

A poem to Aodh Buidhe and Alasdar Mac Domhnaill of Tinnakill, Queen's County

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THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH-century manuscript known as the 'Tinnakill Duanaire' (Trinity College Dublin MS 1340), prized for its important collection of bardic religious verse, contains towards its end a number of items relating mainly to the Mac Domhnaill (McDonnell) family of Leinster. Among these, on f. 34r, is a poem beginning *Le dís cuirthear clú Laighean*, which is edited below from this unique copy. The patron for whom the manuscript was most likely compiled, Aodh Buidhe Mac Domhnaill (1546–1619), was also one of the subjects of the poem. The other subject was his brother, Alasdar (d. 1577).¹

Alasdar and Aodh Buidhe were the two eldest among five sons of An Calbhach Mac Domhnaill, a galloglass constable who was granted Tinnakill Castle² and estate, Queen's Co., in 1562–3 for his services to the English crown. Aodh Buidhe was also granted a smaller parcel of land at nearby Acregar that year. The Clann Domhnaill of Tinnakill, in common with other Clann Domhnaill galloglass in Ireland, were ultimately descended from Alexander (d. 1299?), elder brother of Aonghas Óg (d. c. 1330), from whom the later 'Lords of the Isles' (and the Clann Domhnaill of the Glens) descended. One of three branches of the Clann Domhnaill in Leinster in the sixteenth century, their more immediate descent was from an ancestor who had come from Connacht to serve as a galloglass constable for the 'Great Earl' of Kildare. After the fall of the Kildares in 1534, the family went into the service of the crown. This service was not without ambiguity, however, if one judges from the career of Aodh Buidhe: in 1566 he had his land at Acregar temporarily withdrawn for having committed treason, and in 1599 he is alleged to have been in rebellion with the O'Mores. Despite these events, he generally remained in good standing with the English authorities and was awarded a pension in 1606 for his services to the crown.³

¹Anne O'Sullivan, 'The Tinnakill duanaire', *Celtica* 11 (1976) 214–28.

²A description of this tower house is given in P. David Sweetman et al., *Archaeological inventory of Co. Laois* (Dublin 1995) § 968. It had formerly been an O'Connor castle: Eoghan (mac Muiris) Ó Conchubhair forfeited it to the crown in 1551 for having rebelled three years earlier (*Journal of the County Kildare Archaeological Society* 4 (1903–05) 433 and 437–9).

³Pádraig A. Breatnach, 'An appeal for a guarantor', *Celtica* 21 (1990) 28–37: 30–32; K. Nicholls, 'Mac Domhnaill (MacDonnell)' in Seán Duffy (ed.), *Medieval Ireland: an encyclopedia* (London etc. 2005) 291–2. For a discussion of galloglass mercenaries see Gerard A. Hayes-McCoy, *Scots mercenary forces in Ireland (1565–1603)* (Dublin and London 1937); and Wilson McLeod, *Divided Gaels: Gaelic cultural identities in Scotland and Ireland c.1200–1650* (Oxford 2004) 40–54.

The date of the composition of *Le dís cuirthear clú Laighean* may be associated with the period following An Calbhach's death, which occurred in 1570 at Shrulle, Co. Galway, while he was serving with the President of Connacht and the Earl of Clanrickard against Mac William Burke.⁴ Professor Pádraig Breatnach has suggested that a document of 1571 – which refers to an act for pacifying the sons of An Calbhach, who were in rebellion – indicates that a dispute may have arisen over the family inheritance, and that Aodh Buidhe lost out. The estate seems to have passed to Alasdair (probably the eldest son) by 1572–3. Aodh Buidhe is known to have succeeded to his father's position by 1578 (following his brother's death).⁵

The poem edited below portrays both brothers as heroes and their position as galloglass leaders is clearly referred to (see 12c and notes on 4c and 17a). As O'Sullivan points out,⁶ however, Aodh Buidhe 'is given pride of place': the three supplementary quatrains (34–6 below) are to his wife, Máire Ní Mhórdha (Mary O'More),⁷ and he himself is portrayed throughout as the more stately of the two brothers. Alasdair, on the other hand, comes across as a fearsome warrior, but one who is subordinate to Aodh. Interestingly, neither brother is referred to as Mac Domhnaill, i.e. head of his name. If the poem is an attempt to bolster Aodh's position in relation to Alasdair, then it may have been written in the context of the suggested dispute between the brothers over the inheritance of their father, and this might therefore allow us to date it to c. 1570–1. Another poem that may have shed light on the question unfortunately survives only in fragmentary form. It begins *Gnath Laidhnigh ac* [...] and appears on f. 33r of TCD MS 1340 (just preceding the poem edited here). What is left of the poem mentions Aodh mac an Chalbhaigh and deals with his right to Clann Domhnaill revenues in Leinster.⁸

The author of *Le dís cuirthear clú Laighean* was Muircheartach Ó Cobhthaigh, a member of the Ó Cobhthaigh family of poets of Westmeath.⁹ Five other poems by him are extant: *Dlighidh liaigh leigheas a charad* (edited by Lambert McKenna, 'Some Irish bardic poems lxxxx', *Studies* 38 (1949) 183–8), *Mairg as dáileamh*

⁴John O'Donovan (ed.), *Annala Rioghachta Éireann, Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters from the earliest period to the year 1616 I–VII* (2nd ed., Dublin 1856) V, 1640, 1646.

⁵Breatnach, 'An appeal for a guarantor', 31.

⁶'The Tinnakill duanaire', 215.

⁷*Ibid.*, 215. She is referred to in the poem below by her first name in qq. 34a, 35d and 36a, and by her family of origin in 36d.

⁸O'Sullivan, 'The Tinnakill duanaire', 215. I give a transcription of *Gnath Laidhnigh ac* [...] as an appendix below. Note that the transcription possibly contains fragments from a further two poems.

⁹As the manuscript was in the ownership of one of the poem's patrons, the ascription can be trusted. Note also that the poem shares certain stylistic elements with other poems by this author (see, for example, note on 36cd). For an account of Muircheartach Ó Cobhthaigh see Dáibhí I. Ó Cróinín, 'A poem to Toirdhealbhaigh Luinneach Ó Néill', *Éigse* 16/1 (1975–6) 50–66.

don digh bhrōin (National Library of Ireland MS G 992 (Nugent Manuscript), f. 33v), *Do-ní clū āit oighreachda* (MS G 992, f. 34v), *Geall re hiarlachd ainm barúin* (MS G 992, f. 35v), and *Séd fine teisd Thoirrdhealbhaigh* (edited by Ó Cróinín, ‘A poem to Toirdhealbhach Luinneach Ó Néill’). The poem edited below is exceptional in that it is not found in MS G 992, where Ó Cobhthaigh’s other five poems occur consecutively on ff. 32v–37v.

