In 1883 Whitley Stokes published an edition without translation of the Middle Irish biblical poem *Saltair na Rann* from MS Rawlinson B 502\(^1\) in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (Anecdota Oxoniensia. Mediaeval 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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\(^1\)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.
Fergach fris Fíadu, feidm n-úag,
ar a n-árim na mórsluag,
úair nárbo leis as nach cruth
a mbíathadh nach a n-étiud.

Bá ferg aíl la Día ndil
la thigerna do noebnim,
diar ort a mifid, mèt gal,
tuc a maí iar n-a marbad.

Ro ráid Spíruit Dé fri Gád
aithsecl gle o'richid coimleann :
'Éad frí Dauíd, ní gó, gaib
rogo dó ar tribh brethaib.

Seacht mbliadna dó bochta bán
ocus gorta cogaí imlúad,
nó tri mís agaír rìa creich
nó grís galair tribh lathair.'

triablathaib, R.
(6837-40) God was angry with him, pure work, for numbering the
great hosts, since their feeding and clothing was not his in
any respect.

(6841-4) Dear God, his lord from holy heaven, had another
(reason for) anger, when he killed his soldier, number of battles,
he took his wife after killing him.

(6845-8) The Spirit of God said to God a clear prudent perfect
speech: 'Tell David, no lie, offer him a choice of three
judgments.

(6849-52) Seven years of lasting poverty for him and famine
harassing him, or three months he is driven before pursuit,
or the heat of sickness for three days.

1. Following 2 Reg. xxiv 13 (septem annis) against I Para.
   xxii 12 (tribusannis).

2. tribus mensibus fugies adversarias tuos, et illi te
   persecutur = tribus mensibus te fugere hostes tuos
   et gladium corum non posse evadere.
Ro ráid Gáid fri Dauid tan

ciarbo chrád ria menmanrad:

'To-t-icfa dígal nò chath
trí a th'imrádud nd'Íummasach.'

Coro gáid Dauid iar sein

a scerad for a náimtech;

'Dígal beth maith laisse fo-dóin
tabrad forru dia ógréir.'

Dáuid ba bìdhu rechta

fri each timmu naireachta;

d'fís tríalla deochair do chath
Fladh frís feochair fergach.

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(6853–6) Gad then said to David, though it was a torment to his mind, 'Punishment or battle will come to you as a result of your vainglorious design'.

(6857-60) David prayed then that he might be saved from his enemies: 'Let him impose whatever punishment he sees fit on them according to his will'.

(6861–4) David was a law-breaker, transgressing against every commandment; God was severe and angry against him to find a journey of change to battle (?).

1. We would expect forom 'on me'. But cf. 6865–8.

2. Taking this to be an unattested adjective.

3. The meaning here is not clear.
Ro-s n-ort int angel co sne'id
tria chinaid díumsa Duíd,
sechtmoga míli, mór soél,
do díni mac n-Israhél.

Do-rigní Dauíd fo gail
aithirge fo thromderaidh,
co cétloidaí sála, clechta
i n-éildaíde céla.

Rí ro díét dlígdú dérb déin
do Dauíd dia mórchintaíd,
do decraíb a guíma òlithi
iar n-a hettilaír aithirí.

Do-deochaid Gáid glanbha gè
co mac n-ámra n-Iósse,
co n-érbairt fris, fáth cen chlith:
'Déna tegdaí don Chomáid.'
(6865-8) The angel swiftly killed seventy thousand of the assembly of the Children of Israel for the sin of David's pride, a great story.

(6869-72) Afflicted David repented under heavy tears. with singings of psalms, laid low in garments of sackcloth.

(6873-6) The king granted certain and good forgiveness of his great sins, of the disgraces of his hidden deeds, to David after his humilities of repentance.

(6877-80) Pure bright Gad came to the famous son of Jesse and said to him, reason without concealment: 'Make a dwelling for the Lord'.

1. Formally from céltud, but it must be a derivative of cétal.
Túagais altóir do Dála díl,

buidníb, balothóir don Chomòid,
i n-aria, cen luinn lí,
Orna Umundi Isbussi.'

Do-rinnscón Dáuíd in sein
do ruirig ními noebgil,

ní cheil, fri gním nglárda nglán,
tempul saín séída Solmon.
(6881--4) Raise an altar to dear God, with bands, a strong help for the Lord, in the area, without the shade of boldness, of Areuna the Jebusite.1

(6885--8) David began that, for the ruler of bright holy heaven -- he does not conceal it -- as a bright pure deed, the especial noble temple of Solomon.

