

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-04888-0 - The Annals of Loch Cé: A Chronicle of Irish Affairs from
A.D. 1014 to A.D. 1590: Volume 1
Edited and Translated by W. M. Hennessy
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Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores, or The Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages, usually referred to as the 'Rolls Series', was an ambitious project first proposed to the British Treasury in 1857 by Sir John Romilly, the Master of the Rolls, and quickly approved for public funding. Its purpose was to publish historical source material covering the period from the arrival of the Romans to the reign of Henry VIII, 'without mutilation or abridgement', starting with the 'most scarce and valuable' texts. A 'correct text' of each work would be established by collating 'the best manuscripts', and information was to be included in every case about the manuscripts used, the life and times of the author, and the work's 'historical credibility', but there would be no additional annotation. The first books were published in 1858, and by the time it was completed in 1896 the series contained 99 titles and 255 volumes. Although many of the works have since been re-edited by modern scholars, the enterprise as a whole stands as a testament to the Victorian revival of interest in the middle ages.

The Annals of Loch Cé

This Irish-language chronicle covers events in Ireland from the beginning of the eleventh to the end of the sixteenth centuries. Edited and translated by the native Irish speaker and acclaimed scholar William Hennessy (c.1829–89), the work was published for the Rolls Series in 1871 and remains an important source for Irish history. Hennessy also supplied an edited and translated excerpt from a closely related chronicle, *The Annals of Connacht*, to supplement years missing from the edited text (1316–1412). Volume 1, prefaced with an introduction to the text and manuscripts, begins with a dramatic description of the Battle of Clontarf in 1014 and ends with an account of Irish warfare in Connacht during the middle of the fourteenth century.

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*A Chronicle of Irish Affairs
from A.D. 1014 to A.D. 1590*

VOLUME 1

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RERUM BRITANNICARUM MEDII ÆVI
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OR

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DURING

THE MIDDLE AGES.

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THE CHRONICLES AND MEMORIALS
OF
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND
DURING THE MIDDLE AGES.

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHORITY OF HER MAJESTY'S TREASURY, UNDER
THE DIRECTION OF THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

ON the 26th of January 1857, the Master of the Rolls submitted to the Treasury a proposal for the publication of materials for the History of this Country from the Invasion of the Romans to the reign of Henry VIII.

The Master of the Rolls suggested that these materials should be selected for publication under competent editors without reference to periodical or chronological arrangement, without mutilation or abridgment, preference being given, in the first instance, to such materials as were most scarce and valuable.

He proposed that each chronicle or historical document to be edited should be treated in the same way as if the editor were engaged on an *Editio Princeps*; and for this purpose the most correct text should be formed from an accurate collation of the best MSS.

To render the work more generally useful, the Master of the Rolls suggested that the editor should give an account of the MSS. employed by him, of their age and their peculiarities; that he should add to the work a brief account of the life and times of the author, and any remarks necessary to explain the chronology; but no other note or comment was to be allowed, except what might be necessary to establish the correctness of the text.

[a 2]

The works to be published in octavo, separately, as they were finished ; the whole responsibility of the task resting upon the editors, who were to be chosen by the Master of the Rolls with the sanction of the Treasury.

The Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury, after a careful consideration of the subject, expressed their opinion in a Treasury Minute, dated February 9, 1857, that the plan recommended by the Master of the Rolls "was well calculated for the accomplishment of this important national object, in an effectual and satisfactory manner, within a reasonable time, and provided proper attention be paid to economy, in making the detailed arrangements, without unnecessary expense."

They expressed their approbation of the proposal that each Chronicle and historical document should be edited in such a manner as to represent with all possible correctness the text of each writer, derived from a collation of the best MSS., and that no notes should be added, except such as were illustrative of the various readings. They suggested, however, that the preface to each work should contain, in addition to the particulars proposed by the Master of the Rolls, a biographical account of the author, so far as authentic materials existed for that purpose, and an estimate of his historical credibility and value.

