

An eighteenth-century Gaelic scribe's private library: Muiris Ó Gormáin's books¹

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[Accepted 30 June 2009. Published 29 April 2010.]

Abstract

The transcription and teaching career of the Gaelic scribe Muiris Ó Gormáin spanned three-quarters of the eighteenth century. From the 1750s onwards he became one of the most sought after scribes as he was employed by many of the leading Irish antiquarians, both Protestant and Catholic, to copy and translate Gaelic manuscripts. During the 1760s and 1770s he compiled detailed catalogues of the contents of books and manuscripts in his possession, together with his estimation of their value. Not only do these catalogues provide an important insight into the type of material he considered worth collecting but they also point towards the fact that he functioned as a book-dealer. The bilingual nature of these catalogues, and the large number of books in the English language they contained, challenge the argument first put forward by Daniel Corkery in the 1920s that the worlds of the Gaelic-speaking Irish and the English-speaking Protestant élite were divided from one another with little interaction between them, and Joep Leerssen's contention more recently that Gaelic Ireland was isolated from print culture in English.

Introduction

The role of the eighteenth-century Gaelic scribe carried with it certain responsibilities and challenges. As custodians of native learning, scribes appreciated the importance of preserving the literary remnants of their culture for posterity through the collection and copying of as many texts as possible. In addition, manuscripts served both as primary source material for their own research and as valuable assets that could be sold to other collectors and patrons. Faced with the necessity of eking out a living after the breakdown of the old Gaelic social order, many scribes were forced to seek new patrons to replace the traditional ones who were no more. These new patrons

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doi: 10.3318/PRIAC.2010.110.239

¹ Most of the research for this article was carried out while I was employed as a postdoctoral research fellow at the Centre for the Study of Human Settlement and Historical Change (Moore Institute), NUI, Galway, from April 2001. An earlier draft of this article was presented at the annual Eighteenth-Century Ireland Society conference, Trinity College Dublin, 17–20 June 2004 and initial findings were published in an article entitled 'Leabharlann phearsanta Mhuiris Uí Ghormáin', in Ruairí Ó hUiginn and Liam Mac Cóil (eds), *Bliainiris* 8 (Ráth Chairn, 2008), 59–102. I wish to thank Máire Mhic Chonghail for allowing me access to her mother's papers (Nessa Ní Shéaghda) on Ó Gormáin.

were often members of the Protestant ruling class, particularly from the middle of the century, by which time the study of Gaelic antiquities and the Irish language had become a fashionable pursuit among some members of that class.² This new interest in Gaelic antiquities was due to a number of interlinked factors, which included an emerging sense of Irish identity within the Protestant community and the influence of the Celtic revival that was gathering pace throughout Britain.³ Often, the nature of the material which Gaelic scribes transcribed was dictated by the tastes of these new patrons and, for the most part, reflected the vogue for historical manuscripts, romances and prose tales, and lays from the Fenian and Ulster cycles. There was much demand for the transcription and translation of historical texts, in particular *The annals of the Four Masters* and *The book of Ballymote*, as these had a crucial role to play in assisting the efforts of Protestant historians and antiquarians to validate the legitimacy of their community in Ireland. For some Catholic patrons, too, such as the Gaelic scholar Charles O’Conor of Belanagare, Co. Roscommon, historical sources played a key part both in their defence of Gaelic culture in response to the denigration by English commentators and in their campaign for an amelioration of the penal laws and for parity of esteem.

Very few literary men could survive on scribal work alone, however, without turning to teaching, farming or labouring to supplement their income, and indeed for many it was only a part-time occupation. For Dáibhidh do Barra, for example, it was after Mass every Sunday: ‘*na thamallaibh tar éis Aifrinn gach Domhnach*’. In the case of Donnchadh Ó Shéacháin, he copied every Sunday and for a while every night: ‘*smuth dó gach lá Dom[h]naicc is tamal gac[h] aon oidhche*’ and for the Co. Clare tradesman, Mícheál Ó Raghallaigh, it was an occupation carried out during idle times, ‘*am aimsir d[h]íobhuinn*’.⁴ Of the many scribes who toiled throughout

² For a discussion of antiquarianism in Ireland, see Ann de Valera, ‘Antiquarian and historical investigations in Ireland in the eighteenth century’, unpublished MA thesis, University College Dublin, 1978; Clare O’Halloran, *Golden ages and barbarous nations. Antiquarian debate and cultural politics in Ireland, c. 1750–1800* (Cork, 2004).

³ For a discussion of Anglo–Irish identity, see A.P.W. Malcomson, *John Foster. The politics of the Anglo–Irish Ascendancy* (Oxford, 1978), xvii–xxiii; W.J. McCormack, *Ascendancy and tradition in Anglo–Irish literary history from 1789 to 1939* (Oxford, 1985), 61–96; R.F. Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600–1972* (London, 1989), 167–94; James Kelly, ‘The genesis of “Protestant Ascendancy”: the Rightboy disturbances of the 1780s and their impact upon Protestant opinion’, in Gerard O’Brien (ed.), *Parliament, politics and people. Essays in eighteenth-century Irish history* (Dublin, 1989), 93–127; S.J. Connolly (ed.), *Political ideas in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2000). See also, Colin Kidd, *British identities before nationalism: ethnicity and nationhood in the Atlantic world, 1600–1800* (Cambridge, 1999), 146–81 and Lesa Ní Mhunchaile, ‘Anglo–Irish antiquarianism and the transformation of Irish identity, 1750–1800’, in David A. Valone and Jill Marie Bradbury (eds), *Anglo–Irish identities, 1571–1845* (Lewisburg, PA, 2008), 181–98. For the Celtic revival, see Edward Snyder, *The Celtic revival in English literature, 1760–1800* (Gloucester, MA, 1965); and Robert Welch, *A history of verse translation from the Irish, 1789–1887* (Gerards Cross, Bucks, 1988), 1–43.

⁴ Nessa Ní Shéaghda, ‘Gairmeacha beatha roinnt scríobhaithe ón 18ú agus ón 19ú céad’, *Celtica* 21 (1990), 567–75: 568.

the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it appears that there may only have been three who could be termed 'professional' viz. the Cork scribes Pól and Seosamh Ó Longáin and the northern scribe (thought to be from either Monaghan or Armagh), Muiris Ó Gormáin, the subject of this essay.⁵

Described as 'the fashionable scribe of his day' by William O'Sullivan, Ó Gormáin was arguably one of the most prolific scribes of the eighteenth century as more than 60 manuscripts in his hand, completed between 1734 and 1786, are still extant in various repositories in Ireland and abroad.⁶ These manuscripts consist mainly of prose tales and lays relating to the Fionn Cycle, romantic tales, genealogies, grammatical, medical, legal and religious tracts, as well as extracts from various annals such as *The annals of Connaught*, *The annals of Innisfallen* and excerpts from *The book of Ballymote*. There appears to have been considerable demand for his transcription and translation work from the 1750s onwards from which time he became a significant agent in the transfer of native Gaelic learning to Protestant antiquarians. Although many of these amateur scholars were fired with enthusiasm for the subject, they had little or no competency in the Irish language and therefore relied on native scholars and scribes to furnish them with both Gaelic texts and accompanying English translations. Realising the potential offered by this new market for Gaelic material, Ó Gormáin was quick to take advantage of it as is evident from the following advertisement he placed in *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* (1–5 July 1766):

Whereas the Irish, the ancient language of this nation, hath been long neglected, an Evil justly complained of, as it renders Gentlemen unable to have recourse to the many valuable Chronicles and Compositions still preserved amongst us, relative to the ancient state of this Kingdom, its Arts, Sciences, and Literature. Therefore Maurice Gorman, Professor of that Language, offers his service to the public, and proposes to lay himself out in his own apartment (at the sign of the Mashing Keeve in St. Mary's Lane Dublin) every morning from ten to two, for the instruction of youth and others as wish for their own cultivation, to open treasures so long locked up. [...] N.B. He is perfect master of the difficulties attending the Reading and explaining the ancient Irish MSS. in Vellum.⁷

⁵ Ní Shéaghdha, 'Gairmeacha beatha', 567. It should be noted, however, that for much of his life Ó Gormáin also appears to have relied on teaching in conjunction with his transcription work for a living.

⁶ William O'Sullivan, 'The Irish manuscripts in Case H in Trinity College Dublin catalogued by Matthew Young in 1781', *Celtica* 11 (1976), 231–2. For a more complete account of Ó Gormáin's life and scribal career, see Tomás Ó Fiaich, 'Dán ar Phádraig Mac Siomoin', *Reportorium Novum* 2(2) (1960), 288–91; Lesa Ní Mhunchaile, 'Muiris Ó Gormáin (+1793): scoláire idir dhá chultúr', in Mícheál Mac Craith and Pádraig Ó Héalaí (eds), *Diasa diograise. Aistí in omós do Mháirtín Ó Briain* (Indreabhán, 2009), 215–35.

⁷ Thomas Wall, *The sign of Doctor Hay's head* (Dublin, 1958), 94; Nessa Ní Shéaghdha, 'Irish scholars and scribes in eighteenth-century Dublin', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland/Iris an dá chultúr* 4 (1989), 51.

The emphasis here was on his ability to read the ancient manuscripts in order ‘to open treasures so long locked up’ in the Irish language, the implication being that these literary treasures would remain inaccessible without the assistance of native scholars. Among his students were the prominent Protestant antiquarians Charles Vallancey and the clergyman and Fellow of Trinity College Dublin, Matthew Young. It is noteworthy that he chose to advertise his services openly. Very few Gaelic schoolmasters advertised their services in such a manner during the course of the century and Ó Gormáin’s notice may have been the earliest.⁸

It is difficult to say with certainty whether the standard of Ó Gormáin’s English was high but the following comment from Charles O’Conor to the genealogist Thomas O’Gorman, regarding a text Ó Gormáin was about to translate for him, suggests that it was not: ‘Their language though classical is plain, and Gorman, after translating their testimonies in his bad English, will enable yourself to dress them up in better’.⁹ Nevertheless, his literal translations would have been of a sufficient standard to enable his patrons to rework them if necessary. These patrons included some of the most important and influential antiquarians of his day, both Protestant and Catholic: Charles Vallancey; Lord and Lady Moira; Francis Stoughton Sullivan, Professor of Laws at Trinity College Dublin; and the librarian in Trinity, Thomas Leland; and middle-class Catholics such as Charles O’Conor, Dr John Fergus, and the Chevalier Thomas O’Gorman. Furthermore, between 1772 and 1774, he was employed as amanuensis by the Dublin Society’s Committee of Antiquarians. Later, in June 1785, he was appointed amanuensis to the Antiquities Committee of the Royal Irish Academy. Around the same time, he assisted the research of two other prominent Protestant antiquarians, Joseph Cooper Walker, author of *Historical memoirs of the Irish bards* (Dublin and London, 1786); and Charlotte Brooke, author of *Reliques of Irish poetry* (Dublin, 1789); by furnishing copies of some of the Gaelic poems in their works and possibly also literal English translations. Together with Lady Moira, Walker and Brooke both had a particular interest in Irish romances and Ó Gormáin duly provided copies and translations. He was responsible for transcribing at least four volumes of romances now held in the National Library of Ireland (NLI), MSS G144–7, all of which were originally in the possession of Lord and Lady Moira. The first of these manuscripts contains a copy of the well-known late-medieval romance *Bás Cerbhaill agus Ferbhlaide*, a later adaptation of which, *Eachtra Abhlaighe*, was composed in the mid- or late seventeenth century. In G144, the romance is headed, ‘The Adventures of Farbhlaide, Daughter of the King of Scotland, and Cearbhaill, son of Donnchaid Mhoir Ui Daluigh of Finebheara’. An English translation of the romance, entitled ‘The Adventures of Faravla, Princess of Scotland, and Carval O Daly, Son of Donogh Mor’, and attributed to Joseph Cooper

⁸ Séamus Ó Casaide, ‘Irish professors in the eighteenth century’, *The Irish Book Lover* 21(6) (1933), 137–8. The well-known Co. Clare poet and scribe Tomás Ó Míocháin regularly advertised his services in the *Clare Journal* and *Ennis Chronicle* between 1779 and 1805. See Brian Ó Dálaigh, ‘Tomás Ó Míocháin and the Ennis School of Gaelic Poetry c. 1730–1804’, *Dál gCais* 11 (1993), 55–73.

⁹ Robert E. Ward, John F. Wrynn and Catherine Coogan Ward (eds), *Letters of Charles O’Conor of Belanagare. A Catholic voice in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Washington, 1988), 407.

Walker, is found in Dublin City Public Libraries (DCPL), Gilbert Collection, MS. 135. Although the translation is in Walker's handwriting, the standard of his Irish was such that he would have been unable to translate directly from Gaelic originals and it is likely, therefore, that Ó Gormáin furnished him with a rough literal translation, which Walker then reworked into a more literary style.¹⁰

Muiris Ó Gormáin's book and manuscript collection

In addition to transcribing manuscripts for patrons, Ó Gormáin also amassed a large collection of printed books and Irish-language manuscripts, which he catalogued during the 1760s and 1770s. Although it did not compare in size to the private libraries of his patrons, given his social status and the fact that books were an expensive purchase, it is remarkable that he succeeded in accumulating such a substantial and valuable collection. His catalogues are still extant and are held in the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) and the National Library of Ireland (Pls I–III).¹¹ Both resemble each other as regards to the size and colour of the individual leaves of paper and it is possible that both manuscripts once formed part of the same book. The earliest, RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a), which Ó Gormáin compiled in 1761, recorded 81 items, including manuscripts and printed books; 59 numbered items, 6 of which were printed books, were listed in a second catalogue, NLI, MS. G664, compiled on 3 October 1772. Further additions were made to the latter catalogue on 17 May 1776 when 41 manuscripts and 14 printed books were added. A final entry made on 1 June 1776 listed 38 printed books in the English language.¹² The catalogue also contains a cancelled draft list of 17 Irish manuscripts and 3 Irish printed books. Both RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a) and NLI, MS. G664 include detailed descriptions of the physical make-up and condition as well as content of the various books and manuscripts Ó Gormáin possessed, some of which were in poor condition and in need of rebinding.¹³ In a number of cases, he specified from whom he had purchased the various items. Such detailed accounts by eighteenth-century Gaelic scribes of manuscripts in their possession are rare as often the only personal information that remains consists of colophons or *probatio penne* jotted by them on their manuscripts.¹⁴ Ó Gormáin's catalogues supply a wealth of information and serve, therefore, as one of the best examples for a case study of a Gaelic scribe's interests, the type of material he considered worth collect-

¹⁰ See Chapter 7, Lesa Uí Fhathaigh (Ní Mhungaile), 'Joseph Cooper Walker (1760–1812). Beatha agus saothar: *Historical memoirs of the Irish bards* (1786)', unpublished PhD thesis, National University of Ireland, Galway, 2001.

