

# *Lámhscríbhinn ón 18ú hAois Déag i gCaiseal*

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## Le Donnchadh Ó Duibhir

Scríobhaí Ó Luimneach ba ea Diarmaid Ó Conchubhair a bhfuil lámhscríbhinn dá chuid i Leabharlann GPA Bolton (Eaglais na nÉireann) i gCaiseal Mumhan.<sup>1</sup> I gcathair Luimnigh a scríobhadh í sa bhliain 1714. Tá an t-ádh linn go bhfuil sa leabharlann le cois na lámhscríbhne cúntas cuimhsitheach a thug Eadbhard Ó Raghallaigh uirthi céad bliain tar éis a scríofa. Bhí an Raghallach mór le scoláirí Gaeilge a linne agus é ina rúnaí ar an Ibero-Gaelic Society.

Bhí iomrá mór ar dhá leabhar leis, “A chronological account of nearly 400 Irish writers”<sup>2</sup> agus “An Irish-English Dictionary”.<sup>3</sup> Agus an foclóir á chur le chéile aige bhain sé feidhm as ábhar a bhí cruinnithe ag William Haliday,<sup>4</sup> arbh ó Charraig na Siúire dá mhuintir. Ar liosta na síntiúsóirí bhí an Dr. Bray. Ardeaspag Chaisil, An Dr. Ó Seachnasaigh, Easpag Chill Dá Lua, an Dr. de Paor, Easpag Phort Láirge, agus Lord Norbury.<sup>5</sup>

Seo cúntas Uí Raghallaigh ar lámhscríbhinn Chaisil.

By a Memorandum written by way of title to the book, it appears that part of it was extracted from the Psalter of Cashel in the month of July 1714 by Dermot O’Conor, then in the City of Limerick.

Upon the front page of a leaf in the beginning of the Book is Doctor Keating’s beautiful address to a harper. And upon the two following are to be found the contents of the Book, as far as page 222, without reference to any particular page where the different articles are to be found.

From page 1 to 11 is an account of the Creation of the World, and the History of Mankind to the universal deluge.

From page 11 to 16 there is an account of the colonisation of Asia, Africa and Europe by the descendants of Noah; but the descendants of Japhet are particularly treated of, which introduces the history of the coming of the Milisian colony to Ireland from Spain.

From page 17 to page 94 are displayed the Pedigrees or genealogical tables of the different families descended from Heber the eldest son of Milesius. After page 69 the writer has fallen into an error in paging the book, and the page that should be marked 70 is marked 60, and the pages are continued in succession from this latter 60 to the end of the book. At page 67 of this second series is introduced the genealogical poem of Cain Ó Duinín which treats of the Kings of Cashel and other princes, descendants of Corc, son of Lughaidh. Corc was foster-brother to Niall of the Nine Hostages who died Monarch of Ireland AD 398.

At page 94 commences the genealogical account of the families descended from Ir, son of Milesius.

At page 99 the genealogical tables of the families descended from Heremon son of Milesius begin, and are continued to page 111.

Pages 111 and 112 contain a description of the armorial bearings of several old families.

From page 115 to 146 is given an abridgement of the Leabhar Gabhála or book of conquests. This tract contains an account of the landing and settlement of several tribes who visited Ireland from the deluge to the arrival of Milesius; and a brief history of Ireland from the earliest account of time to the death of the Milesian Chiefs who quarrelled with each other almost as soon as they obtained possession of the Island.

From 147 to 153 is given a catalogue of the Monarchs of Ireland with the number of years which each of them is said to have reigned.



Pages 154, 155 and 156 contain a catalogue of the Kings of Cashel, with the length of their reigns, from Cormac Cas who lived AD 220 to Muirceartach O Brian who died AD 1150.

From page 157 to 166 is given an account of several battles fought in Ireland, amongst which is that of Clontarf AD 1014, where the Danes were completely subdued by Brian Boroimhe, who lost his life after the battle was ended.