The metre of the poem is *Rannai gheacht Bheag*: lines of seven syllables, the endword of each line having two syllables; alliteration in every line; perfect end-rhyme between lines *b* and *d*; finals of *a* and *c* consonate with finals of *b* and *d* and with each other; perfect rhyme between final of *c* and a stressed word in *d*; perfect internal rhyme between *c* and *d*. The internal rhyme in the first couplet generally falls short of perfect rhyme.¹⁰ Quatrain 33 ends with a syllable that echoes the poem’s opening word, thereby delivering metrical closure, and is followed by three supplementary quatrains (see above).¹¹

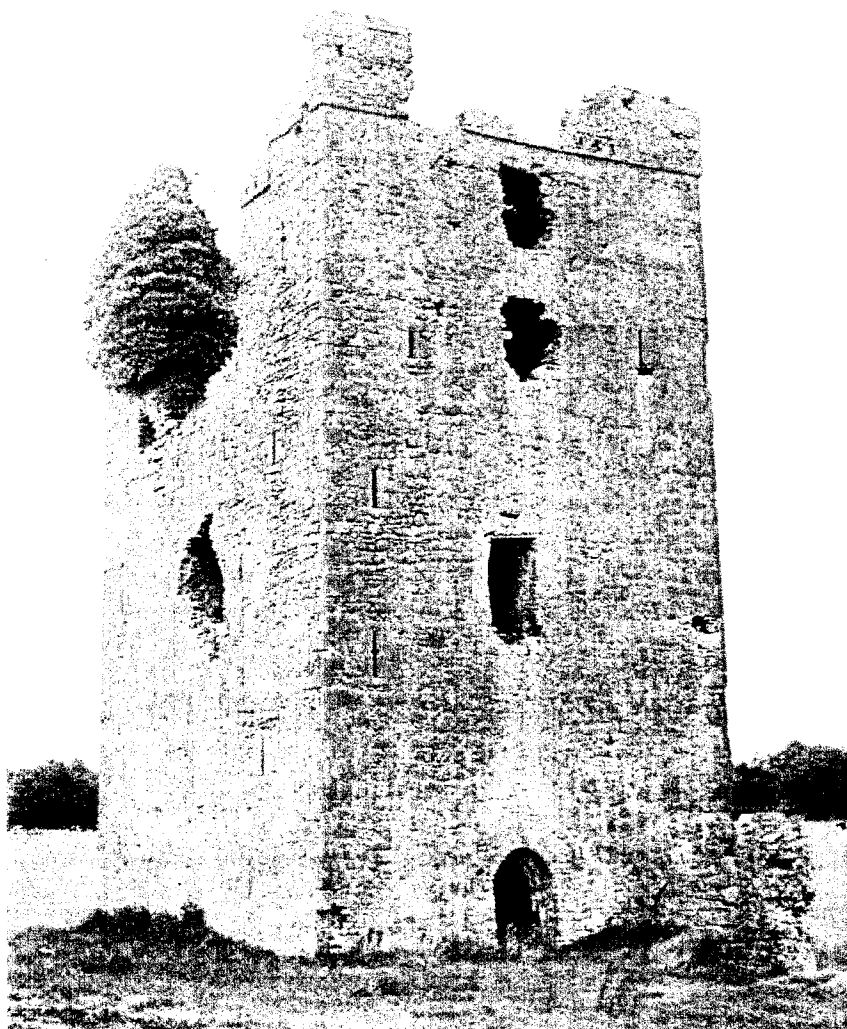
In this edition capital letters and punctuation are editorial. Macrons are used to indicate length when absent from the manuscript. Square brackets are used for insertions or where the manuscript is illegible. I have silently expanded *m*-strokes, *n*-strokes, superscript vowels (representing *r* + vowel), and the contractions for *ar*, *air*, *eacht*, *earlir*, and *eadhleath* (i.e. *et*-symbol + punctum). I have expanded other suspensions in italics.

I have normalized the text in the following ways: length-marks have been removed from *ao(i)*, *ia* and *ua*; *e* (including tall *e*) > *ea* before broad consonants; *é* (including tall *é*) > *éa* before broad consonants; *i* > *io* before broad consonants; unstressed *ui* > *ai*; *éu* > *éa*; final *i* > *e*; *-cc* > *-g*; *chd* > *cht*; *-nd* > *-nn*; *bf-lbfh-* > *bhf-*; *c* > *g* in certain words (i.e. *ac* > *ag* (2c, 3d, 19c, 27c, 27d, 32b, 32d), *co* > *go* (3c, 19a, 30b, 36b), *fuicfid* > *fūigfid[h]* (17d), *tictir* > *tigt[h]ir* (28b)); *in* > *an* (article); *a* > *i* (‘in’); *as* > *is* (copula); *mur* > *mar*.

I have also normalized the use of *dh* and *gh* (*ndoilidh* > *ndoiligh* (2d); *baodhal* > *baoghal* (3b); *ghreadh* > *ghreagh* (3c); *brudh* > *brugh* (4b); *hiaghad* > *hiadhad[h]* (6a); *So fhosdaigh* > *Sofhosdaidh* (10a); *adhaigh* > *aghaidh* (10c); *radhaigh* > *raghaidh* (10d); *reigh* > *rēidh* (15d); *áoidheadh* > *aoigheadh* (19d); *ríoga* > *ríod[h]a* (20b); *reig* > *rēid[h]* (21d); *fóirigh* > *fóiridh* (22b); *reigh* >

¹⁰P. A. Breatnach has shown that, in the case of first couplet in *Rannai gheacht Mhór*, the use of internal rhyme of a looser variety than perfect rhyme is a practice which gained ground after 1500 (‘Rannaíocht mhór: gnéithe de stair na haiste’, post-graduate seminar, University College Dublin, 22 April 2005).

¹¹For an introduction to the type of poetry in evidence here – Irish bardic poetry – see Eleanor Knott, *Irish classical poetry, commonly called bardic poetry* (revised ed., Dublin 1960), and eadem, *An introduction to Irish syllabic poetry of the period 1200–1600* (2nd ed., Dublin 1957).



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rēidh (22c); *blodhadh* > *bloghadh* (23a); *greadh* > *greagh* (23c); *do altuidh* > *do altaigh* (28c); *reighidh* > *rēidhigh* (31b); *hadhaigh* > *haghaidh* (34b); *áoidhe* > *aoighe* (35d); *dáoidhibh* > *d'aoighibh* (36b)).

In the case of all other changes the manuscript readings are given following the text.

My thanks are due to Prof. Damian McManus, to Dr Eoin Mac Cárthaigh, and to the editor of *Ossory, Laois and Leinster*, for their assistance in the preparation of this paper. Any errors or inaccuracies are my own.

Text

Muirc[h]eartach Ua Co[bh]thaig[h] cecinit

1. Le dís cuirthear clú Laighean;
clū 'na gcumaidh nī fog[h]ar;
nī t[h]jéid barr dáibh nach dleag[h]ar;
mall treabhadh cáigh 'na gcom[h]ar.
2. Tar chāch is leanta Laighin
dā ndearntar ar dháich n-oinigh;
ag sin toir an tráigh tharaidh:
gabhair soir le dáimh ndoiligh.
3. Tuillidh Aod[h] san c[h]rú c[h]jaoil[h]leag[h]
clū nach baoghal do bhádhadh;
lūth a ghreagh go n-uar d'f[h]éaghadh
ag tēaghadh ghruadh f[h]ear n-áladh.

1. The fame of the men of Leinster is spread by two men; fame comparable with theirs is not to be found; they are entitled to their pre-eminence; others progress slowly in comparison with them.

2. The Leinstermen are to be followed above all others if a likely source of generosity be sought; there in the east is the profitable shore – importunate poets go east.

3. Aodh earns in battle a fame that is in no danger of being extinguished; the vigour of his horses was tested while reddening the cheeks of wounded men.

