

Book Reviews

Benedict O'Sullivan OP, *Medieval Irish Dominican Studies*, ed. Hugh Fenning OP, Four Courts Press, Dublin, 2009, 237pp, ISBN 978-1-84682-151-6. Price €45.00.

The *Irish Rosary* was a monthly magazine published by the Dominican order which ran from 1897 until 1961. Between 1948 and 1953, it published twenty-seven articles on various aspects of the history of the Dominicans in medieval Ireland by one of its Tralee based priests, Fr Benedict O'Sullivan. Originally from Drimoleague, Co Cork, he was a twenty-six year old primary school teacher in Longford, when he entered the Dominican novitiate in 1914. After his ordination in Rome in 1921, he undertook further study and on his return to Ireland taught in Tallaght and Newbridge. In 1929 he went to Australia for four years where he was vicar provincial and on his return held a variety of positions in different Irish friaries. His initial interest in history dates from the mid 1940s with the publication of an article in the *Dublin Historical Record* on the order in medieval Dublin. It was while serving as prior of the friary in Tralee, where he went in 1947, that he wrote all the articles that are re-printed in this handsomely produced and meticulously edited volume.

The original articles in the *Irish Rosary* were devoid of footnotes so that the sources used were not identified though references in the text often did indicate where the information had come from. This apparently was the main reason that an earlier proposal to publish the articles in book form was not proceeded with. Fr Fenning has undertaken the daunting task of remedying this defect by providing where possible the sources used by Fr O'Sullivan and by also contributing an up-to-date bibliography. He has resisted the, quite clearly, strong temptation to improve the original by some judicious pruning noting gently that Fr O'Sullivan's interest in, and skill at preaching, influenced his writing of history. Despite some recent work, most notably the study by Thomas Flynn of the suppression of the order and its aftermath in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century and the contributions of Dr Fenning himself, though his major work has been on the eighteenth century, the Dominicans in Ireland still lack a modern full-length major study and Fr O'Sullivan's articles remain the only serious research on their origins and contribution in the medieval period.

A total of thirty-nine Dominican friaries were established in Ireland before the Reformation. Twenty-four houses were founded during the thirteenth century, beginning in 1224 with St Saviour's in Dublin and culminating with that of Kilmallock in 1291. The fourteenth century, by contrast, saw few new foundations, a mere five in all. In lamenting this decline O'Sullivan attributes it variously to the Great Schism, Hundred Years' War, Black Death, anti-papal spirit in England and France, hostility from the bishops and secular clergy and more locally the disturbed conditions in Ireland arising from the Gaelic re-conquest of much of the Norman areas. In one of his many unobtrusive but insightful interventions Dr Fenning points out that the rapid growth of the previous century could hardly, in any case, have been expected to continue. The other friaries date from the revival in the fifteenth century with the final foundation at Ballindoon, Co. Sligo in 1507, less than a generation before the suppression of all religious houses by Henry VIII.

The vast majority of the thirteenth-century friaries were erected under the patronage of, and in areas colonised by, the Anglo-Normans. Only in the final phase did penetration into Gaelic areas become significant. In that sense they can be seen as agents of the colonising process, particularly as many of the original friars were English. Because the order had been founded, as had the Franciscans, to be located and service towns this further identified them with the Norman areas of settlement given the barely embryonic nature of urban life in the Gaelic areas. No Dominican foundations were ever established in Co. Clare, Lorrha and Cashel were notable friaries in Co. Tipperary while Limerick had two, or possibly three houses, in Limerick city, Kilmallock and more doubtfully at Ballineagaul, which it has been suggested was a cell of nearby Kilmallock though there is also evidence, perhaps stronger, that it was in fact a Carmelite house.

Each chapter of the book corresponds exactly to each original article. The first three chapters discuss the arrival of the Dominicans in Ireland and sketch the political, social and religious context in which this occurred. The next eight chapters describe the foundation of each friary in chronological order. This is followed by two chapters which attempt to gather from fragmentary evidence some insight into the men who became friars and deals, among other things, with the deep hostility between the Anglo-Normans and the Gaelic Irish, a characteristic it must be stressed of all churchmen, secular and regular of this period. Four valuable chapters are devoted to the material remains of the surviving structures and the editor makes the important point that these were written before the detailed work of Leask on this subject was published, which makes O'Sullivan's contribution all the more impressive.

Economic and financial matters form the main connecting theme of the next five chapters which include fascinating details on farming, food, donations, mass stipends and the monetary rewards to be derived from allowing burial of the rich and powerful within the friary. He shows that the Gaelic nobles were far more generous than their Norman counterparts. The main economic support of all friaries, as mendicant institutions, was however from what was officially termed the quest or to put it more starkly, begging. The origins, organisation and difficulties of this are expertly discussed and analysed. It also gives Fr O'Sullivan an opening to air his dislike of Chaucer, describing the *Summoner's Tale* as a 'masterpiece of cornerboy scurrility' though he accepts that it probably did reflect accurately how mendicant friars were perceived at the time and he took some comfort from the fact that the summoner was not a Dominican!

