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The pre-19th-century manuscript tradition and textual transmission of the Early Modern Irish tale *Oidheadh Con Culainn*: a preliminary study

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

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Faculty of Arts
University of Glasgow
October 2009

Abstract

The Early Modern Irish recension of the tale relating Cú Chulainn's death, *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, has received comparatively little scholarly attention, especially compared with its Early Irish counterpart, *Aided Con Culainn*. Consequently, little is known about the textual transmission and manuscript tradition of the Early Modern Irish tale. The present thesis seeks to rectify this and give a more accurate view and preliminary analysis of the extant manuscripts, concentrating on the manuscripts that date to before the 19th century. A core element of this thesis is a draft catalogue of these pre-19th-century manuscripts.

Taking advantage of the tale's prosimetric structure, it will be argued and demonstrated that it is possible to classify the manuscripts of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* into distinct groups. Within the extant manuscripts preserving the tale we can identify a number of versions of it, differing most notably in the poetry that they contain. The classification of the manuscripts into groups can be established on the basis of the poetry that a version of the tale contains; the emerging groups thus established can be used to comment on the transmission of the tale.

In order to corroborate the argument for the manuscript groups, we will explore a number of aspects of the text and the manuscripts, such as textual comparisons on both intra- and inter-group levels, possible relations (e.g. geographical) of the scribes, linguistic and metrical variations, the 'rhetorics', and different versions of the tale written by the same scribe. The thesis will further investigate the most famous poem from the text, *Laoidh na gCeann* ('The Lay of the Heads'), in order to establish to what extent the evidence from the poem can be used to add to our understanding of the transmission of the overall tale.

Author's Declaration

This thesis represents the original work of Julia Sophie Kühns, unless otherwise stated in the text. The research upon which it is based was carried out in the Department of Celtic, University of Glasgow, under the supervision of Professor Thomas Clancy and Professor Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh during the period October 2005 to October 2008, with a writing-up period from October 2008 to June 2009.

Acknowledgements

writing this thesis have also benefited greatly from the help and advice of Dr Geraldine Parsons.

My friends saw me through the 'PhD experience' and tolerated my moments of stress and panic: thank you to all of you. Special thanks are due to Katherine Young, who was at hand with I.T. support when modern technology got the better of me, and who generously lent 'a fresh pair of eyes' for the purpose of proofreading this thesis.

Above all, this thesis would not have been possible without the support of my family. My parents, Uschi and Mike, never lost faith in my abilities and kept on believing in me when I myself could no longer see the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel. My brother Johannes offered encouragement or distraction – whichever was required! – and with his encyclopaedic knowledge has been indispensable in his role as my 'Irish history advisor'. It is to my family that I dedicate this thesis.

Last and by no means least, a big thank-you to Warren Pascoe, who was there when I needed him and whose support, encouragement and above all patience have been unwavering. Danke für alles.

Go raibh maith agaibh go léir.

Glasgow, October 2009

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Abbreviations

Commonly used abbreviations:

Adv.	Advocates' Library, National Library of Scotland
BDL	the 'Book of the Dean of Lismore'
BL	British Library, London
BmMM	'Brisleach mhór Mhaighe Muirtheimhne'
Bodleian	Bodleian Library, Oxford
Eg.	British Library Egerton Manuscript
CMCS	*Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies*
DCC	'Deargruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh'
DIAS	Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies
DIL	*Dictionary of the Irish Language*
Dinneen	P. Dinneen, *Foclóir Gaedhilge agus Béarla* (Dublin, 1927)
fol.	folio
GOI	R. Thurneysen, *A Grammar of Old Irish* (Dublin, 1998; reprint of 1946)
LL	'Lebor Laignech' (i.e. the 'Book of Leinster')
LnC	'Laoidh na gCeann'
MS(S)	Manuscript(s)
NLI	National Library of Ireland, Dublin
NLS	National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh
NLW	National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
RIA	Royal Irish Academy, Dublin
SGS	*Scottish Gaelic Studies*
TCD	Trinity College, Dublin
TBC	'Táin Bó Cuailnge'
TGSI	*Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*
UCD	University College, Dublin
ZCP	*Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie*

Manuscript Catalogues:

'Black Cat.'	R. Black, 'Catalogue of the Classical Gaelic Manuscripts in the National Library of Scotland' (2 volumes) [unpublished draft catalogue].
Bodleian Cat.	B. Ó Cuív, *Catalogue of Irish Language Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library of Oxford and Oxford College Libraries – Part I, Descriptions* (Dublin, 2001).
Cambridge Cat.	P. de Brún & M. Herbert, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in Cambridge Libraries* (Cambridge, 1986).
Flower Cat.	R. Flower, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum – Vol. II* (London, 1926).
Killiney Cat.	M. Dillon, C. Mooney & P. de Brún, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the Franciscan Library Killiney* (Dublin, 1969).
Mackechnie Cat.	J. Mackechnie, *Catalogue of Gaelic Manuscripts in Selected Libraries in Great Britain and Ireland* (Boston, 1973).

Mackinnon Cat.	D. Mackinnon, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Gaelic Manuscripts in the Advocates' Library Edinburgh, and Elsewhere in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1912).
Maynooth Cat.	Various, *Lámhscríbhinní Gaeilge Choláiste Má Nuad – Fascúl I-VI* (Má Nuad, 1943-1972).
NLI Cat.	Various, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the National Library of Ireland – Fasciculus I-XIII* (Dublin, 1967-1996).
RIA Cat.	Royal Irish Academy, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the Royal Irish Academy – Fasciculi I-IXX* (Dublin,1926-70).
TCD Cat.	T.K. Abbott, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin* (Dublin, 1900).
TCD Irish Cat.	T.K. Abbott, *Catalogue of the Irish Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin* (Dublin, 1921).

Introduction / Aims and Objectives

Aided Con Culainn is a fine specimen of an early Modern-Irish story.[1]

Oidheadh Con Culainn is a text of considerable importance in the Irish literary tradition as befits its subject matter, namely, the death of the 'hero *par excellence*' Cú Chulainn. The tale relating the death of Cú Chulainn is extant in two versions: the probably better known Early Irish version ('Version A', as it was first dubbed by Rudolf Thurneysen[2]) which survives only in the 12th-century 'Book of Leinster', as well as a later version in Early Modern Irish ('Version B'). Of the two versions it is the older Version A that has received more scholarly attention, while the later recension has been somewhat sidelined.

The Early Modern Irish version is generally divided into two parts in the manuscripts, although we can identify three elements to the tale:

<div align="center">

'The Death of Cú Chulainn'

'Version A' (Early Irish)   'Version B' (Early Modern Irish)
Aided Con Culainn   *Oidheadh Con Culainn*
↓
Brisleach mhór Mhaighe Muirtheimhne (BmMM)
Deargruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh (DCC)
Laoidh na gCeann (LnC)

</div>
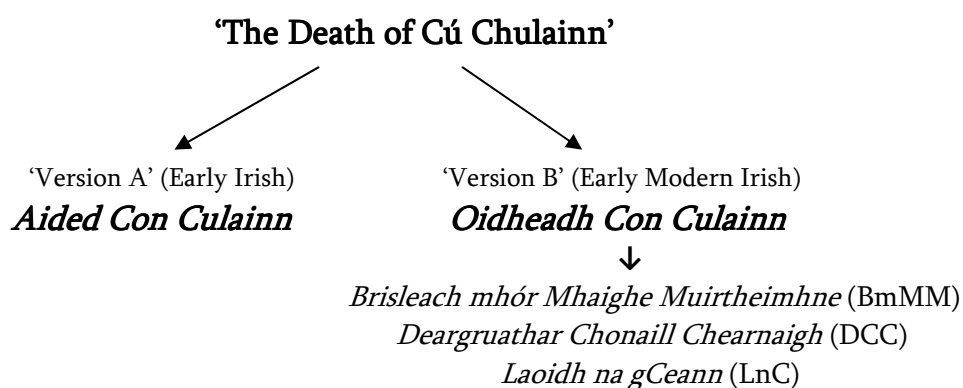
To briefly sum up these 'building blocks' of Version B: the first part of the tale consists of *Brisleach mhór Mhaighe Muirtheimhne* (BmMM), 'The Great Defeat on the Plain of Muirtheimhne', which relates a campaign, instigated by Meadhbh, Queen of Connacht, of the men of Ireland against Cú Chulainn, resulting in the latter's death. This is followed by *Deargruathar Chonall Chearnaigh* (DCC), 'The Red Rampage of Conall Cearnach', in which Conall goes on a killing spree around Ireland, hunting down and decapitating his foster brother Cú Chulainn's adversaries by way of revenge. The *Deargruathar* then culminates in the famous *Laoidh na gCeann* (LnC), the 'Lay of the Heads', which can easily be considered a third element of the tale. LnC takes the form of a dialogue between Conall and Cú Chulainn's widow

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[1] A.G. Van Hamel, *Compert Con Culainn and Other Stories* (Dublin, 1978; reprint of 1933), p. vi.

[2] R. Thurneysen, *Die Irische Helden- und Königsage bis zum Siebzehnten Jahrhundert* (Halle, 1921), p. 548.

Eimhear. Having decapitated Cú Chulainn's opponents and speared their heads on a *gad*,[3] Conall returns to Eamhain Macha and presents the heads to Eimhear, who asks their names in turn. After Eimhear and Conall have identified the heads in a lengthy question-and-answer sequence, the poem is concluded by a series of stanzas mourning Cú Chulainn's death and questioning how life will be without him.

The title *Brisleach mhór Mhaighe Muirtheimhne* is at times used to refer to the entire text of Cú Chulainn's death, rather than just the first part of the tale, as Maria Tymoczko has noted:

> In the Middle Irish tale lists the earliest versions of the story are called *Aided ConCulainn*, 'The Death of CuChulainn'. Only one text survives from the pre-Norman period, the version in the Book of Leinster (LL), 119a-123b. A few sentences from the same version survive in a second manuscript, Trinity College H.3.18 (ca. 1500), where they are used to illustrate lexical points. In this second manuscript the passages are labelled 'In Brislech co sin'. On this basis, the LL text, like the fifteenth-century version, has been called *Brislech Mór Maige Muirtheimne*.[4]

An episode of the same name can be found in *Táin Bó Cuailgne*, and as we will further explore in section 2.1.1, this similarity or inter-changeability of names can lead to confusion, especially in the context of a study of the transmission of the tale. For the sake of clarity, throughout this thesis (unless otherwise specified) *Oidheadh Con Culainn* shall be used as a collective term for BmMM and DCC (and LnC) referring to the tale in its entirety rather than the individual elements. The use of the older spelling *Aided Con Culainn* shall imply reference to the Early Irish version of the tale, although this will generally be made clear by the additional usage of 'Version A'.

The general scholarly consensus regarding Version B, *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, is that the tale survives in, to quote Thurneysen, '*zahlreichen Handschriften*', or 'numerous manuscripts'.[5] 'Numerous', however, does not do justice to the actual number of manuscripts: without anticipating too much of the discussion in this thesis, we can note that there are one hundred manuscripts preserving the tale (and / or LnC) that I have been able to locate, these ranging in date from the 16th- to the late 19th centuries.[6] This is a formidable number of manuscripts to

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[3] Cf. *DIL*, s.v. *gad* 'a withe, an osier, also a halter or fastening made of withes or osiers'. I will continue to use the Irish *gad* throughout this thesis.

[4] M. Tymoczko, *Two Death Tales from the Ulster Cycle* (Dublin, 1981), p. 14.

[5] Thurneysen, *Heldensage*, p. 557.

[6] It should be noted that since I have only researched the pre-19th-century manuscripts preserving *Oidheadh Con Culainn* in detail, I cannot dismiss the possibility that a thorough study and assessment of the 19th-

take into account for any study, even more so when considering the length of the tale, which in its fullest version consists of approximately 20,000 words. A satisfying, exhaustive and conclusive study and examination of all the extant manuscripts would surpass the capacity of this thesis. The following decision was thus taken: to focus exclusively on those manuscripts dating to before 1800. Another possibility would of course have been to consider all one hundred manuscripts, but only on a superficial level. The decision to focus on the pre-19th-century manuscripts is, however, further encouraged by the fact that consultation of the relevant manuscript catalogues suggests that a great number of the 19th-century manuscripts are in fact copies of the earlier, pre-19th-century manuscripts. For a study of transmission, it also seems a logical conclusion to begin with the earlier manuscripts, examining these in greater detail and so allowing for those manuscripts that are of a later date to be considered and slotted into their place within the transmission more easily at a future stage.

Another motivation for researching a portion of the manuscripts in detail, rather than the entire corpus superficially, stems from the fact that the only widely-available edition of the tale, prepared by A.G. Van Hamel, was first published over seventy years ago, and we are in desperate need of a new edition.[7] There are some problems with Van Hamel's edition which does not, for example, include a satisfying discussion of the tale or extant manuscripts. Another problematic issue was raised by Proinsias Mac Cana:

> The curious fact is, however, that the earliest manuscript of the modern version omits all but one of the poems even though they appear to have been in the archetype, and, since this manuscript is the basis of Van Hamel's edition, the result is that the published text gives the impression of an unbroken prose narrative and to that extent understates the role of prosimetrum.[8]

Not only may Van Hamel's edition give a false impression of the text itself, it further does not acknowledge the wealth of manuscripts which preserve *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. As this thesis will demonstrate, there are great variations to be observed within the different versions of the tale, especially with regard to the poetry they contain. The level of detail that could be applied to the examination and analysis in the present study by focusing on the pre-19th-century manuscripts, and leaving aside those pertaining to the 19th century, will be of great advantage at a later stage in helping to decide which manuscript(s) might preserve a copy of *Oidheadh*

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century manuscripts would bring up yet more manuscripts, thus increasing the overall number. [In fact, since this thesis was submitted in June 2009, five further manuscripts have come to light; see section 2.1 (p. 51) for details. These manuscripts have not been incorporated into the study carried out for this thesis. (Written 2 October 2009)].

[7] Van Hamel, 'Aided Con Culainn' in *Compert Con Culainn*, pp. 72-133.

[8] P. Mac Cana, 'Prosimetrum in Insular Celtic Literature' in J. Harris & K. Reichl (eds), *Prosimetrum: Crosscultural Perspectives on Narrative in Prose and Verse* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 110.

Con Culainn that most genuinely reflects its archetype. It is not the intention of this thesis to provide a much-needed new edition of the tale, but rather to smooth the way for one. Nevertheless, the current lack of a critical and up-to-date edition makes it necessary at times to cite at length from the various manuscripts, allowing for a demonstration of the variations between the versions.

Taking all this into account, this thesis has deliberately been given the subtitle 'a preliminary study'. Despite the progress that the research for this thesis hopefully makes towards our understanding of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, it equally brings up and identifies a number of issues and questions that will require further study.

Chapter 1 provides a general introduction to the wider context of the tale, both in terms of genre and from a literary perspective. We will begin with a brief discussion of the Ulster Cycle and the death tales before turning to look at Cú Chulainn's death specifically. Here we will firstly consider those episodes from the Ulster Cycle, and especially *Táin Bó Cuailgne*, which are of relevance to our tale and ultimately lead up to the hero's death. This is followed by a detailed summary of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, at the end of which we shall consider the most prominent differences in the storylines of Version A and Version B. The chapter is concluded by an examination of the published material available for our tale: this includes editions as well as the – few and far between – articles which consider (aspects of) the tale.

Chapter 2 assesses the extant manuscripts preserving our tale and LnC. In order to aid future research into the tale an initial list here includes the 19th-century manuscripts, which have otherwise been sidelined in this thesis. After a brief discussion of the problems and issues that may arise from the information we can draw from the manuscript catalogues, the core element of the second chapter is a draft catalogue of the pre-19th-century manuscripts. This draft catalogue forms the basis for the analysis, examinations and discussion in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 3 reviews the information included in the draft catalogue. It will be argued and demonstrated that it seems possible to classify the manuscripts into six distinct groups. The first five groups are established according to the poetry contained in the respective manuscript versions of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. These versions range from preserving no poetry whatsoever, to others which have in excess of forty poems. The sixth group comprises those manuscripts which preserve 'independent' versions of *Laoidh na gCeann*, the poem here standing outwith its prose context. A preliminary examination of the poetry for each individual

group (i.e. on an intra-group level) is followed by observations on an inter-group level; here we will widen the scope to take in aspects of the prose narrative as well as the poetry.

In Chapter 4 we will approach the groups from a different point of view, namely, their scribes. A short biographical sketch on each scribe and the provenance of the manuscripts (discussed by groups) will be given (where this information is available) in order to examine whether the geographical distribution of the manuscripts may corroborate the existence of our manuscript groups.

The evidence for the manuscript groups thus far having been based mainly on the poetry, in Chapter 5 we will carry out a case study to establish whether the classification into groups is corroborated by the prose narrative. For this case study, a detailed analysis and comparison of two manuscripts from Group I will be carried out; note that this should be read in conjunction with Item 2 ('Group I manuscript comparison analysed in Chapter 5') on the enclosed CD-ROM, which is found on the inside front cover of the thesis.

The scope is once again widened in Chapter 6 where after the intra-group comparison in the previous chapter we will consider all of the manuscripts preserving the prose narrative on an inter-group level. After an examination of the structural presentation of our manuscripts and the implications for the transmission of the tale which this may have, we will turn to consider the 'rhetorics' of the tale. To begin with, a general introduction to the 'rhetorics' – both for *Oidheadh Con Culainn* and on a more general level – will be given, followed by two case studies. These take the form of inter-group comparisons (i.e. close readings) of two of the 'rhetorics', and their surrounding prose narrative and poetry, from a representative manuscript for each group.

The final chapter, Chapter 7, leaves aside the prose narrative and focuses exclusively on *Laoidh na gCeann*. We will make some general observations as to the poem and consider aspects of its overall transmission. The chapter is concluded by a discussion of the 'Scottish versions' of the poem.

To put it very succinctly, the present thesis aims to rectify – or at least pave the way towards rectifying – a state of affair remarked on by Van Hamel, which although already made in 1933 is still valid today:

> A large number of paper MSS., dating from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, contain the same [Early Modern Irish] version [of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*], though in a modernized spelling. These MSS. have not yet been sufficiently scrutinized and their relation is still unknown. In most of them a large number of poems have been preserved, although the same poem is not always

found at the same place. (…) These poems, in fact, require a separate study in themselves.[9]

In addition to shedding light upon the transmission and manuscript tradition of one particular tale – *Oidheadh Con Culainn* – this study further suggests a *modus operandi* for dealing with particularly lengthy texts or tales which have survived in a large number of manuscript witnesses.

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[9] Van Hamel, *Compert Con Culainn*, pp. 70-71.

Editorial Method

Oidheadh Con Culainn is a text of considerable length which lacks a recent and up-to-date critical edition. In the absence of such a publication, yet in order to allow for a comprehensive and clear discussion of the tale's textual transmission, it will be necessary and of great advantage to the reader to provide passages of text in the context of the discussion. Although the passages cited may at times be lengthy, it is not the intention of this thesis to provide a much-needed critical edition (or editions). Rather, the sections cited in this thesis are to be treated as a tool to help corroborate the arguments that are made with regard to the textual transmission of the tale.

Within this thesis two types of transcriptions have been included: 'type A', being straightforward transcriptions, and 'type B', what we could tentatively call 'minimal-interference editions'.[10] 'Type A' transcriptions have been provided of the thirty-seven pre-19th century versions of *Laoidh na gCeann*, as well as for the purpose of comparing of two manuscripts from Group I. The methodology of this latter comparison is explained in more detail in an introduction preceding it. The transcriptions of LnC and the comparison are found on the CD-Rom accompanying this thesis (items 2 and 3). Where passages from these transcriptions are given within the body of the text, they have been made more accessible to the reader by presenting them as 'minimal-interference editions'. Also on the CD-Rom is a type B 'minimal-interference edition' of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* from NLS 72.1.38, with variant readings from NLI G 18. It was felt that it is vital for a reader of this thesis to have access to a full version of the tale, in a format that makes it easier to work with than just a straightforward diplomatic transcription. Further comments can be found preceding the text (item 1 on the enclosed CD-ROM).

There are a number of points to be made regarding the editorial method in this thesis, both for the 'type A' transcriptions (on the CD-ROM) and the 'type B' minimal-interference editions.

The 'type A' transcriptions aim to represent the text / poems as they stand in the respective manuscripts – they thus retain the line and word division as found in the manuscripts. All expansions of abbreviations, suspension strokes, n/m-strokes, superscript letters and contractions have been given in italics; the *punctum* has been consistently expanded to *h*.

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[10] See P.A. Breatnach, 'A Seventeenth-Century Abridgement of *Beatha Aodha Ruaidh Uí Dhomhnaill*', *Éigse* 33 (2005), pp. 76-172, for a similar editorial method of minimal interference.

Accents have been allowed to stand as they occur in the manuscripts. Punctuation, capitalisation and indentations have been retained and represented as they stand in the respective manuscripts; numerals have also been allowed to stand as they occur.

The type B, 'minimal interference editions' all share the methodology of the transcriptions, with the addition of some editorial intrusion. All expansions have been left in italics. These include the following:

- letters and words not actually in the manuscript have also been italicised, for instance, 't^a' has been expanded to 't*ra*', 'm^t' to 'm*aith*' etc.

- superscript 'c' has consistently been expanded to 'c*h*', e.g. 'g^c' to 'g*ach*'.

- as in the transcription points of lenition have been expanded to italicised *h*. Considering the variety of manuscripts in different states of preservation it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between a *punctum* and small stains; as with all other questionable readings an informed decision has been made.

In the 'minimal-interference editions' names or spellings have not been standardized, all readings are as they occur in the manuscript and the spelling may therefore be inconsistent. This also applies to irregular and fluctuating spelling of personal and place names, which have been allowed to stand as found in the respective manuscripts. Names that appear in an abbreviated form in a manuscript have been expanded according to the most commonly occurring unabbreviated form used in the same manuscript. Similarly, any doubtful contractions have been expanded in accordance with *plene* readings from the manuscript in question.

The 'tyronian et' (7) has been allowed to stand throughout, as has Latin 'et'. Punctuation, capitalisation of place and personal names, speech marks and the division of passages into paragraphs are editorial. Word division has been regularised. The abbreviation .i., where it is not an abbreviation for *inghean* but rather for *eadh on*, has been allowed to stand.

Only those lengthmarks actually occurring in the manuscripts have been represented in the 'minimal-interference editions'. The accents may thus be irregular, at times rather erratic, and inconsistent. To keep interference with the original manuscript text to a minimum, however, no accents / macrons have been supplied where they would be required. Where lengthmarks occur that have been rightwardly placed after historically long vowels, these have been silently moved to the left, e.g. *féin* for MS *feín*, *táinig* for MS *taínig*.

In cases of initial mutation, as well as in the case of articles before vowels or before *s*, hyphens have been silently inserted. Hyphens have otherwise been used sparingly and inserted only where needed to avoid ambiguity (e.g. *an glaise-si* rather than *an glaisesi*).

Any editorial addition to the text, e.g. to supply readings where a manuscript is damaged, are given in square brackets [ ]. If the readings in brackets are supplied from another manuscript the source is cited in footnotes.

In conclusion, the 'minimal-interference editions' have been designed with a view to providing passages and textual examples which are needed for comparisons between manuscripts. Their provision will help corroborate the arguments made in this thesis for the transmission of the tale, which survives in manuscripts of great diversity, both in terms of date and geography, but without interfering with the manuscript evidence as a policy of heavy editing might do; a policy of more intrusive edition could well distort comparisons of this nature.

Two further points have to be raised with regard to the treatment of manuscript references and names throughout thesis.

Manuscripts have been referred to by a short title for the collection housing them (cf. 'List of Abbreviations'), and the shelf mark employed by each collection. To give an example, what should in its fullest reference read 'National Library of Scotland Advocates' MS 72.1.38' is thus given as 'NLS 72.1.38', and so on.

In keeping with the Early Modern Irish date of our tale, modernized spellings have been favoured over older ones for personal and place names from our tale when they are given outwith passages cited directly from the text: *Cú Raoi* for *Cú Roí*, *Meadhbh* for *Medb*, *Eamhain Macha* for *Emain Macha*, and so on. In references to older tales, established titles of texts or in direct quotes / references to secondary sources, names have been allowed to stand in non-modernized forms. In accordance with the editorial method of minimal interference, within passages cited directly from *Oidheadh Con Culainn* names have been allowed to stand as they are found in the respective manuscripts; this includes instances of *Cú Chulainn*, *Liath Macha* etc., where they are written as one word and have been allowed to stand accordingly.

Chapter 1: Text and Context

Oidheadh Con Culainn, in order to be fully understood in its context, requires some background knowledge from its audience. The tale forms the tragic climax of Cú Chulainn's heroic biography, nowhere told in a single tale but which we can trace throughout the tales of the Ulster Cycle. In preparation for the analyses and examinations of the tale in this thesis, the first chapter shall establish its 'text and context'.

In terms of context we will consider the Ulster Cycle and the genre of death tales of the Irish heroes. A detailed summary of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* will allow for later cross referencing and referral back to certain events in the narrative. Some background events preceding *Oidheadh Con Culainn* will be discussed in order to help establish the narrative context of the tale within the cycle more firmly.

The final part of this chapter will discuss and assess previous work carried out on 'our' tale.

1.1 The Ulster Cycle and the death tales

We have a substantial number of Irish tales from the time of the earliest major manuscripts such as *Lebor na hUidre* (the 'Book of the Dun Cow'), the famous 'Book of Leinster', or Rawlinson B 502. The way they were classified was by 'tale-type', and there are two extant tale lists, List A (preserved in two manuscripts) and List B (preserved in three manuscripts) which differentiate between tales of birth, (violent) death, destruction, cattle-raid, battle, courtships, tragedy, adventures, voyages, vision, love, plundering, invasion, and so on.[11] Since the 19th century, however, a modern classification splits the literature of medieval Ireland into four 'cycles'. This concept has recently been defined by Erich Poppe as follows:

> It is used as a generic classification of groups of texts and is based on a set of parameters of intratextual cohesion, namely their setting at a particular time and the overlap of the narrative personnel and geographical focus. The texts in each group ideally cluster around a common, fixed point of reference. The relationship between the texts is virtual and rests on mental connections made by medieval

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[11] The tale lists are printed in P. Mac Cana, *The Learned Tales of Medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 1980). As for the actual manuscripts preserving the tale lists, Mac Cana notes: 'List A stands independently and is furnished with preface and colophon; which no doubt explains why it is rather better known, or at least more often cited, than its companion list. It survives in two copies, LL 189 b and TCD MS. H.3.17, col. 797 [...], the former a manuscript of the twelfth century, the latter of the sixteenth. [...] List B is found embodied in the text entitled *Airec menman Uraird maic Coise* "The Stratagem of Urard mac Coise", which is preserved in three manuscripts of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: RIA, 23 N 10, p. 29; Bodleian Lib., Rawl. B. 512, f. 109; and British Lib., Harl. 5280, fo. 47.' (p. 33). The tale lists have also been discussed in a more recent article by G. Toner, 'Reconstructing the Earliest Irish Tale Lists', *Éigse* 32 (2000), pp. 88-120.

authors, scribes, and audiences – as well as by modern literary historians and critics.[12]

The cycles in question are generally referred to as the Ulster Cycle, the Finn Cycle, the Mythological Cycle and the King (or Heroic) Cycle. There is, however, some overlap as, for example, a number of tales belonging to the Ulster and King Cycles may include episodes set in a mythological world.

The Ulster Cycle – into which *Oidheadh Con Culainn* falls – is not only the best-preserved and probably most-widely researched of the four, but is perhaps also the one that is most properly a 'cycle'. As Barbara Hillers has observed,

> The concept of an Ulster Cycle as a body of interrelated narratives is based on the overlap between individual sagas which share the same *locus*, *tempus* and *dramatis personae*.[13]

The *locus* of the Ulster Cycle is that of the *Ulaidh* kingdom, and more specifically the royal seat of Eamhain Macha, now Navan Fort south of Armagh.[14] Here the Ulster king Conchubhar mac Nessa and the warriors of the *craebh ruadh* (the 'red branch', this being the principle house at Eamhain Macha) are positioned.[15] The cast of characters of the 'Ulster heroes', which include Cú Chulainn, Conall Cearnach and Fearghus mac Roich, to name but a few, remains relatively stable throughout the tales, 'though their part in a specific story is often minimal. Their presence seems less a requirement of plot than an invocation of the heroic world of Emain Macha.'[16]

The chief opponents of the *Ulaidh* are the *Connachta*, the people of Connacht, who are led by their king Ailill and his wife, Meadhbh, reigning from Cruachan Aí, the modern day

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[12] E. Poppe, *Of Cycles and Other Critical Matters. Some Issues in Medieval Literary History and Criticism* (E.C. Quiggin Memorial Lecture) (University of Cambridge, 2006), p. 11.

[13] B. Hillers, 'The Heroes of the Ulster Cycle' in J.P. Mallory & G. Stockman (eds), *Ulidia: Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Ulster Cycle of Tales* (Belfast, 1994), p. 99.

[14] Eamhain Macha, or Navan Fort, has received attention from scholars researching not only for its representation in literature, but also for its archaeological significance. For the latter, see a number of articles in Mallory & Stockmann, *Ulidia*: R.B. Warner, 'The Navan Archaeological Complex: A Summary' (pp. 165-170); D.A. Weir, 'The Environment of Emain Macha' (pp. 171-79); F. McCormick, 'Faunal Remains from Navan and Other Late Prehistoric Sites in Ireland' (pp. 181-86). See also N.B. Aitchison, 'The Ulster Cycle: Heroic Image and Historical Reality', *Journal of Medieval History* 13 (1987), pp. 87-116, and J.P. Mallory, 'The World of Cú Chulainn: The Archaeology of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*' in J.P. Mallory (ed.), *Aspects of the Táin* (Belfast, 1992), pp. 103-59.

[15] For a discussion and analysis of the compound noun *craebh ruadh* see T. Ó Broin, '"Craebruad": The Spurious Tradition', *Éigse* 15 (1973-74), pp. 103-13. See also T. Clancy, 'Court, King and Justice in the Ulster Cycle' in H. Fulton (ed.) *Medieval Celtic Literature and Society* (Dublin, 2005), pp. 163-82. A character analysis of Conchobar mac Nessa can be found in G.M. Parsons, '"Never the Twain shall Meet"?: East and West in the Characterization of Conchobar mac Nessa', *Questio Insularis* 4 (2003), pp. 35-56.

[16] Hillers, 'The Heroes of the Ulster Cycle', p. 99. The surprising outcome of a survey conducted in this article shows that the 'number 1' hero, in terms of appearances across the Ulster Cycle tales, is not Cú Chulainn as one might expect, but his foster brother Conall Cearnach.

Rathcroghan in Co. Roscommon. As for the *tempus* of the tales, they coincide with the life of the *Ulaidh* king, Conchubhar, which in turn is said to be contiguous with the lifetime of Christ.[17] Kenneth Jackson famously suggested that the tales provide a 'window on the Iron Age'.[18] Nowadays, a view of the Ulster Cycle tales as actual historical representations – as accepted by medieval literati and 19th-century scholars like Eugene O'Curry – has been revoked as 'any attempt to identify Ulster's heroic age with any specific historical time seems problematic.'[19]

The Ulster Cycle comprises 'roughly 80 heroic sagas, poems, and shorter pieces'.[20] The majority of the tales are rather short and describe a single episode, such as a character's conception, birth or death, early life or training, or tales of wooing, feasting and battle. From these tales we can trace Cú Chulainn's life and 'heroic biography', which is nowhere represented in a single tale. In *Compert Con Culainn*, 'Cú Chulainn's Conception', we learn that the hero has a human as well as a supernatural father, the mortal Sualtamh and the divine Lugh.[21] His mother is Deichtine who appears in different tales as either Conchubhar's sister or his daughter, the latter being the version favoured by *Compert Con Culainn*.[22] Until he is seven years old the hero goes by the name of 'Setanta'. His *macgnímrada*, or boyhood deeds, relate how at this age he arrives at Conchubhar's court at Emhain Macha and is already far superior to boys his age and older. He kills the dog of the smith Culann, and on pledging to act as a guard dog by way of compensation acquires his new name *Cú Chulainn*, 'Hound of Culann'.[23] The tale of Cú Chulainn's efforts to marry Eimhear, *Tochmarc Emire*, includes an account of how he is trained by the female warrior Scáthach and acquires magical weapons.[24] His charioteer

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[17] Conchobar's death (as related in his death tale, *Aided Conchubair*) occurs when he learns of the crucifixion of Christ.

[18] K. Jackson, *The Oldest Irish Tradition: A Window on the Iron Age* (Cambridge, 1964).

[19] Hillers, 'The Heroes of the Ulster Cycle', p. 99. Cf., however, G. Toner, 'The Ulster Cycle: Historiography or Fiction?', *CMCS* 40 (Winter 2000), pp. 1-20.

[20] R. Ó hUiginn, 'The Backgound and Development of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*' in Mallory, *Aspects of The Táin*, p. 29.

[21] Edited by A.G. Van Hamel in *Compert Con Culainn* (Dublin, 1978; reprint of 1933), pp. 1-8.

[22] On this, Alan Bruford has commented: 'This [Deichtine being Conchobar's daughter rather than his sister] makes better sense than the later version which makes both her and Conall Cernach's mother Finnchóem into Conchobar's sisters, if Conchobar's mother died giving birth to him as some texts seem to say (Thurneysen, *Heldensage*, p. 276), but it makes the generation gap between him and Cú Chulainn ridiculously large.' ('Cú Chulainn: An Ill-Made Hero?' in H.L.C. Tristram, *Text-und Zeittiefe* (Tübingen, 1994), p. 204, footnote 37).

[23] Related in *Táin Bó Cuailgne*; for editions see C. O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúalnge from the Book of Leinster* (Dublin: DIAS, 1967) and *Táin Bó Cúailnge Recension I* (Dublin, 1976); also see J. Strachan, *Stories from the Táin* (Dublin, 1944).

[24] 'Tochmarc Emire', edited in Van Hamel, *Compert Con Culainn*, pp. 16-68.

Laogh also has supernatural powers, and this aspect of the superhuman and supernatural is a constant theme in the tales centred around Cú Chulainn. A further characteristic of the hero are the 'warp spasms' (*ríastrada*) that cause him to go berserk in battle and perform the incredible feats that he does. That he is not infallible, however, is illustrated in tales such as *Serglige Con Culainn*, 'The Wasting Sickness of Cú Chulainn', or *Aided Conlaoich* ('The Death of Conlaoich, also known as *Aided Óenfir Aífe*, 'The Death of Aífe's Only Son') in which Cú Chulainn kills his own son.[25] This slaying is brought about by one of the many taboos placed upon the hero, the breach of which eventually seals his fate and ultimately leads to his death.

The centre-piece of the Ulster Cycle is a tale which is considerably longer than any of the others and which 'may be classified as a prose epic'[26]: namely, *Táin Bó Cuailgne*, 'The Cattle-Raid of Cooley'.[27] It has, in fact, been suggested that

> the *Táin* is the basis and origin of the whole [Ulster] cycle, as indeed the collections and lists of tales from the Middle Irish period generally make it clear: the other stories in the cycle are either introductory *remscéla*, what modern publishers call by the ghastly word 'prequels', or else sequels or spin-offs of some kind.[28]

There are a number of pre-tales (*remscéla*) which are linked to the *Táin*. They precede it in terms of setting and shed light on the background of the main characters and events of the *Táin*, including the presence of some of the *Ulaidh* in Connacht, the magical origins of the bulls, and the curse causing a temporary inability of the Ulstermen to fight (*ces noínden*).[29]

The *Táin* itself (in the 'Book of Leinster' recension) begins with the king and queen of Connacht, Ailill and Meadhbh, comparing their respective wealth, which turns out to be evenly matched save for a bull in Ailill's possession by the name of Finnbheannach. When Meadhbh learns of an equally potent bull in Cuailgne, a province in Ulster, she is determined to bring the bull – the *Donn Cuailgne* – into her possession. The deal she suggests to the bull's owner is refused, and she thus summons the armies of Connacht and advances on Ulster. The

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[25] 'Aided Óenfir Aífe', edited in Van Hamel, *Compert Con Culainn*, pp. 9-15.

[26] M. Dillon, *Early Irish Literature* (Chicago, 1948), p. 2.

[27] The *Táin* survives in three recensions: Recension I, also called the 'LU-Version' as the oldest manuscript in which it is found is *Lebor na hUidre* (LU); Recension II, which is contained in the 'Book of Leinster'; and Recension III which only survives in fragmentary form. Recensions I and II were edited by C. O'Rahilly, see footnote 23 above.

[28] A. Bruford, 'Why an Ulster Cycle?' in Mallory & Stockman, *Ulidia*, p. 23. Bruford also explores this argument in an earlier publication, 'Cú Chulainn: An Ill-Made Hero?'.

[29] On *remscéla* see Mac Cana, *The Learned Tales*, pp. 88-91, and T. Chadwin, 'The *Remscéla Tána Bó Cualngi*', CMCS 34 (Winter 1997), pp. 67-75. For discussions of *ces noínden*, see for instance V. Hull, '*Noínden Ulad*: The Debility of the Ulidians', Celtica 8 (1968), pp. 1-42; E.M. Slotkin, '*Noínden*: Its Semantic Range' in A.T.E. Matonis & D.F. Melia (eds), *Celtic Language, Celtic Culture: A Festschrift for Eric P. Hamp* (Van Nuys, CA., 1990), pp. 137-50.

Ulstermen are under a curse which prevents them from fighting but which does not affect the then youthful Cú Chulainn. The hero single-handedly defeats the enemy, having negotiated an agreement by which champion after champion faces him in single combat. The combats are described in great detail, and there are constant references to Cú Chulainn's supernatural and superhuman skills as a warrior. Although eventually Cú Chulainn is victorious over the opposing army, he cannot prevent Meadhbh from taking the *Donn Cuailgne*. The latter, on being brought to Cruachain, kills Ailill's bull but is mortally wounded itself and, having wandered around Ireland, comes home to Ulster where it dies of exhaustion.

We will come back to those episodes from the *Táin* and tales from the Ulster Cycle most relevant to *Oidheadh Con Culainn* in section 1.2 below.

As well as belonging to the Ulster Cycle, our tale can be classed into the genre of 'death tales'. With specific reference to this genre of tales the following observation was made by Daniel F. Melia:

> There has not been a great deal written about death tales aside from short introductions to various editions. This lack of critical comment is, I think, unsurprising, as in many respects the death tales seem to need little commentary: they tell briefly how given people died.[30]

While it may be true that comparatively little has been written on the subset of death tales some individual tales such as *Fingal Rónáin* or the 'Death of Diarmait mac Cerbaill' have received extensive scholarly attention.[31] We may wonder whether Melia's explanation for the lack of comment on the death tales is not too simplistic – as we will see on the example of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, it is a tale that not only 'tells briefly' how Cú Chulainn dies but taps into a wide range of Ulster Cycle tales.

We noted earlier that the Irish tales were traditionally divided into 'tale lists', classifying the tales according to genre. In the list thus preserved in the 'Book of Leinster', the section on *oitte* or 'violent deaths' lists 'thirteen tales which tell the deaths of the heroes Cú Roi, Cú Chulainn, Fer Diad, Conall, Celtchar, Blai the Hospitaller, Loegaire, Fergus, Conchobar, Fiamain, Máel Fothartaig mac Rónáin, Tadg mac Céin, and someone by the name of Mac Samain.'[32] A second list, contained in the same manuscript, 'is a poem by the 10th-century poet Cinaed ua

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[30] D.F. Melia, 'Remarks on the Structure and Composition of the Ulster Death Tales', *Studia Hibernica* 17-18 (1978), p. 36.

[31] Not carrying an indicative *aided* or *oidheadh* title, a tale such as *Fingal Rónáin* might not be instantly recognisable as a death tale.

[32] Melia, 'Remarks on the Structure and Composition', p. 36. For a discussion of *Mac Samain*, see T.O. Clancy, 'Mac Steléne and the Eight in Armagh: Identity and Context', *Éigse* 26 (1992), pp. 80-91.

hArtacáin, *Fianna batar i nEmain* (LL 31a-31b), listing the places where the great heroes fell, including one of his own ancestors.'[33] This list repeats the deaths of those characters already mentioned in the first list and adds more, bringing the total count of death tales up to over thirty.

Within the corpus of death tales, those pertaining to the Ulster Cycle appear to have attracted the most scholarly attention and a number of them were edited by Kuno Meyer.[34] The best-known of the Ulster death tales is *Aided Chonchubhair*, 'The Death of Conchubhar', which has been noted for its strong Christian elements and which survives in a greater number of manuscripts than the other Ulster death tales.[35]

As for the structure of the death tales, Daniel Melia has suggested that generally, they are made up of one of two plots, these plots being 'Woman-Revenge' and 'Tabu-Revenge'.[36] Our tale, *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, falls into the latter category which Melia has defined as consisting of three moves:

1. Hero has tabu [or social obligation].
2. He is forced to break tabu [often by social obligation].
3. He dies a victim of vengeance.[37]

As we will see, this largely applies to our tale, with especially the third point being of relevance; that Cú Chulainn is indeed a 'victim of vengeance' will be evident from the summary of the tale below. Melia's model, however, has recently been criticised for adapting a very generalised view of the tales in considering them as a genre, and in doing so 'has had to "clump" aspects which are in fact more distinct when the tales are read individually.'[38]

Cú Chulainn of course has a great number of taboos or *gessi* imposed upon him.[39] Philipp O'Leary has discussed a number of them, and while it is probably unnecessary to list them all here there are two – noted by O'Leary – which are central to Cú Chulainn's death tale:

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[33] T.O. Clancy, 'Die Like a Man? The Ulster Cycle Death-Tale Anthology', *Aiste* 2 (2008), p. 77.

[34] K. Meyer, *The Death-Tales of the Ulster Heroes* (Dublin, 1993; reprint of 1906).

[35] For editions of the text, see 'The Death of Conchobar' in Meyer, *The Death-Tales of the Ulster Heroes*, pp. 2-21, and J.S. Kühns, 'Battles, Brainballs & Believers: An Editon, Translation and Discussion of *Aided Chonchubair* from NLS Adv. MS 72.1.45' (unpublished M.A. Honours dissertation, University of Aberdeen, 2004). For discussions of the tale, see J. Corthals, 'The *Retoiric* in *Aided Chonchobuir*', *Ériu* 40, pp. 41-59; T.O. Clancy, 'Lethal Weapon / Means of Grace: Mess-Gegra's Brain in *The Death of Conchobar*', *Aestel* 4, pp. 87-115; T.O. Clancy, 'Die Like a Man?'.

[36] For his study, Melia has considered the thirteen tales listed under *oitte* in the 'Book of Leinster' tale list.

[37] Melia, 'Remarks on the Structure and Composition', p. 40.

[38] Clancy, 'Die Like a Man?', p. 79.

[39] For a general discussion of *geis* / taboo see D. Greene, 'Tabu in Early Irish Narrative' in H. Bekker-Nielsen et al. (eds), *Medieval Narrative: A Symposium* (Odense, 1979), pp. 9-19. A re-assessment of Greene's arguments can be found in T. Sjöblom, 'Before *Geis* Became Magical: A Study of the Evolution of an Early

> Other baffling *gessi* concern seeing certain sights or hearing certain sounds. [...]
> Cú Chulainn must not see 'the stud-team of Mac Lir' nor hear 'the harp of Manan's
> son', even when played 'soothingly, sweetly, plaintively'. Any explanation of such
> *gessi* will probably always be conjectural.[40]

We can identify another distinct form of *geis* or taboo featuring in our tale which has been
referred to as 'totemic in nature'[41] and relates to Cú Chulainn and dogs, and which we will
return to in section 1.3.1 below.

1.2 The context of Cú Chulainn's death

Oidheadh Con Culainn is a tale that expects a certain level of 'background knowledge' of its
audience. To quote Maria Tymoczko:

> In many ways CuChulainn's death is the climax of his career. The story
> presupposes a great deal. It alludes to CuChulainn's birth, his childhood and
> training in arms, as well as his mature deeds and great exploits. In particular, the
> story presupposes knowledge of those he killed, for in *The Death of CuChulainn*
> the children of his slain opponents come to avenge their fathers. Because the tale is
> dependent on so many other stories about CuChulainn, in a sense it is derivative.[42]

We have already explored the main themes and events of the Ulster Cycle, but there are a
number of episodes which very specifically determine and subsequently lead up to Cú
Chulainn's downfall. The themes of vengeance and retribution are very much at the centre of
our tale, but what makes Cú Chulainn's adversaries, namely Cailitín's children, Lughaidh mac
Con Raoi and Earc mac Cairbre, so determined to destroy the hero? All of their fathers –
Cailitín Dána, Cairbre Nia Fer, and Cú Raoi mac Daire – were killed by Cú Chulainn, and it is
these particular episodes in Cú Chulainn's career as a warrior that we will briefly consider at
this point, in order to put our tale into context. We have to return to the *Táin* as in some ways
this is where Cú Chulainn's downfall begins.

Cailitín Dána and his sons fall victim to Cú Chulainn's superiority in battle in an episode
that forms part of the *Táin*. In this particular battle Cailitín and his twenty-seven sons are sent
to fight against the Ulstermen by Meadhbh, Queen of Connacht. Fergus, of the Ulstermen,
knows about this arrangement, and the impending fight worries him greatly as he fears for Cú
Chulainn:

Irish Religious Concept', *Studia Celtica* 32 (1998), pp. 85-94. See also T.M. Charles-Edwards, 'Geis, Prophecy,
Omen and Oath', *Celtica* 23 (1999), pp. 38-59.

[40] P. O'Leary, 'Honour-Bound: The Social Context of Early Irish Heroic *Geis*', *Celtica* 20 (1988), p. 89. O'Leary
cites / translates from Van Hamel's edition of our tale.

[41] O'Leary, 'Honour-Bound', p. 90.

[42] M. Tymoczko, *Two Death Tales from the Ulster Cycle* (Dublin, 1981), p. 12.

Tánic Fergus reme dochum a phubla 7 a muintiri 7 rabert a osnad scísi bar aird. 'Is trúag lind in gním doníther imbárach and,' bar Fergus. 'Garsa gním sain,' bar a munter. 'Cú Chulaind do marbad,' bar ésium. 'Uch!' bar íat-som, 'cia marbas?' 'Calatín Dána, bar ésium, 'cona s*h*echt maccaib f*h*ichet 7 a úa Glass mac Delga. Is amlaid atát neim ar cach f*h*ir díb 7 neim ar cach arm dá n-armaib, 7 ni f*h*uil bar a fuliged nech díb, munub marb a chétóir, nába marb ria cind nómaide, & ní f*h*uil digsed dá f*h*iss dam-sa bhad f*h*iadnaisi don chomlund 7 don chomroc 7 daberad a f*h*iss dam mar da mairbfithea Cú Chulaind, ná tibrind mo bennac[h]tain 7 mh'eirred.'

[Fergus came forward to his tent and followers and heaved a sigh of weariness. 'We are sad for the deed to be done here to-morrow,' said Fergus. 'What deed is that,' asked his followers. 'The killing of Cú Chulainn,' said he. 'Alas!' said they, 'who kills him?' 'Calatín Dána,' said he, 'and his twenty seven sons and his grandson Glas mac Delga. There is poison on every man of them and on each one of their weapons, and there is none whom of them wounds but dies before the end of nine days if he does not die at once. And there is no man who should go to witness the encounter for me and bring me news if Cú Chulainn should be killed, to whom I would not give my blessing and my gear.']⁴³

But as the battle commences, it soon becomes clear that any worries were unnecessary: Cú Chulainn withstands every attack and, true to his prediction that no-one would be left alive after this battle,⁴⁴ kills Cailitín, all of his twenty-seven sons as well as his grandson Glas mac Dealga.

Following their training by Meadhbh, Cailitín's sons and daughters, from a very early age, are set to seek revenge for their father. But what about the other princes who fight alongside them? We will have to move forward in time and consider a number of post-*Táin* episodes. In the introduction to his edition of the *Táin*, Thomas Kinsella observed:

The story, as the *Táin* ends, is not finished; other tales continue the action. The most important of these for the plot are:
Cath Ruis na Ríg, 'The Battle of Ros na Ríg', telling of Ulster's war of revenge for the *Táin*, and how Cúchulainn killed Coirpre, king of Temair;
Aided Con Roi, 'The Death of Cúroi', telling how Cúchulainn treacherously murdered Cúroi after being shamed in battle by him;
Brislech mór Maige Muirtheimhne, 'The great Carnage on Murtheimhne Plain' (not to be confused with the episode of the same title in the *Táin Bó Cuailnge*) and
Aided ConCulainn, 'The Death of Cúchulainn', telling of Ulster's defeat at the hands of her united enemies, and how Cúchulainn was killed by the sons of Coirpre, Cúroi and Calatín (the Gaile Dána of the earlier version of the *Táin*); and

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⁴³ O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúalnge from the Book of Leinster* , p. 70, ll. 2545-55; translation from pp. 209-10. The punctum has been expanded to *h* here.

⁴⁴ Cf. O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúalnge from the Book of Leinster*, p. 70, ll. 2583-85 [translation on p. 210]: 'Tiur-sa bréthir,' bar Cú Chulaind, 'ó thúargabusa mo chend 7 ára thelggius m'anál, acht mana derna badessin scél fort, nach nech díb-siút dagéna fadesta.' ['I swear,' said Cú Chulainn, 'now that I have raised my head and drawn my breath, that unless you yourself make it known, not one of those yonder shall tell of it henceforth.'].

> *Dergruathar Chonaill Chernaigh*, 'Conall Cernach's Red Onslaught', telling how
> Conall Cernach avenged Cúchulainn's death.
> But these tales though they bring the action further, do so in a very different
> mode, one that is characterised by high fantasy and a free recourse to the
> supernatural.[45]

As for the first tale enumerated by Kinsella, Earc's father, the king of Tara Cairbre Nia Fear, is beheaded by Cú Chulainn in the battle of Ros na Rígh, *Cath Ruis na Ríg*, which takes place as a direct result of the *Táin*.[46] Cú Chulainn only arrives when the battle is already under way but immediately takes the lead and thus gives the Ulstermen, who up until then had been inferior to their opponents, new hope and courage. The battle becomes more and more violent, culminating in the combat between Cú Chulainn and Cairbre. Although the latter's companions make every effort to protect him and Cairbre manages to take the upper hand, Cú Chulainn's charioteer Laogh comes to his aid by throwing Cú Chulainn his best weapons. Cú Chulainn then kills Cairbre with his spear, and beheads him with his sword.

Cú Raoi mac Daire, finally, was a half-demonic personage with magical powers from the south of Ireland, whose death 'is born of conspiracy and treachery and unequal combat.'[47] The tale resulting in his death relates how Conchubhar's daughter Bláthnat is led off by Echde, who has three beautiful cows. As he lives on an island the cows swim to the Irish coast to graze, which does not agree with the Ulstermen. They try to catch the cows, which escape and lead them to Echde's tower, where a fight breaks out. Cú Chulainn follows them in his boat, in which Cú Raoi, in disguise, also sets over. When Echde is asleep the Ulstermen make off with the girl and the cows and, when Echde follows them, they promise the spoils to the disguised Cú Raoi if he should ward Echde off. Back home the Ulstermen ask the young man to come back for the cows and the girl the next year, they then make the same request a second time, but in the third year Cú Raoi – still in disguise – takes them off with him. Cú Raoi's poet comes to Ulster, revealing the identity of the man who took the girl and cows as Cú Raoi. Cú Chulainn disguises himself and goes to convince Blathnat to betray her husband. Cú Raoi had

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[45] T. Kinsella, *The Tain* (Oxford, 1969), p. xv.

[46] *Cath Ruis na Ríg* is preserved in the 'Book of Leinster', fol. 171a-178a. Cf. Best & O'Brien, *The Book of Leinster – Volume IV*, pp. 761-779. For a discussion of the tale see U. Mac Gearailt, '*Cath Ruis na Ríg* and Twelfth-Century Literary and Oral Tradition', *ZCP* 44 (1991), pp. 128-53.

[47] Tymoczko, *Two Death Tales*, p. 11. For further discussion of Cú Raoi's death see e.g. J. Baudiš, 'Cúrói and Cúchulinn', *Éigse* 7 (1914), pp. 200-09; P.S. Hellmuth, 'A Giant Among Kings and Heroes: Some Preliminary Thoughts on the Character Cú Roí mac Dáire in the Mediaeval Irish Literature', *Emania* 17 (1998), pp. 5-11; P.S. Hellmuth, '*Aided Chon Roí* im Gelben Buch von Lecan: Die Geschichte eines Todes als Lebensretter' in R. Ködderitzsch et al. (eds), *Akten des Zweiten Deutschen Keltologen-Symposiums* (Tübingen, 1999), pp. 65-76; E.A. Gray, 'The Warrior, the Poet and the King: "The Three Sins of the Warrior" and the Death of Cú Roí' in J.F. Nagy & L.E. Jones (eds), *Heroic Poets and Poetic Heroes in Celtic Tradition: A Festschrift for Patrick K. Ford* (Dublin, 2005), pp. 74-90.

revealed to her that his soul is hidden in a salmon that only comes to a nearby lake every seven years and can only be killed with his own sword, so seven years after Cú Chulainn's visit Blathnat catches the fish. That night the Ulstermen move towards Cú Raoi's territory. He wards them off at first, but then loses his sword, which Cú Chulainn uses to kill the salmon, thus decreasing Cú Roi's strength and eventually killing him. Blathnat, for the betrayal of her husband, is killed by his poet Ferchertne.

The above summaries give a taste of the complexity of events surrounding and preceding Cú Chulainn's death; we can see how his actions have incurred the wrath of those opposing and conspiring against him in *Brisleach mhór Mhaighe Muirtheimhne*. Having established its context and background events, we can now turn to look at *Oidheadh Con Culainn* itself.

1.3 Summary of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*

A number of points have to be made with regard to the summary below. *Oidheadh Con Culainn* being the focus of this thesis, the summary is of the Early Modern Irish recension of Cú Chulainn's death (Thurneysen's version B), rather than the better-known Early Irish version (version A) as preserved in the 'Book of Leinster'. The later version, while agreeing with the general structure and events of the earlier text, has been embellished quite considerably; to quote Thurneysen's – somewhat deprecating – view, 'an kindlichen Übertreibungen läßt sie nichts zu wünschen übrig.' ['It [the tale] is not wanting for childish exaggerations'].[48] The main differences in the storylines of Versions A and B will be briefly discussed following this summary of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*.

The summary deliberately goes into details of the tale so as to prepare for the discussion of its transmission and manuscript tradition in the subsequent chapters of this thesis. In anticipation of this discussion, those instances where poems occur in the text have been marked by numbers within square brackets. The numbering of the poems corresponds to that used throughout the thesis. While it is unnecessary to give the first lines of poems in the context of the summary here, the numbering can be checked against pull-out Tables 3-1 and 3-4 in Chapter 3.

To very briefly introduce *loci et personae* of the tale, beginning with the location; as with the other Ulster Cycle tales a large part of the action takes place at Eamhain Macha. Cú Chulainn himself resides at Dún Dealgan, which is not far from Magh Muirtheimhne, a plain south of the modern day Dundalk in Co. Louth. As for *personae*, characters on the side of the

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[48] R. Thurneysen, *Die Irische Helden- und Königsage bis zum Siebzehnten Jahrhundert* (Halle, 1921), p. 558.

Ulaidh worth mentioning are Cú Chulainn's wife Eimhear, his charioteer Laogh and Niamh, who is the wife of Conall Cearnach, who in turn is Cú Chulainn's foster brother. On the side of the adversaries are Ailill and Meadhbh, king and queen of Connacht, who reside at Cruachain. Fighting alongside them are Earc mac Cairbre, Lughaidh mac Con Raoi, Mac Niad mac Finn mhic Rossa and three sons and three daughters of Cailitín Dána; we have already elaborated on the circumstances of their respective fathers' deaths, which fuel their desire for revenge.

'The Death of Cú Chulainn'

After defeating the men of Ireland in the battles of Ros na Rígh and Gairidhe, Cú Chulainn retreats to his residence at Dún Dealgan, his greatest achievement in battle having been the slaying of Cailitín Dána and his twenty-seven sons. Cailitín's wife, however, is pregnant at the time of her husband's death and shortly after gives birth to six children, three boys and three girls. This happens at a time where Conchubhar reigns over Ulster, and Ailill is the ruler of Connacht, Ailill's wife being the famous and troublesome Meadhbh of Cruachan.

Meadhbh takes Cailitín's newborn children under her care, having cut off their right feet and left hands. After seven years she relates to them how their father and twenty-seven brothers had been slain by Cú Chulainn. She impresses upon them that only by the powers of magic could a warrior as skilled and cautious as Cú Chulainn be defeated, and that if they were to take ample vengeance they would have to train in the art of wizardry and witchcraft. Spurred on by Meadhbh's persuasions, Cailitín's children set out to different parts of the world to acquire the knowledge they need. Their final destination is hell, where the smith Vulcan crafts three magic spears for them. Of the spears it is prophesied that they will kill three kings, namely the Liath Macha, horse-king of Ireland, Cú Chulainn, warrior-king of Ireland and Laogh mac Righ an Gabhra, servant-king of Ireland. The names of the spears are given as Gaoth, Ágh and Urchar [poem **1**].

After seven years abroad, Cailitín's children return to Cruachan where Meadhbh awaits them. After they tell of their training and travels [poem **2**] Meadhbh and Ailill assemble the Irish princes at Cruachan: Lughaidh mac Con Raoi from Munster, Mac Niad and Conchubhar, the sons of Finn mac Rossa, from Leinster, and Earc mac Cairbre. The fathers of all four had been slain by Cú Chulainn and they are keen to seek revenge; they thus ally with Meadhbh and Cailitín's children against Cú Chulainn. Together with their hosts they march towards Ulster, set up camp on Tailtean and ravage the surrounding areas.

The Ulstermen, at that time, are weakened by a curse that does not, however, affect Cú Chulainn. On hearing about the invasion Conchubhar, king of Ulster, sends his messenger

Leabharcham to Cú Chulainn at Dún Dealgan [poem **3**]. Through Leabharcham he warns Cú Chulainn of the arrival of the men of Ireland and the magic powers of Cailitín's children. He invites the hero, in accordance with the counsel of his druids, to come to Eamhain Macha. Cú Chulainn agrees, and with his wife Eimhear and his charioteer Laogh he goes to Conchubhar's court, where they are welcomed. Conchubhar instructs the women and his druids (among them Geannan Gruadhsholus and Cathfadh) to keep Cú Chulainn busy and watch him carefully since it is prophesied that he should fall by the hands of Meadhbh and Cailitín's children.

The men of Ireland, having ravaged Dún Dealgan, set up camp at Magh Muirtheimhne. Meadhbh reminds Cailitín's children that they are to lure Cú Chulainn towards her within three days and three nights. The three daughters fly 'on the wings of the wind' to Eamhain, where they create the illusion of fighting armies. Cú Chulainn tries to go towards the illusionary battle but is prevented by Geanann Gruadhsholus [poem **4**]. Cailitín's children then try to use music to ensnare him [poem **5**]. When this fails Badhbh, one of Cailitín's daughters, comes to Cú Chulainn in the shape of a crow and tells him of the devastation on Magh Muirtheimhne [poems **6/7**]. Cú Chulainn's resistance is starting to wane [poem **8**], but again Geannan manages to soothe him. While the inhabitants of Eamhain try to amuse Cú Chulainn in order to distract him, Cailitín's children return to Meadhbh and the men of Ireland.

The next day brings a renewed attempt to lure Cú Chulainn out of the safety of the fort by again creating the illusion of a battle. Niamh inghean Chealtchair, who has Cú Chulainn in her care that day, takes him to *Gleann na mBodhar* (the 'Valley of the Deaf'), but Cailitín's children follow him, so they return to Eamhain [poem **9**]. Incited by another war song, spoken by Cailitín's eldest son [poem **10**], Cú Chulainn again tries to reach the imaginary battlefield but is prevented by Niamh. Cailitín's children, meanwhile, pledge that they would bring Cú Chulainn with them the next day.

On the third day of the siege Conchubhar orders for Cú Chulainn to be taken back to Gleann na mBodhar, where there is a recess blocking out all external noise, under the pretext of Geanann holding a banquet there. Reluctantly, Cú Chulainn agrees to go; he is escorted by Niamh while Eimhear stays behind.

Cailitín's daughters return to Eamhain Macha but, having missed Cú Chulainn's departure, look for him in vain. Eventually they see his horses grazing at Gleann na mBodhar, and create the illusion of a battle raging around the valley. Cathfadh manages to convince Cú Chulainn of the delusion. Badhbh, however, leads Niamh away and takes on her appearance; the 'false' Niamh then demands that Cú Chulainn should go and avenge the destruction of his territory

[poem **11**]. He agrees [poem **12**] and cannot be persuaded otherwise, even when the real Niamh assures him that he has been deceived by her borrowed shape.

At Cú Chulainn's order his servant Laogh goes to yoke the horses, namely, the Liath Macha and the Dubh Saoileann, into the chariot. The Liath Macha, aware of the threat to Cú Chulainn, refuses to be approached, despite Laogh's efforts [poems **13**, **14**]. Only when Cú Chulainn himself comes to fetch her does the Liath Macha comply, but sheds tears of blood. When Cú Chulainn jumps into the chariot his weapons fall off him. On driving towards Eamhain Macha the magic hosts appear again and he sees the palace in flames. But no assurance of his friends and the druids can convince him not to go towards the men of Ireland [poem **15**].

Accompanied by Cathfadh and the *fili*, Cú Chulainn goes to see his mother Deichtine to bid her farewell. She repeatedly hands him a jug of milk which turns into blood every time he reaches for it. He smashes the jug on a rock as he realises that he will not return alive [poem **16**]. Deichtine and Cathfadh beseech Cú Chulainn in vain to wait for the return of his foster brother Conall Cearnach, nor can the weeping of the women of Eamhain hold him back [poem **17**].

Cú Chulainn goes to the plain of Eamhain and even a final bad omen, the sight of two girls washing a bloodstained shirt, does not deter him. He forbids Cathfadh to follow him further and proceeds to Áth na Furaire on Sliabh Fuait. There he meets the children of Cailitín, all in a terrible disguise and with only one eye, one arm and one leg. He turns the left side of his chariot towards them to pass them by but Badhbh throws a spear after him. He catches it and throws it back, but a drop of blood from the spear has fallen on his head, diminishing his and the Liath Macha's strength by half. While Badhbh returns to the men of Ireland, pierced by the spear, Cú Chulainn laments the loss of his strength [poem **18**]. He proceeds towards the men of Ireland [poem **19**] who send the satirist Cú Chuilleasg to meet him and ask his spear of him [poem **20**]. Cú Chulainn, deliberately misunderstanding Cú Chuilleasg's request to pass the spear 'across' rather than point or shaft first, kills the satirist and the men standing behind him. Lughaidh mac Con Raoi, meanwhile, gives a detailed description of the appearance of Cú Chulainn, his horses and his chariot to the men of Ireland, culminating in an incitement to battle [poem **21**].

The men of Ireland rise, and Meadhbh hands the poisoned spears crafted by Vulcan to Lughaidh mac Con Raoi, Earc mac Cairbre and Mac Niad mac Finn. Cú Chulainn and Laogh prepare for battle, and on seeing the enemy Cú Chulainn has one of his 'warp spasms' and charges into them. He kills a great number of men without getting wounded himself. He then

has Laogh collect rocks, which he throws at the men of Ireland for seven days and nights, causing yet more devastation among them.

On the seventh day Mac Niadh, following Meadhbh's instructions, hurls his spear at Cú Chulainn, piercing his right shoulder and wounding the Liath Macha. Then Earc throws his spear, wounding Cú Chulainn's left shoulder and hitting Laogh. Cú Chulainn sends Laogh home to Ulster and to Eimhear but promises to avenge him [poem **22**]. Laogh leaves the battlefield but stays nearby to follow the events.

Cú Chulainn wreaks havoc amongst the men of Ireland, but when Lughaidh throws his spear – the last of Vulcan's spears – it pierces the Dubh Saoileann and fatally wounds Cú Chulainn. The Dubh Saoileann breaks loose, leaving the equally wounded Liath Macha attached to the chariot. Cú Chulainn jumps from the chariot and makes one final onslaught. A raven tries to peck at the entrails which are pouring out of his body, but Cú Chulainn pulls them from the bird and laughs. He goes to a nearby lake to wash himself. When he sees an otter (*dobharchú*) drinking his blood he kills it. He now knows that he is truly doomed as it is prophesied that his final deed would be to kill his namesake [poem **23**].

On Cú Chulainn's request Laogh leads him to a pillar and ties him to it, so that he may die upright facing his enemies. Laogh puts the sword and shield into Cú Chulainn's hands, and the hero dies. Laogh sees the Dubh Saoileann return; he pulls the spear from the horse and rides across Sliabh Fuaid to Eamhain Macha.

For three days and three nights the men of Ireland do not dare approach Cú Chulainn. Only when Badhbh, in the shape of a crow, circles above him and with a screech proclaims his death do they come close. Cú Chulainn is still holding the sword in his hand and Lughaidh gives the order to have it removed. But when the tendons of Cú Chulainn's hand are severed the sword falls from the dead man's hand, cutting off the hands of the thirty men standing closest. Lughaidh then decapitates Cú Chulainn, having been deemed by Meadhbh the most appropriate man to do it. It is decided that Earc mac Cairbre is to take the head to Teamhair. For fear of Conall Cearnach a part of the host remains, while the rest of the men of Ireland disperse.

Eimhear, at the same time, keeps watch from her *grianán*. When she sees a rider approaching she recognises him as Laogh on the Dubh Saoileann and realises that this can only mean that Cú Chulainn is dead. She laments that it is not Cú Chulainn on the Liath Macha coming towards her [poem **24**]. Laogh reports of Cú Chulainn's death, which is greeted by grief and lament throughout the province. Eimhear and Laogh go to Dún Dealgan, which they find ravaged and burnt, and they erect a tent over Cú Chulainn's corpse.

Leabharcham is sent out to find Conall Cearnach and tell him of his foster brother's death. When she reaches Cuailgne Conall's ship is about to anchor, and she goes towards him as he disembarks. She tells Conall the bad news, which he greets with a lament [poem **25**] and then prepares to avenge Cú Chulainn. He sets out in his chariot at such speed that one of the horses – the Coincheann Crónfhada – dies of exhaustion. Conall proceeds with one horse; a feat that had only been performed by three men in Ireland, namely, Lughaidh Lámhfhada, Cú Chulainn and Conall Cearnach.

Conall then reaches Magh Muirtheimhne where he happens upon the wounded Liath Macha. He pulls the spear out of her and makes motion to yoke her into his chariot to replace the Coincheann Crónfhada [poem **26**]. The Liath Macha, however, flings herself into a nearby lake and drowns. Conall approaches Cú Chulainn's corpse and laments his foster brother's death [poem **27**]. He vows to Eimhear that he would avenge Cú Chulainn [poem **28**] and sets out in pursuit of the men of Ireland.

Connla mac Criomhthann, who is with his foster brother Lughaidh mac Con Raoi, sees Conall coming towards them and Lughaidh asks Connla to describe the man in the chariot approaching them [poem **29**]. A conversation commences between the two adversaries Conall and Lughaidh, in which they agree to meet at Magh Airgedros to duel.

On his way to Magh Airgedros and his meeting with Lughaidh, Conall comes upon Máine, son of Ailill and Meadhbh, and decapitates him and his 150 men. He then spears Máine's head on a *gad* [poems **30/31**].

Conall proceeds to Teamhair, where the Ulsterman Ceann Biorraidhe is stationed to guard Conchubhar's daughter Feidlime. On hearing Earc boast about Cú Chulainn's death Ceann Biorraidhe leaves the palace, only to meet Conall outside the gates. Together they return to Teamhair where they see Maoil and Miodhna playing ball with Cú Chulainn's decapitated head. Conall, on his part, beheads the two, putting their heads on the *gad* [poem **32**]. He then instructs Ceann Biorraidhe to take Cú Chulainn's head to Eimhear.

Ceann Biorraidhe does as he is told and meets Eimhear at Dún Dealgan. She receives the head, drinks Cú Chulainn's blood and speaks a lament [poem **33**]. She then speaks of how she would never take another husband, and of the grief that Cú Chulainn's death had caused [poem **34**]. She and Laogh then ponder further over their grief [poem **35**].

Conall, at the same time, after killing Maoil and Miodhna now challenges Earc to a combat [poem **36**]. Earc accepts and goes against Conall with 150 of his men. Conall still prevails and adds Earc's head to those already on the *gad*. He then continues his attack on the men at Teamhair, decapitating Muireadhach mac Fearghusa [poem **37**].

On his way to the meeting with Lughaidh, Conall further kills Colla mac Fáitheamhuil [poem **38**] and Cuilleann Breagha [poem **39**], ravaging their territory. At Fiodh Rocaime Conall meets Cailitín's children, whom he also slays [poem **40**]. He then encounters Lughaidh's party and among them Connla, whose head is added to the *gad* [poem **41**].

Eventually Conall arrives at Magh Airgedrois and meets Lughaidh. The latter – having only one hand after the encounter with Cú Chulainn's sword – urges Conall to tie his own hand behind his back to ensure a fair fight. Conall obliges, but when Lughaidh accidentally cuts the fetter Conall refuses to have his hand bound a second time. Conall dominates, and Lughaidh's head is speared onto the *gad*.

After this final onslaught Conall returns to Dún Dealgan where he meets Eimhear. Seeing the heads of the slain enemies on the *gad* she asks their names in turn [poem **42**], the conversation being concluded by a series of laments for Cú Chulainn's death. Eimhear asks Conall to bury her alongside Cú Chulainn; he digs a grave and erects a stone with an *ogham* inscription on it and Eimhear speaks a final poem [poem **43**].

1.3.1 Main differences in the storylines of Versions A and B

Following the summary of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, it is worth drawing upon the fact that while the general framework of the two recensions of Cú Chulainn's death (i.e. the Early Irish Version A and our Early Modern Irish Version B) is ultimately the same, there are a number of details in which the two differ. Some of these differences are undoubtedly due to the fact that Version B is considerably longer than Version A, and that Version A has a fair amount of *retoiric* whereas in Version B we find largely narrative prose interspersed with poetry. In this context, Van Hamel observed the

> lyrical character of the story adopted in Version B, which strangely contrasts with the Old-Irish epical strain of Version A. Besides, the two versions differ also from one another in the prose narrative, so that Version B is of little avail for the reconstruction of the lost parts of Version A.[49]

With the beginning of the tale being lost in Version A, it is of course difficult to comment fully on all potential differences and similarities between the two versions. As for the training of Cailitín's children which is described at the beginning of the tale, Tymoczko has proposed that 'they were blinded in their left eye so as to give them greater access to occult powers. The sons were set to learning druidry and potion-practice, and arts of destruction. The daughters learned

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[49] Van Hamel, *Compert Con Culainn*, p. 69.

hidden knowledge and witchcraft.'[50] While this undoubtedly implies that somebody – who due to the damage to the manuscript remains unnamed – is set on preparing Cailitín's children for avenging their father, in Version B we learn that this person is Meadhbh, queen of Connacht. Here it is she who personally cuts off the children's left hands and right feet and sends them off to train as witches and wizards. Their journey is also described in some detail: they travel to Scotland, to the druids in the east, to Babylon and finally to hell, where they meet Vulcan. He crafts three swords (called *Lot*, *Leodh* and *Udragh*)[51] and three spears (called *Gaoth*, *Ágh* and *Urchar*)[52] for them to use against Cú Chulainn. Again, these details are not preserved in Version A; Tymoczko's summary of the lost portion of the tale suggests that Cailitín's sons craft the spears themselves, and while the prophecy about whom they are destined for is the same, here the spears are not given names.[53]

In Version B, one character that features throughout the tale is Niamh, Conall Cearnach's wife and Cú Chulainn's lover. She tries to lead Cú Chulainn away from the illusion of battle but inadvertently becomes involved in Cú Chulainn's decision to go and fight when one of Cailitín's daughters takes her shape and tells him to go – the 'real' Niamh's protests that she would never say something like that are ignored. In Version A, however, Niamh speaks a *retoiric* lamenting how Ulster is lost without her husband Conall Cearnach, inciting Cú Chulainn to prove her wrong. The blame is thus shifted from the 'real' Niamh in Version B. It is noteworthy also that this episode is the only time that Niamh features in Version A while in Version B she is mentioned, albeit infrequently, throughout the tale.

A number of bad omens precede Cú Chulainn's departure into battle, and they differ somewhat in detail in the two versions. In Version A, a brooch falls from Cú Chulainn's cloak and pierces his foot as he gets ready. His horse, the Liath Macha, cries tears of blood while being yoked into the chariot. Finally, on leaving Emhain Macha, Cú Chulainn turns his chariot to the left, which is considered a bad omen. In Version B, the Liath Macha behaves in the same way as in Version A but all of Cú Chulainn's weapons fall off him as he gets into the chariot, ready to go into battle. On his way he stops to bid his foster mother farewell, and when she

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[50] Tymoczko, *Two Death Tales*, p. 37. Tymoczko bases her summary and thus reconstruction of the lost portion of the tale on that portion of the lost material preserved in another manuscript besides LL, namely TCD H.3.18, as she tells us on pp. 15-16.

[51] See *Dinneen*, s.v. *lot* 'act of injuring'; s.v. *leodh* 'act of cutting'. For *Udragh* see *DIL*, s.v. *augra* 'strife, contention, quarrel/ battle, fight, conflict'.

[52] See *Dinneen*, s.v. *gaoth* 'wind'; s.v. *ágh* 'battle'; s.v. *urchar* 'shot / cast'.

[53] Tymoczko, *Two Death Tales*, p. 37: 'For seven years, then, they laid their plans. Calatin's sons prepared deadly spears to use against CuChulainn, and the spears were set by a poisonous man named Maine.'

hands him a drink of milk, three times it turns into blood. Finally, Cú Chulainn sees a young girl washing a bloodstained shirt, as noted in the summary of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* above.

We have already hinted that Cú Chulainn's *gessi* or taboos play a role in his death tale, and the violation of the taboos in the hero's final days differ in detail in the two recensions. In Version A Cú Chulainn comes across three hags – Cailitín's daughters in disguise – who offer him food. As he is not allowed to refuse this offer he accepts, although it is the meat of a dog, his namesake, and the hero therefore violates his 'totemic taboo'. Although Cú Chulainn does not actually eat the meat he puts it under his leg, as a result of which his left side is left paralysed. In Version B it is the drop of blood from a spear that weakens Cú Chulainn's side; the violation of the 'totemic taboo' occurs when Cú Chulainn kills an otter[54] which is attempting to drink the hero's blood when he washes himself after receiving the fatal wound.

Versions A and B share the fact that Cú Chulainn's foster brother, Conall Cearnach, is absent at the time of Cú Chulainn's death. In Version A no explanation is given as to his whereabouts; he just 'appears on the scene' after Cú Chulainn's death and proceeds to avenge him. In Version B, on the other hand, we are told that Conall Cearnach had been abroad and returned to Ireland just in time to avenge his foster brother.

The behaviour of Cú Chulainn's horse Liath Macha varies slightly in the two recensions. In Version A, after she has been wounded by the spear, the Liath Macha goes into a nearby lake, only to re-appear later to defend Cú Chulainn's body against the men of Ireland.[55] She further appears to Eimhear to bid her farewell. In Version B the horse remains on the battlefield; when Conall Cearnach arrives there he tries to yoke her into his chariot as a replacement for one of his own horses, but the Liath Macha goes into the lake and drowns herself.

Finally, and probably most importantly, there are differences in the way in which Conall avenges Cú Chulainn's death. In Version A the first – and only – person Conall comes upon in his quest for revenge is Lughaidh. The latter convinces Conall to postpone their battle until they reach Munster, to which Conall agrees. He further agrees to have one hand tied to one side to allow for a fair fight as Lughaidh only has one hand. Still, Conall is victorious and claims Lughaidh's head, thus fulfilling his promise of revenge. In Version B Conall's 'red rampage' is a

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[54] Irish *dobharchú*, 'waterdog': due to the shared element *cú* in their names perhaps a 'totemic' animal for Cú Chulainn?

[55] Cf. R.I. Best & M.A. O'Brien, *The Book of Leinster, formerly, Lebar na Núachongbála* (Dublin, 1956), p. 450 (ll. 14052-53): 'Is iarum b*ir*t in Liath M*acha* na tri dergruat*h*ra immi ma cuairt.' [Then the Liath Macha made three red rampages / bloody onslaughts around him.] Note that in Version A this seems to be the only instance where reference is being made to a *deargruathar*, and that it is used for the Liath Macha rather than for Conall's revenge; in our later manuscripts *Deargruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh* frequently occurs as a new title.

lot more detailed and brutal. Although, in agreement with Version A, Lughaidh is the first person Conall meets, he agrees to meet at him for combat some later stage and kills a number of people en route to this meeting, taking their heads and spearing them onto a *gad*. Thus he ends up with the heads of Ailill and Meadhbh's son Máine, as well as those of Maoil, Miodhna, Earc, Muireadhach mac Fearghusa, Colla mac Faitheamhuil, Cuilleann Breagh, Cailitín's six children, Connla, and Lughaidh himself.

As we can see even from this short investigation, there are important and at times considerable differences in the storylines of Versions A and B. A detailed and close comparative reading of the Early Irish and Early Modern Irish recensions of Cú Chulainn's death would be very interesting and insightful but unfortunately is outwith the scope of this thesis, which has its focus on the transmission and manuscript tradition of the later version. The short discourse above, however, illustrates that the story of Cú Chulainn's death falls into the category of texts that 'were reconstructed and reworked in late medieval versions, with episodes and motifs alternately disappearing or gaining new prominence.'[56]

1.4 Previous work on *Oidheadh Con Culainn*

The Early Modern Irish recension of Cú Chulainn's death (Version B) has received comparatively little attention compared to Version A; it is this latter version that is generally referred to when discussing the 'Death of Cú Chulainn'. A certain emphasis here has been placed upon the obscure *roscada* or *retoirics*, which have been largely replaced by poetry in Version B (discussed briefly in section 3.1 and in more detail in section 6.3). In anticipation of the 'literature review' below, it is worth recapping that the Early Modern Irish recension of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, or Version B, is generally divided into two parts. The first is *Brisleach mhór Mhaighe Muirtheimhne* (BmMM) and the second *Deargruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh* (DCC), which often culminates in the 'Lay of the Heads', *Laoidh na gCeann* (LnC).

There are a number of misconceptions about *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, especially with regard to the manuscripts preserving the tale. One of these can be illustrated by considering what is the chief publication on death tales, namely Kuno Meyer's *The Death Tales of the Ulster Heroes*. While the story of Cú Chulainn's death is not actually edited in here, Meyer very briefly discussed it in his introduction:

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[56] W. McLeod, *Divided Gaels: Gaelic Cultural Identities in Scotland and Ireland, c.1200-c.1650* (Oxford, 2004), p. 99.

> The *Death of Cúchulinn* forms an episode in the story called *Brislech Mór Maige Murthemne*; and extracts from the version in the Book of Leinster have been edited and translated by Whitley Stokes, in the *Revue Celtique*, vol. III., p. 175ff. It is curious that, apart from this twelfth-century version, we have no copies older than the eighteenth century. These modern copies are enumerated by Prof. D'Arbois de Jubainville in his *Catalogue de la Littérature Épique de l'Irlande*, p. 15.[57]

As we will see in the next chapter, there are in fact copies of the tale dating to the early 17th century, while the oldest version of *Laoidh na gCeann* goes back even further to the early 16th century!

A number of editions and translations have been published of both Versions A and B of the text, as well as of *Laoidh na gCeann*. Our primary concern is with Version B, but for the sake of completeness a list of the editions and translations of Version A is given below:

- Whitley Stokes, 'CúChulainn's Death, abridged from the Book of Leinster, ff. 77, *a*.1 – 78, *b*.2', *Revue Celtique* 3 (1877), pp. 175-85: a translation interspersed with sections of the Irish text from LL. This translation also appears in Eleanor Hull, *The Cuchullin Saga in Irish Literature* (1898), pp. 251-263.

- Henri D'Arbois de Jubainville, 'Meurtre de Cûchulainn' in *L'Épopée Celtique en Irlande* (1892), pp. 321-365: French translation of the LL text.

- Rudolf Thurneysen, 'Das große Fällen von Mag Muirtheimne oder: Aided ConCulainn – Fassung A' in *Die Irische Helden- und Königssage bis zum Siebzehnten Jahrhundert* (1921), pp. 549-556: German summary of the text from LL, preceding a summary of version B (see below).

- R. I. Best & M. A. O'Brien, 'Brislech mór Maige Murthemni' in *The Book of Leinster, formerly, Lebar na Núachongábala – Vo. II* (1956), pp. 442-457: an edition of LL.

- Christian-J. Guyonvarc'h, 'La mort de Cúchulainn. Version A' in *Ogam* 18 (1968), pp. 343-352 : French translation of the LL text.

- Maria Tymoczko, *Two Death Tales from the Ulster Cycle: The Death of Cu Roi and the Death of Cu Chulainn* (1981): a translation of the LL text, including the *roscada*.

- John Carey, 'The Death of Cú Chulainn as related in the Book of Leinster' in *The Celtic Heroic Age* (1995), pp. 124-133: a translation of the LL text without the *roscada*.

- Three further translations of the LL text into French, Italian and Russian: G. Dottin, 'Le meurtre de Cuchulainn' in *L'épopée irlandaise* (1926), pp. 147-156; A. Agrati & M.L. Magini, 'La morte di Cu Chulainn' in *La saga irlandaise di Cu Chulainn* (1982), pp. 257-85; C. Shkunayev, 'Smert Kukhulina' in *Pokhishcheniye byka iz Kualnge* (1985), pp. 328-346.[58]

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[57] K. Meyer, *The Death-Tales of the Ulster Heroes*, p. v.

[58] I have not examined the translations listed in this final bullet point but am giving the references as listed in J.P. Mallory & R. Ó hUiginn, 'The Ulster Cycle: A Check List of Translations' in Mallory & Stockmann, *Ulidia*, p. 293.

The list of publications for Version B, *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, is shorter than that for Version A, and we shall begin by considering the published editions before moving on to translations and finally those publications discussing the text as a tale.

The prose narrative has been edited and published on four different occasions; the publications, in chronological order, are:

1) Editions from 18th- and 19th-century manuscripts were published in *Gaelic Journal* 11 (1901) ('Dearg-ruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh') and *Gaelic Journal* 17 (1907) ('Brisleach mhór Mhaighe Mhuirtheimhne').

2) Seosamh Laoide, *Dearg-ruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh* (1907) and *Brisleach Mhór Mhaighe Muirtheimne* (1915).

3) 'Aidead Conculainn' in *Mil na mBeach* (1911), p. 48-56: partial edition from two Maynooth manuscripts.

4) A.G. Van Hamel, 'Aided Con Culainn' in *Compert Con Culainn and other Stories* (1933), pp. 69-133: an edition of the text from the incomplete NLS MS 72.1.45, with readings supplied from RIA MS 23 K 37.

To briefly consider and assess the above editions. Numbers 1) and 2) in our list can be treated as one item as they are the same editions, published first in a journal and subsequently in book-form by *Connradh na Gaedhilge*. In the *Gaelic Journal* the edition is neither printed in its entirety, nor is there any introduction specifying upon which manuscripts the edition is based, while the editions in book form, listed in 2), are somewhat more helpful as both volumes include a preface. It is the latter part of the tale, *Dearg-ruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh*, which was published first while the first part – *Brisleach Mhór Mhaighe Muirtheimne* – only followed in print eight years later. Laoide remarked on this in the introduction to BmMM:

> Is mór an t-iongnadh liom nach é tús na sgéalaidheachta do cuireadh i dtosach agus gan é d'fhágbháil ar deireadh thiar, mar is éigean dó bheith indiu. Tuigthear don tsluagh nach mise thug céad-aire don 'Bhrisligh' ná don 'Dearg-ruathar', agus bíodh a dheimhin aca, dá mbadh orm-sa im aonar do bheadh an gnó, go gcuirfinn síos mo sgéal i ndiaidh a chéile fá mar atá sé is na láimhsgribhnibh féin.[59]

> [It is a great surprise to me that it was not the beginning of the story that was put (i.e. published) in the first instance and not to leave it until the end, as it must be today. It is realised that it was not me who gave the first attention to the 'Brisligh' or to the 'Dearg-ruathar, and let them be certain that if the business were left to me alone I would publish my tale after each other (in the order) in which it is in the manuscripts themselves.]

Confusingly, it is the introduction to the second volume (containing the first part of the tale) which is a lot more extensive and discusses important issues such as the manuscript sources.

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[59] S. Laoide, *Brisleach Mhór Mhaighe Muirtheimne* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1915), p. v. This publication is printed in *Cló-Gaelach*; the punctum has been silently expanded here and in the following quote. The translations of this and the following item are my own.

We thus learn that Laoide's editions are based primarily on an early 18th-century manuscript and supplemented by another which dates to the 19th century; these are manuscripts RIA 23 K 7 and RIA 23 G 10 respectively. Following a rather detailed discussion of the manuscript provenances and scribes, Laoide gives some more details as to his usage of the two manuscripts:

> Tháinig seirbhthean orm fá dheireadh, agus an lámhsgríbhinn eile, .i. 23 K 7, nach bíodh agam go dtí sin acht 'na ghléas cheartuighthe téx do thairngeas chugam í (.i. ó l. 41 anuas) agus do leigeas do 23 G 10, acht amháin laoidh nó dhó do bhaint aisti sin nach raibh i 23 K 7, agus go deimhin díbh tá amhras agam ar na laoithibh sin féin .i. nár bhaineadar don téx ó thus.[60]

> [I became disappointed eventually, and the other manuscript, i.e. 23 K 7, and I drew on the other which I did not have until then but as an instrument of correction (i.e. from p. 41 onwards) and used as a corrective for 23 G 10, except for leaving out a lay or two from it [i.e. 23 G 10] that is not in 23 K 7, and I am certainly suspicious about those lays themselves i.e. that they did not belong to the text from the beginning.]

Very interesting and relevant here is the reference to the variation in poems contained in the texts; as we will see in the following chapters this is a feature which can be utilised in order to classify the manuscripts into separate groups.

The introduction to Laoide's *Dearg-ruathar*, however, makes no specific mention of the manuscripts but rather refers the reader back to 'the other volume'[61] which is probably to be explained by the fact that Laoide intended for the volumes to be published in the correct order of sequence of the tale, rather than in the order in which they were eventually published (see quote above).

Item 3) in the list above, *Mil na mBeach*, is an early 20th-century Maynooth publication which gives a selection of Irish prose and verse. It includes an edition of that section of our tale which immediately precedes and follows Cú Chulainn's death. The brief introduction preceding the notes to our tale reads:

> Aidheadh Conculainn – The above is part of the tale called *Brisleach mór Maighe Muirtheimhne* and is taken from 4 d 11 and 3 d 4. For a description of the tale *v.* Hyde, *Literary History*, Chap. XXVII. When the piece had been prepared we found that a version had appeared in *Gaelic Journal*, Vol. XI.; we have not had an opportunity of examining that text.[62]

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[60] Laoide, *Brisleach Mhór Mhaighe Muirtheimne*, p. ix.

[61] S. Laoide, *Dearg-ruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1907), p. vii: 'Dála an leabhair eile, is as an lámhsgríbhinn do fríoth an teistimhin seo, .i. as ceann do sgríobhadh i dTuadhmhumhan.' ['As with the other volume, it is from the manuscript that this testimony was drawn, i.e. the one that was written in North Munster (= RIA 23 K 7).']

[62] P. Ó Néill et al., *Mil na mBeach* (Dublin, 1911), p. 97.

Of the manuscripts mentioned, 3 d 4 (now also referenced M 20[63]) is a Maynooth manuscript written by Pól Ó Longáin in 1817 which preserves a version of Cú Chulainn's death comprising BmMM, DCC and LnC. I have not been able to locate MS 4 d 11 but the reference and context of the publication and the other manuscript suggests to me that it, too, is a 19th-century Maynooth manuscript. The above description is somewhat faulty in that the section is not just part of the *Brisleach* but takes the narrative far enough to include the beginning of the *Deargruathar*.

The most recent publication, item 4), is also the best-known: this is Van Hamel's 1933 edition of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. Considering that this is the only edition giving the text in its entirety, the introduction is rather unsatisfactory and Van Hamel's decisions concerning the inclusion of material questionable. The edition is based upon the oldest extant version of the tale, contained in NLS 72.1.45. Provenance, scribe, and an exact date of the manuscript are unknown; Van Hamel himself commented that it

> can be dated in the sixteenth century. It is itself a copy, and a comparison with the later MSS. shows that it cannot be taken as too faithful a representative of the archetype.[64]

The manuscript is fragmentary and preserves only the latter half of the tale but even this is not complete. The missing sections are supplied from an 18th-century manuscript, RIA 23 K 37, which Van Hamel places as being not a direct copy of NLS 72.1.45 but as going back to the same original.[65] While NLS 72.1.45 omits all poetry (except for one poem, which is incomplete and largely illegible due to damage to the manuscript), RIA 23 K 37 (written in 1718) preserves a large number of poems. References to these have been put in the footnotes of the edition although this is not done consistently: possibly by mistake, some poems as they occur in RIA 23 K 37 have not actually been noted.

There is no denying that NLS 72.1.45, by preserving the oldest extant version of our tale, is of great importance; its incompleteness physically and in terms of poetry, however, does pose the question whether or not a different manuscript (possibly even RIA 23 K 37) would have been a more faithful representative of the text and thus more suited to form the basis of an edition.

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[63] P. Ó Fiannachta, *Lámhscríbhinní Gaeilge Choláiste Má Nuad – Fascúl II* (Má Nuad, 1965), p. 54.

[64] Van Hamel, *Compert Con Culainn*, p. 70. Thurneysen gives the date for NLS 72.1.45 as '15th-16th century' (*Heldensage*, p. 557); *Mackinnon Cat.* (p. 157) suggests '15th century' with *Mackechnie Cat.* (p. 202) following this. R. Black follows Van Hamel in tentatively suggesting '16th (?) cen' ('The Gaelic manuscripts of Scotland' in W. Gillies (ed.), *Scotland and Gaelic / Alba agus a'Ghàidhlig* (Edinburgh, 1989), p. 155).

[65] Van Hamel, *Compert Con Culainn*, p. 71.

A further three publications may be mentioned which give editions of *Laoidh na gCeann*:

1) J. F. Campbell, *Leabhar na Feinne* (1872): LnC from NLS 72.1.37 (BDL), NLS 72.3.10 ('Duncan Kennedy's Collection'), and one oral version collected by Alexander Carmichael.

2) Alexander Cameron, *Reliquiae Celticae – Vol I & II* (1892 & 1894): editions of LnC from NLS 72.1.37 (BDL), 72.1.36, 72.1.38, 73.2.2 ('Turner MS'); the edition of the poem from BDL is accompanied by a translation.

3) Neil Ross, *Heroic Poetry from the Book of the Dean of Lismore* (1939): transliterated edition of the poem from NLS MS 72.1.37 (BDL) with an English translation.

It is further worth noting that a more recent edition of LnC, thus far unpublished, can be found in Donald Meek's PhD thesis.[66]

As is evident from the above list, the main interest in LnC lies with the version of the lay as it appears in the famous 'Book of the Dean of Lismore'. Neither publication goes into any detail as to the transmission of the poem or the extant versions. Thus, Neil Ross observed in his notes that

> The poem is a dialogue in which Conall Cearnach describes to Eimhear, widow of Cú Chulainn, the heads of those who slew Cú Chulainn, which he has carried off in vengeance and has on a withy. It belongs then to the Craobhruadh cycle, and is decidedly barbarous in tone. It may be noted, however, that according to the Book of Leinster (122 b), Conall slew only one man, Lughaidh mac Con Raoi, in revenge for Cú Chulainn's death; it is the later versions that give the Deargruathar, or general slaughter, *in extensio*.[67]

No references are given for said 'later versions', nor any details as to the extent of the latter, or their textual content as it differs from the BDL version of *Laoidh na gCeann*. The pre-19th-century versions of LnC are discussed in Chapter 7 in this thesis.

There are a number of summaries and translations of the full prose tale. These, listed in chronological order, are the work of

1) Ewen McLachlan (1812)

2) Standish O'Grady (in Eleanor Hull) (1898)

3) Douglas Hyde (1899)

4) Lady Gregory (1902)

5) Rudolf Thurneysen (1921)

6) Christian-J. Guyonvarc'h (1961-62)

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[66] D.E. Meek, 'The Corpus of Heroic Verse in the Book of the Dean of Lismore' (unpublished PhD thesis in two volumes, University of Glasgow, 1982), Vol. I, pp. 311-16 & Vol. II, pp. 565-73.

[67] N. Ross, *Heroic Poetry from the Book of the Dean of Lismore* (Edinburgh, 1939), p. 230.

The earliest summary, number 1) above, is in fact in manuscript form and to my knowledge has not been published. Ewen McLachlan's 'Analysis of the Contents of the Celtic Manuscripts belonging to the Honourable Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland' (often referred to as 'McLachlan's Celtic Analysis') dates to 1812 and is now manuscript NLS 72.3.4 in Edinburgh. MacLachlan gives a detailed, page-by-page summary of the tale as it stands in NLS 72.1.38 (dating to the early 17th century).

Eleanor Hull's *The Cuchullin Saga in Irish Literature* includes a translation of 'The Great Defeat on the Plain of Muirthemne before Cuchullin's Death' by Standish H. O'Grady.[68] Using an 18th-century manuscript, namely BL Egerton 132, O'Grady only gives 'part of a fine modern recension'[69] rather than the complete tale as it stands in the manuscript which preserves the entire prose narrative of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* as well as *Laoidh na gCeann*.

Only a year after O'Grady, in 1899, his contemporary Douglas Hyde published his *Literary History of Ireland*, which includes a summary of a 'modern extension of the saga'[70] from a manuscript in Hyde's possession. About the manuscript Hyde tells us in a footnote that it 'was copied about a hundred years ago by a scribe named Séaghain O'Mathghamhna on an island in the Shannon.'[71] Hyde primarily gives a summary of the main events, interspersed with some direct translations from his manuscript. Of *Laoidh na gCeann* he cites the first verse, noting that 'it was popular in the Highlands also'[72] and making reference to the versions of the lay in NLS 72.1.36, 72.1.37 (BDL) and 72.1.38, as well as the published editions in *Reliqiuae Celticae*.

Lady Gregory's early 20th-century *Cuchulain of Muirthemne* incorporates the tale of our hero's demise in two chapters under the titles 'The Great Gathering of Muirthemne' and 'The Death of Cuchulain', respectively. No mention is made of manuscript sources upon which the translations / summaries are based. Lady Gregory incorporates some poetry, including *Laoidh na gCeann*, but presents these as dialogue or verbal exchange rather than explicitly as verse. Surprisingly, considering the level of attention and detail given to the events of the tale, a description of Conall's actual acts of revenge has been all but omitted and the events, which are described at length in manuscript versions of the *Deargruathar*, have been reduced to

> (…) and they all cried and keened about him until such time as Conall Cearnach came back from making his red rout through the army of the men of Ireland. For he was not satisfied to make a slaughter of the men of Munster and Connaught,

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[68] E. Hull, *The Cuchullin Saga in Irish Literature* (London, 1898), pp. 236-49.

[69] *ibid.*, p. 236.

[70] D. Hyde, *A Literary History of Ireland* (London, 1899), p. 341.

[71] *ibid.*, p. 341, footnote 3.

[72] *ibid.*, p. 353, footnote 1.

without reddening his hand in the blood of Leinster as well. And when he had done that, he came to Dundealgan (…).[73]

The division of the tale used by Lady Gregory does not follow the traditional division into the *Brisleach* and *Deargruathar* as it often occurs elsewhere, both in manuscripts and published editions.

This division is, however, followed by Rudolf Thurneysen's 'Das große Fällen von Mag Muirtheimne oder: Aided ConCulainn – Fassung B' in *Die Irische Helden- und Königssage* (pp. 557-67) where he gives a German summary of the tale (following the summary of Version A as mentioned above). The summary is preceded by a comparatively short introduction in which Thurneysen places the earliest of our modernised version of the tale to the 15th century.[74] This, of course, is at odds with Van Hamel's edition, which is based on 'the oldest of these (i.e. manuscript texts of Version B)'[75] and which is placed by Van Hamel in the 16th century. Thurneysen further notes that the earliest version of LnC is contained in BDL, and that the prose tale is generally divided into two parts, namely BmMM and DCC. He does not, however, give any details on the (manuscript) sources upon which his summary is based.

Finally, a French translation of Van Hamel's edition was published under the title 'La Mort de Cúchulainn' by Christian-J. Guyonvarc'h in *Ogam* 13 (1961), pp. 507-520 and *Ogam* 14 (1962), pp. 493-508 & pp. 625-633.

In conclusion, we can note that while a number of translations are available, there is a distinct lack of a critical (and recent!) edition of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, and a discussion of the manuscript tradition, which is very poorly understood. As we will see, there is a misconception especially with regards to the actual number of manuscripts which preserve our text, and in particular the relationship between them has thus far received no detailed attention.

We have considered the published editions and translations or summaries of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* and will now turn to those publications addressing the tale and its content. Two publications have already been mentioned, these being Kuno Meyer's *The Death Tales of the Ulster Heroes* and Daniel Melia's 'Remarks on the Structure and Composition of the Ulster Death Tales'. While Meyer has very little to say about Cú Chulainn's death Melia does consider it, but only in the context of his classification of the tale into motifs, rather than discussing the

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[73] Gregory, [A.], *Cuchulain of Muirthemne* (Gerards Cross, 1975; reprint of 1902), p. 260.

[74] Thurneysen, *Heldensage*, p. 557. Thurneysen places the redactor of Version B in the 15th century and notes that the oldest extant version of the text can be found in NLS 72.1.45, the writing of which he dates to the 15th-16th century.

[75] Van Hamel, *Compert Con Culainn*, p. 70.

narrative. He also refers to the 'Book of Leinster' text rather than our later, Early Modern Irish, recension.

Derick Thomson, in an article on the 'Blood-Drinking Motif in Scottish Gaelic Tradition',[76] makes reference to our tale and, more specifically, to NLS 72.1.45 which preserves what he calls 'the oldest manuscript version of the more complete recension of *Aided Con Culainn*'.[77] He quotes from this manuscript an instance of Eimhear drinking the dead Cú Chulainn's blood, but does not consider the tale any further.

Other scholars such as Proinsias Mac Cana have addressed the tale, especially for the substitution of verse for *retoiric* in Version B. Mac Cana's views on this will be considered later in this thesis in section 6.3.

To my knowledge – and great surprise – only one scholar seems to have reflected on the tale, especially Version B, on a more in-depth level, remarking on both manuscript tradition and textual issues. This is Ruth Lehmann, who published two articles that are of relevance and interest here. The first of these is entitled 'Death and Vengeance in the Ulster Cycle'.[78] Lehmann introduces the main characters of the Ulster Cycle, then moves on to discuss a number of tales in which death and vengeance are prominent, namely the death of Conchubhar, the conflict between Cú Raoi and Cú Chulainn, the death of Celtchar mac Uitheachar, and the death of Cú Chulainn. This latter tale is discussed in greater detail. Lehmann considers the tale from a literary point of view, and the central questions and answers are summed up as follows:

> The death of the hitherto invincible hero presents a problem. Why is he now vulnerable? Furthermore, in the sequel he must be avenged, his slayers slain. How can such a hero be vanquished and his enemies be overcome by someone else? These problems were solved by two devices. Cú Chulainn is brought down by magic – first by the forced violation of his *gesa*, and then by magic weapons. Second, his avenger, Conall Cernach, Conall the Victorious, defender of Ireland's borders, meets the slayers one by one and without their magic weapons. Cú Chulainn had met them all in a single encounter on Mag Muirtheimhne.[79]

Lehmann then moves through the main events of the tale, in the context of which she gives a translation of one of the poems from the narrative, *Goirt rom ghaoth trem chneas cuanna*. Lehmann's study of the text from a literary point of view is very interesting, but most relevant

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[76] D. Thomson, 'The Blood-Drinking Motif in Scottish Gaelic Tradition' in R. Bielmeier & R. Stempel (eds), *Indogermaica et Caucasia: Festschrift für Karl Horst Schmidt zum 65. Geburtstag* (Berlin/ New York, 1994), pp. 415-4.

[77] *ibid.,* p. 416.

[78] R. Lehmann, 'Death and Vengeance in the Ulster Cycle', *ZCP* 43 (1989), pp. 1-11.

[79] *ibid.,* p. 7.

for this thesis is one particular passage in which Lehmann remarks specifically on our tale and
its manuscripts; it is worth quoting at length:

> Perhaps the finest of all the death-tales is the *Aided Con Culainn*, Cú Chulainn's
> violent death. The Book of Leinster and Ms. H.3.18 in Trinity College, Dublin,
> though fragmentary, contain the oldest version A. A later version, B, is represented
> by three manuscripts in Dublin at the Royal Irish Academy and several in the
> National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh. The two versions are essentially alike,
> but B has substituted syllabic rimed verse for the alliterative *roscs* (or *retoirics*) of
> version A, and has added a number of other verses at turning points in the story.
> The oldest manuscript of version B was edited for the Medieval and Modern Irish
> series of the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies by Van Hamel in 1911 [*sic*].
> This manuscript from the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh is incomplete and
> contains only one poem and that illegible. I am currently preparing an edition of
> 23 K 37 (K) from the Royal Irish Academy, the manuscript Van Hamel used to fill
> in the missing opening and close of his Edinburgh manuscript. A second
> Edinburgh text is even better than K, which has a number of obvious errors in the
> verse where errors are easy to detect. A fourth text of version B, 23 G 10 (G), one
> of Conall Cernach's revenge pp. 29-44, the other Cú Chulainn's death pp. 3-28,
> appeared in the *Gaelic Journal* 11 (1900) 1-180 passim; 17 (1917) 305-383 passim.)
> A third manuscript in the Academy seems older than 23 G 10 but is incomplete
> and has not been edited. None of the manuscripts of the B version has been
> translated.[80]

There are a number of comments to be made with regard to this passage. Lehmann's
predecessors themselves have been rather vague about the extant number of manuscripts
preserving our text; Thurneysen, for instance, talked about 'numerous' (*zahlreiche*)
manuscripts. Lehmann of course does not implicitly say so, but her mention of three RIA
manuscripts and several in the NLS gives the impression that these are the only surviving
manuscript witnesses. As we will see in the next chapter, this is a gross understatement of the
actual number of manuscripts. It is also rather frustrating that she does not name the
manuscripts she mentions in the latter part of the passage. The 'second Edinburgh text better
than K' is in all likelihood NLS 72.1.38 but as for the 'third manuscript in the Academy', there
are a number of possibilities. The final remark that there is no translation of Version B is not
entirely true since Guyonvarc'h published a translation of Van Hamel's edition, albeit in
French, as we have noted above.

As far as I am aware the edition of RIA 23 K 37 that Lehmann mentions as being in the
process of preparation unfortunately was never actually published; if it has been published, I
have been unable to locate it.

Lehmann's second article of interest to us appeared in *ZCP* 49-50 (1997) under the title
'Poems from the *Death of Cú Chulainn*'. Rather short, it takes into account four poems from

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[80] *ibid.,* p. 7.

our tale and considers metrical aspects and the somewhat more complex feature of line transposition – we will consider this feature and return to Lehmann's observations in section 3.4.3. Although a very valuable contribution to deepening our understanding of the tale, Lehmann once again makes mention of only three manuscripts. She cannot, of course, be faulted, as the three manuscripts she mentions are those considered in her article, but I feel that her lack of discussion of the overall manuscripts and textual context of the tale as a whole, as well as the passages and poems she addresses, gives a somewhat distorted picture of reality. It also has to be noted that one statement that she makes with regards to *Laoidh na gCeann* is simply incorrect:

> The final poem, 'The Lay of the Heads' is even in the vellum MS that van Hamel used for *Compert Con Culainn* but it is now barely legible and he did not reproduce it.[81]

We will see in the next chapters that 'Van Hamel's manuscript' (NLS.72.1.45) has suffered considerable loss of leaves and not enough remains of the text to take the narrative as far as LnC – the poem which 'is barely legible' and is therefore 'not reproduced' can therefore not be LnC! As with her 1989 article, Lehmann's second publication may easily lead the reader to believe that *Oidheadh Con Culainn* a) only survives in a handful of manuscripts and b) does not contain a large amount of poetry. This latter point may be true for some of the versions – and we will return to this point – but does not apply to at least one of the manuscripts she cites and uses as a source.

In conclusion, we have seen that a number of editions and subsequent translations of the text have been published, but no edition has been published alongside a translation in the same volume. There is some confusion as to the dates of the earliest manuscript version preserving Version B, and also with regard to the titles of the two major parts of the story (BmMM and DCC). There is no consensus as to the number of extant manuscripts. With regard to the earlier publications, this may well be due to a lack of manuscript catalogues at the time, but as we have seen even the latest publication (i.e. the article by Ruth Lehmann) does not give a correct number. The list of manuscripts in Jubainville's often cited *Essai d'un Catalogue de la Littérature Épique de l'Irlande* is also incomplete. It is worth mentioning in this context an online resource, 'Scéla: A List of Medieval Irish Narratives'.[82] Again, the list of extant

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[81] R. Lehmann, 'Poems from the *Death of Cú Chulainn*', *ZCP* 49-50 (1997), pp. 439.

[82] http://www.volny.cz/enelen/index.htm <accessed 27 November 2008>.

manuscriptwitnesses for *Oidheadh Con Culainn* given here is by no means complete but fuller, and thus more realistic, than what other publications might suggest.

Considering the attention that has been given to other tales, to see this lack of research into the death tale of one of the most prominent characters in Irish mythology, Cú Chulainn, is very surprising. Especially recent publications are few and far between; this thesis strives to rectify this and give the tale some of the attention it deserves. The analysis and observations in the following chapters will hopefully help pave the way towards deepening our understanding of the tale and its transmission in particular. On that note we will move on to consider *Oidheadh Con Culainn* and its manuscripts in order to establish a more accurate view of the tale's manuscript tradition.

Chapter 2: The Manuscripts

The present chapter will address a variety of aspects concerning the manuscripts that preserve versions of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. We will briefly consider the overall manuscripts before moving on to have a detailed look at the pre-19th-century manuscripts. The core element here is a draft catalogue of these manuscripts, which will then form the basis for the observations and examinations as discussed in the subsequent chapters.

2.1 The manuscripts of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*

The general scholarly consensus regarding the extant number of manuscripts that preserve *Oidheadh Con Culainn* is that 'a large number of manuscripts'[83] survives, or as Thurneysen observed, the tale is '(…) in zahlreichen Handschriften des 17.-19. Jahrhunderts überliefert'.[84] 'Large number', and *zahlreich* ('numerous'), however, are rather vague terms and do not give us a clear indication as to any actual figures.

The first step towards establishing a more precise number, then, is to consult the available manuscript catalogues of the various archives and collections housing Gaelic manuscripts. On the basis of the manuscript catalogues, we can determine that our text is preserved in manuscripts held at the following archives, listed below by country. The relevant catalogue(s) which were consulted for the archive in question are listed; a shortened reference is given in parenthesis for both the archives and catalogues which feature in further discussion throughout thesis.

Ireland:

- Royal Irish Academy, Dublin (RIA):

   Royal Irish Academy, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the Royal Irish Academy* (*RIA Cat.*).

- National Library of Ireland, Dublin (NLI):

   N. Ní Sheaghdha, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the National Library of Ireland* (*NLI Cat.*).

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[83] A.G. Van Hamel, *Compert Con Culainn and Other Stories* (Dublin, 1968), p. 70.

[84] '(…) transmitted in numerous manuscripts of the 17th to the 19th centuries.' R. Thurneysen, *Die Irische Helden- und Königsage bis zum Siebzehnten Jahrhundert* (Halle, 1921), p. 557.

- Trinity College, Dublin (TCD):

    T.K. Abbot, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin* (*TCD Cat.*);

    T.K. Abbot, *Catalogue of the Irish Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin* (*TCD Irish Cat.*).

- National University of Ireland, Maynooth:

    P. Ó Fiannachta et al., *Lámhscríbhínní Gaeilge Choláiste Phádraig, Má Nuad* (*Maynooth Cat.*).

- University College, Dublin (UCD):[85]

    M. Dillon, C. Mooney & P. de Brún, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the Franciscan Library Killiney (Killiney Cat.*).

- University College, Cork:

    B. Ó Conchur, *Clár Lámhscríbhinní Gaeilge Choláiste Chorcaí: Cnuasach Uí Mhurchú.*

Scotland:

- National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh (NLS):

    J. Mackechnie, *Catalogue of Gaelic Manuscripts in Selected Libraries in Great Britain and Ireland* (*Mackechnie Cat.*);

    D. Mackinnon, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Gaelic Manuscripts in the Advocates' Library Edinburgh, and Elsewhere in Scotland* (*Mackinnon Cat.*);

    R. Black, 'The Gaelic Manuscripts of Scotland' ('Black Cat.') (unpublished draft catalogue)

    National Library of Scotland, *Catalogue of Manuscripts acquired since 1925.*

Wales:

- National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth (NLW):

    National Library of Wales, *Handlist of Manuscripts in the National Library of Wales*;

    P. Ó Riain, *Clár na Lámhscríbhíní Gaeilge sa Bhreatain Bhig.*

England:

- British Library, London (BL):

    R. Flower, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum – Vol. II* (*Flower Cat.*).

- Cambridge University Library:

    P. de Brún & M. Herbert, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in Cambridge Libraries* (*Cambridge Cat.*).

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[85] Since November 2000 the Library and Archives of University College, Dublin, have been curating the Gaelic 'A' manuscripts formerly of the Franciscan Library Killiney.

- Bodleian Library, Oxford:

   B. Ó Cuív, *Catalogue of Irish Language Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library of Oxford and Oxford College Libraries* (*Bodleian Cat.*).

<u>USA:</u>

- University of Wisconsin, Madison:

   C.G. Buttimer, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the University of Wisconsin – Madison*.

Two further catalogues, namely those of the manuscripts held in King's Inns Library, Dublin (P. de Brún, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in King's Inns Library, Dublin*) and Mount Mellerary Abbey, Co. Waterford (P. Ó Macháin, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in Mount Mellerary Abbey, Co. Waterford*) were consulted, yet these did not list any manuscripts preserving versions of our text. One more manuscript, however, could be identified from an article which gives a draft catalogue for the manuscripts in Muileann gCearr (Mullingar), Co. Westmeath.[86]

On the basis of the manuscript catalogues, we can establish that there appears to be a total of one hundred manuscripts in the collections and archives listed above that preserve versions of the Early Modern Irish recension of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* and / or *Laoidh na gCeann*. The following list collates those manuscripts, detailing basic information on date (given by century) and content, as can be drawn from the relevant catalogue entries. Marked in pink are the manuscripts pertaining to the pre-19th-century period:

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[86] P. de Brún, 'Lámhscríbhinní Gaeilge sa Mhuileann gCearr', *Éigse* 19 (1982-83), pp. 82-102.

	MANUSCRIPT	CEN.	BmMM	DCC	LnC
	Royal Irish Academy				
1	E iv 3 [15]	18th	✓	✓	
2	23 M 25 [11]	17th	✓	✓	
3	23 L 24 [29]	18th			✓
4	23 L 16 [32]	19th	✓		
5	23 K 46 (b) [38]	19th	✓		
6	3 B 9 [73]	19th			✓
7	24 P 6 [94]	18th	✓	✓	✓
8	23 L 6 [103]	19th	✓		
9	23 H 16 [115]	18th	✓	✓	
10	24 L 24 [136]	19th		✓	✓
11	23 K 37 [152]	18th	✓	✓	
12	23 B 21 [184]	19th	✓	✓	✓
13	E v 1 [199]	19th	✓	✓	✓
14	23 G 20 [211]	18th			✓
15	12 F 7 [235]	18th	✓		
16	24 B 22 [238]	18th		✓	
17	24 B 26 [242]	18th			✓
18	24 C 8 [288]	19th	✓	✓	
19	24 A 12 [311]	19th	✓	✓	
20	23 B 4 [432]	19th		✓	
21	23 N 14 [489]	18th			✓
22	23 E 4 [524]	19th	✓		
23	23 L 27 [556]	18th	✓	✓	
24	24 A 7 [574]	19th			
25	23 K 7 [658]	18th	✓	✓	
26	23 P 13 [689]	18th	✓	✓	
27	23 H 10 [704]	19th	✓	✓	
28	C vi 3 [740]	17th		✓	✓
29	3 B 43 [760]	18th	✓	✓	
30	3 B 3 [761]	19th		✓	
31	23 C 26 (c) [765]	18th	✓	✓	
32	24 L 26 [776]	19th	✓		
33	23 L 13 [787]	18th			✓
34	23 G 21 [917]	18th	✓	✓	✓
35	24 B 16 [948]	18th	✓	✓	
36	23 C 22 [961]	18th	✓	✓	✓
37	23 M 47 (a) [973]	18th		✓	
38	23 M 47 (b) [973]	18th	✓	✓	
39	23 G 10 [974]	19th	✓	✓	
40	3 B 11 [999}	19th	✓	✓	✓
41	24 A 23 [1013]	19th	✓	✓	✓
42	24 A 29 [1061]	19th	✓	✓	✓
43	24 C 38 [1168]	18th	✓		
	Nat. Library of Ireland				
44	G 18	18th	✓	✓	
45	G 69	19th			✓
46	G 100	19th		✓	
47	G 113/ 114	18th	✓	✓	
48	G 120	19th	✓	✓	✓
49	G 146	18th	✓	✓	
50	G 149	18th	✓	✓	
51	G 185	19th		✓	
52	G 296	18th	✓	✓	
53	G 314	19th			✓
54	G 356	19th		✓	
55	G 423	19th		✓	
56	G 457	18th	✓		

	MANUSCRIPT	CEN.	BmMM	DCC	LnC
57	G 490	19th	✓	✓	
58	G 501	18th	✓	✓	
59	G 655	19th	✓		✓
	Trinity College, Dublin				
60	1287/ H.1.13	18th		✓	
61	1296/ H.2.5	18th	✓	✓	
62	1354/ H.4.13	18th			✓
63	1362/ H.4.21	17th	✓	✓	✓
64	1376/ H.5.4	18th	✓	✓ (?)	✓
65	3397/ N.5.12	18th	✓	✓	✓
	Maynooth				
66	Murphy 3 (3 C 3)	19th		✓	
67	Murphy 9 (3 C 9)	19th			✓
68	M 20 (3 D 4)	19th	✓	✓	✓
69	M 51	18th	✓	✓	
70	R 70 (3 G 7)	19th	✓	✓	
71	C 38 (3 B 7)	18th	✓ (?)		
72	C 98	18th	✓	✓	
	University Coll., Dublin				
73	Franciscan A 25	17th	✓		
	Mullingar (Westmeath)				
74	MS 6	19th	✓	✓	✓
	Cork				
75	Uí Mhurchú 14	19th	✓		
76	Uí Mhurchú 32	19th			✓
77	Uí Mhurchú 37	19th	✓		
78	Uí Mhurchú 42	19th		✓	
	Nat. Library of Scotland				
79	72.1.36 (XXXVI)	17th			✓
80	72.1.38 (XXXVIII)	17th	✓	✓	
81	72.1.45 (XLV)	?16th	✓	✓	
82	72.2.9 (LIX)	17th	✓	✓ (?)	
83	72.1.37 (XXXVII)	16th			✓
84	72.3.5 (LXXXIII)	19th	✓	✓	
85	72.3.10 (LXXXVIII)	18th			✓
86	72.3.11 (LXXXIX)	19th			✓
87	73.1.14 (XVII-I 5A)	19th			✓
88	73.2.2 (XVII-II 4)	18th			✓
89	50.2.8	19th			✓
90	3281	19th	✓	✓	✓
	Nat. Library of Wales				
91	5326A (O'Grady 13)	19th	✓	✓	
92	5344A (O'Grady 31)	19th			✓
	British Library				
93	Egerton 132	18th	✓	✓	✓
94	Egerton 150	18th	✓	✓	
95	Additional 18947	19th	✓	✓	
	Cambridge				
96	10/ Additional 3085 (b)	18th			✓
97	10/ Additional 3085 (c)	18th		✓	✓
	Bodleian Lib., Oxford				
98	Irish e.3	18th		✓	
	Wisconsin, USA				
99	178	19th	✓		
	Melbourne, Australia				
100	O'Donnell MS II	19th	✓	✓	✓

Table 2-1: Overall MSS of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* (and *Laoidh na gCeann*)

Note that TCD 3397/ N.5.12 (no. 62 in Table 2-1 above) is as yet uncatalogued.[87] Also uncatalogued is O'Donnell MS II (no. 95 above), which is held in the Academic Centre of St Mary's College and Newman College, University of Melbourne, Australia.[88]

In addition to the above manuscripts, a further small number of manuscripts – of interest rather than direct relevance – may be worth pointing out to provide as complete an overview as possible for the transmission of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. These are:

- **NLS 72.3.4 (LXXXIII) (paper, 18th century)**

'In 1812, the Highland Society sent fourteen of the more important MSS. in their possession at the time to Mr. Ewen M'Lachlan, Aberdeen, with the request that the distinguished scholar should examine the MSS. and report upon them. The Report extends to one hundred and seventy-two pages, quarto, and forms the contents of this volume, which is stoutly bound and backed 'Analysis of Ancient Gaelic MSS.''[89] The report is concerned with NLS MSS 72.1.37 and 72.1.38, both of which are listed in Table 2-1 above (numbers 75, 78).

- **NLI G 1 (vellum, 16th century)**

'48rI Chronological notes on the death of Conlaoch son of Cú Chulainn, Cú Chulainn and Eireamhón son of Míl. Beg. *Bliadhuin ar fhichit dob aois do Chonlaoch*. Ends *7 Loch Feabhail* followed by scribal entry *Sguirim go día misi Filip*.'[90]

- **NLI G 295 (paper, 19th century)**

This contains an English translation of LnC (35 qq), which appears under the title 'Lay of the Heads or the Dialogue between Conall Cearnach and Iobhar or Eimhir, the ~~lady~~ widow of Cuchullan' and occupies pp. 80-86 in this manuscript.

Finally, the older recension of our tale, or Version A – *Aided Con Culainn* – is preserved in the following two manuscripts:

- **TCD 1339/ H.2.18 (vellum, 12th century)**

The *Book of Leinster*, contains the only surviving pre-Norman copy of the earlier recension, Version A, of our text.

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[87] I am grateful to Dr Joseph Flahive for bringing this particular manuscript, and the version of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* contained in it, to my attention.

[88] In Melbourne I am indebted to Dr Val Noone, who brought this manuscript to my attention, and to Angela Gehrig (Director of the Academic Centre), who at very short notice granted me access to examine it.

[89] *Mackinnon Cat.*, p. 257

[90] *NLI Cat.* (Fasc. I), p. 6

- **TCD 1337/ H.3.18**

This manuscript contains a few sentences from and glosses on Version A which are here used to illustrate lexical points.

All of these of course a lot of details to grasp, and in order to make the information from the database above more accessible, it is worth considering the overall distribution of the total number of manuscripts preserving *Oidheadh Con Culainn* and present it in a somewhat condensed form. Thus, the overall distribution of our one hundred manuscripts in total, by century, is as follows:
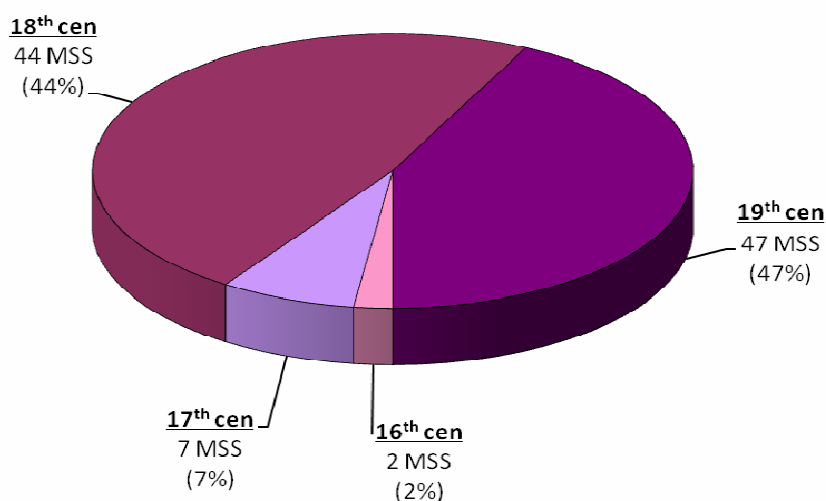
Figure 2-1: Distribution of MSS (by century)

[As we have already noted in a post-script to footnote 6 (p. 8), since this thesis was submitted in June 2009 a further five manuscripts have come to light; these are listed in Pádraig Ó Fiannachta, *Clár Lámhscríbhinní Gaeilge – Fascúl I & II* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1978-80). While the five manuscripts have not been incorporated into the discussion in this thesis, they shall briefly be listed for the sake of completeness, and to aid future study. Reference is given for volume and page number in Ó Fiannachta (ÓF) for the manuscripts:

St. Colman College, Fermoy (Co. Cork)

- **MS CF 22 (b)** – content: BmMM; scribe & date: Conchúbhar Ó Laidhin, 25 April 1729 (both in colophon) [ÓF I, pp. 95-101].
- **MS CF 23** – content: BmMM, DCC; scribe & date: Séan Ó Laochadh; Dublin 1744 (colophon) [ÓF I, pp. 101-5].
- **MS CF 34** – content: BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq); scribe & date: Tadhg Ó Conaill, 5 February 1826 (both in colophon) [ÓF I, pp. 129-33].
- **MS PB 10** – content: DCC; scribe & date: Dáibhidh do Barradh, 1821-22 [ÓF I, pp. 162-70].

<u>**St. Mel's College, Longford**</u>

- **MS ML 3** – content: LnC (28 qq), scribe & date: Diarmuid Ó Maoilchaoine, 1764 [ÓF II, pp. 48-55].

Information added on 2 October 2009.]

2.1.1 Problems and issues

Our manuscript database in Table 2-1 ('Overall MSS of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* (and *Laoidh na gCeann*)'), which is based purely on the evidence and information that can be gathered from the manuscript catalogues, shows that our text is preserved in a multitude of manuscripts. The number of manuscripts is even greater than 'numerous' would suggest, and thus hints at the popularity of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* in the 16th- to the 19th centuries. There are, however, a number of problems associated with working solely with manuscript catalogues, and we shall consider a number of catalogue entries for some of the pre-19th-century manuscripts to illustrate these issues and problems.

A first 'hurdle' in identifying the manuscripts of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* is the fact that the tale is generally split into two parts which can be named differently, increasing the potential entries under which it might be listed in the manuscript catalogue indexes. The possibilities are *Brisleach mhór Mhaighe Muirtheimhne*, *Deargruather Chonaill Chearnaigh*, *Laoidh na gCeann* and *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, all of them occurring in a number of spelling variations. While the number of entries to check is more time-consuming than anything else, what proves more of an issue is the fact that a portion of *Táin Bó Cuailgne* also goes by the name of *Brisleach mhór*, thus leading to confusion. To give a concrete example, the entry for TCD 1319/ H.2.17 in *TCD Irish Cat.* reads: 'Fragment of the tale called Breisleach Mhor Mhuighe Muirtheimhne, in which Cuchullin was killed. An episode of the Táin Bó Cuailgne.'[91] This, of course, is quite ambiguous as the wording of the entry makes both *Oidheadh Con Culainn* and the *Táin* contenders: the reference to Cú Chulainn's death suggests that it is 'our' text, as the *Brisleach* in the *Táin* does not end in his death but covers the events that ultimately lead up to it. The second part of the entry, however, makes explicit reference to the *Táin*. The only way to determine whether the text is of relevance is by consultation of the original manuscript and the full text: in this instance, the *Brisleach* in TCD 1319/ H.2.17 is the section from the *Táin* and not, in fact, 'our' *Brisleach*.

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[91] *TCD Irish Cat.,* p. 111.

A similar problem presents itself when trying to determine the content of the text, in this case the distribution or existence of the different elements of the tale, namely BmMM, DCC and LnC. While some catalogues go into great detail, others provide only the bare minimum of information. Some catalogue entries include a complete list of the poetry contained in the text as it stands in a particular manuscript, while others, very cryptically, will simply give *'Oidheadh Con Culainn'*, which does not yield any clues as to whether we are dealing with a manuscript preserving BmMM only, or BmMM and DCC, or possibly even LnC.

This latter scenario is the case with NLI G 457. The *NLI Cat.* entry gives 'OIDHE CHUCHOLAINN NO BREISLEACH MHUIGHE MHUIRTHEIMHNE ANNSO',[92] while consultation of the manuscript reveals that, in fact, the text preserved here comprises of BmMM, DCC and LnC. Similarly, TCD 1376/ H.5.4 is described in *TCD Cat.* (p. 377) as 'Collection of Tales. Includes "The Death of Cuchulin"'. *TCD Irish Cat.*, for the same manuscript, is somewhat more detailed:

> 1376, Collection of Tales.
> p. 1 Story of the death of Cuchullin (imperfect; has lost six or seven leaves at the beginning). On p. 2 begins the paragraph: *Dála bhfear nÉirionn tangadar go magh muirtheimhne*. Written by Art O'Caoimh, for Fionnghuine O'Caoimh, 30th March, 1701-2.[93]

All the same, it is necessary to look at the actual manuscript to establish that in TCD 1376/ H.5.4 we have a version of the text comprising BmMM and DCC, but not LnC.

TCD Irish Cat. is particularly variable in the amount of information given for individual manuscripts. Following on from the example we have just seen, this is made all the more obvious by looking at another manuscript: TCD 1296/ H.2.5. Here we find, in *TCD Irish Cat.*,

> 1296, Genealogies, Tales, Poems etc. (…)
> p. 303. The great defeat of Magh Muirtheimhne, and the death of Cuchullin (a section of Táin Bó Cúailnge): *Do bhreisleach Mhuighi Muirthsheimhne anso son iomláine agus do challmhuint Cuchullen agus do dheargruaghthar Chonull Cearna ag dhioghuilt a bhais da eis agus do gach mor gnaoimh eile da ndearnadh ann, 7c*. See Miss E. Hull's Cuchullin Saga, also No. 1319, 111. Includes the poems: –
> p. 304. *Ataid suna bur nairm aig*. 3 stanzas.
> Ibid. *Día bhur meatha a eiscarsaor*. 8 stanzas.
> p. 308. *A dhearbhrathair Deitchine, a dhearcghlas duanaigh*. 3 ½ quatrains.
> Ibid. *Méala lióin ghair na slúaigh*. 7 quatrains.
> p. 311. *Bánntracht mbann atá gléo*. 2 ½ quatrains.
> p. 311. *Eírigh a Chúchuluinn fionntar cruas*. 2 quatrains.
> p. 314. *A Chúagaín Cuailgne chraidh*. 7 quatrains. No. 1362, 214 reads: *A*

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[92] *NLI Cat.* (Fasc. X), p. 48.

[93] *TCD Irish Cat.*, p. 231.

Chuchulaind.

p. 316. *Niórsad eaglach gus aniodh.* 6 ½ quatrains.

Ibid. A cathfhadh a mhic Mhaoil Chróigh. 3 ½ quatrains.

p. 317. *A Deitchine as fás do bhallán.* 4 quatrains.

p. 318. *A fhir na toirmisg ar séd.* 2 quatrains.

p. 319. *Rugsad úaim roinn dom anam.* 3 quatrains. (In No. 1362 this line and the fourth change places.)

p. 320. *Mo chean duit a Chú.* 4 quatrains.

p. 324. *Goirt rom gaoith trem cneas cuanna.* 13 ½ quatrains.

p. 326. *Romgabh aníu aighneadh eile.* 3 ½ quatrains.

p. 328. *Laoch Bhudh ferr na triathach* (?) *na thig.* 4 quatrains. (In 1362, 245, this is the fourth line, the first being *Cuchulain ba hamra a gein*, which here is second.

p. 329. *Me air an magh gan thú eírge na naghaidh.* 5 quatrains. (In 1362, 246, this begins: *dursan Cuchulain chaidh*, which here is the third line.)

Ibid. Adbeirim asé connull. Aonmharcach sun air an

muigh. 11 quatrains. (In 1362, 247, the first two lines are transposed.)

p. 331. *Maíne fo eibirt fa cheann.* 3 quatrains.

p. 332. *Uch a chinn on uch a chinn.* 13 ½ quatrains. (This is the fifth line in the copy in 1362, 253.)

p. 334. *Sádhal súaimhneach ain a eirch.* 4 quatrains.

p. 336. *Ceann colla mhic faitheamhuil.* 3 quatrains.

p. 338. *A Chonull cuch iad na cinn.* 31 quatrains. (In 1362, 267, this begins: *A Chonall ca sealbh na cinn.*)[94]

Note how not only all the poems occurring in the text are listed, but how cross-reference is being made to another manuscript in the collection (TCD 1362/ H.4.21) which also contains our text.

Another TCD manuscript is a good example of how the information that can be gathered from the catalogue is faulty due to the manuscript itself being erroneous: TCD 1287/ H.1.13 is described, in *TCD Irish Cat.*, as

A romantic tale entitled: *Deargruathar Chonaill Cearnaigh*, or the 'red rush of C.C.' One of the principal romantic tales of the Irish; it details the exploits of Conall Cearnach in revenging the death of Cuchullin of Dundalk.[95]

It is true that our text in the manuscript begins under the headline 'Dearg ruathar Conaill Cernaigh', but in fact, what the manuscript preserves is a complete copy of the narrative comprising all of BmMM, DCC and LnC.

In many instances establishing whether LnC, especially, is part of a manuscript version of the tale is problematic. Where the poem occurs 'independently' outwith its prose context, the manuscript catalogues will naturally list it as a separate entry. It is a slightly different situation when LnC occurs as part of the prose narrative. While many catalogues specify that LnC is

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[94] *ibid.*, pp. 72-73.

[95] *TCD Irish Cat.*, p. 41.

present in a certain manuscript, others will just list the prose tale and remain unclear as to whether the poem is included as part of it or not, although there may be instances where LnC is listed in the 'first lines of poems' section of a catalogue, but not in the entry for the actual tale. On the other hand, the question of whether or not LnC occurs within the course of the tale in a particular manuscript lends itself to another example: when the information that can be gathered from a catalogue's entry is simply incorrect, as is the case with the entry for NLS 72.1.38 in *Mackechnie Cat.* This reads,

> This account of the slain forms the 'Lay of the Heads', which is omitted in the present text, although space has been left blank, presumably for engrossing of the 'Lay'.[96]

LnC, however, is present in NLS 72.1.38; it is yet another poem following LnC that has been omitted, and a space left blank for it.

We have considered a number of issues that present themselves on trying to gather information on a particular tale, i.e. a section of, rather than the whole, manuscript. With regard to our text, the limitations of the manuscript catalogues, and gaps that they may contain, can be illustrated quite vividly. The following table takes the pre-19th-century manuscripts from our database (Table 2-1) and contrasts their content (i.e., BmMM, DCC, LnC) as it is listed in the catalogues, with the actual content that cannot be gathered from the catalogues but only from examining the manuscripts themselves. Information not represented in the manuscript catalogues is marked in red; as we will see, the greatest lack of information is with regard to the occurrence or presence of LnC. There are two instances of (?): these represent the ambiguous entry 'Oidheadh Con Culainn' which does not specify whether we are dealing with a text preserving BmMM and DCC (as is the case with the second instance, TCD 1376/ H.5.4) or only BmMM (as the first example, NLS 72.2.9, does). Note that the catalogues have been listed alphabetically by collection:

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[96] *Mackechnie Cat.,* p. 190.

MANUSCRIPT	BmMM	DCC	LnC	COMMENT
Bodleian Irish e. 3		X		
BL Egerton 132	X	X	X	
BL Egerton 150	X	X	X	
Cambridge 10/ Add. 3085 (b)			X	
Cambridge 10/ Add. 3085 (c)		X	X	
Maynooth M 51	X	X		
Maynooth C 38 (j)	X			(Fragment only)
Maynooth C 98 (b)	X	X		
NLI G 18	X	X	X	
NLI G 113/ 114	X	X		
NLI G 146	X	X	X	
NLI G 149	X	X	X	
NLI G 296	X	X	X	
NLI G 457	X	X	X	'Oidhe Chucholainn no Breisleach Mhuighe…'
NLI G 501	X	X	X	
NLS 72.1.36			X	
NLS 72.1.38	X	X	X	
NLS 72.1.45	X	X		
NLS 72.2.9	X	X̶ ̶(̶?̶)̶		'Oidheadh Con Culainn'
NLS 72.1.37 (BDL)			X	
NLS 72.3.10 (Kennedy)			X	
NLS 73.2.2 ('Turner MS')			X	
RIA E iv 3	X	X	X	
RIA 23 M 25	X	X		
RIA 23 L 24			X	
RIA 24 P 6	X	X	X	
RIA 23 H 16	X	X	X	
RIA 23 K 37	X	X	X	
RIA 23 G 20			X	
RIA 12 F 7	X			
RIA 24 B 22		X		
RIA 24 B 26			X	
RIA 25 N 14			X	
RIA 23 L 27	X	X	X	
RIA 23 K 7	X	X	X	
RIA 23 P 13	X	X	X	
RIA C vi 3		X	X	(Fragment only)
RIA 3 B 43	X	X		
RIA 23 C 26 (c)	X	X	X	LnC precedes prose.
RIA 23 L 13			X	
RIA 23 G 21	X	X	X	
RIA 24 B 16	X	X		
RIA 23 C 22	X	X	X	
RIA 23 M 47 (a)		X	X	
RIA 23 M 47 (b)	X	X	X	
RIA 24 C 38	X			
TCD 1287/ H.1.13	X	X	X	'Deargruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh'
TCD 1296/ H.2.5	X	X	X	
TCD 1354/ H.4.13			X	
TCD 1362/ H.4.21	X	X	X	
TCD 1376/ H.5.4	X	X ̶(̶?̶)̶		'Story of the Death of Cú Chulainn'
TCD 3397/ N.5.12 (uncatalogued)	X	X		
UCD Franciscan A 25	X			(Fragment only)

Table 2-2: Actual content of the pre-19th-century MSS

As a final point, the varying degree of detail within the catalogues also applies to the description of the physical condition of the manuscripts. Some catalogues comment, for instance, on the loss of leaves, or whether the section of the manuscript containing our text has been subject to damp, or any other factor resulting in it not being preserved in its entirety. Other catalogues will simply state 'incomplete', 'breaks off unfinished' or 'damaged', giving no indication as to how much of the text is lost; yet other catalogues will not comment on the state of a manuscript at all.

For any study of the transmission of a particular tale, the catalogues are an indispensible tool for the compilation of a preliminary list of manuscripts, and to give a sense of the extant copies of a text and provide an initial idea of what survives of it. On the other hand, when more detail and information is required on a particular manuscript, especially for a text of the length of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, the limitations of the catalogues become obvious quite quickly, and the need to consult and work with the original manuscripts becomes clear.

2.2 Draft catalogue of the pre-19th-century manuscripts

We have seen that relying solely on the information that can be gathered from the manuscript catalogues poses a number of difficulties, especially for a research project concerned with the transmission of one particular tale. The logical consequence for dealing with and addressing the limitations of the published catalogues is the compilation of a draft catalogue for the tale in question which, based on a fresh examination of the manuscripts in question, then includes all the information that can be utilised for establishing the tale's manuscript tradition and textual transmission.

At first glance, some of the decisions taken as to the inclusion of information in this draft catalogue of the pre-19th-century manuscripts of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* might seem excessive; this applies in particular to the detailed list of poems included in each entry. The poetry in particular, as we will see in the subsequent chapters, will lead to further analysis since it can be used to classify the manuscripts into a series of distinct groups. In anticipation of this evaluation, and to aid later cross-referencing, the group numbers (namely, I-VI) as they will be used have been given in brackets for each manuscript. For the same reason of aiding later analysis, those instances have been noted in the list of poems where a poem may occur in the course of the prose narrative rather than being marked as verse by indention, capitalisation of the first letter of a stanza and so on. Instances where the draft catalogue refers to as 'Mystery

Poems' (of which there is a total of three) will be discussed in detail in section 3.4.4, while a study of the 'rhetorics' can be found in section 6.3.

To briefly lay out the structure of the draft catalogue, for every extant pre-19th-century version of the *Oidheadh Con Culainn* (or *Laoidh na gCeann*) we have the manuscript number / reference (giving the most common one which is used throughout this thesis, as well as less common ones as they might appear in the published catalogues), a reference to the relevant entry in the published catalogues, details on the scribe, date, general overall content of the manuscript (retaining the spelling of e.g. tales as given in the respective manuscript / manuscript catalogue), the presence of the relevant sections / elements of our tale (BmMM, DCC, LnC), followed by a description of our text, including condition and physical appearance, as well as the poems occurring in each text.

Unless otherwise indicated, the texts are written across the whole of the page rather than in columns, and the scribal hand employed is *corr litir*.

Personal scribal names have been given in a standardized form. Where there is considerable variation as to the spelling in e.g. a colophon, this idiosyncratic spelling will be noted in a footnote; colophons are also cited in the description of the manuscript in question.

As the primary interest of this thesis lies with *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, rather than the overall manuscript containing it, the date given for each manuscript reflects the date that may occur in the section of the manuscript containing our tale, such as in scribal colophons. Thus, the date given for a manuscript in the printed catalogue may differ from that found in the draft catalogue below. All further references to dates will be made to the date noted in the draft catalogue, thus representing the date of the individual texts rather than the overall manuscript itself.

Within the draft catalogue, the manuscripts have been arranged in alphabetical order of the collections and archives housing them; within each collection, the manuscripts have been listed chronologically from earliest to latest.

INDEX TO DRAFT CATALOGUE

Colour codes: Acephelaous texts / Texts breaking off incomplete

Bodleian Library, Oxford: p. 61

1	Ir. e. 3	?1789	DCC	Uilliam Breatnach

British Library, London: p. 62

2	Egerton 132	1712-13	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)	Richard Tipper
3	Egerton 150	1774	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)	Seón Lloyd

Cambridge University Library: p. 65

4	10/ Add. 3085 (b)	1748	LnC (18 qq)	Matthis McGill
5	10/ Add. 3085 (c)	1755	DCC, LnC (29 qq)	Peadar Mhag Uidhir

Maynooth (Russell Library): p. 67

6	C 98 (b)	?1714-29	BmMM, DCC	Diarmuid Ó Conchubhair
7	M 51	1792	BmMM, DCC	Eoghan Mac Síthigh
8	C 38 (j)	18th cen	BmMM (fragment only!)	Aindrias Mac Cruitín

National Library of Ireland, Dublin (NLI): p. 70

9	G 113/ 114	1703	BmMM, DCC	Liam Mac Cartáin
10	G 18	1722	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)	Conchubhar Óg Ó Cruadhlaoich
11	G 457	1759	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)	Pádruig Ó Pronntaigh
12	G 296	1763	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)	Donnchadh Ó Floinn
13	G 149	1765	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)	Mícheál Ó Horgáin
14	G 146	1770	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)	Muiris Ó Gormáin
15	G 501	1794	DCC, LnC (28 qq), BmMM	Tadhg Ó Caoluidh

National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh (NLS): p. 79

16	72.1.45	?16th cen	BmMM, DCC	?
17	72.1.37 (BDL)	1512-42	LnC (24 qq)	James & Duncan MacGregor
18	72.1.38	1608-21	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)	? (three scribes)
19	72.2.9	c. 1650	BmMM	Fearfeasa Ó Duibhgheannáin
20	72.1.36	1691	LnC (27 qq)	Eoghan Mac Gilleoin
21	73.2.2 (Turner MS)	c. 1748	LnC (30qq) + 4 poems	Uilliam Mac Mhurchaidh
22	72.3.10 (Kennedy)	1774-83	LnC (34 (47) qq)	Duncan Kennedy

Royal Irish Academy, Dublin (RIA): p. 85

23	C vi 3	?1633	DCC, LnC (22 qq)	Brian Mac Aodhagáin
24	23 M 25	1684	BmMM, DCC	Eoghan Ó Caoimh
25	23 K 7	1701	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)	Domhnall Mac Donnchadha
26	23 K 37	1718	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)	Seón Mac Solaidh
27	E iv 3	1727	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)	Aindrias Mac Cruitín
28	23 M 47 (b)	1734	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)	Aindrias Mac Cruitín
29	23 L 27	1737	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)	Seaán Ó Cinéide

30	**12 F 7**	1749-50	BmMM	Uillig a Búrc
31	**24 B 26**	1760-63	LnC (35 qq)	Uilliam Ó Cléire
32	**23 C 26 (c)**	1761	LnC (35 qq), BmMM, DCC	Seaghán Ó Conaill
33	**3 B 43**	?1765	BmMM, DCC	?Diarmuid Ó Faoláin
34	**23 N 14**	1766	LnC (35 qq)	Ribeárd Breatnach
35	**23 L 24**	1766-69	LnC (28 qq)	Diarmuid Ó Maolchaoinne
36	**23 C 22**	1767	BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq)	Peadar Ó Féichín / Peter Fane
37	**24 B 16**	1767-68	BmMM, DCC	?Ríghrí Mac Raghnaill
38	**24 B 22**	c. 1722	DCC	Tomás Ruiséal
39	**23 H 16**	1779	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)	Seaghán Ó Domhnaill
40	**23 L 13**	1782	LnC (28 qq)	Peadar Ó Conaill
41	**24 P 6**	1783	BmMM, DCC, LnC (24 qq)	John MacNamara
42	**23 G 20**	1788	LnC (35 qq)	Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin
43	**23 M 47 (a)**	1795	DCC, LnC (28 qq)	Séamus Ó Caoluidhe
44	**23 G 21**	1796	BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq)	Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin
45	**23 P 13**	18th cen	BmMM, DCC, LnC (24 qq)	?
46	**24 C 38**	18th cen	BmMM	?

