

# Saltair na Rann

In 1883 Whitley Stokes published an edition without translation of the Middle Irish biblical poem *Saltair na Rann* from MS Rawlinson B 502<sup>1</sup> in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (Anecdota Oxoniensia. Mediæval and Modern Series Vol. I, Part III). During the 1970s Professor David Greene conducted a seminar on this text at the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies. As a result, he published with Fergus Kelly an edition and translation of *The Irish Adam and Eve story from Saltair na Rann* (lines 833–2240) in 1976. This was accompanied by a volume of commentary by Brian O. Murdoch, published in the same year. Both volumes are currently in print, and for sale at €15 each (€25 for the pair).

Professor Greene intended to produce an edition and translation of the entire *Saltair*, accompanied by linguistic analysis and commentary on the subject-matter, but his death in 1981 put a halt to this project. In his weekly seminar he had covered about half the text, but he had established a provisional text and translation of the entire work, which was typed out by the Librarian Clerk, the late Peggy Walsh. He had inserted various hand-written notes and corrections on her typescript.

Since his death many scholars have come to the Institute to consult Greene's text and translation. As there is no immediate prospect of a new edition in book form of the entire *Saltair* it seemed to be of benefit to reproduce Greene's typescript on the website exactly as he left it. The published text and translation of lines 833–2240 have also been reproduced for the sake of completeness. The School would be most grateful for any suggestions relating to the provisional text and translation, which might be used (with due acknowledgement) in a future edition.

This work has been carried out by Sandra Carrick with the assistance of the School of Celtic Studies computer consultants Gavin McCullagh and Andrew McCarthy. The images were scanned on an Ubuntu Linux workstation, and post-processed using the ImageMagick suite before being assembled into PDFs using gscan2pdf.

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<sup>1</sup>For a discussion of this manuscript, see Brian Ó Cuív, *Catalogue of Irish language manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and Oxford College Libraries* (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies 2001) 163–200.

- 3437 Isin dara bládain, lúad ngrinn,  
 ór gab in gorta gārthind,  
 luíd clann Illeóib, gnám oert,  
 do lúais bíd i tír n-Égept.
- 3441 Im-rulatar, garbaib gelt,  
 iar tírib amraib Égept,  
 i llurg int slúais, trúag a tlí,  
 cosin túaith i mbaí int ardrí.
- 3445 Ros lín mertain, ros gab cess,  
 dia fechtaib ó tír díles,  
 cen érgna n-eólais, cen treóir,  
 cen bérta i tírib aneóil.
- 3449 Roptar snímaig iar sétaib,  
 dia ngnímaib, dia mbaethbétaib,  
 fiad na slúagaib ós ceoh maig,  
 trúagaig  
 túsaga, tursig, déro[h]oíntig.

3439. ba gnám, R.

3441. Imrulat, R.

3452. trúagaib, R.

(3437-40) In the second year, a pleasant mention, after the sharp cruel famine had taken hold, the children of Jacob went, a proper deed, to the land of Egypt to buy food.

(3441--4) They travelled, by rough pastures, over the famous lands of Egypt in the track of the host, pitiful their protection, to the land in which the high king was.

(3445--8) Weariness filled them, trouble seized them, from their journies from their proper land, without knowing the way, without guidance, without the language in unknown lands.

(3449-52) They were sorrowful, as they travelled, for their deeds, for their foolish crimes, in the presence of the hosts everywhere - pitiful, sad, complaining.

3453 Meirtnig, ros tocht a menma,  
ros n-art fo chacht comfeda;  
cen nech dia breith leo ba ceist  
cosin n-airrig a n-atheisc.

3457 Lotair tria medon int sluaig,  
broccaig, 'n-a connia o[h]onthruaig,  
co ngabast foss, febia fir,  
hi frecnarcus ind ardrig.

3461 Feidís techtairi tind mada,  
ar a cenn co grimn, co luath,  
amal at-geoin in gnim cert:  
airri airtmitnech Aegept.

3465 Tinsit a nduire fo traig,  
fillait gluine fo chombaig,  
ro sléchtsat dia duis, dia doss,  
fiad a gnúis, 'na frecnarcus.

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3464. airtmitnech, R.

3465. nduire, R.

3467. ro slecht, R.

(3453--6) Weary, their spirits oppressed them, they struck<sup>1</sup>  
them in the captivity of mutual effort; they were worried  
that nobody was bringing their message to the viceroy.<sup>2</sup>

(3457-60) They went through the middle of the host,  
oppressed, in a pitiful band, until they came to a stop,  
a goodly truth, in the presence of the high king.

(3461--4) He sent a keen messenger correctly and swiftly  
to meet them, since he knew the proper deed - the  
respected viceroy Joseph.

(3465--8) They crushed<sup>3</sup> their inflexibility<sup>4</sup> under their  
feet, they bent their knees in rivalry, they bowed down  
to his virtue, to his protection, before his face,  
in his presence.

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1. Read ros n-ort.

2. Perhaps read cest ... .. aithesc.

3. Perhaps read Teinnsit....

4. Cf. 2090, 7910, in both of which dúire  
rhymes with glúine.

- 3469      Re íarfacht dóib, derb re-clos,  
             Iosēph oo nglōir oen amlos:  
             'Ráidid iar fír dúin for ngair,  
             oen dúib nó oen táncabair ?
- 3473      Cid cond-naigid 'nar mbruig bras,  
             oen airig, oen fíreōlas,  
             oen bērla fri ríad rélta,  
             amal áes ndían taiscélta,
- 3477      Nō mar aes mbraith for aig thaig,  
             bís o chathraig do chathraig,  
             oen scribenn lib, línaiḃ drech,  
             oen scēla ríḡ nō ruirech.
- 3481      Ním thá for samail sund de  
             acht mar aes braith is sleithe,  
             nō slēbbaire loittit smacht,  
             nō bréaire is bréairecht.