4. Tug Alasdar dā adhnadh
 ralasair ōs b[h]rugh biodhbhadh;
 fál tuagh im t[h]ír do tairngeadh;
 snaidhmeadh sídh uadh gurbh iongnad[h].
5. Sgath sēad do dháil nach dleaghar
 is bēasa don dāimh dhaighf[h]ear;
 fa riar dá ndeach tar dligheadh,
 trial[l] fileadh i leat[h] Laighean.
6. Do shúil re hAodh ní[o]r hiadhad[h]
 an chūirt nār haomhadh d'aoinfhior:
 dún gan drud i ndeóigh ríobhan
 tug fíoradh sgeōil nār sgaoleadh.
7. Nī leanfa rī dā rochóir
 madh sī[o]th dh'Alasdar d'athuaim;
 tarraidh sē do chrú Caithír,
 Aichíl ar chló é an athuair.
8. Comhaillfid cāch a mionna
 giodh rot[h]rom cāna ō gColla;
 nī beag líon āigh mar urra:
 cuma an chāin rīogh 'na rolla.

4. Alasdar set ablaze the enemy's castle with a great torch; a wall of axe-bearing troops surrounded the territory; one would be unlikely to secure peace from him.

5. He bestowed the finest of treasures and courtesies, undeserved of the poetic company; if he goes beyond what is necessary in attending to poets, their journey is towards Leinster.

6. In expectation of Aodh, the castle, which was yielded to no man, was not closed: a stronghold left open by royal women revealed the truth of a story not told.

7. No king will follow his own agenda if there be [a possibility] of re-establishing peace with Alasdar (?); he has inherited [the qualities] of the race of Caithír, he is another Achilles for fame.

8. 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.

9. Lucht leanta luirg na rīg[h]e
an fhuil Chuinn-se im cheann bhfēile;
frī[o]th do chrudh ō chloinn Ghráinne
sgur dáimhe do bhoing béime.
10. Sofhosdaidh cāch ōn chonair –
Alasdar fāth a bhfuirigh;
muna thí Aodh 'na aghaidh
raghaidh saor ō a mbí i mbruidhin.
11. Sluagh sīth ō b[h]eannaibh Bladhma,
sī[o]th rē ndeabhaidh nī dhiongna;
ní thug cāch ar cóir bhfeadhma
fóir Bhearbha ar āth nach iomd[h]a.
12. Clann Domhnaill nār ob éinf[h]ear,
fa chor gcomhlainn budh baoghal;
d'aithle ghleó don bhrōin bhuan[n]a[dh]
fuarad[h] leō tóir dā dtaob[h]adh.
13. Caor shlóigh dā aonghuth umhal,
don Aodh-sain leō gur leanad[h];
mā tā Bóinn le dáil ndaighfhear,
fóir Laighean is dāib[h] dleag[h]ar.

9. As for hospitality, this race of Conn are followers of the royal example; enough wealth has been got from Gráinne's children [to ensure that] poets desist from reviling [them].

10. Everyone is easily kept from the road [i.e. from departing] – Alasdar is the cause of their delay; if Aodh does not join him, he [*sc.* Aodh] will be free from [the demands of] those in the castle.

11. The wondrous host from Bladhma's peaks [i.e. Slieve Bloom mountains] will not make peace before a fight; others being in battle-array does not cause Barrow's host to be in few[er] battles.

12. It would be a dangerous thing to fight Clann Domhnaill, who refused no man [a challenge]; after a fight the mercenary host [even] find it invigorating to be approached by a pursuing party.

13. A compact troop, obedient to his every word, followed that Aodh; if the Boyne is [to be] controlled by (?) an assembly of heroes, [then] it is to the Leinstermen's host that it is due.

14. Go dtí tar ais ōn iorg[h]ail
do-ní daingean don damhraidh;
dā mhoille do b[h]í i mbearnaidh
rí ag leanmhain chloinne an Chalbhaig[h].
15. Tú, a Aod[h], dā gcor re chēile –
i sīth fad c[h]ur is cōire;
t’fhian féin do mhóid ní míne;
cóig thíre rēidh do-rōine.
16. Go bhfaghaibht[h]ir eōl eile
gleō, a Alasdair, ní fhoighe;
dána eó re taob[h] dtuille –
Aodh Buidhe san g[h]leō ad ghoire.
17. Caor shluaigh a hAlmhain d’ēaṅtoil
fa chuaine mbairrgheal buailtir;
seól gliadh ōd-chiad ar chūirtibh,
füigfid[h] t’fhian iad ar uaitnibh.
18. Le robhrosdadh rúin daighf[h]ir,
tú, a Alasdair, ’ga f[h]og[h]ail,
do-chuaidh fa thaob[h] dhúin Danair,
súil fhalaigh ō Aodh oraibh.

14. Until he returns from the fight, the warriors remain solid; however long he has been in battle, a king will follow An Calbhach’s children.

15. You brought them [*sc.* the five provinces] together, Aodh – it is most proper [for them to enter] into peace under your term[s]; your soldiers are not more submissive to a vow; you quietened the five provinces.

16. Until circumstances change, Alasdair, you will not be challenged; daring is a salmon next to a flood – Aodh Buidhe beside you in battle.

17. A united and compact troop from the Hill of Allen is gathered around the fair-haired brood; when your soldiers see manors arrayed for battle, they will destroy them.

18. Urged on by the determination of a good man [*sc.* Aodh], you, Alasdair, went to plunder a foreigner’s castle, [while] Aodh discreetly supervised you.

19. Frī[o]th go hathlamh díol deoradh –
do ghrís t’aighthe dob f[h]uarad[h];
tú ag tocht le síodh nār saoilleadh,
díol aoigheadh ort [’na u]amhan.
20. Tug a-muigh muirear Aod[h]a
nach tuillid i dtigh ríod[h]a;
cumhga theagh n-óil dot éara:
sgéala róimh go fear bhfíona.
21. Ceann slōig[h] agaib[h] do fhuirigh
rōd, a Alasdair, d’omhain;
ē féin ’sa f[h]iadh gat eighir
beiridh gial[l] rēid[h] do roghain.
22. Ar gcor chēille isna línib[h] –
a n-ēisdeacht uirre fóiridh –
tarrla an snaidhm rēidh ō ríoghain;
sgríobhaid[h] féin t’ainm ’na hōiridh.
23. Tug bloghadh ar thaoib[h] dtóra
fan gcaoil[s]leigh ar gcor lāmha;
sgaoilid graifne greagh nAod[h]a
taobha cairthe ar fheadh n-ágha.

19. Enough was quickly found for visiting poets – it was a cooling for the heating of your face; your arriving with an unimagined peace [had put] the rewarding of poets by you in doubt.

20. [The fact that] Aodh’s troop cannot [all] be accommodated in a palace resulted in their being outside; so crowded are the banqueting halls that one has to forward requests to the butler.

21. A troop leader stayed with you out of fear, Alasdair; in preference to him and his land belonging to your heir, he gives a ready hostage.

22. Having made sense of the lines – hearing them helps her – a queen unravelled the[ir] secret (?); she herself writes your name in her golden bracelet.

23. Grabbing his slender spear he smashed the side of a pursuing party; Aodh’s horses maul the bodies of warriors during battle.