The final five chapters are detailed studies of the organisational and administrative structure of the order in Ireland focussing in particular on the status of the Irish vicariate and its relationship to the English province to which it was, at least in theory, subject. There is a lengthy, and it must be said rather tedious, discussion of the removal from office of the English provincial, Thomas Rushook and the vicar of Ireland, John Leicester at the general chapter of the order held in Carcassonne in 1378 and their subsequent reinstatement. This chapter had made the Irish friaries an independent province but this was subsequently declared illegal and they reverted to the previous vicarial status under the English provincial. History in a sense repeated itself in 1484 when Ireland was again made into a province in its own right, probably influenced by a similar provision for Scotland which had been made three years previously. However, for different reasons, this decision was also declared illegal and Ireland had to wait until 1536 to achieve finally provincial status. The 1484 request appears to have been linked

to plans to introduce the 'observant' reform into some houses in Ireland and in his final chapter O'Sullivan indicates his plans to write further on this. However this proved to be the last article in the series; Fr Fenning speculates that the editor of the *Irish Rosary* may have felt that the patience of its readers had been stretched enough after five years and twenty-seven articles but perhaps the increasingly legal and technical nature of the articles may have been a factor. In any case O'Sullivan never again returned to the subject, though he lived on until 1970. After he was later moved to Waterford, he developed an interest in its history and, characteristically not doing anything by half measures, went on to deliver a total of thirty-eight lectures to the Old Waterford Society, which it was somewhat curiously noted 'held even altarboys spellbound' and which were posthumously published in the journal *Decies*.

For his discussion of the foundation of the friary at Kilmallock, Fr O'Sullivan relied on the report in the state papers of an enquiry held in 1291 about a dispute between the friars and the bishop of Limerick which had resulted in their expulsion. He allows that this may be an indication of the opposition of Bishops and secular clergy to the mendicant orders, a feature of church politics of the period particularly in continental Europe. However he prefers an alternative explanation that it arose from the bishop's fear that he could be liable to prosecution for having allowed the friars gain possession of their lands without obtaining a licence from the Crown, under a law passed in 1279, the Statute of Mortmain. His argument for this seems to rely on his view that this was a more likely explanation in the context of medieval Ireland but it is difficult not to feel that it arose from his unwillingness to accept that the Bishop most probably had baser motives. Based on the same evidence of the 1291 enquiry, he rejects the view of the eighteenth-century historian De Burgo, and indeed the current popular tradition, that the friary was founded by the Geraldine ancestors of the White Knights, as it is clear that the original patron was a lay citizen of Kilmallock, John Bluett. He suggests instead that the White Knights may have been responsible for the extensive reconstruction of the church in the fifteenth century.

His brief discussion of the surviving buildings at Kilmallock, while careful and interesting, has now been superseded by the fuller study by Arlene Hogan which was published in 1991 through the efforts of the former President of the Thomond Archaeological Society, Fr John Leonard, at that time a curate in the parish. He notes the unusual slender and lofty 'Franciscan style' tower and the other distinctive feature of the church where the south transept extends from the side of the tower rather than from the nave as in most other examples. He also offers the view that a small dark room over the sacristy which has a 'leper squint' in its south wall, which gives a view of the altar, was either a prison or an anker-hold. The latter he explained was a regular feature of all medieval religious houses and was used by individuals who wanted to live a reclusive life as an anchorite, hence the term anker, from middle English usage. While admitting that no documentary evidence of such a practice exists in Irish Dominican records, he instances examples from England and clearly likes the idea of some medieval friar spending his life immured in this way at Kilmallock. As an aside it should be noted that in chapter fourteen the room over the sacristy at Kilmallock is confidently stated to be for the use of the prior but in the next chapter it is considered to be a living room, probably allocated to one of the officials of the community 'even possibly to the prior.'

The legend that the foundation of the friary in Limerick city was in response to a letter sent by St Dominic himself is shown to be just that and indeed this story is also told about Derry and Athenry. An example of the gently humorous way, Fr O'Sullivan

dismisses such beliefs is shown in his comment on the seventeenth-century Italian Dominican, Fr Fontana's, claim that the Saint had actually visited Ireland at some date 'which he wisely omits to mention'. There has been some confusion about the foundation of the priory which has traditionally, and correctly, been attributed to Donnchad Cairprech O'Brien. This arose due to the statement made in 1285 by the king, Edward I, when making a gift to the friary that it had been founded by his father, Henry III. O'Sullivan shows that this arose because it had been necessary to obtain the permission of the king for its establishment, as Limerick was a royal borough and it was on this basis that the claim was made. In 1370 there was a dispute between the friars and the citizens of the city over the cost of repairing the surrounding wall of the friary grounds. This had been damaged when the Irish had briefly captured the city in the previous year. He correctly interprets this as evidence that the friary wall formed part of the city defences though his conclusion that Limerick was still not walled at the time the friary was built is not correct. As has been shown by Brian Hodkinson of Limerick museum, it was incorporated when the original walled area on King's island was later expanded. This incident also provides the interesting information that the Limerick friary owned such extensive woodlands that it could provide 1,050 trees to the city for its rebuilding.