3471.    raid afír dúir forngair, R.
3473.    bruig, R.
3481.    sund se, R.
3482.    íalidte, R.

(3469-72) Glorious Joseph without harm asked them - it has been truly heard: 'Tell your word to us truly; who are you and where have you come from ?

(3473--6) What do you seek in our great country, without a chieftain, without true directions, without a language as a means of explanation, like eager scouts,

(3477-80) Or like spies going backward and forward from city to city, without documents, with various disguises,<sup>1</sup> without news of a king or ruler ?

(3481--4) I have nothing to liken you to here on account of that<sup>2</sup> but spies and thieves,<sup>3</sup> or ruffians,<sup>4</sup> who break the law, or liars telling lies.'

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1. Conjectural.

2. se seems to give no sense here.

3. Assuming a development of sleith, cf. sleitheóracht, DIL.

4. Conjectural: Stokes compares Sc. G. slaopair 'slovens'.

3485      (Don-rimart gorta eo ngráin  
a-ttúaid a oríchaib Cannáin,  
friad n-adlaio úaig, huar Gríoh cain,  
feib tecaít slúnaig fer ndomuin.

3489      Fon-rathaig tír Caim ó chéin,  
ar n-athair ba do Chaldéib;  
ro alt oen gríagáib, oen gráin,  
ba mac Ísáic meic Abráim.

3493      Bráthir sinn huile mar tám,  
lín ar cuire 's ar comáil,  
io gaire ar n-athar nach than  
's maic aile, ar mbráthair ósair.'

3497      'Maso fír, fri hēraim n-án,  
for mbith íarmuí do Abrám,  
tucaid húaib etere nglē  
fri tíchtain do-ridise.

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3497.    Maso fír, R.

3500.    tíchtáin, R.



(3485--8) <sup>1</sup> Fearful famine compelled us to come from the north, from the lands of Canaan, from our fair land, to supply all our needs, as the hosts of the men of the world come.

(3489-92) The land of Ham <sup>1</sup> long sustained us, our father <sup>2</sup> was of the Chaldees; he was brought up without harsh ... <sup>3</sup> without terror, he was a son of Isaac, the son of Abraham.

(3493--6) We are all brothers here, all our company and assembly, cherishing our father continually, and another son, our youngest <sup>4</sup> brother.'

(3497-3500) 'If that is true, with noble meaning, that you are <sup>quat-</sup> <sup>5</sup> grandsons of Abraham, give a clear surety that you will return.'

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1. All the prose versions have Cannain, but cf. 2793-4.

2. Treating fothaigid as \*fo-athaig.

3. -gaibt is obscure.

5. This is the only case noted by Dillon, Nom. Pred., p. 36, in which buith is followed by a substantival predicate, but the meaning seems clear.

4. The use of óssar as an adjective is unusual.

- 3501      Tan tísaid ar óul nach tan  
lib dia tí in bráthair ósair,  
for bia for n-eitteire féin  
is do-géntar for n-ógréir.'
- 3505      Ría ndula dóib for a fecht  
dia tír cona cennaigeacht,  
i lláim ind airríg fria ndáil  
do-rateatar Issacháir.
- 3509      Ro ráid Ioséph, soél cen chess:  
'Do-gréss do-gén for mbithless;  
in each luair for mbia far ndáil  
uáim dúib ar Día n'baráin.'
- 3513      Iar sin do-ohúatar dia tír  
feib fos-rúacar cen dímbíg;  
ro-fuosat fri tascaid tróg  
ascaid ar Día do IMoób.

---

3505.      dúla, R.

3512.      ár Día, R.

(3501--4) Whenever you come back, if the youngest brother comes with you, you shall have your own surety, and you will get whatever you want.'

(3505--8) Before they departed on their journey home with their merchandise they gave Issachar into the hands of the viceroy according to their bargain.

(3509-12) Joseph said, news without trouble: 'I will always attend to your lasting good, you will always have your needs attended to by me for the sake of the God of Abraham.'

(3513--6) After that they went to their country as he had ordered them without fault; they brought with them, to lay up for the miserable, a gift to Jacob for the sake of God.

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1. Simon, Gen. xlii 25.

2. fos-rúacar is apparently metrically conditioned; elsewhere fō-cart, 6777.

3517      Íarum rúnatar dia taig  
              soera, alāna, somennaig;  
              dos-fárraid maith fo glóir glain  
              flaith lóir 'sindara blíadain.

# XXXII

3521      Ro attlaig Ithóob án  
              dia Choimhid, ba gnám omlán,  
              feib fúair a chlann, glanfír cert,  
              fáilti la airríg n-Égept,

3525      Feib ros tríall fo chaingnib ciúin  
              i n-íathaib aidbhlíb aníuil,  
              ros n-alt oen bét ós each maig,  
              dos-rat for sét sainemall,

3529      Feib dos-fuc for cúl, ní cress,  
              ós each mór oona mórless;  
              a tíchtain buidig dia tig  
              is dia Ruirig ro-attlaig

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3518.      somennaig, R.