*Rolls House,
December 1857.*

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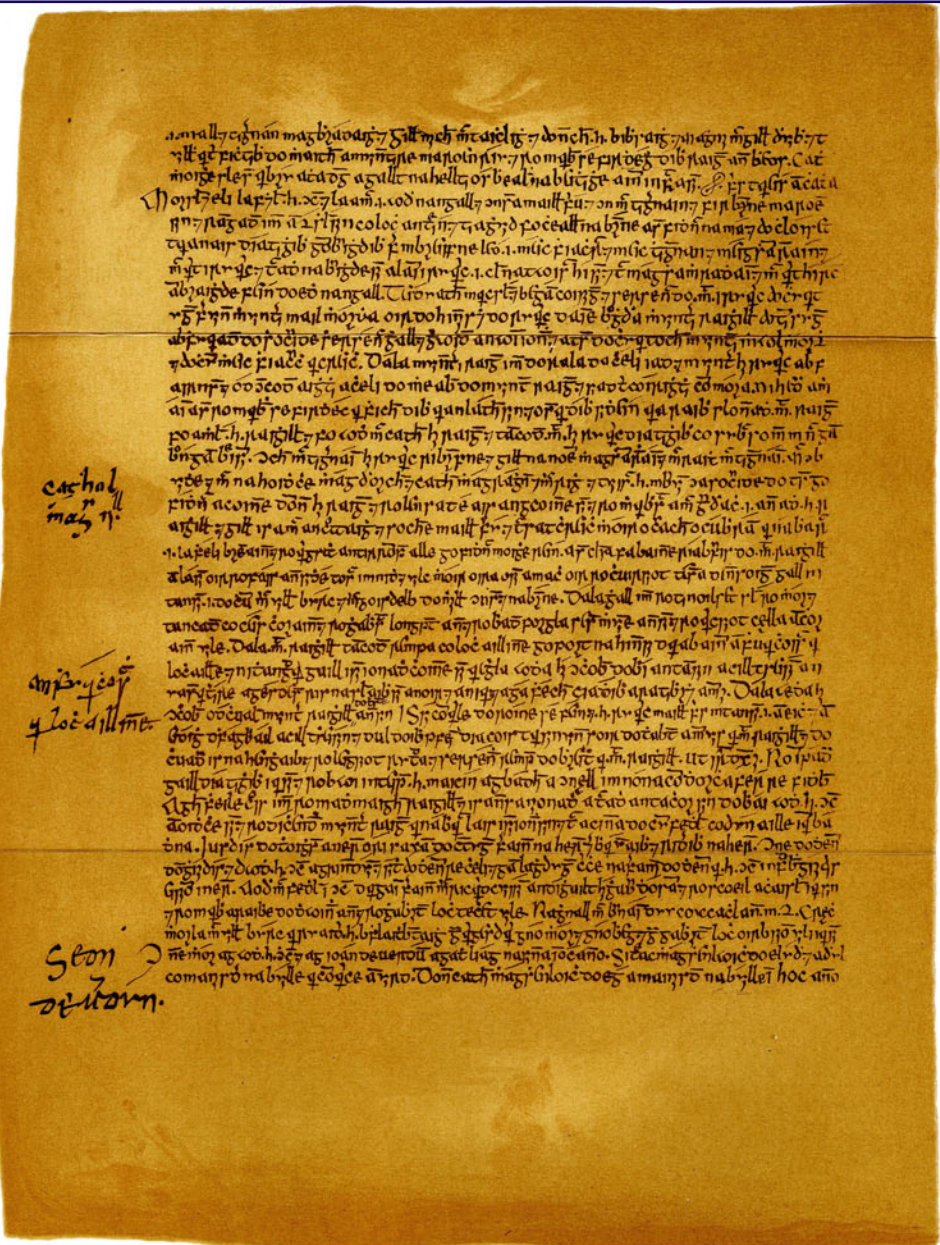
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Forster & Co. Dublin.

MS. TRIN. COLL. DUBLIN. H. 1. 19.

[see Vol. I. p. 415]

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THE

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A CHRONICLE OF IRISH AFFAIRS

FROM A.D. 1014 TO A.D. 1590.

EDITED, WITH A TRANSLATION,

BY

WILLIAM M. HENNESSY, M.R.I.A.

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P R E F A C E.



THE history of the Irish manuscript which has furnished the greater portion of the text of these volumes, was long involved in considerable obscurity. Nor has this obscurity been yet entirely dissipated; for, although the MS. has formed the subject of investigation by three of the most competent Irish scholars and antiquaries of the present century—namely, the late Rev. Dr. Todd, Dr. O'Donovan, and Professor O'Curry—nothing very satisfactory has been ascertained regarding either its original materials, or its history from the time when it passed out of the hands of its owner and part compiler, Brian Mac Dermot of Carrick-MacDermot, county of Roscommon, who died in the year 1592, until the year 1766. In this latter year it seems to have been purchased in Dublin, at the sale of the books of Dr. John O'Fergus, by Dr. Thomas Leland, Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, and author of a History of Ireland, who placed it in the MS. Library of that University, where it is now, No. 19 of class H., Tab. 1. There is no evidence to show how it became the property of Dr. O'Fergus,¹ who was a large collector of

History of
the MS. H.
1. 19, in
the Library
of Trinity
College,
Dublin.

