A MISUNDERSTOOD ANNAL: A HITHERTO UNNOTICED CÁIN

1. AN ANNAL FOR 810 (AI)

As is well known, the Annals of Inisfallen (AI) are principally concerned with the affairs of Leth Moga or the Southern Half of Ireland — and particularly with those of Munster — which as the editor, Seán Mac Airt, pointed out 'show a slow but steady increase from the middle of the sixth century onwards'.¹ Many of the Munster entries are shared, of course, by other annals. Some, however, including the entry for 810 under discussion here, are unique to AI. As edited and translated by Mac Airt, this annal reads: Bo-shlechta la Mumain la Daire ocus la Adhuar macc nEchin 'The law concerning cows [promulgated] in Mumu by Daire and by Aduar, son of Echen'.²

Since bó-shlechta, apparently a derivative of bó 'cow' and slecht 'section',³ is usually preceded by cain 'law', we may follow Mac Airt in allowing for this in the translation.⁴ Unremarked and presumably unnoticed by Mac Airt, however, the text of the annal otherwise also deviates considerably from the norm in such entries. Moreover, these other irregularities have an important bearing on the meaning of the annal.

The annals for the period from 697, when Adomnán gave his lex innocentium 'to the peoples' (populis),⁵ until the early part of the ninth century, when the practice appears to have ceased,⁶ place on record some twenty-six promulgations of a saint's lex or cain. If X be taken to represent the saint to whom the law was almost invariably attributed, Y the region or people adopting it and Z the king or cleric promulgating it, then the usual formulation of the annal entry in its fullest form is lex X for Y la Z (AU 793, 799, 814, 823, 825). With omission either of for Y (AU 744, 753, 757, 778, 806) or of la Z (AU 748, 772, 788, 793, 812), this basic formulation also occurs in a shorter form. Formulations

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⁴ For a collection of references to the cain see Thurneysen, ZCP 18 (1930) 387-8.
⁵ The two editors of AU have taken populis to refer to people (eg.); S. Mac Airt and G. Mac Niocaill, The Annals of Ulster [Dublin 1982] 155-7. A plural seems called for, however, if only because many tribes were involved. Adamnán's place as the maker of the first of the cáins was reiterated in K. Meyer, Cain Adamnain [Aeneidola Oxoniensia, Oxford 1938] 12-13 § 21. If we except that of Adamnán, however, laws were generally named after long-dead saints.
⁶ If we omit the 'external' law of Sunday (AU 887), the latest record of the promulgation of a native cáin is the reference in AU 836 to the law of Patrick being 'carried to Connacht'. A revival in the practice was attempted in the early eleventh century (AI 1040).
⁸ Sometimes the word order varies (AU 723) or is added to (AU 814, 823).
deviating from the norm occur in AU 697, 727, 737, 780, 783, 811, 813, 826, 836. Of these, however, only AU 813, which reads lex Darii la Hu Néill 'Dari's law [promulgated] among the Uí Néill', agrees with AI 810 in using la to denote the region or people adopting the law.

Despite the almost total lack of support elsewhere for the use of la in reference to the region or people adopting the law, Mac Airt must be followed in taking la Mumain of AI 810 to mean 'in Mumu'. The phrase can have no other possible meaning. On the other hand, despite the overwhelming support of the AU entries, his translation of la Dare ocus la Aduar mac Echin as 'promulgated'... by Daire and by Aduar, son of Echen' cannot possibly be correct. Both of these personages were in fact saints, belonging, in as far as either ever existed,9 to the so-called Age of Saints (c. AD 500–650). This rules out, of course, the possibility that either could have promulgated a law in AD 810. Moreover, each of these saints is otherwise acknowledged as the 'source' of a law. And finally, despite the manuscript reading Dare, Mac Airt's rendering of the first saint's name as Daire, an exclusively male name, is wrong. The correct form is the exclusively female name Darí.

Before proceeding to an examination of the evidence for saints Darí and Aduar, therefore, we may now emend Mac Airt's translation of AI 810 to read: 'the law (or laws) concerning cows, of Darí and of Aduar son of Echen, promulgated in Mumu'.

