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Poems from the Nugent Manuscript

Eoghan Ó Raghallaigh
Trinity College Dublin

2008
Declaration

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other University.

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June 2008
Summary

This thesis comprises an edition of nine bardic poems composed during the Classical Modern Irish period. The main source used is National Library of Ireland Manuscript G 992 (also known as 'The Nugent Manuscript', 'The Book of Delvin' and An Duanaire Nuinseannach), a vellum manuscript written in the midlands in the sixteenth century. All copies of the poems appearing in other manuscripts have been consulted also.

The poems conform to the standards of Classical Irish, a literary register used in the composition of bardic poetry from roughly 1200 to 1700 in Ireland and Scotland. Bardic praise poems were commissioned by wealthy nobles, both Gaelic and Anglo-Norman. The poetry was composed by hereditary professional poets who were handsomely rewarded for their work. The strict metrical and grammatical rules which have come down to us in the poets' own grammatical, syntactical and metrical tracts—rules which are generally very closely adhered to in the surviving corpus of poetry—allow us to reconstruct the original form of the poets' compositions and to correct instances of scribal corruption in the manuscript transmission of texts. Though these can be an aid, the modern scholar is routinely challenged by the contorted language which the intricate metrical rules can give rise to.

A general introduction to the sources is given in Chapter 1. This is followed in Chapter 2 by an account of the editorial principles that have been adopted. An introduction to the poems themselves is given in Chapter 3. This includes a discussion of the poets, the patrons, the historical background, the content of the poems and the metres. I also give an account here of the texts as they appear in the Nugent Manuscript and in the various other manuscripts in which copies of the poems are extant. The text of the poems appears in Chapter 4. Each poem is presented in two forms: on the left side of the page, a diplomatic transcription of the text as it appears in the primary manuscript consulted; parallel to this, on the right side of the page, the edited text. Beneath these, I give variant readings from copies of the poems in other manuscripts. A translation of the text is given below the variants. Chapter 5 comprises notes on the text and translation. Significant emendations to the text and issues of interpretation are addressed here. Difficult idioms and expressions are compared, when possible, with examples from other texts for purposes of elucidation. The names of persons, places and populations are identified, and historical and other allusions are explained.
Indexes are included for the following: (i) poems which are cited in the notes but which
do not appear in published collections (many of these are only available in manuscript); (ii)
personal names; (iii) place and population names; (iv) words discussed in the notes; (v) the
metres of the poems; (vi) the poets.
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Responsibility for any errors and omissions rests solely with me.
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Chapter 1

General Introduction

The Nugent Manuscript

The chief source used for the poems edited below is National Library of Ireland Manuscript G 992, also known as 'The Nugent Manuscript', 'The Book of Delvin' and An Duanaire Nuinseannach (= N). This vellum manuscript consists chiefly of a miscellaneous collection of bardic poems from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. It has previously been commented on by Brian Ó Cuív and Dáibhí Ó Cróinín. More recently, a summary catalogue description of it has been made available by Pádraig Ó Macháin on the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies’ Irish Script on Screen (ISOS) website. The manuscript can be dated to the year 1577 on the basis of three scribal notes which mention that year. Furthermore, one of the notes is dated to St Lucy’s Eve, i.e. December 13. As these notes occur near the beginning of the manuscript, it seems reasonable to assume that the writing of the manuscript may have continued into the following year.

Eighteen out of a total of forty-seven bardic poems in the manuscript were composed by members of the Uí Chobhthaigh, a hereditary poetic family who held lands in the barony of Rathconrath, Co. Westmeath, up until the Cromwellian confiscations. The fact that such a large portion of the content of the manuscript was composed by Ó Cobhthaigh poets suggests that it was written by a member of that family, possibly for use within the Ó Cobhthaigh school. Whether or not this was the case is uncertain. What is certain, however, is that the

1Ó Cuív (1973) 11–14 and 23–4; Ó Cróinín (1975–6).
2Anno domini 1577. ‘An ixmadh bliadhain x. do quuin Isbel a ríghseacht hSúír’ Eireann ‘A.D. 1577, and the nineteenth year of Queen Elizabeth’s sovereignty of England and Ireland’; Anno domini 1577. ‘Anocht adhach Lusia ‘as taisceach súicriti atá féin ‘A.D. 1577, and tonight is (St) Lucy’s Eve, and tired and worn out am I’; Anno domini 1577. ‘Anocht ... (illegible) asum (?) triamuin ...’; quoted and translated by Ó Cróinín, op. cit., 51; Ó Cróinín, ibid., gives the page numbers for these as 4, 8 and 14; these correspond respectively to folios 2v, 8v and 5r on the ISOS website.
manuscript has long been associated with the Nugent family.

Three poems in the manuscript were composed in the latter half of the sixteenth century for various members of this Anglo-Norman family of Westmeath. Though these are the only poems which clearly show that the Nugents acted as patrons for the Ó Chobhthaigh, the connection between the two families would appear to have been long-standing. For example, in 1446, the Ó Chobhthaigh chief and his two sons were murdered by the grandsons of Art Ó Maoilsheachlainn. The following year, Richard Nugent, Baron Delvin, imprisoned a grandson of Art Ó Maoilsheachlainn 'in revenge for the killing of ... Ó Chobhthaigh, and the Irish and English of Meath marched together ... so that they chased the sons of Art’s son to Connacht and they were not suffered to stay in Connacht, and that for the Irish tongue’s sake'.

Until the twentieth century, the manuscript was owned by a branch of the Nugent family located at Farrenconnell, Co. Cavan. Why it originally came into Nugent possession is not clear, but a clue may be contained in the following scribal note:

Ag so duanaire Uilliam me an Bharon on Rose ‘this is the poem-book of William son of the Baron from the Rose’.

The note is in a later hand than that of the original scribe and appears on a page containing a number of entries in English about members of the Nugent family in the eighteenth century; therefore, its relevance may be doubted. However, it seems possible that it could refer to William Nugent, son of the fourth Baron Delvin, and subject of Poem 4 below. The ‘Rose’ may refer to Ross Castle, Co. Meath, which William owned and which still stands on the banks of Lough Sheelin. The castle is close to the Cavan border and only a few miles from Farrenconnell. William Nugent is the subject of Poem 4 below, a eulogy by Muircheartach Ó Chobhthaigh, and was himself author of a number of syllabic poems in Irish. It is thought that he may have received some of his education from the Ó Chobhthaigh. Might he have received training from Muircheartach Ó Chobhthaigh himself? Ó Cróinín has suggested the possibility that the Nugent manuscript was written by Muircheartach Ó Chobhthaigh. If this was the case, perhaps he gave it to William as a gift. For lack of evidence, such possibilities remain uncertain.

Much of the value of the Nugent Manuscript lies in the fact that it was written during the period of composition of bardic poetry, and not after it, as is the case with many of the surviving manuscripts containing bardic poetry. The fact that it seems to have emanated from the Ó Chobhthaigh school of poetry makes it all the more valuable. As might be expected from such a manuscript, it forms a sound basis for the editions presented below.

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4 Poems 3–5 below.
5 MacF. Annals, pp. 216–17; quoted by Simms (1989a, 186).
6 This branch descended from Oliver Nugent, a brother of Richard, fourth Baron Delvin. Cf. Burke’s peerage, p. 2981.
7 Quoted and translated by Ó Cuív (1973, 13).
8 Óske (1978) 181.
9 Ó Cróinín (1975–6) 50–51.
General Introduction

Other manuscripts

Poems 1–8 also appear in the seventeenth-century paper manuscript RIA 1 (23 D 14) (= D), which was ‘probably ... written in King’s Co. or the immediate neighbourhood’. Dáibhí Ó Cróinín writes: ‘A comparison of the two manuscripts leaves one in no doubt that 23 D 14 derives largely from the ‘Duanaire’ [i.e. N], and may indeed have been copied by another member of the Ó Cobhthaigh family’. As Ó Cróinín observes, D was written by ‘a very capable scribe, as the quality of his manuscript shows, but he felt at liberty to emend the readings of his examplar on points of spelling, and even on occasions to the point of changing whole words’. More recently, in the introduction to their edition of the poem Cionnas tig Éire gan Aodh, Breathnach and Breathnach are more circumspect in their view of the relationship between N and D. Discussing a number of copies of the poem, they write: ‘Only N and D appear close enough to be directly related. D’s dependence on N or a copy of it appears in readings throughout the text’. There is no doubt that D derives from N, and it is probably a direct copy. D’s scribe, though he occasionally makes mistakes, betrays a familiarity with the classical register and often makes changes to better fit the metre. I include variants from D for poems 1–8 and discuss them in the subsections devoted to manuscripts in the introduction to the poems. D has been used in a number of cases where the text has been lost in N, most crucially in Poem 3, where a binder has cut away a sizable portion of the first eleven quatrains.

There are further manuscript copies of Poems 1, 2, 6 and 9. These are all taken into account and discussed in the introduction to the poems. Though readings from other copies are sometimes used, N forms the basis of the edited text of all nine poems.

The poems

The majority of the poems in the Nugent manuscript have been published over the last century or so. The nine poems edited below have not appeared in print before now. As mentioned above, the manuscript is a miscellany-type poem-book, a large portion of which is made up of Ó Cobhthaigh poems. This mix is reflected in the poems edited below. Six of them are by Ó Cobhthaigh poets, two are by Ó Dálaigh poets and one is by a Mac Bruaidheadha. They range in date from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, and the patrons are likewise

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10 RIA Cat., p. 1.
11 See Ó Cróinín (1975–6) 51.
12 Ibid., 52.
14 Cf., for example, the omission in line 17c in copy D, discussed in the manuscripts subsection of the introduction to Poem 2 below.
15 Apart from these, there remains only one other unpublished poem, Cia as gairde ór ghabhadh Éire, which, to my knowledge, is soon to be edited by another post-graduate student in Trinity College Dublin.
varied.

The order in which I give the poems below follows the order in which they appear in the manuscript and is not chronological.
Chapter 2

Editorial policy

A diplomatic transcription of the manuscript\(^1\) appears on the left of the page and the edited text appears on the right. I give variant readings below these on the same page. The policy adopted for each of these is outlined below.

Diplomatic transcription

1. Length marks sometimes appear in the manuscript to the left or to the right of their appropriate position and sometimes over a consonant. In my transcription I have placed the length mark over the appropriate vowel throughout. This does not apply to cases where the 'appropriate' vowel is unclear; for example, when the length is unhistorical and may indicate the scribe's pronunciation, e.g. *dá ndéarna* (5.7d), in which case I place it as in the manuscript.

2. I have placed the length mark over the first vowel in the case of *do(i)*, *ia(i)* and *ila(i)*, and over the second in the case of *eo(i)* and *iu(i)*.

3. I have italicized all expanded suspensions and abbreviations. However, I have not used an italicized *h* in expanding the punctum delens and the spiritus asper unless they appear over a suspension stroke in the manuscript. Contractions have been expanded conservatively; for example, the *er*-symbol is always expanded as *er*, even though *ir* is sometimes to be read.

4. Tall *e* is transcribed as capital *e*. Capital letters are also used at the beginning of each quatrain, as they are in the manuscript.

\(^1\)This refers to the Nugent manuscript, except where omissions in Nugent have been filled by other manuscripts.
5. In Nugent, quatrains appear as one long line of text with full stops indicating the separation of the lines within each quatrain. I have divided the quatrains into separate lines but have not attempted to alter the word division of the manuscript. I have omitted scribal full stops which mark the end of lines.

6. Round brackets have been used where the text is indistinct or illegible. Letters that appear within these brackets may be regarded as doubtful. Readings from the other manuscript(s) are given below the text in such instances; clarification or comment may also appear below the text with the variants.

**Variant readings**

1. The above practices also apply to the variant readings. I do not include variants which comprise merely of orthographical differences or word division; nor do I normally include variants that only involve the marking of length or non-initial lenition. Likewise, when two or more variants have effectively the same reading but superficially different spellings (e.g. *tteg* and *dteagh*) I quote from one manuscript and follow this by the reference to each in which the reading occurs. In addition, where the importance of a variant lies in its initial letter(s) I may only quote the first letter or first couple of letters followed by a full stop.

2. Where the manuscript is indistinct, illegible or destroyed, readings from other manuscripts are given with the variants.

**Edition**

**Initial lenition**

In cases where *cadad* occurs between two words, I follow the manuscript with regard to lenition of the second initial. The manuscript is not consistent in this regard, sometimes showing lenition and sometimes not.

Where *báthadh consaine* occurs between the two elements in a compound word I have removed lenition of the second element if the manuscript shows it.

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2 It is important to note that text within these round brackets is not to be ignored. Though this method may seem unorthodox, it has, for example, been used by Ó Cuív (1999, 262).

3 Cf., however, *IGT* i, 50-52, where it is stated that lenition should be written and not pronounced in such cases.
Editorial policy

I follow the manuscript in cases where sléagar\(^4\) may apply and in cases of what McKenna terms 'genitives lenited in special circumstances'.\(^5\)

I follow the manuscript with regard to the marking of lenition after the preposition \(ar\), unless metre dictates otherwise.

I follow the manuscript with regard to lenition of relative passive verbs.\(^6\)

Vowels

Length marks have been removed from \(ao(i)\), \(ia(i)\), and \(ua(i)\), and have otherwise been removed or introduced where necessary.

Tall \(e/é\) becomes \(ea/éa\) before a broad consonant; otherwise it becomes lowercase \(e/é\).

Glide vowels have been introduced: \(e/é > ea/éa\) a before a broad consonant; \(i/i > io/ió\) before a broad consonant; \(e/é > ei/éi\) before a slender consonant.

Unstressed \(o > a\) in non-compound words (e.g. \(thógbhos > thogbhas\)).

Unstressed \(ui > ai\) in non-compound words (e.g. \(tríalluid > tríallaid\)).

Unstressed \(iu > ea\) in non-compound words (e.g. \(cruindiughadh > cruinneagadh\)).

Unstressed \(io > ea\) in non-compound words (e.g. \(caisiol > Caiseal\)).

Final \(i > e\).

Consonants

I have normalized the use of \(dh\) and \(gh\) (e.g. \(saodhál > saoghal\)) and of \(mh\) and \(bh\) (e.g. \(eimhir > Éibhir\)).

Mutations have been normalized (e.g. \(bfhuaim > bhfuaim, hshochraide > shochraide, ardphort > ardpHORT\)).

I use single -\(l\)-, -\(n\)- and -\(r\)- where the manuscript doubles those consonants in words such as \(Thailltean, innse\) and \(tuirrse\).

\(cc > g\) (e.g. \(rucc > rug\)).

\(nd > nn\) (e.g. \(aoibhind > aoibhinn\)).

\(c > g\) where it represents historical /\(g/\) (e.g. \(táinic > táinig\)).

\(t > d\) where it represents historical /\(d/\) (e.g. \(rucsat > rugsad\)).

\(^4\)Cf. *IGT* i, 159, and *BST*, appendix 4 (pp. 262-70).


\(^6\)Cf. note on Poem 6, 25d.
Miscellaneous

\[ \text{chd} > \text{cht.} \]
\[ \text{cá} > \text{gá}.^7 \]
\[ \text{agas} > \text{agus.} \]
\[ \text{bhudh/bhūdh} > \text{budh.}^8 \]
\[ \text{nar (conjunction)} > \text{nár}.^9 \]
\[ \text{nar(bh) (copula)} > \text{nár(bh).}^{10} \]
\[ \text{dar (conjunction/preposition + past rel.)} > \text{dár}.^{11} \]
\[ \text{gu (preposition)} > \text{go.} \]
\[ \text{mur} > \text{mar.} \]
\[ \text{ré (preposition ‘against’, etc.)} > \text{re.} \]
\[ \text{re (preposition ‘before’)} > \text{ré.} \]

Punctuation, capital letters and word division are editorial. Any other changes or emendations will be apparent by comparison with the diplomatic version, and, where significant, are discussed in the notes.

Notes on the poems

In Chapter 5, I silently expand all manuscript abbreviations when quoting illustrative examples from unpublished poems.

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^7 In accordance with IGT i, 16.
^8 Cf. note on Poem 2, 44c.
^9 I follow the practice of Eleanor Knott here; cf. TD, vol. 1, p. xcvii. Nugent has examples of both nar and nár.
^10 See preceding footnote.
^11 Nugent has examples of both dar and dár.
Chapter 3

Introduction to the poems

Poem 1: Mairidh teine a dtéallach Ghaoidheal

This is one of a small number of extant bardic poems composed for members of the Uí Mhórdha (O'Mores) of Laois.1 Its author was Eoghan (mac Aodha) Ó Cobhthaigh. He and his wife are subjects of the elegy Dú néall ochtra ós iath Uisnigh (Poem 7). Other extant poems by him are Failghigh chosnas clú Laighean, composed for Brian (mac Cathaoir) Ó Conchobhair Fhailghe (d. 1560)2, and a religious poem, Fada cuimhnighthear cóir Leinbh.

The poet’s patron was Rudhraighe Caoch (mac Conail mhic Mhaoileachlainn) Ó Mórdha, Lord of Laois from 1542 until 1547. Preceding Rudhraighe in the chieftainship were his father, Conall mac Maoleachlainn (1523–1537), his uncle, Piaras (1537–8), and his brother, Céadach Ruadh (1538–42).3 The period during which the poem was composed was one of great political change. Following the failed rebellion of ‘Silken’ Thomas Fitzgerald (1534–6) and the downfall of the Kildare Fitzgeralds, the Uí Mhórdha were now dealing directly with the English administration rather than the Kildares. By 1538 this had resulted in a factional split among the Uí Mhórdha which interlinked with a wider dispute between the Earl of Ossory (Piers Butler) and the lord deputy, Leonard Grey. Piaras Ó Mórdha sided with Ossory while Rudhraighe and his two brothers, Céadach Ruadh and Giolla Pádraig, sided with the lord...

1Two of these poems, Sloinneam cró cloinne Domhnaill and Dá mbeath fear d'aicme eile, were edited by Anne O’Sullivan (1968) and dated by her to the early 14th century. The remaining poems have not been published. Tnith Laighean re láimh gConaill is an anonymous eulogy of sixteen quatrains composed for Conall mac Maoleachlainn (father of the patron of Mairidh teine a dtéallach Ghaoidheal); it survives uniquely in the O’Gara Manuscript (RIA 23 F 16). Maith bhar bhfior gcaith, a chlann Róigh is a poem of sixty-three quatrains composed by Tuileagna Ó Maolchonaire for Uaithne Ó Mórdha (d. 1600) at the end of the sixteenth century; it is contained in a number of manuscripts, the earliest of which is Maynooth MS B 8. The poem Deacair dul i ndioghrus gráidh, possibly for a Conall Ó Mórdha (see Simms database), was composed at the end of the sixteenth or the beginning of the seventeenth century; one copy of it survives in RIA A iv 3.


3Fitzgerald (1909–11) 76.
Introduction to the poems

deputy. Further division followed the replacement of Piaras by Cáedach Ruadh as chief in late 1538: Rudhraighe remained close to Cáedach Ruadh while Giolla Pádraig allied himself with Ó Conchubhair Ó Fhailge. Following his inauguration, Rudhraighe submitted to the crown under the ‘surrender and regrant’ scheme in May 1542 and evidently remained loyal to the English government. However, his dispute with his younger brother, Giolla Pádraig, continued, interlinking with a factional dispute between Grey’s successor, Anthony St Leger and James, ninth Earl of Ormond, whose clients included Rudhraighe, and whose daughter, Margaret, Rudhraighe married in 1543/4. The feud ended with Rudhraighe’s murder at the hands of Giolla Pádraig, who then became chief (1547–9).

Rudhraighe is mentioned in the poem by first name (quatrain 6, 10, 12, 34 and 45), by family name (qq. 5 and 11), as ‘Conall’s son’ (qq. 11 and 31), and ‘Conall’s heir’ (q. 14). Allusions are also made to remote ancestors of the Ó Mhórda (for which see especially the note on 6b). Nowhere, however, is Rudhraighe styled ‘Ó Mórdha’, i.e. chief of his name. In the light of this fact, and of the depiction of the patron as one who is about to burst onto the scene (see below), it would appear that *Mairidh teine a dteallach Ghaoidheal* was composed before Rudhraighe’s inauguration as chief of the Ó Mhórdha. The poem may be seen as a piece of electioneering propaganda in which its patron is presented as a firebrand and worthy leader. Its message is conveyed by the use of metaphor, historical precedent, prophecy, and various other customary bardic methods of praise. In this, the poem conforms to a well-tested template associated with the genre.

The first number of quatrains of the poem (as well as qq. 34, 36 and 37) involve an image of the reinvigoration by Rudhraighe of the fire in *the Gaoi’s hearth*, which may be understood as a reference to Tara. Hitherto hidden in its embers, the patron is presented as ‘a fireball about to burst forth’ (q. 3) and as one for whom ‘it is a fitting time to be unleashed’ (q. 5). Furthermore, in quatrain 6 we are told that he has been chosen by Tara over many other suitors to be her mate. The presentation of a prospective territorial chief in terms of his suitability for the high-kingship is a conventional bardic conceit. It is also customary in a poem to a Gaelic—as opposed to Anglo-Norman—patron to present him as capable of overthrowing the *Goill*, and indeed we are told in quatrains 4 and 5 of the fear Rudhraighe inspires among the *Goill*. This theme is returned to in quatrains 35, 37 and 42. Given the recently changed political circumstances of the period in which the poem was composed, the poet may be referring specifically to the English, rather than merely repeating a traditional theme.

Quatrains 15–30 comprise an apalogue which features the legendary story of the revolt of the *aitheachthuatha* (‘vassal-tribes’), whose treacherous reign is brought to an end by the return

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to the kingship of the rightful heir, Tuathal Teachtmhar. We are told that Rudhraighe is being compared to Tuathal Teachtmhar: at the end of the apologue the poet states that Rudhraighe is as good a mate for Tara as Tuathal was (q. 31), that he is a valorous defender of its land (q. 32), and that he will seize power over Ireland just as Tuathal did (q. 35). In quatrain 33 the notion that Rudhraighe is entitled to the highkingship is further enforced by reference to the number of his ancestors who achieved that position. Although it is not expressly stated with whom the aitheachthuatha are to be equated, considering the context of the period following the end of the hegemony of the Kildare Fitzgeralds, it could be the new English administration.

The latter part of the poem includes allusions that connect it with the territory of Laois. In quatrains 38–41, reference is made to Rudhraighe’s illustrious ancestor Laoiseach Leannmhor, son of Conall Cearnach, who, according to tradition, came from Ulster and settled in Laois. In quatrain 44, we are also told that Rudhraighe should not relinquish the land of the ‘Nore and Barrow’ rivers, which clearly denotes Laois. Finally, some common bardic themes bring the poem to a conclusion: praise of the patron’s valour (qq. 43, 45), of his generosity to poets (qq. 47–8), and of his attractiveness to women (qq. 49–50).

**Manuscripts**

The poem appears in its entirety on folios 12v–14r of N and on pages 31–35 of D. These copies have 51 quatrains, and metrical closure (dúnadh) is delivered in the final quatrain. In addition, five quatrains from the poem (qq. 36–40) appear on pages 102–3 of National Library of Ireland MS G 127 (= ‘G’), written by Riosdard Tuibear (Richard Tipper) in 1713–15.

G’s readings are inferior where they depart from those of the other two copies, particularly in spelling (see variant readings). The exception to this is G’s one superior reading, laoisceach, in 38b. G indicates uncertainty with regard to the authorship of the poem. Its heading states: ‘gothfraidh fionn ó dáladh: ní hedd acht eoghan mac aodh uí cobhtuih’ (all written in the same hand). Directly after G’s fifth (and last) quatrain the scribe writes: ‘et cetera cum multis’. Below this he writes: ‘as an duan darab tosach: Maire tine a ttealach .gh. et cetera’. Why he chose to write this extract from the poem is not apparent.

As well as filling gaps where N is now indistinct or illegible, D corrects, or improves upon, a number of readings in N. For example: úde N, úaidh D (:= sluigh) (q. 28). Further examples: 2b, 16b, 16d, 19b, 24c, 28b, 28d, 32d, 34c, 44a. Readings in D which are inferior to N include: 4a, 8c, 11a, 19d, 21c, 21d, 22c, 23a, 25b, 26d, 28d, 29d, 33b, 42d. It is to be observed that D’s improvements upon N may all be classified as marginal; for example, D’s

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6See note on q. 15 for discussion of the story.
7For discussion of copies N and D see General Introduction, where it is stated that D is probably a direct copy of N.
scribe sometimes chooses by-forms of words that better fit the metre. In contrast, the inferiority of some of D’s readings is substantial; for example, it contains a number of omissions (e.g. 19b, 19d). These scribal corrections/errors are not inconsistent with D’s reliance on, or descent from, N.

A number of readings in D are acceptable by-forms of those in N: Fuigheall (2a); bhfhuihebhhe (7a). Finally, there is variation between N and D with regard to the spelling of the names Fiacha Fionnfholaiddh and Féilim mac Conraigh (for discussion of which see notes on 17a and 18a).

Metre

The metre of the poem is séadna (dán dáreach): lines a and c have eight syllables and end in a disyllabic word, lines b and d have seven syllables and end in a monosyllabic word; alliteration occurs in every line (in line d it occurs between the penultimate stressed word and the endword) as well as between the endword in line a and the first stressed word in line b (i.e. lorga-alliteration); there is perfect rhyme between the endwords of lines b and d, between the endword in line c and the penultimate stressed word in d (i.e. aicill-rhyme); the remaining stressed words (i.e. those coming before the penultimate and the final) in d must also have perfect rhyming partners internally in line c.

Where necessary, I have emended to permitted by-forms of words in order to meet these metrical requirements. For example, in quatrain 14, I emend gabhthur to gabhar for aicill-rhyme with nDanar.

Lorga-alliteration is absent in the first couplet in quatrain 44; however, the presence of triple alliteration in both lines may be intended compensate for the metrical fault (see note on this couplet).
Poem 2: A gcródhatc ceart chlann bhFeórais

This poem is the only known extant composition of An Clasach Ó Cobhthaigh (d. 1415) who is described in his obituary as saoi re dán agus re daonnacht ‘one who excelled both in poetry and charity’. A single poem survives also from Domhnall (mac an Chlasaigh) Ó Cobhthaigh (d. 1446), who we may assume was his son. This Domhnall and two others described as sons of An Clasach Ó Cobhthaigh, Maoileachlann (d. 1429) and Aodh (d. 1452), are each styled head of their name in their obituaries. It is possible, therefore, that An Clasach also held this position. The date of the following annal entry suggests that the Ó Cobhthaigh mentioned in it may have been the author of A gcródhatc ceart chlann bhFeórais: Creach mor do dénam d’earaibh Midhi ar h. Cobhthaidh, chainndéal eigsi 7 ealadh an tartair Eorpa, ar ndúil do fein a n-ichthar Laigín d’iarraidh ealaíne dar híneadadh a bás, uair dob e adhuar na creithi ; 7 arna bheith slán, aisec as fearr fuair eigsi ’na aimsir do gafaibh do i. da .xx. d’ifíbh bo. ‘A great raid was made by the men of Midhe on Ó Cobhthaigh, candle of poetry and science of Western Europe, after he himself had gone into the north of Leinster seeking booty. From this [expedition] his death was reported, and that [report] was the cause of the raid. When he was found to be living, he got the fullest restitution that a poet got in his time, namely, forty score cows.’

A gcródhatc ceart chlann bhFeórais is a eulogy to Maighiú (mac Réamainn mheic Réamainn) Mac Feórais (Matthew de Bermingham), who is presented in the poem as head of his kin-dred. He may be the ‘Matthew son of Redmond de Bermingham’ who in 1378, according to the Irish chancery rolls, was stationed at Tallaght castle with 120 horsemen to resist the O’Byrnes and others.

The Berminghams had established themselves early as one of the leading landowning families among the Anglo-Normans. A number of their territories are alluded to in the poem and attention is drawn to them here. Robert de Bermingham, who first came to Ireland with Strongbow, was granted Offaly. He seems to have divided this with his brother, who received the northern part, known as Tuath Dá Mhuighe (Tethmoy), in modern northeastern Co. Offaly (cf. q. 27). Robert’s own part passed to his son-in-law, Gerald fitz Maurice (FitzGerald), who became Baron of Offaly. Tethmoy passed to Piers (= Feórás) de Bermingham (d.

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*AFM* s.a.

*Cf. a Mhaighiú mheic mheic Réamainn (11b), as tusa Mac fial Feórás (43b), a Mheic úir Fheórás (45b, 50b), A mheic Réamainn (52a), a Mheic Fheórás (52b). ‘Mac Feórás’ was the Gaelic surname adopted by the Berminghams; see below.

**See Tresham (1828) 99b.**
1254), who was the eponymous ancestor for the Irish version of the family’s surname. Piers had taken part in Richard de Burgh’s conquest of Connacht and received the territories of Tir Fhiachrach (Tireragh, Co. Sligo) (cf. q. 25, 32) and Dún Mór (Dunmore, Co. Galway) (cf. q. 32). His son Meiler was granted Athenry (Co. Galway), where he founded a walled town and a Dominican friary; the Berminghams later became Barons of Athenry (cf. q. 25). Through his wife, Basilia, daughter of William of Worcester, Meiler became entitled to the baronies of Knockgraffon and Kiltinan in Tipperary (cf. q. 22–4, 31–2). Piers’s heir was his grandson, Piers fitz James de Bermingham of Tethmoy, infamous for his massacre in 1305 of the O’Connors of Offaly, who were his guests. His son, John de Bermingham, was created Earl of Louth in 1319 having defeated the army of Edward Bruce the previous year (cf. q. 26, 33). The death of John’s nephew, Walter, in 1361 brought the direct Tethmoy line to an end. The O’Connors retook most of Tethmoy and a collateral Bermingham line established an autonomous Gaelicized lordship in the adjacent territory of Carbury in Co. Kildare.\textsuperscript{16}

The overall theme of the poem is one of incitement—the patron being encouraged to set about the recovery of his patrimony. The opening line makes the point that the rights of the Berminghams—clann Fheórais—are based on their military might. The poet recounts how the Anglo-Normans came to Ireland on the basis of the right given to them by the Pope (q. 4) but then makes it clear that it was through the power of the sword that they gained the upper hand (q. 6–8) and that this too was how clann Fheórais obtained possession of their lands (qq. 9–10). The patron is told that it is on account of his prowess and ability that attention is being focused on the gains of his ancestors—the implication being that he will be inspired to emulate their triumphs (qq. 11–12). Further attention is then devoted to his ability on the field of battle (qq. 13–20). As mentioned above, the territories of clann Fheórais are enumerated in qq. 22–27 (note that they correspond to those detailed above). This is followed by a reminder (q. 29) that the lands are not now in the possession of the family and the patron is therefore encouraged to recover them (29–36). The remainder of the poem heaps praise on him as one who is fit for the task. This section also clearly presents him as someone from Leinster.

Manuscripts

The poem appears on folios 29r–30r of N and on pages 57–9 of D.\textsuperscript{17} A third copy appears on pages 305–7 of Maynooth MS C 81 (= M), which was written in the nineteenth century by Eugene O’Curry and his two sons. The catalogue indicates that this particular poem was transcribed by Henry O’Curry. Of particular interest with regard to identifying the exemplar

\textsuperscript{16}Orpen (1915–16); H. T. Knox (1917–18); N. Hickey (1981–2); MacLysaght (1996) 33; Nicholls (2005) 38. See Nicholls (ibid.) for details of the Berminghams’ loss of their lands.

\textsuperscript{17}For discussion of copies N and D see General Introduction, where it is stated that D is probably a direct copy of N.
used by M’s scribe are the following two scribal notes which refer to the source of two other poems in the same manuscript: ‘Copied from Mr. Richard Nugent’s Book of Farranconnell County of Cavan. December 1849’ (p. 37) and ‘Book of Delvin’ (p. 287?) (cited in Cat. Mayn. vi, 11–12). These notes would appear to refer to N.

N contains 52 quatrains. As it contains metrical closure (dúinadh) it would appear to be a complete copy of the poem. The ascription in N has been almost completely cut away but what little remains seems consistent with ‘An Clasach ...’, which is backed up by the ascription found in M (see below). D contains 30 quatrains in full and a few more in fragmentary form. Quatrains fully missing from D are qqs. 1–12 and 26–8. As D is acephalous it bears no ascription. M contains 28 quatrains. It lacks qqs. 22–5 and 33–52. Crucially, we rely on M for the poem’s ascription to An Clasach Ó Cobhthaigh. A large blank space extending to the bottom of the page follows the point at which M ends (p. 306). This suggests that the scribe had the rest of the poem before him in his exemplar, but for some reason did not complete his task. More puzzling though, is the absence in M of quatrains 22–5: a blank space about the size of four quatrains is left in the manuscript at the point where they should occur.

As well as filling gaps where N is now indistinct, D corrects, or improves upon, a number of readings in N. For example: áirE mh N, áirimh D (: Lir) (q. 38d). Further examples: 17a, 23a, 25c, 31c, 39a, 40b, 42d?, 47c, 47d, 48d, 50d. Readings in D which are inferior to N include: 16d, 17b, 17c, 19a, 19b, 21a, 21b, 21c, 22a, 22b, 24a, 32a, 36a, 37d, 39d, 40d?, 41a, 42a, 42d, 43c, 45b, 46c, 47a, 47b, 50c, 51a, 51c, 51d. It is to be observed that D’s improvements upon N may all be classified as marginal; for example, D’s scribe sometimes chooses by-forms of words that better fit the metre. In contrast, its inferior readings are more numerous. Though their inferiority is generally also marginal, attention may be drawn to a significant omission in D. In line 17c, the words ni hal are squeezed in at the end of a line of text in N and would be easy to miss by a copyist. They are omitted in D. This is a clear example of D’s reliance on N: it indicates that D was most likely copied directly from N although it does not disprove the possibility of an intermediary manuscript. Finally, a number of readings in D are acceptable by-forms of those in N, e.g. bhúachaill D, bhuaicail N (46c).

As mentioned above, M uniquely preserves the poem’s ascription to An Clasach Ó Cobhthaigh. It also fills an important gap in 4b where N is illegible and D has been torn away. M contains a number of minor variants, most of which are inferior to those of N, e.g. 1a, 3d, 4b?, 6a, 6d, 7c, 8c, 9c, 10a, 12c, 12d, 13d, 16b, 16c, 17d?, 21b?, 27b, 32a. It will be seen that very many of these simply involve non-marking of lenition. Readings in M which are marginally better are: 7b and 10c.
Metre

The metre is *deibhidhe* (*dán díreach*), the rules of which are: all lines have seven syllables; the endword of the first line in each couplet rhymes with the endword of the second line in each couplet; the second word in each of these rhymes is a syllable longer than the first (i.e. *rinn* and *airdrinn* rhyme); alliteration occurs in every line; non-final stressed words in line *d* must have perfect rhyming partners in non-final position in line *c*.

A number of metrical problems may be mentioned briefly here (cf. notes on each). Quatrain 2, line *b*, is a syllable too long. As no clear emendation suggests itself I have let the manuscript reading stand. Quatrain 3, line *c*, is a syllable short in the manuscript and I have made a tentative emendation. I have made a further tentative emendation in 10d, where MS *gleoghlaisi* rhymes imperfectly with MS *fheoraisi* (10c). In 21d, metrical considerations give rise to the unusual form *aoibhnea-sa* (: *aoibhneasa*) rather than *aoibhne-se*. 
Poem 3: *Mairg as dáileamh don digh bhróin*

This poem is an elegy to Gerald Nugent (Gearóid Nuinseann), brother of Richard, fourth Baron Delvin (d. 1559), and uncle of William and Christopher Nugent, who are subjects of Poems 4 and 5 respectively.\(^{18}\)

The murder of Gerald Nugent is referred to a number of times in the state papers: ‘Garrot Nugent, uncle of Baron Delvin, slain’;\(^{19}\) ‘My Lord of Kyldare, at my request, hath taken a notable rebell and outlaw and murderer, who about a year before my aryvall murdered the Baron of Delvyn’s brother that last dyed’;\(^{20}\) ‘Earl of Kildare commended for his service in apprehending Tyrrel, who murdered the Baron Delvin’s brother’;\(^{21}\) ‘Letters of encouragement to Kildare for the apprehension of certain of the murderers of the last Baron Delvin’s brother’;\(^{22}\) ‘Articles against Murtough O’More, now prisoner in the Gate House at Westminster. He was one of them who wilfully murdered Gerald Nugent of Tristernagh, brother to the late Lord of Delvin, a known servitor.’\(^{23}\)

That Gerald Nugent died violently is borne out also in *Mairg as dáileamh don digh bhróin*, where, for example, his demise is referred to by the use of the words *oidheadh* ‘violent death’ (15b, 33a, 36b) and *guin* ‘killing’ (13a, 24a). The dates of the above references to his death suggest that the poem was composed c. 1565–6. The last quotation indicates that Gerald lived in Tristernagh, Co. Westmeath.\(^{24}\)

One of the themes of the poem is that the patron’s death has left the territory exposed to attack. Though this is one of the stock motifs of bardic elegy, the attackers in question are referred to on a number of occasions, i.e. *clannaibh Cuinn* (5d), *siol nEoghain* (13d), *clannaibh Néill* (21c), and *íbh Néill* (leg. *íkB? 33b). It is possible that these references may simply denote the native Irish in a generic way. However, it is also possible that they refer specifically to the O’Neills, and it is perhaps significant that their chief, Shane O’Neill, intensified his raids on the Pale in the latter part of 1566.\(^{25}\)

Apart from that, the poem seems to reveal little else in the way of specific details, consisting

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18 See *Burke’s peerage*, p. 2981. Gerald is mentioned by first name in 7d, 18d, 20a, 24a, 28b, 31ab and 35b. Interestingly, the family surname, Nuinseann (Nugent), is not mentioned (nor is it mentioned in Poems 4 or 5). Dealbhna (Delvin), however, is mentioned in 9d, 18d, 21a and 31d.
21 The Queen to the Lord Deputy, March 28, 1566 (*Cal. st. pap. Ire.*, 1509–73, p. 293).
24 Tristernagh was the site of an Augustinian friary which, like the abbeys of Fore and Multyfarnham, was under the headship of members of the Nugent family at the dissolution of the monasteries. Its last prior was Edmund Nugent, bishop of Kilmore (see Lennon, 1999–2001, 361–3). The Irish form of Tristernagh is given in Walsh (1957) as Triostarnach (barony of Moygoish).
Introduction to the poems

largely of a working of some of the standard motifs and themes of bardic elegy. The more prominent of these may be briefly pointed to as follows: grief depicted as a ‘drink/feast of sorrow’ (qq. 1–3, 22, 25, 35) and as an incurable wound (q. 18); general grief of poet and others (qq. 4, 7, 8, 9, 15, 18, 19, 27, 31, 34); patron’s prowess and loss thereof (qq. 7, 16, 28); patron’s death leaves territory exposed to attack (qq. 5, 13, 21, 33, 36); nature mourns (qq. 6, 7, 12, 20, 23, 26, 30, 32, 33?); symptoms of grief (blood-red tears, loss of sleep) (qq. 11, 18); grief of women (qq. 14, 27); people assembled at grave (qq. 17, 21, 24); poet’s vigil at grave (q. 25); an end to feasting and a loss of interest in drinking (q. 35).

The author of Mairg as dáileamh don digh bhroín, and of Poems 4 and 5, was Muircheartach Ó Cobhthaigh. O’Rahilly has identified him with the last-mentioned in the following extract from a Fiant of 29 August 1582: ‘Owney O Coffy, of Rochester, co. Westmeath, gent., Melaghlen O Coffy, of same, Moriertagh O Coffy, of same.’ He is also possibly to be identified with the first-mentioned in the following Fiant of 25 March 1600: ‘Murtagh Coffie, Owen Coffie, Thomas Coffie, ... Owney O Coffie, of Rogerston, co. Westmeath, Wm. O Coffie, of Ballinkeeny.’ O’Rahilly writes that the places mentioned in the above Fiants are ‘Rogerstown and Ballinkeeny, both near the Hill of Ushnagh, Co. Westmeath’. In addition to this and Poems 4 and 5, three other poem by him have survived: Dlíghidh liaigh leigheas a charad, which is a religious poem; Séad fine teisd Thoirrdealbhaigh, which is a eulogy to Toirrdealbhach Luineach Ó Néill; and Le dís cuirthear clú Laighean, which is a eulogy to galloglass leaders Aodh Buidhe and Alasdar Mac Domhnaill, of Tinnakill, Queen’s County.

Manuscripts

The poem appears on folios 33v–34v of N. Part of folio 33 has been cut away (evidently by a binder) and has resulted in loss of text. Fortunately, copy D was made before this happened, and it is our only witness for portions of quatrains 1–11. The poem appears on pages 67–69 of D. The final quatrain includes metrical closure (dúnadh), indicating that the poem is complete.

Apart from filling gaps where N has been cut away or is now indistinct or illegible, D contains little in the way of improvements upon N. For example, D’s spelling is better historically in

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26 For bardic elegy in general see Breatnach (1997), McManus (2006, at 61–8), Simms (1989b) and Simms database.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
30 Edited by McKenna (1949b).
31 Edited by Ó Cróinín (1975–6).
32 Edited by Ó Raghallaigh (2006).
33 For discussion of copies N and D see General Introduction, where it is stated that D is probably a direct copy of N.
Poem 3: *Máirg as dáileamh don diugh bhróin*

the following: *brídh* N, *brígh* D (35d). Further examples: 6a, 7d, 18a, 19b, 21a, 22d, 23c, 24d, 29b, 29d, 32c, 36a, 37c. Readings in D which are inferior to N include: 1d, 2c, 3d, 6d, 9c, 11d, 12d, 22b, 23c, 25c, 26b, 29c, 30a, 30c, 35a, 36b, 37d. Some of the latter, e.g. 6d, 25c, are more markedly inferior. However, such examples can still be explained as scribal errors and are not inconsistent with D’s reliance on, or descent from, N.

**Metre**

The metre of the poem is *ranncighacht mhór (dán díreach)*, the rules of which are: all lines have seven syllables and end in a monosyllabic word; alliteration occurs in every line; there is perfect rhyme between the endwords of lines *b* and *d*; the finals of lines *a* and *c* consonate with the finals of *b* and *d* and with each other; there is perfect rhyme between the endword in line *c* and the first or second stressed word in *d* (i.e. *aicill*-rhyme); the remaining stressed words in *d* must have perfect rhyming partners in non-final position in line *c*. Stressed non-final words in line *b* must each correspond with a stressed non-final in line *a*; the type of correspondence found here varies (perfect/imperfect rhyme, perfect/imperfect consonance, and *amas*).

Where necessary, I have emended to by-forms of words in order to meet the above metrical requirements; for example, in quatrain 1, I emend *tnúth* to *tnúidh* for perfect rhyme with *dúim*. Such emendations have not been made in cases of internal correspondence in the first couplet as the metre allows different types of correspondence here.
Introduction to the poems

Poem 4: *Do-ní clú áit eighreachta*

This poem by Muircheartach Ó Cobhthaigh\(^{34}\) is a eulogy to William Nugent (Uilliam Nuinseann, 1550–1625),\(^{35}\) younger son of Richard Nugent, fourth Baron Delvin (1522/3–1559), and his wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Jenico Preston, fifth Viscount Gormanston. His older brother was Christopher, fifth Baron Delvin and subject of Poem 5. William’s inheritance included Ross Castle, near Lough Sheelin, Co. Meath, and lands in both Meath and Westmeath.\(^{36}\) He is known to history chiefly for what is referred to as ‘the Nugent conspiracy’, which evolved out of the Pale revolt led by James Eustace, Viscount Baltinglass, in 1580–1.\(^{37}\)

The cultural attributes denoted by the term ‘middle nation’ are well represented in the person of William Nugent.\(^{38}\) As a member of a leading Old English family of the western marches of the Pale, he was immersed in both English and Gaelic culture. In addition to being the patron of the poem edited here, his involvement in Gaelic culture is attested to by the survival of four poems in Irish which he authored: *Dursan cuimhne an chompónaigh, Dorcha an lisi ar Loch Éirne, Diombáidh triall ó thulchaibh Fáil* and *Fada i n-éagais inse Fáil*.\(^{39}\) In addition, the poems *A sgribhionn luigheas tar lear*—for Nugent—and *Deacair suan ar chneidh gcarad*—addressed to his wife—survive from the hand of Giolla Brighde Ó hEodhasa.\(^{40}\) Nugent is also said to have composed verse in the English language. His contemporary, Richard Stanihurst, writes of him that he was ‘a proper gentleman, and of a singular good wit, he wrote in the English toong diverse sonets’.\(^{41}\)

Nothing certain is known of Nugent’s early education but on the basis of his evident skill in syllabic poetry, his acting as patron to Muircheartach Ó Cobhthaigh, and the location of the latter’s family in Westmeath, it is possible that he received tuition from the Ó Cobh-

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\(^{34}\) See introduction to Poem 3.


\(^{36}\) His inheritance encompassed the townlands of Ross and Cullentragh beside Lough Sheelin in Meath, of Robinstown near Lickbla in Westmeath, and of Kilpatrick and Dromderige in Westmeath—in all about 1000 acres, around 340 acres of which was arable (Iske, 1978, 28). He and his wife (see below) were granted livery of the more substantial properties of the latter’s father at Skreen, Navan and Santry, in 1577.

\(^{37}\) This may be summarized briefly as follows: Having been implicated in the Baltinglass revolt, Nugent evaded arrest, then gathered a force of some 300 men and led what was in effect a second rebellion. This had ended in failure by the end of 1581. He left Ireland early the following year and spent the next two years mostly in Paris and Rome seeking the assistance of the Catholic powers. He returned in 1584 with a force of Scots mercenaries and clashed with the queen’s forces but soon submitted to Lord Deputy Perrot and was granted a pardon. Following this he did not participate in rebellion again.

\(^{38}\) For a discussion of the term ‘middle nation’ see Lydon (1984).

\(^{39}\) The first two poems were edited by Ó Tuathail (1940) the last two by Murphy (1948–52).

\(^{40}\) *IBP* 35 and 36.

\(^{41}\) From Holinshed’s *Chronicles* vi, 62, cited by Ó Tuathail (1940, 7). Mention may also be made of the evidence advanced by Iske (1978) that Nugent was the true author of the works of William Shakespeare. Of this, Ó Crónín (1977–9, 578) writes: ‘No evidence of any weight is offered in support of this extravagant claim, just a list of ‘parallels’ between the events of William’s life and those in Shakespeare’s works.’ Nevertheless the claim has its devotees and Nugent’s name is to be found alongside other candidates who are put forward in the debate on Shakespearean authorship. The claim is noted also in *Burke’s peerage*, p. 2982.
Poem 4: Do-ní clú áit eighreachta

thaigh learned family. Following his father’s death in 1559 he was made a ward of the Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Sussex, and may at some point have been brought to England for tutoring. Though little is known of his activities during the 1560s, Iske draws attention to a scribal note in a manuscript dated to about 1565 which he suggests may indicate that Nugent was living in a house on land he inherited from his father in Dromderige, Co. Westmeath. Iske also notes that he became liable for military service on turning sixteen in 1566 and may therefore have served under his brother who, that year, began active service on behalf of the crown. William went to Oxford University. He matriculated at Hart Hall in 1571 but did not take a degree. It is uncertain when he returned to Ireland but he was certainly back by 1573. In December that year he abducted and married Jane (Janet) Marward (d. 1629), daughter and sole heir of Walter Marward, Baron Skryne (d. 1564). Nugent and Janet appear to have subsequently settled at Kilcarne, near Navan, where Janet had grown up.

Nugent’s involvement in the 1570s in a campaign by leading Palesmen against the ‘cess’ levy resulted in him, his brother and others being briefly placed under some sort of restraint or house arrest in May 1575. His brother established himself as leader of the campaign and was confined in Dublin Castle, along with other leading campaigners, in May 1577, following an attempt to prove the cess unconstitutional. By July they had made submissions acknowledging the government’s prerogative in the matter and were released. The issue of the cess continued to be a cause of grievance, however, and was one of the factors which led to rebellion within the Pale a few years later.

That Do-ní clú áit eighreachta was written before the Pale revolt is evident from the date of the Nugent Manuscript (c. 1577). William is identified by first name in quatrains 3, 9, 27 and 30. The fact that there are no supplementary quatrains for his wife—unlike the poem to his brother—may indicate that the poem predates his marriage. This should not be taken for granted, however, given the fact that also absent from the poem is the normal identifying information one would expect such as the patron’s surname or the names of his father or grandfather. The poem reveals little that clearly points to a date of composition—its primary themes from beginning to end being the patron’s prowess and generosity. If we take the earliest possible date of composition to be the time at which he became available for military service we can fairly safely say that it was composed between c.1566 and c.1577.

42Gerard Murphy notes that Nugent’s poem Diombáidh trall ó thulchaibh Fáil ‘was almost certainly written by someone journeying directly from Ireland to England’ (Murphy, 1948-52, 10). He proposes that Nugent wrote the poem while on his way to Oxford (i.e. 1571). An alternative possibility is that he may have been on his way to England for tuition when he wrote it. Iske (1978, 24–6) notes that Nugent is conspicuously absent from an account given of the funeral of his grandfather, Viscount Gormanston, in 1569—in contrast with his brother, who was one of the chief mourners.

43Iske, 1978, 28. Noting that Nancy O’Sullivan brought the scribal note to his attention, Iske quotes it with translation as follows: ‘an dergthi dom a dtigh Uíleam oig in delbna — I am in Dergthi in the house of young William in Delvin.’ The note occurs on p. 377 of TCD MS 1337 (H 3.18; introduction to the Senchas Már).


45He had earlier been betrothed to Jane but her mother changed her mind and arranged to marry her to Baron Dunsany.
Certain points will be discussed below, however, which may indicate a date at the latter end of that period.

In addition to stating one of the central functions of bardic poetry—the conferring of long-lasting fame upon a patron—the opening quatrain of the poem also captures how the poet/patron system works: fame granted by poets to patrons is dependent upon the generosity of the latter, which in turn is dependent upon their prowess. This paradigm being established, the poem goes on to make clear that William Nugent lives up to the expectations of the poets. His generosity to them is repeatedly mentioned (qq. 2, 6, 10, 12, 19, 24, 29); the dependence of his largesse upon his martial prowess is also pointed to (qq. 14, 17, 21); and there is much praise of his valour and power (qq. 3–5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 16, 22, 23, 25, 27, 30, 31). In lauding his patron’s prowess, the poet employs further motifs which are commonly found in bardic eulogy, e.g. the burning of houses (qq. 3–5, 9, 16, 27), the hurling of spears (q. 7), the enemy avoiding confrontation (qq. 13, 15, 23, 27). Alongside these martial images can be found praise of a more personal nature, for example, quatrains 20 and 28 contain the motif of the patron’s attractiveness to women. In addition, certain motifs occur which may be described as being associated with kingly functions, e.g. exacting tribute (qq. 8, 14, 23, 30), possessing hostages (q. 8), clement weather conditions (q. 26).

The poem contains a small number of references which are of a more specific nature. It is made clear at different points that the patron directs his military might against the Gaelic Irish. In quatrains 9 and 27, we are told of his ravaging and burning of ‘the land of the Erne’, which would seem to refer to the territory of Maguires of Fermanagh. This may seem at odds with the affection he later shows for the Maguires in two of his poems and with the relationship he had with them while he was in rebellion. However, it is not inconsistent with the duality of roles demonstrated by him over the course of his life (we may think of his falling out and in with the English authorities). The presentation of William having made successful raids into Maguire territory does not preclude the possibility that he would later cooperate with them.

The poem also speaks of Nugent’s belligerence in the face of the New English: Táinig triot ó threán Shaghsaibh, síodh ni háil don fhíonfhuilsín ‘That the mighty English are not interested in peace has come about through you’ (18ab). This may be an allusion to his opposition to the cess. If so, the poem may be dated to c. 1575–7. The second couplet in the same quatrain reads: sgoile ar sgáth airm órarsaidh / a snaidhm do ráth ríogh Uisnigh ‘with the protection of a venerable golden weapon you release the fort of royal Uisneach’.

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46 For the motifs found in bardic eulogy, see Simms database.
47 Dursan cuimhne an chompánagainh is a lament for Cu Chonnacht Mág Uidhir, while Dorcha an lísí ar Loch Éirne laments the downfall of the Maguires.
48 See Walshe (1990) 32.
49 Alternatively, ‘the land of the Erne’ might refer to O’Reilly territory: the Erne river rises from Lough Gowna, County Cavan.
Poem 4: Do-ní clú áit eighreachta

bondage’. This would seem to be an extension of the sentiment expressed in the first couplet, the sense being that William makes a stand against the New English on behalf of ‘the fort of Uisneach’.

A further point suggesting a date around this time is the fact that Ó Cobhthaigh’s poem to William’s brother Christopher (Poem 5) contains quatrains in praise of the latter’s wife. This indicates a date of composition after Christopher’s marriage in 1575. As Christopher was William’s elder and superior, it is possible that the poem to Christopher was written first, or that two poems were written as a pair.

Finally, it may be noted that my translation of the poem differs substantially from the supposed interpretation of O’Sullivan as it appears in Iske. It should be pointed out that O’Sullivan must not have been aware of the Nugent copy and was thus relying on the second copy (RIA 23 D 14), the catalogue entry of which misleadingly states, ‘On the death of Uilliam Nuinseann, of Delvin’.

Manuscripts

The poem appears on folios 34v–35v of N and on pages 69–71 of D. The final quatrain delivers metrical closure (dúnadh), thereby indicating that the poem is complete.

As N is legible throughout, D is not required for the filling of gaps, etc. D contains a few readings which are marginally better than N. For example, in 15b, where N has folaighthear, D has the by-form falaighthir, which gives the required erid-rhyme with anaithnidh (15d). Further examples of marginally better readings in D: 2a, 10b, 16d, 18d, 22d, 25a. Readings in D which are inferior to N include: 2b, 2d, 3a, 4c, 8a, 10d, 12a, 12c, 12d, 14d, 16b, 16c.

50 The imagery arguably evokes kingship inauguration. This may be nothing more than normal bardic hyperbole, but it seems possible that it could also refer to something specific like the granting of livery to him and his wife in 1577 (for which, see above).

51 With this may be compared another of Muircheartach Ó Cobhthaigh’s poems, Le díos cuirthear clú Laighean (edited by Ó Raghallaigh, 2006), which distinguishes between the relative status of the two brothers who are its subjects.

52 Iske (1978, 145) writes: ‘William died in June of 1625. He was lamented in a long poem by Muirchertagh O’Coffey. This poem has not been published and again I am indebted to Nancy O’Sullivan for a translation. William is greatly praised for his valour, more particularly for his bravery at the Ford of Ath Duinsencaigh where he seems to have fought a battle. I have not been able to trace this ford but suspect it might be in the north of Ireland and the battle might have been concerned with getting Sorley Boy’s cows out of Glenconkeine and into the Glyms. He is also praised for his generosity to poets: he used to send for them when a foray was under way that they might write about his exploits. He is praised for his treatment of the kings of Uisneach (the O’Coffey’s?) for his truce with the Kings of Aileach – this may refer to the two O’Donnell weddings in his brother’s family which may have been arranged by William. His friendship with the Maguires is remembered — a great cloud, the poet says has descended upon Lough Erne to mourn William. He is praised for his skill in exacting taxes from outside lands and for the richness of his substance in Meath. The poet concludes that it is hard to believe that there would be peace in the land after the death of William.’

53 RIA Cat., p. 3.

54 For discussion of copies N and D see General Introduction, where it is stated that D is probably a direct copy of N.

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17b, 18c, 19a, 20b?, 20d?, 22c, 24d, 25b, 25d, 27d, 29a, 30d, 31b. Some of these are markedly inferior, e.g. 3a, 8a, 10d, 16d, 24d. However, such examples can still be explained as scribal errors and are not inconsistent with D's reliance on, or descent from, N.

Metre

The metre of the poem is casbhairdne (dán díreach), the rules of which are: all lines have seven syllables and end in a trisyllabic word; alliteration occurs in every line; there is perfect rhyme between the endwords of lines b and d; the finals of lines a and c consonate with the finals of b and d and with each other; the non-final stressed words in d must have perfect rhyming partners in non-final position in line c. Stressed non-final words in line b must each correspond with a stressed non-final in line a; the type of correspondence found here varies (perfect/imperfect rhyme, perfect/imperfect consonance, and amas).

Where necessary, I have emended to by-forms of words in order to meet metrical requirements; for example, in 1a, in order to achieve consonance—rather than the perfect rhyme of the manuscript reading—with the finals of the second and fourth lines, I emend oighreachta to eighreachta.

As mentioned above, the type of internal correspondence found in opening couplets varies. However, in quatrain 12, d'ibhe and bheith do not correspond in any way, and it is possible that the breacadh present in the quatrain (d'ibhe : dighe : file) is meant to compensate for this fault.

The rule that the final words of the first and third lines should consonate with each other and with those of the second and fourth lines is broken in quatrains 15, 24 and 31 (see notes). In quatrain 15, the rule is broken by the fact that the finals of the first and third lines rhyme perfectly with each other; however, the presence of breacadh in the quatrain (hearradh : gealladh : n-earradh) may be intended to compensate for this fault. In quatrain 24, the final of the first line consonates imperfectly with the other finals; there is breacadh in this quatrain also (réir : béim : béim : cléir) and it too may be intended to compensate for the fault.

The presence of breacadh in quatrain 10 (réir : féin : réir : cléir) does not appear to compensate for any fault.
Poem 5: Geall re hiarlacht ainm barúin

This poem by Muircheartach Ó Cobhthaigh is a eulogy to Sir Christopher Nugent (Criosdóir Nuinseann), 5th Baron Delvin (1544–1602), eldest son of Richard Nugent, fourth Baron Delvin (1522/3–1559), and his wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Jenico Preston, fifth Viscount Gormanston. His younger brother, William, is subject of Poem 4. He succeeded to the barony on the death of his father in 1559 and was made a ward of the Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Sussex. He went to Cambridge, matriculating as a fellow-commoner of Clare College on 12 May 1563, and was presented to Queen Elizabeth on her visit to the university in 1564. On coming of age, about November 1565, he returned to Ireland with letters of commendation from the Queen to the lord deputy, Sir Henry Sidney. Delvin inherited substantial lands in Westmeath and added to these through grants from the crown. His active service for the crown began in 1566, when he distinguished himself against Shane O’Neill and was knighted at Drogheda by Sidney. His relationship with the English administration was a vacillating one, however. He was imprisoned on a number of occasions over the course of his life and died in confinement in 1602, having been accused of collusion with Hugh O’Neill.

Like his brother, he straddled both English and Gaelic culture, something which finds witness in the well-known Irish language phrasebook he wrote for Queen Elizabeth. His other surviving work, ‘A plot for the reformation of Ireland’, bears witness to his loyalty to the medieval Anglo-Norman colony. In it he sets out the problems besetting the Pale and his proposed solutions.

Delvin first came into conflict with the Dublin administration in July 1574 when he refused to sign a proclamation of rebellion against the earl of Desmond. This resulted in his being placed under restraint in May 1575, whereupon he submitted to the government and was released. His recalcitrance was probably due in large part to his view that the government was dealing oppressively with the Pale aristocracy in relation to the issue of the cess. Controversy had been mounting over the levy by 1574. Delvin had become leader of the campaign against it by 1576. In May the following year, he was confined, along with other leading Palemen, in Dublin Castle for having attempted to prove the cess contrary to law. They were released after a number of weeks following their submission to the Queen’s prerogative in the matter.

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55 See introduction to Poem 3.
56 My account of Christopher Nugent makes use of Lennon (2004). Note that Christopher is also referred to as the 14th baron of Delvin; this refers to the feudal barony as opposed to the peerage, which was created in 1451. Christopher’s eldest son was created 1st Earl of Westmeath in 1621 (see *Burke’s peerage*, vol. 2, p. 2980ff). In the poem, he is mentioned by first name in 6c, 12b, 17b, 31a and 31b; he is described as ‘Richard’s son’ in 9a; he is referred to or addressed as ‘baron’ in 1a, 2a, 3b, 22b, and 28b; and Dealbhna (Delvin) is mentioned in 7b, 14d, 32d, 37c. As with Poems 3 and 4, the surname ‘Nugent’ is nowhere mentioned.
57 Lennon, op. cit.
58 A primer of the Irish Language, compiled at the request and for the use of Queen Elizabeth. For a description, see Gilbert, introduction, xxxiv ff. The manuscript is now housed at Farmleigh House, Dublin.
59 See Gilbert, ibid.
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Early the following year Delvin was imprisoned once more over the issue.

Christopher married Mary, daughter of the eleventh earl of Kildare on 6 May 1575. The fact that the poem contains supplementary quatrains to Mary indicates that it was written after their marriage. This, coupled with the date of the Nugent manuscript (c. 1577), suggests a composition date of c. 1576.

That year coincides with Christopher’s elevation to the leadership of the anti-cess campaign. The opening line of the poem claims that the baron’s status is equivalent to that of an earl. This perhaps alludes to his standing within the Pale at a time when his father-in-law, the Earl of Kildare, was absent. Like Christopher and William Nugent, Kildare had been apprehended by government forces in May 1575; they were subsequently released, as mentioned above, but Kildare was brought to London, and was not allowed to return to Ireland until 1577. The overall thrust of the poem is one of support for Christopher’s position as a leader. He is presented throughout as a worthy and righteous lord, and is afforded many of the usual bardic attributes of such a person, e.g. prowess, including that of his men (qq. 4, 8, 9, 12, 14, 21, 27, 29, 32), generosity and hospitality (particularly to poets) (qq. 2, 3, 4, 13, 17, 24, 30, 33, 34, 35, 38), attractiveness to women (q. 25). He enforces his terms upon others (qq. 11, 18, 26), he is superior to his Gaelic neighbours (qq. 16, 19), he establishes peace (q. 7) and adherence to law (q. 28), and the land is fertile under his rule (q. 1). Support for his leadership role is further advanced by his portrayal as one who is worthy of Tara (qq. 9, 31) and of the highkingship (qq. 10(?), 20). In addition, there is allusion made to his receipt of the five provinces’ taxes (q. 6) and hostages (q. 22). Quatrains that are given over to Christopher’s wife (qq. 39–43) praise her in particular for her generosity to poets.

It may be noted here that O’Sullivan’s summary interpretation of the poem, as it appears in Iske, differs significantly from that offered here. As with Poem 4, it should be pointed out that O’Sullivan relied solely on the second copy of the poem (RIA 23 D 14) and must not have been aware of existence of the Nugent copy.

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60See Burke’s peerage, p. 2982.

61Iske (1978, 133) writes: ‘Muirchertagha O’Coffey wrote an obituary poem of one-hundred-and-eighty-four quatrains. It remains in manuscript but has been summarised for me by Nancy O’Sullivan: The poet praised Christopher as worthy of an earldom — this is fair praise and not necessarily flattery when one considers the sad deaths of Lord Offaly and the two young earls of Kildare. Delvin had taken upon himself the leadership of the Pale and, if he had failed to save it from destruction, he had used up his life to that end. The poet also praised his Lord for his defence of Delvin: he was a great protector of the country who put prisoners in chains; he kept peace in his country from east to west: he was, as might be expected, the most generous of lords to poets and the most valiant of captains in battle. The last five verses pay tribute to his wife Mary Fitzgerald and — an interesting sidelight — the poet notes, “the blood of the Saxon was evident in her face”. She was loved for her generosity and the poet concludes with the tribute, “The daughter of Gearoid was a fruitful tide”.'
Poem 5: Geall re hiarlacht ainm baruin

Manuscripts

The poem appears on folios 35v-36v of N and on pages 72-4 of D. The requirements of metrical closure (i.e. dúnadh) are met in 38d (preceding the supplementary quatrains), thereby indicating that the poem is complete.62

As well as filling gaps where N is now indistinct or illegible, D corrects, or improves upon, a number of readings in N. For example; gabhaidh N, geibhidh D (: ngeimhil) (q. 21). Further examples: 5d, 9d, 12b, 15b, 16d, 17a, 18d, 20b, 22c, 24b, 24d, 26c, 27a, 28c, 31d, 32d, 37a. Readings in D which are inferior to N include: 2d, 4b, 5b(?), 5c, 6b(?), 8b, 13b, 14b, 18c, 21d, 22b, 25b, 26c, 33a, 33c, 36b, 37b, 38a, 38b, 39d. It is to be observed that D’s improvements upon N may all be classified as marginal; for example, cases where D’s scribe chooses by-forms of words that better fit the metre. Furthermore, none of D’s inferior readings is so marked that it cannot be explained as a scribal error or disimprovement. D’s readings, therefore, are not inconsistent with its reliance on, or descent from, N.

Metre

The metre of the poem is rannaighacht bheag (dán díreach), the rules of which are: all lines have seven syllables and end in a disyllabic word; alliteration occurs in every line; there is perfect rhyme between the endwords of lines b and d; the finals of lines a and c consonate with the finals of b and d and with each other; there is perfect rhyme between the endword in line c and the first or second stressed word in d (i.e. aicill-rhyme); the remaining stressed words in d must have perfect rhyming partners in non-final position in line c. Stressed non-final words in line b must each correspond with a stressed non-final in line a; the type of correspondence found here varies (perfect/imperfect rhyme, perfect/imperfect consonance, and amas).

Where necessary, I have emended to permitted by-forms of words in order to meet the above metrical requirements; for example, in quatrain 5, I emend fuidhe to oighe for perfect rhyme with oile and for alliteration with ais. Such emendations have not been made in cases of internal correspondence in the first couplet as the metre allows different types of correspondence here. For example, duit (23a) is not emended to doit, even though doing so would give imperfect rhyme with dtoigh rather than imperfect consonance. In quatrain 13, thoigh and bruidhin do not correspond in any way, and it is possible that the breacadh present in the quatrain (thoigh : foil : dtoigh) is meant to compensate for this fault.

A form of the metrical ornament breacadh occurs in quatrain 1 (see note on lacd). The

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62 For discussion of copies N and D see General Introduction, where it is stated that D is probably a direct copy of N.
Introduction to the poems

occurrence of this may be intended to compensate for the fact that the words *iarlacht* and *ainm* occur in rhyme with themselves, something which may constitute the metrical fault *caoiche* (although this is arguably avoided by the fact that each occurrence is in a different grammatical case).

Perfect end-rhyme occurs between lines *a* and *c* in quatrains 23, 32 and 39, even though the metre requires consonance here. Emendation does not seem possible and the quatrains might be regarded as *lochtach*. 