¹ "The O'Ferguses were the hereditary physicians to the O'Malleys in *Iar-Umhall*, or West Umhallia, now comprising the barony of Murrisk, in Mayo, and all that district to the north-east of Croagh

Patrick. The late distinguished Dr. John Fergus of Dublin, the correspondent of O'Conor of Belanagare, was of this family." O'Donovan's *Catal. of Irish MSS.* in Trin. Coll., Dublin.

The MS.
noticed by
Bishop
Nicolson.

Irish MSS.; but in the year 1734 it appears to have been in the possession of a well known Irish scholar, Mr. John Conry, or O'Mulconry, a member of a very learned and industrious family of Irish historiographers, the assistant of Dr. O'Brien in the compilation of his Irish Dictionary, and transcriber of many valuable manuscripts. This fact we learn from Bishop Nicolson's "Irish Historical Library,"¹ published in that year, in the 4th appendix to which (p. 243) the writer gives a list of "Annals and Chronicles" brought to him since the printing of the foregoing sheets (*i.e.* the body of his work) in which is included a MS. "communicated" to him by Mr. John Conry, corresponding to the original of these volumes. It seems also to have passed through the hands of Roger O'Flaherty, the author of "Ogygia," who died about the year 1717; at least the profuse marginal notes added by him throughout a portion of the volume would warrant this conclusion. But it is uncertain at what period O'Flaherty's connexion with the MS. began or ended.

Known by
various
titles.

The uncertainty attending the history of the MS. has led to so many changes in its title, that it would appear as if each successive possessor had given it a new name.

The name by which Dr. Nicolson indicates the MS. is "Annals of the Old Abbey of Inis-Macreen, an island in Lough-Kea." At the time of its purchase by Dr. Leland, in 1766, and down to the year 1836, it was known as a continuation of the Annals of Tighearnach, and in fact lettered on the back "Tigernachi Continuator." In 1836, however, Dr. O'Donovan pronounced it to be, not the Annals of Inis-Macreen, but the same as the Book of the O'Duigenans of Kilronan, or Annals of Kilronan (a chronicle which the Four Masters had made use of when compiling their Annals), and always referred to it

¹ Irish Historical Library; Dublin, 1724.

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by that title. This opinion of Dr. O'Donovan, in which Dr. Todd coincided, has been called in question by Professor O'Curry, who has left a very full account of the MS., and who considers that it should be called the "Annals of Loch-Cé (or Lough-Key)," the name by which the Chronicle is at present known.

It is due to the memory of these three eminent scholars, that the result of their separate examinations of the MS. should be published, in order that the reasons which influenced them, in arriving at the several conclusions which they have expressed, may be appreciated.

The following is Dr. O'Donovan's account, extracted from his *Catalogue of the Irish MSS. in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin* (page 104, sq.), with some annotations by the late Dr. Todd, which, for the sake of distinction, are enclosed within brackets :—

"This book is lettered on the back 'Tigernachi Continuator.' It is in quarto, and in its original state consisted [principally] of vellum. It is now imperfect, both at the beginning and end, and has chasms in different parts of it, to supply which paper has been written on, but the principal part is blank, and none of the chasms have [has] been completely filled.

"The Annals of Tigernach, of which the book is said to be a continuation, were compiled in the Monastery of Clonmacnoise, of which Tigernach was abbot. He died 1088; but Augustine Mac Raidin, a canon of the order of St. Augustine in the Island of Saints in Lough Ree, continued the work from the death of Tigernach down to 140[5], which was the year of his own death.

"There must be a [gross] mistake in calling this *Tigernachi Continuator*, because if it were only a continuation of Tigernach, it would not commence earlier than the year [1088 or] 1089, whereas the first article that presents itself is an account of the battle of Clontarf, fought in the year 1014, i.e. 74 years before the death of Tigernach. At the year 1088 no notice is taken of the death of Tigernach (in H. 1. 18, fol. 163 b, line 39), nor is there any notice given that the work is a continuation of any annals, but appears to be one entire piece, the work of one person; and I will make it appear in the course of my observations, that it is no other than [an ancient copy of]

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the book of the O'Duigenans of Kilronan, [of] which [the Four Masters had a copy, which] began with the year 900, and ended with 1563 ; (see Michael O'Clery's Testimonium to the Annals of the Four Masters).

"Mr. O'Reilly, in his MS. notice of this [volume], was satisfied that it was not 'the Continuation of Tigernach,' but still he was not prepared to state what it was. His words are—'I think this book cannot properly be called 'the Continuation of Tigernach,' though I am at present unprepared to say what it should be called. But of this I am certain, that it differs materially from a copy of Tigernach, and a part of his Continuator, now in my possession.'

