A minor glossary
in a sixteenth-century Irish legal miscellany

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This article presents a philological study of a hitherto unpublished minor late medieval Irish glossary. The text's brevity and obscure location in a sixteenth-century legal miscellany likely contributed to it being almost entirely disregarded by scholarship. Although brief, the glossary contains some citations from unknown sources and some rarely attested vocabulary. It is one of several minor glossaries, typically written in the margins, on vellum off-cuts or on inserted vellum slips, that have not yet been treated in full. This article intends to draw attention to this body of material by providing an edition and translation of one such glossary.

1. Introduction

The composite volume TCD MS H 3.18 (1337) contains numerous discrete manuscripts, written at various times and locations by different scribes.[1] This volume in particular contains a significant portion of glossaries and glossary fragments, many of which contain legal citations.[2] Most of the more substantial glossaries in this volume have been published.[3] However, briefer glossaries, written in the margins, on vellum stubs, inserted slips and off-cuts, have attracted little attention and remain to be edited and translated in full.[4] These minor glossaries are important witnesses to Early Irish texts that no longer survive and

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1   For a description of the entire volume's contents, see Abbott & Gwynn (1921: 140–58, 358–63). See also Breatnach (2005: 5) for the division of the volume into its component sections, which follows the modern rebinding.

2   On the importance of TCD MS H 3.18 (1337) in the Irish glossary tradition, see Russell (1999: 96–7 and 110–11).

3   For a guide to the *glossae collectae* and glossaries printed in *CIH*, see Breatnach (2005). Most recently, Moran's (2019) edition and translation of O'Mulconry's Glossary (hereafter *OM*), together with the *Irsan* Glossary, and Taylor-Griffiths' (2022) edition and translation of legal *glossae collectae* are excellent philological examinations of such glossaries.

4   Other glossaries which have not yet appeared in print include, for example, the *Indiuth* glossary (*c.* 99 entries) in TCD MS H 3.18 (1337), vol. 3, p. 50a to col. 52 (Abbott and Gwynn 1921: 144; Kobel 2020: 205); a glossary of *c.* 44 entries written in the margins

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contain lexical forms that are not hitherto recorded in *eDIL* (see, for instance, entries [6] and [9] below).

One such text is the *Tindrum* glossary, a title which I have given the text based on the headword in the first entry. Although several entries from this glossary have been previously discussed,[5] the text has not been printed or studied in full. Binchy did not include it in *CIH*, for instance, despite the glossary containing several legal citations. This article seeks to rectify this oversight. It begins with a discussion of the glossary's manuscript context, the text's structure, the format of the entries, orthographical and phonological features, the sources of the entries and citations and a possible date for its compilation. Then follows the edition and translation, together with textual notes.[6]

2. Manuscript context

This glossary is written on a thin, protruding vellum stub of a singleton in TCD MS H 3.18 (1337), vol. 3, p. 46a. It forms part of 'Máel Íosa's book', a miscellany compiled at the beginning of the sixteenth century.[7] The miscellany is a compendium of medieval knowledge, containing legal, grammatical, religious, and pseudo-historical texts as well as poetry and Early Irish prose narratives. The final gathering includes glossarial material, such as a collection of legal *glossae collectae*, a copy of *Dúil Dromma Cetta*, and a text-glossary of *Félire Óengusso*. Two paper bifolios were also later inserted into this final gathering, containing the *Loman* glossary (ed. *CIH* 622.13–627.35), the *Irsan* glossary (ed. and trans. Moran 2019) and the poem *M'aonaran damh dar sliab* (ed. and trans. Carney 1940). These two glossaries were written by three different hands distinct from those of the vellum portion of 'Máel Íosa's book' (Moran 2019: 25). The poem was copied and signed by Páidín Óg Ó Maoil Chonaire (*ac sin duit a Andluain o fPaidin Og O Maol Conaire*, p. 83 inf.) but he provides no date of writing. However, it is noteworthy that the paper bears a watermark motif similar to that in the Book of Ballycummin (Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS 23 N 10), a manuscript dated to

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in TCD MS H 3.18 (1337), vol. 10, pp. 225–37; and a glossary in TCD MS H 3.18 (1337), vol. 17, p. 539a.

5   For instance, [1] is cited by Meyer (1892: 197); [5] and [12] are noted by Meyer (1906: 236 and 526). Further examples of earlier references to entries in this glossary are given in the textual notes below.

6   The structure of this article follows the general format used for published editions and translations of Early and Early Modern Irish texts in peer-reviewed journals, whereby a conclusion is not provided. See, for instance, Cnockaert-Guillou (2024), Nic Chárthaigh (2023), Bauer (2019), etc.

7   For a detailed description of 'Máel Íosa's book' (TCD MS H 3.18 (1337), vol. 2–4, pp. 1–83), see Kobel (2020); cf. Abbott and Gwynn (1921: 146); *CIH* 601 fn. i, and Breatnach (2005: 28) for previous descriptions of the glossary.

c. 1575 and compiled by Seán Ó Maoil Chonaire.[8] This suggests that the paper of the two inserted bifolios at least dates to the same period as that of the paper in the Book of Ballycummin.

