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23 N 10 AND IRISH ORTHOGRAPHY

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1 Old Irish spelling vs Modern Irish spelling

Medial and final /b/, /d/, /g/

ModIr *boige* < OIr *buca*

ModIr *bog* < OIr *boc*

ModIr *pobal* < OIr *popul*

ModIr *ob* < OIr *op*

ModIr *fada* < OIr *fotae*

ModIr *fad* < OIr *fot*

Lenition (*séimhiú*)

In Modern Irish, indicated on all consonants (except <l>, <n> and <r>).

In Old Irish, only indicated on <c>, <p>, <t>, <f>, <s>.

Nasalisation (*urú*)

In Modern Irish, indicated on all consonants as appropriate.

In Old Irish, not indicated on <c>, <p>, <t> and <f>.

Vowels

ModIr *céile* (nom., gen. and dat. sing.)

OIr *céile* (nom. sing.), *céili* (gen. sing.), *céiliu* (dat. sing.)

2 What is the orthography of Early Modern Irish (c. 1200 – c. 1650)?

Late sixteenth / early seventeenth century

Similar to twentieth-century Modern Irish spelling before the 1950s spelling changes.

Prior to the late sixteenth century

A mix of earlier and more modern spelling conventions (e.g. nasalisation frequently not marked on <c>, <p>, <t> and <f>, medial and final /b/, /d/, /g/ frequently written <c>, <t>, <c>)

➢ Anders Ahlqvist, 'Litriú na Gaeilge', in *Stair na Gaeilge* (Maynooth, 1994), 23–60.

3 William Gillies, 'An Early Modern Irish "Harrowing of Hell" ', *Celtica* 13 (1980), 32–55

See also Ó Cuív in *Celtica* 14 (1981), p. 26.

4 *Foclóir nó Sanasán Nua in a mínighthear cáil eigin dfhoclaibh cruaide na Gaeidheilge, ar na sgriobhadh ar urd aibghitre le brathair bochd tuata dOrd S. Froinsias Michéul O Cleirigh, a gColáisde na mBrathar nÉireannach a Lobháin*. Ar na chur a gcló maille re hughdardhas. 1643.

5 EModIr *troigh* < OIr *traig*

Mícheál Hoyne, '*Áoi trasgartha*', *Ériu* 67 (2017), 178–183.

6 *An ceathramh ni biodh a fhios ag an áos óg agas ag an áos ainbfis lerab mian na seinleabhair do léughadh (ní nach bfuil na aincheas ar eolchaibh ar ttíre) gurab* **annamh bhios coimhéd aca ar chaol re leathan, no ar leathan re ccaol do sgriobhadh**, *agas ar [sic]* **firthearc cuirid uathadh ar na connsainibh** *mar atá, bh, ch, dh, fh, etc. agas fós as annamh chuirid síneadh fada ar fhoclaibh. Sgriobhthar go minic* **cuid dona consainibh ar son a cheile**, *mar ata c, ar son g, agas t, ar son d. Ag so samhail na bfocal tre sa dtuigfidhear sin. Ar son an fhocailsi clog, ionann agas cloc, agad, acat, beag, beac, codladh, cotladh, ard, art, etc. Cuirthear fós go minic ae, ar son ao, agas ái ar son aoi. agus fós oi ar son aoi. Sompla airsin mar sgriobhthar go minic aedh ionann agas aodh, agas cael as ionann agas caol. Agus bói agus fós bái as ionann agas báoi.* **Sgriobhthar go minic E ar son A sna seinleabhraibh**, *mar ata die, as ionann agas dia, cie as ionann agas cia, etc.* **Sgriobhthar go minic I ar son A**, *mar ata so dochuaidh, as ionann agas dichuaidh. Sgriobhthar go coitcheann a, o, u ar son a cheile a ndeireadh focail* [...]

'Fourthly, the young and ignorant who wish to read the old books, (a thing which is not difficult for the educated of our country), must know that **they rarely guard against writing slender with broad, or broad with slender**, and that **they very rarely put the aspirate upon the consonants**, as *bh*, *ch*, *dh*, *fh*, *etc.*, and also that they seldom put the long accent on vowels. **Some of the consonants are often written one for another**, as *c* for *g*, and *t* for *d*. Here are examples of words by which this will be understood: *clog* the same as *cloc*; *agad*, *acat*: *beag*, *beac*: *codladh*, *cotladh*: *ard*, *art*, *etc.* Also *ae* is often put for *ao*, and *ái* for *áoi* and also *oi* for *aoi*. For example *aed*, is often written for *aodh*, and *cael* is the same as *caol*. And *bói* and also *bái* is the same as *báoi*. **E is often written instead of A in the old books**, as *die*, which is the same [as] *dia*, *cie* which is the same as *cia*, *etc.* **I is often written instead of A**, as *dochuaidh* [read *dachuaidh*, which can be spelt *dichuaidh*]. *a*, *o*, *u* are commonly written for one another at the end of the word [...]'

