



## The Irish manuscripts in Box STO 1413 in the Huntington Library

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# NIOCLÁS MAC CATHMHAOIL

## The Irish manuscripts in Box STO 1413 in the Huntington Library\*

In this short essay, I will describe and discuss some of the Irish documents contained in Box STO 1413 in the Huntington Library in San Marino, California. Most of these MSS and fragments likely come from the collection of Charles O’Conor of Belanagare (1710–91), and a short description of him will provide some context for the following study.

O’Conor is largely remembered by historians as an apologist for the Catholic cause in Ireland, and in this role, he wrote over twenty pamphlets and booklets.<sup>1</sup> He was the most authoritative native scholar of Irish history in the eighteenth century and championed the use of Gaelic manuscripts as historical sources. After what is popularly considered the downfall of Gaelic Ireland in the seventeenth century, the understanding of these same sources written in Classical, Middle and Old Irish had waned. It seems, however, that schooling in the older language was available to Charles O’Conor, for he received tutelage in Irish from at least one member of the Ó Coirín family who were hereditary poets in Bréifne and Northern Connacht<sup>2</sup> and from Doiminic Ó Duibhgeannáin, whose forefathers had been hereditary historians to the nearby Mac Diarmada family.<sup>3</sup>

This grounding in the Irish literary tradition qualified O’Conor as one of the pre-eminent Gaelic scholars of the eighteenth century, and the relative financial security brought about by his landholdings enabled him to pursue his interests in the Catholic cause and in Irish history and manuscripts. His magnum opus, the *Dissertations on the Ancient History of Ireland* (1753), was compiled using Gaelic MSS sources for the most part and earned him renown as the premier contemporary authority on ancient Irish history. It was

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<sup>1</sup> Details of many of these are found in Gibbons & O’Conor (2015).

<sup>2</sup> Walsh (1947: 119-32); O’Conor (1934: 134-141); Ó Catháin (2015: 31-33); Ó Muraile (2015: 189-90).

<sup>3</sup> O’Conor (1934: 131-134).

published a second time in 1766 and he was working on a third edition at the time of his death. He contributed essays to Charles Vallancey's *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, and heavily influenced the work of other prominent historians and antiquarians of the time, including Charlotte Brooke, J.C. Walker and John Curry.

Throughout his lifetime he amassed a considerable library of Irish MSS, the most notable of which were the autograph copies of the *Annals of the Four Masters*, *The Magauran Duanaire* or poem book, the *Book of The O'Conor Don* and the *Annals of Connacht*.<sup>4</sup> After his death in 1791, most of his manuscripts made their way to the Stowe Library via his grandson the Rev. Charles, who had been appointed librarian there, and had dubiously appropriated the manuscripts for the Stowe estate.<sup>5</sup> Some other Irish MSS probably made their way to Stowe via the collection of Edward O'Reilly (1765–1830). This collection began in 1794 when O'Reilly acquired 'five large sacks' of manuscripts from a 'young man of the name of Wright'<sup>6</sup> [i.e. Mac an tSaoir] that included the library of scribe-scholar Muiris Ó Gormáin (c. 1710–1790) whom he supported in the last years of his life. Some of the Ó Gormáin-Mac an tSaoir collection made their way into the Royal Irish Academy via O'Reilly then Stowe. They likely include MSS RIA F. v. 2-5, F. vi. 3, G. vi. 1, I. v. 1 written by Mac an tSaoir, and perhaps D. iii. 2 by Aodh Ó Dálaigh.<sup>7</sup> Other Irish MSS owned by Thomas Astle (1735–1803) and the Cork banker James Roche (1770–1853) were acquired by Stowe in the nineteenth century.<sup>8</sup> The majority of the Stowe collection were eventually bought by the British government and deposited in the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin and the British library where they remain today.

The correspondence of the Charles O'Conors and some Gaelic manuscript materials, some of which must have formerly belonged with Charles O'Conor of Belanagare's manuscript collection, remained with the Stowe estate. These were bought by the Huntington Library in 1925, along with the rest of the Stowe papers.<sup>9</sup> This acquisition contained some Irish materials from the O'Conor collection, contained in Box 1305 and in Box 1413. The former box contains notebooks of Charles O'Conor filled mostly with excerpts from the different collections of annals that he had in his possession. This paper will focus on the documents held in this latter box, namely Box 1413.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> On O'Conor's MSS collection, see Ó Muraile (2010: 186-210).