In addition to the primary glossarial material in the manuscript, Máel Íosa also entered several shorter glossaries in less attractive sections of the book. For example, on the final page of the first gathering (pp. 1–14), Máel Íosa inserts two glossary extracts on *Elga* 'Ireland' and *melg* 'death' (see *eDIL* s.v. 2) to fill the empty space left in a column. These two items are unrelated to the legal texts in the gathering. Máel Íosa uses two slips of vellum (fols v and vi) to jot down several glossarial extracts of interest to him from other sources.[9] Moreover, Máel Íosa uses a vellum off-cut (p. 50(A)) to compile his own draft-text of a glossary by extracting sections of glossaries and *glossae collectae* from his sources. The *Tindrum* glossary, as mentioned above, is written onto a vellum stub which is situated between copies of *Tochmarc Cruinn ocus Macha* and *Baile Binnbérlach mac Búain*. Apart from an entry that contains a citation from *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, this glossary is thematically unrelated to the immediate surrounding texts. Less attractive pieces of vellum such as those used in this miscellany would have limited circulation and were vulnerable to loss. The compiler used them for inserting texts for his own personal use. Although the texts may be considered as secondary to the manuscript's main texts, they nevertheless reveal a valuable insight into the scholarly endeavours of a scribe, who engage with larger glossaries, *glossae collectae* and other sources. This on-going process of gathering, extracting, copying and inserting texts as witnessed in 'Máel Íosa's book, reflects what Gumbert (2004) distinguishes as the 'continuous enrichment' of manuscripts.

3. Format of entries and glossary structure

The glossary entries vary in format. [1], [3], [7], [8] and [12] consist of the headword followed by the explanation and then the citation, namely, the formulaic pattern of *X .i. Y ut est Z*. The entries for [2], [6] and [9] are akin to glossed extracts, providing the citation first, followed by the gloss, which is either a single word semantic explanation or a lengthier phrase. The lemma remains in the oblique case in [5], i.e. *builg*, acc. sg. of *bolg* 'gap' (*eDIL* s.v. 3). In [4], the headword *gnō* 'mockery' is the second syllabic element in *smitgnō* 'mockery' in the citation and is glossed with a lemma. Similarly in [7], the headword *coit* 'partiality' is the first syllable of the adjective *cóitech* (see below for a discussion of this form). [10] and [11] are text only without headword or explanation.

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8   For a discussion of the watermark motif used in the Book of Ballycummin, see Ó Macháin (2019: 32–34); for further comment on the watermark in the paper gathering of 'Máel Íosa's book', see Kobel (2025: 289).

9   For details, see Kobel (2020: 197 and 199).

The glossary is not in alphabetical order. The internal order of several entries suggests that they were extracted as clusters from sources in which entries had already undergone some organisation. For instance, [4], [5] and probably [6] are derived from *Bretha Nemed Toísech* (see below). [10] and [11] are taken from a copy of the later commentary to *Auraicept na nÉces* (discussed further in the textual notes below). Moreover, the lemmata in [3] and [4] begin with *g-* and are concerned with words relating to mockery and may have been placed together by the compiler himself.

4. Sources

The following sources are identified with certainty: [4] = *Bretha Nemed Toísech* (*CIH* 1134.34 and 2218. 28); [5] = a triad in *Bretha Nemed Toísech* (*CIH* 2219.40); [7] = *TBC* Rec. I, l. 1160; [10], [11] = *Auraicept na nÉces* l. 4752 and ll. 3703–4 respectively; [12] = *Cath Almaine*. Other possible sources include *Lebor Gabála Érenn* for [1],[10] and the *Infancy Narrative of Christ* for [8]. [6] may derive from a legal source, possibly *Bretha Nemed Toísech* since it follows [4] and [5]. I have been unable to identify the sources for [2], [3] and [9].

5. Orthography and phonology

The orthography of the glossary reflects that of the Middle and Early Modern Irish periods. For instance, we find final unstressed vowels have fallen together in *tarcuisni* [3], *insci* [11], and *co cuala* [12]. As for proclitics, the 3sg. relative copula form is written as *is* in [3], with confusion of *a* and *i* (*SnG* III, §3.29). Later orthographical variants include *p* for lenited *b* in *apcōit* [6],[11] and *u* for lenited *b* in *seruith* [9], with archaising final *-th* for lenited *-d* (for *serbaid*). *Tobartaich* [10] shows pseudo-archaic final *-ch* for *-g*, instead of lenited *-d* (*eDIL* s.v. *tabart(h)aid*, this headword ought to read *tobarthaid*). There is also confusion of lenited final *-d* and *-g* in *ainmnig* [10].

Possibly a later phonological variant is found in the use of *f* for word-internal lenited *b* in *sīthfe* [5]. *Connalba* [7] preserves the non-palatalised *-lb-* (later *condailbe*) and the omission of the palatal glide in *dag* [2] may be from the source.

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10   See Scowcroft (1987: 1–142) on the development of this text in the manuscript tradition, esp. 113–114 on *Gabáil Mac Míled*, which is an account of the taking of Ireland by the sons of Míl. The *gabáil* 'conquest' proper narrates the adventures of the Milesians up to the division of Ireland between Érimón and Éber.

11   Other instances of this pseudo-archaising spelling are employed elsewhere in the manuscript, e.g. *hUí Capha*, TCD MS H 3.18 (1337), vol. 2, p. 47a13; *Bodhp*, TCD MS H 3.18 (1337), vol. 4, p. 60a1; *sléphe*, TCD MS H 3.18 (1337), vol. 4, p. 60b9, etc. Breatnach (2012) provides a study of such spelling practices in this manuscript, along with several other sixteenth-century manuscripts.

Phonological changes include the vocalisation and subsequent loss of lenited *g* in *díbail* [10] (earlier *dígbáil*; see *SnG* IV, §2.14) and non-palatalised *-ndr-* in *tindrum* [1] (earlier *tindrem*). However, the latter instance may merely reflect the use of *u* for a schwa.