¹¹ Ó Gormáin only numbered the items in RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a) as far as no. 28 and I have therefore taken the liberty of continuing the numbering in the Appendix to this article.

¹² Numbers 32, 35 and 36 on the list contained more than one title. This brings the total number of English titles in his possession at that time, therefore, to 43.

¹³ He noted, for instance, that his copy of Aodh Mac Aingil's *Scáthán shacramuinte na haithridhe* (Louvain, 1618) 'wants binding very much'. Unlike the Meath scribe Peadar Ó Gealacháin in the following century, who repaired and rebound damaged manuscripts that came into his possession, evidence is lacking that Ó Gormáin did likewise.

¹⁴ Charles Plummer, 'On the colophons and marginalia of Irish scribes', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 12 (1926), 11–44.



Pl. I—Royal Irish Academy (RIA), MS. 23 H 23 (a), fol. 1. Muiris Ó Gormáin's catalogue of books from his private library compiled in 1761. © Royal Irish Academy.

May 17th. 1776. Irish prints and manuscripts 6-17

3. Manuals. manuscript in small 8^{vo} -

2. *loépan nacepeadmeac* written by John Solly containing 455 pages making sheets - 28

3. *loépan na cepeadmeac* in print on 8^{vo} with the Christian Doctrine, and *apocem viz equas* *liom n'compam do éon* composed by Bonaventura o Heosa, *mulle pe mupb, hie tempull lopezo.*

4. *Desiderius* or *r'sacian* an epulaid a small 8^{vo} in print

5. on 8^{vo} written by John Heyden. containing the sermon for good friday in Irish. *tuipé an r'gh naínda. tupead na beata deisionais. na na quocá deisionac. tuipar loca d'piz an t'sapz epupdaize. dram n' dróisain. colom eile.* with many pious poems in Irish and in English on the opposite side pages 285

6. *r'sacian p'p'ad'atca* written by John Solly of fine letter & good orthography 387 pages.

7. the same book written by the same man. 395 pages

8. *in teagz epupdaize amod compp'p'ra f' na t'pains a t'cl'acali* *londa. oile l'ar an a'ij unopac d'erm' ledeym. do cantraq' 105a.* *upn' d'z m'amp' appun. liotam wpa. liotam m'p'e. liotam na n'om. na t'ep' p'p'alm ar'p'ze. t'p'ij na hequon f' na é'rmaz pe s'an a' conll. and very good orthography. several p'p'phocia in Irish. *caipin an p'ad' puon. t'p'p'p'e colom eile da é'p'mynn* *Quicunque vult. ep'e s'e ac'nap'p'.* (ol p'ion. d'z d'p'p')*

the book may be called a manual of devout prayers

9. *an t'sapz epupdaize* on 8^{vo} 156. *r's'm'p'p' came an é'ap'da. beata s'e* *an t'omp' n'om'ca ep'adua. liotam s'e. antama n'om'ca* *de padra. beata s'e cal'p'p'ona 315. pages*

Pl. III—NLI, MS. G664, fol. 17. Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.

ing, the exemplars to which he had access, and his contact with other scribes. They also provide an insight into the type of reading material popular in certain circles in Ireland in the latter half of the eighteenth century, in addition to offering examples of some of the typical books that both a schoolmaster and a Gaelic scholar might possess. The English books in his collection also offer an interesting perspective and point towards a more extensive degree of contact between the English-speaking and Gaelic worlds than has hitherto been accepted. Furthermore, the catalogues serve as a showcase for the work of a coterie of scribes, commonly known as the Ó Neachtain circle, which operated in Dublin in the early decades of the century, and provide a clue to Ó Gormáin's contact with some of its members. As we shall see below, the manuscripts produced by members of this coterie demonstrate that a significant level of interaction occurred between print and scribal culture and provide valuable information on the development of the public sphere in Gaelic Ireland at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

There are two striking aspects to Ó Gormáin's lists. Firstly, they were in English, which suggests that they were not compiled solely for Ó Gormáin's own use. This also gives an indication of the degree to which bilingualism was gradually becoming more widespread among Irish speakers during the course of the eighteenth century and, in Ó Gormáin's case, can probably be attributed to his contact with English-speaking patrons. Secondly, he assigned a financial value to many of the items listed. Although his primary motivation for initiating the collection may have reflected a wish to salvage as many manuscripts as possible from neglect or destruction, and to acquire exemplars for his own studies, the fact that they were priced strongly suggests that he supplemented his income by dealing in books and manuscripts and that the catalogues are, in fact, an inventory of his stock. We know from records in Trinity College Dublin (TCD), for example, that the college purchased a number of manuscripts from Ó Gormáin, including TCD, MS. 1359 (H.4.18), which he himself had transcribed.¹⁵ Through a comparison of RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a) and NLI, MS. G664, one can trace the changes that occurred to his collection during the course of fifteen years. By October 1772, although a number of the same manuscripts listed in the earlier catalogue still occur, the number of Irish-language manuscripts had almost halved. Between 1772 and 1776 the number of manuscripts decreased further, while the number of printed books in English increased substantially. The cancelled draft list of 17 Irish manuscripts and 3 Irish printed books in NLI, MS. G664 was probably a list of items that he had sold. He was keenly aware of the value of each item and used various criteria when assessing the financial worth of a manuscript that included its uniqueness, the number of pages it contained and the quality of paper on which it was written.

The most valuable manuscript in his collection was penned in 1466:

A book on fine vellum, Intitled the Rose, being an Herbal, and a Treatise of physick, an exceeding fine manuscript, with a great many material things

¹⁵ This was entitled an 'Irish Herbal' in RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a), no. 4. O'Sullivan, 'Irish manuscripts in case H', 234, 236–7.

very rare, and wrote very close; a small folio, containing 114 sheets which ought not to be sold. But if it should be too cheap at £11.8.0.¹⁶

This was the *Rosa Anglica*, one of the most important medical texts in the Irish language, translated by an anonymous author from a thesis written by the English surgeon Joannes de Gaddesden between 1305 and 1317.¹⁷ Along with Cormac Mac Duinnshléibe's translation of Bernard of Gordon's *Lilium medicinae* and the *Aphorisms of Hippocrates*, the *Rosa Anglica* was the standard medical text copied and studied by Irish learned doctors.¹⁸ Ó Gormáin's copy of the *Lilium* was made in 1578 and he provided the following information:

The Lilly in folio, very legible tho wrote in the year 1578, as in page 142. Being a Treatise of Phisick by the best Masters of the profession, with a black leather cover, bound or tyed with leather strings, & seems to be a cover to another book before, containing 105 sheets, and is richly worth 7 pound to a Doctor that could read or practise it, and at 1s:1d per sheet comes to £5:13:9.¹⁹

He also considered a genealogical tract penned by Seon Mac Solaidh, a scribe linked to the Ó Neachtain circle, to be extremely valuable at £4 6s: 'the most part of the book is scarce and valuable at a shilling a sheet'.²⁰ Commenting on the quality of paper used in two Keating manuscripts, he noted: 'in a large folio on a very good paper which cost 2 pence a sheet (in all 254 pages) [...] a very fine manuscript it is worth 5 guineas and upwards. It is richly worth three guineas and cannot be sold [for] less' and 'Keating in Irish in quarto well bound containing 74 sheets is worth 3 guineas at the least and at 12 pence per sheet would come to £3.14.0'. He also included the price £3 8s 3d beside the latter entry.²¹ The printed books in the collection were similarly carefully priced. He valued both a copy of William Bedell's *Bible*, printed in 1685 and Hugh McCurtin's *English Irish dictionary*, printed in Paris in 1732, at £16 3s, noting that he had a second copy of the dictionary 'to dispose of'. To place these values in context, it should be noted that chap-books, the cheapest books available at that time, cost between 1d and 6d, and that broadsides and ballad sheets cost between 1/4d and 1/2d.²² Between 1772 and 1774 Ó Gormáin was paid £5 13s 9d per quarter by the Dublin Society's Committee of Antiquarians for his transcrip-

¹⁶ RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a), no. 3.

¹⁷ See Aoibheann Nic Dhonnchadha, 'Eagarthóir, téacs agus lámhscríbhinní: Winifred Wulff agus an *Rosa Anglica*', *Léachtaí Cholm Cille* 34 (2004), 105–47; Winifred Wulff, *Rosa Anglica*, Irish Texts Society 25 (London, 1929).

¹⁸ Nessa Ní Shéaghdha, *Translations and adaptations into Irish* (Dublin, 1984), 6.

¹⁹ RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a), no. 2.

²⁰ RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a), no. 9.

²¹ RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a), nos 1 and 21.

²² Toby Barnard, 'Print culture, 1700–1800', in Raymond Gillespie and Andrew Hadfield (eds), *Oxford history of the Irish book. The Irish book in English 1550–1800* (5 vols, Oxford, 2006), vol. iii, 35.

tion work, the same price he placed on his copy of the *Lilium*.²³ It is estimated that at the end of the 1770s a farm labourer earned an average of 6.7d per day or around £15 per year and by the 1790s, 59% of the population of Ireland survived on less than £5 per annum, while around 30% had an annual income of between £5 and £20.²⁴

The primary means by which Ó Gormáin acquired books and manuscripts for his collection was by purchase either at auction or from booksellers. He noted the purchase of a copy of Edward Lhuyd's *Archaeologia Britannica* (Oxford, 1707) 'bought of Mr Flinn in Castle Street' (RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a), no. 31). This was probably the bookseller, bookbinder and auctioneer Laurence Flin at the Bible, Castle Street, Dublin, from whom Charles O'Connor also bought books.²⁵ Ó Gormáin purchased a copy of Dyke's English dictionary from 'Mrs Davis in Fleet Lane, Dublin'. It is unclear, however, whether this was a private sale or whether she was a bookseller.²⁶ He also obtained manuscripts on loan from Gaelic scribes in his circle and he may have inherited some from other scribes. A considerable proportion of the printed books in his collection may have been purchased at auction.²⁷ At the auction of the library of his former patron, Dr John Fergus, conducted by Laurence Flin on 3 February 1766 in Fergus's home on Abbey Street, Ó Gormáin purchased both books and manuscripts.²⁸ A transcription from the sale catalogue of the Irish-language material purchased at the auction indicates that he purchased the following items: No. 2428 'A medical piece a very ancient M:SS' for 8s 10d (now TCD, MS. 1333 (H.3.14)—a commentary on the *Aphorisms of Hippocrates* and part of Bernard of Gordon's *Lilium medicinae*); No. 2429 'historical poems very old' for 2s 2d; No. 2435 'Boyles New Testament. ib. 1681' purchased for 6s and 10d, which was Robert Boyle's 1681 edition of Uilliam Ó Domhnaill's *An Tiomna Nua* (1602); and two items without lot numbers: 'Irish Dictionary 8vo',²⁹ which Ó Gormáin bought for 6s and 'one Irish book' for which he paid 1s 8d.³⁰

Ó Gormáin's catalogues also indicate that he loaned some of his own manuscripts to other scribes or scholars for extended periods of time, for example,

²³ RIA, MS. 24 E 7.

²⁴ Cormac Ó Gráda, *Ireland: a new economic history 1780–1939* (Oxford, 1994), 16. These statistics are based on Arthur Young's *A tour of Ireland* (2 vols, Dublin, 1780); David Dickson, *New foundations: Ireland, 1660–1800* (2nd edn, Dublin, 2000), 111.

²⁵ For Flin, see Mary Pollard, *A dictionary of members of the Dublin book trade 1550–1800* (London, 2000), 218–19.

²⁶ Her name is not listed in Pollard's *Dictionary of members of the Dublin book trade*.

²⁷ Book auctions were held in Dublin from the 1690s onwards, the majority of which were held at Dick's Coffey House on Skinner Row until the 1760s. See Phillips, *Printing and bookselling*, 82.

²⁸ Ó Catháin, 'John Fergus MD. Eighteenth-century doctor', 140.

²⁹ This was probably item no. 2,433 on the sale catalogue: Hugh McCurtin's *The English–Irish dictionary* (Paris, 1732).

³⁰ RIA, MS. 24 E 7. Ó Catháin, 'John Fergus MD. Eighteenth-century doctor', 155–7. It is possible that Ó Gormáin purchased English-language publications at the sale also but that they were not noted in the transcription in RIA, MS. 24 E 7. It is striking that his collection contained a number of the same works listed in Fergus's catalogue such as Comerford's *History of Ireland* and Francis Hutchinson's treatise on witchcraft.

no. 54 ‘*Lochrann na ccreidmheach* [...] which Patt Woods had from me for half a year’.³¹ Occasionally, he noted from whom he had purchased or borrowed a manuscript and provided information such as their address or profession: no. 11 ‘A treatise on fever [...] wrote by Mr Tipper [...] got from Bryan O’Donnel’; no. 20 ‘*Táin bó Cuailgne* without a cover bought of Mr Billy Quin who is now in America’; no. 26 ‘A book in 4to borrowed from Mr Morris, Weaver’; no. 27 ‘*An Gleacaidh geughlonnach* [...] wrote by John Solly, and bought of James Muldoon shoemaker [*sic*]’; and no. 48 ‘A quarto tyed with old parchment and 4 strings to tye it got from Bartle Cavanagh’.³² Entry no. 55 in NLI, MS. G664 provides important information on the provenance of this manuscript: ‘4to bought of a Gentleman from Cork for 10s10d [...] written by John Murphy in Carricknavar for James Dugan at Walters Milles Cork’.³³

Manuscripts in the collection

The manuscripts owned by Ó Gormáin encompass practically all of the genres traditionally cultivated by Gaelic scribes such as the annals, legal texts, genealogies, hagiography, historical texts, Irish-language dictionaries and grammars, medical texts, pious material, poetry, romance tales, and prose tales and poetry from the Ulster and Fionn cycles. The catalogue RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a) listed 64 manuscripts, many of which were extremely valuable even in Ó Gormáin’s day. The oldest was a copy of *Táin bó Cuailgne* dating from 1419.³⁴ He believed another of his manuscripts, a copy of *Togail Troí* (Destruction of Troy), transcribed by Malachia Ó Cianáin in 1493, to be unique: ‘I believe no other to be had in either vellum or paper’.³⁵ This text was based on a tenth-century translation of the Latin text *De excidio Troiae historia*. Together with *In cath cathardha*, a free translation into Irish of the first seven books of Lucan’s *Pharsalia* (The civil war of the Romans), these texts provide fine examples of the vigorous translation activity from Latin to Irish that took place during the Middle Ages.³⁶ They are important

³¹ NLI, MS. G664 (17 May 1776).

³² RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a).

³³ NLI, MS. G664, 3 October 1772. The scribe is probably Seán na Ráithíneach Ó Murchú (1700–62), a native of Carricknavar, Co. Cork. The James Dugan referred to may be Séamas Ó Dugáin of Cork for whom other manuscripts were written. For both men, see Breandán Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhaithe Chorcaí, 1700–1850* (Dublin, 1982), 53, 167–72.

³⁴ Probably now British Library (BL), MS. Eg. 1782.

³⁵ This is clearly one of the Ó Gormáin manuscripts bought by Edward O’Reilly as he copied Ó Cianáin’s colophon (BL, MS. Eg. 152). The Latin text was composed in either the fifth or sixth century and is attributed to Pseudo-Dares Phrygius. See Uáitéar Mac Gearailt, ‘Togail Traoi: an example of translation and editing in medieval Ireland’, *Studia Hibernica* 31 (2000–01), 76.

³⁶ RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a), no. 8. *In cath cathardha* was the longest composition from the medieval period, apart from *Táin bó Cuailgne* and *Agallamh na seanórach*, and proved to be extremely popular in the manuscript tradition; J.E. Caerwyn Williams and Patrick K. Ford, *The Irish literary tradition* (Cardiff, 1992), 135.

in terms of classical scholarship as they are the earliest vernacular translations in existence.³⁷

Significantly, the collection contained 26 manuscripts penned in the early decades of the eighteenth century by various scribes associated with the Ó Neachtain circle in Dublin. This was an industrious coterie of scribes, who were closely connected to the author, poet and scribe, Seán Ó Neachtain, and his son Tadhg, whose house on Earl Street served as a focal point for their scribal activities. Members of this coterie produced in excess of 100 manuscripts containing matters of historical and hagiographical interest, prose and poetry, often sharing exemplars and sometimes correcting one another's work.³⁸ Manuscripts penned by sixteen members of this group are still extant, the most prolific of which were Tadhg Ó Neachtain, Risteard Tiobar (Richard Tipper), Seon Mac Solaidh (Sean Solly) and Muiris Ó Nuabha (Maurice Newby). Other scribes associated with the circle included Bhailintín Ó hAnluain (Valentine O'Hanlon), Seán Ó hÉideáin (John Heyden) and Stiabhna Rís (Stephen Rice).³⁹ Although Ó Gormáin's name does not feature in Tadhg's poem '*Sloinnfeadh scothadh na Gaoidhlighe grinn*' ('I shall name the best scholars of the keen Irish language'), composed around 1726–8, which provides an account of 26 Gaelic scribes in Dublin at that time, entries in RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a) demonstrate that Muiris did have contact with at least some of the circle's members. For example, he acquired no. 22, a copy of Mícheál Ó Cléirigh's edition of *An réim rioghraidhe*, in Seon Mac Solaidh's hand, from a 'Mr Norton', probably Tadhg Ó Neachtain (Pl. IV).⁴⁰ Other manuscripts include no. 73 'An Irish Testament, bought of Mr Tipper' and no. 78 'An Irish manual bought of Mr John Heyden'. Together with Tadhg Ó Neachtain, these men made the first fair copies of Seán Ó Neachtain's work, some of which later came into Ó Gormáin's possession.⁴¹ Much of Ó Neachtain's work comprised translations of pious works and saints' lives, hymns, and moral treatises from Latin and English but at least 49 of his poems survive. He was also the author of the satirical *Cath bearna chroise Brighde*, and the pseudo-heroic tales based on Irish romances: *An gleacáí géaglonnach* (The stout-limbed champion); *Imtheachta cúigir* (Adventures of a quintet), which has as its main characters five heroes from

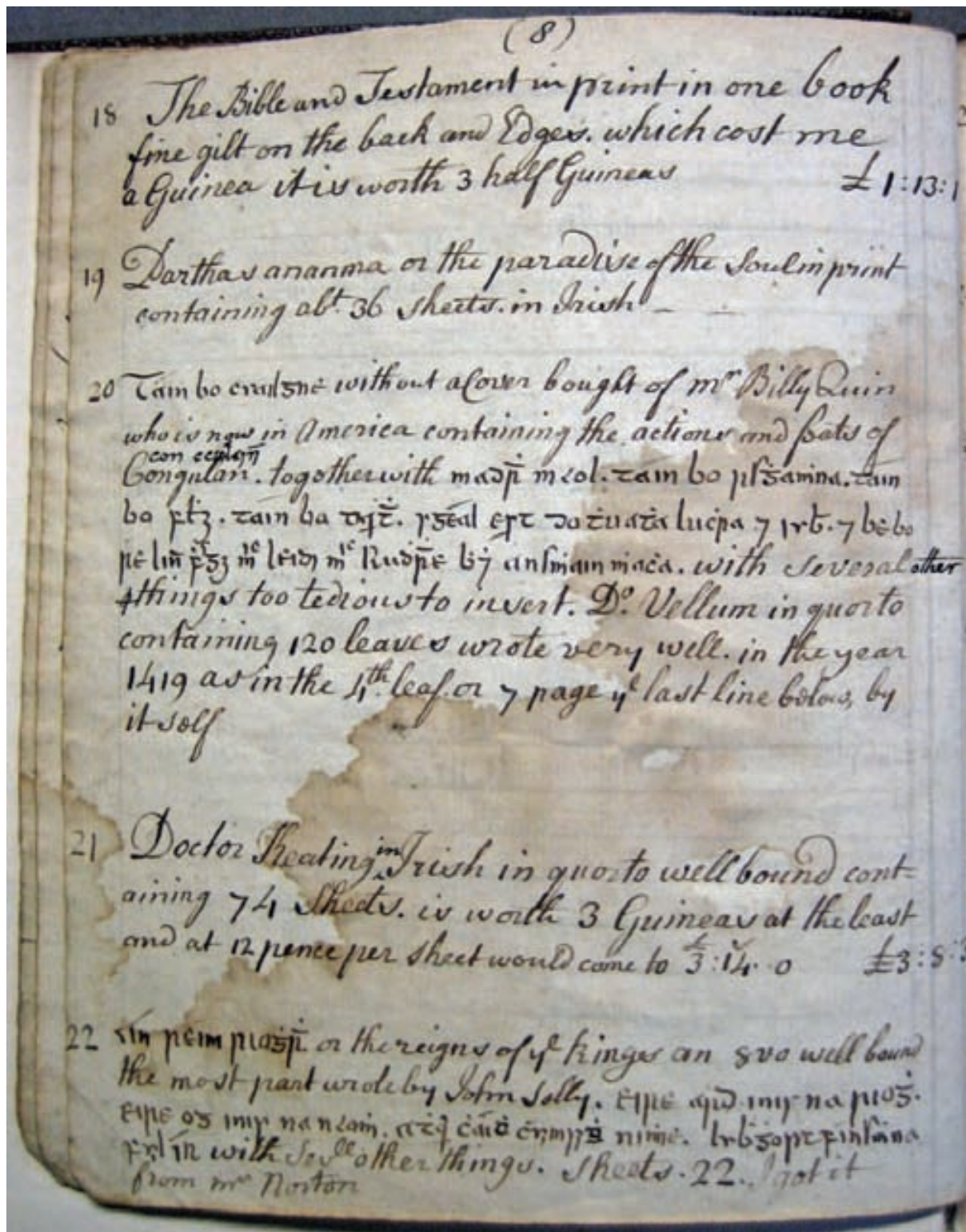
³⁷ Ní Shéaghda, *Translations and adaptations into Irish*, 1–3; W.B. Stanford, 'Towards a history of classical influences in Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 70C (1970), 37–8; Ní Shéaghda, *Translations and adaptations*, 3.

³⁸ T.F. O'Rahilly, 'Irish scholars in Dublin in the early eighteenth century', *Gadelica* (Dublin, 1913), vol. i, 156–62; Alan Harrison, *Ag cruinniú meala* (Dublin, 1988), 39. For Seán Ó Neachtain, see May H. Risk, 'Seán Ó Neachtain: an eighteenth-century Irish writer', *Studia Hibernica* 15 (1975), 47–60; Cathal Ó Háinle, 'Neighbors in eighteenth-century Dublin: Jonathan Swift and Seán Ó Neachtain', *Éire-Ireland* 21 (1986), 106–21; Ní Shéaghda, 'Irish scholars and scribes in eighteenth-century Dublin', 42–4. For Tadhg Ó Neachtain, see Breandán Ó Buachalla, 'Seacaibíteachas Thaidhg Uí Neachtain', *Studia Hibernica* 26 (1991–2), 31–64.

³⁹ For a discussion of the Ó Neachtain circle, see Harrison, *Ag cruinniú meala* and Harrison, *The Dean's friend* (Dublin, 1999).

⁴⁰ Ó Neachtain's surname was anglicized as Norton or Naghtan.

⁴¹ Ó Háinle, 'Neighbours in eighteenth-century Dublin', 115.



18 The Bible and Testament in print in one book
 fine gilt on the back and Edges. which cost me
 a Guinea it is worth 3 half Guineas £ 1:13:1

19 Parthas ananma or the paradise of the Soul in print
 containing abt. 36 sheets. in Irish

20 Tam bo cruaisne without a cover bought of m^r Billy Quin
 who is now in America containing the actions and facts of
 Congular. together with madji meol. tam bo pilsamina. tam
 bo ptz. tam ba tye. p^rseal ept dozuata lucpa 7 rrb. 7 be bo
 pe lin p^rsi m^r leidi m^r Rudpe by ansmian m^rica. with several other
 things too tedious to invert. D^o Vellum in quorto
 containing 120 leaves wrote very well. in the year
 1419 as in the 1st leaf or 7 page y^e last line below, by
 it self

21 Doctor Theating in Irish in quorto well bound cont-
 aining 74 sheets. is worth 3 Guineas at the least
 and at 12 pence per sheet would come to £ 3:5:0

22 sin peim piastri or the reigns of y^e kings an svo well bound
 the most part wrote by John Solly. epe apud my na pios.
 epe os my na nain. arq caid enmya nime. lrb sote p^rinsina
 p^ral in with sev^{ll} other things. Sheets. 22. I got it
 from m^r Norton

Pl. IV—RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a), fol. 8. © Royal Irish Academy.

the Fenian Cycle; and *Jacobides et Carina*, a fictionalisation of contemporary political events, focusing on James Fitzjames, duke of Berwick, the illegitimate son of James II and his involvement in the War of the Spanish Succession.⁴² In addition, he composed the semi-autobiographical allegorical prose tale *Stair Éamoinn Uí Chléirigh* (The history of Edmond O'Cleary). All of these works are well represented in Ó Gormáin's collection and their popularity points to a taste for burlesque material within the Ó Neachtain coterie as well as the esteem in which they held Seán Ó Neachtain.

Pious material was prominent in the various manuscripts in Ó Gormáin's possession, particularly those copied by the Ó Neachtain circle. Harrison has suggested that much of the pious material was used in the practice of their faith and the large quantity present in the manuscripts is a demonstration, therefore, of their devotion to it.⁴³ The Ó Neachtains were also closely connected to members of the Dublin Catholic clergy, amongst whom was Archbishop Edmond Byrne, and this brought them into contact with 'the intellectual life of mainstream Catholicism'.⁴⁴ It is also worth bearing in mind that four of the scribes associated with the Ó Neachtain circle were priests, namely the Franciscans Pól Mac Aogáin (Paul Egan) and Proinsias Bhailis (Francis Walsh), the Augustinian Peadar Ó Muireagáin (Peter Mulligan) and Tadhg's son, Peadar, who entered the Jesuits. Ó Gormáin continued this contact with members of the clergy throughout his life. He was known to Archbishop John Carpenter (Seán Mac an tSaoir) and composed a poem in praise of Archbishop Patrick Fitzsimon (Pádraig Mac Síomoin) and towards the end of his life served as parish clerk of Mary's Lane chapel.⁴⁵ A number of the pious texts in Ó Gormáin's collection were copied by the Ó Neachtain scribes from the printed Counter-reformation devotional works published by the Franciscans at St Anthony's College, Louvain, and elsewhere in Europe. It is not surprising that the Ó Neachtain circle had access to printed volumes of some of these works given their contact with members of the Catholic clergy. Contained in Ó Gormáin's collection were numerous handwritten copies of Bonabhentura Ó hEoghusa's *An teagasg Criosdaidhe* (Antwerp, 1611), the first Catholic spiritual work in the Irish language ever published; Antaine Gearnon's *Parrthas an anama* (Louvain, 1645); and Proinsias Ó Maolmhuaidh's *Lucerna fidelium* or *Lochrann na gcreidmheach* (Rome, 1676) (Pl. V). Most, if not all, of the copies of *An teagasg Criosdaidhe* appear to have been transcribed from the second revised edition of the work, under the care of Pilib Maguidhir, which was published in Rome in 1707.⁴⁶ Significantly, Ó Gormáin owned another manuscript copy of the text, which he believed to be Ó hEoghusa's autograph copy: 'the book very well

⁴² Robin Flower, *Catalogue of Irish manuscripts in the British Museum* (2 vols, London, 1926–53), vol. 2, 378–9.