<sup>5</sup> Sheehan (1952).

<sup>6</sup> Warburton, Whitelaw & Walsh (1818: 934).

<sup>7</sup> Ó Dálaigh was a prominent scribe in early eighteenth-century Dublin, and Muiris Ó Gormáin came to possess some of his MSS.

<sup>8</sup> I received this information from Prof. Richard Sharpe in private correspondence. See also Michael McCarthy (1985: 130) and Rockley (2018: 149-50).

<sup>9</sup> Jenkins (1956: 1-3).

<sup>10</sup> For some other Irish language items in the Huntington Library, see Nioclás Mac Cathmhaoil (2012: 240-244) and Dillon (1939-40: 285-304).

STO 1413 1

c. 1700

## HISTORY OF CO. LEITRIM

15pp. A copy of a history of county Leitrim, which has been edited from RIA MS C iv 1 by James Carney.<sup>11</sup> Carney was unaware of this Huntington copy when he published his edition of the text in 1950. The present copy of this history of Leitrim is perhaps in the hand of Doimínic Ó Duibhgeannáin, Charles O’Conor’s Irish tutor. The other copy of this tract in RIA MS C iv 1 is in a different hand. There are a number of differences between the two copies of the text, some of which are summarised here:

- a. The second verse of the two verses of the poem *Fuair Breffne a diol do shaoghlan* given in C iv 1 is absent from STO 1413 1 (Carney edition, ll. 27-30).
- b. The sentence beginning *fech an leabhar da ngairmther Hólicúrt* (Carney edition, ll. 96-7)<sup>12</sup> is crossed out in STO 1413 1, possibly by a later hand.
- c. Above the year 1618 (Carney edition, l. 214) an interlinear gloss has been added correcting the year to 1605, likely in the hand of Charles O’Conor.
- d. STO 1413 finishes at the equivalent of l. 256 in Carney’s edition, after which the following note occurs: ‘oir ní coir a anáirem sin maille le resún priomaideach’. On the facing page, there are three verses from a poem beginning *ardchíos Connacht go Crúachain* which are not found in C iv 1.<sup>13</sup>

STO 1413 5

1782–90

19 x 15.5cm

## CÍN LAE UÍ MHEALLÁIN

43 pp. The longest manuscript in the box **STO 1413 5** contains a copy of the text known as *Cín Lae Uí Mhealláin*, being a diary of the insurrection in Ulster from 1641 to 1647. The manuscript is well presented, and the clearly legible hand is that of Muiris Ó Gormáin. This can be established on the following palaeographical grounds, comparing the present MS with some of his autographed manuscripts:

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<sup>11</sup> Carney (1950: 238-79).

<sup>12</sup> The name *Hólicúrt*, which Carney (1950: 267) thought was ‘apparently the author of a work on some aspect of Tudor history’, more likely that it refers to *La Cour Sainte* by Nicolas Caussin (1583–1651) *The Holy Court in Five Tomes*, and translated into English in 1650.

<sup>13</sup> I have been unable to identify this poem from elsewhere.

- a. The half-closed left to right cross bar in the letter *-a* and in the graphemes representing *-ar* and *-air* resembling a left-tilted *-n*.
- b. A down-sloping subscript crossbar on the ligature for *air*.
- c. The stem of uncial *-i* descending below the baseline.
- d. The tail of the *-d* curls upwards; the outline of the bowl of *-d* thins towards the bottom right hand corner, likely suggesting the joining of two separate pen strokes.
- e. A downward sloping tail on *-b*; bowl not completed around to the stem.
- f. The ovoid open bowl in *-p*.