Poem 6: *Cia as sine cairt ar chrích Néill?*

This poem is a eulogy to James fitz Maurice Fitzgerald (Séamas (mac Muiris mheic Sheaán) Mac Gearailt; d. 1579). Fitz Maurice is perhaps best known to history for the part he played in fomenting the second Desmond rebellion (1579–83) which was followed by the downfall of the earldom of Desmond and the plantation of Munster. He was the second son of Maurice fitz John Fitzgerald ('Muiris an Toiteain', d. 1564) who was a military retainer of the thirteenth Earl of Desmond (James fitz John, d. 1558). James fitz Maurice followed in his father’s footsteps and carried out similar duties for his first cousin, the fourteenth earl (Gerald fitz James, d. 1583).

A turning point in fitz Maurice’s career came in 1567 with the detention in the Tower of London of the earl of Desmond and his brother, Sir John, following a period of turbulent years in Munster involving a feud between the earls of Desmond and Ormond for which Desmond was held to be chiefly accountable. He and his brother were held in London until 1573. During his absence the earl appointed fitz Maurice captain-general of the Desmonds. Having overcome a leadership challenge by Desmond’s older half-brother, Thomas Roe fitz James, in March 1568, and established his authority over the earldom, fitz Maurice went on to initiate two extraordinary acts for which his period of rule was remarkable. The first of these occurred in early 1569 when he convened an assembly of Munster lords and prelates which agreed that the Reformation of Henry VIII, furthered by Edward VI and Elizabeth, was heretical and therefore had broken the conditions by which Pope Adrian IV had four centuries earlier granted Ireland to Henry II. The assembly dispatched two bishops as envoys to Spain and called on King Philip II to nominate a Hapsburg to be monarch of Ireland, subject to the approval of Rome. Although the effort failed, it clearly establishes religion as a factor in fitz Maurice’s actions.

The second act was his initiation of the first Desmond rebellion (1569–73) which began in June 1569 with his attack on the barony of Kerrycurrihy, Co. Cork, formerly owned by his father. A defeat suffered by his forces near Kilmallock the following September led to the loss of allies—Mág Carthaigh Mór in September and Sir Edmund and Piers Butler (brothers of the Earl of Ormond) in February 1570. Nevertheless, fitz Maurice and his remaining allies continued the fight for another three years before finally submitting to the lord president of Munster, Sir John Perrot, on 23 February 1573 at Kilmallock. Again, fitz Maurice can be seen—at least in the early stages of the conflict—to attach great importance to the religious element of the rebellion: his capture of Kilmallock, Co. Limerick, within the first few weeks was accompanied by a call for the restoration of the Roman Catholic rite within the town, while shortly afterwards he called for the expulsion of all protestants from

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63 Fitz Maurice is identified in quatrains 12, 34, 39 and 40.
64 See McCormack (2005) on which I rely for the following account of fitz Maurice.
Introduction to the poems

Cork. Fitz Maurice’s action in relation to the issue of religion, as McCormack argues, seems to have been influenced by the French wars of religion, which began in the 1560s.

*Cia as sine cairt ar chrích Néill?* appears to have been composed in the initial stages of Fitz Maurice’s captaincy of the Desmonds. The poem amounts to a charter for him to do battle with the English authorities, its message being conveyed with reference to both historical precedent and to prophecy. The opening section (qq. 1–11) places the Fitzgerald family, who had come to Ireland as part of the Anglo-Norman invasion, firmly within the native framework of successive invaders as worked out in Lebor Gabála Érenn. Enumerating each of the forces traditionally held to have occupied Ireland following the Flood, the poet presents the Fitzgeralds as the last group of occupiers. In each case, he gives the invaders a Greek origin. As bardic poetry conventionally refers to the Fitzgeralds as Greek, he thus allows the Fitzgeralds to appear as natural successors to the earlier invaders. He also gives the Old English Fitzgeralds and the Gaelic Irish a common origin. The poet then tells us that the Fitzgeralds came to Ireland with a charter to its land (i.e. that granted to the Anglo-Normans by Henry II), thereby answering the question posed in the poem’s opening line. He makes the case in quatrains 10 that the Fitzgeralds, though foreign in origin, are now also native. Then he challenges them (q. 11) over the usefulness of their long-standing claim, given the recent successes by the English.

The next section (qq. 12–15) begins with the bold statement that Ireland should not be in bondage. James Fitz Maurice is introduced at this point and reference is made to his period in charge of the Desmond earldom, during which time we are told that he will ‘pacify the land of Conn’. Not only is he suitable to lead Munster (q. 13) but he is presented as a possible leader of Ireland (qq. 14–15). Quatrains 16–33 feature an apologue comprising a prophecy put in the form of a dialogue between Fionnchú and Séadna, both saints of the early Irish period. The prophecy is unambiguous: Séadna foretells the coming of a Greek whose descendants will rule Munster and protect Ireland. In time, Ireland will be treacherously taken over by English forces who will leave the country in misery and suppress its religion (q. 25). In response, a hero will rise up in the south to lead the Greeks and an alliance of both Old-English and Gaelic Irish to victory over the English. In quatrains 34–8, Fitz Maurice is addressed directly. He is equated with the hero of the prophecy and is urged to take up arms against the English. The final section of the poem (qq. 39–43) encourages Fitz Maurice to go beyond the leadership of Desmond and to be leader of Ireland.

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66 See note on 4c.
67 This may be the common type of exaggeration one finds in bardic poetry; however, in the present instance it may have had a more literal resonance, given the scale of Fitz Maurice’s political endeavours; compare quatrains 39–43.
68 See note on 18a.
69 The reader is reminded that, as mentioned above, the Fitzgeralds were held to have had a Greek origin by the Irish literati.
70 Again, this may be regarded as typical bardic hyperbole, but it may also be seen as projecting the actual
Poem 6: Cia as sine cairt ar chrích Néill?

The author of Cia as sine cairt ar chrích Néill? was Domhnall (mac Daire) Mac Bruaideadh (fl. 1558–70), one of a large family of sons and daughters of Daire Mac Bruaideadh and Finola Gray of Knockanalan (Cnoc an Albanagh), parish of Kilmurry, barony of Ibrickan, Co. Clare. He was a brother of Tadhg mac Daire, initiator of, and participant in, the early seventeenth-century 'Iomarbhágh na bhfíleadh'. This branch of the Mac Bruaideadh family served as court poets to the O'Briens of Thomond. Domhnall mac Daire's earliest datable poem, Lá dá rabha ós ráith Luimnigh, is an inaugural ode to Conchobhar O Briain (d. 1580), who was installed as third Earl of Thomond in 1558. In Ceolchair sin a chrút an ríogh, he laments the earl's temporary flight to France in 1570. Other extant poems attributed to Domhnall mac Daire are: A mhic gur mheala t’anma, which is a eulogy to John, son of the Earl of Clanrickard on his first assuming arms; Créad an t-uamhan-sa ar fhéin Ghall?, which is a eulogy to Toirdhealbhach (mac Donnchaidh) O Briain, executed in 1581; Do cuireadh ceathrar cloinne, which is a genealogical poem to Fitzgerald, Fitzmaurice, Fitzgibbon (surnames only mentioned); and Ní dual caide ar creich ngeimhil, which is a poem of thanks to Pádraigín, son of Thomas Fitzmaurice (1502–1590), sixteenth Lord of Kerry and Baron of Lixnaw. Poems of doubtful ascription are: Geall re maoinibh moladh Dé, Maír duine bhraithfeas é féin, Raghad d'éisteacht Aifrinn Dé, and A naomhMuire, a mháthair Dé.

Metre

The metre of the poem is deibhidhe (dán díreach), the rules of which are given above (Poem 2).
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Manuscripts

The poem appears in 19 manuscripts, which are grouped and discussed below, beginning with the oldest, N.

N: NLI MS G 992 (Nugent MS), 40r (c. 1577), 42 qq.
D: RIA MS 1 (23 D 14), 82 (derived from N, 17th century), 42 qq.
A: UCD-Franciscan MS A 25, 163 (Brian Mag Niallghuis (?), early 17th century), 40 qq.

The ND version of the poem omits quatrain 25, which is included in all other copies (except H, which is very fragmentary). Copy A is missing quatrains 22, 23 and 37 (for reasons given below, I believe A is close to ND in the stemma). In most cases of minor variation between N (usually followed by D) and other copies, N’s readings are good. That said, it does contain readings for which superior readings are found among the other manuscripts (most of these are of minor importance): (citing N) fodla (3a), cá (3b, 3d, 11b), luith (4c), righ (5b), far (5c), armruadh (5d), tred (7c), trágh (13c), dtiucafadh (16b), ele (18a), Tiucfa (20a), luith (22c), fi(r)heach (23d), (a shed) (27b), Gluaisid (29a), ghall (36b), gclair (40a), chliu (40a), ficheall (41d), cEoil (42a), coigcriche (42b). As well as filling gaps where N is illegible or indistinct, D corrects a number of the foregoing examples (thereby usually conforming with other copies): fhodla (3a), armruaidh (5d), thred (7c), trágh (13c), dtiucafadh (16b), ele (18a), fhúrbheach (23d), bf rém honn (26d), ashéona (27b), aigmhéil (32a), fitcheall (41d), cheóil (42a), ccoigcriche (42b). On the other hand, D has a number of readings which are inferior to N (again, these are of minor importance): thainig (2a), gormfhoitheanch (3c), druing (2b), fionntain (18a), fhod (18d), dfhiafraigh (19b), ghnuisdheàla (20b), cobsaigh (24c), seirg (27c), fáisde (37d), mhic (40b), sídhe (42a), ar (42b), fúigfídhEr (42d). Examples of other minor instances where D departs from N are: dhi (1b), dealbhídha (8b), díobh (21c), dfurfhógra (21d), Thusa (35a), dhúthsi (38b). The ND version of the poem also contains a number of more significant readings which go against all other copies, e.g. (citing N) dfhuiil (8c), Fásfaidh (21a), bfhiondghlanua (33b), fhiondchalaide (38d), maitheadh (40b), as sgaoileadh (42b). The significance of these must be considered in the light of a number of readings which copy A has in common with ND and which also go against all other copies: (citing A) mbarc(gc)orr (8a), Do ta(IRR.gir) fáidh (16a), Gluaisid (29a). These readings suggest a closeness in the stemma between ND and A. The implication of this, it may be argued, is that where A goes against ND and agrees with other copies (e.g. deitibh (4c), an bhambha (7c), dealbhídha (8b), etc.), ND’s readings are cast in doubt and may have arisen due to scribal innovation. I discuss such cases in the notes.

C: Book of O’Conor Don, 379b (Aodh Ó Dochartaigh, 1631), 43 qq.
S: National Library of Scotland MS 72.2.44, 64b (late 17th century), 43 qq.
G: RIA MS 953 (23 G 1), [368] (Art Ó Caoimh, 18th century), 43 qq.

83See general introduction, where it is stated that D is derived, perhaps directly, from N.
Poem 6: Cia as cine cait ar chrích Néill?

As well as containing all quatrains and being close to each other in their readings, these copies contain the following readings against all other copies: (citing C) chinnfios (24b), sa naird and Es (28a). S and G appear to be a closer subset in view of the following shared readings: (citing S): Foide a gcirt (11a), do ghrEgoibh (17a), um ráith (28c), na (42d). Copy C also contains a number of unique readings: thairrngire (31b), rith accon (43b), animeirce (43d).

E: RIA MS 5 (23 D 4), 318 (Munster scribe (?), 17th century), 41 and \( \frac{3}{4} \) qq.
E1: RIA MS 308 (23 M 16), 197 (Aindrias Mac Mathghamhna, 18th century), 41 qq.
E2: Maynooth MS C 87 (b), 495 (Eugene O’Curry (?), 19th century), 41 and \( \frac{1}{2} \) qq.
E3: Maynooth MS C 95, 89 (Peadar Ó Conaill (?), c. 1784 (?)), 10 qq.
E4: RIA MS 179 (23 K 25), 41 (Malachy Curry, c. 1818), 10 qq.
E5: RIA MS 300 (23 B 35), 1 (no scribal signature, c. 1820), 41 qq.
E6: RIA MS 1422 (24 P 59), 211 (Augustine Russell, 19th century), 35 qq.
E7: Maynooth MS R 80, 89 (Augustine Russell, 1843), 35qq.

As well as omitting quatrain 21, all eight of these copies contain the following readings which do not otherwise occur: (citing E) Fod a ccuarta (11a), fort (17b), Beanfoidhs (22a), lainnigh (23b), taoisi (31b), an bhoinn (37a), uair (38d). This group of manuscripts can be subdivided into two groups. Firstly, E,E1,E2. Copy E (41 and \( \frac{3}{4} \) qq.) has part of the final quatrain cut away, leaving only the first couplet and a partially obscured third line. The fact that E2 (41 and \( \frac{1}{2} \) qq.) omits the last couplet and is extremely close in its readings to E (differing only in presence/absence of punctums) suggests that it derives directly from E. Copy E1 also omits the last quatrain and is very close in its readings to E. A noteworthy reading in this sub-division which backs up N against other copies is: (citing E) deite hath (4c). The second sub-division, E3,E4,E5,E6,E7, may fairly be described as differing from E,E1,E2 in containing numerous readings which are inferior to those of the latter. Examples from the first quatrain: (citing E5) reim dhirge (1c), scribhe chaigh (1d). On the other hand, a few of its readings are closer to other copies than to E,E1,E2: deithnibh (4c), fa nuadh (7a), seiseadh (9a). These examples, however, probably do not amount to much—the first reading, though close to deitibh (the reading in a number of copies), is inferior to it and may be explained as a scribal alteration; likewise, the other two may be explained as scribal corrections. It therefore seems possible that this sub-division may also derive from E. The stemma of this sub-division is not fully clear to me. E3 seems to be the earliest and contains only 10 quatrains (interestingly, it is written in an italic hand). I believe E4 to be by the same scribe as that of E5 (Malachy Curry): both were written c. 1818-20; the hand looks the same in both; moreover, E4, consisting of the first 10 quatrains only, is followed by the following scribal note: ‘There are forty one stanzas in this poem, which I have written in another part of this book.’ Might he be referring to E5? Further comparison of both manuscripts would be necessary to ascertain if they originally formed a single manuscript. E7 (35 qq.) is evidently a copy of E6 (35 qq.) (see RIA Cat., p. 3658) and both were written c. mid-nineteenth century. Their readings are consistently poorer than the earlier copies in

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this sub-group.

R: RIA MS 744 (A v 2), 57a (scribe unknown, 17th century (?)), 34 qq.

This copy is 'much mutilated: portions of the following quatrains only are legible: qq. 1–7, 11–19, 21–29, 32–40' (RIA Cat.). This copy of the poem, in common with others, goes against ND in a number of cases, e.g. deitibh (4c), (...)ta ag faighibh (16a), sanairdsi thEs (28a), trEigEdh (40b). In other instances, however, it appears closer to ND than certain other copies: (...)a da ceEirt (11a), (...)ibh greg (17a), coillfEs (24b).

P: RIA MS 1404 (24 P 41), 142 (Tadhg Ó Neachtain, 18th century), 41 qq.

This copy of the poem omits qq. 16 and 24. It also has a number of clearly bad readings, e.g. deighthrebhluigh (4c), aindeontadh (22b), a lan chlannaithriuibh (26c), diomas (28b), raonchala (38d). In common with others, it goes against ND in a number of cases, e.g. an bhanbha (7c), mbrugh ccorr (8a), dféin (8c), etc.

H: TCD MS 1296 (H.2.5), 281 (18th century), 21 qq.

This omits qq. 3, 8–17, 25, 34–43. Contains qq. 1, 2, 4–7, 18–24, 26–33. Q. 27 is misplaced between 30 and 31. The spelling in this copy is very poor. With other copies, it shares a number of deviations from ND, e.g. detiobh (4c), an bhanabh (7c), Ginfig (21a), bhacunta (33b).

L1: RIA MS 257 (23 G 24), 69 (Micheál Óg Ó Longáin, 18th/19th cent.), 42 qq.
L2: Maynooth MS M 2, 283 (Micheál Óg Ó Longáin, 1818), 41 qq.

These are both by the same scribe. Lines 9d and 36d are left blank in L1. In L2, the same lines appear to have been concocted by the scribe (the readings are unmetrical and unique). Lines 10bcd are omitted in L1. The whole of quatrain 10 is omitted in L2. Quatrain 11 is omitted in both L1 and L2. These copies also have a number of deviations from ND in common with other copies, e.g. (citing L1) deitibh (4c), mbrugh ccorr (8a), dféin (8c), etc.

Edition

The edition is based upon the earliest copy, N, with gaps in N filled by D. The relationship between the remaining copies/groups is unclear. However, as mentioned above, doubt may be cast on a number of N's readings in the light of certain variants. I therefore supply variants from copies D, A, C and E, which are the four earliest copies of the poem after N. Doubtful readings in N are referred to in the notes, and variants have been adopted in some cases. The remaining manuscripts, which are late and sometimes fragmentary, have not
been included among the variants as they offer no additional important readings. Finally, it may be mentioned here that metrical closure (dúnadh) is delivered in quatrain 43, thereby indicating that the poem is complete.
Poem 7: Dá néall orchra ós iath Uisnigh

The author of this elegy, Diarmaid Ó Cobhthaigh, has been identified by O’Rahilly as the ‘Dermot O’Coffee of Offaly’ mentioned in a Fiant of 1563. Five of his poems have been published in *Aithdioghluim dána: Deacair aighneas éarca riogh, Dion cloine i n-éag a n-athar, Fíú a bheatha bás tighearna, Mairí as aighne i n-aghaidh breithimh and Maírí nach taislígh go teagh riogha.* Dá néall orchra ós iath Uisnigh is the only other known extant composition by him and the only one on a non-religious theme.

The poem has two subjects: Eóghan (mac Aodha) Ó Cobhthaigh and Aibhilín (inghean Chathaoir), who we may presume was Eóghan’s wife. As stated by Breatnach, Ógohan (mac Aodha) Ó Cobhthaigh was possibly the brother of *Tadhch mac Aodha Uí Chobhthaigh, priomh oide Ereann, 7 Alban lé dán who died in 1554.* As Eóghan is identified in quatrain 6 below as head of his kindred (‘ar ndul do chionn ar gcinidh ‘the head of our kindred [now] dead’) it is possible that he succeeded Tadhg upon the latter’s death. This supposition is supported by the depiction of Eóghan’s death as having left the Ó Cobhthaigh poetic school without its leader: *Tig buain na héigse uile / don éag-soin fuair an file ‘the death of the poet causes the downfall of all poets’ (q. 3); Tré bhás nEóghain ... / mórsogl na gcrioch ní chrùnigh; / a sáil do-cháidh do chobhair / d’fhoghlain truídh ar dháimh nduiliog ‘Due to the death of Eóghan ... the great poetic gatherings of the territories do not convene; importunate poets have lost hope of assistance as a result ...’ (q. 8); guin chroidhe ann as athghain / sgarthin sgoile chlann gCobhthaigh ‘successive heart-wounds are caused by the parting of the poets of Cobhthach’s race’ (q. 10). The poem indicates that Éóghan’s place of burial was Durmhaigh (see qq. 7 and 9). This probably refers to Durrow Abbey, Co. Offaly, which is close to the border with Westmeath. We are not told where he lived but the historical connection of the Úi Chobhthaigh with the area around *Uisneach* is made clear in the poem’s opening line.

Three poems survive by Eóghan (mac Aodha) Ó Cobhthaigh: *Mairidh teine a dteallach Ghaoidehall,* composed for Rudhraighe Caoch Ó Mórdha (d. 1547); *Fada cuimhniadh coir Leinbh,* which is a religious poem; and *Failghigh chosnas clu Laighean,* composed for Brian (mac Cathaoir) Ó Conchobhair Fhailghe (d. 1560). As Cathaoir was the name of

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84 O’Rahilly (1922) 108-9.
85 *AtD* 63-7.
86 Eóghan is identified by first name in qq. 2, 4, 8, 11, 14, 20 and 30, and as ‘Aodh’s heir’ in q. 23; his family name is mentioned in qq. 10 and 31. Aibhilín is identified by first name in q. 30, and as ‘Cathaoir’s daughter’ in qq. 9 and 32.
88 *AFM* s.a.; quoted by Breatnach, op. cit., 63.
89 This may be the source for Breatnach’s statement (ibid.) that Eóghan was ‘resident in the area of Durrow (Queen’s County, now in Laois)’.
90 For a description of the ecclesiastical remains here, see O’Brien and Sweetman (1997) §652.
91 = Poem 1.
Poem 7: Dá néall orchra ós iath Uisnigh

both this Brian’s father and of Aibhilín’s father it is possible that they were siblings, but I cannot verify this. Eóghan’s authorship of the last-mentioned poem shows that he was still alive c. 1560. Given this date and the date of the Nugent Manuscript (c. 1577), Dá néall orchra ós iath Uisnigh can be dated to within the period 1560–77.

The poem is unusual in having as its patron a poet who was related to the author. Though the first line establishes the poem as an elegy on two people, Eóghan and Aibhilín, pride of place is given to Eóghan throughout. Nothing is revealed with regard to the circumstances of the death of the subjects or to the order in which they died, if indeed they died separately. However, the fact that Eóghan’s grave evidently bears an inscription (see q. 4) suggests that time has elapsed since his death, as presumably this would have taken some time to erect. A further allusion to elapsed time is contained in the words ó a-nuraidh (q. 25). One is therefore led to surmise that the poem may have been composed for the first anniversary of Eóghan’s death.

To a large degree the poem consists of a working of many of the standard motifs and themes of bardic elegy. These may be briefly pointed to as follows: general grief and weeping of the author, of other poets and of the people (qq. 1–3 et passim), eyes hurting from weeping (qq. 2, 4, 9, 11), inscription on the grave (q. 4), an end to feasting (q. 5), desire of author to die also (q. 6), poetic schools scattering/not convening (q. 8, 10, 29), blood-red tears (q. 12, 19, 27, 32), clapping of hands (q. 11), (secret) grief of other mens’ wives (q. 13, 14, 18; cf. men’s mourning over Aibhlinn, q. 32), poet lying on grave (q. 15), poets gathering on grave (16, 35), poet’s vigil at grave (q. 17), wringing of fingers (q. 18), keening women (qq. 19(?), 28), nature mourning (q. 23–6). As befits an elegy on a poet, there is considerable emphasis throughout on the grief and loss of the poetic class.

Manuscripts

The poem is acephalous in N, where it begins with quatrain 4 at the top of folio 42r and ends on 42v. (There is a chasm between what are now folios 41 and 42.) In D, the poem appears on pages 89–91. It contains 35 quatrains and is evidently complete, as its last quatrain delivers

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93 Cf. Diúth ollamh essbhuidh Laighean, an elegy on the poet Tomás mac Ruaidhrí Mheic Eochadha, which was evidently composed by a kinsman of the deceased (edited by Pádraig Ó Macháin, 1993), and Anocht sgoailid na sgola (= IBP 38), which is an elegy by Tadhg Ó hUiginn on his older brother and teacher, Fearghal Ruadh.

94 Contrast Bean dá chumbadh críoch Ealla (= DiD 73), an elegy on a patron and his poet, or Goin deisi chaithlios cuchiche (= LBran 68), an elegy on a brother and sister, where each subject is given more or less equal attention.

95 For the composition of poems on anniversaries, see Simms (1989) 401.

96 For bardic elegy in general see Breatnach (1997), McManus (2006, at 61–8), Simms (1989) and Simms database.
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metrical closure (dúnadh).\textsuperscript{97}

As well as supplying the first three quatrains and filling gaps where N is now indistinct or illegible, D corrects, or improves upon, a number of readings in N. For example: *mairidh* N, *maraidh* D (labhair) (q. 6). Further examples: 4c, 5b, 7d, 8a, 11d, 12d, 15c, 16d, 18c, 20a, 20d, 23a, 34d. Readings in D which are inferior to N include: 7a, 7c, 7c, 8b, 8c, 12b, 15c, 17b, 19b, 20c, 25c, 27c, 28b, 34a. It is to be observed that D's improvements upon N may all be classified as marginal; for example, cases where D's scribe chooses by-forms of words that better fit the metre. However, in the case of some of D's readings, their inferiority is more marked. For example: 8b, 17b, 20c, 28b (see notes on each). These can be explained as scribal errors and disimprovements and are not inconsistent with D's reliance on, or descent from, N.

Metre

The metre of the poem is *rannaigheacht bheag* (dán díreach), the rules of which are: all lines have seven syllables and end in a disyllabic word; alliteration occurs in every line; there is perfect rhyme between the endwords of lines b and d; the finals of lines a and c consonate with the finals of b and d and with each other; there is perfect rhyme between the endword in line c and the first or second stressed word in d (i.e. aicill-rhyme); the remaining stressed words in d must have perfect rhyming partners in non-final position in line c. Stressed non-final words in line b must each correspond with a stressed non-final in line a; the type of correspondence found here varies (perfect/imperfect rhyme, perfect/imperfect consonance, and amas).

Where necessary, I have emended to permitted by-forms of words in order to meet the above metrical requirements; for example, in quatrain 8, I emend *chruinnigh* to *chruinigh* for perfect rhyme with *nduiligh* (see note on 8b). No such emendations suggest themselves, however, in the case of 7abd and 25ac (see notes); therefore, I have let those readings stand. Emendations have not been made either in the case of internal correspondence in the first couplet as the metre allows different types of correspondence here. For example, *sreabh* (23b) is not emended to *sriobh*, even though doing so would give imperfect rhyme, rather than imperfect consonance, with *bhfios*.

A form of the metrical ornament *breacadh* occurs in quatrains 1 and 18 (see note on 1acd). The occurrence of this may be intended to compensate for the fact that in each of those quatrains the word *orchra* occurs in rhyme with itself, something which may constitute the metrical fault *caoiche* (although in quatrain 1 *caoiche* is arguably avoided by the fact that

\textsuperscript{97}For discussion of copies N and D see General Introduction, where it is stated that D is probably a direct copy of N.
each occurrence of *orchra* is in a different grammatical case). A further case of *caoiche* seems to be avoided in 30ab (the rhyming words being in different cases; see note).
P o e m  8:  Táinig léan do leith Mhogha

This poem is an elegy for Diarmaid Fionn (mac Domhnaill mheic Cormaic mheic Mhoireadhaigh) Mág Carthaigh.\(^98\) Diarmaid's mother's name was Éadaoin, his first wife's name was Dubh Easa and his second wife's name was Dubh Chabhlaigh.\(^99\) Evidently, his grandfather, Cormac, held the title Mág Carthaigh.\(^100\)

The only Cormac mac Moireadhaigh I have come across in the Mág Carthaigh genealogies who could be styled 'Mág Carthaigh' is Cormac (king of Desmond 1123–38) son of Muiredach (k. of Éoganacht Caisil, d. 1092). This Cormac was succeeded by his brother Donnchad (1138–43, deposed, and d. 1144), who was succeeded by Cormac's son, Diarmait (1143–75, deposed, and 1176–85), who in turn was succeeded by his three sons, Cormac Liatháin (1175–6), Domnall Mór (Domnall na Corra; 1185–1206) and Fíngen (1206–7, deposed; d. 1209). Two other sons of Cormac were Máel Sechlainn (d. 1124) and Fíngen (d. 1152).\(^101\)

Might Domhnall, father of the subject of this poem, have been another, otherwise unrecorded, son of this Cormac? If so, then Diarmaid Fionn would have had a floruit around the late twelfth or early thirteenth century. Though most of the poem is taken up with the rhetoric and imagery of bardic elegy, a small number of quatrains appear to hint at historical reality. Most notably, quatrain 12 contains a reference to Diarmaid having taken hostages from the Dal gCais. This may allude to the rivalry and conflict that existed between Clann Charthaigh and the Uí Bhriain (Dal gCais) over supremacy in Munster during the 12th century.\(^102\)

The poem is ascribed in the Nugent Manuscript to Aonghus Ó Dálaigh. Identifying this poet is a difficulty. The date of the Nugent Manuscript (c. 1577) and the fact that there is a large number of citations from the poem in IGT and BST (see below) probably allows us to rule out Aonghus Ó Dálaigh Fionn (= ‘Aonghus na Diadhachta’; d. c. 1601–9), Aonghus (mac Doighre) Ó Dálaigh (fl. 1598) and Aonghus Ruadh Ó Dálaigh (= Aonghus na nAor; d. 1617).\(^103\) The poem concludes with a supplementary quatrain (iargcomharc) to the Archangel Michael. Although this is a trademark of many of the poems published by Lambert McKenna in AÓD, most of which are probably to be dated to the later classical period,\(^104\) it is also a

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\(^98\)Cf. Diarmaid Fionn (9a), a ndeaghaidh Dhíarmaid Finn (40a), mac Domhnaill do dhul ar ceal (18a), Diarmaid Mág Carthaigh (31), mac ... Domhnaill mheic Mheig Carthaigh (41ab), mac meic Chormaic chríche Fáil (28a), d'ua Chormaic mheic Mhoireadhaigh (29b).

\(^99\)Cf. mac Éadaoin (13b and 41a), bainchele an ríogh ... Dubh Easa (19bd), don dara mnaoi ... Dubh Chabhlaigh (20c). The name Dubh Chabhlaigh occurs much more numerous in the annals in the 11th and 12th centuries than towards the end of the classical period, which suggests an early date for the poem.

\(^100\)Cf. mac ... Domhnaill mheic Mheig Carthaigh (41b).

\(^101\)Cf. genealogical table in NHL, vol. 9, p. 154. As these names occur before the end of the twelfth century I have retained the pre-Classical spellings as they appear in NHL.

\(^102\)See, for example, Jefferies (1984).

\(^103\)For these poets, see Simms (2004b) 488.

\(^104\)McKenna identifies the author of these poems as Aonghus Fionn Ó Dálaigh, whose birth he dates ‘as far back as 1548’ and whose death he dates ‘well into the seventeenth century’. However, Cuthbert McGrath (1945–7, 185) states that McKenna’s opinion ‘is based mainly on two assumptions: (1) that the MSS headings
Poem 8: Táinig léan do leith Mhogha

feature of poems by other Ó Dálaigh poets such as Donnchadh Mór (d. 1244) and Gofraidh Fionn (d. 1387). It should therefore not be taken as indicating a late date. If the suggestion made above regarding the poem’s subject is valid, then we may attribute the poem to an Aonghus Ó Dálaigh who lived in Desmond around the turn of the thirteenth century. Might he have been the father of Donnchadh Mór and Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh, whose father’s name occurs as Aonghus in a genealogy recorded by An Dubhaltach Mac Fir Bhisigh? That this is a possibility is supported by the fact that Ó Dálaigh poets are known to have been working in Desmond in the twelfth century: the deaths are recorded in the annals of two of their number, Raghnall Ua Dálaigh (d. 1161) and Gilla na Trínóite Ua Dálaigh (d. 1165), who are described as chief poets in the kingdom of Desmond.

Manuscript copies and citations in IGT and BST

The full poem appears on folios 42v–44r of N and on pages 91–4 of D. Both copies have 42 quatrains and contain metrical closure (dúnadh), thereby indicating that the poem is complete.

As well as filling gaps where N is now indistinct or illegible, D corrects, or improves upon, a number of readings in N. For example: ithfèirn N, ifEirn D (: frithfheidhm) (q. 37). Further examples: 1c, 2a, 5b, 5c, 6c, 7c, 8c, 11c, 12a, 12b, 12c, 12d, 15a, 15b, 15d, 18b, 18d, 20b, 22c, 23a, 24b, 26b, 27a, 27c, 28b, 32d, 33d, 34a, 35d, 37c, 37d, 40d, 42c. Readings in D which are inferior to N include: 2a, 3a, 4d, 8c, 12b, 12c, 13b, 16a, 17c, 20c, 21b, 24c, 28a, 29b, 31a, 31b, 32b, 32c, 33a, 35d, 37b, 37c, 38b, 39b, 39c, 42b. It is to be observed that D’s improvements upon N may all be classified as marginal. For example, very many of them simply involve the restoration of historical gh for dh, e.g. saodhal N, saoghal D (6c). A small number of readings in D are acceptable by-forms of those in N: mhúirn (leg. mhùirn) D, mhoirn N (28b; both mhoirn and mhùirn are acceptable as the word is not involved in rhyme). In summation, the extent of the variance is not inconsistent with D’s reliance on, or descent from, N.

The poem contains five couplets and two full quatrains which are cited in IGT: 6cd = IGT ii 2011; 10cd = IGT ii 222; 13cd = IGT ii 1569; 15abcd = IGT iii 200; 17ab = IGT iii

are authentic and (2) that they all—Fr. McKenna summarizes them as “Aonghus Fionn” and “Ó Dálaigh Fionn”—refer to the same poet.”

Donnchadh Mór (d. 1244) and Muireadhach Albanach Leasa an Doill (fl. 1213) are recorded as brothers and sons of Aonghus in the following: Cearbhall Fionn, Donnchadh Mór, Muireadhach Leasa an Doill, Giolla Íosa, Giolla-na Naomh, agus Cormac na Casbhairdne sé mec Aonghusa mec Taidhg Dhoichlígh ‘Cearbhall Fionn, Donnchadh Mór, Muireadhach of Lios an Doill, Giolla Íosa, Giolla na Naomh, and Cormac na Casbhairdne six sons of Aonghus s[on of] Taidgh Doichlench (LGen. 133.4).

AFM, s.a.

AI, ATg s.a.

For discussion of copies N and D see General Introduction, where it is stated that D is probably a direct copy of N.
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171; 23cd = IGT iii 510; 42abcd = IGT ii 995. It also contains one couplet which is cited in BST: 28cd = BST 226.13/45b26. These are quoted and discussed in the notes and readings from them have informed my edition. The high number of citations suggests that the poem was held in high esteem and may indicate an early date, given the fact that other oft-quoted poets in the tracts include Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh and Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh.

Metre and style

The metre is deibheedhe (dán díreach) with the additional feature of ordinary stressed rhyme occurring between the finals in lines ac and bd. This type of metre is listed in MV, ii. 66, as deibide n-imrinn fota. The fact that it occurs in a Middle Irish metrical tract and is extremely rare, if not unique, in Classical Irish may be an indication that the poem was composed at the beginning of the classical period.

Where necessary, I have emended to permitted variant forms of words in order to meet metrical requirements; for example, in 34a, I emend dhuid to dhood for rhyme with troid.

Of note also are four examples of person-switching which occur in quatrains 10, 20, 29 and 39 (see notes). This was considered a metrical fault (see IGT i, 2 and v, 1, 23, 73). Patrick Sims-Williams argues, however, that there seems to have been a difference of opinion among poets on this matter, some considering it a fault, others a figure.

Placing the poem

On the combined evidence of the genealogy of the patron, the allusion to his dealings with the Dál gCais, the presence of Ó Dálaigh poets in the kingdom of Desmond at the dawn of the classical period, the very high number of citations in the grammatical tracts (10 couplets in all), and the poem’s peculiar metre, it seems reasonable to argue that the suggestions made above regarding the identities of its patron and author are supportable.

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109 These have all been noted in McManus (2004, 251) except for 42abcd, which should be added to the list of identified citations.
110 Cf. SNG, p. 338.
111 See Murphy, 1961, 69.
112 Sims-Williams (2005) 317, 319. For further discussion of this feature, particularly in later poetry, see Ó Baoill (1990).
Poem 9: *Cuaine rioghna rug Eadan*

This poem is an elegy to Muircheartach, Aodh and Gothaith, sons of Muireadhach Mac Giolla Mhuire Uí Mhorna and his wife Eadan. A supplementary quatrain (28) is devoted to the subjects’ three wives. Móir, Bairrfhionn and Ailbhe, and a further supplementary quatrain (29) is devoted to ‘Aodh Ó Neill, son of Aodh and of Ruaidhri’s daughter’, possibly Aodh Móith Ó Néill (d. 1230), who may have been Eadan’s father (see below). Members of the family are variously styled chiefs of Úi Dhearca Cein (north Co. Down) and/or Leath Cathail (Lecale, east Co. Down) (see footnote on family name above).

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113 I follow Simms (2000) in taking the surname as *Mac Giolla Mhuire Uí Mhorna*. However, it seems possible, on the evidence of *Cuaine rioghna rug Eadan*, that the form *Mac Giolla Mhuire Ua Morna* may be preferable (cf. especially q. 14a, where the three sons are described as *meic Muireadhlaigh Ua Morna*, and q. 7b, where Muireadhacht, the eldest of the brothers, is referred to as *mac Ua Morna*). Evidently, the family surname was originally *Ua Morna*, with *Mac Giolla Mhuire* being at some point prefixed to it and eventually replacing it. Cf. the following references: (i) *Orus Ard-mbó do liosadh o Ruadhhr*, mac Mac Canais *g mac [leg. Mac?] Gille-Muire Uí Morna* [leg. *Morna*] *g o Crotuaghddh* ‘And Ard-bo was burned by Ruaidhrí, son of Mac Canai and by the son of [leg. Mac?] Gilla-Muire Ua Monrai [leg. *Morna*] and by the Crotraighe’ († *A.D.* s.a. 1166). (ii) ‘mcGillemerorie, a good chieftaine of Ulster, was killed by some of the people of Hugh Delacie, earl of Ulster, as he was going to the earles house, whereupon Donnsewe the king of Ulster’s son, Melaghlen prince of Killin own, and all the chieftain of Ulster took armes and banished the said earle of Ulster out of the whole province. The earle of Ulster assembled together all the English of Ireland, and went the second tyme to Ulster, where he possessed himself of all the lands again in the three months of harvest, and banished Maglaghlen from thence into Connaught. o’Neal the Redd tooke the superiority and principalitie of Tyreowne, afterwards’ (*A.Clo*n* s.a. 1238; from the date, perhaps this annal entry refers to one of the three subjects of our poem, or to their father, Muireadhacht). (iii) Diarmait, mac [leg. *Mac* Gille-Muire Uí Morna, *ri Uladh, quieuit in [Christo*] ‘Diarmait, son of [leg. *Mac* Gilla-Muire Ua Morna, king of Ulidia, rested in Christ’ († *A.D.* s.a. 1273). *Diarmait mac [leg. *Mac* Gilla Mure h. Morna ri Ulad mortuus est* ‘Diarmait son of [leg. *Mac* Gilla Muire O Morna, King of Ulidia, died’ († *A.Conn* s.a. 1276). *Diarmait mac [leg. *Mac* Gilla Muire h. Morna, mortuus est* ‘Diarmait, son of [leg. *Mac* Gillamuirire O’Morna, King of Uladh, mortuus est’ († *A.L.C* s.a. 1276). *Diarmait Mac Gillia Muire tighearna leithe Cathail do éc* ‘Dermot Mac Gillamurry, Lord of Lecale, died’ († *A.F.M* s.a. 1276). He is also described in state papers as ‘Df [] Mac Gilmori, chief of Anderden’ († *C.d. Ire.*, 1252-84, no. 953). Referring to the same person, MacLysaght (*More Irish Families*, 1996, 110) states that the name Gillmore/Mac Gillamuir gille-Muire derives from Mac Giolla Mhuire O Morna who died in 1276, but this is unlikely, considering the evidence of the earlier instances of the name (given above). (iv) *Mac Gillamuirre (i. cuiladadh na morna) taosiseach na nacra cein agus leithe cathail do mharbhadh d a brathair budhein* ‘Mac Gill-Muirre (i.e. Cu-Uladh O’Morna), Chief of Hy-Nerca-Chein and Lecale, was slain by his own kinsmen’ († *A.F.M* s.a. 1391). *Mac Gilla Mure ri h. nDerca Cein occisus est a suis* ‘Mac Gilla Muire, king of the Ui Derca Cein, was killed by his own people’ (*A.Conn* s.a. 1391.5), *Mac gilla Muire, ri Ua nDerca Cein, occisus est a suis* ‘Mac Gill-Muirre, king of Uí-nErca-Chein, occisus est a suis’ († *A.L.C* s.a. 1391). *Mac Gille-Muirre, idon, ri hUa-n[D]Eerva- Cein, do marbhadh d a brathair fem* ‘Mac Gille-Muirre, namely, king of Uí-n[D]erca-Cein, was killed by his own kinsman’ († *A.U* s.a. 1391). The latter has a footnote on ‘Mac Gille-Muirre’ which states that the omission in *AU* and *A.L.C* of the explanatory appellation ‘Cu Uladh O Morna’—found in *A.M.*—shows that the textual name had at this time become a patronymic for the junior branch, occupying Ui-Derca-Cein (bar. of Castleicago, co. Down); the senior, who held Leth-Cathail (Lecale, same co.), retaining the original designation, O’Morna’. The footnote also states that ‘the son of Gilla-Muirre ... who was the eponymous head, died in [1276]’; this must be the source which was used by McLysaght (see (iii) above). (v) *The Ui Mhorna are mentioned in Top. poems, II. 370 and 401 (in the section entitled ‘Gaid na Creebhrauidhe’), but there is no mention of Mac Giolla Mhuire. (vi) The eponymous ancestor of the Ui Mhorna was one Morna mac Fhearchair mac Oisin who occurs in the genealogy of the Ui Dhearca Cein (see *Corp. Gen. Hib.*, 426, and *L.Gen.* 205.3). The three sons are mentioned by name together in qq. 6 and 27, and individually (in order of descending age) in qq. 7-9; note that Muircheartach is described as *na na riogh* in q. 7. Muireadhacht is named in lines 10b, 14a and 23b. Eadan is mentioned by name in lines 1a, 12b, 17b, 25c and 26b; she is described as ‘queen of Dundalk’ in 5a and as ‘a daughter of a high-king’ in 5d. For this name, see Byrne (1995).
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Date and author

Though the earliest copy of the poem contains no ascription, it is ascribed to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh (d. 1244) in most other manuscripts, including Nugent (c. 1577). The only other ascription is to Maol Muire Mac Craith. I believe this can be discounted for reasons outlined below (see discussion of manuscript ‘G’). Katharine Simms has pointed out that, as a secular poem, Cuaine rioghna rug Eadan stands apart from the many religious poems that were given a spurious late ascription to Donnchadh Mór, and that this fact lends weight to the ascription to him. Simms has further suggested that the ‘Aodh Ó Néill ... son of Aodh and of Ruaidhrí’s daughter’ (who is mentioned in quatrain 29) might be Aodh Méith, king of Tír Eógain (d. 1230), who was a contemporary of Donnchadh Mór. Although Aodh Méith’s mother’s name is not known, it is conceivable that his father, Aodh ‘an Macaomh Tóinleasg’ Ó Néill (d. 1177) was married to the daughter of the high-king Ruaidhrí Ó Conchobhair. If this is the case, then the ‘high-king’ who was Eadan’s father (q. 5d) would probably refer to Aodh Méith.\(^2\)

Style and metre

The poem makes abundant use of metaphorical imagery in order to illustrate its theme—the heroism and worthiness of its subjects. Its style is relatively unconvoluted and much of it reads as a catalogue of complimentary descriptions which has the effect of a heaping up of praise. The most noteworthy stylistic device used by the poet is repetition, particularly of the numbers ‘three’ and ‘six’, with reference to the patrons (see especially qq. 16 and 19). This rhetorical device occurs in a number of other bardic poems and has been described by Pádraig Breathnach in his discussion of the use of metaphors in bardic praise-poetry.\(^3\) The poem is further embellished by the inclusion of a brief apalogue (qq. 10–13), where the subjects are likened in all their glory to the three sons of Uisneach. The metre of the poem is deibhidhe (dán díreach), the rules of which are given above (Poem 2).

Manuscripts

The poem appears in the following 20 manuscripts, which are grouped and discussed below, beginning with the oldest.

\(^2\)Simms (2000) 381–4. She also discusses the less likely possibility, first put forward by Standish O’Grady,\(^4\) that the ‘Aodh son of Aodh’ of the supplementary quatrain is Aodh Óg (d. 1485) son of Aodh Buíde II Ó Néill (d. 1444).

\(^3\)Breathnach (1997) 83–6. Further poems that may be added to the examples from which Breathnach quotes in illustration of this device are Buimé trí mórthair mhic Dé, which interestingly is also attributed to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh, and Iomnhain an triur théid san luing.
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E: NLS MS 72.1.37 (Book of the Dean of Lismore), 75 (1512–42), 25qq.

A transcription of E is not available in normalized orthography. However, Quiggin’s (1937) transcription is of use when compared with other copies and I refer to its variants in the notes. This copy omits quatrains 21, 26, 28, and 29 and has no ascription.

N: NLI MS G 992 (Nugent MS), 44r (c. 1577), 25qq.
G: NLI MS G 132, 78 (Tadhg Ó Neachtain, 1726–49), 23qq.

Copy N omits quatrains 8, 27, 28, and 29. It ascribes the poem to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh. Copy G lacks quatrains 6, 8, 19, 27, 28, 29; it has no heading and contains numerous corruptions (e.g. Aodh for Eadan, 1a). I believe G derives indirectly from N for the following reasons: (i) Aside from its omission of two further quatrains, G follows the order of quatrains in N. (ii) G agrees with N against all other manuscripts in the case of a number of significant readings (e.g. madh g. 1b, ua 7b, formaoile 9b, gin gur 9d). (iii) Where G departs from N its readings are invariably inferior to it. (iv) Closely following G’s last quatrain is written Maolmuire mac gcrath ceccinit; this is followed by a horizontal line clearly separating it from the next poem (A bhean fuair faill ar an bhfeart by Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird) and the catalogue entry for G lists the poem and the ascription to ‘Maolmuire’ as a single item (NLI Cat. iv, p. 60). However, the fact that the ascription to ‘Maolmuire’ comes at the end of the poem suggests that it probably headed a following poem which got detached from it at some point in transmission. That this transmission goes back to the Nugent MS is suggested by the fact that the poem which follows Cuaine riogha rug Eadan in Nugent, Beart cluitehe ar Eirind éag riogh, is by Maol Muire Mac Craith.

A: UCD-Franciscan MS A 25, 188 (Brian Mag Niallghuis (?), early 17th century), 27qq.

This copy omits quatrains 28 and 29. Quatrains 7–8, 18–19 and 20–21 are reversed. The last four quatrains appear as follows (quatrain numbers are those of my edition): 24ab26cd, 25ab24cd, 27ab25cd, 26ab27cd. There is no ascription. I supply full variant readings for this copy.

F: RIA MS 2 (23 F 16 = O’Gara MS), 114 (1655–9), 28qq.
F1: British Library MS Eg. 111, 9b (Finghin Ó Scannail, 1818), 28qq.
T: RIA MS 156 (23 D 5), 298 (Richard Tipper, c. 1715), 28qq.

This group omits quatrain 19. Quatrains 27–28 are reversed. As F1 is a copy of F (BLib. Cat. i, 339) it has been ignored. That T does not derive from F is suggested by the fact that some of its readings corroborate N’s against F (e.g. 1d badhbha NT, gabha F). In addition, some of T’s readings are corrupt (e.g. 9d chhùmnsFr T, aoinsfhear NF (: Gaoidheal)). Thirdly, F ascribes the poem to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh, whereas T ascribes it to ‘Ollamh éigin’. I include full variants from F and T, and base the text on F in the case of quatrains 8 and
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27-9, which are omitted in N (for reasons, see below).

R: RIA MS 5 (23 D 4), 72 (Munster scribe, 17th century), 28qq.
R1: RIA MS 888 (12 F 8), 23 (Eugene O'Curry (?), 19th century), 28qq.
R2: UCC-Torna MS 57 (T.lvii), 18 (Unknown scribe, 19th century), 11qq.

This group omits quatrain 21. Quatrains 4–5 and 18–19 are reversed. The last five quatrains appear as follows (quatrain numbers are those of my edition): 25ab26cd, 27ab25cd, 26ab27cd, 28, 29. R1 is a copy of R, and R2 is a copy of either R or R1 (RIA Cat., pp. 31 and 2601, and Cat. Torna, vol. 1, p. 148). The ascription in R is to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh. I include full variants for R.

U: RIA MS 1006 (23 L 19), 1 (Unknown scribe, 17th century (?)), 27qq.
H: RIA MS 703 (23 H 8), 64a (Seosamh Ó Longain, 1864), 27qq.

These copies omit quatrains 4 and 21. Quatrains 18–19 are reversed. The last five quatrains appear as follows (quatrain numbers are those of my edition): 25ab26cd, 27ab25cd, 26ab27cd, 28, 29. Though not mentioned in the catalogue, U’s hand resembles that of the ‘Dillon Duanaire’ section of RIA MS 744 (A v 2). In addition, U’s scribe makes use (in 20d) of the less common abbreviation for cht (i.e. s followed by the us-symbol) of which there is limited use in the Dillon Duanaire also. Unfortunately, however, this does not help in giving a more exact date for U, as Dillon has also only been loosely dated to the ‘17th cent. (?)’ (RIA Cat., p. 2264). Copy H differs from U in only a small number of readings. U’s ascription to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh is in a later hand. There is no ascription in H. I include full variants from copy U, the earlier of the two.

M: RIA MS 16 (23 M 26), 244 (Eoghan Ó Caóimh, 1684), 28qq.
M1: UCC-Torna MS 45 (T.xlv), 42 (Piaras Móinséal / Pierce Mansfield, 1814), 28qq.
M2: RIA MS 125 (23 E 14), 159b (John O’Daly, 1846), 27qq.
M3: RIA MS 639 (24 M 43), 15 (John O’Daly, 1848–51), 28qq.
S: RIA MS 303 (23 L 37), 198 (John Stack, 1706–09), 28qq.
L: RIA MS 253 (F vi 2), 310 (Micheál Óg Ó Longáin, 1813), 28qq.
O: RIA MS 257 (23 G 24), 305 (Micheál Ó Ó Longáin, 1795–1833), 28qq.
P: Maynooth MS M 3, 244 (Peadar Ó Longáin, 1818), 28qq.

M1, M2 and M3 are copies of M (Cat. Torna, vol. 1, p. 127, RIA Cat., pp. 364 and 1992). Copies S, L, O and P are also very close to M. This group omits quatrain 21. Quatrains 4–5 are reversed and quatrains 18–19 appear as 19ab18cd, 18ab19cd. The last six quatrains appear as follows (again, quatrain numbers are those of my edition): 25ab26cd, 24, 26ab27cd, 27ab25cd, 28, 29. The ascription in this group is to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh. I include full variants from M, the earliest copy in the group.
Poem 9: Cuaine rioghna rug Eadan

Edition

The edition is based on N, which is the second earliest copy. The relationship between the remaining copies/groups is unclear. However, as outlined above, variants are supplied from each of the groupings and, in the case of E, which is only available in the orthography of the Book of the Dean of Lismore, significant readings are referred to in the notes. For those quatrains which are omitted from N (i.e. 8, 27–9), F has been used, on the basis that it has better readings than the remaining manuscripts (see notes on 27b, 27cd and 29d) and because, unlike RUM, it does not confuse the couplets of quatrains 25–7. The edition follows N’s ordering of quatrains. For the position of quatrains which are omitted from N, I follow EFTRUM (for q. 8), EA (for q. 27), RUM (for q. 28) and FTRUM (for q. 29). I believe these to be their correct positions for the following reasons: (i) Quatrain 7 describes the ‘eldest’ of the brothers and quatrain 9 describes the ‘youngest’, therefore it is sequentially logical that the quatrain describing the ‘middle son’ (q. 8) should appear between these. (ii) As quatrain 27 mentions all three brothers and contains metrical closure (dúnadh) it is a fitting end to the poem. (iii) Quatrains 28–9 each also contain dúnadh and are clearly supplementary to the main body of the poem as their respective subjects are the brothers’ three wives and another patron, Aodh Ó Néill.
Chapter 4

Text, variant readings and translation
Poem 1: Mairidh teine a dteallach Ghaoidheal

Eoghan mac Aodha Ui Chobhthaigh

1 Mairidh tene adteallach ghaoidhiol
a goil fá chách cuirfidh sí
ceiltear le lasar gach teineadh;
lasadh as é as deireadh dí.

2 Fuidheal teinEdh thealluigh ghaoidheal
gébaidh fós gé fadógh mall
tús na teinEdh arís adhnaidh
grís do dheirEdh adhnaidh ann.

3 Caor bhruithne re bél a teilghthe
a dteallach Neill na naoi nGlas
fa ghort bhfiloinn le hanáil nuaabhair
Goill ag gabháil uamhain as.

Readings from G and D:
Heading: gothfraidh fionn ó dáladh: ní héidh acht eoghan mac aodh ui cobhtuigh G. This is followed in G by quatrains 36–40 (see those quatrains below for variant readings and scribal endnote).
1a gáoidheal D; 1d dhí D; 2a Fuigheall D; gáoidheal D; 2b gídh D.

1. Fire still burns in the hearth of the Goidhil; it will emit its heat to all; it outshines the flame of all other fires; to be ablaze is its ultimate state.

2. Though it be a slow kindling, the remnant fire in the Goidhil’s hearth will yet take hold; the embers from the last fire in it are rekindling a new fire.

3. In the hearth of Niall of the Nine Fetters there is a pride-exuding fireball about to burst forth upon the land of Ireland; foreigners are growing fearful as a result.
4 Annamh enteine as *ferr* goradh
   guais a lasda *ar* laochraidh ghall
   gidhbe fós da goil do ghabhláigh
   ní fhuil acht tós adhnaídh ann

5 *CrithEr* bÉo do bí san coigill
   do cru mordha mairidh sud
   teallach gaoidhiol as *uair* oirchÉs
   *sgaoileadh* uaidh don fhoilchÉs úd

6 Da hiarraid *ger* iomdha céile
   ar chloinn róidh do rinne sí
   le rudhraighe gur treamh *tEmhair*
   bÉn thrubhuidhe *dfhearaibh i*

Readings from *D*:
4a éinteine *sfFerr*; 4c gibe; 5a bheó; bhí; cho.; 5b chr.; 6b róigh; 6c rugraidhe; threabh.

4. Few fires emit greater heat; the foreign troop fear its being set ablaze; however much of
   its heat has spread out thus far. it is but the first kindling.

5. Of the race of Mórdha there survives a living spark that has lain hidden in the embers; it
   is a fitting time for it to be unleashed from the Gaoídhil’s hearth.

6. Though many a suitor sought Tara, she chose the seed of Róch; until she devoted herself
   to Rudhraighe she was a woman beyond the reach of men.
Poem 1: Mairidh teine a dheallach Ghaoidheal

7 GERR go bhfuighe fear a fhadóigh
dfhios an teallaigh tiocfa se
cáor shlóigh o chErDercaibh na gcuradh
dErgfaidh re bhfhoir nuladh hé

8 Tene sud nár sáoilEdh dfhadog
da hadhmadh fEsda frioth trath
gE fada an cEo do fheith uirthe
a bEith bEó do cluinfe cach

9 Fa sheilg dtEmra ni trath moille
mithid do sheabhcuibh shil roidh
lór sealad ag seilig ar Emain
lEnad don cerd dhlEgair doib

Readings from D:
7a bhfuighbhé; 8c ge omitted; 8d chl.; 9b roigh; 9d cheird; dhl.; dhóibh.

7. The hearth will shortly get the man to fire it up; he will come in search of it; a troop leader forged in the fields of battle, he will ignite it before the Ulster host.

8. That is a fire that was not expected to take hold; an opportunity has now been got to stoke it up; though a layer of ash has long lingered on it, everyone will hear that it lives.

9. There can be no delay with regard to seeking Tara; the time is ripe for the heroes of Róch’s race; a while spent seeking Eamhain was sufficient; let them [now] follow their rightful calling.
10 Suil ré rudhraighe ag ráth bhóinne; brosdadh air na hiaradh sé; móide as béim dferaibh a hiarraidh; téirmhair féin gá liamhain lé.

11 Ar fhógra shliúighidh shil Mhórdha mac Conaill na cuireadh uain, uain dergtha os ar ghniomh do gebhter; cErdcha na riogh falamh fuair.

12 Rug rudhraighe o rioghraidh Eamhna uain na ceardcha chosnas sé; dá teinidh mar bhudh tós lasaidh beiridh fós a lasair lé.

Readings from D:
10a rúghr.; 11a shliúighEdh; 11c do gabhur; 12a rúgraidhe; 12c theimidh.

10. Rudhraighe is expected at the fort of the Boyne; let him hasten, let him not ask! Tara is insulted by being [merely] asked; all the greater is the blemish on men who ask.

11. Since the opportunity to ignite [the forge] is achieved through one’s deeds, let not Conall’s son delay the hosting-summons of Mórdha’s race; he has found the forge of kings vacant.

12. Rudhraighe has taken from the kings of Eamhain a turn at the forge he defends [i.e. Tara’s forge]; it still lights up as if it were [its] first kindling.
Poem 1: Mairidh teine a dteallach Ghaoidheal

13 Teacht do théaghadh thealluigh gaoidhiol
do ghabh (air) cá here as mó
nir léig uaidh ceidsheal na cearclach
EigEn úain a dErgta do

14 DÉis a gcomh aonta créad fhuirghEs
oidhri connull as clann róidh
caor shluaim ag angeill nach gabhthár
gan buain fa fhéin ndanar doibh

15 Sgel oirdhearc nac uirsgel diamair
o dhraothibh fødla fríoth linn
tarla se san rolla rEmpa
as é orra a reactha rinn

Readings from D:
13b air (indistinct in N); heire; 14a fu.; 14b Róigh; 14d bhúain.

13. He has taken it upon himself to come to warm the Gaoiðhil's hearth—what greater burden! He has allowed no one else first turn at the forge; opportunity to ignite it must go to him.

14. Following the alliance of Conall's heir and the descendants of Róich—a cohesive troop whose hostages are not taken—what holds them back from attacking the English?

15. A well-known tale not at all obscure comes to us from the learned men of Ireland; it was before them in [their] book; this guaranteed that we would hear it.
16. The vassal tribes of Ireland set about treachery against the kings of the fort of Tara; the royal blood, in short, being killed by an enemy was a momentous act.

17. The slaying of Fiacha Fionnfholaith, king of the Gaoidhil, is a well-known act; no fruit grew in Ireland for a time after that treacherous deed.

18. After the treachery they make Féilim son of Conrach king over Ireland: I will find [proof of] it in the [genealogical] line if it be traced; it is a true story that we are told.
Poem 1: Mairidh teine a dteallach Ghaoidheal

19 Fágbhais a mbroinn bEirt nar fholaír d'òighre ar airdréin inse Fáil; ar n-oídhdh shaorshlat shiól Luighdheach aonmhac rioghdh do bluíghleach air.

20 Rí Alban do bainm dá hathair; Eithne ag Eolchúibh a hainm süd; ag inghin rioghdh tarla an toircheas; dion Banbhá san hfoilhache úd.

21 Ní'or m hair einneach dh'fuil na n-airdriogh —d'inis Luighdheach fa lór d'fhís— go breith an ríoghdh don fhreimh fhóir; go n-éir síol na righe a-ris.

Readings from D:
19b ar omitted; áirdri Gh; 19d rioghdh omitted; 20c rioghdh (the o is added); tárla; 21c rioghdh (for an ríoghdh); 21d ris (for aris).

19. [Fiacha] left in a womb that which was required for the makings of an heir to a high-king of Ireland; one royal son was all that survived after the slaughter of the noble scions of the seed of Lughaidh.

20. It was a king's daughter who became pregnant; her father's title was King of Scotland; the learned say her name was Eithne; Ireland's salvation was embodied in that hidden [embryo].

21. No one of the blood of the high-kings survived—what a portent for Ireland!—till the birth of the true-blooded king, till the seed of the kingship rises again!
22 A gcroíonn abhla d’éis a mbuana, fa bile cnuais an crann ud, don fhiodhbaidh ríogh do fhas aoncharann, diol a mbás a saorchlann súd.

23 Acht éanmhac lér éalaigh mhaithair mac Conraigh ar gcor an aír, clár Breagh ar noighidh a fhoirne, doiligh gan fhEr gcoimidhe an chlár.

24 Do sheachna a meic ar mac Conraigh crioich Alban do ionnsaigh sí; gur ghluais lé a heighir a hÉirinn geibidh do ghuais Fhéilim i.

Readings from D:
22c dfhás; 23a élódh; 23b connraich; gcur; 23d doiligh; 24c heigher; 24d éilim.

22. A single tree sprang forth from the royal forest after the destruction of their apple-trees; [it was] a mighty fruit-laden tree [and] compensation for the death of their noble families.

23. Conrach’s son having slain them [all] apart from one son whose mother escaped with him, it is a bitter thing that Breagha’s plain had no man to protect it following the slaying of its host.

24. Seized of such fear of Féilim she departed from Ireland with her son; to protect him from Conrach’s son she made for the land of Scotland.
25. Never laying eyes on the land of Ireland, he was twenty years abroad, during which [time] his great deeds were unsurpassed [even] in the face of all [of Scotland’s] valour.

26. Summoned to Fiachaidh’s heir, the unyielding men of Scotland set forth on a journey at a propitious hour with a new vision for proclaiming the king [of Ireland].

27. Wishing not to remain abroad, lofty-minded Tuathal Teachtmhar enquired, ‘which is the right way out of Scotland?’ He then hoisted a sail on a ship-mast.
28. That Tuathal, high-king of the Gaoidhil, mobilized his full muster; to avenge the treachery of the land of Feilim he pointed his ships towards Ireland.

29. On crossing the sea with a ruler’s truth he put his battle-host ashore; he declared war on Conrach’s son over the land of Ireland.

30. In that battle that he fought over the kingship after coming over [the sea], Tuathal took Ireland back from the hand of the enemy and expelled Félim.
31 Ar mac gCónaill ní cóir toirmEsg
tuathal tÉchtmhar lér thÉigh sí
nír chórâ aláim thuathail tEmhair
mas doigh nuachair dfherruibh í

32 BÉrta coimheda chlair luighdeac
na lÉith o chách cuirter sud
nìr chlEcht einfer acht le hoirbeart
dénamh na mbert noirdhearc úd

33 Cóige ríogh a ríghi Éireann
ar fhichid ri rainic sinn
dfhine róidh as fuighle fire
do sóidh cuimhne an líne linn

Readings from D:
31d a blotted letter (?) appears before nuachair; 32d déinEmh; 33b fhithchid; 33c róigh; 33d do shoigh.

31. If Tara is marriageable for men, [then] Conall’s son [i.e. Rudhraighe] should not be kept [from her]; she was not more fitted to the hands of Tuathal Teachtmhar who once warmed her.

32. The actions [required] to protect Ireland are attributed to him [i.e. Rudhraighe] by all; no one ever executed such distinguished deeds without valour.

33. I have come across twenty-five kings in the kingship of Ireland descended from Róch—these words are true! I remember the[ir genealogical] line (?)

59
34. Ireland’s hearth will blaze up; since getting to know Rudhraighe [its] fire has grown; few before him have set it [so] aflame.

35. As Tuathal seized power over Ireland so will the hero of the race of Róch; I will not conceal the fact that Tara will be saved [by him]; it will be the downfall of the English.

36. The fire of the Gaoidhil’s hearth did not light until it got its own smith; it then threw off its stupor [and] the languishing fire burst forth therewith.
Poem 1: Mairidh teine a dteallach Ghaoidheal

37 Budh Egail doibh dáil a critear  
cáor san teallach tarla beó  
lÉigfid danáil fa fhóir nEchtann  
nár fhólair dóibh lÉttrom lÉo

38 Diorma curadh go crích laoisigh  
laoisigh lEnnmhor fa lán sÉoil  
sÉoltur é sa ealta mhileadh  
sé rEmpa dobfhúrfsÉoil Eóil

39 Tig le hoidri chonuill chÉrnuigh  
caor dhEghshluaigh nac diulfa glÉo  
gan chor sligheadh don dáimh dháighfheir  
go tileadh chláir lAighEn leó

Readings from D and G:
37a critear D, criteir G; 37b tealluidh G; 37c léigfiodh G; 37d dh. G; 38a curuidh G; crioche  
laoisi G; 38b laois- D, laoiseach G; lonnmhor G; 38c sai (for sa) G; mi. G; 38d riompa G;  
39a hoigre DG; chÉrnuidh G; 39b de. G; 39c slighe G; dÉghfheir G; 39d tuluidh chlar G.

37. The shower of sparks from the fireball that has come alive in the hearth will terrify the  
foreign host; [the sparks] will release such fumes around the foreigners that they will be left  
staggering (?) by them.

38. With Laoiseach Leannmhór sped a host of heroes to the land of Laois; he and his warrior-  
band set forth, he leading them as a true guide.

39. There comes with the heir of Conall Cearnach a good and cohesive troop that will refuse  
no fight; the company of good men were not deterred from their march until overcoming the  
land of Leinster.
40. Cathbhaiddh the druid asserted that control of Leinster will be had by the warriors of the plain of heroes, one after the other; Ulster's prophet foretold it.

41. The heir of Conall [Cearnach], Ulster's hero, never denied poets or refused a fight; see how he has cleared the path before you; it is right that you imitate his traits.

42. It took the land of the Gaoidhil a long time to find the man who would save her; she is [now] depending (?) on you; she is [like] booty being carried off with impunity by the mighty English host; you should rightly be most angry at this.
Poem 1: Mairidh teine a dteallach Ghaoideal

43 Cia a laighnibh do lucht an iomthnúith ar fhuíl gcáithfr ní cúis rúin
nar sháraighe cru conuigh cErnuigh
cnú da crobhuing dErbhuidh duinn

44 Ní buadh inleigthe ar uaim nÉirEnn
an múr malla as mine fuinn
Feóir as bErbha na bhfhiadh bhfhithe
ó fhior shealbha criche Cuinn

45 Gearr go racha os rioghraidh laighEn
a linn duas ag dol a méid
guais dá gcumhguaighe ar chrú gcaithfr
chú Rudhraide ag thaithe tÉid

Readings from D:
43b ccathaoir; 43c che.; 43d dhá chr.; dhúin; 44a inlÉigthe; 44d chr.; 45c ccúmhgaigh; ccatháoir; 45d rúghraidhe; thatháoir.

43. There is no rival in Leinster who has not been overcome by the stock of Conall Cearnach; this is plain to Cathaoir’s race [i.e. the Leinstermen]; one of his descendants proves [it] to us.

44. For the sake of Ireland’s integrity, her foremost chief should not relinquish th[at] pleasant region of smoothest fields—[land of] the Nore and Barrow of densely-growing trees.

45. He will soon surpass the kings of Leinster; his flood of gifts is increasing; [he is] a peril to anyone who might encroach upon the land of Cathaoir [i.e. Leinster]; Rudhraighe’s reputation is beyond reproach.
46. A proud stream of the noble blood of Cearbhall mingles with the blood of Conall [Cearnach] which upholds fame; [these] two royal lines never begrudged [others] wealth [but] have always been generous.

47. It would be dangerous to encounter the wave of generosity that has submerged the poets [so great is it]; ..... (?)

48. The Gaoidhil are liable to be seized by jealousy at the extent of their payments to poets; according to the poets, [mere possession of] wealth does not complete the fame of Conall’s race [i.e. they like to share it out].
Poem 1: Mairidh teine a dteallach Ghaoidheal

49 Ceilt a gradha ar an ngruaidh bhfaoilidh fada ar inghin 'na féagh fia; bláth sgath nó (?) caor ina coimhmeas, nó an t-aol ar dhath roinneas ria.