⁴³ Harrison, *Ag cruinniú meala*, 27.

⁴⁴ Harrison, *The dean's friend*, 31.

⁴⁵ Ó Fiaich, 'Dán ar Phádraig Mac Síomoin', 290.

⁴⁶ This edition can be identified by the poem 'Truagh liom a chompain do chor' by Ó hEoghusa and a tract on the Church of St Mary at Loreto included at the end of the work. See R.I. Best, *Bibliography of Irish philology and of Irish printed literature to 1912* (2nd repr., Dublin, 1992), 245.

wrote good orthography and supposed to be Bonaventura's manuscript'.⁴⁷ A further example of a text transcribed from printed books is provided by Ó Gormáin's copy of Dowley's catechism, transcribed in 1729 by Séamus Maguidhir. This was a copy of the 1728 edition published in Paris together with Hugh McCurtin's Irish grammar.⁴⁸ Dowley's publication was based on that of Ó hEoghasa and Gearnon's *Parrthas an anma* and was intended for the use of Gaelic speakers in Ireland and Scotland and those Irish who had been transported to the West Indies.⁴⁹ The collection also included a number of other important pious texts. Amongst these were Keating's discourse on sin, *Trí bior-ghaoithe an bháis* (Three shafts of death), which was in circulation by 1631, and his tract on the Mass, *Eochair-sgiath an Aifrinn* (Defence of the Mass), copies of which were often made for or owned by priests (Pl. VI).⁵⁰ Among the other unpublished texts in Ó Gormáin's manuscripts were Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire's catechism in Irish, based on a Spanish original, which was composed in 1593; Seán Ó Dubhlaoiach's *Seanmóir Aoine an Chéasta*;⁵¹ and Tomás Mac Gabhráin's *Sgathán spioradálta*, a seventeenth-century translation of *Lo specchio spirituale del principio e fine della vita humana* (Brescia, 1590) by the Italian Franciscan Angelo Elli. Other popular pious texts contained in Ó Gormáin's manuscripts included extracts from an Irish translation of Thomas à Kempis's *De imitatione Christi*, known in the manuscript tradition as *Tóruidheacht (na bhfireun) air lorg Chríosa*;⁵² *Eagna fire*, a translation by Seán Ó Neachtain of Giovanni Pietro Pinamonti's (1632–1703) *La vera sapienza*;⁵³ *Agallamh an anma agus an chuirp re chéile*, a translation of the famous medieval Latin poem, '*Dialogus inter corpus et animam*', which is sometimes wrongly attributed to Robert Grosseteste;⁵⁴ the long poem *Beatha Chríost* (Life of Christ), consisting of over 4,000 lines composed by an anonymous Clare scribe at the end of the seventeenth century or early eighteenth century, which was based on the Gaelic version of *Meditationes vitae Christi (Smaointe beatha Críost)*; and the legend of the invention of the cross, *Inventio sanctae crucis*. The lives of the various saints, both native and foreign, also featured prominently in Ó Gormáin's collection. These texts were popular in the manuscript tradition from the later medieval period onwards, and closely resembled the romantic tales.⁵⁵

⁴⁷ NLI, MS. G664, no. 53, 3 October 1772.

⁴⁸ Now BL, MS. Eg. 192.

⁴⁹ Flower, *Catalogue of Irish manuscripts*, 564–5.

⁵⁰ Bernadette Cunningham, *The world of Geoffrey Keating. History, myth and religion in seventeenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2000), 11.

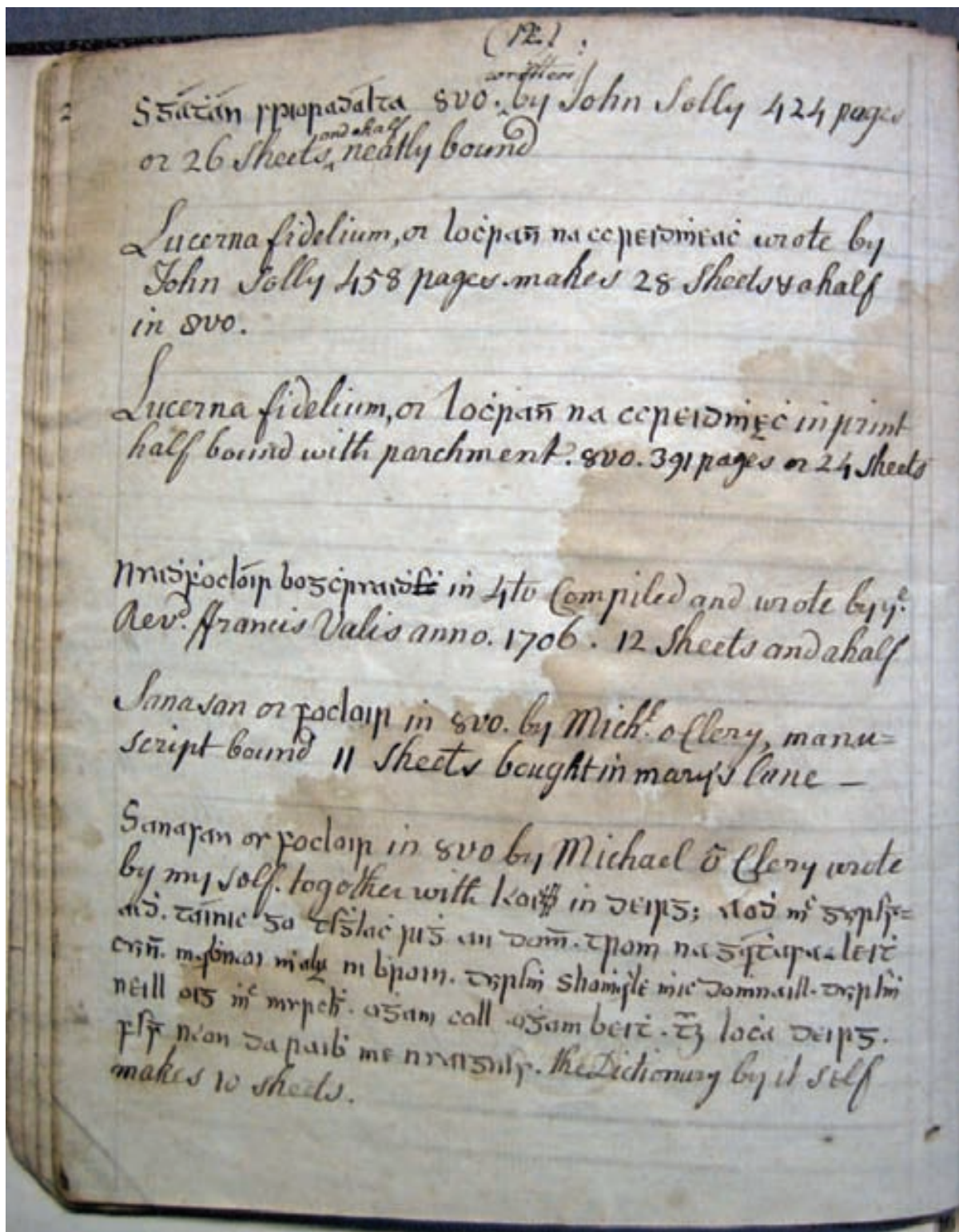
⁵¹ See Tadhg Ó Dúshláine, 'Gealán dúluachra: seanmóireacht na Gaeilge c. 1600–c. 1850', *Léachtaí Cholm Cille* 26 (1996), 89–92.

⁵² At one time, this was the most translated work, with the exception of the scriptures. A number of complete and partial translations of the text in Irish exist. A fragment, for example, is contained in RIA, MS. 23 A 8, a manuscript prayer book, which was compiled by Rev. John Carpenter—later archbishop of Dublin—in 1745. See, Brian Ó Cuív, 'Irish translations of Thomas à Kempis's *De imitatione Christi*', *Celtica* 2 (1954), 252.

⁵³ TCD, MS. H.4.23.

⁵⁴ Flower, *Catalogue of Irish manuscripts*, 37.

⁵⁵ Williams and Ford, *Irish literary tradition*, 140.



Pl. V—RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a), fol. 12. © Royal Irish Academy.

(15)

a book in Asto with a little blew paper on y^e on side
wrote by M. Newby. page 85 ends y^e first book
of sleacaid Beusloñac. and all wanting in this book but
6 leaves. at page 86 Eacra an s'olla deacq begins
and ends at page 106. leat an deis. leacta s'ill 2
cpas ma epaide. leat an ceta sabra. j. imy pin a oipin. q
hémec iy q hionnani. A ceion anoi mbria prq pion.
Cnac an cup an enoora jg. Hazac pmanab eip q pliab zpm.
j. la da pab-mg q pliab zpm. Ap paca anof anail pinn.
A salt p'adís 7 oipin pe ceile. j. A oipin iy p'ada du p'ran.
la da bi p'ailz pleibe ceitlin. 6 leaves. P'sp'z p'yle m'
p'ín ce' s'ill m' mileata ceap na epodapa. an p'ca apd asnj
s'ill. Op'z iolbradac. cor'ac comidac. Epus asnp p'ail.
Coim tr p' adorne boif. leab na p'ra. one verde. Epus na
eodad a t'p'ra. re iy z'as an re iy z'is. z'as na zupz q loc
d'p'is. p'le da deipj adorne. mall so ceitnim an coileac. t'p'rp
aca b'p'ac q ma b'ap. m anam p'mo corp adé d'wab. d'na mo z'sz
a t'p'onaid Ep'is a eisp banba. A cl'p'm' d' n'p'se meadba
cl'p' z' p'us so p'ail. p'andá roeq ac p'ol neill. alup' c'rmz b'p'eat
p'an dan. cat pe d'onds ab'p'isip. t'p' p'us ap an mb'p'isipne. Soid
p'ín 7 d'rbiam. C'is do con'p'leacab c'ato. A salt an c'p'p' an
anma. cap roqe pe dan. Silp'is p'ail cond'ne am'p'p'om.
mo cl'n da z'p' a leabj. Ap an t'p'p'alt. Comaill p'isip deip'nn.
j. d'ailzi liom ina an z'is. cl'p'iq do bi q r'ais an p'ip.

Pl. VI—RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a), fol. 15. © Royal Irish Academy.

Lexicographical and grammatical works are also well represented in Ó Gormáin's collection and he possessed a copy of the grammatical tract *Auraicept na nÉces* (NLI, MS. G664, no. 40), in addition to copies of the most important works produced during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁵⁶ These were necessary reference materials for a Gaelic scribe, particularly when dealing with the annals and Brehon Laws, but would also have played an important part in teaching the reading and writing of Irish. After the demise of the bardic schools, grammars and dictionaries were compiled to facilitate the learning of the language by those who had no training in it. In addition, they were produced by the Catholic clergy on the Continent to assist the Counter-reformation aim of producing devout literature in the vernacular. Ó Gormáin owned a copy of Bonaventura Ó hEodhasa's *Rudimenta grammaticae hibernicae* (1611), the first grammar of the Irish language produced by the Franciscans at St Anthony's College, Louvain.⁵⁷ This influential text formed the basis of most other grammatical tracts in Irish that followed.⁵⁸ The two oldest extant copies of which were in the possession of Archbishop Narcissus Marsh when they were consulted by Edward Lhuyd for his *Archaeologia Brittanica*, are now held in Marsh's Library, Dublin. Ó Gormáin's copy is NLI, MS. G127 and was penned by Risteard Tiobar between 1713–15. It also contained a version of Tuileagna Ó Maolchonaire's Irish grammar and prosody, extracts from Proinsias Ó Maolmhuaidh's (Francis Mulloy) Irish grammar in English, *Grammatica Latino-Hibernica* (Rome, 1677), in addition to a short grammar aimed at teaching young people, 'Mionghraimar le na ccuidighthear leis an aois óig teacht chum Gaoidheilge do leagh 7 do sgríobhadh' ('Short grammar to assist the youth to read and write Irish').⁵⁹ As we have already seen, Ó Gormáin sold TCD, MS. H.4.18 to Trinity College Dublin. This manuscript, which he transcribed in 1766, contained a copy of Father O'Flaherty's Irish grammar and glossary, written in Rome in 1653. Although a copy of the grammar does not appear in either of his catalogues, he must have had access to an exemplar from which he made his copy. This provides an example, therefore, of a manuscript Ó Gormáin had access to but did not own. With regard to dictionaries, Ó Gormáin was the owner of a number of manuscript copies of the first Irish dictionary to appear in print, Mícheál Ó Cléirigh's *Foclóir nó Sanasán nua* (Louvain, 1643), and an autograph copy of Proinsias Bhailis's Irish/Irish dictionary, which was based on that of Ó Cléirigh: 'Nuidhfhoclóir bogchruaidh in 4to compiled and wrote by Rev. Francis Valis anno. 1706'.⁶⁰ Item no. 14 in G664 is another copy of Bhailis's dictionary, this time in Seán Ó hÉideáin's (John Heyden) hand, possibly now RIA, MS. 23 D 21. Ó Gormáin does not appear to have owned a copy of either Proinsias Bhailis's Latin–English–Irish dictionary (Marsh's Library,

⁵⁶ For *Auraicept na nÉces* see, Anders Ahlqvist, *The early Irish linguist* (Helsinki, 1983).

⁵⁷ RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a), no. 16 and G 664, no. 21.

⁵⁸ Ó Maonaigh, 'Scribhneoirí Gaeilge an seachtú haois déag', *Studia Hibernica* 2 (1962), 192–3.

⁵⁹ For an account of these grammars, see Parthalán Mac Aogáin, *Graiméir Ghaeilge na mbráthar mionúr* (Dublin, 1968), ix–xxv.

⁶⁰ RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a), no. 37 and G664, no. 13.

Dublin, MS. Z3.1.13), completed by Tadhg Ó Neachtain after Bhailis's death, or Richard Plunket's Latin–Irish dictionary (Marsh's Library MS. Z4.2.5) from 1660, or indeed of Bhailis's *Grammatica Anglo–Hibernica* completed in 1713. Most, if not all, of these works would have been readily available to the Ó Neachtain circle.