Neither this MS, and/or the original UCC Ir.MS.3<sup>14</sup> are mentioned in either of Muiris Ó Gormáin's catalogue of books and manuscripts,<sup>15</sup> but it seems that he most likely had possession of the manuscript himself in Dublin, as a copy of some it was also made in BL Eg. 131 by his student and friend Énrí Mac an tSaoir who supported him in the destitute final years of his life, and who received most of his MSS when he died around 1794.<sup>16</sup> Mac an tSaoir's partial copy of the text is fourteen pages long, covering that part of the original that deals with events from October 1641 to 27 July 1642, ending at the equivalent of page nine, paragraph three in Ir.MS.3. A comparison of the three extant copies of the *Cín Lae* shows that Mac an tSaoir's partial copy likely derives from Ir.MS.3 rather than from STO 1413 5. As shown in Fig. 1 below, the order of the text in the Eg. 131 fragment complies with UCD Ir.MS.3, but differs from STO 1413 5, and there are many singular readings in Eg. 131 that do not occur in STO.

UCC IR.MS.3	STO 1413 5	BL EG. 131
sgel	sgéal (2.9)	sgél (1.6)
druitior	Druidthear (2.9)	druitior (1.6)
geabhtaoi	geabhtaoi	geataoi (1.6)
mac an fir dorcha	mac an <i>fhir</i> dhorchae (3.2)	mac an <i>fhirdorcha</i> (2.2)
beitelin	Beithilin (5.3)	Beitilín <sup>9</sup> (5.2)
gepta	Gephta (5.12)	gepta (5.11)
Émonn ṛ ma <sub>a</sub> c'maoil	Émonn ruadh ma <i>cat</i> /maoil (5.18)	Émonn ṛ <i>mac</i> c'maoil (6.3)

**Fig. 1:** Some instances of variance in *Cín Lae Uí Mhealláin* in MSS UCC Ir.MS.3, STO 1413 5 and Eg. 131.

The STO 1413 5 copy starts at the same point as page two of the earliest known copy of *Cín Lae Uí Mhealláin*, namely UCC Ir.MS.3. This copy has part of the text missing on p. 1, describing the events of November 1641 which

<sup>14</sup> For a description of this MS, see Breandán Ó Conchúir (1991: 8-9).

<sup>15</sup> Ní Mhugháile (2010: 239-76).

<sup>16</sup> Mac Cathmhaoil (2013: 36). He was perhaps dead by 1790.

corresponds with a damaged portion of the text at the same point in the presumed autograph copy of the text, UCC Ir.MS.3, which suggests that the original MS had been damaged before the present copy was written. There is also close agreement here with UCC Ir.Ms.3 regarding the presentation of the text, with the same paragraphs and breaks in the writing. The pagination of the present copy is not consistent with that in Torna's edition of this text,<sup>17</sup> which may indicate that, as now, some of the leaves of UCC Ir.MS.3 were loose when Ó Gormáin made STO 1413 5.

As this MS is not mentioned in any of Muiris Ó Gormáin's catalogues of his own books and manuscripts, that last of which he made in 1782, it is possible that he obtained a copy at some time after that, when he and Mac an tSaoir made copies of this text. The 1641 rebellion, or 'confederate wars' with which the *Cín Lae* deal, were one of major points of debate in eighteenth-century Irish historiography—Charles O'Connor's friend John Curry wrote his *Historical Memoirs of the rebellion of 1641* (1765) in support of the Irish Catholic cause, with Ferdinando Warner and Thomas Leland against. Muiris Ó Gormáin assisted Leland in the leadup to the publication of his *History of Ireland* (1773), but it is not clear that Leland made use of any Irish sources for this work. Given that the *Cín Lae* is not mentioned in the vast correspondence between Curry and O'Connor on this area leading up to the publication of Leland's book,<sup>18</sup> or in Curry's rebuttal of the same<sup>19</sup> it seems unlikely that any of them knew of this text before that time.

In addition to commissioning several MSS by Ó Gormáin, Charles O'Connor bought at least one MS from him,<sup>20</sup> and the clear layout, with marked margins etc may point towards the present MS being commissioned, most likely by Charles O'Connor, or at least intended for sale. When Ó Gormáin wrote manuscripts for his own use, he tended to maximise the space offered by each page, leaving very little space between items, and very small margins, which were even written in at times. In contrast, this copy of *Cín Lae Uí Mhealláin* has wide margins averaging at eight percent of the page width, with an approximate average of ten percent at the bottom of each page. The MSS that Ó Gormáin wrote for patrons brings to mind William O'Sullivan's statement:

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 octavos and

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<sup>17</sup> Torna (1931: 1-61). See also Nic Cathmhaoil (2006: 45-54).