50 Cread fa n-iarrfadh ortha gruadh ghairthe nar ghn'os sgol nó bas gheal go bhfliainne dar choimheid bean taidhe a toil.

51 Don rioghaird-se fhréimebe Conaill cia an t-aoinneach dá airde sdair budh Eidir do char 'na chomaidh, dá rabh féigín ollaimh air?

Mairidh teine a dteallach gaoidhil

Readings from D:
49a ar an ngruaidh; 49b inghin na fhégh fia; 49c bláth sgath bláth cáor na coimhmes; 50a órrtha grádh; 50b ghr.; sgol; 50d choimhÉid; bEn omitted; 51c chur; chom.; 51d féigín.

Final quatrain is followed by: Mairidh.

49. A maiden’s hidden her love for [his] handsome cheek has long been camouflaged; [that cheek] is like the bloom of flowers, or (?) [like] a berry, or [like] lime for the colour it shares with it.

50. What need would he have of a love-spell [to lure a woman] when he has a glowing cheek unreddened by poets, and a fair hand with a ring on it for which a paramour has kept her love.

51. Should an ollamh envisage one person, however famous, comparable to him among the kings of the race of Conall [Cearnach], who would he be?
Poem 2: A *gcródhacht ceart chlann bhFeórais*

1. Their valour is [what establishes] the right of the race of Feóras; let us trace their early history; let us explain to them the noble chartered rights of their ancestors over the great heroic race of Míl.

2. The great race of Míl Easbáine held fair Ireland's expansive coast without any breach (?) [of it by others]—a peaceful time!—and they ruled over its plain of brightly-clad land.

3. Not since the time of the King of heaven—great His nobility as according to prophecy!—did they [i.e. the race of Míl] ever share [Ireland] with the kings of England—a prime force who were due to expel them.

*Heading*: an clasach o cobhthaigh cecinit M. The ascription in N has been almost entirely clipped but what remains seems consistent with An Clasach (see introduction). Copy D is acephalous and fragmentary (see introduction). 1a cl. M; 3d du andiocursan M.
4. On foot of his errand to old Rome, the king of England came with a claim, [and] a brave host and a charter for all invading ships; Ireland [was] in strife as a result of that of which I speak.

5. Upon reading the [king’s] letter fury filled the tribe of Gaidheal [Glas] towards the English of the nimble-fingered hosts regarding [the sovereignty of] the ancient waters of fair Ireland.

6. When the generous race of Feoras saw the ferocity of the race of Gaidheal Glas, they put aside their chartered right in favour of swords and battle which was not difficult for foreigners.
7. It is not possible to enumerate all of what the Goill and the Gaoidhil destroyed in the first battle over Ireland as a result of which a fierce band was left bloodied.

8. In brief, the Goill assumed power over us from then on by means of valorous deeds of steadfast strength upon the heroic and famous land of Ireland.

9. They themselves took the choicest of the arable land of smooth-hilled Ireland; [it is] time to awaken accurate knowledge [of] the portion of the land belonging to the descendants of fair Feóras.
Poem 2: A gcródhacht ceart chlann bhFeórais

10 Ní clos ón lósoin a-le
luadh cairte fá chEnd gcríche
don chloinn Féórais as ádh sin—
tar ghradh gleoghlaisi an ghaiscith

11 Tríotsa luaidhimm druim ar dhruim
a mháiighiu mheic mheic réamuid
sgéala re neimhsgear aniuigh
freimha seinsgéal na sindsear

12 Dual don óg aithris na sean
leanfadh fós feidhm do shindsear
biaidh luadh do cródhacha os cáich
mórsolta uadh sgach énáth

10 a chlos M; 10c fheoruis si M; 12c biadh M; 12d mórsholta M.

10. Reference to a charter concerning land has not been heard since that day for this race of Feóras—a fortunate thing!—in preference to a love for (?) the glory of weapons in battle.

11. It is on account of you, O Maighíi son of Réamann’s son, that I proclaim one after another the historical roots of [your] ancestors—tidings from which I will not digress today.

12. It is natural for the young to imitate the old; I, moreover, will trace the prowess of your ancestors; your bravery will be mentioned above all others’ [and] there will be great successes as a result in every ford.
13 Seala corcra cairt gach goill
ar sduaghaibh mine mEmraim
lamh thrén do cairtsi go cath
ca sén as fhaicse dardrath

14 Do mhacraidh ag gniomh a ngi Edh
laoich gá noirEgar deideadh
sluagh fa orarmaibh go hath
luadh ar mórhasglaibh mochthrath

15 Luchd each ag cruindiughad/i cruid
tEndala ag teacht tar cn'chuibh
iulaithne gall ar gach gort
go ham gciúnaighthe comharc

13d dúdrath M; 14d mhor. M; 15a chruidh M.

13. A crimson seal on smooth sheets of parchment is the charter of every [other] Gall; a strong arm is your charter when going into battle—what better sign of good fortune!

14. Your young soldiers exercising their horses, warriors being fitted out with armour, a gold-weaponed host [making its way] to the ford [of battle]; talk of great dawn-raids.

15. Horsemen rounding up cattle; fires spreading across lands; the Goill getting to know the lie of every field until battle-cries die down.
Poem 2: A gcródhacht ceart chlann bhFeórais

16 Faomhadh tanaigthe ag tóir thigh
cinn fhEdhna ag iarraidh deiridh
croind fa ghlEomhaisi mun ngort
don cloind fhEoraisi ag umhlocht

17 Gan coigill ngaoidhil ná goill
agad a mheic réidh réamaind
ni hal lea(t) leathchogar cean
ar mhErfhpobal mhac mileadh

18 Formadach gaoidhil as goill
riot-sa amháin a mheic réamaind
tré enfhachain do ghruadh ngeal
ag sluagh fhéarachaidh fhinnbhrEgh

16b cinnfEdhna M; 16c gl. M; 16d fheórais D; 17a choigill D; 17b mhic D; 17c ni hal omitted in D; lEt DM. After lea(t) in N there is a blank space about the size of 5 letters, but evidently nothing is missing. lEthchogair chEn D; 17d mac M.

16. [An enemy's] dense pursuing party is allowed to disperse, [their] troop leaders seeking to retreat; spears adorned for combat around the battlefield yield to this tribe of Feóras.

17. Neither Gaoidheal nor Gall is spared by you, O smooth son of Réamann; you do not like half-measured plans of battle against the spirited people of the sons of Mfl.

18. Both Gaoidhil and Goill are resentful of you alone, O son of Réamann, in particular because of your leadership of the host of fair Breagha's grassy land, O fair-cheeked one.
19. I will relate to you here the proof of the cause of the resentment; this is why there is such slandering of you, O battle-perfect leader of the Ciannachta.

20. In the land of Ireland there are many reasons—and a great many because of you, O curly-haired one—for the rising of the fame of the triumphs of Feoras’s fair and strong race.

21. I will enumerate to you, O curly-haired one, the lands of these descendants of Feoras; the inclusion of these ranges is an enhancement of the delightfulness of the land of Breagha.
Poem 2: *A gcródhacht ceart chlann bhFeórais*

22. From Sliabh gCua of the raids to Corc mac Luighdheach’s Cashel and to Sliabh na mBan bhFionn of the fair flowers—a familiar range chosen by Saint Patrick: [all this] is yours.

23. A beautiful part of Ormond was named permanently after you[r people]; it is called Tuath Fheórais—proof (?) of its nobility.

24. That is the portion of mirthful Munster—of which Cashel is the choicest part—that belongs to the descendants of fair Feóras, O hero of the soft tree-covered land of Breagha.
25. From Athenry, your first portion of Connacht, we must now turn towards fair and fresh Trágh Éoithaile—a victorious course.

26. O noble descendants of Feóras, yours is the gentle-sloped earldom of Louth—the border of Meath of the pure green lands, the heart of Oriel and of Ulster.

27. Yours, O race of Feóras, is all from Cruachán of Úi Fhailghe to the great territory of Magh Nuadhad; this learned quatrains on the matter is likewise [yours].
Poem 2: *A gcroídhacht ceart chlann bhFeórais*

28 Ag sin a mheic réidh réamhuid miúl dotaghaidh ghnúissheaghaind ar chuid hshíl fhéórais dfhódla brígh meolais as ionfhógra

29 Cuimhnigh féin nach fuil a nois sealbh na gcroíochsa ag cloon fhEóruis dod bhrosdadh nocha beag sin t'fhosdadh na gcead na cuiridh

30 Nocht feasda do mhéad mhEnma dearbh do threidhe tighErna a chathbhránán chlár Eachtgha sáidh dathghabháil t'oighreachta

28 Ag sin, a mheic réidh Réamainn. m'iúl dot aghaidh ghnúissheaghainn ar chuid shíl Fheóraí d'Fhódla; brígh m'eolais as ionfhógra.

29 Cuimhnhigh féin nach fuil a-nois sealbh na gcroich-sa ag cloon Fhórais; dod bhrosadh nocha beag sin; t'fhosadh 'na gcead ná cuiridh.

30 Nocht feasda do mhéad meanma, dearbh do threidhe tighearna, a chathbhránán chlár Eachtgha, sáidh d'athghabháil t'oighreachta.

28. O gentle son of Reamann, you of noble countenance, that is my knowledge of the part of Ireland belonging to the race of Feóras; the substance of my knowledge is worth being made known.

29. Remember you that the race of Feóras does not now have possession of these territories; that is enough to incite you; do not leave your destiny in their hands.

30. Reveal henceforth your greatness of spirit, prove your lordly qualities, O battle-chief of the plain of Eachtgha, set about the recovery of your inheritance.
31. Come to the aid of Cashel of the bright waters, of the Suir, [and] of old Magh Feimhin; do not avoid a circuit of bright Knockgraffon—a pleasant land!

32. Shun not forever the portion of Ormond belonging to the race of Feóras; release Connacht from the foreign host with a abundance of help in combat.

33. Save the champions of Dundalk from the Gaelic host; be a fighter for [the capture of] hostages over the fair plain of Oriel.
34 Deisiol banbha a nall a nois
agad go fialchloind bhFeorais
cuairt im chlar gcollmuighde brEgh
sdo chomhnaidhe ar lar laighean

35 Rodha crioch comhartha tind
ag fine fheorais déirind
dlighese gan dola ar ais
rodha an fhinese fheorais

36 Ní’r fholair rodha agas roind
duit a mhaighiu mheic réamaind
diol rodha gach flaith ro fEs
do mhaith dod chora ó choimmeas

34 Deiseal Banbha a-nall a-nois
agad go fialchloinn bhFeórais.
cuairt im chlár gcollmuighe Breagh ’s do chomhnaidhe ar lár Laighean.

35 Rogha crioch—comhartha tinn—
ag fine Fheórais d’Éirinn;
dlighse gan dola ar ais
rogha an fhíne-se Fheórais.

36 Níor fholáir rogha agus roinn
duit, a Mhaighú mheic Réamainn;
diol rogha gach flaith, ro-feas;
do mhaith dod chora ó choimhneas.

36a is (for as) D; 36d choimhEs D.

34. You now have [made] a clockwise course around Ireland [and] back to the noble people of Feorais—a circuit around the land of the hazel-plain of Breagha and you [now] come to a halt in the centre of Leinster.

35. The tribe of Feorais has the choice of the lands of Ireland—a sign of strength; you have an unfailing(?) right to the choice [land] of this tribe of Feorais.

36. [The power] to choose and divide [land] had to be yours, O Maighiu son of Réamann; every lord is eligible to be chosen, as is known; [but] your excellence puts you beyond compare.
37 Ní hiomdha d'fhine Ghaoidheal
do chomhmaith le a chomhmaoidheamh;
uathadh h'éanshamhail d'fhuil Ghall,
a thuir shéánamhail shabhrand.

37a gháoidheal D; 37d thur D; 38d áirimh D; 39a ágh D; 39d diomrádh D.

38 As tú marcach an mhara,
a laoich laidir armthana,
nó as tú Manannán mac Lir,
slat nár anfhallán áirimh.

38 As tli marcach an mhara,
a laoich laidir armthana,
nó as tú Manannán mac Lir,
slat nár anfhallán áirimh.

39 Tú a ionshamhail ar ádh ngnaóí
nó as tú Fiamhain mac Foraoí.
a níamhsbhoilse ad ghnúis do ghnáth,
cús an fhiamhainnsi diomráth.

39 Tú a ionshamhail ar ágh ngnaoi,
nó as tú Fiamhain mac Foraoi;
a níamhsbhoilse ad ghnúis do ghnáth,
cús an Fhiamhain-se d'iomráth.

37. The tribe of the Gaoithil cannot boast of having many as good as you; few of the blood of the Goill are like you, O successful leader of the Shabhrann.

38. You are the rider of the sea. O strong hero of slender weapons, or you are Manannán mac Lir, a scion of sound repute.

39. You are his like for splendid valour, or you are Fiamhain mac Foraoí; his brilliant light is always upon your face, that is why I mention this Fiamhain.
Poem 2: A gcródhacht ceart chlann bhFeórais

40 Nó as tú féar an bhéarla bhinn,
aonghus an bhrodha bhláithshlím
ní diombadhach réd chlú cách
nó as tú an ttiollánach iongnáth

41 Nó as tusa an laochsa a láighnibh
mhEsdar re mac namhairghin
ag tuar chlú ad chomhaimsir fein
tú an conaillsin ar chaithréim

42 Nó as tú mac cumhaill chreachaigh
nó a aithghin ar úirbhreathuibh
nó an fíanuidhe an file glan
fiadhuighe midhe as mhumhan

40 Nó as tú féar an bhéarla bhinn,
Aonghus an Bhrogha bhláithshlím
—ní diombádhach red chlú cách!—
nó as tú an ttiollánach iongnáth.

41 Nó as tusa an laoch-sa a Laighnibh
mheasdar re mac nAmhairghin,
ag tuar chlú ad chomhaimsir fein,
tú an Conaill-sin ar chaithréim.

42 Nó as tú mac Cumhaill chreachaigh,
nó a aithghin ar líirbhreathaibh,
nó an fianaighe, an file glan,
fiadhaighe Midhe as Mumhan.

40. Or you are the man of sweet speech, gentle and sleek Aonghus an Bhrogha—no one is disappointed with your fame!—or you are the wondrous Multi-Talented One [i.e. Lugh Lámhfhada].

41. Or you are this warrior from Leinster who is compared with the son of Amhairghin, winning fame in your own time, you are that Conall on account of [your] martial career.

42. Or you are the son of plundering Cumhall, or his equal for noble judgements, or you are the warrior, the pure poet, the hunter of Meath and Munster.
43. I recognize you now—you are generous Mac Feórais; we liken you to the heroes of Breagha; it is right that we pay heed to [that] fine comparison.

44. Beyond the aforementioned [heroes], I know of no one who would be a fitting match for you, [or] whose martial career and great smooth-browed face would compare to yours.

45. You are now held by us to be the most famous, O noble Mac Feórais; it is vain to wish to equal your exploits, O Ireland’s valorous and multifaceted (?) man.
Poem 2: A gcroídhacht ceart chiann bhFeórais

46 Do fheadar as aoibhind duit
sEnfhocal so as e oirdheirc
a bhúachail mhuidhe buic bhreagh
ar nach tuicc duine dídean

47 Ag slnagh fliodla as i do bhreath
nach fuil enlochd ar heineach
dod chalmachtsa ni dóich dul
sloigh dot anmbratsa as iongnadh

48 Eisdeachd red bhriathraibh binne
lór dfhuasglughadh intinne
eóin mhurghabhla a samhail soin
turlabhra a nadhaidh eólaigh

46b ordhuirc D; 46c bhúachail D; bhuig D; 47a fóidla D; 47b fúil D; 47c dóigh D; 47d anmhraths sa D; 48b dfhuaslugadh D; 48d anagheadh D.

46. I know it is pleasant for you—this is a well-known adage—O herder of the soft plain of Breagha, with whom one does not associate protection.

47. The men of Ireland’s judgement of you is that there is no blemish upon your honour; one is not likely to escape from your bravery; hosts are unlikely to act treacherously towards you.

48. Listening to your sweet words is enough to liberate the mind; like estuary-birds are your words against a sage.
49. O ruddy-faced one, a glimpse of your smooth stately face is enough for you to charm women, you gentle comely noble.

50. The first sight of you in battle is enough to urge your enemy to retreat, O noble Mac Feórais; it will increase your battle-fame.

51. You possess each of the three virtues together, O rightful chief; it is because of it that you will be heeded now, O valiant and swift Mac Feórais.
Poem 2: A gcroídhacht ceart chlann bhFeórais

52 A mheic rémaind ó ráith bhEgh
a mheic fheórais fhóid laighean
do thfios as dú dola a bhfhad
fad chlí dód thogha tánag

A gcroídhacht.c.c.f

52d This line is followed in copy D by: A.

52. O son of Réamann from the fort of Breagha, O Mac Feórais of the land of Leinster, it is right to go far in search of you; it is because of your fame that I have come to choose you.
Poem 3: *Mairg as dáileamh don digh bhróin*

1. Woe to him who is cupbearer of the drink of sorrow, though it be much sought after; it is hard to reckon the number of men who have drunk the sorrowful brew that has been served up to us.

2. The draught I drink every day would be best not drunk; hard it is for him who is cupbearer of this communal(?) drink that has tormented me.

3. So often is this drink served up that it would be a wonder if anyone were [still] stung by it; let no man who drinks sorrow's brew be filled with horror [as it passes] from person to person.

*Readings from D: 1a Mairg as dáileamh; 1b atáthair; 1c deacair; 1d fhilEgh; dhúin; 2a An deoch ibthEar leam gach laoi; 2c fhilEgh; lér cráidhEdh mé; 2d doiligh 3a Neimh san digh; 3b dhá dá.; 3c bóthd gráin; 3d fhilEgh.*
Poem 3: Mairg as dáileamh don digh bhróin

4 (...) tairléadh uain
na hainmbrétha ar chach do chin
(...) anta don tuinn tnúidh
gan suil rinn do theachda a dtír

5 (...) fhir frioth a bhfaill
gaoidhil fan díth ar a ndruim
(...) ghallaibh ghuirt fhloinn
puirt ga roinn re clannaibh cuinn

6 (...) alaidh gur bhEdhg boin
an lÉrg os bhruacháibh gur bhúail
(...) ag tuind re tír
brigh na (...)oìnde buing a bruáigh

4 Trom a-tá an t-airleagadh uainn;
na hainbhreatha ar chách do-chín;
d’éis ar mbéanta don tuinn tnúidh
gan síil ruinn do theachta a dtír.

5 Do dhíoth aoinfhir frioth a bhfaill,
Gaoidhil fan dóth ar a ndruim,
dá dhíoth ar Ghallaibh ghuirt Fhloinn
puirt ’ga roinn re clannaibh Cuinn.

6 Dob fhiú a gcualaidh gur bheadhg Bóinn
an learg ós bhruacháibh gur bhúail;
ionad coinne ag tuinn re tír
brigh na toinne ag buing a bruáigh.

Readings from D: 4a Tróm atá an tairléadh; 4c d’Éis ar mbEna; 5a Do dhíoth aoinfhir; 5c dá dhíoth ar; 6a Do bhfhiú accualaidh; bóinn; 6c ionad coinne; 6d coinne (sic).

4. What has been taken away saddens us greatly; [in the past] I [only] saw [such] injustices done to others; having been overcome by a wave of longing, no one expects me to survive.

5. As a result of the loss of one man they [i.e. the Goill] are left unguarded, the Gaoidhil are at their backs, [and] the strongholds of Ireland’s Goill are being apportioned to the descendants of Conn.

6. What the Boyne heard was such that it startled it and its surface burst its banks; the force of the wave hitting the shore made it a battleground between between water and land.
Text, variant readings and translation

7 (...) fhear cúmtha dá chlu
do fhuingEdh an aoibheal bheo
(...) ndeaghfhóid ní dú
as tocht re chú ngearoid san gleó

8 (...)sgar trom fa dtám
dar luing gur leagadh a seól
(...) tarrla fár dtrean
ni sgeal (f)a rún damhna ar ndEor

9 (...) tuile nach traigh
an tuirsí ar ngabhldadh mar g(h)rein
(...) mhEnma mhóir
foir dhealbhna da chur a gceill

Readings from D: 7a Cia an táoinfer; 7c súil ré gort; 7d ghleó; 8a As fiú an teasgar; 8c mó
ina ghlún tárla; 8d fá; 9a Ní fághthar; 9b ghréin; 9c fagas cor don; móir; 9d chor.

7. Could any friend endure [the loss of] the living ember [i.e. Gerald], given his greatness? It
would not be natural [now] to expect fertile land—one might as well try to rival the fame of
Gerald in battle.

8. So heavy is my downfall that I am defeated; my strength has met with more than [a fall
to] its knees; the cause of my tears is no secret.

9. There is no flood that does not ebb; sorrow has spread out like the sun[’s light]; it is clear
from Delvin’s host that high spirits are close to being vanquished.
Poem 3: Mairg as dáileamh don dhigh bhrón

10 (...) ar na chor a gcriaidh
gan a thochda as doilidh dúinn
(...) an chora do chim
rodha síl uaimse san uir

11 (...)é donadh der
ar ollamh tar éis a riogh
búdh síol (...)
irg mo dhéar
do ghéan an gceird dhleaghair diom

12 Fiú a airde thaiglid ós traigh
na haibhne nach adhbha lín
gidh mór a muich confadh cuain
ní chuair uaidh torchar a dtír

Readings from D: 10a Síol toghtha; 10b thocht; 10c lór úaisli; 10d rogha; 11a Ní mhaoídhife mé; 11c gEmhair dhEirg; 11d do dhÉn; dhIghair dhiom; 12d torchair.

10. When choice seed has been planted it is hard for us when it does not come [to fruition];
great is the nobility of the choice seed I see laid in the earth before me.

11. I will not begrudge an ollamh the reddening of [his] tears following the death of his king;
I will [simply] exercise the art required of me: my tear[s] will be [like] red grain[s] of corn.

12. So high do the currents rise above the beach that it is not a [safe] place for [fishermen with] nets; though great is the fury out in the sea, it does not put treasure to land.
13. Until the death of my troop leader [who now lays] before us (?) seldom was our land without protection; royal sons are paying with tears for [the fact] that the race of Eóghan does not want peace.

14. Do not begrudge their poor spirits to the royal women of Delvin’s plain; it is not kind to prevent them grieving if you understand their loss.

15. Could anything harm us more than your violent death, prince? Our lament, having taken root, has resulted in [other] news being of no consequence since your death.
Poem 3: Mairg as dáileamh don digh bhróin

16 Nír mhó duireasbhaidh é dhóibh sé gé roieasbhaidh dá fhréimh; do dhíoth ar Ghallaibh san ghliath mar dhíoth mBriain ar chlannaibh Céin.

17 Caoir hshloigh a neagar ós tfliiort i ngach leaba as lór a lucht; uain gion go bhfhagaim ar hfhErt ní ghabhainn ceart uair as tucht.

18 Mór bhfileadh dan foghlaidh suain an tromguin nach leighis liaig do mhéadaigh mo mheanma bhróin féachín ar fhóir nDealbhna ad dhíadh.

Readings from D: 16d céin; 17b in gach leabh; 17c tfert; 17d c(h)Ert; 18a foghlaidh.

16. Your loss to the Goill in battle is like the loss of Brian to the race of Cian; though it was a great tragedy for them it was no greater [than yours].

17. A dense host is arranged above your burial-place; great is its volume on all of the graves; though I do not get a turn on your grave [now], there was a time when I did not [have to] enforce my right, on account of [my relationship with] you.

18. Many’s the poet for whom the grievous incurable blow is a plunderer of sleep; seeing Delvin’s host after your death has increased my sadness.
19 Tond tuirse bháitte gach brúaigh
ni tuile nach tánín fáoin
mo reabhradh ar gcúl do chóidh
lúth bróin muna dhó nar dhaoibh

20 Mar so a ghearróid do ghnáth bhíos
gach deaghfhód gan bhláth ód bhas
rún tuile gach sreibhe súas
sguire gach cnuas eile d'fhás

21 Fian deilbhna ag anadh ar huaidh
foghail ar bhreaghmhach dá bhrohgh
lia dhá gcroth ag clannaíb neill
léir le gálaíb do dhul diobh

Readings from D: 19b tánin; 21a dhealbhna; húaigh; 21b foghail; bhréghmágh; dá.

19. The wave of sadness that drowns every bank is a flood which has not missed us; my
gaiety has receded [even] when I am not outwardly expressing grief for you.

20. Since your death, Gerald, all good land is without bloom; every river is bent on overflow-
ing; you[r death] stops all other produce from growing.

21. As Delvin's troop remains by your grave, the plain of Breagha is under attack; more of
their wealth [i.e. that of the Goill] is [taken] by the race of Niall; it is [all too] clear to the
Goill that you have left them.
Poem 3: Mairg as dáileamh don digh bhróin

22. Among those at your grave there are many who distributed the brew of sorrow to the people of Meath; that grievous brew, instead of [your] bounty (?), is not a brew that is in short supply to them.

23. Your demise has badly affected the apple-trees; one would no longer find that interest ought to be taken in protecting them for their apples; they are in danger of catching fire now that you are gone.

24. Your death in battle, Gerald, is clear from the thronged gathering [of Meath’s people]; they are not likely to be unnoticed [as they raise] a communal cry together over your grave.
25. O friend who has full details [of his death], would that you had concealed them from us! After a single drop of the drink of sadness we are without reason.

26. A tempest of waves is stirred up as a result [of his death] so that it has been hazardous for ships ever since; the salmon of the harbour has not the strength to slow down; rivers unearth trees from the land.

27. Concealed love is revealed by it [i.e. her lamentation], though it was difficult for her to admit it [before his death]; it would be a wonder if we could be consoled in our grief, when [even] an enemy’s wife cannot cease from lamenting him!
Poem 3: Maírgh as dáileamh don digh bhróin

28 Cán gach deaghfhóid ag dol dóibh
go gEroid do chor a gcriaidh
do bhí am nach bérthaí a mbuaidh
da bhféagthaí sluaigh (…)  

29 Giodh mor linn a dhochar dúin
a sochar don chill do chúaidh
cuid as fhéarr don úaimhse fóinn
ceall na roimh ar uaisle ón uaidh

30 As fiú ainneart tuinde ar thragh
loingeas o chaladh do chlódh
ni hi ar loingni a bháin do bhual
do roidhne an cuan báidh lem brón

Readings from D: 28d sluaigh gháll a ngliaidh; 29a Gidh; dhúinn; 29b shochar; 29c fÉrr; 29d úaigh; 30a thráigh; 30c amháin.

28. There was a time when the Goill’s host could not be beaten when tested in battle; the tax of every good land went to them until Gerald was laid to rest.

29. Though we think it [i.e. his death] a great loss to us it is a great boon to the church; the positive thing about this grave under us is that, because of it, the church is a [veritable] Rome for glory.

30. The great force of the wave on the beach is sufficient to toss ships out of the bay; the sea has not hit my ship merely, it has empathized with my grief.
31. [The day of] Gerald’s departure was their day of misfortune; his death has put them under a cloud of gloom; Delvin is worse off for what he did in its service [i.e. he is irreplaceable]; it is no longer itself now that he is gone.

32. Far from land I used to see every current which now covers the beach; [I] remember a time when the wild current that covers a tilled hillside did not [even] touch land.

33. When [Gerald] met his violent death, it incite[d] the descendants of Niall to [attack] us; it caused the Boyne to burst its banks; even the hosts of Breagha were plundered.
Poem 3: Mairg as dáileamh don digh bhrón

34. A tumultuous shower of grief poured forth instead of [Gerald’s] bounty (?)—eyes wept uncontrollably until they got their fill of [the sight of] the grave.

35. An abundance of feasting is denied to poets as a consequence of Gerald’s death; [only] a feast of sorrow [is had] in every house in our land; appetite for drink is unlikely now that he is dead.

36. Whoever might have been pleased at his killing was soon thereafter disappointed; the destruction of the Goill’s own troop marks an end to the protection of our land.
37 Rún a thoile le triall soir
do rún chroidhe na hiarr air
ní fhadhann file dá bhfuil
abhall chuir midhe ó nach mair

MAIRG. A. D. D. B.

37 Rún a thoile re triall soir
do rún chroidhe ná hiarr air;
ní fhaghann file dá bhfuil
abhall chuir Mhidhe ó nach mair.

MAIRG. A. D. D. D. B.

Readings from D: 37c fhaghann; 37d amidhe (for midhe). After end of final quatrain is written: M.

37. Do not ask him [to fulfil] his intense desire to go east in earnest; the poet for whom it is [a desire] cannot do it now that the sturdy apple-tree of Meath is dead.
Poem 4: Do-ní clú áit eighreachta

An fEr céadna cecinit

1 Do-ní clú ait eighreachda
do dháil dá thur theóirbhearta
ar bhloidh gídh bé as ionmholta
ag sgoil as é as oirdhearca

2 A chróth le cléir comhchaithidh
béim dá thóin ní tuillfítheir
clú Gall a nú ar neamhchaithreamh
barr ar a gchú cuirfítheir

3 Dáth doinn niámhda ar aoltoraíbh
dfhóidhail oilliam fuigfídhheir
la troda ar áth iocfúidheir
cáth dá oba a nóiltíghheir

An fear céadna cecinit
[Muircheartach Ó Cobhthaigh]

1 Do-ní clú áit eighreachta;
do dháil dá thúr theóirbhearta;
ar bhloidh gídh bé as ionmholta
ag sgoil as é as oirdhearca.

2 A chróth le cléir comhchaithidh;
béim dá thóin ní tuillfítheir;
clú Gall a-nú ar neamhchaithimh;
barr ar a gchú cuirfítheir.

3 Dáth doinn niámhda ar aoltoraíbh
dfhóidhail Oilliam fuigfídhheir;
lá troda ar áth iocfúidheir
cáth dá oba a nóiltíghheir.

Readings from D: 1c gibe; 1d oirrgherca; 2a chr.; 2b thol; tuillfidhEr; 2c gháll; 2d cuirfidhEr;
3a doinnmíambh; 3b dhoghal; fuigfidher.

1. Fame establishes one's place in history; he [i.e. William Nugent] has distributed gifts to
   earn it; whoever is most praiseworthy for fame it is he who is most celebrated by poets.

2. He spends his wealth equally among poets; he will not willingly earn rebuke; the fame of
   the Goill today is undiminished; [indeed,] it will be added to.

3. Fair mansions will be left burning red-hot from William's raiding; the enemy's refusal [to
   submit] to him in banqueting halls will be avenged at the ford on the day of battle.
4. They cannot reach (?) the roads [such is] the blaze they leave around bright enclosures; a pursuing party reaching the fray [i.e. catching up with them] is like music to the ears of Delvin's host.

5. In the heat of battle he boasts that he is not a man to seek relief; he will close in on the [enemy] fighters on account of their hesitation [to engage].

6. Like the tallest tree [in the forest], the Goill surpass all others as a result of the spread of their great renown; such riches have poets received from the land of fair Meath that they stayed put.
Poem 4: Do-ní clú áit eigheachta

7 Dornchar as dá athrachadh
bolg ar bhais mar aithnitheare
do geib se an anagh danchaithEmh
an lámh chlé go gcaithfitheare

8 Frioth coma an fluinn Éireannaigh
do dhruim osaidh fhiórannaimh
beag an beim d'fhíadh Fheilimidh
a ngeill riamh ag rioGhallaibh

9 Néall diadh fá dtucc troimeighmhe
go much os iath fhíinne
rádh gach aoin rér nuilliaimne
da thaoibh dáth nar binndeîmhe

Readings from D: 8a comhaidh ar (for coma an).

7. When he notices a blister on his [right] hand he switches his sword [to his left hand]; such excessive use does he get in battle of the left hand that it [too] will wear out.

8. The Irish land has agreed terms by virtue of a hard-won truce; it is no shame on the land of Féilimidh; its hostages have always been held by the royal Goill.

9. On account of the cloud of smoke by which our William caused loud screams early in the day over the land of the fair Erne, everyone tells him that it was impossible [for the enemy to come] to battle.
10 Visiting poets very quickly got satisfaction not got in their own territory: he has given them a living for which he might be criticised [by local poets].

11. When engaging in battle, a pursuing party cannot be restrained (?) from its foray (?); so many spears break in battle that everyone within (?) grows exhausted.

12. You have [always] declined the first drink for fear of causing offence; in the absence of a poet you gave it to your warriors.
Poem 4: Do-ní clú áit eighreachta

13 Ceadh do báil dá ionghaire
ní ghabh cach na cromhghoire
im nóin ar áth imdhighe
an tráth bídh cóir comhuaidhe

14 Comha a nois dá maídhiarraidh
domhan ort ré réidheoraidh
do thuig ara tfhuaírfechtaín
na fogha duid d Systems

15 Ag léim chalaidh chomhaighthigh
a hErradh fén folaítheoir
géalladh gliadh go bhfuaghaibhthear
tfhian anearadh anaithníd

13 Ceadh dob áil dá ionghaire?
Ní ghabh cach 'na cromhghaire.
Im nóin ar áth imdhighe.
an tráth bídh cóir comhuaidhe.

14 Comha a-nois dá maídhiarraidh
d'omhan ort ré réidheóraidh;
do thuig ara tfhuaírfeaghain;
na fogha duid d'fheóghaidh.

15 Ag léim chalaidh chomhaighthigh
a hearradh fén falaíthir;
géalladh gliadh go bhfuaghaibhthir
tfhian anearadh anaithníd.

Readings from D: Quatrain 13 appears at the foot of the page with the following note: A lEghthoir her an rannso gus an ccrois {crosses appear in the margin indicating its proper position}; 14d an (for na); dhuit d'fheóghaidh; 15b falaíthir.

13. What would be the purpose of protecting him [when] no enemy dares to go near him? You [even] go to battle at dusk when one should rightly stay at home.

14. Tribute is now newly sought [by you] because of your trepidation regarding a visiting royal poet; an attendant understood your cold look; he will aim the spears for you. (?)

15. When landing on a neighbouring shore your troops' apparel is concealed; until promise of a fight is got they remain in unmarked attire [i.e. incognito].
16 Beirt smoil ghoirthe os gháoidhealaibh
conair ród do ráonfhóiligh
dar le righ f(h)úair f(h)óiridhin
a thír uaibh fa éandoighir

17 Go dail nduas nar dhligheabhair
láithn úait as a haradhain
barr dí ar c(h)roódh do chuireabhair
scóil agas í ag anamhain

18 Tainic tróit ó threansacaibh
siodh ní háil don fhionfhuisin
sgaoile ar sgath airm orarsaidh
a snaidhm do raith rioghuinsigh

Readings from D: 16b ród; 16c fúair fóiridhin; 16d áond.; 17b láimh úaibh; 18a Táinic tróit;
18c sgáoil; órarsaigh; 18d ráth.

16. The hot burning thatch over [the houses of] the Gaoidhil has cleared a path before you
[i.e. left you without opposition]; a king who got protection [i.e. accepted terms] thought that
his territory would have been torched by you.

17. With one arm outstretched from its rein, you shared out inordinate booty; you increased
the poets’ wealth while they stayed put.

18. That the mighty English are not interested in peace has come about through you; with
the protection of a venerable golden weapon you release the fort of royal Uisneach from her
bondage.
Poem 4: Do-ní clú áit eighreachta

19 Sgol ad dháil um dhubhnónaidh
do chur áir ar híolmhaoinibh
fiú ar nochd aoidhe dáinriaghail
máoine ort nach ionmhaoidhim

20 Rún maoithe ag mnáibh rileasa
lá do thaoibh an trialla-sa;
sguiridh bean dúaim órasa
do ghreadh an uair iarraissi

21 Re a dteachd fein níor fuirigheadh
teachta ar chléir do chuireabhair
fios uaiibh ar fhear nealadhan
an uair chEn do chruindiuighadh

Readings from D: 19a dhubhnónaigh; 19b chor; 20b trialla-si; 20d iarraissi.

19. Poets seek you out late in the evening to plunder your many treasures; the excessive demands reported by one poet were such that you were left with no wealth to boast of.

20. Women of a royal residence felt a secret sadness one day because of [your going on an] expedition; a woman ceases sewing a golden slipper when you request your horses.

21. Not willing to wait for poets to come, you dispatched messengers to them; when war-booty is gathered you summon the man of art!
22 Sealg do dhíorma dhíanshluághaigh
sgriobhtha ó cheard a gcraobhlíníb
fríoth bEnta (a) tfheilm oírlínih
gan teachta ó tfheidhm déinmhílidh

23 Cur chána ar chrích nanaithnidh
bioth ag cách dod chomharthaibh
feadh cliachda Eidir chomhguiththibh
fear tiarrtha ní fhaghaibhthair

24 Réir fhileadh snách urasa
beim einigh ní fhuidhseag
tucc beim don Íath elesea
an riar le cléir chuiresea

Readings from D: 22c a tfheilm; óírlínih; 22d dáoinmhílidh; 23b bódh; 23c ider; 23d foghaibhthair (with two expunction dots under the first i); 24b fhuidhseag; 24d iar riarr; cuiresea.

22. The expedition of your swift band of followers is written [about] by a [poetic] craftsman in ornamented lines; that no soldier can escape your fighting is found incised in your engraved golden helmet.

23. Let everyone know that one of your distinguishing characteristics is that you levy tribute on foreign land; in a battle with another territory no man seeks you out.

24. Though the satisfying of the demands of poets is not easy you will not be reproached with regard to your generosity; the maintenance you supply to poets has put this other land to shame.
Poem 4: Do-ní clú áit eighreachta

25 Suil téidhe ar áth nimreasain
tfhéachain ar chách coimbrisidh
gur ghuais daoibh eól dhurmaisin
a ngleodh dhaoiobh an dóimhnesin

26 Sreabh ghorm a nguais chomairche
fa cholbha an chuain lindighthe
bean toile dhfiadh fhindeithne
grian gan aire ar imirche

27 Cach na choinde ag mailléurghe
roimhe ar áth nar indéimhne
néall diagh daithle ar nuilliaimne
dá aithne os fhiaadh fhindéirne

Readings from D: 25a téighe; 25b coimhbrisidh; 25c durmaisin; 25d angleó; doimhnisin; 26a ghorma (for ghorm); 27b inndéimhne; 27d fiadh.

25. Before you enter the ford of combat the sight of you overwhelms the enemy; so deep are you in the fight that you are likely to attain knowledge(?).

26. The blue water is likely protected (?) along the pool-filled shore; the sun, with no thought of leaving, is a lover to the land of the fair Inny river.

27. Setting slowly forth to confront him the enemy was not able to be at the ford before him; above the land of the fair Erne our William leaves as his mark a cloud of smoke in his wake.
28. In an ale-house he did not conceal the fact that he had left the land truly ravaged(?); a noblewoman’s glance at the man with the golden helmet reveals her love for him.

29. Before tribute is [even] levied upon a land, poets have made great haste [i.e. in coming to William for boons]; [only] they themselves are to blame when their demands are not satisfied [i.e. if they have not come in time].

30. When going forth his expeditionary force draws loud cries from a territory; peace with a land is [only] possible when it has paid its debts to our William.
Poem 4: Do-ní clú áit eigheachta

31 Do réir fhír na hanúmhla
mar théid do thígh thogharma
ní gnáth an síoth sosnadhma
bíoth ag cáích dá chomhardha

D.N.C.A.O.

31 Do réir fhír na hanúmhla
mar théid do thígh thogharma
ní gnáth an síoth sosnadhma;
bíoth ag cáích dá chomhardha.

D.N.C.A.O.

Readings from D: 31b to.; 31c síodh; 31d bíodh. At foot of poem is written: D:O:N:I:C:L:Ú:

31. When he is obliged to go to an assembly house at the request of an insubordinate it is not usual that peace is easily won [i.e. William sets the terms of submission]; let everyone know that about him.
Poem 5: *Geall re hiarlacht ainm barúin*

1. A baron’s title is tantamount to an earldom; the title warrants an earldom; maintenance of the baron’s fame is a great task; he has always been a guarantee of fertile land.

2. The baron, the ‘earl of honour’, awakens a great envy among earls; there has always been justifiable envy at his being chosen; there are few like him in the land of Ireland.

3. So much wealth is got from the baron that a poet is envied; poets [now] have as a certainty the generosity which was [merely] expected from Breagha [in the past].

Readings from D: i. m. o c. omitted in heading. 2a An; 2c roghain; 2d fu.; 3c tarla.
Poem 5: Geall re hiarlacht ainm barúin

4. His troop of soldiers became raiding parties until they scoured the five provinces; [given such force] it is no shame on the race of Cobhthach [i.e. the Gaoidhil] that Ireland chooses the Goill.

5. A poet who wishes to go to another land cannot [bring himself to] leave the plain of Meath; such was the treatment he received that he has no desire to go back [to his own land].

6. Stewards bring the five [provinces'] taxes to Christopher—what praise for him! It is high time for all to see whether he would adopt the Gaelic custom [of taking taxes].
Text, variant readings and translation

7 Rodhocair díol a ndiomdha
láioch lè gcosaint Er colbha
a táthar fáoi ag fóir dhealbhna
dá ndéarna cóir chráoi chondla

8 Giall a gcuibhreach do cuir Edh
a ndiaidh bruidhne do bhlochadh
go féin ngall tre thÉgh dteinEdh
mall deibhEdh na bhfeEr bhfoladh

9 Mac risEd dath nír imdhigh
dáil nach dligh Ed gur dhaingnigh
mithidh dóibh triall go tÉmhraigh
fóir brÉgmhuigh riamh na róidhnibh

Readings from D: 7b ccosantair; 8b a bhruighnedh (for bruidhne); 9d ráighnibh.

7. It is very hard to compensate the displeasure of warriors who are accustomed to defending borders; Delvin’s host is the cause of it [i.e. their displeasure] since establishing peace throughout Ireland.

8. Having destroyed a castle the Goill put a hostage in fetters; the enemy were slow to retaliate as their house was in flames.

9. Richard’s son did not leave battle until he secured more than his due share; it is high time for the host of Breagha’s plain to go to Tara; they have always been its choice.
Poem 5: Geall re hiarlacht ainm barúin

10 Ag sin aoinbhrEfh gach eólaigh
an ríghe do bhreith béaraídh
féachadh sé cEft fán gcáinaídh
dá lsheacht ngrádhuibh é díféíchuin

11 Fian ghall sgan dola a ndeabhaidh
bánba fá chomha cuiridh
an leath toír riamh na rodhain
a noirc ghabthaif fiadh fuinidh

12 Ge romho san ghleó gaoáidhil
ar chriosdoir ní doich déanamh
mór dtúr na chairt fa cháinaidh
tar lámaibh shíl airt éinfinh

Readings from D: 11c thoir; roghain; 11d gabhthair; 12b dóigh déinimh.

10. It is the singular judgement of every sage that he will take the kingship by right; let him pay heed to justice in the matter of ordinance; it is [the business?] of his seven grades [of poets] to verify it.

11. The Goill’s troop dictates its terms to Ireland without resorting to combat; Ireland is conquered from the east; the eastern half has always been her best.

12. Though the Gaoidhil are much more numerous in battle, Christopher is unlikely to be attacked; he has many territories under taxation by chartered right in spite of the race of Art Aoinfhair.

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13. So many people came to [his] banquet-house that captives had to be brought out of it; more numerous still are the unidentified men in the dining hall of the men of the Inny river.

14. It is not with words that taciturn hosts seek submission to them; on the day of battle the spirits of Delvin’s troop are no worse for their being reluctant to talk.

15. He will not break the many terms imposed by [his] decree (?); he makes two halves of Ireland; the poets side with Breagha.
Poem 5: Geall re hiarlcacht ainm barúin

16 A sealbh agaibh atéanar
bearn a throda níor taobhadh
ód chuairt laoi don chrú chaoilshleadh
chú gáoidheal do bhí a mbáodhal

17 Lá tionóil re hucht teinigh
duit a chriosdóir as cubhaidh
do bhír tú do dháimh dhoiligh
chú oinigh cháigh nach cumhain

18 Ní gar dhaoibh dhol a ndeabhaidh
má frioth do choscc ar chomhaidh
cor síth agas sé ar slíghidh
ridhin le rígh é ar homhan

Readings from D: 16d bháoi; 17a teinigh; 18a dol; 18c is (for agas); 18d homhain.

16. Ever since your day-light foray into battle the fame of the Gaoidhil has been in jeopardy; they have not [since] approached the gap of battle; it is yours alone.

17. A full assembly would be appropriate [to provide an opportunity] for [a display of] your generosity, Christopher; you give [so generously] to importunate poets that other people’s reputation for generosity is forgotten.

18. You have no need to wage war if your restraint has been secured in exchange for terms; [though] en route [to attack you], a king makes a peace pact—one which he finds harsh as he is afraid of you.
19 Téid an teacht tar ghlór nGaidheal; a geart do-chóidh a síneadh; cairt ar Bhóinn leat 'ga léaghadh lér seanadh cóir mhac Mileadh.

20 Ní cosmhail cur 'na haghaidh an bhreathsoin rugadh reamhaibh; beir do bhreith, a leac Lughaidh; cumhain leat bheith ag Breaghaibh.

21 Anamhain ar iocht t'oinigh ar shir danacal oraibh; rí ad cheann mar ghiall a ngeimhil; geibhidh geall 'na fhíadh d'fhogail.

Readings from D: 19c ghá; 20b rÉmhaibh; 20c bhÉth; 20d brÉghaibh; 21d geibhidh; bhíadh dfhógail.

19. The covenant outweighs the triumph of the Goidhil; their right has been suspended; the charter to the Boyne, whereby the rights of the sons of Mfl were denied, is read by you.

20. It is not proper that what was previously decreed should be opposed; pass your judgement, stone of Lughaidh; you remember belonging to Breagha.

21. A king comes to you like a hostage in a chain [and] accepts a pledge to plunder [only] in his own land; to remain at the mercy of your magnanimity was all the protection he sought from you.
Poem 5: Geall re hiarlacht ainm barúin

22 Breath nach ainiúl ar Eolchaibh
as lEt a bharúin bhéarthair
coig gEill an tam fá niarthur
fiafraidh dhéin ghall an ngéabhthair

23 Tus na garma as duit dhleaghair
tar a dtarla a dtoigh chuiridh
don nos riamh do bhí a mBrEghaibh
gach rí ad dheaghaidh siar suidhigh

24 Deacair diall re a ndiol ionaidh
riar do dhíorma gur doilidh
mas bEg libh do lión cuiridh
do lión bruaidhEn fhír oinigh

Readings from D: 22b bhéarthar; 22c niartrhair; 23a dl.; 23b cu.; 24b doiligh; 24d bruighin.

22. A maxim not unknown to the wise will be demonstrated by you, baron; when the five [provinces'] hostages are sought ask the Goill's troop will they receive them.

23. Pride of place is rightly yours above all in the banquet-house; in accordance with the custom that was ever in Breagha, every [other] king sits behind you.

24. So difficult was it to provide fitting accommodation that it was hard to provide for your troop; [even] if you deem the number of your followers a small guesting party, they [still] filled the house of a generous man.
25. There is no anger a queen would bear towards you after killing her husband in battle which you could not pacify by [merely] looking at her.

26. No one feared their dues when they undertook your terms; it was not difficult for a territory which once had a king to be without one [now].

27. Many territories will remember that your wrath was difficult to appease; it is not fitting [i.e. wise] for a king to be engaged in plunder [as] it is risky when your anger is aroused.
Poem 5: Geall re hiarlacht ainm barúin

28 An smachdúd as duit dhleaghair
a bharúin do bhreith dhlighidh
leigthear sáor í dot omhan
 craobh thoraidh as sí ar slighidh

29 Láoch rioghdha nach dóich dhliomdhá
 sínd tar ógbhaidh nÉmhna
ní sgéil sin ar chloind gcondla
 goill ar colbha a dtigh thÉmhra

30 Fiú a rug an tollamh uirthe
conair do chur a leithne
an sgol ní iarr dá aithne
achd cor aighthe ar fhiadh neithe

Readings from D: 28a dl.; 28b bhrEth; 28c do tomhain; 29a dóigh dhíomdha; 29d cholbha.

28. A fruitful branch blocking a path is left untouched out of fear of you; such control as this is rightly yours, baron, according to legal decree.

29. Royal warriors who are not easily beaten surpass the men of Eamhain; it is no slur on the descendants of Connla that the Goill are on the border [i.e. guarding it] in the house of Teamhair.

30. What the poet brought along the path was of such volume as to widen it; poets need only visit the land of the Inny to gain recognition.
31. Christopher is Teamhair’s fitting partner; he is on a par with her; she did not have to go far: it was within Breagh itself that she made her choice.

32. He takes royal hostages out of battle until he establishes his sway throughout the land; if Delvin’s host be few in number when engaging the enemy they are numerous afterwards.

33. No poet has set as his goal to leave the plain of Meath; having travelled the other territories he would not think of leaving.
Poem 5: Geall re hiarlacht ainm barúin

34 Ni guth deinneach déis chomhóil gan dréim ré dénamh roilúth
tug fear gan chúimhne ar camháir fadháil fhileadh bhruídhne an bharúin

35 Réir gach áoinfhir dá bhfhadh har
ní saoílte as méid a mhuirir
créad dob áil do chóig comhaibh láimh ré sgolaibh fhóid Fhuinídh

36 Ag so an clár ar tí a thilte a fhíoch fá lár ní leigfe
ní ghabh coir far glár airtne rádh cairte caigh ní chreidfe

Readings from D: 34b deinnamh; 34c cha.; 34d faghail fíEgh bruídhne; 35a bhfhaghare; 35b méd; 36b fhíoch.

34. No one should be censured for not attempting to leave in a hurry after carousal; partaking of the feast in the baron’s house causes a man to be without thought for the morning.

35. One would not have thought that all could be satisfied given their number; [one wonders] how [even] the five provinces could cater for the poetic schools of Ireland.

36. This land is about to be occupied; he will not abandon his wrath; the claim of the charter of others does not seize justice [i.e. rightly prevail?] over the land of Ireland; he will not believe such a claim.
37. It is no surprise that poets’ words should be found insufficient in times of battle; [nevertheless] their compositions support Delvin’s host when it enters the fray.

38. Few would seek to fight [him] if he approached them across the line [of battle]; he is at liberty to sleep at the ford of battle [such is his prowess]; [thus,] it took longer for the enemy to come to him.

39. The daughter of the earl of Máigh’s land surpasses earls in generosity; Máire does not delay in rewarding poets [as] she dreads causing offence.
Poem 5: Geall re hiarlacht ainm barúin

40. A poet is unlikely to have to wait, [as otherwise] her cheek will blush with her English blood; she does not wait for her wealth to be requested; she shares it in accordance with the wishes of the poets.

41. She is renowned for never having hoarded golden trinkets; [she is] a woman who refuses to hang onto wealth, a stately young lady of the blood of the earls.

42. Gearóid’s daughter [is] a fruitful shore [and] is a likely good source of generosity for poets; she fulfils the expectations of importunate poets.
43 RibhEn gan éra nollaimh
  do mhédaigh gnáoi do ghalluibh
  deacair buing ré a clú a gcumaidh
  cnuí mhullaigh chroinn ós chrannuibh

43 Ribhean gan éra n-ollaimh,
  do mhéadaigh gnáoi do Ghallaibh;
  deacair boing re a clú a gcumaidh;
  cnuí mhullaigh chroinn ós chrannaibh.

Readings from D: At foot of poem is written: G:E:A:LL.

43. Refusing no poet, she is a lady who has enhanced the status of the Goill; it is difficult
to contend with her fame when a comparison is made; she is the topmost nut of the highest
tree!
Poem 6: *Cia as sine cairt ar chríoch Néill?*

**Poem 6: Cia as sine cairt ar chríoch Néill?**

Domhnall mac bruaidEgha

1 Cia as sine cairt ar chríoch Neill
míthidh dí dul go haoinfhreimh
raoin dirghe as daibh as aithnidh
sgríbhne cáigh dá gcúartaitheór

2 Cia ar tíis o tainic ceasair
don droing fluil animreasain
fan gerich naosda mbEnnruruidh mbug
dEghshluaigh as taosga tainic

3 Goill fodla an aignidh thnúthaigh
cá drEim aca as andúthaigh
an clar sEng gormfhoichneach glas
cá dream chomnuidhthEch chosnas

Domhnall Mac Bruaideadhha

1 Cia as sine cairt ar chríoch Néill?
Míthidh dí dul go haoinfhréimh:
raoin dírghe as dáibh as aithníd,
sgríbhne cáigh dá gcúartaíthír.

2 Cia ar tíis ó thainig Ceasair
don droing fluil a n-imreasain
fan gerich n-aosda mbeanruaidh mbug
deaghshluaigh as taosga tánaig?

3 Goill Fhóidla an aignidh thnúthaigh
gá dream aca as andúthaigh?
An clár seang gormfhoichneach glas
gá dream comhnaítheach chosnas?

**Heading:** D. mac daire (mac br. omitted) C; cecinit DEC (omitted in N); heading omitted in A.
1a charír E; 1b dhí DA; dol EA; héínfréimh EA; 1c ráon C; first as omitted in C; 1d cháigh C; hole in A between sgr. and gc.; 2a tíis E; o a C; thainig D, ttáinic EAC; 2b druing DC; ulil E, f(uil) A; (...reásain (hole in MS) A; 2c bán (for fan) E; 2d taimduig D, támúicc EC; 3a fhóidla DAEC; 3b ga EAC; anndúthoig EA; 3c gormfhochtneach DEAC; 3d ga EA; comhnaítheach DE, chom(...gh(().e(().ch A; cosnas E.

1. Whose is the oldest chartered right to the land of Niall? It is time it went to a single stock: straight [genealogical] lines [leading to that stock] are known to all records, if they be examined.

2. Of those who quarrel over the ancient land of russet peaks [i.e. Ireland], which good hosts came first after Ceasair?

3. Which group among Ireland’s eager-spirited Goill is alien? Which group of inhabitants defends the smooth land of rich green corn-blades?
4. Ireland of the graceful rivers was invaded six times since the Flood by the heroes of the Greek host; it is fitting that I preserve [knowledge of] them.

5. According to the evidence of clear history, it was a prince of Greek stock who first seized red-weaponed Ireland, Félim’s land about which hosts were covetous.

6. Parthalón proceeded from Greece with a host of warriors who never shirked discomfort, and spent a while—no short task—in this land after the Flood.
Poem 6: Cia as sine cairt ar chrích Néill?

7 Clunda neimidh fa nua cruth
sluadh fhEir mbolg na mbárc siobhlach
fan da tred do bhí banbha
an ghreg dob í a nathardhá

8 Gaoídhil bhanbha na mbárc gcórr
tuatha dealbhda de dhanand
dfhuil greg na síodbhrugh sliEmain
fiorbhun a ngéag ngenealaigh

9 Siol (g)Erailt le ngluais (deighsh)en
ag so an seisEdh saoir(...)eal
cairt gun tred ar fionnmadh bhfiail
do rioghraid ghreg dan gabhaill

7a neimheadh EAC; is (for fa) E; nuaidh C; 7b sluagh A; fear E; siúbhlaich C; 7c thréid DE; an bhanbha (for banbha) EA; 7d anathardhá EA; 8a banbha E; mbárc córr D; mbrug coorr EC; 8b dealbhda DEAC; danann A; 8c dfein (for dfhuiil) ECA; 8d ngeil-uigh C; 9a gErailt DE, ngearlait AC; deighshén DACE; 9b seachtmhadh EA; sáoircheinéil DEA, sáoirchinéil C; 9c on (for gun) A; fhionnmhagh DEC; fháil C, fáil E; 9d don E, tre (for do) AC; fionnmagh (for rioghraid) C; greg AE; ga (for dan) E, da AC; ghabháil A.

7. The sons of Neimheadh of fair form [and] the Fir Bolg host of swift-moving ships: Ireland was under both of these tribes; Greece was their native land.

8. Ireland’s Gaoídhil of stout ships [and] the shapely Tuatha Dé Danann: the true origin of their genealogical branches is [that] of the Greek race of smooth wondrous castles.

9. Gearailt’s race [i.e. the FitzGeralds], with whom good fortune goes, is the sixth noble tribe of Greek kings for whom it [i.e. Ireland] is a conquest—they have a charter to the noble land of Fál.
10 Among the fresh, smooth-weaponed host from overseas, which race alone is not alien to Ireland but the FitzGeralds, the cream of foreign knights of the land of Lorc?

11 Of what use to the race of royal Gearailt is their long-standing claim upon the land of old Art, if the plain of Té has been given up to the English since yesterday?

12 The land of Ireland should not be in bondage; I know well that Séamas will attempt to pacify the wild land of Conn during (?) his period in the earldom of the land of Munster.
Poem 6: Cia as sine caitr ar chrích Néill?

13 Ón bhreathe, leannain (Leas) a cuirc
(t)tamhann cúimhra chlann nGearailt
b(re)ac inghealta tuile as tráigh
(t)amhá ciim ra clann nGearailt
b(re)ac inghealta tuile as tráigh

14 Bas shEang gan sEdh a séadibh
(craobh dá bheacaid finnghréagaigh
sgath na laochfhreimhe tar linn
as brath aoinchele dEirinn

15 Ceandas fodla na bhfiond nglan
dá dtuigt a d'Ua na niarladh
tearc ro ceime na chartaigh
mó a fheile ina iomarcaigh

13. Only likely spouse of Core’s fort, fragrant tree of the FitzGeralds, preying trout of ebb and flow, the prophesied one of Bearchán’s vision.

14. Graceful of hand and unmindful of wealth, a scion to whom the fair Greeks bow, the best of the heroic race from across the sea: he is a likely mate for Ireland.

15. Should the leadership of Ireland of the bright fields be given to the descendant of the earls—scarcely is the dignity of its charter too high [for him to achieve] (?)—his bounty [would be] greater than his gain.
16. Long ago a prophet foretold that there would come from the Greek tribe a foreigner who will rescue the Irish [and] release the race of Criomhthan from their great oppression.

17. Since it is to the Greek warriors of the graceful horses that the prophet promises [the task of] Ireland’s deliverance, it is likely that hope will be got from the defending shield of Ireland’s shore.

18. On another occasion, the attention of Séadna and Fionnchú—two holy patrons of the land of Ireland—was on prophesying about the land of the graceful, noble, pure, grassy roads.
Poem 6: Cia as sine cairt ar chrích Néill?

19 An mbiadh coidhche gan chur rú
don fháidh do fhia(...)(...a)idh fiondchu
a fhréamh féini ar fhadh gcobhthaigh
nó an mbiadh eire ag allmharrchaibh

20 Tiucfa sunna ar sa sédna
a chléirigh ghil ghnúsdeadla
sáoirghréagach tar sál a noír
go clár gcloinghéagac gcobthuig

21 Fásfaidh uaidh cá huaisle dr'Em
maiince chosnaimh clair (e)irEnd
bhúdh lán dhíobh fionnmhadh fóda
síol nach iognadh durfhógra

19a (for An) A; mbiadh D, mbeid AE, mbiadh C; chor riu E; 19b dhúaifaigh D, do fhiai-foidh EC, do fhiaoidh A; 19c hole in A before féine; iath C; 19d mbaíd C; allmhórchoibh E, allmurrachaibh C; 20a Tiocfa E, Tioc(...) A; Tioghf- C; sund EAC; senda A, sˈEnna C; 20b ghloin C; ghnúsdeadla DC; 21 This quatrain is not in E. 21a Geinfidh AC (for Fásfaidh); ga C; 21b cosnoimh A; chláir DC, cuain (for clair) A; cearn DAC; 21c budh DAC; díobh DAC; 21d dhurfhógra DAC.

19. Fionnchú asked the prophet whether the natives of the land of Cobhthach would ever be free from attack or whether Ireland would [always] be held by foreigners.

20. ‘O fair, brave-faced cleric,’ said Séadna, ‘a noble Greek will come from the east across the sea to the stooping-branched plain of Cobhthach.

21. ‘From him will spring forth the tribe that will protect the land of Ireland—what nobler band? Fóda’s fair plain will be filled with [this] rightly heralded race.
22. 'They will induce the tribe of Eoghan—it will in effect be unwilling obedience—to bound westward beyond old Luachair into the steeply-banked stronghold of Maicnia.

23. 'The grassy land of Cashel's plain will belong to that swarm of true bees, the earls; they will send the Dál gCais stepping from the territory of Munster across royal Limerick's waters.

24. 'Goill will come from yonder land who will betray the earlier [Greek] Goill: a spirited royal stock of firm deed, they [will come] from England.
25 'Tír choillgheal chloinne hÉibhír leó sin—ní sliocht indéinimh—
gan anóir naomh ná neimheadh
fa thaom an shóidh fhúigfidhreach.

26 'Biaidh learg mhíngheal mhúir Chobhthaigh
'na gорт shiolta ó Shagsanachaíbh;
biaidh a láin clochtaireabh gcorr
um chlár bhfochaintiúigh bhFréamhann.'

27 'Sloinn,' ar Fionnchú na bhfeart ngrinn,
cia, a Shéadna, shaorfas Éirinn
ar searg d'uaislibh cláir Chonnla
ón dáimh dhuaibhshigh dhanardha?'

25. 'The bright-wooded land of the descendants of Éibhear will be left by them in a state of
misery without honour for saints or sanctuaries; it is not an example fit to be followed!'

26. 'Ireland’s smooth, bright surface will be turned into a sown (?) field by the English; there
will be many stout stone dwellings around Fréamhann’s corn-filled plain.'

27. ‘Tell me, Séadna,’ said Fionnchú of the swift miracles, ‘after the downfall of Ireland’s
nobles, who will free her from the stern English troop?’
28 Adhainfidh (i)s an aird teas aoibheal (bEo ar) nach bi(a) dimhea(s) ó mb&ad (reidhshlighthe imraith gcuinn) (...) le caich san cho(g)uill

29 Gluaisid gregaig ghuir mhaidhe (r.agcois sin) sluagh comb(aide) (r... triat)ghall tEmrach brEgh as (fialchlann mEnm)nach mhilEdh

30 Fechfaid dfhaoibhruibh a narm dte cia (diobh cla...d) feas a (cheile) (an) sluadh fraochdha a foidmhuidh chuinn (sanóg... laochdha o lun...)
31 ‘Tell me, O great prophet of Heaven, which of the two battle-troops will possess the land of Ireland as a result of this fight you foresee?’

32. ‘The land of Flann,’ said Séadna of the pure psalms, ‘will be taken [lit. ‘had’] from that fierce zealous throng by her own fair Goill.’ The overthrow of London’s host pleases me!

33. ‘After the future fight over this bright pure land in fair Cliú, there will be a wall of English bones which [even] neighbouring herds cannot breach.’
34 Ag so a bhranain bhrúich luimnigh, a mheic Mhuiris mhionfhuaighlidh, cuid ghall don tairngire ar dteacht; ní ham ainbfhine d'éisdeacht.

35 Tusa chuirfeas cath saingeal, tú an cniocht ar ar ceadchailleadh, tú an aoibheal dá n-éir doigh; fa fhéin nGaoidheal griosfuidhear.

36 Treisi ghaoidheal do ghabhail, sgrios Gall do ghort Pharthalán, cia an faidh nar dheaghthairngir duit, a leathLaighnigh chlair Chormaic?

34 A bhrúich E, bhrúach A, bhrúach C; 34b mhic CA; 34c gall EC; 34d tairngaire E; 35a Thusa D; 35c taoibhion É; aiséir EAC; 35d féin DEC, fein A; 36a gáoidheal DEC; 36b gall EC; (for do) A; parthalán E, parthalain A, parrtholain C; 36c dhEgh thairrtairngir DC, dheagthaíngaire E; dhoit A; 36d clair E; cornmuic DE.

34. O hero of Limerick’s shore, O son of smooth-talking Muiris, the part of the prophecy relating to the Goill has herewith come to pass; it is no longer time to hold peace with the alien tribe.

35. It is you who will fight the battle of Saingeal, you are the knight who was first betrayed, you are the ember from which the flame rises: the Gaelic host will be stirred up [by you].

36. Is there any prophet, O half-Leinsterman from Cormac’s plain, who has not predicted for you the assumption of power over the Gaoidhil [and] the banishment of the [New] Goill from the land of Parthalón?
37. About the bright-banked Boyne you will leave a row of stout towers in pieces; about Cuala [you will leave] derelict clay houses: the news of your [fulfilling of] prophecy [spreads] throughout Flann’s land.

38. For want of you, O joyous countenance, the Gaoithil have long been unable to secure [control over] fair harbour[s] in Ireland’s fresh bright undulating land.

39. If Séamas is the spouse of the small earldom of the plain of Mayne, it will be a widowed earldom when the sun-lit land of Dá Thí has chosen him.
40 Ar dhun gclair na ar chliu mái
da maithheadh mac meic seaain
na ar shean(n)loch ngleandurcas ngair
seanduthchas teamrach t(uatail)

41 Riu sin na seacnad deaghailt
soighin chaoin chland righearailt
taibhle a ngealtor sidhgheal sEng
cleachadh fhinfhleadh as ficheall

42 Eisdeacht cheoil a gcrot sithe
as sgaioleadh sgéil coigcriche
gnas a bhfiondbhan sa bhfliileadh
do chas iongnadh fhuicfidhear

40. For the sake of Dún Cláire, Cliú Máil or old Loch Gair of the steep fresh valleys, let not the grandson of Seaán forego Tuathail’s old territory of Tara.

41. The gentle advance/overture[s] (?) of royal Gearailt’s race, the battlements of their charming, fair, graceful, bright towers, partaking in winefeasts and the playing of chess: let him not avoid parting with these.

42. Listening to the music of their enchanting harps, the telling of tales of far-away lands, the company of their fair women and their poets: your wonderful circumstances will be left [behind by you].
Poem 6: Cia as sine cairt ar chríoch Néill?

43 Loingeas sionda na sreabh lag
sreathadh con im cheand (neabrad)
a fuinn (c)orra im chnoc ndEirce
na loc orra timerce.

Cia assine cairt

43 Loingeas Sionna na sreabh lag,
sreathadh con im Cheann nEabhrad,
a fuinn chorra im Chnoc nDeirce:
ná loc orra t’imirce!

Cia as sine cairt

43b rith accon (for sr. c.) C; chon DA; um AC; cheannoibh A, ceann E; neabrad D, bh-
fabhradh E, fheabhrad AC; 43cd In E the bottom of the page cuts through line c, obscuring
the lower part of some of the letters; however, these can be easily gleaned by comparison with
other copies; line d has been cut away entirely; 43c chorra DAC, cho(rr)a E; um AC; neirce
A, nei(r)cc E; 43d imeirce (without preceding t) A, animeirce (for timerce) C.

