Jonathan Swift, Aodh Buí Mac Cruitín, and Contemporary Thomond Scholars

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Thomond, before the shiring of the country in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, extended over Tipperary, Clare and Limerick, and is distinguished by a rich and varied literature. It has never been appraised as an indigenous unit of literary history. The Annals record the obits of the most illustrious of the hereditary learned families who flourished in Thomond down to the social revolution of the 17th century.

Chief amongst them were Mac Bruaidheada, Mac Flannchada, O’Dálaigh, O’Dubh Dabhorain and Mac Cruitín. The obits of Mac Cruitín are recorded in the Annals in the 14th and later centuries, where they are described as ollav of Thomond in history, poetry and music:

Cellach, Chief Historian of Thomond in 1376; Gilla-Duibhin, Ollav of Thomond in history in 1404 and Sencha Mac Cruitín in 1434; Geanann, ollav designate of Thomond in history was drowned in 1436, of whom it was said there was not in the southern half of Ireland (Leth-Mogha) a better historian in his time.

Their patrimony, held by virtue of their office, until the forfeitures of the 17th century, was situated in the townland of Carrowduff.

The Book of Survey and Distribution, Co. Clare records that the lands of Carrowduff were held by Conor McMeike Cruitín; Knockanerhingnan by Farbishigh Mac Cruitín; Aghnaha and Killaughvalley were in the proprietorship of Solomen Mac Cruitín. They all forfeited as Irish papists under the Acts and Ordinances of the Commonwealth. In 1660, the patrimony of Conor McMeike, Farbishig and Solomen, passed to Lord Ilkerin and Donagh O’Bryan. From being proprietors, the Mac Cruitins were reduced to tenants of the new Protestant landlords.

Andrias and Aodh Buí Mac Cruitín were the last of their family to serve their patrons in the tradition of the men of learning of the old order. The school of Andrias Mac Cruitín was situated at Moyglass. Ollamh to O’Brien, and to Ó Lochlainn of Burren, he compiled a manuscript for Doctor Brian Ó Lochlainn (+1734), a collection of the searchas of Thomond, as well as historical poems, heroic tales, some poems he himself composed for the contemporary head of the family, Toirdhealbhach Ó Lochlainn, and twelve poems by Aodh Buí, inter alia. The best known poem by Andrias is

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1 A Brief Discourse, p. 192.
2 A.F.M.
3 S. & D. IV, pp. 236 and 238a.
4 Ibid.
5 DNB, xxxv. 21 and 22 respectively.
6 RIA MSS, E iv 3 (11), The Book of Ó Lochlainn.
addressed to Donn na Duiche\textsuperscript{7} (Donn of the Sandhills\textsuperscript{8}), a complaint about the loss of his patrons and of his poverty. This, and a praise-poem to Somhairle Mac Donnell were, it is said, remembered until the death of the Irish language in Clare.

Aodh Bui Mac Cruitín (1663-1755)\textsuperscript{9} was born in the parish of Kilmacrehy, Barony of Corcomroe, near Liscannor, Co. Clare. He received his early education at the school of his cousin Andrias at Moyglass. He had a more colourful career. In his earliest extant manuscript, written between 1697 and 1701, Aodh Bui wrote down his pedigree in a colophon:

\begin{quote}
Arna sgríobhadh le hAodha mac Conchuchair óig mic Conchubhair mic Aodha na Tuinne mic Cruitín ar hchorálamh an tí dár sealbh an leabhar so eadhon Séamus mac Conchubhair Úi Céireíg sagart ar ndul fá chui an chrábhaidh an 20 lá do mhí Máirti ar an tan sin 1697. Finis X\textsuperscript{o} die Febr. 1701.\textsuperscript{10}
\end{quote}

From his hand-writing it may be adduced that he acquired his later education abroad. Brian O'Loone records the tradition\textsuperscript{11} that Aodh Bui went to France after the Seige of Limerick\textsuperscript{12} where for seven years he was tutor to the Dauphin,\textsuperscript{13} that is, the son of James II and Mary of Modena born in 1688. As the kings of England claimed the title King of France, James II was recognised by Louis XIV as King of England whose throne had been usurped by William III; his son, James Francis Edward was, therefore, called the Dauphin by the Jacobites up to 1701 when he succeeded as James III.