<sup>18</sup> For this, see Love (1962:1-25).

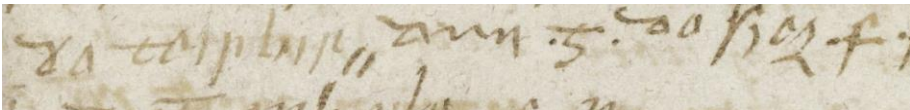
<sup>19</sup> Curry (1773). In a note in MS 1413 9 on the page marked 32, O'Connor shows some disdain for Féidhlim Ó Néill, the main character of the *Cín Lae*: '... Sir Felim. He married the duke of Gordon's Daughter. He commenced a civil war in the Kingdom, on justifiable principles, but was he [*sic*] however disgraced by want of proper conduct, and want of ability. His tragical end and fortitude in that exit are well known'.

<sup>20</sup> This being RIA Stowe I v 1, for which see Sharpe (2013: 116).

duodecimos, into impressive contemporary monuments worthy of publication.<sup>21</sup>

**STO 1413 (5)** is an example of this scribal engagement with the print medium and the influence of print presentation conventions are to be found in the paragraph indentations at pp. 39-40; 40-41, the footnotes concerning the meaning of the place name *an tsrat boile* p. 14 and the *n.b.* concerning *Charlemont* i.e. *Achadh an Dá Charad* on p. 14, and in the addition of colons and semi-colons on pp. 7, 14 etc. These changes in the layout on one hand represent the growing influence of print culture in Irish letters, and are also representative of how the scribe considered his role to be both an editor and interpreter of manuscripts as opposed to being a mere transcriber or copyist.

A remarkable instance of this scribal agency, or ‘editorial intervention’, can be found in 21.20 of the present MS.<sup>22</sup> The original reads ‘*do toirbir// dun g. do sior f.*’ (Fig. 2), with the two semi-subscript slanted dashes before ‘dun’ presumably indicating a gap that was to be filled at a later time. This gives the meaning ‘[...] offered Dungannon to Sior Feidhlim’ but for this part, STO gives *do thoirbhir lord sithseasdar dun geanuinn do sior feidhlim*, ‘Lord Chichester offered Dungannon to Sior Feidhlim’. It is not known if the scribe had access to written sources that would corroborate the agency of Chichester in these matters—the major detailed writings about the confederate wars, such as the *Aphorismical Discovery of Treasonable Faction* were not published until the nineteenth century. When Dungannon was first taken on the 22nd of October 1641, Captain John Perkins—named ‘Parcens’ in the *Cín Lae*—was resident in Dungannon and was arrested by the confederates.<sup>23</sup> By 1643, this Captain Perkins had been released and was restationed in Wales.<sup>24</sup> It is possible then that John Chichester (d. 1647), who received Dungannon from his brother Sir Arthur Chichester (1606–75) in 1630, was present when Dungannon came into confederate hands again on the 30th of May 1644.<sup>25</sup>



**Fig. 2:** Excerpt from UCC Ir.MS.3

Most of the other singular variant readings in **STO 1413 (5)** comprise of words that have been lenited and/or had length marks added to them, so ‘modernising’ the text. Indeed, there is scarcely a solitary line that does not

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<sup>21</sup> O’Sullivan (1976: 232).

<sup>22</sup> Corresponding to UCC Ir.Ms.2 p. 22, *l.* 20

<sup>23</sup> Chapple (2007: 108-9).

<sup>24</sup> 1641 depositions, accessed at <http://1641.tcd.ie/deposition.php?depID=814130r076> on July 30, 2019.

<sup>25</sup> Roebuck (1979: 23).

have a singular reading of this kind. This is not surprising, as the original text may well have been written in a kind of shorthand as an *aide de memoire* and lacks many of the usual lenitions and length marks one would usually expect in seventeenth-century orthography.