Original documents were of primary importance in the efforts of the Protestant and Catholic communities in Ireland to justify their respective positions and it is no surprise, therefore, that historical texts were also well represented in Ó Gormáin's library. Many of the texts he owned of this nature, encompassing annals, genealogies, law tracts and regnal lists, had been transcribed by the Ó Neachtain scribes, for whom the transcription of traditional lore was an integral part of their work and who saw themselves as the heirs of the hereditary learned families.⁶¹ It appears that Tadhg Ó Neachtain intended to write a history of Ireland and, together with other scribes in the coterie, gathered material for that purpose.⁶² Ó Gormáin's collection included a number of copies of the most important seventeenth-century contribution to Irish historiography from a Catholic perspective, Keating's *Foras feasa ar Éirinn* (Compendium of wisdom about Ireland), probably completed by 1634.⁶³ The text circulated in manuscript form in the original Irish and in English and Latin translations during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Copies were common in eighteenth-century Dublin and the Ó Neachtain scribes had access to a number of different exemplars.⁶⁴ Many prose histories of Ireland written in the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century drew extensively on Keating's work and his example was followed by other Catholic historians such as Peter Walsh, Roderick O'Flaherty and Hugh McCurtin. The work was later appropriated by Protestant writers in their attempts to forge an Irish identity for their community.⁶⁵ Other important texts contained in Ó Gormáin's collection, which he was regularly commissioned to transcribe and/or translate for his patrons, included extracts from *Leabhar gabhála*; Mícheál Ó Cléirigh's genealogies of saints and kings, *An réim ríoghraidhe* (Succession of kings of Ireland); Brehon Laws and various annals.

Irish language and Scottish Gaelic printed material

An examination of the Irish-language titles in Ó Gormáin's catalogues indicates that he owned, in either printed form or in handwritten copy, practically every work published in the Irish language to that date and, in some cases, he owned duplicates. These works were primarily of a spiritual or linguistic nature and included bibles, Christian doctrines, catechisms, moral works, sermons, dictionaries and grammars. The majority of these were produced by Catholic authors at the Continental centres of Douai, Louvain, Paris and Rome as a result of restricted access to print in Ireland for Catholics in the seventeenth century, due to the monopoly afforded the king's printer's patent, and full membership of the Guild of St Luke, a body that regulated

⁶¹ Harrison, *The dean's friend*, 53.

⁶² Ní Shéaghda, 'Scholars and scribes in Dublin', 44.

⁶³ See Cunningham, *The world of Geoffrey Keating*.

⁶⁴ Harrison, *The dean's friend*, 57; Cunningham, *The world of Geoffrey Keating*, 216.

⁶⁵ Cunningham, *The world of Geoffrey Keating*, 201–25.

the production of print, being denied to them during the eighteenth century.⁶⁶ The first Irish books in print were Protestant religious works, however, amongst which was a Gaelic translation of the *Book of common prayer* (1559). Ó Gormáin's catalogue lists two different editions of this work. The first, by Uilliam Ó Dónaill (William Daniel), appeared under the title *Leabhar na nvrnaightheadh gcomhchoidchiond agvs mheinisdraldachda na sacrameinteadh* (Dublin, 1608), while the second edition in English and Irish, *Leabhar na nornaightheadh ccomhchoitchionn, agus mhiniostralachda na sacraimeinteadh* (London, 1712), was translated by the Rev. John Richardson with the help of another scribe associated with the Ó Neachtain circle, Cathal Ó Luinín (Charles Lynegar). A short account of the rules pertaining to the spelling and reading of Irish, entitled 'The elements of the Irish language', was also included at the end of the work.⁶⁷ Another Protestant publication, William Bedell's Old Testament, *Leabhair na Seintiomna arna ttarraing go Gaedhilg tre chúram 7 dhúthracht an dochtúir Uilliam Bedel*, which was completed in 1638 but published posthumously in 1685, features in NLI, MS. G664. In RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a), no. 18 Ó Gormáin lists 'the Bible and testament in print in one book fine gilt on the back and edges which cost me a guinea it is worth 3 half guineas £1.13.1'. It is not clear from this description whether the Bible was in Irish or English but it could be Robert Kirke's *An Biobla naomhtha, iona bhfuil Leabhair na Seintiomna* (London, 1690), which brought the Old and New Testament together for the first time in the Irish language. It was printed in Roman typeface as it was intended for Gaelic speakers in the Scottish Highlands, who would have been unable to read Gaelic typeface.⁶⁸ In total, 3,000 copies of this work were published.⁶⁹ Ó Gormáin does not appear to have owned a copy of the New Testament, published in 1602 and 1681.

Despite the restrictions placed on the importation of Catholic service books and devotional literature, Ó Gormáin's catalogues list copies of most of the key texts published on the Continent.⁷⁰ The first Catholic Counter-reformation work in Irish, Ó hEoghusa's *An teagasg Críosaíde*, rolled off the press in Antwerp in 1611. We have seen already that Ó Gormáin owned numerous handwritten copies of this work but he also had a printed copy of the second edition. In addition, he possessed most of the works produced at the Franciscan colleges at Louvain and Rome: *Scáthán an chrábhaidh nó Desiderius* by Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire (Florence Conroy) (Louvain, 1616); Aodh Mac Aingil's *Scáthán shacramuinte na haithridhe* (Louvain, 1618);

⁶⁶ For the king's printer, see Mary Pollard's 'Control of the press in Ireland through the king's printer's patent, 1600–1800', *Irish Booklore* 4(2) (1980), 79–95; and *Dublin's trade in books, 1550–1800* (Oxford, 1989), 2–31. See also, James Kelly, 'Regulating print: The state and the control of print in eighteenth-century Ireland', *Eighteenth century Ireland/Iris an dá chultúr* 23 (2008), 142–74.

⁶⁷ Williams, *I bprionta i leabhar*, 113–17.

⁶⁸ For a discussion of Kirk's Bible, see Victor Edward Durkacz, *The decline of the Celtic languages* (Edinburgh, 1983), 20–3.

⁶⁹ Williams, *I bprionta i leabhar*, 97–102.

⁷⁰ Although the laws remained on the statute books until after 1800, they were interpreted more leniently by the later eighteenth century. Pollard, *Dublin's trade in books*, 16.

Parrthas an anama by Antaine Gearnon (Louvain, 1645), possibly the most popular spiritual work in the Irish language during the seventeenth century; John Dowley's *Suim bhunudhasach an teaguisg chriosdaidhe a bpros agus a ndán* (Louvain, 1663), and Proinsias Ó Maolmhuaidh's *Lucerna fidelium or lóchrann na ccreidmheach* (Rome, 1676).⁷¹ With regard to spiritual works published on the Continent during the eighteenth century, the collection contained *The Doway catechism in English and Irish* (Dublin, 1738), translated by Sylvester Lloyd,⁷² and Andrew Donlevy's *An teagasg Críosduidhe do réir ceasda agus freagartha* (The catechism, or Christian doctrine by way of question and answer) (Paris, 1742). Ó Gormáin does not appear to have owned a copy of Theobald Stapleton's Latin–Irish catechism *An teagasg Críosdaidhe* (Brussels, 1639). Finally, he possessed copies of the most famous collection of sermons in the Irish language, James Gallagher's *Sixteen Irish sermons* (Dublin, 1736) and *Seventeen Irish sermons* (Dublin, 1752). These works, which appeared in numerous editions, brought an end, according to Ó Dúshláine, to the sophisticated baroque style of the Irish sermon, which was replaced by the less ornate, more direct, simple style.⁷³

With the decline of the traditional bardic schools, the provision of dictionaries and grammars of the Irish language took on an added importance, and Ó Gormáin's collection contained copies of the most important works published on the subject in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As was the case with regard to spiritual works, Louvain was again to the fore in the production of lexicographical and grammatical material. Ó Gormáin owned, for example, the first Irish-language dictionary ever published, Micheal Ó Cléirigh's *Foclóir nó Sanasán. Nua ina mínighthear cáil eigin dfoclaibh cruaidhe na gaidheilge* (Louvain, 1643) as well as Hugh McCurtin's *The elements of the Irish language, grammatically explained in English* (Louvain, 1728), which was published together with a new edition of John Dowley's *Catechism*. His collection also contained two printed copies of Edward Lhwyd's *Archaeologia Britannica* (Oxford, 1707), which included an Irish-language dictionary and grammar. This was a significant work as it linked the Irish language to the other Celtic languages. Ó Gormáin also listed two copies of the first English–Irish dictionary ever published, Conor Begley and Hugh McCurtin's *The English–Irish dictionary* (Paris, 1732). The preface to this work states that it was following the example of Abel Boyer, author of *Dictionnaire Royal, François-Anglois et Anglois-François*, of which Ó Gormáin also owned a copy. Furthermore, John O'Brien's *Focalóir Gaoidhilge-Sax-Bhéarla* or *An Irish-English dictionary* (Paris,

⁷¹ For a discussion of these works, see Mícheál Mac Craith, 'Literature in Irish, c. 1550–1690', in *The Cambridge history of Irish literature vol. 1 to 1890* (2 vols, Cambridge, 2006), vol. I, 191–231.

⁷² Pádraig Ó Súilleabháin, 'Roinnt caiticeasmaí Gaeilge', *Éigse* 11 (1964–6), 114.

⁷³ Ciarán Mac Murchaidh, 'Dr James Gallagher, alumnus Kilmorensis: Bishop of Raphoe (1725–37) and Kildare & Leighlin (1737–51)', *Breifne* 10(40) (2004), 219–37; Ó Dúshláine, 'Gealán dúluachra: seanmóireacht na Gaeilge', 97–9. By 1825 they were in use as texts for religious instruction in schools in Donegal, Kildare, Galway and Kerry. See Antonia McManus, *The Irish hedge school and its books, 1695–1831* (Dublin, 2004), 245–53.

1768) is also listed as no. 10 in the 1772 catalogue and it may be the copy now held in the British Library, Eg. 87, which contains notes in the hands of both Ó Gormáin and Charles Vallancey. If this is the case, Ó Gormáin may have used it as a teaching aid for his Irish-language classes with Vallancey. Finally, a copy of Littleton's Latin dictionary was listed in NLI, MS. G664, no. 12, beside which Ó Gormáin included the following note 'for which Major Vallancey paid 13s 9d', indicating that it had been sold to Vallancey.

Items 48, 49, and 50 from Ó Gormáin's inventory in G664, taken on 17 May 1776, consist of titles in the Scottish Gaelic language: '12mo print by Richard Baxter (herse)' and two copies of '12mo in print the psalms in the herse or scottish'. The first volume was a translation of Richard Baxter's highly popular evangelical work *Call to the unconverted* (London, 1658), translated by Rev. Alexander Macfarlane as *Gairm an De mhoir do 'n t sluagh neimhiompoichte, iompochadh agus bith beo* (Glasgow, 1750). This was the first work of the English divines published in Gaelic and contained a warning to unrepentant sinners to allow the conversion of their souls.⁷⁴ It appears that Ó Gormáin owned the second edition, published in Glasgow in 1755 in duodecimo, as the first edition was in sextodecimo. The second work listed in Ó Gormáin's catalogue was probably an edition of metrical psalms in Gaelic that were first prepared in the seventeenth century. The first 50 psalms were published in Glasgow for the Presbyterian Synod of Argyll in 1659 under the title *An ceud chaogad do shalmaibh Dhaibhidh, Ar a dtarring as an Eabhra, A meadar dhana Gaoidhilg le seanadh Earraghaoidheal*, and a full edition of 150 psalms was published in Edinburgh in 1694.⁷⁵ Ó Gormáin's copy may have been either of those editions or alternatively it may have been Alexander Macfarlane's version, entitled *Sailm Dhaibhidh ann dan Gaoidhealach, do reir na Hheabhra, agus an eidir-theangachaidh a's fearr ann Laidin, ann Gaoidheilg, 's ann Gaill-bearla* (Glasgow, 1753). This version contained 45 paraphrases. A further possibility is provided by a Psalter produced by the Episcopal minister, the Rev. Robert Kirk, *Psalma Dhaibhidh a nmeadrachd. Do reir na pniomh-chanamain* (Edinburgh, 1684), of which 500–600 copies were printed. This work relied on the Argyll edition for the first 50 psalms but it does not appear to have been popular in Gaelic-speaking parishes.⁷⁶ The Argyll edition proved to be more popular because the language it contained was closer to the spoken language.⁷⁷ It is noteworthy that Ó Gormáin owned Scottish Gaelic works and this raises questions regarding where he acquired them from and the market for such books in late eighteenth-century Dublin. An edition of Robert Kirke's *Tiomna*

⁷⁴ Donald MacLean, *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica, or, Books printed in the Gaelic of Scotland from the year 1567 to the year 1914* (1915), 9; Hugh Cheape, 'Gaelic genesis', *Scottish Book Collector*, 7(9) (2004), 19; Hugh Cheape, *The Gaelic book: the printed book in Scottish Gaelic* (Edinburgh, 2000); available online at <http://www.ilab-lila.com/english/gaelicbook.htm>, accessed 25 November 2008.

⁷⁵ MacLean, *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica*, 317–19.

⁷⁶ MacLean, *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica*, 317–18.

⁷⁷ Donald W. Mackenzie, 'The worthy translator': how the Scottish Gaels got the scriptures in their own tongue', *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* 57 (1990–2), 175–6.

Nuadh (London, 1690) had been produced for Laurence Flin in Dublin in 1759 but it was presumably for export to Scotland rather than being aimed at the Irish market.⁷⁸ Although both Irish and Scottish Gaelic are closely related and both countries shared a common literary language generally known as classical Early Modern Irish until the seventeenth century, by the early part of that century there were sufficient differences between the spoken languages to make it difficult for speakers of both languages to understand one another. It is unlikely, therefore, that Irish speakers would have understood the Scottish Gaelic texts and consequently they would not have been in demand. Furthermore, literacy levels in Irish during the eighteenth century were very low so that even those who could speak Irish and were literate would not necessarily have been able to read the language as literacy was generally achieved through English.⁷⁹ The Census of 1841, for example, estimated that in the decade 1781–90, 52% of the population could read English and this remained the case until well into the nineteenth century.⁸⁰ The Scottish Gaelic titles in Ó Gormáin's collection, therefore, would probably only have appealed to specialists or collectors.