3526.      aidbli, R.

(3517-20) They then came home, free, well, in good courage;  
the generous prince provided them with goods in pure glory.

### XXXII

(3521--4) Noble Jacob thanked his Lord, it was a perfect  
deed, for the way in which his children, a certain pure truth,  
had been welcomed by the viceroy of Egypt.

(3525--8) For the way in which He had quietly directed  
them under bargains into huge unknown lands, (and)  
cherished them without fault everywhere, (and) placed them  
on a special path,

(3529-32) For the way in which He brought them back, it is  
not narrow, over every boundary with their great profit;  
that they returned home thankful, it is to his *Ruler*  
that he gave thanks.

- 3533 Do-rigset comairli cóir  
maored anra Ihoóib:  
a ndul iar fithisi fecht  
do-ridisi i tír n-Égypt.
- 3537 Do-chúatar iar sétaib, aláin,  
cen bétaib, oethirn o[h]omláin;  
co tréin tlúchtar dar cach tír  
co ruac[h]tar cosin n-ardríg.
- 3541 Fuaratar co lór cen hír  
fáilti mór loond airríg;  
feib ba mellach, la oéill cóir,  
ros mbaí cennach fo-chétóir.
- 3545 Gabais Ioséph esca n-úag,  
atn-aig i lláim fir dia slúag:  
'Tabair tria haccail dia mbrath  
i saocaib na Cannánach ! '

XXXIII

(3533--6) The famous sons of Jacob made a proper plan, that they should go on a journey <sup>return<sup>1</sup></sup> ~~after a short time~~ into the land of Egypt again.

(3537-40) They went safely along the roads, without crimes, as a full band, strongly and . . . <sup>2</sup> over every land until they reached the high king. <sup>3</sup>

(3541--4) They got a great welcome from the viceroy, fully and without anger; they were able to trade immediately as they wished, with good sense.

(3545--8) Joseph took an undamaged cup, he puts it into the hand of one of his people: 'Put (it) into the sacks of the Canaanites to betray them by incrimination. <sup>4</sup>

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1. = iar fecht fithise  
~~1. = Seiking fithise = nithis(e), DIL.~~

2. This word is unexplained.

3. Or airrig 'viceroy', cf. 3542.

4. 'dexterity, prudence', Merständer RC xxxvi 378.

3549      Ní díarraig lotar dia tír  
níddar dímdaig dond airríg;  
feib ro eilacht dšib ceoh tríall  
baí a mbernaocht for Iosíaph.

3553      Tan bítar 'na líni arin maig,  
amal bíd míli ón chathraig,  
ro dlong, ní mebul dia dšil,  
dromg dremun dia n-irgabšil.

3557      Níbtar foichligthi fri tóir,  
ro crochligthi fo chštóir,  
tuctha eo đura don maig  
fora cšlla don chathraig.

3561      Tuctha eo neoch ros techtai  
'na cšmíidib cumrechtai;  
ba trúg a fštal oen bríg  
eo mbítar fšed in n-airríg.



(3549-52) Not discontentedly did they go to their country, they were not ungrateful to the viceroy; according as he had bestowed on them every time they gave their blessing to Joseph.

(3553-6) When they were in a line outside, as it were a mile from the city, he sent (?) - it was no shame for him - a fierce band to seize them.

(3557-60) They were not apprehensive<sup>(2)</sup> of pursuit, they were ... immediately; they were brought back severely (?)<sup>(4)</sup> from the plain to the city.

(3561-4) They were brought with him who had it [= the cup] as fettered captives to the presence of the viceroy, pitiful was their helpless fate.

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1. The prose versions have ro chuir, etc., but it seems hard to extract this meaning from dlongaid.
  2. Apparently a derivative of 1 fochell, DIL.
  3. The prose versions have crochligit, croclaigid, crothlaigid. Perhaps a derivative of croithid 'plunders', cf. crothaid, DIL ?
  4. dúra for dúr is hard to explain.

- 3565      Fris-rogart int airrí dóib,  
             ro ráidí friú fo chétóir:  
             'Trúag dodáil far cuire nglé:  
             far ngabáil uili is meirle.
- 3569      Úair lib[ai], ní láthar náil,  
             in meirli oen imressain,  
             in far ein clothach as-biur  
             for crochad cosin n-oenfiur.'
- 3573      'A airrí Égept oen chess,  
             rosat gléichert fri ar lánles !  
             Ní clothach dot buaid, dot blaid,  
             trúaig do chrochad cen chinaid.
- 3577      Ní heöl dúm oia oel fo gréin  
             dūr dron do Beniamóin  
             fon-rálaig mairb mesetha nír  
             do dálaib ind esera-sin.'
- 3581      Fort-gellam ceoh náuis, dín cert,  
             it' gnúis, a-airrí Égept,  
             ar n-idain, fiad testaib Dé,  
             do chinaid ind esera-se.

(3565--8) The viceroy spoke to them, he said to them immediately: 'The <sup>evil</sup> plight of your bright bands is pitiful - that you have all been taken in theft.

(3569-72) Since you have undoubtedly committed the theft - it is not a pleasing situation - I say with fame that you shall be hanged to the last man for your crime.'

(3573--6) 'O viceroy of Egypt without harm, be <sup>U</sup> clear and just in helping us ! It is not famous for your virtue and renown to hang innocent wretches.

(3577-80) We do not know what harsh strong crime Benjamin has committed at all, that we are struck dead, dismayed, distracted on account of that cup.