The scribe, in accordance with Classical Modern Irish practice, reads unlenited medial and final *-b*, *-d*, *-g* and *-m* as *-bh*, *-dh*, *-gh* and *-mh* respectively,<sup>26</sup> generally renders both medial plene and ‘tall’ *-e* as *-ea*, and marks verbs in the past tense with a lenition, except for the suppletive forms *tarla*, *tanic* and *tug* which he leaves unlenited. It seems the scribe may have left these forms unlenited through a conscious desire to retain or affect older Classical usage, as he wrote *hainic* in place of *tainic* his colloquial English-Irish Phrasebook.<sup>27</sup>

The linguistic traits here also concur with the palaeographical evidence in pointing towards a northern scribe such as Muiris Ó Gormáin. Singular readings of length marks show the scribe lengthening initial syllables but not applying a length mark where it might be expected on words with secondary or primary and secondary stress such as *moran*, *armail*, *comhdhail* and many others. This pattern of initial stress is indicative of wider northern usage in the present day, as is the pattern of inserted lenition on initial consonants after the preposition plus definite article.

STO 1413 6

1745–7

14.9 x 9.7cm

### BARDIC POEM

A detached bifolium. Given that the upper part of the watermark is visible on the bottom half of the pages, this must have formed four pages of what was most likely a quarto MS 14.9 x 9.7cm. There is no scribal pagination, which may indicate that this leaf was once part of a notebook or commonplace book, or perhaps that this bifolium came loose before any pagination was implemented.

A comparison of the writing on this fragment with that in RIA MSS C i 1 (c. 1728) [C], E iii 2 [E] and 23 D 16 [D] shows the writing to be that of Charles O’Conor. This fragment contains a copy of the bardic poem *Cuir srian rem chorp a coimde*, ‘Bridle my body O Lord’ attributed here to Toilegne Ruadh Ó Maolchonaire. An edition of this poem, 16 stanzas long, has been printed in *Aithdioghluim Dána* §81 based on *The Book of O’Conor Donn*, p. 59 and RIA 24 P 13. The present copy has the late amendment on q. 7b found in *The Book of O’Conor Donn* (BOCD), where the last word of the line has been changed from *tsriansoin* to *cheannruigh*. This amendment on q. 7b of

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<sup>26</sup> See Breatnach (2011: 115-6) for a discussion regarding the lenition of *b*, *d*, *g* and *m*.

<sup>27</sup> McCaughey (1967/68).



the poem is not found in other extant seventeenth-century copies of the poem, such as that found in MS RIA 24 P 13. The copy found in the present fragment also shares some corrupt unmetrical readings with BOCD, such as *toil* instead of *tal* in q. 1c, *innte* instead of *uirthi* in q. 11b, *tuar crábhaidh* instead of *creasa crábhaidh* in q. 12d.

The list of expenses on the fourth page of this fragment, dated 5 June 1747 gives it a *terminus ante quem*: Charles O’Conor had come into the possession of BOCD by 1745<sup>28</sup> and given the similarities between the copy here and that in BOCD p. 56, we may presume with reasonable confidence that it was from that manuscript that the present poem was copied.

STO 1413 8

13cm/7.5cm

### FRAGMENT OF LIFE OF SAINT MARGARET OF ANTIOCH

4pp. This is a fragment of an unpublished Modern Irish life of Saint Margaret. There are three recensions in Irish of the life of Margaret, the oldest of which dates back to the fifteenth century.<sup>29</sup> There is also a second shorter life and a third written by scribe and author Tadhg Ó Neachtain in the eighteenth century. Extracts from the first recension, not including the part found in this MS, were edited by Stern over a hundred years ago.<sup>30</sup> The fragment here is from a copy of some of the first recension and covers the end part of the life where Margaret is beheaded by Malchus at the behest of the Roman provost Olybrius. The first recension version was very popular, and there are thirty-three copies of it in Royal Irish Academy alone.

The text is badly faded and suffers from *lacunae*, smudging and drops of ink. The handwriting is poor in comparison to that of both Ó Gormáin’s and Charles O’Conor’s found in the other MSS in this box. The handwriting is so awkward that, in my opinion, the scribe must have been copying in bad conditions, certainly with no access to rulers or, as de Brún quotes of most eighteenth-century manuscripts that it was written ‘*gan teannta buird ná binse*’ that is ‘without a table or bench’.<sup>31</sup> It is unlikely that many patrons would have been satisfied with this copy of the text, or at least the portion found in this fragment. This suggests the likely possibility that the scribe borrowed a copy of the text, and then made a copy for his own use. While this purpose of personal use may mark this fragment as different in the context of STO Box 1315, it was by no means uncommon in eighteenth-century Ireland for manuscripts to be written for private use. In fact, the opposite is true.