English titles in the collection

At the end of G664, Ó Gormáin provided a list of the English books in his possession on 1 June 1776 in 'Pill Lane', Dublin. The list comprises 38 books in total, most of which are priced, the most expensive being Matthew Kennedy's *A chronological, genealogical and historical dissertation of the royal family of the Stuarts* (Paris, 1705), valued at 5s 5d (Pl. VII). It is a wide-ranging collection, incorporating titles on subjects as diverse as arithmetic and, perhaps surprisingly, witchcraft. Ó Gormáin had been employed in Co. Cavan from May 1761 to April 1762 to teach 'writing, arithmetick and the English tongue' and some of the titles such as those on book-keeping, mathematics, letter writing, and the various collections of English poetry may have assisted him in his role as a teacher.⁸¹ Given the interest in the Ossianic controversy by both Protestant and Catholic antiquarians alike, it is no surprise that the collection contained a copy of James Macpherson's *Fingal* (London, 1761/2), an extremely influential work that contributed to the awakened interest in matters Gaelic by members of the Protestant Ascendancy in Ireland.⁸² It is also worth noting that the collection contained a number of the titles included in the *First report of the Commissioners of Education Inquiry* (1825) which listed books used in various schools situated in counties Donegal, Kildare, Galway and Kerry.⁸³ Titles common to

⁷⁸ Pollard, *Dictionary of members of the Dublin book trade*, 218.

⁷⁹ For a discussion of literacy in the Irish language, see Niall Ó Ciosáin, *Print and popular culture in Ireland, 1750–1850* (Basingstoke, 1997), 154–6.

⁸⁰ Caoimhín Ó Danachair, 'Oral tradition and the printed word', *Irish University Review* 9 (1979), 35–6.

⁸¹ BL, MS. Eg. 151, fol. 82. Flower, *Catalogue of Irish manuscripts*, 253.

⁸² Fiona Stafford, *The sublime savage. James Macpherson and the poems of Ossian* (Edinburgh, 1988); Howard Gaskill (ed.), *The poems of Ossian and related works* (Edinburgh, 1996).

⁸³ *First report of the Commissioners of Education Inquiry* (1825), 400, xii, I (Appendix No. 221), reproduced in McManus, *Irish hedge school and its books*, 245–53.

Mill Lane, June 1st 1776. English books

1.	The English Dictionary, by John Quincy. M: D London. 1759	5:0
2.	new physical Dictionary by John Quincy London M: D London 1722	4:0
3.	physical Dictionary by Blaneard. M: D. London 1702	2:2
4.	Critical Dissertation of the origin antiquities of the Calendars British and Irish Sects. by John Macpher son D: D. Dub 1768	1:4
5.	the same book - duplicate	4:4
6.	Fingal an ancient Epic poem in 6 Books Dublin 1762	4:4
7.	Poetical English poetry London 1710	4:4
8.	Genealogy of the Stuarts printed in Paris 1705.	5:5
9.	Mairs book-keeping - Donburgh - 1736	3:3
10.	historical Essay concerning - w - te - ft by Francis Hutchison D: D. London 1720	2:2 3:3
11.	a system of M - g - h London 1727	2:8 $\frac{1}{2}$
12.	England's reformation by Thomas Ward in 2 vol. Lond. 1742.	2:8 $\frac{1}{2}$
13.	Irish historical Library Dublin 1724	2:8 $\frac{1}{2}$
14.	Hudibras in 3 parts Dublin 1732	2:2
15.	Gay's poems Dublin 1742	1:7 $\frac{1}{2}$
16.	Brett's miscellany Dub. 1762 vol. 6 th	1:7 $\frac{1}{2}$
17.	a collection of select aphorisms & maxims by the best authors	2:2
18.	Cummerford's history of Ireland	0:0
19.	an old Latin Grammar	1:7 $\frac{1}{2}$
20.	the real principles of Catholicism	1:7 $\frac{1}{2}$
21.	Mathematical miscellany of paradoxes & problems	2:2
22.	Cummerford's history of Ireland	1:7 $\frac{1}{2}$
23.	Chronology of some memorable accidents from 1720	1:7 $\frac{1}{2}$
24.	Boyer's french Grammar, and English	1:7 $\frac{1}{2}$
25.	allogographical Description of the Kingdom of Ireland with Maps a small 4to 1728. London	2:8 $\frac{1}{2}$

Pl. VII—NLI, MS. G664, fol. 28. Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.

both lists include Comerford and Keating's histories of Ireland, Gallagher's *Sermons* and Dunleavy's *Catechism*.

Broadly speaking, Ó Gormáin's books may be classified into the following categories: medical texts, history, English poetry, geography, a secretary's guide, drawing and painting, and dictionaries and grammars. It is possible that he purchased the medical texts at the Fergus auction with the aim of selling them on to students of medicine. The growing interest by Protestant antiquarians in Gaelic manuscripts and culture was well represented in the collection, as for example in bishop of Derry, William Nicolson's *Irish historical library* (Dublin, 1724). This publication contained an account of the location of various Irish-language manuscripts, including those in private libraries, at that time. Nicolson drew attention to that of John Conry which he believed to be the second most valuable 'in any private hands here in Dublin'.⁸⁴ Nicolson was also responsible for producing the English and Scottish historical libraries and his publication on the Irish material assisted in drawing the attention of English speakers to it.

The collections contain a number of interesting historical works on Irish subject matter such as James Ware's *The antiquities and history of Ireland* (Dublin 1705), translated by Robert Ware, and the aforementioned Matthew Kennedy's history of the Stuarts. With the assistance of Irish historical material in the Irish language, particularly the *Book of Leacan* located in Paris at that time, Kennedy's work argued that the Stuarts were the rightful Kings of Ireland and reasserted their Milesian genealogy.⁸⁵ Another work contained in the collection, rarely discussed nowadays, is Thomas Comerford's *The history of Ireland* (Dublin, 1742). This work, according to Ann de Valera, was based to a considerable degree on Dermot O'Connor's translation of Keating's *History of Ireland*. It was issued as a cheap edition, and appears, therefore, to have been aimed at a different market than that of Keating. It would, de Valera suggests, have been purchased by people 'who would never have acquired the more luxurious book and who would have no objections to having a book that was largely based on another'.⁸⁶ The 1742 edition of the work was published by subscription. A number of other editions of the work were published, but it is unclear from Ó Gormáin's catalogue which one he owned. It is worth noting, however, that Laurence Flin of Castle Street, from whom, as we have already seen, Ó Gormáin purchased books, printed the 1755 edition. Ó Gormáin's collection also contained an important contribution to Scotland's antiquarian debates on the origin of the Picts, namely John Macpherson's *Critical dissertations on the origin, language, government, manners and religion of the ancient Caledonians, their posterity the Picts, and the British and Irish Scots* (Dublin, 1768). This work challenged Charles O'Connor's claims that Scotland had been first colonised by the Irish and that ancient Gaelic society had been literate.⁸⁷ Both editions of Charles O'Connor's *Dissertations on*

⁸⁴ William Nicolson, *Irish historical library* (Dublin, 1724), 243.

⁸⁵ Harrison, *The dean's friend*, 29; O'Halloran, *Golden ages*, 76.

⁸⁶ de Valera, *Antiquarian investigations*, 98–9.

⁸⁷ de Valera, *Antiquarian investigations*, 184; Kidd, *British identities before nationalism*, 202–04.

the *antient history of Ireland* published in 1753 and 1765 respectively; Sylvester O'Halloran's *An introduction to the study of the history and antiquities of Ireland* (London, 1772) and Thomas Leland's controversial *History of Ireland from the invasion of Henry II* (3 vols, London, 1773) were notably absent from the collection. This is surprising given that these were significant contributions to Irish historiography and that two of the authors were patrons of Ó Gormáin.

English poetry was well-represented in the collection. It included a copy of a Dublin edition of Samuel Butler's *Hudibras*.⁸⁸ The poem, originally published in London in 1663, satirised the hypocrisies of the Presbyterians, puritans and other religious groups which were subversive of the monarchy at the time of the Great Rebellion. It later inspired imitations such as the anonymous anti-Irish *The Irish Hudibras or Fingallian prince*, first published in London in 1689, a work that was fiercely satirical of the native Irish, parodying Book VI of Virgil's *Aeneid* in an Irish setting.⁸⁹ Ó Gormáin also owned a copy of *The posthumous works of Samuel Butler* (London, 1754). The work was originally published, with great success, in three volumes between 1715 and 1717, under the title *Posthumous works in prose and verse ... with a key to Hudibras by Sir Roger l'Estrange*. The work appeared in one volume in 1730. Most of the contents, however, are generally rejected as spurious.

Another interesting title contained in the collection was *A small garland of pious and godly songs composed by a devout man for the solace of his friends and neighbours in their affliction* (Ghent, 1684) by the Bishop of Ferns Luke Wadding (c. 1628–91).⁹⁰ This book is now extremely rare but in its time it proved extremely popular as several editions were published. The verse it contained was set to the airs of English and Irish folk-songs of the time and, according to Corish, echo 'the poetry of Herbert, Donne and Crashaw'.⁹¹ The collection also contained the earliest printed versions of eleven Wexford Christmas carols. Most of the poems were probably composed by Wadding himself but the carols were probably traditional hymns.⁹²

Turning our attention now to some unexpected English-language titles in the collection of Ó Gormáin, one notes three medical books, possibly bought at auction, that one would expect to have been acquired with the intent of selling them on. More intriguingly, there were two works on the subject of magic and witchcraft: Francis Hutchinson's *Historical essay concerning witchcraft* (London,

⁸⁸ Samuel Butler, *Hudibras. In three parts. Written in the time of the late wars. Corrected and amended: with additions. To which is added annotations, with an exact index to the whole. Adorn'd with a new set of cuts, from the designs of Mr. Hogarth* (Dublin, 1732).

⁸⁹ For a discussion of the *Irish Hudibras*, see Andrew Carpenter, *Verse in English from eighteenth-century Ireland* (Cork, 1998), 42–8; Andrew Carpenter, 'Sectarianism in Marsh's Ireland: some literary evidence', in Muriel McCarthy and Ann Simmons (eds), *The making of Marsh's Library. Learning, politics and religion in Ireland, 1650–1750* (Dublin, 2004), 187–208:197–202.

⁹⁰ Pádraig Ó Súilleabháin, 'The airs in Bishop Wadding's "Small Garland"', *Ceol* 4(3) (1973), 51.

⁹¹ Corish, 'Bishop Wadding's notebook', 52.

⁹² Andrew Carpenter (ed.), *Verse in English from Tudor and Stuart Ireland* (Cork, 2003), 474.

1718, 2nd edn. 1720) and Daniel Defoe's *A system of magick; or, a history of the black art* (London, 1727).⁹³ Hutchinson's work expressed scepticism at the phenomenon of witchcraft and attempted to explain it in a rational manner. Aimed at the educated lower orders and the judiciary, it sought 'to convince them of the erroneous nature of traditional witchcraft beliefs'.⁹⁴ It met with a mixed response both in England and Ireland.⁹⁵ Defoe, on the other hand, sought to prove the reality of the supernatural in an attempt to reject atheism. His *System of magick* presented both an attack on deism and a criticism of eighteenth-century English society. It was the second of his three major works on magic and the occult, the others being *The political history of the devil, as well ancient as modern* (London, 1726) and *Essay on the history and reality of apparitions* (London, 1727).⁹⁶ Both Hutchinson's and Defoe's works reflect an intellectual interest in witchcraft that came to the fore in the early eighteenth century, a time that saw the rise of controversies over the deist writings of John Toland and others who challenged orthodox Christianity. Rather than dealing with witch-hunting, works on the subject were often a reflection on broader religious, political and philosophical questions. The fact that Ó Gormáin owned copies of these works suggests that there must still have been an interest in the subject in Ireland among the educated towards the latter decades of the century.

A further unexpected title in the collection is *Onania examined, and detected: or, the ignorance, error, impertinence, and contradiction of a book call'd Onania, discovered and exposed* (London, 1723) by Philo-Castitatis, dealing with the subject of masturbation, which was written as a retort to *Onania, or the heinous sin of self-pollution, and all its frightful consequences in both sexes, considered. With spiritual and physical advice* (London, 1710?). This latter work was a warning on the 'moral and physical dangers' of the practice and was sold along with medicine that promised to act as a cure.⁹⁷ Given that a copy of *Onania* was listed as item no. 915 in John Fergus's sale catalogue, it is likely that the topic would have been of interest to medical doctors and Ó Gormáin may have purchased his copy of *Onania examined* together with other medical texts. He did not place a value beside the entry in his catalogue but the very fact that he owned a copy suggests that he believed a market existed for publications of that nature.

⁹³ For Hutchinson, see Andrew Sneddon, *Witchcraft and Whigs. The life of Bishop Francis Hutchinson, 1660–1739* (Manchester, 2008); Williams, *I bprionta i leabhar*, 119–28; Gordon Wheeler, 'Bishop Francis Hutchinson: his Irish publications and his library', in John Gray and Wesley McCann (eds), *An uncommon bookman: essays in memory of J.R.R. Adams* (Belfast, 1996), 140–55; James Sharpe, *Instruments of darkness. Witchcraft in England 1550–1750* (London, 1996), 285–6.

⁹⁴ Sneddon, *Witchcraft and Whigs*, 126.

⁹⁵ Sneddon, *Witchcraft and Whigs*, 121.

⁹⁶ Maximillian E. Novak, *Daniel Defoe, master of fictions* (Oxford, 2001), 653–69; Marion Gibson (ed.), *Witchcraft and society in England and America, 1550–1750* (London, 2003), 242–9.

⁹⁷ For a discussion of *Onania* and *Onania examined*, see Thomas W. Laqueur, *Solitary sex. A cultural history of masturbation* (New York, 2004).