(3581--4) We call to witness every virtue, a proper protection, in your presence, o viceroy of Egypt; we are innocent before the witnesses of God of the crime of this cup.

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1. Strachan took rosat to be 2 sg. pret., of narbsat 1318. But subj. 2 sg. would make better sense here, and it seems to be justified by nírsat, Acall. 597, 598, which is in alternation with nírbat in a long string of commands. Strachan had noted that nírsa occurs as 2 sg. pres. indic. in nírsa eólach itir, Táin 1475.

- 3585 'Tucaid do chind for n-anna  
 úaib aithre n-éanna,  
 far n-ósarbráthair fo-déin  
 dianid comainn Beniaméin.
- 3589 Meirgib iar for sētib, snéid,  
 is léicid Beniaméin,  
 úair is leis, līth cesta nglē,  
 frīth esora na Ēgipte.'
- 3593 'Ōssar na claimne, gnīm nglē,  
 fīr foxal fainne fīre,  
 is sé is dílu diar slōg  
 liar n-athair, la Moōb.
- 3597 Guidait ní, menip grāin lat,  
 dīt, a airrí na hĒgept:  
 oia ron daīra-ne dot rēir,  
 oo ron saera Beniaméin.

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3588. beniamín, R.

3591. līth, R.

3598. dīl, R.

(3585--8) 'Give us pledge for your lives a famous surety,  
your own youngest brother, whose name is Benjamin.

(3589-92) Go <sup>1</sup> swiftly on your journey and leave  
Benjamin, for it is with him that the Egyptian cup  
was found, a clear matter for concern.'

(3593--6) 'The youngest of the children, a bright deed,  
is a true removal <sup>2</sup> of true weakness; he is the dearest  
of us to our father Jacob.

(3597--3600) 'We pray you, if it does not offend you,  
o viceroy of Egypt, that, although you condemn us,  
as you wish, you spare Benjamin.

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1. For the 2 pl. imper. heirgib, see Carney,  
Ériu xviii 34 and Hamp, xxvi 168.

2. Knott, DIL F 201. 66-9, observes that a rhyme  
between foxal and ōssar 'would seem to be  
intended, but it can be for the eye only'. But perhaps  
read thōxal, cf. 5318, where it rhymes with  
ōssar.

- 3601        Mad marb duini fo nim glass  
             do chumaid, is gnīm ammass,  
             bid marb Iġeōb fo-dēin  
             dia chaīniud Beniemēin.'
- 3605        'A macrad Iġeōib áin,  
             fri gartrad do chlainn Abraīm,  
             cen chlothchobair, cen nach mblaid,  
             do-rochrabair for cinaid.'
- 3609        Ro rēlsat a scēl cen brīg,  
             ro slēchtsat fiad in n-airrīg:  
             'Fort-gellam Dīa dāna de:  
             dar slāna ōn chinaid-se.'
- 3613        'Tabraid for cobais cen tláis,  
             rād forais ria ndig tiugbáis,  
             faillsigid for neeh, nīth mbras,  
             do-rinnsid gnīm n-imannas.'

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3616. . . . dūs in [n]dernsaid nach gnīm n-insa triasa  
tised sūt díb, SSR.

(3601--4) If anybody under the blue sky should die of sorrow -  
it is a terrible deed - Jacob himself will die from  
lamenting Benjamin.'

(3605--8) 'O sons of noble Jacob, of the children of Abraham  
devoted to generosity, you have fallen ~~on account of~~ <sup>into</sup>  
sin, without help of fame, without renown.'

(3609-12) They revealed their story weakly, they bowed down  
before the viceroy: 'We call strong God to witness  
concerning it, we are innocent of this crime.'

(3613--6) 'Make your confession without weakness,  
a solemn statement before the draught of final death,  
reveal whether <sup>1</sup> you have done a cruel deed to anybody,  
a great crime.'

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1. This translation would demand i for, which  
~~makes the line hypermetrical.~~

2. Reading in ndernsaid for do-rinnsid, in  
accordance with the prose version.

- 3617 'Ciambad lonnbrass dígal Dé  
fornn, ba comdas fri ar cloenré;  
cōir cia ron crīnad co lár  
i cinaid ar targabāl.
- 3621 Ron báidsemmar, ba gnīm trōg,  
ro cráidsemmar Iácōb,  
ro mertsam coem diar ngnáthaib,  
ro recsam ar n-oenbrāthair.
- 3625 At mōra ar cinaid don brath,  
nidar n-idain diar soerad;  
tríallamm ar n-aided, scēl ngrinn,  
tíagamm fo chlaideb ngerthind !'
- 3629 'Nírbo chōir dam for mbádud,  
fota a-taíd i n-ingábud;  
targa fortacht Dē for tóir,  
a chiniud amra Iácōib !



(3617-20) 'If the vengeance of God were wrathful and heavy on us, it would be fitting to our evil career; it is right that we should be stripped bare<sup>1</sup> in return for our transgressions.

(3621--4) We have ruined ourselves, it was a miserable deed, we have brought sorrow to Jacob, we betrayed one of our companions, we sold one of our brothers.<sup>2</sup>

(3625--8) Our crimes are great from the betrayal, we are not fit to be spared; let us go to our death, a proper procedure, let us go under the sharp sore sword!'

(3629-32) 'It were not right for me to ruin you, you have long been in danger; the help of God will come to save you, o famous sons of Jacob!

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1. DIL C 530. 70--3.