Trinity College, Dublin (TCD):   p. 104

47	**1362/ H.4.21**	1691	BmMM, DCC, LnC (30 qq)	Eoghan Mac Gilleoin
48	**1376/ H.5.4**	1701-02	BmMM, DCC	Art Ó Caoimh
49	**1296/ H.2.5**	1712	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)	? Diarmuid Ó Conchubhair
50	**1354/ H.4.13**	1713	LnC (29 qq) + 4 poems	Domnall Mac Giolla Comhaill
51	**3397/ N.5.12**	1737	BmMM, DCC	Pilib Mac Brádaigh
52	**1287/ H.1.13**	1746	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)	Aodh Ó Dálaigh / Hugh O'Daly

University College, Dublin (UCD):   p. 112

| 53 | **Franciscan A 25** | ?1620s | BmMM | ?Brian Mag Niallghuis |

BODLEIAN LIBRARY, OXFORD

Irish (Ir.) e. 3 [II]

Reference: *Bodleian Cat.*, p. 27 / p. 30.
Date: ?1789 (no date is associated with our text but the two items immediately precedent and subsequent to ours are both dated '1789')
Scribe: Uilliam Breatnach / William Walsh
General content of MS: *Agallaibh na Seanoireadha* (modern and abbreviated form), *Eachtra Thoirdhealbh mic Starn*, *An Triur Mac*, *Eachtra Cloinne Righ na hIorruaide*, *Caith Fionntragha*, *Agallamh na nOinmhideadha*, *Cath Crionna*, miscellaneous material including notes on Irish names on letters, various poems.
Relevant text(s): DCC
Description: Begins, on p. 29 under the headline 'Deirg ruat*h*ar C*h*onuill C*h*éarnaig*h*' with 'Dála Éim*h*ir ing*h*ine F*h*org*h*aill monad*h* do b*h*i sí gac*h* lá air f*h*oraib*h* 7 air árduib*h* 7 air m*h*úrraib*h* a gríanáin ag feit*h*iom*h* an m*h*uig*h*e uait*h*e...' The text ends on p. 49 with a very abbreviated description of the duel between Conall and Lughaidh. At the end of our text is the scribal colophon 'Scriob*h*t*h*a le Uilliam Breat*h*nac san cCairig Big', but no date (cf. 'Date' above).

The text is written in a neat, clear hand. The top of the MS has been cut away slightly, with the result that the running headline is lost on most pages. Where it does remain, it appears as 'Deargruat*h*ar' on every left-hand page and 'C*h*onaill C*h*éarna' on every right-hand page. The text is laid divided into a number of paragraphs, each marked with a capital letter. The poems are generally given in two columns, with each stanza consisting of four lines written underneath one another.

Although the page numbers run sequentially there is a mistake in the order of pages which must have occurred during binding; pages should be read in the following order: 29-38, 43-48, 39-42, 49. Note that the poems have been given in this correct order of pages rather than following the present order of pages: page 39 thus follows page 43.

Poems:
p. 30   Guirt ro*m* g*h*aot*h* géar rom g*h*aoinead*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 31   Cúc*h*ulloin*n* b*udh* ham*hra* an gein (4 qq)
p. 34   Sloin*n* do c*h*airdios doll*adh* tean*n* (= *Aonmharchach sonn...*) (6 qq)
p. 43   Uc*h* a c*h*in*n* ón uc*h* a cin*n* (8 qq)
p. 39   Cuillion*n* Breag*h* o B*h*ruac*h* mead*h* (2 qq)

BRITISH LIBRARY

Egerton 132 [IV/a-2]

Reference: *Flower Cat.,* p. 342.
Date: 1712-13
Scribe: Richard Tipper[97]
General content of MS: There is only one further text besides ours in this manuscript, this is 'a burlesque tale in the manner of Pairlement Chloinne Thomáis, entitled (in the colophon) "Cath Lisin i Dunagan 7 Tain Bo Geanan et Cloinne Conraoi conuige sin. Finit. 1713."'[98]
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
Description: Our text is the first item in this MS; the first two pages, however, are damaged to the extent that less than a quarter of the text survives. The text occupies pp. 1-78 of the MS. While the pages are consecutively numbered, a later (?) hand has crossed out the original numbering and added a new numbering system by which each folio rather than each page (i.e. the top-right hand corner of every right-hand page) has been numbered. Both sets of page numbers have here been given, the later being the one in parentheses. Apart from the damage to the first two pages our text is intact and the hand clearly legible throughout. The top corners of pp. 15 and 19-23 (this being the new numbering as the original consecutive numbering has been cut off) have been cut off, resulting in the loss of a small portion of the text.

The poems have been marked by capitalisation of the first letter of each stanza. The first word of every page has been given at the bottom of the previous one. There are no running titles and BmMM and DCC merge without any indication or headline.

There are no scribal colophons.

Poems:
p. 3 (3r)	Dia bar mbet*h*a, a sesior sáor (7½ qq)
p. 8 (5r)	A Leab*h*urc*h*im luaimnac*h* (4 qq)
p. 12 (7v)	Cruit m*h*ic Manair da seinim sin, do coill*edh* mo g*h*esa fein (6 qq)
p. 14 (8v)	A brath*air* Deictine a D*her*g glais (4 qq)
	A C*h*u Cul*ainn*, coim*h*eric caoin*n*ac*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 15 (9r)	Eirig*h*, a C*h*u C*h*ul*ainn*, fion*n*tar cruas ('rhetoric')
p. 18 (10v)	Ata gleo ro*m* m*h*ead*hair* (4 qq)
p. 19 (11r)	Gair na sluaig*h* im teal*aigh* Teamar (13 qq)
p. 25 (14r)	A Cu Cul*ainn* Cuailgne c*ru*aid*h* (7 qq)
p. 28 (15v)	An*n*amh lea,t a Liat*h* Mac*h*a morad*h*b*h*ail ('rhetoric')
	Nir sat occlac*h* g*us* aniu (7 qq)
p. 30 (16v)	A Cat*h*faid*h* m*a*c Maolcroich (8 qq) ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 32 (17v)	A Deictin*n*, is fas do b*h*allan (4 qq)
p. 34 (18v)	A fir na t*air*misg ar séd*h* (3 qq)
p. 37 (10r)	Do toll*adh* mo leit*h* leit*h*si (3 qq)
p. 38 (20v)	poem omitted: MS has 'ag*us* adbert na laoig*h* et ní fog*h*ai*m*h í' (= 'Mystery Poem 1'[99])
	Mo cean duit, a Cu na ccleas ccain (5 qq)

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[97] *Flower Cat.*, p. 342: 'Written by Richard Tipper (for whom see Eg. 106) at Baile Mhisteil near Mulhuddart in the parish of Castleknock, Co. Dublin.'

[98] *Flower Cat.*, p. 344.

[99] For a discussion of the 'Mystery Poems' see section 3.4.4.

p. 40 (21v) Coimeirgid b*ur*ccuirad*h*, a fiora Er*enn* (new paragraph, no stanza division)

Goirt rom gaet*h* t*r*em c*h*neas cuan*n*a (15 qq)

p. 47 (25r) Rom gab*h* aniu aignad*h* eile (5 qq)

p. 51 (27r) poem omitted: MS has '7 itb*ert* a*n* l*aoidh* ag*us* ni faghaim sa cart*aigh* i.' (= 'Mystery Poem 2')

p. 54 (28v) Goirt ro*m* gaot*h* ger rom gonad*h* (1 q)

p. 55 (29r) Geab*h* mo carp*ad* ort, a Leat*h* (3 qq)

p. 56 (29v) Cu Culain*n* ba ham*h*ra an gein (4 qq)

Dursan, a Cu Cul*ainn* caid*h* (4 qq)

p. 58 (30v) Aonm*har*cac*h* sun*n* air a*n* muig*h* (11 qq)

p. 59 (31r) Sgela *Con* Culain*n* os *air*d (3 qq)

p. 61 (32r) Oig*h*id*h* Mail 7 Miod*h*na (3 qq)

p. 63 (33r) Uch a cin*n* (14 qq)

p. 64 (33v) Dun Dealgan an dunsa t*h*iar (5 qq)

p. 65 (34r) Uchan ach on lo do c*h*uaid*h* isi*n* cat*h* (16 qq)

p. 66 (34v) poem omitted: MS has '7 itb*ert* an laoig*h* 7 ni fog*h*mad*h* i' (would expect *Sadhal suaimneach sin, a Eirc* here)

p. 68 (35v) poem omitted: MS has 'atb*ert* an laoig*h* 7 ni og*h*aim í' (= 'Mystery Poem 3')

p. 70 (36v) poem omitted: MS has '7 atb*ert* an laoig*h* 7 ni og*h*aim í sa cartaig*h*' (would expect *Ceann Cholla meic Faitheanmuoil* here)

poem omitted: MS has '7 atb*ert* an laoig*h*' but the poem is not actually given (would expect *Cuilleann Breagha a bruachadh meadh* here)

p. 71 (37r) Ni *h*iad na curaid*h* rom c*h*ur (3 qq)

p. 73 (38r) In glaise-se Glaisi Cro (4 qq)

p. 75 (39r) A Conaill, cia hiad na cin*n* (= LnC) (29 qq)

p. 77 (40r) Clait*er* in feart bud*h* desta (11 qq)

Egerton 150 [IV/b-3]

Reference: *Flower Cat.*, p. 395.

Date: 1774 (colophon)

Scribe: Seón Lloyd (though MS written by various scribes)

General content of MS: *Cath Chnuca, Ionnsuighe Mháighe Lénna, Cath Mháighe Mucraimhe, Cath Crionna, Cathúghadh Cheallacháin Chaisil, Cath Chluana Tarbh, Tóruigheacht Shaidhbhe inghean Eogain Oig, Oideagh Chloinne Uisneach, Eachtre Cléirighch na gCroicean, Eachtra agus imtheachta an mhadra mhaoil, Comhrac Fear Diagh 7 Conngculglais*; excerpts from *Leabhar na gCeart* and miscellaneous matter (in English and Irish); various poems.

Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)

Description: On p. 277 (142) our text begins under the headline 'Bruislioc*h* m*h*ór Maig*h*e Muirt*h*eim*h*ne mar ar t*h*uit Cuc*h*ullan*n* m*a*c Sub*h*altug*h* .i. Ríg*h*g*h*aisgead*h*ac*h* Éirion*n* et deargruat*har* C*h*onuill Cearrnuig .i. Ríg*h* laoc*h* Eirion*n* anso síos mar lean*n*us.' While the text is well spaced out on the page, the hand is not as neat and 'calligraphic' as some and thus slightly difficult to read at times. Two sets of page numbers are given: consecutive page numberings are found on every page of the manuscript, but a later (?) hand has crossed these out and numbered each folio, i.e. each right-hand page. Both sets have been given here, the later one being the one in parentheses.

The first word of each page is given at the bottom of the previous page. From p. 284 onwards there are running titles; these are 'B*h*risleac*h* m*h*ór' on every left-hand page and 'M*h*ag*h*e Muirt*h*eim*h*ne' on every right-hand page. On p. 331 (170) the running title changes

to 'Dearg ruat*h*ar C*h*onuill c*h*earrna', which from p. 332 onwards is given as 'Dearg ruat*h*ar' on every left-hand page and 'C*h*onuill C*h*earrna' on every right-hand page. The poems / first letters of each stanza are marked by capital letters.

On p. 353 (180), after the prose narrative finishes, is the scribal colophon, 'Gurb isin oig*h*id Cuc*h*ulainn et derg ruat*h*ar C*h*onuill Cerrna gonuige sin. Finit. Loim na Neac*h* san Mi Ianuair áois Cr*ios*t 1774. Séon Lloyd.'

Poems:

p. 279 (143)	Atáid son*n*a b*ur* n-air*m* áig (3 qq)
p. 280	Dia bur mbet*h*a, a seisior saor (7 qq)
p. 288	A de*arb h*rat*h*air Deic*h*tine (3½ qq)
p. 289 (148)	Do coill*edh* mo g*h*easa fein (5½ qq)
p. 290	A C*h*uagain M*h*uirt*h*eim*h*ne (in text; marked by capital letter)
p. 291 (149)	Meala liom gair na sluaig*h* (11 qq)
p. 295 (151)	Ban*n*tra*cht* b*h*an atá ngleó (3 qq)
p. 296	Eirig a C*h*uc*h*uluin*n* fion*n*t*ar* c*ru*ais ('rhetoric')
p. 301 (154)	A C*h*uaguin Cuailgne cruaid*h* (6 qq)
p. 302	Ni biodb*a* brat iseah dealg (1 q)
p. 304	Ana*mh* leatsa a Liat*h* Mac*h*a adb*ail* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 305 (156)	Niorsad eglac*h* roi*mh* aniu (7 qq)
p. 307 (157)	A C*h*atfa a mic Maoil croid*he* (3½ qq)
p. 310	A D*h*eit*hch*ine as fas do b*h*allan (4 qq)
p. 313 (160)	[Rug] siad uai*m* don ana*m*, do [to]ll*adh* mo leat le[ith] le[ith]si (3 qq)
p. 314	Mo c*h*ean duit, a C*h*u (4 qq)
p. 317 (162)	Tain*edh* Cu C*u*lain*n* fa longp*or*t b*h*fear nEirion an tráit*h* sin go cosdat*hach* cat*h*b*h*uad*hach*… (alliterative description; in text)
p. 322	Goirt rom gaoith trém c*h*nes cuana (13½ qq)
p. 327 (167)	Rob g*h*ab*h* aniu aigne eile (4½ qq)
p. 331 (169)	Gort róm gaoit*h* geir rom g*h*oin*adh* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 333 (170)	Lac*h* b*udh* ferr na triait*h*e na tig, Cuc*h*ull*ainn* na ham*h*ra… (4 qq)
p. 335 (171)	Me *air* an mag*h* gan tu (= *Dursan a Chuchulluinn chruaidh*) (5 qq)
p. 336	Adb*h*eir*im* ise *Con*all, aon m*h*arcac*h* sin *ar* an muig*he* (11 qq)
p. 339 (173)	Maine m*ac* Éipirt fa c*h*en*n* (3 qq)
p. 342	Uc*h* a c*h*in*n* uc*h* a chin (14 qq)
p. 344	Sád*h*uil suaim*h*nec*h* sin Eirc (4 qq)
p. 349 (178)	A C*h*onuill, cia hiad na cin*n* (= LnC) (28 qq)

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Note: Manuscript 10/ Additional 3085 is bound in four sections, each being the work of a separate scribe. Relevant for a study of our text are sections (b) and (c). These shall be treated as separate manuscripts, taking into account that they have different dates, scribes and content. For the 'General Content' below only the content of the relevant section has been given. Note that a later (?) hand has numbered the four sections of this manuscript consecutively.

Cambridge 10/ Additional 3085 (b) [VI]

Reference: *Cambridge Cat.,* p. 15 / 17
Date: 19th October 1748 (colophon)
Scribe: Matthis McGill
General content of MS: *Eachtra an Cearnuidh Cáol Riadhbhuidh*; a large number of poems, mostly entitled 'Laoidh'; miscellaneous matter in English including poems, drafts of letters and medical cures.
Relevant text(s): LnC (18 qq)
Description: Our poem occupies ff. 76r-v of this MS. The outer margins of the MS have been trimmed, resulting in the loss of text; the inner margins have disappeared into the binding and with it some text, in our case the first letters or words of stanzas. The last lines on every page have been cut away, thus the scribal signature on 76v has been reduced to 'Matt', what we can guess once read 'Mattis McGill', going by the signatures elsewhere in this portion of the MS. The date '8ber 29th 1748' remains intact. The hand appears rather untrained, with some letters being difficult to differentiate from one another, e.g. d / g, a / o. It is sometimes ambivalent whether suspension strokes (especially n-strokes) should really be read as such as the ink is very faint at times. The poem is laid out one line under the other; a later (?) hand has added line numbers.

Stanzas 1, 15 and 18 of LnC here are curious as they seem to combine one half of the respective stanza with another half from a different stanza.
Poems:
p. 76r   [A] chon*n*aill, ca sealb*h* na cin*n* (18 qq)

Cambridge 10/ Additional 3085 (c) [IV/a-2]

Reference: *Cambridge Cat.,* p. 15 / 20
Date: 1755 (colophon)
Scribe: Peadar Mhag Uidhir[100]
General Content of MS: Annalistic material; miscellaneous poems (one in English).
Relevant text(s): DCC, LnC (29 qq)
Description: Our text is the first item in this section of the MS. The first page is damaged, the top outer corner having been ripped off and the page being quite dark and stained. Since the MS is numbered consecutively this first page is numbered p. 119r. DCC, which is acephalous, begins with (text laid out as in the manuscript):

si ag *con*all [   ]
ainm*h*e [   ] dha é d[   ]

---

[100] The word division in the colophon gives the name as 'Peadair Mha Guidhir'.

do*n* tslait eac*hr*ui*dh*e [   ]
ina laim*h* d*h*i g*ur* b*h*id*h*g*us*t*ar* an
tec*h* g*ur* b*hr*is*us*t*ar* a g*air*ig *air* an
co*n*c*h*in*n* tromf*h*ada go ttorc*har*
g*an* anmain í,(…)

This corresponds to a point in the narrative not long after the 'rhetoric' *Goirt rom ghaoth, géar rom gonadh*, which is spoken by Conall before beginning his *Deargruathar*. Add. 10/ 3085 (c) only consists of pp. 118r-161r; our text, which takes up pp. 118r-152v thus makes up most of the MS, however, since our text is acephalous, it is impossible to say whether BmMM was once part of this MS and is now lost, or whether the text only ever consisted of DCC and LnC.

Leaving aside the damage to the first page our text is otherwise intact. The hand is clear and easily legible though not as neat as some hands. There is no running title, but the first word of each page is given at the bottom of the previous one. Poems are not indented but generally start in a new line and each stanza is marked by a capital letter. Stanzas are laid out in lines of four.

LnC, with 29 qq, occupies pp. 147v-151r. It is followed by a poem with 11 qq, 'Claoit*er* mfe*ar*t bud*h* d*h*esd*h*a', spoken by Eimher. Directly after this final lay follows the colophon, on p. 152v, 'Finis in the year 1755 guid*h*im*h* g*ach* aon léig*h*fios no éisdfios an sg*r*ib*h*in si Paider 7 áve do c*h*uir le anam an sg*r*ib*h*meara .i. Pead*ar* m*h*a Guid*h*ir m*h*ic Ruoraig*h* m*ac* Conc*h*uir m*h*ic F*h*élim m*ac* Donuc*h*aig*h* B*h*aluig m*ac* Cormuic m*h*ic Brían na neac*h* &cᵃ.

Poems:

p. 119r   Gab*h* mo c*har*p*ad* ort, a Leat*h* (3 qq)
p. 120r   Cuc*h*olain ba ha*mh*ra a*n* g*h*ein (4 qq)
p. 121r   Dursa*n* lio*m* a C*h*uloin*n* c*h*aid*h* (4 qq)
p. 123r   An m*ar*cac*h* sun*n* *air* an muig*h* (11 qq)
p. 126v   Sgeala a *Con* cCol*ainn* os *air*d (3 qq)
p. 129r   Oig*h*id*h* M*h*ail ag*us* M*h*iodna (3 qq)
p. 131r   Uc*h* a c*h*inn ge rod merug*adh air* a*n* lin*n* (14 qq)
p. 133r   Dun Dealgan a*n* dunsa t*h*iar (5 qq)
p. 134r   Uc*h*an uc*h* on ló (15½ qq)
p. 136v   poem omitted: MS has '7 adub*h*ai*r*t an laoi s ni f*h*ag*h*aim i' (would expect *Sadhal suaimneach sin, a Eirc* here)
p. 140r   poem omitted: MS has '7 adub*h*ai*r*t a*n* laoí 7 ni f*h*ag*h*aim í' (= 'Mystery Poem 3')
p. 140v   poem omitted: MS has '7 adub*h*ai*r*t an l*aoidh* s ni f*h*ag*h*aim í' (would expect *Ceann Cholla meic Faitheanmhail* here)
p. 141r   poem omitted: MS has '7 adub*er*t a*n* l*aoidh* 7 ni f*h*ag*h*aim í' (would expect *Cuilleann Breagha a bruachadh meadh* here)
p. 142r   Ní híad na curaid*h* rom c*h*ur (3 qq)
p. 144v   An g*h*laisi-si Glaisi C*hr*o (4 qq)
p. 147r   A C*h*onaill, cía hiad na cin*n* (= LnC) (29 qq)
p. 151v   Claoit*er* m'fe*ar*t bod*h* d*h*esd*h*a (11 qq)

MAYNOOTH (RUSSELL LIBRARY)

C 98 (b) [IV/b-3]

Reference: *Maynooth Cat.* (Fasc. VI), p. 49.
Date: ?1714 (no date given in our text, the date 1714 is given at the end of an item preceding ours).
Scribe: Diarmuid Ó Conchubhair
General Content of MS: *Gabhala Éirionn*, *Reim Rioghuídhe*, *Leabhar Oiris*, *Leabhar na gCeart*, *Cath Muighe Mocruimhe*; portions of *Leabhar Muimhneach*; miscellaneous notes and poems.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC
Descriptions: Our text occupies pp. 287-312, where the MS breaks off. On p. 287 the text begins, under the headline 'Ag so do tuairisg Bhreaslac*h*a Mug*h* Muc*h*ruime no do D*h*earga ruad*h*t*ar* C*h*on*n*uill C*h*ea*r*na m*ar* ar t*h*uit Cuc*h*uluinn na ngnaoi*mh*', with 'Feacht da ttangad*ar* Ul*aidh* go hEam*h*uin m*h*ínalun Mac*h*a go sub*h*ac*h* soim*h*ean*n*mác*h*, táin*ig* Cuc*h*uluin*n* go Dun Delgain…'

Although the MS is frayed around the edges quite considerably, only very little of the text is lost. The hand is very clear and the text still black. The text is laid out very clearly and divided into many paragraphs, each of which begins with a capital letter decorated with animal faces. The poems are well indented and also marked by capital letters. The first word of each page is given at the bottom of the previous page. The running titles 'De*ar*gruat*ar* Conull Ce*ar*na' and (erroneously) 'no Bruislec*h*a M*h*ug*h*e M*h*uc*h*ruim*h*e' are given at the top of each right- and left-hand page respectively.

The poem breaks off at a point in the narrative shortly after Cú Chulainn dies, and the men of Ireland are hesitant of approaching him. This section often marks the changeover between BmMM and DCC, however, at this point in the present MS there is no indication of a new text starting. If the changeover was once indicated at a later stage in the narrative here it is now lost.

The final paragraph on p. 312, where the text, and in fact the MS, ends / breaks off, reads as follows (transcribed as in MS):

Tangad*ar* riompa *air* sin t*ar* sliab*h* fuaid dion[ ]
emana a nimt*h*usa gonuige, dala b*h*f*ear* neiri[ ]
ga cen*n* trí lá 7 trí [*sic*] gan tea*ch*t a ngoire c[ ]
nac*h* m*ar*b do b*h*i 7 m*ar* accet*h*na ní [ ]
m*h*ac*h*a do neac*h* mná na fir tea*ch*t [ ]
ttreasguirt 7 da mbuad*h*l*a* le na [ ]
deire is da nge*ar*rad*h* le as fiac*h*ra [ ]os [ ]
fir eiri[ ] cread na sgor *ar* a ceilg [ ]
do b*h*eit*h* [ ]*ar*b*h* o*ir* is cosm*h*uil ad*h*b*h*a [ ]
imirt o [ ] rac*h*adsa da f*h*[ ]

Poems:
p. 288   Ataid suna b*hur* n-*air*m aig (3 qq)
         Dea b*hur* mbeat*h*a a s*h*eisior saor (7 qq)
p. 292   A d*erb*h*rat*hair* D*h*eitc*h*in*n*e (3½ qq)
p. 293   Do coill*edh* mo d*h*easa fein (5½ qq)
         A C*h*uagain a Muirt*h*ei*mh*ne m*h*ór ('rhetoric'; in text, not marked)
p. 294   Meala liom g*áir* na sluag (12 qq)
p. 296   Bant*ra*c*h*t ban ata ngleo rem mer*adh* (3 qq)
         Eirug a C*h*úc*h*uluinn fion*n*t*ar* c*ru*ais ('rhetoric')

p. 299   A C*h*uagáin Cuailgne c*h*ruaid*h* (6 qq)
           Ní biob*a* b*r*at si seo dealg (1 q)
p. 300   Ana*mh* leatsa Liat*h* Mac*h*a ad*hb*h*a*l ('rhetoric')
p. 301   Niorsad eglac*h* gus aniod*h* (7 qq)
p. 302   A Cat*h*fa m*h*ic M*h*aoil C*h*róid*h*e (3½ qq)
p. 303   A D*h*eit*h*c*h*in*n*e as fas do b*h*ullan (4 qq)
p. 305   Rug siad uai*m* roin*edh* do*m* ana*m*, do toill*edh* mo let*h* let*h*si (3 qq)
           Mo cen*n* duit a C*h*ú (4 qq)
p. 306   Tain*ig* Cuc*h*uluin*n* fa longp*h*ort b*h*fear nEirion*n* do cosd*at*h*ac*h* cat*h*buadac*h*...
               (alliterative description; in text)
p. 309   Gort rem g*h*aoit*h* t*r*eim c*h*nes cúanna (13½ qq)
p. 312   Rob g*h*ab*h* aniug*h* aign*e* eile (5 qq)

M 51 [V]

Reference: *Maynooth Cat.* (Fasc. II), p. 99.
Date: 1792
Scribe: Eoghan Mac Síthigh[101] / Owen Sheehey
General content of MS: *Oidheadh Chloinne Uisneach*, *Cath Muighe Muicruime*, *Eachtra Conaill Gulbann*, *Sgialuithreach na Maighdine Muire*, *Ceisniomh inghine Ghuil*, *Parlament Cloinne Tomáis*, *Beatha agas Marta Naomh Maireide*, *Oighde Chloinne Lir*; numerous poems.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC
Description: The MS is in very good condition, the ink still being very black and not faded at all. The hand is clear though not as artistic or calligraphic as some hands.

BmMM begins on p. 19 under the title 'Brise Muig*h*e Muirt*h*ui*mh*ne', with the words, 'Fea*cht* naon dea ttangad*ar* Ullt*aidh* go hEm*h*uin Mac*h*a go sum*h*ach soim*h*en*mm*ach, et tain*ig* Cuc*h*ullain...'. The section of the text that in many MSS forms the changeover to DCC here occurs, in the middle of the text, on p. 57: 'Dal*a* b*hf*er nEirion*n* do b*h*ad*ar* d*o* cen t*r*i lá 7 t*r*i n-óid*h*c*h*e re Cuc*h*uloin...'

On p. 60 BmMM finishes, at a point roughly corresponding to (45.) in the transcription of NLS 72.1.38) with the colophon, 'gon*adh* is sin B*r*ised*h* Muid*hb*h*e Muirt*h*ei*mh*ne e bás Cuc*h*uloin; ar na sg*h*riob*adh* a cCen tSaile le Ógan b*h*a tSeit*h*ig FINIT Mo t*h*oil an toil tug toil m*h*ait*h* d*h*ib*h* g*o* t*h*éug mas toil let t*h*oil m*o* t*h*oil biaid*h* si dod réir go toil leasd t*h*oil a t*h*oil mo c*h*roid*h*e is m*o* cleib*h* bud*h* t*h*oil lem t*h*oil led tsh*oil *se* luid*h*e led t*h*aob*h*.'

On p. 61 DCC begins under the new title 'Déarg Ruat*h*ar Cho*n*aill C*h*ea*r*naig*h* ar f*h*earaib*h* Eirion*n*, cct' with 'Iomt*h*usa Conall Ce*ar*nach m*ic* Aimirgin m*ic* Cais T*r*iallsaig m*ac* Eais m*ac* Factn*a* m*ac* Capa m*ac* Dio*ng*aidh m*ac* hUg*h*rí m*h*óir ó raid*h*ter cl*a*nn Rug*h*rí d*o* s*h*lio*cht* Ir m*h*ic Miled*h*, *ar* dtec*h*t ón ac*h*trá do; do fúair sgeal*a* m*ar*b*h*t*h*a Cuc*h*uloin*n* et is ró d*h*oilg*h*iosac*h* do gab*h*ad*h* ain aige...' DCC finishes on p. 84, with 'gon*adh* é sin De*ar*g ruat*h*ar Co*n*aill C*h*éa*r*naigh m*ac* Ai*m*irgin 7 E*ar*c m*ac* Cairb*r*e 7 c*ró*c*h*núgh*adh* 7 io*m*ad d*o* cúired*h*aib*h* uile, 1792.'

In both BmMM and DCC there are no running titles, and there are no instances of the first word of a page being given at the bottom of the previous page. There is further no division into paragraphs. The poems are slightly indented and the first letters of each stanza enlarged. It is noteworthy that all the poems occur in BmMM and there are no poems whatsoever in DCC.

Note also that there has been a double-up and there are two pages with the page number '45'.

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[101] 'Ógan b*h*a tSeit*h*ig' in colophon.

Poems:

p. 20	Ataid sun*a* a u*m* b*h*fuir n-arm, a cl*ann* Cailiten c*h*aig (2½ qq)
p. 21	Dia b*hfur* mbet*h*a a s*h*eisior saor (7 qq)
p. 28	A b*hr*at*hir* Deig*h*t*h*ine a D*hear*cglas duanaig*h* (3 qq)
p. 29	Do cailled*h* m*o* g*h*esa fein (6½ qq)
	A Cúc*h*uloin coim*h*eir*igh* buir*edh*a ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 30	Gáir na sluag*h* am t*h*ul*aigh* Tem*h*rac*h* os gac*h* díon (12 qq)
p. 37	Dob letsa a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a na merugh*adh* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 38	Is orsad ogla aniog*h* níor b*h*feid*h*m sgis (6 qq)
p. 39	A Cat*h*faidh m*ac* Maol C*h*ro (6 qq)
p. 41	Fola nac*h*a cárad*h* eac*h* fod c*h*luin*n* (?4 qq)
p. 45	A f*h*ir t*h*oirmisg *ar sed* (2 qq)
p. 45	Do t*h*ollad*h* m*o* leat*h* lib*h*se (3 qq)
p. 46	A f*h*ir d*h*ána d*h*uin soich*aidh*e (= *Mo cheann duit, a Chu*) (4 qq)
p. 51	Guirt rom ghaod*h* t*r*eam c*h*nes c*h*rud*hac*h (15 qq)
p. 56	Ano*cht* soca a ndec*h*a mise d'iarrum (= *Rom ghabh aniugh...*) (5 qq)

C 38 (j) [V]

Reference: *Maynooth Cat.* (Fasc. V), p. 70.
Date: 18th century
Scribe: Aindrias Mac Cruitín
General Content of MS: in this section (j) of the MS our text is the only item.
Relevant text(s): BmMM (fragment only)
Description: The MS is currently inaccessible as it is away for conservation purposes. Of our text only a fragment (one folio) remains, namely pp. 29-30. Of these only photographs were available for consultation.

The pages are frayed around the edges, resulting in the loss of text, especially around the bottom. On p. 29 is the poem '[   ] bur mb[eatha a] seis*er* saor'; comparison of the poem here with the same poem in NLS MS 72.1.38 shows that the five verses in MS C 38 (j) correspond to §§1-4 and 8 as they are in the NLS MS.

Not enough of the text remains to comment on any possible relationships between this text and how it stands in other MSS.

Poems:

p. 29	[Dia] bur mb[eatha a] seis*er* saor (5 qq)

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF IRELAND, DUBLIN

G 113/ 114 [I]

Reference: *NLI Cat.* (Fasc. III), p. 128.
Date: 1703 (28th April, BmMM / 27th March, DCC; colophons)
Scribe: Uilliam Mac Cartnáin
General content of MS: (G 113) *Oileamhuin Con Culainn*, *Conlaoich & Cú Coingculoinn*, *Comhrag Fir Diad & Con Culainn*; (G 114) *Feis Tighe Chonáin Cheinntsléibhe*, poems from *Agallamh na Senórach*, miscellaneous other poems
Relevant text(s): BmMM (G 113), DCC (G 114)
Description: NLI G 113 and G 114 once formed a single volume; BmMM now finishes on the final page of G 113 and DCC begins on the first page of G 114. Two sets of page numbers are given as G 113 is acephalous and the first page is in fact page 209 (or 1, as added in pencil; the pencilled numbers are here given in parentheses).

BmMM starts on p. 265 (57), on the bottom half of the page, under the heading 'Breisleac*h* M*h*ag*h*a Murt*h*eim*h*ne an*n* so síos no Oíg*h*e C*h*oingculoin*n*'. The running titles 'Oíg*h*id' (on every left-hand page) and 'Coingculinn' (on every right-hand page) are given all the way through the text. The text begins 'Fecht naon dá ttángad*ar* mait*h*e na coíge Olltáig*h*e…', the initial 'F' has been decorated quite elaborately with an animal face. BmMM ends on p. 291 (83) with the words 'sgéal go ngeirge, gníom*h* go ngo*ir*te. Finis'. Then follows 'Uilliam m*a*c C*a*rtain 28 die Aprilis 1703 a ccúim*h*níogh*adh* g*h*oile 7 g*h*aisge an tréan m*h*il*idh* .i. Cúc*h*uloin*n* m*a*c Súb*h*altaicc.' The rest of the page and the next are taken up by a poem (with 6 stanzas) with the first line 'An leógan a Cóige Ula legac*h* be*ár*na'.

On p. 293, or p. 1 of G 114, DCC begins under the title 'Deargruat*h*ar C*h*onaill C*h*earrnaicc air Éirin*n* ag díog*h*ail b*h*áis C*h*oingculoin*n* ort*h*u', the first words being 'Gab*h*t*h*ar mo c*h*arbad 7 m*h*eic*h* go ndeac*h*uin dá lion do f*h*earaib*h* Éireann…'. Again the initial letter 'G' is decorated with animal features. The running titles here are 'De*ar*gruat*h* C*h*onaill C*h*ern*aigh* air n*Eireann*' (left-hand pages) and 'ag díogail b*h*áis C*h*oingculoin*n* ort*h*a' (right-hand pages).

DCC finishes on p. 305 (13) with the colophon, 'Gonad*h* é sin bás C*h*oingculoi*nn* et B*r*isl*each* M*h*ag*h* Murt*h*eim*h*ne gonuige sin, 7 de*ar*gruat*h*ar C*h*onaill C*h*ear*r*naicc *ar* f*h*eraib*h* Éirean*n* ag díoghail b*h*áis C*h*oingculoinn ort*h*a *ar* na c*h*ríoc*h*núgh*adh* le hUilliam M*a*c C*a*rtain an niógh Sat*h*ar*n*n Cásga an 27. lá don M*h*árta 1703 Uilliam m*a*c C*a*rtain cc^t Misi d*h*o sgríb*h* lé dít*h*c*h*ioll tréan f*h*órsa croinic na saoit*h*e saoidm*h*ear ccéinmc*h*ród*h*a an ionad mo c*h*uim*h*iosgu*ir* linicc g*h*éar g*h*leót*h*arcc ris*m* le díogruis gúid*h*e gac*h* léag*h*t*h*ora.'

The poems are well indented and each verse marked by capital letters, as is every new paragraph. Some words in the text (e.g. Eamhain Macha, Cuchuloinn, Liath Macha) have also been marked by capital letters. The hand is very clear and easily legible throughout, and at the bottom of each page the first word of the next page is given. While the MS is ever so slightly frayed around the edges none of the text is lost.

Both parts of the MS are bound in leather binding dating to 1850.
Poems:
(G 113)
p. 266 (58)   Anman*n*a b*h*úr sleag*h* ré cur cat*h* (2 qq)
p. 267 (59)   Dia b*h*úr mbeat*h*a a s*h*eisior saor (7 qq)
p. 272 (64)   A C*h*ongculoin*n* cóm*h*éirg ('rhetoric; in text)
p. 273 (65)   Gáir na sluag*h* uim t*h*ulaicc Teamrac*h* (5 qq)
p. 277 (69)   Dob an*n*am*h* leatsa a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a (in text)
p. 281 (73)   Do tollad*h* mo leat*h* lib*h*si (3 qq)

p. 282 (74)   M*air*g iaras an aisgid*h* (= *Mo cheann duit a Chú*) (1 q)
p. 283 (75)   Atá Cuc*h*oloin*n* cosg*ar*ac*h* cat*h*b*h*uadac*h*… (alliterative description; in text)
p. 285 (77)   Beir mo b*h*ean*n*ac*h*t leat a Laoig*h* (= *Goirt rom ghaoith tream…*) (6 qq)
p. 291 (83)   Go*ir*t róm g*h*aot*h*, gér róm g*h*onad*h* ('rhetoric; in text)
(G 114)
p. 294 (2)   Cuc*h*uloin*n* bá ham*h*ra an g*h*ein (4 qq)
p. 295 (3)   Aonm*har*cac*h* son*n* *ar* an mag*h* (9 qq)
p. 298 (6)   Cean*n* C*h*oingculoin*n* a tTeam*hr*aig*h* (1 q)
               Uc*h* a c*h*in*n* ón uc*h* a chin*n* (8 qq)
p. 302 (10)   Ní hiad na c*ái*rde rom c*h*ar (3 qq)

G 18 [IV/b-2]

Note: this MS is available on ISOS.

Reference: *NLI Cat.* (Fasc. II), p. 6.
Date: 1722
Scribe: Conchubhar Óg Ó Cruadhlaoich
General content of MS: The MS, quite long at just over 500 pages, contains a variety of texts: Keating's *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* begins at the start of the manuscript, breaks off and continues in two other places in the middle and at the end of the MS. Under the heading *An Leabhar Muimhneach* the tract is given in six divisions; the text breaks off twice and resumes after a number of poems, amongst others by Eochaidh Ó hEoghusa and Tadhg Dall Ó Huiginn. Further there is a portion of *An Leabhar Gabhála*, as well as versions of *An Réim Ríoghraidhe*, *An Leabhar Oiris*, *Cath Fionntrágha* and *Cath Maighe Mucruimhe*.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
Description: The MS is available on ISOS. There are two sets of page numbers given on each page differing by ten pages, both have been given here.

The text starts on p. 337 [347] under the headline 'Do B*h*reisleac*h* M*h*uig*h* M*h*uirt*h*eim*h*ne ag*us* do c*h*allm*h*uint C*h*uc*h*ulen agus do Deargruag*h*t*h*ar C*h*onuil C*h*earna ag diog*h*uilt b*h*ais Conculen'. The running title 'Breisleach' continues on the top of each page all the way through, even when BmMM, without any indication, merges into DCC on page p. 370 [380]. The hand is clear and easily legible throughout and at no point is the text obscured, stained, illegible or otherwise damaged.

Following LnC, on p. 388 [398], is a concluding narrative passage: 'As a haitle sin do deanam*h* d*h*iob*h* leat*h* ar leat*h* do furail Eim*h*er ar Conall as feart do deanam*h* fairsiong ion*nus* go b*h*faig fein slí an*n* na cu*mh*dac*h* ag*us* na com*h*luid*h*e maile re C*ú* C*ulainn* .i. a ceile com*h*aoisi ag*us* a ndub*ert* an laoid*h*. Finis.' The text ends with the scribal colophon: 'Ag sin a b*h*fuaramar re c*ur*sios don du*an* so do Breisleac*h* Muig*h* Muirt*h*seim*h*ne. Ar na sgriob*adh* so an seis*eadh* la don mid*h*e x die ♂ [= March]. 1722. le Con*ch*ob*h*ar Og O Cruadlaoic*h* a Liad.'

Whilst the poems are generally well indented, the beginning of individual verses is not always clearly marked and the lines, at times, seem to run on from one another.

Poems:
p. 338 [348]   Ataid sun*n*a b*hur* n-air*m* aig*h* (3 qq)
                Dia b*ur* mbeat*h*a a seisior saor (8 qq)
p. 345 [355]   A d*h*earb*hr*at*h*air Deitc*h*ine (3½ qq)
                Do coill*edh* mo geasa féin (5½ qq)
p. 346 [356]   A C*h*uagain Muirt*h*eim*h*ne ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 347 [357]   Meala liom gair na sluag*h* (12 qq)
p. 349 [359]   Bantra*ch*t mban ata gleo ro m*h*ear*adh* (3 qq)

Eir*igh* a C*h*uc*h*ulun*n* fion*n*tar ('rhetoric')

p. 353 [363]   A Cuagain C*h*uailgne c*h*ruaid*h* (7 qq)

p. 354 [364]   Ni biod*hb*a brat sa s*eadh* dealg (1 q)

p. 355 [365]   Anam*h* leatsa a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a ad*hb*hail (' rhetoric'; in text')

                 Niorsad eaglac*h* g*us* aniod*h* (6½ qq)

p. 356 [366]   A Cat*h*faidh m*h*ic Maoil c*h*roig*h* (3½ qq)

p. 358 [368]   A Deitc*h*ine as fás do b*h*allán (4 qq)

p. 359 [369]   A f*h*ir na toirmisg ar séd (2 qq)

p. 360 [370]   Rugs*ad* uaim roin*adh* do*m* ana*m*, do toll*adh* mo leat*h* leat*h*sa (3 qq)

p. 361 [371]   Mo cean duit a C*h*ú (4 qq)

p. 362 [372]   Coim*h*eirg b*ur* ngioll ag*us* bur ccur*adh* ('rhetoric'; in text)

p. 367 [377]   Goirt rom gaoit*h* trem c*h*neas cuan*n*a (14 qq)

p. 370 [380]   Rom g*h*ab*h* aniu aig*n*edh eile (4½ qq)

p. 372 [382]   Goirt rom gaot*h* ger rom goin*edh* ('rhetoric'; in text)

p. 374 [384]   Laoc*h* b*u*dh fearr na triath*a* na t*h*ig, Cu Cul*ainn* na hamna... (4 qq)

                 Me ar an mag*h* g*an* tú (= *Dursan a Cú Culainn cruaidh*) (5 qq)

p. 375 [385]   Do beiri*m* asé Conall, aon m*h*arcac*h* sin ar an mag*h* (11 qq)

p. 377 [387]   Maine fo Eib*ert* fa cean*n* (3 qq)

p. 378 [388]   poem omitted: MS has 'agus adub*ert* an laoid*h* is ní do leanfam' (would expect
                 Oighidh Maoil agus Miodhna here)

p. 379 [389]   Uc*h* a cin*n* on uc*h* a c*h*in*n* (13 qq)

p. 380 [390]   poem omitted: MS has 'adub*ert* an laoid*h*' but the poem is not actually given
                 (would expect *Dún Dealgan an dúnsa thiar* here)

                 poem omitted: MS has 'ag*us* adub*ert* laoid*h*' but the poem is not actually given
                 (would expect *Uchán ach! on, uchán ach!* here)

p. 381 [391]   Sad*h*al suaim*h*neac*h* sin, a Eirc (4 qq)

p. 384 [394]   Cean*n* Colla m*a*c Fait*h*eam*h*uil (3 qq)

                 poem omitted: MS has 'ag*us* isb*ert* an laoi' but the poem is not actually given
                 (would expect *Cuilleann Bhreagha a Brúachadh meadh* here)

p. 386 [396]   poem omitted: MS has 'ag*us* adub*ert* an laoid*h*' but the poem is not actually
                 given (would expect *An ghlaise-si Glaise Chró* here)

p. 387 [397]   A Conuill cuit*h* iad na cin (= LnC) (29 qq)

p. 388 [398]   poem omitted: MS has 'ag*us* a ndub*ert* an laoid*h*' but the poem is not
                 actually given (would expect *Claoitear in feart budh dheasta* here)

G 457 [IV/a-2]

Reference: *NLI Cat.* (Fasc. X), p. 46.

Date: 1759

Scribe: Pádruig Ó Pronntaigh

General content of MS: *Imtheachta Tromhdháimhe ina bfoilsithear cionnus fúarus an Táin ait ttús*, *Táin Bó Cuailgne*, *D'foghluim Choncullaind sios sund*, poem on the death of Conlaoich.

Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)

Description: The last item in this MS, our tale occupies pp. 305-370, p. 370 also being the last page of the MS. BmMM begins under the headline 'Oidhe Chucholuin*n*, no Breisleach Mhuighe M*h*uirt*h*eimhne ann so'. BmMM and DCC merge with no separate headline. The sentence often indicating the changeover, 'Dala fheruibh Éirean*n*...', here occurs in the course of the text on p. 345. The running title 'Oidhe Chucholuin*n*' is found throughout our text. The poems are well indented and the stanzas marked by indenting the second lines even further.

The MS is a small volume, the pages slightly darkened but overall in very good condition. The text is easily legible throughout; the writing is small and very neat and delicate. On p. 308 the scribe seems to have sharpened his quill or run out of ink as the writing becomes even finer, only to become bigger again.

At the bottom of p. 370 is the colophon 'Aig sin oid*h*e Chuchul*ainn* conuige sin, air na sgriob*hadh* lé Pádruig Úa Pronnt*uidh*, m*h*ic Néill, m*h*ic Seat*h*ain 7c. ón Éirne, an treas lá do mhídh na Lúghnasa agas an bhlíadhain d'aois an Tigherna 1759. Et guidhim bean*nocht* gach léig*h*theóra a nonóir na hÓighe Muire. Agus mo bhen*nacht* dhóib*h* mar a ccéadna.' This is followed by the catchword 'Tain Bo Fliod*hais*'.

Poems:

p. 306   Atáid sonna b*h*ur n-airm (3 qq)

p. 307   Dia b*h*ur mbeat*h*a a s*h*eise*ar* saor (7 qq)

p. 310   A Leab*h*archuim luaimneach (4 qq)

p. 313   Cruit m*h*ic Manuir da seinm, sin do cailleadh mo gheasa féin (6 qq)

p. 314   A brathair Dheitc*h*ine (4 qq)

p. 315   A Chuchulain coimhirc caon*n*ach ('rhetoric'; in text)
           Éirigh a Chuc*h*ulain*n*, is fianntar crúas do chloidhim ('rhetoric')

p. 318   Atá gleó mór aiga chur (4 qq)
           Gáir na slíg*h* um thealac*h* (11 qq)

p. 324   A Chuc*h*ulainn Chúailgne c*h*ruaid*h* (7 qq)

p. 326   Annam*h* leat a Líat*h* M*h*ac*h*a mórad*h*bhéil ('rhetoric'; in text)
           Niorsad oglach gus aniag*h* (7 qq)

p. 328   A Chathfaid*h* a mheic Maoilchroich (only second part marked as poem) (8 qq)

p. 329   A Dheitc*h*in is fás do b*h*allán (4 qq)

p. 331   A fhir na toirmiosg air séud (3 qq)

p. 333   Do t*h*olladh mo leith leit*h*si (3 qq)
           Mo c*h*en duit a Chú na ccleas cain (5 qq)

p. 334   Coimheirg*h*id bhur ccuraidh a f*h*eara Éirend ('rhetoric')

p. 340   Gort rom g*h*aeth t*r*éin chneis cuan*n*a (15 qq)

p. 345   Rom ghaibh a niog*h* aignead*h* eile (5 qq)

p. 348   Gort rom g*h*aoth, ger rom gonadh ('rhetoric')

p. 349   Gabh mo charbad ort a Liad*h* (3 qq)

p. 350   Cuchulain*n* ba hamhra an ghein (4 qq)

p. 351   Dursan liom a Chú chaidh (4 qq)

p. 352   An marcac*h* sonn air an muig*h* (11 qq)

p. 354   Sgéula Chuc*h*olain*n* ós áird (3 qq)

p. 355   Oidhedh Mháil, agas Mhiod*h*na (3 qq)

p. 357   Uch a chin ge rod measgaidh air lin*n* (14 qq)

p. 358   Dún Dealgan an dúnsa síar (5 qq)

p. 359   Uchan ach an ló (15½ qq)

p. 364   Ní híad na curaid*h* rom char (3 qq)

p. 366   An glaise-si Glaise C*h*ró (4 qq)

p. 368   A Chonaill cia híad na cinn (= LnC) (29 qq)

p. 370   Claidht*er* m'fert budh dheasda (11 qq)

G 296 [IV/b-3]

Reference: *NLI Cat.* (Fasc. VII), p. 19.
Date: 1763
Scribe: Donnchadh Ó Floinn
General content of MS: genealogy tables, *Réim Ríoghruidhe*, *Gabhal Chlanna Mile*, *Cath Muighe Muchrumhe* (immediately preceding our text), *Cath Luimnigh Corcaigh 7 Port Lairge air Lochlainibh le Cealachán Chaisioll*, *Cath Críona*.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
Description: BmMM begins on p. 259 under the erroneous title 'Ag so do t*h*uarisg B*h*risleac*h*a M*h*uig*h*e M*h*uc*h*ruim*h*e no do D*h*eargruat*h*ar C*h*onaill C*h*earna mar a t*h*uit Cuc*h*ullun*n* na ngnío*m*h 7c.' with the words 'Feacht da ttangadar Ulaidh go hEamhuin mínaluinn Mhacha go subhach somheanmnach tainigh Cuchuluinn go Dún Dealgan…' The mix-up of *Muirtheimhne'* with *Muchruimhe* may be due to the fact that the text preceding our text in this MS is *Cath Muighe Muchruimhe*. BmMM and DCC merge without a separate headline, in fact, the running title for the whole text is 'Deargruat*h*ar C*h*onuill C*h*earna an so' (on every left-hand page) and 'no breisleac*h*a M*h*uig*h*e M*h*uc*h*ruim*h*e an so' (on every right-hand page). Following LnC, after a further 7 lines of text, the tale ends on p. 298 with 'ionus g*ur* had*h*laca iad araon a n-aon uad*h*. Finis.'

The MS, a big volume (about 1¼ times the size of an A4 sheet of paper) is very well preserved and there is no damage to any of the pages whatsoever. The hand is neat and clear, the paragraphs are well spaced out and marked by capital letters. While the poems are indented the individual stanzas are not always marked and at times just run on, thus making it difficult to determine the exact number of stanzas in a poem.

On p. 1 of this MS is the signature, 'Ag so leb*h*ar D*h*onnc*h*ad*h* Uí F*h*loin*n* ar na sgriob*adh* an b*h*liad*h*ain d'aois an Tiag*h*urna Míle sea*cht* ccéad agus trí bliad*h*na agus trí fit*h*c*h*id a nInnies a ccun*n*tae an Clair'.

Poems:

p. 261	Ataid suna b*ur* n-air*m* áig*h* (3 qq)
	Dea b*ur* mbeat*h*a a s*h*eisior saor (7 qq)
p. 265	A d*h*earb*h*rat*h*ir D*h*eit*hch*in*n*e (3 qq)
p. 266	Do coill*edh* mo g*h*easa féin (5½ qq)
	A C*h*uagain Muirt*h*eim*h*ne ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 267	Méala liom gáir na sluaig*h* (12 qq)
p. 269	Bantra*cht* b*h*an ata ngleo rom mer*adh* (3 qq)
	Eirig a C*u* C*u*lainn fion*n*tar c*ru*as ('rhetoric')
p. 272	A C*h*uagain C*h*uailgne c*h*ruad*h* (6 qq)
p. 273	Ní bod*h*ba brat, is a sead*h* dealg (1 q)
p. 274	Anam*h* leatsa, a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a ad*h*b*h*ail ('rhetoric'; in text)
	Niorsad eaglac*h* roim*h*e aniog*h* (7 qq)
p. 276	A C*h*at*h*faidh a m*h*ic M*h*aoil C*h*roid*h*e (3½ qq)
p. 277	A D*h*eit*hch*ine is fas do b*h*allán (4 qq)
p. 279	Rug siad uaim roin*n* dom anam, do toll*adh* mo let*h* leit*h*si (3 qq)
	Mo cen*n* duit a Chu (4 qq)
p. 281	Tainig C*u* C*u*lainn fa longp*h*ort b*h*fer nEirion*n* do cosd*a*tac*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h*… (alliterative description ; in text)
p. 283	Gort ream g*h*aot*h* treim c*h*neas cuana (13½ qq)
p. 286	Rob g*h*ab*h* aniog*h* aigne eile (4½ qq)
p. 288	Guirt rom g*h*aoit*h*, geir rom goin*adh* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 289	Laoc*h* b*udh* fearr triat*h*e na tig, Cuc*h*uluin*n* na hEam*h*na an g*h*eain (4 qq)

p. 290   Me air an muig*he* gan tú (= *Dursan a Chuchuluinn chruaidh*) (5 qq)
p. 291   Abruim gur be C*h*onall, aon m*h*arcac*h* sin san muig*he* (11 qq)
p. 292   Maine fo Eib*h*ertfa c*h*enn (3 qq)
p. 293   Uc*h* a c*h*in*n* uc*h* a c*h*inn (14 qq)
p. 294   Sad*h*uil suaim*h*neac*h* sin Eirc (4 qq)
p. 297   A C*h*onaill cia iad na cin*n* (= LnC) (29 qq)

G 149 [III]

<u>Reference:</u> *NLI Cat.* (Fasc. IV), p. 108.
<u>Date:</u> 1765
<u>Scribe:</u> Mícheál Ó Horgáin
<u>General content of MS:</u> *Eachtra Chloinne Riogh na hIoruaidhe*, *Eachtra Chonaill Ghulban*.
<u>Relevant text(s):</u> BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
<u>Description:</u> The pages have darkened as has the ink; as a result the writing is quite faint at times and towards the edges of the MS some of the text is barely legible. The poems are not indented or marked as such, making the text difficult to work with. While the pages are numbered consecutively in pencil the scribal pagination in ink has been ignored during binding, thus resulting in the pages having been bound in the wrong order. The correct sequence of the pages containing our text is thus as follows (giving the pencilled numbers first and the pagination in ink in parentheses):

> 67-8 (132-3), 63-4 (134-5), 59-60 (136-7), 55-6 (138-9), 97-100 (140-3), 103-4 (144-5), 107-8 (146-7), 111-2 (148-9), 115-6 (150-1), 119-20 (152-3), 123-4 (154-5), 127-8 (156-7), 131-2 (158-9), 135-6 (160-1), 139-40 (162-3), 143-6 (164-7), 141-2 (168-9), 137-8 (170-1), 133-4 (172-3), 129-30 (174-5), 125-6 (176, given twice), 121-2 (177-8), 117-8 (179-80), 113-4 (181-2), 109-110 (183-4), 105-6 (185-6), 101-2 (187-8), 147-50 (189-92), 153-4 (193-4), 157-8 (195-6), 161-2 (197-8), 165-78 (199-212), 181-2 (213-4), 185-6 (215-6), 189-90 (217-18), 193-4 (219-20), 197-8 (221-2), 221-4 (223-6), 199-200 (227-8), 195-6 (229-30), 191-2 (231-2), 187-8 (233-4), 183-4 (235-6).

The text begins under the title 'Bruislioc*h* M*h*uig*he* M*h*uirt*h*eim*h*ne an*n*so' on p. 67 (132); BmMM and DCC merge without indication. The sentence 'Dala b*hf*er nÉiren*n*…' which often marks the changeover between the two texts here occurs on p. 156 (196) in the course of the narrative. There are no running titles.

On p. 192 (232) is the colophon, 'Michael Ó Horgáin a lámh agus a leabhair sgriobhin. Arna sgríobhin le Michael Ó Horgáin a gconntae Chiarraidhe a mbaile ar a ngoirthear Achruim san mbliadhain d'aois an Tiagharna míle seacht ccéad 7 chúig bhliadhna ar trí fiothchid.'

<u>Poems:</u> [page numbers given as: pencil (ink)]
p. 63 (134)   Ataid sin b*h*ur n-*ai*rm aig*h* (3 qq)
p. 63 (135)   Dia b*h*úr mb*eath*a a seis*er* saor (5 qq)
p. 112 (149)   A C*h*ú C*h*ullain*n* com*h*eirg*he* cuim*h*nid*h* (' rhetoric'; in text)
p. 124 (155)   A C*h*ú C*h*uilion*n* fion*ntar* cruas ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 144 (165)   Is biod*hb h*a dealg, 7 ní biob*h*a b*r*at (1 q)
p. 146 (167)   Annamh let a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a ('rhetoric')
p. 134 (173)   A f*h*ir na to*ir*miosg *ar* s*éd* (3 qq)
p. 125 (176)   Do toll*adh* mo leat*h* d'*og h*am (2 qq)
p. 126 (176)   Mo c*h*ean*n* duit a c*h*ú na ccleas ccain (5 qq)
p. 117 (179)   Atá Cú *ar*mbuadhach, c*h*loid*h*iom*h*d*er*g… (alliterative description)
p. 102 (188)   Guirt róm g*h*aot*h* t*r*e*m* cneas cuanna (15 qq)

p. 267 (201)   Guirt ro*m* gaod, gér ro*m* goin*adh* ('rhetoric')
p. 169 (203)   Gaib*h* m*o* c*har*ba*d* a Liat*h* (3 qq)
p. 170 (204)   Cú C*h*ulainn b*a* had*h*b*har* a ccéin (4 qq)
p. 174 (208)   Aon m*ar*cac*h* soin *ar* a*n* mai (11 qq)
p. 186 (216)   Uc*h* a c*hin*n ón uc*h* a c*hin*n (13 qq)
p. 187 (233)   A *Con*aill cia hiad na cin*n* (= LnC) (28 qq)

G 146 [IV/a-2]

Reference: *NLI Cat.* (Fasc. IV), p. 103.
Date: 1770
Scribe: Muiris Ó Gormáin
General content of MS: *Eachtra an pháláis dhraoidachtamhail*, *Eachtra an cheithearnaigh choilledh chompáisigh*, *Eachtra Ristaird 7 Lisarda*, *Feis tíghe chanain.*
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
Description: Our texts are the last two items in this MS, which is very well preserved and in its original binding (?). There is no damage whatsoever and the MS is written in a clear hand, with the ink still being very black and not faded anywhere. The pencilled lines for marking ruling of the page are still visible. New page numbers have been given to every item, but from halfway through the MS continuous page numbers have been pencilled in also and are here given in parentheses. Thus BmMM occupies pp. 1 (305)-63 (367) and DCC pp. 1 (368)-31 (398). There are no running titles, and while the poems are not indented they have been marked by capital letters. The first word from each page is given at the bottom of the previous page.

BmMM begins on p. 1 (305) with no new headline, the first line 'Feacht n-oen dia ttangadar' having been enlarged to give the appearance of a headline. BmMM ends on p. 63 (367) with 'occus Conall ar in deargruathar. Gonadh e sin Breisleach mhor Mhuighe Muirtheimhne no oigheadh Choncculaind co nuicce sin', followed by the colophon 'Iar na ghraifneadh re Muiris O Gorman an Ath Clíath Duibhlinne. 1770.' DCC begins on p. 1 (368) as a new item under the headline 'Dearccruathar Conuill Chearnaigh' with 'Tainic Conall roimhe i machaire na hEamhna occus d'Áth na Furaire a Sliabh Fuait...' In many MSS this is a good bit into the narrative of DCC; what usually marks the beginning of DCC here occurs on p. 58 (362) as part of BmMM ('Dala f*h*er nEirionn do b*h*attar co ceann t*rí* lá…').

Poems:
p. 2 (306)   Atait sunna bur n-airm (3 qq)
p. 3 (307)   Dia b*h*ur mbeat*ha* a shesior soar (7½ qq)
p. 8 (312)   A Leab*archam* luaim*h*n*igh* (4 qq)
p. 12 (316)   Do coill*edh* mo g*h*esa f*ein* (6 qq)
p. 13 (317)   A b*h*rat*h*air Deichtinne (4 qq)
p. 14 (318)   A C*h*uc*h*ulainn coim*h*eiricc caoin*edh* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 15 (319)   Eirigh a C*h*uc*h*ulainn fionntar c*ru*as ('rhetoric')
p. 18 (322)   Ata gleo ro*m* med*h*an (4 qq)
p. 19 (323)   Gair na sluagh im teal*aigh* (14 qq)
p. 27 (331)   A C*h*uc*h*ulaind Cuailgne cruaid*h* (7 qq)
p. 30 (334)   Annamh leat a Liat*h* Mac*h*a mórad*h*b*h*ol ('rhetoric')
p. 31 (335)   Nirsat occl*aidh* gus aniogh (7 qq)
p. 33 (337)   A C*h*at*h*f*aidh* m*ac* Maolcroich a C*h*arnmuig*h* (8 qq)
p. 36 (340)   A D*h*eic*h*tin is fás do b*h*allan (4 qq)
p. 38 (342)   A f*h*ir na tairmiscc *ar* séd (3 qq)
p. 41 (345)   Do toll*adh* mo leit*h* leit*h*si (3 qq)

poem omitted: MS has '7 adb*ear*t an laoid*h*, 7 ni f*h*og*h*aim í' (= 'Mystery Poem 1')

p. 42 (346)   Mo c*h*ean duit a C*h*u na ccles ccain (5 qq)

p. 44 (348)   Coim*h*eirg*h*id*h* b*h*ur ccur*adh* a f*h*iora Eirionn ('rhetoric')

p. 52 (356)   Goirt rom gaet*h* t*r*em c*h*neas cuan*n*a (15 qq)

p. 57 (361)   Rom gab*h* aniu aiccn*edh* eile, borb an so*cht* (5 qq)

p. 61 (365)   poem omitted: MS has '7 idb*ear*t an laoid*h* occ*us* ni f*h*aghaim sa c*h*art*aigh* hi' (= 'Mystery Poem 2')

p. 63 (367)   Goirt rom gaot*h* ger rom gonad*h* ('rhetoric')

p. 1 (368)   Geib*h* mo c*h*arb*a*d ort a Leit*h* (3 qq)

p. 2 (369)   Cuc*h*ulainn ba ham*h*ra an g*h*ein (4 qq)

p. 3 (370)   Dursan a C*h*uc*h*ulaind c*h*áid*h* (5 qq)

p. 4 (371)   Aenm*h*arcac*h* sunn *ar* an muicc*h* (11 qq)

p. 7 (374)   Sccela *Con*cculaind os aird, innis am*h*aine m*h*org*h*aircc (3 qq)

p. 9 (376)   Oig*h*id*h* Mail occ*us* Miodhna (3 qq)

p. 11 (378)   Uch a chind, ge rot mescc*adh* tu ar an linn (14 qq)

p. 13 (380)   Dun Dealccan an dunsa t*h*iar (5 qq)

p. 14 (381)   Uchan ach, on lo do chuaidh isin chath (16 qq)

p. 16 (383)   poem omitted: MS has '7 itbeart an laoid*h*' but does not actually give a poem (would expect *Sadhal suaimneach sin, a Eirc* here)

p. 19 (386)   poem omitted: MS has '7 atb*ear*t an laoig*h*, 7 ni oghaim i sa chartaig*h*' (= 'Mystery Poem 3')

p. 20 (187)   poem omitted: MS has '7 atbeart an laoidh' but does not actually give a poem (would expect *Ceann Cholla meic Faitheanmhail* here)

poem omitted: MS has '7 adb*ear*t an laig*h*, 7 ni oghaim i' (would expect *Cuilleann Breagha a Bruachadh meadh* here)

p. 21 (388)   Ni hiad na caraid rom c*h*ar (3 qq)

p. 24 (391)   In glaisi-si Glaisi Cró (4 qq)

p. 26 (393)   A Chonaill cia hiad na cind (= LnC) (29 qq)

p. 30 (397)   Claid*h*t*er* mf*er*t bud d*h*easta (11 qq)

G 501 [III]

Reference: *NLI Cat.* (Fasc. XI), p. 1.

Date: 1794 (29th August; colophon)

Scribe: Tadhg Ó Caoluidh/ Thady Kelly

General content of MS: *Sgéal an Ceithearnaig Mhaoil Riabhaigh, Bruighann Caorthainn, Actra agus Parliament Chlann Thomas Mac Lobuis, Ceisniomh Inghionn Goill, An Teanga Bithnuadh, Oileamhuin Chonn Culan, Bás an mhacaoimh mhoir mhic righ na hEaspaine, Eachtra Chloinne Ríogh na hIorruaidhe, Eachtra an Mhadra Mhaoil,* (anecdotes from) *Agallamh na Senórach, Achtara Mhic an Iolair, Achtara Ucare na Seachtmhaine;* miscellaneous notes (in English), poems and verses.

Relevant text(s): DCC, LnC (28 (30) qq), BmMM

Description: In this MS DCC actually precedes BmMM; the latter in fact occurs as the last item in this MS. DCC occupies pp. 103-124; it begins, under the headline 'Deargruat*h*ar C*h*onall Cearrnaig an so sios, Thady Kelly 29th August 1794' with the words 'Dala bf*er* nEirionn im*orro* do b*h*ad*ar* trí la a*gus* teora n-oid*h*c*h*e…' and ends on p. 124, following LnC, with '7 do fearadh a ccluithe caointe les fein 7 le hUltaibh uile.' Interestingly, this is followed by the colophon 'Gonadh i sin Bruislioch Mhor Mhuighe Mhuirtheimhne agus Deargruathar Chonuill Cearrnaig go nuig sin Finis' despite the fact that BmMM only occurs later in the MS. The first two stanzas

of LnC are given twice. Between DCC and BmMM are various poems (in English and Irish) and tales (see above). BmMM begins on p. 267, as the last prose item in the MS, under the headline 'Brislach Mhór Mhaighe Mhuirtheimhne anso síos', and ends on p. 297 with 'agus rangodar tar Sleibh Fuaid dionnsaighe na hEamhna. Finis.' Then follows the catchword 'Deargruathar'. The last page in the MS, p. 298, has lines of verse in both Irish and English.

Both DCC and BmMM are quite faint on most pages, the writing, though neat, being quite small. The MS has darkened around the edges so that some of the text (especially at the bottom right-hand corners) is barely legible.

There are no running titles in either text; the poems are indented, and the first word of each page is given at the bottom of the previous page.

Poems:

(DCC)

p. 105	Goirt rom g*h*aod ger rom gonad*h* ('rhetoric')
p. 106	Gab*h* mo c*h*arbad ort a Líat*h* (3 qq)
p. 107	De*r*oilid*h* liom dul sann ccait*h* (= *Cú Chulainn budh hamhra...*) (2 qq)
p. 109	Aon m*h*arcac*h* son ar an maig*h* (11 qq)
p. 113	Oc*h* a c*h*in on oc*h* a chin (13 qq)
p. 121	A Chonuill cía híad na cin (= LnC) (28 (30) qq)

(BmMM)

p. 268	Ag soin búr n-ármaib*h* aig*h* (3 qq)
	Dia búr mbet*h*a a seis*er* saor (5 qq)
p. 274	A C*h*u C*h*ull*inn* coim*h*eirig*h*, cuim*h*nig ('rhetoric')
p. 277	A C*h*úc*h*uloin*n* coim*h*eirig*h*, fiontar cruas ('rhetoric')
p. 281	Ni biod*hb*a brat, a*cht* is biod*hb*a dealg (1 q)
p. 282	A Liat*h* Mach*h*a b*udh* headróm ('rhetoric')
p. 285	A f*h*ir na toirmisg ar s*éd* (3 qq)
p. 286	Do toll*adh* mo let*h* don g*h*oin (3 qq)
p. 287	Mo c*h*ean*n* duit, a C*h*ú na ccleas ccain (5 qq)
p. 288	Atá C*u* C*u*lainn cosg*rac*h cat*hbh*uad*h*ac*h* (alliterative description; in text)
p. 293	Goirt rom t*h*rogaod trein c*h*nes c*h*ruad*h*ac*h* (15 qq)

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72.1.45 (XLV) [V]

Reference: *Mackechnie Cat.,* (p.202); *Mackinnon Cat.,* (p. 157).
Date: ?16th century[102]
Scribe: ?
General content of MS: Our text is the only item here.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC
Description: This vellum MS is very incomplete; only three sheets / six folios remain. The outer sheet is bound upside down and inside out, thus making f. 6v the first and f. 1r the first and last pages respectively. The text begins on f. 1r1 with 'armfala doro*na*d co*mair*le leo 7 is com*air*le tug a[   ] 7 laeg m*ac* riang. 7 m*aith*e ul*ai*d *ar* ceanato in co*mair*le…' It is written in two columns per page, thus, 24 columns of text remain. The hand is clear and neat, but especially f. 6v has darkened with age to the extent that the text is mostly illegible here. There are no running titles. There does not seem to be any poetry, apart from f. 6v1, where a line of the poem 'uch a chinn on' can just be made out; the page, however, is too damaged to even reconstruct this stanza, let alone the whole body of the poem. There are no scribal signatures or dates, apart from 'London 5th January 1812, John Mackechnie' (on ff. 6r and 1v), which was clearly added by a modern hand.
Poems:

1v1   'Rhetoric' omitted: MS has '7 ad*ubair*t b*ri*at*r*a doilb*hth*e 7 ni c*ur*iab*h* an*n* so iat' (would expect 'rhetoric' *A Chú Chulainn coimheirig…* here)
2v2   Dob a*nn*amh libh gus aniu (address to horse)
4v1   Éirgidh, a f*er*a Ér*enn*, atá C*ú* C*h*ulainn... (alliterative description)
6v1   ?Uch a chinn on

72.1.37 (XXXVII) ('The Book of the Dean of Lismore') [VI]

Reference: *Mackechnie Cat.,* (p. 179); *Mackinnon Cat.,* (p. 225).
Date: 1512-42
Scribe: Sir James MacGregor (the Dean of Lismore) and Duncan MacGregor
General content of MS: Heroic, courtly and satirical poetry; some religious poetry, some material in Scots.
Relevant text(s): LnC (24 qq)
Description: A copy of LnC occupies pp. 205-208, written in the hand and orthography typical for this MS (i.e. secretary hand, employing an orthography for Gaelic spelling based on Middle Scots). The pages in question are slightly frayed around the edges but with minimal loss of text. The ink has browned with age, as have the pages, but the text is still easily legible throughout. There is no headline, the only indication that a new item starts is the indented heading 'A houdir seo…' before every new item. In our case this is 'A houdir soo Chonnil Carnyth m^c

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[102] This manuscript was used by Van Hamel for his edition of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* (in *Compert Con Culainn*, pp. 69-133). The date of NLS 72.1.45 has been given variously as 15th century (*Mackechnie Cat., Mackinnon Cat.*), 15th-16th century (Thurneysen, *Heldensage*, p. 557) and 16th century (Van Hamel, *Compert Con Culainn*, p. 70; R. Black, 'The Gaelic Manuscripts of Scotland' in W. Gillies (ed.), *Scotland and Gaelic / Alba agus a'Ghàidhlig* (Edinburgh, 1989), p. 155).

Eddirschoil', then, in the next line the poem beginning with 'A Chonnil cha salve no kinn'. Each new stanza is marked by a slightly enlarged capital letter.

   The poem here has been variously published in print, cf. for example Ross, *Heroic Poetry from the Book of the Dean of Lismore*, p. 106 and *Reliquiae Celticae* (Vol. 1), p. 61, followed by a translation on p. 67.

Poems:

p. 205   A Chonnil, cha salve no kinn (24 qq)

72.1.38 (XXXVIII) [VI/b-1]

   Note: This is one of the MSS discussed by Ewen McLachlan in his 'Celtic Analysis (= NLS 72.3.4, dating to 1812), where he gives a detailed summary of the text as it occurs here.

Reference: *Mackechnie Cat.,* (p. 189); *Mackinnon Cat.,* (p. 146).
Date: first half of the 17th century, probably 1608-21.[103]
Scribe: ?
General content of MS: *Cath Magh Mucruimhe, Oileamhuin Conculainn 7 Oigheadh Chonnlaoich*, a vocabulary with the headline *Coir Anmanna*, various poems.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
Description: Our text occupies pp. 7-69 and is the first item in this MS. There is no title, the only indication for the beginning of a new text is a slightly enlarged capital letter ('F'), the text beginning with 'Feachd naon día ttángador Ulaid*h* go hEm*h*ain m*h*íonalain*n* M*h*acha…'. There are no running titles, and BmMM and DCC merge without any indication of a new tale starting.

   The text seems to be the work of three scribes: hand one writing pp. 7-28, hand two pp. 28-30, hand three pp. 31-46, and pp. 47-69 again written by hand one. The hands differ quite substantially, with that of scribe one being very neat and rounded, that of scribe two rather small and narrow and more difficult to read. Hand three is clear but not as neat as hand one.

   There is a page missing between pp. 28-29, resulting in the loss of a portion of a poem (note that this is also at a point where the hand changes). The pagination however is in sequence, having been added by a later hand, and does not acknowledge the missing portion of text.

   Throughout the text poems are not indented but each stanza is marked by a capital letter. The bottom edges of pp. 7-12 are cut off, resulting in the loss of text. The text has further faded quite considerably on the bottom of p. 7, and alltogether on pp. 65-67.

   There are no scribal colophons, dates or signatures in our text, nor at any other place in the MS.

Poems:

p. 8   [A]táid sunna b*h*ur [n-ai]rm áigh (3 qq)
          [Di]a b*h*ur mbet*h*a a seisior saór (8 qq)
p. 15   A d*h*earb*h*rat*h*air D*h*eitc*h*ine (4 qq)
          Do coilled*h* mo g*h*esa féin (5½ qq)
p. 16   A C*h*úagáin M*h*uirt*heimh*ne ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 17   Gáir na slúaigh um t*h*ealaigh tTem*h*ra (12 qq)
p. 19   Atá gleó rom m*her*ad*h* (3 qq)
p. 20   Éirig*h* a C*h*u C*h*uloin*n*, fion*ntar* crúas ('rhetoric')
p. 25   A Cúagain Cúailgne c*h*rúaidh (7 qq)
p. 26   Ní bíod*hbh*a brat sa sed*h* dealg (1 q)
p. 27   Annam*h* let, a Léit*h* M*h*ac*h*a ad*hbh*al ('rhetoric'; in text)

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[103] 'Black Cat.', no page numbers available.

Niórsad eagl*ach* gus aniogh (7 qq)

[note: missing page(s) between pp. 28-29; would expect 'A Chathfadh mhic Maol Chroigh' here]

p. 29   A Dheitchine as fas do bhallán (4 qq)

p. 30   A f*h*ir na toirmisg *ar* sed (2 qq)

p. 32   Do toll*adh* mo leit*h*sa ótta (3 qq)

Mo c*h*en d*ui*t a *Cu* (5 qq)

p. 34   Coim*h*eirgid*h* b*h*ur ccur*adh*, do f*h*il *dá* b*h*ur n-ion*n*soig*h*id*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)

p. 40   Goirt rom g*h*áot*h* t*r*éin c*h*nes c*h*úan*n*a (13 qq)

p. 44   Rom gab*h* aniú aign*edh* eile (5 qq)

p. 47   Goirt róm gáot*h* g*ér* rom gon*adh* ('rhetoric'; in text)

p. 48   Geib*h* mo c*h*arbad fort, a Léith (3 qq)

Cú C*h*uloin*n* bá ham*h*ra an g*h*ein (4 qq)

p. 49   Dursan a C*h*ú C*h*uloin*n* c*h*áigh (5 qq)

p. 50   Aónm*h*arcac*h* sun*n* *ar* an muig*h* (11 qq)

p. 52   Maine Mó-éip*er*t fó c*h*en (3 qq)

p. 53   Oig*h*id*h* M*h*áoil agus a M*h*iod*h*na (3 qq)

p. 55   Uc*h*! a c*h*in*n* ón, uch! a c*h*in*n* (14 qq)

p. 56   poem omitted: MS has 'et adub*h*ai*r*t an laoid*h* 7 ní f*h*uil si an*n* so' (would expect *Dún Dealgan an dúnsa thiar* here)

p. 57   Uc*h*án ac*h*! on, uc*h*án ach! (14 qq)

p. 58   Sád*h*al súaim*h*nec*h* sin, a Eirc (4 qq)

p. 61   poem omitted: MS has '7 adub*h*ai*r*t an laoídh 7 ni f*h*uil an*n*so' (= 'Mystery Poem 3')

p. 62   Cen*n* C*h*olla m*h*eic Fái*h*eam*h*uil (3 qq)

Cuillen*n* B*h*reag*h* a brúach*adh* mead*h* (3 qq)

p. 63   Ní hiad na cairde rom c*ar* (3 qq)

p. 64   An g*h*laise-si Glaise C*h*ró (4 qq)

p. 66   A Chonaill, gid*h* hiad na cin*n* (= LnC) (29 qq)

p. 69   poem omitted: MS has '7 do rin*n*e an laoid*h* an*n*' but the poem is not actually given (would expect *Claoitear in fear budh dheasta* here)

72.2.9 (LIX) [VI/a-1] (cf. TCD 1362/ H.4.21, p. 104 below)

Note: NLS MS 72.2.9, as well as TCD 1362/ H.4.21 which is a copy of it, are discussed in some detail in Cecile O'Rahilly, *The Stowe Version of Táin Bó Cuailnge* (Dublin: DIAS, 1962), pp. xlix-liii; it is from this publication that the information below on the date and scribe have been taken.

Reference: *Mackechnie Cat.,* (p. 226); *Mackinnon Cat.,* (p. 173).

Date: 1650

Scribe: Fear Feasa Ó Duibgheannáin

General content of MS: *Cath Ruis na Rig* (incomplete), *Tain Bo Cuailgne* (incomplete), an English poem on the death of 'Gentleman Archibald McDonald, Laird of Lergie'.

Relevant text(s): BmMM

Description: The text occupies pp. 14r-37v, where it breaks off unfinished at a point corresponding to p. 239 (42r) in TCD 1362/ H.4.21, which is a copy of the present MS. On p. 38 is a new item ('Tain Bo Cuailnge') which starts in the middle of the text, thus suggesting a considerable loss of leaves at some stage. The consecutive page numbers have been pencilled in by a later hand. BmMM begins on p. 37, there is no headline but the first line of text ('Feachd noen dia ttangadar…') is slightly enlarged to indicate the beginning of a new item. There are no running titles, only occasionally is the first word of a page given at the bottom of the previous one. The poems are not indented but each stanza marked by an enlarged capital letter.

The top outer corners of our text are cut off, resulting in the loss of some text; from halfway through the text there is also damage to the bottom corners, resulting in further loss of text. The ink is generally still clear and the neat, tidy hand easily legible, only p. 37v has darkened quite considerably.

The marginalia 'Och uch ach, a olivia is aoibhinn duit' appears at the bottom of pp. 22v, 24r, 24v and 29r, sometimes accompanied / underlined by a geometrical decoration. In the bottom margin of p. 14r is the scribal signature 'eogan mac ghilleoin', who copied the present MS in 1691 into what is now TCD MS 1362/ H.4.21 (see TCD catalogue). In the bottom margin of p. 14v, is a gloss adding the third and fourth line of the final stanza of the poem 'Atá sunn bur n-arma áigh…', which has been omitted in the main body of the text on this page. The gloss, reading 'aon mac deighine gan on, ar bhur ccionn thuaidh atáson. Atá' is marked by +, as is the place in the text where it is to be inserted. It appears that this addition is the work of Eoghan Mac Gilleoin, as the writing and ink (brown rather than the black of the MS) are identical to Mac Gilleoin's signature on the previous page.

While there is no date, colophon or scribal signature associated with our text, the scribe of the present MS signs his name on p. 10r, where we find the subscription *Trocuire co bfaghba an tí do scriobh sin .i. fer Fesa O Duibgeannain/ amen.*

Poems:

p. 14v	Atá sunn bur n-arma áigh (3 qq)
p. 15r	Dia bur mbeatha a seisior sóer (7½ qq)
p. 17r	A Leabharcham luaimhnech a eacladh árduaibhrech (4 qq)
p. 19r	Do coilledh mo geasa fén (6 qq)
p. 19v	A bráthair Deitchine (4 qq)
	A Cú Chulainn coimherigh do comdha ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 20v	Eirigh a Chuculuinn fiontar cruas ('rhetoric')
p. 22r	A banntracht rod rum mearadh (3 qq)
p. 22v	Gair na sluaghsa im tholchuibh Teamhraigh (12 qq)
p. 26r	A Chuchuloind Chuailgne cruaidh (7 qq)
p. 26v	Ni biodhbha brat seach is biodbha dealg (1 q)
p. 27v	Anamh let a Léthmacha ('rhetoric'; in text)
	Nirsat oglach nuir mheata, gus aniu riamh nír eimhgis (6 qq)
p. 28v	A Cathfaidh a mhic Mhaoil Cróich a Carnmhuigh (8 qq)
p. 29r	A Dheitcine as fás do bhallan (4 qq)
p. 30r	A fhir na toirmisg ar séud (3 qq)
p. 31r	Do tolladh mo leith righse (3 qq)
	Mo cion duit, a Chú (5 qq)
p. 32v	Coimheirge bhur ccuradha, a fiora uaisle fuinedha ('rhetoric')
p. 35v	Goirt rom gaoth trem chnes cuanna (15 qq)

72.1.36 (XXXVI) [VI]

Reference: *Mackechnie Cat.,* (p. 176); *Mackinnon Cat.,* (p. 142).
Date: 1691
Scribe: Eoghan Mac Gilleoin
General content of MS: *Imtheacht Conaill Gulban* (fragmentary), *Scel mucci Mic Datho*, *Bruighion bheg na hAlmunn*, *Bruighion Cheisi Coruin*, *An Ceithirneach O Domhnullan*, *Murchaidh Mac Brian 7 an Dirioch*; miscellaneous poems.
Relevant text(s): LnC (27 qq)

Description: LnC here occupies pp. 83v-84v. There is no headline; the writing is very neat and the stanzas clearly indicated and each marked by an enlarged capital letter. On pp. 84r and especially 84v the ink has faded but the text is still legible. The outer corners of the MS have been repaired by fine mesh but the damage has no impact on the text as the side margins are very generous. In the top margin of p. 84b a later, cursive hand has added, 'The following poem is in the genealogy book of Clanranald.'

The MS is in good overall condition, only the first few pages being frayed / worn with age, thus resulting in some loss of text.

There is no date or scribal signature in our item, however, in the middle of p. 79 we find: 'Eogan m*a*c Gilleoin. Le mo laim*h* do c*r*ioc*h*nuid*h* in e*ach*trasa da sg*r*iob*h*ad*h* in se*ach*tmad*h* la do*n* mios M*hair*t aon m*h*ile se cead aon deg 7 c*eith*re fit*h*id d'an*n*alad*h* *ar* teig*er*na Iosa C*r*iosd Caillan Caimpbel leis in leis in leab*har*an .i. Caillan m*a*c Donch*adha* m*ei*c Dug*h*il m*ei*c C*h*aillain Oig.'

Poems:

p. 38v   A C*h*onuill, ca séalb*h* na cínn (27qq)

73.2.2 (Box 2.4) ('Turner MS') [VI]

Reference: *Mackechnie Cat.,* (p. 279); *Mackinnon Cat.,* (p. 278).
Date: c. 1748
Scribe: Uilliam Mac Mhurchaidh
General content of MS: a miscellany of poetry.
Relevant text(s): LnC (27 qq) and four other poems from DCC
Description: Written not in *corr litir* but in a cursive Roman 18th century hand. The poems occupy pp. 103-116. They are laid out as stanzas of four lines; each poem is preceded by a brief (c. three lines) introduction detailing the speakers of the poem and the context.

Poems:

p. 103   Goirt liom an ghaoth tream chneas cuana (15 qq)
p. 105   Och a lámh on och a lámh (13 qq)
p. 108   Cuchuluinn ba hamhra ngcéin (4 qq)
                Aon mharchach Sud air an Mhagh (11 qq)
p. 111   A Chonuill cia Shealbh na cinn (= LnC) (30 qq)

72.3.10 (LXXXVIII)('Kennedy's Collection') [VI]

Reference: *Mackechnie Cat.,* (p. 267); *Mackinnon Cat.,* (p. 262).
Date: 1774-83
Scribe: Duncan Kennedy
General content of MS: a great variety of poetry ('Kennedy's ancient poems'), the titles generally being given in English.
Relevant text(s): LnC (34 (47) qq)
Description: The poem, beginning on p. 67 and ending on p. 73, is written in an 18th-century cursive Roman hand and laid out in stanzas of four lines. Stanzas 1-13 are under the headline '1 Earrann', stanzas 14-27 (stanza 14 being the beginning of LnC 'proper' (*A Chonaill…*) under the headline '2 Earrann'. The running title 'Conal' is given at the top of each page that our poem occupies. The gloss / comment 'very good' has been added next to the first line of stanza 1.

On the bottom third of p. 66 an introduction to the poem begins under the headline 'Conal revenging the Death of Cuchulin'. Unfortunately the bottom of the page has been ripped out and most of the text is thus missing. What remains is 'It is made known by Mr McPherson in his publications of the Death of C[   ]'; the continuation of this introduction at the top of p. 67 reads (line division as in MS):

> parte and passeth all between Conal & his Wife. The first part is
> addressed to Conal by his Wife at his arrival, wherein she mildly re
> flects upon his long absence in Sogorma etc. – And the second part
> enumerates the King's heads upon the Widdy and a short account of
> the Battle of Conals wife, who soon thereafter died and desired to be
> interred with her Son Cuchulin.

<u>Poems:</u>

p. 67   A Chonaill chaoimh nan arma geura (47qq)

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C vi 3 (740) [V]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. XVI-XX), p. 2245.
Date: ?1633 (the date 'the 15th of September 1633' is given, in English, at the end of the text immediately preceding ours., on f. 65v)
Scribe: Brian Mac Aodhagáin
General content of MS: *In Cath Catharda*, *Táin Bó Cuailgne*, poems.
Relevant text(s): DCC, LnC (22 qq)
Description: This MS preserves only the ending of DCC. Just one folio (fol. 67) remains, this is illegible to a great extent as it is frayed around the edges, as a result losing a portion of the outer columns on both sides of the folio. The text starts with 'Acht cheana do thuit Connla fa deoigh do builleadhaibh comromacha comcalmae…' On fol. 67v, col. 1, l. 16 LnC begins, it ends with 'cuir mo bel air bhel na Con. A *Con*uill 7c.' Then follows the mutilated scribal colophon, 'Brian m*ac* Aodhangain .i. m*ac* Aodhagan na Carruige, m*ic* Ao[dh]agan do scriobh…' A new hand takes over on fol. 67v, col. 1, l. 25.
Poems:
fol. 67r   An glais beag so bid Glais Cró
fol. 67v   A Chonaill, cia hiet na cinn (= LnC) (22 qq)

23 M 25 (15) [I]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. I-V), p. 63.
Date: 1684 (colophon)
Scribe: Eoghan Ó Caoimh
General content of MS: *Tochmharc Fhearbhlaidhe*, *Sgéal Optimus agus Optima*, *Oidheadh Chloinne Tuireann*, *Feis Tighe Chanáin*.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC
Description: The text occupies pp. 112-151 of this manuscript, where it finishes and is followed by the scribal colophon, 'Gon*adh* í sin B*r*eisl*each* M*uighe* M*u*rtheimhne 7 óig*h*e Con gCuill*inn* gonadh sin *ar* na sgr*iobh* lé hEoghan Ó Caom*h* 1684.' On p. 131 BmMM merges with DCC; there is no indication that a new part of the tale is starting. There are no running titles, but the first word of each page is given at the bottom of the previous page. The poems are well indented and the stanzas marked by capital letters. Some of the first letters in a new paragraph are decorated (e.g. with animal motifs). There is some 'doodling' in the margins.
Poems:
p. 113   Anma*n* b*h*úr sleig*h* ré cc*r*u cc*at*h (2 qq)
          Dia bu*r* mbeat*h*a a seis*ior* saor (7 qq)
p. 120   A C*h*ongcul*ainn* cóm*h*éir*igh* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 121   G*ar* na sluag*h* sin t*h*alaicc (5 qq)
p. 125   A Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a bá h*éad*trom aigion*n*tac*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 129   Do tollad*h* mo leat*h* lib*h*si (3 qq)
p. 130   M*air*g i*arus* an aisgid*h* (= *Mo cheann duit a Chú*) (1 q)
p. 131   Atá C*u* C*h*ulainn cosgrach cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h*… (alliterative description; in text)
p. 134   Beir mo b*h*en*n*acht leat, a Laoig*h* (= *Goirt rom ghaoth tream …*) (6 qq)
p. 139   Goirt rom g*h*aot*h*, géar ro*m* g*h*onad*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 140   Cú C*h*uloin*n* bá ham*h*ra an gein (4 qq)

p. 141   Aonm*h*arcac*h* son*n* *ar* an mag*h* (9 qq)
p. 144   Cean*n* Con cCul*oinn* a tTemr*aigh* (= *Oighidh Mhaoil 7 Mhiodhna*) (1 q)
p. 145   Uc*h* a c*h*in*n* ón uc*h* a c*h*in*n* (8 qq)
p. 149   Ni hiad na cairde nom c*har* (3 qq)

23 K 7 (658) [II]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. XVI-XX), p. 2035.
Date: 1701 (11th March; colophon)
Scribe: Domhnall mac Donnchadha
General content of MS: *Caithréim Ceallacháin Caisil, Cath Muidhe Mucruimhe, Tochmhairc Fearbhlaidhe, Sgéal na Cairte, Faghail Craoibhe Cormuic, Feis Tighe Chonain Cinntsleibhe, Bruighean Chaorthuinn*, poems and scribblings (partly in English).
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
Description: The MS is a fairly small volume. The pages have darkened with age and the ink faded to brown, which makes the text difficult to read at times. The outer edges are slightly frayed and bottom right-hand corners darkened to an extent that some of the text is almost illegible. The hand is neat and clear; there are no paragraphs in the text but the scribe has used capital letters to indicate new sections. The poems are indented and also marked by capital letters. There is no running title. BmMM begins on p. 75 under the title 'Brisleac*h* M*h*uig*h*e Muirt*h*eim*h*ne' and merges with DCC with no separate headline. The text ends on p. 126 ('Fo*ir*c*h*enn'), where, after LnC finishes, there are a further 9 lines of text.

At the bottom of p. 122, after the sentence ending '…g*ur* t*h*uit Lugh*aidh* le Conall don lat*air* sin', there is the colophon, 'Gurb am*h*laid*h* sin do diog*h*uil Conall Cerrnac*h* b*h*ás Con*c*cul*ainn* ar c*h*loin*n* Cailitin 7 *ar* Lugh*aidh* m*ac* Conríg*h*, 7 *ar* feruib*h* Eiren*n* uile. Finis xi March 1701.' This colophon is crossed out, and underneath is written (in a joint-up cursive hand), 'The 4 following pages belong to this tale'. Pp. 123-30 are on what seems like fresher paper and written with fresher ink. On p. 123 the text has been glossed over / corrected, and words have been inserted.

On p. 89, in the top margin, is written in a later hand (?), 'to the most graceful (?) of her sex'.
Poems:
p. 76   Anman*n*a b*h*ur sled*h* re ccur ccat*h* (1 q)
p. 83   A C*h*u C*h*ul*ainn* coi*mh*éirig ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 84   Gáir na sluag*h* u*m* tuluig Tem*h*rac*h* (13 qq)
p. 90   Dob an*n*am*h* letsa sin, a Liat*h* Mac*h*a ('rhetoric'; in text)
            A Leit*h* M*h*ac*h*a m*h*erad*h*b*h*uil (= *Niorsad óglach gus aniugh*) (1 q)
p. 92   A D*h*eig*h*t*h*in is fás do b*h*allán (4 qq)
p. 96   Mairg sires an aisgid*h* (= *Mo cheann duit a Chú*) (1 q)
p. 97   Ata C*u* C*u*lainn cosg*r*ac*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h*… (alliterative description; in text)
p. 101   Eirig*h* a Laoig*h* fa mór sgél (= *Goirt rom ghaoth trem chnes…*) (8 qq)
p. 107   Guirt ro*m* g*h*aot*h* géar ro*m* g*h*uined ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 109   Cú C*h*uluin*n* ba ham*h*ra an g*h*in (4 qq)
p. 110   Sloin*n* do c*hair*des duil*idh* ten*n* (= *Aon mharcach sonn…*) (6 qq)
p. 114   Uc*h* a c*h*in*n* on uc*h* a c*h*in*n* (8 qq)
p. 119   Cuillen*n* B*h*red ó b*h*ruac*h* med*h* (2 qq)
p. 124   A C*h*onall cé híad na cin*n* (= LNC) (28 qq)

23 K 37 (152) [IV/a-2]

> Note: Van Hamel drew on this manuscript to supplement readings for his edition of the tale from NLS 72.1.45.

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. I-V), p. 433.

Date: 1718 (colophon)

Scribe: Seón mac Solaidh

General content of MS: *Cath Cumair, Cath Muighe Léana, Cath Muighe Mucruimhe, Cath Crionna, Cathugadh Cheallachain Caisil, Cath Chluana Tairb, Foghluim Chonculainn, Cath Leitreach Ruighe, Cogadh Fhearghusa agus Chonchubhair, Cath Ruis na Riogh, Comhrac Fhirdia 7 Choncculainn,* various annalistic entries and a few poems.

Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)

Description: Our text is the last item in this MS, occupying pp. 245-318 (which is also the last page of this MS). On p. 245 we find the headline 'Oidh*eadh* C*on* cColain*n* sios in*na*', above it the date 1718 is given. The text starts in the usual way, 'Fe*cht* n-aon da ttangad*ar* Ul*aidh*…' On p. 291 BmMM merges into DCC with no separate headline, although in a new paragraph. There is no running title, but at the bottom of each page the first word from the following page is given. Pp. 311-312 are in a different hand to the main hand of the text: where the main hand has a slightly 'scribbled' quality, the hand of pp. 311-312 appears quite fine and elegant (this seems to be the same hand of the first page of the MS and the index).

While there are a few stains, these do not obscure any of the text. The poems are not marked in an overly obvious fashion although the first letters of each stanza are slightly enlarged and the second lines slightly indented.

Poems:

p. 246 Atáid sona b*har* n-*air*m aigh*idh* (3 qq)

p. 247 Dia b*har* mbet*h*a a seisior saór (7 qq)

p. 251 A Leab*har*c*h*im luaimneac*h*, a eachl*adh ár*d uaib*h*rec*h* (4 qq)

p. 254 Cruit m*h*eic Manair da feinim, si*n* do coill*edh* mo g*h*esa f*ein* (6 qq)

A b*h*rat*hair* D*h*eictine a D*h*er*g* G*h*las d*h*uain*igh* (4 qq)

p. 256 A C*h*uc*h*oluin coim*h*iric caoin*na*c*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)

p. 257 Eirig*h* a C*h*ú*ch*ol*ainn* ('rhetoric')

p. 259 Atá gleó roim m*h*ed*h*ar (4 qq)

p. 260 Gair na slúag*h* um t*h*eal*aigh* Tem*h*r*ach* (12 qq)

p. 266 A C*h*uc*h*ol*ainn* Cuailgne cruaid*h* (7 qq)

p. 269 An*na*mh leat, a Liath Macha moradbal ('rhetoric'; in text)

Niorsat oglách *gus* aniog*h* (7 qq)

p. 271 A Chathfaid mheic Maoil Chroich (only 2nd part marked as poem) (8 qq)

p. 273 A D*h*eictine is fás do b*h*allán (4 qq)

p. 275 A f*h*ir na toirmisg *ar* séd (3 qq)

p. 277 Do toll*adh* mo leit*h* leit*h*si (3 qq)

p. 278 poem omitted: MS has '7 adub*har*t an laoi, 7 ni f*h*agam í' (= 'Mystery Poem 1')

Mo c*h*en duit a C*h*ú na ccles ccain (5 qq)

p. 279 Coim*h*eirg*h*id*h* b*har* ccuraid*h* a f*h*era Eir*eann* ('rhetoric')

p. 286 Goirt rom ghaet*h* t*r*em c*h*nes c*h*uan*na* (15 qq)

p. 290 Rom gab*h* aniú aign*edh* eile (5 qq)

p. 293 Poem omitted: MS has '7 adub*er*t an laoi, 7 ní f*h*ag*h*am í' (= 'Mystery Poem 2')

p. 294 Goirt rom gaot*h* gér rom gonad*h* ('rhetoric')

p. 296 Gab*h* mo c*h*arbad ort, a Leit*h* (3 qq)

Cu Col*ainn* ba hamra an g*h*ein (4 qq)

p. 297 Dursan líom a C*h*u C*h*ol*ainn* c*h*aid*h* (4 qq)

p. 298   An*m*arca*ch* son*n ar* an muig*h* (11 qq)

p. 300   Sgeala *Con* cCol*ainn* ós *áir*d (3 qq)

p. 302   Oig*h*id*h* M*h*áil ag*us* M*h*iod*h*na (3 qq)

p. 303   Uc*h* a c*h*in*n* ge rod mesg*adh ar* lin*n* (13 qq)

p. 305   Dún Dealgan an dúnsa t*hiar* (5 qq)

p. 306   Uc*h*an ac*h* on ló (15½ qq)

p. 307   poem omitted: MS has '7 adub*hair*t an laoi, s ni f*h*ag*h*a*m* í' (would expect *Sadhal suaimneach sin, a Eirc* here)

p. 309   poem omitted: MS has '7 adub*er*t an laoí, s ni f*h*ag*h*a*m* í' (= 'Mystery Poem 3')

p. 310   poem omitted: MS has '7 adub*hair*t an laoí s ní f*h*aga*m*h í' (would expect *Ceann Cholla meic Faitheanmhail* here)

           poem omitted: MS has '7 adub*hair*t an laoid*h*, 7 ni f*h*ag*h*a*m* í' (would expect *Cuilleann Breagha a Bruachadh meadh* here)

p. 311   Ni hiad na curaid*h* rom c*h*ar (3 qq)

p. 313   An glaisi-si Glaise C*h*ro (4 qq)

p. 315   A *Con*aill, cia hiad na cin*n* (= LnC) (29 qq)

p. 317   Claoint*er* m'fert b*udh* desda (11 qq)

E iv 3 (11) [III]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. I-V), p. 51.

Date: 1727 (1st July; colophon)

Scribe: Aindrias Mac Cruitín

General content of MS: material relating to the Ó Lochlainn family for which this MS was written: poems, annalistic / genealogical entries; *Foghlaim Chonchulainn*, *Oidheadh Chloinne hUisneach*, *Cath Leitreach Ruighe*, *Cath Ruis na Ríogh for Boinn*.

Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)

Description: The MS is in good condition, all pages are intact although the ink has faded on some pages. BmMM begins on p. 128 under the title 'Bruisleac*h* m*h*aig*h*e Muirt*h*eim*h*ne an*n* so sios' with 'Fea*ch*t n-aon dá tangador…' DCC starts on p. 155, where the title 'Deargruat*h*ar C*h*onaill Cearnaigh' is written at the top of the page. The beginning of DCC here reads 'Dala bhfear nEireann do b*h*adar trí lá 7 teora n-oid*h*c*h*e re haig*h*aidh Congcul*ainn* 7 níor léig…' There is no running title; the first word of each page is given at the bottom of the previous page. The poems are well indented to set them apart from the prose narrative.

     Following LnC, on p. 171, is the scribal colophon, 'Finit. Ar na sgríob*adh* lí Aindrias m*a*c C*r*uitín an céd lá do m*h*í iuilí ann[o] d*om*ini 1727.'

Poems:

p. 129   Atáid son*n* búr n-airm aig*h* (3 qq)

p. 130   Dia búr mbeat*h*a b*eth* as saor (5 qq)

p. 136   A C*h*úc*h*ul*ainn* coim*h*eiríg cuim*h*nig*h* (' rhetoric'; in text)

p. 138   Éirig*h* a C*u* C*u*lainn fion*n*tar cruas ('rhetoric'; in text)

p. 142   Ní bíod*h*b*a* brat (1 q)

           A Liat*h* Mac*h*a, b*udh* headro*m* ('rhetoric'; in text)

p. 145   A fir ná toirmisg ar s*éd* (3 qq)

p. 146   Do toll*adh* mo let*h* do*m* g*h*oin (3 qq)

p. 147   Mo c*h*en duit, a C*h*ú na ccleas ccain (5 qq)

p. 148   Atá C*u* C*u*lainn coisgid*h*t*h*ioc*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)

p. 151   Goirt róm g*h*aot*h* trém c*h*nes cruad*h*ac*h* (15 qq)

p. 157   Gort rom ghaoth ger ro*m* gonad*h* ('rhetoric')

p. 158   Gabh mo charbad ort (3 qq)
          Cú C*h*uloinn b*a* hadm*ar* a ccein (4 qq)
p. 160   Aonmharcach sonn ar an maig*h* (11 qq)
p. 163   Uc*h* a c*h*in*n* ón uc*h* a c*h*in*n* (13 qq)
p. 169   A C*h*onuill, cia hiad na cin*n* (= LnC) (28 qq)

23 M 47 (b) (973) [III]

Note: MS 23 M 47 consists of two MSS that have been bound together in a single volume. Both 23 M 47 (a) and 23 M 47 (b) contain versions of our tale; since they are of different dates and written by different scribes they will be treated as two separate MSS. On p. 175 of 23 M 47 (a) a slip has been inserted reading, '23 M 47. Part I ends p. 175 Part II begins p. 1 where this is now inserted'. Although the pagination in 23 M 27 (b) begins with p. 1 a number of pages have been lost – our text, being the first item here, starts a few pages into BmMM.

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. XXI-XXV), p. 2791.
Date: 1734
Scribe: Aindrias Mac Cruitín
General content of MS: poems; *Aidhe Chloinne Tuirionn*.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
Description: Our text is the first item in this second part of the MS, occupying pp. 1-63. There are a number of pages missing from the beginning of BmMM, the text starting with 'm*ac* Sub*h*altaig*h* do mharbh é. Do c*h*uir Mead*h*b*h* fios ar Earc m*ac* Cairbre 7 táin*ig* Earc dá hion*n*saighe…' The hand is quite distinctive and rather spiky, reminiscent of that of Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin. The MS has been repaired around the edges which has resulted in some loss of text. BmMM finishes on p. 36, DCC starting on p. 37 under a new headline ('Deargruat*h*ar C*h*onaill C*h*earrnaig an*n* so sios') with 'Dála b*h*fear nÉirion*n* .im. do b*h*ád*ar* trí lá et teora n-oidc*h*e…'

The poems have been indented slightly. The running titles 'b*rui*sleach', and from p. 38 onwards 'dergruat*h*ar' have been written at the top of each page; however, on many pages they are lost due to darkening of the outer edges of the MS or the page having been trimmed (?) during binding.

A number of the pages have been bound in the wrong order although the page numbers are in sequence. The correct order of the pages in question should be: 17, 18, 29, 30, 31, 32, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33, etc. The poems below have been listed according to this correct order of the pages.

Poems:
p. 7   A C*h*uc*h*ul*oinn* coimeirig*h* cuim*h*nig*h* búir*eadh*a ('rhetoric')
p. 11   A C*h*ú C*h*uloin*n* coím*h*eirig, fion*n*tar cruas do c*h*omain*n* ('rhetoric')
p. 17   Ní biod*h*b*a* brat, a*cht* is biod*h*b*a* dealg (1 q)
p. 18   A Liat*h* Mac*h*a b*udh* headróm aigiontac*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 32   [A] f*h*ir na toirmisg ar s*éadh* (3 qq)
p. 20   [Do] toll*adh* mo let*h* dom g*h*oin (3 qq)
p. 21   Mo c*h*ean duit, a C*h*ú na ccleas ccain (5 qq)
p. 23   Éirg*h*e, óir ata C*u* C*h*ulainn cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h* cloid*h*im*h*d*h*dearg... ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 28   Goirt rom g*h*aod treím c*h*nes cruad*h*ac*h* (15 qq)
p. 40   [G]oirt róm gaod, gér róm gonad*h* (1 q)
p. 41   Gab*h* mo c*h*arbad ort a Liat*h* (3 qq)
         Cú C*h*ul*oinn* b*udh* hág*h*m*ar* a reím (4 qq)
p. 44   [A]on m*h*arcac*h* son*n* ar an maig*h* (11 qq)

p. 49   Oc*h* a c*h*in*n*, ón, oc*h* a c*h*in*n* (13 qq)
p. 59   A C*h*onuill, cia hiad na cin*n* (= LnC) (28 qq)

23 L 27 (556) [III]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. VI-X), p. 1723.
Date: 1737 (2 October; colophon)
Scribe: Seaán Ó Cinéide
General content of MS: various poems; *Toruigheacht Dhiarmada agus Gráinne, Clann Lir, Cath Maighe Muchruimhe, Eachtara Mhic an Iolair, Achtara Cloinne Righ na hIorraidhe.*
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
Description: The text occupies pp. 128-160, beginning under the title 'Brisleac*h* m*h*or maig*h*e M*h*uirt*h*eim*h*ne an*n* so síos'. The manuscript is stained around the edges, resulting in the loss of some text. The hand is fairly spiky but neat and easily legible. On the top of p. 146 is the (darkened) new headline 'Deargruathar', the text here beginning 'Dala b*h*fe*ar* nÉirion*n* im*orro* do b*h*ad*ar* trí lá 7 teroa n-oid*h*c*h*e re hagh*aidh* [Cú Chulainn agus níor l]éig an éagla doib*h*…'.

From p. 147 the running title changes from 'bruisleac*h*' and 'maig*h*e muirtheimhne' (on every left- and right hand page respectively) to 'deargruat*h*ar' and 'conaill ce*arr*nac*h*'. Poems are slightly indented and each stanza marked by a capital letter. There is a slight mistake in the pagination as this is 143, 144, 144, 145.

Following LnC, on p. 160, is the scribal colophon, 'Gonad i sin Bruisleac*h* mór M*h*uig*h*e Muirt*h*eim*h*ne 7 Dergruat*h*ar C*h*onuill C*h*earrnaig*h* gonuige sin arna sgriob*adh* an .2. la sa mí octab*ar* 1737. Seaan Ó Cinéide.'

Loss of pages appears to have occurred towards the beginning of our text here, as comparison with another MS that seems textually closely related, namely 24 P 6, suggests:
23 L 27, p. 132 bottom = 24 P 6, p. 181 (ca. 5th line from top)
23 L 27, p. 133 top = 24 P 6, p. 287 (ca. 3rd line from top)
The loss of these particular pages here would explain the absence of the two 'rhetorics' 'A Chú Chulainn coimheirigh coimheirigh' and 'Éirigh a Chú Chulainn'.

Poems:
p. 128   Ag soin búr n-ármaib*h* (3 qq)
p. 129   Dia mbur mbetha (5 qq)
[note: pages missing here?]
p. 135   Ni biod*h*ba brat, a*cht* is biod*h*ba dealg (1 q)
          [A Liath Macha budh] headro*m* aigiontac*h*a ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 138   A f*h*ir na toirmisg ar s*ed* (3 qq)
p. 139   Do toll*adh* mo let*h*a don ghoin (3 qq)
          Mo c*h*ean*n* duit, a C*h*ú na ccleas ccain (5 qq)
p. 141   Atá Cu C*u*lainn cosgrac*h* cat*h*b*h*uadac*h*… (alliterative description; in text)
p. 144   Goirt rom tré gaoid trém c*h*nes c*h*ruad*h*ac*h* (15 qq)
p. 147   Goirt róm g*h*aod*h*, gér róm gonad*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 148   Gab*h* mo c*h*arbad ort a Liat*h* (3 qq)
          Cú C*h*ul*ainn* ba hág*h*m*adh* a réim calma (4 qq)
p. 149   Aonmharcach ion*adh ar* an maigh (11 qq)
p. 152   Och a c*h*in*n* ón och a chin*n* (13 qq)
p. 157   A C*h*onuill cia hiad na cinn (= LnC) (28 qq)

12 F 7 (235) [III]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. I-V), p. 582.
Date: 1749-50
Scribe: Uillig a Búrc
General content of MS: *Toruigheacht Dhiarmada agus Gráinne, An Bhruighean Chaorthuinn, Oidheadh Chloinne Uisneach, Eachtra Chléirg na gCroiceann, Ceisniomh inghine Ghoil, Seilg Shléibhe Cuilinn, Oidheadh Chloinne Lir, Feis Tighe Chonáin Chinn tSléibhe, An Tenga Bhithnuadh, Páirlimint Chloinne Tomáis, Bruighean Chéise Coradh, Bruighean Bheag na hAlmhuinne, An Ceithearnach Caolriabhach, Eachtra an Mhadra Mhaoil, Bruighean Eochaidh Bhig Dheirg*, various poems.
Relevant text(s): BmMM
Description: Written in a neat hand, our text begins on p. 200 under the headline 'Brisleac*h* m*h*or M*h*uig*h*e Muirt*h*eim*h*ne an*n* so air na sgriob*h* le Uilliog a B*uir*c' and ends p. 244 with 'agus rrangodar tar Sliabh Fúaid d'ionnsaighe na hEamhna'. (This corresponds to the point where BmMM in e.g. RIA 24 P 6 ends before DCC starts with 'Dala bhfear nEreann…').

There are no running titles but the first word of each page is given at the bottom of the previous page. The poems are slightly indented.

Following our text, at the bottom of p. 244, is the colophon 'FINIS le brisl*ech* M*h*óir M*h*aig*h* M*h*uirt*h*eim*h*ne ar na sgriob*h*ad*h* le uilliog a bourc.' Another scribal signature occurs on p. 208, where the third line from the bottom is filled with the signature 'Alexander Bourke'.
Poems:
p. 201   Atáid sin b*ar* n-armuib*h* (3 qq)
p. 202   Dia mb*ur* *m*bet*h*a s*h*eis*er* saor (5 qq)
p. 210   A C*h*úcalain coim*h*eirge cuimnig*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 214   A C*hu*c*h*lainn [*sic*] éire fion*n*t*ar* c*ru*as ('rhetoric'; in text
p. 221   Ní biodb*a* brat a*cht* is biod*h*b*a* dealg (1 q)
p. 222   A Liat*h*mac*h*a b*udh* héadrom aigion*n*tac*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 227   A f*h*ir na toirmisg ar séd (3 qq)
p. 229   Dá b*h*feasadaois ul*aidh* mo d*h*aláig*h* (= *Do tolladh mo leith…*) (1½ qq)
p. 230   Mo c*h*en*n* duit a C*h*ú na ccleas cain (5 qq)
p. 230   Eirge óir atá C*u* C*ulainn* coisgid*h*t*h*eac*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h*... (alliterative description; in text)
p. 239   Goirt rom g*h*aot*h* trem... (13 qq)

24 B 26 (242) [VI]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. I-V), p. 603.
Date: 1760-63
Scribe: Uilliam Ó Cléire
General content of MS: *Beatha St. Margréad, Iollann Airmdhearg Mac Rígh Gréag, Eachtra Lomnachtáin Sleibhe Riffi, Tóruigheacht tShaidhbhe Inghion Eoghain Óig, Parliameint na mBan, Tóruígheacht An Ghiolla Deacair*; miscellaneous verses and poems, partly with prose introductions.
Relevant text(s): LnC (35 qq)
Description: LnC begins at the top of p. 61 under the headline 'Laoide na ccean*n* son*n*'. The writing is neat and the division into stanzas well indicated. Following the final stanza of LnC on p. 63 is written, about halfway through the page, 'Ag sin agallam*h* Em*h*ir ing*h*ion Org*h*al*aigh* et C*on*all Cearnach.' There is no scribal signature or date.

Poems:

p. 61   Sgéula Chongculoinn ós árd (35 qq)

23 C 26 (c) (765) [II]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. XVI-XX), p. 2355.
Date: 1761 (LnC: 18th September; colophon)
Scribe: Seaghán Ó Conaill
General content of MS: various poems; our text is the only prose item.
Relevant text(s): LnC (35 qq), BmMM, DCC
Description: LnC here actually precedes the prose narrative. The poem begins on p. 245. The bottom half of this page is almost entirely lost – possibly eaten away by rodents – thus a portion of the poem on either side of this page is missing; however, enough remains to reconstruct the damaged stanzas. After the poem finishes, on p. 248, there is the colophon, '*Ar* na sgriob*h*a le Seagan Ó Conaill an se*acht*m*h*ad lá déag do September an*n* sa *m*bliain 1761 le luas lamh et *ar* droic*h* g*h*leas.'

BmMM begins on p. 249 under the headline 'Breisleach Muig*h*e Muirt*h*eim*h*ne'. The running titles 'Breisleach' (on every left-hand page) and 'M*h*uig*h*e Mu*ir*theim*h*ne' (on every right-hand page) are given on every page. DCC starts on p. 282 under the new headline 'Deargruat*h*ar C*h*onuill C*h*earna at f*h*eraib*h* Eirion*n* ag diog*h*ailt b*h*áis C*h*oinc*h*uloin*n* ort*h*a'; the running titles change accordingly to 'De*ar*gruat*har*' and 'C*h*onaill C*h*earna'. Following the poem 'Uc*h* a c*h*in*n*' on p. 292 there are 9 further lines of text, which then breaks off at the bottom of the page. This is also the last page of the MS.

The first word of each page is given at the bottom of the previous page. The poems are indented and the first letter of each stanza slightly enlarged.

There appears to be a page missing as can be seen from the pagination, which jumps from 272 to 275; evidence for this missing page is further supported by the fact that the keyword for the next page on p. 272 is 'm*h*ongac*h*' while the first word on the next page, i.e. p. 275, is 'fiu'. It is on these missing pages that we would expect the section 'Ata Cú Chulainn cosgarthach, cathbhúadhach…'

Poems:

p. 245   Sgeal*a* [Chu Chulainn os aird] (= LnC) (35 qq)
p. 250   Anmona b*h*ur sleag*h* re c*ur* ccat*h* (1 q)
p. 257   A C*h*um*h* [*sic*] C*h*uloin*n* coim*h*éirig ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 258   Gair na sluad*h* ui*m* t*h*ulaig*h*… (13 qq)
p. 265   Dob anam*h* leatsa sin, a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a ('rhetoric'; in text)
          A Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a me*ar* ad*h*b*h*al (= *Niorsad óglach gus aniugh*) (1 q)
p. 267   A D*h*eig*h*t*h*in is fas do bhallán (4 qq)
p. 271   Mairg s*h*irios an aisge (= *Mo cheann duit a Chú*) (1 q)
[note: pp. 273-274 missing]
p. 277   Éirig*h* a Laoig*h* sa m*h*or sgeal (= *Goirt rom ghaoth trem chneas…*) (8 qq)
p. 283   Guirt rom gaot*h*, gér ro*m* goin*adh* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 285   Cuc*h*uloin b*udh* ha*mh*ra an ghein (4 qq)
p. 287   Sloin*n* do c*h*airdion doll*adh* (= *Aon mharcach sonn…*) (6 qq)
p. 292   Uc*h* a c*h*inn on (8 qq)

3 B 43 (760) [II]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. XVI-XX), p. 2346.
Date: ?1765
Scribe: ?Diarmuid Ó Faoláin
General content of MS: *Oileamhuinn Chúchuluinn, Oidheadh Chonnlaoich mic Cúchuluinn, Comrac Ferdiad agus Conchulainn, Aidheadh Clainne Lir,* various scribbles and miscellaneous lines.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC
Description: BmMM begins on p. 29 under the heading 'Breisleac*h* Muig*h*e Mui*rth*eimne nó Oid*h*ead*h* Congculoin*n* 7c', written in a neat clear hand. The text is stained around the edges throughout, resulting in some loss of text. There are no running titles, and while the poems are generally indented the lines (or stanzas) of the poems are not very clearly distinguished or marked as they are in some MSS. The bottom third of p. 59 is blank, as is p. 60, except for two lines of scribbles at the top. The top of p. 61 bears the new heading 'Dearg Ruathar Chonuill C*h*earn*n*a air f*h*earuib*h* Eirion an ndiogailt b*h*ais C*h*uc*h*uluin'. The text finishes on p. 78 where it is followed, on the bottom third of the page, by a sketch of two men.

No date or scribal signature are given at any point in our text; the name 'Diarmuid Ó Faoláin' and the place and date 'Lismore, 1765' are given in items preceding and following ours.

Poems:
p. 30   Anomna b*h*ur sleagha re cur c*hath*a (1 q)
p. 37   A C*hu* C*u*lainn co*mh*e*ir*g ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 38   Gan na sluad*h* uim t*h*ulaid*h* Team*h*rad*h* (13 qq)
p. 44   Dob anam*h* letsa, a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a ('rhetoric'; in text)
            A Liath Mach m*h*or ad*hb h*al (= *Niorsad óglach gus aniugh*) (1 q)
p. 47   A D*h*eig*hth*in is fas dod b*h*allan (4 qq)
p. 50   [Mairg] sior*us* an aisge (= *Mo cheann duit a Chú*) (1 q)
p. 52   Ata C*u* C*h*ulainn cosgart*hac h* cat*hbh*uad*h*ac*h*… (alliterative description; in text)
p. 55   Eirge a Laog*h* fa mor sgeal (= *Goirt rom ghaoth trem chneas…*) (8 qq)
p. 62   [Goirt rom ghaoth] gear róm goin*adh* ('rhetoric'; mostly lost due to damage to MS)
p. 64   [Cú Chulainn] bud*h* heam*h*ra an g*h*ein (4 qq)
p. 66   [Sloinn]n*n* do c*air d*us dul*adh* t*h*ean*n* (= *Aon mharcach sonn…*) (6 qq)
p. 70   Uc*h* a c*h*in*n* on uc*h* a c*h*in*n* (8 qq)
p. 75   Cuillean*n* breag*h* o B*h*uac*h* mead (2 qq)

23 N 14 (489) [VI]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. XI-XV), p. 1352.
Date: 1766 (19th February; colophon)
Scribe: Ribeárd Breatnach
General content of MS: *Oidheadh Connlaoich mhic Chon Culoinn, Ceisniobh inighine Ghuil Átha Ló, Acallam na Senórach* (summary of the framework), 'Louvain Irish Grammar', a great number of (Ossianic) poems, miscellaneous scraps, lists, quatrains, scribal notes, some English material.
Relevant text(s): LnC (35 qq)
Description: The MS has a version of LnC with 35 qq, occupying pp. 36-39. There is no introduction to the poem, just the headline 'Laoid*h*e na ccean*n* an*n* so síos'. The stanzas of the poem are numbered. Following the poem is the scribal colophon 'Ag sin agallam*h* Iob*h*ar le Con*a*ll Cé*arr*nac*h ar* na d*h*roc*h* sg*r*iob*h*ad*h* le Ribé*ar*d Breat*h*nac*h ar* an mBaile mBrec an t*an*

sin san mí Fab*h*ra an 9m*h*ad*h* lá déag 1766.' The hand is very clear and there is no loss of text due to damage to the manuscript.

Poems:

p. 36   Sgéal Chongchulainn ós áird (35 qq)

23 L 24 (29) [VI]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. I-V), p. 84.

Date: 1766-69

Scribe: Diarmuid Ó Mulchaoinne

General content of MS: *An Teanga Bhithnua, Bruidhean Chaorthainn, Fís Mherlino, Eachtra mhic na Míochomhairle, Eachtra Thaidhg Dhuibh Í Chróinín, Cath Fionntrágha, Beatha Phádraig, Tuarasgabháil ar Phurgadóir Phádraig;* a great number of poems. The MS was written for Aindrias Mac Mathghamhna.

Relevant text(s): LnC (28 qq)

Description: LnC here has 28 qq although of stanza 6 only the first two lines are given. The poem begins on p. 285 of this MS and ends on p. 288. Before each stanza the speaker is identified: either *an bean ag labhairt* ('the woman speaks') or *Conuill Cearnach ag labhairt* ('Conall Cernach speaks').

Poems:

p. 285   A C*h*on*n*uill, cía híad na cinn (28 qq)

23 C 22 (961) [II]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. XXI-XXV), p. 2758.

Date: 1767

Scribe: Peadar Ó Féichín (writing for Séaghan Bhaillis / de Bhailise)

General content of MS: *Oileamhuin Chúchullainn, Oidheadh Chonnlaoich mic Cúchuluinn, Comhrac Cuchuluinn agus Firdiaigh, Oigheadh Chlainne Tuireann.*

Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq)

Description: The MS is in good condition, and although it is ever so slightly stained around the edges this has no bearing on the legibility of the text. The text is well spaced out, with only 14-16 lines per page, and written in a very clear, neat hand.

BmMM starts on p. 107, which bears the headline 'Breisleac*h* M*h*uig*h*e M*h*uirtheimne'. The title 'An Breisleach' is written on the top of each page. BmMM ends on p. 174, here we also find the colophon 'Sin crít*h*, agus deire, air mo sgéal mas fior na deirid*h* gur breg oid*h*ead*h* Cúchuluinn an laoch óir na sgriob*h*adh air buile le Fane.' On p. 175, under a new and elaborately decorated headline ('Deargruathar Con*n*uill Cearnnuid air f*h*earaib*h* Eireann aig diog*h*ailt*h* b*h*ais C*h*úc*h*uluin*n*') DCC begins; the running title changes to 'Deargruathar' (at the top of each left-hand page) and 'Chonuill' (at the top of each right-hand page).

The prose narrative ends on p. 207 with the words '…agus aig se am d*h*íagh laoi na cceann a mog*h* agallam*h* idir Iob*h*ar agus Con*n*all C*h*ear*n*nach', which is followed on p. 208, after the introductory statement 'Aig se Laoid*h*e na ccein*n* idir Con*n*all C*h*eárn*n*ach d'éis a Deargrúat*h*air air f*h*earaib*h* Eirean*n* air mod agallam*h* agus Iob*h*ar' by LnC. After the poem ends, on p. 210, is written: 'Aig sin agad, a S*h*éag*h*ain do B*h*ailese, Laoid*h*e na cCéan*n* ag leanam*h*ain an De*a*rgrúat*h*air m*a*r ar choir a beith. Gid*h*ead*h* d*a*r *á*r mbréit*h*ir mór casad*h* liom roim*h*e se ríam*h* í: gur s*h*oláras duitse í. 7 do d*h*éan tuille nác*h* léir duit'.

Throughout the text the poems are clearly marked. The first word of each page is given at the bottom of the previous page.

Poems:

p. 109   Anmana b*h*ur sleag*h*a le cur cath (1 q)

p. 124   A C*h*úc*h*uluinn coim*h*eirg*h*e ('rhetoric'; in text)

p. 125   Gair na sluad*h* um tulaid*h* (13 qq)

p. 137   Dob anam*h* leatsa san, a Liat*h* M*h*achad*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)

p. 138   A Líat*h* M*h*achadh m*h*orad*h*b*h*al (= *Niorsad óglach gus aniugh*) (1 q)

p. 143   A D*h*eig*h*t*h*in is fas do b*h*ullan (4 qq)

p. 150   Mairg sireas an aisgead*h* (= *Mo cheann duit a Chú*) (1 q)

p. 153   Atá Cúc*h*uluinn cosgart*h*ach, cat*h*b*h*úad*h*ach… (alliterative description; in text)

p. 160   Eirg*h*e a Laoig*h* fa mór sgéal (= *Goirt rom ghaoth trem chnes…*) (8 qq)

p. 176   Guirt róm g*h*aot*h* géar róm goinead*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)

p. 179   Cúc*h*uluinn bud*h* heam*h*na an *gh*ein (4 qq)

p. 182   Sloinn do c*air*deas dailg tean*n* (= *Aon mharcach sonn…*) (6 qq)

p. 190   Uc*h* a ccin*n* ón uc*h* a chin*n* (8 qq)

p. 201   Cuillean*n* Bréag*h* ó B*h*úac*h* méd*h*a (2 qq)

p. 208   Sgeil C*h*úc*h*uluinn os árd (= LnC) (35 qq)

24 B 16 (948) [II]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. XXI-XXV), p. 2743.

Date: 1767-68

Scribe: ?Ríghrí mac Raghnaill

General content of MS: *Toruigheacht an Ghiolla Deachair 7 an Capuill*, *Cath Chnoca*, various poems, *Sgéal an Chairte Sgarloide*, *Eachtra an Mhadra Mhaoil*, *Eachtra Cléirig na gCroicionn*, *Oileamhuin Cuchulin*.

Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC

Description: Our text is written in a neat but quite small hand, both ink and paper have browned with age and the pages are stained throughout. BmMM begins on p. 222 under the headline 'Brisl*each* Muig*h*e Muirt*h*emne'. There is no running title, and BmMM and DCC merge without a separate headline; however, at the bottom of p. 248, namely the page that has the 'rhetoric' *Goirt rom ghaoth…,* which is followed by 'Gab*h*t*h*ar m'eich 7 in*n*eallt*air* mo c*h*arb*h*uit…', the scribe has written (De*ar*gruat*hair* Conuil Ce*ar*nac*h*).

Page numbers are only given on every left-hand page, in the top corner. From p. 243 onwards the condition of the MS deteriorates and the pages are so stained and frayed around the edges that portions of the text are lost, despite attempts to repair the MS with fine mesh and by enforcing the edges with cardboard. It appears that there are a few pages missing: p. 242 (from p. 241 onwards the page numbering is lost due to damage to the MS) corresponds to RIA 3 B 43, p. 56 bottom, the next page in our MS however, corresponds to 3 B 43 p. 63 (9th line from bottom), thus suggesting that 2-3 pages from 24 B 16 are missing (including the page where one would expect the 'rhetoric' *Goirt rom ghaoth géar rom gonadh*).

The last pages (pp. 251-54) of this MS are written in a different hand which, according to the *RIA Cat.*, 'has not been identified'. These last pages are entitled 'Oileamuin Cuculuinn', which would make p. 250 the last page of DCC, the final line here reading '*air* fir nE*ir*enn cia da m*o* córa Cu C*h*ulainn do d*h*ítc*h*en*n*adh a Lug*h*aidh air…'. There is no colophon to our text (if there was it is now lost); scribe, date and place of writing are given in *RIA Cat.* as Ríghrí Mac Raghnaill at *Baile an Chaisleáin an Róistig* [= Castletownroche, Co.Cork] between 1767-68.

Poems:

p. 223   Anman*n*a *bh*ur sled re cur ccat*h* (1 q)

p. 228   A C*h*u C*h*ula*inn* coi*mh*eirig ('rhetoric'; in text)
         Gair na sluad*h* u*m* t*h*uluig Tem*h*rach (13 qq)

p. 233   Dob an*n*am*h* letsa sin, a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a ('rhetoric'; in text)
         A Leit*h* M*h*ac*h*a m*h*erad*h*b*h*uil (= *Niorsad óglach gus aniugh*) (1 q)

p. 235   A D*h*eit*h*c*h*in is fas do b*h*allán (4 qq)

p. 238   Mairg s*h*ires an aisgid*h* (= *Mo cheann duit a Chú*) (1 q)

p. 239   Atá C*u* C*h*ula*inn* cosg*r*ach cat*h*b*h*uad*ach*... (alliterative description; in text)

p. 241   Eirig*h* a Laoig*h* fá mór sgél (= *Goirt rom ghaoth trem chneas…*) (8 qq)

[note: pages missing?]

p. 2??   Cú C*h*uluin*n* ba ham*h*ra an g*h*in (4 qq)

p. 2??   Sloi*n*n do c*h*air*d*es doil*igh* tenn (= *Aon mharcach sonn…*) (6 qq)

24 B 22 (238) [V]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. I-V), p. 597.

Date: c. 1772

Scribe: Tomás Ruiséal

General content of MS: *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis*, *Ceasacht Inghine Guile*, a small number of poems, *An Ceithreannach Caolriabhach*, *Feis Tighe Chanáin Chinntshleibhe*, *Eachtra Bhodaig an Chóta Lachtna*, *Caith Chnuca*, *Eachtra Coinn Láidir mic Bacaigh Bhinne Gulban*.

Relevant text(s): DCC

Description: The text begins on p. 181 under the headline 'Deargruath*air* Conuill C*ea*rnach *air* fe*r*aib*h* nE*irenn* ag díogailt báis C*h*ongculainn ort*h*a, air na m*h*arb*adh* a Breisle Múig*h*e Múi*rt*h*eim*h*ne.' It is very faint as both the ink and pages have browned with age, especially around the bottom outer edges. There are no running titles. DCC begins, on p. 181, with 'Imt*h*usa Conuill C*ea*rrna *air* tte*acht* ón e*acht*ra sin do fu*air* sg*eal*a   báis nó marb*h*t*h*a Congcullain ase ró d'eilg*h*earac*h* do g*h*ab*h*ad*h* a*n* sg*eal* u[ ]aige, 7 ase adb*er*t m'eac*h* d*h*am*h*, *air* sé, 7 in*n*iol*t*ar mo c*ar*bad dam go ndeac*h*uin dá féac*h*uin cá lion do bhí ag m*h*arbug*h* mo d*h*alta d'fe*a*raibh nE*iri*onn a Muig*h*e Mu*irt*heim*h*ne, do g*h*ab*h*ad*h* a eic*h* do .i. an De*ar*gd*ruch*tac*h* 7 an Coinc*h*enn C*h*ronf*h*ada…'

     This version of DCC is interesting in that it does not contain any poetry whatsoever. It finishes, on p. 194 (a new item starting on p. 195), with the colophon, 'gona é sin D*er*gruat*h*ar C*h*on*a*ll C*h*e*a*rna m*a*c Amergin, 7 bás Lúg*h*aidh m*a*c Conraoi, E*a*rc m*a*c Cairb*r*e Clain*n*e Cailitín, 7 Máine m*a*c Rígh Cono*cht*, 7 umad cun*n*e [   ] ag [   ] *air* na sgríob*h* le Tomas Ruiséal 7 [ ] leiag*ht*heir grad*h*ach guibhe liom c*hum* na beat*h* [ ] áil dam anam.

Poems:

This version of our text does not contain any poetry!

23 H 16 (115) [III]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. I-V), p. 340.
Date: 3 November 1779 (BmMM, colophon), 8 December 1779 (DCC, colophon)
Scribe: Seaghán Ó Domhnaill
General content of MS: *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*, *Oidheadh Chloinne Uisneach*, *Cath Mhaighe Léana*, *Cath Mhoighe Mochruimhe*.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
Description: Our text begins on p. 238 under the headline 'Breisle mór Moig*he* Muirt*h*eim*h*ne sonn', this also being the running title up until p. 251 (incl.). The hand is very neat and fairly small. The poems are well indented to distinguish them from the prose narrative. On p. 251, following the *rosg* 'Gort róm g*h*aot*h*…' which concludes BmMM here, is the colophon 'Gurab é sin Breisle mór M*h*uig*he* Muirtheim*h*ne gonuige sin et tuitim Cuc*h*uloinn c*h*aom*h*aluin*n* c*h*oingleacac*h* .i. an te*ar*ra laoc*h* dob f*h*éarr goil 7 gaisge. cleasa luit*h* 7 lam*h*ac*h* oinec*h* et eagnam*h* san taob*h* sin don dom*h*an ion*n*a c*h*óm*h*aimsin. I*ar* na sgriob*h*ab*h* le Seag*h*an ó Dom*h*ail an te*ar*a la d*on* mid*he* med*h*onac*h* don g*h*eim*h*re aois xpt an tan sin mile sea*ch*t cced agus naoi *m*bliagna deg agus tri fit*hch*id agus bean*n*os [*sic*] dé re hanam an sgrib*h*ín eora 1779'.

DCC begins on p. 252 under the headline ('Deargruat*h*ar Chon*n*aill C*h*earrnacc *air* f*h*ea*r*uib*h* eirion*n* ag diog*h*ailt bais C*h*ongculoinn orro') with '*Iomthusa* Con*n*aill Céarrna t*ar* éis te*ch*t on ea*ch*tra sin is ró d*h*oilig*h*esach do b*h*i sé t*ar* éis báis no m*ar*b*h*t*h*a C*h*ong*h*cul*a*inn [*sic*] et ase adub*ai*rt gab*h*t*h*ar mo eac*h*ra…'. The running title from this page onwards until the end of our text changes to 'De*ar*gruat*h*ear C*h*on*n*aill C*h*ea*r*rnaicc'. LnC, beginning on p. 260, has 28 stanzas here, and is followed on p. 261 by the colophon, 'i*ar* na sgriob*h*ad*h* le Seag*h*an O Dom*h*nail an t-o*ch*tmad*h* lá don míosa December, aois xpt 1779, ait*ch*im do g*h*uid*h*e a leag*h*t*h*air'.

Poems:

p. 238	Ataid sin b*h*ur n-*ar*maib*h* aig*h* (3 qq)
	Dia b*h*ur b*eath*a a seis*ar* saor (5 qq)
p. 241	A C*h*uc*h*ul*a*inn coim*h*eirig ag*us* cuim*h*nig ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 243	Eig*h*rig a C*h*uc*h*uloin*n* et cosain do c*h*umain*n* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 244	Ni biod*hb*h*a brat acht is biod*hb*h*a dealg (1 q)
	A Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a b*udh* héadrom aigiontac*h* tu ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 245	A f*h*ir na tormuisg ar séd (3 qq)
p. 246	Do tollad*h* mo leat*h* dam goin (3 qq)
	Mo c*h*ean*n* duit, a Cu na ccleas (5 qq)
p. 247	Eirg*h*e, óir atá Cuc*h*uloin*n* coisgit*h*ec*h* cat*hb*h*uad*h*ac*h*… (alliterative description; in text)
p. 248	Gort róm g*h*aot*h* dréam cneas cread*h*ac*h* (15 qq)
p. 251	Gort rom g*h*aot*h* gear rom gonad*h* ('rhetoric')
p. 252	Gaib*h* mo c*h*ar*bad ort, a Liath (3 qq)
	Cúc*h*uloinn b*udh* hagm*h*ar a ccein (4 qq)
p. 253	Aon m*h*arcac*h* son*n* *air* an muig*h*e (11 qq)
p. 255	Oc*h* a chin on oc*h* a chin (13 qq)
p. 260	A C*h*on*n*aill, cia hiad na cin*n* (= LnC) (28 qq)

23 L 13 (787) [VI]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. XVI-XX), p. 2484.
Date: 1782
Scribe: Peadar Ó Conaill
General content of MS: poetry, some in English (e.g. a poem on p. 124). The hands used in this MS also change between *corr litir* and joint-up cursive, sometimes both occurring on the same page. The date 1782 is given on p. 88.
Relevant text(s): LnC (28 qq)
Description: The writing here is quite small and slightly faded away, especially around the edges which are generally frayed. LnC starts on p. 17, where it is preceded by the introductory paragraph 'Agallam*h* do t*h*a*rl*aig*h* eidir bean [crossed out, underneath is written 'mnai'] C*h*on gColain*n* 7 Conall C*h*ernach air ttab*r*ad*h* cen*n* coraid*h* Érin*n* leis air g*h*ad do s*h*asam*h* na mna tre C*h*oin cColain*n* do ma*r*b*h* a bfeall, ad d*h*iaig*h* m*ar* leanaisi 7 dearb*h* liom an te teigf*edh* dearg ruat*har* Conall go b*h*fag*h*ag*h* d*h*em*h*un an dana ion*n*.' LnC here has 28 qq, although of the fifth stanza only the first two lines are given, as is the case in RIA 23 L 24. The scribe writes 'E' and 'C' next to each stanza to indicate who is speaking.
Poems:
p. 17   A C*h*onaill, cia hiad na cin*n* (27 qq)

24 P 6 (94) [III]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. I-V), p. 277.
Date: 1783
Scribe: John MacNamara
General content of MS: *Cath Fionntrágha*, *Oighidh Chloinne Lir*, *Bas an macaoimh moir mhic Ríogh na Easbainne*, *Faghail Chraoibhe Cormuic*, *Cath Mhuidhe Mucruime*, *Caithréim Ceallacháin Caisil*, *Tochmhairc Fhearbhlaidhe*, *Eachtra Lomnochtáin*, *Bruighean Bheag na hAlmhuine*, *Ionnsaighe Mhuighe Léana*, 'John Connell's Elegy', various stanzas, poems and colophons.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (24 qq)
Description: The text runs from p. 274 (numbering on the bottom of the page) to p. 320, where it finishes – seemingly unfinished – with stanza 24 of LnC. BmMM ends on p. 304; the date 1783 is given here. DCC begins on p. 305 under a new heading, with the date '1784'. The writing is fairly difficult to read. Many of the poems are not marked as such and just occur as part of the prose narrative, often there is no indication of the division into stanzas. The first word of each page is given at the bottom of the previous page.
Poems:
p. 275   Aig sin b*h*ur n-*ar*maib*h* a c*h*lan*n*a Cailitin c*h*aig (3 qq)
p. 276   Dia b*h*ur mbeat*h*a a seisior s*h*aor (1 q)
p. 282   A C*h*uc*h*ul*ainn* com*h*irig cuim*h*ngi ('rhetoric')
p. 285   A C*h*uc*h*ulainn com*h*irig g*an* fiort*ar* c*h*ruas ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 290   N*an*a brat 7 is biod*h*b*h*a derg (1 q)
p. 291   A Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a b*udh* head*r*om aigio*nn*t*ach* tu ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 294   A f*ir* na to*ir*misg *ar* fed*h* (3 qq)
p. 295   Do t*h*oll*adh* m*o* let*h* ón (2½ qq)
p. 296   Mo ch*enn* duit a Chú na ccles ccai*n* (5 qq)
p. 297   Atá Cuc*h*ulainn cosg*r*ac*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h*… (alliterative description; in text)
p. 301   Go*ir*t rem g*h*aod*h* t*r*eam c*h*nes c*r*uad*h*ac*h* (15 qq)

p. 306   Gu*ir*t ró*m* gaoit*h* et ro goinid*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 307   Gaib*h* m*o* c*h*arbad ort a Liat*h* (3 qq)
p. 308   B*udh* had*h*b*h*ar a c*h*enn (1 q; in text)
p. 309   An t-aon m*har*cac*h* sin *ar* an maid*h*e (11 qq)
p. 311   Oc*h* a c*h*in*n* on oc*h* a c*h*inn (13 qq)
p. 318   A C*h*onaill, cia hiad na cinn (= LnC) (24 qq)

23 G 20 (211) [VI]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. I-V), p. 541.
Date: 1788 (15 May; colophon)
Scribe: Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin
General Content of MS: *Beatha Phádraig, Caithréim Cheallacháin Caisil, Cath Muighe Mucruimhe, Cath Cnuca, Cath Chluana Tairbh, Feis Tighe Chonáin Chinn tShléibhe, Aoidhe Chlainne Lir, Eachtra Léithín;* a large number of miscellaneous poetry, verses and riddles.
Relevant text(s): LnC (35 qq)
Description: Written in Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin's spiky hand, LnC here occupies p. 341 (where it starts in the middle of the page under the headline 'Laoi na ccean*n* son*n*') to p. 343. Each stanza is marked by a capital letter and each second line is slightly indented. At the bottom of p. 343 is the colophon (what is given in bold letters here appears to have been added by the scribe in later years):

Ag*h*allam*h* iob*h*air le Conall Cearnac*h*
tárla *dam*sa c*ear*t le coi*n* an suad*h* a*n* sáoi g*an* eagcóir
Mícheál mioc*hair* fíor a*n* f*ear*. nár s*h*iolc*hu*ir díob*h*ail deireach
May 15th 1788. Ballyndorra **in 22ᵈ year of my age**
Ai*n*m Mich*ea*l o' Longone   **requiscat 1821**
                                    1788
                                        33 yˢ ago

Poems:
p. 341   Sgéal C*hú*c*hu*luinn ós ard (35 qq)

23 M 47 (a) (973) [III]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. XXI-XXV), p. 2791.
Date: 1795
Scribe: Séamus Ó Caoluidhe
General content of MS: poems, *Caith Mhuighe Mochruime, Ionnsuidhe Muighe Léana.*
Relevant text(s): DCC, LnC (28 qq)
Description: Our text is written in a clear and neat rounded hand, occupying pp. 104-121. However, the MS has darkened with age and the pages are thin enough for the writing from the reverse side of each side to shine through. There is no damage to the edges.