Aodh Bui returned to Ireland. He earned his living here by transcribing poems and compiling manuscripts for patrons.\textsuperscript{14} In Dublin he joined the Ó Neachtain damh-scóil, to which he was entitled as a member of a learned family and as poet, historian and lexicographer. In a poem by Tadhg Ó Neachtain \textit{"Sloinfeadh scotthadh na gaothlíge grinn . . ."},\textsuperscript{15} naming twenty-six scholarly members of the damh-scóil who met in Dromcolloche,\textsuperscript{16} Aodh Bui is celebrated as the most distinguished of the professional poets:

\begin{quote}
Aodh mac Cruitín an crann os coill ailmhneasach mumhain 'nois chanuim,  
An fch fachragh [a] bhfuirtiúil fáilte a bhreath bheith a meagd na mórdháil.\textsuperscript{17}
\end{quote}

The metaphor \textit{an crann os coill}—the tree above the wood—is borrowed from one of Aodh Bui's own poems to the Ó Lochlainn,\textsuperscript{18} a subtle compliment.

During the time he was in Dublin, about 1714-1724, he was working with Jonathan Swift on an Irish historiographical work of great interest. Aodh Bui was a satirist

\textsuperscript{7} T.F. O'Rahilly (ed.), \textit{"Deasgan Tuanach"}, \textit{The Irish Monthly}, 53 (1925), 257; \textit{Dánta} (1935) p. 7.
\textsuperscript{8} \textit{The Irish Monthly}, 53 (1925), 260—note. The sandhills lie between Dunbeg and Seapoint and are known as Doogh Mor (Dùch Mòr).
\textsuperscript{9} \textit{Historical Sketches}, p. 95, gives 1663 as the date of his birth.
\textsuperscript{10} RIA 23 L 25 (167).
\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Dánta} (1889).
\textsuperscript{12} BM cat.Ir. MSS, ii, 195.
\textsuperscript{13} DBN, xxix,199.
\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Duanaire Chonchobair Mhaidhir}. RIA MSS, C iv 1 (540 (B)), 124 r\textsuperscript{9}; colophon.
\textsuperscript{15} TCD MSS, H 4 20 (1361), p. 113 ; printed \textit{Gaeilge}, 1 (1912), 168ff. \textit{Dromcolloche} was the original name of the place where the men of learning met. Now built over by Thomas Street and adjoining streets in the neighbourhood of St. Patrick's, bordering Kevin's Bail: TCD cat.Ir. MSS, p. 78.
\textsuperscript{16} TCD MSS, H 4 20 (1361); printed \textit{Gaeilge}, 1 (1912), 159, lines 37-40.
\textsuperscript{17} RIA MSS, E iv 8 (11), p. 15.
of the calibre of Swift. A poem entitled *Sgiathluithreacht an Chosaigh*, a satire on the tyrannous anti-Irish Sir Richard Cox, Lord Chancellor of Ireland 1703-1706, was written down with the colophon:

Molagh do Dhia. Amen.
An ceathramhad la déag do mhí 7br an bhlaighain
daois Chróst: i 1714 ann Ath Cliath
ar na sgiobha le hAodh Buidhe
mac Cruítín et sírim
ar an leightheoir
guidhe orm.

Another copy of the poem also in the hand of Aodh Bui, came into the possession of Charles O’Conor (O Conor Don) himself a member of the Ó Neachtain group. It was attributed to Cormac Ó Luainín, then professor of Irish at Trinity College. He had become a Protestant and was the cause of censure by the ollamh, Scáin Ó Neachtain, for having 'betrayed the law and the faith of God for the folly of the world.' For security reasons he is cited as the author, in sarcastic vein. The skilful ironical antiphralic treatment of the subject led to mistaking it for a praise poem, but certain lines rule out this interpretation.