2. Literally: 'our one brother'.

3633 Bíd bann búada for ar ndáil,  
a hiarmhuí úagdaí Abráim,  
gen gním geisse, tria díl gair  
- is messe ro reosabair.'

3637 Rodas smachtaigset fca láim,  
ro attlaigset a comdál,  
sníset co cóir a caínti,  
ro chisset ar mórfaílti.

3641 'Fúapraid co tenn, níbar tróig,  
eirgid ar cenn Iácoib;  
cen lén is lethan for cert,  
trén for trethan i n-Égept.'

3645 Rí da-fuc a-túaid iar tain,  
Iácoib cona maocaib,  
dia lotar fo-dess for fecht  
fo ainm Ioséph i n-Égept.

(3633-6) Let there be a victorious ending to our meeting,  
pure great-grandsons of Abraham, without any forbidden deed,  
through his dear word - it was I whom you sold.'

(3637-40) They submitted themselves to his authority, they  
thanked him for receiving them, they duly poured forth their  
lamentations, they wept for their great joy.

(3641-4) 'Set out quickly, you are not in danger, go and  
get Jacob; your rights extend widely, without hindrance,  
your strength <sup>1</sup> is powerful in Egypt. <sup>5</sup>

(3645-8) The King brought from the north then Jacob and  
his sons, when they went southwards on a journey under the  
protection of Joseph into Egypt.

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1. Cf. 4200 and DIL s.v.

- 3649      Ó sunn rānatar fo-dess  
ce Iosēph hi comaitheas,  
a n-Í ba dech do each threib  
do-rat Iosēph dia brathreib.
- 3653      Ro baí Iācōb, ba gnīm cert,  
cen snīm i tírib Ēgept,  
maile fria chlainn cōna mblait,  
dá blíadain ar sechtmogait.
- 3657      Mo RÍ co ragrād Ó chéin  
do-fus Abrám Ó Challdéib,  
hé cotn-arlaic iar cóir cheirt  
dōib a n-Í-sin do-rigset.

(3649-52) When they had come south to live in  
neighbourliness with Joseph, (he) gave all that was best  
of every dwelling to his brothers.

(3653-6) Joseph - it was a just deed - was without trouble  
in the lands of Egypt, together with his famous children,  
for 72 years.

(3657-60) My King with great honour from before brought  
Abraham out of Chaldea; it is He who advised them in  
fitting fashion in everything which they did.

---

- 3661      Ō sunn at-bath Iosēph án  
             ní-s mboe saere nō saergrád;  
             fir Ēgept co mēit cloíne  
             dos-ratsat fo throwdoere.
- 3665      Rodos daírwatar dia réir  
             iar n-ēc ind amrai Iosēiph;  
             daíre anlaid, ērain nglé,  
             ní tharlaid fer bith buide.
- 3669      Mōr do chlaimn, ba trōg [in scél]  
             beirthí do ślōg Israhēl,  
             co sūilib dessaib, deilm ndil,  
             con bendais assa cennaib.
- 3673      Mōr da cech uloc, nābu cert,  
             fo-daintis fo ślúag n-Ēgept;  
             ní bai dóere bad teinne -  
             co marbdais a prínginne.

3668.      buidé, R.

3669 ff. no marbtas gach príngin no berthea  
 dóib 7 na mbíd di chlaid ó sein immach no  
 bendais a sūilib dessa assa cennaib.

(3661-4) After noble Joseph died, they had neither nobility nor dignity; the men of Egypt, full of deceit, put them under heavy slavery.

(3665-8) They enslaved them as they wished after the death of the famous Joseph; such slavery, a clear meaning, never happened<sup>1</sup> in the yellow world.

(3669-72) Many children, it was a pitiful story, were born to the host of Israel with right eyes, a dear report, which were plucked out of their heads<sup>2</sup>.

(3673-6) Much of every evil - it was not right - they used to suffer under the host of Egypt; there was no sorer slavery - that their firstborn were killed.

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1. tarlaid to rhyme with amlaid.

2. The translation here follows the text as closely as possible, taking con. 3672, as the equivalent of relative no. But the prose texts suggest that this and the following quatrain have been transposed, and that we should read a súile dessa in 3671: 'their right eyes were plucked out of their heads'.

- 3677 Ciarbo thromm a ndeire docht  
ro bae a nDía 'osa fortacht:  
in mēt for-dingtis int slúaig  
for-beirtis in cach oenhuair.
- 3681 Iosēph mac Imōib ain,  
meioc Issāic, meic Abarāin,  
do-rumalt, fri riagla recht,  
deich fichit blíadna i n-Ēgept.
- 3685 De-ohúaid for cel cluithi ein,  
for slicht sen suithi soerdil;  
fācbaid dá mac, maith a ngreim,  
Mánasses ocus Effraim.
- 3689 De-rumēnsat oāch fo smacht,  
fos-rugēnsat fir Ēgept,  
dia mbúaid, dia mmathius, dia míad,  
cosin n-úair at-bath Iosíaph.

- 
3677. dacht, R.
3680. forbartais, R.
3687. ngraim, R.



(3677-80) Although their strict slavery was oppressive  
God was helping them; as much as the host oppressed them  
they increased at every time.

(3681-4) Joseph the son of noble Jacob, son of Isaac,  
son of Abraham, spent two hundred years in Egypt  
in rightful rule.

(3685-8) He died a death of overcoming sin (?)<sup>1</sup>  
in the tradition of dear noble wisdom; he leaves two  
sons of good authority, Manassas and Ephraim.

