

BORROWED ELEMENTS IN THE CORPUS OF IRISH PERSONAL NAMES  
FROM MEDIEVAL TIMES\*

The corpus of Irish personal names comprises (1) names which clearly belong in origin to the Goidelic branch of Celtic - *Aodh, Cathal, Domhnall, Eóghan*, etc. - together with (2) names of foreign origin which have come into use over a long space of time. Early sources, and especially genealogical material, contain names whose origins are obscure, and some of which may go back to pre-Goidelic peoples in Ireland. Many of these are of rare occurrence and need not concern us here, for the purpose of this paper is to consider names which were in use in the historic period.

The Irish sources for a full study are many and include historical works of various kinds, legal documents, martyrologies, saints' lives and other religious texts, tales, bardic verse and so on. Most important of all are the annals and the genealogies. Special mention must be made of M. A. O'Brien's *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae* (1962) in which the genealogical material in the twelfth-century manuscripts Rawlinson B 502 (Bodleian Library, Oxford) and the Book of Leinster (Trinity College, Dublin) has been edited with full indexes. Some later genealogical collections which have been published, such as the O'Clery 'Book of Genealogies', are without full indexes of names and hence the study of their contents is very tedious. I must mention two other publications which provide a welcome contrast in the way in which they have been edited. They are 'A Tract on the O'Rourkes', edited by James Carney and published in *Celtica* i (1946-50) 238-79, and *A Genealogical History of the O'Reillys* (1959), also edited by James Carney, both of which have exhaustive indexes.

For the period down to the year 1100 or so O'Brien's *Corpus* is a wonderful aid. In it about 12,000 persons are listed. There are over 3,500 separate names, but mostly these are of infrequent occurrence. Something over 4,000 of the persons listed share 100 of the names, leaving the remaining 3,400 names distributed among less than 8,000 persons, that is, an average of two occurrences for each of these names. In fact many names occur only once. O'Brien compiled a frequency list which shows at the top of the scale: *Aed* 250, *Eochu*, *Eochaid* 220, *Fiacha*, *Fiachra* 170, *Ailill* 150, *Fergus* 140, *Cairpre* 130, *Lugaid* 130, *Conall* 110, *Cormac* 100, *Domhnall* 100, *Flann* 100, *Cellach* 90 and *Muireadach* 90.<sup>1</sup> However, only a comparatively small number of the borrowed names that I shall be discussing feature in the *Corpus*.

We owe one of our commonest names to the introduction of Christianity. The first bishop sent to the Irish, Palladius, has left no trace so far as the ordinary use of personal names is concerned. Not so his successor, *Patricius*, for his name has been perpetuated in the form *Pátraic*, modern *Pádraig*, *Páraic*, and so on. The Q-Celtic form *Cothraige*, in which the name was first used, was a non-starter as far as being used for naming was concerned. Other first names or baptismal names common to-day whose origins are to be found in the Christianisation of our country are *Maoileachlainn*, *Maoilíosa* and *Maoilre* (or *Maolmhúire*). I shall have more to say about these later. Men's names, such as *Eóin*, *Mícheál*, *Peadar*, *Séamas*, *Seán* and *Tomás*, and women's names, such as *Caitríona*, *Maighréad*, *Máire* and *Nóra*, are literally 'Christian names', for they are associated with Christian saints. However the dates (i) of their being adapted into Irish form and (ii) of their incorporation in the corpus of Irish personal names in common use require systematic study. I shall not have time here to do more than touch on such matters very briefly.

My original intention when I was invited to take part in this conference was to confine myself to names in the period after the Anglo-Norman invasion. However, I decided that a more general treatment might be useful at this stage, even though this would preclude discussion in detail of a number of topics. You will find, then, that while I begin with borrowed names in the later period,

I go on to consider early borrowings and I bring into the discussion some Irish elements.

With regard to the post-invasion period, there are several points that have struck me in the course of reading annalistic and other source material over the years, e.g. (i) the very many new 'given' names that appear in an Irish dress in our records after 1169, (ii) the adoption of some of these new names by Irish families, (iii) the preference for certain names - whether borrowed or Irish - by some families, and (iv) the relatively few instances we can find of native Irish first names being used by the settlers and their descendants in the centuries following the invasion. Among matters which a survey would aim at establishing are (i) the range and forms of new names adopted into Irish during that time, (ii) the distribution of these names among families, and (iii) the date of appearance of each name, and the development in its use, etc.<sup>2</sup>

It must be noted that many of the borrowed names which became current after the Anglo-Norman invasion existed in Irish form centuries earlier and that the later form is often a regular reflex of the earlier one, as with *Mícheál*, *Peadar*, *Pól* and, indeed, *Pádraig*. But there are exceptions. *Máire* is a post-invasion borrowing from A.N. *Mari(e)*, the earlier form (from *Maria*) being *Maire* (with short stressed vowel) which later became *Moire* and *Muire*. The older borrowing was restricted in use to the Virgin Mary and other saints named Mary, but in this way it came to be used in the given names *Mael Maire* and *Gilla Maire*. *Seán*, which later became monosyllabic *Seán*, is a post-invasion borrowing from A.N. *Jehan*, the earlier forms (from *Iohannes*) being *Iohain*, *Ioain* and *Eóin*, the last of which has been retained as *Eóin*.