2. The Name Darí

The three main sources of evidence for the name Darí, which seems to have been used exclusively of the saint so called,10 are the annals, which focus on her law, the calendars of saints, and the genealogies of the saints. All of these sources agree in providing, almost invariably, her name with an ending in -i. The pattern is set by four annals (AU 812, 813, 826; AI 810). Two spell the name Darí, one Darí and the fourth Dare (AI 810).11 The calendars follow suit. The earliest of these, the Martyrology of Tallaght, composed 828 × 833, has three examples of the name (Feb. 13, Aug. 7, 8), each spelt Darí.12 The late twelfth-century Martyrology of Gorman twice (Aug. 8, Nov. 2) spells it Darí, and even in the seventeenth-century Martyrology of Donegal only one

9The connotations of Darí's name (§ 2 below) do not inspire confidence in her status as a saint. Similarly, Aduar can be shown to have probably enjoyed ancestral status (§ 4 below).
10Darí's place in a number of different calendar lists (e.g. Aug. 8, Nov. 2) does not necessarily imply that we have to do with two or more saints of the same name. The saint is assigned, for instance, only one pedigree. I take all references to be to the one saint.
11The only other annals to notice Darí's law is Chronicon Scotorum (ed. W. M. Hennessy, London 1865), which has two references, Darí (812), Daire (826).
of three entries (Aug. 8, Sept. 28, Nov. 2) substitutes -e for -i. The genealogies of the saints reveal a similar pattern. Thus, of the eight early full-length recensions of the saint’s pedigree, seven adopt the form Dari and one, the earliest version, the form Darí. In fact, only in the seventeenth-century recensions of the pedigree is the name spelled Daire.

The overwhelming manuscript support for a form ending in -i (-i) has been generally ignored by editors or commentators of texts containing the name. Almost without exception these have taken the name to represent either Daire (Dairi), a non-existent personal name, or Daire, an exclusively male name. The often illustrious scholars who have erred in this regard include, in chronological order, J. H. Todd and W. Reeves (1864), W. M. Hennessy (1866, 1887), E. Mac Carthy (1901), W. Stokes (1895, 1905), P. Walsh (1918), R. Thurneysen (1930), R. I. Best and H. J. Lawlor (1931), M. A. O’Brien (1951), S. Mac Airt (1963), K. Hughes (1966, 1972), S. Mac Airt and G. Mac Niocaill (1983), and, most recently, the writer of this article (1985).

Stokes’s inclusion in the list does not say much for the maxim seniores priores. In his earlier work, his editions of the Calendar of Oengus (1880) and of the Vita Tripartita (1887), he had quite correctly taken the name to represent Darí. By 1895, however, when he edited the Martyrology of Gorman, indecision about the name, now rendered Dare (Nov. 2) and indexed as Daire, had become evident. By 1903, he was prepared, with Strachan, in their edition of Thesaurus palaeohibernicus, to index the

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13W. Stokes, The Martyrology of Gorman (London 1885); J. H. Todd, W. Reeves, A calendar of the saints of Ireland (Dublin 1864). In Ó Cléirigh’s index to the latter work, the saint’s name is spelt Daire (Latin Darí). J. Colgan, Acta sanctorum Hiberniae (Louvain 1645), also refers to the saint as Darí.

14P. Ó Ríain, Corpus genealogiarum sanctorum Hiberniae (Dublin 1985) 8 § 39. The Book of Glendalough (Rawlinson B 502) represents the earliest surviving version.

15P. Walsh, Genealogiae regum et sanctorum Hiberniae (Maynooth and Dublin 1918) 62. Cf. An Dubhthach Mac Fhir Bhısıgh’s naomhshaonchas 711 (Daire). I have to thank Nollaig Ó Muiríll for this reference.

16Todd, Reeves, Calendar (1864), 501; W. M. Hennessy, Chronicon Scotorum (1866) 129, 135, 375; idem, Annales of Ulster I (1887) 301, 323; B. Mac Carthy, Annales of Ulster IV (1901) 111; Stokes, Martyrology of Gorman (1895), 312; idem, Martyrology of Oengus (1903) 211, 414; Walsh, Genealogiae (1918), 161; Thurneysen, ZCP 18 (1930), 387; Best, Lawlor, Martyrology of Talcaigh (1931), 241; M. A. O’Brien, Varia IV, Ériu 11 (1932) 164–71, p. 161; Mac Airt, Annals of Inisfallen (1951) 457; P. Grosjean, Notes d’histoire ecclésiologique (33–34), Anales Bolandianes 81 (1963) 260–69; Hughes, Church in early Irish Society (1966) 151–2; idem, Early Christian Ireland . . . (1972), 81; S. Mac Airt, G. Mac Niocaill, The Annales of Ulster (to A.D. 1131) (1983) 269, 283: Ó Ríain, Corpus (1985), 239. In a review of my work (Eigse 22 (1987) 163–5, p. 164), L. Breánaigh draws attention to the error. His claim, however, that ‘Thurneysen and O’Brien took it that the name . . . was . . . Daire’ is inaccurate; the former wrote Dare, the latter Daire. We may also add to the above list, D. Ó Corráin, F. Maguire, Gaelic personal names (Dublin 1981) 69, where Saint Dairí (Aug. 8) is taken to represent Daire.