43. The ships of the gentle-streamed Shannon, the arraying of hounds around Ceann Eabhrad,
the tapering fields about Cnoc Deirce: do not abandon your expedition for them!
Text, variant readings and translation

Poem 7: Dá néall orchra ós iath Uisnigh

Diarmaid ua cobthaigh cecinit

1 Dá nèll orchra ós iath Uisnigh; a n-orchra cia ren cosmhaíl? Roghar fuair—fáth an ghuil-sín—ráth Uisnigh uain san orsain.

2 Brón sgoile an fhuinn-se Éibhir tuirse do loit ar luaghail; ní thug cosg do chaoi Eóghain beóghuin rosg fán mnáoi Muadhaigh.

3 Tig buain na héccsi uile don éccsin fúair an file; caoi nach bfuil na cháoi croídhe ní caoi sgoile a muigh Mhidhe.

Diarmaid Ua Cobhthaigh cecinit

1 Dá nèll orchra ós iath Uisnigh; an orcra cia ren cosmair roghar fuair fáth an ghuilsín ráth uisnigh úain san orsain.

2 Brón sgoile an fhuinnsi éimhir tuirrsi do loit ar luagh ail ní thug cosg do cháoi éoghain beóghuin rosg fán mnáoi múadhaígh.

3 Ticc buain na héccsi uile don éccsin fúair an file cáoi nach bfuil na cháoi croídhe ní cáoi sgoile amuigh mhidhe.

Copy N is acephalous; the poem’s heading and first 3 quatrains are taken from D. In D the heading is sliced along the tops of all letters and is rewritten in the margin.

1. Two clouds of grief cover the land of Uisneach; is there anything so ruinous! The cause of that grieving [is that] Uisneach’s fort got too short a spell in the vanguard.

2. The sadness of the poets of this land of Éibhear is a gloom that has sapped our vigour; [our] weeping over Eóghan was not halted by the reddening of eyes over the woman from the land of the river Moy (?).

3. The death of the poet causes the downfall of all poets; weeping that is not from the heart is not to be found among poets in the plain of Meath.
Poem 7: Dá néall orchra ós iath Úisnigh

4 Cuid dom thoiscc fán leic línigh
roisg do bhEith ar na mbÉóghoin
mall do bhí an dearc fá deraibh
gu féaghuin dí ar fhEirt nÉoghain

5 Ar ndol síos don ghloir ghnathaigh
sgol gan óidh ar fhion dfhechain
coscc ar chlÉir na cui r dfhÍachaibh
ar fhuil bhfhÍachaíd féin féachaidh

6 Beag nar fhEerr dul na dhÉghaidh
ar ndul do chiond ar gcinidh
a dtós an láoi do labhair
mairidh caoi fós ag filidh

4 Cuid dom thoisg fán leic línigh
roisg do bheith ar n-a mbeóghoin;
máll do bhí an dearc fá dhrefáibh
go féaghain dí ar fheart nÉóghain.

5 Ar ndol síos don ghloir ghnáthaigh
sgol gan óidh ar fhion d’fhéachain;
cosg ar chléir ná cuir d’fhíachaibh;
ar fhuil bhFiachaidh féin féachaidh.

6 Beag nár fhéarr dul ’na dheaghadh
ar ndul do chionn ar gcinidh;
a dtós an laoi do labhair,
maraidh caoi fós ag filidh.

Readings from D: 4b mbeóghuin; 4c dhéaraibh; 5b óidh; 6b cheann; 6d maraidh.

4. Part of my purpose at the engraved tombstone is for [my] eyes to be sorely hurting; [my]
eye was slow to tear till it beheld Eóghan’s grave.

5. Constant glory having come to an end, poets have lost interest in drinking wine; do not
admonish the poets [over their grieving]; look at [the anguish of] Fiachaidh’s race itself!

6. With the head of our kindred dead, it would almost be better to follow him; the poet’s
weeping began at break of day; it continues still.
7. [The loss of] the two who were laid to rest merits much grieving in more than this year [alone]; I have looked back at Durrow; it increases my crying on Sunday.

8. Due to the death of Eóghan—grievous loss!—the great poetic gatherings of the territories do not convene; importunate poets have lost hope of assistance as a result of [this] fierce (?) attack upon them.

9. Pools [of tears] sting my eyelids for Cathaoir’s daughter in the grave; after going to Durrow I got no respite from weeping on Sunday.
Poem 7: Dá néall orchra ós iath Úisnigh

10 Barr ar ar gcáoine cuirthear
fá theann gach aoinfhir orthuibh
guin chroidhe and as athghuin
sgarthain sgoile chlann gcobhthaigh

11 Beantar mo rosg da fhréimhaibh
daithle mo bhos do bheóghuin
nir choir teachd tar cháoi gcéillid
mar dhéanmh gcáoi ar fheart nÉóghuin

12 Barr úaithe ar chaoine ar gcínidh
saoirbhEn fá suaithndh neinigh
glas dom dhÉir duind na deaghaidh
dleaghair buing gheill a gEimhil

Readings from D: 11d dhéínimh; 12a cháoineadh; 12b suaithndh; 12d dlÉghair; géill.

10. Successive heart-wounds are caused by the parting of the poets of Cobhthach’s race; our lament is added to by dint of the distress of each man among them.

11. Having sorely hurt my hands [i.e. from clapping in grief] my eyes lift from their roots [i.e. from crying]; it would not be right to speak of restrained weeping as an [appropriate] form of lamentation over the grave of Eóghan.

12. [The death of] a noble woman who was a paragon of generosity adds to our kindred’s lamenting; my blood-red tear [is] unlocked following her [death]—a hostage must be released from bondage!
13. The two calamitous tidings in my thoughts are nothing less than the decimation of a kindred! [While] everyone feels heart-rending grief, the women of Meath have another reason to grieve.

14. Companionless in her weeping over the loss that torments her, a warrior's wife has used all her strength to suppress her crying on Eoghan's grave.

15. In spite of former practice no attempt is made [by me] to lie on the gravestone; today a poet will not find at your grave the love he got in the past.
Poem 7: Dá néall orchra ós iath Uisnigh

16 Gúais dol na cumaidh c(h)áoine
sgol do chruindigh na chéile
fríoth le dámh dfhéach(uin) tuaidhe
déanamh nuaidhe ar dháil ndÉire

17 Úaigh as ceannphort don (cu)mhaidh
úain ar a sealbad siridh
fátúaighsi an tam do fhuirigh
cuiridh barr uaisle ar fhilidh

18 Bean do shní torchra dfheaghain
dob í an orchra dárríribh
do gheis atá ar huaidh dfhéaghain
buain a méruiabh mná mfulidh

Readings from D: 16a cháoine; 16c dfhéachain; 16d dÉnaimh; 17a chumhaidh; 17b a shealbhaibh; 18c húaigh.

16. It is dangerous to join in weeping with the poets who have gathered together; a new form of tear-shedding has been fashioned by them as a result of seeing your grave.

17. The grave is a stronghold of grief; a poet seeks to have it [to himself] for a spell; the time he lingered at your grave has greatly ennobled him.

18. Seeing your demise has tortured the soldier’s wife; it was truly a calamity; having seen your grave she is driven to wringing her fingers.
19. The sadness over [the death of] the darling of the women of Breagha’s plain has spread out like the heat of the sun; eyes shed blood about your grave; you are a [veritable] plunderer of poets [even though you lie] in the earth.

20. The poet did not go to your grave until his tears abated; [too] long [has] he [been] away from you; he impresses this upon Eóghan’s [i.e. your] grave.

21. Harder for me is your departure from Fiachaidh’s race; one does not go unscathed from loving [you]; they must make do with what is under them; your grave is their native land [now] (?).
Poem 7: Dá néeall orchra ós iath Uisnigh

22 A roscc ar ndul adÉoraibh
le goil na tuirsi tráighidh
níó an ag dráóidh thfhErt dfhéchain
bráoin a fremhuibh dErc dáillidh

23 Ar bhfios sgél oídhir aodha
toimhsidh sreabh a leim ludha
sreabh nar thathaigh a trágha
dána ar fEdh nachaidh úna

24 Tarla ar mhuir dánfadh uadha
gu dtucc ar tholchaibh shéala
mó as teand atáid na síona
fá cheand síodha fhóid enna

Readings from D: 22b ré; 23a oighir; 24a Tarla; 24b tolchaibh séalla.

22. Pouring forth [such] tears from the depths of his eyes, the poet could not retain the sight of your grave; his eye has [effectively] expired from weeping; it grows exhausted from the ardour of grief.

23. On learning the news of [the death of] Aodh’s heir a sea which did not visit its beaches [i.e. a very low sea] boldly equals(?) its great[est] flood throughout Ireland.

24. More severe is the weather as a result of [the death of] Ireland’s chief peacemaker; such a storm blew up at sea because of it that it has scarred the [very] hillsides.
25. That force [of the sea] has resulted in no boat facing it since last year; I can remember a
time when the current that [now] powers over the hills was silent.

26. Tilled hillsides which are not expected to deliver are without produce as a result of the
death; such grief has poured into the soil that they get no one to cultivate them.

27. The poets of Ireland are so torn asunder by the death of one man that restrained grieving
cannot be adhered to; on seeing them do not begrudge bloodshed to tears.
Poem 7: Dá neáll orchra ós iath Uisnigh

28 Fiú a gcúma ar nég an fhileadh
ar thuirsi nach teid teimheal
as sé as nós do mháibh munhan
tos cumhadh dáibh sa deireadh

29 Ró tuirrse ar fheair ná hairigh
ar feedh an fhuiindsí fhuiindh
ná máoidh dáil déar na dheaghaidh
géal do dhealaigh dhaimh ndoilidh

30 Tré fheart aibhilín dhéachain
aibhilín nár dhear dheoraídh
do shín mé im nóin ar nuaghul
cóir an fúarad é im Éoghan

Readings from D: 28b ar a tturis; 28d dháibh; 29b fhuinig (above the g is written: nó dh).

28. As is their wont, the women of Munster grieve both first and last; such is their sadness following the death of the poet that grief cannot be extinguished.

29. Do not think that one man’s sadness exceeds [that of others] throughout this land of Ireland; do not begrudge the flood of tears that follows his death, an event which has scattered importunate poets.

30. From looking at the grave of Aibhilín who never refused [hospitality to] a poet I began again to weep in the evening; it is a fitting way to temper [my grief] over Éoghan.
31 So great is the extent of their broken-heartedness that no trifling tears are cried; the weeping of the race of Cobhthach will exceed the rain of Friday.

32 Cathaoir’s daughter, paragon of virtue, until the debility(?) of loving her drained away [i.e. abated], many the man throughout Ireland whose tears were reddened by the tidings [of her death].

33 My grief is inestimable so accustomed have I become to weeping; why try to impede the eye [when] it is longer-lasting for spilling tears.

Readings from D: 31b orthaibh; 32b tathaoir; 32c dÉra; 32d fEdh; 33d dhail.
Poem 7: Dá néall orchra ós iath Uisnigh

34 Gan sileadh déar ní dhlighe
a fhír fhéaghta na sgoile
créad ciall na ceas da chuire
iarr duine fEsda ó bhfoighe.

35 Cnairt gach laoi ag cleir fan gcomhra
si' dod thrÉigEn ní thiobhra;
do ioc dErc dhÉoir nac dErna
mÉoir leabhra ar t'fhheart as iomdha.

Da nell. o. ó. iath (...)

Readings from D: 34a dhlighidh; 34d bhfoighe. Dhá appears after end of final quatrains.

34. You should not be without tears, you who look at the poets; is there any sense to the question you pose? [See if you can] find anyone now from whom you will get [an answer to it].

35. Visiting the grave every day will not bring poets to abandon you; eyes atoned for unwept tears; many are the long fingers on your grave.
Poem 8: Táinig léan do leith Mhogha

Aonghas ó dalaigh

1 Táinig léan do leith Mhogha
nach bí a n-aire ar éantamha;
ar thuit do leith mhór Mhogha
lór do chléith a gcéadfadha.

2 Leath Mogha, mó ioná gach sgéal
tuitim a nGaoidheal nguistréan;
na sluagh throma—truagh an léan!—
gan luadh orra acht a n-uirsgeal.

3 Tuirseach bonaidh (?) bhím dá los
múith mhaigEnta as tréan thógbhos
gin gur hé do niam a nos
a Dhé as cian ó do chodlas.

Aonghus Ó Dálaigh

1 1 Tainig léan do leith Mhogha
nach bí a n-aire ar éantamha;
ar thuit do leith mhór Mhogha
lór do chléith a gcéadfadha.

2 2 Leath Mogha, mó ioná gach sgéal
tuitim a nGaoidheal nguistréan;
na sluagh throma—truagh an léan!—
gan luadh orra acht a n-uirsgeal.

3 3 Tuirseach bonaidh (?) bhím dá los;
múith m ’aigeanta as tréan thogbhas;
gion gur é do-niam a-nos,
a Dhé as cian ó do chodlas.

Heading: After the poet’s name in N is written in a different hand: cecinit o duin go (Mir). After the poet’s name D includes: cecinit.

Readings from D: 1a mogha; 1c móir mogha; 2a mogha; ná; 3a bun béim.

1. Misfortune has come to Mogh’s half [of Ireland], who[se people] are not used to being leaderless; the extent of the loss suffered by Mogh’s great half is such that it blots out their sense[s].

2. Greater than all tidings is the fall of the fierce and strong Gaoidhil of Mogh’s half; the only mention [now] of the mighty hosts is in legend—a sad plight!

3. I am constantly (?) sad because of it; it exacerbates my mind’s dejection; it is a long time since I slept, O God, yet [even] now I cannot do so.
Poem 8: Táinig léan do leith Mhogha

4 Do gadadh ní gasraidh bhuan
a munhain na mór n-ìnnfhuar
féile agus saoire na sluagh;
as treidhe daoine ndhimbuan

5 A fhodla rob aoihthind duit
(gu) bhfuair tu an tEidhm rod comhloit
lór truaidhe re taoibh (ar) thuit
ar sgeol do chúaine córmacne

6 Do sgoil an sgeal rom loitfe
an chlandsa smí comhrucha
saodhal croind a(r ... th)uitm(e)
do bhí gár gcloind córmacne

Readings from D: 4d tréighe dháoin; 5b go; cho.; 5c truairge; ar; 6a sge rom. There is staining after sge(al) in N about the size of a couple of words, but evidently no text is missing. 6c saogháil; ar tí thuítmhe.

4. Munster of the pleasing castles has been deprived of the hospitality and freedom enjoyed by the people—impermanent things, they are attributes of mortal men.

5. O Ireland, happy were you until you were afflicted by the trouble that has ruined you; along with [the sadness over] those who died, great is the sadness of those among Cormac’s brood who scattered.

6. The news that will destroy me has torn this band apart and they will not come together [again]; Cormac’s people lived the life of a tree about to fall.
7 Bás Einfhir diobh—dia do ghoimh!—
do laghdaigh loise ar ndomhain;
sluagh Gaoidheal, giodh gearr ó shoin,
ar sgaoileadh tre cheann gCodhail.

8 A chlann Eóghain nach ob troid,
ó nach tic an té iarraidh
madh fail na féaghaidh a mbroid;
déanaidh bhur ndáil tar Dhiarmaid.

9 Diarmaid Fionn, leannán Leamhna,
dursan úir fá a idhErla;
a nocht m' moide ar meanma
moige ar dtocht mo thighearna.

**Readings from D:** 7c slúagh; 8c magh; mbruid; 9d mhóige.

7. The death of one of them, alas, has reduced the splendour of our world; the Gaelic host has scattered because of [the death of] Codhal’s leader, though it has only recently occurred.

8. O race of Eóghan who refuse no fight, since the one whom we seek is not coming [back],
do not behold the plain of Ireland in bondage; come together despite [the death of] Diarmaid.

9. Diarmaid Fionn, Leamhain’s lover, alas that clay surrounds his curly hair; tonight my spirits are none the greater for my youth, now that my lord is dead.
Poem 8: Táinig léan do leith Mhogha

10 Bas i charrthaigh an chnis ghil
in bhur gcroidhe a chland eimhir
as bead sochraide mar sin
a ndochraide deg éinfhir

11 Braighde sna bliadhnuibhsi a nall
úathuibh gá abhra núamhall
fulang dhaobh fa doladh ngall
as moladh do chraoibh chualand

12 Ní gabhthar uainn anba an chor
braighde ach clann riogh as righan
ni ruce o dháil chais ar chrodh
ach a nglais lámh do lionadh

Readings from D: 11c dáoibh; dholadh; 12a cor; 12b acht; rígh; 12c dhál ccais; 12d acht.

10. The death of the descendant of Carthach of the fair skin is in your hearts, O children of Éibhear; thus their misery arising from the death of one man is the misery of a funeral cortege.

11. He of the fair and gentle eyelash held hostages from foreigners over these past years; [the fact] that you [now] suffer the foreigners’ imposition is, [in effect], praise for the hero of Cuala.

12. [Diarmaid] did not [need to?] seize cattle from the Dál gCais but [instead] he used to fill their handcuffs [i.e. they yielded hostages to him]; it is not hostages that are taken from us, alas, but the progeny of kings and queens.
13 Tucc doinEnd dáir ndión ar bhroid mac Éadaoine an fhúilt fhíarálig; gebhaidh Sionann re síol mBloid; ionann ’s ar ndión do Dhiarmaid.

14 Gacli buinne tréan, gach tonn mhear, a bhfuaim as cian do-chluintEar tucc ó ghúira a nglór na sreabh lór a truaighe acht nach tuigthear.

15 An adhaidh deis fhir bhoirche dhághbhail a núaith bhéaldoirche maírgh tair sgan a tocht chóidhche pláidh mar oloc na héanoidhce.

Readings from D: 13b fhíarálig; 14d tuiccther; 15a adhoigh; 15b úaigh; 15d pláigh.

13. The [death of the] son of Éadaoin of the soft wavy hair has brought bad weather to protect us against attack; the Shannon will hold out against the race of Blod; it is as though Diarmaid were protecting us.

14. [The death of] the descendant of Guaire has caused every strong current and every swift wave; their sound is heard far off, save that the extent of its sadness is not understood.

15. Woe to him who endures a scourge like that of the night after the hero of Boirche was left in a dark-mouthed grave—may it never come again!
Poem 8: Táinig léan do leith Mhogha

16. The [protecting] door of Mac Con’s great Munster has fallen; [Munster] was slower to hear [of the death of] Dor’s leader because of the people at the grave beating it. (?)

17. The prince of Cliú surpassed all—if anyone did—in heroism and kindheartedness; [even] after his death, it takes a brave man not to pay Diarmaid his due.

18. The death of Domhnall’s son results in my receiving no invitation; I have not found honour for some time; I have got all I am going to get.
19. Lest the fatal news of [death of] the Munsterman sadden the wife of the king who had many gifted troops, Dubh Easa got her request to die before the hero of the fort of Limerick.

20. The lamenting for him by his second wife, she of the fair wavy hair, was all the greater for having survived him; as Dubh Chabhlaigh mourns you, O hero of Carman, she is envious of your first wife.

21. Your household comes out in a great spirited cortege; as a result of your death, O hero of Tailte, a [single] battalion would slay your household troops.
Poem 8: Táinig léan do leith Mhogha

22 Ar an bhfhód fa bhfuil do chorp
tréigfead aoibhneas na nardphort
mé ar an uaidh agus í ort
da ní dhuin don bhandtrocht

23 Dúaidh an ríogh nocha raghsa
na an broineach mor mallbhan-sa
daoinne coirthe ó theacht tharsa
na seacht dtroighthe talmhansa

24 A beith ar Dhiarmaid dhúin ghuill
don uaidh as uime dheachraim
a lícosa ar a mbíod mo bhuiind
ní diotsa a líog do leanfúinn

Readings from D: 22c úaigh; 23a Dúaigh; 23b bhr.; mhall.; 24a dúin; 24b úaigh; 24c mbíodh.

22. I will abandon the pleasure of lofty places for the spot of earth under which your body lies; two things deprive the women of you: that I am upon the grave and that it is upon you.

23. Neither I nor this great host of noble ladies will leave the king’s grave; people are tired from speaking of these seven feet of earth.

24. The reason I cling to the grave is because it is upon Diarmaid of Dún Guill; O gravestone to which my feet have become accustomed, it is not to you that I would [have wished to] adhere.
Text, variant readings and translation

25 An tanam sa chli chuga
mac de muna dhianruga
dul ar sál as é muga
do ghradh dé agas diarmada

26 Re diarmaid do déaghladh me
lEir ar ar dtuirrsi thrúaithne
as gearn do dheachramar de
sníor hsheachnamar c(h)En gcuailg(h)ne

27 Gearr bhíos fear ag fadhail chuir;
téid an bioth mar chuip gcubhair
lEigthEr dom chois mé don mhuidh
nocha né a nois a nuraiddh

Readings from D: 25c mhuga; 26b thúaithne; 26c dhe; 26d CEnn Cuailgne; 27a faghail; 27c mhuigh.

25. Unless the son of God quickly carries off my body and soul it is my wish to go across the sea out of love for God and for Diarmaid.

26. It is clear from my wretched sorrow that I have been separated from Diarmaid; I followed Cuailghne’s chief for [but] a short period, but never forsook him.

27. It takes but a short time for a man to meet his downfall; the world passes like a foamy froth; I am abandoned to wander by foot; things are not as they were last year.
Poem 8: Táinig léan do leith Mhogha

28 Mac mEic chormaic chríche fáil
fríoth a mhoirn meisde a fadail
ní fhaghmaid dí ar dtocht í tháil
ní as bhudh ocl ar nanaír

29 Do ádhrs ó aois leanaibh
dúa chormaic mheic mhuireadhaigh
gan dól córn damh ad dhEghaid
achd a chor orm toileamhain

30 Déis a cháomhthaigh ar chlúimh dte
déis chomhoil churadh Éirne
máineas mar ré ag dula dhé
mo chumha mar e ag eirghe

Readings from D: 28a mhic co.; 28b mhúirn; fagháil; 29b co. mhic mu.; 29c dhámh; 30c mháinEis.

28. The favour of the grandson of Cormac of the land of Ireland was got [by me and I am] worse off [now] as a result; after the death of Tál’s descendant I do not [even] get as much favour as would be considered insulting.

29. I followed the grandson of Cormac son of Moireadhach since infancy; now that you are dead I only drink to cure myself of you[r loss]. (?) 

30. After his companionship on warm down, after the feasting of the champion of the Erne, my happiness is like the moon setting, my sadness like it rising.
Text, variant readings and translation

31 Diarmaíd mac Carrthaigh chuain dEn deiscurr Éireann do fhuaigheadh; céadbharr na bhfond tréis an bhfear budh éadrom madh trom t(h)uairthear.

32 Aonach tuaidh mar sin ná saoil ag síol chuirc nár chleacht miontaoim gan dáil náonaigh fá ghort ngáoil a sháodhail as oíc tiontaoibh.

33 A chuirp n’ogh na rath bhfhleadhmhar tug mé a nocht go nEimhshÉghmhar sgaileadh t’fhéine as máoith mhÉmnman lãoich dá chéile ag ceileabhradh.

Readings from D: 31a mhág cárr.; 31b fhuaigheadh; 31c bfer; 31d tú.; 32b cu.; 32c áonaigh; 32d sháoghail; 33a rígh; 33a bfhÉghmhar; 33d dá chéile.

31. Diarmaid Máig Carthaigh of the waters of Dean would have united the south of Ireland; as a consequence of [the death of] the man, the first crop of the lands will be meagre, [even] if heavily fertilized.

32. So do not expect a gathering in the north by Core’s descendants who are not accustomed to minor actions; no assembly meeting in the land of Gaol—O world, you cannot be trusted!

33. O body of the king of the feast-filled forts, what has made me weak tonight is the scattering of your troop—how heartrending!—[and] warriors bidding farewell to each other.
34. The condition of Caiseal’s troop after your death saddens me although they are not friends [of mine now?]; your nobles do not like to avoid a battle nor do they do so.

35. After his death—what grief!—a month feels like a year; we used to visit Tara as a household troop [but] will not do so again.

36. Sad now are the men of brave belligerent Munster; the fact that Broine’s king is [now] in heaven is breaking the hearts of his friends.
37 Do cheandaigh ghnáoi do ghabh sheilbh
do thúair nEmh naomhtha an frithfheidhm
nír sheachain sduadh bhéarbha bhéirn
acht madh bErna fhúar ithfearn

38 Dá adhbar a hanfaidh mhir
déis riogh béirre an bhairr ghlúinigh
tond chliodhna ag caoinEdh a fir
sag máoidheamh dhíomdha an dúilimh

39 Do creidEdh cealg an ollaimh
déis riogh an ruisc núaamhongaigh
a rádh gur m(h)air cleath chomair
ar gcreach as air fhuaramair

Readings from D: 37a gnáoi; seilbh; 37b thúir; 37c sduagh; bErn; 37d iEfirn; 38b ri; 39b righ;
39c mhair; fúaromair.

37. He earned distinction, he seized property, he deserved heaven—a blessed reward! The hero of Bearbha never avoided a [dangerous] gap, except for the cold gap of hell.

38. There are two reasons for the crazed fury of Cliodhna’s wave following [the death of] the curly-haired king of Béirre: it laments her husband and proclaims the wrath of the Creator.

39. The deceit of the poet was believed after [the death of] the king of the bright long-lashed eye; for saying that the hero of Comar [still] lived, that is why I am ruined.
Poem 8: Tainig léan do leith Mhogha

40 A ndeaghaidh dhiarmada find
cred feasda ar bhfeidhm anéirind
an gar nó an nEmhghar uadh ind
dá dhearbhadh trúadh nach tÉidhim

40 A ndeaghaidh Dhiarmada Finn,
créad feasda ar bhfeidhm a nÉirinn?
An gar nó an neamhghar uadh inn?
Dá dhearbhadh trúadh nach tégíím.

41 Mac éadaoine fá hard sdair
as domhnall mhac m(h)ég carrthaigh
do dhion shlógsh muman ni mhair
pudhar mhór gan a mhárthain

41 Mac Éadaoiní fa hard sdair
as Domhnaill mheic Mhéig Carthaigh
do dhion shlógsh Mumhan ní mhair;
pudhar mhór gan a mharthain.

42 Micheal ar mbreithEmh brátha
don chruinde as craobh núabhlátha
bioth mur tá gacha trátha
agár ndion lá an luanchrathá

42 Micheal, ar mbreitheamh brátha,
don chruinne as craobh nuaabhlaítha;
bíodh, mar tá gacha trátha,
agár ndion lá an luanchrathá.

Tainic len do leth moda
Tainig léan do leith Mhogha

Readings from D: 40d trúagh; téighim; 41b mhég; 42b cráoph; 42c bíodh; 42d This line is followed in copy D by: .T.

40. After Diarmaid Fionn, what now is my use in Ireland? Am I near or far away from him? It is a pity I do not die in order to find out.

41. The son of Éadaoin of high repute and of Domhnall son of Mág Carthaigh is no longer alive to protect the hosts of Munster; it is a great misfortune that he is dead.

42. Michael, our Doomsday judge, is a newly flowering branch for the world; may he protect us on Judgement Day, as he always does.
Poem 9: *Cuaine riogha ruig Eadan*

Donnchad mór o dalaigh

1 Cuaine riogha ruig eadan
madh ghéanar ór ghinseadar
triar c(h)ama fErchonta fear
badhbha gealchorra goidheal

2 Trí marcaigh mhuidhe line
trí gaisgeadhaigh gháirighe
deirgheala anaighthe mar fhuil
meirgadha chairthe an chompair

3 Imeartaigh óir an domhain
coindle choigidh conchubhair
triar diombras graineamhail glan
daileamhain iondmhas nuladh

Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh

1 Cuaine riogha ruig Eadan;
madh-ghéanar ór ghinseadar,
triar calma fearchonta fear,
badhbha gealchorra Gaoidheal.

2 Trí marcaigh Mhuighe Line,
trí gaisgeadhaigh Gháirighe,
deirggeala a n-aighthe mar fhuil,
meirgadha Chairte an Chompair.

3 Imeartaigh óir an domhain,
coinnle chóigidh Chonchubhair,
triar diomhas gráineamhail glan,
daileamhain ionnmhas nUladh.

1. Eadan bore a queen’s brood; fortunate the one to whom they were born, three brave valorous men, bright-crimson Gaelic warriors.

2. The three horsemen of Magh Line, the three warriors of Gáireach, bright and red are their faces like blood, [they are] the battle-standards of Cairthe an Chompair [i.e. Ulster].

3. The golden champions of the world, the paragons of Conchubhar’s province, three stately fearsome pure men, the dispensers of the treasures of Ulster.
Poem 9: Cuaine rioghna rug Eadan

4 Triar na dtrí macaibh máthar
croibhaing dileas dearbrathar
triar barrbhuidhe ag beóghoin fhearr
leóghain ghlanmhuidhe gaoideal

5 Meic rioghna dhúine dealga
tri coillbhile cnoidhearga
tri fliinnbhile gan chrand gréin
as clann inghine airdriogh.

6 Muircheartach muidhe line
aodh cuailgne corp séimhidhe
folt goblosgach gruadh mar fhuil
an sduadh gormrosgach gofraidh

4 This quatrain is omitted in U. 4a Aointriar do m. F, Áon triur na m. T, Triar do mhacuibh a R, Triar dil do mhacaibh M (for Triar na dtrí m.); mathair T; 4b dhileas M; dearbrathair T; 4c triur T; fear FTR; 4d leómhuin TR; gl. FTM; 5a Mic AFM; dhúna ATRU, duna FM; dhealgna TR, dealgan M; 5b cuilleasge A, crobhoinge RM (for coillbhile); coindrearcca A, cróidearcca FRU, cnódh. M; 5c cinnbhile FRU, cEinnbhile M; chra. ATRM; crón FTM, chrón R; 5d is (for as) TRUM; 6a maith (after Muirich.) M; moighe ARU, mhuighe T; 6b chuaillgne T; cruth FRM, chorp T; she. TM; 6c cúl AF; gophlosgach A, gabhlosgach T; gruaidh AFTR; sluidh (for fhuil) R; 6d in A, sa FU, san M; sduaidh AF, sduaigh TR, sduagh U; ghorm. TM; ghothfruig R, gofraig.

4. Three sons of one mother, a loyal band of brothers, three yellow-haired ones who inflict severe wounds upon men, the lions of Ireland’s fair plain.

5. The sons of Dundalk’s queen, three hazel-trees red with nuts, three fair venerable trees none of which is weak, they are the children of a high-king’s daughter.

Text, variant readings and translation

7 SindsEr na gcraobh sEng searcach
mac úa morna muircheartach
ua na riogh a bánfhod breagh
lánóg an síol dá(n) sindsear

7 Sinsear na gcraobh seang searcach,
mac Ua Morna, Muircheartach,
ua na riogh a bánfhód Breagh,
lánóg an síol dan sindsear.

8 Aodh mac eadaine a heamuin
mac meadhonach muireadhhaigh
geag na súl ngormongach nglan
odhún dunnlongach dealgan

8 Aodh mac Eadaine a hEamhain,
mac meadhónach Muireadhgaigh,
géag na súl ngormmongach nglan,
ó Dhún donnlongach Dealgan.

9 Soisear na cloinde caoimhe
gofraidh foltchas formaoile
tearc gaoidheal as só ina soin
gin gur mó aoinfhear d'Ultaibh

9 Sóisear na cloinne caoimhe,
Gofraidh foltchas Formaoile,
tearc Gaoidheal as só ioná soin
gion gur mó aoinfhear d'Ultaibh.

7a seinsear R; 7b morna mar A, mur morna F, mar mhorna TM, morna mar (with transposition marks) U (for úa morna); dua morna R; 7c o bánfhod ATUM. o bánfhód F; bhr. U; 7d darslánóg asiodh a (for lánóg an síol dá(n)) A; don sinsear F, don tsh. M; 8 This quatrain is omitted in N and is given above from F. 8a Eduin U; 8c fer written over faded géag(?) in U;gorm. T, ngormmhongach M; gl. T; 8d a dun written over faded text U; dondlongach ATRUM; dealgal A; 9b gothfruig R, gofraig M; fochaoine ATR, fochaoimhe FUM; 9c ca A, ga U (for tearc); is (for as) AFRUM; nó AT, na FR, na U (for ina); sin M; 9d snocha AFRUM, is nócha T (for gin gur); chluinnfEr (for aoinfhear) T.

7. Muircheartach, eldest of the graceful beloved scions, a son of the Ui Mhorna, descendant of the kings from the fair land of Breagha, very young is the progeny of which he is the eldest.

8. Aodh son of Eadan from Eamhain, middle son of Muireadhach, a scion of blue eyes and fair shaggy brows, [he hails] from Dundalk of the brown ships.

9. Youngest of the dear brood, curly-haired Gofraidh of Formaoil, few Gaoidhil are younger than he, yet none among the Ulstermen is greater.
Poem 9: Cuaine riogha rug Eadan

10 Samlaim trír ele a heamhain
re trí macaib Muireadhhaigh
slata garg(h)a gu ngleic mis
mEic dhata arda UISNIGH

11 Náóisí míc UISNIGH na neach
ar eangamh as ar eineach
a chuí druídmleachdach dualach
mar MUIRCEARTAC MARCSHLUAGACH

12 Fear mar mac UISNIGH ele
aodh méirghéal míc EADAINE
croidhe as daingne ina dún clach
aindle ar lúth as ar lámhach

10. I liken three others from Eamhain to the three sons of Muireadhach, three fierce scions swift in a contest, the handsome noble sons of UISNIGH.

11. For prowess and honour, Naoise son of UISNIGH of the steeds—his hair wavy, interlacing and tressy—is like Muircheartach who leads mounted warriors.

12. For agility and dexterity, bright-fingered Aodh son of Eadan—heart stronger than a stone fort—is a man like another son of UISNIGH, AINNLE.
13 Ardán an mac óg oile, ar eangnahm sar aghmhaire, rosog neimdhéarach glas mar ghloin, an cas geilmhéarach Gofraidh.

14 Meic mhuireadhgh na morna—trí saorshlata súlghorma, dream do-ní coimhdhe gach cruidh, trí clóidhmhe as fhéarr an ulltuiabh.

15 Trí seabhaic sleibhe guaire, trí cuiléin na craobhruidhde, triar núidhe gaisdeamhail glan, gaisgeadhaigh dúine dealga.
Poem 9: Cuaine riogna rug Eadan

16 Trí honchoin fhear an bheatha
trí naitreacha neimheacha
trí beithreacha ar a mbí neimh
trí geilcheatha re a nguailibh

17 Trí lEomhain Éireann uile
trí meic áille eaduine
triar comhnúidhe gu ngne ngloin
sé gormsúile mar ghlasghloin

18 Sé cólpa mar chluimh neala
sé taoibh ghasda ghléigheala
sé glaca slioma slEmhna
slata fionda fmeamhna

16 Tri honchoin fhear an bheatha,
trí naithreacha neimhneacha,
trí beithreacha ar a mbí neimh,
trí geilcheatha re a nguailibh.

17 Trí leómhain Éireann uile,
trí meic áille Eadaine,
triar comhmúidhe go ngné ngloin,
sé gormshúile mar ghlasghloin.

18 Sé cholpa mar chluimh n-eala,
sé taoibh ghasda ghléigheala,
sé glaca slioma slÉmhna,
slata fionna fineamhna.

16. Three fierce warriors among men, three venomous serpents, three deadly bears, three bright spears against their shoulders.

17. The three lions of all Ireland, the three beautiful sons of Eadan, three equally vibrant men of pure aspect, six blue eyes like grey-blue crystal.

18. Six shanks like swan-plumage, six agile pure-white sides, six smooth sleek hands, fair branches of the vine.
19. Six straight brown eyebrows, six quick light feet, six green eyes like glass, six cheeks like glowing embers.

20. Three breasts like apple blossom, jet-black eyebrows, bodies the colour of snow, hair like wheat stalks.

21. Three hearts with the hardness of a stone when facing enemies, hearts like three pillar-stones in battle, faces like the lustre of flame.
Poem 9: Cuaine ríoghna rug Eadan

22 Ruisg ghlasa grúaidhí leabra
  ochta geala géisEmhla
  mEór dhata bhoga bhána
  slata foda follaína

23 Dar leat as gríon laoi leabhair
  aighthi thrí mac muireadhúigh
  dáir leat as súr an ghrian gheal
  don triúr dáir ghiall an gaisgEdh

24 Triar dáir ghiall lúth as lámhach
  triar seabhcaidhe soghrádhach
  triar groideach dáir ghiall gac dream
  triar dáir ghiall oinEch EirEnd

22a gorma (for glasa) F, glassa U; os grúaidhíbh A, ghrúaidh T (for gr.); leaphra A; 22b géisamhla T; 22c data F, dhatha M; bana U; 22d glaca (for slata) U; fada M; fallana fallana (sic) A; 23a Samhoil le grein A. Cosmhuil le grein F, Cosmhuiil ré grein T, Cosmhuiil is gríon M; leaphoir AU; 23b tr. FRUM; mhic T; 23c is (for as) AFRM; gr. glan F; 23d an AR, do F (for don); gi. F; in (for an) U; ga. AF, ghaisgídh T; 24a Triur FT; dual (for ghiall) M; is (for as) ATM; 24b an triar seabhoc AU, triúr seabhachadh E (for tr. s.); 24c triúr T; ghr. AT, galach M (for groideach); rerdhial F, ór thriall M (for dáir ghiall); 24d is A, triúr T (for triar) A; gi. F.

22. Grey-blue eyes, smooth cheeks, bright swan-like chests, handsome soft white fingers, tall robust youths.

23. You would think the faces of the three sons of Muireadhach were like a long day’s sun, and that the bright sun were a sister to the three men who are masters of prowess.

24. Three men who are masters of agility and dexterity, three hawk-like lovable men, three men rich in horses who surpass all, three who are masters of Ireland’s honour.
25. Three men who are masters of the prowess of Ulster, three men in the mould of the old heroes, the three sons of Eadan of Breagha's mansion, the bright dragons of the Gaoidhil.

26. The three descendants of great Giolla Muire, the three beautiful sons of Eadan, three warriors who are masters of valour, the three best-known men in Ulster.

27. Gofraidh and Aodh from Eamhain, Muircheartach son of Muireadhach, Sliabh Guaire's slender trio, I myself think they are an excellent (?) brood.
28 Mór barrfionn ailbhe a heamhun mna na macsoin muiredhaigh
gac beithir a heamhun úaine
na leinibh ni leath cuaine

29 Aodh o neill teamhra dhathi
mac daodh ass dingin ruaidhri
nir gin neach mur e uainne
se ar gach leath is lán cuaine

28 This quatrain is omitted in ENA and is given above from F. 28a barrann T, bharrfionn R, bairrfhionn U (written above barann, which is crossed out), bárrfhionn M; aílbhe TM (appears before ba. in M with transp. marks); 28b amonna bán mhéic (for mna na macsoin) T; sin M; mhu. M; 28c ná slatá T, na slata RUM (for gac beithir); 28d leanaibh TR, lEnuimh U, leinbh M; 29 This quatrain is omitted in ENA and is given above from F. 29a teamhair M; 29b áodha T, daodha U; s T, is RM (for ass); Ruadhruideh R, ruadhri M; 29c níor TM; chinn T, ghein R, chin U, ghin M; mair T; uaine RU; 29d na chéidchuaine T, ní leathchuaine RU (for is lán cuaine).

28. Mór, Barrfhionn and Ailbhe from Eamhain are the wives of those sons of Muireadhach; no mean(?) brood are the young men, the scions from verdant Eamhain.

29. Aodh Ó Néill Teamhra Dhá Thí's Tara, son of Aodh and of Ruaidhrí's daughter, a person such as he did not spring from us—on all sides he is [of] perfect stock(?).
Chapter 5

Notes on the poems

Poems cited from published collections are referred to by the use of abbreviations, e.g. *LBrann* 59.21 = *Leabhar Branach: the book of the O’Byrnes*, poem 59, quatrain 21 (cf. Abbreviations). Citations from poems that are unpublished or are published as individual articles are referred to by the first line of the poems. Details of these poems are to be found in an index following this chapter.

Poem 1: *Mairidh teine a dteallach Ghaoideal*

1 ff. For imagery similar to that used here (‘hearth’, etc.), compare *Nír bháidh teine Teallach Eachach* / as úr gleandál; ard a lasar dhonn nach diombuan, / trom a tearnál ‘The fire of green-valleyed Teallach Eachach (“Eochaidh’s Hearth”) was never quenched; high its steady red blaze, plenteous its firing’ (*Magauran* 25.1) and *Acht a-mhain co mairénn dríthle* / gan dol acht [leg. as] da n-iarsma s(i)úd / toghus ces do glainfreimh Ghaoideal / tes saighnein san aoibil úd // ‘Na gris a coguill clann Mhílidh / Mag Mathgamhna mairidh sé / d’eis na saorclann d’écc re hat[h]aidh / cred acht aoncrunn acaidh é (Beag mhaires do mhucraidh Ghaoideal, qq. 15 and 16). That the image presented is one of ‘smouldering cinders’ (q. 2) and not a quenched fire is important, as an extinguished fire can metaphorically represent the end of a dynasty. The concept is an old one: in early Irish and Welsh law, terms such as *dībad* ‘extinguishing’ were used to connote the extinction of a family (see Charles-Edwards, 1970). As for the act of (re)kindling a fire, its symbolic association with the claiming of rightful ownership over a land may be seen in the following extract from *The story of the finding of Cashel*: *et is ed do rád int aingil: inti ataifeas teinid sunn ria cách, erbid flaith*
Muman 'na láim 'and the angel said: 'He who shall first kindle fire here, entrust the kingship of Munster to him' (Dillon, 1952 §4).

1d lasadh as é as deireadh dí: Translation tentative. Alternatively, perhaps, 'its being set alight is its end [purpose]'?

2b gé (N): As this is followed by a noun I have emended it to giodh, in accordance with IGT i, 16. Cf. D.

2cd I take the whole of line d (lit. 'the embers from the end of a kindling in it [i.e. the hearth]') as the subject of adhnaídh in line c. Taking adhnaídh as a verb in line c and as a verbal noun in line d avoids caoiche, the fault of a word rhyming with itself.

3c le hanáil n-uabhair: I take this to refer to the person who is the 'fireball about to burst forth' of line a. A more literal rendering would be 'with breathing of pride', 'with proud breath/breathing'. Cf. lán dom anáil ón uabhar, which is translated as 'I was full of my breath from pride' in IBP (38.16), and as 'puffed up with pride (?)' in DIL, s.v. anál.

3d as: I take this to refer to lines abc as a whole. It cannot refer to caor alone (line a) as caor is feminine.

4d tós adhnaídh: Cf. tús adhnaídh an eigse láin 'the first rays of that full moon' (AiD 63.20).

5ab A similar image is contained in the following: Dá mbáití cinioch Fhóid Floinn, / do-ghébhthaí griús san chogaill 'Were the hospitality of Flann's land overwhelmed, a spark would be found mid the ashes' [LBran 59.21 = Irish monthly 55, 591).

6b chloinn Róigh: Fearghus mac Róigh and Conall Cearnach were descendants of Íor son of Mfl. The Uí Mhórdha traced their descent to Conall Cearnach (see, for example, LGen. 557.4 ff. and 1303.3 ff.). This is reflected in a number of allusions to Conall Cearnach in our poem: 39a, 41a, 43c, 51a. However, the Uí Mhórdha are also referred to—in the present instance and in 9b, 14b, 33c, and 35b—as 'descendants of Róch' (< Roach), which I take to mean Fearghus mac Róigh. This allusion is to be found with reference to members of the Uí Mhórdha in at least two other poems. In the following quatrain one Máire Ní Mhórdha is praised: Téid breath le Máire ar modhaibh— / ní tráth do theacht 'na haghaidh; breath chlár do-chóidh le a seanaibh—deagfhuil Róigh riath 'na raghain 'Judgement goes in favour of Máire for elegance—it is no time to oppose her; poets proclaimed her ancestors—the noble blood of Róch has always been their choice' (Le dis cuirthear clú Laighean, q. 34). The
following three quatrains are from a eulogy for Uaithne Ó Mórtha (d. 1600): *Maith bhur bhfior gcatha a chlann Róigh / a priomhshliocht Ldoisi Lannmhoir / ní dual cor catha acht re ceart / ní do modh flatha forineart // As cuid d'oirghreacht Uaithne Ó Róigh / taisg laimhe Laoighsigh Lannmhoir / lá ngleó da fhíreolchuirbh air / sgribheochar leó a leabhruibh // Cia an Cú Choluin-sín ag Cloinn Róigh / thug bárr úaisle ar a n-onoir / dan gar gaol chéadChon na gc(h)leas / do thaoibh echtghon is ditheas {Maith bhur bhfior gcatha a chlann Róigh, qg. 1, 39, 42). These examples and those in our poem are all mid- to late sixteenth century. It is perhaps noteworthy that Róch is not alluded to in the two Úi Mhórdha poems composed in the fourteenth-century (see introduction). Was Róch recast as an ancestor of the Úi Mhórdha at some stage after the fourteenth century? An alternative explanation might be to take síol Róigh, clann Róigh, etc., as loose terms meaning ‘of Royal Ulster stock’; cf. Mac Airt’s explanation of clann Róigh and sliocht Róigh as ‘the (royal line of the) Ulaidh’ (LBran, p. 412). Knott’s note on an occurrence of clann Róigh does not seem to clarify the matter: ‘I take this [Róch’s race] to refer to kings of the line of Rudhraighe, see Keat. iv 25.62; *Gen. Reg. et SS.* 24 ff.’ (note on *TD* 28.19).

6c le Rudhraighe gur treabh Teamhair: (i) The motif of a candidate for the chieftainship of a territory being presented as a suitable spouse for Tara (i.e. suitable for the high-kingship) is a conventional literary conceit. (ii) The verb *treabhaidh* in its primary sense means ‘cultivates with’, ‘engages in husbandry with’. This would imply the forming of a union or a marriage. Taking account of the fact that the verb is in the past tense, that Rudhraighe does not appear to have yet been elected to the headship of his family, and that the imagery thus far is of a firebrand about to burst forth, it is arguable that a ‘binding’ of Tara to Rudhraighe has not yet happened. Therefore, my translation, ‘devoted herself to’, is an attempt to present Tara’s relationship with Rudhraighe as something of an engagement. For the translation of *treabhaidh* le as ‘devotes one’s self to’ see *DIL* s.v. *trebaid* (c).

6d bean thurbhaidhe: Cf. *DIL* s.v. *turbaid* I (a): ‘hindrance, prevention, interference, delay’. Cf. also *Cread an turbhaidh atá ort / gan teacht ‘what is it that hinders thee from coming’ (*TD* 2.40). In a note on the latter, Knott gives further examples of this word. Citing our couplet (from 23 D 14 (= D)), she describes the usage as ‘of a land bereft of its chief’ (*TD*, vol. 2, p. 203). *DIL*, quoting Knott’s citation of our couplet, suggests the meaning ‘forbidden (?)’. This is what I have followed in my translation. Line *d* may be more literally rendered as ‘[Tara] was a woman forbidden to [other] men’.

7ab Note that the poet does not seem to aim for total consistency with regard to the sequence of time in using the hearth metaphor. We have been told in quatrain 5 that the hero is *in the hearth*, but here we are told he has yet to come to it.
Poem 1: Mairidh teine a dteallach Ghaoidheal

7a a fadóigh ... dfhios an teallaigh (MS): I take the possessive a to refer to teallaigh, which is masculine, therefore the possessive a should be followed by lenition; the emendation to fhadóidh is verified by lorga-alliteration between lines a and b.

7c caor shlóigh: This expression can refer to an individual (as here) or a group (as in 14c and 39b below).

7c ó cheardchaibh na gcúradh: Literally, 'from the forges of heroes'. For my interpretation of 'forges of heroes' as 'fields of battle', compare phrases such as ceardcha an áigh, ceardcha an choyaidh, ceardcha goile, ceardcha sleagh. Alternatively, one might take a 'forge' here to mean 'a centre of training', and read the line as 'from [training in] the forges of heroes', i.e. 'trained in the forges of heroes'.

7d bhfóir nUladh: I take this as a reference to the Uí Mhórdha, whose Ulster roots are alluded to elsewhere in the poem (see note on 6b above).

8c ge (N): As this is followed by an adjective I have emended it to giodh, in accordance with IGT i, 16.

8c ceó: Normally 'mist, etc.' For the sense meant here, cf. Má do adhna innte a-rís / splannc ar luighe ceo ar ghrís 'If I have kindled in them flame when dust had settled on embers' (Iomarbhágh 14.19; in a note on ceo, McKenna writes: 'Syll. short leg. ceóigh, ciach or ar an ng.')

9a Fá sheilg: The noun sealg/seilg when followed by the genitive (as here) or the preposition ar (as in 9c below) has the sense 'seeking out', 'seeking to obtain', 'trying to get', etc. (cf. DIL s.v. selg (c) and AiD glossary). Our example may be thought to connote 'seeking to rule', which is the sense understood by McKenna in the following: Ar seilg Banbha bid Ultaigh, / ar a tí a-táid Connachtaigh 'The Ultaigh seek to rule Banbha, the Connachtaigh too' (AiD 7.36ab). Cf. also Gonadh dhé sin as an-fhlaith / gach rí d’fhual Éibhir arm-ghlain / dar thairg seilg na ríghe ós shoin / ar chloinn Iughoine is Tuathail 'So that therefore every king of bright-sworded Éibhear's race who strove for the kingship after that against Iughoine's race is a "usurper"' (Iomarbhágh 16.163–4; in this example, however, perhaps seilbh should be read for seilg, i.e. 'who attempted to possess the kingship').

9c ag seilg ar: One might take this literally as 'hunting on', the implication being that if a person has the right to hunt on a land then he rules over it. However, I take the sense to be essentially the same as that in line 9a (see note on 9a), i.e. 'seeking [to rule]'. The phrase itself has been variously translated, for example: sealg ar an domhnán níor dhual 'to follow
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the world is wrong’ (Dán Dé 23.11a); do sheilg ar mh’annsa d’fhagháil ‘seeking to obtain my love’ (DiD 39.18d); ag so an t-eag ... / wirre ag seilg ‘see death ... attacking [it]’ (AiD 50.16ab); a rí ... / bí ag seilg ar ar saoradh! ‘be urgent to save me!’ (AÓD 4.3cd); sinn ag seilg ar an mbreith mboaglaigh / go mbreith dà fheirg fhaobhracáigh air ‘we seek (by our sins) the dread doom (?) so that His keen anger seizes Him’ (AÓD 44.10cd); ag seilg ar na cóig cánáibh ‘seeking the tribute of the five provinces’ (Maguire 4.27b).

9c Eamhain: Eamhain Mhacha (Navan Fort, Co. Armagh) can figuratively represent Ulster (cf. Maguire, p. 287, O’Reilly poems, p.304, LBrand, p. 42). One might put 9cd more loosely as follows: ‘although the race of Róch ruled Ulster in the past, it is time for his descendants to move on to greater things, namely, Tara (i.e. highkingship)’.

10a ag ráth Bhóinne: Tara = ráth Bóinne also in AiD 16.17b.

10c móide as béim (MS): I have inserted lenition following the relative copula here in accordance with IGT i, 90. Cf. móide as mhaith an malartach ‘the better bargainer he is’ (O’Hara 4.3).

11d ceardcha na ríogh: Compare the use of this phrase, with reference to Cruacha, in the following: Do-chi[nn] ni lium-so nach lean / go síghmadh Segsa fa sliaibh / is Cruacha ceardcha na rígh / ’s na tuatha um rígh [leg. Siódh?] Neanta a-niar, which I take to mean, ‘I used to see—I remember it well—as far west as the peaceful plain of Seaghais by the mountain, and Cruacha, the forge of kings, and the lands around Siódh (?) Neanta’ (Do thuit aoncharrann Inse Fáil, q. 5). Cf. also cheardchaibh na gcuradh (7c and note).

11d In other words, Tara has been waiting for someone of his calibre.

12a ó ríoghraidh Eamhna: Another allusion to his royal Ulster roots (cf. note on 6a) and thereby an assertion of his ancestral right to the kingship.

12cd More literally, ‘from its fire ... it brings forth its flame’. I have tentatively taken ceardcha (line b) as the subject of beiridh. For the phrase beiridh lasair in the sense ‘lights up’, ‘ignites’, cf. lasair dhearg i néallaibh nimhe / béaraidh th’fhearg ‘thy anger will light up a red flame in the clouds’ (Magauran 11.10). Alternatively, if the subject of beiridh is Eamhain, then the translation might be: ‘[Eamhain], moreover, brings a flame from its fire as a kindling [for Tara]’, or ‘[Eamhain], moreover, brings a flame to [Tara]’s fire as a kindling’.

13a Cf. Dol do théaghadh a teallaigh / mithidh don fhuil Éireannaigh ‘it is time for Éire’s
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race to go to warm her hearth [thereby symbolising possession of her] (EMacC 8.12).

13b For the phrase gabhaim orm ‘I take upon myself’, ‘I undertake’, cf. Biodh gurb ionmhuin leat Lugaidh / ná gabh ort feidhm ndochumhail ‘Though Lugaidh be dear to you take not upon thyself a hard task’ (Tomarbhágh 22.28), and gabh ort mo choimhédh is comhaill / ar roimhéd m’olc toghaim thú ‘undertake and achieve my defence; owing to my many sins I flee to thee’ (Dán Dé 3.19).

14 More literally, ‘Following their alliance, what delays Conall’s heir and the descendants of Róch, a compact troop whose hostages are not taken [and] who have not attacked the English?’

14ab D’eis a gcomhaonta ... oighre Conaill as clann Róigh: This seems to present Rughraidhe (oighre Conaill) as having been chosen by the Ui Mhórdha (clann Róigh) to be their chief (but does not necessarily mean that he has been inaugurated).

14c Caor shluaigh: That this refers to more than one person here (cf. 7c and 39b) is clear from the eclipsis following the possessive relative form of the copula, asa n- ‘whose’ (for which see SNG, p. 423).

15 The apologue told in quatrains 15–31 compares Rudhraighe to one of Ireland’s legendary saviours, Tuathal Teachtmar. The high-king, Fiacha Fionnfholaigh, is slain by the vassal-tribes of Ireland and replaced by Félim mac Conraigh, under whose rule nature does not prosper. The nobles are all massacred by the vassals, except for one, Tuathal Teachtmar, who escapes to Scotland in the womb of his mother, Eithne, daughter of the king of Scotland. After 20 years, Tuathal comes to Ireland with ‘the men of Scotland’, expels Félim, and takes the kingship. The apologue is a telling of one of two basic versions of the so-called revolt of the aitheachthuatha, or vassal-tribes. For a recent discussion of these see Ralph O’Connor (2006, 119 ff). One version of the story is encapsulated by O’Connor’s summary (p. 119) of the Middle Irish tale Bruiden Meic Da Réo: ‘Led by Cairpre Cenn Cait ... the vassals massacre the nobles in Connaught, during a feast which they have prepared for this purpose. They kill the high-king Fiachu Finnolaig and all the nobles besides, apart from Fiachu’s unborn son and two other unborn princes, whose British-born mothers escape to North Britain (Alba). These princes are the rightful kings of Ireland, and they are raised in North Britain; they are subsequently invited back to Ireland by the vassals after Cairpre’s death, since the land has not prospered under vassal rule. The nobles are thus restored to the kingship, with Feradach Finn Fechtnach (Fiachu’s son) as the new king of Ireland.’ Of the second version of the story, O’Connor writes (p. 122): ‘Several late Middle Irish prose and verse accounts date the uprising a few decades later, with the more famous king Tuathal Teachtmar taking
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Feradach’s role of the infant survivor who escapes to North Britain in his mother’s womb and later becomes king of Ireland. Some of these accounts coalesced within the great synthetic historiographical compilation known as *Lebor Gabála Érenn* ‘The Book of the Takings of Ireland’. Its first recension ... states that the usurper Elim mac Conrai killed the king of Ireland, Fiachu Finnoilches (note the similarity to Fiachu Finnolaig, the king of Ireland in *Bruiden Meic Da Réo*). Fiachu’s queen escaped to her native Britain with their son Tuathal in her womb, and we are told how, with her help, he returned to avenge his father’s death on Elim and enforce his kingship on Ireland accompanied by an army of *dibergaig* ‘plunderers’.

This (second) version of the story, perhaps as a result of its incorporation into *Lebor Gabála*, appears to have become the canonical version among bardic poets: in addition to occurring in our poem, this version is also recounted or alluded to in a number of other bardic poems (cf. Ó Caithnia, pp. 120–21), most fully in *Dorn idir dhán is dásacht* (DiD 84, qq. 24–41).

16b *athaigh*: Nominative singular *athach* ‘churl’. As noted by Ó Cuív (1956–7, 300), this by-form of *aitheach* is condemned as faulty in *IGT* ii, 11. Ó Cuív notes that the form *athach* is old and that its condemnation in the grammatical tracts may postdate the period of composition of the poem in which his example occurred (i.e. early 13th century). Emend to *aithigh* (the reading in D)?

16cd Alternatively, ‘the killing of the royal blood by an enemy would(?)', in short, have been bad enough a deed’, the implication being that the deed is all the more grievous when carried out by vassals.

16d Expressions such as *gá dámaid dáibh?* are often translated as ‘in short’. For a note on the expression, see *ISP*, p. 85.

17a *Fiacha Fionnfholaidd*: Father of Tuathal Teachtmhar (see note on q. 15 above). Note that *Fionnfholaidd* also occurs without -fh- and also with broad final consonant (as in D).

In expanding N’s final syllable as -aidh, I have been guided by the following metrically-fixed examples: *Rí do ghabh Banbha mbladhaigh / dar bh’ainm Fiacha Fionnolaidd* (DiD 84.25ab), *Gan mhac aige ’n-a aghaidh / iar mbás Fhiachaidh Fhionnfholaidd* (DiD 84.29ab), *Cosmhail tú ag teacht dar gceobhair / is mac Fiacaild Fionnolaidd* (DiD 84.38ab), *Tainicc a-rís rogha ban / go Fódhla a hinis Alban / slat abhla ó íathoibh Monaidh / tarla d’Fiachaid Fionnfholaidd* (*Mealladh iomlaoide ar Éirinn*, q. 10) and *Magauran* 4.33ab (quoted below in note on 18a). For forms occurring in early texts, see O’Rahilly (1946) 154 ff, and O’Connor (2006).

17c *seal gan tairthe d’fhás a nÉirinn*: For this motif see note on 29c below.
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18a Phélim mac Conrach: (i) Murderer of Tuathal Teachtmhar’s father, Fiacha Fionnfholaithd, and usurper of the kingship of Tara (see note on q. 15 above). (ii) Note that Phélim, lenited as direct object of a verb, alliterates with ann. We could, alternatively, read Élíim, which is the reading in D. Cf. also note on 30d. The spelling Élíim is metrically fixed in Do ghabh Élíim gan fhalaithd / teach ar Fiacha Fionnfholaithd ‘Blameless Élíim captured the house of Fiacha Fionnfholaithd’ (Magauran 4.33ab); it is also the form used in DiD 84 (27c, 28d and 33c). Furthermore, initial F- does not occur in texts from the pre-classical period (for forms occurring in early texts see, for example, O’Rahilly, 1946, 154 ff. and O’Connor, 2006). However, the spelling Félim is used, for example, in GB 7.14 and 17.18. It is possible that the poets felt at liberty to use either Élíim or Félim; however, I have no metrically-fixed example at hand for the latter spelling. (iii) As for the patronymic, the spelling with -aigh occurs here and in 23b; perhaps, however, we should follow D and read mac Conrach. As well as being the form occurring in earlier texts, a metrically-fixed example occurs in: Leis do cuireadh an cead cath / leis do marbhadh mac Connach; / Élíim do thuit le Tuathal / dar loit Éirinn d’éanruathar (DiD 84.33). I have no such example at hand for final -aigh.

18c do ghéabh ón lín dá leantar: I take the object of do ghéabh to be an unexpressed pronoun that refers to lines ab, i.e. ‘I will get [it] [i.e. proof of it] from the [genealogical] line if it be traced’. For the verb leanaidh in the sense ‘traces’, ‘investigates’ cf. DIL s.v. lenaid col. 101.37, and the following: Síol Suibhne na dtachar dte / mar bhios ’n-a bheartaibh féile / dá dheinnleanmhain ní treoir ghearr / i seinleabrhaibh eol Éireann ‘It is no short task to trace through old books of Eire’s lore how Suibhne’s hot-battling stock is ever doing marvels of generosity’ (DiD 102.15 = Irish monthly 56, 35.)

18d as sgéil (N): Note that the reading in D is an sgéal, which could be taken as the object of do ghéabh; this would not alter the overall sense significantly.

19c Luighdeach: Nom. Lughaidh. The allusion is perhaps to the legendary king Lughaidh Riabh nDearg (or Riabhdhearg) who is listed as an ancestor of Fiacha Fionnfholaithd (see Corp. Gen. Hib. s.n. Fiachu Findfholaithd). Generally, in phrases such as ráth Luighdeach, inis Luighdeach, i.e. ‘Ireland’, the reference can be to one of a number of legendary personages of this name, the best know being Lughaidh Mac Con. Cf. 21b and 32a.

21b inis Luighdeach: A poetic name for Ireland. See note on 19c.

21d go n-eir: Knott writes of the verb éirghim: ‘regularly conjugated throughout like a verb in -ighim: the only irregular form in the text being Sg 3 -eir ..., which agrees in form with
the O. Ir. conj. pres. subj. but here may be either subj. or indicative, conj. form’ (TD vol. 1, p. lxxxii–lxxxiii).

22a *A gcroinn abhla:* As *abhla* is the gen. sg. of *abhall* ‘apple-tree’, one might consider *gcroinn* to be superfluous here (‘their apple-tree trees’). However, the following examples of the usage show our example to be the norm: *nír thráth dá mbuing don Bhanbha / croind abhla ar chách fá chomhdha* ‘it was not a time to snatch them from Ireland, apple-trees which were everyone’s support’ (Maguire 24.23cd); *croinn abhla ar lár ag luighe / fá chlár mBanhba um bhealltuine* (LCAB 9.31cd); *Beag dteasda gaoil dá ghoire / tre shiól gCuinn Chláir Iughoinie / ’s mar tharrla do chaomhchoill Chéin / na saorchroind abhla ó éinshréimh* ‘Cian’s fair race, those noble fruit-trees springing from the same seed (as Conn’s race)—a poor proof of kin-love spite of their kinship is their present state, a state brought about by the race of Conn of Iughoinie’s Plain’ (O’Hara 29.6); and *dlighidh donncoill Banba Bregh / lomcroinn abhla gan earradh* (Earradh cumhadh um Cruachain, q. 29cd). It may be noted, moreover, that *crann/croinn ubhall* does not appear to occur; contrast Modern Irish *crann úll.*

23a *amháthair* (MS): I have emended this line by removing the possessive *a* in order to reduce the syllable count to the requisite eight. For omission of the possessive, compare *saor an fear ré bhfuilid chois* ‘is duine saor é an fear a bhfuil siad lena chois’, *as tú an fear ó tteinig mhnaoi* ‘is tú an fear a dtáinig mé óna bhean’ (examples taken from SNG, 423–4). In these examples the subject of the verb is unambiguous. In our example, however, it seems possible that the subject could be taken as either the mother (i.e. ‘apart from one son with whom [his] mother escaped’) or the son (i.e. ‘apart from one son with whose [own] mother he escaped’); the latter, however, seems strained.

23b *ar gcor a n-áir:* Cf. *far cuireadh ár na n-Ultaich* ‘when the Ulaidh were slain around it’ (Magauran 4.32).

24cd In line *d* I have taken the pronoun *i* as the subject of *geibhidh* (the s-less form of the pronoun can be used as subject of a verb if it is separated from it; cf. SNG, p. 429). One might paraphrase the couplet as follows: *Ghabh (si) do ghuais Fheilim gur ghiuais lé a heighir a hÉirinn.* What is effectively the same construction—with *do-geibh* instead of *geibhidh*—can be seen in the following: *A chuimhne dín-ne do dhlígh, / lá marbhtha mheic Mheic Shíthigh; / fuair do bhladh in tachair tug / gurbh achain damh a dhearmad* ‘I must recall the day of the slaying of the son of Mac Sheehy; he won such fame from the fight that it is hardly necessary for me to recall it’ (Marcher 4.34). Alternatively, could one take *do ghiuais Fheilim* as subject of *geibhidh* and *i* as its object, i.e. ‘such fear of Féilim seizes her that ...’? Alternatively, one could take line *c* as going with lines *a* and *b* (‘and so she fled
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out of Ireland with her son; she goes out of fear of Félim.’) but this seems disjointed.

25b *fiche bliadhain*: Emend to *fiche bliadhthan*, in accordance with *IGT* ii, 10? As the nom. sg. and the gen. pl. were formally identical in many words, the nom. sg. began to be used instead of the gen. pl. in cases such as the present example. The practice is faulted in *BST* 237.14–15, however, there are many examples where it fixed by metre (see *SNG*, p. 427 and *O’Hara* 1302n.), therefore, I have let the reading stand.

25cd The translation is tentative. Should one take *fiche bliadhain* as the antecedent of *ann* (line d)? Namely, *nach rugadh ... ann* ‘in which [twenty years] ... was not carried’? The phrase *a gceann* has a range of meanings: ‘to’, ‘in the direction of’, ‘towards’, ‘against’; ‘in addition to’, ‘together with’; ‘in competition with’, ‘in preference to’; I take it to mean something like ‘in competition with’. I have tentatively taken the verb in *ar lion d’oibrheart* to be intransitive, i.e. ‘what filled with prowess’, i.e. ‘the extent of prowess [in general]’.

26a *bhi* *Fiachaidh*: The nom. form *Fiacha* occurs in 17a. For the various forms of this name in *IGT* see Breatnach (2004a) 54–5.

26c *ar séan n-uaire*: The eclipsis shown here (following an accusative noun) occurs sporadically in examples of this expression and may be regarded as editorially unnecessary as *séan* ends in an -n and is followed by a vowel (cf. Mod. *an ólann tú?*). Cf. *Cuir an siothbháirc ar sén úaire ... ó chalaídh* ‘in a propitious hour ... set forth the longship’ (*IBP* 43.8); *Téid na sealbhadh ar séin uaire* ‘after His death He came in a blessed hour’ (*Dlighidh liaigh leigheas a charad*, q. 7a), but *Mo chean don chuairt do chuir sibhsí / ar séan n-uaire a abhra trom* ‘a blessing on this journey you have undertaken at a propitious hour’ (*A-nois ránag rioghacht mh’aigneadh*, q. 3).

26d *le néall nuaidhe*: This phrase occurs also in *O’Hara* 1A.25b, where McKenna translates it as ‘impelled by a new vision’.