"That this book was in the possession of the O'Duigenans appears from several entries in the margin ; thus, at the top of the page containing the years 1462–3, the following memorandum appears : 'Cm vulléoga ocu .u.xx. meampuim aca i n leabur ra, per me David Duigenan ;' 'three leaves and five score of vellum that are in this book, per me, D. D.' And again, on the page which was originally left blank between the years 1541 and 1542, the name Oaibíe O'Duibgenan is written inversely (sic). On the same page the following entry appears, which shows that it was in the possession of the family of Mac Dermot. 'Hugh, the son of Brian, who was the son of Rory Mac Dermot, died in Grangenamanagh on the 14th day of March, 1648. Mulroney, the son of Hugh Mac Dermot, wrote this small scrap in 1654.' On the same page the death of Mac Dermot (Brian Oge), in 1636, is recorded, and his character described in glowing bardic terms ; [this was inserted long after the original writing]. Again, on a leaf of paper inserted between folios 1 and 2, is a memorandum from which it appears that this MS. was in Mac Dermot's country in the year 1698.

"'I am this day at Baile-an-chairn-Oillthrialla, the tenth day of November, 1698. John Mac Namee.' This *Baile-an-chairn* is now called [in English] Heapstown, (which is a literal translation of its Irish name), and lies in Mac Dermot's country. [This place takes its name from a vast cairn of stones which was piled to form the monument of Oilill, the brother of Niall of the nine hostages, from whom the territory of Tir-Oilella, now corruptly Tirerrill, a barony in the south-east of the county of Sligo, has derived its name].

"The notices of the Mac Dermots of Moylurg [and of their bards the O'Duigenans of Kilronan], and of their neighbouring chiefs [and bards], are more numerous than those of any other in Ireland throughout this chronicle ; and this is sufficient to identify it with the district ; for in like manner, the Annals of

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"The Four Masters had the book of the O'Duigenans of Kilronan, in 1636 ; and at that time it commenced with the year 900, and ended with 1563 ; [and] it is plain that this is not the copy of it they had, for it is stated in the testimonium that the Book of the O'Duigenans ended with the year 1563, whereas the present Chronicle ends with 1571. We learn also from the Stowe Catalogue (p. 76) that Charles O'Conor of Belanagare had a copy of the Book of Kilronan in his possession in the year 1728 ; and by comparing an extract [there given] from the same book, A.D. 1464, with the same year in this Chronicle, it will be found they differ materially ; [and this is owing to a defect in this Chronicle at that year].

*[1st]. That the copy of the Book of Kilronan which the Four Masters used, was imperfect at the end (wanting from 1563 to 1571, and [perhaps] more).

"[3rdly]. That this copy had lost several pages at the beginning, and in the middle, which were afterwards attempted to be partially restored on vellum and paper [afterwards inserted].

"There is a diversity of handwriting on the vellum, and even the small quantity that is written on the paper is not all in the one hand. The writing on the vellum is beautifully executed.

"In the beginning of the book the original writing has been

¹ "[O'Connor says] 'This extract is taken from the Book of Kilronan, which has the approbation of the Four Masters annexed to it, by me, Cathal O'Connor, 2 Aug., 1728.'" Note by O'Donovan.

2 "It can be inferred from a memorandum [in the hand in which all the MS. was originally written], that [a

part of] this copy was made for one of the Mac Dermots by a Philip Badly in the year 1580. *ἵρ ἰμ ῥῑῑτεῑῑ ῑῑ ῑῑῑῑ ῑῑῑῑ ῑῑῑ ῑῑῑῑῑῑῑ ῑῑῑῑῑῑῑῑ.* 1580. *Ἰῑῑῑ ῑῑῑῑ ῑῑῑῑ.* "I am wearied of the bark (*recte* book) of Brian Mac Dermot, A.D. 1580. I, Philip Badley [= Badhlaie, Bailey]. Note by O'Donovan.

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gone over with good black ink,¹ but towards the conclusion, and in some parts of the middle, the original writing appears in its virgin [pristine] beauty; but the ink is faded, though by no means so much so as to render the writing illegible.

"Owing to the book having been a long time without a cover, the first page is much soiled, worn, and nearly effaced. Its contents, however, have been copied on paper [now bound up with the book] on the 10th November, 1698, [by John Mac Namee] for the purpose, as [he] says, of preventing its being further *obscured*. The same has been copied upon one of the supplementary pages of the book, so that there are [now] three copies of the same page.

"It commences with the year 1014, and goes consecutively to 1138, where there is a chasm from thence to 1170. Here six leaves of blank paper were inserted, on which the deficiency might be supplied, but nothing has been written on them.