Only a small portion of Irish MSS from the Ireland’s ‘long eighteenth century’ i.e. 1690-1850 have any connection with patronage. The vast

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<sup>28</sup> Ó Macháin (2010: 2).

<sup>29</sup> The earliest copies of which are found in MSS Laud Misc. 610 and in Egerton 1781.

<sup>30</sup> Stern (1897).

<sup>31</sup> de Brún (1972: 15-20).

majority of MSS from this period were *boilg an tsoláir*, or compilations, which the typical scribe, often a tenant farmer or a hedge-school master, filled with matter that he himself found edifying or entertaining. With this we come to the *causa scribendi* of the manuscript from which the present fragment came, for it may be that the scribe anticipated spiritual edification or indeed absolution from his sins in return for this writing. Indeed, in the version of the *Life of Margaret* in Jacobus de Varagine's *Golden Legend* Margaret says just before she is martyred:

And I beseech thee, good Lord, that of thy abundant grace, thou wilt grant unto all them that write my passion, read it or hear, and to them that remember me, that they may deserve to have plain remission and forgiveness of all their sins.

Although the life of Margaret was probably the most commonly copied saints' life in the post-Classical period, it is not typical of the type of manuscripts that Charles O'Connor collected. He had little interest in hagiography. Indeed, this seems to be one of the few pieces of hagiography in his entire collection. The dialect evidence points towards Munster, e.g. (a) *inn* for *-in* indicating a realisation of *-in* as [n̪] instead of the more common [n̪], and (b) final *-dh* Classically rendered as voiced dental fricative [ð] rendered orthographically as *-g*, indicating the pronunciation [g̪].<sup>32</sup> Given this Munster provenance, and O'Connor's antipathy towards hagiography—or indeed towards popular literature in general—it may be that this fragment entered the Stowe collection originally via Cork banker James Roche.

STO 1413 9

c. 1761 – c. 1787

### FRAGMENTS

In the open-sided manila folder, labelled 'miscellaneous', in which there are seven items, labelled here A-G:

- A A detached gathering, 21 pages, containing notes on the O'Neill and O'Donnell families, mostly gleaned from the Irish annals.
- B Loose quarto leaf with notes on 'Taylor's Demosthenes'<sup>33</sup>
- C See separate description below
- D A loose quarto leaf with notes on Richard François Phillippe Brunck's 1786 edition of *Sophocles*
- E A detached octavo leaf with a list of books pertaining to early English history
- F A detached octavo leaf on English ecclesiastical history, likely derived from John Gutch's *Collectanea Curiosa* (1781)

<sup>32</sup> Ua Súilleabháin (1994: 485, §2.17; 488, §2.27); Williams (1944: 450, §2.7).

<sup>33</sup> John Taylor's (1704–66) edition of Athenian orator Demosthenes (384–322 B.C.), first published in 1741 under the title *Demosthenes Contra Leptinem* (1741).

**G** Excerpts and translations from annals: pages 1-11 contain translations into English of select entries of *Annals of Loch Cé* from A.D. 1168 to 1200, page 12 contains excerpts, some translated, from the *Annals of the Four Masters*, from A.D. 1368–1395. Pp. 13-18, excerpts from the *Annals of Ulster*, and the *Annals of Loch Cé* A.D. 1165–1587. Pp. 19-21, an account of the wars in Ireland in 1558. Contains the following marginalia: (i, p. 9) ‘As leabhar Chluana Mheic Nóis. Mai. 6. 1768; (ii, p. 12) Aniu. Apl. 30. 1768.’ ‘A gcoláiste Atha Cliáth Duibhlinne dhamh os cionn leabhair Dhúin na nGall.’