To give you an idea of the distribution factor I have taken material from *A Genealogical History of the O'Reillys* which brings the genealogies down to the late seventeenth century. Having listed the names in order of frequency I find that at the top of the scale the names, Irish and borrowed (printed in italics), are as follows: *Seán* 214, *Philip* 190, *Aodh* and *Brian* 159, *Toirdhealbhaich* 145, *Eóghan* 136, *Eamonn* 115, *Cathal* 96, *Maol Mórdha* 86, *Cathaoir* and *Conchubhar* 78, *Fearghal* 73, *Domhnall* 62, *Séamus* 61. Other names non-Gaelic in origin are *Tomás* 29, *Gearóid* 18, *Proinsias* 13, *Pádraig* 10, *Risteard* 8, *Lucás* and *Mícheál* 7, *Peadar* 5, *Matha* 4, *Enrí* and *Labhrás* 3, *Séirse* and *Seón* 2, and *Adamh*, *Aindrias*, *Alastrann*, *Doimnic*, *Freidiric*, *Gofraidh*, *Maghnas*, *Parthalán*, *Réamonn*, *Roibeart*, *Seafraidh*, *Seilbheastar* and *Uilliam* 1; as well as compound names containing borrowed elements: *Giolla Íosa* 5, *Giolla Pádraig* 1, and *Maoil Sheachlainn* 6. Many of the names occur only in the later stages of the pedigrees, that is, in the seventeenth century.

The genealogical tract on the O'Rourkes, which is of approximately the same date as that on the O'Reillys, shows a different range and distribution of names: *Brian* 23, *Tadhg* 19, *Aodh* 18, *Domhnall* and *Eóghan* 17, *Tighearnán* 15, *Conn* 14, *Seán* and *Toirdhealbhaich* 11, *Donnchadh* and *Feilim* 10, *Fearghal* 9, *Seafraidh* and *Art* 5, *Séamus* 4, *Cathaoir*, *Cobhthach*, *Feidhlimidh* and *Uaithne* 3, *Cathal*, *Conchobhar*, *Mícheál* and *Proinsias* 2, and *Aindrias*, *Fearadhach*, *Lochlainn*, *Maghnas*, *Maoil Sheachlainn*, *Niall* and *Ualgharg* 1. Borrowed names common to both lists are *Aindrias*, *Maghnas*, *Mícheál*, *Proinsias*, *Seán*, *Seafraidh* and *Séamus*; with *Seán* the most common in both.

I present in a different way my third illustration derived from genealogical sources. For it I have abstracted from the seventeenth-century O'Clery 'Book of Genealogies' the names given there of male descendants of *Domhnall Óg Ó Domhnaill* (†1281), son of *Domhnall Mór* (†1241), son of *Eigneachán* (†1207), and I have listed them in alphabetical order and in tabular form to show the number of occurrences of each over ten generations, that is from the latter part of the thirteenth century to the beginning of the seventeenth. However, it must be noted that the main part of these genealogies was compiled in the first decades

of the sixteenth century and that nearly all the occurrences indicated in the last three columns derive from a late addition made over a century later and are not representative of the Ó Domhnaill families as a whole in the sixteenth century.

Descendants of Domhnall Óg, son of Domhnall Mór, son of Éigneachán

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
An Calbhach						2		2			4
An Dubhaltach							2				2
An Giolla Dubh						1	1				2
Aodh	1	1	2	4	14	7	10	1	2	1	43
Aonghus			3	6	3	4	1				17
Art		2	2	2	3	4	3				16
Brian					2	6	6				14
Cathal		1									1
Cathaoir						1					1
Cathbharr							1	1	1		3
Conall					2	2	1				5
Conchubhar		2	1	6	7	4	4				24
Conn					1	4	4		3	2	14
Cormac				1							1
Cú Uladh		1	1								2
Dálach				1	2	1					4
Diarmaid		1	1	3	8	3	3				19
Domhnall	1	1	4	7	11	8	12			2	46
Donnchadh	1	2	3	6	6	5	7		1		31
Éamonn					3	4	3				10
Éigneachán				1	1	1	2	1	1		7
Éimhear					1	1					2
Éireamhón						1					1
Eóghan		1		2	4	7	4			1	19
Eóin		1	1	1							3
Fearghal							1				1
Féilim	1	1		3	7	4	4	1			21
Gofraidh	1		1	5	2	3	4				16
Mael Sheachlainn		3	1	5	7		1				17
Maghnus		1	2	5	7	7	5	1	1	1	30
Muircheartach			1								1
Muiris			1								1
Neachtain				1	2	1	1	1			6
Niall	1	1	2	5	9	7	6	2	1	1	35
Raghnall			3								3
Risdeard				1							1
Ruaidhrí		1	1	1	1	1					5
Rudhraighe					1	4	7		1		13
Seacán			2	6	10	8	6	2	1	3	38
Séamus					1						1
Toirdhealbhadh	1		2	5	12	9	9	2			40
Tuathal							1	1			2
William		1	1	4	1						7
	7	21	35	81	128	110	109	15	12	11	529

All told we see here forty-three names shared by 529 individuals. With regard to the two most common names, *Domhnall* 46 and *Aodh* 43, I might mention that *Aed* is the most common name in O'Brien's *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae* and that Oengus Céle Dé in his Martyrology (Prologue 11. 233-5), composed c. 800, indicated that *Domnall* was a typical royal name, just as *Ciarán* and *Cronán* were typical saints' names:

In gormríg ro múchta,	The famous kings have been stifled,
in Domnaill ro plágtha,	the Domnalls have been plagued,
in Chiaráin ro rígha,	the Ciaráns have been crowned,
in Chrónáin ro máirtha.	the Crónáns have been extolled.

In this case the popularity of *Domhnall* is presumably due to the fact that it was not only the name of the progenitor of this branch of the Ó Domhnaill family but was also the name of his father from whom the importance of this branch of Ceineál gConaill derived. It is interesting to see a slight vogue for the names of two earlier ancestors, *Dálach* and *Éigneachán*, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Once more we see that *Seacán* 38 was the most popular of the borrowed names. However, two earlier borrowings, *Maghnus* 30 and *Gofraidh* 16 are well represented. One of Domhnall Óg's brothers was named *Gofraidh*.