O'Sullivan's casual mention of the survival of some meagre records relating to the friary is explained by the editor as referring to short extracts from the, now lost, house chronicle which were copied in 1627 by Thomas Quirke, the prior and which survive in two separate manuscript collections in the British Library. Excavations on the site have also produced floor tiles and a large number of painted glass fragments.

In regretfully noting that the Dominicans in general have not been as zealous as they might have been in promoting devotion to the great saints of the order, he takes pride in the fact that Lorrha appears to have been the centre of a strong cult of St Peter of Verona, a martyr who died in 1252 and whose feast day is 29 April. In an eighteenth-century Italian published list of his miracles, he is credited not only with curing the son of a Limerick woman, named Everborga, but ensuring, somewhat selfishly one might suggest, that when her house was subsequently burned down that his reliquary was spared.

Fr O'Sullivan often made few concessions to his readers, at least to those who were not priests or well versed in theology, liturgy and ecclesiastical terminology in general. Wycliffe is mentioned without any explanation as if all readers would be instantly familiar with the controversial fourteenth-century cleric nor did he see any need to offer any clarification of the role of chantry chapels for perpetual obits. This problem, even more acute, one might suggest, for present-day readers, has been largely and unobtrusively remedied by Fr Fenning. Hence there need be no confusion about what exactly diapered pillars in the cloister garth at Sligo involved - having a pattern of small squares or lozenges. The locutorium (room in which the friars could speak, as everywhere else the rule of silence was expected to be observed), the hebdomadarian (the friar appointed to preside at the divine office in choir for one week) and the gradual (liturgical book for sung antiphons) are explained as indeed is a more contemporary, but presumably for many equally baffling, reference to the Bisto Twins! All Latin phrases are translated, something which Fr O'Sullivan clearly thought unnecessary or even possibly condescending (*omnia mutantur nos et mutamur in illis!*).

Among the many incidental nuggets of fascinating information to be mined through a careful reading of this work is the fact that the prior was always served last in the

refectory presumably on the sensible grounds that if there was not enough food provided, this would encourage him to remedy the situation. The basic principle of the medieval calefactory, a room which had some form of heating to which the friars could go to warm themselves in very cold weather, survived as late as the 1930s in the Dominican house in Tallaght. An ordinance of Dublin city council decreed that St Dominic's feast day, more widely celebrated in medieval times, be one of the four days in the year when all stray pigs should be cleared off the streets and Fenning tells us that his feast day was celebrated on 4 August for centuries though he does not explain exactly when or why the change to 8 August took place.

O'Sullivan, at one point, defines his view of history as essentially 'the careful and systematic assemblage of facts, which, if sufficiently copious and guaranteed to stand the tests devised by the critic, should yield the desired result', which he saw as painting 'a picture of the kind of life lived by men in ages which differed widely from our own', and not 'the formulation of theories or with apologia for this or that', might not find universal acceptance today. Inevitably some of his assumptions, based on the state of historical scholarship at the time he wrote, are no longer valid: the Normans did not drive out the 'Hiberno-Danish' population of the cities nor was it always the case that the only the humblest class of Irishmen could dwell within their walls. He has a nice lightness of touch when writing of sexual matters, particularly given the likely readership of the *Irish Rosary*, noting that the 'Gaelic aristocracy was not conspicuously successful in the practice of the virtue of chastity' and remarking that it was difficult to interpret the statement that the Pope had allowed Ruaidri O'Connor to have six wives provided he 'renounced the sin of adultery.'

Dr Hugh Fenning, who is archivist of the Irish Dominican province, has performed a major service not only to his own order but to scholars, students and those generally interested in the medieval Irish church by making these articles available in book form. He is far too modest in outlining his role as editor: while he has indeed tidied up the text, provided footnotes and a bibliography, he has made a far greater contribution. He has corrected dates, factual errors, misread texts and at times interpretation. He points out for example that the opening of the Galway friary in 1488 is hardly likely to have resulted, as O'Sullivan argued, from a desire of the Anglo-Norman friars to move to an 'English' settlement when in fact the Galway house was not in the city itself but in the Gaelic suburb of the Claddagh. A careful perusal of the notes shows the extent of his scholarship and the care and diligence he has devoted to this task. This is even more impressive when one considers that medieval history is not his area of specialisation, indeed he rather poignantly notes that he has only one acquaintance in that field, Dr Colmán Ó Clabaigh OSB of Glenstal. One might add that if he can have only one, then he has at least been fortunate in acquiring one of the best currently available!