The running title 'Deargruat*har*' (on every left-hand page) and 'C*h*onuill c*h*éarnaig*h*' (on every right-hand page) is given throughout the text, and the first word of each page is given at the bottom of the previous one. The poems are all well indented.

Our text starts on p. 104 with the words, 'Dala b*h*fear nÉirion*n* .im. do b*h*ád*ar* trí lá et teor*a* noid*hch*e re haigh*idh*…'. The text ends on p. 121, following LnC, where the date 'aois an tig*hear*na an to (?) 1795' is given, and is followed immediately by another text under the headline 'Tea*ch*t C*h*onlaoic*h* m*a*c Congcul*ainn* go héirin*n*'.

The first page of this MS is in fact p. 102, thus allowing for the possibility that BmMM was once here but has now been lost. Pp. 102-3, preceding our text, are occupied by a poem of 99 lines. At the top of p. 102 is the scribal signature 'Aindrias Mac Cruitinn', i.e. the scribe of 23 M 47 (b); however, this appears to be the hand of the scribe of 23 M 47 (a) rather than Mac Cruitín's own, distinctively spiky, hand!

Poems:

p. 106   Goirt róim g*h*aod gér rom g*h*onad*h* ('rhetoric')

p. 107   Gaib*h* mo c*h*arbad ort a Líat*h* (3 qq)

          Cuc*h*ulainn b*udh* hág*h*m*ar* a réim (4 qq)

p. 109   Aon m*har*cac*h* son*n air* an maig*h* (11 qq)

p. 112   Oc*h* a c*h*inn ón oc*h* a c*h*inn (13 qq)

p. 119   A Conuill cá híad na cin*n* (= LnC) (28 qq)

23 G 21 (917) [I]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. XXI-XXV), p. 2645.

Date: 1796 (29ᵗʰ February; colophon)

Scribe: Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin

General content of MS: *Toruigheacht an Ghiolla Dheacair*, *An Bhruighean Caorthainn*, *Toroigheacht Dharmada ig Grainne*, *Bruighean Chéise Coradh*, *Eachtra Thorilibh mic Starainn 's a triur mac*, *Bás mhic Ríogh na hEaspáinne*, *Cath Fionntrágha*, *Oileamhúin Chúchuluinn*, *Oidheadha Chonnlaoicc mic Cuchuloinn*, *Cómhrac Firdia mic Dubháin is Chúchuloinn*, *Oidheadha Chlainne Uisnicc*; a great number of poems, some lists and miscellaneous material.

Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq)

Description: In the index of this MS, BmMM, DCC and LnC are all listed as separate items. Our text is the first in this MS, occupying pp. 1-49. These pages in this MS are slightly stained and quite dark but the text is legible throughout. Although the text is written in *corr litir*, the hand is rather spiky and gives the impression that the scribe is used to writing in secretary hand. BmMM begins under the headline 'Brisleach m*h*ór M*h*uig*h*e M*h*uirt*h*eim*h*ne no óig*h*e C*h*uc*h*uluin*n* an*n* so'. The poems are indented and marked by having the first letters of each stanza in capitals. The first word of each page is given at the bottom of the previous page. On p. 31, about a third into the page is the title 'Dearg Ruat*har* C*h*onaill C*h*earn*n*aicc *ar* f*h*earaib*h* nEir*enn* ag díogailt b*h*ais *Chon Cu*luin*n* ort*h*a'. What often marks the beginning of DCC, however, is here found on p. 28 already: 'Dala bf*er* néirion*n* do b*h*iod*ar* go c*enn* tri lá 7 tri hoid*hch*e…'

LnC starts on p. 46 under the headline 'Laoi na ccean*n* son*n*'. After it finishes, on p. 49 is the colophon, 'Gona bíad san B*r*uisl*each* m*h*ór M*h*uig*h*e M*ur*t*h*eim*h*ne D*er*gruat*har* C*h*onaill C*h*err*n*aigh 7 Laoi na ccean*n* .i. n*o* agall*amh* C*h*onaill is Eim*h*ir b*udh* C*h*uc*h*uloinn go nuige sin. I*ar* na ngrap*h*ad*h* le luad*h*as láim*h*e re tog*h*a d*r*oic*h* p*h*ein*n* le Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin c*h*uim usaide féin a ttig*h* S*h*ialb*h*earc*air* Úi C*h*eallin *ar* an In*n*se Liat*h* láim*h* Cnoc a G*h*rianáin a Múrsgráoid*h*e. Febʸ 29ᵗʰ 1796.' This is followed by the prayer 'Biod*h* a D*h*ia a…t*h*air néam*hd*la*h*. a m*h*en*n*ma a mbeal g*ac*h* nduine hainim re saog*a*l na saogal. Dá naom*h*ad*h air* f*edh* na cruin*n*e. Amen.'

There is an error in pagination as the pages are numbered 42, 43, 45, omitting p. 44.

Poems:

p. 2   Anmeac*h*a b*h*ur sl*edh*a re c*r*u cat*h* (2 qq)

p. 3   Dia b*h*ur *m*beat*h*a a seisior saor (7 qq)

p. 9   A C*h*uc*h*ulainn coim*h*eirge ('rhetoric'; in text)

p. 10   Gair na sluag*h* ui*m* t*h*ulaicc (5 qq)

p. 15   B*udh* ro an*n*am leatsa a Liat*hm*hac*h*a an mearugh*adh* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 20   Do thollad*h* m*o t*haob*h* lib*h*se (3 qq)
p. 21   Mairg iaras an aisge (= *Mo cheann duit a Chú*) (1 q)
         Atá *Cuchulainn* cosgarad*h* cat*hbh*uad*h*ac*h*… (alliterative description; in text)
p. 24   Beir mo b*h*ean*no*c*h*t leat a Laoig*h* (= *Goirt rom ghaoth trem…*) (6 qq)
p. 31   Goirt roim g*h*aot*h* g*h*eir am g*h*onad*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 32   Cuc*h*ul*ainn* b*a* ham*h*ra an g*h*ein (4 qq)
p. 34   Aon m*h*arcac*h* a*r* an maig*h* (9 qq)
p. 37   Cean*n* C*h*oingcul*oinn* a tTeam*hr*aig*h* (1 q)
p. 38   Uc*h* a chéi*n* ón uc*h* a chín*n* (8 qq)
p. 43   Ní h*eadh* na cairde rom char (3 qq)
p. 46   Sgeal C*hú*c*h*ulainn ós ard (= LnC) (35 qq)

23 P 13 (689) [IV/b-3]

Reference: *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. XVI-XX), p. 2114
Date: 18th century
Scribe: ?
General content of MS: *An Leabhar Muimneach*, *Cath Chluain Tarbh*, *Leabhar na gCeart*.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (24 qq)
Description: Written in a very clear hand, the text occupies pp. 111-142. It begins on p. 111 with, 'Ag seoh am dhiaig*h* oig*h*id*h* C*h*ongculloin .i. riogaisg*edh*aibh Eirion*n*, do marb*h*ag tre draoid*h*ac*h*t et gin*n*tle*ch*t c*h*lain*n*e Cailitin sam Bruislig m*h*ór Maig*h*e Muirt*h*eim*h*ne et Dergruat*h*ar C*h*onuill C*h*earrnuig*h* riog*h*laoc*h* Eirionn, a ndiogail báis a d*h*alta et a c*h*ara coim*h*d*h*ileas .i. Cúc*h*ollan*n* m*a*c Sub*h*altuig 7c.' The poems are indented, at times the speaker of a verse is indicated. The text is well spaced out and divided into many paragraphs which in turn are marked by capital letters, some of which are decorated. The running title 'An Bruisleac*h* m*hó*r' on each left-hand side and 'Maig*h*e Muirt*h*eim*h*ne' on each right-hand side changes to 'Deargruat*h*ar' / 'C*h*onaill C*h*earrna' on p. 135. LnC begins on p. 141 and has 24 qq, but 'A' written at the bottom of p. 142 – the last page of this MS – suggests that page(s) have been lost. The division of poems into stanzas is sometimes hard to establish.

No scribal signature or date is found in the manuscript. The *RIA Cat.* (p. 2114) notes, 'Scribe unknown; a pencilled note on p. 1 attributes the handwriting to Lloyd, and adds the name 'Dr. Hardiman', as if Hardiman were the authority. The note is not in Hardiman's hand.'

Poems:
p. 112   Atáid son*n*a bur n-airm áig (3 qq)
         Dia bur mbeat*h*a a s*h*eisior scur (7 qq)
p. 115   Ad*h*earb*h*rát*h*air Deitc*h*ine (3½ qq)
p. 116   Do cuill*edh* mo g*h*easa féin (5½ qq)
         A C*h*uagain Muirtheimhne ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 117   Méala liom gáir na sluaig*h* (12 qq)
p. 118   Ban*n*tra*ch*t b*h*an atá ngleó reim (3 qq)
p. 119   Éirg*h*e a C*h*uc*h*uluin*n* fion*n*t*a*r c*ru*as ('rhetoric')
p. 121   A C*h*uagain C*h*uailngne c*h*ruaid*h* (6 qq)
p. 122   Ní biob*a* brat isead dealg (1 q)
         Annam*h* leatsa a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a ad*h*b*hail* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 123   Níorsad eaglac*h* g*u*s aniu (7 qq)
p. 124   A Cat*hf*a a mac Maoil C*h*raide (3½ qq)
         A D*h*eit*h*c*h*ine as fas so b*h*allán (4 qq)

p. 126   Rug siad uaim ruín dam ana*m*, do toll*adh* m*o* leat*h* letsi (3 qq)

           Mo c*h*ean duit, a C*h*ú (4 qq)

p. 127   Táin*edh* Cúc*h*olain*n* an mud*h* sin go lóngp*or*t b*h*fear nÉirion*n* go cosd*adh*t*h*ac*h*

               cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h*… (alliterative description; in text)

p. 130   Gort rem g*h*aoit*h* trém c*h*nes cuanna (13½ qq)

p. 132   Rob g*h*ab*h* aniug*h* aign*edh* eile (4½ qq)

p. 134   Gort rom g*h*aoit*h* géir ro*m* g*h*oin*adh* ('rhetoric'; in text)

p. 135   Laoc*h* ba fé*ar* na t*r*iait*h*e na t*h*ig, Cuc*h*ullain*n* na ham*h*ra an g*h*ein (4 qq)

           Mé *ar* an maig*h*e gan tú (= *Dúrsan a Chú Chulainn chruaidh*) (5 qq)

p. 136   Adb*heiri*m ase Conall, aonm*h*arcac*h* sin *ar* an maig*h*e (11 qq)

p. 137   Maine m*ac* Eipirt fa c*h*ean*n* (3 qq)

p. 138   Uc*h* a c*h*ín*n* ón uc*h* a c*h*in*n* (14 qq)

p. 139   Sád*h*uil suaim*h*nec*h* sin, Eirc (4 qq)

p. 141   A C*h*onuill, cia hiad na cin*n* (= LnC) (24 qq)

24 C 38 (1168) [II]

<u>Reference:</u> *RIA Cat.* (Fasc. XXI-XXV), p. 3146.

<u>Date:</u> 18th century

<u>Scribe:</u> ?

<u>General content of MS:</u> *Toruigheacht Cheallacháin Chaisil*, three independent stanzas of verse.

<u>Relevant text(s):</u> BmMM

<u>Description:</u> The text is quite dark and stained throughout. Two sets of page numbers are given, BmMM begins on p. 1 (21 in pencil), but from p. 34 (37 in pencil) onwards the MS has darkened, making the text difficult to read; the MS then breaks off unfinished on p. 35, which is also the last page of this MS. Only about the first half of this last page is legible, and even this is stained and very faint. The running titles 'Breislec*h*' and 'M*h*uig*h*e mu*irth*eim*h*ne' are found at the top of each left- and right-hand page respectively; however, 'Mu*irth*eim*h*ne' often erroneously occurs as 'Muc*h*raime'. The poems are indented ever so slightly, and the first word of each page is given at the bottom of the previous one.

A number of notes and glosses (the word in question being marked in the text) added by later hands (?) can be found in the side margins. The English notes are written in a cursive hand, the Irish ones in *corr litir*. The notes are as follows:

- 'David Frenery's hand, Dated Jan 17 1789' (p. 5, side margin)
- 'Timothy Saunders his hand dated this 15th [   ]' (p. 11, side margin)
- glossary: '2. Méal*a*; grief, sorrow; 3. fuinc*h*e; a raven, scald crow' (p. 11, bottom)
- 'Ruaid*h*ruid*h*e Ó Maolruaid*h*na fealb*h*uid*h*e dílis a*n*

   leab*h*uir so et ní aon neac*h* eille d*ár* sg*r*iob*h* ainim an*n*' (p. 13, side margin)

- 'sloit caoim*h* caid*h* reim*h*ráit*h*i for*us*ta su*ar*c, m*ar* main sgáil aolb*h*lat*h* ód c*h*orcuir g*h*il g*h*ruaid*h* glas réim*h* sáim*h* mac aon c*h*earda tturc*h*am suimni gor le searc g*h*éar g*h*ra dfaig sí a*n* orna Fabra (?)' (p. 17, side margin)
- 'David Moran his hand dated this fifteenth day of May 89' (p. 25, side margin)
- glossary: 'féig: bloody, letting blood' (p, 27, bottom)
- '[   ] ofinus ad sealabuige a*n* leab*har* so re c*ur*t D[   ]' (p. 31, side margin)
- glossary: 'daosgair: the meanest, the loivest [*sic*], humblest; soc*h*aid*h*e: an army, a

   multitude' (p. 33, bottom; in red ink)

- signature: 'Pad*ru*ig Ó Gaib*h*nion*n* a cCallain*n*' (p. 35; in red ink).

The last few lines on p. 34 (i.e. the last full page of text) read as follows: 'neóla an eaga da ion*n*said*h*e. Et do g*h*luais d'ion*n*said*h*e loc*h*ain uisge do b*h*í a ccoim*h*f*h*ogus do, et do b*h*í aga

t*h*anac*h*ad*h*, ag*us* aga nig*h*e as, g*ur*ab de si*n* do beirt*h*e*ar* loc*h*an na tanac*h*ad li *ar* o s*h*oin a leith. Na u*air* d*o* c*h*on*nair*c laig*h* an mac*hair* e aga f*h*olm*h*úg*h*adh…'

Poems:

p. 2   Anmona b*hur* sleag*h* re cc*ur* ccat*h* (1 q)

p. 11   A C*h*um*h* [*sic*] C*h*uloin*n* coim*h*eirige ('rhetoric'; in text)
        Gair na sluag*h* uim t*h*ulaid*h* Team*h*rac*h* (13 qq)

p. 18   Dob anamh leatsa, a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a ('rhetoric'; in text)

p. 19   A Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a m*ar* ad*h*b*h*al (= *Niorsad óglach gus aniugh*) (1 q)

p. 22   A D*h*eig*h*t*h*in is fás do bhallán (4 qq)

p. 26   Mairg s*hir*eas an aisge (= Mo cheann duit a Chú) (1 q)

p. 28   Atá Cuc*h*uloin*n* cosgrac*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ach (run; in text)

p. 32   Eirig*h* a Laoig*h* fá mór sgéal (= *Goirt rom ghaoth trem chneas…)* (8 qq)

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1362/ H.4.21 [IV/a-1] (cf. NLS 72.2.9, p. 81 above)

Note: TCD MS 1362/ H.4.21, as well as NLS MS 72.2.9 from which it was copied, are discussed in some detail in Cecile O'Rahilly, *The Stowe Version of Táin Bó Cuailnge*, pp. xlix-liii.

Reference: *TCD Cat.,* (p. 373); *TCD Irish Cat.,* (p. 199).
Date: 1691 (5th November, colophon)
Scribe: Eoghan mac Gilleoin / Hugh MacLean (writing for Cailean Campbell)
General content of MS: *Táin Bó Cuailgne*, *Cath Ros na Rígh*.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (30 qq)
Description: The MS is quite fragile, with the spine falling apart and the edges being frayed; this, however, does not result in the loss of any part of the text. On the inside of the first page is written in Welsh, 'Yn ycheldir Prydein a cowsom y Lhyvr ymma gan yn Hugh Mᶜ Lên o Gil y chynni yn y Kyntir yn Swydh Argile, Aᵒ. Dom. 1700. A'r lywr hwnnw ai hyscrivennasae ai Law i hŷn alhan o hen lwyr.'[104]

Our text is the last item in this MS. Two sets of page numbers are given, one in ink (on every second page, given as 'r' and 'v' here) and one in pencil (on every page, given in parentheses here). There is a mix-up of page numbers as the numbers in pencil appear as 221 / 223 / 223 / 225. They have been given as they appear in the MS.

BmMM, written in a neat, clear hand, begins on p. 16v (190) with no headline but goes straight into the text ('Feachd n-aen dia…'), the first line of which is enlarged to indicate a new item of text. The poems are clearly marked by using capital letters for the first letter, yet at times the poems run on regardless of new stanzas. There are no running titles.

On p. 43r (241), 'Dala b*h*er nEir*enn* i*morro* do b*h*adar…' is given in a new line and in larger letters to give the impression of a headline; this supposedly marks the changeover from BmMM to DCC here. The author scribe gives his name in the line before the new headline: 'Eog*h*an M*ac* Gilleoin do scriobth'.

Towards the end of the text, from p. 261 (pencil) onwards, the tiniest fraction of letters is missing from the top corner of each page, resulting in the loss of the ink numbering. The text finishes with LnC on p. 270 ('Finit'); here we also find the colophon, 'Faicearlan m*ac* fice faice

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[104] 'We acquired this book in the highlands of Britain from Hugh MᶜLên from Cil y chinni [Kilchenzie] in the county of Argyle AD 1700. And this book he had written it with his own hand out of an old book.' I would like to thank Guto Rhys for his help with the translation. Cf. J.L. Campbell & D.S. Thomson, *Edward Lhuyd in the Scottish Highlands 1699-1700* (Oxford, 1963), pp. xvii-xviii: 'It is impossible to retrace Lhuyd's steps with complete exactness; all one can do is to record the names of certain persons and places which he is known to have visited, or which he is likely to have visited. (…) It is clear from these sources that Lhuyd travelled northwards on the road running along the west coast of Kintyre, and then through Knapdale and Lorne, crossing over to Mull by ferry and travelling down the Ross of Mull to reach Iona. After returning to the mainland, he travelled to Edinburgh by way of Inverary, Dumbarton, and Glasgow. Argyllshire abounds with ancient monuments; and some of the ministers serving in Argyllshire in 1699 were the best Gaelic scholars in Scotland. There was plenty of material in the country for Lhuyd to work on. At Kilchenzie in Kintyre he must have met Hugh MacLean, a schoolmaster, who knew Gaelic well and could write it, and who may well have been a source of some of the words collected by Lhuyd in translating the *Dictionariolum*. Two manuscripts in Trinity College Library, Nos. 1307 and 1362 of Gwynn's *Catalogue*, were written by MacLean. (…) No. 1362 was written by MacLean in 1691 and 1692 and acquired by Lhuyd in 1700. It contains versions of the Táin Bó Cúialgne, the Battle of Ros na Rígh, and the Story of the death of Cu Chulainn. MacLean's name also occurs on p. 27 of Gaelic MS. No. LIX [= NLS 72.2.9] of the National Library of Scotland, which contains the same three tales as T.C.D. 1362.'

ficoice fe faice faoi. Callain Caimpbel leis mo lai*mh* ag an peand in cuig*edh* la do mi novemb*er* aon mile se ced ceit*ere* fit*h*id 7 aon deg 1691.'

The present MS is a copy of NLS 72.2.9; comparison of the two MSS show that in his copy Mac Gilleoin is faithful to his exemplar almost to the last suspension stroke, copying also the marginal note 'Oc*h* uc*h* ac*h*, a olivia is aoib*h*in*n* duit' as found in NLS 72.2.9.[105]

Poems:

p. 17r (191)	Ata sun bur n-*ar*ma aig*h* (3 qq)
p. 17v (192)	Dia bur mbeat*h*a a seisior soer (7½ qq)
p. 20r (197)	A Leab*har*cam luaimn*ech* (4 qq)
p. 22r (201)	Do c*h*oill*edh* mo gesa fein (6 qq)
p. 22v (202)	A b*h*rat*har* Deitc*h*ine (4 qq)
	A C*h*uc*h*ul*ainn* com*h*eirg*h*e do c*h*oim*h*ed ('rhetoric')
p. 23v (204)	Eir*igh* a C*h*uculuin*n* fiont*ar* cruas ('rhetoric')
p. 24v (206)	A bantra*cht* rodru*m* me*aradh* (3 qq)
p. 25r (207)	Gair na sl*uagh*sa im t*h*olc*h*aib*h* Team*h*ra*ch* (12 qq)
p. 28v (214)	A C*h*uc*h*uloind Cuailgne c*h*ruaid*h* (7 qq)
p. 29v (216)	Ni biod*h*b*h*a brat seac*h* is biod*h*b*h*a dealg (1 q)
p. 30r (217)	Anam*h* let a Leit M*h*ac*h*a ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 30v (218)	Nirsat ogl*ach* nuir m*h*eata, gus aniu riam nir em*h*gis (6 qq)
p. 31v (220)	A C*h*at*h*faidh m*h*ic M*h*aoil Croic*h* a C*h*arnm*h*uig*h* (8 qq)
p. 32v (222)	A D*h*eitc*h*ine is fas do b*h*all*an* (4 qq)
p. 33v (224)	A f*h*ir na toirmisc *ar* séud (3 qq)
p. 35r (225)	Do t*h*oll*adh* mo l*eith* rig*h*se (3 qq)
	Mo cion duit a C*h*u (5 qq)
p. 36v (228)	Coim*h*eirge bur ccur*adh*a a f*h*ior uaisle fuin*edh*a ('rhetoric')
p. 40r (235)	Gort rom g*h*aot*h* trem c*h*nes cuana (15 qq)
p. 42v (240)	Rom g*h*ab*h* aniu aignead oile (5 qq)
p. 45r (245)	Goirt rom g*h*aot*h* ger ro*m* g*h*uin ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 46r (245)	Gebh mo carp*ad* ort a Leit*h* (3 qq)
	Cucul*ainn* ba ham*h*ra an gein (4 qq)
p. 46v (246)	Dursan*n* C*h*uc*h*uloin c*h*aid*h* (5 qq)
p. 47r (247)	Aon m*h*ar*cach* sun *ar* an m*h*oig*h* (11 qq)
p. 48v (250)	Maine mo Eibirt rod cear (3 qq)
p. 49r (252)	Ad*h*aig*h* M*h*ail 7 Miod*h*na (3 qq)
p. 50r (253)	Uc*h* a lam*h* on uc*h* a lam*h* (13 qq)
p. 51v (256)	Uc*h*an uc*h* on lo do cuaid*h* cat*h* (16 qq)
p. 52r (257)	Sad*h*ail suamn*ech* sin a Earc (4 qq)
p. (261)	Ceand C*h*olla m*ac* Fait*h*eamh*ail* (3 qq)
	Cuillean*n* Breagh a B*ru*ac*h*adh mead*h* (3 qq)
p. (262)	Ni hiad mo c*har*de rom c*h*ar (3 qq)
p. (265)	An glais b*h*eagsa bi Glais Cro (4 qq)
p. (267)	A C*h*on*n*all ca sealb*h* na cin*n* (30 qq)

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[105] Cecile O'Rahilly (in *The Stowe Version of Táin Bó Cuailnge*, p. lii) also notes this truthfuless to the exemplar: 'A comparison of H[1] [= TCD 1362 / H.4.21] with Ed [= NLS 72.2.9] shows beyond any doubt that H[1] was copied from Ed when that manuscript was complete. In the passages that we can compare we note that peculiarities of spelling, small omissions and occasional misreadings are identical in both manuscripts. Even the jingle *Faicearlan mac Fice Faice Ficoice Fe Faice Faoi* has been copied by Eoghan mac Gilleoin from Ed, not at the place where it occurs in the Scottish manuscript but under the *Finid* of Oidheadh Con Culainn (p. 270). The scribal invocation of Ed, *och och a mhacoemh mna* (p. 41b), has been copied at exactly the same point in H[1] (p. 84): *och och a macoemh mna nar ba maith do mha*, the additional words to be attributed perhaps to the scribe of H[1] if not copied from the following page in Ed which is now missing.'

1376/ H.5.4 [I]

Note: due to its fragile state this MS is no longer available for consultation. I was able to consult it one last time in March 2008 but it has now been withdrawn from public access.

Reference: *TCD Cat.,* (p. 377); *TCD Irish Cat.,* (p. 231).
Date: 1701-02
Scribe: Art Ó Caoimh
General content of MS: *Fághail Craoibhe Cormuic*, *Ceisniomh ingine Guilidhe*, *Feis Tighe Chonáin*, *Bruighean Céise Coruinn*, *Bruighean beag na hAlmhuine*, *Agallamh na Senórach* (fragment); miscellaneous poetry.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC
Description: The MS, a small yet thick book, is very fragile, the first page having become completely detached. The leather binding which is tied at the spine looks 'crunched up' and has darkened considerably. Towards the end of the MS the pages become quite frayed and the outer bottom corner darkened, thus making the text slightly difficult to read at times.

Our text is the first item in this MS. BmMM is acephalous, starting with 'olleamnaib*h* 7 lé ban*n*tra*cht* an c*h*oig*h*e uile cúc*h*uloin*n* do coim*éd* 7 do c*h*óm*h*ar *m*bog*h*a go dút*h*a*cht*ac*h*…', i.e. at a point corresponding to RIA 23 M 25, p. 118, l. 10, which was written by Art Ó Caoimh's father Eoghan.

The text is written in a neat, clear hand. The poems are indented and each stanza marked by a capital letter. There are no running titles. The sentence which in many MSS marks the changeover from BmMM to DCC, 'Dala b*h*fe*ar* nE*ir*ean*n*, do b*h*ád*ar* go ce*ann* trí lá 7 trí noid*hch*e…' here occurs on p. 50 in a new paragraph; however, there is no new headline which would suggest that the scribe acknowledged the beginning of a new section of the tale. Our text, which finishes on p. 91, is here followed by the colophon, 'Gon*ad* í sin oig*h*id*h* C*h*oingc*ulainn* ar na sgríob*h* lé h*A*r*t* Ó Caoi*mh* d'Fiong*h*uine Ó C*h*aoi*mh* an 30 la don m*h*arta 1701/2.'

Poems:

p. 6   A C*h*oingculoinn cómhéirg*he* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 8   Gair na sluag sin t*h*ulaicc Team*h*rac*h* (5 qq)
p. 31   Do toll*adh* mo leat*h* lib*h*se (3 qq)
p. 33   M*a*rg i*arrus* an aisgid*h* (= *Mo cheann duit a Chú*) (1 q)
p. 35   Atá C*u* C*u*lainn cosgrac*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h*… (alliterative description; in text)
p. 42   Be*ir* mo b*h*ean*n*a*cht* leat a Laoig*h* (= *Goirt rom ghaoth trem…*) (6 qq)
p. 56   Go*ir*t róm g*h*aot*h* gé*ar* rom g*h*onad*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 59   Cúc*h*uloin*n* bá hám*h*ra an g*h*ein (4 qq)
p. 62   Aon m*h*a*r*cac*h* son*n* *ar* an mag*h* (9 qq)
p. 70   Cean*n* C*h*oingculoin*n* a tTeam*h*raicc (1 q)
p. 72   Uc*h* a chin ón uc*h* a chin (8 qq)
p. 83   Ní hiad na cái*r*de rom c*har* (3 qq)

1296/ H.2.5 [IV/b-2]

Reference: *TCD Cat.,* (p. 314); *TCD Irish Cat.,* (p. 70).
Date: 1712
Scribe: ?Diarmuid Ó Conchubhair
General content of MS: *Lebhar Oiris*, *Lebhar na gCeart*, *Cath Fionntrágha*, *Cath Magh Mucruimhe*, *Cath Chnuca*; various genealogies, pedigrees, poems and miscellanous material.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)

Description: The MS is quite a large volume. While the pages are intact the spine is broken and binding falling apart. There is no date in the relevant section but at the bottom of p. 302, the page before BmMM begins, the date 1712 is given. BmMM then begins on p. 303 under the decorated headline 'Do b*h*reislic*h* m*h*uig*h*i Mu*ir*t*h*s*h*ei*mh*ne an so son iomláine eirgus do callm*h*uint C*h*uc*h*ullen, agus do d*h*erg ruag*h*t*h*ar C*h*onuill C*h*ea*r*na ag dioguilt a b*h*áis da éis agus do gac*h* mor gnaoi*mh* eile da ndea*r*nad*h* an*n* 7c.' The first line of the text is 'Feacht dia ttángad*ar* Uluig*h* go heam*h*ain m*h*ionaluin*n* m*h*ac*h*a…', the initial 'F' being decorated with animal faces. BmMM and DCC merge without indication; the sentence beginning 'Dala b*hf*er nEiron*n* do b*h*ádar go cen*n* trí lá…' which often marks the end of one and the beginning of the other text occurs in the middle of p. 326. The hand is very neat and clear, the poems are well indented although the individual stanzas are not always marked. The first word of each page is given at the bottom of the previous page; there are no running titles.

Following LnC, on p. 339, are 6 more lines of text, ending (erroneously) 'ion*us* gurab é sin a meid do fua*ir*iom*ar* le cur fios do b*h*reislec*h* m*h*uig*h* m*h*uc*h*ru*i*me. Finis.' The 'F' of 'Finis' is again decorated with animal faces. Underneath are the sketchy drawings of two men's heads with curly wigs (?) and shoulders; next to the right, bigger one is written in secretary hand, 'of this men shou'd beware / that now and then cou'd take care / if unto his shape you may fall / gone is witt and wealth & all.' At the bottom of p. 333 a (later?) hand has written 'J. Humphry Loney his hand and'.

Poems:

p. 304	Ataid suna b*har* n-*air*m aig (3 qq)
	Día b*hur* meat*h*a a s*h*eis*er* soar (8 qq)
p. 308	A d*h*erb*h*rat*h*air Deitc*h*ine (3½ qq)
p. 309	Do coill*edh* mo g*h*easa féin (5½ qq)
	A C*h*uagain M*h*u*ir*t*h*s*h*ei*mh*ne m*h*óraig*h*e ('rhetoric'; in text)
	Méala líom g*ár* na sluaig (12 qq)
p. 311	Ban*n*t*r*ac*h*t mban*n* ata gleó rom mer*adh* (3 qq)
	Eirig*h* a C*h*úc*h*uluin*n* fion*n*t*ar* cruas ('rhetoric')
p. 314	A C*h*úagáin C*h*uailgne c*h*ru*aid*h (7 qq)
p. 315	Ní biod*h*b*h*a b*r*at sa sead*h* dealg (1 q)
	Anam*h* leatsa a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a ad*h*b*h*ail ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 316	Niorsad eglac*h* g*us* aniod*h* (6½ qq)
	A Cat*h*faid*h* a m*h*ic M*h*aoil C*h*róig*h* (3½ qq)
p. 317	A D*h*eitc*h*ine as fás do b*h*allán (4 qq)
p. 318	A f*h*ir na toirmisg *ar* séd (2 qq)
p. 319	Rugs*a*d uaim*h* roin*adh* do*m* ana*m* (= *Do tolladh mo leith leithsa*) (3 qq)
p. 320	Mo c*h*en*n* duit a C*h*ú (4 qq)
p. 321	Co*mh*eirg*h*e b*h*ur ccur*adh* ('rhetoric', in text)
p. 324	Goirt ro*m* gaoit*h* t*r*em c*h*neas cuana (14 qq)
p. 326	Rom gab*h* aniu aign*edh* eile (4½ qq)
p. 328	Goirt ro*m* gaot*h* gér rom goin*adh* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 327	Laoc*h* b*udh* ferr na triat*h*ad*h* na t*h*ig, Cuc*h*ulainn na ham*h*ra… (4 qq)
p. 329	Me air an mag*h* gan tú (= *Dursan a Chú Chulainn chruaidh*) (5 qq)
	Adbeir*im* asé Con*n*uill, aonm*h*a*r*cac*h* sun *air* an muig*h* (11 qq)
p. 331	Maine fo eib*er*t fa c*h*en*n* (3 qq)
	poem omitted: MS has 'is dub*er*t an laoig*h* is ní leanfam' (would expect *Oighidh Maoil agus Miodhna* here)
p. 332	Uc*h* a chin on uc*h* a chin (14 qq)
p. 333	poem omitted: MS has '7 adub*er*t an laoid 7 ní dí lennfam' (would expect *Dún Dealgan an dúnsa thiar* here)
	poem omitted: MS has 'agus adub*er*t an laoig*h* is ní di leanfam' (would expect *Uchán*

ach! on, uchán ach! here)

p. 334   Sád*h*al súai*mh*ne*ch* sin a Eirc (4 qq)
p. 336   Cen*n* C*h*olla m*h*ic Fáit*h*em*h*uil (3 qq)
          poem omitted: MS has 'is dub*er*t an laoig*h* is ní leanfam' (would expect *Cuilleann Bhreagh a Brúachadh meadh* here)
p. 337   poem omitted: 'adb*er*t an laoid*h* is ní dí leanfam' (would expect *An ghlaise-si Glaise Chró* here)
p. 338   A C*h*onuill cuc*h* iad na cin (= LnC) (29 qq)
p. 339   poem omitted: MS has '7 do rin*n* an laoid*h* is ni di leanfam' (would expect *Claoitear in feart budh dheasta* here)

1354/ H.4.13 [VI]

Reference: *TCD Cat.,* (p. 369); *TCD Irish Cat.,* (p. 176).
Date: 1713
Scribe: Domnall Mac Giolla Comhaill
General content of MS: 'Keating's History of Ireland, and Miscellanea.'[106] The miscellaneous items include poems, pedigrees and prophecies.
Relevant text(s): LnC and four other poems from the tale (namely, 'Claoid*h*t*er* an f*er*t b*udh* deas*da*', Uch a chin*n* uc*h* a cin*n*', 'Uch*an* ac*h* on ach*an* ac*h*', 'Dun Dealgan an dúnsa tsí*ar*').
Description: The front page of the MS, which is bound in leather, has become detached. The page numbering is modern. P. 211r bears the headline 'Dearg rúat*h*ar C*h*onnuill C*h*ernaig*h* air f*h*lait*h*aib*h* Eirion*n* fo m*ar*bad*h* Con cColluin*n* m*h*ic Sub*h*ailt*a*ig*h* … se*ar*t… . An Laoí ga d*er*bad*h*.' Before every new poem a short prose introduction is given. From p. 213v onwards the MS becomes quite faint at the top, making the text difficult to read. On p. 212b, after the second poem, we find the scribal signature and date 'script*e* le me Danielem Congallum xxm*o* die augus anno dom 1713'.
Poems:
p. 211r   A C*h*on*n*uill ca séilb*h* na cind (29 qq)
p. 212v   Claoid*h*t*er* an f*er*t b*udh* deas*da* (6 qq)
p. 213r   Uch a chin*n* uc*h* a cin*n* (12 qq)
p. 214r   Uch*an* ac*h* on ach*an* ac*h* (16 qq)
p. 214v   Dun Dealgan an dúnsa tsí*ar* (3 qq)

3397/ N.5.12 [I]

Reference: not available as MS is uncatalogued.
Date: 19ᵗʰ September 1737 (colophon)
Scribe: Pilib Mac Brádaigh
General content of MS: *Féis Tighe Chonáin*, portions of *Geinealach agus Craobhscaoiledh na Raghallach agus Maithe na Bréifne*, genealogies, *Oidhe 7 Imthiosa Chloinne Uisneach*, a prose (unique?) romance, *Fágail Chroeibhe Chormuic An So*, *Laoidh Catha Gabhra*, poems and prayers.
Relevant text(s): BmMM, DCC

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[106] *TCD Cat.,* p. 369.

<u>Description:</u> The MS is in good condition, with no damage to it. The hand is clear and very 'swirly'. A box has been drawn around the body of the text on each page thus giving it a very neat appearance. There are no running titles.

The text begins on p. 71r under the headline 'Oig*hid*h C*h*oingcoluinn an so m*ar* leanas', at a point further into the narrative than the usual beginning of the text. The first section of the text reads as follows, starting at a point that relates the return of Cailitín's children from their training in hell and thus omitting the description of their birth and travels:

> [**71r**] Lá n-aon da raibh oiloll m*ac* Rosa Ruaid*h*, 7 Méad*h*b*h* C*ru*acna *ar* fait*he* a ndune fein, 7 *ar* d'fai*cha*in do tug siad na timpc*h*ioll do con*air*c siad Clan Calitin ag tea*cht* fá seala na ngaoit*he* glóruire 7 ní co*mh*nid*h* do roin siad no go rainig siad fait*he* na Crúac*ha*n dala Meid*h*b*h*e, 7 do cur meid*h*b*h*e fíor caoin failt*he* ru, 7 do s*h*uid*h* si et*h*ort*a*, 7 do frid*h* si an ea*cht*a ó dfagbad*ar* eire gus an u*air* sin, 7 do rin mead*h*b*h*e an laoid*he* so
>
> Dia b*h*úr *m*beat*h*a…

The poems are well indented; new paragraphs have been marked by capital letters sometimes decorated with animal faces. The text finishes on p. 111r with the scribal colophon reading, 'Goin*adh* è sin Oig*hid*h c*h*oingcloinn [*sic*] *ar* na sgriob*ha* ré P*h*illip mac B*r*eaduig*he* an 19 lá do míg*h* Septemb*har* an bliag*h*uin do aois tig*har*na 1737. End of the account of the Death of Cuchullin [added by a later hand?].'

It is worth pointing out that at various points in the narrative the characters of Lughaidh mac Conraoi and Laogh mac Righ an Gabra have been confused, giving the name of Conall's adversary Lughaidh where one would expect his charioteer and servant Laogh!

<u>Poems:</u>

p. 71r	Dia b*h*úr *m*beat*h*a (7 qq)
p. 77v	A C*u* C*u*lainn cóm*h*eir*ig* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 78r	G*áir* na slúad*h* uim t*h*ulaicc tTeam*h*rac*h* (5 qq)
p. 82v	A Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a bá h*éct*r*o*m*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 87r	Do tollad*h* mo leat*h* lib*h*si (3 qq)
p. 88r	M*air*g i*ar*is an asgid*h* (1 q)
p. 89r	Atá C*u* C*u*lainn cosgrac*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*hac*h… (alliterative description; in text)
p. 91v	Beir mo b*h*ean*na*c*ht* leat a Laoig*h* (= *Goirt rom ghaoth trem…)* (6 qq)
p. 97r	Goirt roim g*h*aot*h* ge*ar* rom g*h*onad*h* ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 98r	Cúc*h*uloinn bá hám*h*ra an g*h*ein (4 qq)
p. 99v	Aonm*ar*cac*h* son *air* an mag*h* (9 qq)
p. 102v	C*h*ean C*h*oingc*h*uloin*n* a tTeam*h*racc (1 q)
p. 103v	Uc*h* a c*h*in*n* ón a c*h*inn (8 qq)
p. 108r	Ní hiad na c*áir*de rom c*h*ar (3 qq)

1287/ H.1.13 [IV/b-3]

<u>Reference:</u> *TCD Cat.,* (p. 298); *TCD Irish Cat.,* (p. 40).
<u>Date:</u> 1746
<u>Scribe:</u> Aodh Ó Dálaigh / Hugh O'Daly
<u>General content of MS:</u> *Cath Magh Mucruimhe, Caithréim Cheallachain Chaisil, Táin Bó Cuailgne, Loinges Mac Uisnigh, Aislinge Oengusai, Eachtra Nerai, Cophur in dá muccada, Táin Bó Regamna, Compert Conchobhair, Compert Conchulainn, Táin Bó Dartadha, Táin Bó Flidhuis, Táin Bó Fraich, Eachtra Connla, Baile Bricini, Forfeis Fer Falgae, Tochmarc Eimhire,* various poems, genealogies, glossaries.
<u>Relevant text(s):</u> BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)

Description: The MS, quite a large volume, is in good condition, the ink still being very black. The writing is big but at times squint on the page; overall the writing gives the impression that the scribe struggled to write on unruled paper.[107] Our text begins on p. 95 under the – erroneous – headline 'Dearg ruat*h*ar Conaill Cern*aigh*'. While the beginning of each poem is marked by a capital letter, there is no division into stanzas and the poems just run. The hand sometimes makes it difficult to distinguish between lower case and capital letters, this is the case for instance at the beginning of each line in LnC.

Following LnC, a short prose section (pp. 147-48) concludes the tale, and is followed by the scribal sigature 'Mise aniud*h* Aed*h*a Ó Dal*aigh.*'

While the running title for most of the text corresponds to the initial headline, i.e. 'd*er*g r*uath*ar c*on*aill c*er*n*aigh*' (on every right-hand page), it has been changed on some pages to reflect the events in the narrative. These instances of different running titles are as follows: 'Cat*h*a clan*n*a cailitin' (pp.115-117); 'Breisleac*h*an d*er*g air' (p. 119); 'Breisleac*h* M*h*ag*h* Mo*rs*haib*h*ne' (p. 123); 'Tesged*h* f*h*er nEirion*n*' (p. 125-127); 'T*ra*sg*er*t M*h*ag*h* mo*r* S*h*aib*h*ne' (p. 123); 'Ma*rb*h C*u* C*ula*in*n*' (pp. 131-133); 'Te*chta*ira*cht* Cen*n* Beraide' (p. 135); 'Derg r*uath*air Co*n*aill C*er*n*aigh*' (pp. 137-147).

Poems:

p. 96	Atáid soin b*hur* narmaib (3 qq)
p. 97	Día mb*hur* mbet*h*a a s*h*eis*er* saor (8 qq)
p. 101	A d*herb*hrat*h*air a D*h*eiticín (3½ qq)
p. 102	Do caill*edh* mo d*h*eise féin (5½ qq)
	A C*h*uagain*n* a M*h*uirt*h*eim*h*ne mo*rai*rg ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 103	Meala liom gair na sluaid*h* (12 qq)
p. 106	Ban*n*tra*cht* b*h*án atá ngleó (3 qq)
p. 107	Eirig*h*e a C*on* C*h*ol*a*in*n* fion*n*t*ar* c*ru*as ('rhetoric')
p. 111	A C*h*uagain Cualgne chrúaid*h* (6 qq)
p. 113	Ní biod*h*b*aidh*e brat sí se dealg (1 q)
p. 114	Annamh leat a líat*h* m*h*ac*h*a ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 115	Níor eglac*h* gus aniud*h* (7 qq)
p. 117	A C*h*afaidh a m*h*ic M*h*aoil C*h*roid*h*e (3½ qq)
p. 118	A D*h*eiticin as féis do b*h*allan (4 qq)
p. 121	Rug siad uai*m* roin*n* do*m* ana*m*, do toll*adh* mo leat*h* leit*h*se (3 qq)
p. 122	Mo c*h*ion d*h*uit a C*h*u (4 qq)
p. 123	Tainicc C*on*colain*n* fá longp*h*urt b*h*fear nEirion*n* go cois*dadh*aig*h*ac*h* cat*h*buad*h*ac*h*... (alliterative description; in text)
p. 129	A gort rem t*h*reim c*h*nis c*h*uana (13½ qq)
p. 132	Rob*a* gab*h*a aniud*h* aign*ed* eile (4½ qq)
p. 135	Goirt rom gaoid*h* g*er* rom gona ('rhetoric'; in text)
p. 136	Laoc*h* b*udh* ferr ina t*ria*t*h* ina t*h*ig*h* (= *Cú Chulainn ba hamhra…*) (4 qq)

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[107] The hand of Hugh O'Daly and its untidy appearance have been discussed elsewhere. S.H. O'Grady, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum – Vol. I* (London, 1926-53), p. 499 (note 1), remarks that O'Daly's '…transcripts (for the most part written in an outrageous style) suggest both that his patron was very easily satisfied and that ink was not the only fluid present on the scribal table.' W. O'Sullivan ('The Irish Manuscripts in Case H in Trinity College Dublin catalogued by Matthew Young in 1781', *Celtica* 11 (1976), p. 232) is somewhat more sympathetic, commenting that '… his [Hugh O'Daly's] hand is inelegant in the extreme. Unlike O'Grady, I feel the writing is too consistently poor to be accounted for by alcohol alone, some physical misfortune must have affected his hand. It is interesting to compare his earlier work written in 1726 in [TCD] MS 1346 with work in the same volume written in 1750. His early hand is presentable but unfortunately but 1742…the damage had been done.' For a recent analysis of Hugh O'Daly's hand and work cf. P. Ó Macháin, 'Scribal Practice and Textual Survival: The Example of Uilliam Mac Mhurchaidh', *SGS* 22 (2006), pp. 95-122 (cited in section 4.4).

p. 137   Mé air an magh gan tú (= *Dursan a Cú Chulainn chruaidh*) (5 qq)
p. 138   Aon m*har*cac*h* sin *air* an magh (11 qq)
p. 140   Maine fo b*h*ertac*h* fa c*h*en*n* (3 qq)
p. 142   Uc*h* a c*h*in*n* on oc*h* a c*h*in*n* (14 qq)
p. 143   Sad*h*uil suaib*h*nec*h* sin Eairc (4 qq)
p. 146   A C*h*onaill ca seilb*h* na cin*n* (= LnC) (29 qq)

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Franciscan A 25

Note: This MS is available on ISOS.

Reference: *Killiney Cat.,* p. 50.
Date: ?1620s[108]
Scribe: ?Brian Mag Niallghuis
General content of MS: *Eachtra Chloinne Ríogh na hIoruaidhe*, *Comhrag Fir Diadh et Choncculainn*, *Tochmharc Farbhlaidhe*, a great number of poems of varying length and subject matter.
Relevant text(s): BmMM
Description: The MS is a small volume. Throughout the MS the outer margins of the pages are damaged (frayed), resulting in the loss of some text. Our text is the first prose item, starting on p. 5 under the small heading, 'Breisleach M*h*uig*h*e Muir*t*heim*h*ne ina n-ait*h*rist*er* bás *Chon* cCuluind'. A space has been left for an initial decorated letter ('F') but never been filled, the first line thus reads, '[ ]eacht n-aon dia mbaoi ul*aidh*…'.

The text occupies pp. 5-17 where it ends quite abruptly and unfinished. The majority of the pages, especially pp. 7-10 and 12-16, are faded to the extent that the text is largely illegible. There are no running titles nor is the first word of a page given at the bottom of the previous one.

Due to the general condition of the text it is difficult to comment on the poems that may be present here. On p. 7 there appear to be two poems (judging by the capital letters that can just be made out in the margin of this page); the first poem seems to have three stanzas (this first starting with 'A' – 'Anmana bhur sleigh'?), the second poem having six stanzas (three on p. 7 and three on p. 8). The first letters of these stanzas seem to be 'D', 'T', 'B', ?, '*Ar*' '*Ar*', thus suggesting it is the poem 'Dia bhur mbeatha…'. The text on pp. 9-15 is too damaged to make out, let alone reconstruct, any poems that may be part of the narrative. At the bottom of p. 16 we find the 'rhetoric' *A Cú Chulainn coimeirigh caoinedh…*

The final part of the text from the bottom of p. 16 (including the 'rhetoric') to where it breaks off on p. 17 reads as follows (brackets denote sections that are illegible): '[   ] b*er*t so an*n* a cc coimeir*igh* caoin*edh* [   ]d*h* m*ur*t*h*eim*h*ne mo*r* airgt*h*e [   ] d*h*e [   ] co*m* [   ] acoi*m*leanm*uin* [17] *ar* duploingeas fu*ar* F*er*gu*s*o tuit*fedh* Oillill. Lugh*aidh* et laoic*h* Maicn*iad* E*ar*c is Collo in *Con*cubar M*e*idh*b*h is Maine dod mo*r* ruat*h*or eir*enn* aillre*acht* oig*h* ilcleasoig*h* ectm*h*inic ait*h*easoig*h* a ua Cat*h*faidh cl*aid*m*h* d*h*erg rl- Do imt*h*igh an B*h*ad*h*bh roi*m*pe on g*r*ianan am*ach* ar an bfait*h*che *ar* ndin l*er*t do Coi*n* cCul*ainn* teac*h*d le do g*h*air*et*ar na sl*uagh* amoid*h ar* in bfait*h*che *ar* roc*h*t*o*in do Baid*h*bh *da* n-ion*n*soid*h*e 7 do cual*a* .cc. g*air*fedh*o*ch na mBad*h*bh As ans sin ad*ub*h*o*irt cc is doil*igh* liom a beth ag eisdea*cht* ris na g*air*th*e si a G*h*eanoin*n ar se* et cetoig*h* dam*h*so nasl*uagh* d'iondsu*idh*e 7 na sgit*h*buidni sgat*h*bh*reige ud do sg*r*ios 7 do sgaolid*h n*ar do t*r*aot*h*od*ar* nag*air*the g*r*odb*h*iod*h* goc*h*o do cluinim mo t*h*éis mo t*h*reisi 7 do buaid*h*retor maign*edh* 7 min*n*tin*n* 7 do c*h*l- c*h*loc*h* cceol coi*m*b*h*inn nacruite doc*h*ual*us* mo c*h*iall 7 mo cui*m*ne 7 mo [   ].'

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[108] The information on the date and scribe of this manuscript are taken from *Killiney Cat.*, p. 50: '17th cent. Paper. 19x14.5 cms. Pp. 230 numbered in ink. Ms is of Northern provenance and may be dated to the second decade of the seventeenth century (see P. Walsh, *IMN* 1928, 27), but there are no scribal signatures. The main portion seems to be the work of one scribe (sometimes possibly relieved by another), who left blank leaves at first and later filled in some of them in different ink and added corrections and titles here and there. The hand may be that of *Brian Mag Niallghuis*, scribe of A 19. (…)'

The rest of p. 17, as well as p. 18, are blank.

<u>Poems:</u>

p. 7   ?Anmana bhur sleigh (3 qq)

          ?Dia bhur mbetha (6 qq)

p. 16   A C*u* C*ulainn* coim*h*eir*igh* caoin*edh* ('rhetoric'; in text)

2.3 General observations on the pre-19th-century manuscripts

The fifty-three pre-19th-century manuscripts offer great scope for research into the transmission and manuscript tradition of the tale. Although they ultimately preserve the same text, on closer inspection the versions can differ quite substantially. Probably most striking are the huge discrepancies in the number of poems that the versions of the text contain, as can already be seen from the draft catalogue. These versions range from containing one poem – in the manuscripts that preserve LnC only – to those manuscripts that have a version of the text with over forty poems. Before moving on to an in-depth analysis of the pre-19th-century versions of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* and *Laoidh na gCeann*, a number of general observations can briefly be made about some issues that arise from the draft catalogue.

As we can see from the draft catalogue, there are variations within the manuscripts as to the 'elements' of the tale that they preserve. The following table shows the distribution of manuscripts by century and within them the occurrence of BmMM, DCC and LnC:

MS Content	16th cen	17th cen	18th cen	Total
BmMM, DCC, LnC		2	21	23
LnC (poetry only)	1	1	9	11
BmMM, DCC	1	1	7	9
BmMM		2	3	5
DCC, LnC		1	2	3
DCC			2	2
Total	2	7	44	53

Table 2-3: Content of pre-19th-century MSS (by century)

Worth pointing out is some confusion of tales, caused no doubt by the similarity of the names, that occurs in three manuscripts: both NLI G 296 (1763) and Maynooth C 98 (b) (?1714-29) give *Mucruimhe* for *Muirtheimhne* in the title and running headline for our text; equally, TCD 1296/ H.2.5 (1712) ends the tale with '(…) do b*h*reislec*h* m*h*uig*h* m*h*uc*h*ru*i*me. Finis.' The explanation for this seems to be that in all three cases the tale *Cath Mhaighe Mhuchruimhe* occurs in the manuscripts (in NLI G 296, in fact, it immediately precedes our text) – it is interesting all the same that all the instances of this mix-up occur within manuscript group IV.

Approaching the manuscripts chronologically, it has to be noted that the earliest surviving versions of our text are also those that are most damaged. The damage is of an extent that renders the texts very difficult to use, if not useless, for a study of textual transmission as simply not enough of the text remains. These damaged and in some cases fragmentary manuscripts include NLS 72.1.45 (?16th century), UCD Franciscan A 25 (?1620s) and RIA C vi 3 (?1633).

There do not appear to survive any 'Scottish versions' of the prose narrative within the corpus of pre-19th-century manuscripts. This is surprising, especially since four of the eleven manuscripts that contain 'independent' versions of LnC are of Scottish provenance (namely, NLS 72.1.37, NLS 72.1.36, NLS 73.2.2, NLS 73.2.10). Moreover, the earliest surviving version of LnC is preserved in a Scottish manuscript, the famous 'Book of the Dean of Lismore' (NLS 72.1.37, dating to 1512-42), as will be discussed in section 7.4.1. With regard to the prose narrative, although one of the earlier manuscripts preserving a complete copy of the tale (now TCD 1362/ H.4.21, dating to 1691) was copied by Eoghan Mac Gilleoin, a Kintyre scribe, this manuscript is in fact a copy of an Irish manuscript (now NLS 72.2.9, which was written in c. 1650 by Fear Feasa Ó Duibhgeannáin) and thus not a 'Scottish version' of our tale as such.

We can make some observations as to the presentation or physical appearance of the tale in the various manuscripts. Noteworthy in this context are a number of instances of decorative initials and in particular the use of animal faces. These occur in the following manuscripts, given in the order in which they appear in the draft catalogue:

1) Maynooth C 98 (b) [IV/b-2] (draft catalogue p. 67),

2) NLI G 113/ 114 [I] (p. 70),

3) RIA 23 M 25 [I] (p. 85),

4) TCD 1296/ H.2.5 [IV/b-2] (p. 106),

5) TCD 3397/ H.5.4 [I] (p. 108).

It is very interesting that there seems to be some consistency if we look at the groups into which these manuscripts can be classified: 2), 3) and 5) both belong to Group I whereas 1) and 4) fall into Group IV/b-2. Even more interestingly, manuscripts 2) and 3) here were written by Art and Eoghan Ó Caoimh, son and father respectively (cf. section 4.1). Although animal faces or decorations are not represented consistently in all of the manuscripts pertaining to Groups I and IV/b-2, the fact that those five manuscripts out of our total fifty-three fall into two such distinct groups does have some implications. For one, it underpins the evidence of the existence of manuscript groups, which will be further established and discussed in the following chapter. It may even hint at the transmission of the tale within the manuscript groups, these potential links being corroborated by the family ties between some of the manuscripts in Group I.

Another feature that has been touched on in the draft catalogue is the way in which the text, and particularly the poems, are laid out in the manuscripts. The majority of manuscripts will indent a poem (or rather, the stanzas of a poem), thus clearly setting apart verse from prose. As we have seen in the draft catalogue, in many cases each individual stanza will be

marked further by, e.g. enlarged first letters, although there are other manuscripts which will not mark the poems but represent them incorporated into the prose narrative. Equally varied is the occurrence of running headlines, as well as the treatment of BmMM and DCC either as separate items or one continuous text. We will discuss the physical layout or structural presentation of the tale in the various manuscripts further in section 6.2.

Worth mentioning for its glosses in the side margins is a specific manuscript, RIA 24 C 38 (draft catalogue, p. 102). Besides a number of marginal notes and scribbles, there are three instances of words from the text being glossed in the text and translated in the margin ('*Méala*: grief, sorrow & *fuinche*: a raven, scald crow' / '*féig*: bloody, letting blood' / '*daosgair*: the meanest, the loivest [sic], humblest & *sochaidhe*: an army, a multitude'). The glosses seem to be idiosyncratic: they do not appear in any manuscripts, neither those falling into the same group (II) as RIA 24 C 38 or any manuscripts from the other groups. For that matter, no other manuscript includes any glosses for our tale.

Even from the small selection of comments above it is obvious that the scope even for simple observations is vast, which is unsurprising taking into account the sheer number of manuscripts to be considered. We will return to a number of aspects touched upon in the observations above and discuss them in more detail in the following chapters.

In order to make the wealth of material and information given in the draft catalogue more manageable and accessible, we will now turn to look at the manuscript groups. The concept of the groups may seem rather abstract, taking into account that thus far we have only seen the group reference for each manuscript. The following chapter, however, will put these into context and discuss the methodology underlying the classification of the manuscripts into the groups.

Chapter 3: The Groups

In the previous chapter we reviewed the manuscripts preserving *Oidheadh Con Culainn* and *Laoidh na gCeann*, and in the context of a draft catalogue began to examine the pre-19th-century manuscripts in some more detail. We have already hinted at the fact that it seems possible to divide the manuscripts into groups. The present chapter will consider this classification of the manuscripts into groups in detail.

To start with, the methodology for establishing the groups will be discussed; this is followed by a more in-depth examination of the poems and their occurrence in the various manuscripts. The discussion and description of each poem and its features are at times very detailed; however, the level of detail applied to the observations here will be a valuable starting-point and resource for further research into the poems of *Oidheadh Con Culainn.*

In the last section of this chapter, we will widen the scope and make some textual observations which covers the prose narrative as well as the poetry.

3.1 Establishing the manuscript groups

The inclusion of some of the information into the draft catalogue of our pre-19th-century manuscripts in the previous chapter might seem somewhat excessive: for instance, is it necessary to list details of every single poem that may occur within the text in a particular manuscript? Simply looking at the draft catalogue, however, already shows that there are great variations to be observed between the numbers of poems contained within the various manuscripts. Considering the length of the overall text, the poetry provides a good starting point into gaining an overview of the manuscripts, and in order to attempt to group them into more manageable 'chunks' of text. We can identify a total of forty-three poems, with the manuscripts varying from preserving one poem – namely LnC, where it stands independently – to giving the prose narrative in its fullest form with over thirty poems. The logical conclusion is that the best method to utilise this prosimetric structure of the tale is to start by looking at the poems contained within each manuscript. We will do so by stripping the information on the poetry from each manuscript right back, considering only which poems occur, and the number and selection of stanzas. The material is most accessibly presented in table-format. Therefore, the table below gives, along the vertical line from top to bottom, a list of all the poems that we can identify across our manuscripts. They are given in the order in which they appear in the course of the narrative in the majority of our manuscripts – we will come back to

the order of the poems; as we will see in the course of this thesis some variation may occur in a small number of manuscripts. In the table below the manuscripts themselves are given on the horizontal line across the top of the table. They are arranged in the order of the draft catalogue in section 2.2, i.e. alphabetically by collection, and within each collection in chronological order.

Colour coding has been employed to incorporate as much information from the draft catalogue as possible whilst keeping the table as accessible: manuscripts marked in red denote texts that are acephalous while blue indicates that a text breaks off unfinished. Boxes shaded in grey indicate manuscripts that preserve only LnC (and, in two cases, a number of other poems) but not the prose narrative. As for the colour coding applied to the poems themselves, yellow highlights what appear to be 'rhetorical speeches' or 'rhetorics' (discussed briefly below, and in more detail in section 6.3), blue marking the 'mystery poems' (discussed in section 3.4.4), and purple denoting LnC.

NOTE:

For Table 3-1 see file '2009kuhnsphd – tables', Sheet 1.

Table 3-1: List of poems with MSS in order of draft catalogue

Pull-out Table 3-1 illustrates quite strikingly the variations in poetry that occur across our manuscripts, both in terms of the actual poems that may be preserved in a manuscript, and the variations in the number of stanza within the same poem across the manuscripts. Even on just considering the first five manuscripts in our table, the poems contained in these vary from one poem – LnC where it stands alone in Cambridge 10/ Add. 3085 (c) – to forty poems in BL Eg. 132! This latter manuscript also displays a feature limited to a handful of manuscripts which is noted as 'ref+comm.' (= reference + comment) and 'reference' in the pull-out Table 3-1. For the time being it shall suffice to say that these are instances where the existence of a poem at a certain point in the narrative is being acknowledged, with the poems then not actually being given in the manuscript. The 'mystery poems' form a sub-group within these referenced poems but their case is somewhat more complex. We will return to the 'referenced' as well as the 'mystery' poems in detail in section 3.4.4 below.

As for the 'rhetorics', it is Version A of the tale of, course, that is famed for its rhetorical passages. The general consensus regarding our Version B is that these passages have been omitted. While this is largely true, there are in fact a number of passages which cannot be classified as straightforward poetry, and are arguably closer to 'rhetorics' or *roscada*. In the context of exploring the style and character of Irish tales, and in particular *Táin Bó Cuailgne*, N.B. Aitchison summarized the debate surrounding the term 'rhetoric' as follows:

> However, elements of verse are contained within this literature, in passages which have traditionally been known by the term *retoiric* (rhetoric). Mac Cana (1966), however, has argued that this term arises from the mistaken interpretation of the marginal indicator .*r*. The *roscada* essentially comprise the dialogue of the epic tales, but in particular take the form of complex greetings, challenges, prophecies and curses. Three main features, apart from their versical form, characterise and distinguish the *roscada*. Firstly, they comprise part of the direct speech of the epics, in the first person, while the prose forms a narrative in the third person. Secondly, they serve to heighten the mood, especially of love, anger and death (Dillon 1947: 253), through the immediacy of the first person. Thirdly, the language and syntax of the *roscada* are often archaic.[109]

Of the features that constitute 'rhetorics' or *roscada* as listed by Aitchison, two in particular sum up quite succinctly the nature of the passages in *Oidheadh Con Culainn*: they are in direct speech rather than the third-person prose narrative, and they 'serve to heighten the mood'. We will return to the 'rhetorics' in more detail elsewhere in this thesis, but it should be noted at this stage that the term 'rhetoric' is used to differentiate those passages which are more than

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[109] N.B. Aitchison, 'The Ulster Cycle: Heroic Image and Historical Reality', *Journal of Medieval History* 13 (1987), pp. 96-97.

just direct speech, yet which differ from the 'straight-forward' verse of the other poems. We can also observe structural differences; all this will be explored in detail in section 6.3.

To return to the table, with a total of fifty-three manuscripts to take into account, there is of course a lot of information to be considered. We may make the information from pull-out Table 3-1('List of poems with MSS in order of draft catalogue') slightly more accessible by condensing it and considering for a moment only the range of stanzas within each poem, and the occurrence of that poem across the manuscripts. The poems are given in the same order as in the table above; the percentage of the 'Occurrence in MSS' is calculated over the total of fifty-three manuscripts. The occurrence of 'mystery' or 'referenced' poems is marked by *, thus, 14 / 2* (26% / 4%) is to be interpreted as follows: out of a total occurrence of a poem in 14 manuscripts (= 26% of the total fifty-three manuscripts) in 2 instances of the total 14 occurences, the poem is 'referenced' and not actually given; this in turn corresponds to 4% of the total manuscripts. I have retained the colour coding to allow for easier referencing back to the initial table (pull-out Table 3-1).

Poem	min.	max.	Occurrence in MSS
1. *Ataid sunna bhur n-airm aigh*	1 q	3 qq	30 (57%)
2. *Dia bhur mbeatha a seisior soar*	5 qq	8 qq	27 (51%)
3. *A Leabharcham luaimneach*	4 qq	4 qq	6 (11%)
4. *A dhearbráthair Dheichtine*	3 qq	4 qq	15 (28%)
5. *Do coilleadh mo gheasa féin*	5½ qq	6 qq	15 (28%)
6. *A Chúagáin Mhuirtheimhne*	---	---	8 (15%)
7. *A Chú Chulainn coimhiric*	---	---	26 (49%)
8. *Gáir na sluagh um tealaigh Teamhra*	5 qq	14 qq	26 (49%)
9. *Atá gleo rom mhearadh*	3 qq	4 qq	14 (26%)
10. *Éirigh a Chú Chulainn*	---	---	21 (40%)
11. *A Chúagáin Chuailgne cruaidh*	6 qq	7 qq	14 (26%)
12. *Ní biodhbha brat*	1 q	1 q	18 (34%)
13. *Annamh leat, a Liath Macha adhbhail*	---	---	34 (64%)
14. *Níorsat eaglach gus aniugh*	1 q	7 qq	21 (40%)
15. *A Chathfaidh mhic Mhaoilchroidh*	3½ qq	8 qq	14 (26%)
16. *A Dheichtine is fás do bhallán*	4 qq	4 qq	20 (38%)
17. *A fhir na toirmisg ar séd*	2 qq	3 qq	18 (34%)
18. *Do tolladh mo leath leatsa*	1½ qq	3 qq	28 (53%)
19. 'Mystery Poem 1'	n/a	n/a	3* (6%)
20. *Mo cheann duit a Chú*	1 q	5 qq	34 (64%)
21. *Coimhéirigh…*	---	---	9 (17%)
Atá Chú Chulainn…	---	---	25 (47%)
22. *Goirt rom ghaoth trem chneas cuanna*	6 qq	15 qq	35 (66%)
23. *Rom ghabh aniugh aighneadh eile*	4½ qq	5 qq	13 (25%)
24. 'Mystery Poem 2'	n/a	n/a	3* (6%)
25. *Goirt rom ghaoth, géar rom gonadh*	---	---	30 (57%)
26. *Ghéibh mo charbat ort, a Léith*	3 qq	3 qq	15 (28%)
27. *Cú Chulainn budh hamhra an gein*	1 q	4 qq	33 (62%)
28. *Dursan a Chú Chulainn chaigh*	4 qq	5 qq	14 (26%)
29. *Aonmharcach sunn ar an maigh*	6 qq	11 qq	33 (62%)
30. *Sgéala Cú Chulainn ós áird*	3 qq	3 qq	5 (9%)
31. *Máine Mo-Eipirt fo cheann*	3 qq	3 qq	8 (15%)
32. *Oighidh Mhaoil agus Mhiodhna*	1 qq	3 qq	14 / 2* (26% / 4%)
33. *Uch a chinn ón uch a chinn*	8 qq	14 qq	34 (64%)
34. *Dún Dealgan an dúnsa thiar*	3 qq	5 qq	9 / 3* (17% / 6%)
35. *Uchán ach ón uchán ach*	14 qq	16 qq	10 / 2* (19% / 4%)
36. *Sadhail suaimneach sin, a Earc*	4 qq	4 qq	12 / 4* (23% / 8%)
37. 'Mystery Poem 3'	n/a	n/a	5* (9%)
38. *Ceann Cholla mhic Faitheanmhuil*	3 qq	3 qq	8 / 4* (15% / 8%)
39. *Cuilleann Breagha a Bruachadh meadh*	2 qq	3 qq	12 / 6* (23% / 11%)
40. *Ní hiad na cairde rom char*	3 qq	3 qq	12 (23%)
41. *An glaise-si Glaise Cró*	4 qq	4 qq	10 / 2* (19% / 4%)
42. *Laoidh na gCeann*	22 qq	35 qq	37 (70%)
43. *Claoitear in feart budh dheasta*	6 qq	11 qq	9 / 3* (17% / 6%)

Table 3-2: Occurrence of poems across pre-19th-century MSS (in order of poems)

The above table makes the wealth of information more accessible, but even more strikingly points to the variations in the number of stanzas that may occur for a given poem; variations which at times are quite substantial and deserve further investigation. But firstly, simply by re-arranging the list above, we can quite easily make a first assessment as to the poems occurring most and least frequently:

Occurrence in MSS	Poem	min.	max.
37 (70%)	42. *Laoidh na gCeann*	22 qq	35 qq
35 (66%)	22. *Goirt rom ghaoth trem chneas cuanna*	6 qq	15 qq
34 (64%)	13. *Annamh leat, a Liath Macha*	---	---
34 (64%)	20. *Mo cheann duit a Chú*	1 q	5 qq
34 (64%)	33. *Uch a chinn ón uch a chinn*	8 qq	14 qq
33 (62%)	27. *Cú Chulainn budh hamhra an gein*	1 qq	4 qq
30 (57%)	1. *Ataid sunna bhur n-airm aigh*	1 q	3 qq
30 (57%)	25. *Goirt rom ghaoth, géar rom gonadh*	---	---
28 (53%)	18. *Do tolladh mo leath leatsa*	1½ qq	3 qq
27 (51%)	2. *Dia bhur mbeatha a seisior soar*	5 qq	8 qq
25 (47%)	21. *Atá Chú Chulainn…*	---	---
26 (49%)	7. *A Chú Chulainn coimhiric*	---	---
26 (49%)	8. *Gair na sluagh um tealaigh…*	5 qq	14 qq
21 (40%)	10. *Éirigh a Chú Chulainn*	---	---
21 (40%)	14. *Níorsat eaglach gus aniugh*	1 q	7 qq
20 (38%)	16. *A Dheichtine is fás do bhallán*	4 qq	4 qq
18 (34%)	12. *Ní biodhbha brat*	1 q	1 q
18 (34%)	17. *A fhir na toirmisg ar séd*	2 qq	3 qq
15 (28%)	4. *A dhearbráthair Dheichtine*	3 qq	4 qq
15 (28%)	5. *Do coilleadh mo gheasa féin*	5½ qq	6 qq
15 (28%)	26. *Gheibh mo charbat or, a Léith*	3 qq	3 qq
14 (26%)	9. *Atá gleo rom mhearadh*	3 qq	4 qq
14 (26%)	11. *A Chúagáin Chuailgne cruaidh*	6 qq	7 qq
14 (26%)	15. *A Chathfaidh mhic Mhaoilchroidh*	3½ qq	8 qq
14 (26%)	28. *Dursan a Chú Chulainn chaigh*	4 qq	5 qq
14 / 2* (26% / 4%)	32. *Oighidh Mhaoil agus Mhiodhna*	1 qq	3 qq
13 (25%)	23. *Rom ghabh aniugh aighneadh eile*	4½ qq	5 qq
12 / 4* (23% / 8%)	36. *Sadhail suaimneach sin, a Earc*	4 qq	4 qq
12 / 6* (23% / 11%)	39. *Cuilleann Breagha a Bruachadh meadh*	2 qq	3 qq
12 (23%)	40. *Ní hiad na cairde rom char*	3 qq	3 qq
10 / 2* (19% / 4%)	35. *Uchán ach ón uchán ach*	14 qq	16 qq
10 / 2* (19% / 4%)	41. *An glaise-si Glaise Cró*	4 qq	4 qq
9 (17%)	21. *Coimhéirigh…*	---	---
9 / 3* (17% / 6%)	34. *Dún Dealgan an dúnsa thiar*	3 qq	5 qq
9 / 3* (17% / 6%)	43. *Claoitear in feart budh dheasta*	6 qq	11 qq
8 (15%)	6. *A Chuagáin Mhuirtheimhne*	---	---
8 (15%)	31. *Máine Mo-Eipirt fo cheann*	3 qq	3 qq
8 / 4* (15% / 8%)	38. *Ceann Cholla mhic Faitheanmhuil*	3 qq	3 qq
6 (11%)	3. *A Leabharcham luaimneach*	3 qq	4 qq
5 (9%)	30. *Sgéala Cú Chulainn ós áird*	3 qq	3 qq
5* (9%)	37. 'Mystery Poem 3'	n/a	n/a
3* (6%)	19. 'Mystery Poem 1'	n/a	n/a
3* (6%)	24. 'Mystery Poem 2'	n/a	n/a

Table 3-3: Occurrence of poems across pre-19th-century MSS (by frequency)

Interestingly, those poems that occur most frequently also fluctuate most significantly in the number of stanzas that may occur, while towards the lower end of the table we can see that the less frequent a poem is, the more regular the number of stanzas become.

We have made some very preliminary observations on the poetry and have established that across our fifty-three manuscripts, with regard to the poetry there is considerable variation in both the occurrence of the poems in any given manuscript, and in the number of stanzas within each poem in the individual manuscripts.

The logical step from the current order of manuscripts in pull-out Table 3-1 above is to re-arrange the manuscripts and present them not by collection (and thus in the order of the draft catalogue), but by the poetry, i.e. grouping the manuscripts together on the basis of how little or much poetry they contain. On doing so, we can see a number of manuscript groups clearly emerging, with the manuscripts in each group arranged chronologically:

NOTE:

For Table 3-4 see file '2009kuhnsphd – tables', Sheet 2.

Table 3-4: List of poems with MSS classified into groups

We have already anticipated these groups in the draft catalogue by providing the group number for each manuscript. In total, we can establish six distinct groups, labelled I-VI, with 'Group I' comprising the fewest manuscripts, gradually increasing in size to 'Group IV', which is the fullest in terms of manuscripts. It appears that Group IV can be further divided into five sub-groups (namely, IV/a-1, IV/a-2, IV/b-1, IV/b-2, IV/b-3); this sub-division may not be obvious at first glance but will become more apparent when we turn to look at Group IV in detail. Group V is a 'miscellaneous group', comprising those manuscripts which for one reason or another do not fall into any of Groups I-IV, while Group VI is made up of those manuscripts preserving not the prose narrative, but only 'independent versions' of LnC (and in two cases a number of other poems). Not only is the high degree of consistency in terms of which poems are preserved within the groups very striking, but the regrouping results in considerably less variation – in some groups no variation whatsoever – between the number of stanzas occurring in the individual poems. The basic statistics for each group are as follows:

Group	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
No. of MSS	5	7	9	15	6	11
No. of Poems [110]	13~16	5~14	6~17	17~40	1~14	1~5

A number of points of interest and worthy of further investigation have already been raised, and we shall now turn to look at the groups and the poetry and its occurrence in some more detail.

3.2   Preliminary observations on the groups and poetry

Van Hamel, in the introduction to his edition of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, noted that the manuscript upon which his edition is primarily based, NLS 72.1.45, 'provides nothing but the mere prose text' while RIA 23 K 37, which he used to supply readings of the missing portions of the primary manuscript, 'contains a large number of poems.'[111] Van Hamel goes on to make the very relevant statement that 'these poems, in fact, require a separate study for themselves.'[112] The wealth of poetry contained even within our pre-19th-century manuscripts means that within the course of this thesis we cannot possibly consider every angle or every poem in an exhaustive manner. Rather, a preliminary glimpse shall be provided on the groups

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[110] Note that this includes instances of 'loss' of poetry due to manuscripts being acephalous, breaking off unfinished, or preserving only BmMM or DCC rather than the entire narrative of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*.

[111] A.G. Van Hamel, *Compert Con Culainn and Other Stories* (Dublin, 1968; reprint of 1933), p. 71.

[112] *ibid.*

and the poetry contained in each one. For every group, we will consider first the overall occurrence of the poems, as well as reasons for the variation between the numbers of poems within each group where this occurs. Following this is a brief examination of the variation of the number of stanzas within a poem in the group, where this is the case. After an assessment of each individual group we will briefly make some observations on an inter-group level, pointing to those instances where the stanza count within a poem varies most significantly across the groups.

A preliminary and initial assessment of the poetry is complicated by the fact that no published and up-to-date edition of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* is available that includes the poetry, which in turn would allow for cross-referencing. The provision of every single poem, with every variation that may occur, would exceed the capacity of the present thesis. With no textual passages thus available, we will at this stage forego an in-depth discussion of metres, for instance, and make observations on a more superficial level. In order to include as many superficial observations as possible, the discussions of individual poems may at times seem rather exhaustive. The provision of these details here will, however, allow for easier inclusion of the present findings into any further study of the poetry of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* that may be carried out in the future.

The following discussion is to be read in conjunction with pull-out Table 3-4 ('List of poems with MSS classified into groups') above, as it is an elaboration of the information contained within this table and gives further details where differences may occur within the respective groups. For that very reason the numbering of the poems corresponds to that of pull-out Table 3-4 (which in turn corresponds to that of pull-out Table 3-1); note that at times only the poem numbers might be given. Where lists are employed as a visual aid, I have retained the colour coding from the tables for 'rhetorics', mystery poems, LnC as well as acephalous manuscripts and those that break off unfinished, to allow for easier cross-referencing.

LnC will be discussed only on a superficial level in the present chapter as its textual aspects and questions of transmission are discussed in detail in Chapter 7.

In order to illustrate line transposition, which occurs frequently in Group IV, where applicable line references within a quatrain have been given as lines a-d, 'a' referring to the first, 'b' the second, 'c' the third and 'd' the fourth / final line within a quatrain.

3.2.1   Groups I-III

As we can see from pull-out Table 3-4 ('List of poems with MSS classified into groups') above, Group I is the most clear and straightforward group, which is partially due to the fact that it

comprises the smallest number of manuscripts. The following manuscripts have been classified into this group:

- RIA 23 M 25 (1684)
- TCD 1376/ H.5.4 (1701-02)
- NLI G 113/114 (1703)
- TCD 3397 / N.5.12 (1737)
- RIA 23 G 21 (1796)

The number of poems occurring in these manuscripts ranges from thirteen to sixteen. The reason for this variation is rather simple: TCD 1376 is acephalous and 'loses' two poems (numbers 1 and 2) at the beginning while TCD 3397 abbreviates the first part of the prose narrative and thus 'loses' poem 1. Finally, RIA 23 G 21 is the only manuscript here that gives LnC alongside the 'traditional' fifteen poems occurring in this group.

As for the actual poems in Group I, and the number of stanzas in each one, these are as follows:

poem 1: 2 qq	**poem 13**: ---	**poem 22**: 6 qq	**poem 32**: 1 qq
poem 2: 7 qq	**poem 18**: 3 qq	**poem 25**: ---	**poem 33**: 8 qq
poem 7: ---	**poem 20**: 1 q	**poem 27**: 4 qq	**poem 40**: 3 qq
poem 8: 5 qq	**poem 21**: ---	**poem 29**: 9 qq	**poem 42**: 35 qq

As we can see, there is no variation within any poem with regard to the number of stanzas since all manuscripts in Group I are consistent. Within poem 8, *Gáir na sluaigh…*, we can note line transposition in NLI G 113/ 114; see section 5.2 for further discussion.

Into Group II the following eight manuscripts have been classified:

- RIA 23 K 7 (1701)
- RIA 23 C 26 (c) (1701)
- RIA 3 B 43 (?1765)
- RIA 23 C 22 (1767)
- RIA 24 B 16 (1767-68)
- Bodleian Ir. e. 3 (?1789)
- RIA 24 C 38 (18th cen)

The rather significant variation in the number of poems – ranging from five to fourteen – in this group stems from the fact that three manuscripts here break off unfinished: RIA 23 C 26 (c) 'loses' poem 39, the loss of text in RIA 24 B 16 leads to the omission of poems 33, 39 and 42; poems 25, 27, 33 and 42 are lost in RIA 24 C 38. Bodleian Ir. e. 3, preserving only DCC thus only gives poems 25, 27, and 33 but excludes 42. LnC, in fact, deserves further comment for its occurrence in Group II; we will address this in the context of the 'textual observations' in

section 3.4.2 below. The poems, and number of stanzas within each one, in Group II can be illustrated as follows:

poem 1: 1 q	poem 13: ---	Poem 20: 1 q	poem 25: ---	poem 33: 2 qq
poem 7: ---	poem 14: 1 q	poem 21: ---	poem 27: 4 qq	poem 39: 2 qq
poem 8. 13 qq	poem 16. 4 qq	poem 22. 8 qq	poem 29: 8 qq	poem 42: 28~35 qq

As with Group I, we can see that the manuscripts here are very consistent and (with the exception of LnC) all manuscripts correspond with regard to the number of stanzas within any given poem.

Group III, in relation to the previous two, comprises more manuscripts which in turn are fuller in terms of poetry, as we will see presently. To list the manuscripts:

- RIA E iv 3 (1727)
- RIA 23 M 47 (b) (1734)
- RIA 23 L 27 (1737)
- RIA 12 F 7 (1749-50)
- NLI G 149 (1765)
- RIA 23 H 16 (1779)
- RIA 24 P 6 (1783)
- NLI G 501
- RIA 23 M 47 (a) (1795)

The manuscripts include between six and seventeen poems, this discrepancy again being caused by the preservation of the text in the manuscripts: poems 1 and 2 are lost in RIA 23 M 47 (b) as the text here is acephalous, RIA 12 F 7 only gives BmMM and thus no poems after number 22, while RIA 23 M 47 (a) only gives DCC, the first poem here being number 25. Note that despite breaking off unfinished, the damage to RIA 24 P 6 results only in the loss of the last stanzas of LnC.

An overview of the poems occurring in Group III as well as their respective number of stanzas shows that there is some variation, which we will briefly discuss:

poem 1: 3 qq	poem 13: ---	poem 22: 15 qq	poem 33: 13 qq
poem 2: 1 / 5 qq	poem 17: 3 qq	poem 25: ---	poem 42: 24 / 28 qq
poem 7: ---	poem 18: 2~3 qq	poem 26: 3 qq	
poem 10: ---	poem 20: 5 qq	poem 27: 1~4 qq	
poem 12: 1 q	poem 21: ---	poem 29: 11 qq	

<u>Poem 2 *Dia bhur mbeatha*</u>

Only RIA 24 P 6 shortens this poem to one quatrain while the other manuscripts consistently give five.

Poem 18 *Do tolladh mo leath…*

Only two poems deviate from the three quatrains as they appear in the other seven manuscripts in Group III; we can illustrate the variation by giving the variations alongside a 'complete' version of the poem:

RIA 12 F 7 (1749-50), p. 229	RIA 23 H 16 (1779), p. 246 (21)	RIA 24 P 6 (1783), p. 22
	Do tolladh mo leath dam ghoin om mhullach go talamh mo mallacht don droing rom ghoin rug uaim roinn don anmuin.	Do tolladh mo leth óm mullach go talamh mo mallacht do druing rom ghoin rug uaim dom anmhann.
Da bhfeasadaois Ulad mo dhaláigh mar do traochadh leath mo lamhaig mise an curadh cathbhuadhach nar lag do mharbh morttrath arthanaig.	Da bhfeasaidis Ulad mo dhailaigh mar do traochadh leath mo lamhaicc mise an curra cathbhuadach nár lag dom mharbhadh morthraith tainig.	mise an cura cathbhuadhach nar lag do mharbh mor ttriath arttaine.
ar chathaibh crodha Conocht	Ar eigin do haithentaoi e air chathaibh crodha Connocht muna mbedh clann Chailitin le ttarla mo thaobh do tholla.	Ar eigin do haidhontaoi thacht ar chathaibh croda Conacht muna mbeith clann Chailitin chain le ttarla mo thaobh do tholadh.
le ttarla mo thaobh do tolla.		

If we use the full poem from RIA 23 H 16 (giving quatrains 1a-d / 2a-d / 3a-d) as the basis for analysis, we can note that RIA 12 F 7 considerably shortens the poem to lines 2a-d / 3bd while RIA 24 P 6 gives most of the poem: 1a-d / 2cd / 3a-d. The loss of lines 3a and d here does not have an impact on the *dúnadh*, which is lost in RIA 12 F 7 as a result of the missing first stanza. The loss of stanzas and lines is not due to damage in either of the two manuscripts in which a shorter version of the poem can be found since both RIA 12 F 7 and RIA 24 P 6 are intact where the poem occurs.

Poem 27 *Cú Chulainn budh hamhra…*

In RIA 24 P 6 only the first quatrain of the poem is given, which in its fullest form in this group has four stanzas and appears thus in seven manuscripts. It is noteworthy that in RIA 24 P 6 the first part of narrative immediately following the poem seems to have been omitted, as comparison with the other manuscripts in this group shows. Might it be that eye skip has led to omission? Interestingly the one stanza of the poem is given in the course of the prose narrative text, with no 'marking' such as indentation or similar indication of verse at all.

In NLI G 501 stanzas 1 and 2 of the same poem are omitted, although the narrative before and after it corresponds. The omission of the first stanza leads to subsequent loss of the *dúnadh* with the final stanza.

3.2.2 Group IV

As pull-out Table 3-4 indicates, Group IV is the group which is fullest in terms of manuscripts and poetry – and by far the most complex. It appears that Group IV is best sub-divided further, and the following discussion of the poetry will underline this. Firstly, the manuscripts within the (sub)groups are as follows:

IV/a-1
- NLS 72.2.9 (c. 1650)
- TCD 1362/ H.4.21 (1691)

IV/a-2
- BL Eg. 132 (1712-13)
- RIA 23 K 37 (1718)
- Cambridge 10/ Add. 3085 (c) (1755)
- BLI G 457 (1759)
- NLI G 146 (1770)

IV/b-1
- NLS 72.1.38 (?1608-21)

IV/b-2
- TCD 1296/ H.2.5 (1712)
- NLI G 18 (1722)

IV/b-3
- Maynooth C 98 (b) (?1714)
- TCD 1287/ H.1.13 (1746)
- NLI G 296 (1763)
- BL Eg. 150 (1774)
- RIA 23 P 13 (18th cen)

As with the previous groups we shall briefly discuss those instances where poems have been omitted due to damage to a manuscript or partial inclusion of the tale.

NLS 72.2.9 breaks off unfinished towards the very end of BmMM but as Group IV/a-1 comprises only one other manuscript which is a (very faithful) copy of it we can treat this sub-group as if no loss of poetry had occurred. In Group IV/a-2, BL Eg. 132 is slightly acephalous owing to the state of the manuscript, and thus omits poem 1. Cambridge 10/ 3085 (c) only preserves DCC; this is acephalous at the beginning too. Groups IV/b-1 and b-2 are intact; only in IV/b-3 does a rather great loss of text occur in Maynooth C 98 (b) which breaks off at a point in the narrative shortly after Cú Chulainn dies, thus 'losing' DCC. In RIA 24 P 13, on the other hand, only the last stanzas of LnC are lost.

After this initial 'stock-take' of manuscripts we shall move on to the poetry in Group IV. For the sake of clarity and conciseness the following table lists the poems and variation in the number of stanzas across group IV as a whole – where poems have been omitted in a sub-group this will be noted in the discussion of the individual poems below. Note that across the sub-

groups in IV the entire corpus of poems that can be identified within the prose narrative of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* is represented:

poem 1: 3qq	**poem 12:** 1 q	**poem 23:** 4½~5 qq	**poem 34:** 5 qq
poem 2: 7~8 qq	**poem 13:** ---	**poem 24:** ---	**poem 35:** 14~16 qq
poem 3: 4 qq	**poem 14:** 6½~7 qq	**poem 25:** ---	**poem 36:** 4 qq
poem 4: 3~4 qq	**poem 15:** 3½~8 qq	**poem 26:** 3 qq	**poem 37:** ---
poem 5: 5½ ~6 qq	**poem 16:** 4 qq	**poem 27:** 4 qq	**poem 38:** 3 qq
poem 6: ---	**poem 17:** 2-3 qq	**poem 28:** 4~5 qq	**poem 39:** 3 qq
poem 7: ---	**poem 18:** 3 qq	**poem 29:** 11 qq	**poem 40:** 3 qq
poem 8: 11~14 qq	**poem 19:** ---	**poem 30:** 3 qq	**poem 41:** 4 qq
poem 9: 3~4qq	**poem 20:** 4~5 qq	**poem 31:** 3 qq	**poem 42:** 24~30 qq
poem 10: ---	**poem 21:** ---	**poem 32:** 3 qq	**poem 43:** 11 qq
poem 11: 6~7 qq	**poem 22:** 13~15 qq	**poem 33:** 13~14 qq	

The comprehensive list above already suggests that more extensive commentary is required of Group IV than any of the other ones. Since there is a considerable number of poems – forty-three, to be exact – to be taken into account, some are discussed in greater detail than others. Where poems are discussed elsewhere in this thesis appropriate references are provided.

One feature that is worth noting at this point is the fact that the manuscripts in sub-groups IV/b-2 and IV/b-3 frequently transpose lines within the quatrains of individual poems. It is outwith the scope of this preliminary investigation to discuss every instance in detail, but we will note where it happens and illustrate this feature further on the example of a number of select poems.

Poem 2 *Dia mbur mbeatha…*

The poem varies between seven and eight quatrains. IV/a-1 omits the second half of quatrain 6, in IV/a-2 BL Eg. 132 and NLI G 146 do the same, while RIA 23 K 37 and G 457 give a new 'compound stanza' made up of lines 6ab and 7ab, thus 'losing' one stanza. IV/b-1+2 correspond but in IV/b-2 lines are transposed. In IV/b-3 the last quatrain has been omitted.

Poem 3 *A Leabharcham luaimneach*

The poem only occurs in IV/a and has been omitted in all manuscripts in IV/b. It consistently has four quatrains in IV/a.

Poem 4 *A dearbhráthair…*

IV/a+2 and IV/b-1 correspond. The manuscripts in IV/b-2+3 omit half a line, further, we can note line transposition here, with the stanzas presented as follows: stanza 1: 1ab / 1c 2a; stanza 2: 2bc / 2d 3a; stanza 3: 3bc / 3d 4d, stanza 4: 4ab. One manuscript in IV/b-3, NLI G 296,

however, omits this last half-stanza (giving 1: 1ab / 1c 2a; stanza 2: 2bc / 2d 3a; stanza 3: 3bc / 3d 4d) and thus retains the *dúnadh* which has been lost due to the transposition in the other manuscripts in IV/b-2+3.

Poem 5 *Do coilleadh…* & poems / 'rhetorics' 6+7 *A Chúagáin… + A Chú Chulainn…*

We will return to these poems (as well as poem 4 above) and discuss them in more detail in section 3.4.3 below.

Poem 8 *Gáir na sluagh…*

The longest version of the poem, with 14 qq, is preserved in NLI G 146 (IV/a-2), and using the order of the stanzas here we can compare the other versions of the poems to illustrate where variations occur. IV/a-1 has 12 qq in total, omitting stanzas 3 and 12 (as they stand in NLI G 146). As for the remaining manuscripts in IV/b-2 besides NLI G 146 we can observe:

- BL Eg. 132: 13 qq in total, omits stanza 12 and gives the last stanzas in the order of 10, 13, 11, 14.

- RIA 23 K 37: 12 qq in total, omitting stanzas 6 and 13.

- NLI G 457: 11 qq in total, omitting stanzas 6, 12 and 13.

As for sub-goup IV/b, IV/b-1 has 12 qq in total, omitting stanzas 3 and 8. IV/b-2 is somewhat more complex. It corresponds to IV/b-1 in terms of the stanzas present and their order but has transposed lines: stanza 1, order d-a-b-c and stanza 12 (last) a-b-c (i.e. last line omitted), thus resulting in the loss of *dúnadh*. In stanza 5 the last line is omitted while the lines of stanza 8 appear in the order d-a-b-c. The second lines of stanzas 10 and 11 are transposed (i.e. 10 has 11b and 11 has 10b). Due to the omitted line in stanza 5 the whole poem, as laid out in the manuscript, appears to have shifted and new stanzas might start in the middle of a line, etc.

IV/b-3 corresponds to IV/b-2 in terms of the layout / presentation of the stanzas with the exception that in BL Eg. 150 lines 19-20 have been omitted.

In this poem stanzas 11-13 all have same first line, (*Do gheansa gniomh talcair trenseang*), where only two of the three given (and it seems that omissions most frequently occur here) elements of the omitted stanza seem to have been incorporated into those which are given, and we can thus trace an echo of the omitted stanza(s).

Poem 9 *Atá gleo…*

This poem is interesting in that it seems to vary in every sub-group. The longest version with four stanzas is found in IV/a-2. IV/a-1 and b-1 both omit one stanza, while in IV/b-2 and b-3 line omission and transposition make it difficult to 'reconstruct' the stanzas. Since the poem is

rather short a representative version from each sub-group has been reproduced below to illustrate the variations more clearly. Note how the *dúnadh* as preserved in IV/a-2 and IV/b-1 has been lost in IV/a-1 and IV/b-2+3 due to line transposition, the ending of the fourth line here occurring as the opening to the poem:

IV/a-1 (TCD 1362)	IV/a-2 (Eg. 132)	IV/b-1 (NLS 72.1.38)	IV/b-2+3 (NLI G 18)
A bantra*cht* rodru*m* me*aradh* sib*h* do rad oineach cie fil forsna creach*aibh* cuic*h* a b*h*antra*cht* b*h*an	Ata gleo ro*m* m*h*ed*hair* cia do rat*h* o meach*aibh* cia fein for na creach*a* id*air* ban*n*tra*cht* mban.	Atá gleó rom m*h*er*adh*. cía fuil a*r*na c*r*each*uibh*. nó cía tug ó meac*h*uib*h*. eid*ir* b*h*an*n*t*r*a*cht* mban.	Bantra*cht* mban ata gleo rom m*h*ear*adh*. cia fuil air na creach*aibh* no cia tug om eac*h*aib*h*. eid*ir* To*cht* go Glean*n* na mBog*h*ar noca conar g*h*air rom c*h*arsad
To*cht* a nGlean na mBogair noc*h*or b*h*i mo c*h*onoir oir ni ba saog*h*al mo s*h*aog*h*al nior leo	Te*cht* a nGlean*n* na mBod*har* nocha ni mo *conair* mo triall an is doiluig*h* nochan obair dam*h*.	To*cht* go Glen*n* na mBod*har*. noc*h*a conair g*h*ar do c*h*úad*hus* fe*cht* áon*ar*. dáoib*h*si níor sum baog*h*al.	san Mum*h*an do cuad*hus* fea*cht*aon*air* dib*h*si nior som baoig*ha*l. mo saog*h*al ní leo na caruidne marsad. g*ur* t*h*aoisuid liom gleo.
na cur*adh* ro*m* c*ar*sat sa Mum*h*an ni m*air*set nior t*h*og*h*a ger t*h*ugsat 's nior g*h*ab*h*sat re mo gleo.	Do cuad*hus* an*n* fe*cht* aon*ar* dib*h*sam*h* nir sam baog*h*uil do cin*n*in*n* air gac*h* aoinf*er* mo saog*h*ail nir leo.	Mo s*h*áog*h*al ní léo. na curaid*h* rom e*ar*sad. san mugh*adh* níor t*h*agt*h*a g*ur* t*h*áot*h*sed rém g*h*léo.	
	Na c*u*raid*h* rom cars*at* sa Mum*ain* nir mars*at* tag*h*ta g*ur* tag*h*sat nir g*h*ab*h*sat rem gleo.		

Poem 10 ('rhetoric') *Éirigh a Chú Chulainn*

In Group IV/a this poem / 'rhetoric' is introduced as being spoken by Badhbh; in IV/b (and Group III, for that matter) it is, however, spoken by the *mac fá sine do chloinn Chailitín*. We will return to the poem and this particular passage of narrative in section 3.4.3 below.

Poem 11 *A Chúagáin…*

In IV/a-1+2 the poem begins *A Chú Chulainn Chuailgne chruaidh*, thus substituting the address *Chúagáin* for *Cú Chulainn*, but otherwise corresponds to IV/b-1. IV/b-2 gives the same stanzas as IV/b-1 but in stanzas 2 and 6 transposes some lines. In stanza 2 this transposition is quite remarkable. IV/b-2 is here presented as the stanza is laid out in the manuscript:

IV/b-1 (NLS 72.1.38)	**IV/b-2** (NLI G 18)
Da ndec*h*sa a n-agh*aidh* an tslúaigh. bíaid*h* u*air* is b*adh* dainim*h* d*h*aoib*h* ge naisg*er* or*m* dol na ndíaigh. a Níam*h* ing*en* C*h*ealtc*hair* c*h*aoím	Dol na ndiaig a Niam*h* da neac*h*sa a n-aigh*idh* an tsluaig bia uair is b*udh* daini*mh* daoib*h*. ge naisgir oruin [Cealtuir c*h*ruaid

From stanza 6 onwards line transposition gives the stanza as follows: 6d (end) ab / 6c d(end) 7a / 7bc / ?unique line 7d.

IV/b-3 corresponds to IV/b-2 but omits stanza 5, there is, however, an extra line in the final stanza.

Poem 14 *Nírsat eaglach…*

This poem and prose preceding and following it are discussed in section 6.3.5 ('Case study a)'), it shall suffice to say here that transposition of stanzas occurs in IV/b-2 and b-3.

Poem 15 *A Chathfaidh…*

IV/a-1 and a-2 correspond, as do IV/b-1, b-2, and b-3, but between IV/a and IV/b there are discrepancies as the poem in IV/b is considerably shorter and there is subsequent loss of a *dúnadh*.

Poem 16 *A Dheichtine…*

This poem corresponds in all manuscripts in Group IV, no transposition occurs in IV/b-2 or IV/b-3.

Poem 17 *A fhir na toirmisg…*

IV/b-1 and b-2 omit the third and final stanza as it appears in all manuscripts in IV/a (causing the loss of *dúnadh*). In IV/b-3 not only the poem, but also a section of the prose preceding and following it, has been omitted: we find poem 16 *A Dheichtine* and the episode in which Cú Chulainn bids his mother farewell but the following prose narrative, poem 17, and the prose immediately after it has been 'condensed' into one short paragraph, omitting the poem entirely.[113] While any conversational exchange that may occur in the other manuscripts has thus been omitted, the names of the places Cú Chulainn passes are still listed and correspond.

Poem 18 *Do tolladh…*

This poem consistently has three stanzas in all manuscripts in Group IV; in IV/b-2 and b-3, however, line transposition occurs in stanza 1 where we find the lines in the order of d-a-b-c, resulting in the loss of a *dúnadh*.

Poem 20 *Mo cheann duit…* & poem 21 ('rhetoric') *Coimhéirigh... / Atá Cú Chulainn…*

Both poem 20 and poem / 'rhetoric' 21 are discussed in the context of 'case study b)' in section 6.3.5. We can note here that with regard to poem 20, IV/b-2 and b-3 omit one stanza, giving a total of four where the other manuscripts in Group IV have five stanzas.

Poem 22 *Goirt rom ghaoth trem chneas…*

The longest version of the poem, with fifteen stanzas, can be found in groups IV/a-1 and a-2 where it corresponds, only NLI G 457 (IV/a-2) transposes stanzas 2 and 3 (i.e. giving 1, 3, 2, 4 etc).

 IV/b-1 omits stanzas 7 and 12, giving a total of thirteen stanzas. IV/b-2 has fourteen stanzas as it retains stanza 12 as omitted in IV/b-1. We find, however, that IV/b-2 adds one line to stanza 11 but omits last line of the final stanza, thus losing the *dúnadh*. The lines in stanza 5 are transposed and given as d-a-b-c. For this stanza IV/b-3 only gives 5 b-c, omitting the first half as it stands in IV/b-2 but otherwise corresponds to IV/b-2, also with regard to the extra line in stanza 11.

Poem 23 *Rom ghabh aniugh…*

All the manuscripts in IV/a-1+2 and IV/b-1 correspond, giving five stanzas. The manuscripts in IV/b-2+3 omit half of stanza 4 (with the exception of Maynooth 98 which gives the full stanza)

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[113] The omitted section roughly corresponds to the latter half of §28 and the first half of §29 (pp. 95-97) in Van Hamel's edition of the tale.

and transposes stanzas 3 and 4, giving the order of stanzas as 1, 2, 4 [lines a,c], 3, 5.

Poem 24 'Mystery Poem 2' & poem 25 ('rhetoric') *Goirt rom ghaoth…*

These are discussed elsewhere in this thesis: poem 24 in section 3.4.4 below, and poem / 'rhetoric' 25 in section 6.3.3.

Poem 26 *Ghéibh mo charbat…*

Standing consistently with three stanzas in sub-groups IV/a and IV/b-1, the poem has been omitted in IV/b-2 and b-3. No omission of the preceding prose or of that immediately following the poem has happened.

Poem 27 *Cú Chulainn budh hamhra…*

In all manuscripts in Group IV (as, in fact, in all other groups) the poem is consistently represented with four stanzas. In IV/b-2+3 line transposition occurs within the first stanza, which is given as d-a-b-c. This results in the loss of *dúnadh*, even more so in IV/b-2 where the latter half of the final line in stanza 4 has been left out, which would give the *dúnadh*. The line is complete in the manuscripts in IV/b-3.

Poem 28 *Dursan a Chú Chulainn…*

Sub-groups IV/a-1 and b-1 both correspond, giving the poem with four stanzas. With the exception of one manuscript, NLI G 146, which also gives four stanzas, IV/a-2 omits stanza 3. As with previous poems IV/b-2+3 transpose lines, the transposition, however, differs between IV/b-2 and b-3. If we take the four-stanza poem as the basis and assume that this is the correct order of lines, the transposition in b-2 and b-3 can be illustrated as follows (a slash marks the end of a line, the transposition between the two groups has been highlighted in yellow:

> **IV/b-2**: 1c (end) d / 1ab / 1c (beg.) 2a / 2bc / 3d 4d / 4ab / 4c 5a / 2d 3a / 3bc / 5bd
> **IV/b-3**: 1c (end) d / 1ab / 1c (beg.) 2a / 2bc / 2d 3a / 3bc / 3d 4d / 4ab / 4c 5a / 5bd

The changed order of lines at the beginning of the poem here of course results in the loss of a *dúnadh*. Note how line 5c has been omitted entirely. Noteworthy also is that line 4d is phrased quite differently from the other manuscripts – where elsewhere find *do sluaghaibh móra Mumhan*, both IV/b-2 and b-3 give *sluagh gan Gaodhal*.

Poem 29 *Aonmharcach…*

The poem is consistently represented throughout the group with eleven stanzas, the order of which corresponds. In IV/b-2 and b-3, line transposition occurs within the stanzas, the lines all being laid out in the same manner (a slash here indicating the end of a line). Not all stanzas have transposed lines, however, and there appears to be a pattern of one stanza transposed, two 'correct' (the correct stanzas are given in square brackets):

> 1da / 1bc [2+3: ab /cd] 4da / 4bc [5+6: ab /cd] 7da/ bc [8+9: ab /cd] 10d (end) ab / cd (beg.) 11a / 11bc / 11d + extra line

The transposition of lines d and a in stanza 1, together with the additional line at the end of stanza 11 ('*san mbith mbraonach*') cause the loss of a *dúnadh*, as has been the case in previous poems.

Poem 30 *Sgéala Cú Chulainn…* & poem 31 *Maine Mo-Eipirt…*

An argument can be made for considering poems 30 and 31 together as it appears that they are interchangeable within the sub-groups. From pull-out Table 3-4 it is evident that poem 30 is unique to sub-group IV/a-2 and does not occur in any of the other sub-groups (nor in any of the other groups!); poem 31, on the other hand, does not occur in IV/a-2 but is present – with a corresponding number of three stanzas – in IV/a-2, and all of IV/b.

An examination of the textual context of the two poems shows that they both occur at exactly the same point in the narrative, i.e. after the slaying of Máine by Conall and the *dinnsheanchas*-like information that the nearby stream is called *Sruth Máine* in accordance with the events. In terms of content, however, the poems bear no resemblance: poem 30, *Sgéala Cú Chulainn ós áird*, laments the passing of Cú Chulainn while poem 31, *Máine Mo-Eipirt...*, expresses Conall's satisfaction at having killed the first of Cú Chulainn's adversaries. In anticipation of the examination of *Laoidh na gCeann* in Chapter 7 we can note here that where the lay appears in its longest form, with thirty-five stanzas, the first of these shares the first line of poem 30, *Sgéala Cú Chulainn*. We will consider this in more detail in the context of the discussion of LnC in Chapter 7, more specifically in section 7.2.

From this point onwards a number of the poems, at different points across the sub-groups, have been listed in pull-out Table 3-4 as 'reference' or 'not given'. We will come back to the poems in the text of the discussion of this feature in section 3.4.4 below; in the following assessment of the poems we will simply note within which group the 'referencing' occurs. The discussion of individual poems may therefore be rather brief in this first instance.

Poem 32 *Oighidh Mhaoil…*

This poem has been omitted entirely in IV/b-3 while in IV/b-2 it is 'referenced' but not actually given. Where it does occur in groups IV/a-1 and a-2 and IV/b-1 it corresponds, consisting of three stanzas.

Poem 33 *Uch a chinn…*

In its longest form this poem occurs with fourteen stanzas in IV/b-1. We can use this version of the poem to make some observations on the other sub-goups.

If we take IV/b-1 as a basis, with the order of stanzas being 1-14, the order of stanzas in IV/a-1 is transposed slightly to 4, 1, 3, 2, 5-14. Since all stanzas begin with *Uch a…*, this transposition does not have an impact or result in the loss of the *dúnadh*.

In IV/a-2 all manuscripts but one have 14 qq but give stanzas 3 and 2 transposed. The exception is RIA 23 K 7, which omits stanza 3 and so only has 13 qq. In BL Eg. 132 the poem appears somewhat 'higgledy-piggledy', with lines running into one another, it is therefore necessary to have another manuscript in which the stanzas are clearly defined to assess whether any omissions occur, which is not the case. The youngest manuscript in IV/a-2, NLI G 146, presents the poems with all lines and stanzas laid out neatly and in order.

In IV/b-2 NLI G 18 omits a total of eight lines, which would correspond to two stanzas / quatrains; however, only one stanza (4) is omitted entirely, the other 4 lines are omitted from stanza 1 (one line) and the last stanza, 14 (three lines omitted). Enough remains of the poem to suggest that NLI G 18 was copied from an exemplar that preserved all stanzas of the poem. The omission of lines has an impact on the way in which the poem is presented in the manuscript. Note how the transposition is not consistent:

1ab	3bc	5d 6d (beg.)	7cd	9cd	11c 12a	13c 14a
1c 2a	3d	6ab	8da	10ab	12bc	
2bc	5a	6cd (end)	8bc	10cd	12d 13d	
2d 3a	5bc	7ab	9ab	11dab	13ab	

In the manuscripts of IV/b-3 the four independent lines in stanzas 1 and 14 are equally omitted but stanza 4, which is missing in NLI G 18, is given here (marked in yellow below). Lines are transposed but in a slightly different manner to NLI G 18:

1ab	3bc	5d 6d (beg.)	7cd	9bc	11c 12a	12d 13d
1c 2a	3d 4a	6ab	8da	9d 10a	12bc	13ab
2bc	4bc	6cd (end)	8ab	10bc		13c 14a
2d 3a	4d 5a	7ab	8c 9a	10d 11d		
	5bc			11ab		

Note how line 8a is given twice, causing the different shift in lines to NLI G 18, which would otherwise correspond.

The other manuscript in IV/b-2, TCD 1296/ H.2.5 (which in fact is the older of the two) displays features of both NLI G 18 and IV/b-3: it gives stanza 4 as omitted in NLI G 18 but in terms of line division corresponds to the manuscripts in the latter groups.

Poem 34 *Dún Dealgan an dúnsa…*

This poem can only actually be found in sub-group IV/a as it has been omitted entirely in IV/b-3 but 'referenced' in IV/b-1+2. Where the poem stands it consistently has five stanzas and corresponds in every other respect (order of stanzas / lines etc.).

Poem 35 *Uchán ach…*

The longest version of this poem can be found in IV/a-1, where it has sixteen stanzas – we may use this as our 'basis text' for comparison with the other groups. In IV/b-1 the poem is the same but only consists of fourteen stanzas, omitting stanzas 2 and 4 as they stand in IV/a-1. The poem is 'referenced' in IV/b-2 and thus not actually given, and omitted entirely in IV/b-3.

Sub-group IV/a-2 is slightly more complex: here we have sixteen stanzas, which correspond to IV/a-1, but three of the four manuscripts in IV/a-2 (namely, RIA 23 K 37, Cambridge 10/ Add. 3085 (c), NLI G 457) omit the first two lines of stanza 12, thus causing a shift within the rest of poem: the latter two lines of a stanza (laid out in lines of two, i.e. first half of stanza in one line, second in the next) appear to be the first of the next stanza. This of course gives the last stanza three lines when, in actual fact, of the total three lines only lines 2 and 3 are the 'real' last stanza and line 1 is the second half of the penultimate stanza. We have to trace the poem backwards in order to establish where the shift occurs, and what has been left out. Interestingly NLI G 146, the fourth and youngest poem in IV/a-2 gives the missing half stanza of stanza 12 and so has full the sixteen stanzas of the poem.

The 'problem' might lie with the oldest manuscript in IV/a-2, namely BL Eg. 132, where exactly at the point where this omission in stanza 12occurs in other manuscripts we can find a scribal error: the scribe gives the beginning of stanza 11, then the second half of stanza 12, then the full stanza 12 again, but marks this with *punctum delens*. The missing part of stanza 11 is supplied in one line.

We could suggest two possibilities for the transmission of the error if we hypothetically assume that next manuscript by date – RIA 23 K 37 – was using BL Eg. 132 as an exemplar: 1) the addition of the missing part in stanza 11 in BL Eg. 132 occurred after RIA 23 K 37 had been copied from it, the latter incorporating the 'correction' indicated by *punctum delens* but which

results in the loss of a stanza 2). The missing stanza was already there but as it is crammed into one line and the *punctum delens* in this section have been applied rather haphazardly, the scribe of RIA 23 K 37 may have assumed that the omission applied to the whole chunk of the poem, and copied accordingly. There is then the possibility that the scribe of NLI G 146 had access to the – corrected – BL Eg. 132, understood both the added stanza as well as the omission indicated by *punctum delens*, and thus copied the poem in a correct manner.

Poems 36-39:

In poems 36-39 we can note the greatest activity in terms of 'referencing' – none of the poems are actually given in IV/a-2 but are 'referenced'; they have been entirely omitted in IV/b-3. We will discuss in detail in section 3.4.4 below

Poem 40 *Ní hiad na cairde…*

Ní hiad na cairde... only occurs in IV/a and IV/b-1 but has been omitted in both IV/b-2 and b-3. Where it does stand in the manuscripts we can note that no variation occurs, and the poems correspond.

Poem 41 *An glaise-si...*

The poem has only been omitted entirely in IV/b-3, in IV/b-2 it has been 'referenced' but is not actually given in either of the two manuscripts. In IV/a-1+2 and IV/b-1 the poem consistently has four stanzas and also corresponds otherwise.

Poem 42 *Laoidh na gCeann*

The famous 'Lay of the Heads' is discussed in detail in Chapter 7, we can note here that it is present all throughout the manuscripts of Group IV with the exception of Maynooth C 98 (c), where it has been lost due to the fact that the text breaks off unfinished.

Poem 43 *Claoitear in feart…*

The final poem in the narrative is only given in IV/a-2. It has been omitted entirely in IV/a-1 and b-3 but has been 'referenced' in IV/b-1+2. Where the poem is given it corresponds, consisting consistently of eleven stanzas.

3.2.3 Group V

Group V is a group comprising 'miscellaneous' manuscripts which cannot be classified into any of the other groups, for a number of reasons which we will discuss below. The following six manuscripts make up Group V:

- 72.1.45 (?16th cen)
- Franciscan A 25 (?1620s)
- RIA C vi 3 (?1633)
- Maynooth C 38 (j) (18th cen)
- RIA 24 B 22 (c. 1772)
- Maynooth M 51 (1792)

As the colour coding implies, the majority of the manuscripts do not preserve the text in full due to damage to the manuscript.

NLS 72.1.45 (which formed the basis for Van Hamel's edition of our tale) appears to be the oldest manuscript preserving the prose narrative, but it is also very incomplete with only six pages of our text surviving. In addition, in NLS 72.1.45 'all poems have been omitted, with the exception of one towards the end.'[114] This is poem 33, *Uch a chinn ón…* which is, however, largely illegible.

Franciscan A 25 preserves the beginning of the tale but breaks off not far into the text; those pages that do remain have mostly faded, to the extent that the text has been rendered illegible. There does seem to be some poetry, going by the layout of the text in the manuscript, but the text itself is too faint to identify the poems.

What is left of our text in RIA C iv 3 is one folio (two pages), most of which are taken up by LnC. Luckily the 'lay' is preserved almost in its entirety, with only one stanza lost. Portions of the poem occurring immediately before LnC in the course of the narrative are preserved, yet only enough to identify the poem but not enough to be able to comment on the number of stanzas.

Maynooth C 38 (j), like RIA C iv 3, is very fragmentary. Only one folio (two pages) remain, seemingly from the beginning of the tale since part of poem 2, *Dia bhur mbeatha*, can be found here.

The classification of the manuscripts into groups, as we have seen, is based upon the poetry contained within every manuscript; the four manuscripts from Group V discussed above do not preserve enough poetry to allow for the application of the classification as used for the other manuscripts. This is largely due to the fact that the manuscripts are too damaged to preserve enough of the narrative – and thus poetry – to comment on their relationship with the other

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[114] Van Hamel, *Compert Con Culainn*, p. 70.

manuscripts. We have not yet considered the final two manuscripts in Group V, RIA 24 B 22 and Maynooth M 51. Unlike the other manuscripts in this group, both are complete and the text is preserved in its entirety. In RIA 24 B 22, which gives only DCC, all poems have been omitted, and we therefore cannot classify it according to a system that relies on the poetry as a basis. As we can see from the Table 3-4, Maynooth M 51 does preserve a number of poems in the first part of the text, but omits all poetry in DCC. In order to comment conclusively on either manuscript, we would have to carry out a close textual reading of the two manuscripts alongside manuscripts from Groups I-IV, so as to establish to which group the two correspond most closely with regard to the prose narrative. Due to the length of the text, this is a task outwith the scope of this thesis, and will at this point have to remain a desideratum to be addressed in the course of future study.

3.2.4 Group VI

Our final group, Group VI, includes those manuscripts that preserve LnC where it occurs 'independently', i.e. outwith its prose context. The manuscripts are:

- NLS 72.1.37 (BDL) (1512-29)
- NLS 72.1.36 (1691)
- TCD 1354/ H.4.13 (1713)
- NLS 73.2.2 ('Turner MS') (1784)
- Cambridge 10/ Add. 3085 (b) (1748)
- RIA 24 B 26 (1760-63)
- RIA 23 N 14 (1766)
- RIA 23 L 24 (1766-69)
- NLS 72.3.10 ('Kennedy's Collection') (1774-83)
- RIA 23 L 13 (1782)
- RIA 23 G 20 (1788)

We shall not go into any great detail with regard to LnC here, since the 'lay', its transmission and features that occur within the various manuscripts are discussed in Chapter 7. It can be noted, however, that all manuscripts are complete and no loss of text occurs anywhere.

Two manuscripts, as we can see from pull-out Table 3-4, preserve a number of other poems from *Oidheadh Con Culainn* besides LnC. These manuscripts are TCD 1354/ H.4.13 and NLS 73.2.2, the so-called 'Turner Manuscript'. In both we find a total of five poems, only two of which, however, overlap:

- <u>TCD 1354/ H.4.13:</u> poems 33 (12 qq), 34 (3 qq), 35 (16 qq), 42 (29 qq), 43 (6 qq)
- <u>NLS 73.2.2:</u> poems 22 (15 qq), 27 (4 qq), 29 (11 qq), 33 (13 qq), 42 (30 qq).

The overlapping poems are poem 33, *Uch a chinn ón uch a chinn*, and poem 42, *Laoidh na gCeann*; we can see, however, that the number of stanzas in these poems differs in the two manuscripts.

If we go back to pull-out Table 3-4, it is very interesting to consider the poems which occur in TCD 1354/ H.4.13 and NLS 73.2.2 in the context of their occurrence across all the manuscripts. With the exception of LnC, all of the poems that can be found in TCD 1354/ H.4.13 otherwise only occur in Group IV, and more specifically, are only consistently represented here in sub-group IV/a-2, which in turn affirms this particular grouping. The poems in NLS 73.2.2, on the other hand, belong to the handful of poems which can be found in every single manuscript group (with the exception, of course, of Group V). With regard to the number of stanzas, the poems in NLS 73.2.2 correspond to the poems as they stand in Group III and IV/a-1 and a-2.

We will look at the two manuscripts from Group VI in some more detail in the next section which, in order to help establish the relationships between the groups further, will be concerned with the poems on an inter-group level.

3.3   The poetry on an inter-group level

Thus far we have made some preliminary observations on the poetry on an intra-group level. At the beginning of this chapter, however, we have already hinted at the fact that there are – at times considerable – differences between the groups, especially with regard to the number of stanzas a poem may preserve, as was illustrated in Table 3-2 ('Occurrence of poems across pre-19th century (in order of poems)') and Table 3-3 ('Occurrence of poems across pre-19th century (by frequency)') above. We will now consider the poems on an inter-group level, with a view to establishing where the most significant discrepancies can be noted. The examination on an inter-group level shall first and foremost be concerned with Groups I-IV, and unless otherwise stated, 'all groups' in this section shall refer to Groups I-IV. We have already seen that Group V is unsuitable for any further investigation at this stage. Group VI will only be discussed for the poems found within it other than LnC (cf. section 3.2.4 above), which we will leave aside for the time being and return to, in detail, in Chapter 7.

To begin with, it is of interest to establish which poems can be found consistently in all groups. Taking into account that there is a total of forty-three poems that occur in the manuscripts preserving *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, the number of poems which are common to all our groups is surprisingly small, being a total of eleven:

	I	II	III	IV	VI
1. *Ataid sunna bhur n-airm*	2 qq	1 qq	3 qq	3 qq	---
6. *A Chúagáin Mhuirtheimhne*	[n/a]	[n/a]	[n/a]	[n/a]	---
7. *A Chú Chulainnn coimhiric*	[n/a]	[n/a]	[n/a]	[n/a]	---
13. *Annamh leat, a Liath Macha*	[n/a]	[n/a]	[n/a]	[n/a]	---
20. *Mo cheann duit a Chú*	1 q	1 q	4 qq	4~5 qq	---
21. *Coiméirigh... / Atá...*	[n/a]	[n/a]	[n/a]	[n/a]	---
22. *Goirt rom ghaoth trem chneas...*	6 qq	8 qq	13~15 qq	13½~15 qq	15 qq
25. *Goirt rom ghaoth*	[n/a]	[n/a]	[n/a]	[n/a]	---
27. *Cú Chulainn budh hamhra...*	4 qq	4 qq	1~4 qq	4 qq	4 qq
29. *Aonmharcach sunn air an maigh*	9 qq	6 qq	11 qq	11 qq	11 qq
33. *Uch a chinn ón...*	8 qq	8 qq	13 qq	13~14 qq	12~13 qq

Table 3-5: Poems common to all MSS (Groups I-IV & VI)

Of the eleven poems that are common to Groups I-IV (and, to a certain extent, Group VI), five are in fact 'rhetorics', which we shall leave aside for the moment and come back to at a later stage in this thesis (in Chapter 6). This leaves us with six poems and as the table illustrates, these display considerable variation with regard to the number of stanzas in each group. As with the intra-group comparisons and observations on the poetry, we will move through the poems one by one to see what impact the variation of stanzas has on the occurrence of each poem within the respective group.

Poem 1 *Ataid sunna...*

Groups II and III preserve the longest version of the poem where it occurs with three stanzas. In Group I the first stanza has been omitted, while in Group III only stanza 2 is given; in both cases the *dúnadh* is lost. The poem is spoken by Vulcan on handing the specially crafted weapons to Cailitín's children: stanza 2 is the one detailing the names of the spears and swords and thus probably most relevant to the scene while the first recaps the journey of Cailitín's children – we can see how in the context of the prose narrative stanza 2, which is consistently represented, would be the most striking of the three.

Poem 20 *Mo cheann duit...*

With this poem it is again the case that Groups I and II give versions that are shorter than those in the latter groups. Whereas in Groups III and IV we find the poem with up to five stanzas, I and II only give one – again this is the one stanza which is most relevant to the scene within which it occurs. We will return to *Mo cheann duit...* in section 6.3.5 ('Case study b)') where we will consider the poem and the passages of prose narrative preceding and following it. There the passages will be cited in full, which will allow for a clearer illustration of the omission.

Poem 22 *Goirt rom ghaoth trem chneas...*

The third poem occurring across all groups is also the one which displays the greatest variation in the number of stanzas on an inter-group level. In Group I we find 6 stanzas, in Group II 8 stanzas, Group III gives 15 stanzas while the manuscripts in Group IV fluctuate between having 13½ and 15 stanzas. Groups III and IV (where this has 15 stanzas) correspond, Groups I and II both begin the poem with stanzas that in III and IV occur within the poem – the beginning and thus the *dúnadh* is therefore lost. The fact that the first stanza in Groups I and II is different from that elsewhere also means that at first glance one might suspect a different poem altogether; only a reading of the manuscript alongside one that preserves the 'full' poem reveals that it is in fact the same poem but with omissions.

The poem is spoken by Cú Chulainn shortly before his death and addressed to his charioteer Laogh, whom he urges to return to his wife and to spread the word of his heroic deed. While the 'full' poem begins with a lament of sorts – *Goirt rom ghaoth...* – Groups I and II chose as a first stanza one that directly addresses Laogh: in Group I the first stanza begins *Beir mo bheannacht leat, a Laogh*, Group II uses the stanza beginning *Éirigh, a Laoigh, fa mór sgéal*.

In Group VI the poem can be found in NLS 73.2.2, the 'Turner Manuscript', where it stands as the first poem from *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. It has 15 stanzas here, their order corresponding to IV/a-2.

Poem 27 *Cú Chulainn budh hamhra*

Of the four poems occurring in all our groups (excluding Group V) this is the only poem showing consistency across the groups, being uniformly represented with 4 stanzas.[115] Spoken by Conall over the decapitated body of his fosterbrother Cú Chulainn this poem corresponds in Groups I, II, III, IV and VI with no variation occurring in the number, order, or occurrence of stanzas.

Poem 29 *Aonmharcach...*

Once again the longest versions of the poem – with 11 stanzas – can be found in Groups III and IV; the poems here correspond in the order of stanzas. In Group I we only find 9 stanzas, the first and last stanzas have been retained and omission occurs internally, thus not impacting on the *dúnadh*. In Group II, however, we only find six stanzas, what is usually the first stanza has been omitted and the poem starts with an 'internal' stanza, thus losing the *dúnadh*. It is

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[115] The only exception being two manuscripts in Group III where the poem stands with 1 and 2 stanzas respectively; we have noted and commented on this variation in section 3.2.1 above.

noteworthy also that this is the only instance where, when variation occurs on an inter-group level, a poem in Group I has more stanzas than that in Group II. The poem can also be found in the 'Turner Manuscript' in Group VI where, with 11 stanzas, it corresponds to Groups III and IV.

Poem 33 *Uch a chinn...*

This is the last poem that is common to all of our Groups I-IV. It is also the only poem besides LnC where the two manuscripts in Group VI overlap, although they differ by one stanza in terms of numbers. Groups I and II have the shortest version of the poem, both groups give (or omit) the same stanzas.

Group IV/a-2 and the 'Turner Manuscript' in Group VI correspond, giving the same stanzas in the same order. The poems in the sub-groups in IV, as well as TCD 1354/ H.4.13 in Group VI, ultimately give the same stanzas (although the numbers of stanzas may vary by one or two). The order of stanzas does not always correspond; however, the poem is quite formulaic: the beginning of stanzas in the first half of the poem reads '*uch a...*' which is echoed by the final stanza, this, in turn, consistently appears as the final stanzas in all poems and the *dúnadh* is thus retained.

One final poem is worth considering which is not common to all groups, yet where it does occur displays a great variation on an inter-group level. This is poem 8, *Gáir na sluagh*. It is omitted in Group III, but between Group I and Groups II and IV we have a great discrepancy. The latter two groups include the poem with 13 and 11~13 qq respectively; we have already discussed the variations in Group IV in section 3.2.2 above. Group I, however, only gives 5 stanzas – less than half of the 'full' poem. It does, however, retain the first and last stanzas and thus the *dúnadh*; all 'omissions' of stanzas happen internally within the poem.

In conclusion we can note that the longest versions of the poems which appear in all our groups can be found in Group IV, i.e. if there are discrepancies in the number of stanzas the longest version will be in a manuscript in Group IV and shorter elsewhere. The variation in the number of stanzas poses the question which form the earliest versions of the poems would have taken – are they represented more closely by the shorter or longer poems? The question has to be extended for the overall text: would the earliest version of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* have been very full in terms of poetry or would it have contained comparatively little verse? What seems

to be the earliest manuscript, namely NLS 72.1.45,[116] is incomplete and contains (almost) no poetry; it is therefore questionable to what extent it represents the 'exemplar' of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. This is a point that has been commented on by Proinsias Mac Cana, who noted:

> The curious fact is, however, that the earliest manuscript of the modern version omits all but one of the poems even though they appear to have been in the archetype, and, since this manuscript is the basis of Van Hamel's edition, the result is that the published text gives the impression of an unbroken prose narrative and to that extent understates the role of prosimetrum.[117]

The two oldest manuscripts after NLS 72.1.45 which are complete and preserve prose as well as poetry both fall into Group IV: these are NLS 72.1.38 and NLS 72.2.9, which date to 1608-21 and c. 1650 respectively.[118] Two further manuscripts which date to the 17th century fall into the 'miscellaneous' Group V and are so damaged / fragmentary that they cannot be considered. Yet another manuscript from the 17th century, however, is RIA 23 M 25, which dates to 1684 and has been classified into Group I. Thus, already by the late 17th century a number of different versions of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* were in circulation, ranging substantially in the number of poems they contain. The fact that the groups are so consistent internally suggests strongly that there was a tradition of copying rather than personal scribal choice and interference underlying the different versions. We will consider further aspects of text and transmission in this chapter and throughout this thesis to see whether we can determine more clearly which of our manuscripts may be the closest representative of the original exemplar.

3.4 Some textual observations on the prose narrative

Having made some preliminary observations on the poetry of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, we must now turn to the prose narrative. Considering the length of the text and the number of manuscripts to be taken into account, this is a complex task. We will therefore focus on a number of features that stand out and have already been hinted at in the discussion above since they follow on from an examination of the poetry. We cannot fully dismiss the poetry in our 'textual observations' but unlike the discussion so far, when we look at a poem on the pages to

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[116] Although we have seen, of course, that no exact date can be provided for this manuscript, something else that poses the question how representatively this manuscript can be used.

[117] P. Mac Cana, 'Prosimetrum in Insular Celtic Literature', in J. Harris & K. Reichl (eds), *Prosimetrum: Crosscultural Perspectives on Narrative in Prose and Verse* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 109.

[118] NLS 72.2.9 is not in fact complete as it breaks off towards the end of BmMM, a very faithful copy of it, however, is preserved in TCD 1362/ H.4.21. We have already discussed this in the context of the draft catalogue and will consider the scribes further in Chapter 4.

come this will generally be done with a view to taking into account the preceding and following passages of prose narrative.

3.4.1 *Deargruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh*

On consulting pull-out Table 3-4 we can see that especially towards the ending of the tale there is a great discrepancy between the groups with regard to the poems that can be found. This goes for the poems from about poem 29 *Aonmharcach...* onwards: we can see that Groups I-III include about three or four poems of numbers 30-43 while within the manuscripts in Group IV, all of them are preserved. In terms of the narrative, this discrepancy occurs with Conall Cearnach's 'Red Rampage', *Deargruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh*. The nature of most of the poems occurring in the *Deargruathar*, as we can see from the table, is that they are short, a couple of stanzas, which recap the events related in the passage immediately preceding it. These events are Conall's slaying of Cú Chulainn's adversaries. The question arises whether the omission, or inclusion, of these poems in the various groups has a bearing on the prose narrative. For instance, if a poem as it stands in Group IV is omitted in Group I, is a whole scene omitted in the prose narrative here too?

I have briefly examined the manuscripts with regard to the events of DCC they preserve and it seems that the omission of poems, especially in Groups I-III, does not have an impact on the textual content. The order of the events, that is the order of the people who are slain by Conall, corresponds in Groups I-IV. Where poems occur in one group but are omitted in another, this omission is simply glossed over. To give a concrete example, compare the following short section from Group I (using RIA 23 M 25) and Group IV/b-2 (NLS 72.1.38). Note how the events are ultimately the same but the longer version in IV/b-2 embellishes the description of a scene without adding to its content:

GROUP IV/b-2 (NLS 72.1.38, ?1601-21)	GROUP I (RIA 23 M 25, 1684)
[61] Asa hait*h*le sin táinig *Con*all roim*h*e go maoíd*h*m*h*ec*h* móirea*ch*tac*h* a Tem*hr*aigh amac*h* déis *ar* t*h*uit leis do c*h*éad*ui*bh 7 do c*h*uradh*ui*bh na claoínTem*h*rach et an teol*us* a ttáin*ig* ó T*h*em*h*r*a*igh tárla colla fát*h*ach d*h*ó *a*rna f*h*agb*h*ail do Lugh*ai*dh m*h*ac *Con* Raoí ag forair*e* 7 ag for*ch*oim*h*éad *air* féin, et do f*r*eag*a*ir cac*h* a c*h*eile d*h*íobh 7 do g*h*ab*h*ad*a*r go calma cait*h*b*h*eód*h*a ag com*h*t*h*arr*u*ing 7 ag com*h*t*h*úargain a c*h*eile g*a*n c*h*oigill. 7 tug *Con*all béim neim*h*nec*h* nai*mh*dig*h*e n*e*rtlaidir do C*h*olla san c*h*umasgsi*n* g*u*r b*h*en a c*h*en*n* don c*h*ru*ai*d*h*b*h*éimsin don c*h*urad*h* 7 do c*h*uir an cen*n*soin *ar* an ngad. 'Dar *ar* mbréit*h*ir ám*h*,' *ar Con*all, 'as mait*h* lin*n* cen*n* M*ac* Fát*h*oig*h* do b*h*eith iona [62] lead*h*b*ai*bh ledort*h*a 7 iona c*h*osair c*h*ró um fíag*h*nus*e*.' 7 adub*er*t an laoid*h* an*n*: Cen*n* C*h*olla m*h*eic Fáit*h*eam*h*uil... (3 qq) Tainig *Con*all go c*r*ód*h*a *con*fad*h*ach t*a*r éis an c*h*om*h*ruigsi*n* et an téol*us* do c*h*úaidh tár*l*a Cuillen*n* Breag*h* d*h*ó 7 bá t*r*éinf*h*er ten*n* tóg*h*t*h*a 7 bá cait*h*m*h*iled*h* calma com*h*rad*h*ach a gcat*h*aibh 7 a ccom*h*lan*n*uib*h* an Cuillen*n* sin 7 do d*h*íc*h*en*n* *Con*all go prap é 7 do cuir a c*h*en*n* *ar* an ngad 7 do gab*h* ag m*a*rbad*h* 7 ag mioc*h*órug*h*ad*h* a m*h*uin*n*t*ir*e asa hait*h*le go nd*é*r*n*a aonm*h*aid*h*m anb*h*úainec*h* d*á* raib*h*e san gcat*h*r*a*igh uile roim*h*e eid*ir* m*h*naoi 7 f*h*ior 7 c*h*rod*h* 7 c*h*et*h*r*a* 7 do g*h*ab*h* Conall ag máoid*h*eam*h* c*h*in*n* C*h*uillin*n* do b*h*eith *a*r*a* c*h*ur féin aige agus adb*er*t an laoíd*h*: Cuillen*n* B*h*reag*h* a brúach*adh* mead*h*... (3 qq) Táinig *Con*all roim*h*e í*ar*sin go Fiod*h* Rocaime et do *ch*om*n*air*c* d*h*eath*ach* díom*h*óir do letáoib*h* an f*h*ed*h*a a ccom*h*g*h*air d*h*ó. 'As fíor sin,' *ar* sé, 'as drem éigin d'f*er*uib*h* Éir*enn* atá an*n* súd 7 cuid do b*h*úar 7 do b*h*raig*h*d*ib*h* Ul*adh* aca an*n*.'	[148] I*ar*si*n* tainig Conall roim*h*e go mad*h*mac*h* mor*é*a*ch*tac*h* am*ach* déis *ar* t*h*uit leis do c*h*uradh*ai*bh na Teamh*r*ach, 7 an t-éol*us* in*ar* g*h*ab*h*, tár*l*a Colla m*h*ac Fat*h*a[m]uin dó, *ar* na fagb*h*áil do Lugh*ai*dh m*h*ac Conraoi a b*h*forair*e* *ar* C*h*onal[l] 7 d'f*h*reagair các*h* a c*h*eile gan c*h*oigill. 7 tug Conall béim naimdíg*h*e n*ea*rt láid*ir* do C*h*olla g*u*r b*h*eam an c*eann* don c*h*uraid*h* 7 do c*h*uir *ar* an ngad é. 7 do b*h*íod*h* C*eann* Biorruide ag goid*h* na ccean*n* 7 dá leígion don gad, a ndóig*h* g*u*r móíd*h*e do d*h*éanad*h* Conall éa*ch*ta é. 'D*ar* mo b*h*reit*h*,' *ar* sé, 'as mait*h* lio*m* Mac Fat*h*am*h*uin do b*h*eit*h* a ccos*ar* c*h*ró am f*h*iagnaisi 7 a c*h*eann do b*h*eit*h* *ar* an ngad.' Gluaisios Conall roim*h*e go cród*h*a, 7 an t-eol*us* in*ar* g*h*ab*h*, tár*l*a Cuill*eann* Breag dó, 7 bá tréanfear tean*n* treasb*h*orb an f*ear* sin, gid*h*eadh do d*h*ít*h*c*h*eann Conall é 7 do c*h*uir a c*h*eann *ar* an ngad, 7 do g*h*ab*h* ag m*a*rbad*h* a m*h*uin*n*t*ir*e go nd*e*r*n*ad*h* aoinm*h*aid*h*m an buaineac*h* dá raib*h* roim*h*e, 7 do g*h*ab*h* ag maoid*h*eam*h* an c*h*in*n* do b*h*eit*h* *ar* [chu]*ir* feín aige. Táin*ig* Conall roim*h*e i*ar*sin go fíod*h* cró caoim*h*e, 7 [149] do c*h*onair*c* deatac*h* mor do leit*h*taoib*h* na fead*h*a a ccóm*h*f*h*og*us* dó 'Fíor sin,' *ar* Conall, 'is dream éig*h*in d'f*h*e*a*raib*h* Eir*enn* atá an*n* súd, 7 cuid do b*h*u*a*ir 7 do brag*h*dib*h* Ul*ai*dh aco an*n*.'

The passage above illustrates quite well how one manuscript – or group – may give the same events and textual content in a shortened form while another group may spin out the events by adding poetry. In this particular case, we may ask whether it is the nature of the poems that has led in their omission – they do not add to the tale, really, but are a stylistic device to enforce what has been told in the narrative; omitting them does not result in the loss of any textual details. The fact that in the present passage the older manuscript (NLS 72.1.38) includes poetry while this is missing from the later manuscript suggests that we are dealing with omission of the poems, rather than their addition in a manuscript.

A brief examination of the manuscripts from all groups shows that the order of events, or rather, the order of the people slain by Conall is the same, regardless of whether or not the slayings are related or recapped in poems. We can sum up the order of events after poem 29 *Aonmharcach...*, which, as we have seen, is represented in all of Groups I-IV. In the poem Conall and Lughaidh agree to postpone their duel and meet again at a later stage. From then on the events are as follows:

- Conall meets and slays Máine

- Conall meets Ceann Biorraidhe at Teamhair

- they see Maoil and Miodhna play with Cú Chulainn's decapitated head

- Conall beheads Maoil and Miodhna

- Ceann Biorraidhe is ordered by Conall to take Cú Chulainn's head to Eimhear

- Eimhear speaks a lament over the head

- Conall, in the meantime, meets and subsequently decapitates first Earc mac Cairbre and then Muireadhach; he then meets Colla and after him Cuilleann Breagha (see passage above), then Cailitín's children, Connla, and finally Lughaidh – Conall claims all of their heads and spears them on a *gad* with which he returns to Eimhear.

Only in the final two events can we detect a slight textual variation within the groups: the 'Lughaidh episode' varies in length: in some groups it includes a lot of dialogue between the enemies while in others this is shortened to mere descriptions. In Group III, Conall returns to Dún Dealgan and not Eamhain Macha, as is the case elsewhere. In this group we also find a description of Conall erecting a gravestone with an *ogham* inscription over Cú Chulainn's and Eimhear's grave. The textual variation being confined to Group III further corroborates the existence of our groups.

It is a case, then, that only the very final portion of the *Deargruathar* varies, whereas the main events are consistent within all manuscripts. We have seen that the omission of poetry within the *Deargruathar* does not have an impact on the textual content; this, in turn, raises questions as to why they were omitted or included. As we can see from pull-out Table 3-4

'referencing' also occurs mainly with regard to these poems in DCC: were they considered unimportant enough to be left out? The fact that the poems can be found within our earliest manuscripts (classified into sub-groups IV/a-1 and IV/b-2) suggests that we are not dealing with a case of later additions of poems here. We can more feasibly suggest that what is happening in Groups I-III is an abridgement of the tale by omission of poetry while retaining the details and events of the prose narrative.

3.4.2 The ending of the tale in Group II

As pull-out Table 3-4 illustrates, the seven manuscripts in Group II contain the same poems, all with the same number of stanzas; further, the poems all occur in the same order throughout the tale and the stanzas within each poem correspond in all manuscripts. One feature of Group II that deserves further comment, however, concerns the ending of the tale. There are two aspects worth considering with regards to the ending of the tale in Group II: textual differences and LnC.

Of our seven manuscripts a number break off unfinished and thus do not actually preserve the ending of the tale. We can illustrate this more clearly and sum up the information in a table before discussing each aspect in turn. Note that for the discussion we shall refer to the manuscripts using the numbering 1-7; as in Table 3-4 the manuscript are arranged in chronological order from oldest (1) to youngest (7):

	1. RIA 23 K 7 (1701)	2. RIA 23 C 26 (c) (1761)	3. RIA 3 B 43 (?1765)	4. RIA 23 C 22 (1767)	5. RIA 24 B 16 (1767–68)	6. Bodeian Ir. e. 3 (?1789)	7. RIA 24 C 38 (18th cen)
breaks off unfinished		X			X		X
preserves ending	X		X	X		X	
includes LnC	X	X		X			

Of our seven manuscripts, three are incomplete and break off unfinished; these are manuscripts 2, 5 and 7. Manuscript 2 breaks off at a point shortly after Eimhear's lament *Uch a chinn* (poem 33) and so roughly loses the latter half of DCC. In manuscript 5 the narrative is carried as far as the men of Ireland approaching the dead Cú Chulainn, cutting his hand off in order to remove the hero's sword – DCC is therefore lost here in its entirety. Our tale in manuscript 7 breaks off

just before Cú Chulainn's actual death; the last two pages here, however, have darkened to an extent that the text is almost illegible.

LnC traditionally concludes the story of Cú Chulainn's death and Conall's subsequent revenge, and we might therefore ask how manuscript 2 can break off unfinished, yet preserve the 'Lay'. The answer is both simple and unusual: LnC actually precedes the prose narrative in this manuscript; it is, in fact, the item immediately preceding the prose tale. All the same, it is in no way linked to the prose tale; one might expect a colophon or marginal note, maybe, preparing the reader that the 'Lay' anticipates the prose narrative, maybe even requires it to place it in its proper context. With the tale now being incomplete, we have no way of knowing whether a comment might have appeared at the end of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, making reference back to LnC.

There are two further versions of LnC to be found in Group II and as we will see shortly, at least one of them seems equally detached from the narrative, appearing to be more of an 'afterthought'. With some inconsistencies, or variations to the conclusion of the tale that can be noted, it is worth looking at the very final section of the tale as it appears in manuscripts 1, 3, 4, and 6:

1)
23 K 7

[122] (…) go ttug Lugh*aidh* buille briogm*ar* borbnertm*ar* do Conuill gur gerr na cenguil ro bi *air* a laim*h*. 7 *ar* bfaicsin na laim*he* sgaoilte adub*air*t Lugh*aidh* re Conall a lam*h* do cengal 7 do rine aml*aidh*, cid*hedh* b*udh* e críoc*h* 7 foirc*h*en*n* an com*h*ruic sin g*ur* tuit Lugh*aidh* le Conall don lat*h*air sin. ~~Gurb aml*aidh* sin do díoguil Conall Cerrnac*h* bás *Con*cculainn ar cloin*n* C*h*ailitin 7 *ar* Lugh*aidh* m*a*c Conríg*h* 7 *ar* feruib*h* Eir*enn* uile.~~

<div align="right">~~Finis xi march 1701~~</div>

The following 4 pages belong to this tale

[123] As sin do g*h*aib*h* lám*h*b*h*uid*he* re na mac 7 adub*h*airt, 'M*ar* a ram*h*uis ag dít*h*c*h*ean*n*a Cú C*h*ulain*n*, ní dít*h*c*h*en*n*adsa t*h*u a nis.'