In 1717 Aodh Bui MacCruitín published in Dublin his study of early Irish history in answer to Richard Cox’s *Hibernia Anglicana*. It was *A Brief Discourse in Vindication of the Antiquity of Ireland*, based on medieval documentary sources, including tracts from the Book of Ballymote. It was the first work of ‘vindication’ published in English by a member of one of the hereditary learned families educated in Irish schools of fluidheacht, féineachas and seanchas. He was competent to read Irish medieval manuscripts and to draw upon authentic texts to refute the many fabulous relations written of the Kingdom of Ireland these five hundred and odd years past, all by foreign writers, and styling them Histories of Ireland without any regard to the ancient state and affairs of that nation before the Year of Salvation 1171, when the English first got a footing therein.

The list of subscribers to Aodh Bui’s *Brief Discourse* marks the high esteem which he enjoyed as a man of learning. It is clear evidence of the contemporary interest in the early history of Ireland and Irish origins. Amongst the subscribers are distinguished men of Thomond—fifteen O’Briens, including William, Lord O’Brien o Inchiquin to whom *A Brief Discourse* was dedicated; Christopher of Ennistymon, father of his patron Isabella, wife of Somhairle MacDonnell; Sir Donat O’Brien of

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20 *DNE*, xii.414 (1650-1733).
22 *Éigse*, 4 (1945), 284.
23 *Gaeilge*, 1 (1912), 159, lines 49-52.
24 *Hermathena*, 102 (Spring 1906), 166.
26 *Éigse*, 5 (1948), 137.
27 Preceded Sylvester O’Halloran’s *Vindication* by more than half a century.
Dromoland; also Sir James MacDonaill of Kilkee; three Ó Lochlainns; nine Mac
Namaras; five Davorans (Dubh Dabhorain); Brody (MacBruaideadh); Huonin;
Comyn; Lysaght.

He wrote an archaic form of book-learned English, lacking fluency. To him it was
a foreign language which he had little opportunity of using in his long sojourn abroad
or in the Ireland of his day where Irish was spoken by all although, according to the
law, English was the official language. Only those educated in the native schools, or
those who attended the Irish lectures in Trinity College, were able to read their
mother-tongue. Mac Cruitín chose to write in halting English rather than in fluent
Irish because he wished his vindication to be widely read by the Ascendancy, the
new rulers of Ireland, who were illiterate in Irish. It was aimed particularly at those
who had decried Irish antiquities, such as Sir Richard Cox. MacCruitín is conscious
of his limited command of English, and apologises for it:

And tho' I confess my self not sufficient to write correctly in the English language,
yet I promise myself the Favour of all serious indifferent Readers, that you'd
value Truth in a plain, poor Dress; more than the fabulous Narrations of some
Foreign Writers, whose Safeguards are Power and Strength of Eloquence, in the
most part of their Tractates of the Antient Gadelians before the Coming of the
English into Ireland. 39

In the Preface of this work he exposed the unfounded statements made by Sir
Richard Cox in his Hibernia Antiquiana (1689-90), and classed him with “the foreign
writers whose safeguards are power and strength of eloquence.”

I doubt not, but it will be counted Presumption in me, to attempt the Vindica-
tion of the Antiquity of Ireland, against a Number of Honourable, Learned,
Foreign Writers, who have erroneously written thereof; Whereas, Sir Richard
Cox has given the following Opinions of those that wrote of the same before his
Time. As to Doctor Keting, he says thus of his Manuscript History of Ireland,
that, it is an ill-digested heap of very silly Fictions. And of Peter Walsh says,
that his, will never pass for more than an Utopian Achievement. He says the
Learned Flaherty’s Oggyga must expect the same Fate. 40

Mac Cruitín accused Cox of ignorance of the “authentic antiquity books of the
Kingdom” where he would have read of the laws for keeping of records and the
assiduous care taken by the men of learning to preserve them and keep them up to
date, by revising and rectifying their histories, genealogies and annals.