"After the year 1061 four leaves of paper were inserted by the bookbinder, though there does not appear any occasion for them, as there is no chasm, the year 1062 following in regular succession. On one of these, which is smaller than the rest, are written some verses which have no connexion with this MS., or with the family of Mac Dermot, from which it is clear that it found its way into this book by accident, and was in mistake bound up with it. The name [of] Francis Oge appears in it, who was in all probability Doctor Francis Sullivan, who collected the greater part of the MSS. we have hitherto described.

"At the head of the page containing the year 1170 is written 'in nām Dóe an Tionnrcnā ro,' i.e. 'in the name of God this beginning;' which suggests that this part of the Chronicle was written by a different hand from Philip Badley. [And] a comparison of the writing will prove this to the caligraphist.

"From [after] the year 1170 the Chronicle goes on in consecutive annual [chronological] order to the year 1316, where another chasm occurs in the original vellum, in which 146 years more are lost, that is, up to the year 1462. With an intention of supplying this defect 22 leaves of blank paper were inserted, but no part of the chasm is filled up on the six first leaves. On the seventh leaf the death of Conor O'Doherty,

¹ "Mr. O'Reilly says, 'In the beginning of the book it is as black as if written only yesterday.' He did not observe that the original writing was restored by going over it with black

[ink. To prove] that this is the case, however, requires no great skill in caligraphy.—See Mason's Catalogue, T. Coll. Dublin; class H. 16." Note added by Dr. O'Donovan.

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chief of Ardmire, and lord of Inishowen, is [recorded] under the year 1413. [At] the years 1414, 1416, 1426, 1427, 1428, 1441, 1442, 1443, 1446, 1448, 1449, 1453, 1455, and 1460, very little is written on the paper except the dates.

"At the end of eight leaves more of the inserted paper, the same matter which is written on the seventh and succeeding leaves is again repeated, beginning with the year 1413, and leaving the same blanks as above described. At the end of eight leaves more the repetition of the former matter is concluded.

"From the year 1462 the Chronicle runs on regularly on vellum, and up to the year 1497. The writing is by different hands, and in different inks.

"There are vacant spaces left at the end of every year, evidently with a view of adding more matter.

"From the year 1497 to the end of the year 1542, which the writer marks as bissextile, the matter is very closely written on fifteen leaves of vellum. Here nearly two pages were left blank, which have been since filled up by an account of the deaths of George Oge Bingham in 1595, of Brian Oge, the son of Brian Mac Dermot, in 1636, of Randal, Earl of Antrim, in the same year, and of Hugh, the son of Brian Mac Dermot, in 1648.

"From the commencement of the year 1542 to the end of the volume, there is no chasm excepting that two or three pages [towards the very end] are almost illegible. The last page is altogether illegible, for which reason it cannot be said with certainty whether this chronicle had been carried lower down than the year 1571, which is the last date that appears.

"The Four Masters have *all*¹ the entries in this Chronicle,

¹ This is a most unaccountable mistake on the part of O'Donovan. See his edition of the Four Masters, Introduction, p. lxxv., note b, where he refers to the MS. in the following words:—"There is a most curious and valuable manuscript volume of Irish annals, which was in the possession of the O'Duigenans, preserved in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, H. I. 19; but it does not appear to be the one used by the Four Masters. It perfectly accords with all the passages quoted by Ware and Harris from the Annals of Lough Kee; and it may be safely conjectured that it is a compilation made by the O'Duigenans from

the Annals of Lough Kee, Roscommon, and Kilronan. The editor has made copious additions to the work of the Four Masters from this manuscript, calculated to throw much light on historical facts but slightly touched upon by the Masters themselves." O'Donovan has also committed a grave error in stating, as he has in the foregoing note, that the present chronicle "perfectly accords with all the passages quoted by Ware and Harris from the Annals of Lough Kee." At least, it is certain that the original of the present volumes was not used by either of these writers.—Vid. *infra*, pp. xxxii.—xxxiv.

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but some of them, especially those relating to Mac Dermot and his neighbours, they have not unfrequently abridged, leaving out some important references to names and situations of places, which are of great importance to the topographer. An editor of the second part of the Annals of the Four Masters should carefully compare their text with this Chronicle.

“J. O'DONOVAN,

“December 7, 1836.”

Dr. Todd's description of H. 1. 19. Dr. Todd's account does not differ materially from that of Dr. O'Donovan, in conjunction with whom his investigation of the MS. would appear to have been conducted. His opinions were embodied in a paper read before the Royal Irish Academy on the 9th of January, 1837, an abstract of which has been published in the proceedings of that body.¹ Dr. Todd having kindly placed his original notes in my hand a short time before his lamented death, with authority to dispose of them as I might think fit, it appears to me that the most appropriate use to which I can put them, is to reproduce them here without curtailment.