It should perhaps be seen as somewhat of an indictment of medieval church historians in general and the Dominicans in particular that a series of articles written for a popular periodical over half a century ago is still the most comprehensive study available. While O'Sullivan's work reflects the time in which it was written, the limitations imposed on him and his own interests and concerns, it nevertheless remains very valuable. These are well-researched and balanced studies of the introduction and development of the order in medieval Ireland. They are strong on administrative detail, internal organisation and material remains, less informative on the men involved, their backgrounds, motivation, preaching and other important issues such as the Observant reform, relationship to the other mendicant orders, most notably the Franciscans, the

nature of their pastoral role and reaction of the secular clergy to it. These remain tasks to be taken up by others, who hopefully will be stimulated by the publication of this work to follow in the pioneering footsteps of Fr Benedict O'Sullivan.

Liam Irwin

Pádraig Ó Cearbhaill, *Liostaí Logainmneacha Tiobrad Árann, Tipperary*, Oifig an tSoláthair, Baile Átha Cliath, 2004, Lgh 262, ISBN 7557 19360.

The Placenames Commission was established in 1946 to provide authoritative versions of Irish placenames. Ten years later the Placenames Branch was founded, based in the Ordnance Survey, and given responsibility for carrying out the necessary research to ensure the accuracy of our placenames. The launch in October 2008 of a new website which provides the names in Irish of almost 100,000 townlands, streets and post-offices throughout the country is a tremendously important resource for those scholars, students, journalists and members of the general public who are concerned with the realm of Irish placenames. The growing awareness of the importance of our Irish placenames is a feature of present-day Ireland because they are an enduring link with our remote historical past and give us a clinically accurate insight into the mindset of our earliest ancestors. It is a realm of knowledge that is likely to be enhanced, not just here in Ireland but internationally also, by the increasing sophistication of the science of genealogy. Scientists tell us that the gene will be to this century what the microchip was for the twentieth, in the advancement of knowledge.

Cuma cén cinneadh a deinfear go sainiúil faoi cérbh iad ár sinsear ba thúisce a tháinig don tír seo, is cinnte gurb é ceann des na cúraimí/fadhbanna ab éigean dóibh a réiteach go luath cosúil le muintir an domhain uile, ná, logainmneacha cuí d'fháil dos na n-áiteanna ina rabhadar lonnaithe. Is eol dúinn ón ár dtraidisiún féin, go raibh an dinnseanchas, nó staidéar logainmneacha riachtanach mar ábhar scoláireachta ó ré na Críostaíochta sa tír seo.

Ceann des na tágairtí is luaithe a thagann chughainn ó'n aimsear cianaoiseach, ná an cur síos a dhein an tireolaí cáiliúil Gréigeach úd, Ptolemy III a mhair in Alexandria na h-Éigipte sa bhlian 150AD. Tharraing sé léarscáil d'Éirinn a bhí bunaithe ar thaighde a deineadh ag Gréigeach eile, Pythaeus, máirnéalach a mhair i Marseilles na Fraince sa bhlian 325 Roimh Chríost. Dhein seisean cur síos ar threabhanna na h-Éireann agus a gcuid logainmneacha. Ina measc siúd luaidh sé na h-Uaihtní a bhronn a n-ainm ar Bharúntacht Uaithne agus Ara i gContae Thiobraid Árann agus freisean ar an gceantar Uaithne Beag i gContae Luimnigh.

Tá cur síos an-shuimiúil ar shaothar Ptolemaeus III ag an dlíodóir Béal Feirsteach Séamus de Napier ina leabhair sonrach úd, *Lorg na nGael*, ina n-iarrann sé orainn pictiúr a shamhlú de Pythaeus agus an t-eolas tábhachtach seo á fháil aige ós na ndaoine áitiúla le cabhair ó fhear teanga.

Ní h-aon rud nua, é, dá bhrí sin, staidéar de logainmneacha na h-Éireann agus is cabhair oll-mhór é dóibh siúd a n-oireann, an mionstaidéar is deireannai seo *Liostaí Logainmneacha Tiobraid Árann, Tipperary* ag an Dochtúir Pádraig Ó Cearbhaill, faoin ábhar seo. Is cuid é den t-sraith atá á fhoilsiú ag an gCoimisiún Logainmneacha faoi na leaganacha oifigiúla de logainmneacha gach contae sa tír.

Tá sé contaethe eile foilsithe acu sa t-sraith seo cheana féin, mar atá; Luimneach, Cill Chainnigh, Lú, Muineachán, Uíbh Fhailí, Port Láirge. Is é eagarthóir na sraithe ná, An t-Uasal Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig, an Príomhoifigeach Logainmneacha. Tá éacht

déantá ag eagarthóir an leabhair seo, ach go h-áirithe, an Dochtúir Pádraig Ó Cearbhaill, le cuidiú ó roinnt des na saineólaithe dinnseanchais is mó le rá, sa tír seo idir bheo agus mhairbh.