Pages 167 and 172 contain an extract from the book of Rights (Leabhar na gCeart). This extract gives an account of the taxes and subsidies paid to the Kings of Cashel, and also an account of the Royal places of residence or fortresses of those princes.

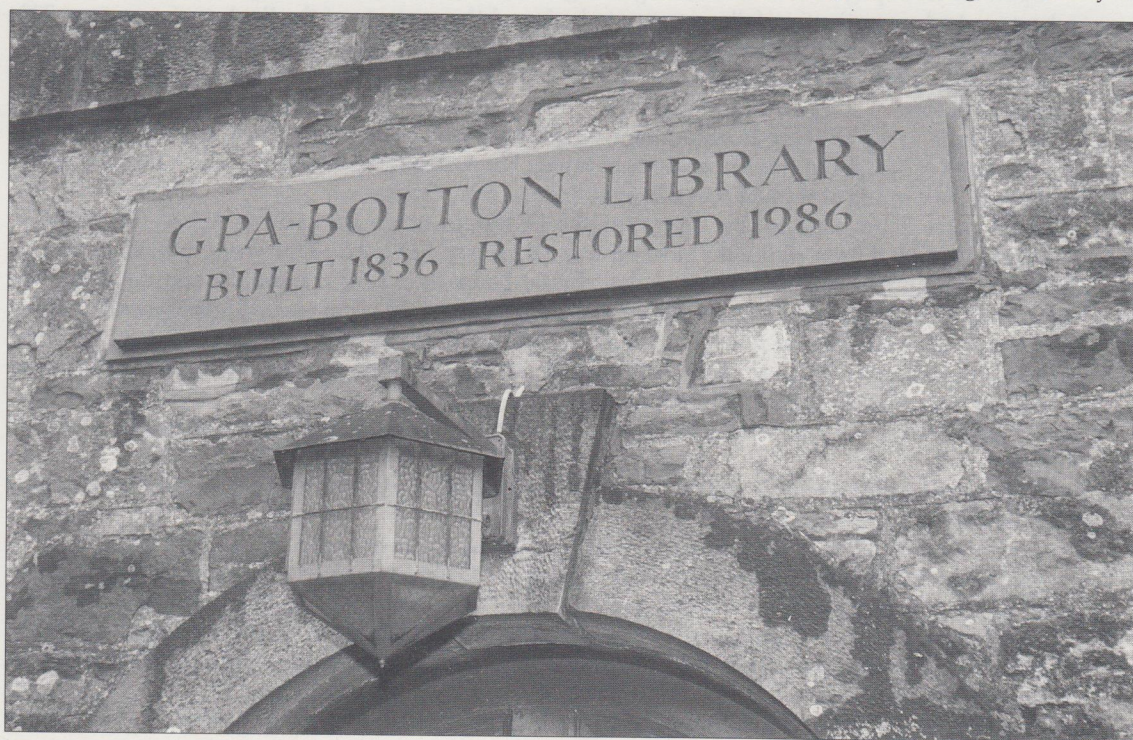
From page 173 to 201 is given the romantic story of the battle of the field of Mucruimhe. The battle here described was one really fought between Art the Solitary, monarch of Ireland, and Mac Con son of Mac Niad, a Munster prince. But the story is highly embellished by poetic fiction, and short poems or extracts from poems are occasionally introduced. It is one of those tales that never fail to give pleasure to the reader.

Pages 201 and 202 contain the pedigrees of the families of O Manning, O Kenny and McGawen or Smith.

At page 203 the Battle of Muirtheimhne begins, and the account is continued to page 222. This like the battle of Macruimhe mentioned before was a real battle fought between the forces of Conor King of Ulster and the forces of the other provinces of Ireland, but the account here given is overcharged with fable.

The famous Conall Cearnach who was the leader of the Ultonian troops lost his life in this battle; more by the power of witchcraft, if we believe the story, than by the prowess of his enemies. It is one of the popular tales of the Irish, and much admired for the poetic descriptions with which it abounds – the book is not paged from 222 to the end.