I come now to another major source for the post-invasion period, the Irish annals, and here I restrict myself almost entirely to discussion of non-Irish first names. In the *Annals of Connacht*, which cover the period 1224-1544, I have noted about 180 such names, but, as in the case of the *Corpus Genealogiarum*, many are of infrequent occurrence.<sup>3</sup> Taking the occurrence of first names over all families I find that *Seacán* (which is sometimes spelled *Seoán*) is the most common name, occurring as it does 111 times. There are also by-forms *Seón* 5, *Seónac* 6 and *Seóinín* 13. Some other borrowed names in order of frequency are: *Tomás* 94, *Villiam* 90 with by-form *Villec* 14, *Maghnas* 70, *Éamonn* 42, *Ricard* 32, *Muiris* 29, *Matha* 27, *Dáuid* 26 with by-forms *Dabhac*, *Dabhag*, *Dábhi* and *Dáibhed*, *Enrí* 24, *Lochlainn* 24, *Amhlaoibh* 21, *Pilip* or *Filip* 17, *Uáitér* 17 with by-forms *Ualter* and *Ualtra*, *Seafraidh* 15, *Séamus* 15, *Piarus* 14, *Ádhamh* or *Adam*, etc. 14, *Hoiberd* 13, *Raghnall* 13, *Risterd* 13, *Roiberd* 11, *Eóin* 10, *Maoilir* 10, *Teabóid* 10, *Gearóid* 10 with by-forms *Gearóidín* and *Gearalt*, *Gillibert* 9, *Nicól* 8, *Réamonn* 8, *Sitrec* 8 and *Aindrias* 7. Not many women are named, but I have noted *Raghnailt* 5, *Caitríona* 5, *Caitilín* 3, *Mairgréig* 3 and *Sibhán* 3.

In view of the illustrations I have given from the genealogies of the use of borrowed names by Irish families, some evidence from these annals may be of interest. I have noted *Seacán* in use in 34 Irish families, the earliest occurrence being in 1252, with quite a few occurrences in the first half of the fourteenth century. *Tomás* was used by about 40 Irish families and was already popular by the middle of the thirteenth century. *Villiam* was used by some 20 Irish families; I have noted a few such occurrences in the thirteenth century, such as *Villiam Ó Neachtain* in 1276, but most of the occurrences are after 1350. I have noted *Éamonn* in only 15 Irish families, mainly from the end of the fourteenth century on.

The evidence of the *Annals of Connacht* indicates that in general Anglo-Norman families were very conservative about naming their children and did not readily take Irish first names. The genealogies tend to confirm the annals. Thus I have found no Irish names in the Butler sections of O'Clery's 'Book of Genealogies'. Among the Fitzgeralds listed by O'Clery I have noted a *Brian* at the fourteenth generation from Maurice Fitzgerald (fl. 1171), that is, in the late sixteenth century, and I have noted a *Pátraicín* in the same generation. A few exceptions I have noted in the annals include a *Diarmaid Mac Iago* (1465), and among the Mac Hoiberd family a *Domhnall* (1419) and a *Maoil Sheachlainn*

(1435). I might add that as regards surnames some of the families descended from the Normans went over to the Irish system. So we get *Mac Gearailt*, *Mac Muiris*, *Mac Goisdelb*, and so on. But there are many families where *Mac* was not used: *a Búrc*, *Cimsóc*, *Dalatún*, *de Laci*, *Dílmáin*, *Príndercas*, *Stondún* and so on.

Before I leave the post-invasion period I want to refer to a feature which must be familiar to any of you who have read Irish bardic poetry of that period: the division of Irish versions of some borrowed names into segments with separate stress. Examples are *Caitir Fhíona* (< *Catharina*), *Crios Díona* (< *Christina*) and *Muir Gréag* (*Margareta*), which have genitive forms *Caitreach Fíona*, *Criosa Díona* and *Mara Gréag*.<sup>4</sup> This sort of segmentation goes back to the earlier period, and to a large extent reflects the stress pattern of the basic form. The metrical martyrologies of Oengus and Ua Gormáin are interesting from this point of view, for rime and alliteration in them help us to determine word boundaries. It is, perhaps, worth calling attention to a difference in boundary choice in the Middle Irish form *Caiteirína* which occurs in *Féilire Uí Ghormáin* (composed in the years 1166-1174) in the alliterating phrase *Catairína rogda* (Nov. 25). Segmentation in some names from Anglo-Saxon is seen in the *Féilire*. Thus Aedilberg (abbess of Barking) is commemorated in the line *Ethel-burga bithög* (Oct. 11), and Ethelrida (abbess of Ely) in the line *Edel-árida áronbān* (Oct. 17).

The major body of borrowed names in existence in the Old Irish period was derived from religious sources. There is a limited number in the poems of Blathmac (fl. c. 750-770) and in the Irish version of the Gospel of St. Thomas.<sup>5</sup> There is a very large number in *Féilire Oengusa*. Naturally enough many of the names in the *Féilire* are of the learned type - they were probably coined by Oengus from the forms in the Latin martyrology which he used. But other names must have been getting a fairly standard form through being used in church circles; and some of these were carried over through later periods, despite the subsequent introduction of different forms derived from the same original.