(A.W.K. Miller, 'O'Clery's Irish Glossary', *Revue Celtique* 4, 349-428, 480; 5, 1–69)

7 Liam Breatnach, 'Dinnseanchas Inbhear Chíochmhaine, "trí comaccomail na Góidelge", agus caibidil i stair litriú na Gaeilge', in E. Mac Cárthaigh and J. Uhlich (eds), *Féilscríbhinn do Chathal Ó Háinle* (2012), 37–55.

8 '[Egerton 88 is] written in an obscure style, and further disfigured by the uncouth spelling which some scribes in this and the preceding century seem to have found a pleasure in adopting: without any object apparently, but that of puzzling readers. In this line O'Davoren was an adept, as was also, amongst others, the older scribe of Harl. 5280' (Standish Hayes O'Grady, *BM Catalogue* i, 88).

'A copy in the same cacography is in Harl. 5280 [...]' (*BM Catalogue* i, 92).

'The wording [in 23 N 10] is very like that of Harleian 5280, but it has not the queer spelling of that manuscript' (Rudolf Thurneysen, 'A third copy of the Guesting of Aithirne', *Ériu* 7 (1914), 196–9).

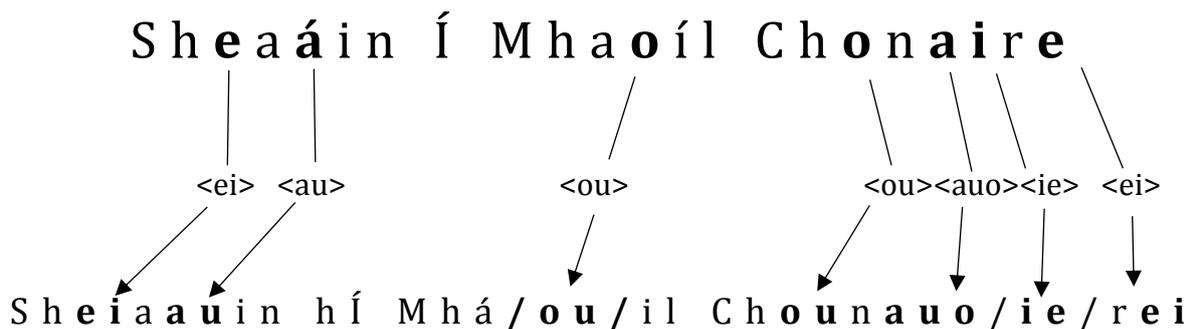'in grotesque spelling' (R.I. Best, *23 N 10 Facsimile*, p. vii).

'The present manuscript [G7] is similar in much of its content to two contemporaneous manuscripts, RIA 23 N 10 and BM Eg. 88 (Tale Section); the orthography in some of the texts in Eg. 88 shows eccentricities similar to those in the present manuscript' (Nessa Ní Shéaghdha, *NLI Catalogue* i, 37).

9a "Another vowel please, Carol"

Finit. Amen. In Satharn ría bFeil in Tailgienn anieua. Miesie Aoudh. Bauilei in Chuoiminei muo mheiandaot a n-airm Sheiaauin Hí Mháouil Chounauoierei 7 daur muo dheurou is truaogh in ries-sien adchlouaim [sic?]*, adhon Semuos Mhauc Muoiries ag imtheaoucht doun Spaiend amailde frina tseitche 7 frina chlaouind fous 7 is eadh is daomhna cheimnighthe dhoiu adhon* [...?] *do nembhfhaghuai*[...]*e onna ur*ath*auir fein (id est Geroit .i. iarla) 7 is eadh douruimnimsi gurop olc fuaoir*[...]

'The Saturday before the Feast of the Adzehead [= St Patrick] today. I am Aodh. Baile an Chuimíne is my stead in the house of Seaán Ó Maoil Chonaire. And by my tears, pitiful is the tale I hear, viz. that James Fitzmaurice is going to Spain along with his wife and his children too. And the cause of their going is not getting [...] from their own cousin (that is, Gearóid the Earl), and my opinion is that it is an ill hap they have got (?)'

Adapted from Best, *23 N 10 Facsimile*, pp. vii–viii.