For this he incurred the displeasure of Sir Richard Cox, who is said to have used
his influence to have the writer imprisoned. The fact of his imprisonment would be
unknown but for the statement by Charles Lucas, thirty years later in The Censor
(1749), that Aodh Buí had been
committed to Newgate by one Cox . . . kept there, closely confined, about a year,
and then released without any accusation or trial, and bribed to silence. 41

In Newgate, he occupied his time writing an Irish Grammar amid the din of the
noisy prison. 42

39 Ibid., Preface pp. ix-x.
40 Ibid., Preface p. x, lines 7-17.
41 Quoted in Ó Gráinéir, The Native Irish Grammarian (The Sir John Rhys Memorial Lecture, 1938, cf
Proceedings of the British Academy, 24 (1939), 205-235).

39
In 1718 he composed a praise poem for his patron Sebéal (Isabel), daughter of Christopher O'Brien of Ennistymon, on her marriage to Somhairle MacDornail, beginning:

A Ghéis ghratha ghléigiol—a bhéith mhaiseach bhéasach
A chraobh-chneasda chéim-leas do mhathain stiul Táil.  

Recent research has brought to light some evidence of the work of Aodh Buí Mac Cruitín, as Irish historiographer, with Jonathan Swift during the second decade of the 18th century.

Swift was always a student of history. When he was with Sir William Temple at Moor Park, after leaving Trinity College, he helped to publish Temple’s work, including an early history of England entitled An Introduction to English History. This and other work of Temple’s stimulated an ambition to write a history of Ireland for the same period.

The only preferment Swift sought was the office of Historiographer Royal, and he was bitterly disappointed at his failure to be nominated to the vacancy on the death of Thomas Rymer in 1713. He had an opportunity to pursue his ambition when Anthony Raymond, F.T.C.D., was appointed Vicar of Trim in 1704, while Swift was living there, and they began to compile material for a history of Ireland. Raymond was to prepare the work with the aid of native scholars and Swift to correct and edit it as he had done for Temple.

As Irish material had to be drawn from medieval sources, mainly in the Irish language, members of the O Neachtain dhahm-scoil were employed to assist in transcribing and translating the Irish texts from medieval codices. Amongst these scholars was Aodh Buí MacCruitín.

Aodh Buí was well qualified to do the work. His Brief Discourse covered the same period and bore evidence of his knowledge of manuscript sources, including the Book of Ballymote which had been missing from Trinity College Library since 1688.

The circumstances under which the Book of Ballymote disappeared from the Library of Trinity College are unknown. It was lost sight of for a century. There is evidence that the Book of Ballymote was in the custody of the O Neachtain dhahm-scoil; Tadhg O Neachtain made a summary of the contents in 1719, and Richard Tipper wrote a partial transcript in 1728. Aodh Buí had access to it in writing A Brief Discourse between 1712 and 1717, and he was using it after 1718, making transcripts for Raymond.

This may be seen on an excerpt from the manuscript of the projected History, where on the first half of the page (Plate VI) is shown in the hand of Aodh Buí a passage from Leathar na gCeart on page 153v of the Book of Ballymote, on the second half.