Names in the Blathmac poems include *Adam Ádam*, *Aindrea* (gen.), *Bartholomeus*, *Ciric*, *Dauid*, *Eua*, *Gabrial Gabriel*, *Iacob*, *Ioain*, *Iosiab* (*Ioseph* in the Gospel of St. Thomas), *Lúcás*, *Maire*, *Marc*, *Mathae*, *Michél*, *Petar*, *Pilib*, *Pól*, *Simón*, *Stephán* and *Tomás*. Corresponding to some of these I have noted in *Féilire Oengusa* the forms *Aindreas*, *Bartholam* (with variant readings *Bartholoin*, *Parrtalon*, *Parthalon*, *Partholan*), *Ciric* but also *Giric* (alliterating with *g-*), *Iohen* (vll. *Eoin* etc.), *Ióseph*, *Lúcas*, *Stefan* with gen. *Stef-áni* (riming: *áni*). Other names found in the *Féilire* which turn up in some form later on include *Alax-andri* (gen.): *Augustín*, *Benedicht*, *Constantín*<sup>6</sup> (vl. *Consantín*), *Magnus*,<sup>7</sup> *Martain* and *SenPhól*.

As I have already said, several Christian names current to-day are reflexes of forms that were in use in Irish as saints' names (or biblical names) over a thousand years ago, names such as *Aindrias*, *Anna*, *Colam*, *Dáibhí* (*Dáuid*), *Eóin*, *Micheál*, *Parthnán* (< *Parthlón*), *Pilib*, *Pól*, *Tomás*. One might wonder how far back the current usage can be traced. In this connection some comments of Gerard Murphy's are of interest. In discussing the forms *Muire* and *Máire* (*Eigse* i 224) he said:

In pre-Norman times the Irish do not appear to have used saints' names as "Christian" names, except as parts of compound names, of which the first element was *Mael* (modern *Maol*)... At a later period the Irish borrowed from the Normans the present Catholic method of naming, in accordance with which saints' names are applied directly to the persons placed under their patronage. It was in that period that *Máire* came into Irish from Norman-French *Marie*, just as *Se-án* (modern *Seán*) came from Norman-French *Jehan*.

While there is no doubt that *Máire* and *Seán* are post-invasion borrowings, we must supplement and modify Murphy's statement to some extent. First of all we must note that as well as *Mael* the elements *Gilla* (or *Gille*) 'servant' and, to a limited extent, *Céle* 'client' were used as elements in the formation of personal names based on saints' names. More important is the fact that there is ample evidence in the Irish annals of saints' names being used for naming in Ireland before the Norman invasion. Among those that I have noted in entries ranging from the sixth century to the tenth are *Augustín*, *Clemens*, *Daniél*, *David*, *Elarius*, *Joseph*, *Martan* and *Tomás* (*Tómás*). The persons so named had connections with the church: they were bishops, abbots, etc., the earliest of them being David, bishop of Armagh (AU 550). I have also noted a *Petrán* (bishop of Lusk AU 615, AI 617), whose name looks like a derivative of *Petar*. Many instances of ecclesiastical persons with biblical or saints' names will be found in annalistic entries for later centuries. I give here a random selection from AFM: *Isac Ua Cuanáin* (1161), *Petrus Ua Mórdha* (1171), *Ioseph Ua hAodha* (1183) *Constantin Ua Brain* (= Briain) (1194) *Donait Ua Becdha* (1205) *Andrias Mac Giolla GÉR* (1249), *Tomás Ua Mellaigh* (1250), *Stiamhna Ó Braccáin* (1302), *Benidicht Ó Braccáin* (1312). At this point I must put forward a possibility that has occurred to me: that the first names applied to these men in the historical records are not their baptismal names or original 'given' names, but are names assumed by them at some point in a religious career, in much the same way that members of religious orders for many centuries past have been using saints' names in place of their baptismal names. However, I must add that it is possible that the practice of using such names as 'given' names developed early in families connected with the church. It is, perhaps, significant that in later centuries we find among the secular learned families such names as *Adhamh*, *Lúcás* and *Solanh*, thus *Adhamh Ó Cianáin*, *Lúcás Ó Duibhgeannáin* and *Solanh Ó Droma*, all of the fourteenth century.

I turn back now to the earliest borrowings due to the Christianisation of Ireland. The Patrician texts of Muirchú and Tirechán found in the ninth-century Book of Armagh have very many names in Latin form which may have had Irish forms but the latter, if they existed, have not been handed down to us. Three names whose Irish forms are known are *Auxilius*, *Benignus* and *Secundinus*, the names of St. Patrick's principal fellow-missionaries. *Auxilius* gave Irish *Ausail(1)e*, *Usail(1)e* or *Úsail(1)e*, and it seems to have survived in a distorted form in the place-name Killashee (near Naas) which represents earlier *Cell Ausaille*. In Irish *Benignus* became *Binén* or *Benén*. *Secundinus* might be expected to give *Sechman(n)*, but this form does not occur, as far as I know. In *Féilire Oengusa* and the 'Additional Notes' in the Book of Armagh we find *Sechnall* which, as Thurneysen pointed out (*Grammar* § 151), is due to dissimilation. Again we have a Leinster place-name, Dunshaughlin in Co. Meath, which contains a somewhat altered form of the name, the Irish form being *Domhnach Seachlainn* which appears earlier as *Domhnach Seachmaill*. Of the three names *Ausaille*, *Benen* and *Sechnall*, only the last is of real significance for naming purposes. Combined with *Mael* it gave *Mael Sechnaill*, a non-Indo-germanic type name which became extremely common after the ninth century. I have no evidence that *Benén* was used for naming, but *Auxilius* was not completely forgotten. In AFM under the year 1027 we find *Giollausaille mac Giollacaoimhgheín*, *tighearna Ua mBriúin Chualann*, and under 1064, at the end of a list of ecclesiastics' obits, we find the name *Gillahuasaille Ua Maoilmithig*. As I have already mentioned, *Gilla* is used like *Mael* to form personal names, and here we have *Auxilius* commemorated in the eleventh century by having his name in its modified form used for a lord of the Leinster Uí Brain and also, probably, for an ecclesiastic.