24. Lēim treasa, a ghlór dá ngealla
lór ō Alasdar d'urra;
ní bhia síodh mar eacht orra,
síol gColla im cheart dā gcuma.
25. Sluagh sīthe na mbārc mbréidgheal
trác[h]t gach crīche do chēadghabh;
seól nuaid[h]e ō thráigh do tógb[h]ad[h];
táin ógbhan uaid[h]e is éadmhar.
26. Fa dhīol gcāna, ō do cumadh,
ar Aodh le cách ní[o]r cailleadh,
nī beag sō ar iath earradh,
gealla[dh] fiach dō gan daingean.
27. Rabhadh rē ngliaidh ní ghēab[h]a,
do iarr Alasdar tuagha,
sē ag lingeadh tr[e] thaobh dtára:
grinneal ágha ag Aod[h] uadha.
28. Táin laoch, gan fhēachain d'fholtaib[h],
le hAod[h] ar ēantoil tigt[h]ir;
re crīc[h] bhFlainn d'uaim do altaigh:
fuair d'fhaclaib[h] 'na lainn litrigh.

24. It is sufficient authority for Alasdar to verbally promise an attack; Colla's race will not be bound to peace regarding [any] claim of their making.

25. The wondrous host of the bright-sailed ships first took the shore of every territory; from the shore a new course was taken [by them]; the envy of a multitude of young women is aroused as a result.

26. Since the paying of tax was established, nobody has failed Aodh, it is no small burden on landowners' territory [that] debts are pledged to him without security.

27. Alasdar will not heed a warning before battle – having sought out [enemy] axe-men he leaps through the side of a pursuing party; as a result the battle-ground is Aodh's.

28. A multitude of warriors is brought to agreement by Aodh, without [their] paying regard to grievances; he rejoiced at the uniting of Flann's land: it was expressed in his ornate blade (?).

29. Bean f[h]ir an uair do ēimhidh
do-chuaidh dā nimh i nēallaib[h];
luighe re taobh fhear n-álaidh
a dtáraid[h] bean d’Aodh d’f[h]éaghain.
30. Rod[h]ocair crī[o]c[h] do chomhd[h]a
sī[o]t[h] Alasdair go n-aghbha;
mar sin bud[h] dōigh a d[h]jomd[h]a,
biod[h]bha i dtigh óil gan arma.
31. Fiū a dhēine tre thaob[h] dtōra
gur rēidhigh raona caola;
guais a bhreith do lēim lúdha
cēim ar gcūla eich Aod[h]a.
32. Síol rī[o]C[h]olla i n-uair fhaghla
ag sī[o]rb[h]log[h]ad[h] tuagh dtromd[h]a;
ar ndol dōibh i ndáil bhfeadhma
ag fóir B[h]earbha is cáir colbha.
33. Dias sūd le mbearar báire
ar chlú dteasda gach tíre;
bíd a lán le béin mbéime,
slān cléire fa f[h]éin nÍle. Le d.

29. 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.

30. It is very hard to protect a territory until it accepts Alasdair’s peace-terms; thus an unarmed enemy in a drinking house would likely be regretful.

31. Such was his vehemence that he cut narrow paths through the flank of a pursuing party; it is perilous to race after Aodh’s horse.

32. During a raid Colla’s race continually smashes heavy axes; it is right that Barrow’s host be in the vanguard when going into battle.

33. They are a pair who gain victory over the famed reputation of every land; many poets engage in criticism, [but] are challenged [to do so] to Islay’s host.

34. Tēid breath le Máire ar modhaibh –
 ní trāt[h] do t[h]eacht 'na haghaidh;
 breath chliar do-chóidh le a seanaibh –
 deag[h]fhuil Róigh riam[h] 'na ragh[ain].
35. Anaidh ar ainbhreith c[h]lĕire –
 gairid mhairfid a maoine;
 ní do bhĕim ar bhuidh bhfáinne
 ō Mhāire is rĕidh f[h]uair aoiĕhe.
36. Teisd Mhāire tar mhna[o]i rĕ[o]ghd[h]a
 le a ndāil d'aoighibh go haobhd[h]a;
 ar fhead[h]aibh cuir chnú n-ōrd[h]a
 crū Mórd[h]a nĕ chuir caomh[na].

34. 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.

35. She tolerates the excessive demands of poets – her wealth will be short-lived; a guest readily got from Máire something more valuable than [even] a ring.

36. Máire's reputation exceeds that of a royal woman with what she willingly distributes to guests; the race of Mórdha does not hoard [its] multitude of golden trinkets.

Manuscript readings

2b dhoith; 3c fúar; 4c tarngadh; 4d snadhmadh; 5c dlighid; 6b dáoinfear; 6c rioghghan; 6d sgaoilidh; 7d aithíl; 7d hé; 8b ge; 9c ghráine; 10c ina; 11d bearb⁺; 12a Cland ndomhnuill; 13a sluaigh; 13c boin; 15d choig; 16a oile; 16b bhuidhe; 16d buíde; 17b bhuailtir; 19a deoruidh; 19b taighche; 19d [*stained*]amhan; 20c dod téura; 21c gud toighir; 22d hoirfhidh; 26c urra; 27c tr [*sic*]; 29c luíghe; 30b bhaghbha; 32a fogla; 33c béin] búain; 34c le] lé; 34d ragh[*text faded*]; 35a ainmbreith; 35c bháine; 36d caomh[*text faded*].

Notes¹²

1a Cf. the similar opening line *Le héanmhnaoi cuirthear clú ban* (DiD 103).

1d *mall treabhadh cáigh 'na gcom[h]ar* Literally, 'slow is the ploughing of others in their ploughing partnership'.

2b *dhoith* (MS) This is one of a number of instances in this poem of scribal confusion of *th* and *ch* (cf. 7d, 19b). This confusion occurs occasionally in manuscripts, e.g. MS *cluithe* for *cluiche* (LCAB 15.6a *et passim*); MS *caith* for *cáich* and MS *míthel* for *Michél* (*Mor ar cach comain in Choimeadh*, RIA MS 1225, f. 62r, qq. 80b and 100a).

dháich n-oinigh For the meaning of this expression see TD 16.5n. and AiD II, 289 (s.v. *dóigh*). For variants *dóighl-ch*, *dáighl-ch*, see IGT ii.14.

2c *an tráigh tharaidh* For further examples of this expression, used of a generous patron, see DiD 102.45b, LBRan line 703, LCAB 29.9c, O'Reilly *Poems* 7.38d, 16.19c, 36.17d, Maguire 24.33d. The image relates to the idea of *torchar* ('valuables washed up by the sea'), a phenomenon associated with righteous kingship.

3a *c[h]aoils[h]leag[h]* As this follows the dat. sg. of a noun whose nom. sg. form is different, I have lenited the initial in accordance with *Magauran* (introduction, xix–xx).

3 Cf. Anne O'Sullivan's translation of this quatrain ('The Tinnakill Duanaire', 222): 'Surrounded by slender-shafted spears / Aodh won undying fame, and saw the charge of his cavalry / mangling the faces of wounded men.' Her literal reading of the second couplet seems to be: 'so that he (i.e. Aodh) got to see the motion of his horses heating the cheeks of wounded men'. The interpretation of *ag téaghadh* with the sense of inflicting injury ('mangling') is unusual.

3d The metrically fixed lenited initial in *f[h]ear* (instead of expected eclipsis) is an example of *sléagar* (see *Magauran* introduction, xxv, and SNG, 357–8).