The article next following the battle of Muirtheimhne is a copy of Doctor Keating's History of Ireland. This book, tho' much mixed with fable, has the merit of being the first regular History of



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the Country that was ever published. All that went before it were only in the form of Annals except such as were contained in poems that related particular facts of our History or the actions of some particular families or Heroes. Keating is considered the Herodotus of Ireland, and tho' his history abounds in fable, it is not more fabulous, nor his fables more improbable than the histories of Greece or Rome, or the ancient history of any other nation. The transcriber of this copy has placed the preface after the History, and has omitted the Pedigrees and the table of Synchronisms given by Keating. The work was translated and published in London in one vol. folio upwards of one hundred years ago, and again in Dublin within a few years afterwards. It was for many years a very scarce book and often sold for five or six guineas a copy. It has been lately reprinted in Dublin in two vols. octavo, but being considered a bad translation a new one was undertaken [by Haliday] and one vol. has been published with the original text and translation on opposite pages. The translator of this volume died before he could begin the second volume and the writer of this account is now engaged in finishing the work.

After Keating's work the Historical Poem of Giolla Caomhain follows. This poem gives a catalogue of the Monarchs of Ireland from the earliest account of time to the coming of St. Patrick — the author wrote three other historical poems and died AD 1072.

The next tract is Giolla Modhada's (*sic*) Historical poem beginning "Éire Ógh inis na naomh" (Oh sacred Eire, Isle of Saints). This poem gives a catalogue of the Monarchs of Ireland from AD 428, where Giolla Caomhan ends to the death of Maolseachlain the 2nd AD 1022. The author was Abbot of Ardbreaccan in Meath and died AD 1143.

Giolla Modhuda's poem is followed by the poetical contention of the Bards of the North and South of Ireland for the pre-eminence of their respective chiefs. These poems contain a great portion of Irish history told in the fascinating language of Ireland.

The Contention of the Bards is followed by genealogical tables of several English families who obtained settlements in Ireland. After which the book ends with a bad table of contents in which the writer has made many errors, particularly in his account of Giolla Caomhan and Torna Eigios, the latter of which he confounds with Torna O Maolconaire who lived some centuries subsequent to him, and he has not mentioned Giolla Modhuda at all. He has, however, mentioned the particular families whose Pedigrees are displayed in the book.

Giota inspéise isea "Pages 111 and 112 contain a description of the armorial bearings of several old families". Bhí an dara ceird ag Diarmaid Ó Conchubhair: péintéir armais ba ea é agus suim dá réir aige ins na cúrsaí sin. Ag tarraingt as an gcuid sin den lámhscríbhinn a bhí Alf Mac Lochlainn san alt úd "A Gaelic Armory".<sup>6</sup> "The technical terms of blazonry appear so seldom in Irish language tracts that it is felt that the publication of the following will not be without interest", arsa Mac Lochlainn. Seo suathantas na Rianach, dar le Diarmaid: "Ó Riain: 3 cann gribhe ar ch. ghorm. thuas gorm sé bileogadh cuillin uaithne. Creast – Ceann gribhe or".

Seo ceann eile. "Ó Carbhuil: Cloidheamh lan d'fuil go drochlen, is 2 leoghan deargadh suas ar gach taoibh. Crest – Seabhach air stumpa croinn". (Luann sé fear groí den sliocht sin in áit eile, i mBéarla agus i nGaeilge: "Dinnis O'Carroll was married to Dorothy dau. to O'Kennedy by whom he had thirty Sons and were presented in one Troop by their Father with all his Interest to ye Duke of Ormond for the Service of King Charles 1st").<sup>7</sup> Tá roinnt den ornáideachas ar lámhscríbhinn Chaisil, ach ní mórán é dairíre.

### Aistriúchán ar "Foras Feasa"

Is iomaí láimhscríbhinn mhaith fhónta a scríobh Ó Conchubhair,<sup>8</sup> acht ní foláir iad a fhágaint ar leataoibh an uair seo chun go bhféachfaimid ar an saothar is mó a thuill clú (agus a mhalairt) dó – an t-aistriúchán a d'fhoilsigh sé ar "Foras Feasa" an Chéitinnigh.