This brings me to consider the body of names formed with *Mael*, *Gilla* and *Céle*. A small number of entries in the genealogies and in the annals suggests that each of these words was used as a 'given' name without any qualifying element.<sup>8</sup> Those names where a qualifying element is appended are modelled

on an earlier pattern consisting of *Mug* 'slave' combined with the name of a deity ancestor, thus *Mug Néit*.

*Céle* is of minimal importance. In an ecclesiastical context it is best known in the phrase *céle Dé* 'client of God' which at the end of the eighth century was used to indicate a member of the reforming group of anchorites. But entries in the annals for earlier years of the eighth century show the compound names *Céle Tigernaig* (AU 715), *Céle Críst* (AU 726), *Céle Dulassi* (AU 750) and *Céle Petair* (AU 757). All the persons mentioned seem to have been clerics, so once more we are faced with the likelihood that the names recorded in the annals were not their original 'given' names.

*Mael* is not only the most frequently used of the three prefixed elements, but also the earliest so used. Indeed it goes back to the time of the Ogam inscriptions and it was quite common by the seventh century. There is a large number of *Mael* names in O'Brien's *Corpus*: *Mael* + adjective, + ordinary noun (in genitive), + place name, + personal name. Among them I have noted over twenty names with a saint's name as the second element, but sometimes one cannot be sure that the second element is to be associated with a saint. Thus the most commonly used *Mael* name with a personal name as second element is *Mael Bressail*. Some, if not all, of the persons so named may reflect a devotion to a Bressal who was abbot in Iona (AU †800), but several of them lived before that Bressal. Next in frequency is *Mael Sechnaill*, a name which I have mentioned already. There are eleven occurrences of this in the *Corpus*. The earliest *Mael Sechnaill* that I have found in the annals and the genealogies is *Mael Sechnaill mac Mael Ruanada* who was king of Ireland (†862). The name became common in a fairly short space of time and in due course gave rise to a surname *Ó Maoil Sheachlainn*.

Other *Mael* names based on saints' names found in the *Corpus* are *Mael Pátraic* 10, *Mael Ciardín* 9, *Mael Brigte* 7, *Mael Maire* 6, *Mael Colaim* 4, *Mael Cainnich* 4, *Mael Eóin* 3, *Mael Ísu* 3, *Mael Míchil* 3, *Mael Póil* 1, *Mael Girice* 1. I take the last to be an indication of devotion in Ireland to St. Cyricus (or Quiricus) of Antioch whose name is found in the poems of Blathmac and in *Féilire Oengusa*. The death in 1088 of a 'chief-poet of Ireland' named *Mael Ísu Ua Mael Giric* is recorded in AU.

Apart from persons named *Mael Sechnaill*, the majority of those with names composed of *Mael* + saint's name recorded in the early annals either are clerics or have church associations - they are abbots, bishops, priests, lectors, erenaghs etc.; but there are some who are not identifiable as such, and there are some who are identified as kings, lords, etc. The earliest *Mael Brigte* I have noted is recorded in AFM as having killed Ragallach, king of Connacht, in 645, but the entry may be without historical foundation. The earliest *Mael Brigte* I have noted in the older annals (AU and AI) died in 830 (AU). The earliest occurrences in these annals of some other *Mael* names are *Mael Coluim* (953), *Mael Eóin* (930), *Mael Giric* (931), *Mael Ísu* (966), *Mael Maire* (902), *Mael Martain* (888), *Mael Pátraic* (846), *Mael Petair* (894) and *Mael Poil* (921). The name *Mael Sempuill* appears in an AU entry for 921. The second element in this name may safely be taken to refer to *SenPhol* 'Old Paul' for whom feast-days are noted at January 19 and March 2 in the Martyrology of Oengus. The form *Sempul* might be explained as being due to consonant assimilation and shortening of the unstressed vowel, but an alternative explanation is that it is a calque on the word *Simplex* which was applied to Paul the Hermit.

Just as with *Mael*, I have noted in O'Brien's *Corpus* over twenty *Gilla* names which I take to be based on saints' names of which several are borrowed. Nine of the second elements are also used in the formation of *Mael* names found in the *Corpus*: *Brigit*, *Cellach*, *Ciarán*, *Coemgin*, *Colam*, *Comgall*, *Maire*, *Míchil*

and *Pátraic*. There are names *Gilla Críst*, *Gilla Martan* and *Gilla na Naem* for which the *Corpus* has no corresponding *Mael* names. On the other hand the *Corpus* has no *Gilla Eóin*, *Gilla Ísa*, *Gilla Póil* or *Gilla Sechnaill*. However, it is clear that the *Corpus* is not fully representative in this respect. As regards frequency, *Gilla Pátraic* 15 is the most common, with *Gilla Críst* 7 next, and *Gilla Brigte* 5 and *Gilla Ciaráin* 5 third.

It appears from the annals that the *Gilla* names came into vogue somewhat later than the *Mael* saint-names - mainly after the tenth century. There is a *Gilla Pátraic* son of Ímar who died in 982 (AU), a *Gilla Pátraic* lord of Tethba who died in 994 (AFM) and a *Gilla Pátraic* king of Ossory who died in 996 (AI, AU). From *Gilla Pátraic* of Ossory came the surname *Mac Giolla Pádraig* (= Fitzpatrick). The choice of the name *Gilla Pátraic* for the son of Ímar is an indication of devotion to St. Patrick as part of the Christianising of the Viking settlers in Ireland. In the following century the second bishop of Dublin was named *Patricius* and in recording his death in 1084 the annals use the form *Gilla Pátraic*.