S h **e** a **á** i n Í M h a **o** í l C h **o** n **a i** r **e**

<ei> <au> <ou> <ou><auo><ie> <ei>

S h **e i** a a **u** i n h Í M h á **/ o u /** i l C h **o u** n **a u o / i e /** r **e i**

> ➢ <á/i> = <au/i> and <a/ie/>   <Sheia**aui**n> (= *Sheaáin*) vs <Sp**aie**nd> (= *Spáinn*)

> ➢ Rare words in Early Modern Irish
> *airm* 'place'
> *meannad* <mheiandaot> 'dwelling-place (locality, district)'
> *ris* <ries> 'news, tidings'
> *ailt* 'house'

9b *Finit do sin ₇ is ercot*ech *in duph*, 'The end of that, and the ink is execrable'.

If <p> = <b> in a word like *op/ob*, then <ph> = <bh> in a word like *dubh*!

9c *Oraoit uaim ar do lebor a Oedh in .100. Luan iar nAurtach Iohannes* (Dubhthach), 'A prayer from me for your book, Aodh, the first Monday after the feast of John'.

10a Kuno Meyer, 'Urteilsspruch wegen entwendeter und beschädigter Pferde', *ZcP* 8 (1912), 103–4.

*Scuirther a gr**auei**diu* [= *graige/-i*]*. Teallsatar īar sin macdretill Temrach sri**au**ona* [= *sriana*] *in rīgh ₇ doc**uao**tar* [= *do-chuatar*] *for a graid* […]

10b Cf. (from H 4.22) Osborn Bergin, 'The Death of Conchobar's Sons', *Ériu* 7 (1914), 242–3.

*Luidh fer inn-Emain M**aoa**ch**aei*** [= *Machae*] *do milroth. M**aoa**rbais* [= *marbais*] *.iii. pait. L**ou**idh* [= *Luid*] *dia n-imḟ**oui**ne* [= *imḟuine*] *for bróu cairrce. Amail r**uo**b**aouéi*** [= *ro baí*] *ann co c**uaa**laigh* [= *cualaid*] *an g**ou**th* [= *guth*]*. Asbert ries* [= *ris*] *don cairrc inda r**ou**nna-s**ou*** [= *ronna-so*] […]

11 *Úath Beinne Étair*, Appendix D in Nessa Ní Shéaghdha, *Tóruigheacht Dhiarmada agus Ghráinne* (1967), 130–7.

Hypervocalism

ar cauch n-auth (= *ar cach n-áth*, Harl. 5280 *ar cech n-ath*), *in n-aenouclach* (= *in n-aenóclach*)

<o> for <a>

dio 'when' (Harl. 5280 *dia*), *aro cinn* (Harl. 5280 *ara cind* 'awaiting them'), *taro formnai* (Harl. 5280 *tara formna* 'over his shoulder'), *-fagbonn* (Harl. 5280 *fagbann*)

> ➢ If <fedo> = <feda>, <oc> = <ac> → unstressed <a> = <o>.

<e> for <a>

ier (= *iar*), *riem* (= *riam*), *die* (= *do* + *a* 'her') *soigid*, *die* (= *do* + *a* 'his') *oirchisecht*, *lie sodain* (Harl. *lia sotain*)

> ➤ If <die> 'day' = <dia> → any <ia> = <ie>.
> ➤ If <dia> 'to his/her/its/their' = <die> → <a> 'his, her, its, their' = <e>.
> ➤ Cf. also *cech/cach*, *cen/can* etc.
> ➤ Míchél Ó Cléirigh lists <a>/<e> variation among the features of old books obvious to the learned in 1643.

<nt> for <nd>

al Fint (= *Find*)

<c> for <g> in initial position

Crainde/Crainne (Harl. *Graindie*, = *Gráinne*), *Clinniu* (Harl. *Glindi*, = *Glinne*), *on caith* (Harl. *on gæith*, = *ón gaíth*), *do-ceip* (Harl. *do-geip*, = *do-geib*)

> ➤ Cf. *co/go*, *cen/can/gen/gan* and *cech/cach /gech/gach.*

<p> for <b> in initial position

ad-pher (= *ad-bhér*), *aenpe* (Harl. *oenbé*), *re Penuiuh Pou* (Harl. *Pennaibh Pó*, = *Bennaibh Bó*), *a mproccaibh* (= *mbroccaibh*)

<ch> = <gh> and <gh> = <ch>

truaice (Harl. *truaige*)

seghtair (Harl. *sechtair*)

<dh> = <th>

in gaedh (Harl. *in gaeth*)

nasalised prepositional pronouns

Fochtuis ind tsentonn risiu [acc. pl.] **ndē** (Harl. *rise ndē*), 'The old woman asked tidings of him'