6. The glossary's date of compilation

Two citations are from Old Irish sources, viz. *Bretha Nemed Toísech* and Recension I of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*. However, the glossary also contains citations from later sources. For instance, two entries are from the later commentary to *Auraicept na nÉces*. Ahlqvist (1982: 32) suggests that *c.* 1100 represents the end of the common tradition for the *Auraicept na nÉces* commentaries. Another entry is from the early twelfth-century second recension of *Cath Almaine* (Ó Riain 1978: xxiv). These later sources provide a lower limit for the glossary (or glossaries) from which these entries were culled with the date of the manuscript providing an upper limit for the present glossary's compilation in its current form. The Anglo-Norman loan-word *abcóit* in [4] suggests a date in the Early Modern Irish period for when the *Bretha Nemed* source was glossed. The earliest example that *eDIL* s.v. *abcóit(e)* cites is from *Smaointe Beatha Chríost* (c. 1450), with the other examples in *eDIL* postdating this.[12] This subsequently pushes the limit for when the *Tindrum* glossary in its present form was compiled closer to the time of the manuscript. In conclusion, it is therefore likely that Máel Íosa himself culled material of interest from various glossaries and textual sources as he was reading them and copied them onto the vellum stub.

7. Cross-references to other glossaries

[4] = Lec. Gl. 263; O'Cl.
[8] = MG §296; *CIH* 1081.27; O'Dav. 1017 (noted in Breatnach 2005: 138).

8. Text and translation[13]

1.   Tindru*m* .i. sgél, ut *est*: t*indrum* m*ac* Mīl*ed* doq*um* nĒr*end*.

   Tinnrem ('account'), i.e. story, as in: the account of the sons of Míl to Ireland.

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12   According to the *OED* (s.v.), the word 'advocate', in the sense of a person employed to plead a cause on behalf of another in a court of law, is attested in English sources from *c.* 1384. *AND*² s.v. *advocat* cites examples with the legal sense from the thirteenth century onwards (the earliest entry dates to *c.* 1260 taken from *Brevia Placitata* (Turner & Plucknett 1951: 220).

13   In the translations, headwords are generally given in the normalised nom. sg. and are standardised according to their forms in *eDIL* for ease of reference.

2. Ēglan*n* 7 dag .i. gaisceda*ch*.

   Écland ('champion') and *daig* ('hero'), i.e. a warrior.

3. Gē*n* .i. t*arcuis*ni, ut *est*: ba hē gén 7 t*arcus*dol is mō fūaruta*r* Ull*aidh*.

   Gén ('ridicule'), i.e. insult, as in: it was the greatest ridicule and insult that the Ulstermen received.

4. Gnō .i. cuitb*edh*, ut *est*: na sme*ch* smitgnō .i. clūas .i. cuitb*ed*.[14]

   Gnó ('mockery'), i.e. derision, as in: nor chin, by striking [it] with mockery, i.e. an ear, i.e. derision.

5. Builg .i. sīt*h*fe, ut *est*: lēi*m* ta*r* builc .i. lēim do tab*air*t dō t*ar* builc i*n* c*ar*p*ait* bīs i*n*a lad*hair* ci*n*a b*ris*e*dh*.

   Bolg ('gap'), i.e. a draught-pole, as in: leaping across a *bolg*, that is, his leaping over the chariot's *bolg* which he has in his grasp without breaking it.

6. Ca*ch* nemt*h*ius .i. *co n*-apcōit .i. ūasalc[h]en*n*.

   Every *neimthes* ('every privileged person'), i.e. accompanied by an advocate, i.e. a noble leader.

7. Coit .i. *con*nalba *no* c*ar*at*r*ad, ut *est*: C*ran*n cóit*ech* f*r*iú.

   Coit ('partiality'), i.e. kin-love or alliance, as in: *Crann cóitech* against them.

8. Faīsitiu .i. íc, ut *est*: d'f*h*aīsitiu i*n* c[h]īsa Cēs*ard*ha.

   Faísitiu ('payment'), i.e. paying, as in: to pay the imperial tax.

9. M*acc* Nesā*n*, bā faid*h*b fri f*air*b .i. bā s*er*uith f*r*i doco*m*ol.

   Macc Nessáin, profit of spoils with estate, i.e. profit of stolen [goods] with hardship.

10. Ain*m*nig oc ain*m*mech*ad*. Gei*n*itil oc selb*ad*. Tob*ar*taich oc tidl*ac*ad. Āinsid oc faicel. Togarmnach oc gairm. Fox*laid* oc dībail.

    Nominative when naming. Genitive when possessing. Dative when bestowing. Accusative when seeing. Vocative when calling. Ablative when taking away.

11. INdl*es* 'is é' do rāda risi*n* cran*n* na*ch* tuisim ní īar n-aic*ned* [nó] i*n* tan f*edhar* i*n*sci na dūl*a*.

    It is improper to use masculine with respect to the *crann* 'tree' which does not generate anything by nature or when the gender of the element is applied.

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14 The glosses *.i. clūas* and *.i. cuitbed* are interlinear, written above *smitgnō*. See further discussion in the notes below.

12. Croís .i. cēol, ut *est*: co cūal*a in* croīs isi*n* t[ṡ]uip lūach*r*a.

Croís, i.e. music, as in: he heard the *croīs* in the wisp of rushes.

9. Textual notes

1. *Tinnrem*, attested with a wide range of meanings, is a commonly occurring word in the glossaries. For example, it is found with the sense of 'course (of action)' (s.v. *tinnrem*, I (e)) in *tinnram .i. crichnugad, ut est. Cinnas ata do tinnram*, *CIH* 1568.31. The citation is taken from the Middle Irish poem *Cinnus atá do thinnrem*, 'What is your course of action', ed. and trans. Breatnach (2008: 9). In this text, *tinnrem* is understood by the glossator as *sgél* 'story, history', an account of an event that happened in the past, cf. *indisfet mo thindram det-siu*, *Aislinge Meic Con Glinne* l. 1260 (Jackson 1990: 40).

2. *Ēglann* is understood here as a substantivised form 'a champion, a fighting man' (s.v. *éccland*, *écclond*). *Dag* is used in the metaphorical sense of 'hero' (see s.v. *daig*, I 'flame, blaze, fire'). The explanatory gloss *gaiscedach*, referring to *ēglann*, is a substantivised adjective 'one bearing arms, a warrior (esp. one of prowess or skill), a champion' (s.v. 1 *gaiscedach*).