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88 A song still popular when John O’Daly included it (with a translation by Mangan) in Poets and Poetry of Munster, Dublin 1849, p. 172.
84 Life, p. 3.
85 1695; 1699 (‘corrected’); and, as Temple’s literary executor, Swift republished it in 1708 and also a translation into French.
86 Corresp., vol. II, pp. 83–84; also p. 2, note 3.
88 RIA cat. Ir. MSS p. 1614.
89 TCD MSS, H 1 16 (1836).
90 TCD MSS, H 2 4 (1839).
91 A Brief Discourse, pp. 173ff. and 222.
92 RIA MSS, 24 G 11 (1264).
93 RIA MSS, 23 P 12 (536).
the text of Dindseanchas Erend on page 188v of the Book of Ballymote. In the margin, in the hand of Jonathan Swift, disguised and distorted, are given the modern English forms and geographical positions of the Irish places in the text such as Uí Maine—Imany of ye C.Gall or Roscom—etc. His writing is disguised lest the script fall into the hands of his enemies and reveal his association with the Book of Ballymote missing from Trinity College.

The importance of the excerpt lies in the evidence of the collaboration of Aodh Bui and Swift about the time Swift went on his journey to the south.

It was Swift’s custom to spend the greater part of every summer (May to October) travelling in the country, usually in the northern part, staying with friends, and learning history and geography on horseback. He wrote to Robert Cope:44

I will tell you that for some years I have intended a Southern journey; and this summer is fixed for it, and I hope to set out in ten days. I never was in those parts, nor am acquainted with one Christian among them, so that I shall be little more than a passenger; from thence I go to the Bishop of Clonfert, who expects me, and pretends to be prepared for me.

The fact that in 1723 he changed his tour and planned a circuitous route via Cork, and Desmond, into Thomond, may have been stimulated by his close association and friendship with Aodh Bui. He might well have met Aodh Bui’s cousin Andrias Mac Cruttin,46 one of the best, if not the very best of the Irish scholars of his day,46 and, through him, contemporary members of other hereditary families of learning in Thomond.

Swift travelled on horseback from June to August, by highways and byways. There is no record of the journey to the south except the Latin poem Carheriae Rupes in Comitatu Corgagensi apud Hybernicos. Scripsit Jun. Ann. Dom. 1723.47 By the words apud Hybernicos he indicates that he was living amongst the Irish people in remote western parts of Cork. “I am half weary with the four hundred (miles) I have travelled” he wrote to Sheridan from Clonfert on the 3rd of August.48

Swift was always close to the people49 and wherever he went moved freely amongst the outlawed Catholics. That he became a Catholic in his last years is a tradition handed down in a story (untyped) told in Kerry, Wexford, and other places (CBÉ MSS 8, pp. 329, 332).

One of the accusations against Gulliver in Lilliput (written before the journey through Thomond) is that he was a Big-Endian at heart (G.T., p.55). These are fictional, but it is a fact that Mrs. Pope prayed for his conversion.50

That Swift was the subject of a Märchen or international tale51 is evidence that he was held in the affection of the people. It is a humorous story (typed A.T.291) of the great man who helped the poor clever boy—an garstin agus an Dean52—well-

45 Historical Sketches, p. 95, says ‘brother’ while other sources say ‘cousin’.
51 I am indebted for this information to Seán Ó Súilleabháin, Archivist, Coimisiún Béaloideasa Éireann.
52 Scealóga, p. 18.
known in Limerick and told with local variations throughout the country, recorded in the manuscript collection of Comisiún Béaloideasa na h-Eireann. The story reflects the image of Swift in the mind of the people reduced to poverty through the great forfeitures of the 17th century and deprived of all human rights by the penal legislation enacted against them. *Little better than hewers of wood and drawers of water* they regarded the Dean as their champion. One of the latest and best of the A.T. 921 type is the story about Swift and Fr. John Austin, S.J. The disreputable anecdotes told of him are not in keeping with this image nor in character, and may be rejected as deriving from a hostile source. Daniel O'Connell—An Fuascailteoir—is the only other Irishman to share the honour of being the subject of a Märchen, because he brought hope to these same people a hundred years later by his campaign for their emancipation.

According to oral tradition, Swift met Aodhagáin Úi Rathaille on his journey through Kerry. They were courteous to each other, and in the battle of wits that ensued Aodhagáin won.