Tingelluis **ndó** *a tal do gnīom* (Harl. *tingeullus ndō*), '[She] promised him to do his will'

Diermait do mairn [dat. sing.] **ndō**, 'to betray Diarmait to him'

> ➤ Rudolf Thurneysen, 'Miscellen zur Altirischen Grammatik: 1. Die Nasalierung des Anlauts nach deklinierten Wörtern im Altirischen', *ZcP* 5 (1905), 1–19.
> ➤ Tomás Ó Concheanainn, 'Srónaíl mhírialta i lámhscríbhinn ón séú céad déag', in A. Ahlqvist and V. Čapková (eds), *Dán do Oide: essays in memory of Conn R. Ó Cléirigh* (1997), 453–64.

12 Kuno Meyer, 'Abenteuer Königs Aed Oirdnide', *ZcP* 8 (1912), 102–3.

nasalised prepositional pronoun: *dogeine tri noí ndabcha* [acc. pl.] **ndō**

hypervocalism: *amauch* (= *amach*)

pseudo-archaic spelling substitutions: *trie pithu sír* (= *tria bithu sír*)

obscure vocabulary: *Fecht n-aon doluid Aodh Dorndine* **ben** *Nēill Frasaig do ordugud rīghe Cairnd Ōlnēcmachta*

Cf. *Scél Baili Binnbérlaig* (ed. Kuno Meyer, *Revue Celtique* 13 (1892), 220–7)

> ➤ '[...] for many ordinary Irish words (*gnáthḟocla*) of H 3.18 [and 23 N 10!] Latin, Hebrew and archaic Irish words have been substituted [in Harl. 5280]'
> ➤ Harl. *Ba sain**cais**-seom di Aillinn **filia** Lugach **bein** Fergusai **Goo***
>   23 N 10 *Ba sain**serc**-sum di Aillind **inghin** Lughach **meic** Fergusa **fairgi***

The origins of hypervocalism

13 OIr *caur* > EModIr *cur*, OIr *menmae* > EModIr *meanma* etc.

BUT cf. the likes of EModIr *térnoae*, *térnaae*, *térnaeíe* (3 sing. pres. subj. of *téarnóidh*)

14 Hypervocalism in line-fillers

Egerton 88 *adhnaaa* (= *adhna*) (*BM Catalogue* i, 107)

H 4.22, f. 66b *touaaubhauaoch* (= *tobhach*)

The origins of consonant substitutions

15 *bacalar dogalar caich* (*Thes.* ii 246.16) (Cambr.)

16 *to-* for *do-* (but also for *de-/di-*)

23 N 10 *di-gene*, Harl. **to**-*gene* (preterite of *do-gní*, *-dénai*)

17 The 'archaic' spellings of *Audacht Morainn* Recension B (especially 23 N 10)

'A number of archaic spellings, best preserved in [23 N 10], show that Recension B was written down well before the main Würzburg Glosses [...] This gives us a compilation date of *c.* 700 [...]' (Fergus Kelly, 1976, p. xxix).

1. 'Historical *-th* is usually preserved in [23 N 10], but is rare in other MSS', e.g. *torath*.
   BUT
   (a) This sort of spelling could be picked up from older manuscripts and applied here artificially.
   (b) If *-d* = <t> → *-dh* = <th>.
   (c) Note also that *dh* and *th* alternate in many words in Early Modern Irish (*tora**dh***, dat. pl. *tor**th**aibh*). One of the subjects of the curriculum of *filidheacht* (language and basic metrics) undergone by the likes of the Í Mhaoil Chonaire was *crothaidheacht na cconnsuineadh chasus* 'the form assumed by consonants that syncopate' (special reference being made to the relationship between *dh-th* and *gh-ch*) (*IGT* I §2), something which may have further encouraged 'etymological' spellings.

2. The preverb *to-* is found for *do-*.
   BUT It is also used incorrectly for earlier *de-* in manuscripts of this period with a pseudo-archaising style (e.g. *to-gene* above).
   It was probably picked up from older manuscripts and generalised, encouraged by the use of <t> for <d> and possibly by etymological spelling (cf. variants like ***t**ig*, ***do**-ig* in *IGT* III).
   The use of *de-/di-* for *do-* is also noted (though not claimed to be archaic).
   This may be old BUT the preposition *do* is sometimes spelt *de/di* in pseudo-archaised manuscripts (see Breatnach 2012, 44).
   As the preposition *do* is commonly used in place of *de/di* → <de>/<di> can be used for *do*(-).