The editors of the E *fascicle* of the *Dictionary of the Irish Language* cite this entry with a question mark. The Dictionary suggests *éccland* was perhaps originally an adjective from *clann*, signifying 'expelled from the clan' following Meyer's (1910: ix) description of members of the *fíana* as men often expelled from their family. Following Meyer, this would entail a formation of the negative prefix *in-* (s.v. 4 *in-*) and *clann*. For the use of this prefix in composition, see *GOI* §872 (e); Dillon (1944). This form may have been influenced by *glond* with the transferred sense of 'champion' (s.v. 1 *glond* (c)).

3. In the citation, *gén* 'ridicule, derision, mockery' and the synonym *tarcusdol* are used in collocation (on the collocation of synonyms, see Mac Cana 1995: 115). The phrase *gén 7 tarcusdol* is followed by a defining relative clause, and therefore, the double article rule is triggered (Uhlich 2013: 435–8). A close parallel to this citation is found in *Táin Bó Cúailnge*: *Conid sí briathar is mó gén 7 tarcassul ro ráided for Táin Bó Cúalnge*, 'And that is the most scornful and insulting speech that was made on the Foray of Cúailnge', *TBC LL* l. 1395 (O'Rahilly 1967: 38). The *ll* in *Ullaidh* (MS *ull* + medial suspension-stroke through the second *l*) is likely a scribal slip for *U*laid*h*. As a reader points out to me, *ll* would only be expected in syncopated forms, e.g. *Ultach*/ *Ulltach*.

4. I provide the full sentence from *Bretha Nemed Toísech* for context: *ni gonae gruaidhe goaibh anṡoís, ná súil, na srúbh, ná smech smiotghno*, *CIH* 1134.34, 'Do not wound cheeks with spears of satire, nor eye, nor nose, nor chin, by striking

them with mockery' (this is translated to English from the Irish translation in Breatnach 1988: 11). I take *smitg[h]nō*, a compound of *smit* and *gnó*, as an independent instrumental dative, following Breatnach's (1988: 19) analysis, who points out that the sense of *smit* here is 'hitting, striking', as found in Modern Irish *smiotadh* (vn of *smiot*), *smiotáil*. Breatnach (1988: 19) suggests that Modern Irish *smiota gáire* 'snigger' may derive from the OIr. phrase *smitghnó* by means of decompounding it into two words and replacing *gnó* with *gáire*. For a discussion of *gnó* meaning 'ridicule' (s.v. 1 *gnó, gnáe*), arising out of *gnó* 'business, matter' (s.v. 2 *gnó*), see O'Rahilly (1950: 322, n. 6). The sense of the citation here therefore is pointing the finger to the chin, mocking that person's physical defect or blemish on that body part (Breatnach 1988: 11). The phrase *smech smitaig* is found in *Bretha Déin Chécht* §33.4, glossed *ina smeich do smitad, ł smitaig a smeichi*, 'for smashing his chin or for the … of his chin', Binchy (1966: 43 gloss 7). The MS has *smitaig* with a dot under the second *i*, which is a mark of deletion. Therefore, we should read *smitag*. Binchy (1966: 63) translated *smech smitaig* as 'a broken (?) chin', taking the adjective *smitach* as a derivative of *smioda* 'piece, fragment'. However, this is perhaps better translated as 'a struck chin'.

It is interesting to note that the explanatory glosses are written interlineally above *smitghnó* in the manuscript, i.e. *clūas* is written above the first syllable of *smitghnó* and *cuitbed* above the second. It is likely that the scribe extracted the citation with glosses following the layout of his exemplar which now no longer survives. However, in the copy of *BNT* preserved in TCD MS H 2.15B (1317), compiled by Dubháltach Óg Mac Fhir Bhisigh, *smitghnó* is decompounded and each gloss has been drawn down into the main line of the manuscript: *Smit .i. cluas. gnó .i. cuidbhiudh*, fol. 116v (*CIH* 1135.17–22). This may have served as the source for the following glossary entries: *smit .i. cluas*, Lec. Gl. 263; *smiot .i. cluas*, O'Cl. Cf. *nad smech smit gno*, *CIH* 2218.28 (for which we should read a compound *smitgno*; there is no gap between these two elements in BL, Nero MS A 7, f. 142vl7).

The glossator of this citation seems to have associated the first element of the compound with *smit(t)* 'the lobe of the ear' (e*DIL* s.v.), which itself is an etymological derivation from the word *smet(h)rach* in the phrase *bri(a)mon smet(h)rach* in sources such as *Sanas Chormaic* and *Auraicept na nÉces* (see further discussion in Arbuthnot 2013: 223–4), e.g. *meilid smit ind aue iter a dā mer 7 doēcce in duine*, CormY 149, 'he grinds the lobe of the ear between his two digits and he looks at the person' (trans. Arbuthnot 2013: 223).

5. For discussions of this entry, see Meyer (1906: 236 n. 1); Mac Neill (1932: 121); O'Rahilly (1942: 163–4); Breatnach (2023: 188–9). This citation is from a triad in *Bretha Nemed Toísech* which concerns chariot-drivers, viz. *CIH* 2219.40: *Immorchor delenn, foxal di ísli, léim tar boilg neimthigetar araid* 'Plying a wand, removing from a hollow, leaping across a gap are what distinguish a charioteer' (normalised text and translation from Breatnach 2023: 189). Breatnach

follows O'Rahilly's interpretation (1942: 163–4). A similar triad appears in *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (*LU* 6407) and in *Mesca Ulad* (Watson 1941, 11.249).