Is é an logainm bunúsach díobh uile a roghnaíodh don staidéar seo ná an Baile Fearainn, toisc gurb é sin an ceann is tábhachtaí de, a léiríonn go cruinn, dleathach, an t-aonad riaracháin talún, a úsáidtear i ngnáth ghnó an Stáit. Tá 3,233 díobh i gContae Thiobraid Árann ar fad.

Is é an leagan Béarla des na logainmneacha is mó a h-úsáideadh go traidisiúnta, rud a chothaigh go minic athchumadh dá riocht agus da gciall. B'fhéidir gur de bhárr easpa tuisceana i gcás chanúint fuaimniú nó eolas bhrí an logainm i gceist, ba chúis leis seo. Sampla maith de seo b'fhéidir, cuiream i gcás ná, an logainm Tiobraid Árann féin, a fhuaimnítear go mí-cheart mar, "Tipperary".

Ba dheacair a shárú déarfhainn, doimhne agus fairsingeacht thaighde an leabhair seo agus riocht nó cruinneas na logainmneacha á phlé ag na saineólaithe a bhí gafa ann. Fuarthas foinse amháin, mar shampla i ndán a scríobhadh i 1470 don logainm, *Tuath Bhaile Uistín* (Templetuohy). Ceann eile ná an bealach a d'úsáid an scoláire suntasach úd, an Dochtúir Seatrún Céitinn, chun talamh a thómmas i dTiobraid Árann i 1633. Cuireadh an-bhéim ar fad, nidh nach ionadh, áfach, ar shaothar taighde an bheirt scoláire iomráiteacha dhinnseanchais is mó le rá den naoiú gcéad déag, Seán Ó Donabhán agus Eoghan Ó Comhraí thar cheann an t-Suirbhé Ordanáis. Tá a gcuid nótaí den riachtanas do éinne a mbeadh a leithéad de shaothair idir lámhaibh acu.

Roimhe sin bhítí ag braith ar cháipéisí oifigiúla as Laidin, Béarla nó Fraincis do furmhór logainmneacha na tíre seo. Is ón Laidin, cuiream i gcás, a thagann na téarmaí eagsúla Gaeilge do "Church", mar atá; Teampail; Mainistear; Eaglais; Díseart agus Domhnach. Is ón bhFraincis a thagann an focal "Gráinseach" (Grange) a chiallaíonn feirm a bhain le Mainistir agus an pobal agus a comharsanacht agus tagann an focal "Buirgéis" nó Buiríos a chiallaíonn "Baile" chughainn ós na h-Angla-Normannaigh. Ach, tríd is tríd, tá an téarma Gaelach, "Baile" níos coitianta ná aon logainm eile i gContae Thiobraid Árann. Tá ceithre chéad is dachad áiteanna den ainm seo sa chontae ar fad.

Bhí an Ghaeilge ag cúlú, dar ndó, i bhfurmhóir den chontae ach amháin in aon chúinne bheag de iar-dheisceart Thiobraid Árann dar leis an daonáireamh a reachtáileadh in 1851, an chéad cheann i ndiaidh an Ghorta Mhóir. Is ón gceantar seo a bhailigh oifigigh an Bhrainse Logainmneacha roinnt bheag de logainmneacha ó chainteoirí dhúchasacha deireannacha na h-áite úd in 1963-4.

Is blúiríní suimiúla eolais da leithéid úd, a chuireann le mealltacht an leabhair ró-luachmhair seo dén ár ndinnseanchas. Tá sé ar an árdchaighdeán chéanna des na cinn eile sa t-sraith seo. Ní leabharlann gaeilge go dtí é. An fánach an smaoineamh é go bhféadfaí a leithéad de shaothair a fhoillsiú faoi logainmneacha Thuaiscirt Éireann agus Alban a luaithe agus is féidir, ar mhaithe an t-saoil Fódhlach uile?

* * * * *

Whatever the final agreement on the identity of who our first ancestors here were, it is safe presumably, to assume that, like primitive societies everywhere, one of their immediate concerns was to establish placenames for their settlements as a requirement of everyday life. Our own records recount that *dinnseanchas*, or the study of placenames, was an essential part of formal scholarship in early Irish society.

Amongst the earliest of such references are those of the Greek cartographer Ptolameus III who lived in Alexandria in Egypt in 150AD. His description of the Ireland of his day was based on the research of another Greek geographer and mariner Pythaeus, who lived in Marseilles in 325BC. The latter's work is described by the Belfast attorney, Seamus de Napier, in his invaluable work on the Celtic influence in Europe, *Lorg na nGael*. Pythaeus documented the various tribes and the names of their locations with the help of an interpreter. Amongst those mentioned he names the Auteini, or *Uaithne* in Irish, from whom we derive the title of the Barony of Owney and Arra in Tipperary and Owneybeg in County Limerick.