There is no record of Swift's itinerary through Thomond, except an absurd stage-Irish story told of what he said at Six-mile-bridge or at Kilfenora, about eating meat on Friday. Apocryphal anecdotes of this type belong to the distorted image of the Dean of St. Patrick's created by his enemies. Many stories of the same sort have been published. I mention it here because it is the only vestige of evidence, oral or written, of his visit to Thomond.

In the first half of the 18th century, the Irish way of life in Thomond had not been as greatly disturbed by the forfeitures and transplantations as in other parts of Ireland. In the great transplant, Clare had been reserved in the general plan of the *Down Survey* for the principal families removed from their forfeited estates in Kerry, Kildare, Meath, Queen's County (Laois), and Dublin, but Cromwell remembering those who had prepared the way for his Irish invasion in 1649, directed that Clare was to be assigned to his supporters. It was the last county to be surveyed. Petty's returns did not reach the Auditor-General's office until 1659. There was no time for distribution of the lands in the commonwealth interest before the Restoration. The Royalists retained the land which Cromwell had reserved for his own people. These fortuitous circumstances account for the fact that the ruling families in Co. Clare were not transplanted to another part of Ireland. Those Royalists conformed and so retained their land. Under the Penal Code they were compelled to withdraw their patronage from the men of learning, and, as a consequence, the latter fell into poverty, as may be read in the poem Aodh Buí and Andrias addressed to their former patron Seóbhadh Ní Bhriain.

On the last stage of his journey from Limerick through west Thomond, Swift may have met some descendants of the learned family of Mac Chlannchadhla (Clancy);
Boetius, Conor, Hugh, Domnal Og, and others who before 1654 held lands in the barony of Corcomroe and Burren. Judges in Thomond and neighbouring territories, they were the wealthiest of the men of learning before the forfeitures, enjoying the patronage of the chief families of Tipperary and Limerick, including the Butlers of Tipperary. In 1654 Boetius was the proprietor of more than 45 denominations of land. All forfeited as papists, but they remained as tenants to the new landlords of their patrimony after 1660. Little is known of the fortunes of the family. Thomas, son of George (generosus), entered Trinity College Dublin in 1669 but left without a degree. Michael, son of Daniel (medicus), was educated in France and matriculated in 1722, but returned to France in 1724 without graduating. Two letters are extant showing Swift's friendship with him. He was the author of The Sharper, a comedy in which the principal character was the notorious Colonel Francis Charteris, satirised by Swift in his Poems. The Dean was so pleased with the comedy that he sent the author a present of £5 "in such gold as will not give you trouble to change." The patrimony of Ó Dubh Dabhóraí was Jurists of Thomond lay in the barony of Burren. As he travelled north from Noughaval, Swift would have seen their law school at Cahermacnaughton, before the cahir was covered over with earth, as it appears to-day. Hugh Ó Dubh Dabhóraí was the ollamh when it was forfeited (as Kahirmacnaughty) and granted to Sir William King and Lord Clare. In 1703 it was purchased by Francis Barton and others at Chichester House Sales of the Trustees for the forfeited estates. Hugh (probably grandson of the ollamh), James, Nehemiah, Manus and John subscribed to Aodh Bui's Brief Discourse in 1717.

There were several other poets in Thomond in the early 18th century. Seán Ó h-Uaithín (Huoneen or Huonyn) belonged to the townland of Derreen, in the parish of Kilshany, north of Ennistymon. Ó h-Uaithín flourished about 1709-1715. He was imprisoned for his satire on the Catholic clergy who had taken the Oath of Abjuration. His elegy on the Jacobite, Lucius Ó Brien, who died in France in 1715, and many other poems, have survived. Mr. Walter Huonin was the only subscriber of the name in Aodh Bui's Brief Discourse. The patronymic Ó h-Uaithín may have suggested to Swift the word he applied to the inhabitants of the 'Country of the Horses'—the Houyhnhnms—in Gulliver's Travels, which he was writing at that time. Micheál Coimín (1688-1760) lived at Kilcorcoran in the parish of Kilfarboy near the