I have already mentioned the name *Gilla Usaille* which honours Auxilius. Secundinus is commemorated not only by the name *Mael Sechnaill* but also by a name *Gilla Sechnaill*. A *Gilla Sechnaill* son of *Gilla Mo Chonna*, lord of Brega, is recorded as having been killed in 1034 (AU, AFM). There is no *Gilla Sechnaill* in the O'Brien *Corpus*, but in fact the Brega genealogy ends with this man's father *Gilla Mo Chonna* (*op. cit.* p. 161). The surname *Mac Gilla Sechnaill* occurs in entries in AFM relating to South Brega for a period of fifty years from 1121 to 1171.

I have pointed out that many of those who had a first name consisting of *Mael* + saint's name were connected with the church. The same is true of *Gilla* names, though to a lesser extent. I am tempted to link these facts with the suggestion I have made about the early use of borrowed saints' names such as *Daniél*, *Jóséph* and *Tomás*. Hence I wonder is it a coincidence that three of the eight churchmen named *Mael Pátraic* listed in AU held office in Armagh (as abbot, bishop or lector) and that another, abbot of Trevet in Meath, is described as *maer muinteri Pátraice* (AU 887), or that *Gilla Mo Chutu Ua Rebacháin* whose death in 1129 is recorded in AI was an abbot of Lismore and hence a coarb of St. Mo Chutu.

Another aspect of the use of such names which merits further investigation is the possible correlation between the saint whose 'devotee' the person named was supposed to be and the territory to which the person belonged. The most obvious example is the frequent use of *Mael Colaim* in naming members of the royal line in Scotland where special reverence for Colam Cille would have been natural; and also its occurrence in Colam Cille's native territory in the person of *Mael Coluim Ua Canannáin*, king of Cenél Conaill (AU 956). The use of *Mael Sechnaill* and *Gilla Sechnaill* in North Leinster and of *Gilla Usaille* in South Leinster may be taken to reflect special devotion to Secundinus and Auxilius in those areas, and the distribution of *Mael Coemgin* points to a similar territorial correlation.

In addition to Latin we must take note of Pictish, British and Anglo-Saxon as sources for early borrowed names, though the number of these in question is not very great. I shall mention only two here. The name *Conaing* was explained long ago by Eoin Mac Néill as a pre-umlaut form of Anglo-Saxon *cyning* 'king'. Its occurrence in some prehistoric genealogies in O'Brien's *Corpus* need not be regarded as posing a serious objection to this derivation. The earliest *Conaing* recorded in AU, a son of Scottish Aedán mac Gabráin, was drowned in 621. A *Conaing ua Daint*, abbot of Emly, died in 661 (AI), and a *Conaing mac Congaile*, king of North Brega, died in 661 (AU). Francis J. Byrne mentions this last

Conaing in discussing early Anglo-Saxon influence in Leinster. The name became fairly popular and continued in use after the Anglo-Norman invasion.

Far more popular than *Conaing* was the name *Cinaed*, if we can judge from O'Brien's *Corpus* where it comes eighteenth in order of frequency (56 entries). T. F. O'Rahilly thought that the name might be of Pictish origin since, as he pointed out in *Early Irish History and Mythology* (p. 362), it is first attested as a name of Picts (AU 630). He thought that the original form might have been *Cinloth* or *Ciniod*, but he went no further towards providing an etymology. However, he pointed out that the Pictish name *Custantin* is a borrowing of Latin *Constantinus*<sup>9</sup>, that *Elp(h)in* or *Alp(h)in* may be a borrowing of Latin *Albinus*, and that *Ulfa* or *Ulpha* may be a borrowing of Latin *Ulpus*. This leads me to put forward a suggestion which was made to me in another context a few years ago by Professor John O'Meara, that is, that the name *Cinaed* may go back ultimately to the Latin word *cinaedus* 'sodomite, catamite'. Originating as a descriptive term it could have become a nick-name and then, with its significance forgotten, a popular personal name. The earliest appearance of the name in the Irish annals seems to be that referring to the death of a Pictish king of that name: *mors Cinedon* (AU 630), *mors Cinaeda* (AI 633). It appears as the name of a king of Ireland, *Cinaed mac Irgalaig* (†728), and I have noted over twenty entries in AU for the following century and a half where Irishmen in various parts of the country, including kings and churchmen, are so named.

I come finally to deal fairly briefly with some of the personal names that the Irish took from the Scandinavians between the beginning of the ninth century and the end of the twelfth. In the narrative accounts of the Scandinavian wars there is a fairly large number of Scandinavian names in modified form showing the influence of Irish sounds and spellings. Several of them were adopted for use by the Irish and in due course the majority of these gave rise to surnames. So we have to-day *Mac Auliffes*, *Mac Caffreys*, (*Godfreys* etc.) *Mac Ivors*, *Mac Loughlins* (*O'Loughlins*), *Mac Randals* (*Reynolds*, etc.), *Sugruas* and so on.

The name *Amlaíb* (< ON *Óláfr*), from which the surname *Mac Amhlaoihb* (*Mac Auliffe*) comes, appears in the annals as the name of a son of a king of Lochlainn (Lothlinn) who was active in Ireland c. 850-871. Down to the middle of the tenth century it is found with reference to at least six Vikings in Dublin and Limerick. O'Brien's *Corpus* has three entries of *Amlaíb* from LL and two in late additions from Lecan. The earliest of the *Corpus* examples that I have dated was a member of the royal line in Scotland, *Amlaíb* son of *Illdolb*, great-grandson of *Cinaed mac Ailpín*. His death in 977 is noted in AU. The earliest use of the name for an Irishman that I have dated is *Amlaíb Ua Machainén* of the Uí Mugdorn (*Corpus* p. 437) who died in 1053 (AU). I have noted two other Irishmen with the name in the eleventh century, one of them being *Amlaíb Ua Briain* who was killed in the Isle of Man in 1096. In all I have noted in AFM over twenty Irishmen named *Amlaíb* down to the year 1250.