(6889--92) Many thousands were killed along the path, many hundreds, many strong lovely hosts; he punished many hosts with beauty for a time, not pityingly did the angel strike them.

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1. This is a transcription of in area Areuna Jebusaei, 2 Reg. xxiv 18, contaminated by the Ornan of the parallel passage I Par. xxi 18.
6893  Do-rodiúsáig Día a mac
       'n-a agid fri frituttacht;
       mòr d'ulc tria brathaib ro gní
dia athair combad athrí.

6897  Do-rinól sluág sleoda snéid
       i n-again nleoda Dauíd,
       tria bladblat feib ro fhirad
       co termart a athrigad.

6901  Túargaib co sluígaib co sreith
       co mbúadaib, co mbarithemnaib;
       nír fhirda d'é dull dom chath
       iar teacht co rígha a athar.

6905  Abisolón, seathaib sluág,
       ro thinól oth claidebrúad
       d'innarba Dauíd co tén
       nà beth for orIoch n-Israhél.
(6891--6) God stirred up his son in rebellion against him; he did great harm through his treacheries to his father so that he might be deposed.

(6897-6900) He collected a swift . . . . . host against holy David, as it was brought about through his fame and strength, so that he was nearly deposed.

(6901--4) He rose up with hosts, with a rank, with virtues, with judges; it was not right for him to go to the battle after coming to his father's queens.

(6905--8) Absalom, with ranks of hosts, assembled a battle of red swords, to banish David strongly, so that he should not be over the land of Israel.

1. A hapax.
Gléirdin ro fersat in cath
trénfir Dáuid co mórath;
ria crúadgail na córad crón
ro theich slóg Abísolón.

Úa[r] ro meabaid in cath cerb
for Abísolón sléidhegg,
a mong buidí, mín a dath,
ro giúl do gáscú darach.

Iób trénfer deibtha tréith,
toísech míltechta Dáuid,
don chath chrodónn ro gab greimn:
ata-cómmong do oenbhímm.

Ó shuinn ro marbad a mac
do-rarbrad fo thochmóracht,
co tarmaír tó, ba soél tróig,
do chhumaid Abísolón.
(6909-12) David's champions of great virtue fought the battle excellently; the host of Absalom fled before the hard valour of the dark warriors.

(6913-6) When the sharp battle went against Absalom of the red spear, his yellow hair of smooth surface caught in the branch of an oak-tree.

(6917-20) Joab the champion whom chieftains affirm, the leader of David's army, took advantage of the blood-red battle: he kills him with a single stroke.

(6921-4) After his son had been killed he was cast down in sorrow so that he nearly died for sorrow after Absalom; it was a sad story.

1. The rhyme greiss : oenbēimm is poor, but it does not seem likely that we should read -bēiss.
As-bert Iōb, ba scēl trēith,
fiad int ślóg mór fri Duiē : "Raga bās baide fo brōn
do chaīne Abīsolōn."

Iarnu ro gab a rīge
Duiē co n-ilur mīle,
ūair do-rochāir leis i cath
Abishopiōn slōgbūsadhach.

Dīfillūd for Duiē dāna
co n-imnūd cēch drochdāla,
Abishopiōn dīan dīumsāig
rīana rīan do-rōdiūsāig.

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6927. Ragabas bōs, R.
6933. Dillīud, R.
(6925--8) Joab said -- it was a sad story -- to David in the presence of the host: 'You will die in sorrow of regret, from lamenting Absalom'.

(6929-32) After that David, with many thousands, took his kingship, since Absalom of the victorious hosts had fallen by him in battle.

(6933--6) He stirred up swift vain Absalom before his path to betray bold David with a multitude of evil meetings.

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1. The asf. for metrical convenience?

2. The emendation is Meyer's. (For) is normally an a-verb, but filliud may have been chosen for the rhyme with immud.
Dia táiní Dáud an-dess
dar Iordanén nírb imhres,
tárnactar 'n-a díil och len
slóig Iúda, slóig Israíchel.

Ro fér slóig Iúda co slán
fáilte fri Dáud nádhrár;
ba fáilte sóil, nírb thréin,
fáilte slóig mac n-Israíchel.

Ro fér/Sephi gléissib glór
def séissib Abísilón;
ro thríall cath aíl fhe greim,
mac Bachaire ó sléib Éffraím.

Sephi mac Bachaire braiss
do chlaíom Israíchel admaíse
ro thínol slóg, nírb fri síd,
do choméige fíre Duíd.
(6937–40) When David came from the south, across the Jordan which 
was not narrow, the hosts of Judah, the hosts of Israel came 
without sorrow to meet him.