18Stokes, Martyrology of Gorman, 153, 211, 312.
name under Dáire.¹⁹ And by 1905, when he published his second edition of the Calendar of Oengus, he had carried the progression to its logical conclusion. The earlier Dáire was now not only rendered Daire; she was also identified as a man!²⁰

Thurneysen's view of the name took an opposite course. Having first followed Stokes's later work in maintaining that the saint was a man named Daire, he later allowed at least for the possibility that the *urheber* of the law was a woman named Dari.²¹ In doing so, he drew attention to the previously scarcely noticed but thoroughly well-founded opinion on the matter expressed by Carl Marstrander in the first fasciculus of the Dictionary of the Irish language (1913).²² Marstrander had in fact taken his cue from Stokes's early work, from which he took his first example of the name. He went on to define Dari, quite correctly, as an uninflected feminine form 'not identical with Daire'. Moreover, the -r element of the name is explained, in a separate entry on Dathri, quite correctly, as an unconnected feminine form 'not identical with Daire'. Moreover, the -r element of the name is explained, in a separate entry on Dathri, as the genitive of *e yew'.²³ The prefix *dar-*, which is peculiar to female names, has since been explained by M. A. Ó'Brien as the remains of *ducilair*, a possible Irish reflex of the Indo-European word for daughter.²⁴

3. WHO WAS SAINT DARI?

Despite Stokes, who took the gloss *bóchána* 'of the law concerning cattle' to represent a place-name, only to be corrected in turn by Ó'Brien, Thurneysen and Grosjean,²⁵ none of the sources already mentioned names the saint's church. As Grosjean, who persisted in calling the saint Daire,²⁶ rightly pointed out, however, her pedigree 'invite à la chercheur dans le pays de Tir Amalgada', a territory whose name is now reflected in the barony of Tirawley, Co. Mayo.²⁷ Also, drawing on the tract now known as 'Four Saints', which describes an encounter between a Saint Cormac 'bien légendaire' and Dari, Grosjean noted that the saint was connected with Mag Gamnach, now Moygawnagh, the name of a parish in the barony of Tirawley.²⁸

²²*DHI* D-I04: 'Dari'.
²³Ibid., 120–22: 'Dathri'.
²⁶He defends this form of the name in a footnote (ibid., 261 n.).
²⁷Ibid., 265. For the pedigree see Ó Ríain, *Corpus*, 8 § 39.
²⁸P. Grosjean, *Analecta Bollandiana* 81 (1963) 265–9, pp. 268–9. In the process, Grosjean followed Colgan (*Acta Sanctorum Hiberniae*, 752 § viii) in misunderstanding the text (p. 268), which records Dari's neglectful reception of Cormac, but this does not upset the identification. Colgan (p. 755) seems to have taken Dari to be the same as Darbhile of the Úi Pháircrach, assigning her a feast on 26 October. Cf. Walsh, *Genealogia*, 63 § 9 (note added by Colgan). For the text on 'Four Saints' see J. G. O'Keeffe in *Irish Texts* 3 (1931) 1–8, p. 2 § 5.
In fact, the saint’s church in this area can now be even more accurately identified. It was at Kildare — from ‘Cill Dair’ ‘Dari’s church’ and not Cill Dá Rí ‘church of two kings’ as previously supposed — in the parish of Crossmolina, which adjoins that of Moygawnagh. Two other Connacht churches named Kildaree, in the baronies of Ballymoe and Clare, Co. Galway, similarly commemorate the saint. While none of these churches is mentioned in an early documentary source, it must seem likely that one or other of the three was involved in the promulgation of Dari’s law. Three of the four references in the annals to the law relate to a very short span of time (AU 812, 813; AI 810 [= AU 811?]). Of these, two relate to regions outside Connacht, i.e. Uí Néill (813) and Mumu (810). The fourth reference (AU 826) records the reimposition of the law in Connacht. There was, it seems, a flurry of activity concerning the law about 811–12 which can hardly have been unconnected with recent political developments in Connacht. Connacht had just then, through the efforts of Muirgus mac Tommaltaig (ob. 815) of the Uí Ebrīúin, become ‘a power on the Irish scene’. The support of the church was, as F. J. Byrne points out, a powerful contributory factor in this development. During Muirgus’s reign, for instance, Patrick’s law had twice been brought from Armagh to Connacht (AU 799, 811), a sure sign of the increase in influence of the western province. Muirgus had also been instrumental in the promulgation of laws associated with more local churches, like that of Roscommon (AU 793). It may well be, therefore, that Dari’s law was first promulgated at Muirgus’s behest. Moreover, its adoption by the Uí Néill and Munstermen very probably also underlines the then increasing influence of Connacht in Irish affairs.