“The Rev. James H. Todd, A.M., M.R.I.A., Fellow of Trinity College, mentioned the fact that an authentic, although imperfect, copy of the Annals of Kilronan, or Book of the O'Duigenans, had recently been discovered by Mr. John O'Donovan in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin.

“The volume is in quarto, and in its original state consisted entirely of vellum. It is now imperfect both at the beginning and at the end, and has also some chasms, which have been filled with paper leaves, inserted probably with an intention of supplying the deficiencies from some other copy; but this has not been done except in a very few cases, and the paper leaves are therefore almost entirely blank.

“Mr. Todd stated that the volume is lettered on the back *Tigernachi Continuator*, and that it was supposed to be the continuation of the Annals of Tigernach, composed by Augustin Mac Raidin (or Mac Raith), a canon of the Augustinian Monastery of All Saints in Lough Righ, in the river Shannon.

“But the continuation of Tigernach began with the year 1089,

¹ *Proceedings R. I. Academy*, vol. 1 p. 22.

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and could not have extended beyond 1405, the year in which Mac Raith died; whereas the present volume, notwithstanding its imperfect state, begins with the year 1014, and ends with the year 1571, one hundred and sixty-four years after the death of the Continuator of Tigernach. Accordingly, this mistake was detected and mentioned by Mr. O'Reilly, in the unpublished catalogue of the Trinity College Irish MSS., drawn up by him for Mr. Mason. (Here Dr. Todd quotes Mr. O'Reilly's opinion, as given above in Dr. O'Donovan's notice, p. xii.) The Library of Trinity College possesses a complete copy of the Continuation of Tigernach, which enables us to determine this question beyond doubt.

"Mr. Todd then proceeded to state the evidence for Mr. O'Donovan's conjecture that this volume is no other than the Annals of Kilronan, in the county Roscommon, compiled by the O'Duigenans:—

"1. The book was in the possession of the O'Duigenans, as appears by many entries contained in it; one of these, which occurs on the upper margin of the page containing the year 1462, may be quoted as an example:—

"*Ṭṛí trílléoga ocuṛ u. xxiṛ. meamruim ata iṛin leabúirṛa*
per me, David Duigenan.

"'Three leaves, and five score of vellum are in this book, by me, David Duigenan.'

"And again, on a page which was originally left blank, between the years 1541 and 1542, the name *Ṭadṛíde O'Ṭuṛṛigenam* is written.

"2. Throughout the Chronicle notices of the Mac Dermots of Moylurg, and of their family bards, the O'Duigenans of Kilronan, are more frequent than of any other clans or chieftains of Ireland, a circumstance tending strongly to identify this volume with the Annals of Kilronan, which we know contained the local chronicles of the Mac Dermots' country. On the page just alluded to, is an entry of which the following is a translation:—

"'Hugh, son of Brian, who was the son of Rory Mac Dermot, died in Grangenamanagh on the 14th day of March, 1648. Mulrony, the son of Hugh Mac Dermot, wrote this short note in 1654.'

"On the same page is recorded the death of the Mac Dermot of 1636, who is styled Brian Oge, and his character drawn with bardic eloquence.

"These and similar entries throughout the volume, made at different dates, and several of them long after the original

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writing of the Chronicle itself, prove that the volume was considered as a family record of the Mac Dermots, and the deaths or births of remarkable members of the family recorded from time to time in its blank leaves; such entries are often made even at the present day in the blank leaves of a family Bible or prayer-book.

"Between the first two parchment leaves of the volume, is a sheet of paper on which the contents of the first page, that had become almost illegible, were transcribed in the year 1698. To this the transcriber has affixed the following note¹ :—

" 'I am this day at Baile-an-chairn-Oillthrialla, the 10th day of November, 1698.—John Conmidhe.'

"This entry proves that in 1698 this book was in the Mac Dermot's country; for *Baile-an-Chairn*, the town of the Cairn, now called *Heapstown*, which is a literal translation of its Irish name, is situated in the Mac Dermots' country. It derived its name from a large *cairn* erected as a monument to Oilill, the brother of Niall of the nine hostages, and the territory has hence been called *Tir-Oilella*, and corruptly *Tirerrill*, a barony in the south-east of the county Sligo.

"John Conmidhe, or (as the name is now written and pronounced) Mac Namee, was probably a travelling bard or scholar, who in a visit to the Mac Dermot's country, was able to read and transcribe the page which had become effaced in consequence of the book being kept without a cover. His name suggests no connexion with the family of Mac Dermot, or with the O'Duigenans of Kilronan.