'Do d*h*ít*h*c*h*enus,' *air* sé…

3)
3 B 43

[78] Is an*n* san tug Lugh*aidh* buille briog*h*m*h*ar neartm*h*ar do *Con*all gur g*h*ear na cceangail do b*h*i *air* a laim*h*. 7 iar b*h*feicsin na laim*he* sgaoilte adub*h*airt Luigh*idh* le Con*n*all a lam*h* do cceangal 7 druin, 7 aml*aidh* sin le Conall. Iar sin do g*h*aib*h*aid ag tuarguin*n* 7 ag cnam*h*g*h*eara a ceile as a hait*h*le, 7 do badar treimse 7 aims*ir* imc*h*ian ion*n*a diaig sin ag sniom*h* asainte le ceile, a*cht* ata a nig*h* céd*h*na dob*h* e crioc*h* 7 foirc*h*ean*n* na c*h*om*h*raic sin gur t*h*uit Luigh*idh* le beimion*n*aib*h* biot*h*b*h*uad*h*aca sair nertm*h*ara [io]nc*h*rod*h*a *Con*all.

G*ur*ab am*h*laidh sin do crioc*h*muig*h*ed*h* an comrac sin [Con]aill C*h*earna *ar* f*h*earaib*h* Eirion*n* do d*h*iog*h*uilt b*h*áis [C]úc*h*ulluin*n* *air* c*h*lan*n*a cuiripe Cailitin*n* *air* Luigh*idh* mac Conraoi, 7 ar f*h*eraib*h* Eirion*n*

<div align="center">—— crioc*h* ——</div>

4)
23 C 22

[206] (…) go ttug Luig*h*id*h* buille bríog*h*m*h*ar borbneartm*h*ar cum Con*n*uill, ion*n*us gur g*h*éarr na ceangail do b*h*í *air* láim*h* C*h*on*n*uill. Agus *air* bfaicsin na láim*he* sgaoilte do Luig*h*id*h* adub*h*uirt re Con*n*all a lámh do c*h*eangal an at*h*úair. Agus do rin Con*n*all am*h*ladh san, gid*h*eam*h* bud*h* he críoc*h* agus foirc*h*ean*n* an c*h*om*h*ruic sin, gur b*h*ain Con*n*all an cean*n* do Luig*h*id*h* *air* an lát*h*air sin, ag*us* mór d*h*earmad a c*h*ur *air* an ngad. Gluaiseas Con*n*all iar san, gus an ion*n*ad a raib*h* Cúc*h*ulion*n* 7 Eim*h*ir agus do hád*h*lacad*h* Cúc*h*uluin*n* le Con*n*all. 7 is mairsin do diog*h*ail Con*n*all cat*h*b*h*úad*h*ac*h* Cearn*n*ach bás C*h*úc*h*uluin*n* *air* c*h*lan*n* mallaig*h*t*he* Cailitín agus *air* Luig*h*id*h* mac Conraoi ag*us* *air* fearaib*h* glanaille Éirean*n*.

Ag*us* aig se am d*h*iaig*h* Laoi na cCean*n* amog*h* agallam*h* idir Iob*h*ar agus C*h*on*n*all C*h*earn*n*ac*h*.

[208] Aig se Laoid*he* na cCean*n* idir Connalll C*h*earn*n*ach déis a Deargruat*h*air *air* f*h*earaib*h* Eirean*n* *air* mod agallam*h*, ag*us* Iob*h*ar.

6)
Bodleian Ir. e. 3

[49] As an san tug Luig buill*e* briogmar borbneartmar do *Con*all g*ur* gear na ceangal do b*h*i *air* a lam. Iar bfaicsint na laim*he* sgaoilte do Luigh*idh* adub*er*t re Conall a lam*h* do ceangal. 7 ro rinead*h* am*h*la gid*head*h* dob e crioc*h* an com*h*ruig g*ur* tuit Luigh*idh* le Conall. G*ur*ab amla sin do d*h*iogal Conall Cearn*ach* bas Cuc*h*ulloin*n* *ar* clan*n* C*h*ailitin agus *air* Luigh*igh* m*a*c Con*n*raoi 7 air dearuib*h* Eirion*n* uile.

At first glance it appears as if there was a great discrepancy between the four endings of the tale, going simply by the fact that they differ in length. On inspecting the content, however, we see that while there are syntactical and lexical variations the four sections are, in fact, identical in terms of content. All four very succinctly 'wrap up' the tale and Lughaidh's demise; note especially the lack of dialogue and only the use of indirect speech by Lughaidh's character. We can also see that, for instance, in manuscript 3, the final paragraph – which adds to the length of the passage here – simply concludes and sums up the main events: in this case Conall's revenge on Lughaidh, Cailitín's children, and the men of Ireland.

Only two manuscripts here give versions of LnC, in addition to the third already discussed above. We will come to manuscript 1 in just a moment. The other version of LnC here is found in manuscript 4. As we can see from the transcription above, the poem appears somewhat 'tagged on' to the end of the tale, standing with a new headline on a new page. LnC here – as in 2, where it precedes the prose narrative – has 35 stanzas; they both correspond in the order of stanzas.[119] Very interesting is the fact that manuscript 4 changes its orthography of the personal names in the context of the tale. As we can see in the transcription, the manuscript uses 'Eimhir' in the prose narrative. Only one instance, or mention, of 'Eimhir' occurs in the passage above but examination of the text has shown that this spelling is used consistently throughout the tale. In the concluding paragraph on p. 207 in this manuscript, as well as the headline to LnC on p. 208, 'Eimhir' appears as 'Iobhar', and this spelling is used in all five instances of the name occurring throughout the poem. We can find this rather idiosyncratic spelling elsewhere within our pre-19th-century manuscripts: it is used in RIA 23 N 14 which, dating 1766 and written by Ribéard Breatnach, preserves an 'independent' version of LnC, also with 35 stanzas. This of course poses the question whether the 'Lay' in manuscript 4 (?1789) may have been supplied from RIA 23 N 14 which pre-dates manuscript 4.

Of our total thirty-seven manuscripts from the pre-19th-century that preserve LnC, only five (including manuscript 4 in Group II) have a version of the poem with 35 stanzas. Two of these post-date manuscript 4, one is the version in manuscript 2 in Group II, and the final one is RIA 23 N 14. It is of course speculative to assume that RIA 23 N 14 was the exemplar for LnC in manuscript 4, however, the spelling 'Iobhar' is quite distinct and confined to these two manuscripts. Considering that Group II does not seem to have 'traditionally' included LnC, any 35-stanza-version predating manuscript 4 is a contender for the exemplar, unless of course the exemplar is now lost. I would venture to suggest, though, that of our known manuscripts RIA 23 N 14 is the most likely contender.

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[119] LnC (especially the distribution and order of stanzas) is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

Finally, we have manuscript 1 left to consider. The ending of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* is preserved here, as is a version of LnC. As we can see from the transcription above, there is a major difference to the other texts, as the original ending of manuscript 1 was extended (the transcription illustrates these emedations to the manuscript). If we consider 1 as it stood before the additional, or alternative, ending was supplied, we see that it corresponds to the other three manuscripts in Group II, especially manuscript 6. With only the first couple of lines of this extended ending given above, we have to recap on what it is that has been added. We have seen that in the 'traditional' ending in Group II the narrative comes to a sudden close, with the Lughaidh episode being kept rather short and no dialogue occurring. In manuscript 1, the additional narrative describes the duel between Conall and Lughaidh and more detail, giving a conversational exchange between the two warriors before Lughaidh is vanquished. Conall then goes on to kill the nobles (*maithe*) of clann Deaghaidh, adding their heads to the collection on his *gad* before returning to Dún Dealgan and Cú Chulainn's dead body. Here he meets the grieving *Ulaidh* and Eimhear, the encounter culminating in the 'Lay of the Heads', here with 28 stanzas. Following the 'lay' the narrative is concluded by Eimhear's wish to be buried alongside her husband, her death, and Conall erecting a stone on their grave. We have discussed the 'alternative endings' for the overall tale in section 3.4.1, and the ending that has been added to manuscript 1 here corresponds to that found otherwise only in Group III. LnC also corresponds to Group III, both in terms of the number of stanzas as well as the order of stanzas. There are minor lexical and syntactical variations, but these may occur even within the manuscripts classified into the same group.[120] The only noteworthy variation within the ending in manuscript 1 is the fact that the reference found in Group III to the 'writing in ogham' on Cú Chulainn and Eimhear's grave stone has been omitted; the erection of the grave stone itself, however, is noted.

The ending in manuscript 1 appears to be a later addition to the manuscript – note the comment 'The following four pages belong to this tale' following the crossed out initial ending. With no scribal colophon we cannot say how much later these pages were added – it may have happened within days of the tale having been copied – and the *RIA Cat.* (p. 2035) simply notes that 'pp. 123-130 are in different ink and on fresher paper'. In anticipation of the discussion of the scribes of our pre-19th-century manuscript in the next chapter, we can note here that no bibliographical information seems to be available on the scribe of manuscript 1, Domhnall Mac Donnchadha, except that he wrote RIA 23 K 7 in 1701, and we thus have no dates for his

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[120] This is discussed further in the context of a sample intra-group comparison (for Group I) in Chapter 5.

lifespan which might help establish which manuscripts in Group III he may have had access to. The earliest manuscript in Group III dates to 1727, thus post-dating manuscript 1 by twenty-six years. If we assume manuscript 1 was written by the scribe as a young man, who then lived to an old age, he may have been alive to see the writing of five manuscripts in Group III, with the fifth manuscript in this group dating to 1765. The next manuscript was written in 1779 and Mac Donchadha, in order to have been able to use this as an exemplar to supply a new ending for manuscript 1, would have had to have started his scribal work either at a very young age, or live to a rather grand age! As always, there is the possibility that he was copying, or supplying, from a manuscript now lost. In all likelihood we will not be able to solve this mystery; it is, however, a great example of the interchange between scribes and their access to manuscripts, and ultimately, their personal choice and preference for selecting – and arguably 'improving' – a tale.

3.4.3 Transposition of poetry / prose

We have examined the poetry within the groups above, and have seen that transposition of lines within a poem may occur and is in fact a frequently feature of Group IV, more specifically sub-groups IV/b-2+3. One aspect of poetry we have not yet considered, however, is the order of the poems as they appear within the prose narrative.

As regards Groups I-III, the order of the poems as they occur in the prose narrative is consistent in all manuscripts within each group, thus corroborating the groupings; the order of the poems corresponds to the numbering in pull-out Table 3-4 above. If we recap this information, the order of the poems within each manuscript group can be represented schematically as follows (the numbering again referring to that of the poems in pull-out Table 3-4); 'rhetorics' have once again been highlighted in ==yellow==, and *Laoidh na gCeann* in ==purple==:

GROUP I:

RIA 23 M 25	TCD 1376/ H.5.4	NLI G 113/ 114	TCD 3397/ N.5.12	RIA 23 G 21
1		1		1
2		2	2	2
7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8
13	13	13	13	13
18	18	18	18	18
20	20	20	20	20
21	21	21	21	21
22	22	22	22	22
25	25	25	25	25
27	27	27	27	27
29	29	29	29	29
32	32	32	32	32
33	33	33	33	33
40	40	40	40	40
				42

GROUP II:

RIA 23 K 7	RIA 23 C 26	RIA 3 B 43	RIA 23 C 22	RIA 24 B 16	Bod. Ir. e.3 (DCC only)	RIA 24 C 38
1	1	1	1	1		1
7	7	7	7	7		7
8	8	8	8	8		8
13	13	13	13	13		13
14	14	14	14	14		14
16	16	16	16	16		16
20	20	20	20	20		20
21	21	p/l	21	21		21
22	22	22	22	22		22
25	25	25	25	p/l	25	25
27	27	27	27	27	27	27
29	29	29	29	29	29	29
33	33	33	33	33	33	33
39	39	39	39	39	39	39
42		42	42			

Table 3-6: Order of poems in Groups I-III

GROUP III:

RIA E iv 3	RIA 23 M 47 (b)	RIA 23 L 27	RIA 12 F 7 (BmMM only)	NLI G 149	RIA 23 H 16	RIA 24 P 6	NLI G 501 (DCC/ BmMM)	RIA 23 M 47 (a) (DCC only)
1			1	1	1	1	1	
2			2	2	2	2	2	
7	7	p/l	7	7	7	7	7	
10	10	p/l	10	10	10	10	10	
12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	
13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	
17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	
18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	
20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	
21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	
22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	
25	25	25		25	25	25	25	25
26	26	26		26	26	26	26	26
27	27	27		27	27	27	27	27
29	29	29		29	29	29	29	29
33	33	33		33	33	33	33	33
42	42	42		42	42	42	42	42

The situation, however, is a different one for Group IV as here we can observe a variation between the manuscripts in sub-groups IV/a and IV/b. This variation is confined to a handful of poems at the beginning of the tale. Once again we can recap and simplify the information as we have done for Groups I-III. The instances of variation are highlighted in green at the changeover point in the table between subgroups IV/a and IV/b; the division of the manuscripts into sub-groups IV/a-1+2 and IV/b-1-3 has been indicated by dotted lines. 'Rhetorics' are once again marked in yellow. Only the first part of the overall table of poems is given in this instance, we will consider the second part of the table in section 3.4.4 below:

IV/a-1		IV/a-2					b-1	IV/b-2		IV/b-3				
NLS 72.2.9 (ca. 1650)	TCD 1362/ H.4.21 (1691)	BL Eg. 132 (1712–13)	RIA 23 K 37 (1718)	Cam.10/Add. 3085 (c) (1755)	NLI G 457 (1759)	NLI G 146 (1770)	NLS 72.1.38 (?1608–21)	TCD 1296/ H.2.5 (1712)	NLI G 18 (1722)	Maynooth C 98 (b) (?1714)	TCD 1287/ H.1.13 (1746)	NLI G 296 (1763)	BL Eg. 150 (1774)	RIA 23 P 13 (18th cen.)
1	1		1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3		3	3								
5	5	5	5		5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4		4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
							6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7		7	7								
10	10	10	10		10	10	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9		9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
8	8	8	8		8	8	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
11	11	11	11		11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
12	12						12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
13	13	13	13		13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
14	14	14	14		14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14

Table 3-7: Order of poems in Group IV (part 1)

The first observation we can make with regards to the poetry in Group IV is the consistency within the subgroups: note how poem 3, for instance, appears in IV/a but is missing from the manuscripts in IV/b, while poem / 'rhetoric' 6 can only be found in those manuscripts which have been classified into sub-group IV/b. Between poems 4 to 10, however, a change of order occurs between sub-groups IV/a and IV/b: while IV/b follows the other groups by giving the poems in the order of 4-5-6-8-9-10 (omitting 7); IV/a, on the other hand, gives the poems in

order of 5-4-7-10-9-8. Poems 6 and 7 are 'rhetorics', and the manuscripts in Group IV/b constitute the only instances where we can find poem / 'rhetoric' 6; all other groups give poem / 'rhetoric' 7. This variation is one feature that supports the classification of the manuscripts here into sub-groups. The same goes for the overall variation in the order of the poems, which as we can see is clearly confined to the two sub-groups. From poem 11 onwards until the end of the tale both sub-groups correspond again with regard to the order in which the poems appear.

What is not apparent from Table 3-7 ('Order of poems in Group IV (part 1)') since it only lists the poems, is that not only are the poems given in a different order, but the sections of prose narrative surrounding them are also transposed. We can illustrate this more clearly. Below is a very condensed version of the section of our narrative within which the transposition of poetry and prose occurs, the first prose section being the one just before poems 5 and 4 (which are the first transposed poems) and the last prose section being the one before poem 11 (from which point on the sub-groups correspond again). Each prose section and poem has been assigned a colour; prose and poetry thus colour-coded have been laid out according to their order in sub-groups IV/a and IV/b:

IV/a	IV/b
Prose	Prose
Poem 5	Prose
Prose	Poem 4
Prose	Prose
Poem 4	Poem 5
Prose	Prose
Poem 7 ('rhetoric')	Poem 6 ('rhetoric')
Prose	Prose
Poem 10 ('rhetoric')	Poem 8
Prose	Prose
Poem 9	Poem 9
Prose	Prose
Poem 8	Poem 10 ('rhetoric')
Prose	Prose

Table 3-8: Transposition of poetry / prose in Group IV

The most notable transposition occurs within the first half of the section in question, as the schematic representation above shows: here both prose and poetry are given in different orders in sub-groups IV/a and IV/b. In the second half the prose sections correspond, only the poems appear in a different order. This of course means that different poems are matched up with different prose sections – something that also applies to the first half. We shall look at the actual textual narrative and poems from the first half of the section to illustrate how different

prose sections have been matched up with different poems, and also to draw upon a further feature which has already been hinted at in the discussion of the poems above, namely, the transposition of lines.

Given below is the first half of the section from a representative manuscript for each sub-group: BL Eg. 150 (IV/a-2) here represents IV/a while NLS 72.1.38 (IV/b-1) stands for the manuscripts in IV/b. I have compared both manuscripts against the others in their respective sub-groups; variations where they may occur are minor enough to justify using one representative manuscript. The colour coding used for our initial schematic representation of the section in Table 3-8 has been retained to allow for easier referencing, as well as illustrating the transposition in a more comprehensible manner.

IV/a (BL Eg. 132)

[7v (12)] Is se do b*h*i ag fet*h*am*h* do Concuib*h*ar an lá sin, .i. Geanan*n* Gruaid*h*sol*us* m*a*c Cathb*a*idh, 7 do feac*h* C*u* C*u*lainn imac*h* ar in b*h*faicht*h*e 7 do c*h*onairc na Catha ic comtuargan a c*h*ele g*a*n coigcill et do himd*h*ercad*h* co himarc*a*dh b*u*dh sin andsein 7 ica faicsin do *da* lion osc*ur*c an*n* f*ein* aigenta e et do c*h*uir a lai*m*h c*h*li faoi do c*h*um eircce do 7 do iad*h*us*d*air Geanan*n* a d*h*a d*h*od lai*m*h na timc*h*eall co harr*a*cht*a* da fosd*og* 7 do c*h*uir na s*h*uid*h*e he.

'T*ru*ag*h* sin, a G*h*eanan*n*,' ar C*u* C*u*lainn, 'dob ferr liomsa ina ór in dom*h*ain 7 ina mait*h*es an*n* talm*ai*n bas d'fag*h*ail roim*h*e so ina at*h*ois et óil fiad*h*nach mar so aga hin*n*isin orm t*ar* mesi doig*h* ata an seanf*h*ocail cuim*h*ad*h* re a cuim*h*neac*h*ed*h* in*n* gac*h* canomh*ail* .i. buaini bliag*h*na *ina* saog*h*ail.'

Et it beart an laoidh:

<blockquote>
1. Cruit m*h*ic Manair da seinim sin
do coill*edh* mo g*h*esa fein
tarrnig mo re gid*h* olc lib*h*
an ceolsa farraig*h* m'feid*h*m.

2. Is ris sam*h*laim*h*né ré mo goin
dar leam do c*h*im Groid*h* m*h*ic Lir
[8r (130)] dar liomsa do cual*adh* sin
an gleo mo*r*sa frind aniar.

3. Dar liomsa do b*h*i da m*edh*
ro b*u*dh c*ed* cur*a*idh co ngoil
eirgis fo g*h*aot*h* g*ar*c a gluin*n*
g*ur* t*h*elg a mui*n*g tar in muir.

4. Dar liomsa do c*h*ulad*h* sin*n*
an gleo mo*r*sa frin*n* noir
dar liomsa do b*h*i da m*h*et
ro b*u*dh ced cur*a*idh co miad*h*.

5. Eirgis fo gaot*h* g*ar*c a gluin*n*
</blockquote>

IV/b (NLS 72.1.38)

(13.) *Agus* asé do b*h*í ag coim*h*éud *Chon* gC*u*loinn an lá soin, Genan*n* Grúad*h*shol*a*s m*a*c Cat*h*fadh, et do féuch Cú C*h*uloinn amac*h* *ar* an bfait*h*chi 7 ad c*h*onnairc na cat*h*a comóra ag com*h*t*h*úargain a c*h*éile gan c*h*oigill et od con*n*air sion sin do himd*h*erg*a*dh go had*h*nár*ach* uime aga bfaicsin 7 do ling buin*n*e borrfadh*ach* boirbt*h*réun san gcur*a*dh 7 do c*h*uir a lam*h* c*h*lé faoí ag [15] éirge d*h*ó ro íad*h*us*d*air Genan*n* a d*h*á láim*h* leab*h*ra láng*h*asda go harr*o*cht*a* uim*e* dá f*h*asdog*h* 7 do c*h*uir iona s*h*uid*h*e é.

'Trúag*h* sin, a G*h*enan*n*, ' *ar* Cú C*u*loinn, 'dob f*err* liomsa iona ór an dom*ain* 7 na mait*h*es na c*ru*in*n*e timd*h*ib*h*e mo saog*h*ail do te*cht* roim*h* an g*h*áirsi do c*h*luinim u*air* bíaid*h* at*h*ois f*h*íag*h*nach agá hin*n*isin or*m* t*ar* m*h*éis dóig*h* am*h* atá an senf*h*ocal go cui*m*hnech an*n* agá rád*h*, .i. búaine blad*h* iona saog*h*al.'

<blockquote>
1. A d*h*earb*h*rat*h*air D*h*eitc*h*ine.
a d*h*earcg*h*lais d*h*úanuigh
léig d*h*am*h* ad*h*eig*h*f*h*irsi
dul fána slúag*h*uibh.

2. Taid*h*b*h*si na crut*h*antúait*h*e
ar eac*h*uibh díam*h*ra
noc*h*a buid*h*ne ro g*h*áoise
ac*h*d saob*h*sl*uagh* síab*h*ra.

3. Noc*h*a slúag*h* óg ildealb*h*ar.
lé gcuirt*h*er graifne
ac*h*d féur 7 duilleab*h*ar.
táinig *ar* an bfait*h*c*h*e.
</blockquote>

gor telg amui*ng* t*ar* in sluaig*h*
agm*ar* do len*us* an tain
far biom*da* gair et glon*n*.

6. Dar t*h*uit F*er* Dia liom sa treas
is Cailitin na ccleas gcoir
mo com*h*rac is com*rac* Fr*ai*ch
nir com*h*rac laoic *ar* na c*h*oll.

'Leig seachat sin,' ar Geanon*n*, 'oir ni uil an*n* sud *acht* saob*h*sluaig*h* sit*he*
et isi sud a*n* gair duaib*h*seach draoi*acht*a do dealb*h*adar clan C*h*ailitin cuccadsa
dot c*h*eangal 7 do c*h*uib*h*reach.'

Do feac*h* C*u* C*u*lainn amac*h* aris ar in b*h*faicht*he* et do c*om*nairc na catha
ina ccoirigt*he* mora *ar* in muig*h* 7 *ar* in b*h*faic*h*t*h*e. A*n* dara feacht do fech amac*h*
7 do c*om*nairc Groid*h* mic Lír ar in b*h*faic*h*t*h*e et do b*hi* geis dosan a faicsin 7 dar
leis do c*h*uala cruit M*ac* Man*n*air ica seinm co suaim*h*neac*h* sirb*h*in*n* et fa geis
dosan a heisteacht et do at*h*ain an*n* sin co fiad*h*nach et co fir deim*h*in g*ur*
coill*edh* a b*h*uad*h*a 7 g*ur* brisad*h* a g*h*esa **[8v (14)]** 7 co ttainig crioc*h* a s*h*aog*h*ail
et a cait*h*reim*h*i 7 it dub*ert* a*n* l*ao*idh:

1. A brath*air* Deictine
a D*er*gglais duain*igh*
léig da*mh* a deg*h*fior
d*o*l fo na sl*uaigh* uile.

2. Taid*h*b*h*si na c*ruit*h*entuait*he*
ar eac*radha* dia*mh*ra
ní ruire ro gaiscc*e*
acht saob*h*sl*uagh* siab*h*ra.

3. In sluag*h* occ illdealb*har*
re ccuirt*er* graifne
a*cht* fear is duilleb*har*
t*h*ainig isin b*h*faic*h*t*h*e.

4. Aóineach g*h*éub*h*as m*h*earrad*h*sa.
lé greag*h*adh gnát*h*a
noc*h*a ttiucfa um ionad*h*sa.
go lait*he* an b*h*ratha.

Ahait*h*le na laoid*he* sin do f*h*éuch C*ú* C*u*loinn amac*h* arís *ar* an bfait*h*c*h*e et ad
c*h*onairc na cat*h*a cóir*igh*t*he* d*ar* leis féin amuig*h* *ar* an bfait*h*c*h*e 7 an d*ar*a hú*air*
do f*h*éuch amach do c*h*onairc Groid*h*m*h*eic Lir *ar* an bfait*h*c*h*e 7 bá geis dó san
sin d'faicsin 7 d*ar* leis fós do c*h*úala Cruit m*h*eic Man*n*oir *ar* an bfait*h*c*h*e agá
sein*m* go sub*h*ac*h* sírre*cht*ac*h* sírb*h*in*n* sasamh*ail* 7 bá geis dósan éisde*cht* fr*is* an
orgán sít*he* soinem*ail* sin 7 do at*h*oin Cú Culoin*n* as na neith*ibh* sin gur coill*ed*
go fírin*n*eac*h* fíad*h*nach ab*h*úad*h*a et gur b*r*isod*h* ab*h*úaing*h*esa 7 go ttáinig
c*r*íoc*h* a c*h*ait*h* réim*he* 7 do ri*nn*e a*n* l*ao*idh an*n*:

1. Do coilled*h* mo g*h*esa féin
táinig mo ré gid*h* olc libh
an céolso do f*h*orr*adh* mfeid*h*m
Cruit m*ac* Man*n*oir gá sein*m* sin.

2. Dar liomsa do c*h*úalaid*h* sin*n*.
an gleó mórso rin*n* anoir
[16] d*ar* liom do cuired*h* go ngoil.
ar an bfait*h*c*h*e Groid*h* m*ac* Lir.

3. Dar liomsa do c*h*úala anois.
gleó mór ád*h*b*ail* riom aní*ar*
d*ar* liom do baid*h*b*h*sioch am*h*éud.
sam*h*uil do c*h*éud go mbíadh.

4. Éirg*h*es fog*h*áot*h* gairb*h*e ngloin*n*.
gur g*h*lúais am*h*oing *ar* an slíab*h*
le fot*h*rom láoc*h* sg*h*reg*h* mb*eith*
c*h*loid*h*em*h* d*h*a las níam*h*.

4. Neach geb*hus* an fe*ra*n*n*sa
   le ha*r*m no le g*r*eadh*aibh* gnát*h*
   noc*h*a ttiocfa im deagansi
   no co tti lait*h*i [an bhráith].

Is an*n* sin do eirig*h* Bad*h*b*h* i*nghin* C*h*ailitin et tainig a riocht fuince .i. feandoicce os cion*n* an g*r*ianain a raib*h*e C*u* C*u*lainn 7 atdub*er*t,

A C*h*u Cul*ainn* coim*h*eiric caoin*nach*
buir*edh* for breg*h*muicc*ibh* bes is col indr*edh*
Murt*h*eim*h*ne morairgt*h*e Mid*h*e
ni do comrac is com*h*ad*h*ais a co*m*hlean*n*m*h*ain
ar loinges fuar Fergusa
tuitf*idh* Oll*il*
Luc*h*ch*aidh* 7 laoech M*a*c Niad*h*
Earc is Coll*a* is *Con*cubar
Mead*h*a is Maine dot morruat*ar*.
Eirig*h* a ilcleas*aigh* ilrecht*aigh*
e*ch*tm*h*in*n* ait*h*eas*aigh*
a ua Cat*h*faidh cloid*im* derg
a m*a*c toimimuig*h*e M*u*rtem*h*ne
ar garg gleo na ngailian*aibh*
doig*h* ro buireset*ar*
ro gairsetar aicm*edh*a eachtran*n* ilcineoil
fa*n* mag*h* morab*h*ail
na ro tiolc dot coim*h*feircc, a C*h*u Culain*n*.

Do imt*h*ad*h* a*n* Bad*h*b*h* roimpe on g*r*iana amac*h* ar in b*h*fait*h*che iar na eimd*edh* do *Con* C*u*lainn dul le do gaired*ar* na sluaig*h* amuig*h* ar in b*h*fait*h*che aris a*n* uair rainic in Bad*h*b*h* c*h*ugt*h*a 7 do c*h*uala gairfiad*hach* na mBad*h*b*h*. Is an*n* si*n* it dub*er*t C*u* C*u*lainn,

      'Is t*r*uag*h* lin*n* beath ag eisde*acht* ris na gairt*h*ad*h*si, a Gean*non*n,' ar se, 'et ceadad*h* dam*h*sa na sluag*h* do ion*n*suigh 7 na sgit*h*baid*h*ne sgat*h* breig*h*esi do

5. Ag*h*m*h*ar do lenas an táin.
   f*ar* b*h*iomda g*air* 7 glonn
   d*ar* t*h*uit F*er* Díad*h* liom san t*r*eas
   is Cailitín na gcles gcorr.

6. Mo c*h*om*h*rag is com*h*rag F*r*áoic*h*.
   níor c*h*om*h*rag laoíc*h* *ar* na c*h*oll.

Ahait*h*le na laoid*h*e sin do éirig*h* Bad*h*d*h* ing*en* C*h*ailitín a rioc*h*d f*h*uince .i. fion*nóg*, 7 táinig ós cion*n* an g*h*rianáin a raib*h*e C*ú* C*u*loinn 7 adbeart na b*ríathra* so an*n*.

A C*h*úagáin M*h*uirt*h*eim*h*ne.
mór*airgthe* an da c*h*om*h*rug.
as com*h*aoís ag coi*m*hlenmuin.
ar loinges fú*ar* F*er*g*h*usa.
tuitf*idh* letsa ri Oill*il*
Luigh*aidh* 7 láoc*h* m*a*c Níad*h*.
E*ar*c is Colla is *Con*c*h*ob*har*.
Méad*h*b*h* 's Maine do t*r*omc*h*osgar.
aillre*ch*taig*h* ilc*h*lesoig*h*.
éi*cht* m*h*inic áit*h*esoig*h*.
a ua Cat*h*faidh cloid*h*iom*h* rúaid*h*.
a m*h*eic díon Mag*h* Muirt*h*teim*h*ne.
ar g*h*air*bh*g*h*leó nám*h*ad*h* mór ad*h*b*h*al.
n*ar* f*h*aice olc ad*h*bal m*h*ór.
dód c*h*oim*h*eirge, a C*h*úagáin.

T*ar* a éisi sin do rád*h*a don B*h*áid*h*b*h* ro imt*h*ig*h* roimpe ón g*h*rianán amac*h* *ar* an bfait*h*che an úair do éimid*h* C*ú* C*u*loinn dul lé 7 do g*h*aireduir na slúaig*h* amuig*h* *ar* an bfait*h*chi *ar* roc*h*tain na Báid*h*b*h*e c*h*uca 7 do c*h*úala C*ú* C*u*loinn g*á*irfed*hoch* 7 sg*r*éuc*hach* na mBád*h*b*h*. As an*n* sin adub*er*t C*ú* C*u*loinn.

      'As trom lem b*h*eit*h* ag éisde*cht* fris na g*á*irt*ibh*si, a G*h*enain*n*,' *ar* sé, '7

bhualadh, et do sgrios uar do traothadar na gaire is mo treisi 7 do bhuadhredar m'aignadh 7 mo chiall et do mugaighesdar mor draoiacht mo nert 7 mo [9r (15)] nia acus 7 do claochlo ceoil cuinbhinn cartanach na cruite ad chualus mo cuimhne et mo cedfadh 7 rug mo luthadh et mo latar uaim bantracht corp glegeal an cuigaidhsi fa cuirannuibh Connacht 7 Muimhneach 7 Laigann et laochmidheach 7 losgadh 7 luaithre budh criche Cuailnge et Maighe Murtemhne 7 do colladh mo ghesa uile, 7 tainig comharda mo criche degeanach.'

ceduigh dhamhsa na slúaigh d'ionnsoidhe et na sgíothbhuidhne sgáithbhréigisi do sgáoilidh 7 do sgrios uile ón dúnadh ór do thráothadair na gáirthisi mo threisi 7 do bhuáidhredair mh'aignedh 7 mo chíall 7 do mhúchasdair mo dhráoidhecht bhunadh 7 mo nert 7 mo niadhachus 7 do chláochlodh céol coimbinn carthann na cruite do chúalasa   mo chuimhne an ghlanchóigedhsi fá churedhuibh Connacht 7 Muimhnech 7 Laighnech 7 laoích Mhidhe 7 losgadh 7 láinréubadh chríche Cúailgne 7 Mhuighe Muirtheimhne 7 do coilledh mo ghesa uile 7 táinig comhartha mo chriche déighenaidhe.'

Table 3-9: Transposition of poetry / prose in Group IV – sample passages

There are a number of comments to be made with regards to the passage above. Firstly, we shall consider the line transposition in poem 5. In IV/a, the poem begins with the first two lines reading *Cruit mhic Manair da seinim sin / do coilledh mo ghesa fein*. If we compare IV/b, we see that these two lines here appear as the fourth and first lines respectively. Of interest is the impact this has on the ending of the poem: in both IV/a and IV/b the final lines of the poem read *níor chomhrag laoích ar na choll*. Thus, only the poem as it stands in IV/b gives a *dúnadh* between the beginning and ending of the poem. To contrast the order of lines within both poems, if we take IV/b as our basis and assign the lines as they stand here the sequence a-b-c-d, the two poems appear as follows:

IV/b	IV/a
stanza 1: 1 abcd	stanza 1: 1dabc
stanza 2: 2 abcd	stanza 2: 2cdab
stanza 3: 3 abcd	stanza 3: omitted in IV/a!
stanza 4: 4 abcd	stanza 4: 3abcd
stanza 5: 5 abcd	stanza 5: 4ab 5ab
stanza 6: 6 ab	stanza 6: 5cd 6ab

IV/a thus gives one extra stanza not found in IV/b (stanza 3 in IV/a), the latter, however, has two lines not occurring in IV/a (4cd) – the total number of stanzas, then, is 6 in IV/a, and 5½ in IV/b.

Somewhat puzzling is the fact that not all manuscripts in IV/a display line transposition in the first stanza and the resulting loss of *dúnadh*. I have specifically chosen a representative manuscript that does have the transposition – of our overall manuscripts in IV/a, however, IV/a-2 (i.e. NLS 72.2.9 and TCD 1362/ H.4.21) give the first stanza with the lines in order of a-b-c-d. One manuscript in IV/a-2, NLI G 146, corresponds, while the other two manuscripts in IV/a-2 besides BL Eg. 150 which preserve the poem (namely, RIA 23 K 37 and NLI G 457) follow BL Eg. 150. The rest of the poem, that is the variation in the order of lines compared with IV/a, corresponds in all manuscripts in IV/a! We may here remember our discussion of poem 35 *Uchán ach...* in Group IV (in section 3.2.2 above), where we also found that within sub-group IV/a-2, manuscript NLI G 146 seemed to have a 'correct' version where we may have detected an error within its fellow manuscripts in IV/a-2.

It is worth here digressing slightly and returning to an article by Ruth Lehmann which we have already mentioned in Chapter 1.[121] In her assessment of 'Poems from the *Death of Cú Chulainn*' Lehmann included those poems which by my numbering system are poem 1 *Atáid*

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[121] R. Lehmann, 'Poems from the *Death of Cú Chulainn*', *ZCP* 49-50 (1997), pp. 432-39.

sunna..., poem 5 *Do coilleadh...*, poem 23 *Rom ghabh aniugh...* and poem / 'rhetoric' 25 *Goirt rom ghaoth....* Rather than giving a detailed discussion, Lehmann provides editions of these four poems, using three manuscripts.[122] She does however make observations rather than give a discussion or offer an explanation: for poem 5 she first gives a version of the poem as it stands in IV/a-2 (i.e. the poem beginning with *Cruit mheic Manair...*); Lehmann then notes rather succinctly that

> it is customary for Irish poems to have an echo of a word in the first line, as in the first poem above *Ataid / atason*. By reversing the first two lines and adding two to the last G achieves this.

This is followed by a version of the poem which corresponds to our Group IV/b. With the other poems Lehmann mainly provides a summary of the prose context in which the poem in question sits; no mention is made of the wealth of poems found within at least one of 'her' manuscripts, namely, RIA 23 K 37, which falls into Group IV/a-2. Nevertheless, we can agree with her final conclusion as this is supported by the consistency we have already established within our manuscript groups, and will continue to explore further in the chapters to come:

> Apparently the later poets followed fairly faithfully one or other of the earlier texts except for changes in spelling, substituting more familiar words for less familiar, and trying to keep an echo of the first line in the last. It is less clear why K [RIA 23 K 7] sometimes neglects this feature. The syllable count is scarcely more consistent in one version than another. The verse surely deserves more careful study as van Hamel recommended.[123]

Having considered an idiosyncracy within poem 5, it is of interest to consider the prose narrative in the light of the transposed poetry. It is the case that different sections of prose narrative are 'matched up' with different poems in IV/a and IV/b. For the textual example cited at length in pull-out Table 3-9 above this is also the case, and here it seems that IV/b displays the more logical sequence: a discussion between the druids Geanann and Cathfadh and Cú Chulainn is followed by a poem addressed to Cú Chulainn (poem 4); this is followed by Cú Chulainn's attempt to go against the enemy which is thwarted by him seeing Groidh mac Lir on the meadow outside the fort and on hearing the latter's harp, which is a taboo for Cú Chulainn. This is related in poem 5 *Do coilleadh...*, after which follows an attempt by Badhbh, in the shape of a raven, to lure Cú Chulainn out of safety with a 'rhetoric'. If we compare the

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[122] These being RIA 23 K 37 (which dates to 1718 and falls into our Group IV/a-2), RIA 23 G 10 (1805-07) and the poem from Hogan's edition of the tale in the *Gaelic Journal*. We have acknowledged this edition in section 1.4, where we had further already noted that Lehmann's selection and presentation of the manuscripts used in her article are slightly problematic since it may give the impression of our tale being preserved in only a very small number of manuscripts.

[123] Lehmann, 'Poems from the *Death of Cú Chulainn*', p. 439.

sequence in IV/a, the beginning of the section is identical with the conversation Geannan / Cathfadh / Cú Chulainn. This is followed, however, by poem 5, which concerns Cú Chulainn's taboo regarding the harp-playing of Lir's son, only then follows the pre-amble by Geannan urging Cú Chulainn not to leave the fort, followed by Cú Chulainn's encounter with Groidh mac Lir after which the druids' address to the hero is given. Here follows the sequence of Badhbh as a raven, and the 'rhetoric', as in IV/b.

The 'rhetoric' deserves a brief observation although at this stage we shall not go into any great details as the 'rhetorics' will be discussed at length in section 6.3. What is noteworthy here is that what we find in IV/a and IV/b are ultimately two different 'rhetorics' but which share similar elements. The initial address differs (*Cú Chulainn* versus *Cúagáin*); then again, whole lines virtually correspond (e.g. *a ua Chathfaidh cloidheamh dhearg / ruadh* – the lexical variation for 'red' again being consistent within each group). It is important to note for our argument of manuscript groups that the two 'rhetorics' are clearly confined to our sub-groups, and that the 'rhetoric' as it stands in IV/b is unique to the manuscript here since Groups I-III all give a 'rhetoric' that corresponds closely to that in IV/a.

As for the remaining half of the section within which variation occurs in the order of poems (this second half following the passages of text cited above in pull-out Table 3-9), it is only the poetry that is transposed between IV/a and IV/b here but the order of the prose passages corresponds. This results in variations in, for instance, the speaker of a poem: in IV/a, poem / 'rhetoric' 10 *Éirigh a Chú Chulainn* is spoken by Badhbh and poem 8 *Gáir na sluagh* by the oldest son of Cailitín's children; in IV/b this is reversed and poem 8 is attributed to Badhdh while it is the 'rhetoric' which is spoken by the oldest son. The overall impression that the sequence gives is that as with the first half of the section, IV/b gives the more logical order.

In conclusion, we have seen that while the order of the poems in Groups I-III corresponds, there is a discrepancy in Group IV between sub-groups IV/a and IV/b. The variation goes beyond transposition of poetry but extends to the prose narrative; we have seen that certain episodes are 'matched up' with different poems within the two sub-groups. Overall, it seems that the sequence given by the manuscripts in IV/b seems to be the more logical one. The transposition of both poetry and prose is consistent within the two sub-groups, which corroborates the argument for this classification. The variation in the 'rhetoric' within the section further suggests that within Group IV, some manuscripts seem to have closer links with others. We will go on to discuss another feature that is unique to Group IV which shall help

establish the intra-group links further and strengthen the argument for the existence of sub-groups within Group IV.

3.4.4 The 'referenced' and 'mystery' poems

The 'referenced' poems and the 'mystery' poems have already been mentioned a number of times in the preliminary observations on the poetry in Group IV, and we shall now explain and explore this feature in more detail. In brief, the 'referenced' poems refer to instances in which a manuscript may acknowledge the existence of a poem but moves on in the prose narrative without providing any actual interjection in verse. Through cross-referencing between the manuscripts we can, however, establish which poem is being referred to but has been omitted. The 'mystery poems', on the other hand, cannot be traced through cross-referencing since we only have the references to the poems, with no manuscript preserving the actual verse.

The following table forms the second half of the simplified table for the order of poems in Group IV, illustrating the order of the poems. We have already assessed the first half of this table in section 3.4.3 (= Table 3-7 'Order of poems in Group IV (part 1)') and had noted transposition in the order of poems at the beginning of the tale. As we can see in the second part of the table below, the order of the remaining poems is consistent in all manuscripts in Group IV. 'Rhetorics' have been marked in yellow and LnC in purple, as was the case for the tables given for Groups I-III. Additional information has been given here, however, for the 'mystery poems' – written in blue – and the 'referenced' poems, the occurrence of referencing being marked by ref.

IV/a-1		IV/a-2					b-1	IV/b-2		IV/b-3				
NLS 72.2.9 (ca. 1650)	TCD 1362/ H.4.21 (1691)	BL Eg. 132 (1712–13)	RIA 23 K 37 (1718)	Cam.10/Add. 3085 (c) (1755)	NLI G 457 (1759)	NLI G 146 (1770)	NLS 72.1.38 (?1608–21)	TCD 1296/ H.2.5 (1712)	NLI G 18 (1722)	Maynooth C 98 (b) (?1714)	TCD 1287/ H.1.13 (1746)	NLI G 296 (1763)	BL Eg. 150 (1774)	RIA 23 P 13 (18th cen.)
15	15	15	15		15	15	lost	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
16	16	16	16		16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
17	17	17	17		17	17	17	17	17					
18	18	18	18		18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
		19	19			19								
20	20	20	20		20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	10
21	21	21	21		21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
22	22	22	22		22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22
	23	23	23		23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23
		24	24			24								
25	25	25	25		25	25	25	25	25		25	25	25	25
	26	26	26	26	26	26	26							
27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27		27	27	27	27
28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28		28	28	28	28
29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29		29	29	29	29
		30	30	30	30	30								
	31						31	31	31		31	31	31	31
	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32[ref]	32[ref]					
33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33		33	33	33	33
		34	34	34	34	34	34[ref]	34[ref]	34[ref]					
35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35[ref]	35[ref]					
36	36[ref]	36[ref]	36[ref]	36[ref]		36[ref]	36	36	36		36	36	36	36
	37	37	37	37		37	37							
38	38[ref]	38[ref]	38[ref]	38[ref]		38[ref]	38	38	38					
39	39[ref]	39[ref]	39[ref]	39[ref]		39[ref]	39	39[ref]	39[ref]					
40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40[ref]	40[ref]					
41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41[ref]	41[ref]					
42	42	42	42	42	42	42	42	42	42		42	42	42	42
	43	43	43	43	43	43	43[ref]	43[ref]	43[ref]					

Table 3-10: Order of poems in Group IV (part 2)

The 'referenced' and 'mystery' poems, as we can see, do not occur consistently in all manuscripts in Group IV, although that there is a regular enough pattern to be detected all the same. Both 'referenced' and 'mystery' poems are confined to the manuscripts of sub-groups IV/a-2, IV/b-1 and IV/b-2. We will consider the 'referenced' poems to begin with before moving on to the 'mystery poems'.

It is necessary to clarify what exactly is meant by 'referenced' poems. These are instances in which a manuscript may acknowledge the existence of a poem but moving on in the prose

narrative without providing any interjection in verse. The example of our first poem which is 'referenced', poem 32 *Oighdih Mhaoil agus Miodhna*, can serve to illustrate this. As the table above shows, the poem can be found consistently in IV/a-1+2 and IV/b-1 and is 'referenced' in IV/b-2. We can compare a manuscript in which the poem is given with one in which it is 'referenced':

IV/b-1 (NLS 72.1.38, 1608-21)	IV/b-2 (NLI G 18, 1722)
[53] (...) 7 do d*h*íc*h*en*n* C*on*all go deit*h*f*r*eac*h* an días si*n*, .i. Máol 7 Miod*h*na, et do c*h*uir an *da* c*h*en*n* sin *ar* an ngad a ndíog*al* na hiomana do rónsad *ar* c*h*en*n* C*h*on C*uloinn*. Adub*hairt* C*on*all asa hait*h*le si*n*: 'Ni liomsa bud*h* cóir cean*n* mo ²c*h*aruid 7 mo c*h*aom*h*d*h*alta do c*h*omaoid*h*em*h*.' Agus adub*h*airt an laoid: Oig*h*id*h* M*h*áoil agus a M*h*iod*h*na a tTem*h*raigh í*ar* na tiog*h*b*h*a... (3 qq) 'A C*h*in*n* Biorr*aidh*e,' *ar* C*on*all, 'déna imt*h*ec*h*t fes*da* 7 b*er* cen*n* C*h*on cC*uloinn* let m*ar*a bf*uil* Eim*h*ir.' 'Noc*h*a b*ár*,' *ar* Cen*n* Biorr*aidh*e, 'gion gu nd*é*rna mé *acht* aoínf*h*er d'fe*r*uib*h* E*r*en*n* …'	[378 (388)] (…) agus do dit*h*cean*n* Conall go deit*h*frac*h* na dias sin .i. Maol ag*us* Miod*h*na, ag*us* do cuir an da cean*n* sin air na nga*d* a ngiog*ail* na hiomana do ronsad ar c*h*ean*n* C*u* C*ulainn* ag*us* adub*ert* Conall as a hait*h*le sin, 'Ní liomsa as coir an cean*n*so mo d*h*alta do c*h*omaoid*h*eam*h*.' Ag*us* adub*ert* an laoid*h*, is ní do leanfam. Iar sin adub*ert* conall le Cean Biorr*aidh*e cean*n* do b*h*reit*h* m*ar*a raib Eim*h*er. 'Noc*h*a mbear,' air Cean Biorr*aidh*e, 'gion go dearna me a*cht* aon duine amain d'fearuib*h* Eirion*n*...'

The two texts correspond very closely, with the exception of the omission of the poem. The passage from group IV/b-2 / NLI G 18 above is an example for a 'referenced' poem where further details for its absence are given – in this case, the poem 'does not adhere to it'. Other 'referenced' manuscripts may omit this, simply stating an introductory formula for a poem such as *agus adubhairt an laoidh*, but then resume the prose narrative without a verse interjection.[124] We can see how it is possible by comparing and contrasting different manuscripts to establish which poem is being left out.

While the actual poems that are being 'referenced' correspond within each of sub-groups IV/a-2, b-2 and b-3, the way in which the 'reference' is given (i.e. whether the poem is simply left out or whether this omission noted or commented on) can vary even within a sub-group. The following table collates how the 'referencing' comments appear in the manuscripts in question:

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[124] In Table 3-4 ('List of poems with MSS classified into groups') this difference is used by noting 'ref+comm.' (= refence + comment') for those manuscripts that add further explanation and 'reference' is used where the poem is simply left out but its existence acknowledged by *'adubhairt an laoidh'*.

	IV/a-2				IV/b-1	IV/b-2	
Poem	BL Eg. 132	RIA 23 K 37	Cam. 10 (c)	NLI G 146	NLS 72.1.38	TCD 1296	NLI G 18
32						ní leanfam	ní do leanfam
34					ní fhuil si ann so	ní dí lennfam	-reference-
35						ní di leanfam	-reference-
36	ni foghmadh i	ni fhagham í	ni fhaghaim i	-reference-			
38	ni oghaim í sa cartaigh	ní fhagamh í	ni fhaghaim í	-reference-			
39	-reference-	ni fhagham í	ni fhaghaim í	ní oghaim i		ní leanfam	-reference-
41						ní dí leanfam	-reference-
43					-reference-	ni di leanfam	-reference-

Note:

In this table '-reference-' indicates those instances where the poem is introduced by e.g. *adubhairt an laoidh* but then continues in the prose narrative.

Thus, we can differentiate four ways of wording the comment on the 'reference'. These are

- *ní fhaghaim í*
- *ní (do / dí) leanfam*
- *ní fhuil sí ann*
- *ní foghnadh í.*

As we can see from the table above, *ní fhaghaim í* is the most frequently used, followed by *ní do / dí leanfam*.[125] This use of *do / dí* is interesting; if we assume that these are forms of *de*, the comment would imply that the poem does not follow 'from it', this, presumable, referring to the exemplar. Note how the instances of *dí* are confined to one particular manuscript, namely, TCD 1296 in sub-group IV/b-2. The final two wording variations both only occur once: *ní fhuil sí ann* in NLS 72.1.38, where it is in fact the only 'referencing' comment in this manuscript, and finally *ní foghnadh í*, appearing only once, in BL Eg. 132. I am taking this to be the verb *foghnadh*, 'being of use to'.[126]

The variation within the wording of the 'referencing' comments may well be down to a scribe's personal choice; relevant for the argument of manuscript groups, however, is the great consistency with regards to which actual poems are 'referenced'. The fact that a poem 'referenced' in, for instance, IV/a-2, generally tends to be given in full in at least one of the other groups makes it possible to identify the poem in question. Poem 39 (*Cuilleann Breagha...*) is noteworthy in that we can only draw upon NLS 72.1.38 to identify the poem as it is 'referenced' in all other manuscripts. Interesting also is the unique interjection for poem 38 (*Ceann Cholla...*) in BL Eg. 132 (IV/a-2): *ni oghaim í sa cartaigh*, 'not in the paper (manuscript?)', suggesting that the poem is not found or included in the scribe's exemplar.

Interestingly, if we look at the distribution of the 'referenced' poems, we can see that they are confined to the latter part of the tale and only occur for those poems which are largely omitted in Groups I-III; we have already noted this omission of poems in section 3.4.1 above. We have to ask what underlies the 'referenced poems' – could they be found in the earliest version of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* and if so, when did the omission start? Since we can trace the poems by comparison with other manuscripts, did a scribe feel that a poem was superfluous and thus retained the 'reference' but omitted the verse? Later scribes then copying from the same manuscript would not have had access to the verse but could only note the reference. With the exception of the final poem, it is the same style of poem that is being referenced, namely short verse interjections recapping on the demise of one of Conall Cearnach's enemies, whose fate

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[125] I am taking the instances of *oghaim* in BL Eg. 132 and NLI G 146 to be variations of *fhaghaim / fhoghaim*.

[126] Cf. *Dinneen*, s.v. *fóghnamh* 'act of serving, availing, doing good or being of use to'.

had already been described in the preceding prose narrative. Could the omission of these poems have been an attempt to save paper, as the poem is a stylistic device rather than adding to the narrative? In any case, we have abridgment of the tale without any loss or impact on the events described in the prose narrative.

It is very interesting that one manuscript in IV/a-2, namely NLI G 457, omits all references and simply continues in the prose narrative – did the scribe feel that giving a reference without being able to provide the poem was counter-productive? NLI G 457 is the second youngest manuscript in IV/a-2 and post-dated by NLI G 146, which in turn does give the references. For the transmission of the tale it thus seems likely that NLI G 457 was not the exemplar used by NLI G 146, but rather one of the other manuscripts in IV/a-2 which also have the references.

As a final thought on the 'referenced' poems it is worth drawing attention to the fact here that this feature is by no means confined to our tale. Caoimhín Mac Giolla Léith, for instance, has identified similar instances within *Oidheadh Chloinne hUisneach*:

> Scribal omission of verse passages from Early Modern Irish prose texts is not uncommon and again may easily occur at any point in the transmission of a text. Such passages are regularly assumed by modern scholars to be of scant importance to the development of the narrative and some indication that this assumption would not be alien to an eighteenth-century scribe is provided by remarks such as the following in MS 25 [= BL Eg. 141], which omits poem (iii) 'Truagh an taidhbhse tarfás damh', and explains 'Et adubhairt [Deirdre] a haisling a laoidhe et ni dí tamaoíd'. Clear indications of the omission of poem (iii) and (iv) occur in a sufficient number of MSS to indicate that they were formerly an integral part of the text.[127]

We have explained what is meant by 'referenced' poems and shall now turn to look at the 'mystery poems'. These are less frequent but are once again confined to the manuscripts in Group IV, more specifically IV/a-2 and IV/b-1, these being the sub-groups within which the 'referenced' poems also occur. Although we find 'referenced' poems in sub-group IV/b-2, none of the 'mystery poems' are represented here.

The 'mystery' poems are like the 'referenced' poems in that we find poem references in the manuscripts without a poem then being given. However, unlike the 'referenced' poems which we could trace and identify by comparing and contrasting other manuscripts in the same, and other, sub-groups, of the 'mystery poems' only the reference remains: we cannot find a corresponding poem anywhere else. There are three instances of 'mystery poems' that we can identify, being poems 19 ('Mystery Poem 1'), 24 ('Mystery Poem 2') and 37 ('Mystery Poem 3').

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[127] C. Mac Giolla Léith, *Oidheadh Chloinne hUisneach* (London, 1993), p. 58.

The numbering gives an indication as to where they sit in the prose narrative, and we can see that unlike the 'referenced' poems, they are not confined to Conall's *Deargruathar*, but already occur in the first half of the tale. Not all three 'mystery poems' are consistently represented in the manuscripts of IV/a-2 and IV/b-1: the latter sub-group only marks 'Mystery Poem 3'. Once again we shall compare how the poems are introduced, as we have done for the 'referenced' poems. Note that Cambridge 10/ Add. 3085 (c) in IV/a-2 only gives DCC and thus merely has the third 'mystery poem':

Manuscript	'Mystery Poem 1'	'Mystery Poem 2'	'Mystery Poem 3'
BL Eg. 132 (a-2)	ní fog*hai*m*h* í	ni faghaim sa cart*aigh* i	ni og*h*aim í
RIA 23 K 37 (a-2)	ni f*h*agam í	ní f*hagh*am í	ni f*hagham* í
Cam. 10 (c) (a-2)			ni f*hagh*aim í
NLI G 146 (a-2)	ni f*hogh*aim í	ni f*h*aghaim sa c*hart*aigh hi	ni oghaim i sa chartaig*h*
NLS 72.1.38 (b-1)			ni f*h*uil an*n*so

Manuscript NLI G 457 in IV/a-2, as with the 'referenced' poems, omits the 'mystery poems' entirely. We can possibly accept this consistency in the omission of references as further evidence for the scribe not seeing any sense in whetting his reader's appetite for a poem which he then cannot provide. We had noted the unique interjection 'not given in this paper' for a 'referenced poem' in BL Eg. 132 – with regard to the 'mystery poems' this interjection is echoed, not only in BL Eg. 132 but also in NLI G 146. Once again we have to wonder whether this *cartaigh*, 'paper' (or manuscript), refers to the respective manuscript, or the exemplar from which it was copied. Noteworthy also is the consistency in wording for the comment on the 'mystery poem reference'. With regard to the 'referenced' poems we could differentiate between four ways of wording this comment; here, for the 'mystery poems', we can note the consistent use *ní fhaghaim / ní fhoghaim*, and only one instance of *ní fhuil annso*.

It will be useful and illuminating to look at a specific reference to a 'mystery poem' and the corresponding section in a manuscript in which such a reference omitted. Below is 'Mystery Poem 2' from BL Eg. 132 (IV/a-2), and the same prose passage from NLI G 18 (IV/b-2), in which the 'mystery poem' cannot be found. I have given the section from the original manuscript, and a lightly edited transcription of the passage below each one; the 'mystery poem' reference is highlighted in yellow in the transcription:[128]

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[128] I purchased a digital copy of the text from BL Eg. 132 from the British Library; NLI G 18 is available on ISOS (http://www.isos.dias.ie/english/index.html <accessed 22 April 2009>).

BL Egerton 132, p. 54 (28v):
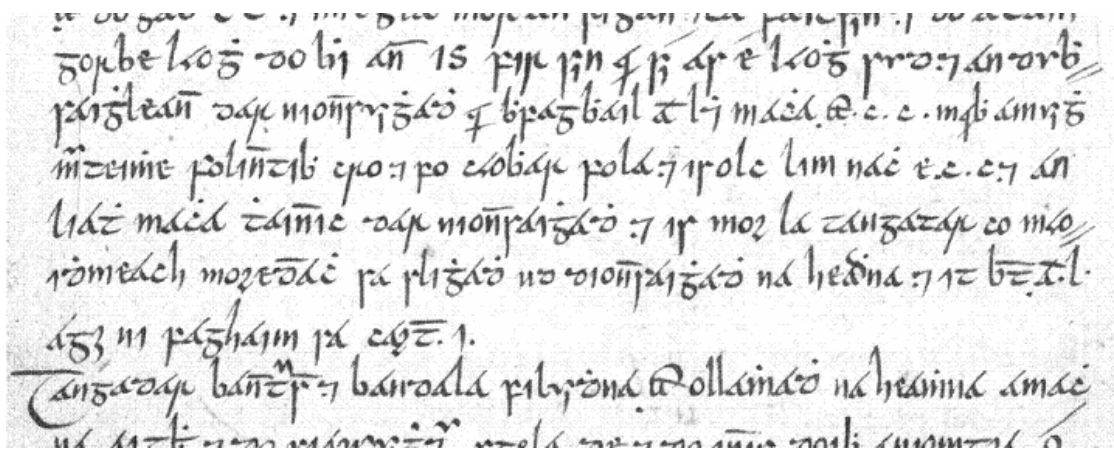
(...) 'Is fir sin,' *ar sí*, 'as é Laog*h* sud 7 an Dub*h* Saig*h*lean*n* dar n-ion*n*suig*h*adh*h* a*r* b*h*fag*h*b*h*ail a*n* L*i*ath Mac*h*a et C*u* C*h*ulainn ma*r*b*h* a Muig*h* Mu*r*teim*h*ne fo lin*n*tib*h* cro 7 fo caob*h*ar fola 7 is olc lim nac*h* e C*u* C*u*lainn 7 an Liat*h* Mac*h*a t*h*ainic dar n-ion*n*saig*h*adh 7 is mor la tangadar co m*h*aoid*h*meach mored*an*dac*h* sa slig*h*adh ud d'ion*n*saig*h*adh na hEam*h*na.' ==7 it b*er*t a*n* l*a*oidh ag*us* ni faghaim sa cart*aigh* i.== Tangadar ban*n*t*ra*c*ht* 7 bandala...

NLI G 18, p. 372 [382]:
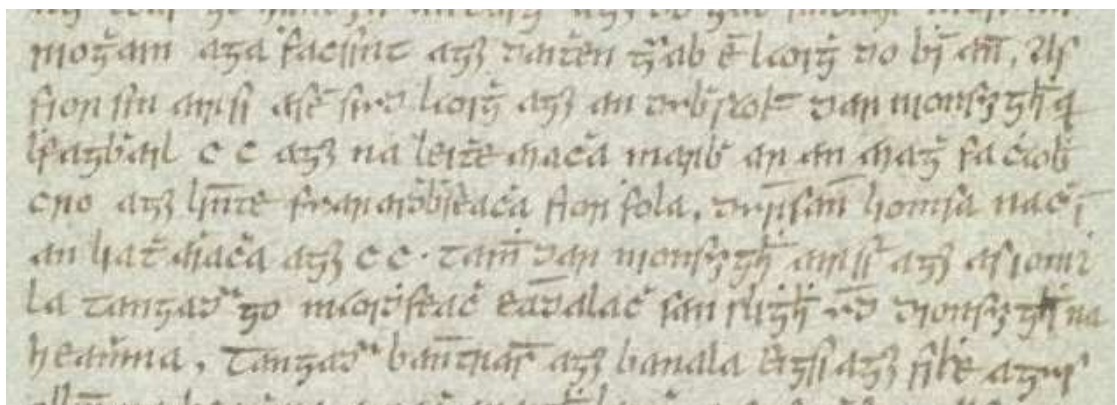
(...) 'As fior sin,' air si, 'as é Laoig*h* ag*us* an Dub*h*saol*enn* dar n-ionsuig*he ar* b*h*fagb*h*ail C*u* C*u*lainn ag*us* na Leit*h*e Mac*h*a marb*h* ar an Mag*h* fa c*h*aob*h*ach cro ag*us* lin*n*te suaraid*h*b*h*seac*h*a fior fola. Dursan liomsa nac*h* í an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a ag*us* C*u* C*u*lainn tain*ig* dar n-ion*n*suig*he*,' air sí, 'ag*us* iom*dha* la tangad*ar* go maoid*h*seac*h* éadalac*h* san slig*he* úd d'ionsuig*he* na hEam*h*na.' Tangad*ar* ban*n*tra*cht* ag*us* banala...

We can see that the second manuscript glosses entirely over any poem or poem reference; I have checked all pre-19th-century manuscripts for those passages in which 'mystery poems' occur in IV/a-2 and IV/b-2, and nowhere can a poem be found. We thus cannot establish, by cross-referencing, which poem should be expected here, as it was possible for the 'referenced' poems. If we look at the context of 'Mystery Poem 2' above, however, we can see how a poem would benefit the scene: Eimhear realises that Cú Chulainn has died when his charioteer arrives at her court with her husband's horse – her feelings could most certainly be expressed

in verse. Proinsias Mac Cana's observations on the combination use of prose and verse spring to mind, of course, who noted us that 'any heightening of the mood may be marked by the use of verse, ordinarily so that the poems are spoken by one of the characters.'[129] This particular scene, and Eimhear's grief and despair, could conceivably be corroborated by a short poem.

As for a solution that would uncover the mystery of the 'mystery poems' we can currently only speculate. There is of course the possibility that within the corpus of 19th-century manuscripts – of which there are at least forty-one (cf. Table 2-1 'Overall MSS of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* (and *Laoidh na gCeann*)') – there might be lurking a copy of an exemplar manuscript that preserves those poems which cannot be identified from the pre-19th-century manuscripts. It is possible that a scribe felt a certain point in the tale would benefit from a poem – did he mean to insert a poem and simply never came around to composing it, leaving an *7 adubhairt an laoidh* which over time was commented on by the scribes copying the tale? The question of course has to be extended to those poems in Group IV which are simply being 'referenced' but which we can identify by cross-referencing with other manuscripts – were the poems considered unimportant enough to be left out and if so, at what point in the transmission of the tale did this omission of poems begin?

3.5 Conclusion

We began this chapter by using the information from the draft catalogue from section 2.2 to classify our manuscripts into groups, based on the evidence of the poetry they contain. We have seen that there is a great discrepancy between the poems that may be contained within a given manuscript – some will preserve only LnC while others will have a version of the prose narrative with more than thirty poems. The poems themselves vary in the number of stanzas across the manuscripts.

The classification resulted in the emergence of six groups: Groups I-IV comprise the manuscripts which have the prose narrative of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*; Group V, which consists of a small number of miscellaneous manuscripts which cannot be sorted into Groups I-IV as they are too damaged to preserve any / enough poetry, or do not include any poetry at all; and finally, Group VI, comprising the manuscripts which preserve only poetry or, more specifically, only 'independent' versions of LnC (with the exception of two manuscripts which give a total of five poems from *Oidheadh Con Culainn*). We examined a number of aspects with regard to Groups I-IV in this chapter, and will consider Group VI in detail in Chapter 7. As for

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[129] M. Dillon, *Early Irish Literature* (Chicago, 1948), p. 2.

Group V, we noted (in section 3.2.3) that the majority of the manuscripts classified into this group are too fragmentary to be considered for the overall transmission of the tale while those that are well-preserved enough to be considered would have to be subjected to close textual readings in order to comment. This is outwith the scope of the present study, and will have to be addressed in the course of future study.

Within the emerging groups we could observe that the at times great discrepancy between the numbers of stanzas within a poem was almost entirely regularised: not only do the manuscripts in each group thus have the same poems, but also generally the same number and selection of stanzas for each poem. In the context of preliminary observations on the poems on an intra-group level we noted those instances where variation may occur within a group, and saw that Group IV (comprising the greatest number of manuscripts which in turn are fullest in terms of poetry) is the most complex group. It appears that Group IV can be further divided into sub-groups IV/a and IV/b, and within these into IV/a-1 and a-2, and IV/b-1, b-2 and b-3. We then considered the manuscripts on an inter-group level, and discussed those poems which are consistently represented in Groups I-IV, and the variation (especially with regard to the number of stanzas) between the groups for these poems.

On widening the scope and moving away from looking exclusively at the poetry, the second part of the chapter was concerned with textual observations. While the poetry could not be sidelined entirely. We attempted to also take into consideration the prose narrative. Thus, we found that the greatest discrepancy with regards to the poems occurs within the latter half of DCC, where in Groups I-III we have comparatively little poetry while Group IV is very full. The omission – or addition – of poems, however, does not have a bearing on the prose narrative since all groups correspond in the events that they relate, and the order in which these are given.

An interesting feature of Group II showed that the ending of the tale seems to have been emended in at least one manuscript in this group, adding to a rather short and abrupt closing of the tale in order to give the extended finale as we can find it in Group III. This of course has implications for the transmission and manuscript tradition of the tale, as it suggests that scribes had access to different versions / recensions of the tale and were happy to 'correct' and supply what they felt would be more fitting.

Given the complexity of Group IV, we spent some time considering a number of features that had emerged and which corroborated the existence of our sub-groups. Between sub-groups IV/a and IV/b we could identify transposition of prose and poetry towards the beginning of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*; it appears that, in terms of the narrative, the sequence of events as

represented in IV/b is more logical than that in IV/a. Another feature, confined to poems within DCC, were the 'referenced' poems which we can identify by cross-referencing between the (sub)groups. Finally, the 'mystery poems' were introduced and put into context, although we can only speculate as to their origins and purpose.

The classification of the poems into groups according to the poetry gives a very clear pattern and helps make the sheer volume of manuscripts more manageable. It will provide a starting point for further study, as it should be possible to classify the remaining, 19th-century manuscripts preserving *Oidheadh Con Culainn* into the same groups using the present study as a model or template.

The classification thus far has been biased towards utilising the poetry, although we have begun to establish that where variations occur within the prose narrative on an inter-group level, the manuscripts in each group tend to correspond on an intra-group level. The following chapters will consider a number of other aspects of the manuscripts both on intra- and inter-group levels, to see whether we can further corroborate our manuscript groupings and comment on the 'text and transmission' of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* and *Laoidh na gCeann*.

Chapter 4: The Scribes

In the previous chapter we established six groups into which our pre-19th-century manuscripts can be divided. While the evidence was quite conclusive, our classification so far has mainly been on the basis of the poetry contained in the various manuscripts, although a few observations drawn from the narrative context have corroborated this. In the present chapter we will adopt a slightly different approach and consider the manuscripts from another point of view, namely, their scribes.

We will go through the groups in turn to see whether there are any clues as to how the tale was transmitted, and whether the groups are still valid when the 'vital statistics' of each manuscript are brought into consideration, these being scribe, provenance, and date.

As we will see, with regard to a number of manuscripts we will have to conclude that they are of unknown provenance, scribe or date. Where this is the case, I have approached the archives and libraries in which the manuscripts in question are held to see whether any additional information might be available. Unless otherwise noted, however, no further information can be added to what we can gather from the respective manuscript catalogues.

The present chapter draws on a range of disparate sources – some more accessible than others – to gather information on our respective scribes. There will be some overlap with the information already given in the draft catalogue, but considering the wealth of material to be taken into account, this repetition will be necessary.

The colour coding used thus far to indicate whether a tale is acephalous or breaks off unfinished has been retained in this chapter.

4.1 Group I

The basic information on the manuscripts in Group I as found in the draft catalogue can be collated as follows:

	Manuscript	Scribe	Date	Content
1	RIA 23 M 25	Eoghan Ó Caoimh	1684	BmMM, DCC
2	TCD 1376/ H.5.4	Art Ó Caoimh	1701-02	BmMM, DCC
3	NLI G 113/114	Liam Mac Cartáin	1703	BmMM, DCC
4	TCD 3397/ N.5.12	Pilip Mac Brádaigh	1737	BmMM, DCC
5	RIA 23 G 21	Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin	1796	BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq)

RIA 23 M 25 is the oldest manuscript in Group I; it is also one of only nine manuscripts preserving our tale that can be dated in the 17th century. After NLS 72.1.38 (?1608-21), it is the oldest manuscript containing a full version of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* (i.e. one that does not break off, is not acephalous or otherwise incomplete due to damage to the manuscript), albeit one that does not include LnC. The manuscript was written by Eoghan Ó Caoimh, who signs his name and the date in a scribal colophon at the end of DCC, on p. 151 of RIA 23 M 25: *'(...) gonadh í sin Breisleach Muighe Murtheimhne 7 Óighe Chonculoinn gonadh sin. Arna sgriobh lé hEóghan ó Caoimh 1684'*. Ó Caoimh is one of the scribes discussed in Ó Conchúir's *Scríobhaithe Chorcaigh 1700-1850*, where we find the following information:

> Tugann Eoghan Ó Caoimh an t-eolas seo a leanas dúinn air féin sa bhliain 1709: gur rugadh é sa bhliain 1656, gus phós sé Eilionóir de Nógla i mí Feabhra na bliana 1680 (1681, nuachomhaireamh) agus go raibh mórsheisear clainne aige – Art (a fuair bás san Fhrainc sa bhliain 1709), Eoghan, Seosamh agus Caomh a chlann mac, agus Onóra, Siobhán, agus Máire a chlann iníon; go raibh beirt deartháir aige, Lughaidh agus Conchubhar (a bhí tar éis bháis i gCarraig na Siúire); go bhfuair a bhean bás i mí Deireadh Fómhair na bliana 1707 agus gur adhlacadh í i dTeampall Molainn ar Brosnaigh, i gCo. Chiarraí. Cuirimis leis an méid sin eolais gur deineadh sagart de sa bliain 1717, deich mbliana tar éis bás a chéile, agus go bhfuair sé bás ar 5 Aibreán 1726 agus é ina shagart paróiste i nDún ar Aill, agus chímid go bhfuil príomhimeachtaí a bheatha againn, fara dátaí.[130]

> [Eoghan Ó Caoimh gives us this information about himself in 1709: that he was born in the year 1656, that he married Eilionór de Nógla in the month of February in the year 1680 (1681, new numeration) and that he had six children – Art (who died in France in the year 1709), his sons Eoghan, Seosamh and Caomh, and his daughters Onóra, Siobhán, and Máire; that he had two brothers, Lughaidh and Conchubhar (who had died in Carraig na Siúire [= Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary]); that his wife died in the month of October in the year 1707 and that she was buried in Teampall Molainn ar Brosnaigh [= Moling's Temple in Brosna (?)] in Co. Kerry. We add to this information that he was ordained as a priest in the year 1717, ten years after his spouse's death, and that he died on 5 April 1726 and that he was a parish priest in Dún ar Aill [= Doneraile, Co. Cork], and we can see that we have the main events of his life, along with dates.]

Eoghan's son Art, mentioned in the quote above, is in fact the same Art Ó Caoimh who is the scribe of TCD MS 1376/ H.5.4, and who seems to have worked together with his father on a number of the manuscripts attributed to him. Even though TCD MS 1376/ H.5.4 seems to have been one of these collaborations, on p. 91 we find the colophon *'Gonad í sin Oighidh*

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[130] B. Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí 1700-1850* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1982), p. 34; translation my own. From M. Ní Mhurchú & D. Breatnach, *1560-1781 Beathaisnéis* (Baile Átha Cliath, 2001), s.v. 'Ó Caoimh, Eoghan (1656-1726)', we can supply the additional information that 'i nGleann an Phréachain i gCo Chorcaí a rugadh é' ('he was born in Glenville, Co. Cork'). Eoghan Ó Caoimh has also been studied in an extensive essay by 'Tórna' Tadhg Ó Donnchú, published (in parts) in *Gadelica* 1 (1912-13) ('An tAthair Eoghan Ó Caoimh: a Bheatha agus a Shaothar').

Choingculainn ar na sgríobh lé hArt Ó Caoimh d'Fionghuine Ó Chaoimh an 30 la don mharta 1701/2'. Art was born in 1687 or 1688 and died in 1709 in France, where he had gone to train as a priest.[131] As Art died young, in his early twenties, there does not remain a large corpus of manuscripts attributed to him, only nine manuscripts in total.[132] Eoghan Ó Caoimh laments the death of his son in two colophons which are preserved in what is now manuscript G 312 in the National Library of Ireland::

> Ag so leabhar da ngoirthior Tri Biorghaoithe an Bháis. Arna sgríobhadh lé hEoghan Ua Caoimh do chSeán Stac, áitreabhus a mBóthar na Blárnan a cCorcaigh Mhóir Mhúmhan, Anno Domini 1709/10. / Sirim air an Seán réamhráidhte sin mo leathsgéal do gabhail trém dhearmad [7] trém dhrochsgribhinn, óir as feasach é mo bheith lán do dhiombádh 7 d'iargnó san bliadhain so tré éag mo mhic ionmhuin .i. Art, fuair bás an August na bliadhna so. Requiescat in pace. Amen.

> and

> (…) Et sirim guidhe an léaghthóra 7 mo leathsgéal do ghabh[áil] tré gach dearmad 7 tré gach drochsgríbhinn dá bhfuil san leabharso, óir maoladh mo rosg 7 do measgadh mo chiall san mbliaghainso tré éag mo mhic ionmhuin .i. Art an tí nách ar chlé do glacadh a pheann ré sgriobadh Laidne, Béarladh nó Gaoidheilge, amhuil as follus do shealbhadóir an leabhar so. Requiescat in pace.[133]

> [1. This is the book entitled *Tri Biorghaoithe an Bháis* [= Keating's 'The three shafts of death']. Written by Eoghan Ó Caoimh for Seán Stac, resident of Blarney Street in great Cork of Munster, Anno Domini 1709/10. / I seek the aforesaid Seán to take my apology for my mistake and my bad writing, since he knows that I am full of sorrow and grief in this year on account of the death of my beloved son i.e. Art, who died in August of this year. Rest in peace. Amen.

> 2. (…) And I seek the blessing of the reader 7 to accept my apologies for every mistake and for every bad writing that is in this book, because my eyes have been rendered dull and my sense is distorted this year on account of the death of my beloved son i.e. Art, the one who did not neglect to put his pen to paper to write Latin, English or Gaelic, as is obvious to the owner of this book. Rest in peace.]

To return to Eoghan Ó Caoimh, it was after the deaths of his wife and son that his correspondence (in both prose and verse) with Liam Mac Cartáin began.[134] This is the very Uilliam (Liam) Mac Cartáin ('An Dúna'), the scribe of our text in NLI G 113/ 114, of whose life we have a fairly full picture.

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[131] Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí*, p. 32. In Ní Mhurchú & Breatnach, *1650-1781 Beathaisnéis* (s.v. 'Ó Caoimh, Eoghan (1656-1726)') to this is added that Art was in La Rochelle in France.

[132] Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí*, p. 32.

[133] The colophons appear on p. xi and p. 511 respectively. For a description of NLI G 312 see *NLI Cat.*, Fasc. VII, pp. 42-45. Translations my own.

[134] Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí*, p. 36.

Born in 1668, Liam Mac Cartáin grew up in Co. Cork on a farm that was partly in Drom Buí in the parish of Carraig na bhFear, and partly in Cloch Fhada in Teampall Geal.[135] At twenty-two years of age, in 1691, as a member of the cavalry regiment of King James' army, he took part *i gcogadh an Dá Rí*, 'the war of the Two Kings', his valour in this campaign being praised in a poem by his later pupil Seán na Ráithíneach.[136] After the war he returned to the parental farm at Drom Buí. We know that Liam had one son, Dónall, who inherited all his books after his death in 1724.[137] From 1705 onwards Liam Mac Cartáin took over the position as head of the Blarney Court of Poetry from Donncha Mac Sheáin Bhuí Mac Cárthaigh after the latter's death.[138] Father Conchúr Mac Cairteán, the parish priest, praised Liam during his lifetime as *'file fiosach focailbhínn agus duine uasal árdfhoglamth*a*'* ('knowledgeable poet of beautiful language and noble man of high learning'),[139] while his pupil Seán na Ráithíneach lamented after his death, *'do Charraig na bhFear is leathan an chreach'* ('great is the loss to Carraig na bhFear') and further, *'Dia dár bhfurtacht, ós finis dár lucht dáimh grinn'* ('May God help us, since our keen-witted band of poets is finished').[140] In light of the other scribes and manuscripts considered here, it is very interesting that from Liam Mac Cartáin we have 'the poem he wrote in 1720 to his friend Eon [i.e. Eoghan] Ó Caoimh, then parish priest of Doneraile, where he discourses on false teeth (…).'[141] Moreover,

> Sincerity and depth of feeling are the predominant characteristics of his works. This is quite in character seeing that one third of his poems are laments. These include a lament on the death of the wife of Eon Ó Caoimh, Gleann an Phréacháin, 1707, (…) and one for Eon's son Art (…).[142]

With regard to the manuscripts NLI G 113/ 114, it is worth mentioning that the two parts once formed a single volume. BmMM finishes at what is now the final page of G 113 while DCC begins on the first page of G 114. Interestingly, looking at the colophons would suggest that the two texts were in fact written in reverse order: at the end of BmMM (p. 291) we find *'Uilliam mac Cartain 28 die Aprilis 1703 a ccúimhníoghadh ghoile 7 ghaisge an tréan mhilidh .i.*

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[135] Anonymous, *Faiche na bhFilí – Carraig na bhFear* (Tráigh-Lí, 1962), p. 11.

[136] Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí*, p. 17.

[137] Anonymous, *Faiche na bhFilí*, p. 13.

[138] *ibid.*

[139] Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí*, p. 18.

[140] Anonymous, *Faiche na bhFilí*, p. 20.

[141] *ibid.*, p. 15.

[142] *ibid.*

Cúchuloinn mac Súbhaltaicc', whereas following DCC, on p. 305, we find the date *'Satharrnn Cásga an 27. lá don Mhárta 1703'*.

The case of our fourth scribe, Pilip Mac Brádaigh, is not as straightforward as the others in this group. TCD 3397/ N.5.12 (the 'Beresford-Mundey MS') is not mentioned in any of the published manuscript catalogues. An unpublished typescript manuscript catalogue in Trinity College, Dublin describes it as follows but omits to give a description of its contents:

> O'Reilly MSS (3391-3423)
>
> 3397 Irish MS, formerly No. 53 in Edward O'Reilly's collection, a cutting from whose Sale catalogue pasted inside the front cover gives a description. Besides poems and tales it contains Dr Thomas Fitzsimons's history of Co. Cavan families (see Carney pp. 7-9). The volume was transcribed by Philip Brady or Pilib Ministir in 1737. 190x160, dark green leather and cloth. (Old N.5.12)

Indeed, following *Oidheadh Con Culainn* in TCD 3397/ N.5.12, on p. 111r, we find the colophon *'ar na sgriobha ré Phillip mac Breaduighe an 19 lá do mígh Septembhar an bliaghuin do aois tigharna 1737'*. No place of writing is given here; however, in a colophon following the first item in the manuscript, namely *Feis Tighe Chonáin*, Mac Brádaigh states the place of writing as *'a mBaile Atha Cliathche'*.[143] James Carney makes the following identification: 'The Beresford-Mundey MS. (…) was written by the Co. Cavan clergyman Phillip Brady, otherwise known as Phillip Ministir.'[144] From two further publications we can gather information on 'Pilip Ministir'. In the notes on scribes in *Nua-Dhuanaire II* (in which two poems ascribed to Mac Brádaigh are printed, namely, *An marcach* and *An dearnaid*) we find the following bibliographical information:

> Mac Brádaigh, Pilip (*c.* 1660-1720)
>
> Is le Co. an Chabháin a bhain Pilip Mac Brádaigh. Ba shagart Caitliceach ar dtús é ach sa bhliain 1683 chuaidh sé isteach san Eaglais Phrotastúnach agus ceapadh ina reachtaire ar pharóiste Chill Dalláin i ndeoise na Cille Móire é sa bhliain 1691. Ina dhiaidh sin, idir 1704 agus 1719, bhí sé ina bhiocáire ar pharóiste Inis Mac Craith. 'Pilip Ministir' nó 'Parson Brady' a thugtaí coitianta air.[145]
>
> [Pilip Mac Brádaigh belonged to Co. Cavan. He was a Catholic priest at first but in the year 1683 he went into the Protestant Church and was appointed as rector in the parish of Cill Dalláin [= Kildallan, Co. Cavan] in the diocese of Cill Mór [= Kilmore], in the year 1691. After that, between 1704 and 1719, he was the vicar of the parish of Inis Mac Craith [= Inismagrath, Co. Leitrim]. He was also commonly known as 'Pilip Ministir' or 'Parson Brady'.]

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[143] TCD 3397/ N.5.12, p. 14v.

[144] J. Carney, *A Genealogical History of the O'Reillys* (Dublin, 1959), p. 9.

[145] B. Ó Buachalla, *Nua-Dhuanaire – Cuid II* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1976), p. 139; translation my own.

A more recent biographical sketch on Mac Brádaigh in *1560-1781 Beathaisnéis* – his lifespan here being given as 'c.1655-1720' – adds to this that,

> In Achadh Uí Mhaoláin, Co. an Chabháin, a rugadh é. (…) Bhí sé pósta ar Mary Brodrick ón gCabhán; i 1682 a tugadh ceadúnas pósta dó agus is ag an bpointe sin a d'iompaigh sé.[146]

> [He was born in Achadh Uí Mhaoláin, Co. Cavan. (…) He married Mary Brodrick from Cavan; in 1682 he was given license to marry and it is at that point that he converted.]

The dates given here for 'Pilip Ministir' and according to which he died in 1720 of course pose a problem for his identification with Pilip Mac Brádaigh, scribe of TCD 3397/ N.5.12, which was apparently written in 1737. We noted earlier that Carney and the TCD typescript catalogue identify 'Pilip Ministir' with Pilip Mac Brádaigh, and the question of this identification is currently being researched and re-examined by Joseph Flahive.[147] Having juxtaposed what we know of 'Pilip Ministir' and Pilip Mac Brádaigh, Flahive believes that we can indeed identify the two names with the same person, and that Mac Brádaigh's life should be reassigned to c. 1660 - c. 1740. While it is generally believed that Mac Brádaigh died following the end of appointment in the dicocese of Kilmore in 1719, Flahive has gathered evidence from other sources which suggest that Mac Brádaigh did not in fact die in December 1719, when a successor was named to his diocese, but went on to spend roughly twenty years in Dublin. While we cannot be sure what Mac Brádaigh did in terms of work during these years – not a huge quantity of his scribal work survives – this revision of dates would allow for the identification of 'our' scribe, Pilip Mac Brádaigh, with the Cavan poet and scribe 'Pilip Ministir'.[148]

Our fifth scribe, Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin, who wrote RIA 23 G 21, is without doubt the most prolific. He is also the only scribe in the present group who not only signs his name in a colophon following our text but also gives a place of writing (RIA 23 G 21, p. 49): *'Iar na ngraphadh le luadhas láimhe re togha droich pheinn le Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin chuim usaide féin a ttigh Shialbhearcair Úi Cheallin ar an Innse Liath láimh Cnoc a Ghrianáin a*

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[146] Ní Mhurchú & Breathnach, *1560-1781 Beathaisnéis*, s.v. 'Mac Brádaigh, Pilip (c1655-1720)'.

[147] I am indebted to Dr Joseph Flahive (personal communication) who not only brought TCD 3397/ N.5.12 (and the version of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* contained in it) to my attention in the first place, but has generously shared his recent research into the life of Pilib Mac Brádaigh with me, as well as allowing me access to his forthcoming catalogue description of TCD 3397/ N.5.12.

[148] Dr Flahive further informs me that Seán Seosamh Mac Labhraí, who completed an M.A. thesis on Mac Brádaigh's life and work at UCD in 1987, is currently working on a full edition of all items attributed to 'Pilib Minister' and an evaluation of each, and that this will be accompanied by some additional biographical materials.

Múrsgráoidhe. Feby 29th 1796.' A member of the famous Ó Longáin scribal family, Mícheál Óg's life and work have received considerable scholarly attention. Meidhbhín Ní Úrdail, in her detailed study of the Ó Longáin scribes in the 18th- and 19th centuries, quotes an autobiographical account by Mícheál Óg, summing up his early life and education:

> Lá Lughanosa .i. August 1st 1791 bead 25 bhliadhna d'aois, [óir] do rugadh mé August 1st 1766 a[g crossed out] mBéal Átha Maidhir a bporróiste Dhúna Bolg. D'éag mh'athair iair 4 bliadhna d'aois dom agus mo mháthair 8½ bliadhn[a] dom. Iair sin dob éigion dom imtheacht leam ádhbhar féin gan chóir go cothrom, gan chuid gan charaid. Do chuir an tAthair Domhnall Ó Cearbhaill fios orm agus bhíos an' fhar[r]aid dhá bhliadhain a bporróiste Chatharach a cCairbreacha shiar. Thánag abhaile iair sin 7 chuas air sgoil (um sgóláirthe [sic] bhocht mar bhíos). Ghluaisíos iair mbeith dom sealad mar sin, 7 mar ná raibh comhairle athar ná máthar orm; 7 téim a n-aimsir aig éireacht bhó 7 ag dul re bainne gur leanas de sin gur ghlac náire mé iair sin .i. bheith ag dul re meadaracha. Ní chuala ag aon dá ttáinig reomham [dá] dhéanamh, 7 gluaisim arís air sgoil 7 mé a n-aois mo 18 mbliadhna ag foghluim Arethmatic [sic]. Téim an bhliadhain ba neasa dom ag foghluim La[idine] gur chaitheas dhá bhliadhain mar sin. Téim ag foghluim figiúirí arís san mbliadhain 17[87?].[149]

> [The day of Lughanosa i.e. 1 August 1791 I will be 25 years of age, since I was born on 1 August 1766 at Béal Átha Maidhir in the parish of Dún Bolg.[150] My father died after I had turned four years old and my mother when I was aged 8½. After that I had to look after myself as I was without opportunity, without any possessions or any friend. Father Domhnall Ó Cearbhaill sent for me and I stayed with him for two years in the parish of Catharach [= Caheragh, Co. Cork] in West Carbery. I came home after that and I went to school (a bad scholar as I was). I moved after that time, since I did not have the advice of a father or mother; and I began herding cows and delivering milk until I shame took hold of me of it i.e. going around with the churns. I did not hear of anyone [in my family] before me doing this [work], and I returned to school when I was 18 years old studying Arithmetic. I began that year also to study Latin for two years. I began to study numbers again in 1787(?).]

Mícheál Óg's career as a scribe spans over fifty years: we have seventy manuscripts in his own hand, about sixty of which he co-wrote, and there are about three hundred poems that he composed.[151] His early scribal years seem to have been spent in the parish of Carraig na bhFear,

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[149] M. Ní Úrdail *The Scribe in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Münster, 2000), pp. 43-44; translation my own. The colophon appears in manuscript NLI G 99, p. 29*m*, which breaks off at the bottom; cf. *NLI Cat.*, Fasc. III, pp. 79-86. As for the incomplete final date given in the colophon, Ní Úrdail (p. 44, footnote 1) has suggested that 'It may be implied from the context that the year 1787 is intended.'

[150] Cf. Anonymous, *Faiche na bhFilí*, p. 3: 'Before the Reformation, Carraig na bhFear district was a parish in its own right, but the parish was then called Dún Bolg – an ancient name, probably connected with the Fir Bolg, who inhabited parts of South Munster in early times. Achadh Builg and Drum Bolg (now Drominn, near Cloghroe) are similar names. The name Dún Bolg must be older than the church, which in turn was built before 1291 A.D. It may have been a Norman structure, as we know that there was a small Norman town at Dún Bolg at this period.'

[151] Anonymous, *Faiche na bhFilí*, p. 53.

the same parish where Eoghan and Art Ó Caoimh and Liam Mac Cartáin (see above) were active. In 1795 Mícheál Óg contemplated emigrating to America but subsequently remained in Ireland, joining the United Irishmen in Cork city in 1797.[152] Around 1800 he married Máire Ní Chrualaoich who already had a daughter from a previous marriage; the couple's twins Peattair and Pól were born towards the end of 1801, when the family were living in Baile Philib (Ballyphilip).[153] Besides the twins and Máire's daughter, the family had five more children: two daughters, Neans and Nóra, were born in 1809 and 1812 respectively,[154] and three sons, Pádraig, Seán, born in 1815 or 1816 and Seosamh, born in 1817.[155]

In 1802 they moved to Cork city where they lived 'in the house of Donnachadh Ó Floinn (ob. 1830), one of the most important patrons and promoters of Gaelic scholarship in Cork at that time.'[156] Over the years the family were constantly on the move: between 1802 and 1807 they were living in Northeast Kerry and West Limerick[157] and from 1807-09 in Cork again.[158] The years 1809-15 were spent in Gleann Maghair and Carraig na bhFear[159] only to be followed by a move back to Cork city (1815-1820).[160] After two years in Na Cloichíní in the parish of Corra Cheapáin (Currykippane, Co. Cork),[161] Mícheál Óg once again settled in Carraig na bhFear in 1822, where he remained for the rest of his life.[162]

It is very interesting for the argument of a manuscript group that even though the lives of the scribes in question span over almost 200 years, they share roughly the same geographical background, as they all belong to Co. Cork, more specifically the south, and have an affiliation with the parish of Carraig na bhFear. An exception here is Pilip Mac Brádaigh, scribe of TCD 3397/ N.5.12, who does not seem to have a 'Cork connection'. Considering the scribal activity at the time, however, it is probably not surprising that a manuscript, or text, would make the jump from Cork to Dublin. With the Ó Caoimhs, Mac Cartáins and Ó Longáins being

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[152] Ní Úrdail, *The Scribe in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Ireland*, pp. 47-54.

[153] *ibid.*, p. 55.

[154] *ibid.*, p. 65

[155] *ibid.*, p. 70

[156] *ibid.*, p. 56

[157] *ibid.*, p. 57

[158] *ibid.*, p. 62

[159] *ibid.*, p. 65.

[160] *ibid.*, p. 69

[161] *ibid.*, p. 78

[162] *ibid.*, p. 79

professional scribal families, copies of their manuscripts would have conceivably been widely available. For our Group I it is of course unfortunate that the pattern established so conclusively by four manuscripts breaks down with the introduction of a fifth; however, this does not undermine our argument. In conclusion, we can review the information of scribes, manuscripts and provenance (by county) as follows:
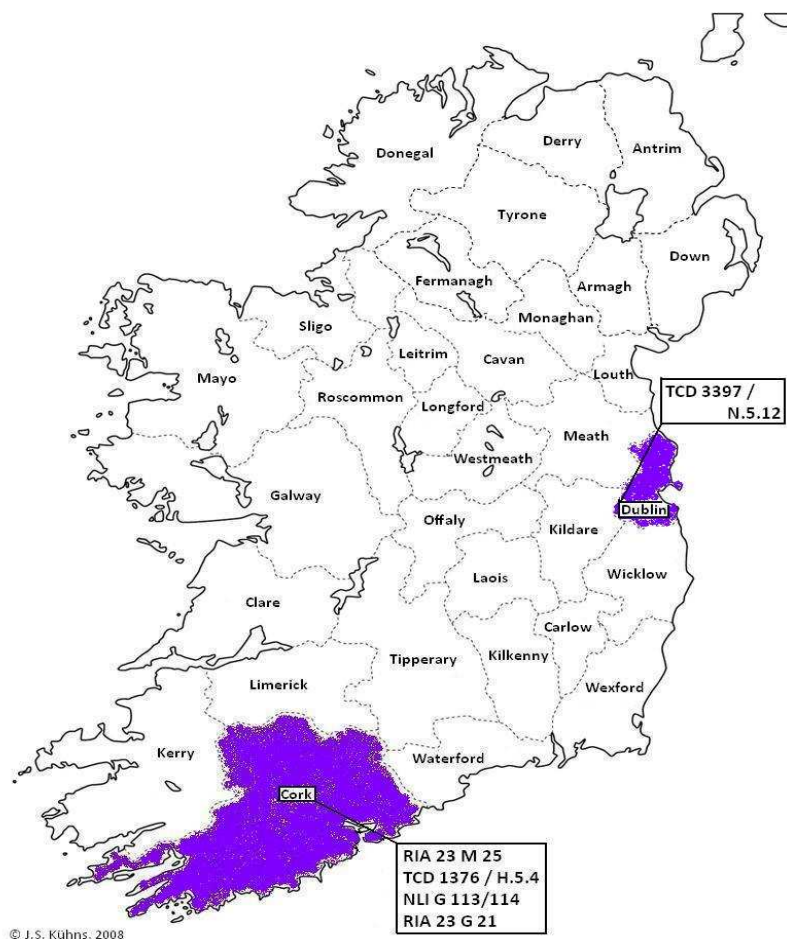
Map 4-1: Geographical distribution of MSS in Group I

4.2 Group II

Group I has shown a remarkable link between the scribes of the manuscripts, by which four of the five manuscripts, or rather their scribes, have close links with one particular parish in Co. Cork. This of course corroborates the existence of this group, and we shall investigate whether similar ties apply to the other groups. As we will see, unfortunately in Group II there is less evidence and information available for scribes of the manuscripts here than was the case for Group I. The 'vital statistics' of Group II are as follows:

	Manuscript	Scribe	Date	Content
1	RIA 23 K 7	Domhnall Mac Donnchadha	1701	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
2	RIA 23 C 26 (c)	Seaghán Ó Conaill	1761	LnC (35 qq), BmMM, DCC
3	RIA 3 B 43	?Diarmuid Ó Faoláin	?1765	BmMM, DCC
4	RIA 23 C 22	Peadar Ó Féichín / Peter Fane	1767	BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq)
5	RIA 24 B 16	?Ríghrí Mac Raghnaill	1767-68	BmMM, DCC
6	Bodleian Ir.e.3	Uilliam Breatnach	?1789	DCC
7	RIA 24 C 38	- not given -	18th cen	BmMM

We will consider the manuscripts and scribes in chronological order. The oldest manuscript here is RIA 23 K 7, dating to 1701. The date is given in the colophon following our text, although the scribe does not give his name here: *'Finis xi March 1701'*. In the *RIA Cat.* we find the following information on scribe and provenance of RIA 23 K 7:

> Scribes: (*a*) pp. 1-168 [our text occupies pp. 75-126], *Domhnall Mac Donnchadha* (pp. 123-130 are in different ink and on fresher paper) who wrote this portion of the MS. during the years 1700-2 at *Droichead na Ruachtuaidhe*, Co. Kerry (pp. 59, 122, 160, 168) part at least of the work being transcribed for *Séamus mac Dúdluing Mic Gearailt* (p. 74).[163]

I have been unable to find any further information on Domhnall Mac Donnchadha, his life and his work. The manuscript and its version of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* is interesting in that the final portion of our tale seems somewhat 'added on'; we have already noted and commented on this in section 3.4.2.

There is quite a leap in terms of years to our second manuscript, with our text in RIA 23 C 26 (c) dating to 1761. Interestingly LnC here precedes the prose narrative, which breaks off unfinished. Following the 'Lay', on p. 248, we find the scribal signature *'Ar na sgriobha le Seagan Ó Conaill an seachtmhad lá déag do September ann sa mbliain 1761 le luas lamh et ar droich ghleas'*. As for the place of writing, the *RIA Cat.* gives Kilworth, Co. Cork, in accordance with colophons to other items in this manuscript (*'a cCilliuird'*).[164] Some further information on the scribe may be gathered from *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí*: that despite a good number of his manuscripts which survive we know comparatively little about Seaghán Ó Conaill, that he started writing as early as 1754 and to our knowledge wrote his last manuscript in 1786, and that he was working in the barony of Condons and Clangibbon (*barúntacht Chúndúnadh is*

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[163] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. XVI-XX, pp. 2035-36 ('658. / 23 K 7').

[164] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. XVI-XX, p. 2356 ('765. / 23 C 26').

Ghiobúnach) in Co. Cork – in Kilworth between 1761-63 and in Kildorrery (*Cill Dairbhre*) and Mitchelstown (*Baile Mhistéala*) in the years 1767 and 1772-75.[165]

The scribe and place of writing of our third manuscript in Group II, RIA 3 B 43, are somewhat questionable as there is no colophon to our text. According to the *RIA Cat.*, 'various scribes have written the odd scraps of manuscript of which the volume is composed.'[166] Since items preceding as well as following our tale bear the signature *Diarmuid Ó Faoláin*, of Lismore, 1765',[167] it is plausible to suggest that Ó Faoláin is also the scribe of BmMM and DCC. Unfortunately, I have not been able to find any further information on the scribe other than what can be gathered from the *RIA Cat.*

Peadar Ó Féichín (Peter Fane), on the other hand, scribe of the fourth manuscript in Group II, namely, RIA 23 C 22, not only signs his name following BmMM (*'óir na sgriobhadh air buile le Fane'*) but in a postscript after LnC, on p. 210, tells us who he is writing for: *'Aig sin agad, a Shéaghain do Bhailese, Laoidhe na cCéann ag leanamhain an Deargrúathair mar ar choir a beith'.* On the life of the scribe, we can turn to *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí*:

> An saothar scríbhneoireachta atá tagtha anuas chugainn ó láimh an Fhéichínigh, is leis an tréimhse 1765-75 a bhaineann sé, agus is is gcathair Chorcaí, sa Bhlarnain agus sa Teampall Geal a dhein sé é. Máistir scole sa Bhlarnain ba ea é, de réir dealraimh ('an sean-trúpaéir san mBlarnain' a thug se féin air féin, sa bhliain 1770). Máistir scoile, leis, ba ea a chara, Seán (de) Bhailís i gcathair Chorcaí, ar scríobh sé dhá lámhscríbhinn dó sna blianta 1767-8 – an duine céanna a raibh Seán Ó Murchú na Ráithíneach ag athscríobh lámhscríbhinní dó, beagán blian roimhe sin, sna blianta 1757-61. Ar na daoine eile i measc lucht léinn agus lucht litríochta a linne a raibh aithne ag an bhFéichíneach orthu, bhí Éadbhard de Nógla, an file i gcathair Chorcaí, ar thug Peadar cuireadh chun dinnéir dó uair, agus Conchúr Bán Ó Dálaigh ó Bhaile Mhistéala.[168]

> [The scribal work which has come to us by the hand of Fane belongs to the period of 1765-75, and it is in Cork city, Blarney, and Whitechurch that it was written. He was a schoolmaster in Blarney, apparently ('the old trooper from Blarney' he said about himself, in the year 1770). His friend, Seán (de) Bhailís was also a schoolmaster in Cork city, for whom he wrote two manuscripts in the years 1767-8 – the same person for whom Seán Ó Murchú na Ráithíneach had rewritten manuscripts, a few years previously, in the years 1757-61. Amongst the other learned and literary people of the time whom Fane knew were Éadbhard de Nógla,

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[165] Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí*, pp. 47-48.

[166] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. XVI-XX, p. 2346 ('760. / 3 B 43').

[167] *ibid.*.

[168] Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí*, pp. 66-67; translation my own.

the poet in Cork city, whom Peadar invited to dinner once, and Conchúr Bán Ó Dálaigh from Mitchelstown.]

It is highly interesting for the transmission of our tale that for one of the places mentioned with regard to Peadar Ó Féichín above, we can draw an inter-group parallel to Group I: *Teampall Geal* or 'Whitechurch' in Co. Cork is where Eoghan Ó Caoimh (scribe of RIA 23 M 25, the oldest manuscript in Group I) was born.[169]

Of the next manuscript, or scribe, again very little is known. There is no scribal signature or colophon in our tale in RIA 24 B 16, which here breaks off unfinished. The *RIA Cat.* tells us, however, that the manuscript was written by 'Ríghrí Mac Raghnaill, who wrote the MS. at *Baile an Chaisleáin an Róistig* [= Castletownroche, Co. Cork] during the years 1767-1768.'[170] *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí* does have an entry for Mac Raghnaill, but lists only those manuscripts which can be ascribed to him without giving any biographical information.

Our penultimate manuscript in Group II does preserve a colophon at the end of our text: on p. 49 in Bodleian Ir. e. 3 we find, *'Scriobhtha le Uilliam Breathnac san cCairig Big'*. In *Bodleian Cat.* the place is identified with Carrickbeg in Co. Waterford.[171] No date is given in our item, but the fact that both prose items immediately preceding and following our tale bear the date '1789' strongly suggests that we can assume this date for our tale, too. I have not been able to find any further information – biographical or other – on 'Uilliam Breatnach / William Walsh'.

The last manuscript in the present group, namely RIA 24 C 38, unfortunately does not give any clues as to scribe or provenance. Our text does not feature a scribal colophon, nor do any other items in the manuscript. There are a number of marginal notes throughout our text which include names; these, however, seem to have been added at a later date and by later hands (cf. draft catalogue, section 2.2, for a list of the notes appearing in our text). No further information is given in the *RIA Cat.*, where on RIA 24 C 38 we find, '18th cent. (…) Scribe's name not given.'[172] The *Catalogue* further notes that the manuscript 'was obtained from Massey of Cork by Dr. Macalister'[173] but does not elaborate on when this happened, and whether the

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[169] Cf. section 4.1 above.

[170] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. XXI-XXV, p. 2743 ('948. / 24 B 16').

[171] *Bodleian Cat.*, p. 28.

[172] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. XXI-XXV, p. 3146 ('1168. / 24 C 38').

[173] *ibid.*

manuscript might have been written in Cork. It appears that 'Dr. Macalistair' had a collection of twenty-nine manuscripts which he presented to the RIA.[174] *RIA Cat.* notes on RIA 24 C 56, or 'Macalister MSS 24', that this particular manuscript was acquired by Dr. Macalistair about 1900,[175] making him a 19th- to 20th-century collector; the fact that the manuscript was collected or acquired in Dublin therefore does not give an indication as to its place or writing.

Unlike Group I, for which we could establish a pretty clear biography for most of our scribes, in Group II the situation is somewhat different. While only one of seven manuscripts remains clouded in mystery in terms of scribe, date and provenance, the information is scarce for others where we have to rely on the information that can be gathered from the manuscript catalogues. Nonetheless, it is striking that once again we have a very clear southern Irish tendency in terms of manuscript provenance:
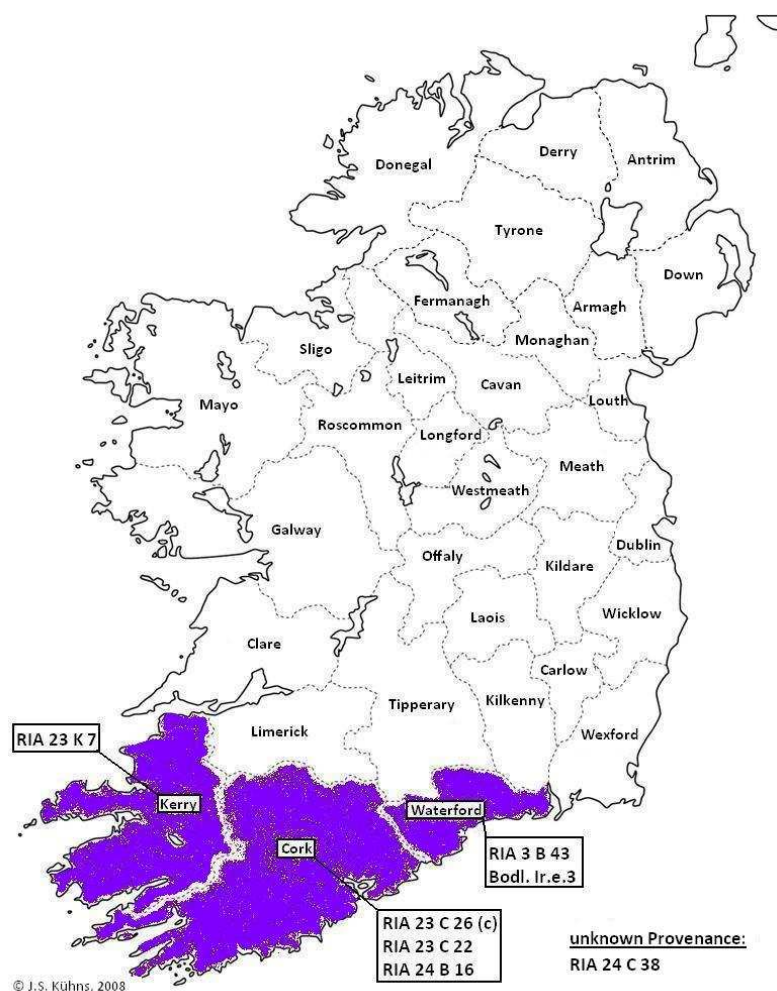
Map 4-2: Geographical distribution of MSS in Group II

4.3 Group III

Group III is fuller than Groups I and II both in terms manuscripts that can be classified into this group, as well as the number of poems preserved in our tale here – we have already seen this from pull-out Table 3-4 ('List of poems with MSS classified into groups)' in Chapter 3. To recap on the manuscripts in Group III:

	Manuscript	Scribe	Date	Content
1	RIA E iv 3	Aindrias Mac Cruitín	1727	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
2	RIA 23 M 47 (b)	Aindrias Mac Cruitín	1734	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
3	RIA 23 L 27	Seaán Ó Cinéide	1737	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
4	RIA 12 F 7	Uillig a Búrc	1759-50	BmMM
5	NLI G 149	Mícheál Ó Horgáin	1765	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
6	RIA 23 H 16	Seaghán Ó Dómhnaill	1779	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
7	RIA 24 P 6	John MacNamara	1783	BmMM, DCC, LnC (24 qq)
8	NLI G 501	Tadhg Ó Caoluidh	1794	DCC, LnC (28 qq), BmMM
9	RIA 23 M 47 (a)	Séamus Ó Caoluidhe	1795	DCC, LnC (28 qq)

Once again we shall work our way through the manuscripts and scribes in chronological order. The first two manuscripts are in fact the product of a single scribe: both RIA E iv 3 and RIA 23 M 47 (b) were written by Aindrias Mac Cruitín within the space of seven years.[176] The former manuscript includes the colophon *'Ar na sgríobadh lí Aindrias mac Cruitín an céd lá do mhí iuilí ann[o] domini 1727'*, whereas only the date '1734' is given in RIA 23 M 47 (b), following LnC. For the place of writing, the *RIA Cat.* gives 'Moyglass (*Magh-ghlas*), Co. Clare'[177] for RIA E iv 3; no place of writing is given for RIA 23 M 47 (b) in the respective entry. Mac Cruitín has a fairly lengthy entry in *1560-1781 Beathaisnéis*, where his lifespan is given as c. 1650-1738; we shall look at the passage most relevant to piece together his biography:

> I Maigh Ghlas i bparóiste Chill Mhuire Uí Bhreacáin in iarthar an Chláir a rugadh é. Deirtear go raibh a mhuintir go maith as ach nárbh fholáir dóibh cuid dá n-oidhreacht a dhíol chun go gcuirfí oideachas maith air. Ba iad na pátrúin a bhí aige Samhairle Mac Domhnaill, Cill Chaoi, a bhean Sibéal Ní Bhriain, agus Éadbhard Ó Briain in Inis Díomáin. Ag pointe éigin b'éigean dó scoil a oscailt agus b'in í a shlí bheatha as sin go deireadh a shaoil. Scríobhaí ba ea é freisin. Rinne sé cóipeanna de 'Tri Bior-Ghaoithe an Bháis' agus 'Foras Feasa' le Céitinn, chomh maith le cóipeanna de: beatha Sheanán Inis Cathaigh; 'Cath Fionntrágha'; agus is é rinne an chóip is sine de 'Caithréim Thoirdhealbhaigh' dá bhfuil ar marthain. Rinne sé duanaire do mhuintir Uí Lochlainn ina bhfuil dánta a chum sé féin agus Aodh Buí. Maireann tuairim leathdhosaen dá lámhscríbhinní. Luaití 1740 agus 1749 mar

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[176] There is, in fact, a third manuscript within our corpus of pre-19th-century manuscripts that is the work of Aindrias Mac Cruitín: this is the fragmentary Maynooth C 38 (j), which has been classified into Group V (cf. section 4.5 below).

[177] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. I-V, p. 51 ('11. / E iv 3').

dháta ach bhí Ó Rathile sásta glacadh le 1738. Tá sé curtha i gCill Fear Buí, dhá mhíle soir ó thuaidh ó Shráid na Cathrach.[178]

[He was born in Moyglass in the parish of Kilmurry in the west of [Co.] Clare. It is said that his relatives were well off but had to sell part of their estate in order to give him a good education. His patrons were Samhairle Mac Domhnaill, Kilkee, his wife Sibéal Ní Bhriain, and Éadbhard Ó Briain in Ennistimon. At some point he had to open a school and this was his way of living until the end of his life. He was also a scribe. He made copies of the 'Three Spears of Death' and Keating's *Foras Feasa*, as well as copies of: the life of *Seanán Inis Cathaigh*; 'The Battle of Ventry'; and it is he who made the oldest surviving copy of *Caithréim Thoirdhealbhaigh* ('The triumphs of Turlagh'). He composed a *duanaire* for the Ó Lochlainns which includes poems he himself and Aodh Buí had written. Around half a dozen of his manuscripts survive. 1740 and 1749 have been suggested as a date but Ó Rathile was happy to accept 1738. He is buried in Kilfarboy, two miles north-east of *Sráid na Cathrach*.]

Of our third manuscript, and second scribe in this group, once again very little is known. At the end of LnC in RIA 23 L 27 (p. 160) the scribe signs his name - Seaan Ó Cinéide – but does not give a place of writing. In fact, no place of writing is given anywhere else in this manuscript, and the *RIA Cat.* does not add any information, simply giving 'Scribe: *Seeán Ó Cinéide*; see pp. 54, 88*i*, 124*i*, 160, 162a, 212; written in 1737-38 (*ibid.*).'[179] None of the other manuscripts written by Ó Cinéide which are listed in the *RIA Cat.* include information on a place of writing, and I have not found information on our scribe anywhere else.

On Uillig a Búrc, on the other hand, we can comment further. The scribe of our tale in RIA 12 F 7, he signs his name twice in the course of our text: once towards the beginning, where 'Alexander Bourke' is used to fill in a line, and also at the end of our text, where we find the colophon '*ar na sgriobhadh le Uilliog a Bourc*'. Further information can be supplied from *RIA Cat.*:

The MS. was written during the years 1749-50 by three Cork scribes – (a) *Uilliog a Búrc* (al. *a Bource, A Bourc, Ulick a bourke*) who wrote pp. 1-288 [our text occupies pp. 200-244] during the years 1749-50; (…) The place of writing of the first and third sections of the MS. is given as *Unach*, Co. Cork (pp. 179, 326, 341) = Annagh, p[arish] of Churchtown and bar[ony] of Kilmore and Orrery, in the north of Co. Cork.[180]

From *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí* we can glean some further information as here we find a note cited from NLI G 30, written by Muiris Ó Fearghaoíle, who tells us: 'Ulick Bourk a tinker by trade

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[178] Ní Mhurchú & Breathnach, *1560-1781 Beathaisnéis*, p. 70-71; translation my own.

[179] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. VI-X, p. 1723 ('556. / 23 L 27').

[180] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. I-V, p. 583 ('235. / 12 F 7').

and pretends to write the Irish stole a printed Irish grammar from me. Ano Dmi. 1744.'[181] We also know that Uillig a Búrc had a brother who died on board a battle ship in Halifax on 15 May 1759, and that Uillig himself was in Droichead na Bandan (= Bandon, Co. Cork) in the year 1756.[182]

The scribe of NLI G 149, our fifth manuscript in Group II, gives us his name and place of writing himself, in a colophon following LnC: *'Arna sgríobhin le Michael Ó Horgáin a gconntae Chiarraidhe a mbaile ar a ngoirthear Achruim san mbliadhain d'aois an Tiagharna míle seacht ccéad 7 chúig bhliadhna ar trí fiothchid'.* For the place 'Achruim' as noted in the colophon, the 'Placenames Database of Ireland' suggests a correspondence with *Cathair an Mhígh* (Cahermee) in Co. Cork.[183] In the *Gazetteer of Ireland / Gasaitéar na hÉireann* we find two places by the name *Eachroim* (Aughrim), one in Wicklow and one in Galway.[184] None of this, however, ties in with the information *i gconntae Chiarraidhe* as given in the colophon which thus identifies 'Achruim' as being in Co. Kerry. The *NLI Cat.* cites this very colophon from NLI G 149 as the source for giving information on scribe, date and provenance of this manuscript, but does not suggest any other identification of the place.[185] I have not found any further details on our scribe's life and work, or been able to identify 'Achruim'. In accordance with the colophon, however, we shall treat the manuscript as being of a Co. Kerry provenance.

Seaghán Ó Domhnaill, scribe of RIA 23 H 16, signs his name in a colophon after our text; for his place of writing we can turn to the *RIA Cat.* where we find that 'at p. 205 he gives the place of writing, i.e. *Tula Órbuidhe ris a raidhtear Tullerboy* (in Limerick).'[186] As with our previous scribe, there does not seem to be any further information available on Seaghán.

An interesting connection, however, can be established between the scribes of the seventh manuscript in Group III, and a scribe in Group II. In RIA 24 P 6, our text occupies pp. 274-320, p. 320 also being the last page of the manuscript which breaks off unfinished.Our text thus appears in the latter half of the manuscript. There is no scribal signature but the *RIA Cat.* tells

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[181] Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí*, pp. 15-16.

[182] *ibid.*, p. 16.

[183] http://www.logainm.ie/?text=achruim <accessed 20 January 2008>.

[184] Placenames Branch of the Ordnance Survey, *Gazetteer of Ireland / Gasaitéar na hÉireann* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1989), p. 101.

[185] *NLI Cat.*, Fasc. IV, p. 108 ('G 149').

[186] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. I-V, p. 340 ('115. / 23 H 16').

us: 'MS. is divided into 2 parts, the first of which (pp. 1-236) was written by *Ríghrí Mac Raghnaill* (= Reynolds) in *Baile an Chaisleáin* (*an Róstigh*), i.e. Castletownroche (near Fermoy), in 1768. (…) Second part, p. 237 to end, written *ca.* 1780-83 by John MacNamara.'[187] We unfortunately do not have any information on the place of writing of 'our' part of the manuscript. It is very interesting, however, that the first part of the manuscript was written by Ríghrí Mac Raghnaill, who is the same Ríghrí Mac Raghnaill who wrote (in the same place) manuscript RIA 24 B 16 in Group II. In the present manuscript, RIA 24 P 6, Mac Raghnaill's part was written a bit over a decade before the second part. With a lack of further information on John (Joannes) MacNamara we therefore cannot be sure that the manuscript might not have travelled and the second part as a consequence been written elsewhere. We could possibly – and very tentatively – suggest a Cork provenance for the second part of this manuscript, based on the evidence of the first part.

The penultimate manuscript in Group III, NLI G 501, was written by Thady Kelly (or Tadhg Ó Caoluidh) who signs his name under the headline for DCC on p. 103: *'Thady Kelly 29th August 1794'.* The *NLI Cat.* cites a number of instances of placenames being mentioned in the manuscript in colophons and (marginal) jottings: Cloghanebegg [bar. Moyarta, Co. Clare]; County of Clare and Division of Kilrush; Kilrush, County Clare.[188] While the manuscript thus appears to be of a Co. Clare provenance, nothing else seems to be known about the scribe.

Our ninth and final manuscript in Group III is 23 M 47 (a), part of a composite manuscript 'formed from five originally distinct MSS.'[189] We have already considered part (b) of this manuscript above. There is no colophon, and thus information on scribe and date for part (a) in our text, but on the basis of colophons elsewhere in the manuscript the *RIA Cat.* tells us that the scribe is '*Séamus Ó Caoluidhe* (pp. 151, 175), who wrote between the years 1789 (p.151) and 1795 (p. 121).'[190] This final date in fact occurs after LnC, but with no scribal signature. No further information on the scribe or manuscript provenance is, to my knowledge, available elsewhere.

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[187] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. I-V, pp. 277-78 ('94. / 24 P 6').

[188] *NLI Cat.*, Fasc. XI, p. 1 ('G 501').

[189] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. XXI-XXV, p. 2791 ('973. / 23 M 47').

[190] *ibid.*

With as little information available on both Séamus Ó Caoluidhe, as well as the scribe discussed before him, namely, Thady Kelly / Tadhg Ó Caoluidh, it is impossible to comment on a potential relationship between the two scribes despite the similarity in names.

In conclusion, we shall review the geographical distribution of the manuscripts in Group III. As with the other groups considered so far, as the map below illustrates, those manuscripts and scribes in Group III which we can place within their geographical context belong to the south-west of Ireland:
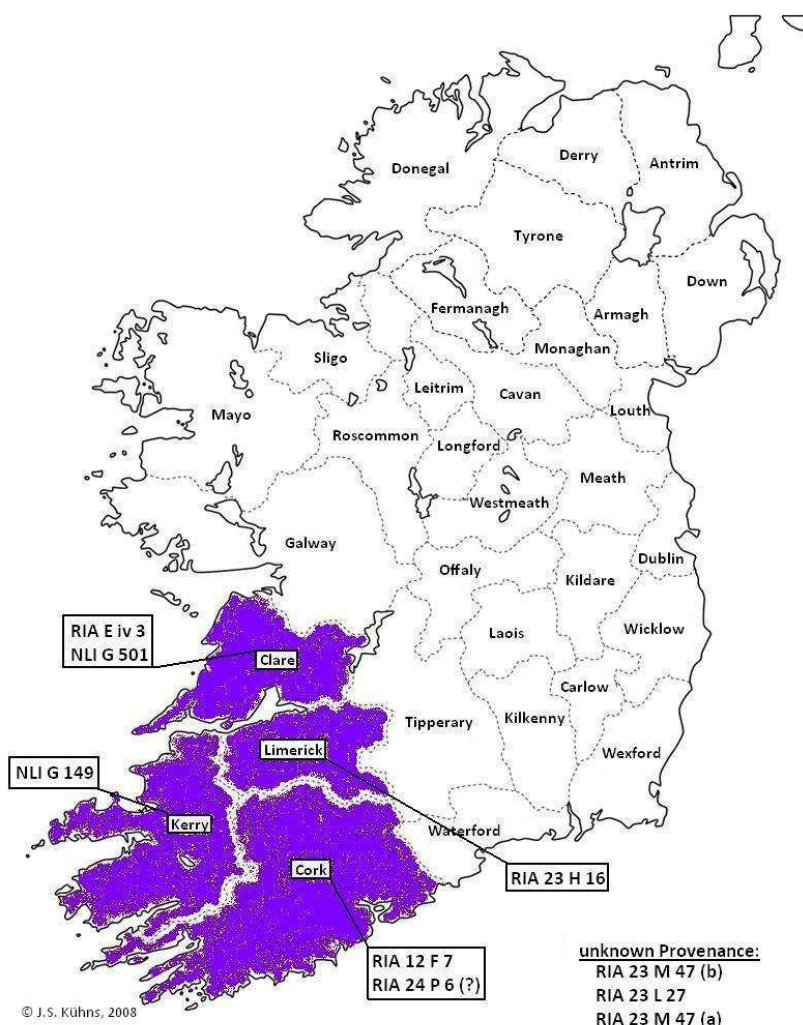
Map 4-3: Geographical distribution of MSS in Group III

4.4 Group IV

Group IV, as pull-out Table 3-4 has already suggested, is the most extensive group both in terms of manuscripts – fifteen in total – as well as the number of poems preserved in the version of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* here. It is also the most complex group: in Chapter 3 we have already discussed a number of features (such as the 'mystery' and 'referenced' poems) that

support an argument for the existence of sub-groups with Group IV. Some passages of textual comparison which illustrate the difference that may occur on an inter-(sub)group level will be discussed further in section 6.3.5.

As with the previous groups we will begin here by introducing the manuscripts and scribes; again, the information available on the individual characters ranges from very extensive to (almost) non-existent. We will also see that a number of links can be established between some of the scribes, which of course may have implications for the transmission of the tale in this particular group. In the discussion of the manuscripts below, the sub-group reference is given in parentheses for each manuscript; we shall, however, treat the manuscripts in chronological order. The manuscripts in Group IV are the following:

	Manuscript	Scribe	Date	Content
1	NLS 72.1.38	?	?1608-21	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
2	NLS 72.2.9	Fear Feasa Ó Duibhgheannáin	c.1650	BmMM
3	TCD 1362/ H.4.21	Eoghan Mac Gilleoin	1691	BmMM, DCC, LnC (30 qq)
4	TCD 1296/ H.2.5	?Diarmuid Ó Conchubhair	1712	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
5	BL Egerton 132	Richard Tipper	1712-13	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
6	Maynooth C 98 (b)	Diarmuid Ó Conchubhair	?1714	BmMM, DCC
7	RIA 23 K 37	Seon Mac Solaidh	1718	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
8	NLI G 18	Conchubhar Óg Ó Cruadhlaoich	1722	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
9	TCD 1287/ H.1.13	Hugh O'Daly	1746	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
10	Cam.10/ Add. 3085 (c)	Peadar Mhag Uidhir	1755	DCC, LnC (29 qq)
11	NLI G 457	Pádraig Ó Pronntaigh	1759	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
12	NLI G 296	Donnchadh Ó Floinn	1763	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
13	NLI G 146	Muiris Ó Gormáin	1770	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
14	BL Egerton 150	Seón Lloyd	1774	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
15	RIA 23 P 13	?	18th cen	BmMM, DCC, LnC (24 qq)

The first manuscript in Group IV preserves the oldest complete version of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. It is very unfortunate that NLS 72.1.38 (IV/b-1) is also a manuscript of which we have no information on either scribe or provenance, or an exact date, and we can thus only point to some possibilities and speculations. In *Mackechnie Cat.* we can find a summary of the opinions voiced for a possible date:

> As various hands appear in the MS it is not possible to give any exact date for its production. Mackinnon suggested late 16th or early 17th century and Robin Flower "Cat.", p. 398, seems not unwilling to accept circa 1600 as the appropriate date.[191]

Ronald Black's unpublished draft catalogue, 'The Gaelic Manuscripts of Scotland', gives the following information on NLS 72.1.38:

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[191] *Mackechnie Cat.*, p. 190.

17th century. Paper, 18½ x 14½ cms. Pp. 190. "Pot" w'mk (passim) indicates dating in first half of 17th cent.; the variety of it which occurs up to p. 28 belongs notably to period 1608-21. Chronology at p. 171 points more precisely to 1618. Other w'mks appear at pp. 49f ("horn") and 59f. Four principle scribes contributed to the work.

A   pp. 5-28, 47-114, 117-42, 155-70, 175-92. Formal, slightly pointed.
B   pp. 29f., 193. The hand of Adv. 72.1.43 etc.
C   pp. 31-46, 143-54, 171-4
D   pp. 115f.[192]

No indication is given as to a possible provenance; however, elsewhere Black tentatively suggested 'Ireland (?) 17 cent.'.[193] With our text occupying pp. 7-69, *Oidheadh Con Culainn* would thus have been written by hands A, B and C, and we can identify the changeover of hands within the manuscript quite distinctly. In the copy of 'Black Cat.' held in the Manuscripts Department of the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, the name 'Charles O'Conor of Belanagare (1710-1791)' has been added in pencil in the margin; it is unclear whether the pencilled note identifies him as the scribe but the fact that the paper of the manuscript dates from the early 17th century is somewhat incongruous.[194] The signature *'Ag seo leabair Mhanuis Mhic Muirish'* appears in the manuscript. However, 'Manus Mac Muirish' has so far not been identified.[195] More research is needed into the scribe and provenance of NLS 72.1.38; for the time being, we shall assume Black's dating of 1608-21 but conclude that scribe and provenance are, as of yet, unidentified.

The second and third manuscripts in Group IV (both IV/a-1) are, in fact, exemplar and copy: Ewen Mac Gilleoin, the Kintyre scribe and schoolmaster, copied TCD 1362/ H.4.21 from the now incomplete NLS 72.2.9. Cecile O'Rahilly discussed both TCD 1362 and NLS 72.2.9 in some

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[192] 'Black Cat.'; no page numbers available.

[193] R. Black, 'The Gaelic Manuscripts of Scotland' in W. Gillies (ed.), *Scotland and Gaelic / Alba agus a'Ghàidhlig* (Edinburgh, 1989), p. 155 (item 41).

[194] I am grateful to Dr Ulrike Hogg, Manuscripts Department, National Library of Scotland, who brought this note to my attention. Dr Hogg informs me (personal communication) that amongst Ronald Black's notes associated with the draft catalogue there is a set of photostats of pp. 150-70 from NLS 72.1.38 with a note attached to it stating that these pages are in the hand of Charles O'Conor of Belanagare, 'Identification confirmed by YBL (or 7BL?) Facs. P. 170'. According to 'Black Cat.' this is the same hand writing pp. 5-28 and 47-69 of our tale; however, the dating evidence of the paper still seems at odds with this identification.

[195] E. MacLysaght, *The Surnames of Ireland* (Dublin, 1980), s.v. 'Mac Morris, -Morish', notes that *'Mac Muiris* is the Irish form of Fitzmaurice of Co. Kerry.' Dr Hogg (personal communication) suggests to possibly read 'Manus Mac Muirish' as 'Magnus Mac Mhuirich', who may belong to the family of Lachlan McVuirich, an illiterate descendant of the bards whose testimony appears in the Appendix of the Report by the Highland Society of Scotland in 1805, and during whose lifetime the Mac Mhuirich library was scattered. If this were the case it would place Manus / Magnus in South Uist, where the Mac Mhuirich's held a farm at Stilligarry. There is no evidence, however, that 'Manus Mac Muirish' did not just leave his signature in the manuscript without, in fact, being one of the scribes.

detail in the introduction to her edition of *The Stowe Version of Táin Bó Cuailnge*. Being the older of the two, we shall first look at NLS 72.2.9, which was written by Fear Feasa Ó Duibhgheannáin in c. 1650.[196] The scribe does not sign his name in the course of our tale – at least not in any of the surviving parts – but we can find his signature in the lower margin of fol. 10a in NLS 72.2.9: *Trocuire ca bfagbha an ti do scriobh sin .i. Fearfesa O Duibgennain Amen*. None of the manuscript catalogues suggest a provenance for the manuscript. However, O'Rahilly makes reference to two further manuscripts written by Ó Duibhgheannáin, one in '*Tom an Bhruic san Chondáe Riabhaigh* (Wexford)' in 1646, the other in the year 1666 in Cill Tochomarc (Kiltoghert), Co. Leitrim.[197] The Ó Duibhgheannáin (or O Duigeanan) scribal family is discussed in a number of chapters in Walsh's *Irish Men of Learning*. With specific reference to the name 'Fearfeasa', however, there are only two mentions by Walsh: a note that 'the *Calendar of Patent Rolls of James I* has a pardon to Fearfeasse O Dwgenaine, rymer of Moygarie, 19 April, 1603', as well as a reference to the Wexford manuscript already mentioned above.[198]

At some stage NLS 72.2.9 passed to Eoghan Mac Gilleoin, who copied *Táin Bó Cuailgne*, *Cath Ros na Rígh* and *Oidheadh Con Cualainn* into what is now TCD 1362/ H.4.21. He signs his name in the exemplar, but also gives his name in TCD 1362, between BmMM and DCC: *Eoghan Mac Gilleoin do scriobh*. In the entry for Mac Gilleoin in the *Companion to Gaelic Scotland* we find the following information:

> Maclean, Hugh (Eoghan Mac Gilleoin) (fl. Late seventeenth century) schoolmaster at Kilchenzie, Kintyre, 1699. During the years 1690 to 1698 he wrote manuscripts containing 'Táin Bó Cuailnge' and other tales (NLS 72.1.36, 14873; TCD 1307, 1362). He met Edward Lhuyd; and probably taught William MacMurchy, whose Gaelic script resembles his.[199]

Ronald Black suggests that it is likely that NLS 72.2.9 passed to the above-mentioned William MacMurchy after it was copied by Mac Gilleoin.[200] TCD 1362, on the other hand, was acquired

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[196] C. O'Rahilly *The Stowe Version of Táin Bó Cuailnge* (Dublin, 1962), p. l: 'Mr. D.A. MacDonald of the Department of Manuscripts, National Library of Scotland, has very kindly examined for me the water-mark on the paper of Ed [= NLS 72.2.9] and tells me that it is 'of a type appearing especially on French paper of the first half of the 17th century.' *Mackinnon Cat.* (p. 173) would assign Ed to 'the end of the 17th or beginning of the 18th century', but it seems safe to date the writing of the manuscript to about 1650.'

[197] O'Rahilly, *The Stowe Version of TBC*, p. xlix-l. 'Black Cat.' also acknowledges these two manuscripts (RIA 24 N 3 and TCD 1394/ H.5.22 respectively).

[198] P. Walsh, *Irish Men of Learning* (Dublin, 1947), p. 11. Walsh gives the date of the Wexford manuscript as 1636 but O'Rahilly (*Stowe Version of TBC*, p. xlix) emends this date, stating that the manuscript was written in 1646, 'not 1636 as stated in P. Walsh's Irish Men of Learning p. 11'.

[199] D.S. Thomson, *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* (Oxford), s.v. 'Maclean, Hugh' (entry by Ronald Black).

[200] 'Black Cat.'; no page numbers available.

by Edward Lhuyd during his tour of the Highlands in 1700.[201] The section of the text now lost in NLS 72.2.9 can be reconstructed from TCD 1362, as Eoghan Mac Gilleoin was very faithful to his exemplar.[202]

In the course of our tale in TCD 1296/ H.2.5 (IV/b-2), we find no scribal colophon or other reference giving scribe, date, or provenance. Neither of the manuscript catalogues for the TCD manuscripts give a date, although at the end of the item preceding our tale the date '1712' is given. As for the scribe, both *TCD Irish Cat.* and *TCD Cat.* tell us that 'The volume is in the handwriting of Desmond of Conor, who is most probably the translator of Keating's History of Ireland.'[203] *TCD Cat.* adds to this,

> There is a loose memorandum by Eugene O'Curry: 'This manuscript appears to have been read with some care by Andrew Mac Curtin: see a quatrain by way of amendment in his handwriting, at p. 58, beginning: Tré b*hon*n aongais anb*h*a an b*h*roid. See also one of his own poems in the same hand, at p. 242: Eugene O'Curry, 29 May, 1839.[204]

Interestingly, in one particular copy of the *TCD Irish Cat.* which I consulted in the Manuscripts Department, Trinity College Dublin, a gloss can be found emending 'Desmond' to 'Dermod' and 'of Conor' to 'O'Connor', and further adding, in the margin, 'written for Thomas Prundivill in 1712'. If this emendation is correct, it appears that we can identify 'Desmond O'Conor' with 'Dermod O'Connor', or 'Diarmuid Ó Conchubhair', who is most famed for producing the first English translation of Keating's *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*.

Born in Limerick, a son to Tadhg Rua Ó Conchubhair (we do not know the year of his birth) it seems that, although a native Irish speaker, Ó Conchubhair learned English from a young age. He was writing in Limerick until he left for Dublin in 1719.[205] In 1720 Ó Conchubhair went to London and there finished his translation of Keating's *Foras Feasa*, written in 1720-21 for Maurice Conor Faly (Muiris Conchubhair Fáilghe).[206] This translation provoked a great controversy:

> In 1722 a violent attack on him [i.e. Diarmuid Ó Conchubhair] in connection with his translation of Keating appeared in the anonymous "Dissertation" prefixed to the Memoirs of the Marquis of Clanricarde. The writer poured contempt on Keating's

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[201] Cf. the enty for TCD 1362/ H.4.21 in the draft catalogue in section 2.2.

[202] O'Rahilly also observed this; cf. draft catalogue, section 2.2 (p. 105, footnote 105).

[203] *TCD Irish Cat.*, p. 74 / *TCD Cat.*, p. 316.

[204] *TCD Irish Cat.*, p. 74.

[205] Ní Mhurchú & Breathnach, *1560-1781 Beathaisnéis*, p. 119.

[206] *Flower Cat.*, p. 174 ('Sloane 3154').

history, and jeered at the translator's assumed title of "Irish antiquary", finally suggesting that the real mover in the enterprise was John Toland, the deist. Ó Conchubhair's translation was published at the beginning of 1723, the copy of Keating in Add. 18745 being probably used as the basis of the version. The Preface by the Translator attacked the anonymous traducer. The controversy was then transferred to the advertisement columns of the Post Boy, 1723 Jan. 24-26, 26-29, the anonymous dissertationist renewing his attack and Ó Conchubhair answering.[207]

In the preface to the second edition of the translation, which appeared in 1726, Ó Conchubhair was accused of embezzling £300 of the funds collected to finance the first edition.[208] In addition to all this, a manuscript written between 1725-1729 by Tadhg Ó Neachtain includes two denunciatory poems on Ó Conchubhair composed by Seán Ó Neachtain; the latter is also mentioned in a poem listing the Gaelic scolars in the Dublin area in the 18th century 'where again it is evident that, whatever his claim to fame, Ó Conchubhair was not *persona grata* with the Ó Neachtain family.'[209] The date of Ó Conchubhair's death is uncertain although both 1729 and 1732 have been suggested as the year in which he died.[210]

It seems that a second manuscript in Group IV is also the work of Ó Conchubhair; at least, there is another manuscript written by a scribe of the same name. This manuscript in question is the sixth in our list, namely Maynooth C 98 (b). Of our text we have BmMM and DCC, which breaks off unfinished; thus, if there ever was a colophon at the end of the tale, it is now lost. The date '1714' is found in colophons to a number of items in this manuscript, as is the name of the scribe: Diarmuid O Conc(h)ub(h)air. No place of writing is given anywhere in the manuscript.[211] It is noteworthy that Maynooth C 98 (b) falls into a different sub-group from TCD 1296/ H.2.5, namely, IV/b-3 as opposed to IV/b-2. There are only two years between the writing of the two manuscripts, suggesting that if they were indeed written by the same Diarmuid Ó Conchubhair, he must have had access to different versions of the tale. There is of course the possibility that we are dealing with a different scribe of the same name, although I

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[207] *Flower Cat.*, p. 174 ('Sloane 3154'). Flower notes further that an account of the controversy can be found in H.R. Plomer, *The Irish Book Lover III*, p. 125.

[208] Ní Mhurchú & Breathnach, *1560-1781 Beathaisnéis*, p. 120; H.M. Risk, 'Two Poems on Diarmaid Ó Conchubhair', *Éigse* 12 (1967-68), p. 37.

[209] Risk, 'Two Poems on Diarmaid Ó Conchubhair', p. 37.

[210] Ní Mhurchú & Breathnach, *1560-1781 Beathaisnéis*, p. 120: 'Ach in *Irish Book Lover*, Aibrean 1912 scríobh W.H. Grattan Flood: "I have seen it stated that O'Connor died in 1732, but Mr Lenihan [staraí Luimnigh] was of the opinion that he died in 1729."'

[211] Celia Kehoe, Assistan Librarian, Russell Library, NUI Maynooth informs me (personal correspondence) that it is not possible to supply any further information with regards to the provenance of MS C 98 (b); the manuscript – part of the O'Curry collection – was acquired by St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, from the Catholic University, now University College, Dublin.

have found no evidence for a second 'Diarmuid Ó Conchubhair'. If we thus assume that the manuscripts were written by the same scribe, since they both fall into the period that Ó Conchubhair spent working in Limerick we can maybe tentatively suggest Limerick as a place of writing for both our manuscripts, too.

The scribe of the fifth manuscript in Group IV, BL Egerton 132 (IV/a-2) is another well-known character: Richard Tipper or Risteard Tuibear. There is no colophon or other scribal note in the course of our tale. *Flower Cat.*, in the entry for Eg. 132, specifies that it was written in 1712-13 by Richard Tipper 'at Baile Mhistéil [= Mitchelstown] near Mulhuddart in the parish of Castleknock, Co. Dublin.'[212] Born in the second half of the 17th century – although we do not have exact dates for his life – he was in the circle of the scribes associated with the Ó Neachtains and features in the poem on 18th-century scribes in Dublin (discussed below).

Tipper seems to have been close friends with the scribe of our seventh manuscript, RIA 23 K 37 (IV/a-2), namely Seón Mac Solaidh, whose biography is somewhat fuller than Tipper's:

> Bhí Seon Mac Solaidh dian ag obair idir 1713 agus 1724, nó tá 29 de lámhscríbhinní againn, de réir mo chuntais-se, a scríobh sé taobh istigh den tamall ghairid sin. I mBaile Hardaman i bparóiste Stigh Colláin a bhí sé, mar a insíonn sé féin dúinn i mbunús a chuid lámhscríbhinní, atá anois san Acadamh agus sa Leabharlann Náisiúnta agus beagán in áiteanna eile. Seon mac Éamainn mhic Dhonncha mhic Mhuiris a thug sé air féin in áit amháin (ARÉ 152 [23 K 37]), agus ba chara agus comhgleacaí é do Risteárd Tuibéar, an scríobhaí tábhachtach a raibh cónaí air i mBaile Átha Cliath. Is cósuil nár mhór an meas a bhí ag Colm Ó Lochlainn ar an bheirt: 'these two industrious but rather incompetent compilers' (Ó Lochlainn 1943: 36). Ach d'fhág siad beirt a lán de litríocht Oiriall againn.[213]

> [Seon Mac Solaidh was working intensely between 1713 and 1724, since we have 29 of his manuscripts, to my knowledge, which he wrote in this short time. He was in Baile Hardaman [= Harmanstown] in the parish of Stigh Colláin [= Stackallan, Co. Meath], as he tells us himself in the majority of his manuscripts, now in the Academy and the National Library and a small number in other places. 'Seon mac Éamainn mhic Dhonncha mhic Mhuiris' is what he called himself in one place (RIA 152 [23 K 37]), and he was a friend and colleague of Risteárd Tuibéar / Richard Tipper, the important scribe who was living in Dublin. It seems that Colm Ó Lochlainn did not have a great opinion of either of them, saying: 'these two industrious but rather incompetent compilers'. But they both left us a lot of *Oiriall* literature.]

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[212] *Flower Cat.*, p. 342.

[213] C. Ó Baoill, 'Scríobhaithe agus Saothrú an Léinn i dTuaisceart na hÉireann', *Léann* 1 (2007), p. 84.

The friendship of the two men is evidenced by manuscripts jointly written by Tipper and Mac Solaidh, such as Eg. 106,[214] and some of their personal correspondence which survives.[215] It is noteworthy also that both Eg. 132 and RIA 23 K 37 fall into the same sub-group; with the RIA manuscript post-dating Eg. 132 by roughly five years there is a chance that they may have been based, if not on one another, upon the same exemplar manuscript. We will return to both Tuiber and Mac Solaidh below.

In our eighth manuscript, NLI G 18 (IV/b-2), following LnC we find the scribal colophon *'Ar na sgriobadh so an seiseadh la don midhe x die* ♂ [= March]. *1722. le Conchobhar Og O Cruadlaoich a Liad'*. In the *NLI Cat.* 'Liad' is identified with Leath in the barony of Trughanacmy, Co. Kerry.[216] I have been unable to find any further information on our scribe Conchubhar Óg Ó Cruadhlaoich; we shall note though that the only other manuscript in sub-group IV/b-2, TCD 1296/ H.2.5 (cf. above), was written in Limerick, thus giving a geographical closeness between both manuscripts if the identification of 'Liad' from the *NLI Cat.* is correct.