4. SAINT ADUAR’S LAW

Unlike Dari, who figures in several calendar lists, Aduar is nowhere provided with a feastday. Indeed, were it not for the single annal in AI (810), we would depend on the genealogies for the sum of our information concerning the saint. There are two conflicting pedigrees. One assigns Aduar to the Sil Aduair of Lóichsi, the implication being that his was originally an ancestral cult. The other attaches him to a branch of the

In the Ordnance Survey Namebooks (Mayo), the Irish form is given as Cill Dá Rígh ‘church of two kings’. In the Letter Books for the same county (vol. I, p. 49), attention is drawn to ‘a grave in which two kings ... are said to lie interred’. E. Hogan included this folk-etymological form in his Onomasticon Gaedelicum (Dublin 1910), p. 188, on the authority, it seems, of the Ordnance Survey. For a late fourteenth-century spelling as da ríg, see Ir. Texts 3 (1931) 7 § 21.

Both parishes are within the barony of Trawley.

An Irish form Cill Dá Rí ‘church of two kings’ has been similarly proposed for each of these names. See Ordnance Survey Letter Books (Galway I), pp. 74–5. Cf. J. O’Donovan, The tribes and customs of Hy-Mána (Dublin 1843) map opposite p. 1.

P. J. Byrne, Irish kings and high-kings (London 1973) 251.

Cf. M. A. Ó Brien, Corpus genealogiarum Hiberniae (Dublin 1962) 83. In the latter source Aduar is included in a secular pedigree.
Osraige, who were of course neighbours of the Loichí, Aduar’s law, which presumably also concerned cattle, is as poorly documented as the saint himself. It has the distinction, however, of being mentioned in two hitherto misunderstood texts. One of these, the annal in AI for 810, has already been discussed (§ 1). The other is a marginal gloss added by the Book of Leinster scribe to an entry on Aduar in the Osraige section of the secular genealogies.36

Taking the Rawlinson B 502 text as a guide, the LL exemplar at this point probably read:

Aed Cōemchenn a quo Aduar mac Echind
hUinniuc a quo Hui Fhorannání.37

The LL scribe, having written mac, found himself at the end of a line. Omitting Echind, presumably by mistake, he began the next line with hUinniuc, as in the exemplar. On noticing the omission, either then or later, he added a gloss over Aduar and in the right margin which has been read, both by M. A. O’Brien and by A. O’Sullivan, as follows: i. qui fecit in mac (?) cháin Echin.38 This reading makes no sense. In fact, the gloss consists of two originally separate parts. The scribe first added mac (?) Echin in the right margin to make up for the original omission, duplicating mac (if this is the correct reading) in the process. And having done so, he went on to write over Aduar and continuing into the right margin i. qui fecit in cháin. The text of LL 339 bc 39 as a whole may then be read and translated as follows, the gloss being indicated by parentheses:

Aed Cám a quo Aduar mac (mac Echin i. qui fecit in cháin)
‘Aed Cám ancestor of Aduar son of Echen, i.e. he who made the law’.

This tells us nothing much about the law, except that it was attributed to Aduar of the Osraige. It does, however, corroborate the evidence of AI 810 as to its hitherto unnoticed existence.

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36 Ó Ríain, Corpus, 45 § 277.
38 I follow the manuscript reading, which is arranged in lines as here, adding, where necessary, length-marks and lenition.