"The Mac Namees were originally petty chiefs of Meath (*Cu Midhe*, 'dog of Meath'), and a branch of the family became afterwards hereditary bards of Tyrone—where they are still very numerous.

"Under the year 1061, and in the same beautiful hand in which the parchment and original part of the MS. was written, we find the following note :—

" 'I am weary of the book of Brian Mac Dermot; A.D. 1580. I, Philip Badley.'

" 'I am weary of the book of Brian Mac Dermot; A.D. 1580. I, Philip Badley.'

From this we may perhaps infer that Philip Badley was employed by one of the Mac Dermots to transcribe or compile this volume, from more ancient documents, and that he was engaged in this task in 1580.

¹ It was very common for Irish scribes to introduce their own names into their works, accompanied by panegyrics of their employers.

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“3. In confirmation of the foregoing evidence in support of Mr. O'Donovan's conjecture, it may be added that a comparison of this Chronicle with the Annals of the Four Masters, supplies strong proof of their having had a copy of it before them. They have abridged many of the passages relating to the Mac Dermots, as being of merely local interest; this we know was their uniform practice in regard to the other ancient chronicles from which they derived their materials, and as they tell us expressly that the Annals of the O'Duigenans of Kilronan were in their hands, these coincidences go far to prove the identity of that Chronicle with the volume now before us.

“It is fair, however, to mention that if the present volume be indeed the Annals of Kilronan, it is not exactly the same as the copy made use of by the Four Masters. They tell us that their copy commenced with the year 900, and ended with the year 1563, whereas the present copy begins with the year 1014, and ends with 1571, and appears to have formerly gone even later.

“These discrepancies, however, are not sufficient to overturn the evidence already adduced. For the copy of the Annals of Kilronan in the possession of the Four Masters may have been imperfect at the end; as this copy is both at the end and at the beginning. It may be added that this copy was evidently written by persons who were *compiling*, and not merely *transcribing*, for they throughout left blanks for subsequent entries, some of which have been inserted in their proper places. This circumstance appears to give to this volume the character of an original copy of the Chronicle, and might lead to the conclusion that the copy used by the Four Masters was a more modern and unfinished transcript.

“There is, however, a circumstance which would seem to indicate that the Annals of Kilronan, which were in the hands of those eminent antiquarians, was a document altogether different from the present Chronicle. It would seem that the copy which belonged to the Four Masters was in existence in 1728, and was then in the possession of Charles O'Connor of Belanagare, who extracted from it an entry relating to the last king of the O'Connor race, who died in the year 1464. This entry is published by Dr. O'Connor in his Cat. of the Stowe Library. It does not agree with the Dublin MS., where the death of O'Connor is simply mentioned under that date, without any of the particulars relative to his funeral, or the honors paid him by the neighbouring chieftains at his interment, which are given in the extract quoted by Mr. O'Connor.

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"This at first sight would seem to be a difficulty fatal to Mr. O'Donovan's opinion, that the Dublin MS. is a copy, and apparently an original copy, of the Annals of Kilronan; but we must not admit this conclusion hastily. For the passage extracted by Mr. O'Connor, may have been a modern insertion from the hand of some members of the O'Connor family, and not an original or integral part of the Chronicle—such insertions are common in this class of Irish MSS., and we have already seen instances of them in the very volume before us.

"To this consideration Mr. Todd added his own doubts whether the *Book of Kilronan*, from which the foregoing extract was taken, can properly be considered the same as the *Annals of Kilronan*, or *Book of the O'Duigenans*, mentioned by the Four Masters. The *Book of Kilronan*, which was in the possession of Charles O'Connor in 1728, is described by him as the *Book of the Church of Kilronan*, not as the family Chronicle of the O'Duigenans; he tells us indeed that the Four Masters had affixed to it their approbation, and this perhaps has led to the idea that it was the same as the Annals of Kilronan, which they undoubtedly used. But they have expressly called these Annals the *Book of the O'Duigenans*, and they tell us that they began with the year 900; a circumstance inconsistent with what we are told of the Book in Charles O'Connor's possession, which must have begun much earlier, since that eminent antiquary extracted from it "a Chronicle of the Kings of Connacht from the arrival of St. Patrick," which Chronicle is described by Dr. O'Connor in his Catalogue of the Stowe Library, as beginning with the arrival of St. Patrick, and ending with the year 1464. It is preserved in the Stowe Library, Press I., No. 3, fol. 23. A transcript of it, if it could be obtained for the Academy from his Grace the Duke of Buckingham, would be of great value and importance.