The phrase *léim dar boilg* clearly was of interest to glossators. For example, a somewhat different interpretation is given in O'Mulconry's Glossary: *Is léim al boilcc .i. súainem tar blaí fo-a·ndichet carpat nó léim dar ais dond aroid for rith*, OM 759, 'It is a leap *al boilg*', i.e. a rope across a green under which a chariot goes, or a leap back by the charioteer while running'. The feat here entails the charioteer jumping over a rope while the chariot goes underneath and landing in the chariot again or leaping backwards while running. Later the precise meaning of *bolg* was lost but the feat continued to be remembered as a remarkable feat of agility, where *bolg* came to be confused with *bolg*, *balg* (fem.) 'bubble' and the feat was to leap on a bubble with such lightness so as not to break it (see, for instance, in verse 31c of the poem *Mór ar bfearg riot, a rí Saxan* by Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh (edited and translated by Bergin (1913); reprinted in Bergin (1970: 73–81, 244–8): *léim ar bhailg is gan a bloghadh* 'leaping on a bubble without breaking it' (and discussed in Breatnach 2023: 153).

In our entry, *bolg* is interpreted by the glossator as a *síthbe*, a draught-pole. The term *síthbe* (*eDIL* s.v.) is a compound of *sith*- 'long' + the compositional form of the verbal noun *-be* 'cutting' (Greene 1972: 67). Greene (1972: 67) notes a rhyming example with a long vowel in SR 4284. The long vowel in the prefix *sith*-, which becomes increasingly common in Middle Irish, may have been influenced by the adjective *sír* 'long'. For a reconstruction of a chariot, depicting the position of the *síthbe*, see Stifter (2009: 282).

A literal translation of the phrase *bīs ina ladhair cina bris*edh is 'that he is wont to have in his grasp without breaking it'. The glossator employs the consuetudinal *bīs* here with the implication that the feat is not performed just once.

6. *Neimthes* (masc. u-stem) is a derivative formation of *neimed* and the abstract suffix -*us* (*GOI* §259). *eDIL* s.v. *neimthes* cites examples with the primary sense of having 'social or professional status or privileges' (s.v. *neimthes*, I). However, in the present entry, the glossator explains *neimthes* as *ūasalc[h]en*n 'a noble leader', the gloss in this instance transposed to the end of the entry. This is an example of *neimthes*, an abstract noun, being used in a concrete sense and denoting a person who embodies it, namely 'a privileged person'. On abstract nouns having this function, see Breatnach (2016: 1–29). This example with the sense of 'privileged person' can therefore be added to *eDIL* s.v. *neimthes*. The noble leader is accompanied by an *apcōit*, who would have been the highest grade of advocate (the *aigne fris-n-indlea-breth*) and who pleads cases on behalf of the leader of a *túath*, and a judge and a king (Breatnach 1990: 11–12).

7. The citation is taken from a quatrain uttered by Cú Chulainn in *TBC Rec. I* (discussed by Nagy 1996: 129 and Ó Cathasaigh 2019: 158–159):

Gaibid Crón cóidech (v.l. *foítech*, *faoitioch*) friu
nís léicfe [i] Muirthemniu
co rroisc monar Féne
isin tSléib túath Ochaíne. *TBC Rec. I* ll. 1160–3.

'The plaintive river Cronn offers them resistance and will not let them cross into Muirthemne until the work of warriors is finished in the mountain north of Ochaíne', O'Rahilly (1976: 157).

The length-mark in *Crón* may perhaps be no more than a misreading of an n-stroke (as a reader has suggested to me) rather than an indication of middle quantity where a long nasal would be expected following the vowel in a single syllable (Greene 1952).

The river *Cronn*, located in or near Cooley, Co. Louth (Ó Riain, Murray, Nic Cárthaigh 2016: 123), is mentioned in a series of episodes in *Táin Bó Cúailnge* Recensions I and II, in which it rises in defence of Cú Chulainn against the hosts of Connacht, hindering their progress and leading to the death of Úalu and the loss of many more warriors (Nagy 1996; Carey 2004; Dooley 2019). For example, *Conéracht Glaiss Chruind friu i n-enna crand*, 'The river Cronn rose up against them as high as the tops of the trees', *TBC Rec. I* l. 1000.

In her notes, O'Rahilly (1976: 245) suggested reading *Cronn coídech* 'the river Cronn lamenting' (cf. 'The … Cronn holds out against them …', trans. Carey (2004: 11) who leaves the problematic *cóidech* unrendered). O'Rahilly (1976: 245) compared this form to *caiteach* 'a mourner' (s.v. *caitech*, which cites this word only), a form which is preserved in British Library, MS Egerton 185 (see also the discussion of this form and *cóidech* in Lindeman 1984: 59–60; for problems with Lindeman's alternate account of this word, see Schumacher 2004: 406–8; also noted briefly in Griffith & Stifter 2013; Stifter et al. 2021). This is an 18th-cent. copy by Séamus Ó Broin of the glossary appended by Robert Kirk to his 1690 version of the Gaelic Bible (An Bíobla Naomhtha) (Ó Baoill 1986). However, Ó Broin's *caoiteach* is an error for *caóinteach* in Kirk's copy (de Bháldraithe 1987: 139). Therefore, O'Rahilly's interpretation does not stand.

A similar quatrain appears earlier in the text in a prophetic poem of five quatrains uttered by Dubthach Dóel Ulad (for a recent revised interpretation and translation of Dubthach's *laíd*, see Ó Cathasaigh (2019)):

Gébaid Crann fóitech fríithu (frihithu, Eg.)
nís léicfe i Murthemniu.
con roisc opair fer Féne
isin tsléib túad Ochaíni. *TBC Rec. I* ll. 198–201.

'The watchful river Crann will offer them resistance and will not let them cross into Murthemne until the work of warriors is finished in the mountain north of Ochaíne', O'Rahilly (1976: 130).

The form *Crann*, which is also written in the glossary entry, is a variant spelling for *Cronn* (*SnG* IV, §2.4 (4)).