27a *Tuathal Teachtmhar*: See note on q. 15 above.

27b *’s ní d’annmhain tal’*: One might translate this as, ‘and not from a desire to remain beyond’; cf. Gid *‘gun loch-sain na learg nglan / rugadh thé aghus do tégbhadh, / fada ó bhruach Lacha Luighdheach / racha is ní d’fhuaith IarMhuimhneach* ‘Though by that fair-shored lake thou wilt born and reared, far shalt thou fare from it, but not in dislike of Iar-Mhumha’s folk!’ (*DiD* 74.41 = *Irish monthly* 47, 283). In our example, however, the note of contrast one might normally understand by *is ní do (= de)* would appear to be absent, and the sense in the context is apparently, ‘and wishing to leave’. As such, it may be regarded as
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an example of bardic poets' fondness for double negatives. Cf. *Fiú an aonrainn, a earra lag, / ní dearnadh, 's ní do dhearnadh, / dod dhreic chruthshlim ghaíthe ghlain / le a gcuirfinn mh'aithe orath* ‘Not a single verse yet, O soft hair, has been written for thy fair-formed bright face, to introduce myself to thee; I have refrained on purpose’ (AiD 46.6).

27d *Seól a gcrois do ardaigh:* Literally, ‘he raised a sail into a cross [i.e. a mast]’. According to DIL, s.v. cros (c), the word cros can be used ‘of various cross-shaped objects’. Apart from the present instance, I have no other example where cros denotes a ‘mast’; however, cf. the first-line *Crann seól na cruinne an Chroch Naomh* ‘The holy cross is the mast of the world’.

28c *d’agra fhaladh ar fonn bhFeilim:* Literally, ‘to avenge a grievance on/against the land of Félim’. The phrase *agra ar* means ‘avenging on’ (see DIL s.v. and Maguire glossary), and fola ar can mean ‘resentment against’. Cf. *Fearfaid luibhe gach leirge / deora fola foirdheirge / fachain na fola duinne / fola ón Athair oruinne* ‘Plants on every hill will weep red tears of blood; the cause of the red blood will be the Father’s wrath with us’ (Pilib Bocht 25.11).

28c *fonn bhFeilim:* A common poetic name for Ireland. Hardly to be taken as ‘the land of Félim [mac Conraigh]’?

29c *fiar bhflatha:* The ancient notion of the ‘prince’s/ruler’s truth/justice’ (earlier fir flaith- mon), is central to kingship ideology in early Ireland. As Fergus Kelly states, ‘[i]f the king is just, his reign will be peaceful and prosperous, whereas if he is guilty of injustice ... the soil and the elements will rebel against him. There will be infertility of women and cattle, crop-failure, dearth of fish, defeat in battle, plagues, lightning, etc.’ (GEIL, p. 18). We have seen in q. 17 that the crops failed following the treachery of the vassals; this will now change with the return of Tuathal as the righteous ruler. For a discussion of the concept of the ruler’s truth see Jaski (72–81).

30d *gur diongbhadh lais:* The verb diongbhaidh is usually translated as ‘wards off’ but that may understate what is meant in the present instance. Given that Conrach’s son was killed by Tuathal in other tellings of the story (see note on q. 15 above) the sense here might be ‘killed’.

30d *Feilim:* Although this is the subject of a passive verb it is being treated as an accusative, as indicated by the lenition, which is fixed by alliteration with ann. Unless, of course, we read *Éilim* (see note on 18a). For an example of lenition after a passive verb, cf. *Dreach céille ‘má n-ibthear fhíon* (Butler 13.21). This example occurs in a seventeenth-century poem. Perhaps the early date of our poem is an argument for emending to *Éilim.*

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31 I construe the lines of this quatrain in the following order: dacb.

31b lér théigh sí: More literally, ‘with whom she [once] warmed’. As well as capturing the sense of ‘warming the hearth’ of Tara which runs through the early part of the poem, the idea of ‘warming with’ presumably also means ‘mates with’. Though this usage is not noted in DIL, cf. Ri dh’ibh Neill gan chur ‘na cheand / crand diona d’uaislibh Éireann / rí gan chaírt ler théigh Teamhair / do réir Airt ar (e)ar[i]rrdehanaibh (Táinig anam i nÉirinn, q. 24) and Ni fuighter da fhréimh roimhe / suas ó Áodh go hluigeoine / fir lér théigh an tóir-si Chuinn /

céim is isle na [a] n-abrúim (Ni mhaireann d’Éirinn acht Aodh, q. 27). An alternative might be to emend to rer (tégid re is defined in DIL as ‘warms to, grows fond of’) but this does not seem necessary.

32a Bearta coimhéada chláir Luighdheach: (i) I have taken ‘the land of Lughaidh’ here to be a poetic name for Ireland (cf. note on 19c). If, however, what is meant is ‘the land of Lughaidh [Laoighseach]’, then this refers to the territory of the Ui Mhórdha. The eponymous ancestor of the Laoighis, of whom the O’Mores were a sept, was Lughaidh Laoighseach (synonymous with, but sometimes recorded as a son of, Laoi(gh)seach Ceannmhor (or Leanmnhor) son of Conall Cearnach; see Corp. Gen. Hib. s.n. Loíchsi, and LGen. 1302.3 ff.; see also note on 38b). However, as Rudhraighe is being considered as spouse of Tara in the present instance, it seems appropriate to regard the context of his bearta coimhégada as broader than the territory of Laois. (ii) The lenition of chláir, which is shown in the manuscript, is not historical and is a possible case of what McKenna terms ‘genitives lenited in special circumstances’ (cf. Magauran, p. xix); it is not metrically verifiable however.

32b ó cháích: On agency being expressed by ó, see DIL O 76.33.

33ab Twenty-five is the number of kings of Tara assigned by the genealogists to the Ulaid (see Corp. Gen. Hib., p. 274). Cf. also the following allusions in syllabic poetry: Côigear ar fhichid uile / ó Ír san Réim Roighraidhe / oiread ré dhá n-urdail soin / fuairsead do théarma ar Théamhráigh ‘In all, twenty-five descendants of Ír in the List of Kings had their term in Teamhair—a number worth twice their number!’ (Iomarbháigh 28.37); Do ghabh asum Teagh Dá Thí / cúigear ar fhichid airdrí, / do Chloinn ghuaisbheithrigh réidh Réigh, / céim le n-uaislighthir m’ónoir ‘From me five-and-twenty kings of Róch’s valiant, generous race seized the Dwelling of Dá Thí, thereby my dignity is ennobled’ (TD 28.19); Tarla diobh-sain suaithnedh linn / cúig régh fhithchiod os (ós) Éirinn / mór Teamhrach fan tslatcoill shean / ó dhá[gh]chloinn mherdha Mhileadh (Ó cheathrar ghuaisid Gaoidhil, q. 57); Fúthaíth dob áille an Fhóidla / fithche cuinge corónda / diobh os a cionn so is cúig régh / óig san insni dob urrigh(e) (Fan ráith imrid aicme Ír, q. 6).
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33b ri (MS): Emended to riógh. Compare also MS ar airdri for ar airdrígh in 19b.

33d do-sóigh: This second element here is not to be lenited (see SNG, p. 357 and 394). For variant forms of this verb see IGT iii, 15. Other examples of the form are Do-sóigh re táobh caisil cloch / aisil dór gu hAodh n-eangach (IGT ii, example 1992); and Tuigther mar soin hí 'na hóig, / do-sóigh ní tré gloin don gréin (IGT iii, 192). Four examples occur in DiD (29.38c, 93.13c, 99.20c, and 118.16d) where McKenna prints the form without a hyphen and confusingly includes it in his glossary s.v. sóigh: ‘sóigh, soich, “tiocfaidh,” “sroisfidh,” do sóigh ...; do soich ...’ (p. 607). One example occurs AiD. Here again he does not use a hyphen. Moreover, he lenites the s-. In the glossary (this time included s.v. roichim) he notes: ‘do- (not leniting) precedes above forms ...'; we may therefore take it that his lenition of the s- was inadvertent.

33d do-sóigh cuimhne an línne linn: Translation tentative. Literally, ‘the memory of the line reaches us’? Perhaps, ‘... passes down to us’?

34 do adhain é: I take é to refer to teallach, which is masculine.

35c már Té do chabhair ní cheileabh: I take this line literally as, ‘Té’s rampart [i.e. Tara] from [its] saving I will not conceal’. For ní cheileabh, cf. tart an chuigir ni cheileabh ‘I shall not be silent about the thirst of the five’ (O’Reilly poems 7.22b) and such phrases as lúad nád cét ‘I shall declare it plainly’ (cited in DIL, s.v. ceilid).

35d Danair: Originally meaning ‘Danes’, this can be used, like Goill, to refer to either the Anglo-Normans or the English. I have taken it to refer to the latter in this poem.

36c teine mhall: I have no other example of the use of mall with reference to a fire. It appears to refer to the ‘inert’ or ‘dormant’ state of the fire.

36cd The sense is that while it waited for a great leader Ireland’s hearth has been dormant, or sleeping, under some sort of ‘enchantment’. The meaning of draoidheacht here may equate with the idea of féagh fíagh, which Knott explains as ‘some kind of enchantment by which persons or objects could be rendered invisible ... [and may also imply] protective disguise, camouflage’ (note on TD 13.13). Note her translation of draoidheacht in the following quatrain (from the same poem as that referred to in the note just cited): Gluaisid foryla bhfear ndomhain / fan nGréig n-éachtaigh n-iorghalaigh, / gur beann siad a draoidheacht dí / do-niadh i n-aoinfheacht uirri ‘The flower of the men of the world march on warlike, valiant Greece, making upon her simultaneously, so that they deprived her of her magic (protection)’ (TD 13.25).
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37a dàil a crithear: Literally, ‘the distributing of its sparks/spurts of flame’. Dàil is defined by DIL, s.v. 4 dàil, as ‘a distributing, dispensing, bestowing, granting’. It is normally used with reference to the distribution of gifts, drink or food, the shedding of tears or blood, as well as of the firing of spears, etc. The following quatrain, however, contains a usage that may be compared with our example: Teas ag gabháil a ngealbhas, / a slegha ag dàil drithlennfhrus, / grís ag gabháil ghruadh ndeirggeal / ‘gun tsluaigh d’anáil óirmheirgeadh, which I take to mean, ‘their bright hands heat up, their spears discharge showers of sparks [on impact?], heat seizes the bright red faces of the host from the panting(? ) caused by [the waving of] banners’ (LCAB 8.50; for d’anáil óirmheirgeadh, DIL, s.v. anáil, suggests ‘the breeze caused by the waving of ensigns’; this would seem to suit an example like Ionnúarodh ó anáil mheirgeadh / ‘ga mhíndhreach bhuig mur bháth cnó [got] a cooling from the breeze of ensigns ...’ (An ullamh fós feis Teamhrach?, q. 12), but would not seem right for the example quoted above, on the basis that a ‘breeze’ is unlikely to cause men’s faces to redden with heat).

37d leath trom: I have no other examples of this word in the sense apparently meant here, ‘unbalanced’, ‘staggering’, etc.

38–41 (i) Attention is drawn here to Rudhraighe’s illustrious ancestor, Laoiseach Leannmhór son of Conall Cearnach (alias Laoi(gh)seach Ceannmhór/Lannmhór; cf. notes on 6b and 32a), whose coming to power in Laois and exertion of control over Leinster is recalled. That this was his right is asserted in quatrain 40 by reference to a prophecy attributed to Cathbhaidh, druid of Conchobhar mac Neasa of the Ulster Cycle. (Cathbhaidh is associated with prophecy in a number of texts, most notably in Longas mac nUislenn and related texts, in which he foretells Deirdriu’s birth and the tragedy she will bring.) The story of how the king of Leinster rewarded Laoiseach with the land of Laoighis for having helped the Leinstermen against the men of Munster is told in the poem Maith bhur bhfior gcatha, a ehlann Roigh, qq. 11–18. (ii) An alternative interpretation of this section might be to take it as a description of Rudhraighe himself rather than a minor apalogue. In other words, ‘with [this latter-day] Laoiseach Lannmhór speeds a host of heroes ...’. However, lines 41cd (féach gur réidhghigh an rian reamhaibh; / diall re a thréidhighb dleaghair doid), addressed to Rudhraighe, would seem to be a summing up of the lesson to be learned from an apalogue.

38a crích Laoisigh: The ‘land of Laoiseach Leannmhór’ (see next note), i.e. the territory of Laois.

38b Laoiseach Leannmhór: The reading in G seems best here. N’s laoisigh is perhaps an inadvertent scribal repetition of the preceding word (the final of 38a).

38c seóltar é ’s a ealta mhileadh: Translation tentative.
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39a Chonaill Chearnaigh: See note on 38–41.

39b caor dheaghshluaigh: Caor here refers to a host. Cf. notes on 7c and 14c.

39c gan chor sligheadh: The sense of cor here is ‘twist’, ‘detour’ (see DIL s.v. cor 9). Cf. dol lem shuíl gé do shireadh / cor sligheadh dáinn a dheireadh ‘though it sought to please me, its end was ever my misleading’ (Pilib Bocht 3.25); do chliaraibh ní cor sligheadh ‘is no check to the march of poets’ (Failigh chosnas clú Laighean 30b).

39c dhaighfhear: Often translated less literally as ‘heroes’ or the like.

40b Cathbhaidh (MS cathf aidh): (i) On the slender final consonant (historically broad) see IGT ii, 111 and 198. MS -/- reflects pronunciation (see SNG, p. 351): I have emended this to historical -bh-. (ii) On identity of Cathbhaidh see note on 38–41 above.

40c damhraidh chlár na gcuradh: The same phrase occurs in a poem by Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn and is translated by McKenna as ‘the troops of the Field of Heroes (Éire)’ (AiD 15.19). The present instance is presumably a reference to the Ulstermen, ancestors of the Úi Mhórdha.

41c raon (MS): For internal rhyme with diall in the next line I have emended raon to rian, which is a synonym and is used in a similar way in the following: réighidh a Rí an rian roimhe / go tí fá fhiadh Iughóine (Coisrigh, a Chriost, cairb Dhonnchaidh, q. 2).

42b ag gabhdil tort: I have no other examples of the expression gabhaidh tar. However, the sense may be similar to that of téid tar, which can mean ‘becomes necessary for’, ‘becomes due’ (DIL s.v. téit, col. 138.8). Cf. the following examples: Mithid mo chosg do chiontaibh, / do-chuaidh thort mo tháirriochtait ‘tá de dhualgas anois ort’ (DiD 11.23; translation DiD, p. 433); mo locht as a truaill tugadh, / do-chuaidh thort mo theasrugadh ‘is é tuain-se anois cabhrughadh liom’ (DiD 52.39; translation DiD, p. 449). If gabhaidh tar is essentially the same as téid tar, then the line might mean ‘the land of the Gaoidhil is due to you’, or, following the examples from DiD, ‘[the saving of] the land of the Gaoidhil falls due to you/is an obligation to you’. My translation is a rendering of the latter.

42c creach ... le: (i) On the use of creach in reference to the land of Ireland, cf. McKenna’s comment on the poem Creach ag Luighne ó Leith Mhogha (= O’Hara, poem 13): ‘Throughout this poem the settlement made in Connacht by Tadhg son of Cian, ancestor of Í Eadhra, is represented as a creach’ (O’Hara, p. 387). (ii) On the use of the preposition le, cf. creach le cleith Lothra a loingsibh / mochbha ag breith sna bádusibhsin ‘the creach borne off by Lothra’s
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hero, cows prematurely calving in the ships’ (BST 211.2).

42d ormhór: The usual (and elsewhere metrically verifiable) spelling of this word in bardic poetry is urmhór (meaning ‘the greater part’, ‘most’, etc.). This is also our MS reading. However, for internal rhyme with tromshlógh the vowel must be emended to ormhór. Emending to tromshlógh is not an option as tro(i)m- is the form of trom that is found in compounds.

42d cóir ormhór a fhálaí ort: Cf. cóir a fhala ar oighir Céin ‘justly is Cian’s heir angry at’ (O’Hara 19.19a). On the use of the word fola ‘grievance’ etc., McKenna notes: ‘Fola may have a subjective genitive (or possessive adjective) denoting the person who feels the anger or gives the offence ... or it may have an objective genitive (or possessive adjective) giving the object, cause (person or thing) of the anger .... When used by itself, fola generally means “anger, etc.” ’ (O’Hara 2003n.).

43a Cia ...: Rhetorical questions are often translated loosely. Cf. Cosmhail re lon, a fhiathch Éile, / an t-abhra cóir—cia ar nar loisg? ‘O prince of Éile, like to a blackbird’s is thy shapely eye, lighting up with love of all’ (AiD 26.33ab) and Cia an t-einri dirimhthear lionn / nóir ghabh airdcheannas Éirinn, / ó Cholla go Ghaoidheal nGlas, / más laoidheadh Orra an t-cólas? ‘Do we count a single king, from Colla back to Gaedheal Glas, who did not seize the headship of Ireland, if that knowledge prove an exhortation to them?’ (TD 24.39). Cf. also notes on Poem 3, q. 7ab, and Poem 6, q. 10b.

43a lucht an iomhthnúidh: More literally, ‘people of envy’. For other translations of the phrase, cf. Fiadh ag tabhoirt umbla d’uirt / —mór labhrais lucht an iomhthnúidh— / claon ahbha fa Fhiadh nÉirne / tarrla ciall ’sa choimhéirghe ‘The wood bends down to the ground, the envious have much to say; apple trees are bent in the land of the Erne—this is the sense of the uprising’ (Maguire 14.24) and Dábhur loit do léigeadh fúibh / do lámhach lucht an iomhthnúidh, / ó[s] sbh cinn chaomhna an choígidh, / rinn gach aongha urchósidh ‘Since your are the protecting heads of the province, the point of every harmful spear was loosed against you for your destruction by the casting of the envious ones’ (Gearr bhur ecuairt, a chlanna Néill, q. 6).

43b gCaithir: See note on 45cd.

44ab Lorga-alliteration is absent here. The triple alliteration in both lines is perhaps meant to compensate for this fact; cf. ‘Lorga bhrisde and compensation in Séadnadh’ (McManus, 2005, 147–9). An alternative would be to emend an mór to ainnmhór, but this seems unlikely.

44ad I construe these lines together, taking ó fhior shealbha as indicating the agent of Ní
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budh inléigthe.

44d fhior shealbha críche Cuinn: More literally, ‘the man of possession of the land of Conn’. Rudhraighe is again being cast as Tara’s spouse (cf. q. 31). For my translation ‘foremost chief’ cf. fer sealbha gach saorchineoil ‘the overlord of every noble people’ (Maguire 20.1e).

44d críche Cuinn: A poetic name for Ireland (from Conn Ceadchathach).

45ab Alternatively, one might take both lines together: ‘His [ever-]increasing flood of gifts [to poets] will soon surpass [that of] the kings of Leinster’; however, this involves taking ag do a méid adjectivally, which is somewhat strained.

45b linn duas: (i) That this ‘flood of gifts’ is for poets is perhaps verified in the line tómn oínnigh nór fhíll ó sgóil (47b). Cf. also Deacair meas do mhéid do theoirbheirt; / do thonn theasda téid ós port ‘it is hard to estimate your greatness; your wave of fame breaks over the land’ (SÓF 3.34ab). (ii) For figurative uses of li(o)nn ‘pool’, ‘lake’, ‘body of water or liquid in general’, see DIL s.v. 1 linn (c). Note also the following examples: Lot dá n-uair nír éigean sin / leanb Dé le dioghrais n-oínnigh; a linn luidh gur t’oidhir / nír gheabh ga dhúil dheaghoínnigh ‘God’s Son’s wounding borne in excessive love was not imposed on Him; Thy Son spared not His generous heart till He had emptied His lake of life’ (AiD 67.19; though McKenna translates linn luidh as ‘lake of life’, he notes in the glossary that the reference is to ‘blood’); Ní thibhre sí gith sóirbh éigeas / inghean Domhnnaíl acht duas láin, / croídhé as lómnáin do linn oínnigh / len binn comhráidh doiligh dhámh ‘Domhnall’s daughter gives naught but overflowing reward to a poet even though he be easily satisfied (?) her heart overflows with generosity and loves the difficult language of the poets’ (AiD 31.40); Frith òi luach a hainlimhina / an ghéag go gcuas choillróigdhá; / téid linn bádha bainróigdhá / ós chionn trágha a throimidhíoghla ‘The queen, a branch bearing royal hazel-nuts, got the full value of her espousals; the flood of her love swept over the shore of God’s dread vengeance’ (AiD 60.4).

45c gcumhguighe (MS): The emendation to gcumhngaighe is for rhyme with Rudhraighe. For the by-forms cumh(n)gaighidh/cuímh(n)gighidh (‘constricts’, ‘confines’, etc.), see IGT iii, 106, and DIL, s.v. cumgaigid.

45cd Alternatively, ‘should any danger [of being accused of meanness?] encroach upon the land of Cathaoir, Rudhraighe’s reputation escapes reproach’, but again, this seems strained.

45cd gCaithir ... thatáthir: (i) Cathaoir Mór was a legendary ancestral king of the Leinstermen. (ii) The normal and historic spelling of these two words is Cathaoir and tathoir. Outside of
the Nugent manuscript I have come across two examples of Caithrír that are metrically fixed:
tarraidh sé do chrú Caithrír, / Aichíd ar chlú é an athair (Le dísh cuirthear clú Laighean q. 7; 17th c. MS; Achaoil is hardly to be read) and Sírmid gialla gach mic riogh / annsin ar chlannnuibh Caithrír (ógáláchas deibhidhe; Maidean dúinn i gCill dá Luadh, q. 21; 17th c. MS). The only other occurrence is: A gael sud in (?) soileimthi / a ghael re cru in Caithrír-si / cían ummat is inairme / triath Muman a macaim-si (Fiú a cúigeadh críoch Osraige, st. 7; 16th c. MS?). As for taithír, the only other bardic example I have found is also in the Nugent manuscript, and it occurs with the same rhyming partner: Poem 7, q. 32ab. Outside of bardic poetry I know of only one example, occuring in O'Davoren's glossary: Táirim i. taithír, ut est ní tairim chlas clothach n-ergy. si. nocha tairthim estecht na cluasí chines in etargna, which Stokes renders as: 'tairim, i.e. blame (?), ut est 'I blame (?) not a famous ear of learning', i.e. I do not blame the hearing of the ear that hearkens to intellect.' (O'Dav. 1518; 16th c. MS).

46a For other examples of cuisle do (= de), cf. the following: Leat achd munab lór a fuil / a mhic Dé i ndiob mo pheacaithi / cuirse ar a deoraibh a díol / cuisle d'fhéolfhui an airtríogh 'If, O Son of God, Thou thinkest that her blood requites not my sin, add to its drops the stream of the Lord's blood' (Pilib Bocht 14.24); Cuisle do'n fhuí is airdis. / snadhmadh críoch, cossg mórairyn, / gég d’fhhuineamhun ghlannphoir Gall / d’fhuirheadhuihbh cathshlóigh Cualann (LBrann 60.42); Braon d’fuil Colla na ccoyl ngreanta / gég d’Ibh Conwill coisnus gialadh / firsreabh don fhuí-sí Neill naragh / cuisle do freimh badhaigh Briain (Beag mhaires do mhacraith Ghaidheal, q. 39).

46a fhúonfhuiul: Literally, 'wine-blood'; fion- in compounds indicates superlative quality, etc. (cf. DIL s.v. fin).

46a Chearbhall: This must refer to Rudhraighe’s maternal lineage. According to O’Byrne (2003, 154), Rudhraighe’s father, Conall, was married to Gormfhlaith O’Carroll. The Ui Chearbhaill territory of Éile lay west of the lands of the Ui Mhórdha.

46cd fuil ... chuïr ... fhuí: An instance of breacadh.

47ab tonn oinigh: See note on 45b.

47cd I do not understand this couplet. The expression cnú órdha ‘golden trinket’ is discussed in note on Poem 5, 41a.

48d dá gclú ... ní chomhaill crodh: (i) The verb comhallaídh can mean ‘fulfils’ and ‘satisfies’. Cf. Gé chaisitum a chorp mólis / i ndeoidh dhéanta doighníomha, / rí nar chomhuill dá
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chraidhe / oruinn go dté a thócaire! ‘Even if after sin I receive His tender body, may the King, whose love this ill requites, still grant me His mercy.’ (DiD 20.34 = Irish monthly 56, 192–6; cf. McKenna’s note: ‘leg. a chroidhe? “rí nár shásigh grádh a chroidhe” (?)’ (DiD, p. 434)). (ii) I take this as a version of the motif of not hoarding wealth, cf. Meic Gosáin nár chongaibh cradh / meic Dúnagain duinn Almhan / mac [leg. meic] Gormáin ór chin(n) an chlann / fir do chreit Colbháin Cualann (Deóraidh sonna siolch Chathaoir, q. 24); sduagh iognáth gan caomhna ar chrodh (Déana cuimhne, a Chaisil Chuirc, q. 23 (second copy)); Níor chleacht coigil chnú n-órdha / ... / bean re beac gcruidh do chaomhna (Poem 5, q. 41).

49ab I take this couplet more literally as, ‘A maiden’s concealment of her love for [his] handsome cheek has long been a camouflage upon her’.

49a grádh ar: ‘Love for’ is more commonly expressed using the preposition do. Further examples with ar are: Do b’iad dá dhuais na deise / i n-éaraic a n-aithise, grádh gach aonduíne ortha, / naomhMuire do fhás eatortha (DiD 27a.15) and Magdaléna Aisíach shíor: / cara is ósáas Ríogh na Rann; / do b’fhiú truirme a gráidh ar Dhia / go bhfuighbhe mé san tslúth thall (Do-ghéan dán do naomhúibh Dé q. 146). Note also that grá ar is also used in Modern Irish (see FGB s.v. grá). Alternatively, one could read a ghrádha ‘love for him’, and translate, ‘[her] comely cheek’s concealing of [her] love for him has long been [a mere] camouflage on the maiden’.

49b ‘na féagh fia: I take the possessive in ‘na to refer back to ceilt. Knott quotes this couplet (from copy D) in a note on féagh fia (TD 13.13). Féagh fia ‘magical mist or veil’ is listed in IGT ii, 95. The sense ‘camouflage’ is borrowed from Knott’s note.

49c bláth (MS): This has no rhyming partner. I take it as a dittography and tentatively emend to nó, which occurs in the next line.

50a ortha: I take this as the word meaning ‘prayer’, ‘charm’. DIL, s.v. ortha, notes the occurrence in the late language of the form órtha, which is our MS reading.

50b acht: This seems to only loosely connect with the previous line and is difficult to translate closely. The reader must infer that the poet is referring to the patron’s possession of a gruadh ghairt, etc. One might translate the first line more hypothetically: ‘He needs no love-charm, but rather [he only needs] his glowing cheek etc.’.

50c go bhfoighéig bhfaínne: (i) I am unsure how to take this. The word foighéag can mean ‘sub-branch’, ‘sapling’, ‘twig’, ‘branch’, etc. Might it denote ‘a finger’ here? Cf. bas gheigleabhar (TD 12.4), translated by Knott as ‘supple-handed’, but could it mean ‘a long-
fingered hand'? Could go bhfoigheig bhfainne mean 'with a ring[ed] finger'? In the absence of a clear example where 'finger' is denoted, perhaps foighéag fhainne means 'a small ring-[shaped] branch', and denotes 'a ring' or 'a bracelet'. Cf. an tslat fhainne 'the round brooch' (AID 6.26). I have tentatively taken it to mean a 'ring'. (ii) Note that the expected lenition of fainne following a dative is not an option as alliteration would be lost. For this sort of eclipse rather than expected lenition following a noun in the dative, cf. Magauran, p. 410 (note on l. 1010): 'Go “with” should properly take dat. (as in O.I.), but in Bardic poetry an epithet after a noun governed by go n- constantly has its initial eclipsed, as here, ....'. Further examples occur in Poem 5, q. 14b, and Poem 9, qq. 10c, 17c and 21a, as well as IGT i, 91, 112, IGT ii, example 103, BST 225.5, 208.28. Examples of analogical eclipse in Middle Irish are given in SNG, p. 239.

50d dór choimheid: Slender -d is fixed by rhyme here with bhfoigheig. This presumes a by-form coimhéididh for the verb coimhheadadh 'keeps, guards, watches'. Instances of slender -d are rare, but do occur, e.g. 2 sg. impv. coimheid in DBM 12.67 and 14.3, and O’Hara 3159; cf. also preterite do choimheid in TriBB 1514, 3272, 3592.

51d féigin: For internal rhyme with éidir I have emended N's feachain to féigin. This form, however, is marked as lochtach in IGT iii, 93. No verse citation is provided there to illustrate the form. The present (emended) instance, however, brings to two the number of examples of féigin I have come across in verse. The other is in a poem by Tadhg Dalli Ó hUiginn: [Ni lamhann] biodhba, a bharr thioigh, / do theacht chugainn dá ghchuntar, / an chrioch fhionnna ón hégín troigh— / a ciomhsa d’fhéigín d’ardaibh 'If thy coming to us be heard of, O clustering locks, foeman [will not dare] to look from on high at the borders of this fair country from which one must go' (TD 41.18). A doubtful alternative might be to emend to éadair: féagain. However, although historically broad (< passive of ad-cota -éta), it seems that (f)eidir (with slender -d-) is the form always used predicatively with the copula. The following is the only possible exception I have found: "do-chuaidh mé óm fhéagain d’fhior, / ní féadair é," ar an inghean: ‘I have forsaken the glances of man, it cannot be,' returned the maiden' (TD 1.26). However, Knott has noted that the reading ní féadair é is uncertain (TD, vol 2, p. 193).
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Poem 2: *A gcródhacht ceart chlann bhFeórais*

1 An alternative interpretation of the quatrain would be to take lines *a* and *d* together: ‘Their valour is [what establishes] the right of the race of Feóras [to reign] over the race of Míl; let us trace the[ir] early history; let us explain to them the noble chartered rights of their ancestors’.

2b The line is a syllable too long. If one emended *ag cloinn mhóir* to *clann mhór*, i.e. *Slios fairsing Éireann áille, clann mhór Mhóeadh Easbáine, gan oirbhearnadh—fa sámh soin—*’s a clár finnleannghlan fúthaidh*, one could take line *b* parenthetically and construe as follows: ‘The expansive coast of fair Ireland and its plain of brightly-clad land were intact—it was peaceful—under them, [namely,] the great race of Míl Easpáine.’ This emendation is drastic, however, and I have let the line stand. It is perhaps worth pointing out that the couplet as a whole has the correct number of syllables if one elides across the line-boundary (an example of such elision occurs in *Butler* 6; on which see note, ibid., p. 112–3).

2c *oirbhearnadh*: Literally, ‘diminution’, ‘impairment’. Such an ‘impairment’ would come with the Anglo-Norman invasion. The translation is tentative. I have tentatively taken *oirbhearnadh* as denoting a ‘breach’ of the coast by foreign troops. It may alternatively denote a ‘diminution’ of the sovereignty of Míl’s race, in which case it would equate to the ‘sharing’ of Ireland with the Saghsain, which is mentioned in the next quatrain.

2d *clár finnleannghlan*: My translation ‘brightly-clad land’ is based on taking the adjective as a compound of *fonn* ‘land’, *leann* ‘cloak, mantle’, and *glan* ‘fair, bright’. Of *leann*, DIL, s.v. *lenn*, notes that it is used ‘poetically of the covering of ... plants’, and cites a number of examples of it compounded with the adjective *glan*.

3a ó ré *Riogh nimhe*: This may simply convey the sense ‘ever’. It may also allude to the scheme of successive invasions of Ireland as occur in *Lebor Gabála Érenn*, as the poet goes on to describe the first invasion of Ireland by the Saghsain.

3acd *Ní raibh ó ... roinn rú ag ...*: I take this more literally as: ‘not since ... was there [ever] a sharing [of Ireland] with them [i.e. the race of Míl] by the kings of England, a prime force to whom their [i.e. the race of Míl’s] expulsion was due.’ The phrase *roinn rú* might more literally be translated as ‘dealings with them’; cf. DIL s.v. *rann*: ‘With FRI, participation (communion) with’ and *ionnas nach biadh roinn risin saoghal aige ‘that he might have no dealings (intercourse) with the world’ (BNnÉ 146 §4). For the interpretation ‘sharing with’, cf. *Do bhí urláimh na Banbha / ag cloinn Mhóeadh mhór-chalma / ó shin gan roinn re ruire*
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/ go haimisir Briain Bóruimhe ‘Power over Banba was held from that time by brave Mile’s race which shared it with no prince, till the time of Brian Boroinme’ (Iomarbhágh 15.72) and oirechas roinn ris an ríoghraidh ‘it is fitting to share with the princes’ (IBP 1.8d).

3c ríoghraidh na Saghsan (MS ríoghraidh hshacsan): I have tentatively introduced na to give the required syllable-count to the line. For the by-forms to -Sagsa-/Saghsa-, cf. IGT ii, 152 and 153.

4b fá toisg (MS): I interpret fá as ‘under his’ and supply lenition following it.

4b g(...) seanróimh (N), go sEnroimh (M): I follow M here.

4b -Róimh: The allusion here is to the papal bull Laudabiliter, issued by the English Pope Adrian IV to Henry II in 1155, authorizing a conquest of Ireland with the aim of reforming the Irish church.

4c sluagh: Nominative of accompaniment. See note on Poem 6, note 6ab.

5a a litreach sin: See note on 4b.


7b mhillsEut (MS): Note the unusual spelling (usually eu = éa, not ea). For another example, see Poem 8, 31c.

7d dream danardha: Though danardha often means ‘foreign’, I take it here to mean ‘fierce’ and to refer to the Gaidhil. Compare the use of dásacht ‘ferocity’ in reference to the Gaidhil in 6a.

8a ach (MS): This word also occurs in the manuscript without -t in Poem 7, 13b and Poem 8, 12b.

8c d’ágh chéimeann gan chlaochlíadh neirt: Literally, ‘by valour of deeds without diminution of strength’.

10cd fhéoraisi : gleoghlaisi (MS): This rhyme is imperfect. I have no other example of gleoghlaise, however, as glas can be used to describe the colour of weapons, the compound might be construed as ‘battle-bluishness’ or ‘bluish din’, and this is perhaps what was in the
scribe’s mind. In 16cd, *ghléomhaise* rhymes with *Fheórais-se*, but this would not seem to suit the present context. I have tentatively emended to *gleólaise*, taking the second element as *loise* ‘flame, radiance’, which can also figuratively mean ‘splendour, brilliance, glory, fame’.

10d *tar ghrádh*: I have no other example of this phrase and the translation is tentative.

11b *Mháighiu* (MS): The manuscript has a short -a- in 36b and I follow this form, equating it with the borrowed name ‘Maidiú (Mathieu)’ mentioned in SNG, p. 442. Should we read *Maidhiú*? I have found no other example of the name *Maig(h)iu/Maid(h)iú* in bardic poetry.

11c *re neimhsgéar*: The negative prefix *neam-*/neimh-* is occasionally used with verbs in late Middle Irish, as noted in *DIL*, s.v. *nem-* (c). Another example of its use with *sgaraidh* ‘separates’ in bardic poetry is: *Féibh thángais ar th’easbalab / toirche oram mar lasair; / gach maith riom go neamhsgarthair / na huilc riomsa go sgarthair* ‘As thou camest on Thy Apostles, come as a flame on me; may all good cleave to me, and all evil be put away from me.’ (*AiD* 57.4).

12d *-sholta*: I take this to be nominative plural of *soladh*, which can mean ‘omen, good fortune, success’.

13d *gá séan as fhaise d’ardrath*: Literally, ‘what sign is closer to good fortune?’ To be taken as rhetorical here.

15b *teannála ag teacht tar críochaibh*: This may refer to the setting alight of homesteads. Alternatively, ‘torches crossing the borders’?

15d *go ham gciánaighthe comharc*: An alternative interpretation might be ‘until you silence battle-cries’.

16a *tanaighthe*: The nominative *tanachadh* occurs in *IGT* iii, 106.

16ab Note the contrast here between *tanaighthe* and *thigh*, and between *cinn* and *deiridh*.

17c *leathchogar cean*: Cf. *Ceangal síthe, seachnadh goimh, / eól dún, a inghean Fhiachaidh, / biodh nach fionnfaradh cogar cean, / cogadh d’iomchar madh éigean*, which may be understood as ‘... even if one does not find out about battle plans, we know how to (carry a) fight’ (*LBran* 50.37cd).
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18cd More literally, 'in particular because the host of fair Breagha’s grassy land have you [as their leader], O fair cheek'.

19b deimhin: For substantive use of this word, cf. DIL, s.v. deimin II.

19d Chiannacht: Given the Berminghams' association with Co. Louth (see note on 26a), this may refer to Ciannachta Breagh, an area extending from the river Liffey to Dromiskin, Co. Louth (see Onom. s.n.).

21cd aoibhneasa ... aoibhnea-sa: In line d, the expected form, aoibhni-se, yields to the requirements of rhyme. Cf. 'De ghnáth caolaítear túschosan iarmhíre i ndiaidh -e agus fágtar leathan é i ndiaidh -a (m.sh. an dalta-sa ‘an dalta seo’ ach an file-se ‘an file seo’) (SNG, p. 345). Cf. notes on Poem 4, 20d and 24bcd.

22a Shliabh Chua: Nom. Sliabh gCua, the mountainous district south of Clonmel.

22b go Caiseal Chuircmheic Luighdheach: (i) That Chuircmheic is lenited rather than eclipsed coming after a noun in the accusative may be regarded as an example of sléagar. (ii) To fulfil the rules of alliteration mheic must be either unstressed or must be suffixed to the preceding word. I have followed the manuscript in doing the latter. It would also be acceptable to write it as two words as mheic in this context can be either stressed or unstressed (Ó Máille, 1945–7). Cf. 39b below. (iii) Core mac Luighdheach was the traditional founder of the kingship of Cashel.

22c Sliabh ... na rnBan bhFionn: Slievenamon, Co. Tipperary.

22d an Táilgeann: Literally, ‘the Adzehead’, a common epithet for Saint Patrick.

23a Do baisdeadh uaibh: For baisdidh ó ‘names after’, cf. a Bhríghid ór baisteadh mé ‘O Bridget after whom I was baptized’ (GB 19.29) and Gá dú ach is ón urchar-sin / do baisteadh Áth an Urchair ‘I need but say that Áth an Urchair was named from that same throw’ (Gabh umad, a Fheidhlimidh, q. 32ab).

23c Tuath Fheórás: This perhaps refers to lands at Knockgraffon and Kiltinan, Co. Tipperary (see introduction). The family lent their name to lands they held elsewhere, e.g Críoch (Mhic) Fheórás, in Sligo (see quotation in note on 25d) and Dún Mór Mheic Fheórás (Co. Galway; see Onom., p. 387), also known as ‘Bermingham’s country’ (cf. McLysaght, 1966, 33).
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23d snaidhm eolais: The meaning of this is not clear to me. My literal interpretation is ‘a guarantee of knowledge’, namely, ‘proof’. The fact that eolais is often used for rhyme with Feóras in this poem suggests that the phrase may have been coined by the poet.

25c uile: I am not certain what the sense of this is and have left it untranslated as the general sense does not seem to suffer. Does it go with dhún, i.e. ‘we must now all turn’? Or with iompádh, i.e. ‘we must now turn fully’? Is it primarily a rhyme filler?

25d fionn Trágh ... nEóthaile: Nom. Trágh Eóthaile, Trawohelly Strand, near Ballysadare, Co. Sligo. This was in Bermingham lands in Tír Fhiachrach (Tireragh; see introduction). Cf. also Imtusa mac fedlimidh iarsin tainic roimhe go tir fiachrach 7 ar fud chriche mic fheorais gur lomairec i ó mhuaidh co traicch neothuile an tsaoir ‘As to the son of Felim, he proceeded after this to Tireragh, and through Mac Feorais’s country, which he entirely plundered from the Moy to Traigh Eothuile’ (AFM s.a. 1249).

26a Iarlicht Lughmhaigh: (i) Sir John de Bermingham was created Earl of Louth in 1319 after his defeat of Robert Bruce’s forces the previous year (see introduction). (ii) The name Lughmhaigh ‘Louth’ is variously spelled, i.e. -b/-m- and -d/-g (cf. Onom., p. 507). I have normalized to the spelling that seems to occur most commonly in the bardic corpus. Compare, however, Ó Maolfabhail’s definition of Lughmhadh as ‘bod Lú, is é sin, ‘sliocht, pobal Lú’ (Ó Maolfabhail, 2005, 76). Is he taking the second element of the name to be moth? DIL, though including the meaning ‘membrum virile’ for this word, does not include ‘descendants’.


27a Chruachán: Croghan Hill, County Offaly.

27c cuma an rann eolais-se air: I take cuma as a reduced form of cuma is/cuma agus ‘[is] like’, ‘[is] the same thing’. More literally, ‘the same is this quatrain of knowledge [composed] about it [‘it’ referring to the facts mentioned in lines ab]’. Examples of cuma followed by a nominative are rare; cf. Comhail bids cach a mionna / giodh rothrom cáná ó gColla; / ní beag lón áth mar urra: / cuma an cháin ríogh ‘na rolla ‘All will abide by their oaths to Colla’s descendants, though their taxes are very heavy; [their] battle-force is no mean guarantor—it is as though the royal tax were in their charter’ (Le dis cuirthear clu Laighean, q. 8; I take the last line literally as ‘it is the same as though the royal tax were in their charter’).

29d t’fhosadh ‘na gcead ná cuiridh: The expression cuiridh X i gcead Y usually means ‘seeks Y’s permission to do X’. The sense in the present example may be: ‘do not seek their [i.e. the territories] sanction for your appointment [as their leader]’, in other words, ‘do not wait for
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the territories to choose you, take the initiative yourself’. Alternatively, if t’fhosdadh means ‘to hold you back’, the line might be interpreted as ‘do not empower them to hold you back’, i.e. ‘do not let them keep you waiting’.

30a do mhéid mhEnma (MS): As méad is masculine (cf. IGT ii, 38) I have delenited the initial in meanma. We could retain the lenition by emending to the feminine form méid (IGT ii, 14), but this is more intrusive.

30c a chathbhrandin: DIL explains branán as ‘name of principal piece in some board-games, common as laudatory epithet for a chief, hero, etc.’ (s.v. branán); it has also been translated as ‘chess-king’ by editors of bardic verse.

30c Eachtgha: Aughyt, the border region between Clare and Galway.

30d sáidh d’: I tentatively take this as a 2 sg. imperative of sáidhídh ‘thrusts, etc.’. According to DIL (s.v. sáidid) it means ‘sets upon, attacks’ when followed by ar; however, I have no other examples of this verb being followed by the preposition do. The word sáith ‘fill, sufficiency’, of which I have one example of a by-form sáidh (tug Muire láimh ris an leas / an ute sháidh do shaidhbheas ‘Mary, besides salvation, grants him abundance of wealth’; AÓD 50.39cd) does not seem to fit the sense here.

31b Shiúir: Note that Shiúir is the normal and correct form of the name of this river; compare, for example, Fa ré é ar Shionainn ‘sar Shiúir, / sar Chunga na gcuan dtaidhiúir (TD 17.34ab) and Ní cheiliomn cius ar mbróin-ne / nuall ard srotha seanBhóinne / na n-eas ceiúin mongharach mall; / combdhubhach Shiúir is Sionann (Butler 4.32). However, there are also examples of Súir occurring in rhyme, e.g. Súir: uír (Top. poems ll. 1175 and 1319; in a note on l. 1175, Carney states; ‘That Súir (: úir) is not a metrical licence, but a form of the name, current perhaps in districts far removed from that river, is suggested by the occurrence of the same rhyme in a poem by Ó Dubhagáin, Leabh. Muimhneach, p. 414, ll. 19, 20.’). The following example may be added to the latter: Cnoc Rafann is Ráith Caisil / beirid orra urmainsin / gur chasnaimh fán Shiúir sreabhghlain / don ghasraidh uír ildhealbaigh (Port oireachais Ara Chliach, q. 41).

31b ar sheanMhagh Feimhín: (i) Nom. Magh Feimhín, the plain between Cashel and Clonmel. (ii) One might expect Feimhin to be eclipsed, as the following examples indicate that fóiridh ar was followed by the accusative: tá fhóirfeas ar fiadh mBanbha (TD 21.18c) and Cosmhbail re cóiryeadh na Trnai / mar fhóirfeas ar Tulaigh dTé ‘like Troy’s rebuilding shall be his saving of Té’s Hill’ (DiD 93.37). However, there is no need for eclipsis after the accusative singular masculine if it is the same as the nominative singular in form.

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31c sEchnait-si (MS): I take this to be a phonetic spelling of the 2 plural imperative of seachnaidh ‘avoids’, which I have restored. Cf. 47d.

31d an ghealChnuic-se Ghrafann: Nom. Cnoc Grafann. Knockgraffon, near Cahir, Co. Tipperary. The name also occurs without initial g, e.g. Cnoc Rafann (Top. poems l. 1487). As Cnoc Rafann is the standard form that has been adopted by the Ordinance Survey (see Ó Cearbhaill, 2004) it is presumably the earlier form and the g- is presumably intrusive.

32a mar thréigean mbunaidh: Lit. ‘as a lasting abandonment’.

32b Urmhumhain: Nom. Urmhumha, Ormond.

32d le rath gconganta: For the translation ‘with a abundance of help’ cf. go rath gcéille ‘with a wealth of wisdom’ (DBM 2.23a). For the genitive form conganta see IGT ii, 47.

35cd Alternatively, ‘you unfailingly(?) deserve [to be] the choice of this tribe of Feoras’, or perhaps, ‘you, the choice of this tribe of Feoras, ought not to retreat’?

36a rogha agus roinn: The idea presented here that the patron both divide and choose the land is a statement of the great power that is being attributed to him. We may compare the following principal in early Irish law: rannaid úsar 7 dogoa sinser ‘the youngest divides and the eldest chooses’ (CIH 1289.11). Of this, Fergus Kelly writes: ‘To ensure fairness in the division of an inheritance (orbae), the division is made by the youngest inheritor (comarbae), but the eldest gets the first choice, the second eldest the second choice, and so on. The youngest gets the last choice, so it is in his interest to divide the property into equally valuable portions’ (GEIL, p. 102). That the same person would both divide and choose would therefore be a suggestion of full control. Further examples of the phrase occur also in the following quatrains:

Aodh Lighean dán ghabhar greim / dá ndlighthear ragha agus roinn / —bíodh a chíll ag cathair Chuinn — / rachaidh tar tuinn go Fiadh Floinn ‘Aodh of Lighin, to whom all cleave and who has a right to choice and distribution, will come overseas to Flann’s Land; let Conn’s Fort realise that’ (DiD 93.42 = Irish monthly 55, 468), Airgidh gach oireacht fa thinneall / Teallach n-Eachach fiuilgeas doirr; / tre Mhagh bhFáil teagar dá thogha / leagar dháibh rogha agus roinn ‘Folk about much-suffering Teallach nEachach are ever attacking it; from all Fál’s Plain people come seeking it. they think to choose and divide its land’ (Magauran 10.7), Do gheallus laoidh n-a laoidh cumuinn, / craobh do lubhghort leasa Floinn, / dom laodh díl, do Chormac Cabha, / glanshlat do dhíligh ragha is roinn ‘I promised a poem, a love-poem, to my dear friend, Cormac of Cobha, a branch from the orchard of Flann’s Fort, a hero who has the right to pick and choose’ (O’Hara 10.2).
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37b le a chomhmaidheamh: Here, I take manuscript le to be for le + 3 sg. possessive. For the use of le expressing purpose with a following verbal noun cf. DIL s.v. la, III (d) and Leó féin orldáimh an oinigh / lé a conghail ó fhéin fhuinidh ‘with them is the custody of hospitality, to guard it from the western warriors’ (TD 10.16). However, in both this and our example le should perhaps be emended to re.

37d Shabhrann: The Sabhrann has been identified with the river now connected with the south channel of the river Lee (Ó Murchadha, 1964–5). The present example seems to be the only one of a genitive ending in -rann, a form which presupposes a nominative Sabhra, which does not seem to occur; therefore Sabhrann is probably an analogical form. The usual genitive form is Sabhrainne, e.g. Top. poems (l. 943), Aisl. MCG (ll. 201, 215, 279, 281) and Leth Coinn airíghim wírre, / díbh máthair mhná Sabhroinni (Meidshe mh’innhe mh’fhad ó Shaidhbh, q. 13ab).

38c nó: See note on 42c.

39a ádh (MS): It seems better to read ágh ‘valour’ (as in D) than ádh ‘luck’ here. N’s scribe uses dh and gh indiscriminately.

39b Fiamhain mac Foraoi: (i) One could emend to Fiamhannmhaic; however, according to Ó Máille (1945–7) mac in the present context can be either stressed or unstressed. Cf. 22b and the following example where it must be written as one word: Da n-iaradh an fhian Muimhneach / ní do chead a ccomhairleach / ioc a(n) gCoin riaghoithlic Raoi / no a ngoin Fhiamainimmhic Foraoi (Lámh dhearg Éireann Íbh Eathach, q. 10). (ii) Mac Cana (1980, 93 n. 60), referring to the lost tale Aided Fhiamain, writes: ‘Cf. Held., 446 f. As Thurneysen observes, the burden of the story seems to have been that Mugain, Conchobar’s wife, was carried off by Fiamain mac Foroi, and that Fiamain was then attacked and slain, probably by Cú Chulainn, in his own fortress of Dún Binne’. Fiamhain mac Foraoi is mentioned along with Táin heroes in DuanF. 20.79 and as being related to Oisín in DuanF. 46.1 (cf. DuanF. iii, p. 365). He is alluded to as a great hero in the poem Foraois airdriogha iath Connacht (Butler 7) Finally, he is depicted as having been killed, with anfhórlann ‘overwhelming odds’, by a foreign host in the following: Sluagh allmharach fa hard gnaoi / rug ar mbhac bhfoltchas bhForaoi / a ngleó acht gidh riag hail roimheart / Fiamhain leo do lámhoigheadh // Fiamhain is Fionn is Fearghas / is Ceallachán cloidheamhghlas / laoch lonna ar nuar chuir comhlaín / gur luidh orra anfhórlann (Cia ré bhfáiltigheann Fódla?, qq. 18 and 20).

40b Aonghus an Bhrogha: Aonghus of Brugh na Bóinne, one of the leaders of the Tuatha Dé Danann. His father was the Daghdha, and his mother was Bóinn.
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40d an t Hollánach: (i) One of the sobriquets of Lugh Lámhfhada, chief of the Tuatha Dé Danann. (ii) Though the spelling ioldánach is normal, the rhyme here with diombádhach (-/-m/-) shows that -ll- is correct. For the change -ld- to -ll-, which happened during Old Irish period, see SNG, p. 354.

41b n’ Amhairghin: Amhairghin, a poet and warrior, was father of Conall Cearnach.

42a mac Cumhaill: Fionn mac Cumhaill.

42c nó: As the comparison with Fionn mac Cumhaill seems to continue here, nó seems out of place. It might be a case of ditography (nó occurs at the beginning of the previous two lines) and could be emended to tú, or simply dropped. I have let it stand, however, as the same phenomenon occurs in 38c.

43c laoich Bhreagh: Referring back to the heroes just listed.

44b neach budh cóir ad chuing chomhair: Cf. tearc neach as cneasda ’na chuing (Butler 8.49c), tearc aonduine ar chuí ’na chuing (LBran 21.7c), and marr treabhadh cáigh ’na gcomhar ‘others progress slowly in comparison with them’ (Le dís cuirthear chú Laighean, q. 1d).

44c bhúdh (MS): Note the lenition of the initial here even though it is non-relative. (Further examples: Poem 5, q. 27, Poem 6, qq. 21 and 23.) O’Rahilly, discusses the occurrence of bhudh and bhúdh in his introduction to Desiderius (pp. xxx-xxxi), however, he does not note any such examples in initial position. Did this lenited form come about by analogy with forms of the substantive verb beginning with b-?

45c It may be mentioned in passing that D has timtheachtaibh. This includes an example of the less common abbreviation for cht, namely, s followed by the us-symbol. This abbreviation is particularly associated with the O’Clery school. Its use here allows the scribe to write a lenited suspension-stroke for the last syllable without having to place this over the suspension-stroke that forms part of the normal cht-compendium (presumably, an s with a double suspension-stroke would be unclear).

45d ilreachtaigh: The meanings ‘many-formed?’, ‘very frenzied?’ are given for the word ilreachtach in DIL s.v. il 61.28.

46d Namely, ‘with whom an enemy does not associate protection’.
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46b seanfhocal so as é ordhraic: Only line d seems to hold potential for containing a proverb but I see none. Compare the almost identical line seanfhocal is é urrdhairc ‘that is a well-known proverb’ (Námha agus cara dar gceird, q. 24b), which is duly preceded by a proverb.

47d anmbrat-sa (MS): The manuscript spelling—unlenited t—is phonetic, as shown by rhyme; cf. note on 31c.

48c mhurghabhla: I have no other example of this word in bardic poetry; however, muir-gabul is defined as ‘an inlet of the sea’ (DIL, s.v. muir; cf. also gabhal m(h)ara s.v. gabul). Perhaps estuary birds are noisy and thus were associated with strength?

48d t-urlabhra a n-aighaidh eólaigh: Namely, ‘when you are debating against a sage’.

49a Gá beag duit: Literally ‘is it not enough for you?’. Taken rhetorically, this effectively means ‘it is enough for you’.

49b an bhantrachta: Although listed as feminine in IGT ii, 26, this noun is treated as masculine here and in all other examples I have found.

50a dá: I take this as anticipating námha in line b.

50b da námha (MS): If dá ‘to his, etc.’ were intended we should have námhaid, which would be unmetrical. For this reason, and for sense, I have emended dá to do.

50d méidéachaidh: As DIL notes, s.v. métaigid, this verb occurs ‘rarely with palatal stem’.

51a Na teóra buadh ... a-táid ort: Cf. A-táid ortsa, a fhéinnidh Teamhra, / na trí buadha as-bert an draoi; / fuarus a n-uair fheidhna d’fhaicsin / buaidh ndealbha is ghaisgidh is ghnaoi ‘O Warrior of Teamhair, thou hast the three excellences of which the druid spoke; when watching thy deeds of gallantry, I have noted thy excellence in beauty and valour and glory’ (Ceangail do shiorth riom, a Ruaidhrí, q. 44), Dleaghair onóir deóradh dhi / an cú luirg ó Loch Éirne / a chú ar a ttád teóra búadh / deóra thú san fháid f(h)ionnúar ‘She is to be honoured as a stranger, this hound from Loch Éirne; O hound of the three excellences, thou art a stranger in this cool fair land’ (BST 224.25–6 = IGT ii, 792).

51c faoi: I take this to be the prepositional pronoun fa + 3 sg. m. Cf. Faoi chanus sinn seanfhocal gnáth / gasroidhe Fáil, / giolla do Choimm mhalaroigh mhóir / thabhartoigh Tháil ‘This old adage of the heroes of Fál, I apply it now to a youth of the restless, mighty and
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generous race of Tál’ (A toigh bheag tiaghar a dteagh móir, q. 3).

51c dhéchfuidhEr (MS): Emended to the by-form dhéacfaidhir for rhyme with éachtroimhir.

52a ráith Bhreagh: If this is taken to denote Tara, the poet may be implying that Mac Feórais is descended from highkings and therefore entitled to be a chief. Alternatively ráith Bhreagh, may simply refer to Ireland as a whole (as it does, for example, in Maguire 2.19) or, perhaps, Leinster.
Poem 3: *Mairg as dáileamh don digh bhróin*

2c *fleadh chuíridh*: This expression, which I understand this to mean ‘a drink one drinks upon invitation’, is difficult to translate and my attempt (‘communal’) is tentative. Something like ‘a festive drink’ would perhaps be suitable in a different context. Cf. *teagh cuíridh* ‘invitation house’, ‘banquet hall’, etc. Cf. *teagh cuíridh*, for which see note on Poem 5, q. 13a.

3ab In other words, given the currency of the news Gerald’s death it would be surprising if there were anyone left to be newly traumatized by the news.

3ab *digh ... digh*: An example of the metrical fault *caoiche*.

4a *uain* (MS): I have emended this to *uainn* following *BST*, p. 6. Note, however, that McKenna lists *uain* and *uainn* (as well as *uan* and *uann*) as by-forms (*DiD*, p. 591).

4a *airleagadh*: Literally, ‘loan’. Compare the notion expressed by *iasacht* ‘loan’ in the poem *Ar iasacht fhuaras Aonghus* (= *DiD* 69), in which the patron is conceived of as being with the poet on a temporary ‘loan’ while he lived. The idea perhaps expresses resignation to the will of God. The literal translation of our line would seem to be ‘what has been borrowed weighs heavily upon us’. Alternatively, one might construe it as ‘the loan[—now come to an end—]weighs heavily upon us’.

4b *na hainbhreachta*: The word *ainbhreach* very often refers to an ‘unreasonable demand’ made by a poet, and my translation (‘injustices’) is designed not to preclude this.

5b *ar a ndruim*: For the phrase *ar druim* ‘following’, etc., see *DIL*, s.v. *druim(m)* IV (c). Cf. also: ‘*ar dh[r]uim* “i n-aghaidh” ...’ (*DiD*, glossary, p. 552), and ‘*ar druim*, “over,” “responsible for,” “controlling” ’ (*AiD* 40.13n.), each of which might possibly suit the present context. One might alternatively construe as follows: ‘For the lack of one man the Gaoidhil [of his territory] are left unguarded—as a consequence of the loss [of him] they are on their backs [i.e. suffering]’. In other words, both the Gaoidhil and the foreigners are suffering from the death of Gerald. This would require *clannaibh Cuinn* (5d) to mean ‘Ulstermen’, i.e. northern enemies, rather than ‘the Gaodhil in general’. A problem with this possibility is that I have no other examples of *ar a ndruim* meaning ‘suffering’.

5d *clannaibh Cuinn*: I am uncertain whether this refers to the Gaoidhil in general, to Ulstermen, or specifically to the O’Neills. Are the same people denoted by this as by *siol nEóghain* (13d), *clannaibh Néill* (21c), *tibh Néill* (leg. *Ibh*? 33b)?
Notes on the poems

6c leary: The meanings of this word include 'hillside', 'shore of sea or lake', 'river-bank', 'surface', 'level' (of, for example, the sea) (cf. DIL s.v. lerg). I have taken it to refer to the surface of the river. If one took it to mean 'river-bank' or 'shore' the translation of the line might be 'so that its side crashed over the banks'. The sense is more or less the same.

6c ionad coinne: Cf. Ionnsoighidh bhur n-ionad coinne 'Haste therefore to the place of battle' (AiD 26.11a).

6cd coinne ... tonne: Perhaps this should be cuinne ... tuinne? The form coinne is listed in IGT ii, 3; the form cuinne is not noted as a by-form. However, the gen. sg. of tonn is apparently always tuinne, a form which also occurs in IGT i, 92. On the other hand, DIL, s.v. coinne, states that cuinne is a later form.

6d ag (not in MS): I have introduced this in an attempt to make sense of the line.

7a an t-aoinfhear cumtha: Cf. a ollamh 's a fher cumtha 'poet and ... confidant' (Marcher 2.38c); fear cumtha is comhuirle 'friend and counsellor' (Pilib Bocht 11.29). See DIL s.v. commaid 'companionship', 'partnership', etc.

7ab Cf. cia an t-aoinfhear nar hainceadh lé? 'is there any man left unsaved by her?' (Dlighidh liaigh leigheas a charad, q. 25b). On this sort of rhetorical usage, cf. note on Poem 1, 43a.

7b do fhuingEdh (MS): I have emended this to do fhuingfeadh in an attempt to make sense of it. Leaving it unamended might give the following translation: 'Who is the one friend whom the living ember [i.e. Gerald] used to sustain for [the dissemination of] his fame?' (The answer being 'me', the poet?) However, the sense of dd chlu (7a) is less certain for such an interpretation.

7b aoibheal bheó: Compare the use of this expression, with reference to Christ, in another poem by the same author: aoibheal bheo na n-uile hé 'He became the living delight of all men' (Dlighidh liaigh leigheas a charad, q. 1d).

7c suil re gort ndeaghfhoid: Cf. gach deaghfhoid gan bhliath ód bhás (20b). The reference here is to nature mourning his loss by not yielding produce.

7d In other words, it would be pointless.

8bcd The translation of line b (literally, 'that my ship's sail has been lowered') as 'that I am
Poem 3: Mairg as dáileamh don digh bhrón

defeated’ may be a little too weak. Perhaps the sense is more ‘that my course is at an end’. The metaphor possibly refers to the power and influence the poet may have had while Gerald was alive. I take *tréan* in line *c* to refer to this also. The fact that this is all very public is alluded to in line *d*.

8c Cf. *go dtarrla*[dar] *a gluine fa each Fortibras* ‘and the horse of Fortibras fell on its knees’ (from ‘The Irish version of Fierabras’ §43, edited by Stokes, 1898–9).

10a *or n-a chor a gcриaidh*: I translate this as ‘has been planted’ but the sense ‘has been buried’ is probably also to be understood as it anticipates the content of the second couplet.

10b This line perhaps suggests that Gerald died young. Cf. q. 15, where Gerald is described as *réalta ríogh* ‘a royal star’, which is glossed as ‘prince, etc.’ in *AiD*, p. 318.

11 This quatrain contains an example of person-switching (if the poet is referring to himself in the third person as *ollamh* in line *b*). Cf. Poem 4, q. 13. He seems to be saying that by shedding tears of blood he is simply doing his job. One might alternatively translate *ní mhaoidhfe mé* as ‘I will not deny’ (cf. McKenna’s gloss: ‘Ní mhaoidhím ort é, ‘I do not begrudge it to thee,” “I will not deny it to thee (if asked),” (O’Hara 1334n.)), but the usual sense is ‘begrudge’. The phrase *maoidhidh ar* occurs again in 14c below, and occurs also in the context of shedding tears in Poem 7, qq. 27c and 29c. For the ‘tears of blood’ motif in general, see Hull (1956); cf. also Breeze (1988), who discusses provenance of the motif of the ‘Virgin’s tears of blood’.

11c *siol geamhair dheiry*: The word *geamhar* means ‘green corn’, ‘corn in the blade’ (cf. *DIL* s.v. *gemar*) or ‘unripe corn’ (cf. *EIF* glossary s.v. *gemar*). I have no other examples of *siol geamhair*.

12 Here I use McManus’s (2006, 103) translation of this quatrain.

13a *úain* (MS): On the emendation to *uann*, cf. note on 4a.

13a *bhrunnaimh*: This reading seems doubtful, as the noun *brannamh* denotes a type of boardgame or its pieces (i.e. chessmen) (cf. *DIL* s.v. *brandubh*). The sense seems to require it to refer to the dead patron, in which case one would sooner expect *bhrándán*, nom. *branán* ‘name of principal piece in some boardgame(s); common as laudatory epithet for a chief, hero, etc.’ (*DIL* s.v. *branán*).

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13 ríogh ... dhíol ... síodh ... síol: An instance of breacadh.

13d síol nÉoghain: Descendants of Eóghan son of Niall Naoighiallach. It is unclear to me whether this refers to the Gaoidhil, to Ulstermen, or specifically to the O’Neills. See note on 5d.

14c ná maoidh ... ar: Cf. note on 11ab.

14cd Literally, ‘do not begrudge women [their] loss of spirits, they are of the royal women of Delvin’s plain’.

15ab More literally, ‘what is the one thing that would be more difficult for us since [i.e. compared to] your violent death as a royal star?’.

15b réaltain ríogh: Might this indicate that Gerald was young? Cf. note on 10b.

15c Cf. A-tá an chumha, ar bhfás a fréamh, / gan dula ‘Sorrow, having taken root, abates not’ (DBM 3.8ab).

16b roieasbhaidh: This might also be spelled ro-easbhaídh. For the spelling at the hiatus, cf. An aghaidh dotieoluis dhu(i)bh / is an mhaidin gheal ghriammh(i)r (M’anam dhuit, a Dhé athar, q. 23ab).

16d mBriain: Brian Bóramaigh.

16d chlannaibh Céin: If this is Cian, son of Ailill Ólom, the reference seems odd, as the Dál gCais claimed descent from his brother, Cormac Cas.

17a Cf. ar n-eagar cháich ar an gcarn ‘when everyone had been arranged in order upon the mound’ (GB 15.21c).

17b i n:- (i) The scribe normally spells the preposition ‘in’ as a. (ii) The use of the preposition ‘in’ here seems a little odd. Might ar ‘on’ make better sense? Compare a n-uamhaidh in Poem 8, 16d.

17b For the extended sense of leaba here, i.e. ‘grave’, cf. DIL s.v. lepaid, col. 109.54–6. For further examples of lucht used to describe mourners at a grave, cf. Breathnach (1997–8), e.g. Do chuir ar mo chroidhe ceó / a bhfuil a(g) loighre ar do líon; / iomdha oraih lucht go lá, /
Poem 3: Mairg as dáileamh don digh bhróin

mná re hucht loghaidh ní lía ‘(The sight of) all those who are lying upon your gravestone has saddened my heart; many a crowd is upon you until daybreak, (and) the women who are paid a fee are not more numerous’ (Mairg nach tuigeann treise riogh, q. 17; quoted and translated by Breantnach, op. cit., 59). A less likely alternative would be to take leaba as literally meaning ‘bed’, i.e. ‘the burden of his death weighs heavily on everyone in their beds’.

17d ní ghabhainn ceart: Lenition of ceart is optional here (cf. IGT i, 77–80). As it is uncertain in both manuscripts I have left it out.

17d More literally, ‘I used not stake my claim formerly because of you’. It might alternatively mean ‘I used not concede my right ...’; however, I have no example of gaibhidh ceart meaning ‘concedes’. Either way, the poet seems to be alluding to his loss of status following the death of his patron.

19d More literally, ‘if/when I do not engage in grieving activity for you’.

20ab I construe this as Ód bhás, a Ghearóid, mar so bhíos gach deaghfhód do ghnáth: gan bhláth ‘Since your death, Gerald, this is how all good land is wont to be: without bloom’.

21a ag anadh ar: This seems to refer to the holding of a vigil.

21b Bhréaghmbhach: Note that this can probably be used to denote the Pale (see TD, vol. 2, p. 341).

21c clannaibh Neill: It is unclear to me whether this refers to the Goidhil, to Ulstermen, or specifically to the O’Neills. See note on 5d.

22ab easbaidh ... fhleadhsoin: Emending to the by-form easbaidh would give perfect rhyme with fhleadh-soin but the metre does not require it.