Bíodh is go bhfuarthas go leor locht ar "Foras Feasa", fiú amháin in aimsir an Chéitinnigh féin, bhí an-éileamh air i gcónaí. Iarracht a bhí ann, dar leis na Gaeil, seanchas agus litríocht na tíre a dhlúthú le chéile, agus a gcearta a sheasamh gan buíochas do lucht a gcáinte. Rinne siad na céadta cóip de. An Sasanach féin, chuir sé spéis ann; bhí beagán de rian an Bhéarla air le cois na staire<sup>9</sup> – agus shantaigh sé aistriúchán air.

Rinneadh sin. Chuir Mícheál Ó Cearnaigh críoch lena aistriúchán sa bhliain 1668.<sup>10</sup> Ba ó Bhaile Loiscthe, Co. Thiobraid Árann dó. Bhí ceann eile ag Sir Robert Southwell, Stát-Rúnaí na hÉireann 1689/90;<sup>11</sup> bhí ceann roimhe sin i seilbh Lord Ossory.<sup>12</sup> Ach bhí de locht ar na haistriúcháin sin go léir gur i bhfoirm lámhscríbhne a bhí siad, agus ba léir go mbeadh díol agus rachairt ar leagan clóbhuailte, agus pollachán airgid i bpóca an duine a chuirfeadh a leithéid ar fáil. Ní deirim gur dúil san airgead a chuir Anthony Raymond, Biocáire Bhaile Átha Troim,<sup>13</sup> chun na hoibre sin, ach le dúil sa léann. D'fhostaigh sé scata scríobhaithe a chabhródh leis sa bhfiontar, agus Diarmaid Ó Conchubhair ina measc.

Sé ní a rinne Diarmaid, ámh, ná bailiú leis go Londain, stocaireacht a dhéanamh, síntúis a chruinniú, agus a aistriúchán féin a fhoilsiú ann sa bhliain 1712.<sup>14</sup> Foilsíodh an dara heagrán i mBaile Átha Cliath an bhliain chéanna.<sup>15</sup> Ní mó na sásta leis an Scéal a bhí Anthony Raymond, ní nach ionadh, agus thug sé íde na muc is na madraí don Luimníoch bradach i gcúpla paimfléad a scríobh sé faoi.<sup>16</sup>

Tugadh fobha eile faoi Dhiarmaid agus an t-aistriúchán fós ar na bacáin. Fear ó Thiobraid Árann, más fíor, darbh ainm Tomás Ó Súilleabháin, a thug faoi sa "dissertation" nó réamhrá a chuir sé leis an leabhar "Memories of the Marquis of Clanricarde".<sup>17</sup> "The Mr. Thomas O'Sullevane mentioned – was an Irishman living in London, who spent a good eal of time reading in the Harley Library and gave Wanley [an leabharlannaí] much advice on Irish matters".<sup>18</sup>

Bhí céimeanna sa dlí aige ó thíortha iasachta. Eisean a d'aistrigh LS. B.L. Add. 34727 ó Ghaeilge go Laidean.<sup>19</sup> Bhíodh sé ag scríobh litreachta go dtí Tomás Ó Doinn i gCaiseal Mumhan.<sup>20</sup> Cuireadh i bpríosún é sa bhliain 1726 mar gheall ar a fhiacha bheith gan díol.<sup>21</sup>

Tugann sé cúntas maith dúinn ar bheatha an Chéitinnigh, ach maidir lena shaothar, ní fiú tráithnín leis é: "as being, for the most part, an heap of insipid, ill-digested Fables, and the rest but very indifferently handled",<sup>22</sup> agus arís: "But as 'tis far from being an History, I believe no Man of Judgment will take it for one".<sup>23</sup>

Léas den bhata céanna a fhaigheann Diarmaid: "The owner of the Copy (for the Original belongs to the Lord Baron of Cahir in Ireland) assumes the Name of an Irish Antiquary which (for ought I know) he may make some claim or Title to; tho' I verily believed there was none of that sort remaining in the Country — But if reading and writing alone be sufficient to make an Antiquary, modestly speaking, there are three Parts of four of the People in Great Britain Antiquaries too".<sup>24</sup>

Fuair Diarmaid faill ar a bhuille féin a bhualadh ar Thomás nuair a foilsíodh a leabhar féin.