The editor of the F-fascicle of *DIL* suggests that *fóitech* is derived from *fót* 'sod', i.e. 'containing sods' (s.v. *fóitech*). O'Rahilly (1976: 245) points out that *fóitech* does not fit the context here and takes it as an adjectival formation of *fót* 'watchfulness' (*eDIL* s.v. 2 *fót* 'watchfulness, vigilance, caution'; s.v. *faitech* 'cautious, heedful, wary'). *Fóitech* is a variant to LU's *cóidech* in the quatrain given above. It is possible that *cóidech* was a difficult form and this was subsequently replaced with *fóitech*, the *lectio facilior*.

The 3pl. prepositional form with suffixed pronoun *friu* in the first line of the verse must be treated as a hiatus form to meet the required syllable count for the line. This becomes monosyllabic in the Middle Irish period (*SnG* III, §3.2), although Modern Scottish Gaelic still preserves the hiatus, i.e. *riutha* with *-th-* serving as a hiatus filler. However, the spelling *fríithu* occurs in the second verse and *frihithu* in Eg. 1782 (Windisch 1913: 126) where *-th-* is likely an analogical spelling (O'Rahilly 1930: 165).

Lastly, Ó Cathasaigh (2019: 159) questions O'Rahilly's editorial imposition of a capital in *Féne* and notes that *fir féne* '*fían*-warriors' is used in this context to refer to the invading army, rather than to the Féni who are distinct from the Ulaid in the early sources.

Returning to the glossary entry, the glossator provides a semantic gloss on *coit*, rendering it as *connalba* 'love for kindred' (s.v. *condalbae*) and *caratrad* 'alliance', presumably understanding *coit* in the extended sense of 'of partiality, love of a person' (s.v. *cuit* (4)) and *cóitech* as a derivative of this. The theme of *condalbae* is a decisive factor in *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, and it is this factor of kin-love that defeats the Ulstermen's enemies in the end (on the power of kin-love in *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, see, for instance, Ó Cathasaigh 2002).

8. This entry is an abridged version of that found in corresponding glossaries (see section 6 above), e.g. *Fuisitin .i. íc, ut est amail ro búi Muire 7 Ioiseb ac fuisidin in chisa*, *fuisitin*, i.e. paying, ut est 'as Mary and Joseph were delivering (lit. confessing) the tribute', O'Dav. 1017. In this entry, the preposition *do*, rather than *oc*, and the qualifier *Cēsarda* are used. Moreover, the short dat. sg. of *faísitiu* (fem., *n*-stem) is used, whereas the longer form, as seen in O'Dav. 1017, is more common in Middle Irish (*SnG* III, §5.11)

According to *eDIL* s.v. *cesarda*, the vowel length of the *-e-* in stressed position is uncertain. It is found with a length-mark in one instance, albeit in prose, i.e. RIA MS 23 P 16 (Leabhar Breac), p. 145a59: *Ar is mōr in ascaid tuc Dia dō .i. a thabairt ō thabach in chíssa césarda corup apstal 7 suiscēlaige hē* (ed. Lambert 2017: 258, §6) which I translate as 'For great is the gift God gave to him, that is, making him an apostle and evangelist after levying of the imperial tribute'. The form is a derivative of *Cesar* (s.v., with uncertainty expressed about the length

of -*e*-) with the adjectival suffix -*d(a)e* (*GOI* §347). In the Middle Irish poem *Ríg Themra toebuige iar tain*, attributed to Flann Mainistrech, the name occurs with a length-mark, albeit not metrically confirmed: *Octauin croda Céssar*, LL 15981 (cited in *eDIL* s.v. *Cesar*). An example confirmed by rhyme in Classical Modern Irish is found in the Bardic poem *Dá ghrádh tréigfead Maol Mórdha* (ed. Carney 1950: 121–127): *bhéasaibh*: *Césair*, 25cd. See further discussion on the Classical Latin diphthong <ae> becoming a long vowel in the stressed position of *Sésair*, *Césair* in Darwin (2021: 214 and 230).

9. The source for this citation is unknown and the lack of context leaves the intended sense unclear. The following analysis and proposed translation is therefore tentative. The citation contains seven syllables and may have been extracted from a poem. Difficulty in interpretation is also lent by the ambiguity of the MS reading, i.e. *m* + suspension-stroke, which could be expanded as either sg. *macc* or pl. *maicc* (or *meicc*). For the non-palatalised final in the gen. sg. *Nesān*, see *GOI* §280.1. The Maicc Nessáin, of whom there were seven and all ecclesiastics, belonged to the Uí Fáeláin branch of the Uí Dunlainge of North Leinster. They were the patrons of the church in Ireland's Eye (or *Inis Mac Nessáin*) in Dublin, the church in Termoneeny (earlier Enga), Derry, and Feighcullen, Co. Kildare (Ó Riain 2011: 104). Inis Mac Nessáin was besieged and plundered on several occasions (e.g. AU 701, AFM 897, 960 and 961).

Fodb can refer to a dead person's possessions, especially clothing (e.g. *fodb* is glossed *etach in mairb* in *CIH* 984.24; ed. and trans. Eska 2019: 270 and 271, with discussion on 43–44) or more generally to battle spoils (see *eDIL* s.v. *fodb*). In the citation, it may refer to the death-due bequeathed to the church, which can include a person's possessions and inherited estate (see discussion on death-dues in Etchingham 1999: 271–6, 439–441; Breatnach 2017: 87–91). However, the glossator interprets *fodb* in the more general sense of stolen property attained through difficulty. The verbal noun *serbad* 'act of stealing; theft' is a *u*-stem verbal noun formation in origin (*GOI* §723; the verb in question is *serbaid* 'steals'). However, the glossator provides the MIr. gen. sg. form in analogy with o-stems (*SnG* III, §5.8). *eDIL* s.v. *serbad* cites two other examples from glossaries, namely O'Dav. 1154 and O'Cl., which is the same entry as the latter. The citation in O'Dav. 1154 (*a serbad .i. ngaid*) is from a passage in *Bretha Nemed Toísech* which is concerned with offences against the wives of poets. Such offences are in fact regarded as an insult to the husbands and compensation is paid to them as a result. This includes stealing from the wives: *a searbud .i. a ngaid*, 'stealing from them', *CIH* 2229.13. In our example, however, *serbad* is used in the transferred sense of 'that which is stolen' (cf. *eDIL* s.v. *gait* (c)).