So the study of placenames is nothing new and this latest interpretation of the placenames of Tipperary, *Liostaí Logainmneacha Contae Thiobraid Árann*, is a very welcome broadening of our knowledge of that area. Together with similar studies of other counties, viz. Limerick, Kilkenny, Louth, Monaghan, Waterford and Offaly, it is one of a series being published by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, under its Chief Placenames Officer, Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig. The immense scholarship involved is the outcome of some of the contributions of some of the foremost Irish placenames scholars, past and present, of the department under its editor, Dr. Pádraig Ó Cearbhaill, Higher Placenames Officer.

The basic placename unit used in this study is that of the townland. Of all the placenames extant, the townland was considered the most important because it gives a precise legal location as the administrative unit of land in day-to-day affairs. There are 3,233 townlands in the two Ridings, North and South of the county. The English form of placenames is that which has been inherited in the legal and administrative system. This can often be a handicap as it sometimes distorts the traditional names and disguises their real and original meanings. This could often happen despite the best intentions of those English scribes who sometimes suffered from the limitations of accent, pronunciation or understanding of the actual placenames involved. The name Tipperary itself is perhaps as good an example as any of this type of error in respect of the original pronunciation of Tiobraid Árann.

The breadth and depth of scholarship involved in the search for the provenance of these placenames is awesome. The source for one such name, for example, *Tuath Bhaile Uisín* (Templetuohy), is found in an Irish poem of 1470. Another is the land measurement defined in 1633 by one of the greatest of all Gaelic scholars, the seventeenth-century poet, historian and academic, Dr. Geoffrey Keating of Salamanca and a son of Tipperary. Still greater reliance was placed on the pioneering work of the two great nineteenth-century scholars John O'Donovan and Eugene O'Curry in their compilation of the country's placenames for the Ordnance Survey in the 1840s.

Prior to the publication of their groundbreaking source Note Book, we are told that 'the historical evidence for the majority of existing placenames within the country is recorded exclusively in Latin, English or French documents'. Hence, the various Irish terms for "church", *Teampall*, *Mainistear*, *Eaglais*, *Díseart* and *Domhnach* are all taken from Latin, while the word *Gráinseach* (Grange) which refers to a monastic farm and its adjoining settlement comes to us from the French. *Búirgéis* or *Buiríos*, meaning a borough or town, derives from the Anglo-Norman. But the commonest placename element in use is the Irish term *Baile*, which appears in 440 of the County's placenames.

The Irish language was already in decline in the Northern part of the County according to the first post-famine census of 1851. It was in a much healthier state however in the South-West corner; it was from the last native Irish speakers of this area

that the officers of the Placenames Branch recorded 'a relatively small number of placenames in 1963-64'. It is these nuggets of information which enhance the attractiveness of the basic invaluable scholarship of this work which merits a place in all Irish libraries. All in all, it is a major contribution to Irish Placenames scholarship in keeping with the standard of others in this series. Is it too much to hope that similar work will be undertaken eventually on the placenames of Northern Ireland and Gaelic Scotland?

Prionnsias de Priondargást

Pádraig Ó Cearbhaill, *Logainmneacha na hÉireann II, Cill i Logainmneacha Co. Thiobraid Árann*, Oifig an tSoláthair, Baile Átha Cliath, 2007 Lgh 299. ISBN 7557-7553-8.

Dóibh siúd a n-oireann, is taisce ró-luachmhar é an leabhar is deireannaí seo, faoi logainmneacha Chontae Thiobraid Árann, atá foilsithe ag an Roinn Ghnóthai Phobail, Túaithe agus Gaeltachta. Oifigigh agus iar-oifigigh de Bhrainse Logainmneacha den Roinn úd a d'ullmhaigh é faoi'n eagarthóir, an Dochtúir Pádraig Ó Cearbhaill, a rugadh agus a tógadh i nGleann Chorbairí i gContae Luimnigh. Is Ardoifigeach Logainmneacha é sa Bhrainse agus tá roinnt mhaith de ábhair an leabhair bunaithe ar a thaighde dá ghradam dochtúireachta. Bhí a mhuintear riamh sáite i dtradísiúin agus oidhreacht na Gaeilge sa chuid sin tíre agus is é an ball is deireannaí é de seolairí dinnseanchais iomráiteacha Thuamhain, ar nós Art Ó Maolfabhail agus Éamon de h-Óir, nach maireann.