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62 S. & D. IV, pp. 197, 243, 250-9, 483 and 489.
63 A Brief Discourse, p. 192; S. & D. IV, pp. xxxiv-xxxv; T.P. O'Rahilly, "Irish Poets, Historians, and Judges in English Documents, 1538-1615", PRIA, 36, C (1922), 114, paragraph 53.
64 S. & D. IV, pp. 249-259.
68 DNB, x. 135 (1675-1732).
70 Correspond., vol. V, pp. 81 and 82.
present Miltownmalbay. He composed a prose tale Eachtra mhic Slaint. He is best known for his poem, Laoïdh Osin air Thuir na n-Og, published three times in the second half of the 19th century, with literal translations in English (from which Yeats borrowed liberally for The Wanderings of Usheen (1889)). In the voyage to Laputa which he began to write after the journey in Clare, Swift introduced the Strold-bruggs. They were the ever-old of the Laputan world, the reverse of the ever-young of Tir na n-Og.

On Swift’s return to Dublin after the southern journey, Aodh Buí and he continued to work on the History, until the summer of 1724. Raymond may have been a good scholar, but he squandered his money and fell so deeply into debt that he had to slip away to England to evade his creditors. Work on the History was suspended and Aodh Buí lost his employment. He worked for a time with Tadhg Ó Neachtain on the manuscript tri-lingual dictionary Irish-Latin-English (now in Marsh’s Library). He left Ireland to seek a publisher for his Elements of Irish Grammar, written in Newgate ten years before. He had gone to Louvain by September 1724, on which date Tadhg Ó Neachtain, on behalf of Aodh Buí, paid the lodging money for his son Aodh Óg. The Grammar was published in Louvain in 1728. Little is known of his movements while he was abroad. Christopher Anderson said he held a professorship in Paris. He collaborated with Conor Ó Begley on an English-Irish dictionary which was published in 1732. Some time later Aodh Buí returned to Ireland. When Andrias died in 1738, Aodh Buí composed his elegy: “Ín buan bróin go bás ollamh”. Aodh Buí succeeded Andrias as ollamh and, it is said, took over the school at Moyglass. However, he was in very poor circumstances. In five stanzas composed after his return and addressed to his former patron, Sebéal Ní Bhriain of Ennistymon, wife of Somhairle MacDonnell, he laments his miserable poverty in his old age, after all he had done for the true history of Ireland and for the Gaelic language:

DEASGAN TUANACH

X

Is mithid a mhaíomh ar rí-fhúil Bhreógain am
Gur mise do scríbh a bhfo-stair nó gan cham,
Gur chuireas an Ghaeltige i bhfhr’si gcól nach gann,
Cé duine gan bhrí me, ag siomh na ród go fann.

79 B. O’Looney, Transactions of the Ossianic Society, 4 (1859) ; Tír na n-Og, Dublin/Tralee 1869 ; D. Comyn, Gaelic Union Publications, Dublin 1880.
81 G.T., pp. 191ff.
82 J.S., p. 289.
84 Egerton 194, Art. 4 ; RM cat. iv. MSS, ii, 104.
85 Historical Sketches, p. 96.
87 TCD MSS, H 8 11 (1415), p. 23; RIA MSS, 23 B 25 (78), 146m; RIA MSS, 23 K 11 (285), 63 ; Ídeala (1935), p. 60.
An fhuireann do shíolrá ó Mhíle mhór anall
Do b’urra leam dhion, taid claoite ó ghléó-ghuíl Gall;
Ó d’imig na saoithre taoim gan ghlór gan ghreann,
’S is truime mo chroí ná an fíog is mó san ngleann.

Táid m’fhiacha ar chuil Fhiachra’s ar dhearbh-shliucht Táil,
Ós fianach gur rianas a seanchas dáibh;
Is diachraich mo thriall-sa go hainnis mar táim,
Gan diallait, gan srian mhaith, gan chapal im láimh.