10. This entry is extracted from the longer version of *Auraicept na nÉces*, l. 4752 (BL, MS Egerton 88, fol. 74va3 and TCD MS H 2.16 (1318), fol. 239a12, respectively). This sentence appears in a section of the commentary headed

Coic filltigthi fichet hi remim 'Twenty-five inflexions in declension', which is divided into two groups, viz. twenty artificial species and five inflexions 'for full consideration of the poets', being the cases of the Irish language: […] *uair ain*mn*iugud ag ainmnech*ad, *geiniti*l *ag selpad*, tobarth*id ag tin*nn*loc*ud, *ains*id *ag faicsin*, *togarm*an*n ag gair*m, *foxla ag dibail no ag fagail* […], *Auraicept na nÉces*, l. 4752 (Calder 1917: 248). Our entry contains Middle Irish forms including *faicel* (*eDIL* s.v. *faiceáil* and *feicáil*; the attestations cited in the dictionary would suggest these are exclusively Middle Irish forms) for *faigsin*, dat. sg. of *aicsiu*, with prosthetic *f*-, and *foxlaid* for *foxla*. The Middle Irish verbal noun *tidlacad* is used (from the simple verb *tidlaig*, based on *tindlaig* with dissimilation of *-ndl-* > *-dl-*; < OIr. *do-indnaig*, vn *tidnacol*).

11. The source is the commentary to *Auraicept na nÉces*, ll. 3703–4. I provide here the entry (given in bold below) in its context:

> Coitchend do ferindsge 7 do banindsge 7 do deimindsge, no indsge is coitchend do ferindsge 7 do banindsgi, *ut est* Fla*nn* no Ceallach, no is couitchend dona huil*ib* masgal is se. Dil*ius* antan raiter: is si sron no suil an fir, no is he beul no fiacail na mna. Dil*ius* is se an fer, is si in beun. Ruidlius intan raiter: 'is e bel no fiacail an fir', no ruidlius is se an fer so, cona anmaim sain*dredaig*. **Indlius is e do radha risin gcrand na tuism*id* ní ier n-aiccned, no in tan fedhair indsgi for araile,** ll. 3695–3704 (v.l: *inles is é do rad*h *resi*n *crand na t*usi*m ni i*ar n-*aic*ned no *i*n tan fed*air *insci f*or *aile*, Book of Uí Mhaine (RIA D ii 1), fol. 141r13.)

> 'It is common for masculine and for feminine and for neuter, or it is common gender for masculine and for feminine, as in 'Flann' or 'Ceallach', or 'it's he' is common for every (kind of) masculine. It is proper when it is said: feminine *srón* or *súil* of the man, or it is masculine *bél* or *fiacail* of the woman. Proper when 'masculine the man' and 'feminine the woman'. Truly proper when it is said: 'masculine is the *bél* or *fiacail* of the man, or truly proper, 'he's this man', with his proper name. It is improper to say masculine with respect to the *crann* which does not generate anything according to nature, or when gender is applied to another' (my translation).

The format of this commentary is in the standard expository form of the long version of the *Auraicept* which uses the four descriptors of *coitchenn* 'common', *díles* 'proper', *ruidles* 'peculiar' and *indles* 'improper' to establish a word's meaning and true sense in as many contexts as possible. Here the commentary discusses natural and artificial (i.e. grammatical) gender and illustrates the agreement and non-agreement between the grammatical gender of a noun and the sex or animateness of a referent. However, it states that it is improper to label *crann* 'is é' (the copula and pronoun are used here as a gender marker, i.e. masculine) when it is inanimate or when the natural gender is applied to a referent. For further discussion on artificial gender in *Auraicept na nÉces*, see Poppe (1995–7).

12. Meyer (1906: 526) noted this entry under the headword *crois. eDIL* s.v. ? *cróinsig* cites this entry along with another attestation from *Cath Almaine*, which is the source of this citation. It is drawn from the recension that includes the Book of Fermoy (F), the Yellow Book of Lecan (Y) and RIA MS D iv 2 (D) (Ó Riain 1978: xxii). Another recension is found in Brussels, MS Bibliothèque Royale 5301–20 (B). F reads as follows:

> […] co cuala inní na ceola écsamla ní riam ná iarum ceol bu ferr. **Co cuala dna in croinsig sant shup luacra**. Ba binde in ceol hí-sin oldát ciúil in domuin (Ó Riain 1978: 25–26, ll. 94–96).

> 'He (Baethgalach) heard the various melodies; and never did he hear, before or after, better music. Then he heard a voice (from a head) in the wisp of rushes, and sweeter was that tune than the tunes of the world!' (trans. Stokes 1903: 59 §18).

Y and D read *guth* instead of F's *croinsig*. In the glossarial index to his edition, Stokes (1903: 68) suggested that *cróinsech* may be a derivative of *crón* in *crónán* 'hum, purr, drone' (*eDIL* s.v.). In *Tromdhámh Guaire*, for instance, the poet Senchán Torpéist had to perform a *crónán* for *Marbán*. Joynt (1941: 46) suggests that it was 'a kind of musical droning or intoning of a guttural nature' and that it was considerably taxing on the throat and lungs. Indeed, Senchán undertook the task with such effort that his eye sprang out of his head onto his cheek (*sreangad ro-tenn dá tuc air ag denum in crónáin, sceinnid a lethshuil tar a cind, co mbui for a gruaig*, ll. 997–8). The *crónán* was performed with the head held back (perhaps leaving the gullet exposed), as suggested by Senchán having raised his beard (*ro thocuib Senchán a ulchain a n-airdi*, ll. 993–4).