Thus far I have followed and detected the Ignorance and Peevishness of this Writer – But I leave him to be corrected by the Torment of his own Mind, and the Contempt of his former Friends, who justly sensible of his ungenerous Proceedings, his invincible Malice, and his notorious want of Capacity, have banished him their Acquaintance as an infamous Renegade and wicked Libeller upon the Glory and Honour of his native country.<sup>25</sup>

Leanadh den aighneas sa "Post Boy",<sup>26</sup> agus ansin bhí a bhata réidh ag Seán Ó Neachtain, file, a scríobh dhá aoir ar Dhiarmaid "an sionnach dubh".



Ní mar sin do'n sionnach dubh;  
Iomdha olc ina ghníomh;  
Mealltóir meabhlach an saith;  
Puinn don mhaith níor chleacht ariamh.<sup>27</sup>

Bhí Seán Ó Neachtain in a cheann ar dhream scríobhaithe a mhair san ardchathair, i mBaile Átha Cliath. Níorbh ionadh Diarmaid a bheith ar aithne acu. Tharla, leis, beirt díobh a bheith ó Thiobraid Árann de réir deallraimh.

Ba iad sin Muiris Ó Nuabha agus Seán Ó hÉidéin.<sup>28</sup> Thus Tadhg Ó Neachain a dtuairisc.

Muiris mórdha, an mhéin gan mheing,  
Mhír Ó Mumhan chímse chugainn,  
Ba Gaedhul an gaoiseach, an Laittion glic  
O Nuabha Úr alluinn ionnraic  
Seán Ó hÉidéin, car mo chuim  
An scríobhnóir alga adhluinn:  
An Muimhneach mear, searc na saoi,  
Dia dá shaoradh go síorrdhuidh.<sup>29</sup>

Ainneoin an bhearrtha go léir ní foláir nó bhí Diarmaid mór leis na huaisle. Chuir sé lámhscríbhinn mhaisithe ar fáil do Mhuiris Ó Conchubhair Failghe,<sup>30</sup> cóip de "Foras Feasa", agus is dócha go bhfuair sé pingin mhaith uirthi. Fuair sé "airgead síos" mar éarlais ó na céadta díobh chun go bhfoilseofaí a leabhar. Ar ndóigh ba bhreá leis na boic mhóra a gcrabha ginealaigh bheith á ríomhadh agus a gcuid armais bheith á ndearadh agus á léiriú.

Déanta na fírinne, ní raibh an t-aistriúchán thar moladh beirte, ach ba mhaith ann é mar sin féin. Mhol an t-Easpag William Nicholaon é: "Mr. O Connor the Translator and Publisher, an Irish Antiquary by Descent, appears to be a person well able to do right to his Author and himself: Notwithstanding the many hard censures that have pass'd, and are yet daily passing, upon both".<sup>31</sup>

Luaitear Diarmaid, leis, i leabhar ceoil "Aria di Camera" a foilsíodh i Londain thart faoin mbliain 1730, gurbh eisean a sholáthraigh na foinn Éireannacha dó. Níor chaill sé riamh é – iad a bhradaíl ó Neale's "Celebrated Irish Tunes" a rinne sé.<sup>32</sup>

Deirtear go raibh sé beo fós sa bhliain 1732<sup>33</sup>, ach ní fios ina dhiaidh sin cathain a tháinig deireadh lena shaol corrach. Má ba rógaire féin é, is maith luachmhar an t-earra a d'fhág sé le hoidhreacht orainn i gCaiseal Mumhan.