22b ar chonnradh gcuain: More literally, ‘in exchange for harbour dues [i.e. payment]’. For the phrase, cf. mó ná a ndubhradh a chlú a ccéin, / réidh is dú cunnradh in chuain ‘Greater than has been said is his fame abroad; it is just that the harbour dues (?) be generous’ (O’Reilly poems 1739–40). The editor gives the translation in a note, where he also includes the following explanation: ‘cunnradh in chuain, ‘harbour dues’ (?), metaphorically signifying payments to poets, who are responsible for spreading his fame.’ (O’Reilly poems, p. 208.) Two further examples of the phrase occur in the following two quatrains: Ní dar ngrádh an glas biodhbbadh / a bhas re clár do ceangladh; / an síoth an uair do b’urlamh / fróith
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Cunnradh cuain nar ceannghadh, ‘Tá cuid de ghníomhaíbh Críost agus taisbeánaid siad méid a ghráidh dhúninn; is é an chuid sin a gheimhle agus a chréachtá; nuair do chríochnuigh sé obair ar slánnghithe fuaramar cead bheith i gcuan (i.e. ar neamh) gan aon táille d’ioc’ (DiD 48.14; translation p. 446–7) and Ní tugtar seóid tar sáile / ’na dheoigh gan dul a ndáoire / mur tá cunnradh chúain Béirre / fuair Eire congnamh cáoine (Do thuith a cloch cúil d’Éirinn, q. 41).

23ab I take ní fhúighthe as a passive conditional. It could alternatively be taken as the 2nd person plural future ‘you will not find again’.

23d guais adhnaidh ortha: In other words, the apple-trees are withered by Gerald’s death and are perhaps only useful as firewood now.

24b a dtionóil: I take the possessive as referring to fóir Mhidhe, who are mentioned in quatrains 22.

24c For my interpretation of fá dhraoidheacht as ‘unnnoticed’, cf. Poem 1, 36cd, where draoidheacht is used to mean ‘an enchanted state’, ‘a state of dormancy’, etc. (see note on latter). Cf. also A Fhiacha na ngníomh ndána, / mo dhán-sa más geall ort-sa, / ná léig a bhfad fá dhraoidheacht: fearr a scaoileadh go solas (LBran 31.6), in which fá dhraoidheacht seems to mean something like ‘in obscurity’.

25b In other words, ‘if [only] concealing them were fitting for you’, ‘if [only] you were inclined to conceal them’. The poet is here referring to the full gory account of Gerald’s death.

25c In other words, ‘after hearing [but] one detail [i.e. the simple fact of his death].

25d an glor céilliódhe as aíl uann: For the phrase is aíl ó (not clearly explained in DIL?), compare the following two excerpts: nach aíl uaim acht ‘that I strive for nothing more than’ (Pilib Bocht 1.17); ingnad an tosd dob aíl uaim ‘strange the silence which was desired of me’ (Diogha gach beathaídh an brón 21c). These indicate that the phrase can mean ‘is desired by’ or ‘is desired of’. We might take the sense of the line to be either ‘we struggle for the voice of reason’ or ‘the voice of reason is desired of us [i.e. we are driven mad and have lost our reason]’. Both interpretations essentially amount to the same thing, i.e. that ‘we are without reason’.

27 Here I use McManus’s (2006, 65n.12) translation of this quatrains.
Poem 3: Maire as dáileamh don diugh bhrón

29d Róimh: As noted in DIL, s.v. róm, this proper noun came to be used of ‘a saint’s settlement in which he was buried’ (in early Irish religious literature), of ‘a burial-ground in general’ and, in bardic poetry, of ‘a frequented centre of resort, chief’s residence, etc.’

30ab Here I use McManus’s (2006, 65) translation of this couplet.

32a More literally, ‘the flow of every current round about the beach’. For tort, cf. DIL s.v. tar col. 74.14–18: ‘2 s. thart as adv. past, around’. Its use with fa (= imm) is not noted here but compare Modern thart fá ‘round about, near, nearly, all around’ (see DÍNN, p. 1176).

33b Íbh Néill: (i) Perhaps I should read Íbh Néill ‘the O’Neills’? It is unclear to me whether this refers to the Gaoidhil, to Ulstermen, or specifically to the O’Neills. See note on 5d. (ii) Both Íbh and Íbh are unstressed (see Ní Dhomhnaill, 1975, p. 11 (c) and (f)) and the alliteration is therefore between a-nall and Néill.

33d féin: Perhaps this could be translated as ‘also’ (see, for example, DiD glossary, p. 560).

34b ar chonnradh gcuain: See note on 22b.

34c More literally, ‘[like] a horse without a bridle is the tearful eye’.

34d don fhheart: Both fiort and feart are accepted dative forms of feart ‘grave’ (see IG T ii, 90 and 95).

36d ‘na fhéil sguir: Literally, ‘a feast of parting’. Further examples of this are found in LBran 25.32a and 56.36a. Cf. also féil scoailidh (LBran 10.13c).

37ab Emending MS le to re, I take Rún a thoile re triall soir / do rún chroidhe to be the object of ná hiarr air.

37b do rún chroidhe: Cf. (by the same poet) gur réidhgh rinn do rún croidhe ‘till he made peace in earnest with us’ (Dlíghidh liaigh leighes a charad, q. 33a). Cf. also the following translations of the same phrase: ‘with sincerity of heart’ (Iomarbháigh 24.4) and ‘in earnestness’ (Dán Dé 7.26).

37c ní fhaghann file dá bhfuil: I tentatively take the unexpressed subject pronoun of the verb bhfuil to refer to rún a thoile re triall soir (= line a) and the unexpressed pronominal object of ní fhaghann as also referring to rún a thoile re triall soir. I therefore construe the line as
follows: ‘the poet whom [it] is [an intense desire] to [i.e. for] him [to go east] cannot achieve [it]’. The sense seems to be that the poet cannot fulfil his desire/duty to visit his patron's grave. This may be a continuation of the theme of the last quatrain—that the territory is in disarray and without protection since Gerald's death—and is consequently too dangerous to travel into. As such, it may be an example of the motif of the poet’s wish to visit the grave did circumstances permit (see Simms database).
Poem 4: Do-ní clú áit eighreachta

1a The usual sense of *eighreachta* is ‘that which one inherits’. This sense occurs, for example, in the first-line *Clu Laighion as oighriocht d’Aodh* (LBran 15.1) which, as its editor notes (p. 353), is a poem about Aodh as the heir to the fame of Leinster. In the present instance, however, I have taken the sense of *eighreachta* to be ‘that which one passes on, legacy, etc.’ (not noted in *DIL*). This sense also occurs in the following: *Geall Eirionn 6 thuind go tuinn / niorbh fhuldir re Coin Cúlaidn; / fiú an toirbheart a-nú dár nocht / a oighreacht a cCú Chondacht.* ‘Cú Chulainn had to be admitted as supreme over Ireland from sea to sea; the generosity he has revealed to-day shows that Cú Chonnacht is his heir.’ (*Maguire* 14.16; line *d* literally means ‘his [i.e. Cú Chulainn’s] *oighreacht* is in Cú Chonnacht.’), and *Urra ac oighreacht Éiremhin / oighrecht tuilles tuarushbháil ‘The heritage of Éireamhún, which deserves fame, has a surety’* (*Maguire* 20.1ab). Compare also: *Is é an moladh oighrí as fhéarr / bhias choidhe che ar fhearubh Éireann* (LBran G.3). An alternative interpretation of our first line might be ‘Fame takes the place of [i.e. is as good as?] inheritance/legacy’.

For the by-forms *oighreacht/eighreachta*, see *IGT* ii, 26.

1b We might alternatively translate this line as: ‘seeking it, he has distributed gifts’. See *DIL*, s.v. 1 tür I and II.

1cd (i) The sense here is that the patron’s activity (rather than his birth?) earns him the poets’ esteem. (ii) Given that the plural of *bladh* can mean ‘famous deeds, glories, triumphs’ (see *DIL* s.v. *blad*) one might also translate it here as ‘glorious action’ or the like.

2c ar *neamhthaithimh*: Translation tentative. I have found only one other example of *neamhthaithimh* in a bardic poem: *Ní haineamh óige i bhfianasti; / aois le neach do neamhthaithimh / ní móide do mheall a chert; / fhearr an óige iná an fhiorfeacht* (*LCAB* 23.1).

2d The expression *cuiridh barr ar* occurs also in 17c and in Poem 7, q. 10. The sense in each case seems to be ‘increases’ or ‘adds to’. The editor of the following example, however, interprets the phrase differently: *Cosg ar n-urchra nír fháemh sinn; / barr ar mo chumha cuirim; / go térmá mo ré roimhe. / mé gach énlá ac eolchaire. ‘I was not willing to curb my grief. I now set a limit to my sorrow; until my life ends, I will mourn every day.’* (*Marcher* 3.5). Perhaps translate line *b* in the latter as ‘I [now] add to my sorrow’? Though *cuiridh barr ar* does not seem to be defined explicitly in *DIL* s.v. *barr* (j), my interpretation may be inferred. Note also that *cuirim barr ar* is explained in *DINN* as ‘I add to’.

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3a *Dath doinn-niamhdha ar aoltoraibh*: The literal meaning, ‘a red and lustrous colour on fair mansions’, renders too positive an image for what is meant. An alternative might be to take the image as referring to bloodshed; however, the references to burnings elsewhere in the poem make this seem unlikely.

3d *cáích dá oba a n-óiltighibh*: This seems to refer to a refusal by a neighbouring territory of terms offered by William. For allusion to negotiations happening over a drink, see note on quatrain 31.

4a *d’urnhaisin* (MS *durmaisin*): I have restored the historical lenited -m- here, although it is often left unlenited by editors and in glossaries (e.g. Armstrong, 1985, 410). Cf. also 25c.

4c *orgháin*: Cf. DIL s.v. *orgán*: ‘A musical instrument (prob. a wind instrument, but freq. used in generic sense, often of martial music)’. There are few examples of this word in the bardic corpus but they are generally used as an object of positive comparison (e.g. ‘as beautiful as the sound of orgáns’). One might alternatively emend to *orghráin* ‘horror’, or in the present instance ‘anger’ or ‘hatred’. Line c could then mean ‘[with] anger towards Delvin’s host’.

5a *chliáchda* (MS): For my emendation to *chliathcha*, gen. sg. of *cliathach*, see IGT ii, 37. *Cliathach* ‘an enclosure made of hurdles’ is here figuratively used of a ‘battle’. As noted in DIL, the metathesized gen. sg. form *cliachtha*, -da, occurs frequently. Another example occurs in 23c below.

5d *mhoille*: The literal meaning ‘slowness’ seems insufficient as the sense of this couplet seems to be: ‘if they don’t come to him he will come to them’. Cf. also *mailléirybe* (27a).

5d *niombhúaluidh* (MS): This must be emended to *n-iombualaidh* (-mb- representing a single consonantual sound) for rhyme with *ionnfhuaraithd*.

7ab I take *as* in line a to refer to the whole of line b, the sense being ‘because of it’, ‘consequently’. More literally, ‘when a blister on the hand is noticed [by him] the sword-hilt is consequently switched [by him to the other hand]’.

7ab Compare the couplet *ar a bhais go mbloghthar bolg / colg tais gu dornchar do dhearg* ‘he has reddened a moist sword up to the hilt so that a blister is burst on his hand’ (Tadhg Ó Cearbhaill, *ar gceann sluaign*, q. 2cd). In a note on the latter, Ó Cuív draws attention to the following couplet: *ón fháinne re cois an chuilg / builg ar bhois í Dháire Déirg* (IGT
Poem 4: Do-ní chuí áit eighreachta

ii, example 2022); he notes Bergin’s translation—‘from the ring beside the sword there are blisters on the hand of the descendant of Dáire Derg’ (Ériu 11, 138)—and suggests the following: ‘from the ring on the shaft of the sword ...’. The following quatrain contains a very similar second couplet to the first-mentioned above: A bróin fhéinndedh bentar bedhg / i ndeabhaidh mar eirghes th’fhery / bos gheal ina mbloghtthar bolg / colg sean go rornchar do dhearg (Fada cuid Éireann re hAodh, q. 23). The following extract is perhaps of interest as it also refers to the occupational hazards of sword-use: Ó ‘dchon’nairc Anradh mac Eibhric ar lár Dhál gCais ag a n-oirleach, lingios chuighe, 7 ó nach raibh ar a chumus arm d’imirt, ar sgoltadh ladhra a ghloc do mhu[gh]dhorn a chloidhimh roimhe sin, síneas a lámh chli 7 cro[i]theas a líreach tar a chéann amach; glucus a chloidheamh 7 é faoi, 7 língidh a uchtar, ó nár bh’eidir leis a bhúaladh gur sháith thríd go talamh é (from Leabhar Oiris; edited by Best (1904) 87–8).

7b aithnitheair: A rare example of this form of the pres. indic. passive; cf. trí ara n-aichnider cech fergach (Triads 188, quoted DIL, s.v. aithnider, col. 272.19). Compare the by-forms aithnightheair/aitheantar/-interar.

8a an fhuinn Éireannaigh: This may refer to a neighbouring Irish territory—perhaps ‘the land of the Erne’ mentioned in quatrains 9 and 27. Alternatively, it may not denote any territory in particular.

8c fhiadh Fhéilimidh: This refers to the fonn Éireannach of line 8a. Both Ulster and Ireland are referred to in bardic poetry as ‘the land of Félim(idh)’. Félim(idh) Reachtmhar was the father of Conn Céadchathach.

9 With the early morning raid described here may be compared the dusk raid mentioned in quatrain 13.

9b go much: The spelling here seems theoretically plausible (cf. various forms in DIL, s.v. moch), however, the only other example I have of it is not dán díreach: Fá dhuiille croabh soir ná siar ná hérigh fón tsíabh go much; / ná déan cuinne, seachain áit. - beag an fáth fá bhfaghtthar guth (D. grá 104.8). It is possible that our scribe is responsible for the spelling as he may have been trying for a better rhyme with dtug in line a. However, if the metre allows imperfect internal consonance in the first couplet then the spelling moch would be acceptable. If moch is read it would be the poem’s only example of imperfect internal consonance.

9d dáth (MS): The emendation to d’áagh (: rádh) does not change the sense as áth often refers to ‘battle’ or ‘a site of battle’.

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10 In describing the patron's great generosity to foreign (i.e. non-local) poets the author would appear to be also criticizing him. Cf. Seán Mac Airt's introductory comments to the poem *Briseadh riaghla ró molta* (= *LBr* 26): 'This interesting and well-reasoned piece deals with the abuse of immoderate praise, and exhorts Fiachaithd to be more discriminate in his choice of poems and poets. The author criticises his patron for his undue affection for 'foreign poets' ...; for the admission of too much 'easy art' ... into his poem-book; and finally for his failure to base the remuneration of poets on the merits of their compositions' (*LBr*, p. 369).

10ac *roidheithfir ... ionaithbhír* (MS *roidheithfir ... ionaithhir*): I have emended -f- to historical -bh- in the latter word only; in the case of the former the spelling *deithfir* is the only one that occurs in *IGT* (ii, 13 and iii, 83). The same applies to 29a.

10ab *nach foghaibhthír*: See note on 23d.

10d *do chuir le*: For my interpretation here, compare the couplet *Fiu an aisgidh do chuir le cléir / a ghoín a n-aisgidh nach bhfuair* 'the gift he sent poets showed that his scorching had not been in vain' (*O'Hara* 18.5ab) and *Aoidhe ni fhuidhe 'n-a ndiaigh, / na maoine chuirid le cléir* 'A visitor will find no wealth after all that [Cian's race] has given away to poets' (*O'Hara* 18.5ab). Cf. also q. 24 below for another example. Perhaps we should emend to *re?* Alternatively, the sense of *do chuir le* may be 'encouraged' (see *O'Reilly* poems, p. 261, s.v. *cuirim*), in which case the translation would be: 'the maintenance for which he is responsible/to be rebuked has encouraged non-local poets [to pour into Meath].’ Yet another possible interpretation would be to take *do chuir le* to mean 'has increased' (for which see *Maguire* glossary).

11ab I am unsure how to interpret this couplet. Perhaps I should read *A ngleó 'in a fight'?

11bcd *cuimsighthír ... winnseannchaibh ... dtuirsighthír*: One might emend to *coimsighthír* and *dtoirsighthír* in order to avoid their stressed vowel being identical with that of *winnseannchaibh*, which is required to consonate with them. However, consonance may not require this. Cf. *nuaidharrachd : t'fhuaírfheaghain* (14ac).

11c *a moigh*: I take the verb as intransitive here. Taking it as transitive ('so many spears does he break') seems less likely in the context.

11d *as-toigh*: It is not clear to me what this means. Does it refer to those 'within' the battle? Or does it refer to those who are 'indoors' in contrast to William who continues to fight late in the day? (That William fights late in the day is referred to clearly in quatrain 13.)
12 d’ibehe ... bheith: The metrically-required correspondence between these is lacking (see introduction); it is possible, therefore, that the breacadh present in the quatrain (d’ibehe : dighe : file) is meant to compensate for this fault.

12ad The poet’s privilege of being offered the first drink at a banquet is a recurrent motif in bardic verse.

13ab ál ... ghabh: Emending to the variant forms ál and gheabh would improve the rhymes with cách and ceadh; however, the metre does not require this (see introduction).

13 This quatrain seems to contain an instance of person-switching. Cf. Poem 3, q. 11.

13c ar áth imdhighe: I construe this as imdhighe ar áth ‘you approach a [battle]-ford’. Cf. ‘i[mthighim] ar, I approach, attack’ (AiD glossary, p. 305). An alternative interpretation might be ‘you wander about’, i.e. ‘you are [still] at the ford of battle at the end of the day’.

13d comhnaidhe: Compare the following couplet: Tóir d’omhan a oirbheire / lá troda ‘na dtromlaidhe; / dá luaithe ar áth n-ionghoile / luaithe cách ‘na comhnaoige ‘The enemy band, for fear of his anger, is in heavy sleep on the day of battle; readily though he goes to the ford of battle, it is more readily that his enemies remain at home’ (Maguire 8.8).

14c ara: Of this word McKenna notes: ‘What ara (originally “charioteer”, etc.) means in Bardic poetry is sometimes not clear; cf. Butlers 2009, 2075, DiD voc., etc. Here it may be a squire of the chieftain who will conduct the foe’s messenger to him.’ (O’Hara 4354n.).

14ac nuaidharraidh ... t’fhuairstheaghain: Note that this consonating pair have the same first stressed vowel. Cf. note on 11bcd.

14d дирghaidh: The MS дирóbaigh may illustrate the vocalization of the -gh-, or may alternatively be a form based on analogy with, for example, gеabhaidh.

15 The implication here seems to be that the only way William’s troop can guarantee an exchange is by concealing their identity in the fashion described, as otherwise they would frighten off the enemy.

15a Ag léim chalaíd: Cf. léim calaidh do bhean a Bóinn (Poem 3, 33c).

15 chomhaighthigh ... folaighthear ... bfhaghaibhthear ... anaithnidh (MS): I have emended
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folaighthear to the by-form falaighthir in order to give the required perfect end-rhyme with anaiithnidh. In order to avoid perfect rhyme with these, I have emended bhaghaibthear to bhfoghaibhthir (for by-forms, cf. note on 23d); however, this leaves perfect rhyme, instead of the required consonance, with chomhaighthigh, and this does not seem amenable to emendation. Perhaps the presence of breacadh in the quatrain is meant to compensate for this fault (see introduction).

16b I take this to mean literally ‘you “path-overwhelmed” a path before you’. For foilghidh in the sense ‘overwhelms’ see O’Hara glossary, p. 426.

17 The immediacy of William’s valour and generosity is captured well in this image of him on his horse sharing out the booty having just captured it. His eagerness to share his booty with poets is to be seen also in q. 21.

17b as a haradhain: Cf. Do bhíodh gur éirigh d’fhoghoil / lámh aige as an aradhain ‘Till he had finished with his fighting, [this hero] ... had often one hand on his rein’ (O’Hara 1494); McKenna’s note on this line reads ‘Should is an aradhain be read? The as in as an would be from a h- and unlikely here.’ (p. 384). Our example is perhaps a little clearer. The preposition seems to be a h- ‘out of’, ‘away from’; i.e. ‘you stretch your hand out away from its rein so that you can distribute gifts with it’.

17c I construe this line as follows: do chuireabhair barr ar chrodh dí [i.e. don sgoil]. For cuiridh barr ar see note on 2d above.

18 Note that William is presented throughout (cf. qq. 2, 6, 8) as of Old English stock (Goill) and is here clearly distinguished from the New English (threanShaghsaibh). See introduction for discussion of this quatrain.

18ab Alternatively, if fhionfluhl-sin refers to the inhabitants of the territory of ríogh Uisnigh, which is mentioned in line d, then the translation should be ‘because of you that noble stock [i.e. the stock of the land of ríogh Uisnigh] does not desire peace from the English’.

18d ríoghUisnigh: The hill of Uisneach, Co. Westmeath. Ráth Uisnigh is often a poetic name for Ireland, but here it may refer to Westmeath, Meath (cf. iath Uisnigh ‘Meath’, AiD 6.39), or perhaps even the Pale.

19c ainriaghaih: Literally, ‘unruliness, lack of discipline, etc.’ (cf. DIL, s.v. ainriagal). The image is one of poets in something of a frenzy as they extract gifts from the patron. For
Poem 4: Do-ní clú áit eighreachta

the translation ‘excessive demands’, compare the word *ainbhreach* which is also translated as ‘excessive demands’ in this sort of context.

20 The women alluded to in this quatrain may be understood to be married. Compare, for example (by the same poet): *Tú a ngliaidh ar nguin a ríghfhir / ní fhuil a ndiaidh a dhéanaimh / fearg nach bí ribh ag ríoghain / do shiodhaigh síbh í d’fhéaghain* ‘There is no anger a queen would bear towards you after killing her husband in battle which you could not pacify by [merely] looking at her’ (Poem 5, q. 25); and *Bean fhir an uair do éimhídh / do-chuíadh dá nmh i néallaibh; / luighe re toibh fhear n-álaídh / a dtáraidh bean d’Aodh d’fhéaghain* ‘When Aodh refused a married woman she fainted from the shock of it; the woman’s attempt [to lie] with him left her [instead] lying with the wounded’ (*Le dás cuírtheach clú Laidhean*, q. 29). The nobility of these women is reflected in pursuits such as embroidery.

20b *an trialla-sa:* Perhaps we should understand this as ‘the above-mentioned expedition/raid’? As with *fh.ionfhuil-sin* in 18b, it is difficult to be sure what the demonstrative refers to. The metre, of course, may also be a factor in its use.

20d *iarraissi* (MS): I have emended this to *iarra-sa* as the metre requires it. It is to be noted, however, that normally the palatal form of the emphatic suffix (i.e. -se) is found after the 2nd sg. indicative (*iarra(e)*). Cf. ‘Ní dócha go raibh aon difniocht idir -a agus -ae ó thaobh na foghraíochta de ... ach caolaíonn -ae míreanna forainmneacha agus taispeántacha’ (*SNG*, p. 345). Cf. note on 24d.

21 William’s eagerness to share booty with poets here ties in well with how he is depicted in quatrain 17.

21d *chrüindéachadh* (MS): Emended to *chrúineagadh* (by-form of *chrúinneagadh*; cf. *IGT* iii, 106) for rhyme with *chuireabhar* as -nn- does not rhyme with -r- after a short vowel (see Mac Cáithigh, 2007).

22ab This may refer to the writing of the hero’s *caithreamh*.

22b *sgríobhtha ó cheard a gcraoibhblínibh:* For the translation of *gcraoibh- as ‘ornamental’ cf. *Dh’éis luit do chuíl crdoibhblítrigh* ‘Wounded by your sword with ornamental lettering’ (*O’Reilly poems* 1.28; translation p.185). For another example of *lín* in the sense ‘line of poetry’, compare *lín a céill do chuireabhair* ‘you explained a line’ (*Maguire* 9.16c). An alternative interpretation might be: ‘is depicted in curved lines [i.e. engraved] by a craftsman’, in which case the engraved image would presumably be on the helmet referred to in the second couplet. In support of this interpretation it is noteworthy that the only other example I
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have found of craoibhlié refers to something engraved: Ní mhairfeadh bleidhe ná brat / dá bhfagheidh cah ch Chormac / ná arm áigh craoibhlié cuir / aoinmhiú a-bháin do bhíadhnaíbh 'None of the goblets or cloaks which all receive from Cormac, nor the ... (?) engraved battle-weapon would endure for even a single thousand years' (O'Har 4.6).

22c fríoth beanta ...: I take this to refer to blows that have been struck to the hero’s helmet during battle, the implication being that he himself is unscathed. Alternatively, the allusion might be to an image that has been carved onto his helmet (cf. note on 22b above).

23c cliathcha: See note on 5a.

23d ní fhaghbaítheir (MS): I emend to ní hoghaítheair for rhyme with chomharthaíbh. (Cf. nach foghaíthtar (10b), nach oghaíthtar (29d)). Note that IGT iii, 22, does not include a form with broad -bhth-. The only other example I have found of with broad -bhth- is the following: an t-iasg mara bhfoghabhthar ‘where fish is caught’ (making imperfect rhyme with comhartha) (Béarad breath na himriosna, q. 16c).

24c don iadh eile-se: The poet seems intent on not naming names!

24 urasa ... fhughe-se ... eile-se ... chuire-se: As urasa ends in a broad vowel the consonance between it and the other finals is imperfect (see Ní Dhomhnaill, 1975, 26 (e)). The presence of breacadh in the quatrains may be in compensation for this fault (see introduction). The MS spelling -sea in bcd has the appearance of an attempt at visual compensation. Might we emend to fhughea-sa ... eilea-sa ... chuirea-sa (cf. 20d and Poem 2, 21d)?

24d le ... chuire-se: See note on 10d above.

25c dh’urmaisin (MS dhurmaisin): See note on 4a.

25cd daoibh ... dhaoibh: If these refer to the same person, as they apparently do, they would seem to comprise an example of the metrical fault of caoiche. The sense of the couplet is not clear to me.

26a a nguais chornairche: The sense is not clear to me. Cf. ‘guais, danger, fear. The gen., etc., with it may be subjective, or objective, “danger, risk, fear, for or felt by” ’ (AiD 60.6n.).

26b linnighthe: I have no other example of this word. However, compare linnide ‘having many pools’ (DIL, s.v.).
26c Eithne: The river Inny, Co. Westmeath. Mentioned also in Poem 5, 13d and 30d.

27a mailléirge: Cf. mhoille (5d).

28ab My translation of this couplet is tentative. An alternative might be: ‘In the ale-house s/he did not conceal that the castle/land was truly empty.’

29ac roidheith fir: See note on 10a.

29d nach aghaibhthir: Cf. note on 23d.

30b ag innéirge: For this verb, see DIL s.v. in-déirig (defined as ‘deserts, abandons, goes forth; refuses, rejects’) and Armstrong (1985, 352) s.v. innéirge.

31 Compare the following quatrains: Críoch an uair dob infhedhma / ní fhuaire an sioth soshnadhma; / frith cuirn fhir na hanumhla / fad chuirm a ttigh thogharmae ‘When it was to be attacked, a foreign land found peace hard to make; the golden cups of your recalcitrant foe were found containing your ale in the assembly house’ (Maguire 21.28), and Mac ríogh ag buain baramhla / nach fuair bhar síoth soshnadhma; / níorbh fhíú neart fhir h’anamhla / gan teacht god thigh togharma (LBrann 19.10).

31bcd thogharma ... soshnadhma ... chomhardha: There is perfect rhyme, rather than the metrically-required consonance, between soshnadhma and the finals of b and d. I see no way of emending this.
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Poem 5: *Geall re hiarlacht ainm barúin*

1a An echo, perhaps, of the first-line Mó iná iarla ainm Sémais (Butler 17).

1acd *barúin ... bharúin ... daghúir*: McManus’s comment on another poem applies equally here: ‘the rule ní dhígh údte na cédcheathromhan don tseoladh coimhtheacht a ccomhardadh re haonfhocal don rann uile (Mac Aogáin 1968, 3688–9: ‘the consonating word at the end of the first line of the opening couplet may not rhyme with any word in the quatrains’) is broken ... but is permitted as a form of Breacadh when the word itself is repeated (see examples (viii) and (x) in Ní Dhomhnaíl (1975, 60), and Ó Máille (1973, 57ff))’ (McManus 2000, 74). The presence of *breacadh* in this quatrains may be intended to compensate for the fact that *hiarlacht* rhymes with *iarlacht* and *ainm* rhymes with *ainm* in lab, something which may constitute the metrical fault *caoiche* (although this is arguably avoided by the fact that each occurrence is in a different grammatical case). Similar cases occur also in Poem 7, quatrains 1 and 18. Cf. also 23ac, 32ac, 39ac (of the present poem), where full end-rhyme occurs rather than consonance; however, no *breacadh* occurs in those quatrains.

1c lé (MS): I have restored to historical re a. Cf. mór re a dhíol a ndearna sí ‘hard to recompence is what she did’ (DiD 30.1b = Irish monthly 58, p. 467). For the construction, cf. DIL s.v. fri, col. 417.49 ff.

1d More literally, ‘land of fertile soil has always been very likely [under his reign]’.

2a *an einigh*: Or perhaps, ‘of generosity’, ‘of hospitality’.

2c *re raghain*: I understand this to mean *re a raghain*. Perhaps translate as ‘at his election’? The reference may be to his becoming leader of the Pale anti-cess campaign.

2d Cf. *tearc a aithgín do Chloind Chèin* ‘rare is his like among Conn’s race’ (O’Hara 11.4).

4a More literally, ‘his troop of soldiers were [as] raiding parties’.

4b *gur thiomchail*: More literally, ‘until they went around’, or perhaps ‘until they made a circuit of’. A similar use of the verb is contained in the following: Ciodh trácht, dála Ghiolla Íosa féin, ní dhearmanadh oiriseadh ná combhumidhe gur thimchill sé na seacht dtuatha so Fhearmanach don ruathar sin agus níor fhúgadhaidh ceann tuaithe tíre innte nár chuir i nglas láimhe nó coise nó go ránghadar i bhfiadhmsais a dhearbhráthar go Cnoc Ninne ar n-a gceur fa ghúin ghaoi agus chloidheimh dhóibh ‘But as regards Giolla Íosa himself, he neither
rested nor tarried till he had gone round the seven tuaths of Fearmanach on that onset and he did not leave a head of a tuath in it whom he did not bind, hands or feet, until they came into the presence of his brother at Cnoc Ninne, after they had been reduced at the point of shaft and sword' (Me Guidhir Fhearmanach §54). Cf. also Iomhtha tír do thimchil sibh / a bratach Aodh Meg-uidhir / id thromluighe gé taoi a-muigh / gach laoi id chomhnudh i gCorcaigh 'Many a district hast thou gone around. O flag of Aodh Maguidhir, though outside thou art lying every day at rest in Cork' ( Créad mhosglas macraidh Éirne?, q. 31; this quatrain is printed and translated in Walsh (1960) 50).

4b na cóig thire: (i) Cf. the following note by David Greene: ‘led chóig maraibh; such phrases with cóig refer to the five provinces, and hence to the whole of Ireland, cf. ar (na) cóig cánáibh ...’ (Maguire l. 115n.). Note also the following examples: Ná tuig nach tuga i n-aighaidh / beith i gCroabhuraidh Chonchubhair; / nír bfhfiu ríghe fhóid Eamhna / cóig tìre gan tigherna (LCAB 1.31); Ar dhúinn feirge Fian nGall / do chaomhuint si slaugh Fréamhnann / 's na cúig tìre im Fhonn nUismigh / an long shidhhe shobhlaigh-sin (DiD 107.25); Siod it cheann 'na cóig tìonoi / coigeadhaigh chlár Ériomhain / cóig tìre 'sa tteachta i thoigh / sul shíne th'eachtra a hUltaiabh (T'aire riot, a rí Doire, q.5); Cúig thire i geamaidh dá chuido / san ríghe nach ronnedh sé; / rí dár bhúth anbal tìr Dha-Thu, / ná e 'na ríghe Uaidh é! 'Five provinces bewail him in unison in the kingdom he did not divide; lament not as a king of Ulaidh a king to whom Da Thí's land gave allegiance' (Cionnas tìg Éire gan Aodh, q. 4); Tú, a Aodh, dá gcor re chéile / —i síth fad chur is cóire; / t’fhian féin do mhóid ní mór; cóig thire réidh do-róine ‘... you quietened the five provinces’ (Le dis cuirthear clu Laighean, q. 15). Note further the following references to the five provinces in the present poem: chóig gcánadh (6a); cóig géill (22c); chóig comhaibh (35c). Possession of these alludes to the high-kingship.

(ii) Lenition of an initial after cóig is historically correct but, unlike the present example, is frequently absent when a plural is clearly a plural, as in most of the foregoing examples and in the following: Na cóig doirse [or] dhoirt a fhual / do cheannach clíomh hÁdhainn / sleagh 'n-a chíg, cló 'n-a bhonnaibh, / 's a dó dhíbh 'n-a dhearnannaibh (DiD 23.25).

4c chloinn gCobhthaigh: The Gaoidhil.

4d clár gCriomhthain: Ireland. Criomhthan, son of Fiodhach, was a reputed high-king of Ireland.

5a an riar fá raibhe: Cf. mun budh mó an riar fá raibhe / dó do bhiaadh an bhóramhe ‘he could have got the Cattle-tribute had not his own arrangement been more advantageous’ (AiD 18.16).
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5b a mhian tar ais: Cf. Do fhéach a-nois an tuaisgeirt / a thoil tar ais ni bhfuair sé / re a bfuair ollamh o fhein Doire / reidh a mbronnadh oile é (Sona re hAodhaibh Clann Conaill, q. 11).

5b a mhian tar ais nach oighe: This might be taken literally as, 'so that he will not retrieve his desire [to go] back [where he came from]', or perhaps 'so that he will not get what he wishes for back [where he came from]'.

5cd In other words, things are so great in Meath that a poet cannot bring himself to leave.

6a chóig gcánadh: See note on 4b.

7 The sense of this quatrain seems to be that since Christopher has established peace throughout the land there is no need for border guards, who are evidently displeased at becoming idle.

7b colbha: For the sense ‘border’, ‘boundary’, see DIL, s.v. colbha (c).

7c More literally, ‘Delvin’s host has [them] under it [the diomdha of line a]’. For use of the preposition fa with diomdha, compare, for example, lór ar fhéaghadh é mar iongna / mé um éanar fa dhiomdha ag dol ‘that I alone depart unsatisfied is marvel enough to look upon’ (IBP 55.10cd).

7d dá ndearna: Might this verb be used impersonally (i.e. ‘... was done (i.e. established)’)?

8c theagh dtéineadh: For the sense ‘a burning house’, compare nó is aghaidh ar theagh dtéineadh ‘or it were to approach a blazing house’ (TD 13.22d and 18.33d); aghadh leis ar teagh dtéineadh ‘he faces (a danger like) a burning house’ (O’Reilly poems 7.22d); do b’iomdha um Bhóinn teagh teineadh ‘many a house along the Boyne will be blazing’ (AiD 15.19); nír léig dlúis na dtíghdeadh dtéineadh ‘the conflagration of the burning houses ...’ (AiD 38.29); An draoi id chonchlann mar do cuireadh / níor chomhthrom an comhar / do cuireadh lat sa teagh teineadh / do bhurat fan bhfear bhfopoladh ‘When the druid was pitted against thee—uneven match!—thou didst put thy cloak about thy opponent in the burning hut.’ (Dán Dé 12.21).

8d deibheadh: As this can mean both ‘haste’ and ‘strife’ (see DIL s.v.) one might take the literal meaning of this line as ‘slow was the fighting of the enemies [in coming]’ or ‘slow was the haste of the enemies [in coming]’. Most examples of deibheadh in bardic poetry have the
Poem 5: Geall re hiarlacht ainm barúin

sense ‘haste’. Either way, the sense is much the same.

8d na bhfear bhfoladh: This is usually translated simply as ‘enemies’ (e.g. Maquire 2.21, DiD glossary, p. 563), which is what I have done; however, a more literal translation would also work well here, i.e. ‘of the aggrieved/disgruntled men’.

9a Mac Risdeard: The name Risdeard is listed under IGT ii, 109. Its genitive has the same form as its nominative.

9b dáil nach díligheann: This might alternatively be translated ‘an agreement beyond his entitlement’, or perhaps ‘more than he bargained for [such was the threat he posed]’.

9d fóir Bhreaghmunigh (MS br-): As fóir is followed by a proper noun it is possible that non-lenition of the following initial was allowed (see Magauran introduction, p. xviii) but compare, for example, MS fóir dhealbhna (Poem 3, q. 9d).

9d fóir Bhreaghmunigh: For the genitive for of magh here (usually moighe/muíge), see note on Poem 7, q. 19a.

9d riamh ‘na raighnish: This phrase more commonly occurs with the noun in the singular, as in 11c (see note).

10b do bhreith: Defined in AiD (glossary, p. 271) as ‘by will, decree’.

10c Níor fhéach Brian ceart fán righe ‘Brian regarded not justice in the matter of his kingship’ (Iomarbhágh 6.181a).

10d sheacht ngrádhaibh: For the seven poetic grades, see Breathnach (1987). For further allusions in bardic poetry, cf. Tiocfaid suinn na seacht ngrádh / do-ní deilbh an deaghadhána; / séan diogbhála a tteacht asteagh, / na seacht bhfoirghrádha fileadh ‘Herein will come the seven grades who form the shape of genuine poesy; the seven true orders of poets, their entrance is an omen of expenditure’ (Filidh Éireann go haoiotech, q. 14); Do bháttur ar Fheidlim fionn / secht ngrádha filedh gan fhíoirciun / seacht ngrádha flatha gan ghoide / secht ngrádha úaisle eboig (Maidean dúinn i gcill dá Luadh, q. 35); Seacht ngrádha filead fuair Áengus / nac suaill dílid(?)(?) damhscol / is sé féin ri(gh) na ndam ndimsach / ri(gh) eir en dán a dan-san (Seacht ngrádha fileadh fuair Aonghus, q. 1).

11c riamh ‘na raghain: One might alternatively translate this as ‘has always been the [for-
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eigners'] choice'. For further examples of the phrase, cf. *Fada atád riamh 'na roghain /siad dá rádh tar Fiadh bhFuinidh; / moladh uile d'fhéin Oíigh / béim oíigh fhuite hUidhir* ‘What is lack of generosity on the part of the Maguires would be praised among the Ulstermen; they have long been the choice, being spoken of in preference to other families of Ireland' (*Maguire* 4.35ab); *Mac Siobhán riamh 'na roghain / fiodhphas na ccliar do chabhair* ‘The son of Siobhán has always been their choice, the fertile wood which helps the poets’ (*Maguire* 24.33ab); *breath chliar do-chóidh le a seanabhb* /—*deaghfhuil Róigh riamh 'na raighn ‘the poets proclaimed her ancestors—the noble blood of Róch has always been their choice’* (*Leom cuirthear clú Laighean*, q. 34cd; by the same author). Cf. the use of the plural of *rogha* in *riamh 'na raighn* (9d).

12a *ge* (MS): As this is followed by an adjective I have emended it to *giodh*, in accordance with *IGT* I, 16.

12a *san ghléó*: For this (uninflected) form of *gleó*, see *IGT* ii, 108. The by-form dative, *gliaidh*, is listed in *IGT* ii, 97. Both are quite common.

12c *mór dtír*: On the use of the nom. sg. after *móir* n- ‘many’, cf. *A cruth táobhréime iolráidh as .c. gach áonfhocal leathan na dháisigh so: móir, agus as .c. gach focal cáil a cruth úthaithd 7 táobhréime iolráidh na dháisigh mar so: móir rí agus móir rí(o)gh .c. aráin ‘A broad noun after móir has gen. pl., a slender one has either nom. (leg. anma before uathaidh) sg. or gen. pl.’ (*BST* 206.10 ff and notes, p. 137). Other examples of *mór dtíir* are: *AiD* 53.18a; *L CAB* 10.18b; and *SOF* 1.35. According to the rule quoted the gen. pl. form would also be correct; however, I have found no examples of *mór dtíreadh*. Examples of other words where a slender nom. sg. is used in such constructions are noted by McKenna in *BST*, p. 138.

13 * thoigh ... bruidhin*: The metrically-required correspondence between these is lacking (see introduction); it is possible, therefore, that the *breacadh* present in the quatrain (*thoigh : foil : dtoigh*) is meant to compensate for this fault.

13a *thoigh chuithre*: Compare *dtoigh chuìridh* in 23b. McKenna translates *teagh cuiridh* as ‘hostel’ (*AiD* 5.10), ‘banquet-room’ (*AiD* 77.7), ‘guest-hall’ (*AiD* 96.6) and notes: ‘teach cuiridh, invitation-house, here Teamhair, i.e. High-Kingship, often of Heaven’ (*AiD* 5.10n). Cf. also, *Céim ad choinne, a Bhriain, beiridh / a coinne fa chúaigh rabhaidh; / lá red thochta ad theagh cuiridh / cuiridh bean fholta at aghaidh* ‘O Brian, a lady comes to meet thee, her trysting-place ‘neath a mist which tells of her presence; but she places contentions in thy path to the house whither she invites thee (i.e. Teamhair?)’ (*Failghigh chosnas clú Laighean*, q. 18). Is Christopher’s residence being compared to Tara?
13b The implication being that the captives were removed in order to make room. Cf. Siad gan teachta i n-éantoigh óil / freasdal nochar féadadh dhóibh / rug dá toigh chaithmhe don chléir / nar léir faighthe a-moigh ó mnáibh ‘ní raibh aon tseomra óil chomh faising go mbéadh slighe dhóibh ann; dá bhrigh sín do léig sí isteach thríd an gcaisleán iad; do bhí an oiread san aca nar fhéad a mná féar na faithche d’fhéicsint. (?)’ (DiD 103.3; translation in note on p. 473).

13d Nieithne: The River Inny, which flows through Co. Westmeath. Mentioned again in 30d and in Poem 4, 26c.

14b go mbriathraibh nandmha (MS): An example of analogical eclipsis following a plural noun governed by go n-. This is more commonly found following nouns in the singular, for which see note on Poem 1, 50c.

14c ní meisde: Literally, ‘[their spirits] are no worse for it’, i.e. ‘they are better for it’.

16 A sealbh agaibh: Alternatively, ‘You alone possess them [i.e. the Gaoidhil]’, the implication being essentially the same, i.e. ‘you are superior to the Gaoidhil’.

16c chuairt laoi: For this phrase, cf. A chuairt laoi go Baile Í Bhruin / a shéala ann do fhágaibh ‘His day-light raid on Baile Í Bhruin left its mark after it’ (AiD 21.26); Do chuairt laoi-si ar láthair gleó / gan aoinfhear do fhágaibh mná (LBrán 15.14ab).

17a Lá tionóil: A possible play on lá an tionóil ‘the day of judgement’ (cf. DIL s.v. tinól).

18a Ní gar dhaoibh: More literally, ‘You are unlikely’ (cf. DIL, s.v. gar).

19b a síneadh: Literally, ‘into extension’. For the sense ‘delay, suspension’ cf. DIL s.v. síned, col. 236.32 ff. Cf. also Agus trí sháint béisidh ãr bhur nimcheannuigheachd maillle re briathruibh blasda; [dream] d’ar [cinneadh] fada ó shin damnughadh nach dteid a síneadh, agus ní ghabhann codladh an sgrios thiuicfus orrtha (Tiomna Nuadh (1602), 2 Peadar 2:3) = ‘And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not (King James Version 1611, published 1769) = ‘By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber’ (New King James Version, published 1982).

20a Cf. the similar line Ní cosmhail cor ’na n-aghuidh ‘It is not proper that they should be
Notes on the poems

opposed' (Maguire 1.17).

20d leac Lughaidh: Better known as Lia Fáil, the stone at Tara which reputedly shrieked when a rightful king touched it. For further synonyms, see AiD 4.14n. and Ó Broin (1990) 394, which includes a broad discussion of this topic.

22c cóig géill: Representing the five provinces (see note on 4b). Compare An fonn Ír-si ag ainbhíne / 'na dhírgha a ccrón chumhruidhe / cóig géill ar chraoi Chonnlai-ne / dot cháoi mar fhréimh Rughroidhe (Creach Gaoidheal éag éanduine, q. 20); Sin réid mhogal swautnóidh slúaigh / tór Connacht fad bhuannuíibh bíaidh / do thoghaibh d'eiğribh fhóid Néill / cóig géill ad gheimhlibh ón ghlíaidh (Suirgheach Cruacha re chú Taidhg, q. 15).

22cd This couplet is not entirely clear to me. I take it to be a statement of the maxim (breath) mentioned in the first couplet. The sense may be that it is only the Goill are capable of taking full submission throughout Ireland. An alternative translation might be 'when the five [provinces'] hostages are being sought ask the Goill will theirs(?) be taken', the inferred answer being that the Goills' hostages will not be taken.

23ac dhleaghair (MS): The emendation to dhleaghair (final slender -r is required by metre) leaves us with the problem of this rhyming perfectly with mBreaghbaibh where the requirement is consonance. The same problem occurs in 32ac and 39ac.

23b dtoigh chuiridh: See note on 13a.


25 I take this literally to mean, ‘you have not done [the following] after killing her husband in battle: you calmed with a glance the anger which a queen does not bear towards you’. Removing the double negative, this effectively means: ‘you have done [the following] after killing her husband in battle: you calmed with a glance the anger which a queen bears towards you’. Put more loosely, this means: ‘having killed a queen’s husband in battle, you have always [lit. ‘you have never not’] calmed with a glance the anger she bears towards you’.

26cd In other words, the land does not suffer even though it has lost its king.

28d craobh thoraidh: I have taken this literally here, reading the couplet as an expression of one of the symptoms of law and order under a just ruler. The expression craobh thoraidh is
Poem 5: Geall re hiarlacht ainm baruín

often used figuratively of a person in a laudatory capacity, e.g(17,148),(944,924)

29ab More literally, ‘royal warriors who are not a likely source of disgruntlement [i.e. ‘who are unlikely to be disappointed’] surpass the warriors of Eamhain’. I have taken line a as the subject of sínid in line b, equating the laoich ríoghdha with the Goill mentioned in line d. Alternatively, line a may be taken in apposition to ógbhaidh nEamhna in line b, in which case the subject of sínid would be the Goill of line d, i.e. ‘[the Goill] surpass the men of Eamhain—royal warriors who are not easily beaten’.

29b ógbhaidh nEamhna: Although Eamhain can refer figuratively to Ulster, the reference here is probably to the native Irish in general.

29c chloinn gConnla: The Gaoidhil.

29d Goill ar colbha a dtigh Teamhra: Here teagh Teamhra must mean Ireland (or the Pale?); cf. Gach neach d’Ultaibh ag umhla / le hUilltoibh Tech na Teamhra; / ‘na leth riamb do bhí Banbha / gach rí tarla ar Fhiadh Eamhna ‘Ireland belongs to Ulster to which everyone is obedient; Ireland has always sided with every king who came to power in Ulster’ (Maguire 1.2). An alternative interpretation of the line might be to take colbha as meaning ‘seat’ (cf. DIL s.v. colba (a): ‘In freq. use of part of the structure or equipment of a house, but precise application not always clear. In some contexts appar. platform, dais along inside walls; seat, bench’), i.e. ‘[that] the Goill sit in the house of Teamhair’.

30c dá aithne: Cf. O’Reilly poems, p. 248, s.v. aithne (b): ‘‘recognition’ in the special, almost technical, sense of ‘recognition of a poet by a patron’, in this sense synonymous with ‘generosity’ ...’

30d nEithne: See 13d.

32ac fheadhma : bearna: The metre requires consonance between the finals of a and c; however, perfect rhyme seems unavoidable here. Cf. 23ac and 39ac.
Notes on the poems

32b Literally, ‘until he brings [i.e. ‘makes’] paths through the territory’. I understand this to mean that once he controls the pathways he controls the land.

32d foir dealbhna (MS): On emendation to foir Dhealbhna see note on 9d above.

32d The implication is that Delvin’s host is more numerous after battle as a result of gaining hostages through victory.

35c choig comhaibh: Representing the five provinces (see note on 4b and compare the following note by McKenna: ‘Comha, “terms,” “conditions,” etc. of surrender, agreement, etc. The word is sometimes used of the land, etc. itself which is surrendered; .... Here it seems to mean “the Five Provinces,” ...’ (O’Hara 135n)).

35cd Literally: ‘what would be required of the five provinces with the poets of Ireland?’. The exact sense of láimh re (‘beside’, ‘with’)) must be inferred and I take it to mean something like ‘to cater for’. Alternatively, if one took láimh re to mean ‘compared with’, the couplet might be interpreted as ‘what would be required for [the catering of] the five provinces compared with [catering for] the poets of Ireland?’; in other words, catering for all of Ireland would be nothing compared to Christopher’s great achievement of coping with the great demands of the poets.

37ab The praise here evidently comes in the guise of modesty on the part of poets.

37b ní dhiongna (MS): I have delenited diongna on the basis that it means ‘strange, unnatural’ (see DIL s.v. 1 dingna and O’Hara 2048n). A scribe presumably took it as the 3 sg. future of do-ní.

37cd cuma fáidh (MS): For rhyme with tráth, I have emended to fáth (gen. pl. of fá(i)th/fá(i)dh) ‘seer’, ‘poet’. For the sense of cuma, cf. tarla chuigi go dearbhtha / clú a ceardecha na cuma ‘there has assuredly come to him fame from the forge of composition’ (O’Reilly poems, 16.25cd; translation p. 214).

38b tar tí: This might alternatively mean ‘across the boundary’, i.e. into enemy territory; cf. leim nocha tugtha tar tí / an rí ’s gan Ulta féin faoi ‘he should not cross the boundary while he has not even all Ulaidh in submission’ (AiD 17.21cd).

38c cead suain ar an ãth aige: Such is his prowess that he can sleep at the ford without fear of being attacked.
Poem 5: Geall re hiarlacht aímn barúin

38d chuige: The final syllable here, echoing the poem’s opening word (geall), delivers metrical closure (dúnadh). The remaining quatrains (39–43) are supplementary.

39ac Ingean iarla fhóid Mháighe: As the Maigue river is mostly in Co. Limerick one would sooner expect the appellation ‘of the land of the Maigue’ to be used of the Earl of Desmond rather than the Earl of Kildare. Here it must me taken as denoting Ireland.

39ac Mháighe … ndámhe … Máire: The metre requires consonance between the finals of a and c; however, perfect rhyme seems unavoidable here. One might emend Mháighe to Mhuaidhe, but cf. 23ac and 32ac.

39d Given the fact that Máire is being praised, the literal meaning, ‘she dreads being criticised’, seems insufficient, as her generosity would presumably be motivated by more than fear alone.

40ab My connecting of these two lines is tentative. Compare the second couplet in the following: An ded ban no an braighigh gheal-soin / do mnaibh táidhi is tochnaire / an gruaigh nár cuir uain ar fhéidh[r] / fuair a cuid don corcair (Formad ag cách re chú Muiris, q. 37).

41a chnú n-órðha: For cnú in the sense ‘jewel, trinket’, compare Lucht comhair cnú n-óráidhe / Cú Chonnacht ’s a fháidhfhéile ‘They share golden trinkets between them, Cú Chonnacht and his wise poet’ (Maguire 11.10ab; Greene notes on p. 242 that ‘cnú often means ‘jewel, trinket’) and ar fheadhainn cuir chnú n-órðha / crú Mórdha ní chuir caomhna ‘the race of Mórdha does not hoard [its] multitude of golden trinkets’ (Le dís cuirthear chú Laighean, q. 36cd).

41ab More literally, ‘She did not practise the hoarding of golden trinkets so that her reputation had its obscurity removed’. Cf. cú sa chlú ar nach dóigh diúgh diúmhair ‘whose fame is not likely to be obscured’ (Maguire 18.23c).

41c bean re bae cruidh do chaomhna: Cf. Bean bhacaigh cruidh do chaomhna / sreabh at aghaidh d’fhuí mhórdha / lá d’aoidh uigh fa fhéirg ndéanmha / téarna a cceolg t’ainidh órðha (Failsigh chosnas chú Laighean, q. 15; McKenna left this particular quatrain untranslated).

42a tríáigh thoraidh: For examples of this laudatory term cf. DiD 102.45b, LBrán 1. 703, LCAB 29.9c, O’Reilly poems 7.38d, 16.19c, 36.17d, Maguire 24.33d. It alludes to the idea of torchar (‘valuables washed up by the sea’), a symptom of righteous kingship.
Notes on the poems

Poem 6: *Cia as sine cairt ar chrích Néill*?

1a *as sine*: Relative *as* is normally followed by lenition but *cadad* applies here. Cf. *IGT* 1, 58.

1a *chrích Néill*: A poetic name for Ireland (from Niall Naoighiallach).

1b *dí*: I take this to refer to *cairt* (and not *chrích*) in line *a*. For *cairt* ar ‘chartered right to’, *DIL* s.v. *cairt*.

1c *dáibh*: I have taken this to refer to *sgríbhne cáigh* in line *d*. It seems less likely to refer collectively to *haoinfhreimh* in line *b* (i.e. ‘straight paths are familiar to [that stock]’, which might be interpreted as ‘they are unopposed’).

1cd In other words, ‘direct paths [to the earliest chartholders] are apparent/are revealed in all records’.

2 I take lines *b* and *c* together and construe lines *a* and *d* as follows: ‘*Cia deaghshluaigh as taosga tánáig ar tús ó tháinig Ceasair*? This is still difficult to interpret literally; perhaps: ‘Who are the good hosts who first came (first) since Ceasair came?’ There seems to be repetition in *ar tus ... as taosga*. Or can we take *ar tus* as modifying *ó tháinig Ceasair* (i.e. ‘since Ceasair first came’)? One would expect *ar tus* to come at the end of the line.

2a *Ceasair*: Ceasair was leader of the first invasion of Ireland according to *Lebor Gabála* traditions. The ensuing invasions of Parthalón, Neimheadh, the Fir Bolg, the Tuatha Dé Danann, and Míl Easpáine (i.e. the Gaoidhil), are mentioned in qq. 6–8. The poet goes on to present the Fitzgeralds as rightful heirs to all of these invading forces (see introduction).

2b *druing*: Mac Cárthaigh (1999, 68) notes that this seems to be the correct form rather than *druing*, which is common in manuscripts. See also *druing* (: *Fhloinn*) in 32ab below.

3cd *gormfhoichneach ... comhnaightheach*: These two words are found rhyming also in: *tir ‘nar chomhnuaidheach chiar bhinn, / tir ghormfhuithneach fhial fhairsing* (*LBran* 37.4). The editor, in a note on *ghormfhuithneach*, writes ‘emend perhaps to *ghormfhoichneach*, ‘with dark-green corn stalks’ ’ (p. 378).

4c *Gréag*: The poet gives a Greek origin to each of the legendary invaders of Ireland in
order to allow the FitzGeralds, who are frequently referred to as ‘Greeks’ in Irish poetry, to be neatly grafted onto this version of Irish history, making them appear as legitimate heirs to the earlier invaders. Bergin (1921–3, 173) explains the notion that the FitzGeralds were originally Greek as arising ‘from their supposed connection with the Florentine Gherardini, who however claimed to be of Trojan origin’. Knott writes: ‘Irish historians derive this family from the Trojan Aeneas, and this is possibly the origin of the epithet ‘Grecian’ (TD 17.10n.). For a recent exploration of the supposed Florentine connection see Ó hÓgáin (2006, 255).

4c d’eitibh: I have followed the variant reading here over N’s deite. N’s reading is unlikely to be right: it would seem to require taking lines cd together and construing as is casmhaile d’eitibh luidh gasmidhe Gréag a goimhhead dáin ‘most likely is their protection for us by the hero of the Greek warriors’.

4c d’eitibh luidh: As noted by Matheson (1964–6, 14), eitibh luidh occurs as an epithet used of a hero and has been translated as ‘speeding wing’, ‘arrow’, and ‘speeding fin’. He also suggests that “[p]erhaps the primary application was to the rectrices or steering feathers of a bird’ (ibid.).

5c críoch Fhéilim: A poetic name for Ireland.

6a Ealbha laoch nár loc anshódh: Cf., by the same author, Ealbha láoch nach loc dochar ‘a multitude of warriors that never shirk hardship’ (IBP 11.11a). For another example of ealbha ‘flock’ used of ‘warriors’ cf. the following: Lá na Finne is dá fhaglaibh / brisear an t-áth lé a valbaidh / nir fhian ó fhéin an chalbaigh / damhraidh Neill gur bladh bearnaídh (Rug an bás báire an einigh, q. 53).

6ab My use of ‘with’ in the translation takes the relationship of line a to line b to be that of ‘nominative of accompaniment’ (see Desid., p. 245, where examples such as táinig an rí sluaghlóin mór are quoted). Cf. also Téid airdrí Embna Macha / ceithri chaocca ionchatha / ar cuiredh le Cuillend cerd, / an bhuidhen mhuinghioni mhaiothderg ‘The high king of Eamhain Macha goes with two hundred warriors who were invited by Cuilleann the smith, a fairhaired band in soft red garments’ (Maguire 17.20); Tiocfuidh Mac Domhnaill dámh mór / ar lár an gormfhíonn fa a ghéid / gé táid ‘ga rághhealladh riomh / tríall aineallamh ní háil d’Aodh (Ní triall corrach as chóir d’Aodh, q. 5). Alternatively, if do ghluais is transitive one might translate as ‘from Greece Parthalon led [lit. ‘moved’, ‘drove’] a host of warriors ...’. Cf. as gluaisde ... buar bhar mbrughadh / a gleanmhoigh fhuar Iar-Mhumhan ‘your hospitallers’ kine must be driven from the smooth valley’ (DiD 74.18; translation in DIL s.v. gluaisid). The following may also perhaps be taken either way: Lucht loinge d’armghasraidh óig / gluaisis Earcail mac I-óib / ó Théibh na ndroibhel ndruichtféiúch / gus an oilín n-aolcháirteach
6b Parthalón: Leader of the second invasion of Ireland (see note on 2a above).

6c treimhse: Note that the -e- in this word is not long here (see TD, vol. 2, 192).

6c ní treoir ghearr: I know of two other examples of this expression: dá dtéinnleanmhain ní treoir ghearr / i seinleabhraibh eol Éireann (DiD 102.15; McKenna (p. 473) explains ní treoir ghearr as ‘is obair fhada’; his translation in Irish monthly (vol. 56, p. 35) reads ‘it is no short task to trace through old books of Éire’s lore’). The second example occurs in the following: Ionmhuin comthach do char me / mac Uí Dhalaigh bhrúaigh Bhrethfne / á(i)r tтрнEochaidh ní treoir ghearr / éneochair eol na hÉrenn ‘Dear is the friend I loved, son of Ó Dálaigh of Bréifne’s shore, our sturdy Eochaidh, the one key to the Ireland’s lore—no short task!’ (Ionmhuin comthach do char mé, q. 1; my translation). Cf. DIL s.v. treoir (c): ‘activity, movement, progress, energy’; the sense of treóir in our phrase may be regarded as ‘activity’ or ‘progress’. One might more loosely translate the phrase as ‘no mean accomplishment’.

6d dár: I loosely translate this as ‘and’. I take it as an example of the survival of dá as a conjunction meaning ‘when’ and may be added to the small number of examples cited by Dillon in his discussion of ‘lá dá raibh sé’ and similar phrases (1968, 189). Examples of the usage show that it occurs in a narrative context and introduces action with reference to an episode/journey/etc. Further examples: Toisg do-chuaidh Aithim e ard / i gCuigeadh Mumhan mórgharg, / dár ghrios gruaidh dtabháir dtana / go bhfuair aonshuil Eochadha. // Dá dtarla ag tacht a Mumhain / abhnann gus an ollumhain, / sruth leacach robalbh rámhach, / Modharn bheachach bhreadúnach. ‘Noble Aithirne went on a journey to great, fierce Munster upon which he reddened a fresh-sided, slender cheek and got one of Eochaidh’s eyes. The poet, as he came from Munster, met a river: a rocky, very quiet, oar-plied stream, the Modharn full of trout and salmon.’ (GB 11.11-12); Go mac Muirne, fa mhór rath, / tigid an Fhian dá éagnach, / dár chinn a n-éanghlár uile / ar éanghráidh Fhinn Almhaine. ‘The Fian came to complain of him to the son of Muirne—it was a very prosperous course—wherefore the united call of all of them overcame the darling of Finn of Allen.’ (Gabh, a Bhriain, liom fám lochtaibh, q. 14); Pádruig ag beannach Banbha / tarla a n-ionadh agallmha / sa chrobhant-schlait go réim raith, / Conall mhac Néill, an naomh-filaith. // Dár fhiosruidh an t-érlamh dhe / ar dtugsa chrualais a cheirdimhe / beirt mhanchumhail nar luinn leis, / ’s druim ré a armchuluidh n-óitheis. ‘In the course of blessing Ireland Patrick came to a place where he held discourse with the brave warrior, prosperous Conall, the saintly prince, son of Niall. Of whom the Patron, understanding the strength of faith, inquired about his wearing a monkish garment which he (Conall) did not like, and about relinquishing his victorious suit of armour.’ (ERMB 10.3-4; translate instead as ‘when/whereupon/and the Patron enquired of
Poem 6: Cia as sine cairt ar chríoch Néill?

him ...’?); Tú do-chúaidh ar an ccreich neirt / dár chrechais in uaim oirdheirc / ní nemhchóir dúana do dheilbh / do creachóir úamha ifeirn (M’anam dhuit a Dhé athar, q. 36).

7a Clanna Neimhidd: Neimheadh was leader of the third invasion of Ireland (see note on 2a above).

7b sluagh Fhear mBolg na mbárc siobhlach: (i) The Fir Bolg were the fourth group of invaders of Ireland (see note on 2a above). (ii) The lenition of Fhear (written in full in the manuscript) might be an example (if it were metrically fixed) of both a ‘genitive lenited in special circumstances’ and sléagar (see Magauran xix and xxv).

7c Banbha: Note the (legitimate) variant an bhanbha in a number of copies. The syllable count is the same here in either case. For the form an Bhanbha, compare, for example, As é do-bheirgeal Tighe Tail, / do Theamhroigh Bhreagh / an Bhanbha mar do-bhearair d’fhior, / Teamhair a theagh (A toigh bhreag tiaghar i dteagh móir, q. 15.).

8a na mbárc gcorr: (i) McKenna translates this phrase (in AiD 38.20) as ‘of the stout barks’ and I follow this. Note, however, that the range of possible meanings of gcorr is wide. As O’Rahilly sums up: ‘The general idea of this very common adj. is terminating in a projection, whether angular or rounded; hence, according to the context, it bears such meanings as tapering, cuspidated, peaked, pointed, jutting out or up, swelling. It has often been rendered ‘smooth’ or ‘polished’ but there seems to be no justification whatever for these meanings.’ (Measgra Dánta, vol. 2. p. 245). It is difficult to be certain how to translate in the present instance; both ‘oval’ and ‘pointed’ would seem to be possible alternatives. (ii) Interestingly, a number of copies have na mbrugh gcorr here. It is possible that this is the better reading: na mbárc occurs in the previous quatrain and might be a case of dittography here.

8a Gaoidhil: Descendants of Clanna Míleadh (Milesians), the sixth group of invaders of Ireland (see note on 2a above).

8b dealbhda (dealbha N): I have gone against N here. The form in all other copies, including D, is dealbhda, which seems better as an adjectival form and is common as such. The form dealbha would seem to have a more limited use as an adjective; cf. DIL, s.v. delba: ‘shapely, attrib. gen. of I delb, when not a simplification of delbdæ, q.v.’.

8b Tuatha ... Dé Danann: The fifth group of invaders of Ireland (see note on 2a above).

8b Dé Danann (de dhanand N): Cf. do sheirc naomhchuirp Dé dhúiligh (AiD 53.20).
Notes on the poems

8c d’fhuil: Note variant reading d’fhéin in all copies outside ND. Either reading is good.

9a Síol Gearailt: The FitzGeralds, said to be all descended from Maurice, son of Gerald, who accompanied Strongbow in the Anglo-Norman invasion.

9b an seiseadh saoircheinéal: Note that, whereas Lebor Gabála makes Ceasair’s invasion the first of six, our poet enumerates the six invasions after Ceasair, thus making the FitzGeralds the sixth. The variant reading seachtmhadh (AE) must be wrong as sé gabhála i ndiaidh na díleann are anticipated in q. 4. Including Ceasair in the enumeration of invasions may have given rise to scribal alteration.

9c fionnmhadh (N): I have emended this to fhionmhaigh for rhyme with rioghraidh. My emendation makes this the only example I have of fhionmhaigh ‘wine-plain’, which may be understood as meaning ‘excellent plain’ or ‘noble plain’ (for fin in compounds cf. DIL s.v.). For another example of MS fionn- for fion- cf. LBr 6358as.: ‘d’fhionnfhuil: leg. d’fhionnfhuil (?).’ The confusion perhaps arose from scribal reading of a length mark as an n-stroke. The same poem has another example at line 6258 (= LBr 62.6a): Mac Airt prints d’fhionnfhuil, but one manuscript has d’fionnfhuil.

9d dan gabhdil: See variants. The reading in N seems to make good sense. Alternatively, following AC, one could read dá ghabhdil, taking dá to refer to -mhagh or to Fáil in line c; the sense might then be: ‘... is the sixth noble tribe of Greek kings to capture it [i.e. Ireland]’. Cf. the last line in the following quatrain: Rí Gréag a los a láimhe / gus an dTraoi—tuar déarmháire— / ’san mhéid do fhéad d’iodhmhuil áigh / do rioghraidh Ghréag dá gabhdil ‘The King of Greece by means of his power set out for Troy—presage of great events!—with all he could muster of the warlike bands of the Greek princes to capture her’ (San Sháinn do toirneadh Teamhair, q. 23).

10a Uaisele cniochtGhall chríche Luirc: (i) I take this to be in apposition to maicne Ghearailt. The variant reading d’uaislibh may have arisen by a scribal assumption that the question being posed was cia a-mháin d’uaislibh ...? rather than cia a-mháin don tshlógh ...?. In addition, reading d’uaislibh would amount to the preposition do being used twice for the same function, which may constitute the metrical fault iomarcaidh (see IGT v, 97; cf. McManus, 2005, 163–5). (ii) The lenition of chríche instead of expected eclipsis after the genitive plural cniochtGhall may be regarded as an example of a ‘genitive lenited in special circumstances’ (cf. Magauran xix).

10a chríche Luirc: A poetic name for Ireland (from the legendary king Laoghaire Lorc mac Úghoise).
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10b The rhetorical use of the phrase *cia a-mháin* is to be seen also in the following: *cia a-mháin do iarr a oighidh / do bháidh oinnigh riamh romhaibh?* ‘did man ever before Thee seek death for love’s sake?’ (AiD 64.22).