Ó Riain (1978: 26 n. 2) reads *cróisig* for MS *cróinsig*, noting that the *n*-stroke in the MS was possibly a length-mark in the exemplar. Alternatively, this could be an intentional *n*-stroke added in a scribal attempt to elucidate this rare word and associate it with *crónán*, as per Stokes' suggestion, mentioned above. That *croisech* is understood as a sound is supported by the fact that it is replaced by *guth* in D and Y (here the *lectio facilior*) (see O'Curry 1873: 325–6). Ó Riain (1978: 74), however, favours the variant *cuisech* in B and translates it tentatively as 'whistling' in his glossary (see *eDIL* s.v. 2 *cúisech* 'piping, whistling').

The form *cruisech* also appears elsewhere in the text of this recension: *7 tócbais a chrúisich ós aird combo bindi cach ceol ar tuind talman*, Y; […] *7 do-rat a crúisic as combá binde oldás cacha ceol ar talmain*, F (Ó Riain 1978: 28 ll. 153–154 and 115–116 respectively). Stokes (1903: 63, §22) translates this as 'and he raised his *cruinsech* (?) on high so that it was sweeter than any melody on the earth's sward'. *eDIL* s.v. *cruisich* provides the reading from Y only, using the oblique form as the headword and suggests it is the acc. sg. of *cruísech* 'javelin, lance, spear' (*eDIL* s.v.). However, the context does not support this meaning. Indeed, the variant *dord fiansa* in B (Ó Riain 1978: 12 l. 167) clearly implies that

cruisech was understood as a humming or droning sound coming from the head. It is thus much more likely that *cruisech* is derived from *cróes* 'maw, mouth, gullet' and used in the sense of 'throat singing'. The head lying in the rushes has his mouth wide open and emits a guttural humming sound.

Returning to our entry, the headword *croís* is a syllabic element extracted from *croisech*. The citation form (*croīs*) is a corrupt form of acc. sg. *croisich* (which was in F's source but which was emended by a subsequent scribe to *croinsig*), perhaps due to a suspension-stroke lost in transmission. The entry in Ó Cléirigh's Glossary, namely, *cruisich .i. ceol* 'music' is likely derived from a source of the recension of Y, D, and F. In the source, the dat. sg. of *sop* 'wisp, tuft' (*eDIL* s.v.) is masculine. However, in the glossary, the form *suip* is treated as a feminine (see *SnG* IV, §4.10 and *IGT* i, §84).[15]

Abbreviations

AND²	*Anglo-Norman Dictionary (AND² Online Edition).* 2005. Aberystwyth University. https://anglo-norman.net (accessed 24/06/2025)
B	Brussels MS Bibliothèque Royale 5301–20
BL	British Library
CIH	Binchy, D. 1978. *Corpus Iuris Hibernici.* Dublin: Institute for Advanced Studies.
CormY	Meyer, K. 1913. *Sanas Cormaic. An Old Irish Glossary, Compiled by Cormac Úa Cuilennáin. Edited from the Copy in the Yellow Book of Lecan by Kuno Meyer.* Anecdota from Irish Manuscripts, IV. Halle: Max Niemeyer. Repr. with Meyer's corrections added to the text, 1994. Felinfach: Llanerch.
eDIL	2019. *An Electronic Dictionary of the Irish Language*, based on the *Contributions to a Dictionary of the Irish Language.* Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1913–1976. https:dil.ie (accessed 20/06/2025).
D	RIA D iv 2
F	Book of Fermoy
GOI	Thurneysen, R. 1946. *A Grammar of Old Irish.* Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.
IGT I	Mac Cárthaigh, E. 2014. *The Art of Bardic Poetry: A New Edition of Irish Grammatical Tracts 1.* Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.
Lec. Gl.	Stokes, W. 1900. 'The Lecan Glossary', *Archiv für celtische Lexicographie* 1, 50–100.

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LL	Best, R. I., M. A. O'Brien & A. O'Sullivan. 1954–1983. *The Book of Leinster*, 6 vols. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.
MG	Pearson, A. I. 1942. 'A medieval glossary', *Ériu* 13, 61–87.
O'Cl.	Miller, A., 1879–1880. 'O'Clery's Irish Glossary'. *Revue Celtique* 4, 349–428; *Revue Celtique* 5, 1–69 ; *Revue Celtique* 6, 479.
O'Dav.	Stokes, W. 1904. 'O'Davoren's Glossary'. *Archiv für celtische Lexikographie* 2, 197–504.
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*. 2025. http://oed.com (accessed 24/06/2025)
OM	Moran, P. 2019. *De Origine Scoticae Linguae (O'Mulconry's Glossary): An Early Irish Linguistic Tract, With a Related Glossary, Irsan*. Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis. Lexica Latina medii aevi 7. Turnhout: Brepols.
RIA	Royal Irish Academy
SnG	McCone, K., D. McManus, C. Ó Háinle, N. Williams, & L. Breatnach (eds). 1994. *Stair na Gaeilge: In Ómós do Pádraig Ó Fiannachta*. Maigh Nuad: Roinn na Sean-Ghaeilge, Coláiste Phádraig.
SR	Stokes, W. 1883. *The Saltair na Rann: A Collection of Early Middle Irish Poems*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
TBC LL	O'Rahilly, C. 1967. *Táin Bó Cúalnge: from the Book of Leinster*. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.
TBC Rec. I	O'Rahilly, C. 1976. *Táin Bó Cúailnge: Recension I*. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.
TCD	Trinity College Dublin
Y	Yellow Book of Lecan

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Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, MS H 2.15B (1317)
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