## NÓTAÍ

1. Táim buíoch do'n Urramach Philip Knowles, Déan Chaisil, a thug cead féachana ar an lámhscríbhinn dom.
2. Edward O'Reilly: *Transactions of the Ibero-Celtic Society* (B.Á.C., 1820) Iml. 1, Cuid 1.
3. Edward O'Reilly: *Sanas Gaoidhilge-Sagsbhearla, An Irish-English Dictionary* (B.Á.C., 1817).
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. Alf Mac Lochlainn: *A Gaelic Armory*, J.R.S.A.I. (B.Á.C., 1954) Iml. LXXIV, lgh. 68-71.
7. Dermot O Connor: *The General History of Ireland – collected by the learned Jeoffry Keating D.D.* (Londain, 1723).
8. e.g. T.C.D. H25; R.I.A. 23 L4; Má Nuad C98 (b); B.L. Add. 18745.



9. Tadhg Ó Dúshláine: *Seathrúin Céitinn agus an Stíl Bharócach a thug sé go hÉirinn, Dúchas* 1983-85 (B.Á.C., 1986), lgh. 43-55.
10. Ls. R.I.A. 25G 16 Cat. lch. 3126.
11. Ls. LN G293 Cat Fasc. VII lgh. 14-15.
12. *Memories of the Right Honourable the Marquis of Clanricarde – (Dissertation)*, London 1722, Athchló Brian Ó Cuiv, Éigse IX, lgh. 2667-7.
13. Alan Harrison: *Ag Cruinniú Meala Anthony Raymond 1675-1726* (B.Á.C., 1988), *passim*.
14. *op. cit.*
15. *Ibid.* (B.Á.C., 1722).
16. *Account of Dr. Keating's History of Ireland: A letter from Dr. Anthony Raymond to my Lord Inchiquin* (B.Á.C., 1723), luaite ag Diarmaid Ó Catháin: Dermot O Connor, *Translator of Keating, Eighteenth Century Ireland* (B.Á.C., 1987), Iml. II lgh. 83-4.
17. Ó Cuiv, *op. cit.*
18. Robin Flower and Myles Dillon, *B M Cat.* (Londain, 1953), Iml. III lch. 15.
19. Robin Flower, *B M Cat.* (Londain, 1926), Iml. II lch. 624.
20. *B M Cat.* III lch. 16.
21. *Ibid.*, lch. 17.
22. Ó Cuiv, *op. cit.*, lch. 264.
23. *Ibid.*, lch. 269.
24. *Ibid.*, lch. 264.
25. D. O Conor, *op. cit.* Preface, lch. V.
26. H. R. Plomer: *Dermot O Connor and Keating's History, Irish Book Lover III* (B.Á.C., 1912), lgh. 125-8.
27. M. H. Risk: *Two Poems on Diarmaid Ó Conchubhair, Éigse XII* (B.Á.C. 1967), lch. 38.
28. (a) *B M Cat.* II lch. 142 "Maurice Newby, a Dublin scribe from Tipperary". (b) Risteard Ó Foghludha – nóta lámhscríofa faoi Sheán Ó hÉidéin – "He wrote another book of same character in 1731, at Tipperary. I saw it this year". (Meán Fómhair 1929).
29. T. F. O Rahilly: "Irish Scholars in Dublin in the Early Eighteenth Century", *Gadelica* (B.Á.C., 1912-13), lgh. 157-62.
30. S. H. O'Grady: *B. M. Cat.* (Londain, 1926), Iml. 1 lch. 31 (Ls Add. 18745).
31. William Nicholson: *The Irish Historical Library* (B.Á.C., 1724), lch. 46, luaite ag Diarmaid Ó Catháin, *op. cit.*, lch. 84.
32. Breandán Ó Madagáin: *An Ghaeilge i Luimneach* (B.Á.C., 1974), lch. 33.
33. Diarmaid Ó Catháin, *op. cit.*, lch. 85.

## SUMMARY

An account of an 18th century manuscript (now in the GPA Bolton Library, Cashel) by a Limerick scholar, Dermot O'Connor. – Editor.