(6941–4) The host of Judah gave great David a complete welcome; 
the welcome of the host of Israel was a subdued one, it was 
not strong.

(6945–8) Seba the son of Bochri, from Mount Ephraim, gave 
voice with devices to the plans of Absalom, he attempted 
another battle. 1

(6949–52) Seba the son of swift Bochri, of the lovely 
children of Israel, collected a host, not for peace, to 
rise up against David.

1. For the collocation greim catha see DII 
G 151. 17 ff.
6953 Ro mebad fair, ní fuair dín,
ria n-Iób co muintir Duid,
co rocht in cathraig, cét mbla,
Abella Pedemacha.

6957 Coro nguíil Iób ilar cath,
nIrbo chiúin cóir co n-armrad,
co ndessid mar dlúm dar dreich
immon dún do cach oenleith.

6961 Bae banscál eomaid is' dún
iar freoraib in ceoch glanrún;
d'acallaim Iób baí 'sin chath
do-lúid for múr na cathrach.

6965 Go relic gairm, ba gníom n-óg,
for mac Saibh, nIrnu erthróg,
don múr fiad int álóg i-маиg
co ndernai Iób d'acallaim.
(6953--6) He was defeated by Joab with David's people, he got no refuge until he reached the city, hundred of shouts, Abela and Bethmaacha. 

(6957-60) And Joab of many battles stuck to him, he was not quiet and fitting with his armed band, and settled like a cloud over the face around the city on every side.

(6961--4) There was a wise woman in the stronghold with solutions for every pure mystery; she came on to the wall of the city to talk to Joab who was in battle array.

(6965--8) And she called out, it was a pure deed, to the son of Sarvia, who was not miserable, out from the wall in the presence of the host, so that she spoke to Joab.

1. 2 Reg. xx 14.
'A lóib, it foimsíd fri síd,
a choimsíd for álóg nDuíd;
'ná hímbéir luinni co lén
for muimni mac n-Israhél.

Senfoccul búaída, bún scél
la tuatha mac n-Israhél,
'De each cheist chialchaíd ro-t ochná:
iarfaig in Pedemachá.'

Ro ráid lóib ilar dáil
fiad int álóg frisín mbánscaíl:
'Teilge oenn meic Bachairi 'mach;
ní géithtar eil na cathrach.'

Ro rádi in ben iar sein
co mbláthi, cen imresain:
'Ferr oenfer dunt álóg do dul,
indá in mór do mudugud.'
(6969-72) 'Joab, you are a calculator of peace, a controller of David's army; do not wreak sorrowful wrath on the foster-mother of the Children of Israel.

(6973-6) There is an old saying of virtue, a lasting story, among the peoples of the Children of Israel: Whatever hard question has consumed you: Ask in Bethmaacha.'

(6977-80) Joab of many meetings said to the woman before the army: 'Throw out the head of the son of Bechri, the city will not be taken advantage of.'

(6981-4) The woman said after that, mildly and without contention: 'It is better that one man of the host should go than that many should be destroyed.'

1. *foimsid* is a hapax, formed in the same way as the well-attested *coimsid*.

2. *DIL C 174. 81* suggests that *cfálchaid* is a metrical adaptation of *cfálchruaid*.

3. 2 Reg. xx 18.
6985 Do-rigned [in] sain ar Iðb
mac Sairb fri aetha soerslóig;
cem meic Bachairi i-rama
ro ladh dar mór na cathraich.

6988 Do-rumalt Davíd cen chess
a borddan, a hairechass,
co fargait fri Solam slán
iar sin in fiaithius forlán.

6993 Samma mac Gerald co ndith
iar ndebrid do frí Davíd,
re álacht do Davíd co trait,
mar Iordanán dia tánic.

*******
(6985--8) That was done as Joab asked, the son of Sarvia with the ranks of noble hosts; the head of the son of Bochri was thrown out over the wall of the city.

(6989--92) David enjoyed his dignity and dominion without sorrow until he left the complete sovereignty after that to healthy Solomon.

(6993--6) Semei son of Gera, with lass, after fighting with David he submitted swiftly to David when he came over the Jordan.

*****
Ro gab Solam, artheál slúag,
rí gi n-Iaraiél n-adrúad;
  rí samlaíd ní fhríth summ sel
  eter talmain is neachm.

Co n-eonu óg, co cruth glan,
targach each slóg séis Solman;
  ba lór forghal ós each maig
  ar erddan, ar airmitein.