The fate of Ó Gormáin's manuscripts

After Ó Gormáin's death, many of his manuscripts eventually came into the possession of the Gaelic scholar Edward O'Reilly, who noted that the scribe 'had a great quantity of Irish Mss. both vellum and paper and upwards of 100 of which have come into my possession'.⁹⁸ Furthermore, according to a note in the hand of the Chevalier Thomas O'Gorman, Ó Gormáin's manuscripts passed to a Mr Wright and a Mr Tankard on his death: 'Gorman's Manuscripts are principally in the hands of Mr Wright a clerk in the National Bank, one Tankard a Publican in Pill Lane etc and some of them are said to be for sale at Dornin's a bookseller's in Grafton St.'⁹⁹ O'Reilly bought a number of the manuscripts from Wright before the latter emigrated to America:

The following Irish Grammar is transcribed from a MS. miscellancy, lent to me by my friend Sir Wm. Betham, written in the year 1713 by Richard Tipper of Mitchell's Town, Parish of Castle Knock, Co. of Dublin. The book afterwards became the property of Maurice Gorman a Schoolmaster in Dublin, who taught General Vallancey Irish. O'Gorman was an industrious scribe, as is evident from the numbers of books extant in his handwriting. He had a great quantity of Irish Mss. both vellum and paper and upwards of 100 of which have come into my possession.¹⁰⁰

In 1825 O'Reilly drew up a list of the 198 manuscripts in his possession, and in his description of manuscript no. 70 he noted: 'The writing is very fine, executed by a young gentleman (Henry Wright) who had been taught Irish by Maurice Gorman, and who owned most of the Irish Mss. now in my possession with many others that I disposed of to William M. Mason and others'.¹⁰¹ Subsequent to O'Reilly's death in 1830, his manuscripts were sold at auction and a number of them were bought by James Hardiman, author of *Irish minstrelsy* (London, 1831). Hardiman, who also appears to have bought some of Ó Gormáin's manuscripts from a Mac Entaggart, possibly the Wright (Enrí Mac an tSaoir) mentioned by the Chevalier, transcribed the following note in one of the manuscripts (BL Eg. 129):

I had this book, with others in his handwriting, from one Mac Entaggart, to whom O'Gorman left them at his death [...] he died in the greatest of poverty in a ground-cellar in Mary's Lane, Dublin, about 1794: where he was a long time supported by the charity of Mac Entaggart, who was himself a poor man.¹⁰²

Ó Gormáin had a tendency to drink heavily and this probably contributed to his state of poverty at the end of his life.

⁹⁸ British Library (BL), Add. 18,426.

⁹⁹ BL, Add. 20,717, fol. 36b; Flower, *Catalogue of Irish manuscripts*, 377.

¹⁰⁰ BL, Add. 18,426; Flower, *Catalogue of Irish manuscripts*, 622.

¹⁰¹ Séamus P. Ó Mórdha, 'The Irish manuscripts of Edward O'Reilly', *Éigse* 9 (1958), 132.

¹⁰² Flower, *Catalogue of Irish manuscripts*, 597–8.

Conclusion

A study of Muiris Ó Gormáin's catalogues provides a new perspective on how resourceful eighteenth-century Gaelic scribes had to become to eke out a living as the century progressed. They appear to be sale catalogues rather than just a listing of the items he owned and indicate, therefore, that he was in the business of dealing in books and manuscripts to institutes such as Trinity College Dublin as well as to private collectors. The catalogues also offer an insight into the material Ó Gormáin believed to be worth collecting and copying, the value he placed on individual items and the exemplars to which he had access for his own transcription work. Of the 70 manuscripts which he listed in 1761, at least 26 of them had been copied by members of the Ó Neachtain coterie, many of which were penned by Risteard Tiobar and Seon Mac Solaidh. This bringing together of part of the enormous literary corpus produced by that group draws attention to the variety of texts they transcribed and allows a pattern of the most popular texts to be traced. The catalogues display a number of salient features. Firstly, the emphasis is placed on devotional material, both handwritten and printed. There are numerous copies of *An teagusc Críostduighe*, *seanmóir Aoine an chéasda* and the lives of the saints, an indication of how highly prized such texts were within the manuscript tradition. Secondly, the number of romantic tales is striking, demonstrating the popularity of those particular texts: *Eachtra an amadáin mhóir*, *Eachtra an mhadra mhaoil*, *Eachtra mhacaoimh an iolair agus Eachtra Mhelóra agus Orlando*. Thirdly, the quantity of Sean Ó Neachtain's creative work contained in the manuscripts indicating the respect in which his work was held and possibly also pointing to a taste for burlesque material within the Ó Neachtain circle.

When both catalogues RIA, MS. 23 H 23 (a) and NLI, MS. G664 are compared, a shift from manuscripts to printed books is evident during the course of fifteen years, particularly a move toward English-language books. In addition, a number of valuable vellum manuscripts are absent from the final list Ó Gormáin compiled. Although he made copies of texts for his own use, the small number of manuscripts in the collection, which he had penned himself is striking, suggesting that most of his copying was completed for patrons. Above everything else, the catalogues challenge the notion that the Gaelic and English-speaking Protestant élite worlds were divided from one another with little interaction between them and that the Gaelic world did not have access to print in the English language.¹⁰³ They clearly demonstrate that the scribe was more than just a copyist and could, and indeed often did, fill other roles: those of collector and of buyer and seller of books and manuscripts.

¹⁰³ For these arguments, see Daniel Corkery, *The hidden Ireland* (Dublin, 1924) and Joep Leerssen, *Hidden Ireland, public sphere* (Galway, 2002), 31 ff.

Appendix A

RIA, MS. 23

H 23 (a)¹

1.	Doctor Keating in Irish in a large folio on a very good paper which cost 2 pence a sheet [...] in all 254 pages (with fine Embellishments) [...] a very fine manuscript, it is worth 5 Guineas and at 1s:1d per sheet will come to 3 Guineas and upwards. It is richly worth three guineas and cannot be sold for less.	£3:8:3
2.	The Lilly in folio, very legible tho wrote in the year 1587, as in page 142 being a treatise of phisick by the best Masters of the profession [...] and is richly worth 7 pound to a Doctor that could read or practise it, and at 1s:d per sheet comes to	£5:13:9
3.	A Book on fine vellum, Intitled the Rose, being an Herbal, and a Treatise of physick, an exceeding fine manuscript, with a great many material things very rare and wrote very close; a small folio, containing 114 sheets, which ought not to be sold. But if it should be too cheap at (NLI, MS. G11)	£11:8:0
4.	An Irish Herbal on vellum in quarto, imperfect, with 4 brass nails on both sides, and brass round the edge on both sides, is a very ancient book, and contains 33 leaves. (TCD, MS. 1323 (H.3.4))	
5.	A book of vellum [...] containing Beatha, Bás agus Eiseirghe ar dTigharna Iosa Críost and I think Beatha Mhuire and is worth 22 shillings to any who would be curious to read the old vellum books [...]	£1:2:0
6.	A large folio in vellum containing 63 leaves with black leather loose about it, and the leather turn'd in with a stitch on one side, containing first the sayings of great men in the church, as St. Bernard, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine etc an Exhortation or Sermon [...] all in good order, and wrote well; anno 1473 [...] Tadhg Ua Righbhardain air scribsit. (RIA, MS. 24 P I ?)	
7.	The Destruction of Troy in vellum containing 70 leaves in a large folio, wrote by Malachiae Ó Kianan anno Dom: 1493. The Expedition of Jason for the Golden fleece in the beginning of the book [...] I believe no other to be had in either vellum or paper. (King's Inns Library, MS. KI 12)	
8.	Cath Cathardha or the war between Pompey & Iulius Caesar, with an account of the battle fought in the plains of pharsalia in Thessaly containing 10 leaves in vellum which are found after the Destruction of Troy unbound.	
9.	A book in folio, on paper, containing 86 sheets with a vast many Genealogies [...] part of Leabhar Gabhala, or the book of Conquests [...] as the most part of the book is scarce and valuable at a shilling a sheet it is worth It is well bound. The most part of it wrote by John Solly.	£4:6:0

¹ Ó Gormáin's manuscripts were eventually bought by various repositories in both Ireland and abroad and a large number of them can be identified from the detailed descriptions the scribe provided in his catalogues. Where I have been able to identify them, I have included the manuscript number and repository in brackets.

10.	A quarto in vellum unbound which I got from Mr H—y containing Beatha Mhuire, Sermons in the beginning of the book. Beatha Chríost, Cannons or Law in the church of poverty. (RIA, MS. 3 B 22 ?)	
11.	A Treatise on fever on paper with 13 leaves, wrote by Mr Tipper [...] with an old herbal in Irish; got from Bryan O'Donnel, both stitched separately with parchment.	
12.	Tri biorghaethi an bháis or the 3 shafts of death on paper [...] 43 sheets and a half at 6½ per sheet comes to and wrote by Mr Tipper. (John Rylands Irish MS. 22?)	£1:3:6½
13.	Eochair sgiath an aifrinn, or the defence of the mass in 4to. 21 sheets well bound, wrote by Mr Tipper. (NLI, MS. G361)	
14.	A book in folio, with a black leather cover, stitched with pieces of leather, containing first Cath or Ionsuighe Mhaighe Leána. Cath Mhuighe Mhucroimhe [...] Turasgbhail Chatha Gabhra, in verse all the above wrote by Mr Tipper. Cath Chluain Tarbh and Marbhnaoi Bhriain Bhoiroimhe, wrote by John Solly [...] (BL, MS. Eg. 106)	
15.	An 8vo. Book, being 8 leaves to the sheet, and well bound; wrote by John Solly. 1st iomarbhaidh to 216 [...] then comes rioghraidh laighean clann chathaoir by Ó Dubhagán. Triallam timchiall na fodhla [...] all wrote by John Solly; making 308 pages. What follows was wrote by Mr Tipper: Annala [...]. (RIA, MS. 23 D 5 and RIA, MS. 23 D 6)	
16.	An 8vo book, well bound: the beginning a Grammar and prosody in Irish to page 94. Fuaras a psaltair Chaisil [...] A prosody English and Irish in the latter end. I think the whole book is about 40 sheets. (NLI, MS. G127)	
17.	Donlevy's Catechism in English and Irish in print. Cost 5s:5d	0:5:5
18.	The Bible and Testament in print in one book fine gilt on the back and Edges, which cost me a Guinea. It is worth 3 half Guineas.	£1:13:1½
19.	Parthas ananma or the paradise of the soul in print containing about 36 sheets in Irish.	
20.	Táin bo cuailgne without a cover bought of Mr Billy Quin who is now in America containing the actions and feats of Congulan together with madra maol [...]. Do Vellum in quarto containing 120 leaves wrote very well in the year 1419 [...]. (BL, MS. Eg. 1782)	
21.	Doctor Keating in Irish in quarto well bound containing 74 sheets is worth 3 Guineas at the least and at 12 pence per sheet would come to £3.14.0.	£3:8:3
22.	An Réim Riaghraidh or the reigns of the kings an 8vo well bound the most part wrote by John Solly [...] I got it from Mr Norton. (RIA, MS. 23 A 40)	
23.	Naonmhar chaoilte an 8vo all wrote by John Solly containing 39 sheets in prose, and verse it was half bound in parchment wants binding. (NLI, MS. G126?)	
24.	Beatha Chríost in verse, wrote by John Solly. Sheets 23. It is richly worth 12 shillings. (UCC, MS. C M 21)	
25.	A book in 4to well bound containing 36 sheets wrote by Maurice Gorman first comhairleach Chato [...]. (BL, MS. Eg. 128)	
26.	A book in 4to borrowed from Mr Morris, Weaver, first imtheacht 7 bás Chearbhuill 7 Fearbhlaidh, Agallamh an chuirp 7 ananma but short [...]. Eachtra chloinne righ na hioruighe about 10 sheets.	
27.	An gleacaidh Geuglonnach in 4to 289 pages; or 36 sheets wrote by John Solly, and bought of James Muldoon shoemaker is worth 36 shillings [...]. (NLI, MS. G197?)	1:16:0

28.	Another book in 4to beginning with the second book of second part of Gleacaidh geuglonnach [...] wrote by Maurus Newby.	
29.	Common prayer English and Irish in print.	
30.	Eachtra chlanna Tomáis, Lisin Ui Dhúnagan [...] an 8vo wrote by myself [...].	
31.	Archaeologia Britannica or Lhuyd's Dictionary in folio, bought of Mr Flinn in Castle Street for	0:11:4½
32.	Another book or Archaeologia Britanica, bought for half a Guinea Containing a prosody in the Irish as also the Irish Dictionary explained in English.	0:11:4½
33.	Sir James Wares history, or antiquities of Ireland in folio bought for 10s:10	0:10:10
34.	Sgáthán Spioradálta 8vo. written by John Solly 424 pages or 26 sheets and a half neatly bound. (NLI, MS. G65 or BL, MS. Eg. 191)	
35.	Lucerna fidelium, or lochrann na gcreidmheach wrote by John Solly 458 pages, makes 28 sheets & a half in 8vo. (NLI, MS. G57)	
36.	Lucerna fidelium, or lochrann na gcreidmheach in print half bound with parchment 8vo 391 pages or 24 sheets.	
37.	Nuadhfhoclóir bogchruaidh in 4to compiled and wrote by the Rev. Francis Valis anno. 1706. 12 sheets and a half.	
38.	Sanasan or focloir in 8vo. by Michael O'Clery, manuscript bound 11 sheets bought in Mary's lane.	
39.	Sanasan or focloir in 8vo by Michael O'Clery wrote by myself together with laoi an deirg [...]. (NLI, MS. G64)	
40.	An teagasg criosdaighe in 8vo. wrote by Mr. Tipper with Seanmoir Aoine an cheusda. Beatha St. Antonio Naomhtha ó Phadua. Liottain St. Antonia. beatha St Caitearfhiona [...].	
41.	An teagasg criosdaigh wrote by James MaGuire together with an Irish Grammar in the beginning. Breitheamh ceart comhthrom an teug [...] the Christian Doctrine comes after the above said things. (BL, MS. Eg. 192)	
42.	An 8vo. bound with the Garland of pious & Godly song in English, Do. print with as fairsing dealbh puball de [...].	
43.	Imtheacht na tromdhaimhe fhailluigheas ciannas do fuaras. Táin bo cuailgne ar tús and part of táin bo cuailgne comes after it covered with a hairy skin in 4to.	
44.	An cath cathardha, or the Wars between Iulius Ceasar and Pompey in 4to and imperfect.	
45.	An teagasg criosdaighe and after it truagh liom a chompain do chor [...] with other things in 4to half bound with parchment wrote by Hugh Daly.	
46.	A book in 4to. first how to prepare and make water colours. Mo ghean dhuit a ghrainne gharbh [...] all wrote by Thadeus Naghten. half bound in parchment. (NLI, MS. G132)	
47.	A book in 4to with a little blew paper on the on [sic] side wrote by M: Newby page 85 ends the first book of gleacaidh geuglonnach and all wanting in this book but 6 leaves at page 86 Eachtra an giolla deacar begins and ends at page 106. laoidh an deirg. Leachta ghuill 2 chráidh mo chroidhe [...] not bound but a piece of parchment. (RIA, MS. 23 L 34)	
48.	A quarto tyed with old parchment and 4 strings to tye it got from Bartle Cavanagh, with very good dans or poems as mairg mheallas muirnn an tsaogan [...].	