11a *Fad a gceirt*: Cf. variant readings. I retain N’s reading here as the noun *fad* is referred back to by *feirrde* in the next line. The form *foide*, which is the reading in S and G, is listed as a by-form of *fad* ‘length’ in *IGT* iv, 98, however, *foide* invariably denotes the comparative form of the adjective *fada*.

11c *ó a-né*: This choice of words is for dramatic effect and not meant to be taken literally.

11a *chlár seanAirt*: A poetic name for Ireland (from Art Aoínfhear, son of Conn Céadchathach).

11d *magh-soin Té*: Múr Té and Ráth Té are poetical names for Tara (from Téa, for whom Teamhair was said to be named; she was wife of the Milesian leader Éireamhón). *Magh Té* is used figuratively here for Ireland.

12c *a sheal*: Perhaps we should emend to *dá sheal* or *'na sheal* to give an adverbial sense here (cf. *da sheal E*): ‘I know well that Séamas will attempt during his period in the earldom of the land of Munster to pacify the wild land of Conn’. Otherwise, perhaps we should allow for some sort of poetic licence with regard to the word order in line *d* (taking the verb as *tairgídh do* ‘offers to’): ‘I know well that Séamas will offer his period in the earldom of the land of Munster to pacification of the wild land of Conn’.

12d *fiadhghort Cuinn*: A poetic name for Ireland (from Conn Céadchathach).

13a *leasa Cuirc*: Cashel (from Corc mac Luighdheach, legendary king of Cashel), representing the kingship of Munster.

13b *chlann nGearailt*: I have kept N’s lenition of *clann* here as it may be regarded as an example of a ‘genitive lenited in special circumstances’ (cf. *Magauran* xix).

13c *breac inghealta*: This expression also occurs in the following quatrain: *Siodhaidhe Buille braisí / meanmarc Bóinne bráonghlaísi / gráuidh tibregtha dáin cep Conn / breac inghealta an dá abhonn* (Crothain ochtain aicme Néill, q. 20). I have taken *inghealta* as the genitive of *inghealt* ‘act of feeding, grazing, etc.’; for the sense ‘preying’, see *DIL* s.v. *ingelt*, I (c), and cf. *Sé mar bhudh bhrec tuile ag troid / glec ris gach nduíne ag Diarmaid* ‘Diarmaid is like a fighting flood-tide trout, he fights everyone’ (*IGT* ii, example 1160). A less likely alternative
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would be to take it as the genitive of *inghealladh* ‘act of promising’: ‘the promised trout of ebb and flow’.

13d *tinghealta*: I take this as a substantivised verbal adjective from the verb *tingheallaidh* ‘promises’.

13d *Bearchain*: Nom. Bearchán, sixth-century saint and founder of Cluain Sosta (Clonsast, Co. Offaly). He is credited with several prophesies, and in particular, the long prophetic poem beginning *Aris biuc a mheic bic bán*, the so-called ‘Prophecy of Bearchán’, which deals with events in Ireland and Scotland from the sixth to the twelfth century and has been edited by Hudson (1996). For further discussion of the tradition surrounding Bearchán see Ó hÓgáin (2006, 35). Bardic poetry contains frequent allusions to *buile Bearchán* ‘Bearchán’s vision’.

14a Cf. *bas sheang gan chuibhreach ar chrotha* (O’Reilly poems 4.12).

14b *finnGréagaigh*: The Fitzgeralds; see note on 4c.

15 *tearc ró céime ‘na chartaigh*: I am unsure of the exact sense of *céime* here and my translation is tentative. I have found one other example of the phrase *ró céime*: *Mac Alasdairinn ursa in eigin / um iathmhaigh Áoi in fhinnbhennagh, / dá ngnás roimhe (i) lé ro ceime / cló a fhreinime do rinngreimuig* (Seabhaic d’aírghbh aicme Dubhghaill, q. 17). I take the possessive in ‘*na chartaigh* as referring to *ceannas Fódla* (line a) rather than to *ua na n-iarladh* (line b; i.e. Fitz Maurice). For the phrase *cairt ceannais* cf. *Giolla Esbuig iarrla Gaoidheal / glacuas cairt cennais an tslúaidh / do bhí riabh [leg. rianh?] o chóir ‘na chartaigh / riar an tslóidh gan antoil uaidh* (Maith an chaitr ceannas na nGaoidheal, q. 6).

15d *mó a fhéile ioná a iomarcaidh*: In other words, though he would have greater revenues at his disposal as high-king he would not increase his personal revenue, thereby leaving more for him to share out. For the sense of *iomarcaidh* here cf. *DIL*, s.v. *immarcaid*: ‘From the meaning excess comes that of advantage, superiority (over); also oppression, injustice’. This seems to be the sense also in the second line in the following example: *Temhair fos dá bhfoghaibhther, / mó a esbhuiagh nó a iomarcaidh* ‘if Tara is yet won, there will be more loss from it than gain’ (Maguire 20.5).

16a *Do thairngir fáidh*: Only A agrees with N here, but the sequence of tenses seems better here than if we take the variant reading (*A-tá ag fáidhth*), as the verb in the next line is in the conditional (*go dtiocfadh*).
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16b Ghréagaigh: Cf. note on 4c.

16c clann gCriomhthain: (i) Figurative expression for the Irish (from Criomhthan(n) son of Fiodhach, a legendary high-king of Ireland). (ii) I have left the lenition of clann in N here as it may be an example of a ‘genitive lenited in special circumstances’ (cf. Magauran xix); the preceding ceas is normally treated as a masculine noun, therefore as it is in the accusative we would expect either non-lenition or eclipsis (cf. Magauran xix).

16cd sgoilfeas ...: (i) Though coming after the relative verb sgoilfeas, I take Gall to be its subject antecedent (as well as that of fhóirfeas). It seems most unlikely that treibh Ghréagaigh is the antecedent of sgoilfeas: ‘Long ago a prophet foretold that there would come from the Greek tribe that will release the race of Criomhthann from their great oppression a Foreigner who will rescue the Irish’. I have supplied a coordinate conjunction (‘and’) in the translation to clarify the sense. The sequence of tenses between the first and second couplets seems awkward (one might expect the verbs to be in the conditional in the second couplet): perhaps we should take the second couplet as a whole as object of go dtiocfadh? (ii) Note also the following similar couplets: tí fhóirfeas ar fhiadh mBanbha / ó mhóircheas fhian n-allmhardha ‘thou wilt rescue the country of Banbha from the great oppression of the foreign hosts’ (TD 21.18cd; note that this example introduces an apalogue, as in our poem); mar sin fhóirfeas iath Banbha / ó mhóircheas fhian n-allmhurdha (Déana cuimhne, a Chaisil Chuirc, q. 38).

17a d’ógaibh Gréag: Note variant readings; d’óghbhaidh and d’ógaibh are both acceptable.

17a Gréag: Cf. note on 4c.

17cd a sgéith ... buain bharrmhla: For baramhail in the sense ‘hope’ see DIL s.v. baramail (c). The phrase beanadh baramhail a h- occurs also in the following: sé slóigh gan fhear n-anaghail / a hóigh gur bhean baramhail ‘the Six Hosts had no one to save them until they got a sign of hope from the Virgin’ (AiD 65.39).

18a Séadna as Fionnchú: Séadna was a legendary prophet (he appears also in AiD 27.24, LCAB 17.19, TD 27.33, Maguire 20.11). St. Fionnchú (d. 664) founded a monastery at Brí Gobhann (Brigown, near Mitchelstown, Co. Cork). These two early saints converse together also in the prophetic poem Apair rim, a Sétna, / scéla deiridh betha, published by Meyer (1901, 31–2) and dated by him to the twelfth century. There are certain parallels between it and our apalogue: the latter half of the poem foretells that a coblach Saxan (i.e. the Anglo-Normans) will come, that they will reign in Ireland for 180 years before committing treachery upon each other, that the son of the king of the Saxain will come to take the kingship from the Goill, that Ireland’s Goill and Gaidil will unite and defeat the slúag Saxan, and that
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together they will crown a single king over Ireland.

18bc ... fuáisdine / d’iath .... I have tentatively taken these together; cf. *oc faitsine dia mac* ‘prophesying about his son’ (*PH* 3436; quoted in *DIL*, s.v. *faitsine*).

19ac I take *ru* (line a) to refer collectively to *fhréamh féine* (line c) and the latter as subject of *an mbiodh* (line a).

19c *faidh gCobhthaigh*: A poetic name for Ireland (from Cobhthach Caol Breagh, son of Úghaine Mór, a legendary king of Ireland).

20a *Tiocfa* (*Tiucfa* N): Cf. MS -u- in *go much* (Poem 4, 9b).

20c *saoirGhréagach*: Cf. note on 4c.

20d *clár ... gCobhthaigh*: A poetic name for Ireland (see note on 19c).

21a *Fásfaidh*: Note that this reading is confined to ND. Cf. the variant *geinfidh*.

21d Cf. *Mac toirbhertach Néill i Néill / an sechtmhadh rí dég dóbhséin / ghébhús iath fhionnghlun Fódla, / triath nach iongnadh d’fhurfhógra ‘... a lord whom it is no wonder that he be heralded’ (*LCAB* 9.24).

22 *Beanfaidh siad*: The variant *beanfoidhsci* (E) leaves the line a syllable short.

22a *siol Eóghain*: The nobles of Munster (from Eóghan Mór, legendary king of Munster, or his grandson, Eóghan son of Ailill Ólom, from whom the Eóghanacht dynasty descended).

22c *seanLuachair*: Luachair encompasses part of Counties Kerry and Limerick.

22d *múir Mhaicniadh*: (i) Poetic name for Munster or, more specifically, as perhaps is meant here, south-west Munster (cf. *Top. poems*, p. 123–4) (from Maicnia, son of Lughaidh, and father of Mac Con, legendary king of Ireland). (ii) On the possible absence of lenition following *múir* in N and definite absence in DE, cf. *Magauran*, p. xviii, where it is noted that in compound place-descriptions such as this ‘poets may be thought to have had some licence’. I follow McKenna in supplying lenition. Cf. also 26a and 27c.
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23b Dúl gCais: Originally a branch of the Déisi that settled first in east Limerick and began to move into Co. Clare in the eighth century; they claimed descent from Cormac Cas, grandson of Eóghan Mór and son of Ailill Ólom.

23cd Cf. Táin fhirbheach nach dóigh Danar / ar míneach áigh do hoileadh ‘a swarm of true bees who were raised on the meadow of valour, no mark for foreigners’ (Maguire 24.44). Note that in our example the lenition of fhírbheach is confirmed by alliteration.

23d táin fhírbheach iarlai-sin: Perhaps n-iarlai-sin should be read, but I have let the manuscript reading stand as iarlai-sin may be regarded as qualifying táin.

24b chaillfeas ar: Cf. variants (variation in the stressed vowel between -o- and -a- is allowed in this verb; see IGT iii, 77). The sense of the variant chinneas ar ‘who will surpass’ seems less flattering to the Old English than one would expect in the context. Furthermore, the reading in N must be correct if one takes tú an cniocht ar ar céadchailleadh (35b) as an echo of the current line.

25 This quatrain is omitted in ND.

25a chloinne hEibhir: The southern Gaoidhil, descendants of Eibhear Fionn, son of Míl Easbáine, according to the Lebor Gábala traditions.

25c gan anóir naomh ná neimheadh: (i) Cf. do mbheaddaigh neimheadh gach naomh ‘he has enriched saints’ shrines’ (DiD 100.14 = Irish monthly, vol. 58, p. 96), cádhas a naomh sa neimheadh ‘the veneration of her saints and sanctuaries’ (ERMB 13.80d), Níor thuill ferg ná oímh ná neimhidh (A-nois caoinfhead-sa Clann Táil, q. 29). (ii) I take this to be a reference to the suppression of the Catholic religion. Comparison may be made with the poem Mairg rug ar an aimsir-se (edited by Breatnach, 1989), probably composed during the period 1575–79, which depicts the earldom of Desmond in a state of civil turmoil in which the Catholic religion is suppressed.

25d fhíugfidhear: The question arises as to whether one might emend to úigfidheart, taking the verb to be like do-gheibh in containing f-less forms (fuaras, uaras, etc.). Nicholas Williams drops the MS f- in the following: ar mbuain re hallmharhachaitbh úicfe / ‘na ndamhdaibhchaibh cúrte clach ‘when you have dealt with the Foreigners, you will raze the courts of stone to their very floors’ (GB 6.28cd). Williams states in a note (p. 283) that ‘úicfe is necessary for alliteration; the verb is not relative as it is preceded by neither subject nor object’. It may be argued, however, that the verb is relative if we construe as follows: ‘[it is] after dealing with the Foreigners that you will raze the courts of stone to their very floors’. This f-less
example is therefore doubtful. Furthermore, *IGT* iii, 85, does not include forms without initial *f*- for this verb (unlike *do-gheibh*). I have therefore retained the manuscript reading. As such, it comprises an example of a metrically-fixed lenited relative passive; cf. McKenna’s observation that ‘[p]assive [relative] verbs ... are generally unlenited’ (*BST*, p. 271; my italicization). Another example occurs in 42d. Cf. also: *Ón ló fhuingfír aos leiníb* (*Fád m’uaghge m’fhearrann caínte*, q. 32a); *Ionmhainh dias fhuingfídhearr ann* (*Measgra Dánta* 16.10a); *an slógh adhpbhal fhuingfídhearr* (*Pilib Bocht* 19.19c); *a ngeall ’gun aon fhuingfídhir* (*Cumann croinic Chloinne Neill*, q. 28d).

26a *mhúir Chobhthaigh*: (i) A poetic name for Ireland (see note on 19c). (ii) On the possible absence of lenition following *mhúir* in *N* and definite absence in *DEC*, see note on 22d.

26b *’na gort shiólta*: I have no other examples of this and my translation assumes that the poet is presenting arable land (favoured by the English) in a less positive light to pastoral land (favoured by the Irish). Alternatively, perhaps the sense is ‘the English will cause the land to go to seed [i.e. lay waste to it]’.

26c *biaidh a lán clochaítreabh*: *N* has *biaidh*; however, the use of singular verb with plural subject is faulted in *IGT* v, 20 (i.e. *uathadh re hiolar*). Either the mark of lenition of the -d in *N* has faded or the scribe felt that *a lán clochaítreabh* warranted a plural verb. The former is more likely; also, the occurrence of *biaidh* in line *a* would parallel its use here. Note, however, that the plural verb is metrically fixed in the following exceptional example: *Atáidh a lán do lochaíb* ‘There are many lakes’ (*Iomarábh* 5.53a). Examples of the normal use are: *Diol Briain nó oighidh nar fhéarr / fuair a lán d’aíslíbh Éireann ‘a death as cruel as Brian’s, or a worse one, was suffered by many nobles of Éire’* (*Magauran* 4.28ab), *rachaidh a lán diobh fa dheireadh / diom gé a-táim ’gá dtuireamh ‘many will escape me though I strive to tell them’* (*Dán Dé* 12.26cd).

26c *gcorr*: See note on 8a.

26d *bhFréamhann*: Frewin, Co. Westmeath. Associated with the high-kingship. See *IGT* ii, 129, where *Fréamhann Mhidhe* is listed with other names in *-ann* which, as Carney notes (*Butler*, p. 102) were originally genitives but are also used as nominatives, with a new additional genitive form *-ainne*. Cf. also Walsh (1957), 32–3, 143.

27c *cláir Chonnla* (*condla* *N*): See note on 26a regarding lenition.

27d *ón dáimh dhuaibhseigh dhanardha*: Note the same coupling of *duaibhseach* and *dhanardha* in the following examples: *'sa mair d’uaislíbh fhuinn Bhanbh / ón druing dhuaibhseigh dhan-
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ardha (Déana cuimhne, a Chaisil Chuirc, q. 14), Tig ainnséin go brugh Banbha / buidhean dhuibhseach dhianardha ‘... a stern foreign band ...’ (EMacC 3.31).

28a isan aird teas: ND is only backed up by H, which contains poor spelling and is fragmentary. The variant san aird andeas is confined to one subgroup of manuscripts (CSG); as the form is also less historically correct it therefore seems doubtful. San aird-se theas would be defensible on the basis that it has a wider spread among the various copies.

28c im ráith gCuinn: Poetic name for Ireland (from Conn Céadchathach).

28d éindrithe: Literally, ‘single spark’. See TD introduction, p. lv, where drithle ‘spark’ is noted among epithets used of chiefs to illustrate their ‘warlike nature and qualities’.

28d cháich (caich N): I have lenited this as it follows a feminine nominative.

29a Gluaisfid (Gluaisid NDA): The reading in NDA seems inferior here as the declarative verbs of the apalogue’s prophecy are all future tense; I have emended the reading accordingly.

29a Gréagaigh: Cf. note on 4c.

29a Mháighe: Nom. an Mháigh, the Maigue river, mostly in Co. Limerick.

29b sin: I take this to refer back to Gréagaigh in line a. Alternatively, if it anticipates fial-chlann mheannnach Mhileadh (line d) we might take sluagh combáidhe as a cheville referring to both the Goill and the Gaoidehill as an alliance, and the quatrain may be construed as follows: ‘The Greeks of the land of the Maigue river will proceed/march with them [i.e. the Gaoidehill]—an allied host: the choicest of the noble Goill of Breagha’s Tara [i.e. Ireland] and the spirited noble descendants of Míl’.

30c fódmhuigh Chuinn: Poetic name for Ireland (from Conn Céadchathach).

32b As the sentiments here seem to convey an immediate acquaintance with cath Lunndan I take the line as an interjection by the poet and have left it out of the direct speech. It may of course be argued that as Séadna was a prophet such feelings could well have been attributed to him.

32b Lunndan: London. For its various forms (both with and without -d-) see AiD 44.18d note and SNG, p. 354.
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32c críoch Fhloinn: Poetic name for Ireland.

32c fionnGhallaibh: For the use of the term fionnGhall to denote the Old English community in late bardic poetry see Ó Buachalla (1996, 82–3) and McLeod (2004, 128–9).

32d droing: See note on 2b above.

33b bhfionnghlan-sa: Cf. the variant forms fochainte and fochantiug. The reading in N here may be inferior as the use of fi(o)nn- twice in the one line is repetitious and perhaps not to be expected. Fochainte seems unsuited to the context. The form fochantiugh also occurs in q. 26d and would seem to be at least as good a reading as N’s. (I have one other example of fochantiugh outside of this poem: Glán filltí a n-áonach Tailtean / iocfaidh re a fholt fochantiiodh (Mór do mhil aoibhneas Éireann, q. 15).)

33b a bhfínChliaigh: Nom. Cliú (Máighe), a district partly in east Limerick (see Onom.).

33c Saghsan (sacsan N): For the accepted by-forms -gs- and -ghs-, see IGT ii, 152–3.

34a bhríuch: Cf. variants. The genitive singular in -úich, -uaigh and -úigh are sanctioned in IGT ii, 75. The form ending in -uaich occurs also but I have no example confirmed by rhyme. The form with long -u- is a reflex of the early disyllabic form of the word.

35a cath Saingeal: (i) Cf. the variant genitive form Saingil (e.g. Top. poems 1509–10; DiD 99.12; Iomarbhágh 6.253; Magauran 32.20). Singland is located one mile south-east of Limerick. (ii) The battle of Saingeal was one of a number of prophesied battles in which the Irish were to be victors (see Ó Buachalla 1983, 73, 77–8). Further allusions to it in bardic verse are: Cath díbhheargach Dún na Sgiath / cuirfidi oidhre fhóid fíonnChliaich; re a ré muithidh gach mearchath / is cuirfidi sé an Saingealchath (DiD 97.43); Cath Maisten go muighier llibh / no go ocurthar cath Sligigh / no cath Saingeal bhus buan bladh / do dhuiain ni daingin dúnadh (Gréas dearbhtha Duan na Feirsde q. 46; quoted in Ó Buachalla, 1996, 501); Dá mo ann niorbh ionguai lín / ionur torcr: cinn na bhfear / ag cath Saingill nó sendchath cliaith / a-tá a ttaralinguri do teacht (Cia na cinn-se do-chiú a-niarr?, q. 3).

35b tú an cniocht ar ar céadchailleadh: I take this to be a succinct way of saying: ‘you are [one of] the knight[s of the old Goill] who ha[ve] been betrayed [by new Goill]’, as prophesied in q. 24.

36b sgrios ghall (N): As sgrios is masculine I have removed the lenition from the following
word (which is written in full as the letter h in N). The presence of lenition may perhaps be
due to the influence of treise Ghaoidheal (line a) or cuid Ghall (34c).

36b ghórt Pharthaláin: Poetic name for Ireland. Cf. q. 6.

36d a leathLaighnigh: Fitz Maurice’s mother was ‘Julia, second daughter of Dermot O’Mulryan
of Sulloghade, co. Tipperary’ (McCormack, 2004, 819), therefore we should not take this as
indicating that she was a Leinsterwoman. Perhaps we have here an allusion to the division of
the FitzGeralds into the two great houses of Kildare and Desmond. The only other example
I have of the form occurs in the grammatical tracts: Rug clír lé ó lethLaighnigh, / riár
nacharbh é a athchuindghidh (IGT ii, example 768).

36d chlóir Chormaic: A poetic name for Ireland (from Cormac mac Airt). Or for Munster
(from Cormac Cas)?

37b tor gcorr: Cf. note on 8a.

37b ‘na gceathramhnaibh: I take this to refer to the destruction of the four walls of a tower-
house.

37 fhiadh bhFloinn: A poetic name for Ireland.


38a treimhse: Cf. note on 6c.

38cd bhfionnchladhaigh ... fionnchálaidh: If repetition of the first element (fionn) is to be
regarded as less than optimal then N’s reading may be doubted here. It may be preferable
to follow A (bhfaonchladhaigh ... aonchálaidh): ‘unable to secure any harbour in Ireland’s
sloping and undulating land’. Interestingly, however, I have found no other example of aon-
chálaidh. Nor have I found any other example of E’s ionchálaidh ‘suitable for putting to
port (?)’ (the ion- here may be redundant given that the phrase uain chálaidh ‘docking
time/opportunity, etc.’ occurs on its own elsewhere). In support of N’s reading in line d
is the fact that the form occurs elsewhere: Briathra fádh is fuighle naomh / dá huaimse
dot fholt bharrclaon; / nóach leó do tiorchanadh thall / an t-eó a fionnchladh Fréamhann?
‘The words of soothsayers, the utterances of saints, mate her with thee, O wavy tresses; did
they not prophesy of yore the salmon from Frewen’s fair harbor?’ (TD 1.52) and Trílisi
sgath da ccleith um gach coirrthealuigh / beich a ndoirchfheidhuihb ‘ga mbrath as a mbionn-
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choruibh / meabhaidh gach tirilihan re torcharuibh / deabhuidh móirthoraidh ag ingrim gach f[h]ionnchalaidh. (Fada leighthear Eamhain i n-aontugha q. 25).

39a Iarlacht chumhang: Cf. Do thoil don chléir ag comholl / bóim ar do bhloidh ní bhenann; / ní fhéid si t’fhéile d’fhulong / cunhang di Éiri d’fherand. ‘Your willingness to submit to the poets causes your fame to be untarnished; it cannot sustain your generosity, Ireland is too small a country for it.’ (Maguire 1.20d).

39a Mhéine (bheine N): Nom. Méin, Mayne, barony of Glenquin, Co. Limerick. See variants and cf. the following example: Ní mhaireann acht a n-iarmhar / crú na n iarladh ó Sheanaid / laochraidh Máighe agus Ménne / mo thnaghe gleire Gearailt ‘Only a remnant remains of the blood from Seanad, the warriors of the Maigue and of Méin—alas for the flower of the Geraldines’ (IBP 26.9 = Measgra Dánta 55.9). The genitive Méine occurs in the poem Twireamh na hÉireann (O’Rahilly, 1952, ll. 345 and 387). T. F. O’Rahilly states that it is uncertain whether the nominative form is Méin or Méinn (Measgra Dánta vol 2, p. 265); the Ordinance Survey has adopted the spelling Méin (see Ó Maolfabhail, 218).

39c griainghort Dá Thí: Poetic name for Ireland.

39d a n-aontamha: Cf. variant spellings and see note on Poem 8, 1b.

40a Dhún gCláire (dhun gclair ND): See variants. The form with -e gives the required syllable count. Hogan (1910, 380) states that Dún gCláire was ‘perhaps on Sliabh gCláire’, i.e. in Co. Limerick. Cf. also Dá mbeith ní ar phortaibh dille / níor dhearmaidhe Dún gCláire / Dún Iasg Caiseal is Méin-mhagh / Áine Cliach is Ceann Coradh ‘Were it a question of fair forts, one should not forget Dún gClaire, Dun Iasg, Caiseal Magh Mín, Aine Cliach, Ceann Coradh’ (Iomarbhágh 5.108; the editor identifies Dún gCláire as being in Co. Limerick).

40a cliú máil (ND): Cliú Máil (meic Úghaine), alias Cliú (Máighe), Co. Limerick (see note on 33b). On the emendation to -iaigh see variants and IGT i, 14, and ii, 97. I have left Máil unlenited as the preceding word is evidently accusative. Though the other two placenames governed by maithidh ar in this quatrain are followed by eclipsis, one might argue that the eclipse is petrified in each case as both are old neuters. However, in the case of ar sheanLoch ngleannnúrchas nGair the eclipse is also shown on an adjective, thereby indicating that it is functional rather than petrified. Though one finds examples such as glóir aithghearr ar bheathaidh bhuain ‘passing glory chosen instead of eternal life’ (AiD 87.28) which suggest that ar ‘in exchange for’ governs the dative, it seems more likely to govern the accusative, as in the following: ní theobhradh Brian ar fhear oile / an bhean do iarr loigh leat ‘the woman who has sought thy companionship would not exchange Brian for any other man’ (O’Hara
Poem 6: Cia as sine caírt ar chrích Néill?

5.17cd), Fáithéamhnaí móir ar mhuiin mbig, / beatha shúr ar sheal ngeirid (DiD 37.2ab). See also DIL s.v ar II (c) and (d).

40b ná maithidh: I take seandúthchaí Teamhrach Tuathail (line d) to be the direct object of this verb and the sense of maithidh here to be ‘foregoes, gives up, yields’ etc. The variant reading tréigeadh seems acceptable also. However, ND’s reading would appear to be the lectio difficilior as it goes against all other copies and seems less likely to have replaced tréigeadh in transmission than vice versa. The idea of abandoning one place in favour of another is contained also in the following, which makes use of the verb tréighidh: Tréige ar Chaiseal na gcórrphort / iochtar Cua do chéadlongphort, / cuan arab neamhfhaghlach neach / 'n-a mbual leabharloch Luighdheach ‘For round-forted Caiseal, and northern Cua, thy old stronghold, thou shalt leave the shore, safe for all, on which Loch Luighdheach beats’ (DiD 74.40; transl. Irish monthly 47, 341). Our example differs from the latter in that the patron is not being told not to ‘abandon’ Tara, but rather not to ‘forego’ it, which is slightly different, and which may be better conveyed by the use of the verb maithidh than tréighidh.

40c sheanLoch ... nGair: Loughgur, Co. Limerick. The forms L. Guir and L. Goir also occur., however, L. Gair is older (see Ó Maolfabhail, 210).

40d Tuathail: Tuathal Teachtmhar, legendary high-king of Ireland.

41b soighín: The sense is not clear to me. Soighín can mean ‘advancing towards, visiting, seeking, etc.’. Perhaps ‘Royal Gearalta’s race’s gentle seeking [of you]’. Cf. ‘s[oighim] ort I welcome thee’ (AiD, vocabulary p. 324). Cf. also the phrase soighín gráidh (ISP, p. 68, q. 10d), cited in DIL s.v. saigin (c), where the definition ‘an impulse of affection (?)’ is offered.

42b as sgaoileadh sgéal: Note the variant reading sgaoileadh a sgéal; ND reading, which differs from the other manuscripts here, seems somewhat stilted.

42d do chás iongnadh: (i) Alternatively, translate as ‘for a wonderful cause’? (ii) See variants. Perhaps we should read dá chás iongnadh ‘for his great cause’?

42d fuigfidhear: See note on 25d.

43b sreathadh con: The variant reading rith a ccon occurs in C only.

43b Cf. Ag sreathadh con ar chiomn sealg (LBran 4230); Mac Airt (p. 431) glosses sreathadh as ‘act of arranging (con, hounds)’.

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43b *Cheann nEabhrad*: Nom. Ceann Eabhrad/Feabhrad. For a full discussion of the history of this placename see Ó Murchadhá (1996). He identifies it (p. 171) as ‘Seefin Mt., tl. Glenosheen, par. Particles, bar. Coshlea, Co. Limerick’, and notes (p. 155 n.15) that the ‘initial ‘f’ is probably intrusive, deriving from the genitive, i.e. ‘Cath Cinn Ebrat’ > ‘Cath Cinn Fhebrat’ > ‘Cenn Febrat’.’

43c *na fuinn chorra*: Cf. note on 8a.


43d *ná loc orra*: An example of the preposition *ar* (< O.I. *for*) carrying out the functions of O.I. *ar*, which does not possess a set of prepositional pronouns in Classical Irish corresponding to earlier *airium, airiut*, etc. (see SNG, p. 437). Here *orra* (< O.I. *forru*) replaces earlier *airriu/err(i)u* ‘in exchange for them’. Note that an accusative form, *orra*, is used rather than a dative (e.g. *orthaibh*) (cf. discussion of *ar* in note on 40a above). The expression *locaidh X ar Y* ‘abandons X for Y’ is not given in *DIL s.v. locaid.*
Poem 7: Dá néall orchra ós iath Uisnigh

1a dá néall orchra ós iath Uisnigh: Compare the line dá nal brón ós Bhranochuibh in an elegy on a brother and sister (L.Bran 68.19d).

1ab orchra ... orchra: Caoiche, the fault of a word rhyming with itself, is arguably avoided here by the fact that each instance of orchra is in a different case: genitive in line a and nominative in line b. However, the presence of breacadh in this quatrain would compensate for caoiche in any case (see note on 1acd).

1ad iath Uisnigh ... rath Uisnigh: These may be taken as denoting the territory around Uisneach in Westmeath and, by extension, the Úi Chobhthaigh, who held lands in the area. It may also denote the whole of Ireland. Given the literary associations of Uisneach the epithet is highly complimentary.

1acd Uisnigh ... ghuid-sin ... Uisnigh: McManus’s comment on another poem applies equally here: ‘the rule ní dhlighe uaidhe na céidcheathamh don tsoiladh coimhtheacht a ccomhardadh re haonfhocal don rann uile (Mac Aogáin 1968, 3688–9: ‘the consonating word at the end of the first line of the opening couplet may not rhyme with any word in the quatrain’) is broken ... but is permitted as a form of Breacadh when the word itself is repeated (see examples (viii) and (x) in Ní Dhomhnaill (1975, 60), and Ó Máiil (1973, 57ff))’ (McManus 2000, 74). The presence of breacadh in this quatrain may be intended to compensate for the fact that orchra is made to rhyme with itself in 1ab (see note on 1ab). A similar case occurs also q. 18 and in Poem 5, q. 1.

1b (i) Literally, ‘what is their downfall/misfortune compared to?’ I take the question to be rhetorical and translate accordingly. (ii) If, alternatively, we read an orchra, the sense would not seem to be altered.

1d san orsain: Orsa/ursa literally means a ‘doorpost’, ‘jamb’ (see DIL s.v airsá) and is sometimes translated ‘gate’, ‘portal’, etc. As a door or gate may be understood as the location at which one ‘crosses over’, orsa sometimes denotes a ‘threshold’ or ‘brink’ as the following examples illustrate: Mar sin rug rioghan nimhe / a peacadh a páirtidhe / cuaird na hóige san ursain / suairc do róine an ríoghan-sain ‘Thus did Heaven’s Queen save her servant from sin! The Virgin’s visit to that threshold, happily did the Queen make it!’ (AÓD 48.21), Nior briseadh ar bheirn ‘na mbiadh. / níor loc ó ursainn éinghiadh, / a chneas gheal tochairthe i dtroid, meadh chothaighthe do charraig ‘No gap in which he would be was breached; the one of the bright skin which was inviting in battle, who was equal to a rock in steadfastness
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never turned aside from the brink of a single encounter’ (Escar Gaidheal éag aoinfhir, q. 20). The following example is noteworthy for its use of the verb *fuair*, which occurs in our example: 

Da chraóibh cnúais do-chuaidh os fiodh / oighre Neill is Airt Áoinfhear / fúair Éire iad san orsain / siad re chéile comhchosmhuil (Táinig anam i nÉirinn, q. 25). I understand the present example to mean something like ‘at the outer edge’, ‘at the threshold’, ‘at the coalface’, ‘to the fore’, ‘in the limelight’, and this is what my translation ‘in the vanguard’ attempts to convey. Compare also the use of *tairseach* ‘threshold’ in the following quatrain in which a poet is not merely ‘at’ the threshold but ‘is’ the threshold; it is of particular interest as the context refers to the art of poetry:

*Bheith duitse ad bhreitheamh bhalach, / 's ad chroinicidh comhrach, / an t-ainmsin dd rddha ribh. / 's ad thairsigh Dhdna Dirigh* ‘For instance those descriptions you give of yourself, “a splendid judge”, “a superb chronicler”, “a threshold of Dán Direach”’ (A fhír shealbhas duit an dán, q. 4).

2d *muadh* (MS): I have tentatively taken this as an adjective deriving from the proper noun *Muaidh* (earlier Muad) ‘the river Moy’, in Counties Sligo and Mayo. A form *Muaidhighe*, if preferable, could also be accommodated by emending its rhyming partner *luaghail* (line b) to the sanctioned by-form *luaighil* (cf. *IGT ii*, 42). My interpretation is based on a resemblance to such common phrases as, for example, *don mhacraidh Mhuimhnigh* (O’Hara 33.16a). One might alternatively take *muadhaigh* as a feminine accusative of an adjective *muadhach*, which might be a by-form of *muadh* ‘noble’, etc. (see *DIL*, s.v. *muad*) but I cannot back this up. The only other example I have found of a form *muadhach/muadhaigh* occurs in a single quatrain that is quoted on page 196 of Francis O’Molloy’s *Grammatica Latino-Hibernica*, published in 1677: 

*On mac rob aosda dhfiachaidh. / Taosgtha thig math gach muadhaigh. / Calbhach og rogha an riográidh, / Togha tiorthaigh clo cuanaidh.* The poem from which the quatrain was taken appears not to have survived and it is therefore difficult to interpret the proper sense of *muadhaigh* there too.

3cd In other words, ‘the poets in Meath’s plain weep only from the heart’. A good example of the bardic penchant for saying something by saying what it is not. Literally, ‘weeping that is not heart-felt weeping is not the weeping of poets in the plain of Meath’.

3cd *caoi ... chaoi ... caoi*: This is an example of *breacadh fíre comhláin* (see Ní Dhomhnaill, 1975, 47–8).

4ab This couplet has previously been translated as: ‘part of my visit to the inscribed stone is that (my) eyes are a living agony’ (Breathnach and Breathnach, 2005, 50).

5 The subject’s death has brought about a loss of appetite for feasting and merriment. Cf. *D’fhearoibh Laighion na leary réidh / ó furas t’oidhidh d’oilbéim. / guth an bhróin a mbeol*
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gach fir, / gan óidh ar cheol dá gcruintir (LBran 44.11). The words glóir ghnáthaigh refer to splendour of the past and are contrasted with the grief of the present. It is common in elegy to contrast present grief with the former joys of feasting, etc. Cf. Mar táid cách dá chor a suim, / faaiscin Chaislén Í Chonuing / gan fhion gan chaidromh gcleire, / do líon mh’agneadh dh’aithimhile ‘Like everybody else who is pondering on that fact, the sight of CaislénÚ Chonaing, without festivity (wine) and a company of poets, has filled my heart with anguish’ (Butler 4.8). In 5cd our poet makes the point that there is no point in trying to force the poets back to normality, so distraught are they. It might also be inferred here that considerable time has elapsed since Eóghan’s death (for which see introduction).

5d fhuí bhFíachaidh: This usually denotes the Irish race (the reference being to Fiach(aidh) Fionnfholaídh; cf. apologue in Poem 1) and probably does here too. Alternatively, might Fiachaidh be some ancestor of the Úi Chobththaigh? Cf. another example in q. 21.

6b do chionn: The reading in D is do cheáinn, which gives perfect rhyme with fhearr in line a. However, the dative form, cionn, is required following the preposition do. This indicates that consonance is sufficient correspondence internally in the first couplet. If do cheáinn were intended by the poet we may compare the following example, which is a second couplet (rannaigheacht bheag, dán díreach): ag bháin chruidh do Cheann Tíre, / gearr mhi ar m.uir d’fháil Máille ‘when taking cattle from Cantyre (Ceann Tíre) a mile on the sea is short to the Ó Máillíes’ (Bráthair don iocht an t-oineach, q. 25cd; but that couplet might be regarded as lochtach ‘faulty’?).

6cd The poet seems to be referring to himself here in the third person; cf. also qq. 15, 17, 20, 22. I take caoi as the subject of both labhair and maraidh.

7a (i) Might the words a mbliadhna be read as a reference to a year having elapsed since Eóghan’s death, i.e. ‘in [this last] year’? (ii) The line as a whole may be understood as expressing that the poet’s grief will be lifelong, which is a motif in bardic elegy.

7abd tromghuil ... gcomhraidh ... Dhomhnaigh: There is perfect rhyme, rather than the required consonance, between tromghuil and the other two words; however, I see no way of emending this.

7b fán gcomhraidh: Cf. the use of the preposition fa in the following also: Adhbhár bróin a bheith fan gcomhraidh / Conn Aolmhuiigh na n-each mbrus ‘That Conn of Aolmhagh, lover of steeds, should lie in his coffin is a great sorrow for me’ (O’Hara 10.19ab).

7c Dhurmhuigh: Nom. Durmhagh. This would seem to have been Eoghan’s place of burial.
I take it to be Durrow, Co. Offaly, rather than to the larger town in Co. Laois of the same name. A monastery was founded at Durrow (Co. Offaly) by St. Columcille in c. 556 and it remained an ecclesiastical site throughout the medieval period; cf. O’Brien and Sweetman (1997) §652. The well-known manuscript the Book of Durrow was kept at the monastery at Durrow until the sixteenth century; cf. O’Neill (1984) 4.

7d cungnai dh sé lem dheoir Domhnaigh: (i) I do not understand the import of deóra Domhnaigh (cf. also im ghl Dé Domhnaigh, 9d), but cf. Do dhorchaidh gríán a soilsi / ní léir ar choilltibh toradh / cosg ní bfuil ar dheóraibh Domnaigh / a ndeoigh chódnai ghchinn eCólla (Uaigneach sin, a cheinn Aodha, q. 8). Perhaps graves were visited on a Sunday? Or perhaps the reference indicates that the author was a religious? (As noted in the introduction, all his other surviving poems are on religious themes.) (ii) The verbal noun cungnamh ‘help’ is used in a similar context in the following: Magh Murbhachadh d’fhéagadh gan Aodh, / cungnamh do-bhearadh dom bron ‘To look at the plain of Murbhach without Aodh would lend support to my sorrow’ (Cionnas tig Éire gan Aodh?, q. 41ab). For my translation of cungnai dh as ‘increases’, compare the use of the synonymous verb fóiridh in DiD 95.1, which McKenna glosses as ‘neartuíth idh neaduíthidh’ (DiD, p. 469). Might one likewise translate cungnai dh as ‘strengthens’?

8b ní chruinnigh: Copy D reads do for ní here. The sense of N’s reading is better when compared for example with talk elsewhere in the poem of the poetic schools not gathering in the wake of Eóghan’s death (e.g. q. 10).

8b chruinnigh (MS): Emended to the by-form chruinnigh (cf. IGT iii, 106) for rhyme with nduíth as -nn- does not rhyme with -l- after a short vowel (see Mac Cárthaigh, 2007).

8c For the expression téid súil do chobhair ‘loses hope of, despairs of, help’ see DIL s.v. súil II (e).

8d d’fhogail tnúidh: For my tentative translation ‘... fierce attack’, cf. DIL s.v. tnúthach (a): ‘furious, angry’. Alternatively, might the sense be ‘... an attack upon [their] love/devotion’ (cf. DIL s.v. tnúth (d))? 

9b Chaithir: For the spelling of this name, see note on 32ab. I use the normal spelling, Cathair, in the translation.

9cd níor ghabh mé ... turbhaidh im ghl Dé Domhnaigh: (i) I take turbhaidh here to mean ‘respite, cessation’ (cf. DIL s.v. turbaid, col. 384.16). Our example may be compared with the following, in which turbhaidh is also used with the verb gabhaidh, although the associated
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preposition is different: Lion gleó do mhacraidh menmnaigh / o ghleó ni ghabhaid turbhaidh / ní bhí a bhfaoch uile ar armaibh / domhaidh laoch mhuige Murbaise ‘... they do not break from fighting ... ’ (?) (Éire i ngioll re hAodh Eanghach, q. 17). (ii) The significance of ‘Sunday’, here as in 7d, eludes me. Is there any significance in the fact that turbhaidh in the sense ‘temporary exemption from duty’ (see DIL s.v. turbaid I (a) and II) occurs in conjunction with Sunday observation in the text Cúan Domhnaigh: Turbaide techta in n-domnaig i. teched ria n-genntib nó robudh ria creich nó slúagh. Techt fo éigim acht ní tiagar de for culú co n-deirgle in domnach. [etc.] ‘Lawful exemptions of Sunday, viz.: fleeing before pagans; warning before a raiding party or an army. Going to a cry of distress, but there is no returning therefrom until Sunday is past. etc.’ (from ‘the epistle concerning Sunday’ in Cúan Domhnaigh, edited by O’Keeffe (1905) 208–9 §32).

10a For the expression cuiridh barr ar ‘adds to’, cf. Poem 4, note 2d.

10cd I take ann to refer proleptically to all of line d, i.e. ‘a heart-wound and [yet] another wound is in it, [namely, in] the parting of the poets of Cobhthach’s race’.

10d sgoile chlann gCobhtaigh: The lenition of chlann, which is shown in the manuscript, is not historical and is a possible case of what McKenna terms ‘genitives lenited in special circumstances’ (cf. Magauran, p. xix); it is not metrically verifiable however.

11a fréamha: I have translated this literally as ‘roots’. It is sometimes understood more loosely as ‘sockets’ or ‘depths’; cf. q. 22d and the following examples: An uair bhias do bhéal go bán / Is do chéadfaidh ar gchloachlíadh / Is préamh na súl ag sileadh / Do láidh féag an bhfaicfidh means ‘When thy lip is white, thy senses numb, thy eye-sockets dripping, see then if thy (present) vigour shall be admired!’ (AOD 41.8); Adhbhair doinimeanna a ndeaghal / a aos dána a dháileamhain; / iomdha déara ag teacht taiscibh / fréamha dearc ón deaghuisín ‘Saddening was the scattering of their poets and cup-bearers; many a tear burst through their eyes owing to that scattering’ (AiD 10.29; McKenna’s glossarial citation s.v. fréamh: ‘fréamha (depths) súl’); buille squir mo dhearc dá ndéaraibh, / fuil ag teacht ó fhréamhaibh rosg ‘my tears’ final act before stopping is that they turn to blood’ (SÓF 1.31); tithe greanta ar mhionbhun méar, / dearc fréamh gciordhubh dá gcrúidh ‘marks made on smooth fingers, black-rooted eyes are emptied [of tears]’ (DiD 79.11).

11cd This couplet has previously been translated as: ‘One ought not to speak of weeping calmly as being a (suitable) way of weeping on Eoghan’s grave’ (Breathnach and Breathnach, 2005, 501).

12b fa suathnídh n-einigh: I take suathnídh here as a substantivised form of the adjective
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meaning ‘well-known’, etc.

12cd The depiction of tears here as hostages being released from bondage echoes what one finds in a bardic political context, where a lord’s death is followed by the release of hostages. As McManus puts it: ‘Emphasis in Bardic poetry tends to be on the large number of hostages taken by the king, reflecting the extent of his sway .... The release of hostages after the king’s death allows a poet in elegy to emphasize the numbers his king had taken ....’ (McManus, 2006, 74).

13b ach (MS): This spelling without -t occurs also in Poem 2, 8a and Poem 8, 12b.

13d caoi oile ag mnáibh: This seems to be an allusion to the concealed love of married women for Eóghan. As such, it anticipates the theme of the next quatrain. Cf. also Caoi oile ag mnáoi tre na mac / is cáoi chroidhe tre chormac (BST 192.8).

14 The implication here is that Eóghan was the lover of a soldier’s wife. (Presenting a patron as having illicit affairs with other men’s wives is a form of praise found in bardic eulogy; compare, for example, Poem 3, 27.) A more literal rendering of the second couplet is ‘there is not strength in a soldier’s wife that has not smoothed [her] weeping on Eóghan’s grave’. The ‘soldier’s wife’ is mentioned again in q. 18. An alternative might be to translate as ‘enemy’s wife’?

15a an chleachta: Clechtad is given as a masculine o-stem in DIL, in which case the genitive ending should be -aidh. I have found three examples of gen. sg. cleachtaidh in bardic poetry. The form cleachta (< cleachththa, which is the spelling in D) is an example of the u-stem genitive formation. McManus notes (SNG, p. 376) that verbal nouns in -(e)adh, -(u)dh and -(e)amh are inflected in the manner of both o- and u-stems.

15 One would expect the sentiment expressed here (in particular ní fhoighe an cion roimhe fuair file) to be found in a poem by a former official poet who is now out of favour under a new regime (for this motif see Breatnach, 1997, 54–5). It seems out of place in the present poem given the fact that the author was a kinsman of the deceased and that the deceased himself was likely an official poet to someone else. Perhaps, therefore, the author was simply using literary convention rather than reflecting the reality of their relationship.

16 The ‘danger’ referred to here may be a further expression of the motif found in the preceding quatrain, i.e. the author is now out of favour and exposed to attack by others. Taken as a whole, however, it seems more likely that the danger arises from the distress—and consequent unpredictable behaviour—of the assembled throng of poets.
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16d dháil ndéire: (i) Though one might take dháil ndéire as meaning ‘a tearful gathering’, another occurrence of the expression in 33d (i.e. dháil deóire) clearly means ‘a tearful pouring forth’, and that is the sense I understand in the present instance. (ii) One might have expected a plural attributive genitive here (i.e. ndear rather than ndéire). Compare the following examples of a comparable phrase, one of which has genitive singular and one of which has genitive plural: ag téaghadh ghrudadh fhéar n-áladh (: bhádadh) ‘reddening the cheeks of wounded men’ and luighe re taobh fhéar n-áladh (: dtaráidh) ‘lying with wounded men’ (Le dís cuirthear clú Laighean, qq. 3d and 29c). Here, as in our example, metrical requirements would appear to dictate the choice of singular or plural form. One might perhaps argue that our example illustrates that a genitive singular is used when the sense is attributively/adjetival and that the genitive plural is used when the sense is objective, i.e. after the verbal noun (ag dáil déar); however, the following example reminds us that one can also speak of ‘shedding a tear’: iomdha ag teacht ó chineadh Crédidhe / dearc ag sileadh deire id dhiadh ‘many a chief of the race of Créidhe came to thee (a suppliant) with streaming eyes’ (AiD 38.39).

17a sealbh-: (N): The reading in D (a shealbhaibh) seems to be a case of incorrect expansion of a suspension-stroke. In addition, its lenition of the s- is unmetrical.

18ab orchra ... orchra: As this rhymes with itself, it may constitute an example of the metrical fault caoiche. The presence of breacadh may be intended to compensate for it (see note on 18acd).

18acd d’fhéaghain ... d’fhéaghain ... méaraibh: See note on 1acd for this breacadh, which perhaps compensates for possible caoiche (see note on 18ab).

18cd a-tá do gheis ... buain a méaraibh mná muidh: Compare the use of buain a h- in the following: A déara deargfhola id dhiadh / do cheannchodar séala ar sídhi; / buain a bosaibh óighe ar t’uaigh / uain fa chosaibh cóire an chigh ‘Mary’s blood-flecked tears shed at Thy death were payment for the sealing of our pardon; our trampling on the debt due to the breast made the Virgin wring her hands over the grave’ (AiD 95.32). If, alternatively, one read buain i n- the sense might be: ‘having seen your grave she is compelled to beat her fingers [i.e. through hand-clapping]’. Wringing of hands and beating of hands together are both symptoms of grief that are found in bardic poetry.

19a bhan mBreaghmhuigh: The gen. sg. of magh is normally moighe/muighe (cf. SNG, p. 380 and IGT ii, 31). However, according to IGT ii, 138, an o-stem genitive formation is sanctioned for the proper nouns Maonmhagh, Breaghmhaigh, Lusmhagh and Aolmhagh. Another example of genitive Breaghmhuigh occurs in Poem 5, q. 9d. Examples of the historical s-stem genitive formation Breaghmhuighe are to be found (with metrical verification) in AiD
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4.1c, 40.38c, and DiD 109.9a.

20 Here we have an instance of person-switching. Eóghan is addressed directly in lines a and c and referred to indirectly in line d.

20c The reading in D is clearly inversed as it leaves the line without alliteration.

20cd The sense here is unclear to me and the translation is tentative.

21b Cf. ní tiachair uaidhe gan oilbhéim (IGT iii, 129).

21cd Translation tentative. The sense is unclear to me. Compare the use of tír dhúthaigh in the following: Seacht dtroighe mo thir dhúthaigh ... fúthaibh soin go bráth bithir ‘Seven feet of earth are my native land; one lives for eternity in it’ (Pilib Bocht 21.1ad). Is the author saying that the poets will remain indefinitely at the grave?

21d d’fhuil Fhiachaidh: See note on 5d.

22b tráighidh: Or perhaps, ‘dries up’?

23b sreabh: Emending to the by-form sriobh would give better correspondence with bhfios in line a, but the metre does not require this (cf. note on 6b).

23b toimhsidh: Literally ‘measures’, the present example seems more likely to mean something like ‘measures up to’, ‘equals the measure of’. Cf. do thomhais Críost an crann (DiD 54.27); McKenna’s glossing of this (DiD, p. 449) as do bhí sé ‘n-a luighe air would seem to indicate that he takes do thomhais to mean ‘equalled the measure of’ > ‘covered’ > ‘lay upon’.

23b a léim luída: Literally, ‘its vigorous bound’, i.e. ‘the vigorous gushing forth of its water’. Cf. an Múaid ag breith léimend luída ‘the river Moy gushes forth’ (?) (IGT example 1256).

23d n-achaidh Úna: Ireland. Úna was the daughter of Conn Céadchathach.

24b tholchaibh: Emending to the by-form thealchaibh (see IGT ii, 190) would give better correspondence with d’anfadh in line a, but the metre does not require this (cf. note on 6b).

24d cheann siodha: Cf. ‘ceann siodha, etc., person pre-eminent for pardoning, etc.’ (AiD
Poem 7: Dá néall orchra ós iath Uisnigh

67.3n.)

24d fháid Éanna: Ireland. Éanna was a son of Niall Naoighiallach.

25ab This couplet has previously been translated as: ‘That intensity [of a raging sea] has ensured that no vessel has faced her since last year’ (McManus 2006, 65).

25ac a-nuraidh ... thulaigh: These should consonate rather than rhyme perfectly, but no emendation suggests itself. Emending thulaigh to tholaigh (cf. IGT ii, 190) would result in the loss of aicill-rhyme with cumhain.

26a mheas: This usually means ‘mast’, ‘tree-fruit’, but would appear to be used loosely here, as it refers to the produce of the ‘tilled fields’ mentioned in line d.

26 It is difficult to tie this quatrain together. I tentatively construe the order of the lines as dacb. Emend nach to ní in line d? Namely, ‘no hope is placed in tilled hillsides; they are without produce because of the death’.

27c ná maoidh ... ar: Perhaps translate as ‘do not deny ... to’? Cf. note on Poem 3, q. 11.

27c duinn: I understand this to mean ‘blood (in tears)’, taking it as a substantivized form of the adjective donn ‘red’. Though the adjective donn is used to describe the colour of blood (see DIL s.v. 1 donn (a) and cf. dom dhéir dhuinn, q. 12 above), I have no other example of its use as a noun meaning ‘blood’. The term most commonly used to denote blood in tears is fuil. Cf. the many examples cited by Hull (1956), who discusses the ‘tears of blood’ motif in general, and Breeze (1988), who discusses provenance of the motif of the ‘Virgin’s tears of blood’. Note also that the term crú is used of tears in q. 19 above.

27d sgol fhuinn Éibhir: We would expect bhfuinn as sgol is a genitive plural; however, lenition is metrically fixed, and thus is an example of a ‘genitive lenited in special circumstances’ (see Magauran, introduction, xix).

27d fhuinn Éibhir: Ireland. Éibhear was the son of Mfl Easbáine, ancestor of the Gaoidhil.

28b D’s reading here is clearly wrong as it leaves the line hypersyllabic.

28b teimheal: Literally, ‘darkness’, ‘gloom’, etc. For the phrase téid teimheal ar, cf. mór ar a dtéid teimheal ‘much ... is being forgotten’ (Pilip Bocht 22.1).
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28cd As these mná Mumhan appear to excel at grieving they may be taken to be keening women. I cannot say why they should be from Munster. Line d may be read as indicating that it is their duty to grieve both first and last, or that they are supreme at this task, or both.

29a In other words, everyone is equally sad.

29c ná maoidh: Cf. note on 27c above.

30a dfhéachain (MS): Emended to d’fhéaghadh for consonance with the finals of bcd. (A form féaghan does not occur.)

30ab Aibhilín ... Aibliín: Though this word rhymes with itself the fault of caoiche is arguably avoided as each instance of the word is in a different grammatical case.

30b nár dhear: Note that our example is the only citation of this verb given in DIL s.v. deraid, which quotes D and incorrectly marks the -e- as long (it is not actually marked long in D; also, cf. internal correspondence with fheart in line a). The sense of the verb is clear however, and a number of examples are given in DIL of its verbal noun (s.v. derad), e.g. bean nar fed duini do deradh ‘a woman who could refuse no one [hospitality]’ (Fada is mná matthe mná Mumhan, l. 21; my translation). Cf. also Fear séad do dháil tar dhligheadh, / dá ghrés gan dáimh do dhearadh ‘a man who distributes treasures above what is necessary, he never refuses poets’ (Butler 17.9ab; my translation).

30d Cf. Ní seal do chleacht a chaoineadh / bean ar a fheart ’n-a héanar; / léig don mhinaoi do-ní nuaghul / más fuaradh caoi dhí a dhéanamh. ‘Some lonely woman is crying unceasingly at his (Éigneachán’s) grave; when she bursts afresh into tears leave her alone; that may cool the heat of her grief’ (Tuile ar drághadh tréan Goidheal, q. 16).

31a Fabhairse: This word, meaning ‘something trifling/paltry’, is discussed in DBM (glossary). For its various forms ((f)abhairse/(f)obhairse) see IGT iii, 83.

31c Friday was evidently associated with heavy rain. Cf. Fearthain Aoine eineach Néill ‘A Friday’s rain is Niall’s hospitality’ (Magauran 14.1a). In a note on that line its editor draws attention to the Connacht proverb is olc an Aoine faoi n-a tioradh, which may be rendered ‘bad is the Friday with no rain (lit. ‘under its drought’). This is one of a number of proverbs that attest to a belief that rain was expected to begin falling on Fridays and to continue through till Saturday evenings (see Ó Máille, 1948–52, vol. 1, 25). Might this be through
association with Good Friday and the equating of rain with the Heavens weeping? Or has it
to do with a belief that the biblical deluge happened on a Friday? The poem Tabhraidh onóir
don Aoine, preserved in the Book of Úi Mhaine, lists many calamitous events that occurred
on a Friday, including the Deluge: Dia hAoine d’fhas [leg. d’fhios?] a smachta / ro-s baidh
Dia in droying ndacainachta / ca robadh nach rug don droying [leg. dreim?] / tug ar in doman
dilind (Tabhraidh onóir don Aoine, q. 6). Cf. also the last line in the following text: Ag so an
chúis fá ndéanaid cáich an Aoine: i. dia hAoine do pheacuigh Ádhamh; agus dia hAoine do
cuireadh a Parrthas amach é. Dia hAoine do crochadh Chríost. Dia hAoine do mharbh Cain
mac Ádhaimh a bhráthair Abel. Dia hAoine do clochadh Stéphán. Dia hAoine do marbhadh le
Hiruath an mhacra i. cheithre mhile agus fíthche, d’fhonn Chríost do mharbhadh ‘na measg.
Dia hAoine do crochadh Peadar agus Pól. dia hAoine do beanadh a cheann d’Eóin Baiste.
Dia hAoine do cuireadh Clann Israel tré an Muir Ruaidh. Dia hAoine iadhtar neamh agus
osgailtear ifrionn. Dia hAoine do rineadh comhleapchas fir agus mná ar ttús. Dia hAoine
d’fhás drisi agus droighneach, losa agus luibhe na talmhan; agus dia hAoine tugadh an díle
tar an ndomhan (published in Gadelica, p. 207, from a manuscript of Eoghan Ó Caoimh,
RIA 23 M 30, p. 443). Douglas Hyde prints a very similar text in Abhrdín Diadhia Chúige
Connacht (vol. ii, p. 218), which he says he got from an O’Gorman manuscript. He also notes
that there is a similar section in the text An tenga bithnua; the particular section in question
has ‘midnight’ instead of ‘Friday’.

31cd beanfaidh ... barr don: For beanfaidh barr do ‘excels’, ‘exceeds’, cf. Gér dheacuir barr do
bhuidin dí— / céadAlmha Cloinne Baoisgne ‘Though it were difficult to excel that first tribe
of Baoisgne’ (TD 27.8).

32ab Chathoir ... taithír: Normally spelt Chathaoir and tathaoir. For discussion see note on
Poem 1, q. 45. I use the normal spelling of the name Cathaoir in the translation.

32b gur thaom taithír a tmída: (i) I take thaom as past tense of a poorly-attested verb
taomaidh. DIL only has taemad which it describes as a verbal noun formation from taem;
it is defined as ‘emptying, baling out’ and further examples indicate the senses ‘pouring’ and
‘flooding’. I have come across only one other example of the finite verb: Gan mo thagra
i n-ainmhíbh mh’olc / guidhim Mac Dé le dúthracht / fam shaoiradh ó ghuin an gha / ler
taomadh fhual ó fós. ‘I fervently beseech the Son of God not to charge me with my sins and to
save me from the wound of the spear by which Jesus’ blood was shed’ (A Sheónóid, médadaigh
meanna, q. 16). From the foregoing we may surmise that taomaídh can mean ‘empties’,
‘bales out’, ‘sheds’. Furthermore, DINN defines taomaim as ‘I pour or teem forth, drain,
pump, bail out (as a boat), overflow’ and FGB defines the verb taom as ‘empty of water,
pour off, bail’. (ii) The noun tathaoir usually means ‘blame’ or ‘reproach’, but I cannot make
sense of that here. After giving the definitions ‘reprehension, reproach, contempt’, DINN
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adds: ‘al[so] grief, heaviness’. My tentative translation is guided by this.

32c do dhathaigh dhéara: A possessive may be inferred here; namely, do dhathaigh a dhéara. I take sgéala in line d, or perhaps the whole of line d, as the subject of do dhathaigh.

33ab A less likely interpretation would be to take line b as the subject of tug: ‘that my grief is inestimable causes me to continually weep’. One might even take the sgéala of the last quatrain as its subject: ‘[The tidings] cause me to continually weep so that my grief has become inestimable’.

33cd I take the question posed in line c as rhetorical, the point being that it is useless to try to stifle one’s crying as it is not possible; line d then makes the point that crying is good for the eyes in any case. Compare line 35c, where it is implied that one ought not to suppress tears.

33b nach cnEsda (MS): My emendation to measda provides the line with alliteration. Perhaps the scribe had the sense ‘not healed’ in mind here; this is usually cneasaighthe, but DIL, s.v. cnesta, notes a single instance of the form: go beth dà chréachtaibh cneasda (taken from Meyer, Death-tales of the Ulster heroes, 1906).

34ab The poet seems to address himself here in the second person.

34cd I take the question posed in line c as rhetorical. The ‘question’ referred to in it must be the rhetorical one posed in the last quatrain (33c), although my translation of the latter admittedly does not tie in well with the reference to it here. One must take the question in 33c more literally, namely, ‘what is needed to stop the eye from crying?’. As with the original quatrain, the implication here (34c) is that no one knows how to answer it, and this is the point made in line d.

34d ó bhfoighe: The object of the verb here is not expressed.

35d meóir leabhra: The adjective leabhra ‘long’ might signify the outstretching of hands, but its use may primarily be to serve the metre. Cf. meóir leabhra labtha um fhoghaibh, / dearna dánta um dhornchladhaibh (TD 4.30cd).
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1b (i) Literally, ‘whose attention is not wont to be on unweddedness’, the symbolic ‘unweddedness’ being between the land—and by extension, its people—and the deceased chief. Cf. Fada leicter Eamhain a n-áontugha / ga háontogha da feruibh le cceïlter a cdchumha / fada a-tá gan righfer a riachtana / síneadh a miantola do chlú a cédfadh (Fada leicther Eamhain i n-áontugha, q. 1; Book of O’Conor Don, 250b). I have emended MS aontugha to éantamha on the basis that the former is a late form (cf. DIL s.v. eantamh). Both forms occur in manuscripts; witness, for example, the spelling in the RIA MS 743 copy of the poem just cited: Fada leigther Eamhain a n-donton-cha (p. 871). Cf. also manuscript spellings in poem 6, 39d. (ii) A doubtful alternative might be to take aontugha to be a compound of aon (taking this as essentially meaningless here) and tugha ‘cover, protection’, in which case the line might translated ‘who[se] people do not normally worry about protection’, but this interpretation does not seem necessary.

1c ar thuit do leith mhór Mhogha: Literally, ‘all of those who have died of Mogh’s great half’.

1d lór do chleith a gcéadfadh: Literally, ‘sufficient for the concealing of their sense’.

2d uírsgeal: This word is used here in its earlier sense, i.e. ‘famous tale’, etc., rather than that common in bardic poetry, ‘parable’, ‘apologue’, etc. (cf. DIL s.v. airscél).

3a bonaidh (MS): I have emended this to bunaidh, taking it to be genitive singular of bunadh (meaning ‘inherent’, etc.). Although all other examples of bunaidh seem to be used attributively, I see no alternative to taking its usage here as adverbial. Might it be compared to the adverbial use of seasta in Modern Irish?

3cd Note the reference here to the long time (perhaps a year?) that has passed between the death of the subject and the composition of the poem (cf. qq. 18 and 27). It is also possible, however, that only a month has passed since the death of Diarmaid (see 35b).

4ab Do gadadh ... a: It is unclear to me whether the preposition here is a h- ‘out of’ or i n- ‘in’. I have found no other example of gadadh a h-; gadadh de and gadadh ó are the norm.

4acd gasraidh ... tréidhe: I take both of these words to refer to féile and saoire (4c), which are ‘stolen’ from Munster’s people on the death of their leader.

5d Alternatively, ‘what it [i.e. an teidhm (5b) / Diarmaid’s death] has scattered of Cormac’s
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brood’.

5d Cormaic: Presumably Diarmaid’s grandfather (cf. 28a and 29b), who apparently held the title of Máig Carthaigh (see 41b).

6cd (i) This couplet occurs as IGT ii, example 2011: Sáoghal croinn ar [tÍ] tuitme / do bhí ’gar ccloinn Chormaicne. I presume it is coincidental that tÍ has had to be supplied in both IGT and the text edited here. (ii) The image of a tree about to fall conveys well the idea of great power on the brink of extinction. Cf. Ní raibh tarbha a thionóil / ar gheall aicme Éireamhóin; / mar bhíos crann an [leg. ar?] tÍ thuitme / do bhí i n-am a fhuaaslugthe ‘All the wealth promised by the race of Eireamhóin brought no profit for its gathering; he (Niall), when the time of his release arrived, was (dying) as a tree tottering to its fall’ (AiD 23.21).

6c a(r ... th)uitm(h)e (N): (i) Although unclear, I believe that N shows lenition of an initial t following ar tÍ. D has lenition; IGT does not. Lenition occurs after ar tÍ in the following metrically fixed examples: ar tÍ shéana a sháráichthe (DiD 5.24d), do ghmomh ar tÍ Fhiacha ar-aon (L Bran, 34.10d), Le a ndearna soin as sí ar ndóichne / go bfoil ar tÍ fhóirthi oirn (IGT iii, example 967), Bean ar tÍ fhéithimh an Airtsí / féithidh an tÍ as fhcaicsi d’Art (BST 206.5). Although there are many examples of non-lenition after ar tÍ, I have none that is metrically fixed. (ii) Regarding the possible lenition of the m in tuitimhe, D has lenition, whereas IGT does not. The following examples have lenited m: L Bran 31.1b, 31.5d; Pilib Bocht 16.19c, 18.16b, 18.21a, 24.11a, 25.18d. I have found no example of nom. tuitimh/toitimh. The historicity of such a form seems doubtful, and I have therefore followed IGT.

6d Chormaic: See note on 5d.

7c ge (MS): As this is followed by an adjective I have emended it to giodh, in accordance with IGT i, 16.

7d cheann gCodhail: This is probably meant to mean ‘Munster’s leader’ (see note on 16c). See MD iv, p. 425, for a discussion of places named Codhal, one of which is apparently in Munster.

8a chlann Eoghain: The nobles of Munster (descendants of either Éóghan son of Ailill Ólom, eponymous ancestor of the Éóghanacht dynasty of Munster, or his grandfather Éóghan Mór).

9a Leamhna: An Leamhain, the River Laune, Co. Kerry. Breatnach (1999, 83) notes that the chief residence of Domhnall Máig Carthaigh Mór (Earl of Clancare; d. 1597) was at ‘Pallis
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Castle, located near Beaufort Bridge, Killarney, where the Laune River leaves the Lakes to flow north-westward towards Castlemaine harbour'. Cf. note on 24a.

9b *idhearla*: I take this to be a compound of *idh* ‘withe, ring, ringlet’ and *earla* ‘tress, hair’.

9d *ar dtocht*: I take this to be the older meaning of this verbal noun (i.e. that corresponding to *téit* rather than *tig*). Cf. McKenna’s note quoted in note 28cd below.

9d *m’óige*: A hint here that the poet was young. In 29a he claims to have known Diarmaid since childhood, thus indicating that they were both young men.

10b *clann Eibhir*: The Munster nobility (descendants of Éibhear Fionn, son of Míl Easpáine and father-in-law of Eóghan Mór (Mogh Nuadhad), ancestor of the Éoganacht dynasty in Munster). Éibhear Fionn is often cited as an ancestor of the southern Gaoidhil of Ireland.