The name *Gofraid* or *Gothfraid* (< ON *Goðrøðr*), from which the surname *Mac Gofradha* (*Mac Caffrey*, etc.) comes, is seen in FAI § 401 (? AD 871-2) where the genealogy of *Ímar*, a brother of the first *Amlaíb* mentioned above, is given: *Iomhar mc. Gothfraidh mc. Raghmaill mc. Gothfraidh Conung mc. Gofraidh*. It appears in the annals in the years 921-34 as the name of a grandson of *Ímar*, and there are four other Scandinavians recorded with the name in the following sixty years, the latest of these being *Gofraid*, son of *Aralt*, king of the Hebrides who died in 989 (AU). Among notable Scandinavians named *Gofraid* in the following century was *Gofraid Méranach*, king of Dublin (†1095). The name does not appear in O'Brien's *Corpus*, but AFM has an entry for the year 835: *Gofraidh, mac Fearghusa, toiseach Oirghiall do imtheacht go hAlbain do neartughadh Dhail Riada, tre fhorchongradh Chionathe mic Ailpín* 'Gofraidh, son of Fearghus, chief of Oirghialla, went to Scotland to strengthen Dál Riada, at the request of Cinaed,

son of Ailpín'. Another entry in the same annals records the death in 851 of a *Gofraidh mac Fergusa*, chief of Inse Gall. Despite these early appearances of the name, there are relatively few occurrences in the annals in the next four hundred years. Yet the name was given to a son of Domhnall Mór Ó Domhnaill who died in 1247 and, as I have shown, it was also given to later members of the Ó Domhnaill family. One of the most celebrated of late mediaeval Irish poets was *Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh* (†1387). The surname, in the form *Mac Cafraidh*, is found in AFM from 1326 on.

*Ímar* (< ON *Ívarr*) occurs in the annals as the name of a king of the Norsemen from 856 to 871, and there were four others of the name among the kings of Dublin, Limerick and Waterford in the period down to 1000. The name does not occur in O'Brien's *Corpus*. The earliest instance of the name applied to an Irishman seems to be *Ímar Ua Beicce*, lord of Uí Méith, who died in 1049 (AFM). I have noted five others down to 1250. The surname *Mac Iomhair* does not seem to occur in the annals.

No Scandinavian personal name has been found as a source for the name *Lochlainn*. The Irish name is presumably taken from the place name *Lochlainn*, earlier *Lothlind*. There are four instances of it in O'Brien's *Corpus*, three in the Uí Néill genealogies and one in the genealogy of Corco Mo Druad of Clare. This last, *Lochlainn mac Mael Shechnaill*, is recorded in AU as royal heir of Corco Mo Druad in 983, this being the earliest instance of the name. From *Lochlainn* were descended the Uí Lochlainn of Boirenn. Among the Uí Neill there were apparently two contemporaries named *Lochlainn*: *Lochlainn mac Mael Shechnaill* (†1023) and *Lochlainn mac Muiredaig* (†1024). In the next century the surname *Mac Lochlainn*, is used in the annals with reference to the high-king Domnall (†1121) and his descendants. The form *Ó Lochlainn* is also used.

I have already shown the name *Ragnall* (< ON *Ragnaldr*) two generations back in the genealogy of the Viking *Ímar* (fl. c. 850-871). The first Viking named *Ragnall* recorded in AU as being active in Ireland died in 920, and I have noted two others of the name in the tenth century. Three instances of the name are found in O'Brien's *Corpus*, two from the Rawlinson manuscript and a late one from Lecan. One of the Rawlinson entries relates to the Monaig of Ulster and the other to Cenél Eógain; both may refer to eleventh-century persons. The earliest instance I have found in the annals of an Irishman named *Ragnall* is *Regnall Hua Eochada, rígdama Ulad* (AI 1045). There are over a dozen others down to 1250. There are entries for the *Mac Raghmaill* family of Muintir Eólais in Leitrim from 1150 on.

The name *Sichfrith* appears in AU as the name of a Viking, a son of *Ímar*, who died in 887. In 892 there is mention of *Sichfrit Ierll* in connection with the Dublin Norsemen. *Sichfraidh mac hUathmuran*, identified in AU 932 as a grandson of Domnall, king of Ailech (†915), through his daughter, may have been of mixed Irish and Norse blood, for an earlier annal (920) records *mac hUathmaran* as being a son of Bairith who may be identified as the 'tirannus magnus Nordmannorum' whose death is recorded in 880. The earl of the Orkneys who died at Clontarf in 1014 is named as *Siuchraidh mac Loduir* in AU but as *Sichfrit* in *Chronicon Scotorum*, while the Annals of Loch Cé make two characters of him, *Sioghraidh fionn* and *Sioghraidh donn*. He is called *Sigurðr* in Icelandic sources. The Irish forms may represent ON *Sigfrið* or *Sigrðr*. The name does not occur in O'Brien's *Corpus* but AFM records a lord of Fir Rois, *Sitfriuch mac Mic Sealbhaigh*, in 1096, and AI 1283 records a son of Gilla Flann Ua Súilleabháin named *Suchridh*. The late Munster tract *An Leabhar Muimhneach* lists several descendants of Domhnall Mór Ó Súilleabháin named *Siuthechraidh*. I have found no early occurrences of the surnames *Ó Siuchfradha*, anglicised *Sugruas*, which is found in Kerry, but it is reasonable to associate it with the use of the forename *Siuchraidh* among the O'Sullivans.