(3689-92) They thought that they had everyone in their  
power, the men of Egypt served them according to their  
success, their wealth and their honour until Joseph  
died.

---

1. Following DIL C 251.54 in taking clufthi  
as gen. sg. of clód, cf. 5863. But there is no  
other example of oin as an o-stem, required  
here for rhyme (: soerdil).

3693      Ro-génair Moisi, mod glē,  
             i n-amsir na tromdaire;  
             ro-lād, ciarbo chain a chruth,  
             ass hi sruth Níl dia bádu.

3697      Cona fuair Termod, gním cert,  
             ingen Forainn rí Egept,  
             'eond sruth ic innlat a lám,  
             cainbē fíal forwsaid fíndnár.

3701      Iar sin con-forngart dia mnáib  
             cona tuctaís asin tráig  
             in mac mbec in E[h]rotha glain  
             úair do-rat Día fca menmain.

3705      Roda car Termod iar sein  
             feib caras cách a cengein,  
             coro n-eráil, ba cain glonn,  
             bar fergo dia degaltrom.

---

3708.      non iráilenn for deag-daeinibh dia altrun, SSR.

(3693-6) Moses was born, bright work, in the time of the heavy captivity; although his shape was lovely, he was thrown out into the river Nile to drown.

(3697-3700) So that Tharmuth the daughter of Pharaoh the king of Egypt found him, a proper deed, when washing her hands at the river, a modest steady fair maiden.

(3701-4) After that she ordered her women to take him out of the shore, the little boy of pure shape, for God put it into her mind.

(3705-8) Tharmuth loved him after that as everybody loves an only child and ordered the best <sup>1</sup> to rear him well.

---

1. This is a very strange use of forrggu, and bar = for does not occur elsewhere in SR. Perhaps amend to: for degmaib dia degaltrom, or the like.

3709      Ó sunn ro alt comba trén  
ro diall fri claind n-Israhél;  
do-chúaid i fat fiad each claind  
narbo mac d'ingin Fóraind.

3713      Íssu cen lén, lúad nglanna,  
cen athair trén talmanna;  
forfáiltech gním glé each thuir  
'sind aimsir i rogenair.

---

3710.      diall fri claind mac n-Israhél, R.

3715.      forfáiltig, R.

(3709-12) When he had been reared until he was strong,  
he resembled the children of Israel; it went out widely  
that he was not the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

(3713-6) Jesus without sorrow, a pure mention, without  
a strong earthly father; the clear deed of every host  
was joyful at the time when he was born.

---

- 3717      Cot-rúnic lá forsin maig  
             fri cendiis ic imsergain:  
             indara n-aí dia chlainn cheirt,  
             araili ba do Égept.
- 3721      Ó sunn at-geóin narbo trén  
             in fer do chlainn Israhél  
             - ba hē in gnīm garb cen chert -  
             ro marb in fer a hÉgept.
- 3725      Ro-fitir in túath co glē  
             fer do marbad do Moise;  
             feib léir do-rigned co cert  
             at-chuas do airríg Égept.
- 3729      For-fúacart Forainn co cert  
             for feraib amraib Égept  
             nā beth dó dín i nnach dū,  
             acht a bás no a hinnarbu.

(3717-20) He met one day in open country two men fighting together: one of them of his own proper people, and the other an Egyptian.

(3721-4) When he had seen that the man of the children of Israel was not strong, he killed the Egyptian - it was a rough unjust deed.

(3725-8) The people knew well that Moses had killed a man; it was told to the viceroy<sup>1</sup> of Egypt precisely as it was done.

(3729-32) Pharaoh justly proclaimed to the famous men of Egypt that he should have no protection in any place, but that he should die or be banished.

---

1. In view of the next <sup>quaternion</sup> ~~quaternion~~, read ardrig?

- 3733 Do-deochaid Moísi for fecht  
for teched ría slúag n-Égept  
iar tírib, iar sligthib srath,  
co farmaic ind ingenrad.
- 3737 Co fúair slóg mór forsin maig  
do gillaib is d'ingenaib  
ic immáin chaírech fo smacht  
dochum topur is tiprat.
- 3741 Oo déne na trebthach trén  
in slessaib slébe Coréb  
ba mór a ngáir forsin maig  
ic dáil usci dia caíreachaib.
- 3745 Dessid Meíssi, ba mod nglē,  
for ochair na conaire,  
snímach, saethrach, bec a nert,  
a oenur ic sírimthecht.
- 3749 Moísi ba trén in each dáil,  
do chiniud clainni Abráim,  
ní cheil ceól nglē ngnímrad nglíeo  
- is do réir Dē cet-ráin.
-



(3733-6) Moses went on a journey fleeing from the  
host of Egypt, through countries, through roads of  
river-banks, until the girls found him<sup>1</sup>

(3737-40) He found a great host of boys and girls in  
the open country, driving sheep under control to  
wells and springs.

(3741-4) There was a great tumult in the country as a  
result of the activity of the strong peasants around  
the slopes of Mount Horeb, watering their sheep.

(3745-8) Moses sat down, it was obvious, on the side of  
the road, anxious, tired, weak (as a result of)  
continuously travelling alone.

(3749-52) Moses, who was strong in every assembly, of  
the people of the Children of Abraham, the bright  
music of wise deeds does not conceal it - it is by  
God's will that he met (them).

---

1. In view of the next quatrain, we might amend to  
in n-ingenraid, reading sraith for srath, and  
translate 'he found the girls'.