Ecne Solman, artheál slóg,
  ós bith bladmar mar dergóir;
  mac scama Solman, síth nglan,
  ní fhríth do rígaíb talman.

Dá arri g déic, díghrais gair,
  hed ro bátar ic Solmain;
  cách for a chuírd, demna seál,
  for dá thúaith déic Israhél.

héd, R.
(6997-7000) Solomon with ranks of hosts took the kingship of strong Israel; no such king has been found here at any time, between earth and holy heaven.

(7001--4) With pure wisdom, with fair shape, the wisdom of Solomon rules over every host; it was sufficient witness everywhere of dignity, of reverence.

(7005--8) The wisdom of Solomon, with ranks of hosts, is like red gold over the famous world; the like of Solomon, pure peace, has not been found among the kings of the earth.

(7009-12) Twelve sub-kings, unassailable word, is what Solomon had; each circulated round the twelve peoples of Israel, a certain story.

1. It is not certain whether we should read ḫed or ḫē.
7013 Frithalim tigi ind ríg.
    slóg sir Solman meic Dáud,
    fri tinöl bíd ocsus chiis
    eícch díbh i cind eacht ocemiss.

7017 Fess cech n-aidoli, oen chess cain,
    tairbi tige Solamain;
    oen lubai lergg, lëri líi,
    oen selgo sléibí ná huiscí.

7021 Tríoba míach cruithnecht òs bláí,
    tri fìchit míach n-sóirne,
    deich ndaim, fiche bó, ní bréq,
    ocsus cét molt, ba mórthrit.

7025 Ar ecnu, ar ordun eill,
    fri freoru fergal fídrong,
    amru brígaib, brosnaib gal,
    òs rígaib ro gab Solam.

***************************

7023. deich ndaim fichet bó, R;
deich ndoim biata ann 7 .XX. dam inghelta,
LB 130 b 50.
(7013--6) The provision of the king's house, of the permanent host of Solomon, son of David - each of them was in charge for one month, for the collection of food and rent.

(7017--20) A feast every night, without fair torment, was the benefit of the house of Solomon; without herbs of the hillsides, clearness of colour, without the hunting of the mountains, or water.

(7021--4) Thirty sacks of wheat over the ground, sixty sacks of barley; ten oxen, twenty cows; it is no lie, and a hundred wethers, it was a great flock.

(7025--8) For wisdom, for great dignity, for meeting the witness of true hosts, Solomon excelled kings, more famous than strengths, with sheaves of valours.

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1. The sub-kings; 3 Reg. iv 27.

2. decem boves pingues, et viginti boves pascuales,

3 Reg. iv 23.
Is leis ro thurcbad o lār
in cumstach críchid comlān
ōs cach clothmaig, ceorph gluān
tempal sruth sochraid Solman.

Fáchaid Dāuid déde n-dein
dia marbad ic Solamain:
ōs trēn [na] dlamad ocaith
ōcu[s] Sampe mac Gerad.

Solam, ba suí saigtis máil,
frī foglaim eonai inlāin;
co adrad n-Idal cen brīg
ro huc ed do cach ardrīg.

Mac Dāuid frī tarba trēn
rī macc n-amra n-Israhēl,
cen goi cen geiss, cumtaig rath,
Solam is leis ro turebad.

************
(7029-32) It is by him that the prudent perfect structure was raised from the ground, the noble lovely temple of Solomon, with fair shape over every renowned plain.

(7033-6) David leaves a good pair to be killed by Solomon: strong Joab who never refused battle and Semei son of Gera.

(7037-40) Solomon, who was a sage to whom princes came, engaged in the learning of full wisdom; he gave a time to every high king, to the worship of idols without power.

(7041-4) It is by him that it was raised, Solomon the son of David of strong benefit, the king of the Children of Israel, without lie, without prohibition, the grace of a building.

1. Following DII. D^2 165. 31-2.

CXXVII

Ó adrad ind Ídail án

do-rát Día d' I gail ndermáir
for claint Solman, sruth na sreith,
coro scartha fri deichtreih.

Síl Solman for rós, réim ngle,
ro-dás tróeth rí ríndhime,
cen fergal, cen míd, maithius,
cen ordan, cen ardflaithius.

Mac Solman Róbuam ro fíoch
for dethreib cona dligthib,
ocus Hirobuam, ro-clos,
for deicht[h]reih ro gab flatheos.

Solam ba suí saightís druing
fri foglaimm n-seai n-eruill;
ro scar fri báid is fri blaid
ó búsair adartha in Ídail.