¹²The following abbreviations are employed here:

AiD = Lambert McKenna (ed.), *Aithdioghluim dána* I–II (Dublin 1939 and 1940). *BST* = Lambert McKenna (ed.), *Bardic syntactical tracts* (Dublin 1944). *Butler* = James Carney (ed.), *Poems on the Butlers of Ormond, Cahir, and Dunboyne (A.D. 1400–1650)* (Dublin 1945). *DiD* = Láimhbheartach Mac Cionnaith (ed.), *Dioghluim Dána* (Dublin 1938). *DIL* = E. G. Quin (ed.), *Dictionary of the Irish language based mainly on Old and Middle Irish materials* (compact edition, Dublin 1983). *IGT* = Osborn Bergin (ed.), 'Irish grammatical tracts', supplements to *Ériu* 8 (1916), *Ériu* 9 (1921–3), *Ériu* 10 (1926–8), *Ériu* 14 (1946), *Ériu* 17 (1955). *LBRan* = Seán Mac Airt (ed.), *Leabhar Branach: the book of the O'Byrnes* (Dublin 1944). *LCAB* = Tadhg Ó Donnchadha (ed.), *Leabhar Cloinne Aodha Buidhe* (Dublin 1931). *Mac Fhirbhisigh* = Nollaig Ó Muraíle (ed.), *Leabhar mór na ngenealach: the great book of Irish genealogies compiled (1645–66) by Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh* I–V (Dublin 2003). *Magauran* = Lambert McKenna (ed.), *The book of Magauran: leabhar Méig Shamhradh-áin* (Dublin 1947). *Maguire* = David Greene (ed.), *Duanaire Mhéig Uidhir: the poembook of Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir, lord of Fermanagh 1566–1589* (Dublin 1972). *Measgra* = T. F. O'Rahilly (ed.), *Measgra dánta* I–II (Dublin and Cork 1927). *O'Hara* = Lambert McKenna (ed.), *The book of O'Hara: leabhar Í Eadhra* (Dublin 1951). *O'Reilly Poems* = James Carney (ed.), *Poems on the O'Reillys* (Dublin 1950). *SNG* = Kim McCone et al. (ed.), *Stair na Gaeilge in ómós do Pádraig Ó Fiannachta* (Maynooth 1994). *TD* = Eleanor Knott (ed.), *The bardic poems of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn (1550–1591)* I–II (Dublin 1922 and 1926).

4b *biodhbhadh* As this follows the dat. sg. of a noun whose nom. sg. form is the same I have not lenited the initial in accordance with McKenna's assertion that it is not certain that lenition should occur in such cases (see *Magauran* introduction, xx). Likewise, 9d.

4c *tuagh* The weapon of the galloglass. Mentioned also in qq. 27b and 32b. The phrase *fál tuagh* also occurs in *LCAB* 8.9.

5a Note the similarity between this line and *fear séad do dháil tar dhligheadh* (*Butler* 17.9a) which I take to mean 'a man who distributes treasures above what is necessary'; the latter occurs in a poem written between 1539 and 1546, by a kinsman of our poet, Uaithne (mac Uilliam) Ó Cobhthaigh, whose floruit was a little earlier than our poet's. Cf. also the following in a poem to Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir: *Dob fhiú a ghuais re ndáimh ndoiligh / co ndáiltear duas nach dleghair* 'From the danger he finds himself in from the importunate poets inordinate gifts are bestowed' (*Maguire* 10.15ab).

5cd In other words, his generous attention to poets calls them to Leinster. Note the similarity – in words if not in meaning – between this couplet and the following one from a poem whose first line is echoed by ours and was written c. 1555 by another kinsman of our poet, Eoghan (mac Aodha) Ó Cobhthaigh: *an leac dá ndeach tar dhligheadh / breath fhileadh leat is leabhar* 'even if law be buried in the tomb poets and books will still proclaim thee' (L. McKenna (ed.), '*Failghigh chosnas clú Laighean*', *Studies* 38 (1949) 57–62, q. 16cd).

For *i leat[h]* meaning *towards*, see *DIL* L 127.85 ff.

6c More literally: 'a stronghold left open after royal women'. The image conjured here is one of royal women leaving their castle door open and going inside, where they wait for Aodh – the unlocked door thus 'revealing the truth', i.e. that they are willing to have an illicit affair with Aodh, or perhaps cede their virginity to him, such is his attractiveness.

7a *Ní leanfa rī dā rochóir* A similar expression is contained in the following: *Mór mbiodhbha bhios 'na bhruighin / sioth i ndiomdha ger dhoiligh / ní len fer cóir a chinidh / i tighthibh oil fher nOild[h]* 'Many enemies will be found in his *bruidhean* and though one would have thought it difficult to maintain peace where there is [potential] discord, no man follows his own people's agenda in the dining halls of the men of Aileach' (*Éire a ngioll re hAodh Eanghach*, NLI MS G 167, p. 179, q. 10, quoted and translated in Damian McManus, "'The smallest man in Ireland can reach the tops of her trees": images of the king's peace and bounty in bardic poetry', *Celtic Studies Association of North America Yearbook* 5 (forthcoming)).

7b My interpretation of this line is tentative. A possible alternative might be to emend to *ma s[h]úth*, in which case the line could mean 'in the matter of re-establishing peace with Alasdair'.

7c *Caithír* Apparently a variant form of the name Cathaoir. Although a number of occurrences of this form (i.e. with slender *th*) are to be found in manuscripts, I have found only one metrically fixed example: *Sírmíd gialla gach mic ríogh / annsin ar chlannuibh Caithír* (*Maiden duinn a cCill da Lúadh*, Book of the O'Conor Don, 373b, q. 21ab). The metre of the latter is *ógláchas* of *deibhidhe*, in which the requirement is *comhardadh briste* ('imperfect rhyme'). As this involves identity of rhyming vowels, the *th* in *Caithír* must be slender as its rhyming partner is *ríogh*. Note also that the final *r* in *Caithír* would have to be broad, something of which I have found no other example. I take the allusion to be

to Cathaoir Mór, legendary ancestral king of the Leinstermen, whose son Failghe is the eponym of Co. Offaly.

Although Caithír follows the dat. sg. of a noun whose nom. sg. form is different, I have left Caithír unlenited on the basis that, as a proper noun (unlike the case in 3a above), non-lenition may have been allowed (see *Magauran* introduction, xx).

7d *aithíl* (MS) The name *Aithíl* occurs in an apologue in *O'Reilly Poems* (6.17–23). Its editor was unable to identify the origin of the apologue. However, he suggests (p. 194, note 709–56) that *Aithíl* may be for *Aichíl*, and that it is possibly an adaptation of Achilles. Liam P. Ó Caithnia (*Apalóga na bhfilí 1200–1650* (Baile Átha Cliath 1984) 123), referring to the same example, tentatively suggests that *Aithíl* may be an adaptation of Atlas. The following are identified as Achilles: *Aichíl* (: *díbh*), *Celtica* 16 (1984) 92, q. 10d; and – with short *i* – *Aichíl* (: *caithir*), *DiD* 110.42cd. As our scribe has confused *th* and *ch* elsewhere in this poem (cf. 2b, 19b), I have emended to *Aichíl*, and follow the latter two examples in identifying him as Achilles. Given Alasdair's portrayal in the poem (see introduction), comparison with Achilles seems apt.

8b *ge* (MS) For emendation to *giodh* see *IGT* i.16.