XXXVII

3753      Ro bātar ann, caínig, cain,  
             'coa caírib hi timmarcain,  
             i n-immblib int slúag co mblait,  
             éif ingin in p[h]rimsacairt.

3757      Ro ráid fri Moisi, mod nglan,  
             iar sain in dara ingen:  
             'Cid nachar cobrai, dín cert,  
             a hóclaig út a hÉgept?

3761      Atar-fail cen duine trén,  
             ar n-oenur i n-etarlén;  
             immun n-usce n-uár each cruth  
             a-tā in slúag ic ar sárgud.'

3765      At-raraecht Moisi, mod nglē,  
             nípu héirge meraige,  
             co tarat cobair tréin trait  
             do hingenab int sacairt.

(3753-6) The two daughters of the highpriest were there,  
weeping, tell (it)!, <sup>1</sup> in difficulty with their sheep on the  
edges of the strong host.

(3757-60) One of the girls said to Moses in fair manner:  
'Why do you not help us, proper protection, you follow  
from Egypt?

(3761-4) We are <sup>2</sup> alone in great hardship without a strong man;  
the host is taking advantage of us in every way about the  
water.

(3765-8) Moses got up in a bright manner, it was not the  
rising of a fool, and gave swift strong help to the daughters  
of the priest.

1. Meyer read caíne, without indicating whether he  
had 'beauty', 'game' or 'lament' in mind; all forms  
possible are fem. and would require a further emendation to  
chain, BDILC 40.17 suggests emendation to caingen,  
which removes the rhyme with caírib. Taking caínig  
to be n. pl. of caínech and cain to be 2 sg. imper.  
of canaid obviates any emendation.

2. This form is isolated, but cf. dadet fail, 1747,  
and níoh-ar fail, 1560.

- 3769      Ro gartatar leō dia taig,  
             Moise, anru cach n-ārmaig,  
             con-éicitar a scéla  
             dia n-athair cen iména.
- 3773      In sacart sluinti galssi  
             ro fer fáilti fri Moisi,  
             ar a o[h]ruth, ar a chéil nglain,  
             ar fortacht dia ingenaib
- 3777      Ro fastai i[n] sacart iar sein  
             ina centaid, i n-centreib;  
             iar timu ind Ríg, ruáthar ndil,  
             do-rat [dó] a p[h]rímingin.
- 3781      Hí clemnas sacairt cen lén,  
             i fíchaib sléibí Coréb,  
             do-rumalt Moisi, mod nglé,  
             ann tres raínd a ainsire.
- 3785      Noemrí nime, nert cach slúag,  
             ceemo[h]lí cen bini, bithbúaid,  
             Rí betha borggaig oen brath,  
             ros n-ordaig feib ro bátar.

(3769-72) They invited him (to go) with them to their home,  
Moses, more famous than any battle (?); they told their story  
to their father without denial.

(3773-6) The priest who expounded wisdom welcomed Moses, for  
his bounty, for his clear understanding, for saving his daughters.

(3777-3780) The priest then kept him in his company, in his  
family; according to the command of the King - a fair foray -  
he gave him his first daughter.

(3781-4) Moses spent, clear work, a third of his life there  
as son-in-law of the <sup>2</sup> priest, without sorrow, in the villages  
of Mount Horeb.

(3785-8) The holy King of Heaven, the strength of every host,  
a fair support without sin, lasting victory, the King of the  
cited world without treachery - He ordained them as they were.

- 
1. ~~Perhaps read amra in each arad, famous in~~  
~~every battle.~~ Cf. Arón ba amru cech n-aíl, 4513, and  
Moisi, nō cech n-aíl, 4451, ba ferr cech ndáil, 7125.
2. int of R makes the line hypermetrical, but seems  
required by the sense.

- 3789 Bae lathi Moysi i-muig  
i sléib Cheréb 'coa chaírib  
conid n-árlassair in Rí  
a tathlassair teintidi.
- 3793 Rí ro forcogart am-ne  
for mac n-Amra, for Moise,  
ro ráidi fris, rúathar cert:  
'Is ferr duit dul i n-Egept.'
- 3797 Ro ráid Moysi, monor nglé,  
'Ní tuidecht frit fornгаire,  
ro fetar féin, febda bainn,  
an fer éscráite d' Foraind.'
- 3801 'Heirgg la mo bréithir for fecht  
ar cenn int sluaig i n-Egept;  
not neibfaider fiad cach claind,  
not seerfaider for Forainn.
- 3805 Béra úaim comartha lat  
not saerfa for écomart  
co nach fil ní n-úag fo nim  
con-I tlichtain frit menmain.'
- 3809 Fo-fuair mór do búaid oen brath,  
mór n-ecnai úaig co n-égrath,  
co n-úaill, ba mór ngaissi glé  
fo-fuair Moisi, baí lathe.

XXXVIII

(3789-92) Moses was one day out in Mount Horeb with his sheep, when the King addressed him out of a fiery dissolving flame.

(3793-6) The King ordered then the son of Amra, Moses; he said to him, a just onset: 'It is better for you to go into Egypt'.

(3797-3800) Moses said, clear labour: 'Not to oppose your commandment, (but) I myself know, an excellent deed, that I am a man whom Pharaoh considers an enemy.'

(3801-4) 'Go with my word on a journey to the people in Egypt; you will be sanctified before every people, you will be saved from Pharaoh.