A riogain tofa do bhordhfuil uaisle Táil,
Tá an aos dom tholla, ‘s is fogaig dom guais an bháis,
Tá caiche im rosgaibh ‘s is follas mo ghruaig gur bhán.
‘S nil bri im chosaibh ó chlochaibh an chrúá-chasáin.

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A dhuille seo, éire i goin is tabhair mo ghrá
Don gheanamhail bheasach bhéilghilic bharramhail bhreá,
Do shleachtaibh na laoch is do fhéin chuir Danair tar sál,
Is mo bhceanacht dá céile caomh ná dearmaid tràth.

In the first verse, line 2, the ollamh refers to the true history, that is, to A Brief Discourse; in line 3, to his Elements of Irish Grammar and an English-Irish Dictionary which he had put into print although he was a man without substance.

The manuscript tri-lingual dictionary bearing a tribute to the ollamh Tadhg Ó Neachtain, who directed the work, was acquired by Marsh’s Library for £20 about two years before the death of Swift. It was never published, but it is one of the sources from which Irish lexicographers continue to draw material.

In his later years, Aodh Buí’s school was in the townland of Knockin-an-Aord. O’Looney stated that the remains of it could be seen in 1863. Is there any trace or memory of it to-day?

Aodh Buí died in 1755. He is said to have been buried in the cemetery of the church of Kilvoydane, just east of Corofin, although the exact site of his grave is now unknown.

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66 Dinds (1863).
67 S. Lewis, Topographical Dictionary of Ireland, 2nd edition, London 1847—vol. I, p. 481: “Hugh McCurtin, a learned antiquary, grammarian, and poet, author of an Irish dictionary, died here [Corofin] about 1720 [sic], and was interred at Kilvedane, in the neighbourhood”; vol. II, p. 159: “In this cemetery [Kilvoydane] was interred Hugh Mac Curtin, a celebrated Irish antiquary, scholar, and poet; he was author of the antiquities of Ireland, an Irish grammar and dictionary, and other works.” I am indebted to the Hon. Editor, Mr. Etienne Rynne, for this information.

45
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AD</td>
<td><em>Alumni Dublinae</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT</td>
<td>Aarne-Thompson, <em>Types of International Folk Tales</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBÉ MSS</td>
<td><em>Manuscript Collection of Comisiún Béaloideasa Éireann</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dánta (1863)</td>
<td>Brian O’Looney, <em>Dánta Chlainne Dhomnail</em>. A Collection of Poems written on different occasions by the Clare bards, in honour of the MacDonnells of Kilke and Killone, Dublin 1863.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DBN</td>
<td><em>Dictionary of National Biography</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Sketches</td>
<td>Christopher Anderson, <em>Historical Sketches of the Native Irish and their Descendants Illustrative of their past and present with regard to Literature, Education, and Oral Instruction</em>, Edinburgh 1839.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JNMAS</td>
<td><em>Journal of the North Munster Antiquarian Society</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRIA</td>
<td><em>Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scéaloga</td>
<td>Pádraig Ua Dúinmín, <em>Scéaloga le h-aighaidh na Scóilbhaireanna, Baile Átha Cliath (n.d.)</em>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The King of Tir na nÓg is obliged to give the King of Munster, four slaves, twenty cows, twenty oxen, and cattle for seven men.
In the land of the high men, four ships, ten
horses, twenty slaves, and ten cows.
To the King of Emain, twenty acres, twenty
horses, and twelve slaves.
To the King of Leinster, four ships, four
slaves, and a parrot, and four cows.
He is now one hundred and sixty sheep, and he has the obligation to accompany him to Tara.

The End of the Book of Rights and the Book of Monuments.

The Antiquity of the Third Race.

The Book of Delimnator goes on to state:

5 a 1 of June 1600.

A.D. 188.

(Photograph: Royal Irish Academy)