Cé go bhfuil suas le trí mhíle, dhá chéad agus tríocha a trí (3,233) Bailte Fearainn i gContae Thiobraid Árann, ní bhaineann an saothar seo ach leis an gcéad agus tríocha a h-ocht (138) díobh go bhfuil "Cill" mar ainm Bhaile Fearainn acu. Dár leis na seolairí is ainm réamh-Normannach é, "Cill" a thagann chughainn ón Laidin, "Cella" a chiallaíon 'téarma lonnaíochta eaglasta'. Deireann an t-údar linn freisean gurb é an téarma seo, "cill", an 'téarma lonnaíochta eaglasta is raidhsiúla samplaí i gcomhdhéanamh ainmneacha paróistí agus bailte fearainn Thiobraid Árann'. Dá bhrí sin, dob' éigean dó cúram ar leith a dhéanamh ar na foinsí riaracháin eaglasta chun samplaí d'aimsiú des na logainmneacha atá pléite aige sa leabhair. Méadaíodh leis an taighde a bhain leis seo toisc go raibh ceithre dheoise i gContae Thiobraid Árann mar atá, Caiseal, Cill dá Lua, Imleach agus Líos Mór agus freisean, gur bhain cuid des na téacsanna le deoise nó le deoisí áirithe ar nós na mbailiúcháin annáidí, cuiream i gcás.

Spreagann an tagairt seo an smaoineamh go raibh baint áirithe b'fhéidir, idir úsáid an logainm "cill" agus díospóireachtaí Cómhhdála Sionóid Rátha Breasail sa bhlian 1111AD, toisc, dar leis an léann acadúil, gur ag an t-Sionód úd a bunaíodh deoisí na tíre. Ní fheadair.

Tá tagairt simiúil eile ag an údar don logainm úd "cillín", ina gcuirtí furmhór na leanaí do cailltí gan baiste sa tír seo; deireann sé go bhfuil cur síos ar 22 láthair adhlachta le h-aghaidh leanaí i suirbhé seandálaíochta áirithe i dThiobraid Árann Thúaidh agus gurb é "Kyle" an logainm a tugtaí do áiteanna adhlachta dá leithéid. Dob amhlaidh an nós céanna dar ndó, i gContae an Chláir, mar shampla, "Shanakyle", i gceantair Chluain Lárach gar do Chathair Luimnigh agus Shanakyle/Old Shanakyle i gCoill Rois.

Blúirín eolais shuimiúil eile a tugtar dúinn maidir le Cill Chais, an caisleán is ársa agus is mó aitheanta, b'fhéidir, i gContae Thiobraid Árann, ar fad ná, 'Níl abhainn ná sruthán i gcóngar Cill Chaise áfach.' Is deacair a shamhlú conas a bhféadfadh aon

phobal a maireachtaint gan achmuinn chó riachtanach so. Aisteach! Ar aon chuma, is foinse shaibhir cruinneolais an leabhar so de dhinnseanchas na h-Éireann; mionstaidéar saineolach ar ghné thábhachtach amháin den ár n-oidhreacht logainmneacha.

Tá an saol Fódhlach uile faoi oll-chomaoín arís ag an údar, Pádraig Ó Cearbhaill, de bhárr a chuid taighde éachtach. Is brobh ró-luachmhar é de bheart chultúir ár dtíre. Moltar é do gach scoláire ár ndinnseanchais. Ní leabharlann Gaelach do dtí é.

Proinsias de Priondargást

Proinsias de Róiste, *Binsín Luachra; Seanchas agus Gearrscéalta*, curtha in eagar ag Dáithí Ó hÓgáin, An Clócomhar TTA, Baile Átha Cliath, 2001, Lgh 144. ISBN 0-903758-74-1. Praghas €6.

Is annamh a gheibhimíd taisce cho luachmar is an ceann atá ar fáil sa leabhar tábhachtach seo; cnuasacht saibhir de ghaeilge oir-dheiscirt Chontae Luimnigh a bhí fós ina Ghaeltacht, sa chéad leath den naoiú aois déag.

Rugadh an t-údar, Proinsias de Róiste ag Cnoc Teorann i bparóiste Chnoc Loinge i mí Lúnasa 1866. Bhí a mhuintir lonnuithe sa cheantar sin ó 1820 nó mar sin. Bhí naonúr clainne ag a thuismitheoirí agus dob é Proinsias an ceathrú duine clainne díobh. Múinteoir gairmiúil cheoil agus rince abea a athar Seán agus dar ndó, bhí an luí céanna leis an gceard sin ag Proinsias fhéin agus a bheirt driotháir Séamus agus Seán. D'aistrigh an ceathrar díobh go chathair Luimnigh sa bhliain 1892, áit ar bhunúodar Acadamh Rince agus Ceoil i Sráid Shearlais - Sráid Naomh Gearóid, mar atá anois - i ngiorracht chúpla céad slat de Eaglais Oird an t-Slánuitheóra ann.

Do bhíodh an rince a mhúineadh ag an athar agus an ceol á sheinm ag an triúr mac. Chaith an seinnteoir ab fhearr díobh, Séamus seal mar orgánaí sa séipéal de chuid Ord an t-Slánaitheóra. Cé nach raibh an t-sláinte go maith ag Proinsias de dheasca an mhúcadh agus gur chaill sé roinnt mhaith ama ón scoil naisiúnta áitiúil dá bhárr, is léir go raibh meabhair chinn géar agus suim mhór riamh aige i gcúrsaí cheoil. Bhailigh sé na foinn traidisiúnta áitiúla le cabhair ón a dhriotháir Seán agus bhí a ainm in áirde mar bhailitheoir cheoil.