"On the whole, then there can be no question that, whether the Dublin MS. be, or be not, the Kilronan Annals which were in the hands of the Four Masters, it is undoubtedly a Chronicle of the Mac Dermots' country, composed by the O'Duigenans of Kilronan. This is abundantly proved by the internal evidence of the volume, and will not be doubted by any person who is competent to form an opinion on the subject. It has been suggested that the intermediate part of the MS. belonged to another chronicle, or was written at a different date from the rest, because additional notes and passages are inserted more frequently than in the preceding or following passages. Mr. Todd stated that he was unable to concur in this opinion. It is certainly true that this intermediate part of the volume

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appeared to be written by perhaps four or five different hands, whereas the first part was all by the same scribe, and the last part, with the exception of some few entries, also by the writer of the first; but the hand of the first scribe may be traced also in the intermediate part, and a handwriting which occurs very frequently in the intermediate part, is found also in several places in the third. There cannot therefore be any great difference of date between these three portions of the volume. The intermediate part, containing at present twenty-four leaves of parchment, certainly bears marks of having once been separated from the rest; on its first and last pages occur the entries by David Duigenan, already quoted, who (if an opinion may be hazarded from his handwriting) appears to have lived in the beginning of the 17th century. The phenomena may be accounted for by supposing two or more scribes engaged simultaneously in the transcription of the work.

“The number of parchment leaves when they were counted by David Duigenan, was five score and three, which may mean either 103, or if the Irish method of counting, which allowed six score to the hundred was adopted, 123; the number of parchment leaves at present in the volume is 99.

“The principal chasms in the MS. are between the years 1138 and 1170, and between the years 1316 and 1462. In the former of these chasms several leaves of paper have been inserted which are entirely blank. The latter has also been filled up with paper, on which some very brief and scanty notices have been entered between the years 1413 and 1461. Two copies of this paper portion of the volume have been made, one of them of a date much more recent than the other. The older appears to have been written in the 16th century.

“Throughout the volume several marginal notes occur which are for the most part summaries of the text, both in Irish and English. Many of the English notes are, in Mr. Todd’s opinion, in the handwriting of Roderick O’Flaherty, the celebrated author of *Ogygia*.

“Mr. Todd concluded by remarking that the discovery of this copy of the Book of the O’Duigenans of Kilronan will be of great importance if ever the liberality of Government, or the contributions of individuals, should place at our disposal funds for the publication of the *Ancient Annalists of Ireland*; the *Annals of the Four Masters* will of course be the first to be put to press, and it is of great importance to collect in the first instance the original documents made use of by those learned antiquaries in the compilation of their work. What these were they have themselves told us in their preface, a

translation of which has appeared in the Transactions of the Academy, in a paper read before the Academy by Mr. Petrie. By this recovery of the Annals of Kilronan, we are now in possession of almost all these documents. The Book of Clonmacnoise, or Annals of Tigernach, is published by Dr. O'Connor, and a copy of it, well worthy of collation, is in the Library of Trinity College. The Book of the Island of Saints, in Lough Righ, is also in Trinity College. The Book of Senait Mac Manus, or the Ulster Annals, is published by Dr. O'Connor, and a very ancient copy is in Trinity College Library. The Book of Mac Firbis, or the Book of Leacan, is in the Library of the Academy, and is now completed by the copy of Lord Roden's MS., just finished at the expense of the Academy; and when we add to this list the Book of the O'Duigenans of Kilronan, there remain not more than two or three of the original Annalists, to which we have not now easy access."

Professor O'Curry's description of H. 1. 19. Professor O'Curry's description¹ is much more specific and detailed than either of the foregoing. Written at a period twenty-five years later, it naturally exhibits a more intimate acquaintance with the contents and history of the MS. than could have been acquired by either Dr. Todd or O'Donovan, at the time of their investigation. It is as follows:—

"And first, of the Annals which have been known for some time under the name of the Annals of Kilronan, but which, I think, it will presently be seen should be called the Annals of *Inis Mac Nerinn* in *Loch Cé*.

"The only copy of these Annals known to exist at present is that in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, Class H. 1. 19. It is on vellum, of small folio size; the original writing in various hands, but all of them fine and accurate. Several leaves having, however, been lost from the original volume in various parts of it, the chasms are filled up, sometimes with paper and sometimes with vellum, and some of the missing annals restored, although in an inferior style of penmanship. These restorations are principally in the handwriting of Brian Mac Dermot. The chief defects in the body of the book are observable from the year 1138 to 1170, where thirty-two years are missing; and from the year 1316 to 1462, where 142 years are missing. The year 1468 is also omitted.

¹ *Lectures on the Manuscript Materials of Irish History*; Dublin, 1861, p. 93, sq.