ō *gColla* The Clann Domhnaill of Ireland and Scotland, according to medieval tradition, descended from the legendary king Colla Uais, one of three brothers known as the 'three Collas' said to have lived in the fourth century AD (see, for example, *Mac Fhirbhisigh* 341.1 ff.). For a discussion of the significance of this genealogy see McLeod, *Divided Gaels*, 119–21.

8d *cuma an cháin ríogh 'na rolla* More literally, 'it is the same as though the royal tax were in their charter'. The construction is unusual, and there are no entirely comparable examples given in *DIL* C 621.35 ff.

9c *ghráine* (MS) This is one of a number of examples in this poem (cf. 12c, 13c and 35c) of scribal *n* for historical *nn*.

chloinn Ghráinne Namely, Aodh and Alasdair. As their mother is known from another document as 'dgr. of O'Dunne' (see O'Sullivan, 'The Tinnakill Duanair', 215 n. 11), her full name can now be given as Gráinne Ní Dhuinn. Perhaps the date precludes her being identified with 'my sister Grany' mentioned by Cathaoir mac Taidhg Óig Í Dhuinn in his will of April 1617 (K. W. Nicholls (ed.), *The O Doynne (Ó Duinn) manuscript: documents relating to the family of O Doynne (Ó Duinn) from Archbishop Marsh's Library, Dublin, MS Z.4.2.19* (Dublin 1983) 171).

9d *béime* Cf. note on 4b.

10a *Sofhosdaidh* Literally, 'detainable', 'easily detained'.

10ab In other words, such is Alasdair's generosity that people are slow to leave his company. Alasdair's generosity was noted in his obituary in the annals (s.a. 1577): *Alas-trann, mac an chalbhacch, mic toirrdhealbhaigh, mic eoin charraigh, do mharbhadh hi ccomhrac la mac teabóitt buidhe mhég Seóinin i ndoras na gaillmhe, agus nír bhó hiomdha mac gallóglaigh i nérinn in tan sin ro ba mó faghaltas, agus ro ba tiodhlaictighe toirbertaighe inás* 'Alexander, son of Calvagh, son of Turlough, son of John Carragh [Mac Donnell], was slain in combat by Theobald Boy Mac Seoinin, in the gateway of Galway; and there were not many sons of gallowglasses in Ireland at that time who were

more wealthy, or who were more bountiful and munificent than he' (O'Donovan, *Annals* V, 1692–3).

10c *ina* (MS) I have emended this to *'na* as the line has a syllable too many.

10cd An alternative interpretation of this couplet might be: 'if Aodh does not oppose him [then] no one in the hostel will' (cf. *do t[h]eacht 'na haghaidh*, 34b).

11ab That is to say, Aodh and Alasdair would sooner fight than sue for peace.

11c *ar cóir* McKenna defines this as 'i n-eagar, etc. chóir' (*DiD*, 534).

11cd In other words, Barrow's host is not discouraged from fighting by the sight of an enemy ready for battle.

11d *Bhearbha* As this is a proper noun it is possible that non-lenition of its initial was also allowed (see *Magauran* introduction, xviii).

12a *Cland ndomhnuill* (MS) The eclipsis here is unhistorical (*clann* being a feminine \bar{a} -stem), but does occur in manuscripts, possibly on the model of the likes of *siol gColla*, e.g. *Acht siol gColla clann nDomnaill* (Pádraig Ó Macháin, 'Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn: foinse dá shaothar', in Pádraig Ó Fiannachta (ed.), *An Dán Díreach* (Maigh Nuad 1994) 77–113: 108, q. 34); *Clann nDubhgoill nárbh optach n-áigh / go heg Emuinn óig d'faghail* (*Táirníg aoihbhios chlann cColla*, RIA MS 540, f. 172r, q. 43a); *Clann nDálaigh is daghfhuil Néill / do-chuadar uile dh' éinmhéin* (*O'Hara* 22.4a).

12c *bhúana* (MS) See note on 9c.

12d *fuairad[h]* I take this to be a verbal noun meaning 'a refreshing', etc. (see *DIL* U 36.84 ff., and cf. *fuairadh bhar n-each, a fhir chró, / creach nó [a] dhó libh re dá lá* 'cupla creach gach ré lá – ní fhuil ann acht fuairadh dot eachaibh' (*DiD* 106.17cd; translation McKenna's, p. 476)).

13a *dā aonghuth umhal* This might also be translated 'obedient to his word only'.

13c *Bóinn* (MS *boin*, see note on 9c) The river Boyne. This can figuratively represent Meath, the Pale, Leinster or Ireland (see *TD* II, 341, *Maguire*, p. 287, *L Bran*, p. 417).

14b *do-ní daingean don damhraidh* The usage of the verb here is impersonal.

14cd In other words, a king is safe in their company.

15b *i síth* (MS *asith*) I have taken this to mean 'into peace' and normalized the spelling of the preposition to *i* in accordance with my editorial method. A possible alternative might be to read *a sí[o]th*, i.e. 'their peace under your terms is most proper'.

16cd Line c has the appearance of a proverb.

17a *hAlmhain Almha* is the Hill of Allen, Co. Kildare, traditionally regarded as the residence of Fionn mac Cumhaill. The allusion draws a comparison between the Clann Domhnaill galloglass on the one hand and Fionn and his *Fiana* on the other. As Fionn and the *Fiana* were to Cormac mac Airt, legendary king of Ireland, so the Clann Domhnaill were to those for whom they fought. Other examples of this comparison in bardic poetry can be found in poems to the MacSweeney's, galloglass to the O'Donnells, e.g. *Leithéid Almhan i nUltaibh* (*TD* 27). Cf. also the observation of Gerard A. Hayes-McCoy, discussing the question of whether or not there was a mercenary tradition in Ireland before the galloglass: 'it can be shown that the position of the *Fiana* of Fionn approximated in some degree to that held by the great mercenary families of the MacDonalds, MacSweeney's and MacSheehy's' (*Scots mercenary forces*, 25).

17ab Note the similarity with 28ab below: *Táin laoch ... le hAod[h] ar ēantoil tigt[h]ir.*

17c *seól gliadh* My translation is guided by McKenna's translation of the following: *Seól catha ... orruibh* 'they are in battle array' (BST 196.21). The sense of *seól* in that example is one 'of battle gear' according to DIL S 183.35–7, which I take to mean clothing, etc. As *seól* in our example is apparently used of the adorning of buildings, the sense might be that of 'pageantry'. The following contains the only other example I have found of *seól gliadh*: *Daor ceannchar an clú do-gheibh / mac Aodha is oirdhearc n-áireimh; / do-rinne an gleódh rian reimhe / fá sheól gliadh dá ghuailleidhe* (LBran 25.2).

17d *ar uaitnibh* I have found no other example of this expression in bardic poetry and have been guided by the following extract from the annals: *Ro fhorchongair an caislén do chor ar uathnedhaibh iar sin, 7 ro leccadh go lár* 'He then ordered that the castle should be placed upon posts, and it was tumbled to the earth' (O'Donovan, *Annals* V, 1316.10). A footnote on 'be placed upon posts' reads: 'when a breach was made in one of the walls towards its base, to introduce a prop to sustain the superincumbent weight while the men would be undermining the next wall, under which, when undermined, a similar prop should be introduced, and so on till all the base of the walls of the building were removed. The props were then dragged from under it by means of ropes pulled by men or horses, and the edifice tumbled often without breaking into fragments.' This is the only example I have found of metrically-fixed unlenited *t* in this word. The form is not mentioned in IGT ii.2.