We have already hinted in the draft catalogue that Hugh O'Daly, or Aodh Ó Dálaigh, scribe of the ninth manuscript in Group IV, TCD 1287/ H.1.13 (IV/b-3) has received scholarly attention for his handwriting. This debate has been summed up and reviewed by Pádraig Ó Macháin, and it is worth quoting at length:

> One of the most maligned figures in Irish manuscript tradition is the eighteenth-century Dublin scribe, Aodh Ó Dálaigh. He was a producer mainly of patrons' books, and his writing prompted the following remarks from Standish Hayes O'Grady:
>> He [Francis Stoughton Sullivan] was a large employer of Hugh O'Daly, whose transcripts (for the most part written in an outrageous style) suggest both that his patron was very easily satisfied and that ink was not the only fluid present on the scribal table. (O'Grady 1926: 499 n.1)
> For this suggestion of intemperance William O'Sullivan, many years later, substituted one of physical disability:
>> Aodh Ó Dálaigh was [Sullivan's] scribe from 1742 to 1758. He also aimed at well-spaced modern copy but his paper is not so good as [Muiris] Ó Gormáin's and his hand is inelegant in the extreme. Unlike O'Grady, I feel the writing is too consistently poor to be accounted for by alcohol alone, some physical misfortune must have affected his hand. (O'Sullivan 1976: 232)
> While O'Grady's imputation appears to have arisen from Ó Dálaigh's awkward and at times crooked writing style, his remarks had a lasting effect on the minds of

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[214] *Flower Cat.*, p. 329.

[215] B. Ó Cuív, 'Seón Mac Solaidh chun Riostaird Tuibear', *Éigse* 11 (1964-66), p. 196.

[216] *NLI Cat.*, Fasc. II, p. 6 ('G 18').

scholars of the twentieth century. Eleanor Knott, in a statement referencing O'Grady's catalogue (which at the time was still unpublished), referred to Ó Dálaigh as 'an unreliable scribe' (Knott 1922: xciii). Séan Mac Airt wrote of Ó Dalaigh as 'the well-known, though not very trustworthy scribe' (Mac Airt 1944: xv). Referring to National Library of Ireland MS G 24, N.J.A. Williams, again referencing O'Grady's remarks, says: 'Written by the notoriously inaccurate eighteenth century scribe, Aodh Ó Dálaigh' (Williams 1980: 7).

Analysis of some of Ó Dálaigh's texts, particularly those texts copied by him from exemplars that are still extant, tells a different tale however. (…)[217] Although this example is inadequate as a basis for conclusive deductions, the comparison is an indicator that, far from being the 'unreliable' scribe of twentieth-century scholarship's received wisdom, Aodh Ó Dálaigh may yet emerge as a careful and conscientious scribe. He copied the medieval texts that were in the book before him, reproducing the manuscript punctuation and virtually every contraction, to the extent that should the exemplar not survive, the Ó Dálaigh text might be relied upon as a fair basis on which to establish an edition.[218]

Relevant for our discussion is the fact that once again we can establish a link between scribes since Ó Dálaigh's position as scribe for Sullivan was taken over by Muiris Ó Gormáin, who will be discussed in more detail below. In TCD 1287/ H.1.13 Ó Dálaigh signs his name following our tale, although no place or date are mentioned. Both *TCD Cat.* and *TCD Irish Cat.* give '1746' as the year of writing, and as we can see from the disussion above Ó Dálaigh was working in the Dublin area. No further details are given anywhere as to his exact lifespan, although 'about 1760' has been suggested for the year of his death.[219]

At the end of our (acephalous) tale in Cambridge 10/ Add. 3085 (c) (IV/a-2) we find the following colophon: *'Finis in the year 1755 guidhimh gach aon léighfios no éisdfios an sgribhin si Paider 7 áve do chuir le anam an sgribhneara .i. Peadar mha Guidhir mhic Ruoraigh mac Conchuir mhic Fhélim mac Donuchaigh Bhaluig mac Cormuic mhic Brían na neach &cᵃ'.* We can thus identify the scribe as 'Peadar Mhag Uidhir' or 'Peter Maguire'; unfortunately nothing seems to be known about him, nor does he seem to have written anything other than this portion of the manuscript. *Cambridge Cat.* does not give any further information on the provenance of this manuscript.

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[217] Here Ó Macháin provides a short extract of Ó Dálaigh's copy of *Compert Con Culainn* from a British Library manuscript, followed by a brief analysis of the passage.

[218] P. Ó Macháin, 'Scribal Practice and Textual Survival: The Example of Uilliam Mac Mhurchaidh', *SGS* 22 (2006), pp. 97-98.

[219] W. O'Sullivan, 'The Irish Manuscripts in Case H in Trinity College Dublin Catalogued by Matthew Young in 1781', *Celtica* 11 (1976), pp. 231-32.

Pádraig Ó Pronntaigh, on the other hand, can be commented on in more detail. Written by him in 1759, NLI G 457 (IV/a-2) preserves the full text of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, including LnC. The colophon following it holds important information: *'air na sgriobhadh lé Pádruig Úa Pronntuidh, mhic Néill, mhic Seathain 7c. ón Éirne, an treas lá do mhídh na Lúghnasa agas an bhlíadhain d'aois an Tigherna 1759.'* Two bibliographical sketches explore Ó Pronntaigh:

> Ó Prontaigh, Pádraig (c. 1700-60)
>
> Is le Co. Fhear Manach a bhain muintir Phrontaigh agus b'fhéidir gur sa chontae sin a saolaíodh é féin leis. Is i gCo. Lú, ámh, a chaith sé an chuid a mó dá shaol ina dhiaidh sin. Ba scríobhaí bisiúil é agus tá glac mhaith dá lámhscríbhinní ar marthain fós.[220]
>
> [The Ó Prontaigh people belonged to Co. Fermanagh and it is possible that he himself was born in this county. It is in Co. Louth, however, that he spent most of his life after that. He was a prolific scribe and a good number of his manuscripts still survive.]

Colm Ó Baoill gives a somewhat more detailed account:

> Ach is é Pádraig Ó Pronntaigh an chéad scríobhaí tábhachtach a bhfuil ceangal éigin aige leis an chontae, agus is le scríobh is mó a bhaineann tábhacht Phádraig. Cé gur dócha gur as Fear Manach a tháinig a shinsir (Flower 1926: 118), tá fianaise i ndán dá chuid a scríobh sé i 1759 (BM Eg.172; Flower 1926: 122.16) go raibh Pádraig ina chónai i mBaile Mhic Scanláin ar thaobh ó thuaidh Dhún Dealgan c. 1738. Tá 10 de lámhscríbhinní againn uaidh (ar a laghad) i leabharlanna éagsúla, agus de réir na gcuntas atá i gcló orthu is idir 1731 agus 1769 (b'fhéidir) a scríobh sé iad. Tá trí cinn acu, a bhfuil idir scéalaíocht agus chráifeacht le fail iontu, i gcnuasach Énrí Uí Mhuirgheasa i gColáiste na hOllscoile, Baile Átha Cliath (COB Morris 7, a bhaineann leis an bhliain 1732, agus COB Morris 8 agus 15).[221]
>
> [But Pádraig Ó Pronntaigh is the first important scribe who has some sort of connection with the county, and his importance pertains to (hand)writing. It is thought that his forebears came from Fermanagh, there is evidence in a poem of his that he wrote in 1759 that Pádraig lived in Baile Mhic Scanláin [= Ballymascanlan, Co. Louth] north of Dún Dealgan / Dundalk in c. 1738. We have (at least) 10 of his manuscripts in different libraries, and according to the information that has been published on them he wrote them between 1731 and 1769 (possibly). There are three of them that have both *scéalaíocht* and devotional material in them, in the collection of Énrí Ó Mhuirgheasa in University College, Dublin (UCD Morris 7, with material from the year 1732, and UCD Morris 8 and 15.]

Our manuscript is thus most likely of a Louth provenance.

In our next manuscript, NLI G 296 (IV/b-3), we find the following note on p. 1: *'Ag so lebhar Dhonnchadh Uí Fhloinn ar na sgriobadh an bhliadhain d'aois an Tiaghurna Míle seacht ccéad*

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[220] Ó Buachalla, *Nua-Dhuanaire – Cuid II*, p. 139; translation my own.

[221] Ó Baoill, 'Scríobhaithe agus Saothrú an Léinn i dTuaisceart na hÉireann', p. 83-84; translation my own.

agus trí bliadhna agus trí fithchid a nInnies a ccunntae an Clair'. We can thus deduce that the manuscript was written in 1763 by Donnchadh Ó Floinn in Ennis, Co. Clare. An identification with the famous Donnchadh 'Bán' Ó Floinn springs to mind, but since the latter's lifetime has been placed between 1760 and 1830 he cannot possibly be our scribe.[222] Nothing seems to be known about 'our' Donnchadh Ó Floinn, the less-famous namesake, other than what he tells us himself in the note cited above.

To move on to our thirteenth manuscript, Muiris Ó Gormáin is another scribe on whom we can comment fairly extensively. Ó Gormáin signs his name in our manuscript, NLI G 146 (IV/a-2), at the end of BmMM and before DCC, also giving the date and place of writing: *'Iar na ghraifneadh re Muiris O Gorman an Ath Clíath Duibhlinne. 1770.'* The *Dictionary of Ulster Biography*, very briefly states that 'O GORMAIN, (MAC GORMAIN), MUIRIS c.1700-1794 (...) was born in Ulster and was a schoolmaster, scribe and poet.'[223] According to Nessa Ní Shéaghdha, Ó Gormáin was one of only three 'professional' scribes (*scríobhaí 'gairmiúil*) in Ireland in the 18th- and 19th century, the other two being Pól and Seosamh Ó Longáin.[224] Ó Gormáin spent most of his life in Dublin,[225] although 'he seems to have moved about the country a good deal.'[226] This is evident from a description of Ó Gormáin's life by McCaughey:

> Ó Gormáin was a most prolific scribe, but he also made a living, at least in the earlier part of his life, as a teacher. John Reilly of Annagh, Co. Cavan, and Geo. Dawson of Kilmore, Co. Armagh, engaged to pay him £1.1s.8d. each to teach their sons "writing, arithmetic and the English tongue". Peadar Ó Doirnin (obit. 1768 or 1769), who is said to have been a rival schoolmaster in Forkhill, Co. Armagh, questions his capacity to teach the last-named subject in a poem satirising Ó Gormáin (Add. 18749, art. 53). Eg[erton] 151, art. 20, however, shows Ó Gormáin casting his net wider than mere English, and trying his hand at word-for-word translations of Latin tags into dialect.[227]

Ó Gormáin also wrote an English-Irish phrasebook (now NLI G 141) which dates to 1770,[228] and composed poems. Among these is a poem of welcome on the occasion of the appointment

[222] Donnchadh 'Bán' Ó Floinn is discussed at length in two publications: Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí*, pp. 69-77 and Anonymous, *Faitche na bhFilí*, pp. 63-67.

[223] Online *Dictionary of Ulster Biography* (Kate Newman, 1993), s.v. 'O Gormain (Mac Gormain), Muiris, c.1700-1794' – http://www.ulsterbiography.co.uk/biogsO.htm <accessed 20 April 2009>.

[224] N. Ní Shéaghdha, 'Gairmeacha Beatha roinnt Scríobhaithe ón 18ú agus ón 19ú céad', *Celtica* 21 (1990), p. 567.

[225] Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí*, cf. 'Innéacs', s.v. 'Ó Gormáin (*ob. Ca* 1794): scríobhaí a thug formhór a shaoil i mBaile Átha Cilath, de réir a dealraimh.'

[226] T.P. McCaughey, 'Muiris Ó Gormáin's English-Irish Phrasebook', *Éigse* 12 (1967-68), p. 203.

[227] McCaughey, 'Muiris Ó Gormáin's English-Irish Phrasebook', p. 203

[228] See McCaughey, 'Muiris Ó Gormáin's English-Irish Phrasebook', for an edition of the same.

of Hugh Percy, Earl of Northumberland, as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland on 20 April 1763.[229] It appears the Ó Gormáin 'recycled' the same poem in order to welcome later lords lieutenant. On the title page to another such poem – that written in 1782 on the occasion of George Nugent Grenville's (Earl Temple) appointment – Ó Gormáin , with reference to himself, states that the poem was written 'By Maurice O Gorman Professor of the Gaelic Language in Dublin, & the last of the Irish Bards.'[230] O'Sullivan's discussion of a number of Irish manuscripts in Trinity College, Dublin, includes the following assessment of Ó Gormáin's status and reputation as a scribe:

> Supplied with manuscripts by O'Conor, [Francis Stoughton] Sullivan employed the fashionable scribe of the day, Muiris Ó Gormáin to prepare interleaved copies and he started his translation (MS 1279). All of the work done by Ó Gormáin for Sullivan is interleaved and on good paper with wide margins and uniformly bound in white vellum with red leather titlepieces; besides the Annals of the Four Masters and the annals of Connacht (MS 1278) these include 1294 (Cathréim Toirdhealbhaigh), 1345 (Historical Poems) and 1348 (O'Clery's Réim Ríoghraidhe agus Seanchus na naomh).
> The eighteenth century collectors were most anxious to have their Irish texts in a fitting new dress and Ó Gormáin's work was geared to this market, ready to turn illegible medieval vellum or grubby seventeenth century paper octavos and duodecimos into impressive contemporary monuments worthy of publication.[231]

As a final remark on Ó Gormáin, we can note that he took over his position as scribe for Sullivan from Hugh O'Daly, or Aodh Ó Dálaigh, who wrote TCD 1287/ H.2.5 and has already been discussed above.

The scribe of our tale in BL Egerton 150 (IV/b-3) himself gives us information on date, place of writing, and also signs his name following LnC: *'Loim na Neach san Mi Ianuair áois Criost 1774. Séon Lloyd'.* The life of Lloyd is sketchy in places, but an article by Eilís Ní Dheá gathers together what information there is on our scribe.[232] From Ní Dheá's article we learn that the year of Lloyd's birth is unknown, although it has been suggested that he was alive as early as c. 1725. From Limerick originally, at the age of thirty he moved to Co. Clare where he was in charge of a school in Fuarúir, not far from from Kilkee (Cill Chaoi) in Co. Clare. According to tradition Lloyd liked a drink and could be found in the taverns in Cill Ruis (Kilrush), Co. Clare,

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[229] R. Mahony, 'Muiris Ó Gormáin and the Lords Lieutenant of Ireland', *Éigse* 22 (1987), p. 25.

[230] *ibid.*, p. 28.

[231] O'Sullivan, 'The Irish Manuscripts in Case H in Trinity College Dublin', p. 231.

[232] E. Ní Dheá, 'Seón Lloyd (? – c.1785)', *The Other Clare (Annual Journal of the Shannon Archaeological Society)* 24 (2000), pp. 18-22. Lloyd's biography as given here is based on the information from Ní Dheá's article.

and moving to Cill Mhichíl and Ennis. By 1773 he had settled in Limerick, and on 8 July of the same year a notice appeared in the paper which advertised the opening of a school near the meat market, Lloyd writing that he

> intends applying himself regularly to the instruction of his pupils in the English rudiments (…). He also means to devote a part of his time to instruct in the most approved and expeditious manner Young students and gentlemen who may be curious to be acquainted with the Irish or Iberno-Celtic, which for its antiquity, expressive elegance and energy is at present admired by the literati of Europe.[233]

At that time Lloyd was in demand as a scribe, working under the patronage of Seán Ó Maoldomhnaigh. It is then that 'our' manuscript, BL Eg. 150, was written, the collective work of three other scribes besides Lloyd (who wrote 'our' portion of the manuscript), these being Séamas Boinnbhíol, Aindrias Mac Mathghamhna and Diarmaid Ó Maoilchaoine. By July 1775 Lloyd was living in Cork, where he continued his scribal work, although it is possible that he was only in Cork until October 1775. We certainly know that he was back in Limerick by 1778: a letter dating to 27 August 1778, written in Limerick and addressed to his former patron, aims to settle a dispute which had arisen between Lloyd and his co-scribes of BL Eg. 150. As Lloyd reports to Seán Ó Maoldomhnaigh,

> Yesterday morning a particular friend … has furnished me with an open and unexpected declaration of war, with hostilities furiously commenced against me by Mr. James Bonfield and Andrew McMahon, two gentlemen of the poetical world. (…) I am quite unacquainted with Mr. Bonfield's allegations.[234]

He does not, however, specify what these allegations are. Not long after, Lloyd returned to Co. Clare, where in 1780 he published a book of the title *A Short Tour; or An Impartial and Accurate Description of the County of Clare with Some Particular and Historical Observations*, priced at 'a British Shilling.'[235] At the time of publication of his book, Lloyd lived to Tuairín (Toureen) near Ennis, Co. Clare, and he remained there until his death, which occurred at an uncertain date in 1785, when his dead body was found besides the road a quarter of a mile from Tuairín.

The final manuscript in Group IV, RIA 23 P 13 (IV/b-3), is incomplete as LnC breaks off after fourteen stanzas. No scribal signature or colophon remains, neither within the course of our tale nor anywhere else in the manuscript. The information in the *RIA Cat.* does not yield any further clues, as it simply states

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[233] *ibid.,* p. 19.

[234] *ibid.,* p. 20.

[235] *ibid.,* p. 18.

> 18th cent. (…) Scribe unknown; a pencilled note on p. 1 attributes the handwriting
> to Lloyd, and adds the name 'Dr. Hardiman', as if Hardiman were the authority.
> The note is not in Hardiman's hand.

With no further information available we will unfortunately have to treat this manuscript as
being of unknown date, provenance, and scribe.

We have already hinted at the fact that a number of our scribes are included in a poem that
lists scribes working in Dublin in the 18th century. The poem (edited by T.F. O'Rahilly) takes
the form of a 'versified list of Irish literary men residing in Dublin' and was written by 'Tadhg
(son of Seán) Ó Neachtain, the lexicographer, mainly during the years 1726-29.'[236] Consisting of
a total of twenty-six stanzas, of 'our' scribes the following are mentioned: Seón Mac Solaidh
(RIA 23 K 37; IV/a-2), Risteard Tuibear / Richard Tipper (BL Egerton 132; IV/a-2), Aodh Ó
Dálaigh (TCD 1287/ H.1.13; IV/b-3) and Diarmuid Ó Conchubhair (TCD 1296/ H.2.5; IV/b-2):

> (11.)   An Solamh sochmadh, Seaán na searc,
>   a Thoigh Calláin thaoibhe Teamhrach,
>   cuim is sciath is tearmon dil
>   fhritil ársaidh mhacaibh Míleadh.

> (14.)   Tibrach ionmhuin ó Fhine Gall,
>   Roisteard na searc 's na suinneann;
>   bu béarlach Gaoidhiolgadh gille an ghrinn,
>   a suin na sean 's a scríbhinn.

> (19.)   Aodh Ó Dáladh, cia do rinn
>   míréir Thaidhg, thráth dhíbhsi canuim;
>   bu Gaedhul an fear, fa fíor a chuid;
>   don chrodhbhuinn bu duairc a d[h]earmad.

> (20.)   Ó Conchubhair fós Diarmuid díbh,
>   an Mhumhuin bu sean don staruidh,
>   do brígh ó locht gan saoi san mbith,
>   bhá a threabh do m[h]acaibh Míleadh.[237]

> [(11.)   The affable Solomon,[238] beloved Seaán
>   from *Toigh Calláin* (?) beside Tara,
>   protection and shield and dear sanctuary
>   of the ancient language of the sons of Míl.

> (14.)   Beloved Tuibear from Fingal,
>   beloved Risteard of the champions;

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[236] T.F. O'Rahilly, 'Irish Scholars in Dublin in the Early Eighteenth Century', *Gadelica* 1 (1912-13), p. 156.

[237] O'Rahilly, 'Irish Scholars in Dublin', pp. 159-60; the translation of O'Rahilly's edition is my own.

[238] Note the play of *Solamh* on the scribe's name *Ó Solaidh*.

> voluble was the Irish of the humorous fellow
> in the sounds of the ancients and in writing.

(19.)   Aodh Ó Dáladh, who
        displeased Tadhg, one time by you I say;
            the man was a Gael, true his portion;
            to the poetband it were gloomy to forget it.

(20.)   Diarmuid Ó Conchubhair is also one of them,
        from Munster which is old to the historian,
            because of fault without a learned person in the world
            his tribe was of the sons of Míl.]

In the notes to his edition, O'Rahilly observes that stanza 11 refers to Seán Mac Solaidh, anglicised John Solly, from Stackallen near Tara and stanza 14 to Ristéard Tuibear or Richard Tipper from Fingal.[239] On the latter, O'Rahilly further remarks that,

> It is remarkable, as showing how Irish was still spoken almost to the outskirts of Dublin city, to find that such a competent scribe as Risteard Tuibear was a native of Fingal. In 1717 he resided in 'Baile Mhistéil' near Mulhuddart, in the parish of Castleknock (23 E 26, 23 L 32), and this may have been his birthplace. The inhabitants of the greater part of Fingal were of English extraction, and never acquired Irish, – a fact noted by several writers, including Fr. Peter Talbot in 1685, Sir William Petty in 1672, and Fr. John O'Heyne in 1706.[240]

The brief note to stanza 20 elaborates only that the scribe here is 'Diarmuid Ó Conchubhair [Dermod O'Connor], a Munsterman.'[241] O'Rahilly also notes in his introduction to the edition of the poem that Ó Conchubhair was the author of the first English translation of Keating's history.[242]

Once again, we shall review the geographical information and distribution of the manuscripts in Group IV on a map:

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[239] O'Rahilly, 'Irish Scholars in Dublin', p. 161.

[240] *ibid.*, p. 162.

[241] *ibid.*, p. 161.

[242] *ibid.*, p. 156.
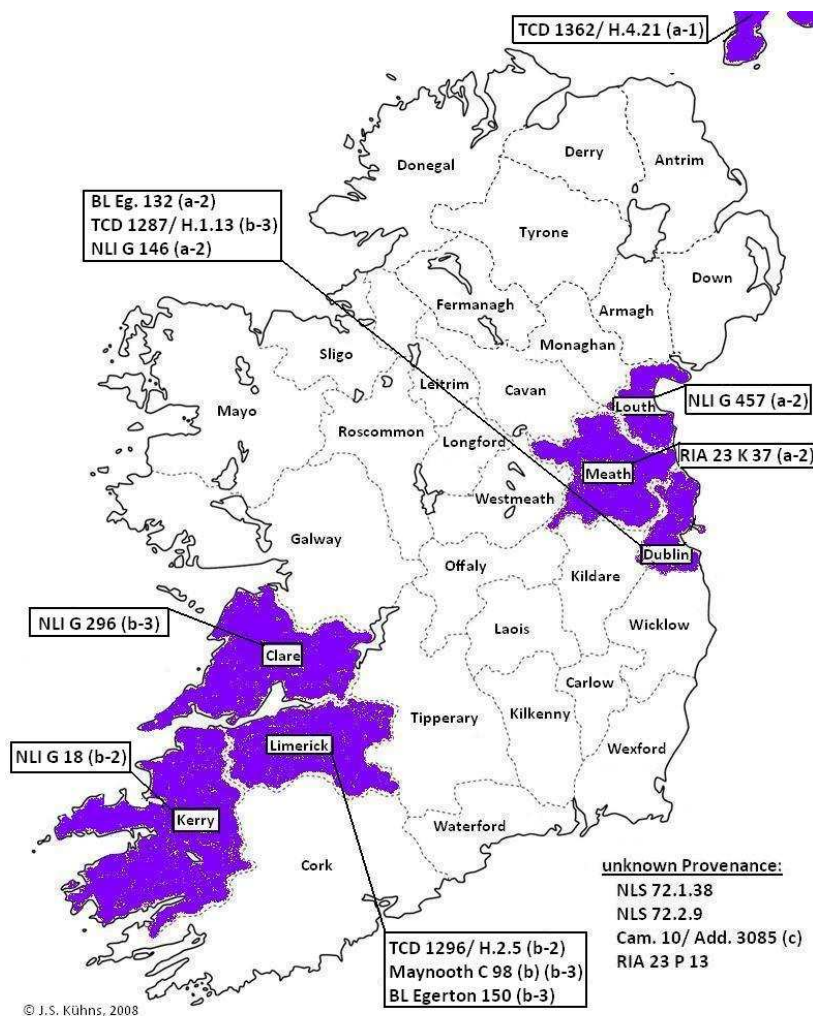
Map 4-4: Geographical distribution of MSS in Group IV

4.5 Group V

Our penultimate group is the 'miscellaneous' Group V, comprising the manuscripts which cannot be classified into any of the other groups; we have discussed the reasons for this in section 3.2.3. The group is comparatively small, with only six manuscripts. These are:

	Manuscript	Scribe	Date	Content
1	NLS 72.1.45	?	?16th cen	BmMM, DCC
2	Franciscan A 25	Brian Mag Niallghuis	?1620s	BmMM
3	RIA C vi 3	Brian Mac Aodhagáin	?1633	DCC, LnC
4	Maynooth C 38 (j)	Aindrias Mac Cruitín	18th cen.	BmMM
5	RIA 24 B 22	Tomás Ruiséal	1772	DCC
6	Maynooth M 51	Eoghan Mac Síthigh	1792	BmMM, DCC

The oldest manuscript in our 'miscellaneous group' has probably received the most attention with regards to our tale, since it is this manuscript that Van Hamel used for his edition of Cú Chulainn's death. Of the manuscript, Van Hamel tells us that it is

a vellum MS. and can be dated in the sixteenth century. It is itself a copy, and a comparison with the later MSS. shows that it cannot be taken as too faithful a representative of the archetype.[243]

The manuscript is dated to the 15th century in *Mackinnon Cat.*,[244] with *Mackechnie Cat.* following this suggestion. Thurneysen places NLS 72.1.45 in the '15th-16th century',[245] while Ronald Black agrees with Van Hamel and tentatively suggests '16th (?) century'.[246] With the text being both acephalous and incomplete at the end no scribal colophons survive; we thus have no knowledge of a date or provenance, or scribe. None of the available manuscript catalogues shed any further light on NLS 72.1.45.

Slightly speculative is what we can gather about the possible scribe of our incomplete tale in Franciscan A 25, formerly of the Franciscan Library, Killiney and now kept in University College, Dublin. We can consult the *Franciscan Cat.* in three different places to glean some information on our scribe. For manuscript A 25 the catalogue notes,

> 17th cent. (…) Ms is of Northern provenance and may be dated to the second decade of the seventeenth century, but there are no scribal signatures.[247]

The catalogue goes on to suggest that the hand of the main scribe, and thus of our tale, can be identified with Brian Mag Niallghuis, who wrote another manuscript in the collection, namely A 19. Under the respective description we find that '*Brian mag Niallghus*, 'Muise na Roice', 1608, (…) may be identical with Bernardus mac Nellus of Glencolumbcille.'[248] Another manuscript was partially written by the same hand, and in the entry for this manuscript, Franciscan A 33, we find that 'section (p) may be the work of *Brian Mag Niallghuis*, scribe of A 19 and possibly A 25.'[249] It seems then that there is an element of doubt as regards the scribe of our manuscript, but if we accept Brian Mag Niallghuis as our scribe, in keeping with the identification in Franciscan A 19, Franciscan A 25 might be of a southern Donegal provenance.

The third manuscript in Group V, RIA C vi 3, is somewhat difficult to place since it is the work of two different scribes who both contributed to what remains of our tale. We have only a very

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[243] A.G. Van Hamel, *Compert Con Culainn and Other Stories* (Dublin, 1968), p. 70.

[244] *Mackinnon Cat.*, p. 202.

[245] R. Thurneysen, *Die Irische Helden- und Königsage bis zum Siebzehnten Jahrhundert* (Halle, 1921), p. 557.

[246] Black, 'The Gaelic Manuscripts of Scotland', p. 155.

[247] *Franciscan Cat.*, p. 50.

[248] *ibid.*, p. 37.

[249] *ibid.*, p. 71.

fragmentary portion of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, consisting of folio 67r-v and preserving the very acephalous end of DCC and LnC, which, although damaged, we can largely reconstruct. The main scribe of RIA C vi 3 is unknown, and the *RIA Cat.* suggests that due to the variation maybe more than one hand should be distinguished.[250] In the item before our fragment we find the date '15 September 1633'. Folio 67r seems to be the work of the anonymous main scribe. Fol. 67v, however, is in a different hand, and the scribe signs his name at the end of LnC (the signature is now partially mutilated): *'Brian mac Aodhagain .i. mac Aodhagan na Carruige, mic Ao[dh]agan do scriob'*. The original hand resumes after this. As for the identity of 'Brian mac Aodhagain' Paul Walsh, in his *Irish Men of Learning*, tells us that the biggest branch of the Mac Aodhagáin learned family were centred in counties Longford and Westmeath.[251] No specific mention is made of Brian, and I have not found any information on him elsewhere.

Our text in Maynooth C 38 (j) is very fragmentary, with only two pages surviving. No scribal colophon remains within our text. *Maynooth Cat.* suggests that it is in the 'penmanship' (*i bpeannaireacht*) of Aindrias Mac Cruitín,[252] whom we have already discussed in the context of Group III in section 4.3 above. Not enough remains of the text in order to be able to classify the manuscript into any of Groups I-III. It is tempting to suggest, on the grounds that two of the other versions of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* copied by Mac Cruitín can be classified into Group III, the same would have applied to Maynooth C 38 (j) when it was complete. Yet with no textual evidence to corroborate this, we can only speculate. In terms of manuscript provenance it is probably permissible to tentatively suggest Co. Clare, as this is where the other two Mac Cruitín manuscripts in Group III belong.

Our penultimate manuscript in Group V, RIA 24 B 22, on the other hand, is complete, although the text here only comprises DCC. At the end of it we find the name of the scribe – Tomás Ruiseál – but no date or place of writing. As for the date, *RIA Cat.* proposes that 'the approximate date of writing is 1722.'[253] No places of writing, however, are mentioned anywhere in the volume. I have not found evidence for, or information on, any scribe who could be indentified with 'Tomás Ruiseál'.

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[250] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. XVI-XX, p. 2245 ('740. / C vi 3').

[251] Walsh, *Irish Men of Learning*, p. 238.

[252] *Maynooth Cat.*, Fasc. V, p. 70.

[253] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. I-V, p. 597 ('238. / 24 B 22').

Finally, Maynooth M 51 is somewhat more insightful as from two colophons appearing in the course of our tale – one after BmMM and one after DCC – we can establish that our text was written in 1792 in Kinsale, by a scribe called Eoghan Mac Síthigh. He signs his name somewhat idiosyncratically as '*Ógan bha tSeithig*', but is listed in the index in *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí* as 'Mac Síthíg, Eoghan (Eoghan a'tShíthigh, Ógan bha tSeithigh, Owen Sheehey)'.[254] In the actual entry, however, only our manuscript is listed and the information that it was written '1786-1805, i gCionn tSáile',[255] suggesting that no further information, biographical or other, is known of our scribe. The mention of Kinsale as a place of writing does, however, give us a Co. Cork provenance for Maynooth M 51.

Again we will illustrate the distribution of the manuscripts on a map; unfortunately, we can only plot three of the six manuscripts, and two of these with a degree of doubt. Nonetheless, we can once again note the presence of Cork as provenance for one of our manuscripts here, Cork of course having featured prominently within the other manuscript groups:
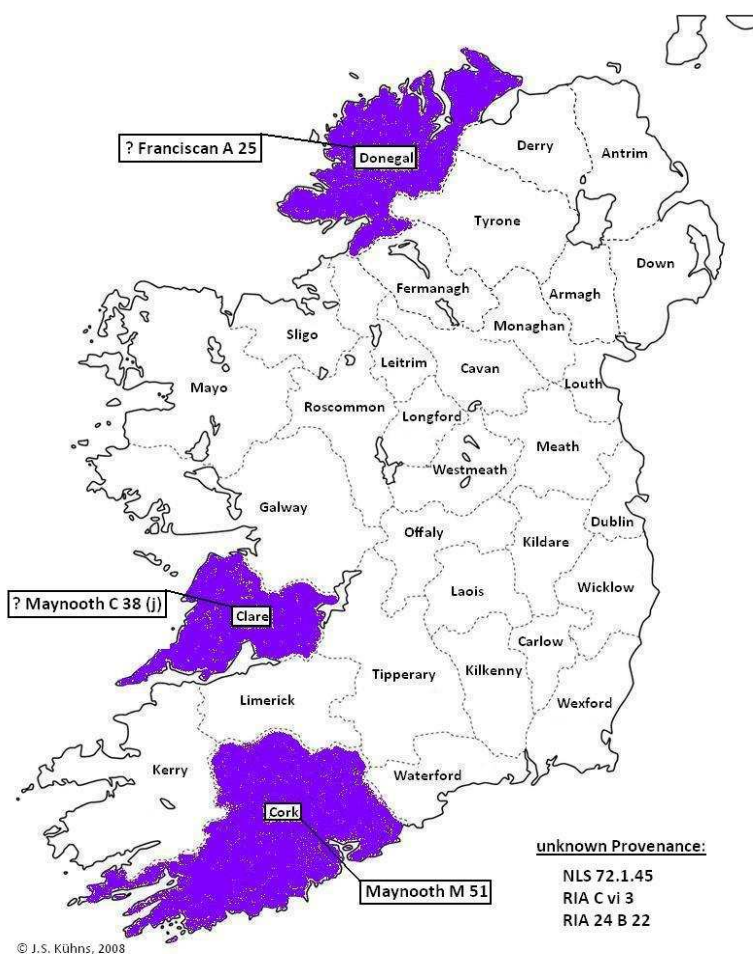
Map 4-5: Geographical distribution of MSS in Group V

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[254] Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí*, p. 369.

[255] *ibid.*, p. 29.

4.6 Group VI

Our final manuscript group, Group VI, is that comprising the manuscripts which preserve 'independent' versions of LnC, that is the poem where it stands alone and outwith the narrative context of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. This is the case in the following manusripts:

	Manuscript	Scribe	Date	Content
1	NLS 72.1.37	Sir James & Duncan MacGregor	1512-42	LnC (24 qq)
2	NLS 72.1.36	Eoghan Mac Gilleoin	1691	LnC (27 qq)
3	TCD 1354/ H.4.13	Domnall Mac Giolla Comhaill	1713	LnC (29 qq) + 4 poems
4	NLS 73.2.2 ('Turner MS')	Uilliam Mac Mhurchaidh	c.1748	LnC (30 qq) + 4 poems
5	Cambr. 10/ Add. 3085 (b)	Matthis McGill	1748	LnC (18 qq)
6	RIA 24 B 26	Uilliam Ó Cléire	1760-63	LnC (35 qq)
7	RIA 23 N 14	Ribeárd Breatnach	1766	LnC (35 qq)
8	RIA 23 L 24	Diarmuid Mac Maolchaoinne	1766-69	LnC (27½ qq)
9	NLS 72.3.10	Duncan Kennedy	1774-83	LnC (34 (47) qq)
10	RIA 23 L 13	Peadar Ó Conaill	1782	LnC (27 qq)
11	RIA 23 G 20	Míchéal Óg Ó Longáin	1788	LnC (35 qq)

Our first manuscript in Group VI is probably also the most famous among the pre-19th-century manuscripts: the 'Book of the Dean of Lismore', which can be dated between 1512 and 1542 and thus to the lifetime of King James V.[256] It was compiled by members of Clann Ghriogair and owes its name to the 'dean' Seumas or James MacGregor, whose 'earliest known appearance in record is 9 March 1503, and he died on 12 December 1551, the eve of St. Lucia's day.'[257] As for the manuscript's provenance,

> The place of compilation was Fortingall, at the mouth of Glen Lyon, at the eastern extremity of the vast tract of territory known as Breadalbane that stretches west as far as the march between Perthshire and Argyll.[258]

In terms of the material contained within the 'Book of the Dean of Lismore', we find poetry – here we can differentiate between four categories: religious, courtly / eulogistic, heroic and satiric poetry – as well as non-poetic items, the material alternating

> to such an extent that the *Book* has sometimes been seen as a commonplace book or as a repository for rough or working copies of poems.[259]

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[256] M. MacGregor, 'Creation and Compilation: *The Book of the Dean of Lismore* and Literary Culture in Late Medieval Gaelic Scotland' in I. Brown et al. (eds), *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature – Volume One* (Edinburgh, 2007), p. 210.

[257] M. MacGregor, 'The View from Fortingall: The Worlds of the *Book of the Dean of Lismore*', *SGS* 22 (2006), p. 35.

[258] MacGregor, 'Creation and Compilation', p. 210.

[259] W. Gillies, 'Gaelic Literature in the Later Middle Ages: *The Book of the Dean* and Beyond' in Brown et. al., *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature – Volume One*, p. 220.

The manuscript is, however, most famous for its indiosyncratic spelling system as the material contained in BDL is written

> not according to the conventions of Gaelic spelling as we see them in contemporary, 'Classical' Gaelic manuscripts, but according to a quasi-phonetic system based upon the orthography of Middle Scots, and in secretary hand rather than Gaelic script.[260]

The version of LnC as it stands in the 'Book of the Dean of Lismore' is not only the oldest version of the 'lay', but also displays a number of interesting features which we will explore further in Chapter 7.[261]

The second manuscript, NLS 72.1.36, is also of a Scottish provenance. It was written in 1691 in Kintyre, Argyll, by Eoghan Mac Gilleoin or Hugh MacLean. We have already discussed Mac Gilleoin in in the context of Group IV section 4.4 above, as he is also the scribe of TCD 1362/ H.4.21 which has been classified into Group IV.

TCD 1354/ H.4.13 is the first of two manuscripts in Group VI which contains additional poems besides LnC, the latter here standing with 29 stanzas. *TCD Irish Cat.* names the scribe of this manuscript as 'Domnall Mac Giolla Comhaill';[262] we find the Latin signature and date, *'Scripte le me Danielem Congallum xxmᵒ die augus anno dom. 1713'*, following the second of our five poems. No place of writing is noted in the manuscript or the manuscript catalogue, and I have been unable to find further references to our scribe (or the manuscript) anywhere else.

NLS 73.2.2 is also known as the 'Turner Manuscript'. Besides LnC (here with 30 stanzas) we find in it a further four poems from *Oidheadh Con Culainn* (cf. sections, 3.2.4, 3.5). There is no scribal signature at the end of any of the poems and none of the manuscript catalogues gives any indication as to the scribe; however, in the *Companion to Gaelic Scotland* we find,

> MacMurchy, William (Uilleam MacMhurchaidh) (*c.* 1700-78) Of Largie in Kintyre. Schoolmaster, tailor, weaver, piper, harper and poet as well as collector,

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[260] MacGregor, 'Creation and Compilation', p. 210.

[261] BDL has received a great amount of scholarly attention. For issues of its historical and social setting see the two articles by Martin MacGregor as cited above. The Gaelic ballads contained within BDL have been extensively researched by Donald Meek: cf. 'The Corpus of Heroic Verse in the Book of the Dean of Lismore' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis in two volumes, University of Glasgow, Department of Celtic, 1982), 'The Scottish Tradition of Fian Ballads in the Middle Ages' in C.G. Ó Háinle & D.E. Meek (eds), *Unity in Diversity* (Dublin, 2004), pp. 9-23; 'Development and Degeneration in Gaelic Ballad texts' in B. Almqvist et al. (eds), *The Heroic Process: Form, Function and Fantasy in Folk Epic* (Dublin, 1987), pp. 131-60.

[262] *TCD Irish Cat.*, p. 176 ('1354 / H.4.13').

writer and disseminator of manuscripts: he wrote NLS Adv. MSS 72.2.12, 72.2.15, 73.2.2 (the Turner Manuscript) and the Inverneill Manuscript.[263]

As for the date of the 'Turner Manuscript', *Mackechnie Cat.* rather vaguely suggests that it was written 'in the mid 18th century',[264] while *Mackinnon Cat.* is a bit more specific in saying that 'its date is probably a few years before 1748'.[265] The history of the 'MacMhuirich Bardic Family' was discussed by Derick Thomson,[266] while Pádraig Ó Macháin, in a recent article, has looked specifically at Uilliam Mac Mhurchaidh.[267] Although he does not give any biographical information on our scribe, Ó Macháin remarks that Mac Murchaidh was

> of a family of musicians and men of learning, noted for their possession of manuscripts, who were prominent in Kintyre in the eighteenth century.[268]

He further notes that Uilliam Mac Mhurchaidh is 'among the handful of Scottish scribes of the eighteenth century who still practised the traditional Gaelic script', this usage of Gaelic script, in turn, indicating that he 'was part of the tradition of manuscript transcription, and therefore firmly within the Gaelic tradition'.[269] The very relevant observations by Ó Macháin concerning the material copied by Mac Mhurchaidh are worth quoting at length:

> Perhaps it was the case that Mac Mhurchaidh had a particular interest in collecting the waifs and strays of Irish literature that had been assimilated into Scottish tradition to greater or lesser extents. (...) Uilliam Mac Mhurchaidh's openness to a variety of sources, his facility for composition, and his possible intrusion – whether deliberate or unintentional – into shaping and re-shaping of other texts, point to different levels of scribal activity and intent in his manuscripts. They may also tend to obscure another level of scribal interest, in that it is also possible to adduce evidence that emphasises his work as a collector, transcriber and transmitter rather than creator and re-creator. From the variety of material collected and copied by Mac Mhurchaidh, a picture of an eclectic scribe begins to emerge, one who drew liberally from the range of sources that he encountered. A feature of his work that serves to emphasise this point is material that appears to be drawn from demonstrably Irish sources, without being mediated through Scottish tradition. This may be accounted for in part if we suppose Irish manuscript sources to have still been in circulation in Kintyre and Argyll at this time; but it is likely also that Mac Mhurchaidh spent some time in Ireland, perhaps when soldiering in one of the regiments listed by Conley.[270]

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[263] Thomson, *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland*, p. 187.

[264] *Mackechnie Cat.*, p. 279.

[265] *Mackinnon Cat.*, p. 278.

[266] D.S. Thomson, 'The MacMhurich Bardic Family', *TGSI* 43 (1960-63), pp. 276-304.

[267] Ó Macháin, 'Scribal Practice and Textual Survival', pp. 95-122.

[268] *ibid.*, p. 98.

[269] *ibid.*, p. 105.

[270] *ibid.*, p. 102. The reference to 'Conley' is to W.M. Conley, 'A Poem in the Stewart collection', *SGS* 11 (1966), pp. 26-37, who lists (pp. 33-34) the following Highland regiments as those that Mac Mhurchaidh

We know of course that LnC was in circulation in Kintyre and Argyll in Mac Mhurhchaidh's days as the manuscripts copied by Eoghan Mac Gilleoin pre-date the 'Turner Manuscript' by roughly sixty years. As we will see in Chapter 7, the versions of LnC in TCD 1362/ H.4.21 and NLS 73.2.2 correspond closely; while it may not necessarily be a case of the two being exemplar and copy there is, however, the possibility that they go back to the same original as they bear some relation to one another.

In our fifth manuscript, Cambridge 10/ Add. 3085 (b), we only find the mutilated signature 'Matt' at the end of LnC. From other signatures in the manuscript we can supply that this once would have read 'Matt(hias) McGill'. Herbert and de Brún suggest in *Cambridge Cat.* that McGill's portion of Add. 3085 was probably written near Downpatrick, Co. Down.[271] Nothing further seems to be known about our scribe, and we shall tentatively follow the information from the *Cambridge Cat.* with regard to the manuscript's provenance.

Manuscript six in our list for Group VI is RIA 24 B 26. With no scribal signature or date we have to rely on the information that can be drawn from the *RIA Cat.*: 'Scribe: *Uilliam Ó Cléire* of *Rathaoin* (*Rathéen*), who wrote the MS. in the years 1760, 1761, 1762 and 1763'.[272] There is a place of the name 'Ratheen' in Co. Donegal,[273] and we can find further places of the same (or very similar) name listed in the *Gazetteer of Ireland / Gasatéar na hÉireann*: there is a *Raithean* (English 'Rahan') in Co. Offaly, *An Ráithín* ('Raheen') in Co. Wexford, and *Na Ráithíní* ('Raheens') in Co. Mayo.[274] As there is no further information on the scribe himself available seemingly anywhere, it is difficult to know whether any of these places are the 'Rathéen' cited in the catalogue. With the little information we have being as inconclusive and ambiguous, we may thus have to treat RIA 24 B 26 as a manuscript of 'unknown provenance'.

The information on the scribe of our seventh manuscript, RIA 23 N 14, is slightly more fruitful. The scribe gives us information on his name, place of writing, and date in a colophon following

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might have served in: the Black Watch; Loudon's Highlanders; the 77th regiment, Montgomery's Highlanders; the 88th regiment, Fraser's Highlanders; the 89th (Duke of Gordon's); the 100th regiment under the command of Major Colin Campbell of Kilberry. Conley (p. 34) suggests that Montgomery's and Kilberry's regiments are the most likely contenders.

[271] *Cambridge Cat.*, p. xviii.

[272] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. I-V, p. 603 ('242. / '4 B 26').

[273] Cf. http://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/504923 <accessed 17 December 2008>: 'O[rdnance] S[urvey] grid ref. G8960: Ratheen, near to Ballyshannon and Laputa, Donegal, Ireland'.

[274] Placenames Branch of the Ordnance Survey, *Gazetteer of Ireland / Gasaitéar na hÉireann*, p. 148.

LnC, stating that the poem was written by *'Ribeárd Breathnach ar an mBaile mBrec an tan sin san mí Fabhra an 9mhadh lá déag 1766'*. Baile Breac is in the parish of Carraig na bhFear, which has already come up in this discussion of our scribes, especially with reference to Group I. Being a Cork scribe, Breatnach gets an entry in *Scríobaithe Chorcaí*, and from this we can glean the following details on his life: he was a farmer and according to Torna married to a daughter of Seán Ó Murchú na Ráithíneach, on whom he composed a lament on his death in 1766. Of Breatnach's children we know that he had a daughter, Siobhán, who died age 7½ on 23 August 1773, and a son called Tomás, who left the occasional note and signature in his father's manuscripts. Breatnach's neighbour was Mícheál mac Peadair Uí Longáin, with whom he co-wrote a number of manuscripts, and whose manuscripts he kept safe for the latter's son. This son was Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin, and their relationship was so close that Mícheál Óg in 1786 wrote manuscripts in Breatnach's house. The two men frequently swapped manuscripts, and on Breatnach's death on 2 March 1810 a lament was fittingly composed by Mícheál Óg.[275]

In RIA 23 L 24 only the date of writing of LnC is given, in a short prose introduction preceding the poem: '1766'. From *RIA Cat.*, however, we can supply that the scribe is '*Diarmuid Ó Mulchaoinne* at *Caisleán Hannraoi*, Co. Clare'.[276] I have, unfortunately, not been able to find any information on our scribe to add to this. Interestingly, however, *RIA Cat.* further notes on RIA 23 L 24 that in it 'There are occasional corrections or additions (cf. p. 186) in a later hand, perhaps that of Peter O'Connell.'[277] There are no such corrections to LnC, but as we will see in just a moment when we turn to RIA 23 L 13 (also classified into the present group), this manuscript was written by one 'Peadar Ó Conaill', and post-dates RIA 23 L 24 by sixteen years. In RIA 23 L 13 LnC stands with the same number of stanzas as in RIA 23 L 24, but even more significantly, in both versions of the poem only the first two lines of the fifth stanza are given. Also, both versions of the poem are preceded by a short prose introduction which is virtually identical (cited in section 7.1.3). If 'Peter O'Connell' who corrected and added to added to RIA 23 L 24 is thus the same person as 'Peadar Ó Conaill', scribe of RIA 23 L 13, there is a good chance he might have used LnC from RIA 23 L 24 as an exemplar, copying faithfully enough for the omitted half-stanza to be left out in RIA 23 L 13, too.

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[275] Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí*, pp. 4-5. A chapter in *Faiche na bhFilí*, pp. 59-62, is dedicated to 'Ribeárd Breathnach', but the information given here is essentially the same.

[276] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. I-V, p. 84 ('29. / 23 L 24').

[277] *ibid.*

Another manuscript of Scottish provenance is the next in our list: NLS 72.3.10, which is also known as 'Kennedy's Collection' and was compiled between 1774-83 by Duncan Kennedy.[278] Our manuscript is what is generally referred to as the 'Second Collection'.[279] A brief sketch of Kennedy can be found in the *Companion to Gaelic Scotland*:

> Kennedy, Duncan (fl. 1890) Schoolmaster of Logierait and author of Folklore and Reminiscences of Strathtay and Grandtully (1927), which quotes many Gaelic names and sayings.[280]

Slightly more exhaustive is the following account:

> A rather pathetic figure is the collector Duncan Kennedy who had been a schoolmaster but spent his later years in Glasgow, where he tried to live as a writer. There is a glimpse of him entered in a note entered in a copy of one of his small books, a collection of Gaelic hymns published in 1786. Its first owner wrote on the flyleaf: 'I bought this book from the author in Glasgow, for half a crown, as an act of charity being moved thereto by his shabby genteel appearance'. Kennedy had between the years 1774 and 1780 brought together a collection containing some 4500 lines of Ossianic poetry, and he made a 'revised version' of it a couple of years later. In 1806 he sold his manuscripts to the Highland Society for 20 £, and they are now in the Adv. Libr. He added several notes and arguments, writing in English, but obviously thinking in Gaelic. He inserted verses and lines of his own, but was careful to note where this was done. Thus his collections are on the whole to be taken as realiable sources of popular tradition. Somehow Kennedy felt himself unduly neglected, and even cheated outright. He had lent his books to a minister John Smith, who had utilized Kennedy's versions, without any acknowledgement to the collector, and Kennedy even threatened to bring an action in order to obtain part of the proceeds of the book but there was evidently nothing to be had.[281]

We can observe Kennedy's adding to poems in LnC and will explore this in more detail in section 7.4.3.

With RIA 23 L 13, we once again have to rely on manuscript catalogues to shed light on the date, scribe, and place of writing since there is no colophon preceding or following LnC that may give any indication. *RIA Cat.* identifies the scribe as 'Peadar Ó Conaill (Peter Connell)' and gives the date as 1782, but lists no place of writing.[282] The lack of provenance poses a problem: there is a scribe by the name Peter O'Conell who was active in Co. Clare and is best known for compiling an English-Irish dictionary, now preserved in BL Eg. 83, and who lived

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[278] Cf. *Mackinnon Cat.*, p. 262.

[279] Both collections are indexed, described and printed in J.F. Campbell, *Leabhar na Feinne* (London, 1872).

[280] Thomson, *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland*, p. 142.

[281] R.Th. Christiansen, *The Vikings and the Viking Wars in Irish and Gaelic Tradition* (Oslo, 1931), p. 53.

[282] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. XXI-XXV, p. 2484 ('787. / 23 L 13').

between 1755 and 1826.[283] These dates of course fit in with 'our' Peadar Ó Conaill and the date of RIA 23 L 13, but it is questionable whether the agreement in date justifies an identification of the two with one another. The identification is, however, corroborated by the listing of our manuscript in an account of the life of the Clare scribe Peter O'Connell by Dermot Gleeson, who lists RIA 23 L 13 in amongst a number of manuscripts attributed to O'Connell.[284] As for the latter's biography, he was born in 1755

> at Carne in the parish of Killimer, about five miles east of the town of Kilrush in Corcu Baiscinn and on the shore of the Shannon estuary.[285]

His ancestors may have come from Kerry although a lack of records makes this impossible to trace; his father is unknown but his mother is recorded as having a small farm.[286] O'Connell became a teacher and from an early age had the ambition to compile an English-Irish dictionary. In order to achieve this he

> journeyed far from his native place – through Scotland, the Hebrides, the Orkneys, and through Wales – in search of material for his Dictionary and to study the comparative forms of Celtic speech.[287]

While the Dictionary was never printed, it was copied in manuscript form and used extensively, amongst others by Dinneen.[288] O'Connell died in 1826, the inscription on his tombstone reading:

> This tombstone was erected by Anthony O'Connell in memory of his Unchel (*sic*) Peter O'Connell, who was a Professor of Languages and Teacher of Philosophy. He lived respected and died regretted by his numerous friends and family on the 24th day of February, 1826. Aged 71 years. May he rest in Peace. Amen.[289]

We have also established a potential link between the present manuscript and RIA 23 L 24, also in Group VI, and discussed above.

Our final manuscript in Group VI is RIA 23 G 20, which was written by Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin. In a scribal colophon at end of LnC we find the signature 'Micheal O'Longone' and the date and place '15th 1788. Ballyndorra'; this place may be synonymous with Baile Aindriú,

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[283] Cf. T. Wall, 'Teige Mac Mahon and Peter O'Conell – Seanchaí and Scolar in Co. Clare', *Béaloideas* 30, pp. 89-104, and D.F. Gleeson, 'Peter O'Connell: Scholar and Scribe, 1755-1826', *Studies* 33 (1944), pp. 342-48.

[284] Gleeson, 'Peter O'Connell: Scholar and Scribe', p. 348.

[285] *ibid.*, p. 343.

[286] *ibid.*

[287] *ibid.*, p. 345.

[288] *ibid.*, p. 347.

[289] *ibid.*

or Ballyandrew, in the parish of Doneraile in Co. Cork.[290] *RIA Cat.* states that the manuscript was written 'at various places in the counties of Cork, Kerry, and Limerick during the years 1786-1814; over sixty colophons and marginalia giving details of the scribe's movement occur *passim*.'[291] This ties in with the information on Mícheál Óg as we have already discussed at length in the context of Group I in section 4.1 above.

We have seen that Group VI comprises the greatest number of 'Scottish' manuscripts of any of our groups, and overall displays quite a geographical variety in terms of provenance. On a map this distribution can be illustrated as follows (Argyll here representing the whole of Scotland):
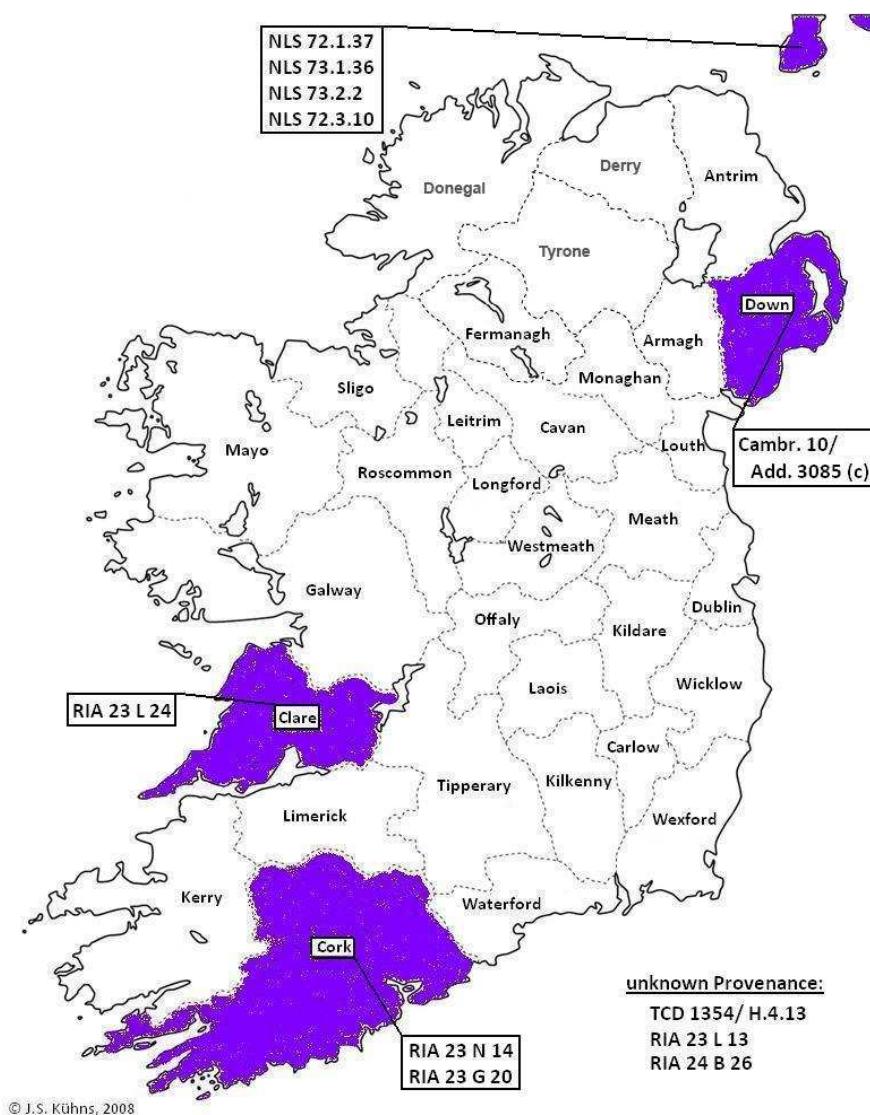
Map 4-6: Geographical distribution of MSS in Group VI

[290] http://www.logainm.ie/?text=ballyndorra <accessed 15 May 2009>.

[291] *RIA Cat.*, Fasc. I-V, p. 542 ('211. / 23 G 20')

4.7 Conclusion

In Chapter 3 we established our manuscript groups based on the evidence of the poetry that is contained in the versions of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. In order to provide an alternative view and approach to the manuscripts, in the present chapter we examined the manuscripts with regard to their scribes and provenance. This has brought up a number of interesting results. Group I was very consistent: for four out of the five manuscripts that have been classified into this group we could conclusively establish a Cork provenance, and more specifically, trace them back to the same parish. While the other groups were not quite as neat, we could still see a number of links between manuscripts on both inter- as well as intra-group levels. In the case of Group IV, for instance, we have a wide range and diversity within the manuscripts both in terms of date and provenance. We have seen, however, that a number of manuscripts in Group IV can be ascribed to the leading scribes in the 18th century of whom we know that they were in contact, even though they might not necessarily all have been operating in the same place. This then suggests for the other groups that a similar intellectual exchange might have taken place but which has remained unrecorded. D.F. Gleeson, in his article on Peter O'Connell, scribe of RIA 23 L 13 in Group VI, makes the following observation:

> Many of the scholars travelled from place to place and across to Limerick and Kerry and took manuscript copies of one another's books and manuscripts, and so it may be exemplified in them that 'wherever you have a log of wood with a master at one end and a pupil at the other, there you have a University.'[292]

Although Gleeson writes with specific reference to the 18th-century scholars and scribes of Co. Clare, the general point of the statement – the interaction of scribes which resulted in the spread and transmission of material – is probably just as true for if not all, then at least a number of our other scribes and manuscripts. It is also worth bearing in mind that our tale is not static, and any variations may reflect a scribe's personal choice and approach to the text since the scribes were re-creators as much as transmitters.

Another aspect that has emerged more clearly from the discussion and observations in this chapter is that we have a number of manuscripts that can be attributed to the same scribes: Aindrias Mac Cruitín can be credited with three manuscripts, while Diarmaid Ó Conchubhair, Eoghan Mac Gilleoin and Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin, respectively, all wrote two of our manuscripts. The fact that even within manuscripts written by the same scribes there is a discrepancy as to the groups into which these manuscripts fall again illustrates that the transmission of the text is by no means static or straightforward.

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[292] Gleeson, 'Peter O'Connell: Scholar and Scribe', p. 344.

It is interesting how the 'Scottish' manuscripts, or rather, those to which we can assign a Scottish provenance with certainty, preserve only versions of LnC, yet there does not seem to be a 'Scottish' version of the prose narrative. The maps at the end of each group discussion have illustrated a clear geographical bias towards South-West Ireland, and more specifically Co. Cork. We can note the overall geographical distribution of our fifty-three pre-19th-century manuscripts as follows:

Provenance	unknown	Co. Cork	Scotland	Co. Clare	Co. Dublin	Co. Kerry	Co. Limerick	Co. Waterford	Co. Donegal	Co. Louth	Co. Meath	Total
No. of MSS	16	11	5	4	4	4	4	2	1	1	1	53

As a final conclusion to this chapter on 'The Scribes' the statistics above can again be translated onto a map in order to illustrate the overall distribution of our manuscripts, and emphasize the clear bias towards South-West Ireland, even more clearly:
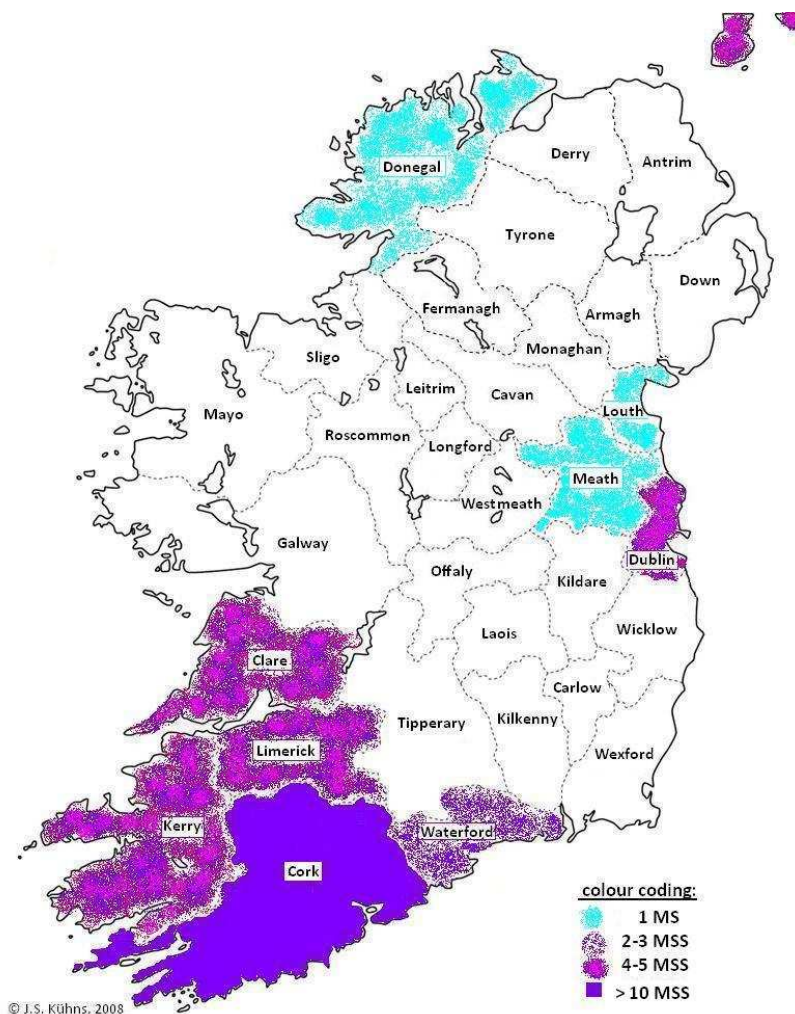
Map 4-7: Geographical distribution of all pre-19th-century MSS of known provenance

Appendix 1: Index of manuscripts (alphabetically by provenance)

PROVENANCE	MANUSCRIPT	GROUP	DATE	SCRIBE	CONTENT
Co. Clare	RIA E iv 3	III	1727	Aindrias Mac Cruitín	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
	NLI G 501	III	1794	Tadhag Ó Caoluidh	DCC, LnC (28 qq), BmMM
	NLI G 296	IV/b-3	1763	Donnchadh Ó Floinn	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
	RIA 23 L 24	VI	1766-69	Diarmuid Mac Maolchaoinne	LnC (27½ qq)
Co. Cork	RIA 23 M 25	I	1684	Eoghan Ó Caoimh	BmMM, DCC
	TCD 1376/ H.5.4	I	1701-02	Art Ó Caoimh	BmMM, DCC
	NLI G 113/ 114	I	1703	Liam Mac Cartáin	BmMM, DCC
	RIA 23 G 21	I	1796	Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin	BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq)
	RIA 23 C 26 (c)	II	1761	Seaghán Ó Conaill	LnC (35 qq), BmMM, DCC
	RIA 23 C 22	II	1767	Peadar Ó Féichín / Peter Fane	BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq)
	RIA 24 B 16	II	1767-68	?Ríghrí Mac Raghnaill	BmMM, DCC
	RIA 12 F 7	III	1749-50	Uillig a Búrc	BmMM
	?RIA 24 P 6	III	1783	John MacNamara	BmMM, DCC, LnC (24 qq)
	Maynooth M 51	V	1792	Eoghan Mac Síthigh	BmMM, DCC
	RIA 23 G 20	VI	1788	Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin	LnC (35 qq)
Co. Donegal	? Franciscan A 25	V	?1620s	?Brian Mag Niallghuis	BmMM
Co. Dublin	BL Eg. 132	IV/a-2	1712-13	Richard Tipper	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
	TCD 3397/ N.5.12	I	1737	Pilib Mac Brádaigh	BmMM, DCC
	?NLI G 146	IV/a-2	1770	Muiris Ó Gormáin	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
	TCD 1287/ H.1.13	IV/b-3	1746	Aodh Ó Dálaigh / Hugh O'Daly	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
Co. Kerry	RIA 23 K 7	II	1701	Domhnall Mac Donnchadha	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
	NLI G 149	III	1765	Mícheál Ó Horgáin	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
	NLI G 18	IV/b-2	1722	Conchubhar Óg Ó Cruadhlaoich	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
	RIA 23 N 14	VI	1766	Ribeárd Breatnach	LnC (35 qq)
Co. Limerick	RIA 23 H 16	III	1779	Seaghán Ó Domhnaill	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)

	TCD 1296/ H.2.5	IV/b-2	1712	? Diarmuid Ó Conchubhair	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
	Maynooth C 98 (b)	IV/b-3	1714-29	Diarmuid Ó Conchubhair	BmMM, DCC
	BL Eg. 150	IV/b-3	1774	Seón Lloyd	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
Co. Louth	NLI G 457	IV/a-2	1759	Pádruig Ó Pronntaigh	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
Co. Meath	RIA 23 K 37	IV/a-2	1718	Seón Mac Solaidh	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
Co. Waterford	RIA 3 B 43	II	?1765	?Diarmuid Ó Faoláin	BmMM, DCC
	Bodl. Ir. e. 3	II	?1789	Uilliam Breatnach	DCC
Argyll, Scotland	TCD 1362/ H.4.21	IV/a-1	1691	Eoghan Mac Gilleoin	BmMM, DCC, LnC (30 qq)
	NLS 72.1.36	VI	1690-91	Eoghan Mac Gilleoin	LnC (27 qq)
	NLS 73.2.2	VI	c. 1748	Uilliam Mac Mhurchaidh	LnC (30qq) + other poem
	NLS 72.3.10	VI	1174-83	Duncan Kennedy	LnC (34 (47) qq)
Perthshire, Scotland	NLS 72.1.37 (BDL)	VI	1512-42	James MacGregor	LnC (24 qq)
unknown	RIA 24 C 38	II	18th cen.	?	BmMM
	RIA 23 M 47 (b)	III	1734	Aindrias Mac Cruitín	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
	RIA 23 L 27	III	1737	Seaán Ó Cinéide	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
	RIA 23 M 47 (a)	III	1795	Séamus Ó Caoluidhe	DCC, LnC (28 qq)
	NLS 72.2.9	IV/a-1	c. 1650	Fearfeasa Ó Duibhgheannáin	BmMM
	Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (c)	IV/a-2	1752	Peadar Mhag Uidhir	DCC, LnC (29 qq)
	NLS 72.1.38	IV/b-1	1608-21	?	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
	RIA 23 P 13	IV/b-3	18th cen.	?	BmMM, DCC, LnC (24 qq)
	NLS 72.1.45	V	?16th cen.	?	BmMM, DCC
	RIA C iv 3	V	?1633	Brian Mac Aodhagáin	DCC, LnC (22 qq)
	Maynooth C 38 (j)	V	18th cen.	Aindrias Mac Cruitín	BmMM
	RIA 24 B 22	V	c. 1722	Tomás Ruiséal	DCC
	TCD 1354/ H.4.13	VI	1713	Domnall Mac Giolla Comhaill	LnC (29 qq) + poems
	Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (b)	VI	1748	Matthis McGill	LnC (18 qq)
	RIA 24 B 26	VI	1760-63	Uilliam Ó Cléire	LnC (35 qq)
	RIA 23 L 13	VI	1782	Peadar Ó Conaill	LnC (27 qq)

Appendix 2: Index of scribes (alphabetically)

NAME	MANUSCRIPT	GROUP	DATE	PROVENANCE	CONTENT
Breatnach, Ribeárd	RIA 23 N 14	VI	1766	Co. Kerry	LnC (35 qq)
Breatnach, Uilliam	Bodleian Ir.e.3	II	?1789	Co. Waterford	DCC
a Búrc, Uillig	RIA 12 F 7	III	1749-50	Co. Cork	BmMM
Kennedy, Duncan	NLS 72.3.10	VI	1774-83	Argyll, Scotland	LnC (34 (47) qq)
Lloyd, Séon	Egerton 150	IV/b-3	1774	Co. Limerick	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
Mac Aodhagáin, Brian	RIA C vi 3	V	?1633	?	DCC, LnC (22 qq)
Mac Brádaigh, Pilib	TCD 3397/ N.5.12	I	1737	Co.Dublin	BmMM, DCC
Mac Cartáin, Uilliam	NLI G 113/ 114	I	1703	Co. Cork	BmMM, DCC
Mac Cruitín, Aindrias	RIA E iv 3	III	1727	Co. Clare	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
	RIA 23 M 47 (b)	III	1734	?	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
	Maynooth C 38 (j)	V	18th cen.	?	BmMM
Mac Donnchadha, Domhnall	RIA 23 K 7	II	1701	Co. Kerry	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
Mac Gilleoin, Eoghan	NLS 72.1.36	VI	1690-91	Argyll, Scotland	LnC (27 qq)
	TCD 1362/ H.4.21	IV/b-2	1691	Argyll, Scotland	BmMM, DCC, LnC (30 qq)
Mac Giolla Comhaill, Domnall	TCD 1354/ H.4.13	VI	1713	?	LnC (29 qq) + poems
Mac Mulchaoinne, Diarmuid	RIA 23 L 24	VI	1766-69	Co. Clare	LnC (27½ qq)
Mac Mhurchaidh, Uilliam	NLS 73.2.2	VI	c. 1748	Argyll, Scotland	LnC (30 qq) + poems
MacNamara, John	RIA 24 P 6	III	1783	Co. Cork	BmMM, DCC, LnC (24 qq)
Mag Niallghuis, Brian	Franciscan A 25	V	?1620s	Co. Donegal	BmMM
Mac Raghnaill, Ríghrí	RIA 24 B 16	II	1767-68	Co. Cork	BmMM, DCC
Mac Síthigh, Eoghan	Maynooth M 51	V	1792	Co. Cork	BmMM, DCC
Mac Solaidh, Séon	RIA 23 K 37	IV/a-2	1718	Co. Meath	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
McGill, Matthis	Cam.10/ Add. 3058 (b)	VI	1748	?	LnC (18 qq)
MacGreogor, James	NLS 72.1.37 (BDL)	VI	1512-42	Perthshire, Scotland	LnC (24 qq)
Mhag Uidhir, Peadar	Cam.10/ Add. 3058 (c)	IV/a-2	1752	?	DCC, LnC (29 qq)

Ó Caoluidh, Tadhag	NLI G 501	III	1794	Co. Clare	DCC, LnC (28 qq), BmMM
Ó Caoluidhe, Séamus	RIA 23 M 47 (a)	III	1795	?	DCC, LnC (28 qq)
Ó Caoimh, Art	TCD 1376/ H.5.4	I	1701-02	Co. Cork	BmMM, DCC
Ó Caoimh, Eoghan	RIA 23 M 25	I	1684	Co. Cork	BmMM, DCC
Ó Cinéide, Seaán	RIA 23 L 27	III	1737-38	?	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
Ó Cléire, Uilliam	RIA 24 B 26	VI	1760-63	?	LnC (35 qq)
Ó Conaill, Peadar	RIA 23 L 13	VI	1782	?	LnC (28 qq)
Ó Conaill, Seaghán	RIA 23 C 26 (c)	II	1761	Co. Cork	LnC (35 qq), BmMM, DCC
Ó Conchubhair, Diarmuid	TCD 1296/ H.2.5	IV/b-2	1712	Co. Limerick	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
	Maynooth C 98 (b)	IV/b-3	?1714-29	Co. Limerick	BmMM, DCC
Ó Cruadhlaoich, Conchubhar	NLI G 18	IV/b-2	1722	Co. Kerry	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
Ó Dálaigh, Aodh / O'Daly, Hugh	TCD 1287/ H.1.13	IV/b-3	1746	Co. Dublin	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
Ó Domhnail, Seaghán	RIA 23 H 16	III	1779	Co. Limerick	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
Ó Duibhgheannáin, Fearfeasa	NLS 72.2.9	IV/a-1	c. 1650	?	BmMM
Ó Faoláin, Diarmuid	RIA 3 B 43	II	?1765	Co. Waterford	BmMM, DCC
Ó Féichín, Peadar / Peter Fane	RIA 23 C 22	II	1767	Co. Cork	BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq)
Ó Floinn, Donnchadh	NLI G 296	IV/b-3	1763	Co. Clare	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
Ó Gorman, Muiris	NLI G 146	IV/a-2	1770	? Co. Dublin	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
Ó Horgáin, Mícheál	NLI G 149	III	1765	Co. Kerry	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
Ó Longáin, Mícheál Óg	RIA 23 G 20	VI	1788	Co. Cork	LnC (35 qq)
	RIA 23 G 21	I	1796	Co. Cork	BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq)
Ó Pronntaigh, Pádruig	NLI G 457	IV/a-2	1759	Co. Louth	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
Ruiséal, Tomás	RIA 24 B 22	V	c. 1772	?	DCC
Tipper, Richard	BL Egerton 132	IV/a-2	1712-13	Co. Dublin	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
unknown scribe	NLS 72.1.45	V	?16th cen.	?	BmMM, DCC
	NLS 72.1.38	IV/b-1	1608-21	?	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29)
	RIA 24 C 38	II	18th cen	?	BmMM
	RIA 23 P 13	IV/b-3	18th cen.	?	BmMM, DCC, LnC (24 qq)

Chapter 5: Group I – Intra-group Comparison

In the previous chapters we introduced the manuscripts which preserve *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, and considered the pre-19th-century manuscripts in more detail in the context of a draft catalogue. Using the evidence of the poetry from the pre-19th-century manuscripts as a basis, we could see that it is possible to classify the manuscripts into six distinct groups: Groups I-IV comprising the manuscripts which preserve the prose narrative of the tale; the 'miscellaneous' Group V which contains manuscripts that are fragmentary, damaged or cannot otherwise be classified into the other groups; and finally Group VI, comprising the manuscripts which preserve 'independent' versions of *Laoidh na gCeann*.

We have thus far relied heavily on the poetry as a basis for classification and considered comparatively little of the prose narrative, addressing only a select number of textual features in Chapter 3. One obvious and crucial question for the existence of our manuscript groups is, however, whether those manuscripts that correspond in terms of poetry also correspond with regard to the prose narrative. In order to corroborate the manuscript groups further, we shall look at the prose narrative on an intra-group level. It would be a desideratum to carry out intra-group comparisons for all manuscripts in all groups; however, the length of the text as well as the wealth of manuscripts makes this a task beyond the capacity of this thesis. Instead, we shall carry out a case study in this chapter to illustrate the variations that may occur within a particular group. For this case study our Group I shall serve as a 'guinea pig'.

The need for a sample intra-group comparison will become more apparent later in this thesis: in section 6.3.5 there will be discussions of prose passages across all groups using a representative manuscript for each group (cf. Table 6-5 'Representative MSS for Groups I-IV'). Without anticipating too much of the results of the present intra-group comparison, we will see that choosing a representative manuscript for each group is justifiable, as only minor textual variations can be observed between the texts as they stand in those manuscripts which have been classified into the same group.

5.1 Comparison of two manuscripts from Group I

The following sections provide a detailed study of two of the five manuscripts that make up Group I. Our five manuscripts in Group I are RIA 23 M 25 (written in 1684[293]), TCD 1376/

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[293] Note that the dates given here refer to the dates of our tale as might be found in colophons, rather than the date of the overall manuscripts.

H.5.4 (1701-02), NLI G 113/ 114 (1703), TCD 3397/ N.5.12 (1737) and RIA 23 G 21 (1796). Scribes and provenance of these particular manuscripts have already been discussed in section 4.1, where we noted how closely Group I's manuscripts are linked geographically, four of the five manuscripts having been written by scribes who lived in or had links with Carraig na bhFear in Co. Cork.

In relation to the other pre-19th-century manuscripts preserving *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, the five in Group I contain a version of the text with a total of only sixteen poems (three of them being 'rhetorics'); other manuscript groups may have in excess of thirty poems. All five manuscripts in Group I are consistent in terms of the number and selection of stanzas each poem contains, as well as the order in which the poems (and stanzas within each poem) occur throughout the prose narrative (cf. section 3.2.1 and Table 3-6 'Order of poems in Groups I-III'). To see whether or not the grouping of these manuscripts into a family according to the poetry can be backed up by the prose narrative, a detailed comparison has been carried out between the oldest and the youngest manuscripts in Group I, namely, RIA 23 M 25 (**M**), written in 1684 by Eoghan Ó Caoimh and RIA 23 G 21 (**G**),[294] the work of Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin which dates to 1796.

RIA 23 M 25, being the oldest manuscript in this group, has been used as the basis text for comparison; corresponding readings are given from the youngest manuscript in the group, RIA 23 G 21.[295] In the present chapter we will look at a number of passages which illustrate the variations that may occur between the two manuscripts. In accordance with the editorial method as laid out in the introductory part of this thesis, the passages cited below are of the 'type B' variety, i.e. they have been edited slightly to make them more accessible for comparison. Page numbers have been included to enable reference to the passage within the transcription on the CD-ROM. In order not to entirely sideline the other three manuscripts in Group I, the longest passages will include their variant readings; as we will see, they tend to follow **M** more closely than **G** in instances where these two manuscripts vary.

The full 'type A' transcription of **M** on the enclosed CD-ROM with the colour-coded variant readings from **G** may give an initial impression that the two manuscripts and their versions of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* differ to a great extent. On considering these apparent discrepancies

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[294] For the purpose of this comparison in this chapter, manuscripts RIA 23 M 25 and RIA 23 G 21 will be referred to as **M** and **G** in this chapter.

[295] A complete transcription of RIA 23 M 25 with colour-coded variant readings from RIA 23 G 21, can be found on the enclosed CD-ROM (Item 2 – 'Group I manuscript comparison analysed in Chapter 5').

more closely, however, it will become apparent that to a large degree these are relatively minor variations that do not change the content of the text at all.

We shall begin our analysis of the comparison with some general observations on the variation that may occur between the two manuscripts; the examples from the text have been chosen for their suitability to illustrate certain points rather than for their content. Following this are a number of longer sections; these will be considered in the light of textual discrepancies to see if and how specific examples add to – or take away – from the understanding of the text. Finally, we shall look at some examples of textual differences from the poetry.

5.1.1 The prose

We find minor orthographical variation such as *is* / *as* in forms of the copula and grammatical variations which include the prepositions *le* / *ri*, *do* / *le(is)*, and preverbal particles *ro* / *do*, the first option representing the one that generally (although not exclusively) seems to be favoured by **M**, and the second one by **G**. Variations between verbal forms and roots occurs frequently, e.g. *rug* / *tug*; *adbert* / *adubert*, and *táinig* / *téid*. There are numerous instances, in enumerations mainly, where the sentence elements are transposed, e.g. *Laogh 7 Eimhir* / *Eimhir 7 Laogh*. Given below are some more examples illustrating the differences and variation (highlighted in bold for clarity) that may occur without really impacting upon the content of the section concerned, and thus the tale as a whole. They can be differentiated as follows:

Lexical variation (and orthographic differences):

- **M** (p. 113): 7 as iad trí sl*éagh*a 's mó nim*h* 7 **grain** d*o* rin*neadh* liomsa riam*h*
  G (p. 2): 7 as iad trí sléag*h*a as mó n*imh* 7 **urc*h*óid** d*o* rin*neadh* liomsa ria*mh*

- **M** (p. 115): b*h*úr **ccn*eadh*** 7 b*h*úr **ccrea*cht***
  G (p. 4): b*h*úr **n-ait*h*reac*h*a** 7 b*h*úr **cc*a*rad uile**

- **M** (p. 115): 7 d'éirg*eadar* a moc*h* **laoi** *ar* na m*ar*eac*h*
  G (p. 5): 7 d'eirg*eadar* a moc*h* **na maidne** *ar* na m*h*air*each*

Variation in preposition and variant spelling:
- **M** (p. 113): 7 ró **fear** failte **friú**, 7 do s*h*uig sí et*urth*a, 7 d'f*h*iafr*aigh* an éa*cht*a
  díob*h* ó d*o* fág*h*b*h*ad*ar* Éire g*us* an u*ars*i*n*

  G (p. 2): 7 d*o* **cur** fáilte **riompa**, 7 d*o* s*h*uig sí eator*h*a, 7 d'f*h*iaf*raigh* an ea*cht*a 7
  an imt*h*ea*cht*a **doi*p*h** ó f*h*ágb*h*ad*ar* *Eire* g*us* an u*air* sin

We can note here that the content differs somewhat, but since the verb is different (*fear* / *cur*) in the two examples the variation is explicable.

Grammatical variations and variant spelling:

- **M** (p. 119): 7 do t*hoch*uilt ina ttimpc*h*ell go nd*e*rnad*ar* catha do **s*h*luagaib*h***
  G (p. 8): 7 d*o* t*hoch*ailt ion*n*a ttimpc*h*ioll go nd*e*rnad*ar* iliom d*o* **s*h*l*uaigh*te**

- **M** (p. 144): **ríog*h* 7 taoiseac*h***
  G (p. 37): **ríg*h*t*h*e 7 róf*h*l*ait*.*h*e**

In the first example dative plural *sluagaibh* (**M**) is replaced by a nominative plural form with infixed -*t*- (for dative plural). **M**, in the second example, gives the genitive plural forms *ríogh*, *taoiseach* which in **G** are replaced by nominative plural forms (for genitive plural).

We can find examples in both **M** and **G** where one manuscript, by the addition of extra phrases of various sorts (e.g. adjectival, prepositional), has elaborated or embellished a passage which has been kept rather short in the other manuscript, yet neither adding to nor taking away from the narrative. To give but a few examples, compare

> **M** (p. 113):
> 7 ní cóm*h*núig*h*e do ron*n*s*a*t sé go rángad*ar* fait*h*e na C*rua*c*h*na.

to the corresponding section in **G** (p. 2), which reads:

> 7 ní cóm*h*air d*o* rinns*a*t go rángad*ar* fait*h*e féur uait*h*ne Cruac*h*na a ccríoc*h*aib*h* cáom*h*aill Con*na*c*h*t.

An example where a section in **G** has been kept slightly shorter but embellished in **M** would be the following passage:

> **M** (p. 120):
> do c*h*on*air*c Gráid*h* m*h*ac Lir ar an b*h*fait*h*c*h*e, 7 bá geis dó san sin d'f*h*aicsin, 7 d*ar* leis do c*h*ual*a* c*ru*it m*h*ac Man*nu*ir agá sein*n* go sub*h*ac*h* síorb*h*in*n*...

> **G** (p. 9):
> d*o* con*air*c G*r*aig*h* m*a*c Lir m*i*c Manuír d*o* s*h*ein*n*im go sub*h*ac*h* sírb*h*in*n*...

Another instance of **G** embellishing a section by, for instance, adding an additional name to an enumeration of people, can be seen below:

M:
1 [128] 7 i*ar*si*n* do g*h*ab*h* ag ceileab*h*r*adh* do C*h*at*h*b*h*uid*h*, 7 do c*h*ur a d*ru*im ré hEam*h*uin, 7 táin*ig* ó Át*h* na Forfaire *ar* Sliab*h* Fuaid 7 do c*h*on*nair*c do leit*h*taoib*h* na con*air*e deatac*h*, 7 taín*ig* dá ion*n*suíd*h*e oi*ar* b*udh* doíg leis g*ur* d*r*ong eígin d'fe*ar*aib*h* Éir*enn* do b*h*í an*n*.

G:
1 [19] 7 *air* sin d*o* g*h*ab*h* ag ceilliob*h*ra d*o* C*h*at*h*fad*h*, **d'Eim*h*ir 7 d*o* b*h*an*n*t*ra*c*h*t,** 7 d*o* c*h*uir a d*r*uim le hEam*h*uin **7 d*o* g*h*luais roim*h*e go súg*h*ac*h* solasac*h* 7 d*o* c*h*uaid*h* a d*h*obron 7 a dólás de** 7 táin*ig* go hÁth na Forfaire 7 as soin go Sliab*h* Fuaid 7 c*h*on*air* deat*a*c*h* mór d*o* l*eith*taoib*h* an c*h*onaire 7 taín*ig* dá ion*n*suig*h*e oi*r*
5 b*udh* doit*h* leis g*ur* d*r*ong eígin d'fe*ar*aibh E*ir*enn do b*h*í an*n*.

There are yet other instances in the manuscripts where, within one sentence, elements have been both added and omitted, as this example shows:

> **M** (p. 120):
> 7 do c*h*ual*a* C*u* C*h*ulainn **gáir** 7 sg*r*eac*h*ac*h* na mBad*h*b*h* as *eadh* adub*er*t, 'As tro*m* lio*m* b*h*eit*h* ag eistea*ch*t ris na gáirt*h*uib*h* so, a G*h*eanuin*n*.'
>
> **G** (p. 9):
> Agas m*ar* d*o* c*h*ual*a* Chucul*o*inn sg*r*éac*h*ac*h* na *m*Bad*h*b as é adb*er*t, 'As tro*m* **tuirsac*h*** liom b*h*eit*h* ag eistea*ch*t ris na gáirt*h*esi, a G*h*eanain*n*.'

The differences here are very subtle, but note how in **M** Cú Chulainn hears the 'shout and screeching' (*gáir 7 sgreachach*) of Badhbh whereas in **G** it is only the 'screeching' (*sgréachach*); on the other hand, listening to this is simply 'heavy' (*trom*) to Cú Chulainn in **M** yet 'heavy and sad' (*trom tuirsach*) in **G**.

One interesting feature of **M** seems to be a confusion of two of the female characters: on p. 122 there are two, on p. 124 four, and on p. 125 one,[296] examples of the name Niamh (or Neamh/ Neamh .i. Chealtchair etc.) having been crossed out and the name 'Eimher' supplied in superscript in the same line, or in the margin of the page. I have examined the other manuscripts in Group I for the relevant sections and interestingly TCD 1376/ H.5.4 (written by Eoghan Ó Caoimh's son Art), NLI G 113/ 114, as well as TCD 3397/ N.5.12, follow the example of **M** and give 'Eimhear'. In **G**, however, we consistently find 'Niamh'; the corresponding section in manuscripts from groups other than Group I agreeing with this. The textual context suggests that 'Niamh' rather than 'Eimhear' should be the protagonist in the sections in question. This, of course, would make the corrections in **M** erroneous, and the subsequent manuscripts would have incorporated this 'false correction'. In turn, this makes a strong case for **M** being the exemplar for this manuscript group.

In the context of characters from the tale we shall examine the way in which people are being referred to, and the differences in providing or withholding information about their lineage, profession etc. To give but three examples:

- **M** (p. 135): Vulcán
  G, p. 26: B*h*ulcan gob*h*a Ifrin*n*

- **M** (p. 139): Cúc*h*ul*o*inn m*h*ac Sub*h*ált*aigh* a muig*h* M*urt*h*eim*h*ne
  G (p. 31): *Cuchu*l*o*inn a Mag*h* M*urt*h*eimne

- **M** (p. 138): Éim*h*ir i*ngean* Forg*h*uill M*h*onuig

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[296] Cf. CD-ROM, Item 2, where these instances of corrections as found in **M** have been represented in the transcription.

G (p. 29): Eim*h*ir b*ean* Chúchu*l*oinn

Again, these are rather minor details that do not have an impact on the tale but are interesting all the same, especially as it seems to be the case that overall **G** tends to embellish sections which are kept rather short in **M**.

A similar observation can be made for the following section. Rather longer, this passage relates how Cú Chulainn, against the advice of his druids and followers, decides to go into battle against the men of Ireland. Before facing his enemies, he goes to bid his foster mother Deichtine farewell. She passes him a bowl of milk which turns into blood every time he takes it from her – a bad omen warning Cú Chulainn of the consequences that his actions – going into battle against Meadhbh and the men of Ireland – are about to have:

M:[297]

1 [126] 7 d*o* ch*uaidh* ag ceileab*h*r*adh* dá muin*n*tir go Dún Dealgan; 7 do g*h*ab*h* Cat*h*fuid*h* 7 na fil*edh*i agá leanmuin díochra, 7 táin*ig* ar fait*h*e an dún*aidh*.

7 táin*ig* D*eich*t*h*ine* amac*h*a dá [io]n*n*suig*h*e ar na ait*h*ne d*h*i g*ur* a ndáil na sluag dob áil leis dul, 7 tug [an] bollán coimd*h*e d*h*ó, 7 rób*a* buad*h* dósan ré ndul

5 cu*m* an tsh*i*ob*h*ail [127] deoc*h* dól as an mbollán, 7 as*eadh* do b*h*í an*n* a lán d'f*h*uil c*h*roid*h*eir*g*.

'T*ru*agh sin, *a D*h*eich*t*h*ine*,' ar C*u* C*h*ulainn, 'ni hiongnad*h* ga*ch* neac*h* eile dom t*h*réigionsa 7 an c*h*ruit*h* a ttugais an bollán *damh*.'

7 do g*h*ab*h* D*eich*t*h*ine an bollán arís, do líon é, 7 tug dósan é. 7 ^is fuil do b*h*í

10 an*n*^, 7 do líon sí an bollán fó t*h*rí. 7 is fuil do fríot*h* gach u*air* an*n*. Do g*h*ab*h* fear*g* Cú Cul*ainn* 7 tug urc*h*ar don b*h*allán fá c*h*loic*h* gur b*r*is*eadh* é, gur 'Tul*adh* an B*h*allán' ainm na háite ó sin a leit*h*.

'As fíor si*n*, a D*h*eich*t*h*ine,' ar C*u* C*h*ulainn, 'ní t*u*sa as cion*n*tac*h* rio*m*sa, a*cht* mo g*h*easa *ar* na ccoill, 7 mo s*h*aog*h*al ar tea*cht*, 7 ní t*h*iocfad beó ó f*h*ea*r*aib*h*

15 Éir*enn* don c*h*urso.'

Is an*n* sin do g*h*ab*h* D*eich*t*h*ine 7 Cat*h*fad*h* dá g*h*uíd*h*e ui*m* anm*h*uin ré Conall Cearrn*ach*.

'Ní f*h*ana*mh*,' *ar* se, 'oi*r* táin*ig* mo reid*h*e 7 mo réim*h*ios, 7 ní t*h*réigio*mh* mo b*h*lad*h* 7 mo b*h*uad*h*a cosgu*ir* a*r* b*h*reíg d*h*iombuain an tsaog*h*uil, 7 níor eím*gh*ios

20 cat*h* ná iorg*h*uil ó do g*h*abh*us* mo ch*reda*m*** gaisge g*us* a niog*h*, 7 is lúg*h*a do d*h*éan a nois oi*r* is buaine blad*h* ná saog*h*al.'

7 táin*ig* roim*h*e iarsi*n* go mac*h*ai*r*e na hEam*h*na, 7 do t*h*ógb*h*ad*ar* ing*h*io*n*a ríog*h* 7 taoisioc*h* Ulad*h* gárrt*h*a t*ru*ag*h* túirseac*h*a na d*h*iaig 7 do lean Cat*h*fad*h* ina aon*ar* é as an *m*baile ama*ch* (...)

G:

1 [16] 7 d*o* ch*uaidh* ag ceilliobh*r*ad*h* dá m*h*uin*n*ter go Dún Dealg*h*ain, 7 d*o* lean Cat*h*fad*h* 7 na fil*eadh*a go diac*h*ra é. 7 níor stad *Cúchu*loinn go ttáin*ig air* fait*h*e [17] a d*h*una f*ein*.

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[297] Variant readings for this passage:
* TCD 1376 **[24]** adds: (.i. a mat*h*air), NLI G 113/ 114 **[71 (219)]** adds: (.i. a m*h*at*h*air)
* ⁻⁻ * TCD 1376, 3397 **[84v]**: a m*h*at*h*air ionm*h*uin; NLI G 113/ 114: a m*h*at*h*air
^ ⁻⁻ ^ NLI G 113/ 114: as fuil fu*air* an*n* an d*ar*a fea*cht*
** TCD 3397: *a*rm

7 táinig Deichne amach, .i. mathair Chonchuloinn, ar n-aithne diair na
5 heighmhe gurab a ndail na sluag dob aill ris dul. 7 iar sin tug an bullan bisig 7
buadh chuige 7 budh buadh dhosan re dul cuim siobhail ná chuim seachrain
deoch d'ól as, 7 budh ghnáith ris an mbullan an deoch do bheith go suairc
sobhlasda ann. Agus asé nidh fuair Cuchuloinn ann, a lan d'fuil chroibhdheirg.
'As truagh sin, a mhathair ionmain,' ar se, 'ni hiongna gach nduine eile dom
10 threigionsa 7 an chruith a ttugaisi an bullán dom.'
Iar sin do ghaibh Deichne an bullán arís, do líon é, 7 tug do Chúchuloinn é, 7
as fuil do fríth an dara huair ann, 7 do líon sí an bullán fá thrí 7 as fuil do fríth
ann gach uair. Do ghaibh fearg Cúchuloinn 7 tug urchar don bhullán chum caraig
comhór cluiche gur bhris é, gur 'Tuladh an Bhulláin' ainm na háite a rabhadar ó
15 shoin a leith.
'As fíor sin a mhathair,' (ar Cuchuloinn), 'ní tusa is cionntach liomsa, acht mo
gheasa fein ar na ccaileamhuin, 7 mo shaoghal ar tteacht, 7 ní thiocfad beó ó
fhearaibh Éirionn don chor so.'
As ann sin do ghaibh a bhean 7 a mhathair 7 an bhanntracht uile da iarraidh ar
20 fanmhuin go teacht do Chonall Cheárrnnach.
'Ní anfad,' (ar se), 'oir táinig mo reidhe 7 mo reimheas, 7 ní thréigfidh mo
bhlaith ná mo bhuadh cosgair ar bhréig dhiombuain an tsaoghailsi.'
7 ar rádh na mbriathar sin dho, gluaisios roimhe d'ionnsúighe an chatha 7 do
lean Cathfadh an aonar é as an mbaile amach (...)

There are two instances in which the manuscripts differ that can be singled out in the above passage.

Firstly, note how **G** consistently reminds us of the relationship between Cú Chulainn and Deichtine, referring to her as *mathair Con Chulainn* (l. 4) or having him address her as 'beloved mother' (*mathair ionmuin*, l. 9). **M**, on the other hand, only ever gives us her name, Deichtine, thus denying the reader the information on the close link between the two characters and as a result, one could even argue, keeping the section less personal than it is in **G**.

The second observation concerns the key moment in this scene, i.e. Deichtine's filling of the bowl with milk that then turns into blood. In **M** it is the case that after this happens the first time, 'Deichtine took the cup again and filled it, and gave it to him. And it is blood that was in it and she filled the cup three times and it was blood that was found in it every time.' (ll. 10-11). In **G** we are told that 'after that Deichne [also note the spelling variation of the name in both texts] took the cup again, and filled it, and gave it to Cú Chulainn, and it was blood that was found in it the second time, and she filled the cup three times, and it was blood that was found in it every time.' (ll. 12-14). In terms of content then the two passages are identical, yet the subtle change of phrasing in **G** seems to make the scene here more vivid and thus haunting.

In yet another scene, the key scene of the prose narrative – Cú Chulainn's actual death – we seem to encounter the same phenomenon as observed for the previous passage: through a few subtle additions to the narrative, **G** increases the tension and atmosphere and thus intensifies the overall effect of the scene on the reader.

Cú Chulainn, mortally wounded by the poisoned spear, orders his charioteer Laogh to prop him up against a pillar so that he would die standing, with his sword in his hand, facing his enemies:

M:[298]

1   [**136**] Is ann sin do choírig Laogh* é ina sheasamh ris an ccairrtha 7 a aghaidh air fhearaibh Eireann, 7 do chuir a sgiath na dhorrnn** go comhneartmhar 7 an cloidheamh ina dheasláimh, 7 ró dhealig^^ a anam ré a chorp ann sin 7 a druim ris an ccairthe, 7 a lámh a laimh Laoigh† mac Rianghabhra. 7 do thuit ceann goile

5   7 gaisge, oinig 7 eagnamha, cosnuimh 7 códhachta na hÉireann ann sin.
    °Ró imthig Laogh iarsin 7 do chonnairc° an Dubhfhaoilinn ag éirge as a néal 7 táinig dá hionnsuíghe, 7 do bhean an tshlegh nimhe aiste, 7 do bhádar deóra dianmhóra donnfhola ré a ghruadhaibh…

G:

1   [**27**] As ann sin do choírig Láogh é na sheasamh ris an ccarruig 7 aighidh air fhearaibh Eirionn, 7 do chuir a sgiath na dhorrnn dhaingen dhílis dheththapadh chlí 7 a chloídheamh ionna dheasláimh churata chleaslúthmar dhoileointe bhoirbneartmar riamh gus an lá sin, 7 do sgar a anam re na chorp annsin 7 a

5   dhruim ris an ccarruig, 7 a lámh a laimh laogh mac rianghabhra. 7 do thuit ann sin ceann goile 7 gaisge, oinicc 7 eagnamha, cosnaimh 7 códhachta na hÉirionn an uair sin .i. Cúchuloinn mac Súbhallthaigh.
    [**28**] Agus d'imthig Láogh mac Rianghabhra ann sin go tuirseach dobrónach on carruig 7 do chonnairc an Dubhfhaoilionn ag éirge as a néal 7 teíd dá

10   hionnsuíghe, 7 do bhain an tshleagha nímhe aisde, 7 do bhíodar deóra donnfhola le a gruaibh…

Lexical variations here include *ró dhealig a anam* (l. 3, **M**) versus *do sgar a anam* (l. 4, **G**) – also note the older *ro* for *do* in **M** – or *ris an ccairthe* (l. 4, **M**) where **G** has *ris an ccaruig* (l. 5). Neither variation changes the content of the tale; however, once again **G** adds elements – particularly adjectives in the descriptions – to the text, making it more vivid. Another point

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[298] Variant readings for this passage:
  * TCD 3397 [**94r**]: lughaidh
  --- NLI G 113/ 114 [**80 (288)**]: clé láimh
  ^ NLI G 113/ 114: go códha coirighthe ina…
  ^---^ TCD 3397: do sgar
  † TCD 3397: lughaidh
  ° ¨ ° NLI G 113/ 114: As ann sin ró mhuig a ghol 7 a ghéárchumha croidhe ar laogh, 7 do thogair imtheacht ó na thriaith 7 ó na thigherna, 7 ar ndul tuairim trasna seacht n-eithre uadha, féachus tar ais air an marbhmhiledh, 7 fillios air a rís, 7 toirbhirios do mhilisphógaibh é, 7 do tháisg ré a ucht 7 ré a úrbhrúinne é, 7 caoidheas go ró thuirsioch ní budh mó iná an chéad chaoi, 7 ceileabhras dó, mar gurab ma bheatha do bhiadh, 7 triallas roimhe, 7 ní cian do chuaidh an tan ad chonnairc…

that has already been remarked on and that can also be picked up on here is **G**'s tendency to be more specific in referring to people by giving their names: compare *(…) cródhachta na hÉireann ann sin* in **M** (ll. 5-6) with *(…) cródhachta na hÉirionn an uair sin .i. Cúchuloinn mac Súbhallthaigh* in **G** (ll. 7-8).

Following Cú Chulainn's death, the men of Ireland are wary of approaching him since the hero died standing upright and they are unsure of whether he really is dead. Finally, after three days and nights, Badhbh approaches Cú Chulainn in the shape of a crow, confirming his death with a screech. When the men of Ireland gather around him, Cú Chulainn's sword falls out of his hand and cuts off a hand from each of those standing closest to him, including Lughaidh mac Con Raoi. Very interestingly, the number of these 'casualties' (and thus hands that have been cut off) has been doubled in our later manuscript, **G**. Compare the thirty boys (*trióchad mac*, l. 12) and thirty hands (*deich lámha fichit*, l. 13) in **M** with the *trí fithchid mac righ* and their *ttri fithchid lamha* (ll. 13 and 14 respectively) in **G** in the passages below:

M:[299]

1 [137] Do ghluais roimpe a riocht feannoige iarsin, chuaidh a bhfroighthibh na firmameinte fíorairde ós cionn Chongculoinn, 7 do dhruid anuas a ndiaig a cheile go tainig a ngar dó, 7 do leíg trí sgreacha ós a chionn, 7 do thurrnadh ar an sgéith ós a chomhair amach.

5 Od chonncadar fir Eireann sin, d'ionnsuígheadar féin é*. Is amhlaidh do bhí san 7 a chlaidheamh nocht ina láimh dheis aige, 7 do bhí diomchosnamh ann nár feadadar fir Eireann a dhorrnn d'osgladh fá dhorrnnchladh an chloidhimh.

'Gearthar an luthach aige,' ar Lúghaidh mhac Conraoi, '7 tuitfidh an cloidheamh aiste.'

10 Do gearradh lúthach na láimhe leó amhlaidh sin, 7 do thuit an cloidheamh *cómhthrasna uaidh*, 7 an **trióchad mac rígh** do bhí faoi, do sgar an cloidheamh a **ndeich lámha fichit** riú, 7 a siadsin na héachta déighmacha do rín CúChuloinn^.

G:

1 [28] Iarsin do ghluais an Bhadhb roimpe a riocht fionnoige, go ndeachaidh a bhfad ós cionn Chúchuloinn, 7 do bhí ag druidim anuas a ndiaigh a chéile go ttáinig a ngar dhó, 7 gur leíg trí sgreacha ós a chíonn, 7 do thúirling ar a sgéith.

Mar do chonarcadar fir Éirionn sin [29] d'ionnsúigheadar féin é. 7 as amhlaidh

5 do bhí Cúchuloinn 7 a chloidhiomh nochtaighthe inna láimh dheis aige, 7 do bhí do churanntacht san laimh sin ná féadfadh fir Eirionn an cloidhiomh do bhuain aisde 7 é marbh, ná a dhornn dosgladh.

'Géarrthar lúthach ná láimhe aige,' ar Luighidh mac Connraoi, '7 tuitfidh an cloidhiomh aiste.'

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[299] Variant readings for this passage:
  * NLI G 113/ 114: é go prap priomh easga
  ⁻ NLI G 113/ 114: go faon fothrasna
  ^ in TCD 1376, 3397, and NLI G 113/ 114 'Cú Chulainn' is written in larger letters!

10   D*o* ge*arr*ad*h* lút*h*ac*h* na láoc*h*lam*h*a an*n* sin, 7 d*o* t*h*uit an cl*oidhio*m*h* cóm*hth*rasna uaid*h*, 7 na **trí fit*hch*id m*a*c rig*h*** do b*h*í láit*h*reac*h* na lám*h*a d*o* g*h*e*arr*ad*h* d*o* Cu*chu*loinn d*o* sg*a*r an cl*oidhio*m*h* a **ttri fit*hch*id lam*h*a** riú, 7 a siadsin na hea*ch*ta déag*h*mac*h*a d*o* rin*n* Cu*chu*loinn.

We will move on in the narrative to what are probably the two most significant instances of variation between the two manuscripts **G** and **M**. For this, we will consider the second part of the tale, namely Conall Cearnach's 'Red Rampage', *Deargruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh*. Note that neither **M** nor **G** provide a running headline for our text as it can be found in some of the other manuscripts, where the headline in question often changes at the point of changeover between BmMM and DCC.[300]

In **G**, we find the following passage – in terms of the narrative this is the point where Conall has been told of his foster brother's death and, having muttered a lament in the form of a 'rhetoric',[301] gets ready to go after the men of Ireland to avenge Cú Chulainn.

G:

1   [30] 7 táin*ig* Con*a*ll as an loing 7 c*uir* fáilte roi*mh* Leab*h*arc*h*am, 7 c*uras* Leab*h*arc*h*am failte roi*mh* C*h*onall 7 ar [31] d'inis d*o* sgeal*a* C*hu*chu*h*loin*n* m*a*r d*o* m*a*rb*h* é le fe*a*raib*h* Éirion*n*,

'Uc*h*, uc*h*,' (*ar* Con*a*ll),' as guirt doilg liomsa an sgeal sin 7 d*o* gonad*h* m*o*
5   c*hr*óid*h*e am c*h*liab*h* ris.' 7 adb*er*t:

'Goirt rom g*h*aot*h*, géir am g*h*onad*h*, árd olc ad*h*b*h*al Cú c*h*aoim*h* C*h*uluin*n* díon óg ul*adh*, ni liomsa nác*h* guirt.'

Dearg ruat*h*air C*h*onaill C*h*ea*m*n*n*aicc *air* f*h*earaib*h* E*irionn* ag díogailt b*h*ais *Chonchu*luin*n* ort*h*a [given as a new headline!]

10   Dála C*h*onaill C*h*earrnac*h* m*a*c Aim*h*e*r*gin m*i*c Caistrillsig m*a*c Cas m*a*c Fa*ch*tna m*a*c Capa m*a*c Gionga m*a*c Rag*h*raoi m*o*r o raid*h*t*er* clan*n*a Rug*h*raoi g*an* s*h*lios Ir m*h*oir m*a*c Milig*h* *air* ttea*ch*t on ea*ch*traigh d*h*o 7 m*a*r fuair sgéal*a* marb*h*t*h*a Cu*chu*loinn ó Leab*h*arc*h*am is ró d*h*oilg*h*us*a*c d*o* g*h*aib*h* an sgeal sun cuige 7 mór b*h*'iongna sin oi*r* fa hiad dis ing*h*íon C*h*at*h*fuig*h* d*r*aoi .i. Deicne 7
15   fion*n*a*h*aom*h* sa máit*h*reac*h*a d*o* C*hu*chu*h*loinn 7 d*o* Con*a*ll C*ear*nac*h*.
        'Gab*h*t*h*ar m*o* c*h*arbad…'

Not only does **G** acknowledge the beginning of a new tale, or element of the text, by giving a new headline; the manuscript also gives an introduction to its protagonist by providing Conall's genealogy. The corresponding passage in **M**, however, reads as follows:

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[300] This point of changeover between BmMM and DCC and the way it is represented in the manuscripts is discussed further in section 6.2.

[301] The 'rhetorics' are discussed in more detail in section 6.3.

M:[302]

  1 [**139**] 7 táin*ig* Conall as an loing 7 tug fáilte don b*h*aneac*h*laibh, as t*air*si lin*n* an f*h*áilte Leab*har*c*h*am*, 7 mo m*h*órc*h*ean reóm*h*ad f*ein* a ríg*h*m*h*íleadh, 7 tug lám*h* t*ar* C*h*onall 7 do ch*uaidh* ar a c*h*oim*er*ce.

      'Sgéla leat a Leab*har*c*h*am,' *ar* Conall.

  5 'Atáid droc*h* sg*eal*a agam,' *ar* sí, '.i. C*u* Culoinn do m*h*arb*h* d'f*h*earaibh E*i*reann.'

      'Uc*h* is goirt liomsa sin,' *ar* C*h*ona*ll*, '7 do gonad*h* mo c*h*roid*h*e leis.' 7 adub*ert*,

      'Goirt rom g*h*aot*h*, géar ro*m* g*h*onad*h*, *ár*d olc ad*h*b*h*al, Cú caoim*h* C*h*uloin*n*, díon óg ul*adh*, sgéal go ng*air*ge, gníom*h* go ngu*ir*te.'

      'Gab*ht*h*ar* mo c*h*a*r*ba*t*…'

Here the two parts of the tale merge without any indication or reference to the *Deargruathar*; furthermore, Conall's genealogy has been omitted. The same applies to the texts as they occur in TCD 1376, NLI G 113/ 114 and TCD 3397, where again there are no new headlines to indicate the beginning of DCC. While **G** gives the reader some 'bonus material' and thus, one could argue, sets him up for what is to come and enforces the significance of the character that is Conall Cearnach, this does not actually have an impact on the overall tale, and does not change the narrative context. However, only slightly later in the text **M** gives a short genealogy of Conall, in the context of him approaching Lughaidh mac Con Raoi and the latter asking his servant to identify the man approaching them:

M:[303]

  1 [**141**] 'Do c*h*imsi m*ar*cac*h* d*ár* n-ion*n*suíg*h*e*,' *ar* Con*n*la, '7 aoineac*h* * mor d*er*g faoi, 7 ní f*h*aca ria*mh* aonm*h*arcac*h* is f*ear*r t*h*iompc*h*illias an m*h*ag*h* iná é.'

      'Do b*h*eir*i*msi ait*h*ne *ar* an m*ar*cac*h* si*n*,' *ar* Lúgh*aidh*, '^g*ur* ab é^ ríg*h* laoc*h* E*i*reann atá an*n*, .i. Conall Cearrnac*h* m*h*ac Aim*ir*gin I*ar*duin*n*^^ m*i*c Fin*n*file

  5 m*h*ic Glais m*h*ic Rosa Ruaid*h* m*h*ic Rúg*h*raidh*e*. 7 is m*air*g cu*m* a ttig† an tí atá an*n* oi*r* ní d*h*each*aidh* a b*h*íod*h*b*h*a slán uaid*h* ria*mh* *ar* mu*ir* ná *ar* tír.'

Unsurprisingly, having just provided extensive information on Conall's lineage two pages previously, **G**, on p. 33, only gives *Conall Cearrnach mac Aimhirgin atá ann…* at the corresponding point in the tale.

We will move on to the final example in the analysis of the prose narrative in our two manuscripts. This concerns the ending of the tale, and is probably also the portion of the text

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[302] Variant readings for this passage:

  * TCD 3397 [**96r**] adds: c*h*am*h*

[303] Variant readings for this passage (all variants from NLI G 113/ 114 [**295**] unless otherwise stated):

  * adds: a lugh*aidh*

  ¯¯ de*ar*gm*h*or dása*ch*tach

  ^ adds: as Riog*h*d*h*a do thiocfad*h* ina é, 7 as…

  ^¯¯^ oir a sé

  ^^ i*ar*g*h*uinid*h*

  † TCD 3397 [**99r**]: t*h*áinig

that stands out as exhibiting the most significant textual differences. Below is the last section in

which both texts more or less correspond:

M:[304]

1   [150] 7 d*o* gh*ab*h Conall ag feit*h*iom*h* an *ár*muig timpc*h*ioll, 7 na cu*ir*p c*h*iórt*h*a
c*h*ról*ead*art*h*a ag sile a bh*f*ola* an gh*l*aise gh*l*anf*h*uar gh*ainm*heac*h*, 7 *ar*na
f*h*aicsi*n* do *Chon*all 7 adubert gíodh glaise c*h*ruin*n* *hain*m* gon*adh*so*, b*udh*
'Glaise C*h*ró' hain*m*^ ó so amac*h* go brat*h*…

G:

1   [45] 7 d*o* gh*aib*h ag feac*h*uin an arrm*h*uid*h* ion*n*a timpchioll, 7 na cuirp
chiorrb*aithe* chróileadartha ag sile a bhfola na s*ruith*lin*nt*ib*h* fá an nglaise d*o* bh*í*
ag sníd*h*e le hais an m*h*ac*h*aire ion*n*a rab*h*adar g*ur* b*udh* caob*h*a cró 7 lin*n*te fol*a*
an gh*l*aise gh*l*ean*n* f*h*uar gh*ainm*híg*h*e 7 i*ar* na f*h*aicsin d*o* Con*all* asé adb*er*t g*ur*
5   b*udh* 'Glaise Cró' a hainim ó so am*ac*h …

In **G**, this is followed immediately by the passage below, thus finishing the narrative rather

abruptly when we consider the details that the overall text tends to give:

G:

1   [45] …g*ur* b*udh* 'Glaise Cró' a hainim ó so am*ach*.
        I*ar* sin d*o* gh*l*uais Conall roi*mh*e 7 ní fa*da* ráin*ig* leis dul an t*an* tár*l*a Lúig*idh*
m*a*c Con*n*ráoi *air*, 7 cat*h*a coírig*h*t*h*e aige, 7 ní teit*h*e d*o* rin Conall riómp*a* *acht*
d'íon*n*suig i*at* a ccéad*o*ír 7 b*udh* cosm*ail* le hanfad*h* tuin*n*e treine tro*m*anfuíd*h*e
5   cuime cuím*h*ainge a c*ur* a heísg fá tír, Conall ag diansgáoile 7 a dlút*hm*harb*adh*
m*ait* luíge ion*n*a t*h*impc*eall* gur tuit*edar* uile ris bon*n* re bon*n*.
        7 d*o* chóm*h*raig sé feín 7 Lúigh*idh* le c*h*éile 7 d*o* bh*i* gab*h*ail na *m*buill*edh*a ag
dul *air* Lúigh*idh* g*o* nd[u]b*er*t,
        'A Conaill,' (*ar* sé), 'ni co*mh*ro*m* ár ccó*mh*r*ac* *ar* áon .i. t*u*sa 7 d*o* dá lai*mh* agat
10   7 mise *air* aonláim*h*, 7 as am*h*laidh d*o* biam com*ht*hr*o*m [46] d*o*n laím*h* d*h*eas d*o*
c*h*eangal duitsi.'
        D*o* rin*n* Con*n*all am*h*la sin 7 do gh*abh*sad da ccloim*h*te claisleatana
geárf*h*aob*h*arac*h*a a ccorpaib*h* 7 a muinéalaib*h* a c*h*éile g*o* ttug Lúigh*idh* buille
br*áth*m*ar* boirbn*er*tm*ar* d*o* C*h*onaill, g*ur* ghéarr na ceangail d*a* laim*h*.
15   7 i*ar* faicsin na lám*h*a sgaoilte d*o* Luígh*idh* adb*er*t re *Con*all a lám*h* d*o* ceang*al*
arís. 7 d*o* rin Conall am*h*la sin gid*h*eadh d*o* be c*r*íoc*h* 7 foírc*h*eann an c*h*om*h*ragh
sin g*ur* t*h*uit Luigh*idh* le Conall *ar* an lait*h*ir sin g*ur*ab am*h*la sin d*o* dh*í*ógail
Conall Ceárrn*n*ac*h* bas C*hú*c*h*u*l*uin*n* *air* c*h*lainn C*h*ailitin*n* *air* Luigh*idh* m*a*c
Con*n*raoi 7 air f*h*earaib*h* Eirion*n*
20   Láoi na ccean*n* son*n*
    Sgéal C*hú*c*h*uluinn ós ard, ait*h*ris dúin*n* a M*h*aine m*h*org*h*airg …

This final part of the prose narrative in **G**, then, only relates the duel between Conall and

Lughaidh mac Con Raoi: the latter having lost a hand to the dead Cú Chulainn's sword, he

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[304] Variant readings for this passage (all variants in both NLI G 113/ 114 and TCD 3397):
   * both MSS add: sruit*h*lin*n*tib*h*
   --- as ainm don tsruit*h*so gonuige so, bud*h*…
   ^ as ain*m*

urges Conall to have one hand bound behind his back, lest he have an unfair advantage by using both hands. This is done, but Lughaidh inadvertently severs the rope, and despite agreeing to have his hand bound a second time, Conall is victorious over Lughaidh. **G** then ends with a version of LnC, here in its longest form with 35 stanzas. Interestingly the ending in **G** is very reminiscent of that in RIA 3 B 43 in Group II, which we have cited in section 3.4.2 (p. 156), although RIA 3 B 43 does not give a version of LnC. We have seen, however, how in Group II LnC does not seem to be properly 'integrated' into the narrative and the same can be said for **G**, where the poem also appears somewhat 'tagged onto the end' of the tale.

The final portion of the prose narrative and thus corresponding section in **M** is far longer than that in **G**. Therefore a short summary, rather than the full section, shall be given here, which will suffice to illustrate the additional details given in **M**. We have seen that the two texts correspond up to the point when the origin of the name Glas Cró is explained. In **M** Conall now not only encounters Lughaidh mac Conraoi but also *maithe chloinne Deaghaidh* (p. 150). The duel between Lughaidh and Conall, then, is interspersed with a conversation between the two warriors, with Lughaidh arguing why Conall should have his hand bound. The latter's victory is also spun out, ending with Conall's concluding remark to the slain Lughaidh, *'Muna ndítcheann tusa Cú Chuloinn,' ar sé, 'do budh leasg liomsa tusa do dithcheannadh'* ('If you had not beheaded Cú Chulainn,' he said, 'I would be reluctant to behead you'; **M**, p. 151). The narrative then elaborates briefly how Glas mac Deaghaidh, as well as *caogad ríghmiliodh do mhaithibh chloinne Déaghaidh* ('fifty warriors of the nobles of clann Déaghaidh'), fall by Conall's hand. The final paragraph in **M** relates what has been omitted in **G**, namely, Conall's return to Eamhain Macha:

M:

1   [151] Téid Con*a*ll i*ar*si*n* go hEam*h*uin i*ar* mbuaid gcosg*air ar* an m*h*éid d'f*h*ear*a*ibh
    Eir*eann* na*ch ar* t*h*uit lé Cuc*h*uloi*nn* a mB*r*eislig m*h*oir M*h*úig*h*e M*ur*t*h*eim*h*ne, 7
    rug lán an gad leis do c*h*eann*a*ibh mait*h*e b*h*f*ear* nEirean*n* do b*h*ean díob*h ar* an
    De*a*rgruat*h*air sin a ndíog*h*uil b*h*a*í*s C*h*ongculoi*nn*, 7 do b*a* dub*h*ach d*r*a[

5   ]m*h*eanm*ach* do b*h*ad*ar* uaisle 7 mná 7 míl*eadh* na hEam*h*na *ar* b*h*faicsi*n*
    C*h*onaill dá n-io*nn*suíg*h*e.

       7 i*ar* ttea*cht* Conaill do lát*h*air cúca, do c*h*u*i*r a t*h*rí tro*m*gha*r*t*h*a caointe as ós
    *ar*d maille ré hóguib*h* na hEam*h*na ag caoin*eadh* a cc*ar*ad 7 a ccoigc*h*eile
    Congc*u*loinn gon*adh* í sin B*r*eisl*each* M*uig*he M*ur*theimhne 7 óig*h*e C*h*oncul*oinn*

10   gon*adh* sin. *ar*na sg*r*iob*h* lé hEóg*h*an Ó Caoim*h* 1684.

Interestingly, if we look at the final paragraph in the other three manuscripts in Group I beside **M** and **G**, we find that although they may not be identical, they again correspond very closely to **M**, rather than to **G**:

TCD 1376/ H.5.4:	NLI G 113/ 114:	TCD 3397/ H.5.12:

TCD 1376/ H.5.4:

1 [90] Téid Con*a*ll go hEam*h*uin i*ar* mbuaid*h* ccosg*air* ar an m*h*eid d'fea*r*uib*h* E*i*renn nac*h* ar t*h*uit le C*oinc*ulainn [91] a mB*r*eislig mo*ir* M*h*uig*h*e M*h*ur*th*eim*h*ne, 7 rug lán an gaid

5 leis do c*eann*aib*h* mait*h*e b*hf*ear nÉir*eann* do b*h*ain díob*h* ar an nDé*ar*gruat*h*ar si*n* a ndíog*h*uil báis C*h*oingculoinn.

7 do b*a* dub*h*ac*h* d*r*oc*h*m*h*eanmnac*h* do b*h*ad*ar* uaisle, 7 mná, 7 mil*edh* na hEam*h*na,

10 *ar* b*h*faicsi*n* C*h*onuill *dá* n-io*nn*suighe 7 i*ar* ttea*cht* Conuill do lát*hair* [ ] do fu*ir* a t*h*riú tro*mgh*art*h*a claointe as ós *ar* ár*d* maille ré hoguib*h* na hEam*h*na ag ccloi*ned* a cc*ar*ad, 7 a ccóigcéile C*h*oing*c*ulainn.

15 Gon*ad* í sin oig*h*id*h* C*h*oing*c*ulainn ar na sgríob*h* lé hA*r*t Ó Caoi*mh*.

NLI G 113/ 114:

1 [[305 (13)]] Téid Conall i*ar* sin go hEam*h*uin M*h*ac*h*a i*ar* mbuad*h* cosg*air air* an m*éd* d'fea*r*aib*h* Éireann nác*h* ar t*h*uit lé Coingculoi*n* a mBreislicc m*h*ó*ir* Mag*h*

5 Muirt*h*eim*h*ne. 7 rug lán an g*h*aid leis so c*h*ean*n*aib*h* na ttaoisioc*h* b*u*d*h* tásgam*h*la d*ár* t*h*uit leis d'fearaib*h* Éirean*n* san Deargruat*h*ar sin a ndíog*h*uil b*h*áis C*h*oingculoi*nn*.

10 7 do bá dúb*h*ach dóm*h*ean*m*ach do b*h*í Conc*h*ub*h*ar 7 uaisle Ula *ar* b*h*faicsin C*h*onall dá n-io*nn*súig*h*e; 7 *ar* ttea*cht* C*h*onaill do lát*h*air c*h*uca, do c*h*uir Conall a t*h*rí tro*mgh*arrt*h*a cúm*h*a 7 caointe ós *ar*d as,

15 maille ré hógaib*h* Ula caoin*edh* a cc*ar*ad ag*us* a ccóm*h*c*h*éile C*h*oingculoi*nn*.

Gonad*h* é sin bás C*h*oingculoi*nn* et B*r*isl*each* M*h*ag*h* Murt*h*eim*h*ne gonuige sin…

[for full colophon see manuscript entry in draft catalogue]

TCD 3397/ H.5.12:

1 [111r] Téid Conall *ar* sin go hEam*h*uin i*ar* *m*breit*h* b*h*uaid*h* cosguir i*ar* an méid d'fea*r*uib*h* éiran nac*h* *ar* t*h*uit lé C*u* C*u*lainn a *m*Breisleac*h* mór M*h*uig*h*e Múrt*h*im*h*ne. 7

5 do rug lan an g*h*aid leis do c*h*éan*n*aib*h* mait*h*e bf*ear* nÉirean*n* do b*h*áin d*h*oib*h* i*ar* an Deargruat*h*ar sin a ndiog*h*uil báis C*h*oingculoinn.

7 do b*u*d*h* dub*h*ac*h* dróc*h*meanmac*h* do

10 b*h*ad*h*ar uaisle, 7 mna, 7 m*h*il*eadh* na hEam*h*na *ar* b*h*faicsin C*h*onuill uat*h*a; 7 is ttea*cht* do C*h*onall do lat*h*air do [111v] do cuiread*h*ar tír tromg*h*art*h*a caointe astú os *ar*d máille re hóguib*h* na hEam*h*na: ag caoin*eadh*

15 a cc*ar*ad, 7 a ccoim*h* c*h*éile .i. C*h*oincuilion*n*.

Goin*adh* è sin Oig*h*id*h* C*h*oinglloinn [*sic*] *ar* na sgriob*h*a…

[for full colophon see manuscript entry in draft catalogue]

5.1.2 The poetry

Having considered a number of examples from the prose narrative, we will turn to look at the poetry. As with the prose, the lexical and syntactical differences in the poetry are minor, but in some cases even these small changes have an impact on the metre. We will not consider every single poem in its entirety; rather, we shall focus on a number of poems and stanzas that are most representative for the variations that may occur. The numbering of the poems in question corresponds to that in pull-out Table 3-4 ('List of poems with MSS classified into groups'); the total number of stanzas of the respective poem in Group I is also indicated. Variations between **M** and **G** are highlighted in bold and briefly commented on following each poem. The poems are given in the order in which they occur in the text.

Poem 1 *Ataid sunna bhur n-airm aigh* (2 qq)

M (p. 113)	**G** (p. 2)
1. **Anman***na* b*h*úr **sl***éagh* **ré** cc*ur* ccat*h* Gaod is **Ag***h*, is Úrc*h*ra **anman***na* b*h*úr ccl*oidh*eam*h* go mbl*ath* Lot is **León**, is Leadr*a*d.	1. **Aini***mn*eac*h*a b*h*ur **sl***eagh*a **le** c*ur* cat*h* Gáod*h* is **Ág***h*a is Urc*h*ra **aini***mn*a b*h*ur ccl*oidh*eam*h* go *m*blad*h* Lot is **Leóna** is L*eadh*rad*h*.
2. Tuitfid*h* lib*h* an **Cú curad***hac***h* cn*eadh*ac*h* créa*ch*tac*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*hach* aon m*h*ac **D***eithch*ine gan an *ar* b*h*úr ccion*n* t*h*uaid*h* **atá san**.	2. Tuitfidh libh an **Chú ceárrdach** cneadhach creachtach cathbhuadhach aon m*h*ac **Deig***hch*ine gan **ain** *ar* b*h*úr ccion*n* tuaid*h* **a t***h*riúr.

stanza 1

l. 1: different plural formation, **G** using the ahistorical innovative variant *-acha-* in *ainimneacha*. Orthograpical variation in *sléagh / sleagha*. Change of preposition from *ré* to *le*.

ll. 2 & 4: in **G** addition of unstressed vowel which is then elided.

l. 3: different plural formations.

stanza 2

l. 1: gender variation (*Cú / Chú*). Lexical change from *curadhach* 'heroic, warrior-like' in **M** to *ceárrdach* 'skillful' in **G**.

l. 3: orthographic change in **G**: possible reinterpretation of personal name, analysing as *deagh* 'good' and *cine* 'race', but with the same phonetic result.

l. 4: textual change (*atá san* to *a thriúr* 'a threesome'), resulting in loss of end rhyme with l. 3 in **G**.

Poem 2 *Dia bhur beatha a seisior saor* (7 qq)

<u>M</u> (p. 114)	<u>G</u> (p. 3)
2. **T*air*si** lin*n* a **M.*head.h*b*h*** m*ho*r t'fáilte do c*h*uirm do c*hóm.h*ól ad **d.*h*eaigsi**, a lít*h* g*h*lan táinig dít*h* ár n-ath*ar*.	2. **As tairse** lin*n* a **M.*h*eid.*h*b*h*** m*hó*r t'fáilte do cuir*m* do c*h*om*h*ol ad **d.*h*iagsi** a lít*h* glan táinig dít*h* ár n-at*h*ar.
6. Ár n-oid*eadh*a san bhFraingc **am(*h*)uic[h]** do bé **Gáb*ha*** m*h*ac Fióg*h*uil *ár* n-oid*eadh*a san **B.*h*aibilóin soin** Casal Fióg*ha* m*ha*c Fiog*h*uil.	6. Ar n-oid*eadh*a san bFraingc **amuit*h*** do be **Gob*ha*** mac Fiog*h*ail ar n-oid*eadh*a san **B.*h*aibioloin** Casal Fiog*ha* m*a*c Fiog*h*ail.

stanza 2

l. 1: in **M** absence of copula. **G** using slenderised vocative *a Mheidhbh* (minor grammatical difference).

l. 3: slight change in spelling, presumably representing different phonological forms.

stanza 6

l. 1: arguably phonetic spelling in both manuscripts: in **M** -ic[h] presumably for –[ixʲ]; in **G** –th possibly for –[ih].

l. 2: in **G** change of name to a more familiar name containing 'smith' word.

l. 3: in **M** extrametrical change: addition of syllable giving *deibhí* rhyme with end of following line, i.e. *soin : Fioghuil*.

Poem 8 *Gáir na sluagh…* (5 qq)

<u>M</u> (p. 121)	<u>G</u> (p. 10)
3. Muna **b.*h*eit*h*** d*r*aoig*h*ea*ch*t m*hó*rshluag*h* 　　　　　　　　　　[m*h*onuig feib ró m*hair*finn **noc*h*a** muirfidís fír **M.*húm.h*an** **mé** a los *air*m.	3. Muna ***mbeith*** d*r*aoig*h*ea*cht* m*hó*rs*h*luagh 　　　　　　　　　　[m*h*on*m*uig f*eibh* ró mhairfin*n* **ni** m*h*uirfidís **me** fir **Éirion*n*** a los airm.
5. Do faot*h* mise is m*h'*ea*ch* is m*h' air*m do t*h*rí gáib*h* do faot*h* Eam*h*uin m*hó*rg*har*g M*h*ac*h*a **cruaid*h* an g*hair*.**	5. Do f*h*aot*h* mise is m*h'*ea*ch* is m*h'*air*m* do t*h*ri gáib*h* d*o* f*h*aot*h* Eam*h*uin m*hó*rg*hair*g Mac*h*a **truag*h* a háong*h*air.**

stanza 3

l. 1: initial mutation difference.

ll. 2 & 4: in both manuscripts, note modern rhyme between *mhairfinn* and *airm*, which requires *airm* to be pronounced as *airim*.

l. 3: variation between negative particle; in **G** lexical difference (*Éirionn* for *Mhumhan*) as well as syntactical change by moving pronoun from the fourth line into the third.

stanza 5

l. 4: lexical change in **G**, also new compund at the end of line which interrupts the rhyme.

Poem 18: *Do tolladh mo leath leatsa* (3 qq)

<u>**M**</u> (p. 129)	<u>**G**</u> (p. 20)
1. Do tollad*h* mo **leat*h*** lib*h*si ó mo mulla*ch* go talm*h*uin mo m*h*alla*cht* don d*r*oing **iomc*h*raid*h*** rug uai*m* leat do*m* armui*n*.	1. Do tollad*h* m*o* **t*h*aob*h*** lib*h*se o m*o* m*h*ulla*ch* go talm*h*uin mo m*h*alla*cht* don d*r*oing **reim c*h*ráid*h*** r*ug* uai*m* leat do*m* armuin.
2. Dá b*h*feasad*h* **an*no*cht** Eam*h*uin rugsad uai*m* leat*h* mo **lám*h*uig** misi an curad*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h* do m*h*órt*h*riat*h*aib*h* tánag.	2. Da b*h*feasad*h* **curr*aidh*e** Eam*ain* go r*ug*sad uai*m* leat*h* m*o* **lám*h*aicc** mise an c*h*urrad*h* c*h*at*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h* dá móirt*h*riat*h*ib*h* t*h*ánag.
3. **Ár n-éigion** do hait*h*eantaoi **ar c*h*at*h*aib*h*** cród*h*a Connacht muna mb*eith* cl*ann* **C*h*ailitín** dá ttáin*ig* **ar** ttaob*h* do toll*adh*.	3. **Tuitf*idh*** liomsa cat*h*a **mórc*h*ród*h*a** Con*n*acht muna *m*b*eith* cl*ann* **C*h*ailitin*n*** da ttáin*ig* m*o* t*h*aob*h* d*o* t*h*oll*adh*.

stanza 1

l. 1: lexical change (*leath* for *thaobh*).

l. 3: reinterpretation.

stanza 2

l. 1: lexical change; substitution of noun for adverb.

l. 2: additional conjunction; orthographical difference (older spelling in **G**).

stanza 3

ll. 1 & 2: Major textual difference with loss of metrical regularity in **G**.

l. 4: change of person from *ar* 'our' to *mo* 'my'.

Poem 20: *Mo chean dhuit a Chú* (1q)

<u>**M**</u> (p. 130)	<u>**G**</u> (p. 21)
M*air*g i*arrus* an **aisgid*h*** a C*h*ú C*h*uilliosg c*h*ruaid*h* fir Éirion*n* am **ag*h*aidh** **mo** g*h*ai do b*h*reith uai*m*.	Mairg iaras an **aisge** a C*h*úc*h*uileasg c*h*ruaid*h* **is** fir Éirion*n* am **aig*h*idh*s*i** **air tí mo** g*h*ai d*o* b*h*reit*h* uaim.

l. 1: form in **G** displaying later form.

l. 3: additional syllable in **G** by use / addition of emphatic suffix and spelling difference indicating a dialectal form; at beginning of line in **G** addition of connective *is*.

l. 4: two additional syllables (*ar tí*) in **G**.

Poem 27: *Cú Chulainn budh hamhra an ghein* (4 qq)

M, p. 149:	**G**, p. 32:
4. As é **do** b*udh* dalta d*h*am*h*	4. As e **d*híobh*** b*udh* dalta d*h*am*h*
ib*h*id brain dig as a c*h*rú	ib*h*id brain dig as a c*h*rú
ní **d*h*iongan** g*áir*e ná gean	ni **déan** gáire ná gean
ó do ch*uaidh* tar ceal mo Cú.	**ó** ch*uaidh* tar ceal mo C*h*ú.

stanza 4

l. 1: different copula forms.

l. 3: older verbal form in **M** replaced by more modern one in **G**: leads to syllable loss.

l. 4: older form *do-chuaidh* as found in **M** replaced by modern *chuaidh* in **G**, the loss of one syllable impacting on the metre.

Poem 29: *Aon marchach sonn air an mhaigh* (9 qq)

M (p. 141)	**G** (p. 34)
1. Aon m*h*arcac*h* **son*n*** *ar* an maig*h*	1. Aon m*h*arcac*h* *ar* an maig*h*
a Lúgh*aidh* laoc*h*dha lon*nmh*ir	a Luigh*idh* laoc*h*da loin*nmh*ir
ní c*h*éal *ar* c*h*urad*h* na cclan*n*	ni c*h*eal *ar* c*h*urad*h* na cclan*n*
adeir*m* g*ur*ab é C*h*onall.	**adeiri*m*** g*ur*ab e Conall.
3. Táin*ig* Conall roi*m*he i*ar*sin	3. Tainig Conall roim*h*e *ar* sin
g*us* an áit a **mbí** Lúg*h*aid*h*	g*us* an ait **a raib*h*** Luig*h*id*h*
f*ear*g m*hó*r agam míl*eadh* ré am*h*ac	fir an dom*h*ain roi*m*he amac*h*
níor bó **ceann*m*uis** a ccóm*h*rag	nior b*udh* céim leis a ccóm*h*rac.
4. Sloin*n* do c*hair*dios **doil*igh*** dean*n*	4. Sloin*n* d*o* c*h*arad*us* **doilg** lio*m*
's ní heagal duit *ar* Conall	is ni heagal d*uit* *ar* Conall
muna rab*h*ais **ar an muig*h***	muna rab*h*ais **ag marb*h*ad*h***
ag m*ar*badh m*h*eic Súb*h*altaig.	**C*hu*c*h*uloin*n*** m*ac* Sub*h*alltaicc.
8. Do b*h*éaradsa sin a f*h*ir	8. Do b*h*éarsa sin a f*h*ir
a Lugh*aidh* laoc*h*d*h*a lon*nmh*ir	a Luigh*idh* laoc*h*da loin*nmh*ir
is tug do b*h*reit*h*ir talam*h* c*h*lan*n*	**ac*h*t go b*h*fag*h*ad d*o* b*h*ríat*har* dea*r*bh an*n***
nác*h* seac*h*nair*si mo c*h*om*h*lan*n*.	nác*h* **seant*ar* leat** m*o* c*h*ómlan*n*.
9. Do b*h*eir*im* fóm bréit*h*ir **niad*h***	9. Do b*h*eiri*m* fám briat*har* **díb*h***
cuingim fóm c*h*loid*h*eam*h* is fóm sgiat*h*	**fám sgéit*h* is fám cloid*h*iom*h***
go ttigid mo s*h*luaig amac*h*	**ac*h*t go** ttagad*h* mo s*h*luag*h* amac*h*
nác*h* img*h*eab*h*ad aonm*h*arcach.	ná héimeóc*h*ad aonm*h*arcac*h*.

stanza 1

l. 1: dropping of adverb *sonn* resulting in loss of syllable in **G**.

l. 4: possible phonetical spelling of *adeirm* in **G** with implied epenthesis (but this could be due to a scribal slip / error).

stanza 3

l. 2: change of present habitual into past tense.

ll. 3 & 4: total change of syntax and text.

stanza 4

l. 1: phonetic variant; corrupt phonetic spelling in **G** (*doilg* for *doilig*), which is indicative of two dialect traits, namely, final unstressed *-igh* > *-ig* (characteristic of Munster) and epenthesis implied in the cluster 'lg'.

ll. 3 & 4: in **G** 'padding out' of name loss of information in l. 3.

stanza 8

l. 1: in **M** later 1st singular future verbal form replaced by an older form in **G**, resulting in the loss of a syllable.

ll. 3 & 4: total change of syntax and text. In l. 4 replacement of active 2nd singular in **M** by passive/ impersonal form in **G** (stylistic difference).

stanza 9

l. 1: in **G** preposition for noun in **M**, which in **M** gives rhyme with l. 2.

l. 2: syntactical change in **G** and omission of verb.

l. 3: different verbal form and tense (**M** *ttigid* / **G** *ttagadh*); sg *sluagh* in **G** for plural *shluaig* in **M**.

l. 4: different futures: *e*-future in **M** replaced by long *ó*-future in **G** which here also uses a different verb.

In stanza 3, line 3 differs quite subtantially in **M** and **G**. Note that although in **G** we have extra syllables, despite the modification to the line the end rhyme between lines 3+4 has been retained.

In the stanza 9, line 2, the order of the words, or rather elements, has been transposed. However, as the last word of the previous line differs in both manuscripts, the shift retains end rhyme between lines 1+2 in both cases: **M** *niadh* : *sgiath*, **G** *dibh* : *cloidhiomh*, although the rhyme in **G** is not very good.

Poem 32: *Oighidh Mhaoil agus Miodhna* (1 q)

<table>
<tr><td align="center"><u>M</u> (p. 144)</td><td align="center"><u>G</u> (p. 37)</td></tr>
<tr><td>

1. Cea*nn* C*h*oncculo*inn* a tTeam*hr*aigh
tug Ul*adh* fá **m*hím*h*eanmuin**
t*húir*seac*h* mise d'éis an fir
olc liom a eag 'sa **oig*hidh*.**

</td><td>

1. Ceann Choingculoinn a tTeamhraigh
tug Uladh fá **doimheannmuin**
tuirsioch mise d'éis an fhir
olc liom a éag 'sa **ad*h*lac.**

</td></tr>
</table>

stanza 1

l. 2: different prefixes

l. 4: lexical change *oighidh* 'death' to *adhlac* 'burial' which in G disrupts the metre while **M** retains the rhyme with *fhir*.

Poem 33: *Uch a chinn on uch a chinn* (8 qq)

<table>
<tr><td align="center"><u>M</u> (p. 145)</td><td align="center"><u>G</u> (p. 38)</td></tr>
<tr><td>

3. Uc*h* a lám*h* ón uc*h* a lám*h*
da **b*hádh*uise** seal go sám*h*
minic do curt*h*aoi fám c*h*eann
uc*h* dob ionm*h*uin leam on lám*h*

</td><td>

3. Uc*h* a lám*h* ón uc*h* a lám*h*
do **b*h*íosa** seal g*o* sámh
minic d*o* curt*h*aoi fám c*h*eann
oc*h* dob ion*nm*h*uin leam an lám*h*.

</td></tr>
<tr><td>

4. **Dian is maoid*h*te** is mait*h* leam
a C*h*oingculo*inn* c*hru*aid*h* na mbea*nn*
nác*har* imd*her*gas **do** g*h*muís
's nác*h* **de*ár*nas** d*ru*is tar do c*h*eann.

</td><td>

4. **Am smaointe** as mait*h* lea*m*
a C*húch*ulo*inn* c*h*ruaid*h* na *m*bea*nn*
nár imd*hear*gas **riam*h* do** gnúis
is nác*h* **d*éar*nad*h*** d*rú*is tar d*o* gnúis.

</td></tr>
</table>

stanza 3

l. 2: person shift and older verbal form in **M**,[305] modernisation in **G** entails syllable loss.

stanza 4

l. 1: lexical variation

l. 3: different negative particle; addition of *riamh* in **G** (in order to retain syllable count?)

l. 4: active 1ˢᵗ person singular in **M** corresponds to passive in **G**.

Poem 40: *Ní hiad na cairde rom char* (3 qq)

<table>
<tr><td align="center"><u>M</u> (p. 149)</td><td align="center"><u>G</u> (p. 43)</td></tr>
<tr><td>

2. Béarradsa b*h*ur cci*nn* **ó** t*h*uaid*h*
a c*h*lan*na* Cailitín c*h*ruaid*h*
treigfid*he* lio*m* gan taisi
do nim*h* c*h*ruad*h* mo c*h*úlg*h*laisi.