3. For <úa>, we find <ó> or <óa>.
   BUT <ó> and <óa> found for <úa> in texts that are certainly Middle Irish, where it is obviously a pseudo-archaic feature (Johan Corthals, 'The *retoiric* in *Aided Chonchobuir*', *Ériu* 40 (1989), 41–59, at p. 44). Presumably picked up from earlier MSS.
   Note also that *ó* and *ua* variation survives into Early Modern Irish in some words (*sluagh/slógh*).

4. Final *-ch* is spelt <gh> in *ētagh* and *oenagh*.
   This may be an old spelling (either original to the exemplar or applied artificially) BUT it may be no more than an extension of the spelling system: <c> = <g> → <ch> = <gh> → <gh> = <ch>.
   Note also the possibility of 'etymological' spellings. EModIr *éada**ch***, gen. sing. *éada**igh***, nom. pl. *éada**igh**e*; *aona**ch***, gen. sing. *aona**igh***, nom. pl. *aona**igh**e*.

5. The use of *már* for *mór.*
   As noted, *már* occurs as late as the Milan Glosses, BUT in any event, it is also found much later as a pseudo-archaism.
   Cf. G7 *Toforaint* (= *do-forainn*) in **Márrighan** *laithriuch nduine lie haulta* (= *lia halta*) *hi Machi* (= *Macha* here?)
   OIr *Morrígan* > Middle Irish *Mórrígan* > pseudo-archaic *Márrígan*

6. Unstressed -<e>- for *-a-* in infixed pronouns *-de*(*n*)-, *-te*(*n*)-, and in *oec* 'young' (not preserved in 23 N 10), *toceth* and *insoet* (MS *insuet*).
   BUT <e> for <a> in unstressed position is widespread in MSS of this type. See top of p. 5 above.

7. Absence of *a*-glides.
   BUT The absence of glides was a recognised feature of old books in 1643 and almost certainly earlier. Cf. Aodh's *ercót*ech.

18 <é> for *ía* in *grén* etc.

This may be a genuine old spelling or a generalisation of a genuine old spelling

BUT Note also the possibility of 'etymological' spellings (*grian*, dat. *gréin* etc.). *Ia > éi* is an example of *cáoladh éigceirt* 'irregular slenderisation' (*IGT* I §14).

Cf. the variation between *ré/ría.*

19 Doubling of vowels to indicate length

Cain beein lam Dee ndílgodag   do chobair?

'Would I not have been on the side of my forgiving God to help (Him)'? (Corthals 1989, 46–7)

beein = beinn (1 sing. past subjunctive)

> ➢ David Greene, 'Middle quantity in Irish', *Ériu* 16 (1952), 212–18.

20 Rudolf Thurneysen, 'Morands Fürstenspiegel', *ZcP* 11 (1917), 56–106.

Julius Pokorny, 'Zu Morands Fürstenspiegel', *ZcP* 13 (1921), 43–5.

Rudolf Thurneysen, 'Allerlei Keltisches: 2. Zu Morands Fürstenspiegel', *ZcP* 13 (1921), 298–9.

Kim McCone, 'Prehistoric, Old and Middle Irish', in K. McCone and K. Simms (eds), *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies* (1996), 7–54, at p. 31.

21 (Uilliam Búrc) *Budh léaghthóir leabhar ndorcha* / [...] / *sgríbhneóir dob fhearr i nÉirinn*, 'He was a reader of difficult books [...] the best scribe in Ireland' (*A Bardic Miscellany* 65.6)

An leabhar nách léighinn féin, / do-níodh damhsa a dhreach shoilléir, 'The book I used to not read myself he, bright face, would impart to me' (*Tadhg Dall* 23.8)

(Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir) *Comhairle Chormaic na ccath / do ghabh airdrí Fher Manach; atá sí ó leabhraiph leis / do mheabhraigh hí ar aithriss*, 'The high-king of Fermanagh has read out the counsel of Cormac of the battles; he has it from books, he has learnt it by recitation' (*Duanaire Mhéig Uidhir* 2.35, my translation)

Luas Í Cholla ar caoillínibh / cruas a rolla réidheobhaigh, 'his speed in reading narrow lines will simplify the difficulty of his genealogy' (*Duanaire Mhéig Uidhir* 21.35)

(Brian Mór Mac Diarmada) *Léaghaidh litre ríleabhair, / t'fhilidh d'éis a gceódhubhaidh; ceisd chruaidh reampa réidhighidh / ag buain deargtha a deórudhaibh* , 'After your poets have been utterly confounded, you read the words of a royal book and unravel a difficult question for them, causing wandering poets to blush' (*Fuidheall Áir* 4.9)