STO 1413 9 C

before 1790?  
14.5 x 11.6 cm

MORAL MAXIMS

A singleton. The equivalent of two lines at the top of this leaf and a large portion of the inner side on the lower half have been torn away, which renders the text difficult to establish, but it seems to be derived, either directly or indirectly, from the moral maxims on pp. 135-41 in RIA MS 23 N 10, corresponding to §§17-20, 75-95, 100-105 of Marstrander’s edition of that text.<sup>34</sup> The maxims presented here are mainly paraphrases or abridgements of those found in 23 N 10 rather than direct copies:

RIA MS 23 N 10	STO 1413 9 C
§17 Na dena tnuth re duine diabhlaidhi ar son a ueth saidhbhir oir ni maith bhias a deire go dimhim	N[á dean tnúth] re duine diabhlaidhe
§75 Ditin in fhiorinne 7 an choir	Coimhéid an fhírinne 7 an chóir
§77 Seachain lucht na mbreg 7 an bladhmúinn 7 ditail iad	Seachain lucht na mbreag 7 na mbladhmánn
§79 Na len dot toil fein acht bidh sotheguiscc amailed re comairled duine oile	Na lean do thoil fein go hiomlán, acht bí riagh[alta] maille le comhairleachaibh maithe do bheith ort
§79 Na muin duine a naimsir feirge oir na hann is usa a smachtugud	Na múin duine a naims[ir feirge]

**Fig. 3:** Versions of maxims in STO 1413 C compared to RIA MS 23 N 10

<sup>34</sup> Marstrander (1911: 126-143).

The handwriting shares many similarities to that of Muiris Ó Gormáin,<sup>35</sup> and it is not inconceivable that items of his copied material found their way into Charles O’Conor’s documents, and from then into the Stowe collection. On one hand, it is difficult to make a case that Ó Gormáin ever had access to RIA MS 23 N 10, as this manuscript seems to have been in South Connaught–Northwest Munster region until it made its way to William Betham via the Ó Longáins, and from Betham onwards to the Royal Irish Academy.<sup>36</sup> Edward O’Reilly—through whom some of the Stowe MSS collection previously passed—may well have had access to RIA MS 23 N 10 when he worked as an assistant to William Betham, but the writing in this fragment is not his.

Ó Gormáin however, was interested in wisdom texts—the version of *An Teagasc Ríogh*, or compilation of advice quatrains beginning with the line, ‘Luigh agus éirigh ar do láimh dheis’ may have originated with him,<sup>37</sup> and it most likely through Ó Gormáin’s influence that this text appeared in Charles Henry Wilson’s (c.1756–1808) *Selected Irish Poems translated in English*.<sup>38</sup> It may yet be proved that Ó Gormáin was responsible for an Irish translation of the *Disticha Catonis*, the original of which was popular as a Latin primer.<sup>39</sup> As with the copy of *Cín Lae Uí Mhealláin* (STO 1413 5) it is feasible that this MS fragment originated with Muiris Ó Gormáin, after whose death it passed to Anraí Mac an tSaoir (*fl.* 1790), then to Edward O’Reilly (1765–1830), possibly from O’Reilly to Stowe, and finally to the Huntington Library. Alternatively, it may have once been part of Charles O’Conor of Belanagare’s collection.

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<sup>35</sup> See p. 247 above.

<sup>36</sup> Sharpe (2018: 316–324).

<sup>37</sup> Despite this poem being in the form of advice from a king to his son, it does not seem to be directly related to *Tecosca Cormaic*. The earliest copies of this particular *Teagasc Ríogh* seem to be in Ó Gormáin’s hand e.g. RIA MS 23 A 45 p. 59; BL Eg. 127, Eg. 128; NKS 173b.

<sup>38</sup> For this, see Peadar Ó Muircheartaigh (2020) (forthcoming).

<sup>39</sup> See NLI MS G 144; TCD MS 1389. These are not copies of the earlier version of *Cato* as found in RIA MS 23 L 34 (Maurice Newby, 1711). As early as 1745 Ó Gormáin lamented that he had not taken Cato’s advice, as he stated in this quatrain:

Is mór an tubaisde nár fhiosraigh mé Cháto ríamh  
 nó do Ovid file b[h]í go hullamh chun mnáibh a ríar  
 air nós an leinibh nach ibheann, is nach áill gan bíadh  
 ní béo sibh gan fir, is ní háill libh iad (RIA MS 23 A 45, p. 62, ll. 1–4).

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