</td><td>

2. Béaradsa b*h*ur cci*nn* **bud*h*** t*h*uaid*h*
a c*h*lan*na* C*h*ailitin*n* c*h*ruaid*h*
tuitfaoí lio*m* g*an* taise
d*o* nim*h* c*h*ruaid*h* m*o* culg*h*laise.

</td></tr>
</table>

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[305] On person shift, see C. Ó Baoill, 'Person-shifting in Gaelic Verse', *Celtica* 21 (1990), pp. 377-92.

3. Gac*h* m*ar*b*adh* **uile**	3. Gac*h* m*ar*b*adh* **lio*m* uile**
idir mag*h* m*í*n is muire	*idir* m*h*aig*h* m*h*ín 7 muire
mo is fearr liom an line	mo as f*éarr* liom an line
ná *ar* m*har*b*hus* dom c*h*om*h*d*h*ine.	na *ar* m*har*b*hus* dom c*h*om*h*daoine.

stanza 2

l. 1: difference in spelling of first element of adverb at end of line.

l. 3: lexical variation; in **M** loss of syllable caused by reduction of disyllabic ending *–fidhe* to *–fí* (spelt *–faoí* in **G**).

stanza 3

l. 1: extra syllable in **G** through addition of *liom* (attempt to correct defective syllable count in **M**?).

5.2 Conclusion

The above comparison and analysis of **M** and **G** have shown that while there are undeniable differences and variations between the text in the two manuscripts, overall they tend to correspond very closely. The classification of the two manuscripts into the same group on the basis of the poetry is thus corroborated by the prose narrative. Variant readings for the other manuscripts show that the variations here are minor, too.

There are syntactical, lexical, and of course orthographical variations. A common feature seems to be that sections of the text have been slightly abbreviated or embellished in one manuscript or another. However, this does not have a bearing on the overall content of the narrative and in most cases neither adds to nor takes away from it. The same applies to the poetry: both texts (in fact, all five manuscripts) agree in the poems they contain, the order of occurrence within the narrative, and the number of stanzas. There are variations within the poems where words, or even lines, have been modified, but overall the poems correspond closely enough to argue that they go back to, or are based on, the same original poem, or copies thereof.

The one section of the text that stands out with regard to differences between our two manuscripts is without doubt the ending of the tale. Comparison of this section with the other three manuscripts in Group I has shown that, with minor variations, they follow **M**; we have seen that this is also the case in the other textual passages examined in the present chapter. It thus seems that the youngest of our manuscripts in Group I, **G**, is also the most anomalous.

Of our five manuscripts in Group I, **G**, which dates to 1796, is the youngest, post-dating **M** by 112 years. If we take into consideration the geographical connection that links four of our

manuscripts and scribes – with the exception of TCD 3397/ N.5.12 all of our manuscripts in Group I belong to Munster and, more precisely, have ties with the parish of Carraig na bhFear in Co. Cork – it is not unfeasible that Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin, the scribe of **G**, would have had access to other manuscripts in this group, and maybe even some that belong to a different group. If this was the case, it may well have had an impact on the variation within the ending of the tale. If we take into account the large number of manuscripts preserving *Oidheadh Con Culainn* that pre-date **G**, it is quite possible that a scribe may have known of, and had access to, different versions. While he may have favoured and decided to copy one particular version, knowledge of the variations would have had a bearing on his version.

Scribal activity and access to manuscripts also seems to yield a clue as to the inclusion of LnC in **G**. Another RIA manuscript written by Mícheál Óg, namely 23 G 20, contains an independent version of LnC, again with 35 stanzas. RIA 23 G 20 dates to 1788, and it is therefore very likely that while copying our text into **G** Mícheál Óg decided to include the poem – even though it may not have been found in the exemplar of the narrative that he was copying from – since he knew of and had access to LnC, having copied it less than a decade earlier.

Two further points of interest can be noted with regard to textual variations within Group I. These do not concern **M** and **G**, but two of the other manuscripts from this group, namely NLI G 113/ 114 and TCD 3397/ N.5.12. Variant readings for the passages above have shown that the manuscripts besides **G** follow **M** very closely, with the expected occasional variation. It is interesting that in one poem – poem 8 *Gáir na sluagh* – NLI G 113/ 114 consistently transposes lines. Compare this to the poem as it stands in **M**; the transposed lines have been highlighted in bold:

<u>**M**, p. 121:</u>	<u>**NLI G 113/ 114**, p. 8:</u>
G*áir* na sluag*h* uim t*h*ulaicc tTeam*h*rach ós gac*h* dion*n*; caoin*eadh* ban *ar* fait*he* Eam*h*na, **méala liom**.	G*áir* na sluag uim t*h*ulaicc Team*h*rac*h* ós gac*h* dion*n* **et meala lio*m*** caoin*eadh* ban *ar* fait*hch*e Eam*h*na.
Mná Ula a leabt*h*aib*h* Con*na*c*h*t borb an gleó; is dom d*h*ít*h*si t*h*ig an trom olc **is de*ar*b*h* leó**.	Mná Ula a leabt*h*aib*h* Con*na*cht borb an gleó **et is de*ar*b leó** is dom d*h*it*h*si t*h*ig an trom olc.

Muna b*h*eit*h* d*ra*oig*hea*c*h*t m*h*órshluag*h*
                              [m*h*onuig
feib ró m*hair*finn;
noc*h* a muirfidís fír M*h*úm*h*an
	Muna b*h*eit*h* d*ra*oig*hea*cht m*h*orsh*h*luag*h*
	                              [m*h*on*uig*
	feib rom*hair*fin*n*;
	et me ar los *ar*m

mé a los *air*m.	noc*h* a mu*ir*fidis fir M*h*úman.
Muna mbiad*h* clan Cailitín C*ru*ac*h*na c*ru*aid*h* a b*h*fis; noc*h* a lead*ar*dís fir luac*h*ra **lead*hb* dom chnis.**	Muna mbiad clan*n* C*h*ailitín C*h*ruc*h*na cruaid*h* a b*h*fis; **et lead*hb* dom c*h*nis** noc*h*a lead*ar*dís fir luac*h*ra.
Do faot*h* mise is m*h'*eac*h* is m*h'ai*m do t*h*rí gáib*h*; do faot*h* Eam*h*uin m*h*órg*har*g M*h*ac*h*a **cruaid*h* an g*hair*.**	Do faot*h* mise is m'eac*h* is m*h'ai*m do t*h*rí gáib*h* **et cruaid*h* an g*hair*** do faot*h* Eam*h*uin mórg*hair*g Mac*h*a.

In terms of content and spelling, right down to the use of contractions, NLI G 113/ 114 is very close to **M** – unsurprising perhaps, as we had noted earlier that the manuscripts were written by father and son (cf. section 4.1). The transposition of lines is therefore rather curious, especially since the prose narrative preceding and following the poem in NLI G 113/ 114, as well as the rest of the tale, again corresponds to **M**. The same can be said for all the other poems, which also correspond to **M**. We can note how consistent the line transposition is – for lines a-b-c-d as they stand in **M**, in NLI G 113/ 114 we have the order a-b-d-c in every single stanza. NLI G 113/ 114 also consistently prefixes *et* to the line that has been moved up from its ultimate to a penultimate position. The consistency suggests not a mere mistake, which might have been confined to one stanza, but a conscious effort on the part of the scribe to re-arrange the poem.

A second observation can be made for Group I, this time with regard to TCD 3397/ N.5.12. We observed in our discussion of the scribes that TCD 3397/ N.5.12 is the 'odd one out' by not sharing the geographical connection between the other four manuscripts in the group, which can all be traced to Carraig na bhFear in Co. Cork, while TCD 3397/ N.5.12 was written in Dublin. What else sets this manuscript apart is the fact that the opening section has been condensed or, more accurately, omitted. In all other manuscripts in Group I and, for that matter, the manuscripts in the other groups, the tale begins with an account of the fate of Cailitín's children: their birth after their father's death, Meadhbh taking them under her wing, their training as witches and wizards and the travels involved in gaining the necessary knowledge to face Cú Chulainn. Most important here is the time they spend in hell, where they receive the magical spears crafted by Vulcan. In TCD 3397/ N.5.12 all of this has been omitted and the manuscript starts at a point in the narrative where Cailitín's children return from hell:

> [**71r**] Lá an n-aon da raibh Oiloll m*a*c Rosa Ruaid*h* 7 Méad*h*b*h* C*ru*acna *ar* fait*h*e a ndune fein, 7 *ar* d'fai*ch*in do tug siad na timpc*h*ioll do con*air*c siad clan Calitin ag

tea*cht* fá seala na ngaoit*he* glóruire. 7 ní co*mh*nid*h* do roin siad no go rainig siad
fait*he* na Crúac*h*an. Dala Meid*h*b*h*e 7 do cur Meid*h*b*h*e fíor caoin failt*he* ru, 7 do
s*h*uid*h* si et*h*ort*h*a, 7 do frid*h* si an ea*cht*a ó d'fagbad*ar* Eire gus an u*air* sin, 7 do rin
Mead*h*b*h*e an laoid*he* so:
      'Dia b*h*úr *m*beat*h*a…'

While the details of the travels and adventures have been omitted, reference is still made to the fact that Cailitín's children spent time away from Ireland. In TCD 3397/ N.5.12 the text begins in the middle of p. 71r, the top half bearing the concluding section of the preceding item. The omission of the opening scene, or anecdote, can thus not be accounted for by damage to the manuscript or the loss of leaves. Was it a case that the scribe did not deem the opening section important enough to copy? Or was he using an exemplar that was acephalous and which is now lost (taking into account that all other manuscripts in this group predating TCD 3397/ N.5.12 are complete)?

In conclusion, **M** and **G** fall into the same manuscript group on account of both the prose narrative and the poetry. While **G** may not necessarily have been directly copied from **M**, I would argue that the two manuscripts either go back to the same original, or, if **M** were the exemplar manuscript in Group I (being the oldest manuscript here), **G** might be based if not on **M** itself, then on a copy of it.

    The variations that can be found between the two manuscripts can be accounted for and probably even expected, considering the 112 years that separate them. After all, textual transmission, scribal activity and the copying of tales were not a static process. As Pádraig Ó Macháin has observed,

> Side by side with high-fidelity transcription, throughout the centuries one also finds an inclination on the part of scribes to intrude and interfere in texts as a natural element of their work. Contractions in exemplars are expanded in copying, whole texts are re-organized, new versions of older texts are produced, poems are collected and thematically arranged, verses are omitted or added – all part of the natural scribal order.[306]

We have examined Group I in detail and established that the prose narrative, despite a number of minor variations, corresponds in the manuscripts and thus corroborates the classification of the manuscripts into groups according to the poetry.

    It would be of great interest to provide such detailed examinations and analyses for the other groups; unfortunately, this is outwith the scope of this thesis. I have carried out preliminary examinations of the manuscripts in the other groups and it appears that these, too,

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[306] P. Ó Macháin, 'Scribal Practice and Textual Survival: The Example of Uilliam Mac Mhurchaidh', *SGS* 22 (2006), p. 95.

correspond as closely as the manuscripts in Group I do. A detailed analysis would arguably bring up similar results to the comparison carried out for Group I, namely a general correspondence with minor variations. For the time being it seems justifiable to conclude, on the basis of the result of our case study, that the classification of the manuscripts into groups is supported by the prose narrative.

In order to demonstrate the variations that may occur between the groups we will turn, in the next chapter, to examine the manuscripts from Groups I-IV on an inter-group level: an examination of a number of sample passages consisting of prose, verse and 'rhetoric' will be contrasted from each group, thus allowing for a comparison of select sections from tale across the different manuscript groups.

Chapter 6: Inter-group Comparisons

A detailed comparison of two manuscripts from Group I in the previous chapter has shown quite conclusively that the classification of the manuscripts into groups that we established on the basis of the poetry they contain is corroborated by the close correspondences of the prose narrative within the group examined. Preliminary comparisons between the other manuscripts suggest that the same is true for groups II-IV, also.

Having conducted a detailed examination of an intra-group comparison, we will now widen the scope and consider an inter-group comparison. This shall be done for two reasons: firstly, to establish more firmly the nature of the overall textual transmission of the text, and secondly, to strengthen and further support the evidence for our manuscript groups.

We will begin by considering the overall general content of those manuscripts in which our text has been transmitted to see if there are any obvious patterns emerging or whether we can identify any 'tale clusters', meaning particular tales that have a tendency to appear alongside *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. Was the choice of scribes to copy our tale determined by its 'bedfellows', and if so, can these companion tales give us a clue as to the process of transmission? We will then look at the structural presentation (i.e. the physical layout and presentation, (running) headlines, colophons etc.) of the text in our manuscripts. Following this we will narrow the scope and look at the 'rhetorics' contained in our text.

A number of comments have to be made with regard to the discussion of the 'rhetorics' in this chapter. A literature review of some articles published on this matter precedes the discussion of the actual 'rhetorics'; this is designed to give some background on the scholarly debate surrounding the term. Following an initial overview of the 'rhetorics' in our text, we will briefly consider the relationship between the 'rhetorics' of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* and the *roscada* of the Early Irish recension (Version A) of the tale. The focus of this thesis is of course upon the Early Modern Irish version of the tale, but since its older counterpart is famed for its *roscada* it seems fitting to at least provide some very preliminary and initial observations on Version A of the text in the context of the subject matter. The discussion of the 'rhetorics' itself is then split into two components: firstly, an assessment of the structural presentation of the 'rhetorics' in the manner of the examination of the overall manuscript text and secondly, in the context of two case studies, a detailed examination and analysis of two 'rhetorics' and their surrounding prose narrative and poetry.

6.1 Overall general manuscript contents

We shall start our investigation into an inter-group comparison of our manuscripts by casting the net as wide as possible and considering the general and overall contents of all fifty-three pre-19th-century manuscripts.

It has been noted by scholars that there are cases of manuscripts in which tales frequently occur alongside one another. One of the best known examples here is probably *Oidheadh Chloinne hUisneach* (OCU) which as Mac Giolla Léith points out,

> is linked in a number of MSS with two other tales of a similar nature and structure, *Oidheach Chloinne Lir* (OCL), 'The Violent Death of the Children of Lir', and *Oidheadh Chloinne Tuireann* (OCT), 'The Violent Death of the Children of Tuireann'. This triad is sometimes known as *Trí Truagha na Sgéaluigheachta*. Thurneysen was the first to suggest that the three tales might have a common authorship and this argument was made at greater length by Robin Flower.[307]

Mac Giolla Léith, however, then goes on to conclude on this matter:

> Of the eighty seven MSS containing OCU which were available to me, only eleven of these also contain both OCL *and* OCT. A further thirteen MSS contain OCU and OCL but not OCT; eight MSS contain OCU and OCT but not OCL. This means that almost two thirds of the MS copies of OCU are unaccompanied by either of the other two tales. This is not to argue against their having a common author or redactor, merely to suggest that there is little to indicate that the grouping together of the tales was either as early or as ubiquitous as is sometimes implied.[308]

Despite Mac Giolla Léith's conclusion, for a study of the transmission of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* it is still an intriguing question whether there may be a pattern as to the tales which appear alongside ours in the pre-19th-century manuscripts.

The following table illustrates the distribution of all tales that occur in each of the fifty-three manuscripts preserving *Oidheadh Con Culainn* and *Laoidh na gCeann*. There are ninety-three tales in total; three more items are listed, these being 'miscellaneous poems', which cannot possibly all be listed separately, 'miscellaneous items in prose', as well as 'miscellaneous items in English', to which the same applies. Colour coding has been employed in the table as a visual aid to indicate the six manuscript groups: two colours are alternated, each change-over indicating a new grouping. Shading of the same colour within the groups shall make it easier to follow one particular manuscript along the list of items in the horizontal axis:

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[307] C. Mac Giolla Léith, *Oidheadh Chloinne hUisneach* (London, 1993), p. 22.

[308] *ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

NOTE:

For Table 6-1 see file '2009kuhnsphd – tables', Sheet 3.

Table 6-1: Overall general content of MSS

There are a number of points to be made with regard to the information in the above table. Firstly, it is worth noting that in Maynooth C 98 (b), as well as NLS 72.1.45, our text is the only item present; these manuscripts have nevertheless been incorporated in the table to cover all manuscripts dating from before the 19th century.

The data in the table indicates that there are two items that clearly stand out as occurring in the greatest number of manuscripts. These two items with the highest overall occurrences – in forty-four and twenty-four manuscripts respectively – are unfortunately two of the three items which are probably rather ambiguous in our list: 'miscellaneous poems' and 'miscellaneous material (in prose)'. It would be impossible to incorporate every single poem and stanza that may occur in our fifty-three manuscripts in a table; equally, covering every single 'miscellaneous' item would be a rather exhausting task. A tentative look through the manuscript catalogues suggests that there are no apparent patterns as regards these 'miscellaneous' items, whether prose or poetry, that would make them stand out. Classified here as 'miscellaneous material' are items such as prayers, letters, recipes, glosses, king lists, genealogies, lists of Irish names of the alphabet, to name but a few. The third ambiguous category in the tale is that of 'miscellaneous material in English', which is represented in twelve of the fifty-three manuscripts; this category is equally diverse in content as the two previously discussed. Since it is of interest here to establish whether *Oidheadh Con Culainn* has a tendency to be transmitted in the company of any other tale, or tales, we will disregard these three items – 'miscellaneous poems', 'miscellaneous matrial (in prose)' and 'miscellaneous material in English' – and focus on the prose tales.

On sidelining the three ambiguous categories, we are left with ninety-five prose tales. To facilitate the analysis, the information on the prose tales that can be gathered from pull-out Table 6-1 above can be condensed to make the material more accessible. If we take the data from the table and contrast the number of occurrences per tale across our total of fifty-three manuscripts against the number of texts per occurrence, we achieve the following results:

Overall occurrence in our 53 MSS	15x	9x	8x	7x	6x	5x	4x	3x	2x	1x
No. of prose tales (total: 95 tales)	1	1	2	2	5	6	10	12	11	45

Thus, there is one item occurring in fifteen of our fifty-three manuscripts, one text occurring in nine manuscripts, and so on. On the other end of the spectrum, there are forty-five tales that are unique to the manuscripts in which they can be found, eleven tales that occur only in two of our fifty-three manuscripts and so on. In order to establish a possible pattern, or even

'manuscript cluster', we will have to look at the individual tales with a greatest overall occurrence. These are:

Occurrence	Tale(s)
15x (= 20% of 53 MSS)	*Cath Mhaighe Mhucruimhe*
9x (= 17% of 53 MSS)	*Feis Tighe Chonáin Chinntsléibhe*
8x (= 15% of 53 MSS)	*Cathughadh Cheallacháin Chaisil…* *Oidheadh Chloinne Uisneach*
7x (= 13% of 53 MSS)	*Ceisniomh inghine Ghuille* *Oileamhuin Chon Chulainn*
6x (= 11% of 53 MSS)	*Cath Chnuca* *Cath Fionntrágha* *Comhrag Con Chulainn agus Fir Diadh* *Oidheadh Chloinne Lir* *Oidheadh Chonnlaoich*

Considering these tales with the greatest occurrences, there is no apparent pattern that would link them to our tale, or indeed establish a link between the tales themselves. If we reconsider the numbers, this is hardly surprising: even *Cath Magh Mucruimhe*, the tale with the highest overall occurrence, is represented in just over quarter of our total manuscripts. As has been noted previously, however, it is interesting that the close similarities in name between *Magh Mucruimhe* and our *Magh Muirtheimhne* have led to confusion in three of our manuscripts. The manuscripts in question – namely, TCD 1296/ H.2.5 (IV/b-2), NLI G 296 (IV/b-3) and Maynooth C 98 (b) (IV/b-3) – contain both tales and erroneously use *Mucruimhe* for the required *Muirtheimhne* on a number of occasions (cf. section 2.3).

As far as the other tales are concerned, it is worth pointing out that there seems to be a comparatively large number of death tales, as well as battle tales, amongst those tales with the highest overall occurrence. Their overall number in relation to the multitude of tales, and manuscripts, however, does not suggest that this can be taken as evidence for any particular 'tale cluster', or a similar link, between *Oidheadh Con Culainn* and another text(s), and I would argue that the same is true for *Cath Mhaighe Mucruimhe*.

With no obvious pattern emerging, it is tempting to suggest that all we have here is evidence for both the popularity and availability of certain tales, and of course for personal scribal choices. It appears that, in the manuscripts considered, *Oidheadh Con Culainn* was selected by scribes for its own merit and not simply copied reflexively. We must thus conclude that the variations speak in favour of personal scribal patterns and patrons' preferences, and that an overall textual tradition does not seem to apply in the case of our tale. Consequently, the appearance of our tale and its placement amongst others in the various manuscripts does not provide corroborative evidence for the establishment of our manuscript groups.

6.2 The structural presentation of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*

The evidence of the overall general content of our manuscripts has proved rather inconclusive and not added to our understanding of the transmission of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. We will now narrow the scope and on leaving aside the general manuscript content again focus exclusively on our tale. We will, however, omit Group VI – namely that comprising manuscripts containing LnC, or LnC and other poems from the text – and take into account only those manuscripts which contain the actual prose narrative of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. This leaves us with forty-two manuscripts, divided into manuscript Groups I to V. Although we have now 'lost' eleven manuscripts by omitting Group VI the sheer number of texts that remain to be considered still poses a problem for conducting a clear and concise inter-group comparison which covers all manuscripts. Considering the length of the text, we will have to narrow the focus and concentrate on certain aspects or passages in order to allow for a detailed comparison; it is a difficult task to decide which sections of the narrative should represent the overall text. Before moving into a textual comparison we will therefore begin by considering the physical appearance and layout of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* in each manuscript. For this comparison we will examine each according to a number of variables:

- Where both BmMM and DCC are present in a manuscript, do they appear as separate items or do they merge and are presented as one text?

- If they are presented as separate items, is there a colophon at the end of BmMM?

- If they are presented as separate items, how is this marked – does DCC appear under a new headline, or on a new page?

- At what point in the narrative does the changeover between BmMM and DCC occur?

- Where a manuscript has a running headline in the top margin, is it the same headline throughout, or does it change where DCC appears as a new item?

The data for this analysis is, again, most clearly and concisely presented in a table. Manuscripts marked in red indicate texts that are acephalous while those marked in blue break off unfinished. The manuscripts have been arranged according to groups and are given in the same order as in pull-out Table 3-4 ('List of poems with MSS classified into groups').

In the column detailing at what point in the tale the changeover from BmMM to DCC occurs, shortened references (*Dála Eimhir, Dála bhfear*, *Gabhthar* etc.) have been used; they will be expanded, explained and analysed in the evaluation following the table.

NOTE:

For Table 6-2 see file '2009kuhnsphd – tables', Sheet 4.

Table 6-2: Structural presentation of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*

The first impression that the comparison might give is that there does not seem to be any obvious consistency within the groups with regard to the structural presentation. There are some overall correspondences and relations between some of our chosen variables; for example, those manuscripts in which BmMM and DCC merge without any indication do not have a running title (the only exceptions here can be found in Group IV). There is no consistency within the groups, however, as to whether the tales merge or are presented to the reader as two separate items. Similarly, the point in the narrative at which the changeover occurs varies, both within the groups and between the overall manuscripts. The different points of changeover in the narrative are probably the most interesting feature brought up by our study of the structural presentation, and it is worth considering the implications of this further.

Of the forty-two manuscripts, only eighteen mark the changeover from BmMM to DCC, while the remaining twenty-four manuscripts either only preserve one element of the tale, or the texts merge without indication.[309] As we can see from the information in pull-out Table 6-2 above, across the eighteen manuscripts marking the changeover there are five different points in the tale at which this changeover occurs. For further discussion, these points have been labelled A-E, point A standing first in the tale and point E last. Their distribution in order of most to least frequent is as follows:

Point of changeover	Occurrence	By manuscript group
(A) *Dála bhfear nÉireann…*	in **7** MSS	III (6x) , IV/a-1 (1x)
(D) *Gabhthar m'eich...*	in **6** MSS	I (2x), II (1x); III (1x), V (2x)
(B) *Dála Eimhir…*	in **3** MSS	II (3x)
(C) *Air mbeith Eimhir...*	in **1** MS	II
(E) *Táinig Conall...*	in **1** MS	IV/a-2
Total	**18** MSS	-----

The above list shows that two points in the narrative are unique in forming the changeover, while another two are by far the most popular. The unique points are **(C)** *Air mbeith Eimhir…* and **(E)** *Táinig Conall…*, while the most popular are **(A)** *Dála bhfear nÉireann...* and **(D)** *Gabhthar m'eich…*, both being marked (i.e. given under a new headline/ on a new page etc) in seven and six manuscripts respectively. Interestingly, the three occurrences of the third point of changeover being marked – **(B)** *Dála Eimhir…* – are confined to Group II.

Thus far we have considered this issue of the point of changeover in the tale using rather cryptic abbreviations – **(A)** *Dála bhfear nÉireann*, **(D)** *Gabhthar m'eich*, etc. To put these into context and to illustrate how they sit within the narrative, we will consider the relevant

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[309] Those manuscripts preserving only one element of the tale are the following: only BmMM - RIA 12 F 7 (III); only DCC - Bodleian Ir.e.3 (II), RIA 23 M 47 (a) (III), Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (c) (IV/a-2), RIA 24 B 22.

section from our tale in which the points of changeover occur. All points that can be identified occur in rather close proximity to one another, considering the overall length and detail of the text. The following is a 'type B minimal-interference edition' (cf. Editorial Method) of the passage within which the points of changeover occur from RIA 23 C 22 (II). Dating to 1767, I have chosen this particular manuscript for two reasons: firstly, it is here that we find one of the two unique changeover points (namely, point **C**); secondly, RIA 23 C 22 is a very well-preserved manuscript with no loss of text whatsoever. Clearly there will be slight variations in this passage of the text in the other manuscripts. Comparison of the passage in question with other manuscripts both on an intra- and inter-group level shows, however, that these variations are minor enough so that for the purpose of illustrating the changeover from BmMM to DCC, it is justifiable to use one manuscript as a 'representative version'. In anticipation of the evaluation of this 'case study', the points of changeover have been marked in bold; those manuscripts in which they occur are listed in footnotes.

We begin at a point in the tale where Cú Chulainn, having been able to withstand the forces of Meadhbh and the men of Ireland so far, has been mortally wounded by one of the poisonous spears given to the children of Cailitín in hell. His charioteer, fulfilling Cú Chulainn's dying wish, has propped the hero up against a pillar so that he can die upright, facing his enemies.

> [RIA 23 C 22, p. 167] Is an*n* san do c*h*oirid*h* Laog*h* é, agus tug ag*h*aid*h* air f*h*earaib*h* Eirean*n*; agus do c*h*uir a sgiat*h* ion*n*a d*h*orn*n* go coim*h*neartm*h*ar fan ccloid*h*eam*h* ag*us* do d*h*ealuid*h* anam re na c*h*orp an*n* san, agus a u*ch*t ris a ccairt*h*e. Agus do t*h*uit an traith sin cean*n* [168] goile agus gaisge oinid*h* ag*us* eagnam*h*a osnam*h*a ag*us* crid*h*a*ch*ta na hEirean*n* ag*us* do ro imt*h*id*h* Laogh roim*h*e iarsan, go tuirseac*h* ait*h*m*h*eallach, ag*us* go dub*h*ach dearac*h* dobrónac*h*, ag*us* do c*h*on*n*airc an Dub*h* Faoilean*n*, aig eirg*h*e as a néal. Ag*us* táinid*h* dá hion*n*sad*h*a ag*us* do b*h*ain an tsléag*h* ním*h*e aiste. Ag*us* do b*h*ádar déora díom*h*ara dón*n*fh*ola re na grúad*h*aibh, ag*us* do c*h*úaid*h* Laog*h* uire. Ag*us* táinid*h* as an áir amach, go cúm*h*ach créac*h*tnaid*h*t*h*e d'éis a t*h*igearn*n*a do t*h*uitim, ag*us* táinid*h* tar Sliabh Fúaid d'ion*n*sadha na hEam*h*na (am) amt*h*usa gonuige sin.
>
> **(A) Dála bfear nÉirean***n* [310] do b*h*ád*ar* g*o* cean*n* tri lá ag*us* trí n-oid*h*c*h*e re haigh*idh* C*h*uchuluin*n*. Ag*us* níor leig éagla d*h*óib*h* dul a ccóm*h*g*h*ar do ris an ráe sin, ag*us* Cúc*h*uluin*n* ris na trí lá ag*us* ris na trí hoid*h*c*h*e sin na s*h*easam*h* marb*h* ris an ccairt*h*e. Ag*us* an Líat*h* M*h*ac*h*ad*h* [169] air fíarlaoid an m*h*áig*h*e ion*n*a t*h*ímpc*h*íoll, ag*us* í aig it*h*ead*h* ag*us* aig sírs*h*iúb*h*al ion*n*as nár láim*h* duine ná ainm*h*id*h*e tea*ch*t ion*n*a g*h*aire ris an ráe sin. Adub*h*rádar feir Éirean*n* an*n* san, gurab cealg do b*h*í Cuc*h*uluin*n* dá d*h*eanam*h* c*h*úc*h*a, ag*us* cum breit*h* oruin*n*, *air aon rían do g*h*níd*h* sé súd, air íad san.*
>
> 'Cá áit ion*n*a bfuil Bád*h*b ing*h*íon C*h*ailitín*n*?' air Meadb*h*.
>
> 'Atáim an*n*so,' air sí.

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[310] RIA E iv 3 (Group III); RIA 23 M 47 (b) (III); RIA 23 L 27 (III); RIA 24 P 6 (III); NLI G 501 (III); RIA 23 M 47 (a) (III); TCD 1362/ H.4.21 (IV/a-1).

'Éirg*h*e go lúait*h*, ag*us* go héasga, ag*us* tab*h*air sgéalad*h* leat, an beo no marb*h* atá Cuc*h*uluin*n*.'

'Rac*h*ad fein an*n* san,' air sí, 'gibé bás do g*h*eab*h*ad*h* de. Agus as e rioc*h*t a rac*h*ad*h* an*n* dá ion*n*sad*h*a, iod*h*oin a rioc*h*t eoin air eitiollaidh ós a c*h*ion*n* san aod*h*ar. Ag*us* má tá sé beó: muirfid*h* sé mise don c*h*éad urc*h*ar, agus más marb*h* é: turn*n*fad angar dó. Agus mar do c*h*luin*n*fid*h* sib*h* mo cómart*h*ad*h* tíagaid*h* dam ion*n*sad*h*a.'

Iar san, do g*h*lúais an Bád*h*b roímpe, a ruc*h*t fuin*n*c*h*e, ag*us* do chuaid*h* a bfrog*h*t*h*aib*h* [170] na fiormaimente fíoráirde ós cíon*n* C*h*úc*h*uluin*n*, ag*us* do d*h*ruid anúas a ndíaig*h* a c*h*éile nó go ttáinid*h* an gar do, íar san do leig trí sgréac*h*aid*h* ro m*h*óra ós a c*h*íon*n*, ag*us* do t*h*úrn*n* air an sgeit*h* ós a c*h*óm*h*air amac*h*. Od conaircadar feir Éirean*n* san do ró ion*n*sad*h*ádar féin e: ag*us* is am*h*laid*h* do b*h*i seisean*n* ag*us* a c*h*lóid*h*eam*h* noc*h*taig*h*t*h*e ion*n*a láim*h*; daingin, d*h*ilís, d*h*eag*h*t*h*apa, d*h*oileóinte, d*h*eis aige; ag*us* do b*h*í d'iomc*h*osnam*h* aige, nár f*h*éadadar feir Eiréan*n* an dorn*n* d'osglad*h* san dorn*n*c*h*ladh an c*h*loid*h*im*h*.

'Geárt*h*ar na lug*h*t*h*ac*h*ad*h* aige,' air se, Lúig*h*id*h* Mac Cónraoi, 'ag*us* tiucfad*h* an cloid*h*eam aiste.'

Do gearad*h* lúg*h*t*h*ac*h* na láim*h*e leó ám*h*lad*h* san, agus do t*h*uit an clóid*h*iom*h* cómt*h*arsna úad*h*a agus an tríoc*h*ad mac do b*h*í faoi, do sgar an cloid*h*eam*h* na deit*h*c*h* lam*h*a deasa fit*h*c*h*id ríu. Ag*us* as íad san na héac*h*ta déig*h*éanac*h*a do rin Cúc*h*uluin*n*.

'Dít*h*c*h*ean*n*tar Cúc*h*uluin*n* [171] lib*h*,' air Méad*h*b*h*.

Ró féac*h*adar feir Eirean*n* cía dá mad*h* córa Cúc*h*uluin*n* do d*h*ít*h*c*h*ean*n*a.

'A Lúig*h*id*h*,' do rád*h* Méad*h*b*h*, 'is leat Cúc*h*uluin*n* do d*h*ít*h*c*h*ean*n*ad*h* óir as é so m*h*arb*h* t'at*h*air.'

Iar san do ró eirg*h*e Lúig*h*id*h* agus do d*h*it*h*c*h*ean*n*uid*h* sé Cúc*h*uluin*n*. Ag*us* air na d*h*ít*h*c*h*ean*n*ad*h* do ró leigeadar feir Eirean*n* trí gárrt*h*a com*h*m*h*órad*h*, aig com*h*m*h*aoid*h*eamh a ccosgair. An*n* san, d'eirg*h*eadar trí dat*h*a aille iongantac*h*a do c*h*ean*n* C*h*úc*h*uluin*n*, agus do éirg*h*e ruaidh ruad*h*manda, ró deallraig*h*t*h*eac*h*: is an darad*h* gruaidh d*h*o gur cóim*h*g*h*eal re snec*h*ta a d*h*'f*h*uar aonoid*h*c*h*e an darad*h* gruad*h* leis: do rinead ar feir Eirean*n* com*h*airle iar san: dá f*h*eac*h*ain*n* cá cóige d'Eirin*n* am béart*h*ad*h*a cean*n* Cúc*h*uluin*n*. Ag*us* adúb*h*radar uile d'ait*h*easg ainf*h*eir, ós í Méad*h*b*h* do rin*n* na sluad*h*a do t*h*iomsug*h*ad*h* as í dligeas an cean*n* do b*h*reit*h* [172] as í dligeas an cean*n* do b*h*reit*h* lé, go Cruacáin:

'Nac*h*a mbéarsa liom é,' air Méad*h*b*h*, 'ac*h*t beiread*h* Earc Mac Cairbre leis é, oír as í imleacán Eirean*n* Team*h*air an*n* san.'

Do sgaoileadar feir Eirean*n* da ccoigead*h*aib*h* agus dá bfearan*n*aib*h* fein: ag*us* do ró ordúig*h*cadar a ccurad*h*a, ag*us* a ccait*h*m*h*ílead*h*aib*h* do f*h*ágb*h*ail agá n-iomc*h*oimead air eagala C*h*on*h*uill C*h*earn*n*uid*h* do b*h*reit*h* orrt*h*a agus do rug Earc Mac Cairbre cean*n* C*h*úc*h*uluin*n* leis do Team*h*air a n-iomt*h*usa gonuid*h*e sin.

(B) Dála Eim*h*ir [311] ing*h*ion F*h*org*h*uill m*h*anuid*h* do b*h*iod*h* sí gac*h* laoi air foraib*h* agus air árdaib*h* agus air m*h*uraib*h* an g*h*ríanain, aig feit*h*eam*h* an m*h*uig*h*e uad*h*a, ag*us* aig teac*h*t d'eistec*h*t re sgéalaib*h*. Nior c*h*ian di an la san, aig feit*h*eam*h* ion*n*a timpc*h*ioll an tan do c*h*on*n*airc aon m*h*arcac*h* aig teac*h*t tar m*h*ag*h* na hEam*h*na dá hion*n*sad*h*a go [173] hanfuineac*h* a measga ag*us* do g*h*aib*h* crit*h* ag*us* uam*h*an*n* í air na faicsin*n* di, agus d'áit*h*in gurab é Laog*h* do b*h*í an*n*.

'Is fíor san,' air Eim*h*ir, 'as é Laog*h* Mac Riang*h*ab*h*rad*h* agus an Dub*h* F*h*aoilean*n* faoi. Iar bfágb*h*ail C*h*uc*h*uluin*n* agus an Líat*h* M*h*ac*h*ad*h* a Mág*h*

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[311] RIA 23 C 26 (II); RIA 3 B 43 (II); Bodleian Ir. e. 3 (II).

M*h*uirt*h*eimne, fá lintib*h* fola, agus fá c*h*aobaib*h* cró. Ag*us* is doilg diob*h*álach liom nach e Cúc*h*uluin, agus an Líat*h* M*h*ac*h*ad*h* tainid dár n-ion*n*sad*h*a. Agus is mór lá tángadar go maoid*h*feac*h* san tslig*h*e úd d'ion*n*sad*h*a na hÉam*h*na.'

Agus air na f*h*aicsin*n* sin do lu*ch*t an dunad*h*, tángad*ar* bandála agus filead*h*a ag*us* fallsam*h*ain na hEam*h*na amac*h* ion*n*a cuin*n*im*h*, ag*us* do ró fiafradar sgéala de. Agus do inis san a sgéala dóib*h*, ó tús go deirid*h*. Ag*us* íar cclos na sgéal san, do c*h*ác*h* do t*h*ógb*h*adar garrt*h*a troma taid*h*b*h*seac*h*a, ag*us* éig*h*m*h*e loma loisgneac*h*a, [174] ag*us* faoid*h*e fan*n*a fíort*h*rúad*h*a: ag*us* guil árda eagcaointeac*h*a, seac*h*nain na hÉam*h*na aig fearuib*h*, ag*us* aig mnáib*h*, ag*us* aig filead*h*aib*h*, an dúnad*h*, ag*us* an c*h*óige uile.

Táinid*h* Éim*h*ir, agus Laog*h* riompa d'ion*n*sad*h*a na hÉam*h*na, ag*us* do fúaradar an dún air losga riompa, ag*us* glúaiseas Éimhir ag*us* a ban*n*tra*ch*t riompa, go harm a raib*h* Cúc*h*uluin*n*, ag*us* do sáig*h*id*h* puball aluin*n* ioldat*h*ach ós cion*n* Cúc*h*uluin*n*, ag*us* do s*h*uig*h*eadar an b*h*an*n*tra*ch*t tra*ch*t ion*n* t*h*impc*h*ioll, ag*us* do g*h*ab*h*adar dúb*h*ad*h* agus dobrón ós cion*n* an cuirp.[312] [175]

(C) **Air mbeit*h* do Éim*h*ir** [313] aig nuald*h*ub*h*ad*h* os cion*n* Cúc*h*uluin*n* do c*h*uir tea*ch*ta a ccion*n* Leab*h*arc*h*am, ag*us* íar ttea*ch*t do lát*h*air di adúb*h*uirt Éim*h*ir lé dul a ccíon*n* C*h*onuill C*h*éarrn*n*uid*h* san dom*h*ain m*h*ór soir agus in*n*is do C*h*úc*h*uluin*n* do b*h*eit*h* marb*h*.

Gluaiseas Leab*h*arc*h*am roimpe go dúb*h*ach dobronac*h* go rainidh g*o* hIn*n*b*h*ear M*h*ór a ccríoc*h* C*h*úailgne agus do con*n*airc sí an long aig gab*h*ail cuain, agus tug baram*h*ail gur ab í an eangac*h* do b*h*í an*n*, iod*h*ain long Con*n*uill C*h*earn*n*uid*h*, ag*us* téid si dá hion*n*sad*h*a agus táinid Con*n*all a ttir as an loing [176] ag*us* do fear fíorcaoin fáilte riamh an mbanac*h*lad*h*, ag*us* bud*h* hiongnad*h* leis a bfaicsin*n*.

'Is táirse lin*n* an failte,' do raid*h* Leab*h*arc*h*am, 'ag*us* mo mór c*h*ean*n* róm*h*ad féin a ríg*h*m*h*ilid*h*,'

Ag*us* tug lam*h* tar Con*n*all ag*us* do chúaid*h* air a coimeirce.

'Sgeala leat, a Leab*h*arc*h*am?' do ráid*h* Con*n*all.

'Atáid sgéala móra olcad*h* agam,' do raid*h* Leab*h*arc*h*am, 'iod*h*oin Cúc*h*uluin*n* do m*h*arb*h*ad*h* air fearuib*h* Eirean*n*.'

'Uch is guirt na sgéala san líomsa,' do ráid Con*n*all, 'ag*us* do goinead*h* mo c*h*roid*h*e leis sin,' do ráid Con*n*all, ag*us* adub*h*uirt:

'Guirt róm g*h*aot*h*, géar róm goinead*h*, ar n-olc ad*h*b*h*al Cu c*h*aim*h* Culuin*n* dion og Ulad*h*, sgéal go ngairge gníom*h* go nguirte.

(D) **Gab*h*t*h*ar m'eic*h*** [314] agus inealltar mo c*h*arbad dam, go ndeac*h*ain*n* dá feac*h*ain*n* ca líon fearuib*h* Eirean*n* do b*h*i aig marb*h*ad*h* Cú C*h*uluin*n* mo dalltad*h* air Mad*h* Muirt*h*eim*h*ne.'

Do gab*h*ad na heich do, ag*us* do hin*n*ealad*h* a c*h*arbad, ag*us* bud*h* hiad so anmona na n-each sion: iod*h*áin, an Déargd*h*rúc*h*tac, ag*us* an C*h*oinc*h*éan*n* C*h*romf*h*ada. Iár san lingeas Con*n*all ion*n*a c*h*arbad [177] ag*us* táinid*h* roim*h*e go dísgir ag*us* do gaib*h* laige ag*us* an bfuin*n*e mór é, gíod*h*eam*h* do chúaid

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[312] In 23 C 22 this concludes BmMM. There follows a stanza of four lines/ colophon:

Sin crít*h*, agus deire, air mo sgéal
más fíor na deirid*h* gur bréag
óid*h*ead*h* C*h*úc*h*uluin*n* an laoch
air na sgríob*h*ad*h* air buile le Fane

DCC begins on the next page under a new headline.

[313] RIA 23 C 22 (II).

[314] NLI G 113/ 114 (I); RIA 23 G 21 (I); RIA 24 B 16 (II); RIA 23 H 16 (III); RIA 24 B 22 (V); Maynooth M 51 (V).

feirg*h*níom*h* tar baing*h*níom*h* ac Con*n*all agus do ró g*h*aib*h* fearg mhór ion*n*as go ttug huille don tslait eac*h*ráid*h*e ion*n*a láim*h* don ttarad*h* t*h*eac*h* do b*h*í fon ccarbad, ion*n*as gur b*h*[r]íos tar an teach ris an mbéim sin, gur bris an géarrgair san cCoincin*n* cCroimf*h*ada go ttorc*h*ar air an lát*h*air sin. Do éirg*h*id*h* Con*n*all go hat*h*lam*h* a haitle an easgair sin, agus do d*h*irigh an carbad go deifreac*h* air an nDear nDrúc*h*taid*h*, agus do ling uirt*h*e. Ion*n*as gur ab é sin a treas f*h*ear do rin marcúid*h*eas aoin*n*eich air ttuis an Éirin*n*, iod*h*óin Lúig*h*id*h* Lam*h*fada a cCath M*h*uid*h*e Tuiread ion*n*ar marb*h*ad*h* fein*n*e fog*h*m*h*ar, agus Cúc*h*uluin*n* Mac Sub*h*úaltaid*h* a M*h*ág M*h*uig*h*e M*h*úirt*h*eim*h*ne, agus Con*n*all Céarn*n*ac*h* air an Dear nDrúc*h*taid*h*.

    (E) Táinid*h* Con*n*all [315] roim*h*e go Magh na hEamn*a*, agus do Áit*h* na Fórf*h*aire, air Slíab*h* Fúaid agus a Mac*h*air Con*o*cht [178] ris a ráid*h*tear Mag*h* Múirt*h*eim*h*ne; ag*us* air rochtain an m*h*uid*h*e d*h*o (…).

We will recap the above section and consider the positioning of the points of changeover in the narrative. Having been mortally wounded, Cú Chulainn is propped up against a pillar by his charioteer Laogh who places Cú Chulainn's sword and spear in either of the latter's hands. Cú Chulainn dies, and Laogh rides to Emain Macha on one of Cú Chulainn's horse, the Dubh Saoileann, which had also been wounded by a spear. The men of Ireland, however ((**A**) *Dála bhfear nÉireann…*), following the death of Cú Chulainn and Laogh's departure do not dare to approach the slain hero for three days and three nights as they are uncertain of his death. Only after Badhbh circles over him in the shape of a crow and announces his death by letting out three screeches do the others approach. Lughaidh gives orders to have Cú Chulainn's sword removed from his hands but the sword falls out of the dead man's hand and cuts off one of Lughaidh's hands, as well as a hand of each of the thirty warriors standing closest to him. Lughaidh is deemed the most appropriate person to decapitate the dead Cú Chulainn to avenge his father, and so he cuts off the hero's head. Miraculously, on the decapitated Cú Chulainn's head one cheek turns blood red and the other one snow white. Earc mac Cairbre is given orders to take the head to Teamhair. At the same time Cú Chulainn's wife Eimhear ((**B**) *Dála Eimhir…*), who has been keeping watch from her *grianán* every day and night, sees a solitary rider approaching whom she recognises as Laogh. She realises that this can only mean one thing: Cú Chulainn has died in battle. Laogh reports the news of Cú Chulainn's defeat to the women and poets who bewail his death. Eimhear and Laogh go towards Eamhain and come to the burned-down Dún Dealgan where they erect a tent over Cú Chulainn's headless corpse. While Eimhear's female companions lament, Eimhear ((**C**) *Air mbeith Eimhir…*) sends Leabharcham out to find Conall Cearnach. Leabharcham travels to the territory of Cuailgne where Conall's ship has just landed ashore. In the conversation that follows Leabharcham

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[315] NLI G 146 (IV/a-2).

informs Conall of Cú Chulainn's death. Conall expresses his grief in a short rhetorical speech, then asks for his chariot to be prepared ((D) *Gabhthar…*) so that he can go after the men of Ireland and avenge Cú Chulainn. Such is his haste to get to the site of his foster brother's death that one of his horses dies of exhaustion. Conall continues on with just one horse, passing a number of places ((E) *Táinidh Conall…*) before reaching Magh Muirtheimhne.

Maria Tymoczko noted, with regard to the Early Irish Version A of our tale, that 'a curious aspect of *The Death of CuChulainn* is its dual perspective.'[316] This is a point just as valid and relevant to our later recension, and is made evident in our first point of changeover, *Dála bhfear nÉireann…*, where the narrative shifts from Cú Chulainn and his charioteer Laogh to Meadhbh and the men of Ireland. Not only is **(A)** one of the two most frequently occurring markers of the changeover BmMM / DCC in our manuscripts, but it is also the point where Thurneysen had marked the beginning of DCC in his summary of the tale in *Die irische Helden- und Königsage.*[317] Similarly, Seosamh Lloyd's editions of BmMM and DCC (published as two separate volumes) break off, and resume, at this very same point in the tale.[318]

The second point of changeover, **(B)**, again occurs where the reader experiences a shift of perspective, this time away from the men of Ireland and to Cú Chulainn's wife (widow) Eimhear, the narrative running parallel in time to the preceding scene. **(C)** *Air mbeith do Eimhir…* is unique to one manuscript. While no change in perspective occurs here as Eimhear instructs Leabharcham to find Conall Cearnach, there is clearly a change of focus, with the lament of the women around Cú Chulainn's dead body concluding this section. The fourth point in the narrative at which the changeover BmMM / DCC occurs, namely **(D)** *Gabhthar m'eich…*, is the most frequently used besides **(A)**. In the manuscripts favouring the changeover indicated here by **(D)** we have a climactic ending to BmMM in the form of Conall's 'rhetoric' (discussed in more detail below). Finally, the last and fifth point of changeover that we can identify (**(E)**) is again unique to one manuscript. Perspective does not change here; however, the enumeration of those men having performed the feat of using a chariot with only one horse gives enough of a conclusion to one episode to the start of another.

We can deduce that while not all of our five points of changeover also share a changeover in perspective, each one could justifiably be seen as a legitimate contender for marking the

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[316] M. Tymoczko, *Two Death Tales from the Ulster Cycle* (Dublin, 1981), p. 12.

[317] R. Thurneysen, *Die Irische Helden- und Königsage bis zum Siebzehnten Jahrhundert* (Halle, 1921), p. 564.

[318] S. Lloyd, *Dearg-ruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1907) and *Brisleach Mhór Mhaighe Muirtheimhne* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1915).

changeover from BmMM to DCC. Each one occurs at a point in the narrative that concludes an episode:

   (**A**) follows the death of Cú Chulainn and Laogh's departure

   (**B**) follows the beheading of Cú Chulainn and the taking of his head to Tara

   (**C**) follows the erection of a tent by Eimhear over Cú Chulainn's body

   (**D**) follows the news of Cú Chulainn's death being delivered to Conall

   (**E**) follows Conall's departure in pursuit of the men of Ireland.

To use an (admittedly rather clumsy) analogy: if this were a made-for-TV-movie, it would be appropriate to insert a commercial break at either of the points of changeover; alternatively, in 'Cú Chulainn's death – the novel' each one could easily mark the beginning of a new chapter. Considering the length of the overall text, it is quite remarkable that there are no greater discrepancies and that amongst all our manuscripts only five points (or three even, if we take into account that two of them are unique occurrences) were chosen as options for breaking the narrative. Unfortunately, like the examination of the overall manuscript content in section 6.1, the point of changeover in the narrative does not seem to yield any clues as to the transmission of the tale: the inconsistencies within each group and the groups overall are too substantial. We also have to bear in mind that the tale is not static, and interference and change on the part of the scribe can thus only be expected.

As Pádraig Ó Macháin has observed, in any manuscript study one 'finds an inclination on the part of scribes to intrude and interfere in texts as a natural element of their work.'[319] I would thus venture to suggest, by way of explanation, that while a scribe may well have copied his text from an exemplar with the changeover at one particular point, he may have felt for it to be more fitting to occur elsewhere – after all, like the physical layout of the text in the manuscript the point of changeover does not have any bearing on the actual content of the tale.

We will proceed in the inter-group comparison by narrowing the scope even further and looking at specific sections of the text that consistently occur in all manuscripts.

6.3 The 'rhetorics'

The length of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* has previously been pointed out as an obstacle to a straightforward comparison of all manuscripts. It would be impossible to compare the entire prose narrative between all forty-two pre-19th-century manuscripts preserving the text. So

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[319] P. Ó Macháin, 'Scribal Practice and Textual Survival: The Example of Uilliam Mac Mhurchaidh', *SGS* 22 (2006), p. 95.

once again the question arises: how to choose a section, or sections, of the text that are suitable for an overall textual comparison?

The Early Irish version (Thurneysen's Version A) of our text, *Aided Con Culainn*, is famed for its long passages of rhetorical speech, and there appears to be a general consensus that these passages have been omitted in the later recension, or Version B, of the text. Rudolf Thurneysen, rather succinctly, commented on Version B: 'Die schwer verständlichen retorischen Stücke der älteren Fassung sind hier natürlich weggelassen (…)' [The obscure rhetorical passages of the older version have of course been omitted here (…)],[320] while Proinsias Mac Cana went into some more detail:

> The story of Cú Chulainn's death, *Aided Con Culainn*, exemplifies the kind of variation that may occur even from one recension to another of the same text, not merely because of their different dates and redactors but also probably because of the differing degrees in which they reflect the fullness of the oral tradition. The early recension, which in its original form may have been written down in the eighth century, is largely composed of *roscada*, so much that Thurneysen thought that in its earliest form (presumably its earliest written form, though he does not explicitly say so) it might have consisted solely of *roscada* with brief introductions. The later version, which is in Early Modern Irish, omits the *roscada* but is interspersed with poems ('in accordance', comments Van Hamel, 'with the lyrical character of the story adopted in Version B, which strangely contrasts with the Old-Irish epical strain of Version A.'). This reflects a general tendency in the late M[iddle] I[rish] and early Mod[ern] I[rish] period to make more frequent use of inset poems, as well as to substitute syllabic verse for the *roscada* of earlier recension of tales.[321]

We can, however, make a more nuanced statement. Mac Cana is of course right to draw attention to the addition of poems to the Early Modern Irish version of the text; however, as we will see in the following discussion this does not, as he implies, completely omit those sections of the text which might reasonably be referred to as *roscada*.

6.3.1 The term 'rhetoric'

Before moving on to a discussing of the 'rhetorics' as they occur in *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, a brief summary shall be given of the scholarly debate surrounding the term 'rhetoric' and its use and designation. Chapter I.20 ('Die Form der Sagentexte') in Thurneysen's *Heldensage*

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[320] Thurneysen, *Heldensage*, p. 558:

[321] P. Mac Cana, 'Notes on the Combination of Prose and Verse in Early Irish Narrative' in S.N. Tranter & H.L.C. Tristram (eds), *Early Irish Literature – Media and Communication/ Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit in der Frühen Irischen Literatur* (Tübingen, 1989), p. 135. Van Hamel is quoted from *Compert Con Culainn and Other Stories* (Dublin, 1968; reprint of 1933), p. 69.

addresses two forms of narrative in the Irish texts besides prose: rhetoric and poetry. With regard to rhetoric Thurneysen noted,

> Die eine [Gattung der Stücke in poetischer Form], namentlich in den älteren Sagen beliebte, aber bis ins 12. Jahrhundert verwendete führt den Namen *retoric* (*rethoric*) aus dem lateinischen Adverb *rhetorice*. Solche Stellen werden in einigen Handschriften durch ein an den Rand geschriebenes *r.* gekennzeichnet. Wohl durch ein Mißverständnis dieses *r.* nennen sie dann jüngere Texte bisweilen *rosc* oder *roscad* ‚Spruch'. Sie bestehen meist sehr kurzen, oft durch Alliterazion verbundenen Sätzen oder Satzgliedern in überaus bilderreicher Sprache mit ungewöhnlicher Wortstellung, seltenen Wörtern oder Wortformen und lockerer syntaktischer Fügung.[322]

> [The one [category of pieces in poetic style], namely that favoured by the older tales but used up until the 12th century, goes by the name of *rhetoric* (*rethoric*), deriving from Latin *rhetorice*. Such passages are marked in some manuscripts by a marginal *r.* Possibly due to misinterpretation of this *r.* the younger texts sometimes call them *rosc* or *roscad* 'saying'. They generally consist of very short sentences or sentence elements, often linked by alliteration, which are extraordinarily rich in imagery, rare words and loose syntactic compliance.]

In direct response to this, Proisias Mac Cana commented,

> There is, however, a certain difficulty in reconciling Thurneysen's view with the actual occurrence of the term in Irish manuscripts, and this perhaps explains why we find later writers referring to Thurneysen's account in terms of general agreement while at the same time glossing over the fact that he regarded *retoiric* as a contrived, obscure form of literary diction.[323]

Reviewing the evidence for marginal *.r.*, the usage of *retoirics* and the etymology of the word,

Mac Cana – in disagreement with Thurneysen – concluded that

> there is nothing to suggest that *retoiric* was used as a term denoting a particular form or *genre* in Irish literature before the eleventh century. Secondly the abbreviation *.r.* seems to occur rather infrequently outside LU and LL, and it may well have been the former manuscript which first gave it extended application as a marginal indicator. In any case, there is no good reason to believe that this *.r.* originally referred to the word *retoiric*; instead all the weight of evidence points to *rosc* (*roscad*) as the term abbreviated.[324]

Daniel Binchy supported Mac Cana's view by noting that,

> The evidence from the Laws, therefore, strongly supports Mac Cana: far from the borrowed term *retoiric* having been later 'superseded' by the native *roscad*, the abbreviation *.r.* originally stood for *roscad*, and *retoiric* represents an innovation by monastic scribes who had some acquaintance with the works of Latin *retores*.[325]

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[322] Thurneysen, *Heldensage*, p. 54; translation my own.

[323] P. Mac Cana, 'On the Use of the Term *Retoiric*', *Celtica* 7 (1966), p. 66.

[324] *ibid.*, p. 89.

[325] D.A. Binchy, 'Varia Hibernica: 1. The So-Called 'Rhetorics' of Irish Saga' in H. Pilch & J. Thurow (eds), Indo-Celtica: Gedächtnisschrift für Alf Sommerfelt (München: Max Hueber Verlag, 1972), pp. 29-38.

Thereafter, Daniel F. Melia took up the problem of the marginal *.r.* once again. Like Mac Cana he considered evidence from LU and LL as to the location and appearance of the marginalia:

> The use of *.r.* for many types of poetry and for some things which are demonstrably not poetry indicates that at some point in the history of its use it must have had a wider sense than that of designating some particular sort of poetry.[326]

Where does this discussion fit in with the passages in question from *Oidheadh Con Culainn*? There are no instances of marginal *.r.* in any of our pre-19th-century manuscripts to mark *rosc*-like text which would suggest that we are in fact dealing with a *retoiric* or *rosc*. A number of manuscripts may give a little cross in the side margin at the point in the narrative where Cú Chulainn's soul 'parts with his body'; however, there are no instances of marginal references to a poem or 'rhetoric'. To go back once more to Thurneysen, as for the usage of – as he calls them, *retoirics* – he remarked:

> Sie werden in den Sagen sehr häufig in Weissagungen und profetischen Enthüllungen verwendet, und es scheint mir zweifellos, daß sie auch der abgerissenen, strukturlosen, dunklen Rede der Verzückten und Wahrsagenden nachgebildet waren. Ich möchte das sogar als ihren ersten Ursprung ansehen. Daneben kommen sie freilich auch sonst vor, z.B. bei Wortkämpfen, bei Begrüßungen feindlicher Helden und so fort. Immer sind sie aber Personen der Sagen in den Mund gelegt, also als gesprochen oder gesungen gedacht. Zwar zeigen auch manche beschreibenden Stücke einen gewissen retorischen Stil; aber er ist ganz anderer Art. Er besteht hauptsächlich darin, daß viele alliterierende Beiwörter aneinandergefügt werden. Häufig wird auch ein gewisser Rythmus beobachtet, indem eine Reihe von Parallelsätzen je mit einem dreisilbigen Wort schließen. So steht er in näherer Berührung mit der eigentlichen rythmischen Dichtung (…).[327]

> [They are often used in divinations and prophetic revelations, and it seems to me that without doubt they were also based on the abrupt, structureless, dark speech of the rapt and the diviner. I would even see this as their first derivation. They naturally occur elsewhere, too, e.g. in verbal battles, at the meeting of adversarial heroes and so on. But they are always put into the mouths of characters featuring in a tale, they are thus meant to be spoken or sung. Some descriptive pieces may display a certain rhetorical style but this is of a different nature. It mainly consists of the alliterative. Often a certain rhythm can be observed in which a number of parallel sentences are concluded by a trisyllabic word. It is therefore in closer contact with the actual rhythmical poetry (…).]

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[326] D.F. Melia, 'Further Speculation on Marginal *.r.*', *Studia Hibernica* 17-18 (1978), p. 365. 'Rhetorics' have further been discussed by Liam Breatnach ('VI Law' in McCone & Simms, *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*, pp. 107-121, cf. especially pp. 112-13) and Johan Corthals ('Early Irish *Retoirics* and their Late Antique Background', *CMCS* 31, pp. 17-36), who places the origins of *roscad / retoiric* to the vernacular in the 6th century when it developed 'in imitation of Latin poetry and rhetorical style and in accordance with the literary taste of that time.' (p. 36).

[327] Thurneysen, *Heldensage*, pp. 55-56; translation my own.

Thurneysen's observation as to the occurrence of rhetorics at points of heightened tension such as the dramatic meeting or addressing of one another by two rival warriors, or similar verbal exchanges, is certainly relevant to our discussion as all of the 'rhetorics' in *Oidheadh Con Culainn* do indeed have a very dramatic feel to them. A second observation made by Thurneysen regards descriptive passages displaying a rhetorical flavour on account of their extensive use of alliterating adjectives. This is also highly relevant since such passages can be found in our text; one concrete example is discussed in some more detail below.

As the following discussion of a number of passages from our text will show, in the light of the wider debate it is probably rather ambiguous to refer to them consistently as *retoirics*, or even *roscada*. For one, they seem to lack the abstruse character of the passages as they occur for example in the Early Irish recension, or Version A, of our tale. I will, however, tentatively continue to refer to the passages in question as 'rhetorics' (and continue to do so using quotation marks), using the term here as a tool, so to speak, to denote those sections in our narrative which genuinely seem to occupy an intermediary position in the continuum between pure unembellished prose on the one hand, and poetry on the other. Arguably, there are one or even possibly two further sections in *Oidheadh Con Culainn* which could be construed as 'rhetorics', but here have been treated as 'alliterative descriptions'. We will discuss these passages in question in more detail below (in the context of the second case study), giving further arguments for the decision not to consider the section(s) as 'rhetoric'.

6.3.2 The 'rhetorics' in *Oidheadh Con Culainn*

There is a total of six so-called 'rhetorics' that can be identified in our manuscripts, although not all six are consistently represented in every manuscript. As is the case with the poetry, different manuscripts may include some 'rhetorics' while omitting others, this distribution differing across the groups. It appears that one 'rhetoric' is unique to the manuscripts in sub-group IV/b, while the all other manuscripts give a different 'rhetoric' at the corresponding point in the narrative. We can represent the distribution of the 'rhetorics' across the manuscript groups in a table; the numbering across the horizontal axis is that of the 'rhetorics', corresponding to the numbering of pull-out Table 3-4 ('List of poems with MSS classified into groups'). Note that Group V has not been included here as the 'miscellaneous' nature of this manuscripts in this group (cf. section 3.2.3) does not allow for us to make general statements that apply to the entire group, as it is possible for Groups I-IV. For the same reason, Group V will not feature consistently in our discussion of the 'rhetorics'.

	6	7	10	13	21	25
I	---	✓	---	✓	✓	✓
II	---	✓	---	✓	✓	✓
III	---	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IV/a-1	---	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IV/a-2	---	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IV/b-1	✓	---	✓	✓	✓	✓
IV/b-2	✓	---	✓	✓	✓	✓
IV/b-3	✓	---	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 6-3: Distribution of 'rhetorics' in Groups I-IV

This simple representation of the distribution of the 'rhetorics' in Groups I-IV supports the case for our classification of the manuscripts into groups, which will be further corroborated by the following discussion. As we will see in due course, the omission of 'rhetorics' does not impact upon the prose narrative surrounding them. To introduce the 'rhetorics', below are brief summaries of their context. They are given in the order in which they occur in the course of the prose narrative.

A Chúagáin Mhuirtheimhne (poem / 'rhetoric' 6) is spoken by Badhbh, daughter of Cailitín, to Cú Chulainn. The passage occurs fairly early on in the narrative when our hero is still in the safety of his *grianán*; Badhbh, however, having transformed herself into a crow, flies up to his window and speaks the words to entice him to go into battle against his enemies.

Very similar in content to the above, *A Chú Chulainn coimhiric* (poem / 'rhetoric' 7) occurs in some manuscripts in the place of *A Chúagáin Mhuirtheimhne*. It is also spoken by Badhbh, in the shape of a crow, and directed at Cú Chulainn. We have already considered the interchangeability and occurrence of the two poems / 'rhetorics' 6+7 in section 3.4.3, in the context of a discussion of the transposition of poetry and prose in the sub-groups of Group IV.

Éirigh, a Chú Chulainn (poem / 'rhetoric' 10) depending on manuscript / group, is spoken either by Badhbh or Cailitín's oldest son. At this point in the narrative Cú Chulainn is still in his *grianán*; the passage is therefore reminiscent of the two previous ones as it is a further attempt to lure Cú Chulainn into the open. The latter's resolve begins to crumble and his urge to give in to the challenge of Cailitín's children, and the men of Ireland, is getting stronger.

Annamh leat, a Liath Macha (poem / 'rhetoric' 13) addresses Cú Chulainn's horse and is spoken by his charioteer Laogh, who has made a futile attempt to fetch the horses to yoke them into the chariot, and uses the words to convince the Liath Macha to cooperate.

Occurring immediately before the battle between Cú Chulainn and the men of Ireland commences, *Coimhéirigh bhur ccuradha* (poem / 'rhetoric' 21) is a passage spoken by Lughaidh

mac Con Raoi. He directs it at the men of Ireland, who are spurred on by it and rise to fight as a result.

Finally, *Goirt rom ghaoth, géar rom gonadh* (poem / 'rhetoric' 25) is not only the shortest 'rhetoric', but also the only one that occurs after Cú Chulainn's death. The words are Conall's, who speaks them to express his grief on hearing about his foster brother's defeat and subsequent death in the battle of Magh Muirtheimhne.

It is worth noting that the first four 'rhetorics' are enticements of one kind or another, while the final one is different, being a type of elegy. As the overview in the Appendix to the present chapter of those 'rhetorics' not discussed in detail in the two case studies in section 6.3.5 shows, this final 'rhetoric' – or lament – is also considerably shorter than the others.

6.3.3 The *roscada* of Version A

It is of interest and relevance here to very briefly assess the relationship between the 'rhetorics' of our Early Modern Irish tale *Oidheadh Con Culainn* and the *roscada* of the older, Early Irish recension of the tale, *Aided Con Culainn* (Version A). A fuller discussion than the preliminary observations below is beyond the scope of this thesis.

The Early Irish recension or Version A of our tale is proabably most famed for its 'obscure rhetorical passages'[328]; as has been commented by Maria Tymoczko,

> The account of Cú Chulainn's death is brief and stark, but the form is rich and varied. Passages of *rosc* – the cryptic, dense, alliterative, visionary poetry representing the earliest and most archaic tradition of poetry in Ireland – constitute almost half the text.[329]

In the context of a discussion of the 'rhetorics' in the later, Early Modern Irish recension of the tale, it is of great interest whether any of these might reflect the *roscada* as they stand in the early text. A preliminary assessment and examination of the *roscada* of Version A suggests that there is only one *rosc* in Version A (namely that beginning *Comergid a fhiru Herend*) which has been imported into our later text, although we can identify a number of minor similarities with other *roscada* for which we cannot find exactly corresponding 'rhetorics' in Version B. We will briefly point out these correspondences.

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[328] In the interest of clarification, and for purposes of differentiation, we shall refer to the passages from Version A as *rosc(ada)* and continue to use the term 'rhetoric(s)' for those from our later Version B. It has already been noted that 'rhetoric' may arguably not be the best term but we will continue to use it, with caution, as a tool for differentiation.

[329] M. Tymoczko, *Two Death Tales*, p. 14.

Poems / 'rhetorics' 6 and 7, *A Chúagáin Mhuirtheimhne* and *A Chú Chulainn coimhéirigh* respectively, incorporate some elements of the first the first *rosc* in Version A, sharing for instance the address *a ua Chatfaidh* which in Version A reads here *a huí Chatbad*. [330]

The third *rosc* in Version A begins with the line *Ni bidba bratt*,[331] and there is a poem with the same first line in the later Version B, namely, poem 12 *Ní biodhbha brat*, which occurs in the manuscripts of Groups III, IV/a-1, IV/b-1, b-2 and b-3. There are no further correspondences, however, than that of the first line. This suggests that the first line of a *rosc* in Version A has been used in the Early Modern Version B, but has been used here for a poem rather than 'rhetoric'.

We have already hinted that there is one *rosc* from Version A that we can also identify in the later text: this is the *rosc* beginning *Comergid a fhiru Herend...*;[332] as we will see, it is very reminiscent of poem / 'rhetoric' 21 *Coimhéirigh... / Atá Cú Chulainn...* especially as this stands in Groups IV/a-1 and a-2, and IV/b-2. Interestingly, the 'alliterative description' of Cú Chulainn and his chariot and horses given by Lughaidh mac Con Raoi which precedes the 'rhetoric' in the later text seems to bear close similarities to the corresponding section in Version A, where we find another *rosc* with the first line *Atchiusa sund carpat cóem*.[333] We will return to the two *roscada* in section 6.3.5 ('Case study b)') below. Although we will make some preliminary observations on potential relationships between Versions A and B on the evidence of the 'rhetoric' and the 'alliterative description' and the corresponding *roscada*, it has to be noted that a close comparative reading of both recensions would be required to more firmly establish any exact correspondences and variations. This, however, is outwith the scope of this thesis, nor its intention.

Of the remaining *roscada* in Version A we cannot at this very preliminary stage establish any further correspondences or similarities with poems or 'rhetorics' in Version B, with one exception. In Version A, at a point in the narrative at which Cú Chulainn bids his charioteer Laogh farewell, we find the following:

> *Is and sin ro ráid Láeg. Goirt rom gaet. 7c-* [334]

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[330] R.I. Best & M.A. O'Brien (eds), *The Book of Leinster, formerly, Lebar na Núachongbála – Vol. II* (Dublin, 1956), p. 442, ll. 13779-86 (LL fol. 119a).

[331] *ibid.*, p. 433, ll. 13802-06 (LL fol. 119a).

[332] *ibid.*, p. 446, ll. 13925-34 (LL fol. 120a).

[333] *Ibid.*, p. 446, ll. 13902-20 (LL fol. 120a).

[334] *ibid.*, p. 448, l. 13976 (LL fol. 121a).

In her translation of *Aided Con Culainn*, Maria Tymoczko comments,

> The manuscript has 'Bitingly he wounded me, etc.'. Often scribes included only the first line of a (possibly one well-known) poem rather than copying the entire text. The omission conserved labour and vellum, and was indicated by 'etc.' or 'et reliqua'. This is apparently a case in point. Here, as in other sagas, the complete text has been lost because it was nowhere preserved in its entirety.[335]

In Version B we can identify two poems / 'rhetorics' which match the first line 'Goirt rom gaet': these are poem 22, *Goirt rom ghaoth trem chneas cuanna*, and poem / 'rhetoric' 25, *Goirt rom ghaoth, géar roim gonadh*. The former poem occurs at a roughly corresponding point in the narrative while the 'rhetoric' is spoken by Conall Cearnach on hearing the news of Cú Chulainn's death. Nevertheless, the form of the *rosc* in Version A seems to suggest that it is the 'rhetoric' rather than the poem in the Early Modern version that is more likely to preserve and reflect at least elements of the lost *rosc* from Version A.

The 'mystery' of the abbreviated *rosc* in Version A was picked up by Ruth Lehmann in her discussion of the poems of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, and it is worth quoting her views at length:

> When Loeg and Cú Chulainn bid each other farewell in the Book of Leinster, only the first line of what was probably a *rosc*, like most of the other utterances in this MS, is recorded. The line given is 'Goirt rom gaet, 7c.' The later MSS K [RIA 23 K 37, 1718], G [RIA 13 G 10, 1805-07] , and GL [the *Gaelic Journal*, the edition here based upon RIA 23 K 7 (1701) and RIA 23 G 10], however record two occurrences of this opening, the first opens the dialogue between Loeg and Cú Chulainn as in LL, the second a *rosc* spoken by Conall Cernach when Loeg tells him of his death. The poem is in fifteen stanzas, except in G, which omits the seventh stanza. The poem begins with the line: Goirt rom g*h*aet*h* t*r*em c*h*nes c*h*uan*n*a, 'Bitterly I was wounded through my fine skin', and ends: Rom b*h*eog*h*onsat g*er* goirt, 'They wounded me to the quick, sharply, bitterly.' The *rosc* I cite only from K; the other MSS, G and GL differ very little, and if, perhaps, this preserves the lost version in LL the few differences among the versions are inconsequential.

> Goirt rom g*h*aoth gér rom gonadh
> a*r*d olc adbere cum caol Cul*ainn*
> díon óg Uladh sgeal go ng*airbh*e
> gnio*m* con goirt[(e)].

> Bitterly am I wounded sharply am I wounded
> A great evil I speak fair form of Culann
> Protector of Ulster's youth a tale with harshness
> A deed with bitter [(ness)].

> One of my reasons for believing this may be the original *rosc* is the retention of *adbere* in the second line and the approximation of that in G as ud*h* b*h*eire when GL substitutes ad*h*b*h*al 'very great'. The Old Irish for present Irish *adeir / adere* apparently baffled the later scribe.[336]

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[335] Tymoczko, *Two Death Tales*, pp. 99-100 (note 27).

[336] R. Lehmann, 'Poems from the *Death of Cú Chulainn*', *ZCP* 49-50 (1997), p. 438.

We have previously noted that there is a problem with Lehmann's generalisation of her arguments, as she only takes into account a fraction of the manuscripts preserving the tale and thus does not represent all the variants that can be found across the manuscript groups which we have established. Arguably, the 'rhetoric' could also be introduced with a line division different from Lehman's edition:

> *Goirt rom ghaoth*
> *Gér rom gonadh*
> *ard olc ad-bere*
> *cum caol Culainn*
> *díon óg Ulaidh*
> *sgeal go ngairbhe*
> *gniom con goirt[(e)].*

Thus, we would for instance achieve a preponderance of disyllables at the end of lines (with the exception of the first line) and mostly two stresses in the lines.

If we look at how this particular 'rhetoric' in the Early Modern version of the text stands in our groups (cf. Appendix to this chapter), we can note that Groups I and II are very similar and virtually interchangeable, with Group III also corresponding very closely. Neither of the three groups, however, give the *ad-bere* cited by Lehmann. The 'rhetoric' in Group IV/a-2 and all of sub-group IV/b corresponds very closely but here we find the *ad-bere* (or variations thereof, see transcriptions in Appendix). Group IV/a-2 displays the greatest variation as the 'rhetoric' here gives additional lines not found elsewhere. If we take Lehmann's suggestion as correct that the 'rhetoric' preserving *ad-bere* is the original while the replacement with *adhbhail* is an innovative feature, we would arrive at the conclusion that Groups I and II (and, in this case, Group III) give a reworked version of the original 'rhetoric' as preserved in Group IV. Without anticipating too much of the analysis to follow below, we will see that similar conclusions can be made on the basis of the observations from the case studies of two 'rhetorics' which will be carried out on the following pages.

6.3.4 The structural presentation of the 'rhetorics'

We will begin a closer examination of the 'rhetorics' by considering what could once again be called their 'structural presentation' in the different groups. In the following table, our six 'rhetorics' are listed, each with four subsections which observe the way in which the 'rhetorics' are introduced. The four variables are: those instances in which the 'rhetoric' is introduced simply by 1) a verb of speech (such as *adbert*, *adubhairt* or *itbert*) or, more concretely, by a verb of speech followed by a defining object. In this latter category we can identify three possibilities: 2) *adubhairt na briathra* ('spoke the words'), 3) *adubhairt an laoidh* ('spoke the lay

/ poem'), and 4) *adubhairt an rosg* ('spoke the rhetoric / inflammatory speech / short poem'[337]). Interestingly, another common defining object one might well expect, *rann* 'quatrain / stanza', does not occur in the context of any of our six 'rhetorics'. It does occur elsewhere in the tale, in Groups II, IV/b-1 and IV/b-3, on introducing a number of poems; these instances however are few and far between; see pull-out Table 6-7 ('Introduction of poems in Groups I-IV') below.

A further point of interest is the way in which the 'rhetorics' are presented in each manuscript. They can occur embedded in the course of the narrative, just like any other ordinary monologue or dialogue; this has been classified as 'in text'. There are, however, those instances in which 'rhetorics' have been 'marked'. This classification might be slightly vague since 'marked' refers to all those instances in which the 'rhetoric' is given in a new paragraph, with a capital letter, indented like a poem, or, indeed, laid out like a poem. In order to keep the table as concise and clear as possible, though, it is necessary to make the data easily accessible. Creating another level of detail seems counter-productive here, and 'marked' has thus been employed as a collective and all-inclusive term. What we also have to acknowledge, of course, is that in some cases the distinction between 'in text' and 'marked' is questionable; in these borderline cases a subjective decision had to be taken in keeping with the presentation of other poems (and the overall text for that matter) in the manuscript(s) in question.

We shall move on to the table itself and the information that can be gathered from it since the description above on its own might seem rather abstract:

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[337] For the definition of *rosg*, cf. *Dinneen*, s.v. *rosc* 'a dithyramb, rhetoric, an inflammatory speech; applied in early literature to a roughly versified incitement to deeds of valour, and of which certain of the 'runs' in folk-narrative are survivals' and *DIL*, s.v. *rosc* 'a short poem, ode or chant'. For a recent discussion of *rosc*, see also B. Ó Buachalla, *An Caoine agus an Chaointeoireacht* (Baile Átha Cliath: Cois Life Teoranta, 1998).

NOTE:

For Table 6-4 see file '2009kuhnsphd – tables', Sheet 5.

Table 6-4: Structural presentation / introduction of 'rhetorics' in MSS (Groups I-V)

To give a few examples to illustrate how the table works: *Annamh leat...*, in RIA 23 M 25 (Group I), occurs in the text and is introduced simply by a verb of speech. The 'rhetoric'*Goirt rom ghaoth...* is preceded by the defining object *rosg* in RIA 23 L 27 (Group III) and is marked in the text here. A number of cases are not quite as clear cut and as there might be some confusion when looking at them in the table; these 'abnormalities' have been commented on below. They are listed in order of the groups, which for each manuscript is given in parentheses: (I) thus means Group I, (II) Group II, and so on.

<u>Bodleian Ir. e. 3 (II)</u>: *Goirt rom ghaoth* is embedded in a sentence by the conjunction *agus* 'and', rather than beginning in a new sentence as is the case elsewhere. Here we have

> [**30**] 'Uc*h* uc*h* is guirt liomsa an sgeal s*in*,' *ar* Conall, 'agus do goinead*h* mo c*h*róid*h*e leis agus guirt ro*m* gaot*h* gear rom g*h*oinead*h* ar n-olc ad*h*b*h*al Cú caom*h* C*h*uloin*n* díon óg Ullad*h* sgéal go ngairge gníom*h* g*o* nguirte.'

This is the only 'rhetoric' present here as the manuscript preserves only a version of DCC but not BmMM, i.e. that portion of the tale in which the other 'rhetorics' occur.

<u>RIA 23 M 47 (b) (III)</u>: *Éirigh a Chú Chulainn fionntar cruas* here begins *A Chú Chulainn coimhéirig fionntar cruas*, thus echoing the preceding 'rhetoric'.

<u>Group III</u>: *A Chu Chulainn coimhiric* is consistently introduced by *adubhairt na briathra*, however, following the 'rhetoric' all seven manuscripts preserving this 'rhetoric' continue in the narrative, 'Et ar rad*h* an rosg sin don Bad*h*b*h*...'

<u>NLS 72.2.9 & TCD 1362/ H.4.21 (IV/a-1)</u>: *Éirigh a Chú Chulainn...* is idiosyncratically introduced by *7 itbert an loe rosc*.

<u>NLS 72.1.45 (V)</u>: *A Chu Chulainn coimhiric* is acknowledged and then omitted as the manuscript has '7 ad*u*bai*r*t b*r*iat*r*a doilb*h*th*e* 7 ni c*u*r*i*ab*h* an*n* so iat'.

Unlike the evidence for the overall manuscript content or structural presentation of the tale, which proved to be rather inconclusive and inconsistent across the manuscripts and manuscript groups, with regard to the 'rhetorics' we can detect consistency within the groups and, to a large part, also on an inter-group level. In both Groups I and II not only do all manuscripts correspond in terms of the 'rhetorics' they contain but, importantly, the way in which each 'rhetoric' is laid out and introduced is also consistent.

The data from pull-out Table 6-4 can be condensed somewhat to make the conclusions that we can draw from it more accessible. The table below gives the number of 'rhetorics' per group (there being a total of six altogether), the number of manuscripts in each group, the overall number of rhetorics – taking into account those instances where a 'rhetoric' is lost due to missing pages etc., and finally the occurrence of each of our variables or 'introductory particles'). Note that no manuscript contains all six – 6/6 – 'rhetorics' as the first two 'rhetorics' are interchangeable: 'rhetoric' 1 (*A Chúagáin Mhuirtheimhne*) occurs in only IV/b, in place of 'rhetoric' 2 (*A Chú Chulainn, coimhiric*) which consistently stands in all the other manuscripts. With the condensed data we can observe the following results:

Group	I	II	III	IV/a-1	IV/a-2	IV/b-1	IV/b-2	IV/b-3	V
No. of rhets. in group	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	3
No. of MSS in group	5	7	9	2	5	1	2	5	6
Overall no. of rhets. in group	20	22	38	9	20	5	10	24	5 (6')
adubhairt	15 / 20	16 / 22	24 / 38	5 / 9	13 / 20	3 / 5	6 / 5	14 / 24	4 / 6
…na briathra	5 / 20	6 / 22	4 / 38	----	----	1 / 5	2 / 5	5 / 24	1 (2') / 6
…an laoidh	----	----	----	2*/ 9	7 / 20	1 / 5	2 / 5	5 / 24	----
…an rosg	----	----	10(+7^) / 38	2 (4*) / 9	----	----	----	----	----

^ these being the instances where the 'rhetoric' is followed by '*ar radh an rosg sin…*' in addition to the introduction.

* counting the instances of '*loe rosg*' as an individual entry for both '*laoidh*' and '*rosg*'.

' counting the MS that acknowledges a 'rhetoric' but omits it.

We can see that the speech interjection *adubhairt* where it is not followed by any introductory particle is the most common type of introduction of the 'rhetorics'.

The results become even clearer when we condense the data further and consider each group as a unit, and not every single manuscript in it. On feeding this information into the same table we can see the following pattern:

Group	I	II	III	IV/a-1	IV/a-2	IV/b-1	IV/b-2	IV/b-3	V
No. of rhets.	4	4	5	5		5	5	5	5
adubhairt	3 / 4	3 / 4	5 / 5	3 / 5	4 / 5	4 / 5	3 / 5	3 / 5	3 / 5
…na briathra	1 / 4	1 / 4	1 / 5	----	---	----	1 / 5	1 / 5	1 / 5
…an laoidh	----	----	----	1*/ 5	1 / 5	2 / 5	1 / 5	1 / 5	1 / 5
…an rosg	----	----	2 (+1^) / 5	1 (2*) / 5	----	----	----	----	----

^ '*ar radh an rosg sin…*' following the 'rhetoric'.

* the instances of '*loe rosg*'.

It is very clear, then, that the most frequent way of introduction for the 'rhetorics' is by simply employing a verb of speech without a following object. The instances of adding *laoidh* as a defining object are largely confined to Group IV, while *rosg* is used only very sparsely in Groups III and IV/a-1. In fact, in Group III *rosg* occurs twice but is used in what could almost be described as an afterthought: *A Chú Chulainn, coimheirig* is introduced by *adubhairt*, or *adubhairt na briathra*. Following the 'rhetoric', the text in the manuscripts in Group III continues with *ar radh an rosg sin….*

A similar study was carried out by Gearóid Mac Eoin in the context of a wider article on the term *laid*.[338] With regards to two of the most famous medieval Irish manuscripts, *Lebor na hUidre* ('The Book of the Dun Cow') and *Lebor Laighneach* ('The Book of Leinster'), Mac Eoin considered what here have been referred to as 'verb of speech' and 'defining object':

> From at least the beginning of the ninth century the word *laid* was used in the general meaning 'poetic composition, poem'. […] A particular use of the word in this general sense is in introducing verse inserts in prose tales. The older tales with verse inserts preserved in the earliest surviving manuscripts containing tales in Irish, Lebor na hUidre (LU, late 11th century) and the Book of Leinster (LL, mid-12th century), do not use *laíd* or any other noun in introducing verse. Either they make no allusion to the verse in the preceding prose or they use a verb like *ro-ráid*, *as-bert* 'said', or *ro-cét* 'sang'.[339]

Given the statistics for the formulae introducing a poem in both LL and LU, Mac Eoin concluded that

> From the above it is clear that the commonest form of introduction is a verb without an accompanying object, *as-beir* being the commonest verb in all texts. When an accompanying noun is used, the commonest by far is *laid*, in which connection it should be noted that the high figure for *briathra* in LL is due to frequent occurrence in the *Comrac Fir Diad* episode of *Táin Bó Cuailnge* in that manuscript.[340]

This of course is very close to the conclusions arising from our own examination of the structural presentation of the 'rhetorics' in *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. In our manuscripts the verbal form most frequently occurring in introducing a 'rhetoric' is *adubhairt*, followed by instances of *adbert* or, less frequently, *itbert*; there are, however, no instances whatsoever of *ro-cét*, 'sang'.

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[338] G. Mac Eoin, 'The Irish metrical term *laíd*' in R. Bielmeier & R. Stempel (eds), *Germanica et Caucasia: Festschrift für Karl Horst Schmidt zum 65. Geburtstag* (Berlin/ New York, 1994), pp. 375-384.

[339] *ibid.*, p. 378.

[340] *ibid.*, p. 380.

Looking at Mac Eoin's conclusions, the question of course arises what the results of an examination of the overall poems for our tale might be, and not just of the 'rhetorics'. Considering that the primary focus of this chapter is upon the 'rhetorics' we shall not stray too far and only consider one representative manuscript from each of the four Groups I-IV with regards to the introduction of the poems. [341] The manuscript representatives for each group are:

Group	Manuscript	Date	Scribe
I	RIA 23 M 25	1684	Eoghan Ó Caoimh
II	RIA 23 K 7	1701	Domhnall Mac Donnchadha
III	RIA 23 H 16	1779	Seaghán Ó Domhnail
IV/a-1	NLS 72.2.9	c. 1650	Fear Feasa Ó Duibhgheannáin
IV/a-2	BL Eg. 132	1712-13	Richard Tipper
IV/b-1	NLS 72.1.38	1608-1620	?
IV/b-2	NLI G 18	1722	Conchubhar Óg Ó Cruadhlaoich
IV/b-3	BL Eg. 150	1774	Seón Lloyd

Table 6-5: Representative MSS for Groups I-IV

These manuscripts have been chosen so that each group is represented, where possible, not only by one of the older manuscripts, but also by one that is complete and not missing any text due to the loss of leaves or other damage to the manuscripts. The intra-group comparison of two manuscripts from Group I in Chapter 5 showed that while textual variations may occur between the manuscripts within a group, they are minor enough for it to be acceptable to nominate one manuscript from each group as a representative.

The following table gives the introduction (i.e. verb of speech and defining object, where applicable) to each poem contained in our manuscript group representatives. The 'rhetorics' are included in the table; in keeping with the colour-coding of pull-out Tables 3-1 ('List of poems with MSS in order of draft catalogue') and 3-4 ('List of poems with MSS classified into groups') they have been highlighted in yellow:

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[341] The manuscripts in Group V only preserve a small number of poems as this group comprises of those manuscripts that are fragmentary or otherwise incomplete or do not contain any poetry (cf. section 3.2.3 where we concluded that a close reading of the manuscripts of Group V is a desideratum for future study). Equally, Group VI is irrelevant for this examination as we are interested here in the introduction of poems occurring in a prose context, whereas the poems in Group VI stand independently and outwith the prose narrative. Note that for the same reasons, neither group will feature in the 'case studies' and further discussion of the 'rhetoirics' in that will follow in this chapter.

NOTE:

For Table 6-6 see file '2009kuhnsphd – tables', Sheet 6.

Table 6-6: Introduction of poems in Groups I-IV (using representative MSS)

It is very obvious that in keeping with Mac Eoin's findings, the identifying object *laoidh* is the commonest form of introduction in our manuscripts, followed by those instances where a poem being preceded, or introduced, by a verb of speech only. A preliminary comparison between our manuscript representatives and other manuscripts in their respective groups show that there may be some minor variations: for instance, where a representative has *adubhairt an laoidh* this may only appear as *adubhairt* in another manuscript in the group. These variations, however, are few and far between, and the overall impression given by our representative manuscripts is conclusive enough to deduce that our results correspond closely to those obtained by Mac Eoin. Once again, however, within our sample manuscripts there are no instances of *ro-cét* with reference to any of the poems, although there are a few examples of the verb of speech such as *adubhairt* being replaced by a verb of action, namely, *do rinn*. We can further observe that the greatest variation regarding the defining object occurs within the 'rhetorics'. We will thus return to the 'rhetorics' and consider two of them in some more detail.

6.3.5 Two case studies

With regard to the 'rhetorics', we have so far considered the structural presentation rather than concrete and detailed examples, their metrical structure or textual readings. This shall be rectified on the following pages. To recap briefly, there are six 'rhetorics' in total of which between four and five are present in each group. We will consider two of the 'rhetorics', namely poems / 'rhetorics' 13 *Annamh leat, a Liath Macha* and 21 *Coimhéirigh… / Atá Cú Chulainn…*, in more detail in two 'case studies' in order to illustrate the textual discrepancies and similarities that may occur on an inter-group level. In order to widen the scope slightly and not just restrict our analysis to, and consequently base our conclusions on, the 'rhetorics', the prose narrative surrounding each one is taken into account for our case studies. This will allow us to carry out an inter-group comparison with a focus on the 'rhetorics', while also considering on an inter-group level some of the contextual prose narrative and poetry. The inclusion of the prose context of the 'rhetorics' will further help to illustrate the (dis)similarities on an inter-group level, which in turn, as will become apparent, supports the argument for the existence of the manuscript groups. A further factor that has influenced the decision to include the prose narrative is the lack of critical edition(s) for *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, and thus restricted access to the actual text. It is hoped that the provision of textual passages here will give a sense of the overall text; furthermore, if future study would lead to an edition of the tale the provision here of textual passages may aid the decision which group would preserve a version of the tale most suitable and representative for an edition.

The analysis of the prose narrative for the 'rhetoric' in the first case study is more in-depth than that for the second. As we will see even from a brief analysis of the second passage, the variations occurring here very much echo those that will already have been discussed in the context of the first case study, and we can thus arguably extend our conclusions. Since we can anticipate similar results from an analysis of equal length for the second case study, it is justified and does not impact upon the overall argument and conclusion to give a less detailed analysis here.

In the case studies, we will follow the groups in their order – beginning with Group I and working our way through to Group IV[342] – as we have done in previous sections of this thesis. Without anticipating too much of the discussion, the most interesting findings will be observed within Group IV and its sub-groups; it appears that with regard to the 'rhetorics', out of all the groups we here find those versions that are most likely to be representative of an exemplar of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. This, however, does not render a discussion and analysis of the other groups any less valuable.

Finally, transcriptions of those 'rhetorics' not considered in the two case studies below are given in the Appendix at the end of this chapter; this is to ensure that readings from all 'rhetorics' are available for consulation.

Case study a) *Annamh leat, a Liath Macha…*

The 'rhetoric' which forms the basis for our first case study is set, to a certain extent, within one of the key scenes of the tale, a scene which hints strongly at the impending doom that lies before Cú Chulainn. It may be summarized as follows.

Following Cú Chulainn's decision to leave the safety of his fortress he sends Laogh, his charioteer, to fetch the horses to yoke them into the chariot in preparation for his departure. The horses, however, turn away as he approaches them with the reins. Laogh addresses the Liath Macha, first in prose, then in a 'rhetorical speech', and finally in poetry, but his attempts to catch the horse remain futile. Only when Cú Chulainn himself steps in does the horse comply. The Liath Macha's premonition as to the inauspiciousness of the situation manifests itself in her crying tears of blood, and is further reinforced by Cú Chulainn's weapons falling off him on jumping into the chariot.

Below are the representative examples of this scene from each group, supplied from the manuscript chosen as a group representative as discussed and listed in Table 6-5

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[342] We have already elaborated on the reasons not to include Groups V and VI; cf. footnote 341 above.

('Representative MSS for Groups I-IV'). In every case or passage, the 'rhetoric' has been marked in blue in anticipation of the discussion which follows the textual examples.

Group I (RIA 23 M 25)

1   [125] Táin*ig* Laog*h* roim*h*e ag gab*h*ail na n-eac*h*, 7 ní t*h*áin*ig* riam*h* aon u*air* b*udh* measa leis 7 b*udh* leasga dá ngab*h*áil ná an u*air*sin. 7 do c*h*roit*h* na srianta *ar* cóm*h*air na n-eac*h* 7 do t*h*eit*h*eadar uaid*h*, 7 do s*h*eac*h*uin an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a é, 7 do b*h*í fraoc*h*d*h*a fíornim*h*neac*h* fris.

5   'Uc*h* as fior si*n*,' *ar* Laog*h*, 'is mana mo*r*uilc dam*h*sa 7 duitsi an t*ar*rngair*e si*n*, 7 má at*a* olc a ng*ar* duitsi atá dam*h*sa, oi*r* is ionan*n* sub*h*ac*hus* 7 dub*h*ac*hus* duin*n*, 7 dob an*n*am*h* lib*h*se nác*h* a ccoin*n*e na srian*n*ta do t*h*iocfad*h* sib*h*.'

7 do g*h*ab*h* Laog*h* ag agallam*h* na Léit*h*e Mac*h*a, 7 ag tab*er*t a teas*da* féin u*irt*he, 7 adub*er*t:

10   'Dob an*n*am*h* leatsa, a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a, an me*a*rúg*h*ad*h* sin, gan ion*n*súig*h*e do s*h*rianta go sriang*h*air*eac*h*, 7 g*an* cuing do c*h*arb*a*t c*h*u*a*rdúg*h*ad*h* oi*r* bá me*ar* ré mórc*h*at*h*aib*h* t*h*ú.' 7 adub*h*e*r*t Laog*h* arís:

'A Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a,' *ar* sé, 'bá héd*h*trom aigion*n*tac*h* a n-aonúig*h*ib*h* t*h*ú, bá bréad*h*a sog*h*ab*h*ála ré h*e*ad*h* n-anf*h*órluin*n*.'

15   7 níor f*h*an an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a an t*an* si*n*, 7 d'in*n*is Laog*h* sin do *Ch*ongc*u*lainn. 7 téid Cú C*h*ulainn féin dá gab*h*áil 7 níor f*h*an ris, 7 b*udh* comór lé maoldorrn*n* míl*idh* na deóra don*n*f*h*ola do s*h*ileadh t*ar* a gr*u*ad*h*aib*h* don Léit*h* M*h*ac*h*a. 7 táin*ig* Laog*h* don d*ar*a leit*h* don Léit*h* M*h*ac*h*a, 7 adub*er*t:

'A Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a, as córa duit mait*h* do déanam*h* aniog ná roim*h*e so riam*h*.'

20   Et d'f*h*an an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a ré Laog*h* an t*an* si*n*, 7 do gab*h*ad*h* an Dub*h* F*h*aoil*inn*, 7 do cu*i*readh an c*ar*b*a*t ort*h*a. 7 do g*h*ab*h* C*u* C*h*ulainn ag in*n*ioll a c*h*leas ngoile 7 ngaisge a *ar*m 7 a ilf*h*aob*h*ar .i. ub*h*allc*h*leas 7 a c*h*leiteac*h* c*h*leas, 7 a c*h*leasa uile, 7 do ling ina c*h*arbad g*an* c*h*eadúg*h*ad*h* do neac*h* dá raib*h* ina t*h*impc*h*ioll, et do t*h*uit*eadar* a *a*ir*m* uaid*h* fá na c*h*osaib*h* san c*h*arb*a*t, go

25   ndeac*h*ad*ar* as a ccoirig*h*t*h*ib*h* siob*h*ail 7 as a n-ionad*h*úib*h* iombuailte, 7 bá cealm*h*uine 7 droc*h*t*h*u*ar* leósam uile si*n*.

Group II (RIA 23 K 7)

1   [89] Tainig Laog*h* roim*h*e do g*h*ab*h*áil na n-ec*h* 7 ni dec*h*aid*h* ria*mh* u*air* b*udh* lesga leis da ngab*h*áil na a*n* u*air* sin, 7 do c*h*roit*h* na srianta os com*h*air na n-ec*h*, 7 do t*h*eit*h*edar uaid*h* 7 do sec*h*uin an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a é, 7 do bi fraoc*h*d*h*a foirniata fris.

'Oc*h*, is fior sin,' *ar* Laog*h*, 'is mana móruilc damsa 7 duitsi a*n* t*ar*rnguiresi, 7 ma

5   ta olc a ng*ar* duitsi ata dam*h*sa oir is ionan*n* sub*h*ac*hus* 7 dub*h*ac*hus* dúin*n*, 7 a anui*m*,' *ar* se, 'dob an*n*am*h* lib*h*si nac*h* a ccoin*n*e na srianta do tiocfad sib*h*.'

7 do g*h*ab*h* Laog*h* ag agallam*h* na Leit*h*e M*h*ac*h*a 7 ag tab*h*ai*r*t a teasda [90] fein uirre, 7 adub*air*t:

'Dob an*n*am*h* letsa sin, a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a,' air sé, 'an merug*adh* sin do b*h*eit*h* ort

10   g*an* ion*n*suid*h*e do srianta go siang*h*airec*h* 7 coing do c*h*arbuit do c*h*u*a*rdug*adh* u*air* ba mer re morc*h*at*h*aibh t*h*u. 7 a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a,' *ar* se, 'ba headtt*r*om aigent*h*ac*h* t*h*u a n-aonuig*h*ib*h* 7 bá breag*h*a sog*h*ab*h*ála re hion*n*suid*h*uib*h* n-anf*h*órluin*n*.'

7 níor f*h*an a*n* Liat*h* Mac*h*a ris in t*an* sin 7 tainig da in*n*sin do C*on* C*u*lainn. 7 do

15   c*h*uaig*h* C*u* C*u*lainn féin da ngab*h*áil, 7 níor f*h*an fris, 7 ba com*m*or re maoldorrn

mil*idh* na déora don*nfh*ola do sil*edh* t*ar* a gr*u*ad*h*uib*h* don Leit*h* M*h*ac*h*a. 7 tainic Laog*h* don d*ar*a leith di 7 adub*air*t:

'A Leit*h* M*h*ac*h*a, as córa d*h*uit mait*h* do d*h*éanam*h* aniug*h* ná roim*h*esi riam*h*.' 7 adub*h*airt an ran*n* so:

20   A Leit*h* M*h*ac*h*a mer ad*hb*h*uil,
                      mór ccat*h* riam*h* ar ar imris
                      cora d*h*uit mórm*h*enma aniog*h*,
                      na gac*h* la riam*h* do rinis.

Ag*us* do f*h*an an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a re Laog*h* in ta*n* si*n*, 7 do gab*h*adh an Duib*h*
25 S*h*aoil*enn*, 7 do c*h*uaid*h* an c*ar*but orra. 7 do g*h*ab*h* in*n*ioll agus ag irdugh*adh* a c*h*les ngoile 7 ngaisg*e* 7 a air*m* 7 a iolf*h*aob*h*air. Do g*h*ab*h* C*u* C*u*lainn a cait*hb*h*eirt cat*h*a u*m* a c*h*en*n* 7 um a c*h*nes, 7 do g*h*ab*h* a roit*hch*les ag*us* a ardc*h*les 7 a f*h*aob*h*arc*h*les 7 a uballc*h*les 7 a c*h*leit*inn*c*h*les 7 a clesa uile, 7 do ling iona c*h*arbuit g*an* cedugh*adh* d'aonnec*h* da raib*h*e ina timc*h*ioll. 7 do t*h*uited*ar* a airm
30 uile uad*h*a faoin a cosuib*h* is an c*ar*but, go ndec*h*ad*ar* as a ccóirig*h*t*h*ib*h* siub*h*uil 7 as a n-ionaduibh imbuailte, 7 ba cealm*h*uine mor leosan uile sin.

Group III (RIA 23 H 16)

1   **[244]** Tainig Laog*h* roim*h*e do g*h*ab*h*ail na n-eac*h* et ni d*h*eac*h*aidh aon u*air* b*udh* leisg leis dul dá ngab*h*ail na an u*air* sin, et do c*h*roit*h* na srianta *air* c*h*om*h*air na n-eac*h* 7 do t*h*eit*h*ed*ar* uaid*h* 7 d'eimig [?] an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a é, et do b*h*i go fraoc*h*d*h*a forniata ris.

5   'Uc*h*, is fior sin,' *ar* Laog*h*, 'is mana morolc duitse et dam*h*sa sin 7 ma tá olc a ngoire d*h*uitse atá dam*h*sa oir is ionan súb*h*ac*h*us na go dúb*h*ac*h*us duin*n*. 7 dob an*n*am*h* lib*h* nác*h* a ccoin*n*e na srianta do t*h*iocfad*h* sib*h*.'

Et do g*h*ab*h* Laog*h* ag iomagallm*h*ad na Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a, 7 ag tab*h*air*t* a teasda et a tu*arus*gb*h*ála, 7 adub*h*air*t:

10   'A Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a,' *air* se, 'b*udh* héadrom aigiontac*h* tu a n-ion*n*uig*h*ib*h*, 7 b*udh* b*h*reag*h*a le bandáluib*h* et b*udh* soc*air* sog*h*ab*h*ala le hion*n*saig*h*t*h*ib*h* 7 is leat b*udh* m*h*ion*n*ca b*h*eit*h* neam*h*g*h*aib*h*t*h*ech re hu*air* an f*h*orloin*n* 7 éagcom*h*lan*n*.'

7 nior f*h*an an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a leis na hait*h*iosgaib*h* sin. [Taine Laog*h* d'ion*n*saig*h*e C*on* C*u*lainn 7 d'in*n*is do n*ár* f*h*an an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a ris.][343] Et
15 d'eig*h*rig C*u* C*u*lainn féin da gab*h*áil 7 nior f*h*an ris, ag*us* b*udh* c*h*om*h*mór re maoldorn*n* míle na deora doin*nfh*liuc*h*a do b*h*í ag sile t*ar* g*h*ruaid*h*aib*h* an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a. Et táinig Laog*h* don dara taob*h* don Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a.

'A Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a,' *ar se*, 'is cora d*h*uit mait*h* do d*h*enam*h* anois ná aon la riam*h* roim*h*e.'

20   7 ró f*h*an an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a re Laog*h* an tan sin 7 do g*h*ab*h* an Dub*h* F*h*aolion*n*, et do cuired*h* an carbad orra. Et do g*h*aib*h* C*u* C*u*lainn ag in*n*ill 7 ag corugh*adh* a c*h*leas goile et gaisge et agá n-íolf*h*aob*h*arugh*adh* *air* cen*n*a. Et gab*hus* a c*h*in*n*b*h*irt cat*h*a uime a c*h*en*n*, agus a c*h*leasaib*h* uile. Et do ling ion*n*a c*h*arbad gan c*h*eadugh*adh* d'aoinnec*h* da raib*h* ion*n*a t*h*impc*h*ioll, 7 do t*h*uit*h*ed*ar* a airm uile
25 uaid*h* fán a c*h*osaib*h* 7 na c*h*arbad, ion*nus* go ndec*h*ad*ar* as a ccóirig*h*t*h*ib*h* siub*h*ail 7 as a n-ion*n*adaib*h* iombuailte, et b*udh* c*h*ealm*h*uine m*h*ór le cac*h* uile sin.

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[343] From 12 F 7, p. 222.

Group IV/a-1 (NLS 72.2.9)

1 [**27r**] Tainic Laog*h* roim*h*e do g*h*ab*h*ail na n-eac*h* 7 ni dech*aidh* aon uair a riam*h* bús leasca lais dul da ngab*h*ail ina 'n u*air* sin, 7 do c*h*rait*h* na srianta *ar* a n-ag*aidh*, 7 do teic*h*adar uad*h*a 7 do s*h*each*ain* an Liat*h* Mac*h*a é 7 do b*h*i go fraoc*h*da fo*r*niata f*r*is.

5   'Uc*h*, as fíor sin,' *ar* L*a*og*h*, 'oír is mana mó*r*uilc *damh*sa 7 duitsi féin, a Léit*h*, na had*h*b*h*aisi iongant*ach*a ad*h*eitc*h*e oír ní mana mait*h*iosa an t*ar*rngoire si*n* 7 ma ta an t-olc a ngoire d*h*uitsi atá d*h*am*h*sa 7 is ionan*n* sub*ach*us 7 dub*ach*us duind ar aon 7 a ana*m*, a Léit*h* Mac*h*a,' *ar* se, 'do b'anda*mh* lib*h* gus aniug*h* n*o* a n-ag*aidh* na s*r*iantasa do t*h*iucf*adh* sib*h* cugamsa.'

10   7 ro g*h*ab*h* L*a*og*h* ag agalla*mh* an Léit*h* Mac*h*a, 7 ag tab*h*air*t* a *dath*a et a tu*arus*cb*a*l*a* os áird, 7 as *an*n adb*er*t:

[**27v**] 'Anam*h* let, a Lét*h* M*a*c*h*a, g*a*n mo*r*adp*a*r d'iondsuig*h*i, g*a*n sóis*edh* go s*r*iangh*o*tac*h* 's co cuing carb*ad* com*h*lut*h*m*a*r, do cot*h*ug*adh* re coim*h*eirge, oir bad me*a*r, ré mórc*h*ath*a*ib*h*, 's bad ettro*m* á*r*d aigent*ach* an dal*a* a ndeg*h* aon*aigh*uib*h*, bad breag*dh*a go bandal*a*ib*h*, bad soc*a*r co soc*a*ruib*h*, bad sog*h*ab*h*t*h*a ré saor á*r*aib*h*, re han*n*, re hoirisio*mh*, as lib*h* ro bú ro m*h*ionca b*eith* go ne*ar*tm*h*ar nea*mh*g*h*aibt*ech* re hu*air* n-anf*adh* n-ecco*mh*lan*n*. An*n*am*h*.'

As ceana ní ró f*h*an an Liat*h* M*a*c*h*a re L*a*og*h* da éis si*n*. 7 tain*ig* féin m*a*r a raip*h*e C*u* C*u*lain*n*, 7 ro in*r*is do ná*r* f*h*an an Liat*h* Mac*h*a ris. 7 do eir*igh* féin d*a* 20 gap*ail*, 7 níor f*h*an ris, 7 ba meidig*h*t*er* máold*h*orn mil*idh* na deora don*n*fola do s*h*iledh* dar a gru*a*id*ibh* an t*a*n si*n*. 7 tain*ig* L*a*og*h* don leit*h* oile d*h*i, 7 ro ráid*h*:

'A Liat*h* M*a*c*h*a,' *ar* L*a*og*h*, 'ar coira d*h*uit mait*h* do d*h*enam*h* aniu ina g*ach* lá riam*h* roi*mh*e.' 7 adb*er*t an láoi:

Nírsat ogl*ach* n-uir m*h*eata,
25   gus aniu riam*h* nír eim*h*gis
do c*har*pat do c*h*uing leat*h*an,
gid*h* gar no cian do teigmis.

Níorsat obt*ach* n-io*mg*h*ona,
ní img*h*ab*h*t*h*a *ar* ccleit*h*e
30   do feadar is imc*a*rad*h*,
dam*h*sa 7 duit, a Leit*h*e.

G*ach* ionad*h* a ndeac*h*am*a*r,
's a rangat*ar* ar mbesa
ar ttosca fa deag*h* t*h*ap*adh*
35   mber*a* go brat*h* *ar* scela.

A Leit*h* Mac*h*a m*h*ear adb*ail*
mór ccat*h* riam*h* ar imbris
cora aniug*h* gnio*mh* deag*h*ag*h*m*har*
na gach lá riam*h* do rignis.

40   On lait*h*e do roc*h*t a muir
do c*h*om*h*raicset *ar* n-aisde
níor f*h*agbuis na droc*h* scor*adh*
's ní rabois ad*h*a a tt*r*oisce.

           An Dub*h* Silion*n* sit*h*am*h*uil

45   minic í a ndáil a codn*adh*

           b*á* socair a síor rat*ha*

           ger bo luat*h* ag leim fogl*aim*.

     [28r] Do f*h*an an Líat*h* M*ach*a ré Laog*h* 7 do g*h*ab*h* í et an Dub*h* Silionn, 7 do cuir a carp*at* forra. 7 do g*h*ab*h* ag ion*n*all 7 ag ordug*adh* a cleasa 7 ardcleasa 7 a

50 f*h*aobarcleasa 7 a up*h*allcleasa 7 a cleitincleasa 7 a cleasa uile *ar* c*h*eana. 7 ro ling ina c*h*arp*at* iarsi*n* gan ceadug*adh*, 7 do t*h*uit*edar* a cleasa 7 a *ar*ma uile uad*h*a fona c*h*ossaibh isin c*h*arp*at* go ndeac*h*at*ar* as a ccoirigtib*h* 7 as a n-ionad*aibh* iombuailte, 7 imb*ert*a, 7 as iondall ord*aigh*t*h*e, 7 b*á* mí cealm*ain*e mór d*h*osa*mh* sin.

Group IV/a-2 (BL Eg. 132 [344])

1 [27] Tain*n*ic Laeg*h* roi*mh*e do g*h*ab*h*ail na n-eac*h* et ní deac*h*aig*h* aria*mh* enu*air* bud*h* leasga les dul da ngab*h*ail ina an u*air* sin, et do c*h*roit*h* na s*r*ianta *air* i n-ag*aidh* 7 do t*h*eic*h*etar [28] [uaid*h* 7 do im]g*h*ab*h* an Liat*h* Macha e. Et do b*h*aoi co [fraoc*h*da forniata fris].

5   'Uch, as fior sin,' *ar* Laeg*h*, 'is mana moruilc [d*h*am*h*sa 7 duit]si an t*air*ngire sin et ma ta olc a ngoire doitsi [ata d*h*am*h*sa] 7 ionan*n* sub*h*ach*us* et dub*h*ach*us* duin et a anam, dob an*n*am*h* gus aniu nac*h* a n-ag*h*aidh* na srianta 7 iom ag*h*aidh*si do tiocfad*h* sib*h*.'

     7 do g*h*ab*h* Laog*h* ag agall*amh* an L*eit*h 7 ic tab*h*air*t a teas*da* 7 a tuarasgb*h*ail 7

10 adub*h*air*t ría:

     'An*n*amh leat, a Liat*h* Mac*h*a morad*h*b*h*ail, g*an* saig*h*id*h* co s*r*ian go sriangairt*e* gan cuing carp*at* do cot*h*ug*adh* re coimeigean oir ba mear re mór cat*hadh*. Et ba hett*r*om aigentach a n-aenaig*h*ib*h* 7 b*á* breag*h*da co bandal*a* et b*h*eit*h* co nea*mh*gaib*h*t*h*ac*h* re huair n-anfac*h* no eccom*h*lain*n*. Dob an*n*am*h* let b*á* socair sog*h*ab*h*t*h*a re hion*n*saig*h*ad*h* agas re hanadh is leat ni ro mionca leat gan an*n*am a

15 L*eit*h. An*n*amh.'

     Et gid*h*ed*h* fos nír an*n* an Liat*h* Macha re Laog*h* an*n* sin et t*h*ainic Laog*h* d'ion*n*saig*h*id*h* Cu C*u*lainn et *da* in*n*is do nar an an Liat*h* Macha ris. Et do eirig*h* Cu C*u*lainn fein da gab*h*ail 7 nir an fris, 7 ba com*h*mór re maoldorn mil*idh* na

20 deora don*n*fola do sil*edh* dar a gr*u*aid*h* an L*eit*h, et t*h*ainic Laeg*h* don dara leith don Leith.

     'A Liat*h* Mac*h*a,' *ar* Laeg*h*, 'as cora d*h*uit mait*h* do d*h*eana*mh* aniug*h* ina g*ach* la ria*mh* roim*h*e.' Et atbeart an laoig*h* an*n*:

           Nirsat occlac*h* g*us* aniu

25   nir feimdis fo carp*at* do cuidb*adh*a

           cid*h* cian gan [lines breaks off unfinished]

           [29] Nirsat opt*ach* n-im*h*g*h*ona

           ni imgaib*h*thea cleatha

           do feadar imsgarad*h*

30   dam*h* is duit, a Leit*h* Macha.

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[344] Where BL Eg. 132 is damaged at the top outer corners of a page, readings have been supplied (in square brackets) from RIA 23 K 37, pp. 268-270, which is the second oldest manuscript in Group IV/a-2.

Gac*h* inadh a ndeachamar
's a rangadar ar mbeisa
ni facas co dibealta
sinde ag imteacht fo meala.

35   A Leit*h* Mac*h*a mer ab*h*b*h*ail
mor ccat*h* riam*h* *ar* ar imris
cora duit m*en*ma mait*h* aniog*h*
na gac*h* la riam*h* do rin*n*is.

On lait*he* do com*h*raicsiom
40   do com*h*raicsiot ar n-aisde
ni facas tu an droch scar
ní rab*h*ais ad*h*aig*h* taisce.

On lait*he* do com*h*ruicsiu*m*
do comraicsiut ar sgela
45   minic tu fat tig*h*erna
ar fad*h* maig*h*e lain lena.

An Dub*h* Saig*h*lean*n* sit*h*amh*ail*
minic i a ndal a coccn*aidh*
ba socair ba sognio*mh*a
50   ger bo dían nir bo togbaid.

Do an an Liat*h* Mac*h*a re Laeg*h* et do g*h*ab*h* a*n* Dub*h* S*h*aig*h*lean*n*, 7 do cur an carp*at* orra. Et do g*h*ab*h* ag in*n*eall et ag corug*h*ad*h* a c*h*leas et a ilfaob*h*air do gab*h* Cu Cul*ainn* a cat*h*b*h*ar*t* cat*h*a im a c*h*neas, et do g*h*ab*h* a rot*h*c*h*leas 7 a ardc*h*leas 7 a faob*h*urc*h*leas et a faob*h*arc*h*leas 7 a ub*h*allc*h*leas et a cleit*h*inc*h*les et a rit*h*rean*n*
55 7 a ilc*h*leas uile *ar* cean*n*a. Et do ling ina carp*at* g*an* cead*u*g*h* 7 do t*h*uit*edar* uile a *air*m uadha fan a c*h*osaib*h* is an carp*at* *co* *n*deac*h*adar as a ccoirig*ht.h*ib*h* siob*h*ail et as a mionad*h*hac*h* imbuailte 7 as a n-in*n*eall orduig*ht*he, 7 ba mícelm*ain*e mor leosam*h* sin *uile*.

Group IV/b-1 (NLS 72.1.38)

1   **[27]** Táinig Laog*h* roim*h*e do g*h*ab*h*ail na n-ec*h* 7 ni d*h*ech*aidh* riam*h* aonu*air* b*udh* leisge leis dol *dá* ngab*h*ail iona an u*air*sin et do c*r*oith na s*r*ianta *ar* a n-agh*aidh* 7 do t*h*eit*h*ed*ar* uád*h*a 7 do iomg*h*aib*h* an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a é 7 do b*h*i go fraoc*h*da foirníat*h*a f*r*is.

5   'Uc*h*! As fíor sin,' *ar* Láog*h*, 'as mana mór urrb*adh*a 7 uilc d*h*am*h*sa 7 duitsi an t*air*mg*air*e sin et ma ata olc a ngoire d*h*uitsi ata d*h*am*h*sa ór as ionann sub*h*ac*h*us 7 dub*h*ac*h*us dúin*n* et dob an*n*am*h* letsa gus aníu, a Léit*h*, nac*h* um agh*aidh*si 7 a n-agh*aidh* do ts*r*éin do t*h*iucfa.'

    7 do g*h*ab*h* Laogh *ar* an Léit*h* ag tab*hair*t a tú*arus*gb*h*ála ós *áird* 7 adub*er*t ría:

10   'Annam*h* let, a Léit*h* M*h*ac*h*a ad*h*b*h*al, go soig*h*ed*h* go s*r*anam*h* s*r*ang*hair*the gan cuing c*h*arbuid do c*h*ot*h*ug*h*adh* re coim*h*éig*in* ór ba m*ear* le mórcath*aibh* ba hedrom aigent*ach* a n-áon*aigh*ib*h* et ba breg*h*da go ban*n*ál*uibh* b*adh* soc*air* sogab*h*ala re hion*n*soid*h*e 7 le han*adh* t*h*ú 7 as let ro b*adh* mionca b*h*eit*h* go ném*h*g*h*áib*ht.h*ec*h* le hú*air* n-anf*adh* no éugcoml*ainn* an*n*am*h*.'

15   Et gid*hedh* fós níor an an Líat*h* M*h*ac*h*a le Laog*h* an*n* sin 7 táinig Laog*h*
d'ion*n*soid*h*e C*h*on gCuloin*n* 7 do in*n*is dó nár an an Líat*h* M*h*ac*h*a ris 7 do éir*igh*
Cú Culoin*n* féin dá gab*h*áil 7 níor an f*r*is et bá comór lé maoldor*n* milid*h* na deóra
don*n*f*h*ola do s*h*iled*h* t*a*r g*h*rúad*h*aibh an Léit*h* M*h*ac*h*a 7 táinig Láog*h* don d*a*ra
let*h* don Léit*h* M*h*ac*h*a.

20   'A Léit*h* M*h*ac*h*a,' ar sé, 'as córa d*h*úit mait*h* do d*h*én*a*m*h* aníu iona g*ach* aonlá
ria*mh* roim*h*us so.' 7 adb*er*t an l*a*oid*h*:

                Niórsad eagl*ach* gus aniogh
                níor lag fa c*h*a*r*bad do c*h*uidb*adh*
                gid*h* cían t*h*éig*h*m*h*ís ion g*ach conair*
25   níorsad obt*h*ach* n-iomg*h*oine.

                [N]iór g*h*áib*hthech* a gcléit*h* c*h*at*h*a
                do fed*ar* as iomsgar*adh*
     [28] d*h*am*h*sa duit, a Leit*h* M*h*ac*h*a,
                ttangad*ar ar* ttiolaite. [*sic* for 'ttio[dh]lait[h]e']

30   Gac*h* ion*adh* 'na ndec*h*om*ar*
                sa rangad*ar ar* sgéula
                ní f*h*acaid*h* nec*h* gan diog*h*b*á*il
                sin*n*e ag imt*hecht* fa m*h*éula.

                A Léit*h* M*h*ac*h*a m*h*er ad*h*b*h*al,
35   as mór gcat*h* ríam*h* do siris
                córa men*m*a maith anois
                no aonla ríam*h* da rabois.

                [O]n lait*h*e do c*h*om*h*ruigsiom
                ar aon 7 *ar* n-aisdé
                ni f*h*ac*us* tusa a ndroc*h*sgur
40   is ní rab*h*us a ngaisde.

                [O]n lait*h*e do c*h*om*h*ruigsiod
                ar aon 7 *ar* sgeula
                meinic tu f*ar* ttiug*er*na
                ar fud m*h*uig*h*e lain leuna.

45   [A]n Dub*h* Saoilen*n* sit*h*em*h*uil
                meinic í a ndáil c*h*om*h*dála
                bá socuir bá soig*h*níom*h*a
                g*ur* d*h*ían níor d*h*óg*h*ab*á*l.

    [D]o an an Líat*h* M*h*ac*h*a re Láog*h* an*n* sin 7 do g*h*ab*h* an Dub*h* Sáoilen*n* na
50 díaig*h* et do c*h*uir an c*a*rbad ort*h*a *ar* aon. 7 do g*h*ab*h* ag in*n*eall a c*h*les 7 ag
cór*ugh*adh a *a*rm 7 a iolf*h*aob*h*air et do g*h*ab*h* Cú Culoinn a c*h*ait*h*b*h*eirt c*h*at*h*a
um a c*h*nes et do g*h*ab*h* a roit*h*c*h*les 7 a *air*dc*h*les 7 a f*h*áob*h*airc*h*les 7 a
ub*h*oillc*h*les 7 a c*h*léitínc*h*les 7 a rit*h*ren*n* 7 a ilc*h*lesa uile *ar* c*h*ena et do ling iona
c*h*a*r*bad g*an* c*h*edug*h*adh 7 do t*h*uitedar a airm úad*h*a uile fana c*h*os*a*ibh san
gc*a*rbad go ndec*h*odar as a gcóir*igh*t*h*ibh siubh*a*il 7 as a n-ion*n*uib*h* iombúailte 7 as
55 an in*n*ell órduig*ht*he 7 ba cealm*h*oine m*h*ór uile leósan sin.

Group IV/b-2 (NLI G 18)

1   **[354]** Do táin*ig* Laoig*h* roim*h*e do g*h*ab*h*ail na n-eac*h* ag*us* ní t*h*ainig riam*h* aon uair b*udh* leisge leis dul da ngab*h*ail an uair sin ag*us* do c*h*rot*h* na srianta air an b*h*fat*h*a ag*us* do t*h*eit*h*edar na heic*h* uad*h*a ag*us* do iomgaib*h* an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a é ag*us* do b*h*í go fraoc*h*da forniadta fris.

5   'Uc*h*, as fíor sin,' ar Laoig*h*, 'ag*us* man*a* morurbad*h*a dam*h*sa ag*us* duitsi an tar*n*gaire **[355]** sin ag*us* ma ata olc a ngaire d*h*uitsi ata d*h*am*h*sa oir is ionan*n* sub*h*ac*h*us 7 dub*h*ac*h*us duin*n* ag*us* dob anam*h* leatsa, a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a, nac*h* u*m* aigh*idh*si 's a n-aigh*idh* do sriain do t*h*iocfá.'

Ag*us* do g*h*ab*h* Laoig*h* ar an Léit*h* ag tab*er*t a tuar*us*gb*h*ala os áird:

10   'Do b*udh* anam*h* leatsa, a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h* ad*h*b*h*al, go soigh*edh* go srian*aibh* go sriang*h*arrt*h*a g*an* cuing*e* carb*a*d do c*h*ot*h*ug*adh* re com*h*eigion oir ba mear le mor cat*h*aib*h* ba eadrom aigeantac*h* a n-aonuig*h*ib*h* ag*us* b*udh* breag*h*d*h*a go ban*n*aluib*h* ba soc*h*ar sog*h*ab*h*ala re hionsuigh*e* ag*us* re han*adh* tú ag*us* is leat ro b*udh* minic b*h*eith go neam*h*g*h*aib*h*teac*h* re huair n-anf*or*lann no eagc*h*om*h*lainn.'

15   Ag*us* gid*h*eadh fós nior fan an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a leis. Iar sin tainig Laoig*h* d'ion*n*suigh*e* C*u* C*u*lainn ag*us* d'in*n*is do nar f*h*an an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a leis. Iar sin d'eir*igh* C*u* C*u*lainn fein da gab*h*ail ag*us* nior f*h*an fris, ag*us* ba com*h* mor re maold*h*orn mil*edh* na deora don*n*a f*h*ola da sil*edh* an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a tar a gruad*h*uib*h*. Ag*us* tainig Laoig*h* don dara leit*h* don Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a, ag*us* adub*er*t:

20   'As cora duitsi mat*h* do d*h*eanam*h* aniug*h* na aon la eile roim*h*e aniug*h* riam*h*.' Is dub*h*er*t an laoid*h* seo síos:

            Niorsad eaglac*h* g*us* aniod*h*.
            nior lag fa c*h*arp*a*t do c*h*uidb*h*e
            ge cian do teig*h*maois ion gac*h* conair
25   niors*a*d obt*h*ac*h* n-iom*h*g*h*oine.

            Nior g*h*aib*h*t*h*eac*h* a ccleit*h* c*h*at*h*a
            do f*h*ead*ar* as iomsgarad*h*
            dam*h*sa is duit, a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a
            tangad*ar* ar ttiog*h*lait*h*e.

30   Imt*h*eac*h*t fa meal*a* in gac*h* ionad na deac*h*amair
            sa rangad*ar* ar sgeul*a*
            ní fac*h*ad*h* neac*h* gan diog*h*b*h*ail
            sin*n*e ag*us*...

            An Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a m*h*earad*h*b*h*uil
35   as mór ccat*h* riam*h* do s*h*iris
            cora meanma m*h*at*h* anois
            na aon la riam*h* da rab*h*uis.

            On lait*h*e do c*h*om*h*ruigsiom
            ar aon ag*us* ar n-aisge...

40   Ge lain*e* léana on lait*h*e do com*h*ruigs*a*d
            ar aon 7 *ar* sgeula
            minic t*h*ú fár ttiag*er*na
            ar fad m*h*us...

An Dub*h* Saol*ann*

45   b*udh* soc*h*ar b*udh* sognaoim*h*ac*h*

ger d*h*ian nior dogabal*a*...

D'fan a*n* Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a re Laoig*h* an sin ag*us* do g*h*ab*h* an Dub*h* Saol*ann* na d*h*iaig ag*us* do c*h*uir an carbad orra ar aon ag*us* do g*h*ab*h* ag ionuill a c*h*leas ag*us* ag corug*h*ad*h* a arm ag*us* a iolf*h*aob*h*ar ag*us* do gab*h* C*u* C*u*lainn a c*h*at*h*b*h*arr cat*h*a

50   uime a c*h*neas ag*us* do g*h*ab*h* [356] a roit*h*c*h*leas ag*us* ardc*h*leas ag*us* a ub*h*alc*h*leas ag*us* a faob*h*arc*h*leas ag*us* a cleitínc*h*leas ag*us* a rit*h*rean*n*c*h*leas ag*us* a uilc*h*leas uile air ceana. Ag*us* do ling iona carba*d* gan c*h*eadug*h*ad*h* ag*us* do tuitiod*ar* a airm uad*h*a uile fa na c*h*osaib*h* san ccarp*a*t go ndeac*h*ad*ar* as a ccoir*igh*t*h*ib*h* siob*ail* ag*us* as a n-ionad*aibh* io*m*buaillte ag*us* ion*n*ioll ordaig*h*t*h*e, ag*us* ba ceilm*h*uine mór leo

55   sin uile sin.

Group IV/b-3 (BL Eg. 150)

1   [304] Do táin*idh* a*ir* an b*h*fait*h*c*h*e, et do c*h*roit*h* na sriain mar b*udh* gnait*h* leis, et do t*h*eit*h*iod*ar* na heic*h* roim*h*e, is do img*h*aib*h* an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a é go fraoc*h*d*h*a fo*ir*niata.

'Uc*h* uc*h*, a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a,' *ar* Laog*h*, 'ma ta olc a ng*ar* d*h*uitsi atá d*h*am*h*sa, oir

5   is ionan sub*h*ac*h*us et dúb*h*c*h*us duin.'

7 do g*h*aib*h* iar sin ag tab*h*airt tuarr*us*gab*h*ál*a* na Léit*h* M*h*ac*h*a os ard, et adub*er*t:

'Ana*m*h* leatsa, a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a, ád*h*b*h*al gan soig*h*ed*h* ga srian g*an* srian g*h*árt*h*a gan cuind c*a*rbaid c*h*ut*h*ug*adh* re cóiméigion, óir ba mear le morc*h*at*h*aib*h*

10   b*udh* heattrim aigiontac*h* le haont*h*uig*h*ib*h* et b*udh* b*r*eag*h*da go banaluib*h* riam*h* soc*air* so g*h*ab*h*ála re hion*n*suide, et ni t*h*ain*idh* tu riam*h* u*air* is fearr na anois (is) is leat b*udh* gnat*h*ac*h* b*eith* nea*m*hg*h*aib*h*t*h*eac*h* an a*m* eigin no éagcom*h*lainn.'

Gid*h*ed*h* fós níor f*h*an an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*h*a fris. Iar [305] sin do eirg*h*id*h* Cu C*o*lann fein dá gab*h*áil, et níor f*h*an fris. Et ba co*m*mh*ór re maoldorn*n* míl*idh* na

15   déora don*n*f*h*ola do sill*ed*h* an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a t*ar* a g*h*ruaid*h*aib*h* an tráit*h* do c*h*unairc an cur*adh* Cú C*h*ollan*n*. Iar sin táin*ed*h* Laog*h* *ar* an leith oile don Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a, et adub*er*t se:

'A Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a, b*udh* córa d*h*uitsi mait*h* do d*h*eanam*h* aniu na aonla eile roim*h*e riam*h*.' Et adub*er*t an laoi no an rosg so síos:

20   Niorsad eglach roi*m*h aniu

nior lag fa c*h*arpba*d* do c*h*uib*adh*

ge cian do t*h*eig*h*maois an gac*h* conair

níorsa*d* obt*h*ac*h* n-ea*m*hguine.

Nior g*h*aib*h*t*h*eac*h* a ccleit*h* catha

25   do f*h*ed*ar* a iomsgarra

dam*h*sa is duitsi, a Liat*h* M*h*acha

tangad*ar* ar tteag*h*laigt*h*uige.

Imt*h*es fa m*h*eala in gac*h* iona*d* da ndeac*h*mu*ir*

so rangadar ar sgeala

30   ni f*h*ac*h*ad*h* neac*h* gan diogb*h*ail

sine ag..

A Leit*h* M*h*ac*h*a m*er* ab*hb*al
is mor ccat*h* riam*h* do siris
córa meanmna mait*h* anois
na aon la riam*h* da rab*h*uis.

35

On laet*h*i do c*h*óm*h*ruicsiom
ar aon is ar n-aisde
ni feac*us* tusa a ndroc*h*sgor
is ni rab*h*uis [306] a n-aisge.

40

Ge lain lait*h*e an lena do c*h*om*h*ruicsiod
ar aon *ar* aon sgeula.
minic tú fá *ar* ttiag*her*na
ar fat na mu...

An Dub*h* F*h*aoilean*n*
45
b*udh* soc*air* bu sog*h*níomac*h*
ger d*h*ian nior d*h*og*h*ab*h*ala...

D'fan an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a re Laog*h* M*a*c Riang*h*ab*hr*a an*n* sin et do g*h*aib*h* an Dub*h* F*h*aoilean*n* na diaig et do g*h*aib*h* ag ionioll a c*h*arpbaid et a c*h*leasa a arm et a iolf*h*aob*h*air. Iar sin do g*h*aib*h* Cu C*h*ollan*n* a c*h*at*hb*har catha uime a c*h*neas
50 cruit*h*aluin*n* et do g*h*aib*h* a róc*h*leas 7 a uib*h*aillc*h*leas, a f*h*aob*har*chleas, a c*h*leit*h*ínchleas 7 a rit*hr*eanchleas et a ilec*h*leasa uile *ar* céad*h*na. 7 do ling iona c*h*a*r*bad gan ceadug*h*ad*h* et *air* sin do t*h*uitiod*ar* a c*h*leasa luit*h* uile fan a c*h*osuib*h* san ccarp*a*t go ndeac*h*ad*ar* as an ionad catha et iomb*h*uailte.

Observations and Analysis

The very first impression of the above passage from our various groups of course is that I and II seem to correspond very closely, as do to a certain extent IV/a-1, IV/a-2, IV/b-1 and IV/b-2. On the other hand, IV/b-3 seems to display the greatest number of variations in comparison with the other groups, and at times seems to abridge the narrative. Group III agrees with Group I in the omission of the poem *Níorsad eaglach gus aniugh*. It would be superfluous to discuss every single textual variation in detail, and it shall suffice here to point to a number of them.

The variation found in the preceding prose passage from our representative manuscripts can be divided into four subgroups: general lexical variation, lexical omissions and additions, phrasal omissions / additions and inflectional differences.

General lexical variations include *ní tháinig ~ ní deachaidh*; interchangeability of *do sheachuin ~ d'eimig ~ do imghaibh*; *coinne ~ aighidh*; *donnfhleocha ~ donnfola*. These four instances occur within our groups as follows:

I	[l.1] ní tháin*ig*	[l.3] do s*heach*uin	[l.7] a ccoin*ne*	[l.17] don*nf h*ola
II	[l.1] ni deach*aidh*	[l.3] do sec*h*uin	[l.6] a ccoin*ne*	[l.18] don*nf h*ola
III	[l.1] ni deach*aidh*	[l.3] d'eimig	[l.7] a ccoine	[l.16] doin*nf h*liuc*h*a
IV/a-1	[l.1] ni dech*aidh*	[l.3] do s*heach*ain	[l.8] a n-ag*aidh*	[l.20] don*n*fola
IV/a-2	[l.1] ní deac*h*aig*h*	[l.3] do img*h*ab*h*	[l.7] a n-agh*aidh*	[l.20] don*n*fola
IV/b-1	[l.1] ni d*hech*aidh*	[l.3] do iomg*h*aib*h*	[l.8] a n-agh*aidh*	[l.20] don*nf h*ola
IV/b-2	[l.1] ní t*h*ain*ig*	[l.3] do iomgaib*h*	[l.8] a n-aigh*idh*	[l.18] don*na f h*ola
IV/b-3	-n/a-	[l.2] do img*h*aib*h*	-n/a-	[l.15] don*nf h*ola

In a subgroup of omissions and additions we may differentiate between lexical additions within the same semantic range where the addition embellishes or adds to a preceding or following lexical item, such as I [l.26] *bá cealmhuine 7 drochthuar* where all other groups (except IV/b-3, which omits this completely) simply have *ba cealmhuine mor* or, in the case of IV/a-1 [l.54] and IV/a-2 [l.57], *bá mícealmaine mór*.

Phrasal omissions, or additions, can be observed in II [l.6] and IV/a-2 [l.7], both adding the address *a anuim*, IV/a-1 [l.8] even adding *a anam, a Léith Macha*, where all other passages just continue the narrative without this interjection.

Finally, as an example of a seemingly erroneous scribal omission we can cite IV/a-1 [l.4], which gives *7 do fraochda* where we find *7 do bhi [go] fraochda* elsewhere. We can speculate that the omission in IV/a-1 of *bhi go* is due to the scribe's eye having jumped to the final *o* of *go*.

As a final example of a lexical variation, but where there is a derivational relationship between both forms, we can observe variation between *gar* and *gaire* / *goire* : I [l.6], II [l.5] and IV/b-3 [l.4] give *a ngar* where III [l.6], IV/a-1 [l.7], IV/a-2 [l.6] and IV/b-1 [l.6] have *a ngoire* and IV/b-2 [l.6] *a ngaire*.

<u>Grammatical variation</u> can be subdivided into prepositional and verbal variation. In the former group we can point to instances of variation between older *fris* (II [l.15], IV/a-1 [l.4], IV/a-2 [l.19], IV/b-1/2/3 [ll.17/17/13]) and innovative *ris* (I [l.16], III [ll.14, 15], IV/a-1 [l.22]). Note that *fris* ~ *ris* variation occurs within manuscripts of each group, also.

With regard to <u>verbal variation</u> we can distinguish between general verbal and preverbal variation, such as

I	[l.15] d'in*n*is
II	[l.14] táinig da in*n*sin
III	[l.14] d'in*n*is
IV/a-1	[l.19] ro in*n*is
IV/a-2	[l.18] *da* in*n*is
IV/b-1	[l.16] do in*n*is
IV/b-2	[l.16] d'in*n*is
IV/b-3	-n/a-

or a rather more complex variation involving tense (past ~ historical present) – note especially the historical present in Group I:

I	[l.16] téid
II	[l.15] do c*h*uaig*h*
III	[l.14] d'eig*h*rig
IV/a-1	[l.19] do eir*igh*
IV/a-2	[l.18] do eirig*h*
IV/b-1	[l.16] do éir*igh*
IV/b-2	[l.17] d'eir*igh*
IV/b-3	[l.13] do eirg*hidh*

In the two examples of verbal variation, note also the variation between Classical *do* and vernacular *d'* before vowels, the latter found in Groups III and IV/b-2.

Two instances of variation involving analytic and synthetic verbal forms and person as well as variation between the preverbs *ro* and *do* are worth pointing out:

I	[l.20] d'f*h*an
II	[l.25] do f*h*an
III	[l.20] ró f*h*an
IV/a-1	[l.49] do f*h*an
IV/a-2	[l.51] do an
IV/b-1	[l.49] do an
IV/b-2	[l.47] d'fan
IV/b-3	[l.47] d'fan

In the second instance, note especially the 2nd person singular synthetic conditional form in IV/b-1 and b-2 for analytic plural forms for manuscripts in all other groups:

I	[l.7] do t*h*iocfad*h* sib*h*
II	[l.6] do tiocfad sib*h*
III	[l.7] do t*h*iocfad*h* sib*h*
IV/a-1	[l.9] do t*h*iucfa*dh* sib*h*
IV/a-2	[l.8] do tiocfad*h* sib*h*
IV/b-1	[l.8] do t*h*iucfa
IV/b-2	[l.8] do t*h*iocfá
IV/b-3	-n/a-

Interesting also is an instance where IV/a-1 [l.20] retains the older equitive *ba meidighter* where elsewhere we find a modern periphrastic *ba comór*. In this context it is worth noting that in terms of orthography we find that IV/a-1 generally seems to favour older spellings / forms (possibly archaising) such as *lais* where *leis* occurs elsewhere, and a scribal tendency in the same manuscript to use 'p' / 'ph' for 'b' to represent the labial fricative 'bh': *raiphe*, *gapail*, *uphall*. In the passage from IV/a-2, in lines 1, 5, 20 and 51, we can note also the use of older *ae* for more modern *ao* as in *Laegh* for *Laogh*

Variation in <u>adjectives</u> worth noting include *fíornimhneach* (Group I, l.4) ~ *foirniata* (which occurs in all our other groups in various spelling variations); as an example of <u>nominal variation</u> it is worth pointing to *do neach* (Group I, l.23) which occurs with a pre-modifier *aon* as *d'aoinnech / d'aoineach* in II [l.30] and III [l.24] and has been completely omitted in the manuscripts of Group IV.

An instance of active vs. passive in combination with lexical variation is found where Groups I [l.21] and III [l.21] have the passive *do cuire(a)dh* for the active *do chuaidh* (II [l.26]) and *do c(h)uir* in all manuscripts of Group of IV (except in IV/b-3, where it is omitted). Finally, we can note variation between plural *da ngabháil* (II, l.15) and singular *dá gabháil* (I, l.16 / III, l.15 / IV/a-1, l.20 / IV/a-2, l.19 / IV/b-1, l.17 / IV/b-2, l.17 / IV/b-3, l.14).

Considering the number of manuscripts examined and the period of time they cover (the oldest here dating to 1684 and the youngest to 1774), textual discrepancies are only to be expected. Looking at the examples above, however, we can conclude that while a detailed analysis illustrates a large degree of variation, this does not actually impact on the overall textual narrative or content in a significant way. Group IV/b-3 is exceptional as here, in contrast to the other groups, we seem to have abbreviation of the text to a certain degree. Despite this, the overall narrative is still largely intact, and no vital elements have been omitted or lost.

Most examples quoted to illustrate the variation that occurs between our groups have been taken from the actual prose narrative. The main variation, as even a first impression of the passages will show, occurs, however, within the poetry and the 'rhetoric'. The poetry has already been discussed in this thesis in sections 3.2 and 3.3; nevertheless, a few points may be mentioned here. The omission of the poem *Níorsad eaglach gus aniugh* in Groups I and III is in keeping with those groups' overall smaller number of poems. Group II gives only one stanza whereas in Group IV we find between six and seven stanzas. The one stanza present in Group II is arguably the one most relevant to the prose passage in the context of which it occurs; it is the stanza directly addressing the Liath Macha. While the full poem in Group IV may give

some additional information as to the feats of the Liath Macha, and generally reinforces the sense of drama, the single stanza in III is sufficient to give weight to Laogh's address. With regard to the events of the passage, however, the lack of poetry (or stanzas) does not have an impact on the text in a sense that it significantly 'adds' or 'subtracts' from the narrative. While the poem may be a good example of poetry being used in a prose context to mark 'heightened tension', it does not 'make or break' the tale, so to speak, and any reader of a manuscript from Group I could follow the tale just as well without missing out on crucial information.

In the cases of Groups IV/b-2 and b-3, this specific poem is another good example for the occurrence of transposed and omitted lines within a stanza. In comparison with other versions, the poem in Groups IV/b-2 and b-3 may seem rather haphazard and unstructured, although it still largely contains the same lines. In certain stanzas, however, this results in disruption of the metrical structure and loss of the poetic and rhythmical flow of the other, 'correct', versions. All this is probably best illustrated by presenting the six poems side by side. Groups I and III are not included in the table as the poem does not occur in these groups; the poem in its 'transposed' state in sub-groups IV/b-2 and b-3 has been laid out as it stands in the respective manuscripts. For further discussion of the poem in the various groups see sections 3.2.1-3; the transposition within this particular poem in sub-groups IV/b-2 and b-3 is discussed in section 3.2.4.