The name *Sitriuc* (ON *Sigtryggr*) is found in AU 895 where the death of a Viking of that name is recorded. Four more Vikings of the name are to be found in the annals before the year 1000, the best-known being *Sitriuc mac Amlaíb*, king of Dublin, who died in 1042. There is no *Sitriuc* in O'Brien's *Corpus*, but in AFM 1037 there is a record of a member of the Ua Flanacáin family of Uí Maine with *Sitriuc* as his forename, and I have noted the name in use by various Irish families about fifteen times in the period down to 1250.

The discussion of pre-Norman borrowings could be extended to include such names as *Bruatar*, *Colam*, *Dubgall*, *Magnas*, *Somaírlé* and *Tomrar*, all of which have their points of interest. An aspect of my subject that I have barely touched upon is the morphophonology involved in the borrowings. However, my aim has been to give a general impression of the material with which future researchers might concern themselves as well as indicating some of the questions about Irish personal names that have occurred to me in the course of my work. It is safe to repeat what has been said so often during this conference: there is a great deal more to be done,

#### Notes

\*Revised version of a paper read to the eleventh Conference of the Council for Name Studies in Great Britain and Ireland on April 8, 1979.

1. See 'Old Irish Personal Names' in *Celtica* x (1973) 211-36.
2. I use the following abbreviations in the course of this paper:  
AC = *Annála Connacht*, ed. A. M. Freeman (1944)  
AFM = *Annala Rioghachta Éireann*, ed. J. O'Donovan (1856)  
AI = *The Annals of Inisfallen*, ed. S. Mac Airt (1951)  
AU = *Annals of Ulster*, ed. W. H. Hennessy and B. Mac Carthy (1887-1901)  
FAI = *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland*, ed. J. N. Radner (1978)
3. There is a considerable degree of variation of spelling and form in the *Annals of Connacht*, and in presenting this material I have disregarded some minor differences. My survey and analysis were carried out in a fairly short space of time, so I cannot be sure that the figures I have given are correct in every detail.
4. See 'Irish Grammatical Tracts - Declension', published as supplement to *Ériu* viii-x (1916-28) §§ 185, 155 and 157. Despite their conservatism the poets had to accept borrowed names and to provide rules governing their use. In the tract on declension I have noted (i) 30 borrowed names of men and (ii) 8 borrowed names of women: (i) Aindrias (Ainnrias), Amhlaoibh, Conaing, Enrí, Eóin, Gaibhrial, Gearóid, Gofraidh, Hoibeard, Lochlainn, Lúibhrinnt, Maghnas, Maithias, Míchéal (Mícheól), Muiris (Moiris), Naoimhías, Nioc(a)lás, Niocól, Pilib (Filib), Pól, Riocard, Roibeard, Rolán(t), Seaán (Seoán), Seafraidh (Séafraidh), Solamh, Teabóid, Tomás (Tómás), Uilleag, Uilliam (Oilliam); (ii) Anábla, Anára (Anóra, Onóra), Caitir Fhiona, Críosa Díona, Máire, Mairghréad (Mairgréag), Muir Gréag), Síle, Suibh Fhiona. Quite a few of these must have been taken into Irish about the time of the evolution of 'classical' early Modern Irish (which is dated about the end of the twelfth century) or afterwards. Of course there are very many borrowed names occurring in bardic verse which are not listed in the linguistic tracts.
5. See *The Poems of Blathmac son of Cú Brettan*, ed. J. Carney (1964).
6. See note 9.
7. I have already shown that the name *Maghnus* was a favourite one with the Ó Domhnaill family. Although its occurrence in the *Féilire* shows that it was known in Ireland in the eighth century, it is generally associated with names borrowed from the Vikings. Its popularity probably derives

from the impression made on the popular mind by the invasion of Ireland in 1101 and 1102 by Magnus Barelegs, king of Norway.

8. See *Celtica* x 229-30.
9. According to O'Rahilly the adoption of the name *Constantinus* 'may have been due in the first instance to the fame of Constantinus who ruled as emperor of Britain and Gaul A.D. 407-41'. The Pictish king named *Custantín*, in connection with whom O'Rahilly discussed the possible borrowing from Latin, died in 820 (AU). O'Brien's *Corpus* has five entries under *Causantín* (a by-form of *Constantín*). One of these - in a supposed genealogy of Cú Chulainn - is clearly spurious; one records a son of Blathmac (†670), king of the Ulaid; and three refer to descendants of Cinaed mac Ailpín, king of Scotland (843-58).  
The name *Constantín* is found in *Féilire Oengusa* for March 10 and March 11. In the commentary the first of these is identified as 'Helena's son', but the second is identified as a king of Britain and Scotland who left his realm and came on a pilgrimage to Rahan in Offaly where he succeeded Mo Chutu. This would place him in the second quarter of the seventh century. Hennessy (AU i p. 72, n. 4) identified the Rahan *Constantín* with a *Constantinus*, whose 'conversion' in the year 588 is recorded in AU, but the dates do not tally.

I have mentioned a bishop of Killaloe named Constantín Ua Briain. He was a brother of Domhnall Mór Ó Briain, and both he and Domhnall Mór died in 1194. According to O'Clery's 'Book of Genealogies' (§ 1937) and the late historical work *An Leabhar Muimhneach* (pp. 325, 342), *Clann Consantín* (or *Chonnsaidín*), a branch of Dál gCais, were descended from him. In his *Irish Families* (p. 92) E. Mac Lysaght cites *Mac Consaidín* 'as an example of a Gaelic surname from a foreign christian name' and he says 'The Considines, like their kinsmen the Mac Lysaghts, were a branch of the O'Briens, being descended from Domhnall Mór O'Brien'. Mac Lysaght has made a slight slip here. We should, I believe, read 'Toirdhealbhaich' in place of 'Domhnall Mór'. As to the choice of the name *Constantín* for the man who became bishop of Killaloe, it is impossible now to determine the reason for it, but it was more likely to have been made on religious grounds than anything else.

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