(3805-8) You will bring with you a sign from me, it will save you from unequal combat, so that there is no whole thing under heaven which can oppose your desire.'

(3809-12) He got much victory without betrayal, much perfect wisdom with complete grace, with pride; it was much pure wisdom that Moses got -- he was one day

- 3813 RÍ do-rat fleisc mbláith mbalnai  
i lláim Moísi meic Amraí  
diar lass ind rúb, ríga scél,  
im rún ríe i sléib Choréb.
- 3817 RÍ ro rádi co dána  
fri Moíse taidbsiu a láma:  
i[n]dara húair dí ba clam,  
ind úair aile ba gléglan.
- 3821 RÍ do-rat sain fri samlai  
do Moísi, do mac Amraí  
'Is amlaid sain, ségda in smocht  
do-gréas do-gén-sa t'fortacht'.

3813. mbalnai, R.
3814. Amraí, R.
3822. Amraí, R.
3824. to fortacht, R.



(3813-6) The King who put a fair fortunate (?) <sup>1</sup>wand into the hand of Moses son of Amron when the bush burned - a royal story - according to the will <sup>2</sup>of the King on Mount Horeb.

(3817-20) The King who told Moses boldly to show his hand: at one time it was leprous, the next time it was pure and clean.

(3821-4) The King who gave that as an example to Moses, to the son of Amron: 'It is in that way, noble the command, that I will continuously help you'.

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1. In spite of the spellings, Amrai does not seem to have a long final vowel, of, Amra : calma, 4477. For balnaí cf. bal dai, 4977, which perhaps derives from bal rather than from ball.

2. This seems to be an early example of the masc. gender of rún, cf. fo rúin, 6547.

- 3825 In rí ro faídi fri tóir  
do chlannaib aifni IMoóib,  
do chath la bréithir nDē dil  
fri Forann cona drauidib.
- 3829 Rí ro chart Moíse for fecht  
co Forann, co rí n-Égypt,  
co tarlaiced úd oen lén  
clanna amra Israhēl.
- 3833 'Manis tarlaice co lúath  
meico Israhēl, línib túath,  
foídfet mór ndígal di sain  
'mo-dílfat úd ar écin.'
- 3837 Rí fo-tāt huili na slóig,  
iss hé ar tuire dengóir  
- nín len clem, nā gō, nā ceist -  
rí do-rat dó in mbláithle[i]sc.

(3825-8) The king who sent him to help the pleasant families of Jacob, to fight with dear God's word against Pharaoh and his druids.

(3829-32) The king who sent Moses on a journey to Pharaoh, to the king of Egypt, so that he should release without sorrow the famous families of Israel.

(3833-36) 'Unless he swiftly releases the children of Israel, with hosts of peoples, I will send many revenges from  
that which will deliver<sup>1</sup> them from him by force.'

(3837-40) The king under whom all the hosts are, he is our tower of red gold - neither treachery nor falsehood nor trouble afflicts us - the king who gave him the fair wand.

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1. Taking mo-dílfat as fut. 3 pl. of \*im-díla 'delivers'; it could also be 1 sg., as taken by Strachan and DIL. Since this compound is not otherwise attested, the possibility of its being a corruption of mos-dílfat should also be considered.

3841 Ráidid Moisi fíad each clainn  
 iar sain iarum fri Forainn:  
 'Lessaig do slúraig féin fo leith,  
 léic úait a thúait dhin Choimdid.'

3845 As-bert Forainn, forom nglé,  
 nā tibred dóib a saere  
 co fessad oia bad mó nert  
 - a nDía-som nó día Égept.

3849 De-gnínt druid ind rí  
 tria brichtu, ainble anfir,  
 nathracha co lúath don flaith;  
 dolbsait a fúath dia flescaib.

3853 De-rigni Moisi, mod ndil,  
 i n-anmain ind rí do nim,  
 la bréithir nDē fíad flaithib,  
 dia fleisc comba glénathir

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3844. Chindid, R.

3849. druidi, R.

XL

(3841-4) Moses said then in the presence of every family to  
Pharaoh: 'Look after your own people separately (and) release  
His people to the Lord'.

(3845-8) Pharaoh said, a clear sound, that he would not give them  
their freedom until he knew which was the stronger, their  
God or the god of Egypt.

(3849-52) The king's druids quickly make through their spells -  
an injustice of wickedness - serpents for the prince; they  
formed their shapes from their wounds.

(3853-6) Moses made, a fair manner, in the name of the  
King of Heaven, by the word of God before princes, his wand into  
a bright serpent.

- 3857      Nathir Meisi fúabrad oath  
            fri nathracha na ndruíd;  
            is-tig ar bllaib ind rí  
            dodas-fúaid cos[in] n-cennáir.
- 3861      Gabais a nathraig do lár,  
            Meisi fiad in taig lownán,  
            nos creith, nado[s] saí i fleisc;  
            lasin slóg robo móroheist.
- 3865      Meisi minn ós betha báro,  
            húa Ilcoíb meic Isaac,  
            a aithesc glan, gníurad nglé,  
            is do réir Dē ro-ráidi.

(3857-60) Moses's serpent kept seeking battle with the  
druids' serpents; in the house in front of the king  
it ate them up until the last morsel.

(3861-4) Moses picked up his serpent before the full  
house, he shakes it, he turns it into a wand;  
the host was greatly troubled.

(3865-8) Moses, a hero above the ship of the world,  
the grandson of Jacob son of Isaac, it is by the will  
of God that he uttered his pure speech, a bright  
deed.