II	IV/a-1	IV/a-2	IV/b-1	IV/b-2	IV/b-3
	Nírsat og*lach* n-uir m*h*eata, gus aniu riam*h* nír eim*h*gis do c*h*arp*at* do c*h*uin le at*h*an, gid*h* gar no cian do teigmis.	Nirsat occlac*h* g*us* aniu nir feimdis fo carp*at* do cuidb*adha* cid*h* cian g*an* teig*h*mis.	Níórsad eag*lach* g*us* aniogh níor lag fa c*har*bad do c*h*uidb*adh* gid*h* cían t*h*éig*h*m*h*ís ion g*ach* conair níorsad obt*h*ach niomg*h*oine.	Nior sad eag*lach* g*us* aniod*h*. nior lag fa c*h*arp*at* do c*h*uidb*he* ge cian do teig*h*maois ion gac*h* conair niorsad obt*h*ach niom*h*g*h*oine.	Niorsad eglach roim*h* aniu nior lag fa c*h*arp*ba*d do c*h*uib*adh* ge cian do t*h*eig*h*maois an gac*h* conair níorsad obt*h*ac*h* nea*mh*guine.
	Níorsat obt*ach* nio*mgh*ona, ní img*h*ab*h*t*h*a ar ccleit*he* do feadar is imc*ar*ad*h*, dam*h*sa 7 duit, a Leit*he*.	Nir sat opt*ach* nim*h*g*h*ona ni imgaib*h*thea cleatha do feadar imsgarad*h* dam*h* is duit, a Leit*h* Macha.	[N]íór g*h*áib*h*t*h*ec*h* a gcléit*h* c*h*at*h*a do fed*ar* as iomsgar*adh* d*h*am*h*sa duit, a Leit*h* M*h*ac*h*a, ttangad*ar ar* ttiolait[h]e.	Nior g*h*aib*h*t*h*eac*h* a ccleit*h* c*h*at*h*a do f*h*edar as iomsgarad*h* dam*h*sa is duit, a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a tangad*ar ar* ttiog*h*lait*he*.	Nior g*h*aib*h*t*h*eac*h* a ccleit*h* Catha do f*h*edar a iomsgarra dam*h*sa is duitsi, a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a tangad*ar ar* tteag*h*laigt*h*uige.
	Gac*h* ionad*h* na deac*h*amar, 's a rangat*ar* ar mbesa ar ttosca fa deag*h* t*h*apad*h* mber*a* go brat*h* ar scela.	Gac*h* inadh a ndeachamar 's a rangad*ar* ar mbeisa ni facas co dibealta sinde ag imteacht fo meala.	Gac*h* ionad*h* 'na ndec*h*omar 's a rangad*ar ar* sgéula ní f*h*acaid*h* nec*h* gan diog*h*báil sin*n*e ag imt*h*ec*h*t fa m*h*éula.	Imt*h*eac*h*t fa meal*a* in gac*h* ionad na [ndeac*h*amair sa rangad*ar* ar sgeula ní fac*h*ad*h* neac*h* gan diog*h*b*h*ail sin*n*e ag*us*	Imt*h*es fa m*h*eala in gac*h* ionad da [ndeac*h*mu*ir* so rangadar ar sgeala ni f*h*ac*h*ad*h* neac*h* gan diogb*h*ail. Sine ag
A Leit*h* M*h*ac*h*a merad*h*b*h*uil, mór ccat*h* ria*mh* ar ar imris cora d*h*uit mórm*h*enma a niog*h*, na gac*h* la ria*mh* do rinis.	A Leit*h* Mac*h*a m*h*ear adb*ail* mór ccat*h* riam*h* a rim bris cora aniug*h* gnio*mh* deag*h*ag*h*m*h*a*i* nag ac*h* lá riam*h* do rignis.	A Leit*h* Mac*h*a merab*h*b*h*ail mor ccat*h* riam*h* a*r* ar imris cora duit m*e*nma mait*h* aniog*h* na gac*h* la riam*h* do rin*n*is.	A Léit*h* M*h*ac*h*a m*h*er ad*h*b*h*al, as mór gcat*h* ríam*h* do siris córa men*m*a mait*h* anois no aonla ríam*h* da rabois.	An Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a m*h*earad*h*b*h*uil as mór ccat*h* riam*h* do s*h*iris cora meanma m*h*at*h* anois na aon la riam*h* da rab*h*uis.	A Leit*h* M*h*ac*h*a m*e*rab*h*b*h*al is mor ccat*h* riam*h* do siris córa meanma mait*h* anois na aon la riam*h* da rab*h*uis.
	On lait*he* do roc*h*t amuir do c*h*om*h*raicset ar naisde níor f*h*agbuis na droc*h* scor*adh* 's ní rabois ad*h*a a ttr*o*isce.	On lait*he* do com*h*raicsiom do com*h*raicsiot ar naisde ni facas tu an droc*h* scar ní rab*h*ais ad*h*aig*h* taisce.	[O]n lait*he* do c*h*om*h*ruigsiom *ar* aon 7 *ar* n-aisdé ni f*h*acus tusa a ndroc*h*sgur is ní rab*h*us a ngaisde.	On lait*he* do c*h*om*h*ruigsiom *ar* aon ag*us* *ar* n-aisge	On laet*hi* do c*h*óm*h*ruicsiom araon is ar n-aisde ni feac*us* tusa a ndroc*h*sgor is ni rab*h*uis a n-aisge.
		On lait*he* do com*h*ruicsiu*m* do comraicsiut ar sgela minic tu fat tig*h*erna ar fad*h* maig*h*e lain lena.	[O]n lait*he* do c*h*om*h*ruigsiod *ar* aon 7 *ar* sgeula meinic tu f*ar* ttiugerna ar fud m*h*uig*h*e lain leuna.	Ge lain*e* léana on lait*he* do com*h*ruigsad ar aon 7 *ar* sgeula minic t*h*ú fár ttiag*er*na ar fad m*h*us	Ge lain lait*he* an lena do com*h*ruicsiod araon *ar* aon sgeula. minic tú fá *ar* ttiag*h*erna ar fat na
	An Dub*h* Silion*n* sit*h*am*h*uil minic í a ndáil a codn*adh* bá socair a síor rat*h*a ger bo luat*h* ag leim fogl*aim*.	An Dub*h* Saig*h*lean*n* sit*h*am*h*ail* minic i andal a coccn*adh* ba socair ba sognio*mh*a ger bo dían nir bo togbaid.	[A]n Dub*h* Saoilen*n* sit*h*em*h*uil meinic í a ndáil c*h*om*h*dála bá socuir bá soig*h*níom*h*a gur d*h*ían níor d*h*óg*h*ab*á*l*a*.	An Dub*h* Saolan*n* b*udh* soc*h*ar b*udh* sognaoim*h*ac*h* ger d*h*ian nior dogabala.	An Dub*h* F*h*aoilean*n* b*udh* soc*air* bu sog*h*níomac*h* ger d*h*ian nior d*h*og*h*ab*h*ala.

<u>Analysis of the 'rhetoric' *Annamh leat...*</u>

We will now shift our focus away from the entire textual passage and turn to look at the 'rhetoric' *Annamh leat...*. The 'rhetoric' is given again below for each group, but this time set out according to discernible alliterative units. As will become apparent, this works better with some manuscript versions of the 'rhetorics' than with others, but generally helps to provide a sense of structure. This of course is only one way of presenting the 'rhetorics'; other approaches might be just as valid and the approach favoured below should therefore be seen as a method for analysing structural characteristics of the 'rhetoric'. We have already anticipated that with this 'rhetoric', as well with that in the next case study, an underlying original can most likely be detected in the manuscripts in Group IV; we will, however, keep the analysis in the order of the manuscripts groups.

<u>Group I (RIA 23 M 25)</u>

1   Dob an*n*am*h* *l*eatsa, // a *L*iat*h* *Mh*ac*h*a, // an *me*ar*ú*gh*adh* sin,
    gan ion*n*súig*h*e do s*h*rianta go siang*h*air*eac*h*,
    7 g*an* cuing do c*h*arb*a*t c*h*u*ar*dúgh*adh*
    oi*r* bá me*ar* ré mórc*h*at*h*aib*h* t*h*ú.   {7 adub*her*t Laog*h* arís:}
5   A Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a,   {*ar* sé}
    bá héd*h*trom aigion*n*tac*h* a n-aonúig*h*ib*h* t*h*ú,
    bá bréad*h*a sog*h*ab*h*ála ré h*eadh* n-anf*h*órluin*n*.'

On rearranging the elements of the 'rhetoric' according to alliterative units, or clusters, and removing the speech interjections (here presented within set brackets { }), we can see a certain structure emerging. The first line, of course, could easily be split again, as indicated here by //. Alliteration in this first line has been marked in colour to illustrate how, on splitting the line into three, we would still retain linking alliteration between the lines: *leatsa-Liath*, *Macha-mearúghadh*. Equally, in the second, third and seventh lines, there is alliteration between the last two stressed words; here we can also consistently note three syllables in the words in final position.[345] The preponderance of trisyllabic cadences at the end of lines suggests the possibility of emending lines 4 and 6: where we find *thú* in final position. We could emend in two ways in order to leave trisyllables at the end of lines 4 and 6: in line 4, by placing *thú* leftwards to follow *mear*, and in line 6 for *thú* to follow *aigionntach* – note that this is how the corresponding line in Group II reads (see below). Alternatively, we might suggest deleting *thú* in both cases and, given the likely age of the text, replace *bá* with a synthetic older copula

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[345] The common occurrence of trisyllabic end-words or cadences in the older type of rhythmical and alliterative verse have been noted in C. Watkins, 'Indo-European Metrics and Archaic Irish Verse', *Celtica* 6 (1963), pp. 194-249, *passim*.

form, *robsa*, *bat* or *robsat*.[346] The emendation would not only give a trisyllable in final position, but alliteration between the last stressed words in both lines (this extends even further, as is the case in line 3). Line 5 interrupts the flow of the 'rhetoric' slightly, but interestingly this particular line occurs right in between the speech interjections, which have a similar effect in disrupting the otherwise quite consistent structure. Also note the three-fold alliteration in line 6.

Group II (RIA 23 K 7)

1 Dob an*n*am*h* letsa sin, a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a, {air sé}
    an merug*adh* sin do b*h*eit*h* ort
    g*an* ion*n*suid*h*e do srianta go siang*h*airec*h*
    7 coing do c*har*buit do c*h*u*ar*dug*adh*
5 u*air* ba mer re morc*h*at*h*aibh t*h*u.
    7 a Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a,   {*ar* se}
    ba headtt*r*om aigent*h*ac*h* t*h*u a n-aonuig*h*ib*h*
    7 bá breag*h*a sog*h*ab*h*ála re hion*n*suid*ú*ib*h* n-anf*h*órluin*n*.

The 'rhetoric' here is very similar to that in Group I, and most of the analysis above applies here, also: we have linking alliteration between lines 1 and 2 (*Macha-merugadh*), a preponderance of trisyllabic words towards the end of lines and line-internal alliteration (with as much as three alliterating words occurring in lines 4 and 7). The most striking differences are that in line 2 we have an additional *do bheith ort* which – consistently occurring in all manuscripts in Group II – seems to fill out the line, and further a change in line 7: *thu* has been moved from its ultimate position in Group I so that the line here now ends in a trisyllabic word. This may represent a scribal correction in order to preserve the metrical structure, i.e. lines ending predominantly in trisyllables – a 'correction' we had already suggested for Group I above – but could also be a modern adaption of an older synthetic form. The occurrence of *thu* at the end of the line has been retained, however, in line 5, which corresponds to line 4 in Group I (see above for suggested emendation). The speech interjections are distributed slightly differently, yet they are present in both Groups I and II, interrupting the 'rhetoric'.

Group III (RIA 23 H 16)

1 A Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a,   {*air* se}
    b*udh* héadrom aigiontac*h* tu a n-ion*n*uig*h*ib*h*,
    7 b*udh* b*h*reag*h*a le bandáluib*h*

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[346] Cf. L. Breatnach, 'An Mhéan-Ghaeilge' in K. McCone et al. (eds), *Stair na Gaeilge in Ómós do Pádraig Ó Fiannachta* (Maigh Nuad, 1994), p. 324, §12.194; also, *GOI*, p. 490, §810.

et b*udh* soc*air* sog*h*ab*h*al*a* le hio*nn*saig*ht*h*ib*h*
5   7 is leat b*udh* m*h*io*nn*ca b*h*eit*h* neam*h*g*h*aib*h*t*h*ec*h*
re hu*air* an f*h*orloi*nn* 7 éagcom*h*lan*n*.

In the 'rhetoric' in Group III, we notice the textual differences to the texts in Groups I and II. While there are clear correspondences, the 'rhetoric' here begins with what is the ending in Groups I and II, and then goes on to introduce elements lacking in the latter two groups. The only speech interjection occurs right at the beginning; if we took this away completely and imagined that the 'rhetoric' started with *budh héadrom* it could be argued that there appears to be a link to the concluding *éagcomhlann*, the *é* being echoed. Trisyllables occur at the end of every line, alliteration is more or less consistent, with the exception of lines 1 and 5. Alliteration, however, is not always between the final and preceding stressed word in a line (cf. line 4). *Bhreagha* in l. 3 in the context of this line alliterates whereas in Groups I and II (lines 7 and 8 respectively) *breagha* is followed by *soghabhala*; in Group III this only occurs in the next line. In Group III, then, we have more detail, and the overall structure appears neater than in Groups I and II, although it lacks in places the alliteration of the last stressed word. We can illustrate the 'rhetoric' as it occurs here in Group III schematically, thus showing its apparent structural consistency. Superscript 'A' refers to alliteration, X to stressed syllables, and X_ _ to trisyllables.

$$
\begin{array}{lll}
X & X & \\
X^A & X^A & X^A{}_-{}_- \\
\cancel{O} & X^A & X^A{}_-{}_- \\
X^A & X^A & X{}_-{}_- \\
X & X & X{}_-{}_- \\
X^A & X^A & X^A{}_-{}_-
\end{array}
$$

Group IV/a-1 (NLS 72.2.9)

1   Anam*h* let, // a Lét*h* M*ac*h*a,
g*an* mo*r*adp*ar* d'ionds*uigh*i,
g*an* sóis*edh* go s*r*iang*h*ot*ach*
's co cuing carb*ad* com*h*lut*h*m*ar*,
5   do cot*h*ug*adh* re coi*mh*eirge,
oir bad me*ar*, ré mórc*h*ath*aibh*,
's bad ettro*m* *ár*d aigent*ach*
an dal*a* a ndeg*h* aon*aigh*uib*h*,
bad breag*dh*a go bandal*aibh*,
10   bad soc*ar* co soc*ar*uib*h*,
bad sog*h*ab*ht*h*a ré saor*ár*aibh,
re han*n*, re hoirisio*mh*,
as lib*h* ro bú rom*h*ionca
b*eith* go ne*ar*tm*h*ar nea*mh*g*h*aibt*ech*
15   re hu*air* n-anf*adh* n-ecco*mh*lan*n*. An*n*am*h*.

What stands out in Group IV/a-1 is the length of the 'rhetoric' compared with Groups I, II and III. The first line is also the only line that does not end in a trisyllable, unless we read *Léth Macha* as one word, which is impossible given the inflection of *Liath*.[347] There is linking alliteration, as opposed to the alliteration between words in penultimate and final position in all other lines. A reading in line 11 is somewhat questionable: should we read *saorfhearaibh* for 'saor*áraibh*' (this latter example being an exact expansion of the contractions as found in the manuscript)? *Saoráraibh* may perhaps reflect a change to provide rhyme with *bandalaibh* in line 9. The 'rhetoric' appears to be more of a textual unit, and has a more regularised appearance. While it may be true that there are irregularities within the stresses preceding the cadence, there is a clear pattern of trisyllabic final cadence (X _ _) throughout, with the exception of the first line:

l.1	X _ (X) _	X X _	
	_ X _ _	X _ _	[348]
	_ XᴬA _ _	Xᴬ _ _	
	_ Xᴬ Xᴬ _	Xᴬ _ _	
l.5	_ Xᴬ _ (_) _	Xᴬ _ _	
	_ _ Xᴬ _	Xᴬ _ _	
	_ X ᴬ_ Xᴬ	Xᴬ _ _	
	_ Xᴬ _ Xᴬ	X _ _	
	_ Xᴬ _ _	Xᴬ _ _	
l.10	_ Xᴬ _ _	Xᴬ _ _	
	_ Xᴬ _ _	Xᴬ _ _	
	_ Xᴬ _	Xᴬ _ _	
	_ X _ _	X _ _	
	_ _ Xᴬ _	Xᴬ _ _	
l.15	_ Xᴬ Xᴬ _	Xᴬ _ _	

Group IV/a-2 (BL Eg. 132)

1 An*n*amh leat, // a Liat*h* Mac*h*a morad*hbh*ail,
   g*an* saig*h*id*h* co s*r*ian go sriangairt*e*
   gan cuing carp*at*
   do coth*ug*ad*h* re coimeigean
5 oir ba mear re mórcat*h*ad*h*.
   Et ba hett*r*om aigentach a n-aenaigh*ibh*
7 bá breag*h*da co bandal*a*

---

[347] Since the first line is an address there might be grounds for an exception for the lack of a trisyllable at the end of the line. We can draw a parallel to Conall Cearnach's speech to Cet mac Mágach in *Scéla Muicce Meic Dathó* (SMMD), where the first line is the only one that ends in a monosyllable (*Fo chen Cet / Cet mac Mágach / magen curad…*). Cf. R. Thurneysen, *Scéla Muicce Meic Dathó* (Dublin, 1986), p. 15, ll. 13-15. It is further noteworthy that this speech in SMMD is very close in rhythm to our 'rhetoric' / poem 21 *Goirt rom ghaoth*. It would require further study to determine whether any conscious modelling might underlie this similarity.

[348] This requires *iondsuighi* to be read as a trisyllable, thus preserving the pre-modern phonological form.

et b*h*eit*h* co nea*mh*gaib*ht*hac*h*
re huair n-anfac*h* no eccom*h*lain*n*.

10 Dob an*n*am*h* let bá socair sog*h*ab*ht*ha
re hion*n*saig*h*ad*h* agas re hanadh
is leat ni ro mionca leat gan an*n*am a L*eith*. A*nnamh*.

As with IV/a-1, the 'rhetoric' appears to be rather formulaic, the sense of unity being supported by the repetition of the first word *annamh* at the end of the 'rhetoric', which also occurred in Group IV/a-2 but which cannot be observed in any of Groups I-III. The first line, i.e. the address to the Liath Macha, is somewhat abbreviated here. Line 7 as it stands here is omitted in IV/a-1, while what is line 9 has been shifted from being the final line in IV/a-1. Note also the missing alliteration in line 8 (due to the omission of *neartmhar* which we find in Group IV/a-1) which is otherwise quite consistently found in every other line. Trisyllables in a final position are found up to line 10; however, there is no trisyllable at the end of line 3, either, unless we read *carbat* as a trisyllable [karabad], i.e with epenthesis, which would then suggest a more modern pronunciation. There are no trisyllables at the end of lines 10-11, either, and one gets a sense that the last three lines form an entity of their own, and could easily stand alone. The echoing of the first word at the end of the 'rhetoric' speaks against this, of course; however, if we imagined lines 10-12 to be separate, the ending to the rest of the 'rhetoric' (i.e. line 9) would correspond again to the ending in IV/a-1.

Group IV/b-1 (NLS 72.1.38)

1 Annam*h* let, // a Léit*h* M*h*ac*h*a ad*h*b*h*al,
go soigh*edh* go s*ŕ*ian*amh* s*ŕ*iang*hairt*he
gan cuing c*har*buid
do c*hot*hugh*adh* re coim*h*éig*in*

5 ór ba m*ear* le mórcath*aibh*
ba hedrom aigent*ach* a n-áon*aighi*b*h*
et ba breg*h*da go ban*n*ál*uibh*
b*adh* soc*air* sogab*h*ala
re hion*n*soid*h*e 7 le han*adh* t*h*ú

10 7 as let ro b*adh* mionca
b*h*eit*h* go ném*h*g*h*áib*ht*hec*h*
le hú*air* n-anf*adh* no éugcoml*ainn*. An*n*am*h*.

The structure of the 'rhetoric' once again is quite formulaic. The first line largely corresponds to IV/a-2, with the exception that the prefix *mór* to *adhbhal* has been omitted (cf. *mer adhbhal* in the poem, stanza 3, line 1), thus losing the alliteration with *Macha* (we will see that this is the case for the other two sub-groups in IV/b, b-2 and b-3, too, which in itself supports the groups). With the exception of line 10, the other lines follow the pattern of being rich in

alliteration (which in lines 2-4 extends even further back than to the penultimate word) and ending in trisyllabic words. While trisyllables are present in lines 11-12, line 1 lacks alliteration (cf. IV/a-2); line 10 lacks alliteration and ends in a disyllable, while line 8 has only the alliteration. With regard to the transposed final line in IV/a-2 as compared with IV/a-1, the present 'rhetoric' here has the same final line as IV/a-1 but in terms of content has the same textual elements as IV/a-2: thus, the structure follows IV/a-1 while the content corresponds to IV/a-2.

Group IV/b-2 (NLI G 18)

```
 1   Do budh anamh leatsa, // a Liath Mhach adhbhal,
     go soighedh go srianaibh go sriangharrtha
     gan cuinge carbad
     do chothugadh re comheigion
 5   oir ba mear le morcathaibh
     ba eadrom aigeantach a n-aonuighibh
     agus budh breaghdha go bannaluibh
     ba sochar soghabhala
     re hionsuighe agus re hanadh tú
10   agus is leat ro budh minic
     bheith go neamhghaibhteach
     re huair n-anforlann no eagchomhlainn.
```

IV/b-2 ultimately corresponds exactly to IV/b-1, with only a few variations: the copula *do budh* has been added right at the beginning of line 1; there are minor inflexional variations such as line 9 *minic* / *mionca*, and minor orthographical variations, e.g. *hionsuighe* / *hionnsoidhe*. One lexical variation worth pointing out can be found in the final line (line 12): here we have *anforlann* where in IV/b-1 we find *anfadh*. With these exceptions, the 'rhetorics' in IV/b-1 and IV/b-2 are identical, thus supporting the case for sub-division of Group IV into 'a' and 'b'.

Group IV/b-3 (BL Eg. 150)

```
 1   Anamh leatsa, // a Liath Mhacha ádhbhal
     gan soighedh ga srian gan srianghártha
     gan cuind carbaid chuthugadh re cóiméigion,
     óir ba mear le morchathaibh
 5   budh heattrim aigiontach le haonthuighibh
     et budh breaghda go banaluibh
     riamh socair soghabhála
     re hionnsuide, et ni thainedh tu riamh
     uair is fearr na anois is,
10   is leat budh gnathach
     beith neamhghaibhtheach
     an am eigin no éagcomhlainn.
```

The 'rhetoric' generally follows the example of the others in Group IV/b. Lines 1-7 correspond closely to IV/b-1, for instance, also with regards to the alliteration and trisyllables at the end of lines (until we reach line 8); once again there is no *mór* prefixed to *ádhbhal* in the first line. Note, however, the grammatical variation *haontuighibh* at the end of line 5, whereby the infix 't' is used in the plural; elsewhere we would find older *n-aonuighibh*. Once again it is in the latter part of the 'rhetoric' that some variations occur: line 8 and the second half of line 9 are unique to the 'rhetoric' here and do not appear in any of the other groups we considered. We may suggest that the *et ni thainedh tu riamh* seems to be based erroneously (phonetically?) on *re hanadh tu* (cf. Group IV/b-2, line 9). There is lexical variation at the end of line 10, *gnathach ~ minic / mionca*, and the final line seems to have been abbreviated, although the final half of it is retained and corresponds to the 'rhetorics' in group IV (with the exception of the transposed lines in IV/a-2). Overall, the final part of the 'rhetoric' here strikes one as having been reworked but without sticking to the patterns in the first part of the 'rhetoric'.

Conclusions to case study a)

In conclusion, a number of observations can be made by way of comparing the 'rhetorics' across the groups. The 'rhetorics' are very close in Groups I and II; the same applies to IV/b-1 and IV/b-2. The passage is generally very consistently represented in Group IV, with some differences especially towards the end. In Group IV the 'rhetoric' appears at its most complete, displaying a certain formulaic feel which is created by the echoing of the first word following the 'rhetoric' and the lack of speech interjections interrupting the flow, as they do in Groups I, II and III. These latter three 'rhetorics' in Groups I-III are interesting in that they all contain elements of the longer passage in IV; these elements, however, only overlap to a certain extent: the ending of Group I and II is the beginning of Group III. The elements that make up Groups I and II, then, occur roughly within the first half of the 'full rhetoric', while Group III is made up of the second half. The speech interjections are somewhat deceiving as they detract from the formulaic character that we have in IV, while, in fact, with regard to the actual content, we find that they do not hugely differ textually, other than that the passages have been abbreviated in Groups I-III. The speech interjections perhaps indicate that some scribes did not understand the structure of the 'rhetorics', if they recognised them as non-prose at all.

The greatest discrepancies that occur within the 'rhetorics' can probably be divided into categories, these being speech interjections, echoing of the first word and textual discrepancies. Other structural features that we have identified are the occurrence of trisyllables, mostly towards the end of lines, alliteration and the regularities of stress patterns (three vs. two).

These stress patterns are reminiscent of early forms of alliteration / rhythmical poetry. We have seen that Version A does not seem to preserve a 'rhetoric' on which the present one is based; could it be the reworking of an older 'rhetoric' as it might have stood in the exemplar of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* and to which it was an innovative addition?

We had noted earlier, with regards to the overall prose passage, that all groups correspond very closely, the only exception possibly being sub-group IV/b-3, which in places seems to give an abbreviated account. The most significant differences lie with the poetry – and this in turn is reflected in the 'rhetorics'. Groups I and II omit any poetry in this passage entirely, whereas Group II gives only one stanza of the six or seven we can find in Group IV. Groups I, II and III, of course, are also those groups in which the 'rhetorics' are most inconspicuous and, due to speech interjections, almost disguised.

The question that arises is whether an 'ur-text' of our tale would have contained an abbreviated or full(er) version of poetry and 'rhetoric'. We can note that the oldest manuscripts used for our inter-group comparisons here, namely IV/a-1 (c. 1650) and IV/b-1 (1608-20) both preserve the 'long recensions' of poem and 'rhetoric' in this passage. The next oldest manuscript, from Group I, gives no poem and an abridged 'rhetoric', the longer recension was therefore already in existence. Dating to 1684, however, our representative manuscript for Group I – RIA 23 M 25 – is not that much younger and at the time of its writing a shorter recension must therefore have been in circulation, unless RIA 23 M 25 is itself the original exemplar for the other manuscripts in this group.

Case study b) *Coimhéirigh... / Atá Cú Chulainn...*

The second case study shall again involve the 'rhetoric' in the context of its surrounding prose narrative, and poetry. The reason the passage is given in its entirety, rather than just focusing on the 'rhetoric' straight away, is that it provides further corroborative evidence for the patterns that have been emerging on an inter-group level in our first case study.

The 'rhetoric' *Coimhéirge da bhur ccuradh*, in the overall text, occurs at a point just before the battle between Cú Chulainn and the men of Ireland commences, thus somewhat further into the narrative than *Annamh leat*. The overall passage is slightly longer than the previous one, it can, however, be divided up into chunks of text to make it more manageable. As before, a summary of the passage will be given in the context of an analysis, following the readings from our various groups; the 'rhetoric' in the passge below is once again marked in blue.

Group I (RIA 23 M 25)

1   [130] Is an*n* sin táin*ig* Cu C*h*uloinn d'ion*n*suíg*h*e b*hf*ear nEir*eann*. Od c*h*ualad*ar*
a*cu* é, adubrad*ar* ná*ch* raib*h* san dom*an* aoinf*h*ear dob f*h*earr oineac*h* iná é, 7 go
m*adh* co*ir* dóib*h* Cúc*h*uilleasg c*h*ainte do c*h*ur d'iaraidh a s*h*leid*h*e *air*. Teid
Cúc*h*uilliosg a ccoin*ne* 7 a ccóm*h*d*h*áil C*h*on gCuloi*nn*, 7 trí c*h*aogad éigios m*ar*

5   aon ris, 7 ní raib*h* mian*n* deisi lé c*h*eile díob*h*, 7 fe*ar*us Cú C*h*uloinn faílte ré
Cúc*h*uilliosg, 7 adub*er*t Cúc*h*uilliosg:

'Aisgid*h* d*h*am*h*, a C*h*on gCul*oinn*,' *ar* sé.

'Cá haisge si*n*?' *ar* Cú C*h*uloinn.

'Do g*h*ai gear gormg*h*as*da*,' *ar* Cúc*h*uilliosg. Adub*er*t C*u* C*h*uloinn an laoid*h*:

10   M*air*g i*arr*us an aisgid*h*,
a C*h*ú C*h*uilliosg c*h*ruaid*h*,
fir Éirio*n*n am agh*aidh*,
mo g*h*ai do b*h*reit*h* uai*m*.

'Cio*nn*us do b*h*éara mé mo s*h*leag*h* d*hui*t,' *ar* sé, 'an é a g*r*ain no a hurl*ann* do

15   b*h*éara me roimpe?'

'Noc*h*a cea*ch*tar diob*h*,' *ar* Cúc*h*uilliosg, 'a*ch*t tab*h*air trásna d*h*am*h* í.'

Do léig sion t*r*asna *ch*uca an c*h*raosioc*h* ream*h*air m*h*ór, gur t*h*uit Cúc*h*uilliosg
gona tri naonm*h*air m*ar*b*h* gan anmuin do nim*h* na c*r*aoisíg*h*e.

'T*ru*ag*h* sin,' *ar* Cu C*h*uloinn, 'táin*ig* saog*h*al m*h*'einig go b*r*at*h* t*ar* eis

20   C*h*onc*h*uilleasg go na t*h*rí naonm*h*air do t*h*uiti*m* leam; 7 leíg brod *ar* na
eac*h*raid*h*, a Laoig*h*, go mbéaramaois *ar* na sluagaib*h* ina n-ionad*h*uíbh
iomfastóig*h*.'

'Noc*h*a ndiongan,' *ar* Laog*h*, 'go mbéar*ar* an tsh*leagh* liom.'

'Ní bearer,' *ar* Cu C*u*loinn, 'oi*r* ní d*h*eac*h*asa a ndiaig aontiod*h*laice dá ttug*us*

25   uai*m* ria*m* roi*mh*e so 7 ní rac*h* ina diaig súd.'

G*ideadh* do t*húir*ling Laog*h* 7 do t*h*óguib*h* an tsh*leagh* 7   tángad*ar* riompa
d'ion*n*suíge b*hf*ear nEirea*nn* 7 b*udh* clos san longp*h*or*t Cu C*h*uloinn do b*h*eit*h* dá
n-ion*n*suíg*h*e, 7 do c*h*uala Lúgh*aidh* m*ac* Conraoi si*n* 7 adub*er*t:

'Rac*h*ad féin ag feac*h*uin an at*h*ar ad*er*t*h*er do b*h*eit*h* aga*m*, dá fios cio*nn*us tig

30   sé c*h*um b*hf*ear nEír*eann*.'

Táin*ig* Lugh*aidh* d'féac*h*uin c*h*rot*h*a 7 deilb*h*e C*h*ongc*uloinn*, 7 adub*h*er*t, ag
tab*h*air*t a t*h*uarus*g[ab]*ála ós *air*d d'f*h*earaib*h* Eir*eann*:

'Do c*h*ímsi c*h*ugaib*h*,' *ar* sé, 'c*h*arbad féig foluai*m*[n]eac*h* fion*n*d*ru*ine, go lút*h*
7 go luas 7 go nglioc*us* go brubail [131] uait*h*ne, 7 go ttaob*h*c*h*lár úm*h*aid*h*e m*ar*

35   luas fain*n*le nó fe*ir*be, nó síd*h*e g*h*aoit*h*e. 7 do c*h*ím c*h*ug*h*aib*h*,' *ar*sé, 'eac*h* liat*h*
lút*h*m*h*ar luait*h*leimneac*h* fódm*h*ór furránta, go luít*h* c*h*eit*h*re ccrú go
mbeimean*n*aib*h* splan*n*cam*h*la teine treat*h*anruaid*h*e a ccraosg*h*lórm*h*ar a cin*n*.
An d*ar*a heac*h* díob*h* eac*h* c*h*aolc*h*osac*h* cin*néd*rom dron*n*dual*a* dúrb*h*ras seang
seada seirgc*h*aol c*h*asm*h*ongac*h* c*h*enn*f*had*a* go n-aolf*h*olt n-ion*n*tlaís, 7 giolla

40   don*n*fian*n* dat*h*c*h*orc*h*ra a b*hf*iag*h*nuisi an óglaoic*h*, am*h*uil b*udh* rós d*er*g lí a
aig*h*t*h*e, 7 a c*h*ean*n*c*h*oc*h*all sroill uime, 7 é ag stíurad*h* na n-eac*h* *ar* an eól*us*
b*udh* áil leis féin.'

Is an*n* si*n* táin*ig* Lúgh*aidh* a ndáil bf*h*ear nÉir*eann* 7 adúb*h*er*t:

'Déanaid*h* eírge,' *ar* se, 'oi*ar* at*a* Cu C*h*uloinn dá b*h*úr n-ion*n*suíg*h*e.' 7

45   adub*h*er*t, 'Atá C*u* C*h*uloinn cosgrac*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h* colgd*h*íreac*h*
comaoid*hf*eac*h* c*h*uiguib*h* sraonfuig*er* laoich brisfúig*er* bíod*h*b*h*et*h*a roic*hf*úig*er*
fór c*h*leat*h*aib*h* Ula, m*air*g mná maca maot*h* ing*h*iona, m*air*g miondaoine, m*air*g

mu*ir*, m*air*g tír cu*m* a ttái*n*i*g* an fe*ar* furra*nn*ta flat*h*am*h*uil feid*h*mláidir.'

Is a*nn* sin d'éirg*eadar* c*h*eit*h*re hollc*h*oige E*ireann* a ccrioslac*h*aib*h* a sgiat*h* 7 a
50 lú*i*reac*h*, 7 do c*h*oirig*eadar* iad f*ein* ina ccip*eadh*aib*h* cóm*h*d*h*lút*h*a cat*h*a *ar*a
c*h*ion*n*, 7 d'éir*igh* Mead*h*b*h* C*h*ru*a*c*h*na, 7 do g*h*ab*h* na h*air*m nim*h*e tugad*ar*
cl*ann* C*h*ailitín leó go hÉir*inn* fá c*h*om*h*air C*h*ongc*u*loi*nn* d*o* m*ar*badh, 7
d'f*h*iarfr*aigh* ó thus:

'Ca b*h*fuil na trí ríg*h* atá am fu*arr*ad*h* *ar* an sluag*h*so .i. Lúg*h*aidh m*h*ac Conrí,
55 Maicniad*h* m*h*ac Fin*n* 7 E*ar*c m*h*ac C*air*b*r*e?'

Group II (23 K 7)

1 [**96**] Is a*nn* sin tainig Cu Cul*ainn* d'ion*n*suid*h*e b*h*f*er* nEirio*nn*. 7 in tan do
c*h*ualad*ar* c*h*uca e, adub*h*rad*ar* nác*h* raib*h* *ar* dom*an* aoinf*h*ac*h* do b'f*h*earr oinec*h*
na C*u* C*u*lainn, 7 go m*adh* coir dóib*h* Cu C*h*uillesg c*h*ainte do c*h*ur d'i*arr*aidh a
s*h*leid*h*e f*air*. Ag*us* téid Cú C*h*uillesg a ccoi*nn*e 7 a ccom*h*dail C*u* C*u*lainn 7 trí
5 caogad éiges maille ris, 7 ní raib*h* mia*nn* deise re c*h*éile d*h*íob*h*. Fer*us* C*u* C*u*lainn
failte roim*h* C*h*ú C*h*uillesg, 7 sires a s*h*leid*h* *ar* C*u* C*u*lainn, 7 adub*h*air*t C*u* C*u*lainn
an laoidh:

> Mairg s*h*ires an aisgid*h*,
> a C*h*ú C*h*uillesg c*h*ruaig;
10 > fir Eire*nn* am agh*aidh*,
> mo g*h*a do b*h*reit*h* uai*m*.

Adub*h*air*t C*u* C*h*ulainn re Coin C*h*uillesg :
'Cio*nn*us do b*h*éara mé mo s*h*led*h* d*h*uit,' *ar* se, 'an é a grain nó a hurlai*nn* do
b*h*eara me roi*m*ide?'
15 'Noc*h*a cec*h*tar díob*h*,' *ar* Cú C*h*uillesg, 'ac*h*t tab*h*air trasna d*h*am*h* í.'
Do leigsion trasna cuca a*n* craoisec*h* ram*ar*m*h*or g*ur* tuit Cu C*h*uillesg gona trí
caog*a*d m*ar*b*h* g*a*n anmuin.
'Truaid*h* sin,' *ar* Cu C*h*uloi*nn*, 'tainig saog*h*al m'einig*h* go brac*h* t*ar* éis C*h*u
C*h*uillesg gona tri caogad do t*h*uitim do nim*h* na craoisig*h*e ag*us* leig brod *ar* ann
20 ec*h*raidh, a Laog*h*, go mb*eir*maois *ar* na sluad*h*uib*h* iona n-ionaduib*h*
co*mh*nuid*h*e.'
'Noc*h*a ndiongan,' *ar* Laog*h*, 'nó go mbeir*ar* an tsled*h* lio*m*.'
'Ní b*h*eirair,' *ar* C*u* C*u*lainn, 'oir ní d*h*ec*h*asa a ndiaig aon tiod*h*laice da ttug*us*
uai*m* riam*h* roim*h*e so 7 ni rac*h*sa diaig*h* sud.'
25 Gided*h* do tuirliong Laog*h* 7 do t*h*oguib*h* an tsleg*h* 7 tangad*ar* rio*m*sa
d'ion*n*suid*h*e bf*er* nEir*ionn* 7 b*udh* clos san longp*h*ort C*u* C*u*lainn do b*h*eit*h* [**97**] da
n-ion*n*suid*h*e, 7 an u*air* do c*h*uala Lug*h*aidh m*a*c C*on*rig*h* sin as ed adub*air*t:
'Rac*h*ad fein d'feac*h*uin an at*h*ar ad*er*t*h*ar do b*h*eit*h* ag*u*m cio*nn*us tig se do cu*m*
b*h*f*er* nEir*ionn*.'
30 Tainig Lug*h*aidh d'féac*h*uin c*h*rot*h*a 7 deilb*h*e C*h*on cCul*ainn* adb*er*t, ag
tab*h*air*t a t*h*u*ar*us*g*b*h*ála ós áird d'f*er*uib*h* E*ir*ionn:
'Do c*h*imsi c*h*ugaib*h*,' *ar* se, 'c*ar*but f*h*oluaim*h*nec*h* feig fio*nn*d*r*uine go lúit*h* 7
go luas 7 do langlioc*us* go brubal uaine go tt*ao*rb*h*c*h*lar umaid*h*ne m*ar* luas ai*nn*le
nó feirbe nó sídg*h*aoit*h*e 7 ec*h* liat*h* lut*h*m*h*ar luait*h*leimnec*h* fódm*h*ar forranta go
35 luit*h* c*h*eit*h*re ccrú go mbeime*nn*uib*h* spla*nn*cam*h*la tein*e* t*r*eat*h*anruaid*h*e a
cc*r*aosglorm*ar* a ci*nn*. An d*ar*a hec*h* d*h*iob*h* ec*h* caolc*h*osac*h* ci*nn*eadtrom
d*r*o*nn*dualac*h* duirb*h*ras seng seda seigc*h*aol casmongac*h* cen*nfh*ada go nd*a*t*h*

ndaolallta n-ion*n*tlais 7 giolla doin*n*fion*n* dat*h*c*h*orcra a b*h*fiagnuisi an oglaoic*h*
amuil b*udh* ros derg lí a aig*h*t*h*e 7 cen*n* c*h*oc*h*all s*r*oill uim*h*e *air* ag stiur na n-ec*h*
40   a*r* an (n)eol*us* b*udh* ail leis fein.'

Is an*n* si*n* tainic Lugh*aidh* a ccea*n*n b*h*fe*r* nEir*ionn* 7 adub*h*ai*r*t riú:

'Dean*aidh* eirge,' *ar* se, 'oir ata Cu C*h*ulainn da b*ur* n-ion*n*suig*h*e.' 7 adub*er*t,
'Ata *Cu Cu*lainn cosg*r*ac*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*ac*h colgd*h*irec*h* cuguib*h* s*r*aonfug*er* laoic*h*
sgaoileig*er* sloig brisfig*h*er biod*h*b*h*a roic*h*fuig*er* for c*h*leat*h*uib*h* Ul*adh*, m*air*g
45   mna, m*a*ca, maot*h* ing*h*ena, m*air*g miondaoine, mairg muir, m*air*g tir cu*m* a ttig na
flait*h* forránac*h* feram*h*uil *ar* d*ru*im a*n* dom*ain*.'

Is ann sin d'eirged*ar* c*h*eit*h*re hollc*h*oige E*r*ionn a cc*r*ioslac*h*uib*h* a sgiath 7 a
búirec*h* go lánc*h*oiriged*ar* 7 do c*h*uad*ar* ina ccip*ead*uib*h* co*m*hmora catha *ar* a
c*h*ion*n* ag*us* do eir*igh* Mead*h*b*h* 7 do g*h*ab*h* a h*air*m nim*h*e tugad*ar* clan*n* Cailitín
50   c*h*uirpte leo a hIf*r*ion*n* a ccom*h*air C*h*ú Cul*ain*n do m*ar*b*h*adh c*h*uig*h*t*h*e, 7 do
fiad*h*f*r*aig*h* o t*h*uis:

'Ca b*h*fuilit na tri riog*h* ata a*m* f*h*arr*adh* .i. Lugh*aidh* m*a*c *Con*ri 7 Maicniad*h*
m*a*c Fin*n* 7 Erc m*a*c C*air*bre?'

Group III (RIA 23 H 16)[349]

1   **[246]** Is an sin táinig Cuc*h*uloin*n* d'ion*n*saig*h*e b*h*fe*ar* nEirion*n* 7 od c*h*oncad*ar*
cuc*h*a é adub*h*rad*an* nac*h* raib*h* san dom*an* nec*h* b*udh* féárr oinec*h* na é, et go mo
c*h*óir doib*h* Cuc*h*uilleasg [cáinte 7 trí c*h*aoga eigios maille ris 7 g*an* mian deise ag
éinec*h* díob*h*] do c*h*uir d'iarra sleid*h*e *air*, et teid Cuc*h*uilleasg a ccoin*n*e 7 a
5   ccoim*h*d*h*ail Cu C*u*loin*n*, 7 fe*ar*us C*u* C*u*lainn fáilte rés an eigceas, et adub*h*ai*r*t an
laoi, et d'freg*air* Cuc*h*ul*oinn* e:

Mo c*h*ean*n* duit,
a C*h*u na ccleas ccain;
tab*hair* aisgid*h* d*h*am
10   fa haisge c*h*on*r*rait*h*.

Do b*h*eirim mo c*h*loid*h*im*h*,
a f*h*ir d*h*ána d*h*uin*n*;
soc*h*aid*h*e do rug m*air*g
air an ttalam*h* tt*ru*im.

15   Is í aisgid*h* iarruim,
a C*h*uc*h*uloin*n* c*h*ruaid*h*;
do g*h*ai gorm gasda
do c*h*uireas ar gac*h* sluad*h*.

Mair*g* iarr*us* an aisgid*h* sin
20   a C*h*u C*h*uilleasg cruaid*h*;
fir Eirion*n* am agh*aidh*
et mo g*h*ai do b*h*reit*h* uaim.

Mór ccait*h* is mór ccom*h*lan*n*
do lean*us* t*ar* le*ar*;

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349 Readings in square brackets from RIA 12 F 7, pp. 230-232.

25   a C*h*u c*h*aom*h* na ngormlan*n*,
                       riot ata mo c*h*en*n*.

     A hait*h*le na laoi sin adub*hair*t C*u* C*uloin*n re Cuc*h*oilleasg:
     'Cion*n*us do be*a*ra me an ts*h*leag d*h*uit, an é a grain no a húrlain*n* do c*h*uirfiod roimpe?'

30   'Noc*h*a cea*ch*tar diob*h*,' *ar* Cuc*h*uilleasg, 'ac*h*t tab*hair* tarsna d*h*am*h* i.'
     Do leig Cuc*h*uloin*n* an c*h*raoiseac*h* c*h*uc*h*a am*h*la sin, gur torc*h*air Cuc*h*uilleasg go tri naonm*h*uir eigc(l)es maille ris.

     'Truag*h* sin,' *ar* C*u* C*uloin*n, 'tainig deir*edh* m'oinicc go brat*h* t*ar* eis C*h*uc*h*oilleasg go trí naonm*h*uir do tuitim liom do nim*h* mo c*h*raoisig*h*e. Et leig

35 brod *ar* na heac*h*ra, a Laog*h*, no go mbearamis *ar* na sluad*h*uib*h* ion*n*a n-ion*n*adaib*h* da n-ionf*h*osda.'

     'Ni d*h*iong*an*,' *ar* Laoig*h*, 'no go mbéarad*h* me an tsleag*h* liom.'

     'Ni b*hea*rair,' *air* Cuc*h*uloin*n*, 'oir ni d*h*eac*h*us*a* a ndiaig*h* tiod*h*laice da ttug*us* uaim*h* riam*h*, 7 ni rac*h*ad a ndiaig*h* súd.'

40   Et do g*h*luaised*ar* riompa d'ion*n*saig*h*e b*h*fear nÉirion*n*, et b*udh* c*h*los san longp*or*t C*u* C*ulain*n do b*h*eit*h* dá n-ion*n*saig*h*e. Od c*h*uala Lug*h*aidh M*a*c Conraoi sin, adub*hair*t go rac*h*ad*h* d'feac*h*uin an at*h*ar sin adeirt*h*ear do b*h*eit*h* aige, 7 cion*n*us do t*h*ig sé a ccion*n* b*h*fear nÉirion*n* *uile* 7 gan giollaid*h*e se ion*n*a f*h*arraid*h* do c*h*oisgfiod*h* com*h*lan*n* díse nó duine d*h*e.

45   Et tainig Lug*h*aidh d'feac*h*uin*n* crot*h*a 7 deilb*h*e C*u* C*uloin*n 7 adub*hair*t, ag tab*hair*t a t*h*u*arus*gb*h*al*a* os ard d'fe*a*raib*h* Éirion*n*:

     'Ad c*h*ig*h*imse c*h*ug*h*aib*h*,' *ar se*, 'c*ar*bad feit*h*em*h*ail foluaimnec*h* fion*n*druinge [go luas lang*h*aoit*h*e go bpopal uaine go ttarb*h*c*h*lár um*h*aid*h*e go b*h*feirsidib*h*] go rot*h*aib*h* róg*h*lana, go c*arr*p*edh*aib*h* craoislet*h*na go b*h*feirrd*h*ib*h* fion*n*druinge go

50 creat n-*árd* n-úraoib*h*in*n* ndírec*h* ndásac*h*tac*h*, 7 go luas lang*h*aoit*h*e, et is tréanluait*h* tin*n*easnac*h* na heac*h*ra do c*h*id*h*imse c*h*ug*h*aib*h*,' *air* Lug*h*aidh, '.i. eac*h* liat*h* luait*h*leim*h*nec*h* lút*h*m*h*ar, go luit*h* c*h*eit*h*re ccro, go **[247]** *m*beinio*n* splain*n*c aid*h*b*h*le tein*n*e treat*h*anruaid*h*e as craos glónm*h*ar a cin*n*. Et an dara heac*h* diob*h* .i. eac*h* caolc*h*osac*h* cin*n*éadrom cluaisb*h*eag casm*h*ongac*h*

55 cean*n*f*h*ada diomsac*h* do f*h*osdaig*ht*h*e go ndait*h* ndaoil go mire fainle, 7 go luin*n*e leom*h*an. Et gioll*a* doin*n*fion*n* dat*h*c*h*orcra roim*h* an óglaoc*h* amac*h*, b*udh* rós de*ar*g lit*h* [a aig*ht*h*e. 7 cen*n*c*h*oc*h*all sroill uime 7 da líg lóg*h*m*a*ra ós úr a aig*ht*h*e aga] imd*h*ig*h*in *air* f*h*ua*ch*t et *air* t*h*eas an f*h*leasg airgid ata ion*n*a láim*h* ag stiurnig*h*ec*h* na n-eac*h* sin go n*ár* léig *air* aineol*us* iad ac*h*t imt*h*ec*h*t san rian is lon

60 leis féin.'

     Et adub*hair*t re fe*a*raib*h* Eirion*n*:

   'Eirg*h*e, oir atá Cuc*h*uloin*n* coisgit*h*ic*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h* cloid*h*iom*h*d*h*ea*r*g cosgrac*h* com*h*aoid*h*fec*h* dár n-ion*n*saig*h*e, et sloig*h*fig*h*ear sluad*h* brisfig*h*ear biod*h*b*h*a tollfúig*h*ear taoib*h*, et ciorrb*h*uig*ht*h*ear cuirp leis don c*h*or so. Et is

65 m*air*g curra*dh* na cait*h*m*h*il*edh* [m*air*g laoc*h*ra, m*air*g lát*h*ar, m*air*g mnaib*h*, m*air*g miondaoine, m*air*g m*air*g m*ar*caib*h* m*air*g io[n]g*h*iona] na riogna *air* an muig*h*e si Muirt*h*eim*h*ne c*h*um attig an f*h*lait*h*c*h*urrad*h* f*h*aob*h*rac*h* f*h*ea*r*gac*h* f*h*oran*n*ac*h* so is fe*a*ram*h*la feid*h*im *air* druim an dom*h*ain re túrnam*h* tréannam*h*ad, oc*h*, oc*h* mo c*h*ean*n* do c*h*oim*h*éirge, a Cu*ch*ulan*n*.'

70   Is an*n* sin do ro éirg*h*iod*ar* c*h*eit*h*re ollc*h*óig*h*ib*h* Éirion*n*, et do c*h*uad*h*ar a ccrioslac*h*aib*h* a sgiat*h* sgelb*h*olgac*h*, et a luit*h*rec*h* línea*ch* lánc*h*adad sít*h*rig*h*me sárd*h*aingne solám*h*aig*h*, et do c*h*uir*edar* iad féin ion*n*a ccipid*h* com*h*m*h*óra cran*n*ruad*h* cat*h*armac*h*a *air* c*h*ion*n* C*h*uc*h*uloin*n*. D'éig*h*rig Mead*h*b*h* 7 do g*h*aib*h* na hairm nim*h*e tugad*ar* clan*n* C*h*ailitín leo a hIt*h*frion*n*, et d'fiafraig:

75   'Cá bh*h*fuilid na trí rig*h* atá am f*h*arraid,' *air* si, '.i. Lugh*aidh* M*ac* Conraoi, Maicniad*h* M*ac* Fin*n* M*ic* Rosa, et Earc M*ac* C*air*bre?'

Group IV/a-1 (NLS 72.2.9)

1   [**31v**] As an*n* si*n* tain*ig* C*u* C*ulainn* d'iondsu*igh*i fe*ar* nÉr*enn* 7 o do c*h*ualat*ar* fir Eir*enn* C*u* C*ulainn* do b*eith* dá n-iondsu*igh*i adub*h*rad*ar* n*ach* roib*h*e is an dom*an* aon duine do b'fe*arr* oin*ech* ina C*u* C*ulainn* 7 go m*adh* coir Cú Cuillesc c*on*a t*h*rí naonb*h*uraib*h* eicces do c*h*uir a n-ag*h*aidh C*u* C*ulainn* 7 ní raib*h*i mian deisi a n-

5   aon leasd*ar* diob*h*, 7 fear*us* Cú C*h*uillisc failte fria *Con* Cul*ainn*, 7 adbert an*n* so sios:

Mo cion duit a C*h*ú,
a C*h*ú na ccles ccain;
taph*air* aisc*e* d*a*m*h*
10   ca haisc*e* c*on*raig*h*.

Do beirim fom cl*oidh*iom*h*,
a f*h*ir dana duind;
soc*aidhe* ruig ma maisce
ar talm*an* trui*m*.

15   As i aiscid*h* i*ar*ui*m*,
a C*h*ú na ccleas mbuad;
do ga gor*m* ger gas*da*
cuireas ar g*ach* sluag*h*.

[**32r**] Mairg cuinges an aiscid*h*
20   a C*h*ú C*h*uillesc cruaid*h*
fir Eirend a mag*h*aidh,
's mo gai o breit*h* uaim.

Mor ccat*h*a as mor cco*m*h*lan*n,
do leanuis t*ar* ler;
25   a C*h*ú c*h*aoim*h* na ngor*m*lan*n
is riot atá mo c*h*ean.

'Cion*nus* berus me an ga duit, a Cú Cuillesc,' *ar* C*u* C*ulainn*, 'an e a chenn no an e a hurlan*n* b*erus* mé roi*m*pe?'
'Noc*h*o cea*ch*tar d*h*iob*h*,' *ar* Cu Cuillesc, 'a*cht* tab*air* tarsna dam*h* í.'
30   Do leig C*u* C*ulainn* an ts*h*leag*h* cuige co ttorc*h*uir Cu Cuillesc m*arbh* g*an* anm*ain* c*on*a t*r*i naonb*h*araibh.
'Truag*h* sin,' ar C*u* C*ulainn*, 'tain*ig* soag*h*al m'ein*igh* 7 m'eangn*am*a go bruinne mbrat*h*a 7 Cú Cuillesc c*on*a trí naonb*h*araibh do tuiti*m* liom don agat 7 a Laoig*h*,' ar C*u* C*ulainn*, 'aig brod f*or* san eachr*aidh* go mb*ei*rmaois f*or* na sl*uagh*uib*h* í n-
35 aoinion*adh* da n-ion*n*fost*adh*.'
'Noc*h*o d*h*ingen,' ar Laog*h*, 'no go mb*ei*r*ar* an tsleg*h* liom.'
'Ni beirt*har*,' *ar* C*u* C*ulainn*, 'oir noc*h*o d*h*ec*h*us riamh a ndiaig*h* tiod*h*luict*h*e da ttug*us* amac*h* 7 ni mó rac*h*ad ina diaid*h* sud.'
7 do t*h*uirling L*a*og*h*, 7 do t*h*ogadh an tsl*egh* 7 tangat*ar* ro*m*pa d'ion*n*ds*aigh*i fer

40   nEiren*n*, 7 do clos a longpo*rt* fe*ar* nEr*enn* Cu Culain*n* do b*eith* da n-iondsa*igh*i. Et
      o dó *ch*uala Lugh*aidh* m*a*c Co*rr*í sin adub*er*t:
            'Ra*ch*at fein do fec*ain* an at*har* agat adeir*ar* do b*eith* agam da fios cion*nus* tig sé
      do cum fer nEr*enn*.'
            Tain*ig* Lugh*aidh* d'fec*ain* *ch*rot*h*a 7 *ch*aomd*h*en*mh*a Cu Culainn 7 as*edh*
45   adub*er*t ag tab*er*t a tu*arus*cba*l*a:
            'Ad ciusa cug*aibh*,' *ar* se, 'c*ar*bad féig*h* f*eidh*eam*ail* foluaimn*ech* fin*n*bruin*n*e, go
      lut*h* go luas go lan glioc*us* go bpub*all* uaine co tt*arb*hclar um*aidh*e go bfeirts*idibh*
      um*aidh*e go rot*aibh* rogla*na* go cc*ar*pad ccraoisleat*h*an, co ccreit n-*ura*rd n-
      *ur*aoib*h*in*n*, dir*ech* d*r*easaig*us* [**32v**] co luas aindle no feirbe no i*ar*a m*ar* sith*e*
50   gaoit*h*e geire gaib*h*te adfu*air*e e*arr*chaidh*e t*ar* cend ma*ch*are no maothsleib*h*e. Ase
      sin glioc*us* 7 gér g*h*luasa*cht*, t*ri*ce 7 t*ar*pthaig*h*e 7 trén luas *con* cing*edh* na
      hea*ch*radh*a ana ur*ar*da ad *ch*iusa chuguibh,' ol se, 'ea*ch* liat*h* let*h*an lut*h*m*h*ar
      luat*h* leimn*ech* fodmar forran*ach* go lút*h* *ch*eit*h*re ccrú, go mbenan*n* splonc
      aoibl*ach* tin*n* tric*h*eam*h* ruaid*h*e a clas*ach* a glom*ar* cin*n*glan aluind. An dara hea*ch*
55   d*h*ib*h*, ea*ch* caol*ch*osach, cein*n* ett*r*om, dron dual*ach* durbras seng seda sern *ch*ail
      casm*h*ong*ach* cen*n*foda gcon*n*at gco*ch*lann g*ach* *da* olta ccaoin ion*n*tlais san dara
      l*eith*. Giolla dui*nn* fin*n* dat*hch*orcra, a bfiad*h*nus*e* an ogl*a*oich am*h*al bu ros li a
      aigt*h*e *da* imdioden ar t*h*es 7 ar f*h*ua*ch*t, fleasc aluin*n* *air*ged*h* ina laim*h* ag
      certugh*adh*, a ea*ch*raigh co *n*ac leig an eol*us* iat a*cht* an l*eith* is áil leis an ogl*a*oich
60   ad *ch*iusa.'
            As an*n* sin tain*ig* Cu Culainn d'ion*n*suig*h*e fer nÉr*enn*.
            'Mait*h* a f*h*iora Er*enn*,' *ar* Lug*aidh*, 'den*aidh* eirge oir ata Cu Culainn da b*h*ur n-
      ionds*uigh*i.' 7 adbert an rosc:
            'Coim*h*eirg*h*e b*h*ur ccur*adh*a, a f*h*iora uaisle fuin*edh*a do fuil sun*n* dá b*h*ur
65   soigin*n*si Cu Culainn dá cosd*adh*ach, cat*h*b*h*uadh*ach*, cloideam*h*de*ar*g, cosc*arr*ach,
      co*mh*m*h*aoid*h*m*h*eac 's n*a* faidh*er* sl*uagh*, brisf*igh*ear biodb*h*a, m*air*g mná m*air*g
      mná, m*air*g maca, m*air*g miondaoine, m*air*g ing*en*a, m*air*g e*arr*ad*h*a, m*air*g muir
      mairg tír, gus a ttig an flait*h* forrana*ch*, fe*ar*gail feoc*air* g*h*niom*h*, *ar* drui*m* an
      dom*ain* dam*aigh* re toir*ch*ill tic re toir*ch*ill, tain*ig* uc*h* ní mo *ch*enn *ar* ccom*h*eirge.'
70   As an*n* sin do eir*igh* Mead*h*b*h* 7 ro g*h*ab*h* na h*ar*ma nim*h*e tug*a*tar cl*ann*
      Cail*itin* leó ahifren da raib*h*e, an dan Cu Cul*ainn* do t*h*uiti*m* leó 7 as í so roind
      tug*us*tar orra 7 as *edh* ro ráid*h*:
            'Cáit i b*h*fuil*e*tar na trí riog*h*a atait im f*arr*adh*s*a *ar* an sl*uage*d so,' *ar* sí, '.i.
      Lug*aidh* m*a*c [**33v**] *Con*ri, 7 M*a*cníad m*a*c Fin*n*, et E*a*rc m*a*c C*air*bre?'

Group IV/a-2 (BL Eg. 132)[350]

1   [**20v**] Is an*n* sin t*h*ainic Cu Culain*n* d'ion*n*suig*h*e fear nEren*n* 7 od *ch*ualadar fir
      Erion*n* Cu Cul*ainn* aga teacht da n-ion*n*saig*h*ad*h* adub*h*rad*ar* n*ach* roib*h*e a
      nErion*n* na sa do*mh*ain énduin*n*e dob fear oin*ach* inas 7 co mad*h* coir doib*h* Cu
      Cuilleasg cainte do coir d'iarraig*h* a sleag*h*e f*air* og*us* tain*n*ic Cu Cuilleasg a n-
5   ag*h*ad*h* Cu Culainn con*a* t*ri* noenm*u*raib*h* ei*r*ges et ní roib*h*e mian deisi a n-
      aenl*easa*dar dib*h*, 7 fergais Cu Cuilleasg failte re Cu Cul*ainn* et at b*er*t an laoig*h*:

                        Mo cean duit
                        a Cu na ccleas ccain
                        tab*hair* aiscc*idh* d*h*amh

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350 Readings in square brackets from NLI G 457, pp. 334-335.

10   ca haiscc*idh* co*n*roic*h*.

          Do b*he*rim fo*m* cloid*heamh*
          a f*h*ir dana duin*n*
          soch*aidh*e rug m*air*ga*d*
          ar a*n* talm*ain* t*rui*m.

15   Así aisgan iarrui*m*
          a C*u* C*u*lai*n*n c*ru*aid*h*
          do g*h*a goir*m* g*ear*gas*da*
          cu*ir*es *ar* g*ach* sluaig*h*.

          M*air*g sireas an aisgan
20   a Cu Cuill*easg* c*ru*aid*h*
          fir Er*ionn* im ag*h*ad*h*
          mo g*h*a *da* b*h*reit*h* uai*m*.

          Mór ccat*h* is mo*r* ccom*h*lan*n*
          do lean*us* tar lear
25   a C*h*u cao*mh* ngo*rm*l*ann*
          rit*h* ata mo c*h*ean*n*.

'Cio*nn*us do b*h*era me an tsleag*h* d*h*uit,' ar Cu C*u*lai*n*n, ''n é a grain*n*e no an é hurlan*n* do bér roi*m*pe?'

    'Noc*h*a ceac*h*ta*r* dib*h*,' *ar* Cu Cuilleasg, '*ach*t tab*hair* trasna **[21r]** *da*mh i.'

30   Do leigsin t*ar*sna cucca a[n c*h*raoiseach reamh*ar* m]oir co ttorc*air* Cu Cuilleasg m*ar*b*h* g*an* anmion *con*a naonm*ar*aib*h*.

    'Truag sin,' *ar* C*u* C*u*lai*n*n, 't*h*ain*n*ic saeg*h*ail m'ein*ic* co brat*h* ta*r* eis *Con* Cuilleasg *con*a trí naenm*ar*aib*h* do tuitim lea*m* do ni*mh* na craois*aidh*e. Et leig brod fuig*h* san eac*h*ruig*h* co tt*air*nmaois *ar* na sluig*h*uib*h* a n-aonion*adh da* n-
35   iomfost*agh*.'

    'Noc*h*a dingen,' *ar* Laog*h*, 'co mb*ear*ar an tsleag*h* lio*m*.'

    'Ni b*ear*tar,' *ar* C*u* C*u*lai*n*n, 'o*ir* ní deac*h*us a ndiaig*h* aointiod*h*laice da ttug*us* amac*h* ria*mh* 7 ni mo rac*h*ad*h* ina diaig*h* súd.'

    7 do t*h*oirling L*aogh* 7 do togad*h* a*n* tsleag*h* et t*h*ancad*ar* rompa
40   d'ion*n*saig*h*ad*h* fear Eirio*n*n 7 do clos a longpuirtaib*h* fer nEirio*n*n C*u* C*u*lai*n*n do b*h*eit*h* *da* n-ion*n*saig*h*ad*h*. 7 ot c*h*ualad*h* Lugh*aidh* M*a*c *Con*rai si*n* adub*hair*t:

    'Rac*h*ad f*ein* d'feac*h*aint in ath*ar* ud ad*eir*ar *ar* do b*udh* mia*m* lea*m* a f*h*ios do b*h*eit*h* agom cio*nn*us t*h*ig se doc*h*u*m* fer nErio*n*n.'

    T*h*ainig Lugad*h* d'feac*ain* crot*h*a 7 deilb*h*e C*u* C*u*lai*n*n et adub*hair*t, ag tab*air*t
45   a tuarascb*h*ail os *air*d d'f*ear*aib*h* Erio*n*n:

    'Ad c*h*iusa c*h*ugan,' *air* se, 'carp*at* feig*h* foluai*r*mac*h* find*ru*ine co llut*h* co lluas co laingliocus co pup*all* uaine co tt*ar*bclar umh*aidh*e co f*eir*stibh fio*n*numa co rot*h*ach roglana co carp*at* craoisleat*h*an co creit n-air*d* n-uraoib*h*in díroc*h* ndressuig*h* dasac*h*tac*h* co luas ainle no f*eir*bre no ma*r* sid*h*e gaoit*h*e ad*h*f.f*h*uaire
50   earrch*aidh*e t*ar* c*h*ean*n* mac*hair*e m*h*uig*h*sluig*h*e is é si*n* gliocais 7 t*r*ice 7 t*r*enluas 7 t*air*puig*h*e co cing*eadh* na heacruig*h*a *ar*da uiraoib*h*inn. Ad c*h*iusa c*h*ugan,' *ar* Lugaid*h*, 'eac*h* diob*h* **[21v]** liat*h* [lúthm*h*ar lúait*h*leam]neimnac*h* fodm*ar* forranac*h* co lut*h* ceit*h*ri c*h*ru co mbon*n* sponcaob*h*lac*h* tin*edh* t*r*icemre a glasac*h* a glom*ar*oin*n*. An dara heac*h* diob*h* .i. eac*h* caolc*h*osac*h* cean*n*e ttrom dron
55   dualac*h* dulbras seang seta se sincael casmongac*h* cean*n*fa*da* co *n*dat*h* coc*h*la

ndaolda n-in*n*tlaisi. Giolla doin*n*fion*n* da ttorcra a b*h*fiad*h*naisi an oglac*h* am*ail* b*udh* ros d*ear*g li a aig*ht*he 7 a cean*n*coc*h*al sroil uime guna gibnac*h* do licc log*h*m*air* os ur a aig*ht*he aga imdit*h*ean ar fuac*ht* et teas na g*r*einefleasg alain*n* *air*gaid ina laim*h* a ceart*ug*ad*h* na heac*h*ruig*h*e *con*ad*h* leigan eolas doib*h* *ach*t an

60 l*eith* as ail les an oglac*h* ad ciusa.'

Is an*n* sin t*h*ain*n*ic d'ion*n*saig*h*ad*h* feraib*h* Eirion*n*.

'Mait*h*, a fiora Eirion*n*,' *ar* Lughaidh, 'den*n*ad*h* erge, ata C*u* C*u*lainn da bar n-ion*n*saig*h*aid*h*.' 7 itbeart:

'Coimeirgid b*ur*ccuirad*h*, a fiora Er*ion*n, ro fil son*n* da bar soigac*h* C*u* C*u*lainn

65 cosdad*h*ac*h* cat*h*biad*h* cl*oidh*em*h*dearg cosgrad*h* co*m*maoid*h*m*ac*h* 's nid*h* fuig*h*ear eid*ead*h* sloig*h*fuig*h*er sleag*h* brisfuig*h*er biod*h*b*h*a do roic*h* fein cleit*h*ad*h* Ulad*h* m*air*g mna m*air*g m*a*ca m*air*g ing*h*eana m*air*g mínduine m*air*g errud*h*a m*air*g muir m*air*g tir do cu*m* attig an flait*h* forran*ach* fearam*ail* *ar* d*ru*im a*n* dom*h*ain da m*h*aig*h* re toirc*h*ill tig re toirc*h*ell téid. Uch is mo c*h*ean

70 coim*h*erg*h*e.'

Is an*n* sin do eirg*edar* cet*r*i ollcuigad*h* Eirion*n* a crioslaig*h*ib*h* [22r] a sgiat*h* coim*h*leat*h*an ceom*h*gart*h*a 7 a [lúirech sáidhb*h*ir solamhuig*h*e] et do coiruig*h*edar iad ina ccipi comora cat*h*a c.... 7 eirig*h* Mead*h*b*h* 7 do g*h*ab*h* na harma neim*h*e cuice neoc*ht*h*aiga dar clan*n* Cailitín lei a hIfrion*n* fa com*h*air C*u*

75 C*u*lainn do m*h*arb*h* 7 is i roin*n* t*h*ug orra.

'Cait*h* bfuilid na t*r*i rig*h* ata*h* imfarrad*h* son*n* *ar* in sluag*h*ed*h*so, .i. Lugad*h* M*ac* Conrí 7 M*ac* Niad*h* M*ac* Fin*n* 7 Earc M*ac* C*air*p*r*i?'

Group IV/b-1 (NLS 72.1.38)

1 [32] As an*n* sin táinig C*ú* C*u*loinn d'ion*n*soig*idh* f*er* nÉ*renn*, et ad c*h*úalad*ar* fir E*renn* C*ú* C*u*loinn do b*h*eith agá n-ion*n*soig*h*id*h* adub*h*rad*ar* uile nac*h* raib*h*e a nÉ*r*in*n* ioná sa*n* dom*h*an aon dui*n*e dob f*err* oinac*h* ionás, et g*ur* C*ú* dóib*h* Cú C*h*uillesg caínte do c*h*ur d'iarr*aidh* a s*h*leig*h*e fair, et tainig Cú C*h*uillessg a n-

5 ag*aidh* C*h*on cC*u*loinn gona t*r*i nonb*h*oraib*h* eigces 7 ní raib*h*e mian deisi an aoínleasdar d*h*íob*h*, 7 f*erus* f*ail*t*e* re C*on* cC*u*loinn 7 adb*er*t an laoid*h* an*n*:

Mo c*h*en d*ui*t a *Cu*
a Cú n ccles ccai*n*
tab*ar* aisg*idh* d*h*am*h*

10 ca haisg*idh* c*on*raic*h*.

Do b*er*im fa*m* cl*aidh*em
a f*h*ir d*ára* d*h*ui*n*n
soc*h*aid*h*e rug m*h*arg*a*t
ar an tt*a*lmuin t*r*uim

15 [33] As í aisg*idh* iarr[u]*m*
a C*h*ú C*h*ul*oinn* c*rú*aid
do g*h*a goir*m* g*h*ér gas*da*
c*ur*eas *ár* g*ach* slúaig*h*

Mairg s*h*ires an aisg*e*
20 a C*h*ú C*h*uill*esg* c*h*rúaid*h*
fir E*renn* u*m* ag*aidh*

sin fog*h*a do b*eir* uai*m*

Mór c*eth*cis mó*r* cco*m*hlann

25   do len*us* go ler

a C*h*ú caoi*m*h na ngor*m* l*ann*

riot atá mo c*h*en.

'Cion*nus* do b*h*éra mé an tsl*eagh* daoíb*h*,' *ar* Cú C*u*loinn, 'a ndíaig*h* a gráine *nó*
a ndíaigh a hurl*ann*?'

30   'Do b*h*ér í, ní h*e* ón,' *ar* Cú C*h*uilleasg.

Do léig Cú C*u*loinn an ccraois*ech* rem*h*oir rom*h*óir t*ar*na c*h*uca, go ttorc*h*uir Cú
C*h*uillesg m*ar*b g*an* an*m*uin guna *trí* nonbh*ur*aib*h* éiges.

'T*r*úacc sin,' *ar* Cú C*u*loinn, 'tainíg saog*al* m'ein*igh* go br*áth* t*ar* éis C*h*on
Cuilleasg *con*a t*rí* nonbh*ur*aib*h* éigios do t*ui*tim lem do neim*h* na cráois*igh*e, 7 léig

35 b*r*od forsan eac*h*raidh go mb*er*mís fo*r*na sl*ú*aguib*h* iona nion*adh* fos longp*or*t día
n-io*mf*h*osdóg*h*.'

'Noc*h*a diongnad*hm*e si*n*,' *ar* L*aogh*, 'nó go mb*er*ar an tsl*eagh* lio*m*'

'Ní b*er*am,' *ar* Cú C*u*loinn, 'or ní d*h*ec*h*us*a an díaig*h* tiod*h*luict*h*e *dá* ttug*us*
am*ach* riam roi*m*e so, et ní mo r*ach*ad a nd*h*íaig*h* súd.'

40   Do t*ur*ling L*aogh* 7 do t*h*ogadh an tsl*u*aig*h* 7 tangad*ar* roi*m*pa d'ion*n*soig*idh* f*er*
nÉir*enn*. Et do clos a longport bf*er* n*Er*enn Cú C*u*loinn do b*h*eith *dá* n-
ion*n*soig*idh*, et m*ar* do cúala Lúgh*aidh* m*ac* C*on* Raoí sin, adub*ert*:

'Rac*h*ad féin [d'feac*h*aint] an at*har* úd ad*er*ar do b*h*eith ag*am* cion*nus* tig *sé* a
ndáil bf*er* n*Er*enn.'

45   Do gluaís L*aogh* roi*m*he d'féc*h*ain c*r*ot*h*a 7 deilb*h*e C*h*on cC*u*loinn et adub*ert* ag
tab*air*t a t*h*úar*us*gbala ós aird d'f*er*uib*h* E*r*en*n*:

'Ad cíusa c*h*ug*aibh*,' *ar* sé, 'c*ar*bad féig*h* féit*h*em*ail* foluaímn*ach* fiond*r*uina, go
lút*h*, go luas, go láinglioc*us*, go bpub*aill* uaine, go tt*ar*b*h*cl*ár* um*aidh*e, go
bfeasitib*h* fion*n*u*m*ha, go rot*h*oib*h* rog*h*l*a*na, go cc*ar*bad ccraoislet*h*an, go ccreit n-

50 ur*aird* n-uráoib*h*in*n* ndír*ech* ndas*acht*oig*h*, go lúas ain*n*le **[34]** nó sleig*h*e as é sin
glice 7 t*r*ice 7 t*air*p*igh*e 7 t*r*éunlúas *con* ceinged na heac*h*radh*a a*r*da u*r* uaine ad
c*h*iusa c*h*ug*aibh*,' *ar* Lugh*aidh*, 'eac*h* d*h*iob*h* an líat*h* lút*hm*h*ar* lúait*h*léimn*ach*
f*h*ódm*ar* f*h*orrán*ach* go lút*h* ceit*h*re ccrú go mbenon*n* sblaingc aid*h*ble t*h*ein*edh*
t*h*riciomraidh*e a mull*ach*uib*h* a c*r*aosc*h*ló for g*ach* leit*h*. An d*ar*a hec*h* d*h*íob*h*, .i.

55 eac*h* cáolc*h*osac*h* cen*n*eadrom do*r*ndualac*h* durb*r*as seng seda seir*edh*c*h*áol,
cen*nf*ada casm*h*ongac*h* cíór d*h*ub*h* go ndat*h* ccaom*h*t*h*láit*h* ccoc*h*l*ach*
ccneism*h*íolla. Giolla doin*n* ingnac*h* dat*h*c*h*orc*r*a a bfíad*h*n*us* an óglóoic*h* am*ail* bú
rós d*er*g lí a aig*h*t*h*e et cen*n*c*h*ochall s*r*óill uime go*n*a g*h*ibne fion*n*druine et *dá* líg
lóg*hm*h*ar* ós *ar* a aig*h*t*h*e d*h*á imd*h*íden *ar* f*h*úac*h*t 7 *ar* tes ng*r*éine, et flesg *air*gitt

60 iona láim*h* ag c*er*tochad*h* na hec*h*raidh*e go n*ech* léig *ar* ainéolas íatt *acht* an l*eth*
bu*dh* ail do*n* óglóoc*h* ad c*h*iusa.'

As an*n* sin táinicc Cú C*h*uloinn d'ion*n*soig*idh* f*er* n*Ér*enn.

'Mait*h*, a f*h*iora E*r*enn,' *ar* Lugh*aidh*, 'dean*adh* e*ir*gid*h* atá Cú C*u*loinn cug*aibh*.
Coim*h*eirgid*h* b*h*ur* ccur*adh*, do f*h*il *dá* b*h*ur* n-ion*n*soig*hidh* Cú C*u*loinn

65 cosdad*hach* cat*h*b*h*úad*hach* cloid*h*im*h*d*h*er*g c*h*osgarac*h* comaoíd*hm*ac*h*,
leirg*h*er(er)*f*adh* láoic*h*, sloid*h*f*iter* b*h*ur* sl*úaigh*, brisf*itar* a b*h*iod*h*bet*h*a, ro soic f*or*
c*h*let*h*ib*h* Ul*adh*, m*air*g mná, m*air*g mac*á*om*h*a, m*air*g míondaoíne, m*air*g err*aidh*a,
m*air*g m*ur*, m*air*g tír, do c*h*umh*ad* tigan flait*h* forrán*ach* feram*h*uil, *ar* d*r*uim an
dom*h*uin dám*h*uig*h*, ré toiric*h*il tig, ré toiric*h*il t*eit*, uc*h* 's ní, mo c*h*en, an

70 c*h*oim*h*eirg*e*.'

As an*n* sin do eirg*h*etor ceit*h*ri hollc*h*oig*idh* E*r*enn*a cc*r*iosloig*ibh* a sg*íath*

ccoi*mh*egui*r*, 7 a lúir*ach* said*hbh*i*r* solám*h*ui*dh* et ro *ch*óir*gh*ettor na ccipe*d*ui*bh*
comóra c*ath*a iad féin *ar* a *ch*ion*n*, et do éir*igh* Med*hbh* 7 do *gh*a*bh* na h*air*m
ni*mh*e tug*a*d*ar* [35] cl*ann* C*h*ailit*í*n leó a hIf*er*n fá *ch*om*har* C*h*on Culoi*nn* do
75 m*har*b*adh*, et as í roi*nn* tug M*edh*bh orra.

'Cait a bf*uil*i*d* na trí rí*gh* atáid u*m* farrs*n*a fan*n*a,' *ar* si, '.i. Lughaidh m*ac* C*on*
Raoí, et M*ac* Níad*h* m*ac* Fin*n* et E*ar*c m*ac* C*air*bre?'

<u>Group IV/b-2 (NLI G 18)</u>

1 [361 (371)] Is an sin tain*ig* C*u* C*ulainn* d'ionsuig*he* bfear nEirion*n* ag*us* ad con*ca*d*ar*
fir Eirion*n* C*u* C*ulainn* do b*h*ei*th* da n-ion*n*suigh*idh* ag*us* adub*h*rad*ar* uile na rai*bh*
a nEirin*n* i na san dom*h*an aon duine do bfearr oinea*ch* na C*u* C*uluinn* ag*us* g*ur*
coir doib Cú C*h*uileasg c*h*ainte da c*ur* d'iarr*aigh* fair agus tain*ig* Cú Cuileasg a n-
5 aigh*idh* C*u* C*uluinn* gun a ttr[i] naonm*h*ar eigeas ag*us* ní rai*bh* mia*nn* deisi an aon
diob*h*, ag*us* fear*us* failte le C*u* C*uluinn* ag*us* adub*h*er*t* an laoi*dh*:

Mo cean duit a Cú,
a Cú na ccleas ccain
tabair aisge d*ham*h
10   go haisg*e* c*h*on*n*raic*h*.

Asi aisge iarruin
a Cu C*h*uluin*n* c*h*ruaid*h*
do gai gor*mg*h*eir g*h*asda
cuireas ar ga*ch* sluag*h*.

15   Mairg iarr*us* an aisge
a Cú Cuilleasg cruaid*h*
fir Eirion*n* am aig*h*
's mo g*h*ai do b*h*rei*th* uaim.

Mór gcath as mor cco*mh*luin*n*
20   do lean*us* go leir
a C*h*ú caom*h* na ngor*m*lan*n*
riot mo c*h*ean.

'Cion*nus* do b*h*ear an tslead*h* d*h*iob*h* is g*ur*ab a ndiaig a grain*n*e no a ndiaig a
húrluin*n*e do níod*h* do*ch*ar?'
25 Ag*us* air sin do leig C*u* C*ulainn* an craoisea*ch* ramar ro mór trasna c*ut*h*a go
ttor*ch*ar Cu C*h*uilleasg mar*bh* gan anam guna a ttri naonm*ar*ai*bh* eigsi.

'Truag*h* sin,' *ar* C*u* C*ulainn*, 'tain*ig* saog*a*l m'ein*igh* go brát*h* tar eis Con
Cuilleasg gona a trí naonui*bh*ur eigsi do tuitim liom ag*us* leig brod for san
nea*ch*rad*h* go mbeirmaois for na sluag*h*tai*bh* iona n-ionas for longp*h*ort da n-
30 iom*h*fosda go ttiub*h*rui*nn* sgaoile ag*us* sgaipe orra uile.'

'D'iongnad*h* me sin,' *ar* Laoig*h*, 'a*ch*t go mbeir*edh* me an tslead*h* [362 (372)]
liom.'

'Ní b*h*earu*m*,' *ar* C*u* C*ulainn*, 'oir ní dea*ch*us*a* a ndiaig aon tiod*h*luigt*he* da
ttug*us* ama*ch* riam*h* roim*h*e seo, ag*us* ni mo rea*ch*us* me anois.'

35 Do t*h*úrling Laoig*h* ag*us* do t*h*óg an tsleag*h* ag*us* tangad*ar* riompa d'ionsuig*he*
bfear nEr*ionn*. Do ba clos a longp*h*or*t* b*h*fear nEirion*n* C*u* C*ulainn* do t*h*ea*ch*t ag*us*

mar do chuala Lughaidh Mac Conraoi sin adubhert:

'Rachad féin d'feachuint crotha an athar adearthar do bheith agam cionnus tig se a ndail bhfear nEirionn.'

40   Do ghluais Lughaidh roimhe d'feachui[n]t chrotha agus deilbhe Cu Culainn agus adubhert ag tabhairt a tuarusgbhala ós aird d'fearuibh Eirionn:

'Ad chiusa agaibh,' air se, 'carpat feigh feitheamhuil foghluaimneach fiondruinne go luath go luth go langhliocus go bpubaill uaine go ttarbhchlar umaidhe go bfreasaitaibh fionnumha go rothaibh roghlana go ccarbad

45   ccraosleathan go ccreit n-úrard n-úraoibhen ndírig ndasachtuig go luas ainle no sleidh as e sin glice agus trice agus tairpaidhe agus treanluas concheingead na heachradha arda uruaine go ad chiusa chugaibh,' ar Lughaidh, 'each dhiobh an liath luthmar luathléimneach fodmhar forránach go luth cheithre ccru go mbeanann splainc aidbhail theine tri ciomruaidhe a mullaibh chraoschloch foir

50   gach leith. An dara heach diobh, each caolchosach cinnéadtrom dron dualach urbhras seang seada seirchaol cheannfhada casmhongach ciorruibh go ndath ccomhtlaith ccochlach ccneismhiolla. [Giolla] dhonn iongneach dathcorcradh a bhfiaghmuisi an oglaoich amhuil budh ros dearg lí a n-aighigh agus ceanncochall sroill uime gilma fiondruine agus da ligh loghmara a uraighthe da imdhidean air

55   fhuacht agus air theacht ngreine agus fleasg airgid iona laimh ag ceartachadh na heachraidhe go nach leig air aneolus iad acht an leath budh aill don oglaoch ad chiusa.'

Is ann sin tainig Cu Culainn d'ionnsuighe bfear nEirionn.

'Math, a feara Eirionn,' air Lughaidh, 'deinadh eirghe, ata Cu Culainn cugaibh.
60   Comheirghe bhur ngioll agus bur ccuradh, do fil da bhur n-ionusuighe Cu Culainn cosdathach cathbuadhach chloidheamhdhearg cosgarach comhmaoidmach [363 (373)] leir ghearrerfadh laoich is leitfadh se bur sluagh briseadh ar a biodbadhuibh acht go ro shoic fa Ulaibh mairg mna mairg macaomha mairg miondaoine mairg earraidhe mairg muir mairg tír cum a ttig an fhlath forranacha dearamhuila air
65   druim domhain dámhuig re toiricil tig re toirichil, teid uch is ní mo chean an comheirge.'

Is an sin do eirgedar ceithre ollcoige Eirinn a ccriosluighibh a sgiath a ccomheagar a luithreacha saidhbhre solamha agus ro corrighdar na ccipedhibh chomóra catha iad féin as a chionn, agus do eirigh Meadhbh agus do gabh na hairm
70   nimhe tug clann Chailitín leo a hIffronn fa chomhair Cu Culuinn do mharbhadh 7 as í roinnt tug Meadhbh orra:

'Ca ait,' air si, 'a bfuilid na tri righ ata um fharradh .i. Lughaidh Mac Conraoi agus Mac Niad Mac Finn agus Earc Mac Cairbre?'

Group IV/b-3 (BL Eg. 150)

1   [314] Tainedh Cu Culainn d'ionnsuighe bhfear nEirionn ann sin, et adubhradar fir Eirionn uile na raibh san domhan duine budh mo oineach na Cu Chulainn, et gur coir doibh Cu Chuillesg cainte ardollamh Eirionn do chur ag iarrad a shleagh air, oir da ttugadh an tsleagh uaig go da train meisnig ortha e. Iar sin tainedh Cu
5   Culleasg a ccoine Chu Culainn et a thri naonmhara eigsi, et adubert an laoi:

Mo chean duit, a Chu,
a Chu na ccles ccain;
tabhair aisge damh,
go haisge chonrach.

10   As i aisge i*ar*uim,
                  a C*h*u C*h*ullain*n* c*h*ruaid*h*;
                  do g*h*a gorm g*h*ear g*h*asa,
                  do c*h*uirid*h* *air* ga*ch* sluag*h*.

        [315/161r] Mairg s*h*ireas an aisge,
15   a C*h*u C*h*uilleasg c*h*ruaid*h*;
                  fir Eirion*n* am aigh*idh*,
                  is mo g*h*a do b*h*reit*h* uaim.

                  Mor ccat*h* is mor ccom*h*luin*n*,
                  do lean*us* go leir;
20   a C*h*u c*h*aom*h* na ngorm lan*n*,
                  riot mo c*h*ean*n*.

'Cion*nus* do b*h*éar an tsleag*h* d*h*ib*h*,' *ar* C*u* C*u*llainn, 'oir ma b*h*eiri*m* an dh'*urlann* a graine i, do d*h*eanfad*h* diog*hbh*ail et ma b*h*eiri*m* an dh'*urlann* aruine í.'

25   'Deanfad*h* diog*hbh*ail,' *ar* se, 'et do b*h*ear trasna dib*h*.'
    Air sin do léig an c*h*raoisec*h* trasna *ar* an talam*h* c*h*ugt*h*a go ttorc*h*air Cú C*h*uillesg m*h*arb*h* *air* an áit et a t*h*rí naonm*h*air eigsi do b*h*uad*h* na sleigh, et níor m*h*ait*h* le Cu C*h*ull*ainn* sin.
    'Luid*h* brod d*h*uin,' *ar* C*u* C*h*ullainn, 'no go mbeirio*m* na b*h*fas longp*or*t *ar*
30 f*h*earuib*h* Éirion*n*, ion*nus* go ttiub*h*arsa sgairpt*h*e 7 diansgaoil*edh* ort*h*a.'
    'D'iongnai*m*,' *ar* Laog*h*, 'ac*h* go ttugab*h* an tsleag*h*.'
    'Ní d*h*eac*h*asa a ndh*iaigh* aon tab*h*art*h*ius dá ttug*us* uaim riam*h*, et ní mó rac*h*fa*d* anois.'
    Iomt*h*usa longp*h*ort b*h*f*ear* nEirion*n*, ba clos an*n* uile go raib*h* Cu C*h*ulainn da
35 n-ion*ns*uid*h*e. An*n* sin do raid*h* Lughaidh m*ac* Conrig*h*:
    'Rac*h*fadsa d'féac*h*ain cion*nus* t*h*ig an **[316]** ta*h*air úd adeirter do b*h*eit*h* agam a ndail b*h*f*ear* nEirion*n*.'
    7 tug Lughaidh a t*h*u*ar*r*us*gab*h*ail os ard *ar* b*h*fil*edh* d*h*o 7 adb*er*t:
    'Ad c*h*iusa c*h*ugaim,' *ar* se, 'carpat feig*h* feit*h*eam*h*uil fogluaim*h*neac*h*
40 fiond*ru*ne go luat*h* go luat*h*leimneac*h* fodm*h*ar f*h*oranac*h* go pobal uait*h*ne go tt*ar*b*h* c*h*láir úm*h*aidhe go b*h*freasdib*h* fion um*h*a, go rot*h*aib ro g*h*lana go cc*ar*ba*t* craosleat*h*an go ccreat n-*ur*ard n-úraoib*h*in ndirig ndása*cht*aig go luas ainle no sléid*h*e, is e sin glice 7 trice, 7 t*air*pt*h*e, 7 tréanluas chonceingead na heac*h*r*aidh*e arda ur ait*h*ne do ad c*h*iusa cugain, .i. liat*h* eac*h* diob*h*, an Liat*h* Mac*h*a lut*h*m*h*ar
45 luai*mh*neac*h* lán easga go luth c*h*eit*h*re ccrú go mbainion*n* splainc ad*h*b*h*ar teinid*h*, t*h*ri c*h*iomruad*h* a mull*ach*aib*h*, a craos c*h*lo for ga*ch* leith. An dara heac*h* diob*h*, eac*h* caolc*h*osac*h* cinneadrom droin dualac*h* durb*h*ras seang sead*h*a seirc*h*aol cen*nf*h*ada casm*h*ongac*h* ciord*h*ub*h*, go ndat*h* ccaom*h*t*h*lat*h* ccoc*h*lac*h* ccneismiola. Giolla don*n* ringnac*h* dat*h*c*h*orcra a b*h*fiag*h*nuise aon óglaoic*h*
50 am*h*uil bud*h* rós d*ear*g a lí a agh, et cean*n* c*h*oc*h*al sroil uime gona g*h*ilm*h*adh f*h*iondruin*n*e, 7 da lig*h* log*h*m*h*ara ur a aig*h*t*h*e da imd*h*id*h*ion *air* f*h*ua*cht* 7 air t*h*eas na gréine, 7 fleasg airgid iona láim*h* ag certug*h*adh na **[317/162r]** heac*h*r*aidh*e, go nac*h* leigfid*h* *air* aineolus iad, a*ch* an leit*h* bud*h* hail leis.'
    Tain*edh* Cu C*u*lainn fa longp*or*t b*h*fear nEirion*n* an tráit*h* sin go cosdat*h*ach
55 cat*hbh*uad*h*ach cloidea*mh*d*h*earg cosg*ra*t*h*ach. Mairg mna, m*air*g macaoim*h* m*air*g miondaoine, m*air*g eirr*e* m*air*g muir, m*air*g tír, c*h*um a ráin*edh* an flat*h* foranac*h* ferram*h*uil an tan sin.

Ar c*h*los Cu C*h*ulain*n* do b*heith* ag tea*cht*, do crit*h* c*h*eit*h*re hollc*h*óige Eirion*n*
trí huaire mór ttíomc*h*ioll, et do c*h*uad*ar* a ccriosluig*h*aib*h* a sgiat*h* 7 a ccom*h*gar a
60   luit*h*reac*h*a said*h*b*h*re sod*h*lam*h*a, 7 ro c*h*oiriod*ar* ccipt*h*ib*h* rom*h*ora cat*h*a iad
fein. I*ar* sin tug Meid*h*b*h* na tri hairi*m* nim*h*e a laim*h* na ttri rig*h*t*h*e .i. do
Lug*h*aidh* m*ac* Conraoi, et do M*h*acniad m*ac* Fin*n* et do Earc m*ac* Cairbre.

Observations and Analysis

As with our first case study, at first glance the above prose passages all appear very similar, the
notable exceptions again being the abbreviated poetry in Group I and II and a somewhat
abridged prose narrative in Group IV/b-3. We have established the kind of variation that may
occur between the groups, and picking out just a few examples from this second passage shows
that the variations here are very similar to those noted above in the study of *Annamh leat...*
and its surrounding prose passage. See for instance

I	[l.4] a ccoin*ne*
II	[l.4] a ccoin*ne*
III	[l.4] a ccoin*ne*
IV/a-1	[l.4] a n-agh*aidh*
IV/a-2	[l.5] a n-ag*h*ad*h*
IV/b-1	[l.5] a n-ag*aidh*
IV/b-2	[l.5] a n-aigh*idh*
IV/b-3	[l.5] a ccoine

which corresponds to this very lexical variation in our first case study. A second lexical
variation that could be noted is

I	[l.2] aoinf*hear*
II	[l.2] aoinf*hach*
III	[l.2] nech
IV/a-1	[l.3] aon duine
IV/a-2	[l.3] énduin*ne*
IV/b-1	[l.3] aon dui*ne*
IV/b-2	[l.3] aon duine
IV/b-3	[l.2] duine

Interesting here is the variation found in Group II, *aoinfhach* (for *aoineach*?), which may
perhaps be a hybrid form of *aoin(e)ach* and *aoinfhear*.

   A preliminary analysis of the second passage, especially in light of the results from the first
case study and the two examples given above, suggests that variations do occur, yet the overall
structure and content of the passage in our groups correspond very closely. Considering the
length of the passage we shall look at it section by section, pointing to the most notable
differences with regards to content, rather than giving again a detailed breakdown of the
variations; these would not differ a great deal from the variations we have already pointed to in

the context of the first case study. Going through the passage which consititues the second case study will also give an opportunity to sum up the main events of the passage and allow for a different approach to pointing to the variations which is less 'technical' than that employed for the first case study, focusing on differences in the narrative rather than linguistic variation. In the context of the 'alliterative description', we will briefly bring the Early Irish recension of the text back into the discussion, as we had already hinted in our preliminary assessment of the *roscada* of Version A in section 6.3.3 above.

The first section of the passage relates the meeting of Cú Chulainn and the satirist Cú Cuilleasg, who has been nominated by the men of Ireland to request Cú Chulainn's spear. Only Group IV/b-3 (line 3), at the first mention of Cú Cuilleasg, specifies the latter's office: *ardollamh Éireann*. There is some inconsistency between the groups – and also within the individual passages – as to the number of men who are in the company of Cú Cuilleasg, and in some cases confusion or inconsistency as to their mention later on in the tale. In anticipation of the following sections of the passage, there are three incidents in which the number of men in his company are mentioned: (a) at the first mention of Cú Cuilleasg himself, (b) following his slaying, and (c) in Cú Chulainn's reflection on his death. This is best illustrated by laying out the three instances, and the respective number of men mentioned in each of them per group, alongside one another:

	(a) Cú Cuilleasg's introduction:	(b) After the slaying:	(c) Cú Chulainn's reflection:
I	[l.4] trí c*h*aogad eigios	[l.18] trí naonm*h*air	[l.20] t*h*rí naonm*h*air
II	[l.4] trí caogad éiges	[l.16] trí caog*a*d	[l.19] t*r*i caogad
III	[l.3] trí c*h*aoga eigios	[l.32] trí naonm*h*uir eigces	[l.34] trí naonm*h*uir
IV/a-1	[l.3] trí naonb*h*uraib*h* eicces	[l.31] trí naonb*h*ar*a*ibh	[l.33] trí naonb*h*araibh
IV/a-2	[l.5] t*r*í noenm*u*raib*h* ei*r*ges	[l.31] naonm*a*raib*h*	[l.33] trí naenm*a*raib*h*
IV/b-1	[l.5] t*r*i nonb*h*or*a*ibh eigces	[l.31] *trí* nonb*h*uraibh éiges	[l.33] t*r*í nonb*h*ur*a*ibh éigios
IV/b-2	[l.5] ttri naonm*h*ar eigeas	[l.26] ttri naonm*a*raib*h* eigsi	[l.28] trí naonuib*h*ur eigsi
IV/b-3	[l.5] t*h*ri naonm*h*ara eigsi	[l.27] t*h*rí naonmh*air* eigsi	-n/a-

Groups I and III show some confusion, and deviation from the other groups: in the first instance Cú Chuilleasg is accompanied by 150 men but only twenty-seven are slain alongside him. Group II is consistent in that the initial number of 150 is mirrored in the number of men killed. In all of Group IV the numbers are consistent at 'three nines', that is twenty-seven men in Cú Chuilleasg's retinue as well as the number of those killed. This suggests textual confusion in Groups I and III, which may be based on two different underlying types of exemplar, one

having 150 and the other twenty-seven. We will discuss another instance of 'numerical confusion' in section 7.1.1.

This overall first section preceding the poem corresponds very closely in all groups, although Group I adds a verbal exchange between Cú Chulainn and Cú Cuilleasg in which the latter requests the former's spear – in all other groups this request is incorporated into the prose narrative. IV/b-3 agrees in content but phrases the section is shorter and phrased slightly differently.

Following this section is an interjection in verse. The longest version of the poem, with 5 stanzas, is found in Groups III, IV/a-1, IV/a-2 and IV/b-1. IV/b-2 and IV/b-3 omit the second stanza, thus giving the poem with four stanzas, while I and II only give one verse. This ultimately follows the pattern established in the first case study: again the single stanza that is given in I and II is also the one most relevant to the overall events, i.e. the one stanza that sums up the request made by Cú Cuilleasg. While the longer versions of the poem may help create a dramatic atmosphere they do not hugely add to the tale; on the other hand, the omission of stanzas does not result in loss of narrative content or sense. Where in our first case study the poems in IV/b-2 and b-3 showed some 'abnormalities' in the form of transposed and omitted lines, they here give the poem in accordance with the other groups and with no disruptions of that kind.

The poem is followed by a conversation between Cú Chulainn and Cú Cuilleasg. Groups II and III are the only groups that do not launch straight into the dialogue but return to the narrative with the introduction, 'After the lay Cú Chulainn said to Cú Cuilleasg'. In the following short exchange, Cú Chulainn deliberately misunderstands the request to simply pass the spear 'across' – this being Cú Cuilleasg's answer to the question as to whether the spear should be handed shaft or point first – and hurls it through Cú Cuilleasg, killing him. We have already examined the ambiguity in some groups as to the number of people killed alongside the poet; otherwise the groups correspond very closely. They also correspond in the next section: an exchange between Laogh and Cú Chulainn, which ends with the two going towards the men of Ireland, where they are heard by Lughaidh Mac Con Raoi. Noteworthy here is that in Group III Lughaidh's address to the men of Ireland is not given as direct ('Lughaidh heard this and said: "I will go myself…"') but rather as indirect speech ('Lughaidh heard this and said to go…').

In the narrative now follows a rather lengthy speech by Lughaidh, describing to his men the appearance of what he sees before him; we have classified this as an 'alliterative description'. The section is consistent in all groups in terms of the order of elements that are described: first

Cú Chulainn's chariot, then his two horses, the Liath Macha and the Dubh Saoileann, and finally his charioteer Laogh. Groups I, III, IV/a-1 and a-2 and IV/b-1 and b-2 have a second speech interjection – *ar sé* or *ar Lughaidh* – roughly halfway through the passage, at a point before the description turns to the horses. The passage in Groups I and II corresponds very closely, the only difference being the second speech interjection in Group I which has been omitted in Group II. Group III gives a slightly longer account which corresponds closely to those in Group IV, although the ending is the same as in Groups I, II and IV/b-3. This conclusion of the alliterative description is very interesting if we compare the two endings as they occur in Groups I, II, III and IV/b-3 as opposed to Groups IV/a-1 and a-2 and IV/b-1 and b-2. In the former case, the description of the charioteer Laogh is concluded with *ar an eólus budh áil leis féin* (I, II) / *acht imthecht san rian is lon leis féin* (III) / *ach an leith budh hail leis* (IV/b-3), while in IV/a-1 and a-2 and IV/b-1 and b-2 it is, quite consistently, *acht an leath budh aill don oglaoch ad chiusa*. This final verb – *ad chiusa* – of course mirrors the beginning of the passage, which in all of Group IV is *ad c(h)iusa chugaibh / chugaim*, thus giving a *dúnadh*. As a result, the 'alliterative description' in IV/a-1 and a-2 and IV/b-1 and b-2 seems to display more of a structural entity, the *dúnadh* giving it a formulaic and finished feel. Note also the the verb in Groups I, II and III, where the ending does not provide a *dúnadh*, is *ad chimsi* rather than *ad chiusa*.

The 'alliterative description' in this passage raises some important issues of classification and transmission. Arguably we could classify it as a 'rhetoric', and this idea is further strengthened by the fact that the Early Irish Version A of our tale contains a *rosc* very reminiscent of it, as we have already noted in section 6.3.3, namely the the *rosc* beginning with *Atchiusa sund carpat cóem*.[351] Some structure is evident in the 'alliterative description'; however, a significant factor for the definition and classification of our 'rhetorics' is that we find a descriptor such as *rosc, laoidh* or even simply *briathra* in their introduction. As we can see in the passages above, this is not the case with the 'alliterative' description, which is consistently simply introduced by a verb of speech. It is further the case that the passage is not 'marked' in any of our representative manuscripts, i.e. indented or presented in a new paragraph, as is the case for a large number of the other 'rhetorics'. With undeniable echoes of the corresponding passage in Version A, what we may have here is a case of reinterpretation of a former *rosc* into alliterative prose, with the *dúnadh* as found in Group IV giving it a more structured character. Note, however, that the *rosc* in Version A does not actually have a *dúnadh*, which supports the case

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[351] Best & O'Brien (eds), *The Book of Leinster, formerly, Lebar na Núachongbála (Vol. II)* (Dublin, 1956), p. 446 (ll. 13902-13919).

for a suggestion of reworking. It is important to stress that even if we could potentially classify the 'alliterative description' as a 'rhetoric', this does not affect the argument or scope for the overall transmission of the tale; all it would change would be an additional poem / 'rhetoric' on our list of poems. The brief discussion of the 'alliterative description' above demonstrates that here we have the same patterns that we have begun to see within the first case study, that is close correspondences between Groups I and II, and fullest accounts within Group IV (again, with the exception of IV/b-3). As we will see in a moment, this will be confirmed further by the analysis of the 'rhetoric' *Coimhéirghe / Atá Cú Chulainn*.

The alliterative description, in all groups, is followed directly by the 'rhetoric'. But before we move on to an analysis of the 'rhetoric', we shall briefly finish looking at the overall passage. The final paragraph after the 'rhetoric' has the men of Ireland, spurred on by Lughaidh's speech, rise in anticipation of the impending battle. The number of men is consistently given as *ceithre hollchoige*; overall, we can note a number of alliterations in the section. As with the 'alliterative description', we may ask whether there might be enough of a structure to merit the definition of 'rhetoric' here. But again there is a lack of descriptor, and in fact any speech is absent. It is noteworthy that Group IV/a-1 omits this section, however, and moves straight into the second part of this final passage – Meadhbh rising up and requesting the presence of Lughaidh Mac Con Raoi, Mac Niad Mac Finn and Earc Mac Cairbre in order to hand them the poisoned spears destined to kill Cú Chulainn. In all but Group IV/b-3 the place of origin of the spear, i.e. hell, is specified, and the request for the presence of the three men spoken by Meadhbh. In Group IV/b-3 this is abbreviated by omitting the speech and Meadhbh handing the weapons over right away. We will see in a moment that this omission of speech and overall abridging of text also applies to the 'rhetoric' here, too.

As with the first case study we shall consider the actual 'rhetoric' in some more detail. The method employed in our analysis of *Annamh leat...* having proved quite instructive, we shall repeat the exercise and again break up the section into alliterative clusters (as far as this is possible). Once again the division here is used as a tool and represents only one possible way of representing the 'rhetoric'. The introductory section immediately preceding the 'rhetoric' has been given in order to point to differences on an inter-group level although arguably we cannot count it as part of the 'rhetoric' itself; line numbering is thus only given for the 'rhetoric'.

<u>Group I</u>

Déanaid*h* éirge, {*ar* se}
oi*r* at*a* C*u* C*h*uloinn dá b*h*úr n-ion*n*suíg*h*e. {7 adub*h*er*t*}

1 Atá C*u* C*h*uloinn cosgrac*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h*
   colgd*h*íreac*h* comaoid*h*feac*h* c*h*uiguib*h*
   sraonfuig*er* laoich
   brisfúig*er* bíod*h*b*h*et*h*a
5 roic*h*fúig*er* fór c*h*leat*h*aib*h* Ula,
   m*air*g mná maca maot*h* ing*h*iona,
   m*air*g miondaoine,
   m*air*g mu*ir*,
   m*air*g tír
10 cu*m* a ttáin*ig* an fe*ar*
   furran*n*ta flat*h*am*h*uil feid*h*mláidir.

The preamble, which is interrupted and followed by speech interjections, acts as an incitement for the men of Ireland and is presented as a simple address spoken by Lughaidh, while the 'rhetoric', beginning with *Atá Cu Chuloinn...* has a definite formulaic feel to it. It is rich in alliteration, noting especially the alliterative run of 'c's in lines 1-2, 'm' in lines 6-9 and 'f' in the final two lines. Line 5 forms an exception in not having any alliteration. Line 6, the beginning of the *mairg* run, has been abbreviated by following *mairg* with a number of nouns – compare other groups below where each of these has been preceded by *mairg* individually. Noteworthy also is the rhythm created by the trisyllabic words standing at the beginning of lines 3-5: *sraonfuiger-brisfúiger-roichfúiger*, all being passive singular forms. We can further observe trisyllabic words in a final position in lines 1, 4, 6, 7 and 11. There is no *dúnadh*.

<u>Group II</u>

Déanaid*h* éirge, {*ar* se}
oi*r* at*a* C*u* C*h*uloinn dá b*h*úr n-ion*n*suíg*h*e. {7 adub*h*er*t*}

1 Atá C*u* C*h*uloinn cosgrac*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h*
   colgd*h*íreac*h* comaoid*h*feac*h* c*h*uiguib*h*
   sraonfuig*er* laoich
   brisfúig*er* bíod*h*b*h*et*h*a
5 roic*h*fúig*er* fór c*h*leat*h*aib*h* Ula,
   m*air*g mná maca maot*h* ing*h*iona,
   m*air*g miondaoine,
   m*air*g mu*ir*,
   m*air*g tír
10 cu*m* a ttáin*ig* an fe*ar*
   furran*n*ta flat*h*am*h*uil feid*h*mláidir
   ar d*ru*im a*n* dom*ain*.

The 'rhetoric' in Group II corresponds exactly to that in I, with the addition of line 11, where we can also find alliteration. This line, as we will see, consistently occurs in the 'rhetorics' in Groups III and IV (with the exception of IV/b-3). The expansion of the text, however, does not have an impact on the overall structure or result in a *dúnadh*, as there is no correspondence to the beginning of the 'rhetoric'.

Group III

1   Eirg*h*e, oir atá Cuc*h*uloin*n* coisgit*h*ic*h* cat*h*b*h*uad*h*ac*h*
    cloid*h*iom*h*d*h*ear*g cosgrac*h* com*h*aoid*h*fec*h*
    dár n-ion*n*saig*h*e,
    et sloig*h*fig*h*ear sluad*h*
5   brisfig*h*ear biod*h*b*h*a
    tollfúig*h*ear taoib*h*,
    et ciorrb*h*uig*h*t*h*ear cuirp leis don c*h*or so.
    Et is m*air*g currad*h* na cait*h*m*h*iled*h*
    m*air*g laoc*h*r*a*,
10 m*air*g lát*h*ar,
    m*air*g mnaib*h*,
    m*air*g miondaoine,
    m*air*g m*air*g m*ar*caib*h*
    m*air*g io[n]g*h*iona na riogna
15 *air* an muig*h*e si Muirt*h*eim*h*ne
    c*h*um attig an f*h*lait*h*c*h*urrad*h* f*h*aob*h*rac*h* f*h*eargac*h* f*h*oran*n*ac*h* so
    is fe*ar*am*h*l*a* feid*h*im
    air druim an dom*h*ain
    re túrnam*h* tréannam*h*ad,
20 oc*h*, oc*h* mo c*h*ean*n* do c*h*oim*h*éirge, a Cu*ch*ulan*n*.

The introduction to the 'rhetoric', interrupted by speech interjections, in Groups I and II, has here been merged with and incorporated into the main body of the 'rhetoric'. Line 6 is a new addition from the perspective of Groups I and II, as is line 7, but this (*leis don chur so*) almost appears like a prose section within the 'rhetoric' and we may suggest that it could be omitted. The passive singular forms as found in Groups I and II can be found in Group III, too. We can, however, note verbal variation: instead of *sraoinfuiger / brisfuiger / roichfuiger* as in Groups I and II, in Group III (ll. 4-6) we find *sloighfighear / brisfighear / tollfúiighear*. The *mairg* section has also been extended slightly, the elements *muir* and *tír* having been left out but lines 9-10 having been added. A reference to the place of action, 'Magh Muirtheimhne', is found in line 15. Lines 16-18 correspond largely to Groups I and II, line 18 being the addition to Group II that is missing in Group I. The final two lines are again new introductions in comparison with Groups I and II. The final line, and especially the concluding address to Cú Chulainn, reflects the beginning of the 'rhetoric'; while it is not strictly a *dúnadh* it does have a close resemblance

and gives a certain closure to the 'rhetoric'. Trisyllables can be noted at the end of lines 1, 2, 8, 15, 19 and 20. With this 'rhetoric', the resulting overall impression is that of a more structured piece compared with the 'rhetoric' in Groups I and II.

Group IV/a-1

> Mait*h* a f*h*iora Er*enn*,   {*ar* Lug*aidh*}
> den*aidh* eirge
> oir ata C*u* C*ulainn* da b*h*ur n-ionds*uigh*i.   {7 adbert an rosc}

> 1   Coim*h*eirg*he* b*h*ur ccur*adh*a,
>   a f*h*iora uaisle fuin*edh*a
>   do fuil sun*n* dá b*h*ur soigin*n*si
>   C*u* C*ulainn* dá cosd*adh*ac*h*, cat*h*b*h*uadh*ach*,
> 5   cloideam*h*de*ar*g, cosc*arrach*, co*mh*m*h*aoid*h*m*h*eac
>   's n*a* f*aidh*er sl*uagh*,
>   brisf*igh*e*ar* biodb*ha*,
>   m*air*g mná
>   m*air*g mná,
> 10   m*air*g maca,
>   m*air*g miondaoine,
>   m*air*g ing*en*a,
>   m*air*g e*arr*ad*h*a,
>   m*air*g muir
> 15   mairg tír,
>   gus a ttig an flait*h* forranac*h*,
>   fe*ar*g*ail* feoc*air* g*h*niom*h*,
>   *ar* drui*m* an dom*ain* dam*aigh*
>   re toirc*h*ill tic re toirc*h*ill, tain*ig*
> 20   uc*h* ní mo ch*enn* *ar* cco*mh*eirge.

As in Groups I and II, we have a short introduction before the 'rhetoric' begins, which interestingly is specified here as being a *rosc* (cf. the omission of such a defining descriptor in Groups I and II, where we only find a verb of speech). The address 'nobles of Ireland' occurs both in this preamble but also in the 'rhetoric', thus intensifying the effect of urgency that the 'rhetoric' communicates. Lines 1-3 as they stand here do not occur in either of the previous 'rhetorics': at the beginning of line 3 we find *do fuil*, which can be found in medieval Irish texts and poetry.[352] The description of Cú Chulainn in lines 4-5 largely corresponds to the 'rhetoric' in the previous groups. At the beginning of lines 6-7 we find passive singular forms: note that there are only two of these as opposed to three in Groups I-III. The *mairg* section resembles that of Group I and II. Note that the double up of *mairg mná* appears to be a scribal error. The

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[352] See *GOI*, p. 479, §780.3.

ending, in terms of length, is closer to Group III, but is phrased slightly differently so that here we have a proper *dúnadh*. Trisyllabic words conclude lines 1-5, 11-13 and 20.

Group IV/a-2

>Mait*h*, a fiora Eirion*n*,   {*ar* Lugh*aidh*}
>den*n*ad*h* erge,
>ata C*u* C*u*la*i*nn da bar n-ion*n*saig*h*aid*h* {7 it beart}

>1   Coimeirgid b*ur* ccuirad*h*,
>   a fiora Er*ionn*,
>   ro fil son*n* da bar soigac*h*
>   C*u* C*u*la*i*nn cosdad*hach* cat*h*biad*h*
>5   cl*oidh*em*h*dearg cosgrad*h* co*m*maoid*h*m*ac*h
>   's nid*h*fuig*h*ear eid*eadh*
>   slo*i*g*h*fuig*h*er sleag*h*
>   brisfuig*h*er biod*h*b*ha*
>   do roic*h* fein cleit*h*ad*h* Ulad*h*
>10   m*air*g mna
>   m*air*g m*ac*a
>   m*air*g ing*h*eana
>   m*air*g mínduine
>   m*air*g errud*h*a
>15   m*air*g muir
>   m*air*g tir
>   do cu*m* attig an flait*h* forran*ach* fearam*ail*
>   *ar* d*ru*im a*n* dom*h*ain da m*h*aig*h*
>   re toirc*h*ill tig re toirc*h*ell téid.
>20   Uch is mo c*h*ean coim*h*erg*h*e.

Very similar to Group IV/a-1, we may note the shift in address here, both in the preamble and the 'rhetoric', from *fiora uaisle* to *fiora Eirionn*. The addition to line 3 in Group IV/a-1 of *do fhuil* here occurs as *ro fil*. Lines 6-8 again preserve passive singular verbal forms (*nidhfuighear / sloighfuigher / brisfuigher*): note that there are three of these, one in each line, as is the case in Groups I-III, whereas in IV/a-1 we could only observe two. Line 9 is a new addition, the *mairg* run corresponds, as does the final section and the *dúnadh*. There is a slight lexical change and change of tense in line 19 where we have *téid* but in Group IV/a-1 [l.18] find *tainig*.

Group IV/b-1

>Mait*h*, a f*h*iora E*renn*,   {*ar* Lugh*aidh*}
>dean*adh* e*irg*id*h*
>atá C*ú* C*u*lo*i*nn c*u*g*a*ibh.

>1   Coim*h*eirgid*h* b*h*ur ccur*adh*,
>   do f*h*il *dá* b*h*ur n-ion*n*soig*h*id*h*

C*ú* C*u*loinn cosdad*hach* cat*hb h*úad*hach*
cloid*h*im*hd her*g c*h*osgarac*h* comaoíd*hh*mac*h*,
5   leir g*her(er)*f*adh* láoic*h*,
sloid*hf iter* b*h*ur sl*ú*aigh,
brisf*itar* a b*h*iod*hh*bet*h*a,
ro soic f*or* c*h*let*h*ib*h* Ul*adh*,
m*air*g mná,
10   m*air*g m*a*cáom*h*a,
m*airg* míondaoíne,
m*airg* err*aidh*a,
m*airg* m*ur*,
m*airg* tír,
15   do c*humh*ad tig an flait*h* forrán*ach* feram*h*uil,
ar d*r*uim an dom*h*uin dám*h*uig*h*,
ré toiric*h*il tig, ré toiric*h*il t*eit*,
uc*h* 's ní mo c*h*en an c*h*oim*h*eirg*e*.

We here seem to have old plural passive forms (lines 6-7) where we find passive singular forms in the previous groups.[353] The plural passive forms are pre-Classical,[354] and the occurrence of these older forms here is thus very significant and suggest that we have an older form of the 'rhetoric' preserved in the present group, while the other groups represent modernized versions. In addition, we can again note the older form *do fhil* (line 2), which goes nicely with the older plural passive forms and supports the argument for the present group preserving a more 'archaic' form of the 'rhetoric'. Overall, the 'rhetoric' here is very similar to that in Group IV/a-2: again we have the address *a fhiora Eirionn*, although this has been omitted in the 'rhetoric' itself and only occurs in the introductory address. Line 8 corresponds to line 9 in IV/a-2, where it occurred for the first time in our comparison of 'rhetorics'. Another correspondence is the verb *teit* in line 17 – we had already noted that this appears as *táinig* in Group IV/a-1. The *dúnadh* is also preserved.

Group IV/b-2

Mat*h* a feara Eirion*n*,   {air Lugh*aidh*}
dein*adh* eirg*he*,
ata C*u* C*u*lainn c*u*gaib*h*.

1   Com*h*eirg*he* b*h*ur ngioll ag*us* bur ccur*adh*,
do fil da b*h*ur n-ionusuig*he*
C*u* C*u*lainn cosd*athach* cat*h*buad*hach*
c*h*loid*h*eam*hd h*earg cosg*ar*ac*h* co*mh*maoid*ma*c*h*

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[353] For examples, see *GOI*, p. 399, §640.

[354] Damien McManus does not evidence passive *-fitir* in Classical Irish, cf. 'An Nua-Ghaeilge Chlasaiceach' in K. McCone et al. (eds), *Stair na Gaeilge*, p. 401.

5   leir g*h*earr(*er*)f*adh* laoi*ch*
    is leitf*adh* se b*ur* sluag*h*
    bris*eadh* ar a biodb*adh*uib*h*
    a*cht* go ro s*h*oic fa Ul*adh*
    mairg mna
10 mairg m*a*caom*h*a
    mairg miondaoine
    mairg earr*aidh*e
    mairg muir
    mairg tír
15 cu*m* a ttig an f*h*lat*h* forranac*h*a dearam*h*uila
    air druim dom*h*ain dám*h*uig
    re toiricil tig re toiric*h*il, teid
    uc*h* is ní mo c*h*ean an com*h*eirge.

Group IV/b-2 corresponds to Group IV/b-1, but very notably loses the passive forms and replaces them with singular active forms (lines 6-7). In comparison with IV/b-1, the first line of the 'rhetoric' here, (line 1) further adds *bhur ngioll*. Another variant worth mentioning is the verb *ro shoic* in line 8; Group IV/b-1 agrees by giving *ro soic* (l. 8), yet Group IV/a-2, the only other group to include this line, has *do roich*. The agreement between Groups IV/b-1 and b-2 strengthens the argument for the sub-groups.

Group IV/b-3

1   Tain*edh* Cu C*ulainn* fa longp*or*t b*h*fear nEirion*n* an tráit*h* sin go
    cosdat*hac*h cat*h*b*h*uad*hac*h
    cloidea*mh*d*hear*g cosg*rat*ha*ch*.
    Mairg mna,
5   m*air*g macaoim*h*
    m*air*g miondaoine,
    m*air*g eirr*e*
    m*air*g muir,
    m*air*g tír,
10 c*h*um a ráin*edh* an flat*h* foranac*h* ferram*h*uil an tan sin.

Group IV/b-3 gives a drastically reduced version which is not a 'rhetoric' at all but rather uses elements of it and presents them as an alliterative prose description. We have already noted above that the following paragraph in IV/b-3 follows suit and, by omitting any speech and presents the events as a continuous narrative, while retaining the sense and content of the other groups.

Conclusions to case study b)

As with the passage in our first case study, we can once again conclude that the similarities generally outweigh the discrepancies on an inter-group level in regard to the prose narrative and the 'rhetoric'. Even taking into account the omissions and abridgements in Groups I and II with regards to the poetry, and overall text in sub-group IV/b-3, the elements that are present correspond to the 'longer' versions of poetry and prose in the other groups. Within the poetry we again find that only the stanza that sums up the immediately preceding events is given, that is the one stanza that is most relevant to the overall action.

There is once again consistency in Groups I and II in that in these groups not only is the poetry shortened to one stanza, but the 'rhetoric' is also abbreviated. A good example for this 'gradual abridgement' is the element *druim an domuin* which, present in Groups III and IV (except for sub-group IV/b-3), can be found 'tagged onto the end' of the 'rhetoric' in Group II and has been omitted in Group I. Where it stands in Group IV, however, it makes metrical and structural sense. Generally, the elements that do remain in these shortened versions are all present in the longer versions in Group IV; looking at it the other way, we could argue that the 'shortened' versions only take certain and exactly corresponding elements from the longer versions while omitting others.

We had already noted in our first case study that IV/b-3 has a tendency to give an abbreviated account; this is made all the more obvious by looking at how a 'rhetoric' has been reduced to an alliterative description while still retaining the same textual elements or components. The inclusion of a *dúnadh* into our 'rhetoric' – and also the alliterative description – is once again confined to Group IV. The 'rhetorics' thus give an impression of being more integral and formulaic. The question arises whether Groups I and II represent a 'failed attempt' to shorten yet at the same time retain the 'rhetoric' as it stands in Group IV (again with the exception of IV/b-3 where, as we have noted, the 'rhetoric' is reduced to an alliterative description). This echoes our observations of the first case study where we had already noted that the 'rhetoric' seemed most genuine, and structurally sound, in Group IV.

Within the 'rhetoric' we could make interesting observations with regard to the use of singular and plural passive forms: Groups I, II, III, IV/a-1 and IV/a-2 have singular passive forms, which in IV/b-1 are given as plural passive forms. In sub-group IV/b-2 these have been replaced by active forms, and omitted entirely in IV/b-3. In Group IV (with the exception of b-3) we could further observe the addition of the older form *do / ro fil* at the beginning of a line; together with the old passive plural forms as found in IV/b-1 this may suggest that the 'rhetoric' preserved here may be older, while the other groups give modernised forms.

In the preliminary assessment of the *roscada* of Version A in section 6.3.3 we had noted that there is one *rosc* in particular which we can identify with a 'rhetoric' in our later recension of the tale, this being the 'rhetoric' that was the subject of this second case study, *Atá Cú Chulainn / Coimhéirghe*. In light of the observations made on the 'rhetoric', it is of relevance to explore very briefly the extent to which this really may be reflective of the corresponding *rosc* from Version A. Given below is the *rosc* both as a continuous text (as found in the published edition of Version A in LL), and tentatively split up into units as we have done in for the 'rhetorics' in our case studies above:

> Coimergid a f*h*iru Her*end*. atraigid fil sund Coin Cul*aind* costodach coscarach claidiubderg. iraichlid erachlid. airegid. Iactbadir cind de sein ailfit*ir* aichthi cosc n-admait ditnui taclaid ferg fair. Óenní sin amáin m*ac* Dé m*ac* duini. mairg mindóene mairg séis mairg sreith mairg suthch*er*naid gen in flaith flaith findnélach fossad fichda fírchlich feromail ra hart in domuin dodenaig. boí da*no* noí mís fo chleith ingeni détlaind bunaid. machit Macha immanar neóil slecht mairc ro chaith slecht bud adbur anmich airchind dian tic bacher Cua comergid. Com*ergid*.[355]

1	Coimergid a f*h*iru Her*end*
	atraigid fil sund
	Coin Cul*aind* costodach coscarach claidiubderg
	iraichlid erachlid airegid
5	Iactbadir cind de sein
	ailfit*ir* aichthi
	cosc n-admait ditnui taclaid ferg fair
	Óenní sin amáin m*ac* Dé m*ac* duini
	mairg mindóene
10	mairg séis
	mairg sreith
	mairg suthch*er*naid
	gen in flaith flaith findnélach
	fossad fichda fírchlich feromail
15	ra hart in domuin dodenaig
	boí da*no* noí mís
	fo chleith ingeni détlaind bunaid
	machit Macha immanar neóil slecht mairc
	ro chaith slecht bud adbur anmich airchind
20	dian tic bacher Cua comergid. Com*ergid*.

There is a very clear echo of this older *rosc* from Version A within the 'rhetoric' as it stands in our later text. Interesting especially is the *fil* in line 2 above; we had noted *do / ro f(h)il* in the 'rhetoric' within Group IV. In line 6 above we have a plural passive form; we had also

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[355] Best & O'Brien, *The Book of Leinster* (Vol. II), pp. 446-7, ll. 13925-13935. The punctum has been expanded to *h* and 'im⁻' to 'im*orro*'.

identified plural passive forms in the 'rhetoric' as it stands in sub-group IV/b-1. In the *rosc* in line 5, however, there is an older active future deponent 3rd plural form, *iactbadir cind* ('heads will cry out')[356] which, in Version B, has been transformed into a passive 3rd plural form.

The transformation in the later 'rhetoric' suggests two things: one, that possibly the redactor of Version B did not understand the *rosc* and two, that the underlying version of the 'rhetoric' in *Oidheadh Con Culainn* is relatively old as well. What we can further note is that while the opening of the *rosc* is very clearly echoed in the 'rhetoric' as it stands in Group IV, here we consistently find the addition of *bhur ccuradha* after the opening *coimergid*. Overall, and especially taking into account the older features within Group IV, it seems that the 'rhetoric' as preserved in Group IV/b-1 most closely reflects the older *rosc* of Version A, and thus possibly the exemplar of the later version of the 'rhetoric'.

6.4 Conclusion

We started our inter-group comparison by casting the net as wide as possible in order to establish potential links between the groups which might give us clues as to the textual transmission of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. The overall general manuscript content did not produce any discernible patterns, and neither did an analysis of the physical layout of our text in our manuscripts. It was only when we introduced the 'rhetorics' and considered concrete textual examples that some consistency seemed to emerge, as was the case for our 'rhetorics'.

Within each of our manuscript groups there is significant internal consistency and correspondence, not only in the way in which the 'rhetorics' are presented in the manuscripts (occurring in the course of the prose narrative or being marked in some way to set them apart from the main body of the text) but also in the way in which the 'rhetorics' are introduced. Here we could identify a number of classifications, ranging from the introduction of a 'rhetoric' simply by a verb of speech, or a verb of speech in combination with a number of defining objects or descriptors (e.g. *adubhairt an laoidh / rosg / na briathra*). A brief digression into the introduction of all the poems in our groups – using a representative manuscript from each group – showed that the variation of the defining objects mostly occurred with regard to the 'rhetorics' but was relatively consistent for the poetry.

In total, we have established that a total of six 'rhetorics' can be identified within our text:

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[356] Cf. *DIL*, s.v. *íachtaid* 'cries out, makes lamentation, shrieks, groans'.

- Poem / 'rhetoric' 6: *A Chúagáin Mhuirtheimhne*

- Poem / 'rhetoric' 7: *A Chú Chulainn coimhiric*

- Poem / 'rhetoric' 10: *Éirigh a Chú Chulainn*

- Poem / 'rhetoric' 13: *Annamh leat, a Liath Macha*

- Poem / 'rhetoric' 21: *Coimhéirigh... / Atá Chú Chulainn...*

- Poem / 'rhetoric' 25: *Goirt rom ghaoth, gear rom gonadh*

We have already illustrated the distribution of the 'rhetorics' across the manuscript groups in Table 6-3. 'Rhetorics' 13 and 21 were the subject of our case studies; we will recap on some of the results that came out of their analysis below. We will very briefly comment on the remaining 'rhetorics', transcriptions of which can be found in the Appendix to the present chapter.

Poems / 'rhetorics' 6 and 7 (*A Chúagáin Mhuirtheimhne* and *A Chú Chulainn coimhiric*), while they may not be interchangeable, occur at the same point in the narrative, with 'rhetoric' 6 being confined to sub-group IV/b while the other manuscripts here favour 'rhetoric' 7. As can be seen from the transcriptions in the Appendix to the present chapter, Groups I and II are very close with regard to 'rhetoric' 7, giving a shorter account than Groups III and IV/a, which in turn share close correspondences. The main difference to be pointed out between Groups I and II lies within lines 2 and 4: line 4 in Group I (*a mhic díona Murtheimhne*) appears as the second line in Group II; line 2 in Group I and line 4 in Group II are unique to the respective groups. The final lines differ slightly; other than that the two groups correspond. Looking at sub-group IV/b – which gives the 'alternative rhetoric' 6 - we find that while the two 'rhetorics' 6 and 7 share common elements, they are different enough to be classified as two separate items.[357] Compare, for instance, the differing first lines: *A Chúagáin Mhuirtheimhne* ~ *A Chú Chulainn coimhéirigh*. We can detect similarities, however, within the list of Cú Chulainn's anticipated victims (*tuitfidh leat righ Ailill, Lughaidh...*) which bear close correspondences, as does the address *a ua Chaithfaidh*, which again can be found in both 'rhetorics'. As with our 'case studies', for 'rhetorics' 6 and 7 it seems to be a case that Groups I and II give abbreviated accounts which largely correspond. Group III gives a 'rhetoric' which is longer and generally agrees with Group IV/a, although there are some discrepancies. Sub-groups IV/a-1 and a-2 correspond, as do IV/b-1, b-2 and b-3, although here we have a clear divide between the sub-groups IV/a and IV/b since the latter gives a 'rhetoric' not found elsewhere, which however has strong echoes of that in IV/a.

[357] Cf. section 3.4.3, where we have already briefly compared and contrasted these two 'rhetorics'.

Poem / 'rhetoric' 10 *Éirigh a Chú Chulainn* has been omitted in both Groups I and II, which again supports the links between those two groups which we have already established and suggested. In the remaining groups the 'rhetorics' all have close correspondences; IV/b-2 and b-3 lose the *dúnadh* at the end due to an addition of *t'airm* where the other groups finish with *éirigh*. All groups, however, consistently give the rhythmical lines endings *catha-flatha-grádha-lámha* (note that Group III gives *grá ~grádha*).

Of the six 'rhetorics' two were analysed as case studies in some more detail. Considering in both cases not only the 'rhetoric' itself but also its narrative context and the poems occurring in its vicinity proved useful to make some concrete textual observations on an inter-group level. It emerged that the overall framework of the tale corresponded closely across the groups, as did the prose narrative, while the greatest discrepancies occurred within the poetry and 'rhetoric'. Those manuscripts that either gave shortened versions of the poetry or omitted it altogether were also those manuscripts that gave abbreviated 'rhetorics'. The elements that were retained in the shortened 'rhetorics' or poetry, however, could be traced exactly in the longer versions as preserved in the other groups. Dividing the 'rhetorics' up into alliterative clusters showed that even where speech interjections interrupted the flow and thus somewhat disguised the presence of a 'rhetoric', the textual elements still largely corresponded. In both case studies one group, namely sub-group IV/b-3, stood out in consistently abridging the prose narrative and even reducing a 'rhetoric' to an alliterative description, as was the case in our second case study. Nevertheless, those textual elements that are necessary to convey the same sense and content as found in the other groups were retained.

We concluded that Groups IV/a-1 and IV/b-1, although they fall into different sub-groups, share similarities, and on the evidence of the 'rhetorics' we analysed in this chapter it appears that out of all groups, sub-groups IV/a-1 and b-1 seem to most closely represent an exemplar of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. This is of course supported by the fact that within these groups we find our earliest manuscripts, which thus chronologically have to pre-date the others. Especially within the 'rhetoric' of the second case study, we had noted similarities between sub-group IV/b-1 and the corresponding *rosc* from Version A. We could speculate that the older forms retained by sub-group IV/b-1 make this particular sub-group a marginally more likely contender than IV/a-1 for representing the exemplar. If we assume, however, that between sub-groups IV/a-1 and b-1 we could establish the 'ur-text', it seems plausible that all other groups – linked more or less closely – are based upon variants of the text as it stands here.

Our inter-group comparison has strengthened the argument for the existence of our manuscript groups as each group displayed some unique features that set them apart from the others. Some groups seem textually closer than others: in the case of the sections considered for our case studies, Groups I and II were almost interchangeable in terms of the prose narrative, so close are the correspondences. While this may be so, even those groups that displayed the most crucial textual discrepancies are still amazingly close to the other groups; on the whole (and especially on a more superficial textual level rather than a close linguistic one) the similarities outweigh the discrepancies.

On the basis of the analysis in the present chapter, and on further taking into account the observations on the transmission of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* made in the present thesis, we may attempt to provide a preliminary stemma for Groups I-IV, placing the manuscripts of sub-groups IV/a-1 and IV/b-1 as those that are closest to and most representative of the exemplar:
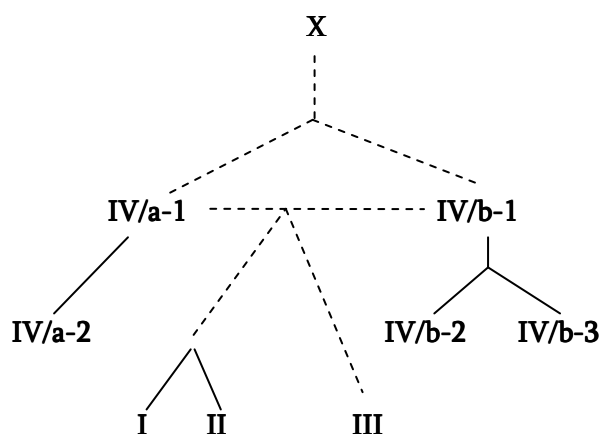
Appendix: Transcriptions of the remaining 'rhetorics'

GROUP	*A Chúagáin Mhuirtheimhne*	*A Chú Chulainn coimhéirigh*	*Éirigh a Chú Chulainn*	*Goirt rom gaoth…*
I	-n/a-	[120] A C*h*ongcul*ainn* cóm*h*éir*igh*. a iolrea*ch*taig éa*ch*tm*h*inic, *ar* g*h*argg*h*leó na ngaileangac*h*, a m*h*ic díona M*urth*eim*h*ne, rób*h*uírsiad ró g*h*airsiad aicme ea*ch*tra*nn* ilc*h*ineoil, ná*r* tí olc dod c*h*om*h*é*ir*ge a C*h*ongcul*ainn*.	-n/a-	[139] Goirt g*h*aot*h*, géar rom g*h*onad*h*, *ár*d olc ad*h*b*h*al, Cú caoim*h* C*h*uloin*n*, díon óg Ul*adh*, sgéal go ng*air*ge, gníom*h* go ngu*ir*te
II	-n/a-	[83] A C*h*ú C*h*ulain*n* coi*m*héirig a m*h*ic díona M*urth*eim*h*ne *ar* g*h*argg*h*leo na ngalianac*h* freag*air* na sluaig*hth*e ró b*h*úirsiod ro g*air*siod aicme e*ch*tra*nn* ilc*h*ineoil n*ar* tí olc dod c*h*oi*m*héirge a C*h*ú C*h*uluin*n* b*h*uad*h*uig*h*.	-n/a-	[107] Guirt ro*m* g*h*aot*h* géar ro*m* g*h*uined *ar* n-olc ad*h*b*h*ul Cú c*h*aom*h* C*h*ulan*n* dión óg Ul*adh*. sgéul go ng*air*ge gniom*h* go nguinte.
III	-n/a-	[241] A C*h*uc*h*ul*oinn* {*air* si} coi*m*heirig ag*us* cuim*h*nid buaid*h*red*h* for b*h*reg*h* mid*h*e b*h*éas is col Muirt*h*eim*h*ne, mór airgt*h*e Mid*h*e agus crec*h* ion*n*rad*h* na hEam*h*na; ní do c*h*uirimsi ion*n*ad mo m*h*uinig*h*in a ccoim*h*leanm*h*uin*n* air loingeas fu*air* F*h*e*ar*guis; tuitfed*h* leat uim Oilioll Lughaid*h* et laoc*h* Maicniad*h* Earc is Colla, Conc*h*ub*h*ar Mead*hbh* is Maine do m*h*órc*h*osg*ar*; éirge a innioll dáimhe ilchleasa, eachtnimhnecha theacht ó Chathfa cloidhimhruadh	[243] Eig*h*rig a C*h*uc*h*uloin*n* fionntar cruas et cosain do c*h*umain*n* 7 do c*h*araid *air* ne*ar*t nam*h*ad Muig*h*e Muirt*h*eim*h*ne, atá lán do d*h*rongaib*h* deig*h*f*h*ear cloid*h*m*h* 7 sgiat*h*, ion*n*saig an Liat*h* M*h*ac*h*a 7 beir leat í a c*h*en*n* cat*h*a cosain is feid*h*m flat*h*a, Eam*h*uin Mac*h*a na rod réid*h*, na coigill aos grá na cosa na lam*h*a, beide na Boin bána t'ar[m] et eighrig.	[251] Gort róm g*h*aoit*h* ge*ar* róm g*h*onad*h* árd olc ád*h*b*h*ail Cuc*h*uloin*n* díon óg Ulad*h* sgéal go ng*air*b*h*e gníom*h* ngoirte.

		a mhic dionadh Muighe Muirtheimhne, a ghairghleodh na ngaileonach, ró gharsad aicmedha eachtrann ilcheola air tí olc dod choimheirge a Chuchuloinn.		
IV/a-1	-n/a-	[19v] A Cúchulainn coimherigh do comdha bhuair breghmaine. Bes is coll dod comh clusa [20r] iondraigh minic Murteimhne magh Mide go mór airgnedh. Ní do corrbinnc is comhadus no do loingus fuar Fergus coimhleanmuin ccath toethfedh Oillill angloid Lugaidh 7 loech Macniadh Arc is Colla 7 Concubar Medb is na Maine o do mor ruathar. Eirigh a ilrechtaigh echt minic iollann aiteacht a ua Catfaidh cloidimhdeirg a mhic mor Mhagh Murteimhne ar gairg gleó na ngailian doig ro mortar 7 ro gairsedar aicineda Echtrann ilcinela fan magh mingleo mor adphal nar tí olc dot comheirge a Cú calma cathbhuadach gaph mo comhairle a Chú.	[20v] Eirigh a Chuculuinn fiontar cruas do cumhuing ar nert namhad niadh Murthemhne na murar lan do droing deighfear cloidheamh 7 sciath, ionnsuighe an Liath Macha ber leat í ccenn chatha. Cosin ré fedm flatha Eamhain na ród réigh na coigill oes gradha na cosa no lamha bed na Buinn bana o t'airm aguis éir. Eirigh.	[45a (245)] Goirt rom ghaoth ger rom ghuin ard olc adbert ciorraidh co na craobhruaidhe bas banntracht is binn macaomh. bas file is ard ollamh am an Cu caomhghlan Culoinnsi. eg aindrigh is engen righ aodhaire oirdherc fior Ulltaibh an Cu cleasadh cathbhuadadh gniomh rom ghuin is rom ger gort.* * [from TCD 1362 as 72.2.9 breaks off before this 'rhetoric']
		[14 (8v)] A Chu Culainn coimheiric caoinnach buiredh foe bregh cormac is comhadhais a comhleannmhain ar loinges fuar Fergusa tuitfidh Ollill Luchchaidh 7 laoech Macniadh	[15 (9r)] Eirigh a Chu Chulainn fionntar cruas do cloidhimh ar nert at níath Murteimhne na muirer lan do drongaibh deghfer cloidmh 7 sgiath	[55 (29r)] Goirt rom gaoth ger rom gonadh ard olc adbere Cu caomh Culainn dion og Uladh sgeal go ngairbhe

IV/a-2	-n/a-	Earc is Colla is Concubar Meada is Maine dot morruatar Eirigh a ilcleasa ilrechtaigh echt mhinic aithecht a ua Cathfadh cloidem derg a mic toim i Muighe Murtemhne ar garg gleo na ngailiana doigh ró buirsetar ro gairsetar aicmedha eachtrann ilcineoil fan magh morabhail na ro tiolc dot coimhfeircc a Chu Culainn a Chú.	ionnsuigh an Liath Macha ber leat a ccenn catha cosainn re feidhm flatha Eamhan na ród rédh na coigill na Boinn bána. o tarnsa et eir. Eirigh.	gniomh con goirt.
IV/b-1	[16] A Chúagáin Mhuirtheimhne mórairgthe an da chomhrug as comhaoís ag coimhlenmuin ar loinges fúar Ferghusa tuitfidh letsa ri Oillil Luighaidh 7 láoch Mac Níadh Earc is Colla is Conchobhar Méadhbh 's Maine do tromchosgar aillrechtaigh ilchlesoigh éicht mhinic áithesoigh a ua Cathfaidh cloidhiomh rúaidh a mheic díon Magh Muirthteimhne ar ghairbhghleó námhadh mór adhbhal nar fhaice olc adhbal mhór dód choimheirge a Chúagáin.	-n/a-	[20] Éirigh a Chu Chuloinn fionntar crúas do chumhoing ar nert námhad Magh Muirtheimhne na muirer nó do dhroing dheighfer cloidhemh sgíath. Ionnsoidh an Líath Macha Beir lat a gchenn chatha go sin as feidhm flatha Eamain na ród réidh na coigill aós grádha no cosa nó lámha beid na Boinn bána ó tairm 7 eirg.	[47] Goirt róm gáoth gér rom gonadh ard olc Uladh udh bheire Cú cáoimh Culoinn, dión óg Uladh sgéul go ngairbhe gníomh go ngoirte.g.
IV/b-2	[346] A Chuagain Muirtheimhne morarghadh ann do chomhragh as comhaois a ccomhlionann air ar loingeas fuair Feargusa tuitfedh tuitfedh leatsa Riogh Oilioll, Lughaidh agus laoch Mhaic Niadh Earc is Colla is Conchubhar Meadbh 's Maine do trom chosgair ailreachtaigh ilchleachtaigh	-n/a-	[349] Eirigh a Chuchulunn fionntar cruas cumhuing. ar neart namad Mheadhbhe na muirear lán do dhroing dheighfhear cloideamh sgiath. ionsaigh an Liath Mhacha beir leat acceann catha go sín is feidhm flatha. Eamhuin na ród reidh	[372] Goirt rom gaoth ger rom goinadh ard olc Ulaidh udbheire Cu chaoimh Chulainn dion óg Ulaidh sgeul ngair gnimh go ngoirte.

	a eacht mhinic atheachtach a uadh Chathfaidh chloidheamh ruadh. A meic dian Magh Muirtheimhne air ghleo namhad mor adhbhal nar fhaice olc adhbhal mhor dod comheirge a Chuagáin.		na coigil aois gradha na cosa na lamha. beid na buinn bána od tarmuin.	
IV/b-3	[290] A Chuagain Mhuirtheimhne mhórairg tig an do chomhrag as comhaois a choimhleanmain air ar loinges fuar fergusa tuitfeadh leatsa righ Oilioll Lughaidh et laoch Macniad, Earc is Colla is Conchabhar Meadhbh is Maine do throm chosgair a ilreacht ilchles a eacht mhinic aithechtach, a ua Catfaidh cloideamhruadh a mhic dian Maigh Muirtheimhne air ghleó namhad móraidhbheil nar faice olcadhbhal mór dod chóimheirghe a Chu Chuluinn.	-n/a-	[296] Eirig a Chu Chulluinn fionntar cruais cumhing ar nert namhad maith na muirer lan do droing deghfer sgiath, ionnsaigh an Liath Macha beir leat a ccenn chatha go sin as feigm flatha Eamhuin na ród réidh na cogill cosgrádha na cosa na lámha, beid na Boinn bána ad th'airm.	[331 (169)] Goirt róm ghaoith, geir rom ghoinadh, ard olc Ula adbeirre Cu chaomh Culluin díon og Ulaidh sgeal ngar gniom go ngoirt.