18d Literally, 'a concealed eye from Aodh upon you'. This quatrain captures well the general portrayal of Aodh as Alasdair's superior, and the latter as the more reckless of the two.

19b *taighche* (MS) See notes on 2b and 7d.

19cd In other words, having brought 'the five provinces' together in peace (see q. 15), Aodh is left without war booty, thus leaving it potentially difficult to reward poets.

20 Cf. DiD 103.3 for a similar description of a crowded banqueting hall.

20c *dod téura* (MS) Emended to *dot éara* following IGT i.20 (cf. 21c).

20cd More literally, 'the narrowness of the drinking houses refuses you / [you send] word ahead to the wine man.'

21ab That is to say, the leader of another territory opts to maintain an alliance with Alasdair rather than oppose him.

21c *gud toighir* (MS) Emended to *gat eighir* following IGT i.20 (cf. 20c) and for rhyme (: *beiridh*).

22a Cf. *líne a ccéill do chuireabhair* 'you explained a line' (*Maguire* 9.16c).

22c Literally, 'the knot was loosened by a queen'. On agency being expressed by *ó*, see DIL O 76.33 ff. The 'knot' perhaps refers to a coded message of love contained in the 'lines' (of poetry?) of 22a, which were sent (by Alasdair?) to a married noblewoman (*ríoghain*).

22d *hōiridh* Taking the *fh* in the MS reading to be superfluous, this word is a compound of *ór* ('gold') and *idh* ('a hoop-shaped object', etc.; see DIL, s.v. *id*). On translating *óiridh* as 'golden bracelet' see Butler 2016n. and TD 10.39n.

23d *cairthe* For the figurative use of *cairthe*, with reference to a warrior, see DIL C 317.29–30.

25abc This must refer to the arrival of the ancestors of Aodh and Alasdair on the shores of Ireland and their spreading throughout the land.

25c One might alternatively interpret this line as ‘from the shore a new sail was raised’ (i.e. ‘they set off anew from the shore’).

25d *is éadmhar* I take this to mean that the young women are jealous of each other and vie for the attentions of Clann Domhnaill. Alternatively, it might simply mean ‘are desirous [of the Clann Domhnaill]’, for which meaning see *AiD* 13.20n.

26a More literally, ‘Regarding the paying of tax, since it was established’.

26c This line is a syllable short. Possibilities for emendation would be to insert *is* at the beginning of the line, or *na n-* before *earradh*, or perhaps to replace *ar* with a different preposition.

earradh I take this to mean ‘of freemen’ and to refer to Aodh’s clients, the implication being that it is no small achievement for them to have never failed to pay Aodh. Alternatively, if *earradh* is a singular genitive and refers to Aodh, the translation might be as follows: ‘Since the paying of tax to Aodh was established, [though] debts were pledged to him without security – no small burden on a lord’s land – nobody has failed Aodh’. I am not sure about either translation. Another possibility might be the following: ‘Since the paying of tax to Aodh was established nobody has failed him – [though] this is no small burden on landowners’ territory; [consequently,] debts are promised to him without security (i.e. he has no need for security)’.

27b *tuagha* Cf. 4c. One could alternatively read the literal meaning, ‘axes’, i.e. his own weapons. Taking it to mean ‘axe-bearers’ seems, however, more in keeping with the emphasis on Alasdair’s fearlessness.

27d *grinneal ágha* I have taken this to be essentially the same as *grian áigh*, *grian chatha*, etc. (see *O’Reilly Poems* 2532n. and *DIL* G 159.36–7). Further examples of *grinneal* in this sense are: *Gabhthar lais a lár na nGaidheal / go grinneal ghliadh mur as dú / mana ratha da dheirc dhosuidh / beirt chatha le chosain clú* (National Library of Scotland MS Adv. 72.2.2, f. 4v); [. . .] *n dliger fir ar th’uilli a n-agh / nach leigter uirri fa fion / do lion aigh a ngrinneal ghli(i)dh / coir grian na linn[e]d ag lion* (RIA MS 1134, p. 148); *Gur thesdaigh grinneal an ghli(i)dh / tre a rendaibh do-rinne an t-eól / caor shluagh ag anadh fa Áodh / daor fuair an goradh san ghleódh* (NLI MS G 167, p. 137).

28c *críc[h] bhFlainn* Ireland. See *Maguire*, p. 288, for a list of similar poetic names for Ireland.

28d *litrigh* For the sense ‘ornate’, ‘ornamented with lettering’ see *DiD*, p. 582 and *O’Reilly Poems*, p. 275 (s.v. *litreach*). The only other example I have found of a *lann litreach* is contained in the following: *Tú ag léim deabhtha is díchiollach, / a ghéug Leamhna lúathbhuilleach, / do lann arsaidh óirlitreach, / anaidh badhbh dá buachail-leacht* (*O’Reilly Poems* 1.30; Carney has translated part of the second couplet (p. 254, s.v. *buachailleacht*): ‘the scald-crow awaits the plying (lit. tending, herding) of your blade’). Cf. also *lann líneach*, of which I have found two examples: *Port an Fhailleagáin d’féaghain / ba roitheandáil dá-ríribh / mac Í Fhlainn uadh san áireamh / tárraidh luagh sa loinn línigh* (*Rucc an bás báire an einigh*, RIA MS 2, p. 73, q. 69); *Do-ní chairt don loinn línigh, / lér mhínigh chloind Airt Éinfhir* (*IGT* ii, example 1126).

29c *fhéar n-álaidh* Note the plural use of the attributive adjective in q. 3d (above) versus singular use here.

29cd Literally, 'lying alongside injured men is what a woman got from attempting Aodh'.

30cd In other words, if you are an enemy of Aodh you had better not let your guard down at any time.

31abd Note *breacadh* in this quatrain: *thaob[h] : raona : caola : Aod[h]a*.

31cd The image conjured is one of bits of armour etc. being kicked up by Aodh's horse as he charges through a pursuing party, making it perilous to travel closely behind him. My translation of a *bhreith do léim lúdha / cēim* ('to travel by vigorous bound') as 'to race' is intended to capture the sense of a soldier attempting to keep up with Aodh.

32a *ricolla* (MS) Emending to *ríoghColla* would also be correct (see *SNG*, 391) but more intrusive.

32d *colbha* The translation 'vanguard' is based on the sense 'edge' or 'border' (see *DIL*, s.v. *colba*). Cf. the following examples from another poem by the same author: *Rodhocair diol a ndiomdha / láoich lé gcosaintir colbha / a-táthar fáoi ag fóir Dhealbhna / dá ndéarna cóir chráoi Chondla*; and *Láoich ríoghda nach dóich dhiomdha / sínid tar ógbhaidh nÉmhna / ní sgél sin ar chloind gCondla / Goill ar colbha a dtigh Themhra (Geall re hiarlachd ainm barúin, NLI MS G 992, f. 35v, qq. 7 and 29)*.

33 This quatrain appears twice in the manuscript – here and between quatrains 2 and 3. As it contains *dúnadh* it must belong at this point (quatrains 34–6 being supplementary). If, in the exemplar used by the scribe, q. 2 appeared at the foot of a page and q. 33 appeared at the top of a subsequent page, with qq. 3–32 on the intervening pages, he may have inadvertently turned more than one page after copying quatrain 2 and copied this quatrain before realizing his mistake.