49.	An gleacaidh geuglannach in quarto a parchment cover half bound, wrote by Mr Tipper. 36 leaves more are in Mr Solly's book for this book wants from the 14 chapter to the latter and which I believe would make about 9 sheets to finish it out.	
50.	A quarto book with thick white paper about it beginning with a prosody English and Irish with some dans or poems in Irish which cost me 9s:9d	9s:9d
51.	A quarto book with a rough hairy skin for a cover stitched to it, wrote by Thady Naghten, not paged containing first an Irish Grammar, and prosody explained in English. Leabhar na gCeart [...].	
52.	A book in 8vo with a thin leather cover stitched, containing Stair Emuinn Ui Chléirigh, do reir Sheain Ui Neachtain [...] Suidh fruim síos a phádrúig done by John Naghten [...] Stair Emuinn Ui Chléirigh wrote by John Solly, and all the rest by Richard Tipper. (BL, MS. Eg. 148?)	
53.	A little book in quarto stitched with parchment containing Stair Emuinn Ui Chléirigh 7 Cormuc og on mbulairne 7 tuarasgbhail na bulairne ri mumhain.	
54.	A Common prayer in Irish print in quarto.	
55.	Breisleach mór mhaighe mhuirtheimhne [...] which is a quarto book was half bound with parchment all wrote by Richard Tipper. (BL, MS. Eg. 132)	
56.	An old book in 4to, some printed paper as a cover to it, wrote in the year 1654 as in page 30. At page 13 Beatha Phadrúig begins and ends at page 30, wrote by Giolla Padruicc a Luinin [...].	
57.	An 8vo bound containing Beatha Mhaodhoig 93 pages.	
58.	The <u>Royal Penitent</u> a small vol. I think 12vo well bound 43 pages. ²	
59.	Eagna fhíre or true wisdom 16o leaves to the sheet 110 pages well bound in parchment and wrote by Mr Tipper.	
60.	A large 8vo bound but wants binding yet, with several pictures or draughts by the pen or pencil, the first part an teagasg críosaíge [...] wrote anno Dom 1686.	
61.	An Teagasg Críosaíge ar na cuireadh a cclo a lobháin ar na cumadh do bhonaventura Ó Heosa [...] As truagh liom achompain do chor in 12vo. I believe and 259 pages well bound about 24 sheets and at 3d a sheet will come to	0:6:6
62.	The Doway Catechism in English and Irish, but the English type for the Irish in 8vo with blew paper for a cover.	
63.	A quarto in parchment bound, all wrote by Thadeus Naghten not paged. Brave whisky stand not cap in hand [...]. I left several things out too tedious to write here. (NLI, MS. G135)	
64.	Seanmóir aoine an cheasda, or a sermon on good Friday in 8vo wrote by myself with a cover of black leather stitched and Beatha St. Margaret or the life and death of St. Margaret. (RIA, MS. 23 I 22)	
65.	Seanmóir aoine an cheasda, wrote by Maurice Gorman 8vo stitched with a parchment cover. (NLI, MS. G28)	

² This was *The royal penitent: a paraphrase on the seven penitential psalms* (London, 1727) by Richard Daniel, Dean of Armagh.

66.	Seanmóir aoine an cheasda, or a sermon on good Friday wrote by Thady Naghten in a parchment cover half bound. Note the 3 books are the same Sermons verbatim. In the beginning fo this last book is marbhnaoi or an Elegy for the Archbishop of Dublin Edmond Byrne [...]. (BL, MS. Eg. 194)	
67.	A very old book in 4to with an old parchment cover and a leather button on one side. Begins with cuaine riaghna rug Édain. An teagasg criosdaighe de reir flaithri ui mhaolchonaire [...] mhac do thionntagh aspáinis an gaoidheilge é annon 1593 [...] An teagasg criosdaighe ar na cumadh da bhonaventura o heodhasa [...] all very well wrote a very fine letter, and good orthography.	
68.	A very old book in quarto with a parchment cover stitched, begins with the dan triallam timchiall na fodhla [...] an dara leabhar do phairliment cloinne tomáis [...]. with several dans which were too tedious to insert here the book wrote by different hands.	
69.	An old quarto book with a black parchment cover, with some stains of oyle & wrote by different hands, begins with agallamh an anma 7 an chuirp. Macaimh an iolair [...] Eachtra Abhlaiغه inghine righ alban 7 Chearbhuill mhic Donchadh mhóir ui Dhála ó Fhinebheara. (BL, MS. Eg. 170)	
70.	A little book in 8vo stitched in a good cover of another book containing 40 leaves begins with As ait liom stáidbhean sgiathach sgathfanta. Laoidh an amadain mhoir [...].	
71.	An old book in 4to with an old parchment cover stitched to it Tadhg Mac Daire [...]. The seven penitential psalms in metre or verse. Mor ata ar theagasg flatha. Bean ar natheirgh Éire being the last. I left out some I did not put down here.	
72.	A little bound book about the bigness of a primmer [sic] wrote by Mr Tipper begins with bliaghuin sa solas adath in full [...].	
73.	An Irish Testament in 4to bought of Mr Tipper.	
74.	The iomarbhaidh wrote for myself about 14 sheets 8vo in loose sheets.	
75.	A miscellancy or bolg solair, I wrote from time to time, no cover on it wherein is Merlino [...] A dhuine cuimhnigh do chriocha deiognach with a great many other good things too tedious to write the heads here.	
76.	Aodh Mac Aingil, or sgathan na haithrige in print wants to the 9th page, wants binding very much.	
77.	Michael O'Clery's Irish Dictionary in print, imperfect.	
78.	An Irish Manual bought of Mr John Heyden December 20th 1761.	
79.	Aodh Mac Aingil or Scathan na hAithrigh, bought of Mr Henesy December 21 1761. Do. print for 3:3.	3:3
80.	Teagasg Chormac mhic Airt for a mhac Cairbre Lifeachar.Udar Márainn mhac Maoin [...] all in an old 4to without any cover.	
81.	Teagasg chormic mhic Airt [...] in paper 4to; wrote by Mr Thady Norton anno 1729 [...] about 4 sheets wrote by Valentine O Hanlon [...] Beatha Bhrighide (2 sheets) in full, wrote by Mr Tipper. (NLI, MS. G449)	

Appendix B

(NLI, MS. G664)

English books¹

1.	John Quincey, <i>Pharmacopoeia officinalis & extemporanea. Or, a complete English dispensatory</i> (11th ed., London, 1739)	5:0
2.	John Quincey, <i>Lexicon physico-medicinum: or, A new physical dictionary; explaining the difficult terms used in the several branches of the profession</i> (2nd ed., London, 1722)	4:0
3.	Steven Blanckaert, <i>The physical dictionary. Translated from the lexicon medicum graeco-latinum</i> (4th ed., London, 1702)	2:2
4.	John Macpherson, <i>Critical dissertations on the origin, language, government, manners and religion of the ancient Caledonians, their posterity the Picts, and the British and Irish Scots</i> (Dublin, 1768).	4:4
5.	The same book a Duplicate	4:4
6.	James Macpherson, <i>Fingal an ancient epic poems in 6 Bookes</i> (Dublin, 1762)	4:4
7.	Bishe's English poetry (London, 1710)	4:4
8.	Matthew Kennedy, <i>A chronological, genealogical and historical dissertation of the royal family of the Stuarts, beginning with Milesius ... and ending with ... James the 3rd of England</i> (Paris, 1705)	5:5
9.	John Mair, <i>Book-keeping methodiz'd: or, A methodical treatise of merchant-acompts according to the Italian form</i> (Edinburgh, 1736).	3:3
10.	Francis Hutchenson, <i>Historical essay concerning witchcraft</i> (2nd ed., London, 1720)	2:2
11.	Daniel Defoe, <i>A system of magick; or, a history of the black art. Being an historical account of mankind's most early dealing with the devil; and how the acquaintance on both sides first began</i> (London, 1727).	3:3
12.	Thomas Ward, <i>England's reformation ... A poem in four cantos</i> 2 vols. (London, 1742).	2:8½
13.	William Nicholson, <i>Irish historical library. Pointing at most of the authors and records in print and manuscript, which may be serviceable to the compilers of a general history of Ireland</i> (Dublin, 1724)	2:8½
14.	Samuel Butler, <i>Hudibras. In three parts. Written in the time of the late wars. Corrected and amended: with additions. To which is added annotations, with an exact index to the whole. Adorn'd with a new set of cuts, from the designs of Mr. Hogarth</i> (Dublin, 1732).	2:8½
15.	John Gay, <i>Poems on several occasions by Mr John Gay</i> (Dublin, 1752)	2:2

¹ In some instances Ó Gormáin provided a short title in addition to the year and place of publication. I have attempted here to provide the complete title, based on the *English short title catalogue*. Wherever he had not provided the year of publication I have given the first edition of the work. Furthermore, in some cases I have given Ó Gormáin's own description of the work particularly when it is impossible to otherwise identify the work in question.

16.	Peter Brett, <i>Brett's Miscellany: containing above one hundred useful and entertaining particulars, divine, moral, and historical</i> vol. 6 (Dublin, 1762)	1:7½
17.	Randal Smith, <i>A collection of select aphorisms and maxims; with several historical observations, curious remarks, and characters of persons and things; taken out of the best authors</i> (Dublin, 1722)	1:7½
18.	Thomas Comerford, <i>The history of Ireland, from the earliest account of time, to the invasion of the English under King Henry II</i> (Dublin, 1742)	2:2
19.	An old Latin Grammar	0:0
20.	John Hornihold, <i>The real principles of Catholics: or, a catechism by way of general instruction, explaining the principal points of the doctrine and ceremonies of the Catholic Church</i> (1749)	1:7½
21.	<i>Mathematical miscellany, in four parts. ... By a lover of the mathematicks</i> (Dublin, 1730)	1:7½
22.	Thomas Comerford, <i>The history of Ireland</i> (Dublin, 1755)	2:2
23.	<i>A Chronology of some memorable accidents, from the creation of the world, to the year 1742</i> (Dublin, 1743)	1:7½
24.	Abel Boyer, <i>The compleat French-Master; for ladies and gentlemen</i> (London, 1694).	1:7½
25.	Francis Lamb, <i>A geographical description of ye kingdom of Ireland. Collected from ye actual survey made by Sr. William Petty. Corrected & amended ... Engraven ... by Fra. Lamb</i> (London, 1728)	2:8½
26.	a Cordery	0:6½
27.	Aristotle's book of problems, with other astronomers, astrologers, physicians, and philosophers. Wherein is contain'd divers questions and answers touching the state of man's body (London, 1710?)	
28.	<i>Pax vobis, or Ghospell and libertie against ancient and modern papists. By E.G. preacher of the word. Dedicated to the right honble the Lord Halyfax</i> (London?, 1679).	
29.	<i>Pax vobis</i> (imperfect)	0:0
30.	A small common prayer (imperfect)	0:0
31.	G. F., Gent, <i>The Secretary's guide ... Containing variety of forms for inditing letters upon any subject whatsoever</i> (London, 1741).	0:0
32.	Arts Companion drawing and painting Posthumous work of Samuel Butler	1:7½ 0:0
33.	Irish historical library in blew paper	1:7½
34.	John K'eogh, <i>Zoologia medicinalis Hibernica: or, a treatise of birds, beasts, fishes, reptiles, or insects, which are commonly known and propagated in this kingdom not bound</i> (1739)	1:7½
35.	John Brett, <i>Conjugal love and duty: a discourse ... asserting the prerogative of beauty, and vindicating the privileges of the fair sex</i> (Dublin & London, 1758) 2 bound John Brett, <i>Conjugal love</i> (unbound)	2:0 1:7½

36.	<p>A new description of Merryland bound² <i>The muses choice: or, the merry fellow. Being a collection of wit and humour ... Extracted, partly, from the works of the most celebrated authors, such as Congreve, Pope, Swift ... and, partly, from originals, taken from private manuscripts</i> (London, 1754). <i>Philo-Castitatis, Onania examined, and detected: or, the ignorance, error, impertinence, and contradiction of a book call'd Onania, discovered and exposed</i> (London, 1723). A pious garland of songs imperfect to the tune of</p>	<p>1:1 0:0 0:0 0:0</p>
37.	<p>Samuel Boyse, <i>A New Pantheon: or, Fabulous history of the heathen gods, heroes, goddesses, &c. ... Adorn'd with figures depicted from ancient paintings, medals and gems</i> (Dublin, 1758).</p>	<p>1:7½</p>
38.	<p>Thomas Dyche, <i>A new general English dictionary; peculiarly calculated for the use and improvement of such as are unacquainted with the learned languages</i> (London, 1735) which I bought of Mrs Davis in fleet lane Dublin.</p>	<p>2:2</p>

² This is possibly *The English pilot. The fourth book, describing the West India navigation from Hudson's Bay to the River Amazonas ... also a new description of Newfoundland, New England, New York, East & West New Jersey, Dellawar Bay, Virginia, Maryland, and Carolina, etc* (London, 1728).