10cd (i) This couplet occurs as *IGT* ii, example 222: Nach bed sochraide mar sin / a ndochraide d’éginfhir. Note that *IGT* has *Nach* where *N* has *as*; taking *Nach* to be the interrogative form of the copula, the sense is essentially the same. (ii) *Clann Éibhir* are addressed directly in 10b and in the third person in 10d. This constitutes an example of person-switching, which was considered a fault (see *IGT* i, 2 and v, 1, 23, 73). In order to avoid this, one might read *an dochraide* instead of *a ndochraide*, in which case the couplet might be translated as ‘the misery arising from one man’s death is thus the sorrow of a funeral cortege’. As there are other examples of person-switching in this poem which do not seem amenable to emendation (qq. 20, 29, 39), I have followed the word spacing of the MS and of the quotation in *IGT*.

11cd In other words, the fact that they are suffering now shows what good protection they had from the hero of *Cuala*, i.e. Diarmaid, in the past.


12d *nglais lámh*: The translation ‘handcuffs’ may seem anachronistic, but it is the term used by Greene in *Maguire* (13.24d).

13a *doinEnd* (MS): I have emended this to its accusative form, *doininn* (see *IGT* ii, 12).
13b *fhíarloig* (MS): As this is a compound word I have not normalized to *-laig*. For *-o-* in genitive and dative singular of *lag* see *IGT* ii, 40 and 73.

13c *síol mBloid*: Blod, son of Cas (ancestor of Brian Bóramhe) (*FFÉ* iv, p. 182).

13cd This couplet occurs as *IGT* ii, example 1569: *Géabhaidh Sionann re Síol mBloid / ionann ar dhión do Dhiarmaid.* I have followed *IGT* here in reading *géabhaidh* ... *re* ‘holds out against’ (see *DIL* s.v. *gaibid* 15.61). Dál gCais are portrayed in q. 12 as an enemy who yielded hostages to Diarmaid during his lifetime. The idea in the present quatrain would seem to be that, following Diarmaid’s death, *síol mBloid* (= Dál gCais) are a threat, and that the elements, in turmoil for the dead hero, are effectively protecting Diarmaid’s people. The reading in N (*gebhaidh sionand le siol mbloid* ‘the Shannon sides with the race of Blod’) therefore seems less likely than that in *IGT*. *IGT*’s *ar dhión* seems inferior to N’s *ar ndion*. It seems possible, however, that *IGT*’s *ionann* may be a reduced form of *ionann* is rather than a mere corruption if we compare *cuma/cuma* is, for which see Poem 2, 27c.

14c *ó ghúaire* (MS): (i) Hogan (*Onom.*) identifies one river of this name, flowing from ‘L*[och]* Muinremair’, i.e. Lough Ramor, Co. Cavan. Cf. Sliabh Guaire, Slieve Gorey, parish of Knockbriide, barony of Clankee, Co. Cavan. If this is the what is meant here, the translation would be ‘[Díarmaid’s death] has elicited from Gúaire every strong current and every swift wave ...’ . Being so far from Munster, however, it seems unlikely to be the proper identification. It is more likely that the ‘currents’ and ‘waves’ (14a) are those of the Shannon, mentioned in the previous quatrain. I have therefore taken *Gúaire* to be the celebrated seventh-century king of Connacht (d. 663). He is more typically alluded to in bardic poetry as the supreme example of hospitality and generosity rather than as a metaphorical progenitor (as here); however, examples of the latter do occur: *[A]* dhá shleagh thollas taobh námhad, / mar neimh nathrach guin na grann; / caol ch[l]aidheamh ó ghreis uí Gúaire, / maolaighthear leis guailne Gall ‘His two spears pierce the side of the enemy, and the wound inflicted by his shafts is like a snake’s poison; [when] a slender sword [is used] in an attack by the descendant of Gúaire, limbs are lopped from Foreigners’ shoulders by it.’ *(Dáil chabhlaigh ar Chaístéal Suibhne,* q. 24). For discussion of the use made of comparisons with Gúaire in bardic poetry, see Breatnach (1997, 102–3). (ii) Although *ó* can be feminine (see *IGT* ii, 98), the lenition following it here in the manuscript is probably a result of the scribe taking it to be the preposition *ó* ‘from’.

15abcd This quatrain occurs as *IGT* iii, example 200: *An adhaigh d’éis fhír Boirchi / d’éagbáil a n-uaim bélomoirchi / mairc táir is gan tocht choídhche / pláigh mar olc na héoidhche.* It is quoted in a section headed by the verbal noun *tárthachtuin* ‘reaching’, ‘getting’, etc., and dealing with its various finite verbal forms, the particular form illustrated in this quotation
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being táir (line c). Note IGT’s non-lenition of the initial in Boirchi, for which, as the second part of a quasi-title, McKenna suggests the poets may have had licence (Magauran, xviii). IGT has uaim for uaigh, which is acceptable if it is for uaimh ‘grave’. (iv) Finally, IGT’s is gan tocht for N’s sgan a tocht does not seem to substantially alter the sense.


16a A mhumha (MS): I have emended to An Mhumha, as it is referred to in the third person in 16b.

16a Mheic Con: Lughaidh Mac Con.

16cd I cannot make good sense of the couplet and my tentative translation is very doubtful.

16c sia aide (MS): I take this as a corruption and emend to siaide ‘the longer’ etc. The emendation gives the line the correct syllable count.

16c ceann Dor: ‘Dor; when used by itself (as opposed to Cuan Dor ‘Glandore’) this placename seems to be, like Cnodbha, Colt and many others, simply a name for Ireland ...’ (Maguire, note on l. 2209). In the present context, however, ceann Dor probably means ‘Munster’s leader’; cf. ‘Is cosuíil gur cóir an chiall “Munstermen” a bhaint as cath Dor ar aon dul le cath Emhna ... “Ulstermen” ...’ (Breatnach, 1973, 49, note on 13a).

16d húrladh (MS): I have emended to horladh for rhyme with comhladh, and take it to be a by-form of urlaidhe/orlaidhe ‘fighting’, ‘smiting’, etc. (see IGT iii, 83, and DIL s.vv. urlad and urlaide).

17ab This couplet occurs as IGT iii, example 171: Rug Cathal gé chuín ruga / geall gaisgidh geall fialbhuga. IGT’s variants (Cathal for fláith Cliach and gé chuín for giodh cúich) change the quatrain significantly: ‘Cathal surpassed all at any time in heroism and kindheartedness’. (On translating gé chuín ruga (lit. ‘whenever he might do so’) as ‘at any time’ cf. Tresi ac Muire ar a Mac inmhain / d’agru a chréchta gé chuín tí ‘Mary has influence with her beloved Son by invoking his wounds at any time’, (Ni théid an éigean i n-aíspidh, q. 43ab)). The fact that IGT has Cathal where N has fláith Cliach suggests that the couplet is a possible example of recycling—whatever name the particular occasion called for being slotted in after the verb.

17a Cliach: Nom. Cliú, alias Cliú Máil (meic Úghaine) and Cliú (Máighe), ‘a district probably

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including the Galtees, with parts of Limerick, Tipperary, and Cork’ (*MD* v. p. 185). Cf. notes on Poem 6, 33b and 40a.

17d *ar ndul* (MS): On the emendation to *ar ndol* see *IGT* ii, 95.

17cd An alternative reading of this couplet might be ‘he who did not to pay Diarmuid tax [before] is bold [now] that he is dead’.

18 The poet’s portrayal of himself in this quatrain is not inconsistent with that of a chief’s poet: he no longer receives invitations to functions nor is he the beneficiary of Diarmuid’s *anáir*. (On the latter term cf. *anáir ealadhna*, which Breatnach (1983, 39) explains as alluding ‘to the ‘indulgence’ the generality of poets expected to be shown as of right by society’.) He more obviously portrays himself as a chief’s poet in qq. 28 and 30 (see notes on 28b and 30a). However, that he could not have been a chief’s poet is clear from the fact that Diarmuid was not head of his name: he is referred to as *mac Domhnaill* (18a) and not *Múg Carthaigh*.

18c *re headh*: Note the hint here again of a period of time having elapsed since the death of Diarmuid (see notes on 3cd and 27d).

18d Literally, ‘the getting of all I will get has ended’.

19a *toirseadh*: I take this to be 3 sg. past subjunctive of the verb *toirsidh* ‘saddens’ (otherwise unattested?), which I take to be a by-form of *toirsigidh* (see *DIL*, s.v. *toirsigid*).

19d *Dubh Easa*: See *IGT* ii, 125, where both this and *Dubh Chabhaileigh* (see next quatrain) are declined.

20ab In other words, her lamenting is all the greater because, as well as mourning his death, she now has to live on without him.

20a *dara*: Note that this is unstressed (see Ní Dhomhnaill, 1975, p. 9).

20b *a chaoine*: Namely, ‘lamenting of him’. For the by-forms *caoine/caoineadh* see *IGT* iii, 71.

20b *gé ceibh ngégnáoi* (N): D seems to have a better reading here (cf. *Magauran*, p. xix: ‘Dat. Sg. Masc. and Fem. (i) When different from nom. sg. it lenites epithet’).
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20bcd a chaoine ... / ... 'gud chaoi, / a thuír Charmain, réd chéadmhnaoi: Here we have another example of person-switching (cf. notes on 10cd, 29bc and 39).

20c Duibh Chabhlaigh: Cf. note on 19d.

20d charman (MS): (i) The genitive of this name normally ends in a broad consonant (e.g. LBran 47.14c (: glán), 57.29a (: sheanAlmhan)); however, the emendation here to Charmain is required for rhyme with Chabhlaigh. Historically, both broad and slender finals are found in the genitive (for examples, see Onom., p. 158). (ii) Ó Murchadha (2002) argues that Carman was located at Silliothill in the parish of Carnalway, Co. Kildare.

21cd Literally, ‘It is as a result of your death that a battalion would slay your household troops, O hero of Tailte.’ Or alternatively, ‘It is as a result of your death that your household troops would slay a battalion, O hero of Tailte.’ The former interpretation implies that the hero’s troops are vulnerable to attack from a battalion now that he is dead. The latter implies that the hero’s troops are so enraged as a result of his death that they would slay a battalion. The former seems more likely as it is in better keeping with the motif of the hero as protector of his people.


23b an broineach (N): D, which shows lenition of the initial b here, seems to be the better reading here. Broineach would seem to be feminine, to judge from the following examples: Suighid longport ar lár cháich / na mbroinigh neimhng, nemhláith ‘They pitched their camp in the midst of the people—a venomous, fearless host’ (Mór loites lucht an indluig, q. 37ab) and lonfuidh an teagh do (bhroinigh) bhuirb / fear Oiligh aird ‘this Prince of lofty Aileach will fill that house with proud nobility’ (A toigh bheag tiaghar a dteagh mor, 10cd). DIL, s.v. brainech, states that it can ‘appar[ently]’ mean ‘band, company, host’.

23cd (i) This couplet occurs as IGT iii, example 510: Daoine coirthe ó theacht tarrsa / na seacht dtroighthe talmhansa. There are no significant variants between this and N. (ii) For the sense of coirthe (‘tired’) see DIL, s.v. cuirthe, where the IGT example is quoted; for the sense of theacht tharsa see DIL, s.v. do-icc, 303.8–16.

23d na seacht dtroighthe: Cf. seacht dtroighe is uaisle don úr / fúm ag loighre ar th’uaighse, a Aodh ‘seven feet of the most noble earth are beneath me as I lie on your grave, o Aodh’ (Cionnas tig Éire gan Aodh, 16cd).
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24a Dhúin Ghuill: Nom. also Dún Goill (cf. Onom., p. 385), but -uill required here for rhyme with bhuinn. Dungeel, Co. Kerry (LMuimhneach, p. 444). Like Pallis Castle (cf. note on 9a), Dungeel is situated by the Laune River, but further down river towards Killorglin. The association of Dún Goill with Clann Charthaigh is reflected in the sobriquet of one of the sons of Tadhg na Mainistreach (Mág Carthaigh Mór/king of Desmond 1391–1428), namely Cormac Dúna Goill ‘ó bhuíl Sliocht Dúna Guill’ (LMuimhneach, p. 202).

24b don ... dheachraim: I take this as an instance of deachraidh de ‘adheres to’ etc. (see DIL s.v. 3 dechraid). This is clearly the sense also in 26c. An alternative interpretation would be to take deachraidh to mean ‘becomes enraged’ (see DIL s.v. 1 dechraid) and don as indicating the agency of uaigh, i.e. ‘the reason I become enraged is because the grave is upon Diarmaid of Dún Guill’. Perhaps it is meant to work both ways as a pun.

24cd liog: Listed as following the declension of IG T ii, 39. The development of this word from Old Irish lia is discussed in DuanF. iii, p. 292.

24c mbiod: 3 pl. conjunct, present habitual of a-tá. A by-form of bíd (see SNG, p. 416); further examples occur in Magauran 23.24d, Dún Dé 23.25b, LCAB 37.23b.

25ab More literally, ‘unless the son of God swiftly carries [off] the soul and its body to hirn[self].’

26c do dheachramar dé: See note on 24b.

26c de (MS): The emendation to dé is required for rhyme. For the form with long e, see Breatnach (2002).

26d c(h)End (N): As lenition is uncertain in N, absent in D, and optional in a case such as this (cf. Magauran, p. xx), the text has no lenition.

27a For the expression do-gheibh cor ‘is defeated, overthrown’, etc. see DIL s.v. 1 cor 15. Further examples are: a shlát Ché gan chor d’fhaghail / Mac Con rob é th’ionamhail ‘O prince of Cé, in that thou wert not overthrown Mac Con was like to thee too’ (Magauran 24.30bc); na ré féin fuair Tuathal cor / ’s ní hé a mhac fuair a ionadh ‘in his own day he met with reverse, / nor was it his son that succeeded him’ (Iomarbhágh 5.101bc); tearc flaitheas nach fuighe cor ‘few kingdoms escape unshaken!’ (IBP 41.6c).

27b téd an bioth mar chuip gcubhair: This seems proverbial but I have no other examples.
like it. We may compare the proverb *níl ins an saoghal ach ceo, ’s ní mhaireann an ceo ach seal* (Ó Máille, 1948–52, vol. 2, 161–2).

27c léigthear dom chois mé don mhuigh: This refers to the poet’s banishment or exile. Compare the following, from a poem in which the poet seeks reconciliation with his patron and wishes to avoid exile: *Níor chleacht sinn siobhal oidheche / ná imirt arm bhfaobhairthe; / ní poinnidhe ar ngniomh le gá; / coillidhe dhiom níor dheanta ’I am not used to night wandering or wielding fierce-edged arms; not wondrous is my sword play. I should not be made an outlaw’* (DiD 67.5 = *Irish monthly* 47, 509). Commenting on the poem *Each gan aradhain an fhearg* (= DiD 88), Knott writes: ‘The chief had bestowed land on the poet, rent free, as a reward for poems addressed to him; subsequently he deprived him of the land in a fit of displeasure, thus rendering him a homeless exile’ (*TD*, vol. 1, xlii). Among the quatrains Knott quotes from the poem is the following: *Tig don fheirg sin leath ar leath, / is do chomhairlibh Chairreach, / gur cuireadh as ar n-dit inn; / edit i suidheabh. da suidhinn?* ‘From that wrath of thine, and from the counsel of the men of Carbury, was I banished from my place; where if I may do so, shall I settle down?’ (ibid.).

27d This line might imply that the poem is an anniversary elegy. Compare a similar allusion to a year having passed in Poem 7, 25ab. See notes on 3cd and 18c. For the composition of poems on anniversaries, cf. Simms, 1989, 401.

28b *mhoirn*: ‘One of the most recurring terms in the poets’ vocabulary of affection is *muirn*. Regularly it denotes the special ‘favour’ or ‘esteem’ due to an ollamh from his chief.’ (Breathnach, 1983, p. 44). Here again (see notes on qq. 18 and 30a), the poet gives the impression that he was a chief’s poet, or at least that his relationship with Diarmaid was akin to that of a chief’s poet.

28c *Tháil*: Nom. Tál, an ancestor of the Dál gCais. I cannot explain why Diarmaid Fionn would be described as a descendant of Tál, unless perhaps through his mother’s genealogy.

28cd This couplet occurs as *BST* 226.13/45b26: *Ní fhaghuim dhí ar ttocht í Tháil / ní fa badh olc ar n-anáir*. McKenna translates as ‘I get from her after the death of Tál’s scion naught to hurt my honour’ and notes that ‘teacht is here for the common *dul* in sense of “dying”.’ (*BST*, p. 176–7). The significant difference between the two readings is *BST*’s *fa badh* (‘with regard to which ... would be’) for as *budh* ‘out of which ... would/might be’ (i.e. prep *a h- + relative conditional/past subjunctive copula*). The reading in N leaves the line a syllable short and therefore I have followed *BST*. N’s reading is a form for which no example is listed in *BST*, p. 162. However, note the following examples: “*Créad as budh beag leat do lion / mar sin,* ar oide an airdríogh; / “*sluagh carad ar aontoil ann, / aontoigh tharad
"ní thíoibhram." "Why, therefore, shouldst thou think thy number too small?" continued the high-king's fosterer, "a host of united friends are here, we shall not stir one foot in thy despite." (TD 2.32); *A theanga so thall, nísaod crand re cléith, gé taei ag cagnam chách, ablar fáei as budh féich* (IGT iii, example 306).

28d *ní fa budh oile ar n-anáir:* More literally, 'that which would hurt my honour'.

29a The poet claims to have known Diarmaid since he was a child. Perhaps this accounts for the evidently very close bond he had with him, which he has portrayed in terms consistent with that between a chief and a chief's poet (see notes on 18, 28b and 30a). Perhaps he had expected to become his chief's poet when Diarmaid would one day become chief.

29bc *d'ua Chormaic ... ad dheaghaidh:* This is another clear example of the person-switching (cf. notes on 10cd, 20 and 39).

29b *mhuireadhaigh* (MS): I have emended this to *Mhoireadhaigh* for rhyme with *d'oileamhain*; however, I have no other examples of a spelling with *-oi-* for this name.

29cd This couplet is not clear to me and the translation is tentative. *Oileamhain* can mean 'nourishment' but that sense seems unlikely in the present instance. I have been guided by the following for my interpretation: *Mo doimhean 'n-ndeaghaidh / ní hurusa a hoilearnhain* "'Tis not easy to cure (?) grief for them" (AiD 14.9); *DIL,* s.v. *ailemain,* quotes this example and suggests 'control'.

30a Again (cf. notes on 18 and 28b), we have here an image associated with the relationship between a chief's poet and the chief: that of the poet sharing the chief's bed (cf. Carney, 1967).

30b *Éirne:* The river Erne.

31a *Dean:* Carney writes that Dean is 'found as an ornamental epithet, but is probably a placename' (*O'Reilly poems,* p. 304). Perhaps the same element as in Loch Dean/Deán 'Lough Dan' in Co. Wicklow? Note also that a *Cnuc Dean* is mentioned in 'Agallamh na Seanórach' (see *Agallamh* vol. 1, pp. 93 and 95).

31c *bhfhEur* (MS): Note the unusual spelling (usually eu = éa, not ea). For another example, see Poem 2, 7b.
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31d éadtròm: One might also read éadrom here; cf. note on Poem 9, 19b.

32b siol Chuirc: The nobility of Munster. Corc mac Luighdheach was the legendary founder of the kingship of Cashel.

32c ghórt nGaoil: Hogan (Onom.) identifies a ‘Gael’ in Fir Rois, i.e. in the baronies of Farney, Co. Monaghan, and Ardee, Co. Louth, and in Co. Meath.

33b go neimhsheadmhar: On the meaning of this see DIL (s.v. sedmar, segmar ‘strong, vigorous’) and cf. DiD 67.19: “Ná habair sin” ar si-se / “seanóir crón mo chéile-se / sé go neimhsheadhmhar anocht / ar gceileabhradh dá chalmacht” i.e. “Don’t say that,” says she. “My husband is a decrepit old man—he is weak tonight, having bid farewell to his strength”’. McKenna translates neimhsheadhmhar as ‘insignificant’ in Irish monthly 47, 509. Note that the rhyming pair is the same in this example and in our poem.

35b This line might be interpreted as indicating that a month has passed since Diarmaid’s death (cf. note on 3cd).

35d téighmis: A rare example of 1 plural imperfect of the verb téid. As it is understood as a compound verb already containing do, the pre-verbal particle do is not used before it. It is interchangeable with do-éighmis/-is.

36c Broine: Unidentified placename. It occurs also in DiD 67.32.

37b nEmh (MS): Both neamh and neimh occur as acc. sg. forms of neamh (see SNG p. 381). I have neamh in the text as it is less intrusive.

37b frithfeidhm: My tentative understanding of this word is based on taking frith to refer to the ‘result’ or ‘counter-effect’ of Diarmaid’s efforts (feidhm), the compound thus meaning ‘compensation’ or ‘reward’.

37c Bhearbha: Nom. (an) Bhearbha, the river Barrow.

38b Béirre: Bear, in west Cork.

38c tonn Chliodhna: Cliodhna here is the personification of Munster, or Ireland. As such, she is presented as the ‘spouse’ of the dead patron. The elements, represented by her ‘wave’, join with her in grieving—indeed, they even display the grief of God (38d). The story of Cliodhna
and her eponymous wave is told in ‘Agallamh na Seanóirach’: daughter of Manannán mac Lir’s chief sage, she was brought back from Tír Tairngire to the land of mortals and drowned by a great wave while sleeping (see Dooley and Roe, 1999, 113–16). Of this, and of other accounts, Ó hOgain writes: ‘These accounts seem to have arisen from an actual designation of the tide at that place as the Wave (Tonn) of Cliona. This was one of the great waves of Ireland, according to the ancient topographical system, and her association with it was an expression of the idea that deities resided in, and that goddesses were patronesses of, water’ (Ó hÓgáin, 2006, 86). The strand where Cliodhna was thought to have drowned became known as Tonn Chliodhna and its location is identified as near Galley Head, Co. Cork (see MD v. p. 204). Tonn Chliodhna, Tonn Tuaigne and Tonn Rudhraighe comprise a trio of great waves often mentioned in bardic poetry which are also identified placenames (see Marcher, 877–80n.). Cf. Tonn Chliodhna thríd ag tuile / Tonn [Tuaigne] tonn Rudhrudhe / Tuigthe ar chumhaidh na dtri dtionn / Rí ar an Mumhain nach marann ‘For him Tonn Cliodhna is swelling, Tonn Tuaigne and Tonn Rudhraighe! One sees from the mourning of the three waves that no king rules over Mumha! (AÓD 52.15), Tonn Chliodhna dá chaoineadh [‘s gaoth] / Ní bhionghna dá chaoineadh cách / Ní [sqach] tré [dhaighie i Dhuach] / Sruth luath ná aibhne ná áth ‘Cliodhna’s wave laments him, and the wind! No wonder that men do too! In sorrow for Dua’s descendant streams, rivers, fords cease not (to bewail).’ (AÓD 55.11). Cliodhna also became the fairy woman of the Mac Carthaigh family (see MacKillop, 1998).

39 Presuming that the poet is referring to himself when using the term ollamh (39a), this may be regarded as an example of person-switching (see notes on 10cd, 20bcd and 29bc). He seems to be saying that his personal ruination, loss of status (see q. 18) etc., has come about for having claimed that Diarmaid was still alive when he was dead.

39c Chomair: This is defined as ‘a confluence (of rivers etc.), assembly, meeting place’ (cf. DIL s.v. commar). Hogan mentions a number of places of this name (Onom). The present reference may be to the Comar situated at the meeting of the Boyne and Blackwater, due to its proximity to Tara.

41b domhnall mhac (MS): The sense seems to be that mac in the previous line governs this name, which necessitates the emendation to Domhnaill mheic. The patron is referred to as mac Domhnaill in 18a.

41d mharthain: Note that metrical closure (dúnadh) is delivered both here and in 42d.

42 This quatrain occurs as IGT ii, example 995: Michéil ar mbrethemh brátha / don chrúnne as créobh máthlátha / bídh mar tá gacha trátha / agár ndún lá an liánbrátha. There are no significant variants between this and N.
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42d luanbhrátha: That the supplementary quatrain belongs to this poem is confirmed by the fact that its final syllable echoes the poem’s opening one, thereby delivering dönadh, albeit a lesser form than that in 41d.
Poem 9: Cuaine rioghna rug Eadan

1a Eadan: Cf. variants. The historically correct nominative form of this name has a final /-n/ (see Ó Concheanainn 1980-81).

1b madh-ghéanar: N’s reading is a rare example of the historical spelling of this expression. Early Irish *mad-géanair* (‘was happily born’) came to be used predicatively and in Classical Irish was normally spelt *mo-ghéana(i)r* ‘lucky/blessed/fortunate (the one)’ (Modern *méanar*). For use of the nom./acc. after *mo-ghéana(i)r* cf. IGT i, 29 and BST 214.19.

1b ghinseadar: Note variants in *-ei-*. 

1d badhbha: The variant *gabhl* (FM) is inferior as its use would give rise to all stressed words in the line having an unlenited *g-*, which would comprise the fault *droichead uma* (see Ní Dhomhnaill, 1975, p. 65).


2b Gháirde: Nom. Gáireach, Garhy, Co. Westmeath. Cf. ‘Ba ar Gháirde (san larmfh) a troideadh an cath móir i d’Táin Bó Cuailnge, cath a bhris na hÚltaigh ar Mheadhbh agus ar fhéara Éireann agus iad ag fileadh siar go Connachta’ (Ó Concheanainn, 1985, 83) and Walsh (1957, 260-3).

2b deirggeala: For use of the plural predicative adjective in bardic poetry cf. SNG, p. 386-7.

2d Chairthe: The lenition of the initial is an instance of *sléagar*.

2d Chairthe an Chompair: Literally, ‘the pillar-stone of the breast’. Evidently ‘the pillar-stone against which Cú Chulainn died’ (*Top. poems*, p. 89). It is used figuratively of Ulster. Further examples are to be found in AiD 15.8, O’Reilly poems 33.32, Muicheach dhamh dhol um dhúithch e q. 1d, and LGen. 940.5.

3a Imeartaigh óir: Lambert McKenna takes *imeartach* to mean ‘champion’ in the following: *Beart cluiche ní dheachaidh dhe / gur tlíodh dh éis ar-oile, / clár bindealtach na mbrat ngeal / le himeartach mhac Mheadh ‘Never was any point in the game lost by him, and so the champion of the sons of Mflidh came gradually to rule over this land of sweet-singing birds and bright raiment’ (O’Hara 8.4). Cf. also: *Imeartach coigidh Con Roi / mac Aine an éarla*
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geagnaoi / beart an bhranáin o Bhóinn Bhréagh / budh doigh do ghabhail Ghaoidheal (Cia re bhfáiltighéann Fódla?, q. 34) and Fá hulchain an imbertaigh / go hourdail an echmarcaigh (IGT ii, 295). In the following, imeartach is followed by óir, as in our example: A ildánaidh Essa Rúaid / a aithighin Con ón Craebruaídh / a imechtraid coir na cath / a imertaidh oir Uilitach (Fulang annrá adhbhar sóidh, q. 41, Ir. texts ii, p. 25). The sense ‘champion’, ‘warrior’, may be an extension of the meaning ‘a player (of fidhcheall)’ in as much as the player is the ‘leader’ of his team. Cf. Gér mhaith mise mar imeartach, / gé luath do ghluaisin m’fhuireann, / an inghean chaomh, nior chinneamar / firre do ch ... coitcheann (Mór tubaist na táiplisge, q. 10). Cf. also the poem Imir do chluiche a Chormaic (= LCAB 15) in which the valorous deeds of the patron are compared to a game of táiplis. Alternatively, imeartach may simply be a noun of agency based on imbert ‘the act of handling or plying a weapon, tool, etc.’ (DIL, s.v. imbert (c)) as.

3b chóigidh Chonchubhair: (i) Namely, the province of which Conchubhar mac Neasa was king, Ulster. (ii) The lenition of chóigidh may be regarded as an example of a ‘genitive lenited in special circumstances’ (see Magauran introduction, xix) (iii) Regarding N’s lack of historical lenition following chóigidh, McKenna notes that in compound place-descriptions such as this ‘poets may be thought to have had some licence’. I follow McKenna in supplying lenition. (Magauran introduction, xviii).

3c diombras: The only two other examples of this word I have come across show it to be complimentary: Dearc dhiombras as diol seirc / bun céille ar chan Feirccheirtne; / mionn seanbhain fearmhioigne Floinn / dearbhadh céaimhioine Coloin (LCAB 24.43) and Mian leis- sean ar chóir geconfaidh / dáil a aírín ar eachtronnaibh; / ‘s i díil an diombras donnghloin / dáil a ionnmhas d’ollamhnaibh (DiD 102.38). McKenna offers the following explanation: ‘diombras: “mall” “maordhai” (?)’ (DiD glossary) and I have followed this. Cf. also bras ‘forward, boastful, defiant’ (DIL s.v.).

3d ionnmhas: I take this as a genitive plural. This noun is usually used in the singular in a collective sense. Plural use is therefore unusual but examples are noted in DIL, s.v. indmas. We might alternatively follow copies FRUM and read d’ionnmhas Uladh.

5a Dhúine: The lenition here may be explained as either sléagar or an instance of a ‘genitive lenited in special circumstances’; alternatively, it possibly arises from being governed by meic.

5a Dealga: (i) The genitive by-form Dealgan occurs in 14c. (ii) For the lenition of the initial in variants TR, cf. McKenna (1941), where examples of such exceptional forms are noted: an tighe fhinn (TD 8.11), an bhrogha bhuig (TD 8.1); cf. also SNG, p. 358.

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5b *choillbhile* (co. N, and cf. variants): (i) Copy E has *coolwall*, which seems to accord with N. (ii) The rule for lenition following *trí* is given by McManus as follows: ‘séimhítear tú’schonsan an ainmnigh *ísil* iolra ... ar lorg *trí* go sé (m.sh. *trí fhine, sé aicme, ceithre bhile* srl.)’ (SNG, p. 426).

5b *chnóidhearga* (cn. N, and cf. variants): (i) Copy E has *knoozerge*, which seems to accord with N. (ii) For lenition following *choillbhile*, when a noun’s nominative plural form is not longer than its nominative singular the epithet is lenited, e.g. *fir mhóra, bile mhóra* (cf. Magauran, p. xviii). Cf. also *IGT* i, 84.

5c *fhinnbhile* (fi. N, and cf. variants): (i) Copy E has *feine willi*, which seems to accord with N. (ii) For lenition here cf. note on *choillbhile* (5b). Note that N goes against the rule in both these cases.

6a *Muighe Line*: See note on 2a.

6b *Cuailghne*: For *-ghn-* here cf. *IGT* ii, 175. Compare also McKenna’s emendation of MS *Cuailgni* to *Cuailghne* (: ndruaidhne) in Magauran (25.32).

6b *corp*: Cf. variants. Copy E has *corp*.

6c *folt*: Cf. *cül* in AF and *bar*, which must be for *barr*, in copy E. All readings are acceptable as the word in question cannot be verified by the metre.

6c *gobhlosgach*: I have no other clear example of this word. However, compare *Do dhá chíoch comhbháin re laogh / foltigh iad, a bhas bharrchaol, /’s an dearc úr mharbhrosghac mhall, /’s an cül gaibhleasgach géagham* (D. grá 16.23), in which the adjective *gaibhleasgach* is used in a laudatory sense of a person’s hair, as in our example. The poem’s editor notes (ibid., p. x) that the text is ‘truaillithe nó gan é beith deimhnithe’. Read *gabh*– for rhyme? His spelling as it stands suggests that the second element is *flesgach*, ‘abounding in shoots or branches (freq. epithet of woods)’ (DIL, s.v. *flescach*). The figurative sense of *flesgach* might therefore be ‘abounding in hair/tresses/locks’. It has been translated variously as ‘twisted’, ‘braided’ and ‘tressy’: *Tigim, a fiaolt feagach fior ’I come, O curled and twisted hair’ (IBP 24.5a), *Eire trom trillse Saidhbhhe, / erla i bhfuillead fionnfliailghe: / barr mar fionndruine as úr dath, / an cül fionnbhuidhe feagach ’A heavy weight are Sadhbh’s tresses, her side-hair in bright ringlets, her top-hair shining like bronze, her back-hair fair and yellow and braided’ (Magauran 16.1), a *laghbrarr feagach cam cloon ’o soft tressy curling head’ (IBP 21.26b). Cf. also *folt dualach na bhfleas bhfaínneach* (LCAB 33.10d), an *folt feagach fann* (DiD 8.12c) and *folt géagach feasgfáinneach fior ‘curly, ringletted, spreading locks’ (Filídh...
Éireann go haointeach, q. 41). I take the first element of gobhlosgach to be from gabhal 'fork'. We may compare the use of the adjective gabhlach in describing hair in the following examples: a fholt gleannach gabhlach 'his hair full of hollows and branching tresses' (IBP 17.47), ód chéithh ghéagánaigh gabhlaigh 'on account of thee, O waving, parted locks' (TD 14.21). It is difficult to be exact but I take gobhlosgach to mean 'abounding in branching locks'.

6cd gruadh ... sduagh: The variant gruaidh ... sduaigh would be acceptable also.

6d gormrosgach: Note that consistency in the description of eye-colour is not aimed for: Gofraidh's eyes are referred to variously as gorm (here and in 14b and 17d), glas (13c and 22a), and uaine (19c).

7b mac Ua Morna: Cf. variants. Copy E has mak mir woirrin, which appears to agree with FTM. N's reading, ua, is not corroborated by the variants, but occurs again in N in 14a (meic Mhuireadhaigh Ua Morna). One might consider reading mac Uí Mhorna, but this is not backed up by any manuscript. I keep N's reading and take the sense of mac to be 'descendant' (cf. 26a).

8 This quatrain is omitted in N. The text is based on F (see introduction; there is no substantial difference between F and the remaining manuscripts for this particular quatrain).

8c géag: E has stoyg, which is presumably for sduagh. Either would be acceptable as the word is not in rhyme.

9b Formaoiile: (i) Nom. Formaoil. Hogan (1910) mentions two places of this name in the north of Ireland, both anglicised Formil, one in the parish of Lower Badoney, barony of Strabane, Co. Tyrone, and the other near Dungiven, County Derry. (ii) Cf. variants. Copy E has fosscheyve, which may be for fochaoimhe, the reading in FUM. Though this rhymes perfectly, its second element is a repetition of its rhyming partner (caoimhe) and thus comprises the metrical fault caoiche reanna (see Ní Dhomhnaill, 1975, p. 63). The other variant, fochaoine 'smooth below, in lower part', would be acceptable but may be doubted on the basis that it is an unusual word.

9c tearc: Cf. variants. Copy E has terc, which accords with N.

9d gion gur: The variant 's nocha appears to be partially corroborated by E, which has noe chai. N's reading seems to make sense however, and neither reading is metrically inferior.
Notes on the poems

10c go ngleic mir: See variants. (i) The reading in N (mis) is clearly a slip. (ii) For omission of lenition of mir following a dative, see note on Poem 1, 50c, and cf. 17c and 21a below. (iii) I understand the phrase go ngleic mir literally as ‘with a swift contest’, which I take to mean ‘of swift [ability in] a contest’. The only other example of go ngleic I have found occurs in a pre-classical poem: Secht maicc Sadba slointer lat / co ngleic glanda gelcharat, / dindgile druing dedlad graig / ingine Cuinn chëtchathaig (Clann Ailella Óluim uill, q. 2).

10d Note that the genitive form Uisnigh is confirmed by rhyme (: mir).

11c druimchleachtach dualach: The adjective druimnech (from druim ‘ridge’) is used of hair to mean ‘wavy’, etc. Cleachtach is explained as ‘wavy, braided, plaited(?)’ (DIL, s.v. 2 clechtach). Dualach in some contexts evidently means ‘plaited’ or ‘interlaced’, but its primary meaning is ‘having locks or tresses; in tresses’ (DIL, s.v. 2 dúalach). As with gobhlosgach (6c), it is difficult to be exact.


13b eangnamh: The variants eagna (A) and uaisle (F) would be acceptable. A slight doubt concerning the reading eangnamh is that it has been used in a similar context already in 11b. However, it is evidently corroborated by copy E, which has angnew.

14a Ua Morna: Cf. variants. Copy E has e Wornenth, which seems to be for Úi Mhorna, the reading in FTR. Copies AU have omitted Ua/Ui and made up the syllable count by adding trí to the beginning of the line. Interestingly, N’s reading, ua, is corroborated by M. The variant reading Úi Mhorna seems reasonable but I have chosen to follow N, as in 7b.

14c dream do-ní ... gach cruidh: Cf. variants. Copy E has dram in neith ... gith crwe, which seems to accord with N.

14d cloidhmhe: Cf. variants. Copy E has cloyewe, which seems to accord with N.

15a Sléibhe Guaire: Nom. Sliabh Guaire, Slieve Gorey, Co. Cavan. Non-lenition is metrically fixed and is an example of sléagar.

15b Craobhruaidhe: Nom. Craobhruadh. Originally Conchobhar mac Neasa’s residence at Eamhain Mhacha, here the usage is figurative and probably refers to Ulster east of the Bann, as it does in Top. poems, ll. 369 ff.

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15c gaisdeamhail: This reading is found only in NFT and is perhaps to be doubted. E's reading is gaskhwill. The only other apparent example of an adjective gaisdeamhail I have found remains unpublished: D'ú lethCholla ludhharcuigh / breclonga do bhelisligh / mac aithremail wirEogain / in gaistemail geigdíillid[?]. (Gach siol go siol righÉoghain, q. 31). I have kept the reading, as it might be taken as an adjective deriving from gaisde 'snare', a noun which is used as a term of praise in the following: Do-bhér amnanna oile / ortsa, a í Bhrían Bhórimhe; / dot ainm baiste atáim re treall, / a ghaiste áigh na hÉireann 'I will call thee by other names, thou descendant of Brian Boramha; for a space I have been using thy baptismal name, O noose of Ireland's valour' (IBP 24.12). Gaisdeamhail might then mean something like 'snare-like'. Cf. gaisteach 'trap-like, snare-like; full of snares of pitfalls' (DINN, s.v.). The variant reading, gaisgheimhail 'valiant' would be a viable alternative.

15d Dáine: The omission of lenition here may be explained as an example of sléagar.

15d Dealgan: Compare the genitive by-form in 5a.

16a honchoin: Onchú can be used figuratively to refer to a 'warrior' or a 'hero', as here, but was originally 'the name of an animal, apparently of the dog tribe and fierce and dangerous' (DIL, s.v.). Perhaps onchoin are to be associated here with defence (compare 'Culann's Hound').

16b naithreacha: The noun naithir is listed as following the declension of caithir in IGT ii, 120, which has a nominative and accusative plural form cathracha. However, I have found only one example of naithreacha in bardic poetry and it is not fixed by metre: Na nathreacha Goill Ghuirt Breagh, / na leómbain laochruidh Laighean, / tug sé a n-aithbheóghadh inn, / is é an fhlaithleóimhan Feilim (LBr 50.23). On the other hand, I have two further examples of naithreacha, both of which are metrically fixed: Ceithre toirthe mhuir Meadbha, / ceithre cleatha claoin Teamhra, / ceithre naithreacha go neimh / nochar bhfaithcleatha idir (FFC, p. 30, q. 13), and Ré Éirne athair na n-éan / fine Chuinn an chlann éidtréan / rioghshlíogh dana haithbeatha a fhuil / naithreacha an dioghbhóidh Danair (Fada re hurchoíd Éire, q. 38).

17b álile: The variant aobhdha would be acceptable too; however, note that copy E has eildith, which would appear to accord with N.

17c go ngnél ngloin: (i) For eclipsis of adjective see note on Poem 1, 50c.

17cd ngloin ... mar ghasgloin: Cf. variants. Copy E has zill ... oiss in groew, which seems to be for ghil ... ós a ngruadhaibh, which is the reading in FT. This reading would
Notes on the poems

be acceptable, as would that in RM’s *mar ghlaisibh* in line *d*. N’s reading may perhaps be doubted on the basis that *gloin* is repeated and may be regarded as an instance of the metrical fault *caoiche reanna*.

19b *eadtroma*: I have kept the historical spelling of this word, in spite of the following guidance from BST 234.5: *Trom agus édrom .l. do rinn; trom agus édrom .c. do rinn*. The bardic author is perhaps talking about sense and stress here rather than spelling, and simply *using* spelling to make his point. Cf. also McManus (1996) 181.

19c *'sa ngné ar ghloin ... 'sa ngné ar ghriosaigh (sa ghné ar ghloin ... sa ngné ar ghriosaigh\textsuperscript{N, sin graa er zlyn ... sith gna er greissi}\textsuperscript{E}): (i) Cf. variants. N and E appear to have more or less the same reading here. The remaining manuscripts have unmétrical readings. In the first couplet I have changed N’s lenited *g-* to an eclipsed *g-*, taking the possessive pronoun to refer to *ruisg*; note that E seems to show eclipsis of the *g-*.

The readings are reversed in the second couplet, with eclipsis of the *g-* shown in N, and apparently not shown in E. (ii) I take the phrase *'sa ngné ar* as meaning ‘whose aspect is as an equivalent of [i.e. like]’. Might the variation in the manuscript readings reflect unfamiliarity with the use of *ar* in this sense (i.e. similitude/similarity)? One might expect *'sa ngné mar* but this would leave the line with a syllable too many.

19cd *ruisg*: Evidently an *urlann*, though it comes after *sé*.

21a *go gcrunas gcairrge*: For eclipsis of the adjective here see note on Poem 1, 50c.

21b *easgcairde*: The *-g-* is phonetic. Compare *-c-* in *Cara agus eascara in fhearg* (IBP 44.1a).

21c *mar thri chairthe*: The variant *na ttri ccairthe* ‘of the three heroes’ (AFT) can be discounted as it would seem to require a verb for it to make sense.

21d *aighth mar lí na l.*: Cf. variants. The reading *a n-aighth ar lí na l.*, found in A, might be preferable, as the expression *ar lí ‘of the colour of ...’* is quite common and I am not aware of other examples of *mar lí*. Note, however, that F agrees with N.

23a *Dar leat as grian ...*: Compare variants. Copy E has *Dawleim re gneith ..., which might be for Dar liom re ... (?). Each of the variant readings each seems acceptable, as does the reading in N, which may be compared with *Eadarnaidh d’ainglibh nimhe / ar bhar gcionn do chídhe / dar libh is grian dá ghabhlaibh / ni amh gach fhir don eadarnaidh* ‘A host of Heavenly angels ye shall find awaiting you; from his flashing beams ye shall deem each of
Poem 9: Cuaine ríoghna rug Eadan

that host to be a sun' (Dán Dé 25.31).

23d dáir ghiall an gaisgeadh: Literally, 'to whom prowess has submitted'. Further examples of this expression in this poem occur at 24a, 24c, 24d, 25a and 26c. Cf. also: trí glanóir dáir gheill gach geall 'three pure gold pieces to whom every supremacy yielded' (Ionmhain an triúr theíd san luing, q. 13c), triath Dealbhna dáir gheill gach tír (Brónach Goill Bhanbha dá éis, q. 1b), and Hector is an gaisgeadhach glan / do cheangladar a cconnradh / a rian da-ríribh do lean / míleadh [leg. miltidh] dáir ghiall an gaisgeadh (Ina mbliath leaghfar cineadh Chaoimh, q. 27).

23d an gaisgeadh: The mark of lenition on the initial here in some of the manuscripts is puzzling as this noun is masculine (see IG T ii, 11).

25b ar sliocht: Non-lenition following ar here is fixed by metre.

25c trí meic: The presence of two urlanns is unusual for this metre.

25c Eadain: Cf. variants. Ó Concheanainn (1980–81) notes the occurrence of the genitive forms Etina and Etaine for this name. In the present poem the genitive form Eadaine occurs in 12b, 17b and 26b (each also fixed by metre). Its treatment here as an o-stem genitive seems anomalous and this may explain its substitution with dreasain in RM. However, we may compare Siobhán, genitive Siobhán/Siobhain/ Siobhána (Maguire, p. 289). Compare also names ending in -in, e.g. Saidhbhin, which are deemed to be masculine (see IG T i, 113).

25c bragha Breagh: Namely, Tara. The non-lenition of bragha might be explained as an example of sléagar.

26a Trí meic Giolla mhóir Mhuire: Rather than reading Trí Meic Giolla mhóir Mhuire ‘three Mac Giolla Mhuires’, it seems best to read meic, taking it to mean ‘descendants’, as in 7b.

26b áille: Cf. variants. The variant reading aobhdha would be acceptable also (the same variation of readings occurs in 17b).

27–9 These quatrains are not in N. As with quatrain 8, I have based the text on F, which seems on the whole to have better readings (see notes on 27b, 27cd and 29d).

27b The variant reading 's at the beginning of this line (cf. AM) is acceptable but not necessary; it does not occur in E.
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27cd seang Sléibhe ... leam féine: Cf. variants. F has the metrically correct reading and finds corroboration in E (... Sleyve ... lamm peynni).

28c na slata: Cf. variants. The reading in F, gach beithir, would leave the line a syllable too long.

29d is lánchuaine: Cf. variants. This reading, corroborated by M, seems to make sense. T is unmetrical. RU have the same phrase as occurs at the end of q. 28 and may be a case of dittography. In addition, our reading seems more balanced as it provides variation between the phrases which end the last three quatrains—fi'orchuaine (27), leathchuaine (28) and lánchuaine (29)—each of which provides dúíadh.
Unpublished poems and poems not appearing in collections

The following is a list of poems cited in the notes which are to be found in manuscript only or are published as individual articles. I do not list here poems that are published in collections such as Díoghlúim dána. I have normalized the spelling of unpublished first-lines.

- *A fhír shealbhas duit an dán*: Edited by McKenna (1951).
- *A-nois caoinfead-sa Clann Táil*: RIA 710 (23 H 25) 16r.
- *A toigh bheag tiaghar a dteagh mór*: Edited by McKenna (1952).
- *Beag mhairreas do mhacraidh Ghaoidheal*: RIA 90 (24 P 12), 140.
- *Béarad breath na himriosna*: Edited by Ó Cuív (1962).
- *Bráthair don iocht an t-oineach*: Edited by Ó Máille (1932).
- *Brónach Goill Bhanbhá dá éis*: Edited by Ó Tuathail (1940).
- *Ceangail do shíoth riom, a Ruaidhri*: Edited by McKenna (1948a).
- *Cía na cinn-se do-chiú a-niar?*: NLI G 433, 184.
- *Cía re bhfaíiltigheann Fódla?*: RIA 703 (23 H 8), 66a.
- *Cionnas tig Éire gan Aodh?*: Edited by Breathnach and Breathnach (2005).
- *Clann Ailella Ólúim uill*: Edited by Meyer (1918).

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Unpublished poems and poems not appearing in collections

- Coisrigh, a Chríost, cairbh Dhonnchaidh: RIA 3 (23 L 17) 12b.
- Crann seóil na cruinne an chroch naomh: RIA 1 (23 D 14) 87.
- Créad mhosglas macraidh Éirne?: RIA 90 (24 P 12) 130.
- Crobhaing ochtair aicme Néill: RIA 540 (C iv 1) 160r.
- Cumann croinic Chloinne Néill: RIA 785 (23 G 8) 97.
- Dáil chabhláigh ar Chaisteal Suibhne: Edited by Meek (1997).
-Déana cuimhne, a Chaísil Chuírc: Book of O’Conor Don, 357a; second copy, containing additional quatrains, is acephalous and begins D’éis Bhúrcaigh nach fuair éanoil: RIA 3 (23 L 17) 7a.
- Deóraidh sonna sliocht Chathaoir: TCD 1411 (H.6.7) 506.
- Diogha gach beathadh an brón: Edited by Ó Cuív (1999).
- Dlighidh liaigh leigheas a charad: Edited by McKenna (1949b).
- Do thuit a cloch cúil d’Éirinn: RIA 2 (23 F 16) 159.
- Do thuit aonchrann Inse Fáil: RIA 1387 (23 O 78) 62.
- Earradh cumhadh um Cruachain: Book of O’Conor Don, 281a.
- Éire i ngioll re hAodh Eanghach: NLI G 167, 179.
- Fád m‘uraighe m‘fhearann cairte: RIA 499 (23 B 25) 78.
- Fada is mná maith mna Mhuint: RIA 1134 (23 E 29) 199.
- Fada leigheas Eamhain i n-aontugha: Book of O’Conor Don, 250b.
- Fada re hurchóid Éire: Book of O’Conor Don, 248b.
- Fada súil Éireann re hAodh: NLI G 167, 134.
- Failghigh chosnas clú Laighean: Edited by McKenna (1949a).
- Fan ráith imrid aicme Ír: RIA 11 (E iv 3) 59a.

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Unpublished poems and poems not appearing in collections

- Filidh Éireann go haointeach: Edited by Knott (1911).
- Fiú a cástighadh críoch Osraighe: TCD 1363 (H.4.22) 150.
- Gabh umad, a Fheidhlimidh: Edited by Dillon (1961).
- Gach siol go siol rígh Éoghaín: TCD 1363 (H.4.22) 130.
- Gearr bhur gcuart, a chlanna Néill: Edited by Ó Cuív (1952–4).
- Gréas dearbhthá Duan na Feirsce: NLI G 167, 129.
- Ina mbláth leagthar cineadh Chaoimh: RIA 953 (23 G 1) 366.
- Ionmhain an triúr théid san luing: Edited by Ó Cuív (1971).
- Ionmhain comhchacht do char mé: TCD 1346 (H.4.4) 167.
- Maidean duinn i gCill dì Luadh: Book of O’Conor Don, 373b.
- Mairg nach tuigeann treise riogh: Book of O’Conor Don, 261a.
- Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaoidheal: NLS Adv 72/2/2, 3r.
- Maith bhur bhfior gcatha a chlann Róigh: Maynooth MS B 8, 29.
- M’anam dhuit a Dhé athar: Book of O’Conor Don, 120a.
- Mealladh iomlaoide ar Éirinn: RIA 2 (23 F 16) 42.
- Meisdhe mh’inmhe mh’fhad ó Shaidhbbh: RIA 742 (A iv 3) 684.
- Mór do mhíl aoibhneas Éireann: RIA 2 (23 F 16) 70.
- Mór loiteas lucht an ionlaigh: Edited by Knott (1910).
- Muichneach dhamh dhol um dhúithche: Edited by O’Sullivan (1952).
- Ní mhaireann d’Éirinn acht Aodh: RIA 540 (C iv 1) 157v.
- Ní théid an éigean i n-aisgidh: Edited by B. Ó Cuív (1983).
- Ní triall corrach as chóir d’Aodh: Book of O’Conor Don, 136b.
• Ó cheathrur gluaisid Goidhil: RIA 11 (E iv 3) 49.
• Port oireachais Ara Chliach: RIA 3 (23 L 17) 141b.
• Rug an bás báire an eínigh: RIA 2 (23 F 16) 73.
• San Sbáinn do toireadh Teamhair: Edited by Breathnach (1953-5).
• Seacht ngrádh fileadh fuair Aonghus: TCD 1319 (H.2.17) 235.
• Seabhaic d'airrghibh aicme Dubhghaill: RIA 540 (C iv 1), 180v.
• Séad fine teisd Thoirrdhealbhaigh: Edited by Ó Cróinín (1976-7).
• Seanóir cuilg caírth an Bhurcaigh: Book of O’Conor Don, 344a.
• Sona re hAodhain Clann Conaill: NLI G 167, 141.
• Suirgheach Cruacha re chuí Taidhg: RIA 743 (A iv 3) 868 (earlier 109).
• Tabhraidh onóir don Aoine: RIA 1225 (D ii 1) 56v.
• Tadhg Ó Cearbhaill, ar gceann sluagh: Edited by Ó Cuív (1982-3).
• Táinig anam i nÉirinn: RIA 2 (23 F 16) 85.
• T’aire riot a mheic Mhurchaidh: Edited by McKenna (1948b).
• T’aire riot, a ri Doire: NLI G 167, 167.
• Tuile ar dtárgadh tréan Gaidheal: Edited by McKenna (1950).
• Uaigneach sin, a cheann Aodha: Book of O’Conor Don, 225a.
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Abbreviations

AClon D. Murphy (ed.), The annals of Clonmacnois, being the annals of Ireland from the earliest period to A.D. 1408 (Dublin 1896).


AI S. Mac Airt (ed.), The annals of Inisfallen (Dublin 1951).

AiD L. McKenna (ed.), Aithdioghluim dána (2 vols, Dublin 1939 and 1940).


AFM J. O'Donovan (ed.), Annála ríoghachta Éireann: annals of the kingdom of Ireland by the four masters, from the earliest period to the year 1616 (7 vols, Dublin 1848–51).


AÓD L. McKenna (ed.), Dánta do chum Aonghus Fionn Ó Dálaigh (Dublin and London 1919).

ATig W. Stokes (ed.), The annals of Tigernach (facsimile reprint in two volumes from Revue Celtique 16–18 (1895–7); Felinfach 1993).


**Abbreviations**

**BST**
L. McKenna (ed.), *Bardic syntactical tracts* (Dublin 1945).

**Burke's peerage**

**Butler**
J. Carney (ed.), *Poems on the Butlers* (Dublin 1945).

**Cal. doc. Ire., 1254–84**
H. S. Sweetman (ed.), *Calendar of documents relating to Ireland, 1254–84* (London 1877).

**Cal. st. pap. Ire., 1509–73**
H. S. Sweetman (ed.), *Calendar of the state papers relating to Ireland, 1254–84* (London 1860).

**Cat. Mayn.**

**Cat. Torna**

**CIH**
D. A. Binchy, *Corpus iuris Hibernici* (Dublin 1978).

**Corp. Gen. Hib.**

**Dán Dé**
L. McKenna (ed.), *Dán Dé: the poems of Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh, and the religious poems in the duanaire of the yellow book of Lecan* (Dublin 1922).

**DBM**

**Desid.**
T. F. O'Rahilly (ed.), *Desiderius otherwise called Sgáthán an Chrábhaidh* (Dublin 1941).

**DuanF.**
E. Mac Neill and G. Murphy (eds), *Duanaire Finn* (3 vols, Dublin 1908, 1933, 1954).

**D. grá**

**DiD**
L. McKenna (ed.), *Dioghluim dána* (Dublin 1938).

**DIL**

**DINN**

**DNB**

**EIF**
### Abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>ERMB</td>
<td>T. Ó Raghallaigh (ed.), <em>Duanta Eoghan Ruaidh Mhic an Bhaird</em> (Dublin 1930).</td>
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<td>FFC</td>
<td>T. Ó Raghallaigh (ed.), <em>Fíl agus filidheacht Chonnacht</em> (Dublin 1938).</td>
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<td>IBP</td>
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<td>Iomarbhágh</td>
<td>L. McKenna (ed.), <em>Iomarbhágh na bhfileadh (the contention of the bards)</em> (2 vols, London 1920).</td>
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<td>LCAB</td>
<td>T. Ó Dónnchadha (ed.), <em>Leabhar Cloinne Aodha Buidhe</em> (Dublin 1931).</td>
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<td>LMuimhneach</td>
<td>T. Ó Dónnchadha (ed.), <em>An leabhar Muimhneach maraon le suim aguisínt</em> (Dublin 1945).</td>
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### Abbreviations

<table>
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<tr>
<td>MacF. Annals</td>
<td>J. O'Donovan (ed.), ‘Annals of Ireland, from the Year 1443 to 1468, translated from the Irish by Dudley Firbisse, or, as he is more usually called, Duald Mac Firbis, for Sir James Ware, in the Year 1666’, in Miscellany of the Irish Archaeological Society, i (Dublin 1846) 198–302.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Me Guidhir Fhearmanach</td>
<td>P. Úa Duinnín, Me Guidhir Fhearmanach: the Maguires of Fermanagh (Dublin 1917).</td>
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<tr>
<td>NLI Cat.</td>
<td>N. Ó Néill and P. Ó Macháin, Catalogue of Irish manuscripts in the National Library of Ireland (Dublin 1961–).</td>
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<td>PH</td>
<td>R. Atkinson (ed.) The passions and the homilies from Leabhar Breac (Dublin 1887).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pilib Bocht</td>
<td>L. McKenna (ed.) Philip Bocht Ó hUiginn (Dublin 1931).</td>
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**Abbreviations**

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<tr>
<td>Simms database</td>
<td>K. Simms (compiler), <em>Bardic poetry database</em> (<a href="http://bardic.celt.dias.ie/">http://bardic.celt.dias.ie/</a>).</td>
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<td>SNG</td>
<td>K. McCone et al. (eds), <em>Stair na Gaeilge: in ómós do Pádraig Ó Fiannachta</em> (Maynooth 1994).</td>
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<td>Tiomna</td>
<td><em>Tiomna Nuadh ar dTighearna, agus ar Slanuightheora Iosa Criosd Nuadh (1602)</em> (Dublin 1829; first edition 1602).</td>
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<td>TD</td>
<td>E. Knott (ed.), <em>The bardic poems of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn</em> (1550–1591) (2 vols, Dublin 1922 and 1926).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Top. poems</td>
<td>J. Carney (ed.), <em>Topographical poems</em> (Dublin 1943).</td>
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<tr>
<td>TríBB</td>
<td>O. Bergin (ed.), <em>Trí bior-ghaoithe an bháis: Séathrún Céitinn do sgríobh</em> (1931, Dublin).</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZCP</td>
<td><em>Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie</em> (1897–)</td>
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Square brackets are used for clarification purposes when a particular name refers to different people. Round brackets are used for parts of a name which are sometimes omitted in the text. Names which are not obvious are identified in Chapter 5 (Notes on the poems).

Aibhilín  g.sg. 7.30a; n.sg. 7.30b
Ailbhe  n.sg. 9.28a
Ainnle  n.sg. 9.12d
Amhairghin  g.sg. 2.41b
Aodh [Mac Giolla Mhuire]  n.sg. 9.6b, 9.8a, 9.12b, 9.27a
Aodh [Ó Cóbhthaigh]  g.sg. 7.23a
Aodh Ó Néill [Aodh ‘Méith’ Ó N. (?)]  n.sg. 9.29a
Aodh [Aodh ‘an Macaomh Tóinleasg’ Ó Néill (?)]  d.sg. 9.29b
Aonghus an Bhrogha  n.sg. 2.40b
Ardán  n.sg. 9.13a
Art Éinshéar  g.sg. 5.12d, 5.36c, 6.11a
Bairrfhionn  n.sg. 9.28a
Bearc'hán  g.sg. 6.13d
Blod  g.sg. 8.13c
Caithór [Cathaoir Mór]  g.sg. 1.43b, 1.45c

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<td>g.sg.</td>
<td>7.9b, 7.32a</td>
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<tr>
<td>father-in-law of Eoghan mac Aodha Ui</td>
<td>n.sg.</td>
<td>1.40b</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chobhthaigh</td>
<td>g.sg.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carthach</td>
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<td>8.10a</td>
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<td>Cathbhaidh</td>
<td>n.sg.</td>
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<td>Cearbhall</td>
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<td>Ceasair</td>
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<td>Cian</td>
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<td>etc.]</td>
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<td>Cobhthach [eponymous</td>
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<td>ancestor of the Ui</td>
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<td>Chobhthaigh</td>
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<td>Conall [mac Amhairghin]</td>
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<td>Conall [Ó Mórdha]</td>
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<td>Connla</td>
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<td>Conn</td>
<td>g.sg.</td>
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<td>Conrach</td>
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<td>1.18a, 1.24a, 1.29a</td>
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<td>Core (mac Luighdheach)</td>
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<td>2.22b, 6.13a, 8.32b</td>
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<td>Cormac [clár C.]</td>
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<td>Cormac [Mág Carthaigh]</td>
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<td>5.6b, 5.12b; v.sg. 5.17b; n.sg. 5.31a; d.sg. 5.31b</td>
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<td>Cumhall</td>
<td>g.sg.</td>
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(Mág Carthaigh)

Domhnall g.sg. 8.18a, 8.41b

Dubh Chabhlaigh d.sg. 8.20c

Dubh Easa n.sg. 8.19d

Éadán n.sg. 9.1a; g.sg. (Éadaine) 9.8a, 9.12b, 9.17b, 9.26b (Eadain) 9.25c

Éadaoin g.sg. 8.13b, 8.41a

Éanna g.sg. 7.24d

Éibhear g.sg. 6.25a, 7.2a, 7.27d, 8.10b

Eítheus n.sg. 1.20b

Éóghan [son of Niall Naoighiallach] g.sg. 3.13d

Éóghan [Éóghan Mór or Éóghan son of Ailill Ólom] g.sg. 6.22a, 8.8a

Éóghan [mac Aodha Uí Chobhthaigh] g.sg. 7.2c, 7.4d, 7.8a, 7.11d, 7.14d, 7.20d, 7.30d

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Féilim(idh) [crioch F.. etc.] g.sg. 1.28c, 4.8c, 6.5c

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Fiachan (mac Foraoi) n.sg. 2.39b; g.sg. 2.39d

Fionnchá n.sg. 6.18a, 6.19b, 6.27a

Flann g.sg. 1.3c, 3.5c, 6.32c, 6.37c

Foraoi g.sg. 2.39b

Gaoidheal (Glas) g.sg. 2.5b

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<td>Gofraidh [Mac Giolla Mhuire]</td>
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<td>Laioiseach (Leannmhóir)</td>
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<td>Lughaidh [inis L., etc.]</td>
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<td>(Luighdheach) 1.19c, 1.21b, 1.32a, (Lughaidh) 5.20c</td>
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<td>Lughaidh [father of Core]</td>
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<td>Mac Feórais</td>
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<td>Mág Carthaigh [Diarmaid]</td>
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<td>Maicnia</td>
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<td>Maighníú</td>
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<td>Máire</td>
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<td>Manannán mac Lir</td>
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<td>Micheal</td>
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<td>Míl (Easbáine)</td>
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<td>Mogh</td>
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<td>Moireadhach [Mág Carthaigh]</td>
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<td>Mór</td>
<td>n.sg.</td>
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Mórdha
  g.sg. 1.5b, 1.11a; 1.47d(?)

Muircheartach [Mac Giolla Mhuire]
  n.sg. 9.6a, 9.7b, 9.27b; a.sg. 9.11d

Muiréadhach [Mac Giolla Mhuire]
  g.sg. 9.8b, 9.10b, 9.14a, 9.23b, 9.27b, 9.28b

Muiris
  g.sg. 6.34b

Naoise
  n.sg. 9.11a

Neimheadh
  g.sg. 6.7a

Niall [Naoighiallach]
  g.sg. (N. na Naoi nGlas) 1.3b, (críoch N.) 6.1a.

Niall [Ghíndubh (?)]
  g.sg. 3.21c, 3.33b

Oílliam [also William, q.v.]
  g.sg. 4.3b

Parthalón (-án)
  n.sg. 6.6b; g.sg. 6.36b

Réamann [Mac Peórais]
  g.sg. 2.11b

Réamann [mac Réamainn Mheic Fheórais]
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Risdeard
  g.sg. 5.9a

Róch
  g.sg. 1.6b, 1.9b, 1.14b, 1.33c, 1.35b

Ruaidhri
  g.sg. 9.29b

Rudhraighe
  g.sg. 1.6, 1.45d; a.sg. 1.10a, 1.34b(?); n.sg. 1.12a

Seáin
  g.sg. 6.40b

Séadna
  n.sg. 6.18a, 6.20a, 6.32a; v.sg. 6.27b

Séamas
  n.sg. 6.12b, 6.39b

Táilgeann, an
  n.sg. 2.22d

Táil
  g.sg. 8.28c

Té
  g.sg. 1.35c, 6.11d

Tuathal (Teachtmhár)
  n.sg. 1.27a, 1.28a, 1.30b, 1.31b, 1.35a; g.sg. 1.31c, 6.40d
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William [also Oiliam, a.sg. 4.9c; g.sg. 4.27c, 4.30c q.v.]

Úna g.sg. 7.23d, 7.32d
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Square brackets are used for clarification purposes. Round brackets are used for parts of a name which are sometimes omitted in the text. Names which are not obvious are identified in Chapter 5 (Notes on the poems).

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<td>1.20a, 1.24b, 1.26b; d.sg. 1.27c</td>
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<td><strong>Áth na Ríogh</strong></td>
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<td>g.sg.</td>
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<td><strong>Béirre</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bóinnn</strong></td>
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<td>1.10a; n.sg. 3.6a; d.sg. 3.33c; a.sg. 6.37a, 5.19c(?)</td>
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<td><strong>Cairthe an Chompair</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Ceann Eabhraid</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Ciannachta</strong></td>
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Cnoc Grafann  g.sg. 2.31d
Codhal  g.sg. 8.7d
Comar  g.sg. 8.39c
Connachta  d.pl. 2.25b; a.pl. 2.32c
Craobhrudh [An Chr.]  g.sg. 9.15b
Cruachán Ó bhFailghe  d.sg. 2.27a
Cuailghe  g.sg. 8.26d, 9.6b
Cuala  a.sg. 6.37d, 8.11d
Dál gCais  n.sg. 6.23b; d.sg. 8.12c
Danar  g.pl. 1.14d, 1.42c; n.sg. 1.35d
Dealbhna  g.sg. 3.9d, 3.14d, 3.18d, 3.21a, 3.31d, 4.4c, 5.7c, 5.14d, 5.32d, 5.37c
Dean  g.sg. 8.31a
Dor  g.sg. 8.16c
Dún Cáirde  a.sg. 6.40a
Dún Dealga(n)  g.sg. (Dúna Dealga) 2.33a, (Dúine Dealga) 9.5a (Dúine Dealgan) 9.15d; d.sg. 9.8d
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Eithne  g.sg. 4.26c, 5.13d, 5.30d
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Fódla  g.sg. 1.15b, 1.25a, 1.29a, 2.28c, 2.47a, 6.3a, 6.15a, 6.21c; v.sg. 8.5a
Formaoil  g.sg. 9.9b
Fréamh(a)n\)  g.sg. 6.26d
Fuineadh  g.sg. 5.2d, 5.11d, 5.15c, 7.29b
Gáireach  g.sg. 9.2b
Gall  n.pl. 1.3d, 2.7b, 2.8a, 2.18a, 3.36c, 4.6a, 5.4d, 5.29d, 6.3a, 6.24a; g.pl. 1.4b, 2.15c, 2.32c, 2.37c, 3.28d, 4.2c, 5.8c, 5.11a, 6.10a, 6.29c, 6.34c, 6.36b, 8.11c; g.sg. 2.13a, 2.17a; d.pl. 3.5c, 3.16c, 3.21d, 4.8d, 5.43b, 6.24b, 6.32c; n.sg. 6.16d
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