33c *búain* (MS) I have emended this to its variant form *béin* for rhyme with *fhéin*.

33d *fhéin nÍle* An allusion to the Scottish ancestry of Clann Domhnaill. Islay was the seat of the Lord of the Isles.

34d *deag[h]fhuil Róigh* Descendants of the Ulster hero, Fearghas mac Róigh. Máire's connection with the latter is not clear to me. She was of the Leinster family Ó Mórdha, who did not trace their origins to Fearghas mac Róigh (see *Butler* 1293n., where it is stated that Munster and especially Connacht families claimed descent from F. mac Róigh, and *Measgra* II, 209, which states that the principal families that were supposed to have descended from him were Ó Lochlainn of Burren, Ó Conchobhair of Corcomroe and Ó Conchobhair of Kerry; *L'Bran*, p. 412, explains *clann Róigh* and *sliocht Róigh* as 'the (royal line of the) Ulaidh'). Perhaps Máire is to be connected to the line of Fearghas mac Róigh through her mother's genealogy.

35a *c[h]léire* In leniting this I have followed the example of McKenna (*dá n-ana ar an iul dhíreach*, *DiD* 58.30), and have taken it that *anaidh ar* is followed by the dative.

35c More literally, 'a thing to surpass the gift (or excellence) of a ring'.

35c *bfháine* (MS) See note on 9c.

36cd The sense of *cuir* (gen. sg. of *cor* 'putting', 'planting', etc.) is somewhat vague when used of trees, as here, but has variously been translated as 'planted', 'firm planted', and 'newly-set' (see *DIL* C 472.62–6, and *TD* 1.6n.). Its use here seems to be primarily

for metrical purposes and therefore may be superfluous to the sense. For my interpretation of *caomhna ar* (normally ‘protection against’) cf. *Ingen Taidg gruaidh ghairthe / gnúis nár go neimh ndersgnaithe / sduagh iongnáth gan caomhna ar chrodh / an fhionnbhláth aobhdha iodhan* ‘... who does not hoard wealth ...’ (q. 23 of an acephalous copy of a poem of which the first remaining line is *Déis Bhúrcach nach fuair éanoil*, RIA 3, f. 7a (= *Déna coimhne a Chaisil Chuirc*, Book of the O’Conor Don, f. 357a, q. 11 ff; the quatrain I quote does not occur in the latter copy)). *Caomhna* also occurs in this sense without *ar*: *Gaoth[a] a filidh (é) fraochdha a marcruidh / maorga a caigne / ní cleachtar leo caomhna a ccuirm(h)e / aobhdha a n-ainnre* ‘... they do not hoard their ale ...’ (Dáibhí Ó Bruadair: *Teallach coisreagtha chrích(e) Barrach*, TCD MS 1448, p. 48); cf. also the next example I quote below.

In *fhead[h]aibh ... chnú n-órd[h]a* (literally, ‘trees of golden nuts’) I take ‘trees’ to figuratively mean a large number or a ‘host’; for *cnú* in the sense ‘jewel, trinket’ see *Maguire* line 455n. The term ‘golden nuts’ seems to have been popular with Ó Cobhthaigh poets, though not exclusive to them: *Nír chleachd coigil chnú n-órdha / dá clú go cora a dhíamhra / bean ré bac gcruidh do cháomhna / slat mháordha d’fhuil na n-íarla* (Muirch-eartach Ó Cobhthaigh: *Geall re hiarlachd ainm barúin*, NLI MS G 992, f. 35v, q. 41); *Baodlach buain fa bheol na tuinne / tonn oinigh nar fhill ó sgoil / ní dhiongna comha cnu n-ordha / crú modha ar a mordha a-moidh* (Eoghan (mac Aodha) Ó Cobhthaigh: *Mairidh tene a dteallach Ghaoidhiol*, NLI MS G 992, f. 20v, q. 47); *Lucht comhair cnú n-óraidhe / Cú Chonnacht ’s a fháidhfhile* ‘They share golden trinkets between them, Cú Chonnacht and his wise poet’ (*Maguire* 11.10ab); *Do briseadh cáin do chnú n-óir / dámad tóir thú ar dháimh na dáidh* (IGT ii, example 1777).

APPENDIX

The following is a transcription of TCD MS 1340, f. 33. The text is fragmentary and comprises portions of what may originally have been three separate poems. I have therefore divided the transcription into three sections. The first section contains the beginning of the poem *Gnath Laidhnigh ac* [...]. This appears on the recto, which comprises the far left portion of the top half of the original page. Quatrains were written one per line, therefore what remains of the text is the beginning of each quatrain. As the page would have originally contained around 56 quatrains *Gnath Laidhnigh ac* [...] may have ended, and another poem may have begun on this page. The second and third sections are the fragments of text that appear on the verso, which comprises the far right portion of the top half of the original page. Quatrains were also written one per line, therefore what remains of the text is the end of each quatrain. Sections 2 and 3 are separated in the manuscript by a gap of about three lines, suggesting the end of one poem and the beginning of another.

Capital letters and punctuation are editorial. Tall *e* has been transcribed as small *e*. Expansions are in italics. Square brackets indicate loss of text due to having been torn away; round brackets are used for tentative readings and for illegible text (in the latter case one dot represents approximately one illegible character). An oblique stroke indicates division of quatrains; it also indicates alternative tentative readings of instances where only part of a letter remains. Quatrains in section 1 are numbered.

1. TCD MS 1340, f. 33r

1. Gnath Laidhnigh ac [...] / 2. Meinic tugadh leo (d)[...] / 3. Tugadar Goill dá[...] / 4. Mac righ Laighean m(a)[...] / 5. R(..a) e don fe(u)r Laigh[...] / 6. Le Díarmuid mhac (mh)[...] / 7. D(a) thaobh Laidhneach a(s/r)[...] / 8. Leis do fagbadh fiad[...] / 9. Aod mhac an Chalbhaigh [...] / 10. Cogadh Laidhneach ro(s/r/i)[...] / 11. Tainic leo lion a thio[...] / 12. Mairg do-chí an cr(u)[...] / 13. Dar le hAodh ni he [...] / 14. Do bi fíor gcatha (c)[...] / 15. A ndiaigh sochair (s/r)[...] / 16. Cios na gColla ar [...] / 17. Sochar a shean o hsi[...] / 18. Do bhuain chora d[...] / 19. Mar fuaradar [...] / 20. Mac an Chalbhaigh [...] / 21. Nír himreadh oir[...] / 22. Cogadh Aoda a[...] / 23. Fuair fear [...] / 24. Na comhth(a)[...] / 25. Do leig th[...] / 26. (Mac .id)[...] / 27. Fir (io)[...] / 28. Ba[...] / 29. C(u)[...] / 30. D[...]

2. TCD MS 1340, f. 33v1–10

[...]oghluim. / [...]ios. / [...]a aguind. / [...]gíataigh. / [...]mcheall. / [...] (m). / [...] (n/h)athcuinghidh. / [...] (e)athaibh. / [...] an Chalbaigh. / [...] na finemhuin.

3. TCD MS 1340, f. 33v11–23

[...] ecorn. / [...] ugadh. / [...]. / [...] aighteach. / [...] (air) neimhneach. / [...] fionghoile. / [...] (n/m)othrois. / [...] (f) far n-ainleatrom. / [...] (r). / [...]. / [...] idhimh. / [...] / [...] al.