******

7049. roéed, R.
God gave a great vengeance on the children of Solomon, the stream of ranks for the worshipping of the noble idol, so that they were separated from the ten tribes.

The King of starry heaven overthrew the seed of Solomon on the field, bright course, without judgment, without honour [or] wealth, without dignity, without high sovereignty.

Roboam the son of Solomon warred against the two tribes with his laws and Jeroboam, it has been heard, took kingship over the ten tribes.

Solomon was a sage, to whom hosts came, at the learning of great wisdom; he separated from virtue and fame at the time of worshipping the idol.
Rí do-rat díghail, deilim n-úag,
forás ríg réil Hiabúam,
dian cúrsaíg in faith fo leith
dia mbeid o adrad ind ídail.

Do marbad ind fétha áin
luid Hiabúam cona gráin;
seocail a lám, láthar ngrínn,
immon claidheab ngráb ngríthimh.

Dia tormailt in faith in mbíad,
dar timna nDé, ba anríad,
rí ro faed leó lán do gail
iar sain chucaid dia argain.

Ruri betha, bríg nád bréo,
ro ruide im gretha glangeó;
ro chacht each rí fo gráin glain
in Rí do-rat in díghail.

************
(7061--4) The King wreaked vengeance, a pure report, on the bright king Jeroboam, when the prophet reproached him in private when he was worshipping the idol.

(7065--8) Jeroboam in his hatred went to kill the noble prophet; his hand dried up, a precise circumstance, around the rough sharp sore sword.

(7069--72) When the prophet ate the food against God's command, it was improper conduct, the King sent a lion full of anger after that to him to kill him.

(7073--6) The King of the world, power which is not a lie, reddened the bright scion in commotions; the King who wreaked the vengeance has taken captive every king under the bright sun.
iar n-écaib Hirobúam ráin

do deicht[h]reib, deithbir gélguír
    i n-Israhél, fo glóir gal,
    ro baí móir n-arracht n-Ídal.

baí móir n-ergal degraich dílan
baí móir do ulc, do anriadh,
eter dethreib, tólaib treib,
ocus deicht[h]reib na n-imned.

Báí déib fri timdriud móir oth
dia n-imdriud is dia tróethad,
coch slúag 'mo-sech, for aig thaig,
do geintib is d'échtrannaih.

Baí, ba deithbir, toirí thrúag
for deicht[h]reib cona móirslúag,
slúag mull na n-Ídal coch treib
im Hirobúam iar n-écaib.

******

7087. deithreib, R.
(7077-80) After the death of noble Jeroboam there were many images of idols among the Ten Tribes, it is right to lament, in Israel with the voice of battles.

(7081-84) There were many swift furious battles, there was much evil, much misbehaviour, between the Two Tribes, with hosts of dwellings, and the Ten Tribes of the sorrows.

(7085-88) They had perpetually many battles, invading and overthrowing one another, each host of pagans and of foreigners moving backwards and forwards.

(7089-92) There was pitiful sorrow - it was right - on the Ten Tribes with their great host, the loud host of the idols in every dwelling, after the death of Jeroboam.

1. Taking tindrim = tinnrem as elsewhere in SR : 1047, 1297, 4223, 6771.
No gab rígi, réim n-achtaich,
Achab úsallach imthaltaich,
cróda co nglandath co ngail
fríammad, fríam timmarcaín,

Fri timmarcaín cáich fo recht
iar fimealtaib fáth firchert,
frí adrad De, tólaib gal,
frí marndad n-angbaid n-Idal,

Fri hinnarba n-schtrann n-ság
líni b a clechtchlann comhúad,
frí guim nglé ngléini oceh cruth,
frí róir nDé do hoiridugad.

I n-aimsir Nèle cen ché
cóc ngléi, cen imferrdel,
for deicht[h]reib cóma gréid glé
Achab án ro gab ríge.

*******
(7093--6) Proud strong-willed Asa took the kingship, an active course, a valiant man of pure form, of valour, to tame them, to compel them,

(7097--7100) To compel everybody to obey the law according to the fair ways of truly righteous prophets, to worship God, with hosts of valours, to destroy wicked idols,

(7101--4) To expel pure foreigners with the bands of their customary families of battles, to do a bright deed, clearer than any shape, to ordain God's will.

(7105--8) Noble Asa took kingship over the Ten Tribes with his bright dignity in the time of Elias without sin, with brightness, without transgression.

1. As Knott points out Asa must be meant here (3 Reg. xv 9 ff.) rather than Achab who is mentioned in 7382 (3 Reg. xxii 13 ff.).