Chapter 7: *Laoidh na gCeann*

In this final chapter we will examine the most famous poem from Cú Chulainn's death tale: *Laoidh na gCeann*, the 'Lay of the Heads'. The 'lay' offers countless possibilities for research, but the scope of this thesis will allow us only to carry out a preliminary examination of the poem's transmission and tradition.
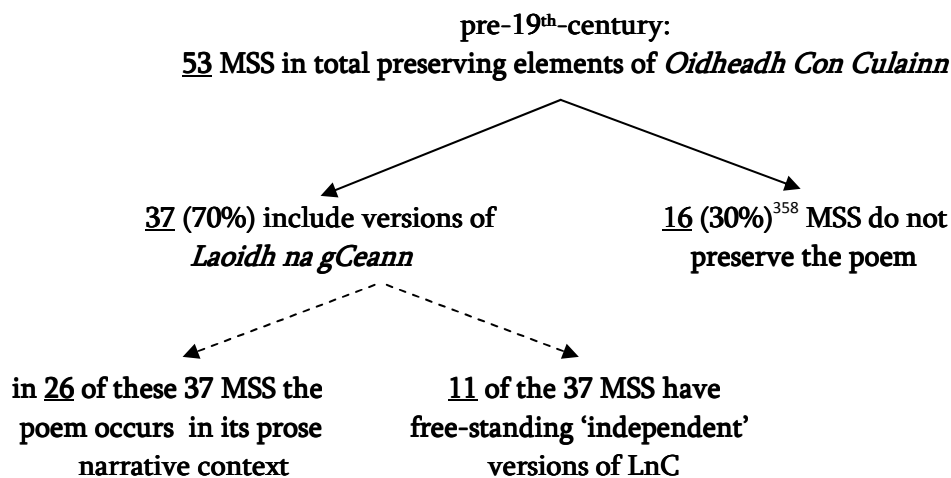
We will begin by making some general observations on the poem's distribution across the manuscript groups. This will be followed by a brief discussion of the 'independent versions' of LnC, after which we will consider the longest version of the poem that we can identify. Under the headline 'Same scribe, same poem?' we will address those instances in which the poem was written or copied by the same scribe more than once; the focus here is upon the Kintyre scribe Eoghan Mac Gilleoin. Finally, we will consider the remaining 'Scottish' versions of LnC, paying special attention to those versions of the poem that display the most irregular features and idiosyncrasies.

7.1 General observations

Laoidh na gCeann takes the form of a dialogue between Cú Chulainn's widow Eimhear and his foster brother, Conall Cearnach. Having chased Cú Chulainn's adversaries through Ireland and taken revenge for the hero's death by beheading them, Conall returns to Eimhear and presents her with the heads which he has speared on a *gad*. The poem itself is a conversation between Eimhear and Conall: she enquires about the identity of each head, he answers by giving the name and some additional information such as the place of death, genealogy and so on. The final stanzas are slightly different in that they do not take the form of 'question-and-answer', but rather consist of a series of rhetorical questions and statements mourning the loss of Cú Chulainn and wondering how life will be without him.

The poem traditionally concludes the story of Conall Cearnach's revenge for Cú Chulainn, *Deargruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh*, which forms the second part to the overall story of Cú Chulainn's death. However, the poem also appears 'independently', meaning that it stands on its own and outwith the prose narrative context in a number of manuscripts. Of our total fifty-three pre-19th-century manuscripts that preserve elements of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, thirty-seven include versions of LnC (both in the context of the prose narrative and 'independent' versions). The earliest version of the poem is that found in the early 16th-century 'Book of the

Dean of Lismore' (BDL) while the latest dates to 1796. We can illustrate the 'statistics' of LnC and its distribution across the pre-19th-century manuscripts as follows:

pre-19th-century:
53 MSS in total preserving elements of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*

37 (70%) include versions of
Laoidh na gCeann

16 (30%)[358] MSS do not
preserve the poem

in **26** of these 37 MSS the
poem occurs in its prose
narrative context

11 of the 37 MSS have
free-standing 'independent'
versions of LnC

The fact that the poem occurs in the context of the prose narrative but can also stand independently is an aspect that we will explore further. Firstly, it will be beneficial to recap on the manuscripts which preserve LnC.

In the following list, the thirty-seven manuscripts preserving the 'lay' have been arranged chronologically, along with information on their date, group and content. As we have seen in previous chapters, the manuscripts preserving 'independent' versions of LnC have been classified into their own group, namely Group VI; to make their occurrence even clearer those manuscripts preserving the 'independent' versions are marked in bold and by * in the list below. As before, the colour coding for manuscripts with acephalous texts or those that break off unfinished applies.[359]

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[358] Counting here those manuscripts which, in all likelihood, would at one point have included LnC but where it is now lost due to damage to the manuscript, loss of leaves etc.

[359] Note that there are three instances of manuscripts in which LnC is not fully preserved due to the loss of leaves (RIA 24 P 6, RIA 23 P 13) and the general condition of the manuscript (RIA C vi 3). This latter manuscript only preserves a fragment of the prose tale but fortunately it is possible to reconstruct most of LnC, with only one stanza being completely lost.

	Manuscript	Date	Group	Content
1	***NLS 72.1.37 (BDL)**	1512-20	**VI**	LnC (24 qq)
2	NLS 72.1.38	1608-21	IV/b-1	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
3	RIA C iv 3	?1633	V	DCC, LnC (22 qq)
4	***NLS 72.1.36**	1691	**VI**	LnC (27 qq)
5	TCD 1362/ H.4.21	1691	IV/a-1	BmMM, DCC, LnC (30 qq)
6	RIA 23 K 7	1701	II	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
7	TCD 1296/ H.2.5	1712	IV/b-2	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
8	BL Eg. 132	1712-13	IV/a-2	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
9	***TCD 1354/ H.4.13**	1713	**VI**	LnC (29 qq) + 4 poems
10	RIA 23 K 37	1718	IV/a-2	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
11	NLI G 18	1722	IV/b-2	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
12	RIA E iv 3	1727	III	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
13	RIA 23 M 47 (b)	1734	III	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
14	RIA 23 L 27	1737-38	III	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
15	TCD 1287/ H.1.13	1746	IV/b-3	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
16	***NLS 73.2.2 ('Turner MS')**	c. 1748	**VI**	LnC (30 qq) + 4 poems
17	***Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (b)**	1748	**VI**	LnC (18 qq)
18	Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (c)	1755	IV/a-2	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
19	NLI G 457	1759	IV/a-2	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
20	***RIA 24 B 26**	1760-63	**VI**	LnC (35 qq)
21	RIA 23 C 26 (c)	1761	II	LnC (35 qq)[360], BmMM, DCC
22	NLI G 296	1763	IV/b-3	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
23	NLI G 149	1765	III	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
24	***RIA 13 N 14**	1766	**VI**	LnC (35 qq)
25	***RIA 23 L 24**	1766-69	**VI**	LnC (28 qq)
26	RIA 23 C 22	1767	II	BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq)
27	NLI G 146	1770	IV/a-2	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
28	BL Eg. 150	1773	IV/b-3	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
29	***NLS 73.2.10 (Kennedy)**	1774-84	**VI**	LnC (34 (47) qq)
30	RIA 23 H 16	1779	III	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
31	***RIA 23 L 13**	?1782	**VI**	LnC (28 qq)
32	RIA 24 P 6	1783	III	BmMM, DCC, LnC (24 qq)
33	***RIA 23 G 20**	1788	**VI**	LnC (35 qq)
34	RIA G 501	1794	III	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 (30) qq)
35	RIA 23 M 47 (a)	1795	III	DCC, LnC (28 qq)
36	RIA 23 G 21	1796	I	BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq)
37	RIA 23 P 13	18th cen	IV/b-3	BmMM, DCC, LnC (24 qq)

Table 7-1: Pre-19th-century MSS preserving LnC (in chronological order)

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[360] Arguably, LnC as it stands in RIA 23 C 26 (c) could be classified as an 'independent' version since it precedes the prose narrative and is thus not integrated into the framework of the tale. We have, however, noted similar instances (in Group II) of LnC where it stands after *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, and appears to have been added as an afterthought, rather than be part of the tale; here, too, the poems were classified into the respective manuscript group rather than into Group VI. For the sake of consistency, we shall reserve Group VI (comprising the 'independent' and free-standing versions of LnC) for those manuscripts that truly only give the poem and none of the prose narrative.

Presented like this, we cannot discern an apparent pattern as to the occurrence of the poem within the manuscripts, for instance with regard to any consistency in the number of stanzas where the poem stands independently or within its prose narrative context. For most of this thesis we have considered the manuscripts as they are classified into groups; it might thus be useful and consistent to re-arrange the data accordingly and present the manuscripts once again, this time by group (and chronologically within each group), to see whether this results in a more regular distribution. In the order of their groups, then, the thirty-seven manuscripts preserving LnC appear as follows – note that the 'independent' versions are thus confined to Group VI:

Group I (1 out of 5 MSS in group):

RIA 23 G 21	1796	BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq)

Group II (3 out of 7 MSS in group):

RIA 23 K 7	1701	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
RIA 23 C 26 (c)	1761	LnC (35 qq), BmMM, DCC
RIA 23 C 22	1767	BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq)

Group III (8 out of 9 MSS in group):

RIA E iv 3	1727	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
RIA 23 M 47 (b)	1734	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
RIA 23 L 27	1737-38	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
NLI G 149	1765	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
RIA 23 H 16	1779	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
RIA 24 P 6	1783	BmMM, DCC, LnC (24 qq)
RIA G 501	1794	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 (30) qq)
RIA 23 M 47 (a)	1795	DCC, LnC (28 qq)

Group IV (13 out of 15 MSS in group):

IV/a-1	TCD 1362/ H.4.21	1691	BmMM, DCC, LnC (30 qq)
IV/a-2	BL Eg. 132	1712-13	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
"	RIA 23 K 37	1718	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
"	Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (c)	1755	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
"	NLI G 457	1759	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
"	NLI G 146	1770	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
IV/b-1	NLS 72.1.38	1608-21	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
IV/b-2	TCD 1296/ H.2.5	1712	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
"	NLI G 18	1722	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
IV/b-3	TCD 1287/ H.1.13	1746	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
"	NLI G 296	1763	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
"	BL Eg. 150	1773	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
"	RIA 23 P 13	18th cen	BmMM, DCC, LnC (24 qq)

Group V (1 out of 6 MSS in group):

    RIA C iv 3 │ ?1633 │ DCC, LnC (22 qq)

Group VI (the 'independent' versions of LnC) (11 out of 11 MSS in group):

NLS 72.1.37 (BDL)	1512-20	LnC (24 qq)
NLS 72.1.36	1691	LnC (27 qq)
TCD 1354/ H.4.13	1713	LnC (29 qq) + 4 poems
NLS 73.2.2 ('Turner MS')	c. 1748	LnC (30 qq) + 4 poems
Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (b)	1748	LnC (18 qq)
RIA 24 B 26	1760-63	LnC (35 qq)
RIA 13 N 14	1766	LnC (35 qq)
RIA 23 L 24	1766-69	LnC (28 qq)
NLS 73.2.10 (Kennedy)	1774-84	LnC (34 (47) qq)
RIA 23 L 13	?1782	LnC (28 qq)
RIA 23 G 20	1788	LnC (35 qq)

On re-arranging the manuscripts by groups, clearer patterns emerge with regard to the number of stanzas in some of the groups: see for instance the consistency in Group III of 28 stanzas in LnC, while in Group IV there is a tendency for the poem to occur with 29 stanzas. Discrepancies can be noted, however, and some of these we may be able to explain.

If we take Group II, for instance, only three out of the seven manuscripts which make up the group in total preserve LnC, which in turn here ranges between 28 and 35 stanzas. We have, however, already drawn attention to the fact that the manuscripts in Group II do not normally appear to preserve a version of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* that includes LnC (cf. section 3.4.2), and that where the poem does occur it appears to be somewhat 'tagged onto the end' of the prose narrative. This seems to indicate that individual scribes must have had access to more than just the version of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* they were copying (and which presumably did not include LnC), and that they chose to emend the text accordingly as they deemed appropriate.

The greatest fluctuation in the number of stanzas occurs in Group VI, which comprises the 'independent versions' of LnC. To a certain extent, the fact that such significant variation occurs here corroborates the argument for the existence of this particular manuscript group. We have established the groups on the basis of the agreement between both prose and poetry within the individual manuscripts. While further examination, comparisons and especially close textual readings would be needed to comment on the exact relationship between the manuscripts within each group, we can work on the tentative assumption that they are copies of one another, although the precise exemplar may not be clear at this stage. The general agreement with regard to LnC within those groups preserving the (entire) prose narrative

supports this view about the transmission of a particular version of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* within Groups I to IV. In Group VI, where LnC stands independently, we do not have any prose narrative or further poems related to *Oidheadh Con Culainn* upon which we could base a similar argument for the manuscripts' relationships or transmission.[361] This lack of prose context, on the other hand, means that it is here that we might expect the greatest variation in the number of stanzas as the poem may have been copied and thus transmitted from a number of different sources. The versions of LnC preserved in the manuscripts which fall into Group VI do not necessarily have to be copies of one another; for example, some of the versions might have been taken out of their prose context and left standing on their own.

After these preliminary observations on LnC, the question arises how to proceed in our discussion and analysis of the poem. It is of course desirable to cover as many versions as possible, but the number of versions to be taken into account makes it difficult to give each one the same degree of attention. We have seen that the total number of stanzas varies between 22 and 35 – a difference of thirteen stanzas! We have also seen that within Groups I to IV the number of stanzas within the poem tend to be fairly regular. Taking these two points into account, the question arises which stanzas may have been omitted or added (depending on the length of the poem), and with regard to the groups, whether versions of the poem preserving the same number of stanzas actually preserve the same stanzas. And do these stanzas occur in the same order across the manuscripts? Totalling up the number of stanzas within each version of LnC and the number of manuscripts preserving them, we would have a total of 1070 stanzas to cross-reference, contrast and compare. This figure is of course enormous, and we will have to find an alternative way of dealing with this number of stanzas.

A very clear way of illustrating the distribution of the stanzas in every one of our thirty-seven manuscripts is a schematic and colour-coded representation of the poem.[362] Due to the nature of the poem – a conversation between Conall Cearnach and Eimhear - the stanzas can be divided up into units or pairs, each pair consisting of Eimhear's question and Conall's answer. Each pair has been assigned a colour; as we will see, the order of the first six stanzas is the same in all versions;[363] these have thus been treated as one unit and assigned the same colour. As already mentioned, the tone of the poem changes slightly in the final stanzas which

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[361] With the exception, of course, of the two manuscripts in Group VI (namely, NLS 73.2.2 ('Turner MS') and TCD 1354/ H.4.14) which preserve a further four poems besides LnC.

[362] A sample version of LnC with the colour-coding applied to it can be found following the transcriptions of the poem on the enclosed CD-ROM ('Item 3 – Transcriptions of LnC').

[363] With the exception of NLS 72.3.10 (Kennedy).

are not so much questions and answers rather than statements (e.g. *A Chonaill ós uireasa dam/ ní luighfidh mé le fear go bráth…*) and rhetorical questions (e.g. *A Chonaill cionnus atáid/ mná Innse Fáil tar éis na Con?*). Rather than treating these final stanzas as pairs, each stanza has been assigned an individual colour as here we also have the greatest discrepancies in the order in which the stanzas occur. The key to abbreviations used in the colour chart is as follows:

Q = Question	(E) = Eimhear	S = Statement
A = Answer	(C) = Conall	RQ = Rhetorical Question
1., 2., = number of stanza in each pair		

Note that in the six manuscripts where we find the longest version of LnC, with 35 stanzas (namely, in RIA 23 C 26 (c), RIA 24 B 26, RIA 23 N 14, RIA 23 C 22, RIA 23 G 20 and RIA 23 G 21), the first stanza of LnC 'proper' – *A Chonaill cia hiad na cinn* – occurs as the sixth stanza. The first five stanzas as they stand in these six manuscripts can be seen to be introductory stanzas which in the table have all been marked in purple; we will discuss these introductory stanzas in more detail in section 7.2 below.

Stanzas marked as 'unattested' in the table indicate that they are unique to the respective manuscript and do not occur in any of the other pre-19th-century versions of LnC. There is no overlap or reduplication of 'unattested' stanzas in different manuscripts.

In terms of the order in which the information is presented, along the horizontal axis the manuscripts have been arranged by groups and chronologically within each group, while vertically the colour-coded stanzas are given in the order in which they appear in the respective manuscripts. The following table, then, shows this condensed information on the thirty-seven versions of LnC, using the conventions as laid out above:

NOTE:

For Table 7-2 see file '2009kuhnsphd – tables', Sheet 7.

Table 7-2: LnC colour-coded (by manuscript groups)

The table corroborates the initial observations which could be made from our list of the manuscripts in the order of their groups: as we can see from the colour chart, LnC as it stands in Groups III and IV is very regular. Where variations do occur, we can note that these are on an inter-group level. Note for instance the final stanzas, and how their order corresponds within Groups III and IV, but is different between the two groups.

The most significant variations within the poem can be noted in Group VI. We had already observed that here we find the greatest fluctuation with regard to the number of stanzas, but the colour-chart shows that variation occurs also within the order of stanzas in the various versions of this poem in this group.

A more regular pattern can be achieved, however, by re-arranging the data from the initial table for the colour-coded stanzas, and by presenting the manuscripts according to the number of stanzas that their version preserve, in descending order. Thus, we can create 'blocks' of the manuscripts which give LnC with 35, 30, 28 and 24 stanzas respectively, thus reducing any variation in the order of stanzas almost entirely. The final five manuscripts are those which display the most significant variation in the order (and number) of stanzas and cannot be slotted into any of the 'blocks' – we will address these manuscripts and their variations in more detail below.

NOTE:

For Table 7-3 see file '2009kuhnsphd – tables', Sheet 8.

Table 7-3: LnC colour-coded (by number of stanzas)

The table, thus re-arranged, allows us to see more clearly the variations that occur within the different versions of LnC.

If we disregard the introductory stanzas to LnC where it stands with 35 stanzas for a moment, we can see that the poem here corresponds to our second 'block' of LnC with 30 stanzas. A difference can be noted, however, within the final five stanzas. These final stanzas, as has already been pointed out, break the pattern of being in pairs of question-answer, into which the rest of the poem can be divided. Instead, we find a series of statements and rhetorical questions, mostly spoken by Eimhear. We can see that with regard to the poem with thirty-five and thirty stanzas, we have the same stanzas, and thus content, but in a different order. The fact that these stanzas are 'independent' and not part of a pair mean that changing their order has no impact on the overall poem, neither in terms of content nor for its comprehension.

Between LnC with 30 and with 29 stanzas, we can note both correspondences as well as variations concerning the order of stanzas. The final stanzas stand in the same order; however, the fourth and fifth stanza-pairs are in reversed order:

30 qq		29 qq
1. Q (E)		1. Q (E)
2. A (C)		2. A (C)
1. Q (E)		1. Q (E)
2. A (C)		2. A (C)

The order of these stanzas as they stand in the manuscripts with 29 stanzas is also the order we find in the manuscripts with 28 stanzas. Interesting is the question of which stanza has been omitted so that we have 29 instead of 30 stanzas.

This omission of a stanza occurs at the only point in the poem where Conall's answer to Eimhear question has two parts, or two stanzas:

30 qq		29 qq
1. Q (E)		1. Q (E)
2. A (C)		
3. A (C)		3. A (C)

In her question, Eimhear enquires about the names of 'the six heads of evil appearance' ('*na sé cinn as olc níamh*'). Conall's answer is in two parts:

> A siad sud na se baid*hbh*
> do ciu m*arbh* sa mbel re gaoit*h*:
> cl*ann* Cail*itin* lu*cht* na ccleas,
> d*r*eam n*ach* raib*he ar* les mo laoic*h*.

> Attearnod*h* o ccleas na cCon*n*
> do cl*ann* Cail*itin* fa [nem*h* gnáth]
> do m*h*arb*h*us an seis*er* bad*h*b*h*,
> do t*h*uits*ed* le m'*ar*m t*ar* c*h*a[ch].[364]

As the colour-coding in pull-out Tables 7-2 and 7-3 above shows, in those versions of LnC with 29 or fewer stanzas only the second part of Conall's answer is given. The subjects that are the answer to the question – *clann Chailitín* (also referred to as *seiser badhbh* in the second stanza cited above) – are named in both stanzas, however, and thus make one as valid an answer to Eimhear's question as the other.

Within our 'block' of the versions of LnC with 29 stanzas, there is no variation in the order of the stanzas, and we can see that the order of the final stanzas corresponds to the versions of LnC with 30 stanzas. Within those manuscripts giving the poem with 28 stanzas, however, we find another pattern yet again. The 'lost' stanza is one of these final stanzas (a statement made by Conall beginning *An dá gháir do chráidh mo chorp...*), a second of these is then omitted but another stanza not found in the versions with more than 28 stanzas concludes the poem. The order of the final stanzas which overlap in both versions (i.e. with 29 and 28 stanzas respectively) corresponds. A discrepancy that can be noted concerns the two manuscripts in this 'block' of 28-stanza-versions of LnC which fall into Group IV/b-3. We will return to this variation in more detail in section 7.1.2 below.

Finally, there are the five manuscripts which do not conform to the pattern with regard to the order of stanzas that we have established for the other manuscripts. These five manuscripts fall into Groups V (one manuscript) and VI (four manuscripts) respectively. As we can see from Table 7-3, while the majority of stanzas making up these 'anomalous' versions are the same stanzas we can find in the other, more regular, versions, we also find a number (in the case of NLS 72.3.10, a great number!) of 'unattested' stanzas, i.e. stanzas which are unique to the respective manuscript and do not appear in any other version of the poem examined here. Of the five manuscripts, three are of a Scottish provenance; they will be discussed further in the context of the 'Scottish versions' in section 7.4 below. We will come back to the other two manuscripts, also.

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[364] Poem cited from TCD 1362/ H.4.21 [IV/a-1], pp. 268-69. The stanzas are lightly edited in accordance with editorial policy as laid out at the beginning of this thesis.

7.1.1 'The extent of Conall's revenge'

The internal variation that may occur within the poem can be illustrated on the example of one particular stanza. This is the second part, i.e. answer, to the stanza-pair marked as

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1. Q (E)
2. A (C)
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in pull-out Tables 7-2 and 7-3, and it is also the last stanza-pair before the 'independent' final stanzas. In her question, Eimhear asks Conall, *'Cread do thuit leat laimh?'*, 'How many fell by your hand?'. His answer as to the number differs considerably in the different versions of the poem:

- *Naonmhar is ceithre fichid* (= 89)
- *Ceann their fichid agus céad* (= 121)
- *Naonmhar is seacht fichid céad* (= 1409)
- *Deichneabhar 's seacht fichid céad* (= 1410)
- *Naonmhar fichid céad* (= 2009)
- *Ceann ar fhichid is fichid céad* (= 2021)
- *Naonmhar is dá fichid céad* (= 4009)
- *Naonmhar is trí fichid céad* (= 6009)

This variation is of course reminiscent of an episode in the prose narrative of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* which we considered in section 6.3.5 (case study b), *Coimhéirge.../ Atá Cú Chulainn*): here we noted similar, albeit less grave, discrepancies in numbers, more specifically with regard to the number of people killed by Cú Chulainn alongside the satirist Cú Chuilleasg.

As for the variation within the stanza of LnC, however, we may ask what the distribution of Conall's 'numerical answers' is across the manuscripts, and whether there is a pattern with regard to the number of stanzas in the overall poem. The following table gives, once again, the thirty-seven manuscripts preserving LnC, with detail as to which of Conall's 'answers' we can find in each one:

Group	Manuscript	Total qq	89	121	1409	1410	2009	2021	4009	6009
I	RIA 23 G 21	35 qq								✔
II	RIA 23 K 7	28 qq							✔	
"	RIA 23 C 26 (c)	35 qq								✔
"	RIA 23 C 22	35 qq								✔
III	RIA E iv 3	28 qq							✔	
"	RIA 23 M 47 (b)	28 qq							✔	
"	RIA 23 L 27	28 qq							✔	
"	NLI G 149	28 qq							✔	
"	RIA 23 H 16	28 qq							✔	
"	RIA 24 P 6	24 qq~							✔	
"	NLI G 501	28 qq							✔	
"	RIA 23 M 47 (a)	28 qq							✔	
IV/a-1	TCD 1362/ H.4.21	30 qq							✔	
IV/a-2	BL Eg. 132	29 qq							✔	
"	RIA 23 K 37	29 qq							✔	
"	Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (c)	29 qq							✔	
"	NLI G 457	29 qq							✔	
"	NLI G 146	29 qq							✔	
IV/b-1	NLS 72.1.38	30 qq	✔							
IV/b-2	TCD 1296/ H.2.5	29 qq	✔							
"	NLI G 18	29 qq	✔							
IV/b-3	TCD 1287/ H.1.13	29 qq	✔							
"	NLI G 296	29 qq	✔							
"	BL Eg. 150	28 qq							✔	
"	RIA 23 P 13	24 qq~	✔							
V	RIA C vi 3	22 qq						✔		
VI	NLS 72.1.37 (BDL)	24 qq				✔				
"	NLS 72.1.36	27 qq							✔	
"	TCD 1354/ H.4.13	29 qq							✔	
"	NLS 73.2.2 ('Turner MS')	30 qq							✔	
"	Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (b)	18 qq						✔		
"	RIA 24 B 26	35 qq								✔
"	RIA 23 N 14	35 qq								✔
"	RIA 23 L 24	28 qq							✔	
"	NLS 72.3.10 (Kennedy)	47 qq		✔						
"	RIA 23 L 13	28 qq					✔			
"	RIA 23 G 20	35 qq			✔					

~ LnC breaks off unfinished!

Table 7-4: Distribution of Conall's 'numerical answer' in LnC across MSS

It appears that all versions of LnC with 28 stanzas consistently favour the '4009' answer, which in turn means that there is agreement between the manuscripts in Group III. With one exception, namely RIA 23 G 20 (VI), all versions of LnC with 35 stanzas give '6009'. Group IV is somewhat more puzzling. In Group IV/a, versions of the poem with 30 as well as 29 stanzas have '4009' (and thus the same as the versions with 28 stanzas). In IV/b, however, we

consistently find '89', both in the poem with 29 as well as with 30 stanzas. The regularities within the sub-groups of course corroborate and confirm their existence. But it also poses questions as to the transmission of the poem.

It is interesting that the oldest manuscripts in each sub-group, namely TCD 1362/ H.4.21 (IV/a-1) and NLS 72.1.38 (IV/b-1), give the poem with 30 stanzas, while the other manuscripts in Group IV have 29.[365] It is consistently the same stanza that is 'lost', namely, one of Conall's two-stanza answers identifying the heads of Cailitín's children. Based on the relative chronology of their dates, is it possible that the manuscripts in IV/a-2 followed IV/a-1, and IV/b-2 and b-3 followed IV/b-1, but in all cases chose to omit the same stanza which, taking into account the context, could easily be considered 'superfluous'.

Once again, the greatest variations can be noted within the 'independent' versions in Group VI, and the one manuscript in Group V. In fact, 50% of Conall's 'answers' are unique to manuscripts in Group VI: '121', '1409'. '2009' and '1410' can each only be found in one manuscript. This further characteristic corroborates our initial observation that the greatest discrepancy or variation within the number of stanzas occurs in Group VI – the same is true for the extent of Conall's revenge as recorded in the poem.

7.1.2 Sub-groups IV/b-2 and IV/b-3

There are a number of comments to be made with regard to LnC as it stands in Group IV, particularly sub-groups IV/b-2 and b-3. Out of the six manuscripts that make up these two sub-groups,[366] in four we can note a feature within LnC already discussed in the context of the other poems at various points in Chapter 3, namely, line transposition. The four manuscripts in question comprise of the two that make up sub-group IV/b-2 (i.e. TCD 1296/ H.2.5, NLI G 18), as well as TCD 1287/ H.1.13 and NLI G 296 in b-3.

The pattern of line transposition is rather regular, and corresponds in all four manuscripts. If we compare LnC where it stands with transposed lines to NLS 72.1.38 (Group IV/b-1) and work on the assumption that the latter gives the 'correct' order of lines, we can note line transposition in stanzas 4, 7, 10, 13 and 16; in all of these the order of lines is d-a-b-c, i.e. making the final line the first. To give a concrete example, compare stanza 4 in NLS 72.1.38 with NLI G 296 (here representing the four manuscripts with transposed lines):

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[365] With a notable exception in Group IV/b-3, which we will return to in just a moment.

[366] There is a total of seven manuscripts in sub-groups IV/b-2 and b-3; however, Maynooth C 98 (b) is of no relevance here since it only preserves the beginning of DCC which then breaks off unfinished, thus losing LnC (if it was ever part of the narrative).

NLS 72.1.38	NLI G 296
Cen*n* rig*h* Mid*h*e na n-eac*h* lúat*h*,	Tug*us* liom a ccein a c*h*en*n*,
E*ar*c m*a*c C*air*bre na ng*rú*ad*h* nd*er*g;	cin*n* rig*h* Míd*h*e na n-ec*h* luat*h*,
a ndiog*ail* mo d*h*altáin féin	E*ar*c m*a*c C*air*b*r*e na ng*ru*ad*h* seng,
tug*us* liom a ccein an cen*n*.	a ndiog*al* mo d*h*alta féin.

The assumption of NLS 72.1.38 as giving the 'correct' sequence of lines is backed up by the metrical evidence: note here the *aicill* rhymes *lúath : grúadh* and *féin : ccein*, which are lost due to the transposition of lines in NLI G 296. See also the end rhyme *nderg : cenn* in NLS 72.1.38, which again is lost in NLI G 296.

Of particular interest in the above stanzas is the lexical difference in line 2 (line 3 in NLI G 296), *nderg ~ seng*. With the exception of RIA 23 P 13 (which has *nderg*) all manuscripts in IV/b-2 and b-3, regardless of whether they transpose lines or not, follow NLI G 296 by giving *se(a)ng*, which is a far better rhyme with *ceann* than is *dearg*. Of the overall manuscripts, the vast majority give *ndearg*, only Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (b) and RIA C iv 3 have *se(a)ng*. These latter two, of course, we have already identified as belonging to the small number of manuscripts within which we have detected the greatest discrepancies with regard to the order and number of stanzas. Moreover, four of the 'Scottish versions' of LnC here offer an entirely different option by giving *na gcuach gcam* instead of *ngruadh se(a)ng* or *ngruadh nde(a)rg*. We will return to this issue in our discussion of the 'Scottish versions' in section 7.4 below.

To come back to the line transposition, it is indicated in pull-out Tables 7-2 and 7-3 that the earliest manuscript in IV/b-2, namely TCD 1296/ H.2.5, only gives half (the first two lines) of the first stanza, which might be an explanation, or least part of the explanation, for the transposed lines. NLI G 18, however, follows the line transposition yet gives the full first stanza; the two manuscripts in IV/b-3 that transpose lines also omit half of the first stanza. Could this be an indication that they followed the TCD rather than the NLI manuscript? And does it mean that the NLI manuscript, while otherwise following TCD 1296, had access to another version of the poem from which to supply the missing part of the line?

For a satisfactory overview of Groups IV/b-2 and b-3, we will now have to introduce those two manuscripts in IV/b-3 which do not transpose stanzas; these are BL Eg. 150 and RIA 23 P 13. In the latter manuscript LnC breaks off unfinished after 24 stanzas, while in BL Eg. 150 we have 28 (although only the first half of stanza 5 is given) – one stanza less that the other manuscripts in IV/b-2 and b-3. On consulting once again Table 7-3, we can note that the stanza omitted in BL Eg. 150 (and RIA 23 P 13) is the same as in the other versions with 28 stanzas, namely that marked and colour-coded
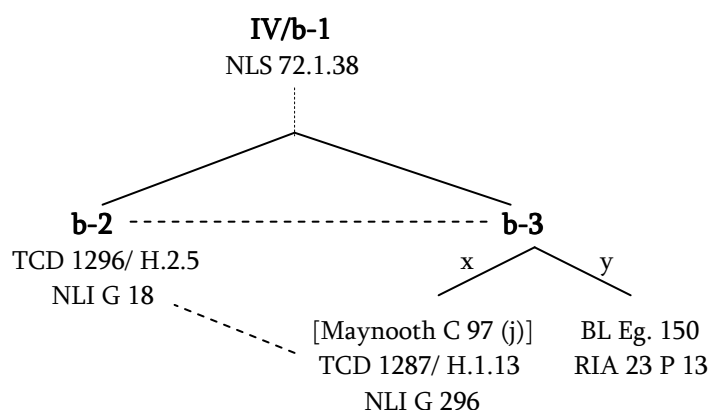
1. S (C)

in the tables above. The order of the final stanzas in BL Eg. 150, however, corresponds to that of the LnC versions with 29 stanzas and is thus the same as the other manuscripts in IV/b-2 and b-3. LnC in RIA 23 P 13 is incomplete, but looking at what does remain we can assume that it would have followed BL Eg. 150. In terms of chronology, BL Eg. 150 is the youngest manuscript in Group IV (with no exact date being available for RIA 23 P 13). It would be possible that if it generally followed the other manuscripts in the sub-groups, due to its later date the scribe had access to a version of LnC and could 'emend' the transposed lines, with RIA 23 P 13 then following this example. With a no more exact date for RIA 23 P 13 than '18th century', it is of course possible that the transmission worked the other way and that BL Eg. 150 might be based upon RIA 23 P 13.[367] Yet another possible indicator for a link, albeit a tenuous one, between BL Eg. 150 and RIA 23 P 13 is the fact that in both manuscripts we can note the idiosyncratic spelling *seoh* for *seo*. There are four instances of this in RIA 23 P 13 and one in BL Eg. 150; of course, we cannot dismiss the possibility that the one instance in BL Eg. 150 may be down to a scribal 'error' and not a reflection of the transmission at all.

There is one issue left to address which we have already begun to examine, and this concerns the stanza in which Conall enumerates his slain enemies. If we return to Table 7-4 in section 7.1.1 detailing the distribution of Conall's numerical answers as to the number of his enemies, we can see that BL Eg. 150 – as well as all the other versions giving the poem with 28 stanzas – gives '4009' as the number, while RIA 23 P 13 follows the other manuscripts in IV/b and has '89'. It seems, then, that BL Eg. 150 follows the other versions with 28 stanzas with regard to the omitted stanza and number of people slain by Conall but gives the final stanzas in the same order as the other manuscripts in IV/b-2 and b-3. RIA 23 P 13, on the other hand, follows BL Eg. 150 both with regard to the number and omission of stanzas but gives the same number for Conall's slain enemies as the manuscripts in VI/b-2 and b-3. This gives another impetus for speculation about the transmission of LnC here, and the relationship between BL Eg. 150 and RIA 23 P 13. Would it be possible, hypothetically, that if RIA 23 P 13 pre-dated BL Eg. 150, it would have used one of the other manuscripts in IV/b-2 and b-3 (maybe even the now incomplete Maynooth 98 (b)?) as an exemplar but 'corrected' the transposed stanzas? BL Eg. 150 might then have been copied from this manuscript (preserving one instance of *seoh*) but also had access to other versions of the poem, and thus being influenced gives a 'mix-and-match' version of the poem, incorporating features from the versions with both 28 and 29 stanzas? The fact that the number '4009' occurs in a considerable number of other versions

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[367] This is based on the assumption that there might not have been another manuscript in the sub-group which is now lost, which is of course a possibility.

suggests that its occurrence in BL Eg. 150 is more than a random coincidence. Of course, this is all very speculative.

The above observations are very preliminary and superficial, simply pointing to a number of features which may be used to further establish the relationship between the manuscripts. A close reading and comparison of LnC in IV/b-2 and b-3 (and, for that matter, all extant versions) would be required to give a more definitive answer as to the transmission. However, on the basis of the present observations we may suggest the existence of a further sub-division within IV/b-3 ('branches' x and y), and thus an overall reworked stemma for Group IV/b, based on the evidence from LnC:

IV/b-1
NLS 72.1.38

b-2 - **b-3**
TCD 1296/ H.2.5   x   y
NLI G 18

[Maynooth C 97 (j)]   BL Eg. 150
TCD 1287/ H.1.13   RIA 23 P 13
NLI G 296

7.1.3 The 'independent' versions

It was noted at the beginning of the present chapter that LnC can occur in the prose context of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* (or, more specifically, *Deargruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh*), but can also stand 'independently', that is on its own outwith the prose narrative. Of the thirty-seven pre-19th-century versions of LnC in total, eleven are such 'independent' versions, the manuscripts having been classified into their own group, Group VI. We have already pointed out that it seems to be in this group that we find those manuscripts displaying the greatest diversity in terms of the order of stanzas, as well as the number of stanzas.[368] The evidence from pull-out Table 7-3 showed, however, that there are in fact only five manuscripts among the 'independent' versions which display the most notable variations.

An interesting aspect of the 'independent versions' is the question of how they are presented in the individual manuscripts. Where the poem stands at the end of DCC, its context is of

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[368] We will also consider here RIA C vi 3, the only manuscript from Group V preserving a version of the poem. RIA C vi 3 is not an 'independent' version; however, the manuscript is so fragmentary that not enough remains of the prose narrative to take this into account for any examinations. Further, the version of LnC in RIA C vi 3 is one of those which is most 'irregular' and it thus seems fitting to consider it here.

course elucidated by the prose; this context is lost, however, where the poem stands independently. A short introduction putting the poem in its context may be given in some manuscripts, while others omit any explanation. This suggests that knowledge of the overall tale *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, or at least of *Deargruathar Chonaill Chearnaigh*, is assumed and presupposed of the poem's audience, 'since the relationship between the poem and the prose tale is close, but the poem does not elucidate the circumstances of Conall's retribution.'[369]

The following table details whether the 'independent' versions of the poem are introduced ('intro') by a short prose section, under a simple title ('title', this generally simply being *Laoidh na gCeann*), or whether it stands without either of the two. The second part to the table illustrates whether a manuscript may have a version of the poem that we may describe as 'regular', i.e. following the pattern of the other versions as we have established in pull-out Tables 7-2 and 7-3, or which manuscripts preserve those five versions of the poem which are most anomalous, that is to say display the greatest irregularities both in order and number of stanzas:

Manuscript	qq	intro	title	'regular'	'anomalous'
RIA C vi 3 [V]	22 qq				✓
NLS 72.1.37 (BDL)	24 qq				✓
NLS 72.1.36	27 qq				✓
TCD 1354/ H.4.13	29 qq	✓		✓	
NLS 73.2.2 ('Turner MS')	30 qq		✓	✓	
Cam. 10/ Add. 3985 (b)	18 qq		✓		✓
RIA 24 B 26	35 qq		✓	✓	
RIA 23 N 14	35 qq		✓	✓	
RIA 23 L 24	28 qq	✓		✓	
NLS 72.3.10 (Kennedy)	24 qq	✓			✓
RIA 23 L 13	28 qq	✓		✓	
RIA 23 G 20	35 qq		✓	✓	

In the instances where an introduction is given, this is generally a very short section noting the names of the speakers and the context (along the lines of 'Conversation between Eimhear and Conall after Cú Chulainn's death'). Only in one manuscript, NLS 72.3.10 (Kennedy), do we find a longer discourse, in English. Unfortunately, the majority of the introduction here is lost due to the bottom half of the page on which the introduction starts having been ripped out; what remains is a similar account to that noted for the other versions in which we find an introduction. Kennedy's version of LnC was published by J.F. Campbell in his *Leabhar na*

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[369] D.E. Meek, 'The Corpus of Heroic Verse in the Book of the Dean of Lismore' (unpublished PhD thesis in two volumes, University of Glasgow, 1982), Vol. II, p. 566.

Feinne; Campbell already noted the damage to and subsequent loss of the introduction.[370] Finally, in only two manuscripts, namely, NLS 72.1.37 (BDL) and NLS 72.1.36, does the poem stand without any introduction or title.

In section 4.6, in the context of the discussion of the scribes, we had established a potential link between RIA 23 L 24 and RIA 23 L 13: in the former manuscript corrections can be found which may have been added by 'Peter O'Connell', a scribe of the same name having written RIA 23 L 13. The likelihood that one 'Peter O'Connell' can indeed be identified with the other is supported by the fact that in LnC not only is the second half of stanza 5 omitted in both versions, but the prose introduction preceding the poem is virtually interchangeable:

RIA 23 L 24	RIA 23 L 13
Agallam*h* do t*h*arl*a* idir b*h*ean C*h*u C*h*ullan*n* gus Con*n*all Cearrnach *ar* ttab*h*airt c*enn*aib*h* currig*h*e Éirion*n* leis *air* gad do s*h*asam*h* na mná tré C*h*oin cCuillion*n* do m*h*arb*h*a a bfeall, 7 is de*ar*b*h* líom an te léigf*edh* de*ar*gruad*hth*ar C*h*onuill *g*ach bfaid Déig*h*in an Dána, xb^v 2^d1766 m*ar*fu*arus*.	Agallam*h* do t*h*ar*l*aig*h* eid*ir* ~~b*h*ean~~ ^mnaoi C*h*ongc*h*ulain*n* 7 c*h*onall c*h*ernach air ttab*h*radh cen*n* coraid*h* érin*n* leis *air* g*h*ad do s*h*asam*h* na mna tre C*h*oin cCollain*n* do m*ar*badh a bfeall, ad d*h*iaig*h* m*ar* leanasi 7 dearb*h* liom an te teigf*edh* deargruat*har* conall go b*h*fag*h*ag*h* d*h*em*h*un an dana ion*n*.

Overall, as we can see, the majority of the 'independent' versions conform to the pattern we have established for the other groups, giving very 'regular' versions of the poem. Only five are anomalous and of these, three (namely, NLS 72.1.37, NLS 72.1.36, NLS 72.3.10) are of a Scottish provenance and will be discussed below in sections 7.3 and 7.4. This leaves only two versions of LnC to examine here, namely those found in RIA C vi 3 and Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (b).

As previously noted, LnC as it stands in RIA C vi 3 is not strictly an 'independent' version since it is preceded by a now very acephalous version of DCC. The two manuscripts do, however, seem to share a number of features. This is best illustrated if we lay out the information of the two versions from pull-out Tables 7.2 and 7.3:

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[370] J.F. Campbell, *Leabhar na Feinne – Vol. I* (London, 1982), p. 16.

RIA	Cam.
22 qq	**18 qq**
1. Q (E)	1. Q (E)
2. A (C)	2. A (C)
3. Q (E)	Q (E)
4. A (C)	2. A (C)
Q (E)	1. Q (E)
2. A (C)	4. A (C)
1. Q (E)	1. Q (E)
6. A (C)	6. A (C)
1. Q (E)	
illegible	
1. Q (E)	1. Q (E)
2. A (C)	
5. Q (E)	5. Q (E)
2. A (C)	2. A (C)
1. Q (E)	1. Q (E)
2. A (C)	2. A (C)
1. Q (E)	1. Q (E)
2. A (C)	2. A (C) **
1. Q (E)	1. Q (E)
2. A (C)	2. A (C)
1. RQ (E)	
1. S (E)	1. S (E)

Eimhear's question towards the beginning, marked in dark blue, is unique to these two manuscripts. With the exception of the grey stanza '2. A (C)' (the fourth stanza in Cam. 10), all stanzas found in Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (b) are also present in RIA C vi 3. The pink stanza marked with ** in Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (b) deserves some attention: here we find that while we can generally identify the stanza, the first two lines are markedly different from how they appear elsewhere. Compare the stanza as it stands in RIA C vi 3, the Cambridge manuscript, and NLS 72.1.38, which represents the 'mainstream' stanza as we find it elsewhere:

RIA C vi 3	Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (b)	NLS 72.1.38
Cea*nn* m*ac* Ferg*us*a na n-eac*h*, Muiread*hach* do c*h*reac*h* go tolt; mac mo s*h*eat*ar* a*n* tor ten*n* tucc*us* lem a c*h*en*n* da c*h*orp.	[ ] beag an nonoir c*h*in m*h*ic rig*h* iomc*hair* go mín *ar* f*h*olt mac mo s*h*eart*h*a an tur cen*n* do sc*ar*is a c*h*ean*n* re na c*h*orp.	Cen*n* m*h*eic ferg*hus*a na n-ec*h*, Muir*edh*ach do c*h*rec*h* go colt; mac mo s*h*et*h*ar an tuir t*h*en*n* do sg*ar*as a c*h*en*n* ré chorp

Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (b), then, does not actually give the name of the head in question, although the second part of the stanza corresponds to the other versions; an identification of the stanzas in question with the 'Muireadhach-stanza' thus seems justified.

Besides the unique stanzas, there are two further common factors between the two manuscripts. We have already noted the fact that in the 'Earc-stanza', both favour *se(a)ng* over *nde(a)rg* which we find in all manuscripts except for some in Group IV/b-2 and b-3 (cf. section 7.1.2 above). Further, both uniquely give the number of Conall's slain enemies as '2021'.

To speculate, it seems feasible that if Cam. 10/ Add. 3085 (b) is not a (slightly emended) copy of RIA C vi 3, it is based upon a version very similar to it. As we have seen in section 4.6, no provenance is known of the Cambridge manuscript, which might help to establish a connection. Once again, a close reading of both versions of LnC would be required to comment on the relationship with more certainty.

7.2 The longest version of *Laoidh na gCeann* (35 qq)

Having established a general overview of LnC from the different manuscripts preserving it, the poem itself in its entirety shall be examined briefly in some detail. As a first 'case study', we will consider a number of those manuscripts preserving the longest versions of LnC with 35 stanzas, of which there are six. These are:

Manuscript	Group	Date
RIA 23 G 21	I	1796
RIA 23 C 26 (c)	II	1701
RIA 23 C 22	II	1767
RIA 24 B 26	VI	1760-63
RIA 23 N 14	VI	1766
RIA 23 G 20	VI	1788

We have so far established that the majority of manuscripts seem to preserve very regularised versions of LnC, and that there are no (or hardly any) variations within the order of the stanzas in versions of the poem with the same number of stanzas. The question then arises whether there are any noticeable discrepancies between the versions that fall into the same category of presenting the poem with an equal number of stanzas.

In order to establish to what extent there may still be differences or discrepancies between such 'regular' versions, we will compare three of the six versions which preserve LnC in its longest form: RIA 23 N 14 (**N**), RIA 23 C 22 (**C**) and RIA 23 G 21 (**G**). In **N**, which dates to 1766, the poem stands independently; **C** (1767) falls into Group II and LnC occurs at the end of the prose narrative, as is the case in **G** (1796), which has been classified into Group I. Although the latter two manuscripts preserve the full prose tale, we have noted that the poem here seems somewhat 'tagged on to the end' of the narrative rather than being fully integrated. We could of course have chosen any manuscripts which have versions of LnC with the same number of stanzas and thus 'regularised appearance'; one of the reasons why the longest version shall be used is that it allows for a brief examination of the five 'introductory' stanzas which precede the beginning of LnC 'proper'.

For the purpose of comparison, the poems have been inserted side by side into the table below, thus allowing for a direct comparison. Instances where the poems differ significantly have been marked in bold letters, this includes lexical and grammatical differences as well as orthographic ones. Minor differences (e.g. *ghnáith~ghnáth*, stanza 20) have been ignored here.

RIA 23 N 14 (N)

1. Sgéal *Chon* gC*h*ula*i*nn **ós** *ái*rd
   ait*h*ris duin*n*, a M*h*aine m*h*órg*h*airg
   cion*nus* do fríoc*h*ad*h* an C*h*ú Eam*h*na
   sul do t*r*ioc*h*ad*h* a m*h*óir m*h*enma.

2. ’S am*h*laidh fu*arus* an Cú calma
   m*ar* b*udh* lánm*h*ait*h* lea*m* m*h*eanma
   ag imt*h*ea*ch*t na néoin don **laoi loin*n***
   na heoin a laoi *ar* a c*h*oloin*n*.

3. Ná hab*air*si sin **am*h*aine**
   is ná **be*ir* béi*m* *ar* an** míl*edh*
   ’s ná cloist*er* **é** uait a b*h*fad
   air uaid*h* cosg*ar*ta **do nám*h*ad.**

4. Ní *air* f*h*uait*h* ade*irm*se **é**
   a C*h*onaill m*h*u*air* as gléig*h*eal gné
   ní duin*n*e nác*h* ad*h*b*h*ar uaille
   na héin *ar* C*h*oin na Craoib*h*ruaid*h*e.

5. As a ndiog*h*ail Con na hAn*m*a
   le Conall na ccleas ccalma
   go ttéid maine a n-aitreac*h* **sgéil**
   curad*h* na n-*arm* n-aigm*h*éil.

RIA 23 C 22 (C)

1. Sgeal C*h*ú C*h*uluin*n* **os árd**
   ait*h*ris duin*n*, a M*h*aine m*h*órg*h*arg
   cion*nus* do fríoc*h*ed*h* an C*h*ú Éam*h*na
   sul traoc*h*id*h* a m*h*óir meanma.

2. Is ám*h*laidh fúar*us* an C*h*ú c*h*alma
   mar bud*h* lánm*h*at*h* lem **m*h*enma**
   air imt*h*ea*ch*t a noin don **laoi loin*n***
   na héoin ag luíg*h*e *air* a c*h*oluin*n*.

3. **Na** habair sin **amain*n*e**
   is ná **beir béim air an** mílead*h*
   is ná cloistear **é** úait a bfad
   air uat*h* cosgra **do nám*h*ad.**

4. Ní *air* f*h*úat*h* adeirmse **é**
   a C*h*on*n*aill m*h*óir is geal gné
   ní dúin*n*e nác*h* ad*h*b*h*ar úaille
   na héoin *air* C*h*oin na C*r*áob*h*erúa.

5. Is a ndíog*h*al Con na hÉam*h*na
   le Con*n*all na ccleas ccalma
   go ttéid main*n*e a n-at*h*rac*h* **sgeil**
   curad na n-*air**m*** n-áid*h*b*h*éil.

RIA 23 G 21 (G)

1. Sgéal C*húch*uluinn **ós ard**
   ait*h*ris dúin*n*, aM*h*aine m*h*org*h*airg
   cion*nus* d*o* frít*h* an C*h*ú Eam*h*na
   sul d*o* t*r*áoc*adh* a m*h*óirm*h*enma.

2. ’S am*h*laidh fuar*us* an C*h*ú c*h*alma
   m*ar* b*udh* m*h*ait*h* leam **m*h*en*m*ma**
   ag imt*h*ea*ch*t na néon d*on* **laoí loín*n***
   na heoín ag lúig*h*e *ar* a c*h*oloin*n*.

3. **Na** hab*ar*si sin **am*h*aine**
   is nác*h* **beir béim *air* an** míl*edh*
   ’s nác*h* cluint*er* **é** uaitt a b*h*fad
   air uair c*h*osg*ar*tadh **do nam*h*ad.**

4. Ni *air* fuat*h* adeir*m*si é
   a C*h*onaill m*h*óir as gleigeal gné
   ní dúin*n*e nác*h* ad*h*bar uaille
   na hein *air* Coin na C*r*aoib*h*eruaid*h*e.

5. As a ndíogail C*h*on na hEam*h*na
   le Conall na ccleas ccalma
   go ttéid maine a n-ait*h*reac*h* **sgéil**
   currad*h* na n-ar*m* n-aidb*h*éil.

Column 1

6. **A C**h**onaill** cia hiad **na** cin*n*
   ós de*arb*h lin*n* **gur** d*hea*rgais t'*airm*
   na cin*n* **sin do c**h**ím ar an ngad**
   in*n*sdeas **leat fios a n**-an*m*.

7. Ing*h*en Org*h*alaid*h* **na n-eac**h
   Iom*har* **úir na mbreat**h*a* mbin*n*
   is a ndiog*h*ail C*h*on **na ccleas**
   tug*us* c*h*ug*h*aib*h* **b**udh d**h**eas **na** cin*n*.

8. Cé an cean*n* malac*h*ead*h* **mór**
   de*irge* ná an rós a g**h**ruad*h* g**h**lan
   sé as deise d*h*om leit*h* **clí**
   cean*n* an tsaoi ná*r* art*h*aid*h* d*h*at*h*.

9. **Cean**n rí Mid*h*e **na n-eac**h m*ear*
   E*ar*c m*ac* C*air*bre **na** ng*ru*aid*h* nd*erg*
   sa ndiog*h*ail **mo** d*h*altáin **féin**
   tug*us* a ccéin a c*h*ean*n* dod t'ferd.

10. Cé an cen*n* so dom leit*h* **c**h**lí**
    de*ar*g **a lí** ní lo*cht* dá d*h*eilb*h*
    an cean*n* cé t*ha*r*l*a gan c*h*orp
    mait*h* leam cé **holc le Meid**h*h*b**h**.

11. Maine m*ir* ó aoib*h*firt*h* **na n-eac**h
    m*ac* Meid*h*b*h*e do c*h*reac*h* ga*ch* **cuan**
    do sg*ara*s a c**h**ean*n* re na c*h*orp
    lea*m*sa **uile do t**h**uit a s**h**luag*h*.

Column 2

6. **A C**h**on**n**aill**, cíad **na** céin*n*?
   as **dearb**h lin*n* **gur** déargas t'airim
   na céin*n* **sin do c**h**ím** *air* **an ngad**
   ineas **leat fios a n**-ainona.

7. A ing*h*ean Órd*h*alaid*h* **na n-eac**h
   a Iob*har* **úir na mbreat**h*a* bin*n*
   is a ndíog*h*al C*h*on **na ccleas**
   tug*us* cugab*h* **b**udh d**h**eas **na** chin.

8. Ciad*h* an c**é**n**n** malac*h*ad*h* **mór**
   d*e*rge ná an rós a g**h**rúad g**h**lan
   asé bus deise dam leat*h* **c**h**li**
   céan*n* an tsaoi n*ar* atruid*h* dát*h*.

9. **C**é*n**n** ríg*h* Míd*h*e **na n-eac**h mear
   Earc m*ac* C*ar*bre **na** ng*rú*ad*h* nd*e*rg,
   sa ndíog*h*ail **mo** d*h*alltáin **féin**
   tug*us* a ccéin*n* dod t'farrad*h*.

10. Cíad*h* an c**é**n**n** so dam léat*h* **c**h**li**?
    darg **a lí** níl lo*cht* ion*n*a d*h*eilb*h*
    an c**é**n**n** cid*h* t*h*arl*a* gan c*h*orp
    m*ait*h* lio*m*h* gid*h* **holc re Méid**h*h*b**h**.

11. Maine m*ac* ó aoifírit*h* **na n-eac**h
    m*ac* **Méid**h*h*b*h*e do c*h*raic*h* ga*ch* **cúan**
    do sgar*us* a c**é**n**n** re na c*h*orp
    lioms **uile do t**h**uit a s**h**lúadh.

Column 3

6. **A C**h**onaill** cia hiad **na** céain*n*
   os de*arb*h lin*n* **gur** d*hea*rgais t'air*m*
   na cin*n* **sin do c**h**ím** *air* **an ngad**
   in*n*st*er* **leat fios a n**-aini*m*.

7. Ing*h*ion Órgal*aidh* **na n-eac**h
   a Eim*h*ir **úir na mbreat**h*a* mbín*n*
   is a ndíogail C*h*on **na ccleas**
   tugas c*h*ug*h*aib*h* **b**udh **deas na** cin*n* .

8. Cia an c*eann* malac*h*adh **mór**
   deirge na an rós a g**h**ruad*h* g**h**lan
   asé as deise do*m* leat*h* **clí**
   c*eann* an tsaoit*h* nar art*h*aig*h* dat*h*.

9. **Cean**n ríg*h* Míd*h*e **na n-eac**h mear
   Earc m*ac* C*air*bre **na** ng*ru*aid*h* ndearg
   is a ndíogaill m*o* d*h*altain **fein**
   tug*us* a ccéin a c*h*ean*n* d*o*d t'farr*a*id.

10. Ciod*h* an c*eann* do *dam* leat*h* **clí**
    dearg **a lí** níl lo*cht* dá d*h*ealb*h*
    an c*eann* ciod*h* tárl*a* **gan** c*h*orp
    m*ait*h liom gé **holc le M**e*idh*b**h**.

11. Máine mir o aoib*h*f*rit*h* **na n-eac**h
    m*ac* **Méid**h*h*b*h*e d*o* c*h*reac*h* ga*ch* **cuan**
    d*o* sg*ara*s a c*eann* re a c*h*orp
    lio*m*sa **uile d**o **t**h**uit a s**h**luag*h*.

Column 1

12. Cé an cean*n*sin *ar* **m'agh*aidh* anon*n***
go b*h*folt b*h*fionn go mala slím
rosg m*ar* aid*h*g*h*read*h* déad **mar** b*h*lát*h*
áille ós crut*h* an c*h*in*n*.

13. Leis sin féin do t*h*uit an C*h*ú
do rád*h* **a c*h*orp na c*h*rú t*h*ais**
Lúg*h*aidh m*ac* Conraoi na mbean*n*
agá ttug*us* **liom a** cean*n* **tar ais.**

14. Cé an d*h*á c*h*ean*n*so *ar* m'agh*aidh* t*h*oir
a *Ch*on*n*aill m*h*uair na ngoil ngaoi
geal a n-agh*aidh* dub*h* a b*h*fuilt
de*ir*ge a ng*r*uaid*h* **ná fuil** laoig*h*.

15. **Cean*n* M*h*áine is** M*h*eid*h*ena **m*h*oir**
an dá c*h*ean*n* sin as dóig*h* lin*n*
as aco fu*arus* cean*n* na Con
ar Múr Tem*h*rac*h* **na sgor slím.**

16. Cé an dá c*h*ean*n* sin *ar* m'agh*aidh* t*h*eas
a C*h*onaill m*h*oir na ccleas lúit*h*
aon dat*h*a *ar* f*h*oltaib*h* na b*h*fer
de*r*g a ng*r*uaid*h* geal a ngnúis.

17. Cuillean*n* B*h*reag is Con*n*la cruaid*h*
dias **do b*h*eir*e*d*h*** buaid*h* le fe*ir*g
Iob*h*ar**a siad** sa a ccin*n*
d'fagb*h*us **a ccu*ir*p fá lin*n* de*ir*g.**

Column 2

12. Cía an cean*n* san *air* **m'ágh*aidh* anón*n***
do*nn* a bfolt*h* bf*í*an*n* a mal*adh* s*h*lím
rosg mar óig*hr*id*h* ded **mar** blát*h*
áille ós cruit*h* an c*h*éin*n*.

13. Leis sin f*éin* do t*h*uit an C*h*ú
do rad **a c*h*orp na c*h*rú t*h*ais**
Lúg*h*id*h* m*ac* Conraoi na *m*bean*n*
dá tag*us* **líom*h* a** c*h*énn **tar ais.**

14. Cía an dá c*h*énn so *air* m'áig*h*id*h* s*h*oir
a *Ch*on*n*aill m*hó*ir na ngail ngaoi
geal a n-ágh*aidh* dub*h* a bfolt
de*r*ge a ng*r*úad*h* **ná fuil** laoid*h*.

15. **C*é*nn M*h*áin*ne* is** M*h*éid*h*na **m*hó*ir**
an dá c*h*éan*n* is dóit*h* lin*n*
is acad*h* fúar*us* céan*n* na Con
air MúrTéam*h*rac*h* **na sgor slim.**

16. Cía **an céan*n* so** *air* m'ágh*aidh* t*h*eas?
a C*h*on*n*uill m*hó*ir na ccleas lúit*h*
aon dat*h*a *air* foltaib*h* na bfear
derg a ngrúad*h*a geal a ngnú[is].

17. Cuilean*n* B*h*réagh*a* **7 Cón*n*la crúaid*h***
dís **do b*h*eir*edh*** búaid*h* le feirg
a Iob*h*ar**a síad** san na céin*n*
d'fágas **a ccuirp fá lin*n* deirg.**

Column 3

12. Cia an c*eann* sin do*m* **agh*aidh* anon*n***
go b*h*folt b*h*fionn go mala s*h*lím
rosg mar oid*h*g*r*ead*h* deid **mar** bláit*h*
áille ós cruit*h* an c*h*in*n*.

13. Leis sin f*éin* do t*h*uit an C*h*ú
asé rad **a c*h*orp na c*h*rú t*h*ais**
Luig*h*id*h* m*ac* Con*n*raoi na mb*eann*
'gá tug*us* **liom a** c*h*eann **tar ais.**

14. Cia an dá c*h*eann so *ar* m*h*'aigh*idh* s*h*oir
a C*h*onaill m*hó*ir na ngoil ngáoit*h*
geal a n-aigh*idh* dub*h* a b*h*foilt
deirge a ng*r*uad*h* **ná fuil** laoig*h*.

15. **Cean*n* M*h*aine is** Meid*h*b*h*ne **m*hó*ir**
an dá c*h*eann sin as doit*h* lín*n*
is aca fuar*us* c*eann* na Con
ar Muir Team*h*rac*h* **na sgór slím.**

16. Cia **an dá c*h*eann** sin *ar* m*h*'aigh*idh* t*h*eas
a C*h*onaill mói*r* na ccleas lúit*h*
aon dait*h* *ar* f*h*oltaib*h* na b*h*fear
dearg a ng*r*uad*h* geal a ngnúis.

17. Cuil*eann* B*h*réag*h* is Con*n*la cruaid*h*
dís **do b*h*eir*edh*** buad*h* le feirg
Eim*h*ir **a siad** sin a ccín*n*
d'fágb*h*as **a ccuirp fá lin*n* d*h*eirg.**

18. Cé iad **na sé** cin*n* as **olc sgéi***mh*
do c*h*ím féin *ar* m'agh*aidh* t*h*uaid*h*
gor*m* a n-aigh*idh* dub*h* a b*h*fuil
siab*h*ra a ruisg *ar* dat*h* a ng*h*uail.

19. A siad **súd** *ar* sé na sé baid*h*b*h*
do c*h*id*h* m*arbh* sa mbéil re gaoit*h*
clan*n* C*h*ailitín lu*ch*t na ccleas
dra*m* nác*h* raib*h* *ar* leas mo laoic*h*.

20. Gac*h* attéid ó c*h*leasaib*h* na Con
do c*h*lan*n* C*h*ailitín do g*h*nát*h*
do m*h*arb*h*us an seisio*r* san
do t*h*uit siad lea*m* a*m* seoc*h* cac*h*.

21. Cé an dá c*h*ean*n* so as faide amac*h*
a C*h*onaill m*h*óir do ca*r* báid*h*
ar g*h*rád*h* h'oinig*h* ná ceil o*r*m
ain*m* na deise do g*h*oin t'*a*ram.

22. Cean*n* Laog*h*air*e* is C*h*lá*r*ad*h* C*h*uilt
an dá c*h*ean*n* do t*h*uit lea*m* g*h*uin
do g*h*oinsad Cú C*h*ulainn c*h*ai*r*m
as tríd do d*h*er*g*us m'*arm* na b*h*fuil.

23. A C*h*onaill b*h*úid*h* as *ár*sa ccéill
cé an cean*n*so d*h*ar g*h*eill cád*h*
don ór fó t*h*reid*h*llsib*h* an c*h*in*n*
is cú*mh*dac*h* slím don *airg*ed b*h*án.

18. Cía **na sé** céin*n*sin*n* is **olc sgéi***mh*
do c*h*ím féin *air* m'áigh*idh* búaid*h*
gorm a n-ágh*aidh* dub*h* a bfuilt*h*
síab*h*art*h*a a ruisg *ar* dat*h* a ng*h*úail.

19. A síad *air* sé **na sé** bád*h*b
do c*h*íd*h* marb*h* sa mbéal re gáoit*h*
clan*n* C*h*ailitín lu*ch*t na ccleas
d*r*úm nác*h* raib*h* *air* leas mo laoic*h*.

20. Gac*h* attéid ó c*h*leasaib*h* na Con
dó c*h*lan*n* Cailitín do g*h*náit*h*
do m*h*arb*h*us an seisear san
do tuiteadar **lem** arm seoc*h* các*h*.

21. Cía **an dá** c*h*éan*n* so is **faide amac***h*?
A *Ch*o*n*aill m*h*óir do c*h*ar baid*h*
air g*h*rád*h* h'oinig*h* ná ceil or*m*
ainmi na díse **se** do g*h*oin do lá*mh*.

22. **Clan***n* **Laogaire 7** C*h*láiruid*h* C*h*uilt
an dá c*h*énn san do t*h*uit lem g*h*oin
do g*h*oin*edar* Cú C*h*uluin*n* c*h*arn*n*
is **tríd** do d*h*er*g*us m'ar*m* ion*n*a bfuil.

23. A C*h*on*m*uill b*h*úid*h* is árrsa **a ccéill**,
cía **an** c*h*énn so dár g*h*éill cád*h*?
don ór fó tréillsib*h* an c*h*in*n*
is cumdac*h* slím don *airg*ed b*h*an.

18. Cia hiad **na sé** cín*n* as **olc sgéim***h*
do c*h*ím f*ein* *ar* m*h*'aigh*idh* t*h*uaid*h*
gorm a n-aigh*idh* dub*h* a b*h*fuil
siob*h*ra a rosg *ar* dat*h* a ng*h*uail.

19. Asi súd **na sé** báid*h*b*h*
do c*h*íd*h* marb*h* sa mbéal re gáoit*h*
cl*ann* C*h*ailitín lu*ch*t na ccleas
dra*m* nác*h* raib*h* *ar* leas m*o* laoig*h*.

20. Gac*h*a ttéid o cleasaib*h* na Con
do clain*n* C*h*ailitín d*o* g*h*nát*h*
do m*h*arb*h*us an seisior **soin**
do t*h*uit siad **leam** air*m* **seoc***h* các*h*.

21. Cia **an dá** c*h*eann sin as **faide amac***h*
a C*h*onaill m*h*óir d*o* c*h*uir báid*h*
air g*h*rád*h* h'oinicc **na** ceil or*m*
aini*m* na deise **do** g*h*oin t'ar*m*.

22. **C**eann **L**áog*h*air*e* is C*h*lára **cuilt**
an da c*h*eann sin d*o* t*h*uit leam g*h*oin
d*o* g*h*onsat *Cúchuloinn* c*h*ai*r*in*n*
sa 's tríd sin d*o* d*h*er*g*us m'*arm* na b*h*fuil.

23. A C*h*onaill b*h*uig*h* as árrsa **a ccéil**
cia **an** c*h*eann so *dár* g*h*eill cád*h*
d*on* ór fa t*h*réillsib*h* an c*h*éin*n*
is cú*mh*dac*h* slím d*on* airg*ed* b*h*án.

24. **Cean**n m*h*ac Fin*n* ó Rosaid*h* Ruaid*h*
Mac Niaid*h* do fu*air* bás lea*m* **n**e*rt*
Iob*hair* asé sin a c*h*ean*n*
*air*dríg*h* Laig*h*en na lan*n* mbreac.

25. Ce h**é** an cean*n* sin an*n* do laim*h*
a C*h*onaill m*ho*ir as báid*h* lin*n*
ó nác*h* m*air*ean*n* Cú na ccleas
cr*éd* b*he*ir t*h*ú *ar* leas an c*h*in*n*.

26. Cean*n* m*h*ic Fe*argu*sa na n-ec*h*
Mu*iredh*ac*h* mór do c*h*reac*h* gac*h* colt
m*a*c mo s*het*h*rac*h* an tor ten*n*
's do sg*arus* a c*h*ean*n* re a c*h*orp.

27. A C*h*onaill m*hó*ir ó M*h*aig*h* an Sgáil
cread do t*h*uit leat lai*m* g*an* on
dona slóig*h*tib*h* do m*h*ill sin*n*
leat an diog*h*al c*h*in*n* na Con.

28. **Naonm**a*r* is t*rí* fit*hch*id c**éd**
ade*irim* leat cé **tréan** an sluaig*h*
do torc*h*rad*h* lea*m* druim *ar* druim
do ni*mh* mo lain*n* c*h*oi*mh*g*h*ér c*h*ruaid.

29. A C*h*onaill ó cion*nus* táid
mná Ínsi **Fáil** t*ar* éis na Con
an b*hfuil* cúm*h*ad*h* mo c*h*olt nó m*o* c*h*éis
n*ó* an ttab*hr*aid **spéis** na g*h*ol.

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24. **C**é*nn* **m**a*c* **Fin**n ón Roscaid*h* Rúaid*h*
Ma*c* **N**íad*h* fu*air* **bás** lem **neart**
a Iob*h*ar, **asé** sin c*é*n*n*
ríg*h* Láig*h*ean na mbéan*n* mbreac.

25. Cía h**é** an c*é*n*n* san an*n* do lai*mh*?
a *C*h*on*aill m*hó*ir is báid*h* **lin**n
ó nác*h* mairean*n* Cú na ccleas
cr*éd* b*h*eir tu *air* leas an c*h*ín*n*.

26. C*é*n*n* m*a*c Feargu*s*a na n-eac*h*
Múi*redh*ac*h* m*h*ór do c*h*reac*h* gac*h* colt
ma*c* mo seat*h*rac*h* an tor ten*n*
's do sgar*us* a c*h*én*n* re na c*h*orp.

27. A C*h*on*n*uill m*hó*ir ó M*h*ag*h* an Sgáil
cr*éd* do t*h*uit l*eat* lái*mh* g*an* on?
do na slúad*h*uib*h* do m*h*íll sin
leat an díog*h*al c*h*in*n* na Con.

28. **Náonm**h*ar* is trí fit*hc*id*h* is c**éd**
ad*erm* leat is **tréan** slúad*h*
do torc*h*rad*h* **lio**m d*r*óim *ar* d*r*óim
do nim*h* **mo** lan*n* cói*mh*g*h*éar crúaid*h*.

29. A *C*h*on*aill cion*nus* atáid
mná In*n*se **Fáil** tar éis na Con?
an bfuil c*h*úm*a*d*h* **m**o c*h*olt nó **m**o c*h*éis
n*ó* an tab*h*ruid **spéis** ná gol.

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24. Cean*n* **m**a*c* **Fin**n o Rosa Ruad*h*
Maic Níad fu*air* **bás** leam **neart**
Eim*h*ir asé sin a c*h*eann
airdríg*h* Laig*h*ion na lan*n* mbreac.

25. Cia an c*eann* sin an*n* do láim*h*
a C*h*onaill m*hó*ir as bád*h*ac*h* lin*n*
ó nác*h* m*air*ean*n* Cú na ccleas
cr*éd* b*h*eir tú *air* leas an c*h*in*n*.

26. C*eann* m*a*c F*ergu*sa na n-eac*h*
Muir*edac*h* mor d*o* c*h*reac*h* g*ac*h* colt
m*a*c **m**o s*h*eat*h*rac*h* an tór t*eann*
's d*o* sg*aras* a c*h*eann re a c*h*orp.

27. A C*h*onaill m*hó*ir ó M*h*áig*h* an Sgáil
cr*ed do* t*h*uit l*eat* laim*h* g*an* on
d*o* na slóig*h*tib*h* d*o* m*h*éill sin*n*
leat an díogaill c*h*eain*n* na Con.

28. **Náonm**h*ar* is trí fit*hch*id c**éd**
adeir*m* leat cíod*h* **tréan** an sluag
d*o* marb*adh* lio*ms*a d*r*uim *ar* d*r*uim
d*o* nim*h* **m**o lain*n* cói*mh*g*h*ér c*r*uad*h*.

29. A C*h*onaill ó cion*us* 'taid
mná In*n*si **Fáil** t*ar* éis na Con
an b*hfuil* cum*h*a **m**o colt n*o* **m**o c*h*eis
no 'n ttab*h*raid **spéis** na gol.

30. Seo **an dá gháir do chráidh mo** chorp Iobhar úir na bfolt ccas mbláidh gáir chomhmaoite na bfer nglan 's gár na mban is truagh gáir.	30. Se **an dá gháir do chráidh mo** chróidhe a Iobhair úir na bfolt ccas mbláth gáir cómhaoidhte na bfer nglan is gáir na mban is trúadh an gháir.	30. Seo **an dá gháir do chráidh mo** chorp a Eimhir úr na bhfolt ccas mbláth gáir comhaoidhte na bhfer nglan is gáir na mban as truagh gáir.
31. A Iobhar créd é do miann féin gan an Cú do réir fó raith is gan mo dhaltán for ghlan troigh d'faicsin dhamh mar sin sa chath.	31. A Iobhair créd é do mhiann féin? gan an Chú do réir fó raith is gan mo dhaltán fór ghlan tróigh d'faicsinn dam mar sin san ccath.	31. A Eimhir créd é do do mhiann fein gan an Chú do réir fó raith 's gan mo dhaltán fórghlan tróigh d'faicsin dam ag dul a ccaith.
32. A Chonaill os uireasa dhamh ní luighfe me **le fear** go brách da gheabhad bás do chumhaidh na Con a Chonaill is ná ceil ar chách.	32. A Chonaill ós úireasa dam ní luighfedh mé le **fear** go bhráth do ghebhad bás do chumadh na Con a Chonaill is ná ceil air chách.	32. A Conaill ó's uireasa dam ní lúighfidh mé le **fer** go bráith do gheabhad bás do cúmha na Con a Conaill is ná ceil air cháich.
33. **An Dubh 7 an** Lia Mach **mear** an dá óigech fórglan **gníomh** gach neach lear torchuidh a ttriath as othar thiar d'imreas m'fíoch.	33. **An Dubh 's a** Líath Macha **mhear** an dá óigeach fórghlan **gníomh** gach nech lear torchair a ttríath is othar shíar d'imearus m'fíoch	33. **An Dubh is an** Liath Mhacha **mher** an dá óigeach foirghlan **gníomh** gach neach lear torchradh a ttriaith as othair siar d'imrios mh'fíoch.
34. **A Chonaill ó mithid duinn** Chu Chulainn san úir do chur táigeam **é go cill** dhá luadh a leabaidh chumhaig chruaidh chloch.	34. **A Chonnuill ó mithid dúinn** Cú Chuluinn san úir do chur táigeam **é go cill** dá lúadh a leabaidh chúmhaing chrúaidh chloch.	34. **A Conaill ó's mithid duinn** Cúchuloinn san iúir do chur tóigeam **é go cill** dá luadh a leabaidh chumhang chruaidh chloch.
35. **A Chonaill rachadh** féin fán **bfert** ós fíor gach fann mo neart mar tá cuir mo bhéal ar bhéal na Con ad deiredh dhom ar ndul dá lá.	35. **A Chonnuill rachad** san **bféart** ós fíor gach fán mo nert mar tá cuir mo bhéal air bhéal na Con ós deiredh dham air ndul dá lá.	35. **A Chonaill rachad** fein san **bfert** ó's fíor gach fann mo nert mar 'tá cuir mo bhéal air bhéal na Con is deire dam iar 'ndul dá lá.

The above comparison of **N**, **C**, and **G** shows that while the three versions of LnC generally agree, it seems that on a micro-level **N** and **G** correspond more closely to one another than does **C** to either of the two. In some cases, these correspondences are purely orthographic, such as an interchangeable *th* and *sh* in the spelling of the adverbials *thiar / thoir* (e.g. stanza 33.4, stanza 14.1). But there are other, more striking similarities between **N** and **G**. To give but a few examples, both **N** and **G** give the analytic verbal form *do thuit siad* where **C** has the synthetic form *do thuiteadar* (stanza 20.4). **N** and **G,** in stanza 21.4, use *t'arm* where **C** has *do lámh*. Interestingly, in this last example, when we look at the whole stanza it seems that *do lámh* (as found only in **C**) in fact gives end rhyme with *baidh* in line 2 of this stanza. Finally, in stanza 30.1, both **N** and **G** have *mo chorp* where **C** has *mo chróidhe*. The table below collates a number of lexicographical, grammatical and orthographical features:

	Stanza / line	RIA 23 N 14 (N) (1766)	RIA 23 C 22 (C) (1767)	RIA 23 G 21 (G) (1796)	obvious correspondence
1.	**1.3**	do fríoc*h*ad*h*	do fríoc*h*ed*h*	d*o* frít*h*	**N / C**
2.	**2.2**	lánm*h*ait*h* lea*m*	lánm*h*at*h* lem	m*h*ait*h* leam	**N / C**
3.	**2.3**	ag imt*h*ea*cht* na n-éoin	*air* imt*h*ea*cht* a n-oin	ag imt*h*ea*cht* na n-éon	**N / G**
4.	**3.3**	ná cloist*er*	ná cloistear	nác*h* cluint*er*	**N / C**
5.	**3.4**	uaid*h*	uat*h*	uair	**N / C**
6.	**3.4**	cosg*ar*ta	cosgra	*c*hosg*ar*t*adh*	**N / G**
7.	**4.2**	as gléig*h*eal gné	is geal gné	as gleigeal gné	**N / G**
8.	**6.4**	in*ns*deas	ineas	in*ns*t*er*	**N / C**
9.	**8.4**	art*h*aid*h*	atruid*h*	art*h*aig*h*	**N / G**
10.	**10.2**	dá d*h*eilb*h*	ion*na* d*h*eilb*h*	da d*h*ealb*h*	**N / G**
11.	**10.4**	cé	gid*h*	gé	**N / G**
12.	**12.2**	go b*h*folt	do*nn* a bfolt*h*	go b*h*folt	**N / G**
13.	**13.2**	do rád*h*	do rad	asé rad	**N / C**
14.	**16.3**	dat*h*a	dat*h*a	dóit*h*	**N / C**
15.	**17.4**	d'fagb*h*us	d'fágas	d'fagb*h*as	**N / G**
16.	**18.4**	siab*hr*a	síab*h*art*h*a	siob*h*ra	**N / G**
17.	**20.4**	do t*h*uit siad	do tuiteadar	do t*h*uit siad	**N / G**
18.	**21.4**	t'*ar*am	do lá*mh*	t'ar*m*	**N / G**
19.	**22.3**	do g*h*oinsad	do g*h*oin*edar*	d*o* g*h*onsat	**N / G**
20.	**22.4**	na b*h*fuil	ionna bfuil	na b*h*fuil	**N / G**
21.	**24.4**	*air*dríg*h*	ríg*h*	airdrig*h*	**N / G**
22.	**24.4**	na lan*n* mbreac	na mbéan*n* mbreac	na lann mbreac	**N / G**
23.	**27.3**	slóig*h*tib*h*	slúad*h*uib*h*	slóig*h*tib*h*	**N / G**
24.	**28.3**	torc*h*rad*h*	torc*h*radh	marb*adh*	**N / C**
25.	**30.1**	mo c*h*orp	m*o* c*hr*óid*h*e	m*o* c*h*orp	**N / G**
26.	**31.4**	m*ar* sin sa c*h*at*h*	m*ar* sin san ccat*h*	ag dul a ccait*h*	**N / C**

We can quantify the material presented in the table to illustrate the correspondences between the manuscripts more clearly. Of the total twenty-six features listed above, the distribution and correspondences between **N**, **C** and **G** are as follows:

Correspondence	No. of instances
N / C	9
N / G	17
C / G	0
total	**26**

It is very noteworthy that there is not a single instance of an obvious correspondence between **C** and **G**.

While our initial table collating the lexicographical, grammatical and orthographical features did not bring up any correspondences between **C** and **G**, there are in fact instances where the two agree. Where this is the case, **N** seems to display dialectal features: we can identify two instances in **N** of *mhuair* (stanzas 4.1, 14.2), a Munster dialectal feature,[371] as opposed to *mhóir* in **C** and **G**; and further an instance of de-nasalization of final *ng* to *g* in *chumhaig* (stanza 34.4), where **C** and **G** have *chúmhaing* and *chumhang* respectively.[372] **C**, on the other hand, has a tendency to use *céinn* for *cinn/ceann* (stanzas 12.4, 17.3), *ceinn* here possibly representing an i-gliding diphthong as found in some south-eastern Munster dialects.[373] In stanza 23.3, **N** gives the hypercorrect form of *threidhllsibh* where in **C** and **G** we find *tréillsibh* and *threillsibh*. In stanza 8.4 there is an instance of metathesis (*athr- > arth-*): **N** and **G** have *arthaidh* and *arthaigh* where **C** gives *atruidh*.

A number of modern and archaic forms occur in the three versions of LnC. In stanza 4.4 we find the modern plural *héin* in **N** and **G** as opposed to *héoin* found in **C**. Manuscript **N**, in stanza 9.1, also uses modern *rí* where **C** and **G** have *rígh*. Worth pointing out in this context are *brách* < *bráth* (the former occurring in stanza 32.2 in **N**, the latter in **C** and **G**) as well as *ai / oi* variation in stanza 12.3 (**N**: *aighghreadh*, **C**: *óighridh*, **G**: *oidhgreadh*) and *ái / ói* variation in stanza 34.3 (**N / C**: *táigeam*, **G**: *tóigeam*).

In conclusion to this first comparison between versions of LnC, we can note that while there are slight differences in wording, grammar and spelling, this does not provide a great deal of information in terms of transmission. We have established that **N** and **G** seem to correspond more closely than **C**, but again the differences are minimal and do not constitute any major

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[371] For instances of breaking of *ó* to *ua*, see B. Ó Cuiv, *The Irish of West Muskerry, Co. Cork* (Dublin, 1944), p. 184.

[372] T.F. O'Rahilly, *Irish Dialects Past and Present* (Dublin, 1972), p. 184.

[373] See B. Breatnach, *The Irish of Ring, Co. Waterford* (Dublin, 1947), p. 142, §545.

break-through for a study of the transmission of LnC. Where **N** and **C** correspond, these instances seem to be mainly lexical: see for instance

	N	C	G
stanza 28.3	torc*h*rad*h*	torc*hradh*	marb*adh*

Where correspondences between **N** and **C** occur, can we assume that **G** has altered the text?

A final aspect that is interesting and worth considering at this point concerns the first five stanzas of the poem as they appear in our six manuscripts preserving this longest version of LnC. LnC, where it occurs in all the other pre-19th-century manuscripts, begins with what is stanza 6 here, *A Chonaill cia hiad na cinn*. Comparing the first five stanzas of **N**, **C** and **G** as well as RIA 23 C 26 (c), RIA 24 B 26 and RIA 23 G 20 with the 'traditional' beginning of LnC, namely stanza 6, shows that that the two in fact have different metres. The first of the five stanzas (i.e. *Sgéal Cú Chulainn ós árd…*) in each of the six manuscripts including them, has a metre of:

- $6^1+8^2+9^2+8^3$ (**N**)
- $6^1+8^2+9^2+7^3$ (**C**)
- $6^1+8^2+8^2+8^3$ (**G**)
- $? +8^2+ ? +8^3$ (RIA 23 C 26 (c))[374]
- $7^1+8^2+8^2+8^3$ (RIA 24 B 26)
- $6^1+8^2+9^2+8^3$ (RIA 23 G 20)

The first five stanzas are, for the most part, in *Deibhidhe* metre.[375] With the beginning of LnC 'proper', i.e. stanza 6, the metre consistently changes to a loose form of *Rannaigheacht* (7^1+7^1); this also applies to all other extant versions of LnC.

Interestingly, a poem of three stanzas with the first line *Sgéal Cú Chulainn ós árd* occurs in our manuscripts in Group IV/a-2 (namely BL Eg. 132, RIA 23 K 37, Cam. 10 / Add. 3085 (c), NLI G 457 and NLI G 146). The following table contrasts the poem from Group IV/a-2 (using our 'group representative' manuscript) with how it stands as an introduction to LnC (from **N**):

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[374] Due to damage to the manuscript the first and third lines are almost entirely lost.

[375] Although there are some anomalies to be noted: see for instance stanza 3.1&2, *mhaine : míledh*.

BL Eg. 132 [IV/a-2]	RIA 23 N 14 (N) [VI]
1. Sgela *Con* cCulain*n* os *aird* in*n*is, a M*h*aine morg*air*g an b*h*faca tu a*n* Cu calma ce ler traot*h*ad*h* a m*h*ormeanma.	1. Sgéal *Chon* gC*h*ul*ainn* ós *áir*d ait*h*ris duin*n*, a M*h*aine m*h*órg*hair*g cio*nn*us do frío*ch*ad*h* an C*h*ú Eam*h*na sul do t*r*ío*ch*ad*h* a m*h*óir m*h*enma.
2. Atcon*nairc* misi an Cu cain mar is lanm*h*ait*h* lem meanmáin gin go*r*ab do deoin a*n* laic*h* luin*n* eoin ag luig*h*e ar a c*h*oluin*n*.	2. 'S am*h*laidh fu*ar*us an Cú calma m*ar* b*udh* lánm*h*ait*h* lea*m* m*h*eanma ag imt*h*ea*ch*t na néoin don laoi loin*n* na heoin a laoi *ar* a c*h*oloin*n*.
3. Da mbeirad*h* urc*h*ar a t*h*ab*h*aill *ar* sluag*h* alain*n* na treanfer tar eis anu*air*im sa n-eac*h*ruig*h* ni mairf*idh* a*ch*t a sgéala.	3. Ná hab*air*si sin a m*h*aine is ná be*ir* béi*m* *ar* an míl*edh* 's ná cloist*er* é uait a b*h*fad *air* uaid*h* cosg*ar*ta do nám*h*ad.
	4. Ní *air* f*h*uait*h* ade*irm*se é a C*h*onaill m*h*u*air* as gléig*h*eal gné ní duin*n*e nác*h* ad*h*b*har* uaille na héin *ar* C*h*oin na Craoib*h*ruaid*h*e.
	5. As a ndiog*h*ail Con na hAn*m*a le Conall na ccleas ccalma go ttéid maine a n-aitrea*ch* sgéil curad*h* na n-*arm* n-aigm*h*éil.

While the first two stanzas correspond very closely, the third stanza in IV/a-2 has no counterpart in the 'introduction' to LnC. However, we can see how the third stanza in IV/a-2 provides a *dúnadh* to the first stanza, thus bringing the poem to a close. The closeness between the first two stanzas in both versions suggests a link between the poem where it stands independently and as part of LnC. The earliest version of LnC with 35 stanzas, and thus the 'introductory' stanzas, dates to 1701 (RIA 23 C 26 (c)), while the earliest manuscript preserving the independent *Sgéal Cú Chulainn*-poem dates to 1712-13 (BL Eg. 132). Going exclusively by chronology, it seems possible that the independent poem might be an adaptation from the stanzas where they stand as an introduction to LnC. This would explain why the third stanza with the *dúnadh* – which would be a new addition to conclude the poem – is not a good example of *Deibhidhe* but arguably looks more like *Rannaigheacht*. We do not know, however, whether there might have been a manuscript (or manuscripts) pre-dating RIA 23 C 26 (c) which included the independent *Sgéal Cú Chulainn*-poem but which is now lost. This would of course change the scope for the transmission and we can therefore only speculate.

7.3 Same scribe, same poem? The case of Eoghan Mac Gilleoin

Within the corpus of our pre-19th-century manuscripts, we can identify four scribes who are responsible for more than one copy of the prose narrative and / or LnC. It seems reasonable to assume that the versions of the poem copied by the same scribe would show little, if any, sign of variation, especially with the majority of the versions of LnC being so regular, but it is worth investigating whether this is really the case. The scribes in question are the following; note how all of them contribute to more than one of our manuscript groups:

Scribe	Manuscripts	Group	Date	Content
Eoghan Mac Gilleoin	NLS 72.1.36	VI	1691	LnC (27 qq)
	TCD 1362/ H.4.21	IV/b-2	1691	BmMM, DCC, LnC (30 qq)
Diarmaid Ó Conchubhair	TCD 1296/ H.2.5	IV/b-2	1712	BmMM, DCC, LnC (29 qq)
	Maynooth C 98 (b)	IV/b-3	?1714-29	BmMM, DCC
Aindrias Mac Cruitín	RIA E iv 3	III	1727	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
	RIA 23 M 47 (b)	III	1734	BmMM, DCC, LnC (28 qq)
	Maynooth C 38 (j)	V	18th cen.	BmMM
Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin	RIA 23 G 20	VI	1788	LnC (35 qq)
	RIA 23 G 21	I	1796	BmMM, DCC, LnC (35 qq)

For the transmission of LnC, Diarmaid Ó Conchubhair is of no relevance since only one of his versions of the poem survives: Maynooth C 98 (b) breaks off unfinished and as a consequence 'loses' LnC which we can now only speculate would once have been included here.

In Aindrias Mac Cruitín's third manuscript, Maynooth C 38 (j), only an unfinished version of BmMM is preserved. His other two manuscripts, however, give the entire prose narrative of *Oidheadh Conn Culainn* including LnC. Both manuscripts fall into the same group, Group II, and each give LnC with 28 stanzas. The versions correspond almost exactly; the only differences we may note are minor spelling variations (e.g. *tharla ~ tharrla*) and one instance of a textual difference: the final line in stanza 24 reads *d'faicsin san bhfiadh budh maith* in RIA E iv 3 while RIA 23 M 47 (b) gives *d'faicsin san bhfiadh go braith*.

We have already examined one of the LnC versions by Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin in some detail in section 7.2 above: this was LnC from RIA 23 G 21, the earlier of the two versions which stands at the end of prose narrative in the manuscripts copied by Ó Longáin. Ó Longáin's second version is the 'independent' one found in RIA 23 G 20. In both cases the poem has 35 stanzas, which occur in the same order. A very preliminary comparison suggests that, as with Mac Cruitín's versions, the variations are largely of an orthographic nature. There are, however, two instances of textual variations:

reference	RIA 23 G 20	RIA 23 G 21
§28.1	*Nao*nam*ar* is **sea*cht*** b*h*fit*h*id *cead*	Náonm*har* is **trí** fit*hc*h*i*d c*éd*
§31.4	d'faicsin *dam* **mar** sin sa *chaith*	d'faicsin *dam* **ag dul** a ccait*h*

The second variation is rather minor while the first has an impact on the content of the stanza. This is once again the stanza in which Conall enumerates the number of his slain enemies (cf. section 7.1.1), which in RIA 23 G 20 is '1409' but '6009' in RIA 23 G 21. '6009' is the number found in all other versions of LnC with 35 stanzas, while '1409' is unique to RIA 23 G 20. Note, however, how the variation in number has no impact upon the metre since both *seacht* and *trí* have one syllable. Another idiosyncrasy of RIA 23 G 20 is that Ó Longáin here frequently uses drawings instead of words, e.g. the rough sketch of a head where we would expect *ceann*, or an eye for *rosg*. Overall, however, the two versions correspond to one another.

This leaves one scribe to consider, namely, Eoghan Mac Gilleoin. As the table of scribes shows, we find some rather interesting discrepancies in his two versions of LnC: one is 'independent' and consists of 27 stanzas, while the other occurs in the context of the prose narrative and has 30 stanzas. Of our four scribes, Mac Gilleoin thus seems to be the only one whose versions of the poem display some 'irregularities' and therefore deserve further comment. With Mac Gilleoin being a Scottish scribe working in Kintyre, his manuscripts could well be discussed in the context of the 'Scottish versions' in section 7.4 below. However, Mac Gilleoin's manuscript TCD 1362/ H.4.21 is a copy of an Irish manuscript (NLS 72.2.9) and thus does not strictly speaking preserve a 'Scottish version', despite being a manuscript of Scottish provenance. We shall therefore discuss Mac Gilleoin here but treat this discussion as an introduction to the 'Scottish versions'.

To introduce the Scottish dimension of the poem's transmission, we can note with Donald Meek that,

> The Scottish ballad tradition after 1600 differs from that in Ireland in being preserved primarily by oral means. This does not mean that scribal activity was absent. MSS containing Gaelic ballads were compiled in Scotland, notably that of Ewen MacLean (1690-91), comprising prose tales and romances, a substantial amount of bardic verse and two ballads.[376]

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[376] D.E. Meek, '*Duanaire Finn* and Gaelic Scotland' in J. Carey (ed.), *Duanaire Finn: Reassessments* (London, 2003), p. 31. The focus of the present chapter is upon giving a preliminary overview over the pre-19th-century versions of LnC, the Scottish versions of which have been discussed in a number of articles in the context of 'Gaelic ballads', and 'Gaelic Ballads in Scotland'. We will not attempt to take into account here in any great detail the context and implications of the classification of a poem as a '(Gaelic) ballad', but will simply treat LnC as a 'poem'. For discussions of 'Gaelic ballads', see for instance D.E. Meek, 'The Corpus of Heroic Verse'; D.E. Meek, 'Development and Degeneration in Gaelic Ballad Texts' in B. Almqvist et al. (eds), *The Heroic Process: Form, Function and Fantasy in Folk Epic* (Dublin, 1987), pp. 131-60; D.E. Meek, 'The Gaelic Ballads of Scotland: Creativity and Adaptation' in H. Gaskill (ed.), *Ossian Revisited* (Edinburgh, 1991), pp. 19-48; A. Pehnt, 'Skulls and Gulls: Cuchullin in the Scottish Gaelic Ballad' in J.P. Mallory & G. Stockmann

The dating of Mac Gilleoin's two manuscripts is of course important for a question of transmission. Following LnC, in TCD 1362/ H.4.21 we find the date '5 November 1691'. There is no colophon after the poem in NLS 72.1.36; in this manuscript we do, however, find a date in the context of an item preceding LnC by only a few pages. This date is '17 March 1691', and it is therefore probably reasonable to assume that NLS 72.1.36 is slightly older than TCD 1362/ H.4.21, if only by about seven months. In order to be able to comment on the transmission and relationship between the two versions, it is necessary to recap on the variations that occur between the two. The following table juxtaposes the colour-coded stanza information (i.e. their order and occurrence) from pull-out Tables 7-2 and 7-3:

NLS	TCD
27 qq	**30 qq**
1. Q (E)	1. Q (E)
2. A (C)	2. A (C)
3. Q (E)	3. Q (E)
4. A (C)	4. A (C)
5. Q (E)	5. Q (E)
6. A (C)	6. A (C)
	1. Q (E)
	2. A (C)
1. Q (E)	1. Q (E)
2. A (C)	2. A (C)
1. Q (E)	1. Q (E)
2. A (C)	2. A (C)
1. Q (E)	1. Q (E)
2. A (C)	2. A (C)
3. A (C)	3. A (C)
1. Q (E)	1. Q (E)
2. A (C)	2. A (C)
1. Q (E)	1. Q (E)
2. A (C)	2. A (C)
1. Q (E)	1. Q (E)
2. A (C)	2. A (C)
1. Q (E)	1. Q (E)
2. A (C)	2. A (C)
1. RQ (E)	1. RQ (E)
1. S (C)	1. S (C)
1. S (E)	1. S (E)
	1. RQ (C)
1. S (E)	1. S (E)
1. S (E)	1. S (E)
1. S (E)	1. S (E)

(eds), *Ulidia: Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Ulster Cycle* (Belfast, 1994), pp. 263-68; A. Pehnt, 'Gattung als Versprechen: Mündlichkeit und Nördlichkeit' in H.L.C. Tristram (ed.), *(Re)Oralisierung* (Tübingen, 1996), pp. 201-15; D.E. Meek, 'The Scottish Tradition of Fian Ballads in the Middle Ages' in G. Ó Háinle & D.E. Meek (eds), *Unity in Diversity: Studies in Irish and Scottish Gaelic Language, Literature and History* (Dublin, 2004), pp. 9-23. These items also contain discussions of the (18th-century) Scottish collections of ballads such as MacLagan, MacNicol, Pope, Kennedy, etc.

While the two versions largely agree in the order of stanzas, we can observe that there is some (minor) variation especially towards the end of the poem. Nevertheless, both versions contain the same stanzas, with the exception of those three missing from NLS 72.1.36. Since TCD 1362/ H.4.21 is a copy of another manuscript which once had the entire narrative, we would not have expected any great variation or deviation here from the 'mainstream' version of the poem. It is a slightly different case for NLS 72.1.36, where the poem is an 'independent' version. The fact that there are no 'unique' stanzas, and that despite the slight difference in order all stanzas correspond to those found in the 'mainstream' versions of LnC, suggests that LnC here, too, was copied from one of these 'regular' versions. Note especially how for the stanzas describing the heads of Cailitín's children both stanzas of Conall's answer are given (colour-coded in orange); in our overall manuscripts only those which have LnC with 30 or more stanzas give two 'answer-stanzas'. Could the variation in the order of stanzas in NLS 72.1.36 be an attempt of the scribe to 'personalise' the poem? Or was he copying from an exemplar which is now lost, and which also gave the stanzas in the order as they stand here?

We will compare the texts of two versions of the poem to see whether this may yield any further clues. Note that the stanza numbers have been given the same colour-coding as in the schematic representation above to allow for easier cross-referencing.

NLS 72.1.36	TCD 1362/ H.4.21
1. [83] A C*h*onuill ca séalb*h* na cinn, is derp*h* lin*n* g*ur* d*h*ergas h*áir*m; na cin*n* do c*h*íu *ar* an g*h*ád, sloint*er* let na fir d*ar* bf*h*áob*h*?	1. [267] A C*h*on*n*all ca sealb*h* na cinn, is d*er*p lin*n* g*ur* dea*r*guis h*air*m; na cin*n* do c*h*iu *ar* [an] ng*a*d, sloint*er* let na fir ar faoid*h*b*h*?
2. Ing*h*in org*h*uil na n-éac*h*, Eim*h*ir úr³⁷⁷ na m*h*breit*h* bín*n*, sa díog*h*uil C*h*on na nccles, tug*us* liom ndés na cín*n*.	2. A i*ngean* F*h*orguill na n-eac*h*, a Eimhe*ar* ur na mbreit*h* mbin*n*, san ndiog*ail Con* na ccleas, tug*us* lio*m* a des na cind.
3. Cuic*h*e an cean málach dub*h* mo*r*, is d*er*g no róis a g*h*ru*a*ídh g*h*lán, se is nesa dom laim*h* c*h*lí, cen an rí n*ar* at*h*ruid*h* dát*h*?	3. Caid*h*e an cen*n* mal*a* dub*h* mor, deirge na rós a g*r*uaid*h* g*h*lan, se is nesa do*m* laim*h* c*h*li, cean*n* an rig*h* n*ar* at*ar*t*h*aig*h* dat*h*?
4. Cen*n* ri Míd*h*e na n-eac*h* lúat*h*, E*ar*c m*ac* C*h*ai*r*bre na ngcúac*h* cám, anéruic mo d*h*áltan féin, tug*us* liom a gcéin a c*h*éan.	4. [268] Cean*n* rig*h* Mid*h*e na n-eac*h* luath, E*ar*c m*ac* C*h*a*r*bre na ccuac*h* cca*m*, aneiric mo d*h*altain fen, tug*us* liom a ccein a c*h*ean*n*.

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³⁷⁷ MS initially had 'óg' but this is marked by punctum delens and 'úr' given in superscript.

5. Cuiche an ceansa ghabhus ad leith clí,
derg alí ni lochd a dhéilb,
a cean o tharla gan chorp?
Is máith liom giodh ólc le Méabh.

6. Maine mo Éibert na n-éach,
mac Méidhbhe do chréach gach cúan;
ar sgaradh a chínn re na chorp
is liom uile do thuit a shluagh.

7. Cuiche an da chensa ar m'aghaidh thoir,
a Chonall mor ga gól a ngháoth,
én dúbh ar bhfolta na fear
is derg an grúaidh na fúil láoidh?

8. Cen Mhálla 7 Mhioghnadh mhór
in da chenn sin is dóigh línn,
is aca fuarus cenn na Con
ag múir Témhra na sgól slím.

9. Cuice an da chensa ar m'ághaidh thés,
a Chonall mor na ccles lúith,
én dúbh ar bfólta na fer,
's dérg a ngruaídh, géal a gnúis?

10. [84] Cullinn Breadh 7 Conlath rúadh,
dias beirad búaidh le féirg,
Eimhir, fhaicsin a cinn:
tugas a ccorp fa linn déirg.

11. Cuice na sé cínsa is olc níamh
do chíum fein ar m'aghaidh thúaith,
gorm a n-áithche, dubh abfúilt,
siabharta a rúisc, a Chonaill cruaídh?

12. Aig súdh na se bádhbh
do chiú marbh sa mbéil re gáoith:
clanna Cálidín, lucht na nccles,
dréam nach roib ar léas mo laoidh.

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5. Cuiche an ceansa dom leith cli,
derg a li no locht a dheilbh,
an cenn o tarla gan corp?
Is maith liom giodh olc le Meadbh.

6. Maine mo Ebert na n-each,
mac Meidhbhi do creach gach cuan;
ar scaradh a chin re chorp
liom uile do thuit a shluagh.

7. Cia he an cennsa ar m'aghaidh thall,
go bfolt bfan go mala shlim,
rosc mar oighre, a ded mar bhlaith,
aille na cach cruth a chinn?

8. Is leis sin do thuit an cu,
tugus a chorp fa cru tais,
Lughaidh mac Conri na reann,
tugus a chenn liom tar ais.

9. Cia an da chensa ar m'aghaidh thoir,
a Conall mor gon goil nghaoith,
geal a n-aighthe, dubh a bfuilt,
derge an gruaidh re a fuil laoidh?

10. Cean Mhail 7 Mhiodhna mor
in da ceann sin is doigh linn,
aca fuarus cenn na Conn
ag mur Temrach na sgol slim.

11. Cia an da censa ar m'aghaidh thes,
a Conall mor na ccles luith,
aen duth ar bfoltaibh na bfear,
derg a ngruaidh, geal a ngnuis?

12. Cuillenn Breagha is Connla ruadh,
dias do bheredh buaidh le feirg,
a Eimhir, aig sin a ccinn:
tugus a ccuirp fa linn derg.

13. Cia na se cinnse is olc neimh
do chim fein ar m'aghaidh thuaith,
gorm a n-aighthe, dubh abfuilt,
siabra an ruisc, a Conall chruaidh?

14. A siad sud na se baidhbh
do ciu marbh sa mbel re gaoith:
clann Cailitin, lucht na ccleas,
dream nach raibhe ar les mo laoich.

13. Atternod*h* ó gléus na Con
do c*h*lan*n*a Calidín fa nem*h* gnáth,
do m*h*arb*h*as an séism*ar* badb*h*:
do tuit siad le m'*ar*m t*ar* c*h*ach.

14. Cuic*h*e an da c*h*eansa is fáida amac*h*,
a C*h*onall mo*r* do b*r*át*h* bad*h*,
ar grádh hóinid*h* na ceil orm,
cen na deis d*ar* g*h*on*n* t'*ár*m?

15. Cean Laog*a*re is C*h*láire Cúilg
an da c*h*en do tuit lem g*h*úin,
do g*h*ón*n*sát Cu C*h*ulin C*ár*m
is t*r*íd do d*ér*gas m'*ár*m na b*h*úil.

16. Cuic*h*e an ceansa ar m'ágh*aidh* t*h*all,
go bfólt fán go mála slím,
roisc m*ar* oig*h*re déd m*ar* b*h*láth,
áille no cách c*r*uth a c*h*in*n*?

17. Cean m*h*ic F*h*ínn m*h*ic Rósa Rúaid*h*,
M*h*ic Níadh fu*ar* bás le mo neart:
Éim*h*ir fháicsin a chinn,
*ar*drí Laíg*h*en na déarg ttaís.

18. Cuiche an ceansa g*h*ab*h*us ad láim*h*,
a C*h*onall m*hó*r, is baid*h* lin*n*,
o nac*h* m*air*ion Cu na ccles,
cred fa bhfuil *ar* leas an*n* c*h*in*n*?

19. Cean m*h*ic Férgna na n-éac*h*,
Mú*ir*edh*ach do c*h*réach go clót;
mac mo ts*h*ethu*ir* on túr t*h*ean*n*,
do sg*ar*us a c*h*enn le na c*hó*rp.

20. [85] A C*h*onuill mho*r* M*h*uighe in Sgáil
cr*éd* do t*h*uit le do lai*m*h g*an* loc*h*d
do na slúag*h*uib*h* d*ar* m*h*íll sin,
let a ndíog*h*bail c*h*in*n* na Coín?

21. Náonm*ar* is da f*h*ít*h*id céd
ad*er*im ríut fa léin slúaig*h*,
do t*h*orc*h*u*ir* líom, d*r*úim *ar* d*h*ru*í*m,
do ním*h*e cuílg chl*aidh*iomh c*r*úaid*h*.

22. A C*h*onuill, cion*n*as atáid
mná Innsi Fáil t*ar* éis na Cón*n*?
a bfuil cúm*h*a um c*h*ólt, um c*h*éis,
na ttábrad*h* spéis ina d*h*úl.

15. [269] Attearnod*h* o ccleas na cCon*n*
do cl*ann* Cail*itin* fa [nem*h* gnáth],
do m*h*arb*h*us an seis*er* bad*h*b*h*:
do t*h*uits*ed* le m'*ar*m t*ar* c*h*a[ch].

16. Cia an *da* c*h*ensa is faide amac[h],
a *Conall* mo*r* do b*r*at*h* baid*h*b*h*,
ar grad*h* t*h*oin*n*id*h* na ceil orm,
cen na deisi do gon*n* t'airm?

17. Cen Laoguire 7 C*h*laire Cuilg
an da c*h*en*n* do t*h*uit lem g*h*uin*n*,
do g*h*onsat C*u* C*u*lainn Cairne,
trid do d*er*gus m'*ar*m ba bfuil.

18. A *Conall* o At*h* F*er* Diad*h*,
cuic*h* an cen sin d*ar* g*h*iall cac*h*
go noir fa t*h*rillsib*h* a c*h*in*n*,
co ccumdac*h* slim d'*air*gid b*h*an?

19. Cen m*ac* Fin*n* m*ic* Rosa R*uaidh*,
M*ac* Niad*h* fu*ar* bas lem nert:
a Eim*h*ir, ag sin a c*h*eann,
*air*drig*h* Laig*h*en na le*ar*g ttais.

20. Cia an cen sin gab*h*us id laim*h*,
a *Conall* mor, is baid*h* lin*n*
o nac*h* m*ar*ion*n* Cu na ccleas,
cr*ed* fa bfuil *ar* les an c*h*in*n*?

21. Cen m*ac* Fergna na n-ec*h*,
Muir*edh*ach do c*h*reac*h* go colt;
mac mo ts*h*eat*h*ar on tar t*h*ean*n*,
do sc*ar*us a c*h*eann le a corp.

22. A Conuill mo*r* M*h*uig*h*e an Scail,
cr*ed* do t*h*uit l*eat* laim g*an* loc*h*t
dona sluagh*aibh* do m*h*ill sin,
leat a ndiog*ail* c*h*in*n* na Con*n*?

23. Naonm*ar* is *da* fic*h*it c*ed*
adeirim riut fa len sluaig*h*,
do t*h*orcuir liom, d*r*uim *ar* d*h*ruim,
do nim*h* cuilg chl*aidh*im chr*uaidh*.

24. A *Conall*, cion*n*us ataid
mna In*n*si Fail d'eis na Con?
in b*h*fuil cum*h*a im c*h*olt, im c*h*eis,
no in ttap*r*ad*h* speis ina d*h*ul.

23. An da gháir do cráid*h* mo c*h*orp,
    Eim*h*ir óg na bfólt mbláith;
    gáir com*h*áonta mf*er* gléidh
    is gáir cáointe mbán ro réidh.

25. An da gair do c*h*raid*h* mo c*h*orp,
    Eimir og na bfolt mblait*h*;
    gair commaoid*ht*he bfer ngclet*h*
    gair caointe mban ro reid*h*.

24. A C*h*onall, is míth*idh* d*h*úin
    Cú C*h*ulin anúir do c*h*úir,
    tóc*h*lum go fóirc*h*en anúaigh
    is a leabuid*h* c*h*óitc*h*iona c*h*ríad*h* clóc*h*.

26. A *Conall* is mit*h*id d*h*uin*n*
    C*u* C*u*lain*n* an uir do c*h*uir,
    toc*h*lam go foirc*h*en*n* anuaig*h*,
    san leab*aidh* c*h*oitc*h*in*n* c*r*iaid*h* cloc[h].

25. A Chonall, rac*hadh* fan mbféart,
    is fán*n* mo néart m*ar* atá;
    cu*ir* mo b*h*éil *ar* béil na Con,
    is óirc*h*íos dam*h* dul fa lá.

27. **[270]** [A Eimher cr]*ed* do gen fein,
    gan a Cu do reir fa rat*h*,
    g*an* mo *da*ltan fa gl*an* groid*h*
    d'faic*s*in amuig*h* 's amac*h*?

26. A C*h*onall, is óirc*h*íos dám*h*,
    ni luíg*h*eab*h* le fer go b*rát*h ;
    do g*h*éb*h* bás da c*h*úm*h*a sin,
    a C*h*onall na céil *ar* c*h*ách.

28. [A] C*h*onuill, is oirc*h*es dam*h*,
    ni luig*h*eab*h* le fer go brat*h*;
    do g*h*eib*h* bas da c*h*um*h*a sin,
    a *Conuill* a ceil *ar* cach.

29. A *Conuill*, rac*h*ad gan bf*er*t,
    is fan*n* mo n*er*t m*ar* ata;
    cuir mo b*h*eil ar beil na Con,
    is oirc*h*es *da*m*h* dul fa la.

27. A Dúb*h* 's a Lía M*h*ác*h*a m*h*ear,
    d*h*á éac*h* fa glan gníom*h*,
    gac*h* nec*h* lé *ar* t*h*orch*ur* in t*r*íat*h*,
    is orra síar adimr*us* m'f*h*íac*h*.

30. A Dub*h* 's a Lia M*h*ac*h*a m*h*ear ,
    a *da* eac*h* fa gl*an* a ngniom*h*,
    gac[h] nec*h* ler torcr*adh* att*r*iat*h*,
    is orrt*h*a si*ar* adimres m'f*h*ioch.

It is outwith the scope of this thesis to conduct a detailed linguistic analysis and comparison of Mac Gilleoin's two versions; instead, we will point to a number of features which may help in establishing a clearer picture of the transmission of the two versions.

While they are generally very similar, we can detect a number of variations. Interesting is the instance of correction in NLS 72.1.36 in stanza 2.2, where the initial *óg* has been emended to *ur*. Of our total thirty-seven versions of LnC, only three have *óg*, namely NLS 72.1.37 (BDL), NLS 73.2.2 ('Turner Manuscript') and NLS 72.3.10 (Kennedy), all of these being Scottish manuscripts. All other versions – including TCD 1362/ H.4.21 – give *úr*. The emendation of *óg* to *úr* thus appears to be an exclusively 'Scottish' feature. In terms of transmission, while the 'Scottish' versions of LnC as preserved in NLS 72.1.37, NLS 73.2.2 and NLS 73.2.10 do not seem to be direct copies of one another, there is the possibility that the scribes either had access to those versions preserving *óg* for *úr*, or otherwise were aware of a 'Scottish tradition' within LnC, which they adhered to.

Another interesting variation that we can note are two instances of *aig sin* in TCD 1362/ H.4.21 (stanzas 10.3, 19.3) which appear in NLS 72.1.36 as *fhaicsin* (stanza 10.3, 17.3). This re-interpretation is unique to the NLS manuscript as all other versions of LnC in which these stanzas occur give *aig sin* or a variation thereof (such as *ag siad, ag so, a siad sin*, etc.). On the other hand, we can note rather idiosyncratic correspondences between the two versions, such as a giving *derp(h)* in stanza 2.2, where in all other versions we find *de(a)rbh*. In section 6.3.5 (analysis of 'Case study a)', p. 297) we have already pointed to 'a scribal tendency in the same manuscript [NLS 72.2.9, being the exemplar from which Mac Gilleoin copied TCD 1362/ H.4.21] to use 'p' for 'b' to represent the labial fricative *bh*.' Could the use of 'p' for 'b' in NLS 72.1.36 here be an indication that Mac Gilleoin was using NLS 72.2.9 as an exemplar for LnC after all, as we know he did when copying TCD 1362/ H.4.21? On the other hand, TCD 1362/ H.4.21 is a very faithful copy of NLS 72.2.9, re-duplicating the former manuscript almost down to the last suspension stroke (cf. entry for manuscript in the draft catalogue, section 2.2). It seems odd that Mac Gilleoin would have copied so faithfully in one instance, but not in the other (note the orthographical variations in LnC above). Then again, he might have felt that since the poem in NLS 72.1.36 would stand 'independently', he could be more liberal in the transmission from one manuscript to the next. The overall manuscript context might play into this, too: while in TCD 1362/ H.4.21 we find exclusively prose tales, NLS 72.1.36 contains prose as well as miscellaneous poetry; it may thus have been compiled for a different audience and constitute a different sort of anthology from the TCD manuscript.

A final feature, which we have already hinted at in section 7.1.2 above, is a variation in the 'Earc-stanza'. We had noted a variation for *ngruaidh nde(a)rg* and *ngruaidh se(a)ng* in the manuscripts; if we consider Mac Gilleoin's versions above (stanza 4, line 2) we find *Earc mac Chairbre na ngcúach cám* (NLS) and *Earc mac Charbre na ccuach ccam* (TCD). This variant for the line can be found only in two further manuscripts: NLS 72.1.37 (BDL) and NLS 73.2.2 ('Turner Manuscript'), once again two Scottish manuscripts and thus reflecting the *óg / úr* variation which once again is strongly suggestive of an established 'Scottish' version of LnC.

More research is necessary to establish the transmission of the two versions with certainty, but we may venture to suggest a few possibilities. Even without knowing the exemplar of NLS 72.1.36, we can assume that it was copied from a manuscript which had the 'Irish' version of LnC. Although we have identified a number a features that seem to be unique to the Scottish manuscripts (the *óg / úr* and *seang / dearg* variations discussed above), we know that TCD 1362/ H.4.21, which shares these features, is based upon an Irish manuscript. The 'Scottish

features' may thus not necessarily be an indication of a 'Scottish trend', but merely survive in manuscripts of a Scottish provenance while ultimately going back to an Irish exemplar.

It may be useful here to briefly contrast a number of Scottish Gaelic (ScG) and Irish/ Classical Irish (Ir/ Class) features that we can identify in Mac Gilleoin's two versions of LnC:

NLS 72.1.36		TCD 1362/ H.4.21	
§1.3	*ar* an g*h*ad (ScG)	§1.3	*ar* [an] ng*a*d (Ir/ Class)
§2.2	bin*n* (ScG)	§2.2	mbin*n* (Ir/ Class)
§2.3	na nccles (ScG)	§2.3	na ccleas (Ir/ Class)
§2.4	a ndés (Ir/ Class)	§2.4	a des (ScG)
§3.4	at*h*ruig*h* (Ir/ Class)	§3.4	at*arth*aig*h* (ScG)
§4.1	nan gcúac*h* (ScG)	§4.1	na ccuac*h* (Ir/ Class)
§5.4	Méab*h* (ScG?)	§5.4	Mead[h]bh (Ir/ Class)
§9.3	na fer (ScG)	§11.3	na bfear (Ir/ Class)
§12.3	na nccles (ScG)	§14.3	na ccleas (Ir/ Class)
§23.3	mf*er* (ScG)	§25.3	bfer (Ir/ Class)
§23.3	gléidh (Ir/ Class)	§25.3	n gclet*h* (ScG)
ScG: 8x		**ScG: 3x**	
Ir/ Class: 3x		**Ir/ Class: 8x**	

The above list and comparison suggests that NLS 72.1.36 is more vernacularised than the TCD text, the major indicative feature here being the presence of the Scottish Gaelic type of eclipsis of which we only find the odd example in TCD 1362/ H.4.21 (e.g. stanza 25.3).[378] On the other hand, there are some parallels between both texts – note two instances of hypercorrections, *mban* (NLS stanza 23.4 / TCD stanza 25.4) and *do chuir* (NLS stanza 24.2 / TCD stanza 26.2) where we would expect *bán* and *do chur* respectively. While these may suggest dialectisms or peculiarities pertaining to Mac Gilleoin, it has to be noted that both instances of hypercorrections occur frequently (although not consistently) in the other versions of LnC, and thus cannot reliably be used to draw any conclusions.

Mac Gilleoin's 'independent' version of LnC in NLS 72.1.36 may give the impression of varying greatly from the text in TCD 1362/ H.4.21. Our observations tie in with the initial assessment of the pre-19th-century versions of LnC in section 7.1.3 above, where it was noted that the greatest discrepancies and variations seemed to occur within the 'independent' versions of the poem. This is also true for Mac Gilleoin's two texts: it is that found in NLS 72.1.36 which displays a changed order and omission of the stanzas. However, on closer inspection it appears that overall this version, too, closely follows the 'traditional' version of LnC as it can be found in the majority of our manuscripts.

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[378] See R. Ó Maolalaigh, ''The Scotticisation of Gaelic: A Reassessment of the Language and Orthography of the Gaelic Notes in the Book of Deer' in K. Forsyth, *Studies on the Book of Deer* (Dublin, 2008), pp. 242-43, for similar Scottsh examples.

7.4 The other Scottish versions

We have discussed one of our Scottish scribes, the Kintyre scribe Eoghan Mac Gilleoin and his two versions of LnC, in order to demonstrate the variations that may occur between versions of the poem which can be attributed to the same scribe. There is, however, a total of five manuscripts of Scottish provenance, and since we have considered only two of these in the context of the discussion of Mac Gilleoin, we have three manuscripts of a Scottish provenance left to address. These are:

Manuscript	Date	Group	Content
NLS 72.1.37 (BDL)	1512-42	VI	LnC (24 qq)
NLS 73.2.2 ('Turner MS')	c. 1748	VI	LnC (30 qq) + 4 poems
NLS 73.2.10 (Kennedy)	1774-84	VI	LnC (34 (47) qq)

Two of the three manuscripts, 72.1.37 (BDL) and 72.3.10 (Kennedy), have already been singled out above as preserving versions of LnC which are most diverse and anomalous in comparison with the other examples of LnC. We will consider each of the three Scottish manuscripts in turn, starting with the one that is earliest in date.

7.4.1 The 'Book of the Dean of Lismore' (NLS 72.1.37)

The earliest version of LnC is that contained in the 16th-century 'Book of the Dean of Lismore' (now NLS 72.1.37), compiled between 1512-42, in which the poem stands independently with 24 stanzas.[379] As we will see this is one of the versions of the poem which displays some 'irregularities' and does not conform to the 'mainstream' versions we can identify in most other manuscripts. The poem, as it appears in BDL, has been edited a number of times, most recently by Donald Meek, although this edition is so far unpublished.[380] Meek has commented that while we can identify corrections (orthographic and other) to the text as it stands in BDL, 'there is no conclusive evidence that another version of the poem was available.'[381] LnC here

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[379] BDL has, of course, received extensive scholarly attention; we shall, however, treat it here like any other manuscript as it would be outwith the scope of this thesis to consider the BDL and its place in the manuscript tradition of Scotland in detail. A number of items directly concerned with BDL have been cited in footnote 376; to these we may add W. Gillies, 'Courtly and Satiric Poems in the Book of the Dean of Lismore', *Scottish Studies* 21 (1977) pp. 35-53; W. Gillies, 'The Gaelic Poems of Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy (I)', *SGS* 13 (part 1) (1978), pp. 18-45 [parts II and III of this article in *SGS* 13 (part 2) (1981), pp. 263-88 and *SGS* 14 (part 1) (1983), pp. 59-82.

[380] Meek, 'The Corpus of Heroic Verse'. For Meek's edition of *Laoidh na gCeann* (poem no. XIX) see Vol. I, pp. 311-16, with comments in Vol. II, pp. 565-73. For published editions of the poem see A. Cameron, *Reliquiae Celticae – Vol. I* (Inverness, 1982), pp.113-14, and N. Ross, *Heroic Poetry from the Book of the Dean of Lismore* (Edinburgh, 1939), pp. 106-15.

[381] Meek, 'The Corpus of Heroic Verse', Vol. II, p. 565.

stands independently, without a prose introduction or even headline which might help identify its background. LnC forms no exception, however, since for the poems in BDL,

> The dimension most obviously missing is that of a general literary context. The scribes of the Book of the Dean did not attempt to show the relationship of the ballads to the prose tradition with which they are, in some cases, intimately connected from at least the early Middle Ages.[382]

Of the 24 stanzas that LnC comprises in BDL, two (namely, stanzas 9 and 24) are unattested elsewhere (at least within the pre-19th-century manuscripts). The second of these unattested stanzas concludes the poem and gives it a formal *dúnadh*, which is missing from the versions in later tradition. Overall, BDL gives the majority of the stanzas which make up the dialogue between Eimhear and Conall (i.e. 'question-answer-stanzas'), but omits most of the 'independent' stanzas which, being statements and rhetorical questions, elsewhere conclude the poem. Interesting are two instances in BDL where a question is 'teamed up' with an answer elsewhere given to a different stanza; this is represented as

| 1. Q (E) |
| 6. A (C) |

and

| 1. Q (E) |
| 2. A (C) |

in pull-out Tables 7-2 and 7-3. The first 'answer-stanza' which has been omitted due to the question being followed by a different answer, is that concerning Lughaidh Mac Con Raoi. Considering that it is Lughaidh who, in the prose narrative, throws the spear that fatally wounds Cú Chulainn, the absence of this stanza is quite conspicuous. In the second case, the question is traditionally answered with an identification of the heads as those of Maoil and Miodhna. This stanza, however, is absent in BDL.

We can draw a parallel between LnC and its appearance in BDL versus the other versions and another poem that, as well as being contained in BDL, has a life in Scottish and Irish tradition. This is a poem beginning *Ceathrar do bhí ar uaigh an fhir*, also known as the 'Alexander poem'. It is represented in both Irish and Scottish tradition, with the version found in BDL pre-dating the earliest Irish version by two centuries. In comparison, the BDL-version of LnC pre-dates the next earliest extant version of the poem (in NLS 72.1.38) by less than a century. Following an examination of the 'Alexander poem' in BDL and in Scottish and Irish manuscripts, Pádraig Ó Macháin has concluded that

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[382] Meek, 'The Gaelic Ballads of Scotland: Creativity and Adaptation', p. 39.

> The copy of *Ceathrar do bhí ar uaigh an fhir* in the Book of the Dean of Lismore represents an independent line in the textual tradition of that poem. Related eighteenth-century Scottish versions, while generally aligned with the Dean's text, show influence also of the Irish tradition.[383]

For LnC the situation is slightly different in that the Scottish versions generally agree with the Irish tradition rather than the BDL version (an exception being LnC in 'Kennedy's Collection', as we will see in just a moment). Ó Macháin has further concluded that 'we cannot say the Irish text derives from the Dean's text, or that the Dean's text is essentially the Irish text plus an interpolation'[384] – something which I am tempted to suggest is just as true for *Laoidh na gCeann* as it is for *Ceathrar do bhí ar uaigh an fhir*.

7.4.2 The 'Turner Manuscript' (NLS 73.2.2)

The 'Turner Manuscript' was compiled in 1718 by Uilliam Mac Mhurchaidh, a 'poet, scribe, collector and anthologist'[385] who was 'among the last in Scotland with a knowledge of the old Gaelic hand (*corra-litir*) and an interest in transcribing older literary material.'[386] Very noteworthy about the 'Turner Manuscript' is the fact that besides LnC we here find a further four poems from *Oidheadh Con Culainn*.[387] All of these are preceded by a brief prose introduction putting the poem in question into the context of the prose narrative.[388] Poem 22 *Goirt rom ghaoth* is thus introduced (on p. 103) as *Comhradh eadar Cuchulinn agus Laoighre Buadhach tareis Chatha Murtheimhne ar seasamh dho ris an chartha chum eug an sin.* On relating this back to the prose narrative, we can see that an error, or mix-up, of persons has occurred: 'Laoighre Buadhach' or Lóegaire Búadach may feature alongside Cú Chulainn in tales such as *Fled Bricrenn* ('Briccriu's Feast'), yet plays no part in *Oidheadh Con Culainn*.

As far as LnC is concerned, the version found in the 'Turner Manuscript' has 30 stanzas and does not show any sign of variation from the 'mainstream' versions of the poem as is stands in the other manuscripts. It is, however, one of only two manuscripts which give the poem with

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[383] P. Ó Macháin, 'Irish and Scottish Traditions concerning *Ceathrar do bhí ar uaigh an fhir*', *Éigse* 30 (1997), p. 17.

[384] Ó Macháin, 'Irish and Scottish Traditions concerning *Ceathrar do bhí ar uaigh an fhir*', p. 17.

[385] M. Scott, 'Politics and Poetry in Mid-Eighteenth Century Argyll: *Tuirseach andiugh críocha Gaoidhiol*' in C. Ó Baoill & N. Maguire (eds), *Rannsachadh na Gáidhlig 2000* (Obar Dheathain, 2002), p. 150.

[386] W. McLeod, *Divided Gaels:Gaelic Cultural Identities in Scotland and Ireland c.1200-c.1650* (Oxford, 2004), p. 60. Mac Murchaidh's use of *corr litir* in 18th-century Scotland has previously also been noted in R. Black, 'The Gaelic manuscripts of Scotland' in W. Gillies (ed.), *Scotland and Gaelic / Alba agus a'Ghàidhlig* (Edinburgh, 1989), p. 167.

[387] Cf. section 3.2.4.

[388] Only LnC is not preceded by such an introduction but simply appears under the title 'Laoi na cceand'.

30 stanzas (the other being TCD 1362); the order of these corresponds in both manuscripts, as pull-out Tables 7-2 and 7-3 demonstrate. A preliminary examination of LnC, as well as the other poems from *Oidheadh Con Culainn* as they occur in the 'Turner Manuscript', suggests that we can agree with Thomas Clancy who has concluded that they

> have almost certainly precipitated out of a verse-strewn version of the tale, and though I have not examined them in detail, they do not appear to be subjected to Scottish Gaelic vernacularisation in any major way.[389]

7.4.3 'Kennedy's Collection' (NLS 72.3.10)

Laoidh na gCeann as it is preserved in NLS 72.3.10, 'Kennedy's Collection', is the most anomalous of our thirty-seven versions. The poem here has a total of 47 stanzas which are split into two parts: the first 13 stanzas appear under the headline *I. Earrann*, while the other 34 have the headline *II. Earrann*. It is only this second part that we can identify with 'LnC proper'; the first 13 stanzas form a unique introduction to the poem and 'would appear to be Kennedy's own work.'[390] This new introduction appears to be intended to be spoken by Eimhear and is in praise and lament of Cú Chulainn. The stanzas bear no resemblance to the five-stanza introduction *Sgéal Cú Chulainn ós árd* as it stands in the version of LnC with 35 stanzas.

With regard to the second part of 'Kennedy's LnC', of the total 34 stanzas sixteen are unique and unattested elsewhere. Within these unattested stanzas, we find that reference is being made to characters that do not belong to the Ulster Cycle. This is the case in stanza 23 (36), which is concerned with *Da Mhac Riogh Lochlan nan ruag / D' an ainm Manus is Lua'-lamh*. The eighteen stanzas which we can identify at times differ from the 'traditional' versions. Compare for instance the following stanza from 'Kennedy's LnC' with the stanza as it is generally found elsewhere:

NLS 72.3.10 (stanza 4 (17))	**NLS 72.1.38** (stanza 6)
Ainnir fhabharrach nan clearc,	Maine mo Eib*er*t na n-eac*h*,
Mac Maibhe le'n creachta gach cuan;	m*ac* Meid*hb*h*e* do c*h*rec*h* go cuan;
Mo chomraic se sud a cheann,	*ar* sg*ar*t*h*uin ac*h*inn sa c*h*uirp,
'S gur h ann leam thuit a shluagh.	liom uile do t*h*uit a s*h*lúag*h*

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[389] T. O. Clancy, 'Mourning Fearchar Ó Maoilchiaráin: Text, Transmission and Transformation' in W. McLeod et al., *Cànan & Cultar / Language & Culture: Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig* 3 (Edinburgh, 2006), p. 62.

[390] Meek, 'The Corpus of Heroic Verse', Vol. II, p. 566. Only the second part of Kennedy's version of LnC has been taken into account in Tables 7-2 and 7-3; when referring to LnC in 'Kennedy's Collection' it is these thirty-four stanzas that reference is being made to, the unique introductory stanzas being omitted in the discussion here.

Only lines 2 and 4 correspond, and even here we find some discrepancies. On the basis of these two lines it is possible, however, to identify the stanza with some degree of certainty.

The explanation for the irregularities and unattested stanzas is that LnC in 'Kennedy's Collection' is not simply a copy from another manuscript. Rather, while Duncan Kennedy collected poems he also 'inserted verses and lines of his own, but was careful to note where this was done,'[391] and further 'mixes texts from genuine oral tradition with his own identifiable adaptations and additions.'[392] On the basis of cross-comparison with other versions of the poem we can see quite clearly which stanzas are Kennedy's own. Note that in the context of the 18th-century Scottish collections (such as MacLagan, Pope) 'the catalogue of the heads of the Ulster warriors is found only in Kennedy's collection.'[393] However, LnC is only contained in Kennedy's second collection but not his first.

7.5 Conclusion

Within the corpus of pre-19th-century manuscripts, thirty-seven of the total fifty-three manuscripts preserve versions of LnC. The poem can occur in the context of the prose narrative as well as standing 'independently'. The majority of the manuscripts preserve what we may refer to as a 'mainstream' version of the poem. We have seen that where LnC differs with regard to the number of stanzas, versions with the same number of stanzas generally agree in the order in which these stanzas are presented in the individual manuscripts.

A comparison of the longest version of LnC from three different manuscripts showed that while there are minor orthographic and lexicographical variations, the versions correspond more than they disagree. Overall, it seems that the greatest variations and discrepancies from the 'mainstream' version can be found within the 'independent' versions of LnC, and more specifically, in those manuscripts of a Scottish provenance.

On closer inspection, the two versions of LnC which display the greatest variations (or irregularities) are those contained in NLS 72.1.37 (BDL) and NLS 72.3.10 (Kennedy). For the latter, we found that an explanation lies with the fact that Kennedy used 'traditional' material, as well as adding his own stanzas to the poem. BDL, on the other hand, preserves mostly genuine material and only has two stanzas unattested elsewhere. The order of the stanzas

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[391] R.Th. Christiansen, *The Vikings and the Viking Wars in Irish and Gaelic tradition* (Oslo, 1931), p. 53.

[392] A. Gunderloch, 'Ballads and Narrative Song: §3. Scottish Gaelic' in J.T. Koch (ed.), *Celtic Culture: A Historical Encyclopedia* (5 volumes) (Santa Barbara and Oxford, 2006), p. 161.

[393] Meek, '*Duanaire Finn* and Gaelic Scotland', p. 35. For further information on the Scottish collections cf. the items listed in footnote 376.

differs somewhat from the 'mainstream' versions, and we find that a number of stanzas have been omitted. Conversely, the BDL version of LnC preserves the only instance of a formal *dúnadh* to the poem.

Although we have identified a number of features which seem to be confined to the Scottish versions / manuscripts,[394] with the exception of BDL and Kennedy, the Scottish and Irish versions of LnC are very closely related and generally give the same stanzas, which in most cases are presented in the same sequence.

In conclusion, on the basis of the analysis and observations made in this chapter it seems that a study of LnC alone would not suffice to establish the overall transmission of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. While a number of versions of *Laoidh na gCeann* display interesting irregularities, the majority of the manuscripts are very uniform and thus do not offer great scope for an understanding of the overall transmission of the tale. Having said that, it is important to note that the present chapter is only a preliminary investigation into the transmission of *Laoidh na gCeann*; further study – especially the inclusion of the 19th-century versions as well as oral versions collected for instance in *Leabhar na Feinne* – and closer textual readings and comparisons might shed more light on the poem's transmission.

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[394] These features being the lexical variations within the final line of the 'Earc-stanza', and the variation in the description of Eimhear as *óg* and *úr* (cf. section 7.3).

Conclusion

The aim of this thesis has been to shed light upon the textual transmission and manuscript tradition of the Early Modern Irish tale *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. The focus has been upon those manuscripts written before the 19th century; had the large number of 19th-century manuscripts been included in this analysis we could not have carried out as detailed an examination as was possible due to their omission. Consequently, our understanding and conclusions as to the tale's transmission would have remained rather superficial.

As the assessment of the previous work carried out on *Oidheadh Con Culainn* in Chapter 1 demonstrated, there are a number of common misconceptions about the tale. This is especially true with regard to the extant number of manuscripts preserving the tale. Our study has allowed us to go beyond the generalisation of the number of manuscripts being 'numerous', and achieve considerable precision, at least for the manuscripts dating from before the 19th century. The enumeration of the actual manuscripts in Table 2-1 ('Overall MSS of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* (and *Laoidh na gCeann*)'), however, shows that the number of manuscripts preserving the tale and the poem can be estimated as being over ninety.[395]

A key feature of this study has been the demonstration that we can identify robust manuscript groups which yield clues to the transmission of the tale. Using as a basis the information from the draft catalogue of the pre-19th-century manuscripts as found in section 2.2, we were able to establish six distinct groups into which the pre-19th-century manuscripts can be classified. The classification was initially based purely on the evidence of the poetry, yet the groups' existence was corroborated by examining a variety of features pertaining to the manuscript texts. Comparisons of passages of prose and verse from the text both on an intra- and inter-group level showed quite conclusively that the classification into groups on the basis of the poetry is corroborated by the prose narrative. The approach to the groups has, to a certain extent, been quite scientific in its gathering and evaluation of information and data, and we have thus been able to prove their existence quite conclusively.

As for the version of the tale which might most closely represent an exemplar of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*, we concluded in section 6.4 that those manuscripts preserving the tale with the greatest number of poems, i.e. those manuscripts classified into Group IV, seem to be the most likely representative. More specifically, we suggested that sub-groups IV/a-1 and IV/b-1

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[395] I have been able to identify a total of one hundred manuscripts, although a thorough study of the 19th-century manuscripts may of course bring up further manuscripts and increase this number. [Cf. post-script to footnote 6.]

preserve those versions closest to the exemplar or archetype of *Oidheadh Con Culainn*. This suggestion is to an extent based on the findings from an examination of the 'rhetorics' in section 6.3.5. Within sub-groups IV/a-1 and IV/b-1, the 'rhetorics' seem to be preserved in an older form and are most integrated into the narrative, and thus possibly most genuinely correspond to the exemplar. In turn, this would suggest that the exemplar would have preserved a great number of poems, which over time were omitted in those manuscripts which we can now classify into Groups I-III and V.

We saw that it is possible to observe similarities and influences of some groups in others. For instance, the comparisons of prose passages in Chapter 6 showed that Group IV/b-2 displays some features of IV/a-1; if we take those groups as preserving the most 'original' versions of the tale, or at least one of them being the closest reflection of the exemplar, we can begin to detect how the transition started and the other versions of the tale evolved. From a different point of view, we examined how the geographical distribution of manuscripts and their scribes corroborate the manuscript groups. Here we found that the manuscripts showed a clear bias towards Munster with regard to provenance. Between the scribes, we were able to establish a number of links on both inter- and intra-group levels. What became obvious, however, was that the scribes, regardless of their place of writing, must have had access to different versions of the tale that were in circulation at the time of copying. The issues of personal scribal choice, and scribal access to different versions of the tale, could be well illustrated by the ending of the tale in Group II, where some manuscripts showed a revised ending clearly deriving from the text as preserved in the manuscripts of Group III (cf. sections 3.4.2, 3.5). Although the evidence from the manuscript groups allowed us to state that the transmission of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* was largely very faithful, it was nevertheless not a static matter. As Wilson McLeod has noted of the scribes working in late medieval and Early Modern Ireland and Scotland, they were 'active in composing, recopying, and reworking a wide range of prose tales.'[396]

A number of other avenues of research emerge from the present study. A key desideratum for future study is without doubt an examination of the 19th-century manuscripts, which would complement the work presented on the pre-19th-century material in this thesis. The wealth of material from the pre-19th-century manuscripts, and the variations to be observed within the versions of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* here, suggest that not a lot of new material might be expected within the corpus of 19th-century manuscripts that has so far not been scrutinised in

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[396] W. McLeod, *Divided Gaels Divided Gaels: Gaelic Cultural Identities in Scotland and Ireland, c.1200-c.1650* (Oxford, 2004), p. 99.

detail. A preliminary examination of the Melbourne 'O'Donnell MS II' (dating to 1862) showed that the particular version of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* preserved in it would without doubt be classified into Group I. [397] We cannot, of course, dismiss the emergence of further versions of the tale (or potential 'hybrid versions' comprising elements of the tale from different groups), and thus further manuscript group(s), from within the 19th-century manuscripts as a possibility on the basis of examining only one of them. From the late 18th-through to the 19th century new dimensions may also come into play with respect to *Laoidh na gCeann* because of independent collections of versions of the poem from the oral tradition.[398] The 19th-century manuscripts are also important for establishing whether we can identify the 'mystery poems' (i.e. those poems we know to be present because of introductions in manuscripts, but which are nowhere preserved; cf. discussion in section 3.4.4) by cross-referencing and examination of the 19th-century manuscripts. An assessment of the 19th-century manuscripts, then, is crucial before making any definitive or decisive comments as to the tale's transmission, or suggesting an overall stemma for the manuscripts.

From the summary of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* in section 1.3, we can identify a number of motifs from which we can draw parallels to other tales. For instance, the raven pecking at Cú Chulainn's entrails which are protruding from the hero's body after he is fatally wounded reminds us of *Fingal Rónáin* and the description of the dying jester found in it. The request made in our tale by the satirist Cú Chuilleasg for Cú Chulainn's spear to be passed across also occurs in *Táin Bó Cuailgne*. A character of the name 'Ceann Biorraidhe', who in our tale takes Cú Chulainn's severed head from Teamhair to Dún Dealgan, also features in *Aided Conchubhair*, the death tale of Conchubhar mac Nessa. A reading of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* as a literary text would allow for pursuing motifs like these further in order to establish how *Oidheadh Con Culainn* sits within the wider genre of Irish tales, and whether and how any of these may have impacted upon its development.

Similarly, a study of 'Version A vs. Version B' deserves greater attention. We have pointed to a number of variations between the storylines of Version A and Version B in section 1.3.1, but this discussion is by no means exhaustive. In sections 6.3.3 and 6.3.5 we further assessed some of the *roscada* of Version A in contrast to the 'rhetorics' in Version B; once again, this assessment and comparison was very preliminary and could be developed. It would be very

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[397] 'O'Donnell MS II' is held in the Academic Centre of St Mary's College and Newman College, University of Melbourne, Australia.

[398] For example, see J.F. Campbell, *Leabhar na Feinne – Vol. I* (London, 1872), pp. 18-19, for orally collected versions of *Laoidh na gCeann*.

interesting and illuminating to have a close reading of both versions to establish exactly which changes, additions and omissions were made in our later version as compared with its Early Irish counterpart.

This thesis has once again emphasized the need for an up-to-date and critical edition of the tale. We noted variously the problems posed by Van Hamel's edition of the text, which is the only published and widely-available edition to date. A key issue with this publication is the fact that the edition is based on a version of the tale that does not preserve any poetry, thus giving a false impression of the overall extant versions. That NLS 72.1.45, on which Van Hamel's edition is based, preserves only a fraction of the text due to damage to the manuscript, is also problematic. The present thesis has paved the way towards a fresh edition by giving an overview over the different versions of *Oidheadh Con Culainn* that are preserved within the corpus of its pre-19th-century manuscripts.

The present study contributes to wider debates about the transmission of tales insofar as that the methodology applied here could easily be used as a template for other texts. The approach showed that while we have different versions within the same recension of a tale, the poetry was more useful and beneficial as a starting point for examination than the prose narrative, where only minor variations could be observed. This cannot, of course, be generalised and suggested as a standard *modus operandi* for any tale, but the results here have shown that it can potentially be good basis for examination, and for finding an initial way into researching a tale of such length and complexity.

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