D'fhoilsigh sé a chéad cnuasacht *The Roche Collection of Irish Traditional Music* i 1912 i dhá imleabhair agus ceann eile, *Airs and Fantasies* i 1932. Bhí sé gníomhach riamh mar bhall de Chonradh na Gaeilge agus go mór-mhór, ach go h-áirithe, i Bhfeachthas Athbheochana na Gaeilge. Dob é an gaeilgeoir dúchasach deireannach ó Chontae Luimnigh agus bhailigh sé cnuasacht áluinn de bhéaloidis a áit dhúchais a foilsíodh mar, *Binsín Luachra: Gearrscéalta agus Seanchas* i 2001.

Is taisce ró-luachmhar inléite an leabhar seo atá lán de chaint agus chanúint a cheantair dhúchais atá ar maos le stair litríochta agus oidhreacht na Gaeilge. Tá, idir fhilíocht, seanfhocail, paidreacha, sláintí, beannachtaí, scéalta, seanchas agus greann ar fáil ann, chó maith le foclóireacht agus nathanna áilne gaeilge na linne sin, céad caoga bliain ó shoin. Do b'fhiú é b'fhéidir a bheith ina théacs-leabhar ar Chúrsa Ghaeilge na h-Ard-Teistiméarachta.

Tá an t-ádh dearg orainn go bhfuil an t-Ollamh Daithí Ó hÓgáin ó Roinn Bhéaloidis na h-Éireann in Ollscoil Átha Cliath, mar eagarthóir ar an leabhar seo. Is duine de thógáil an réigiúin seo é, freisean, a bhfuil aithne idirnáisiúnta air mar cheann des na saineoluithe is mó le rá i gcúrsaí bhéaloidis agus oidhreacht na Gaeilge. Cuidíonn a nótaí cheartúcháin agus aguisín go mór le h-inléiteacht an leabhair.

Do chabhródh sé níos fear fós, b'fhéidir, leis an ngnáth léitheoir, ach foclóir des na foclaibh neamh-choitianta a chur leis an leabhair freisean. Is rún, sainiúil, cuí omóis, é, "*Binsín Luachra; Seanchas agus Gearrscéalta*, don t-údar Proinsias de Róiste, a fuair bás in Oispidéal Naomh Camillus, Luimneach, i 1961. Ní leabharlann Gaeilge do dtí e.

Proinsias de Priondargást

Joan Rockley, *Antiquarians and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Cork*. BAR British Series 454 Archeopress, Oxford, 2008. ISBN 9781407302508. 181 pp. £34.

This work is based on the author's doctoral thesis supplemented by some material from her earlier MA completed in 1995 and further postdoctoral research. It essentially covers the period 1800 to the 1880s. This termination date is due to the fact that there appears to have been a virtual collapse of antiquarian activity in Cork at that time. The author suggests that this was due to the deaths at that period of some of the major figures involved and the related collapse of the main Antiquarian Societies.

The author provides a general background to her study in chapter one, giving a potted history of the development of antiquarianism in Britain in the first half of the nineteenth century, the background to Irish antiquarianism, and in particular the roles of the Royal Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy. She also discusses early attempts to encourage interest in the Irish language. The Cork Irish Society was founded in 1815 but despite the strong encouragement of Bishop John Murphy, it had only a short and ineffective life span.

Her detailed study of archaeology and those who studied, fostered and promoted it is detailed, comprehensive and fascinating. She discusses bodies such as the Cork Institution, Cork Scientific and Literary Society and the Cork Cuvierian Society. This latter body was, for reasons which remain obscure, named after a French scientist, Baron Georges Cuvier. There is no evidence that he had any connection with Cork or ever visited the city but his widow presented a bust of him to the Society which can still be seen in the Crawford Art Gallery. The Cork Institution was founded in 1803 largely through the efforts of a Presbyterian Minister, Thomas Dix Hincks, and modelled on the Royal Institution of London which had been established in 1799. It was initially active and successful but by the 1820s with the departure of Hincks and the economic and social problems after 1815 it lost its effectiveness. A botanic garden which it had established on the south side of the city in 1810 was sold in 1828 to Fr Theobald Mathew for use as a cemetery.

There is valuable and fascinating discussion of individual antiquarians and collectors, both well known and obscure. The wide range of source material investigated and utilised for this is most impressive. There is brief mention of the famous Limerick-city-born [not County Limerick as stated here] priest, Fr John McEnery and his pioneering paleontological work in Devon which led him to realise that the dating in the bible for the creation of the world was wrong.. She suggests that McEnery did not publish his findings due to disillusionment with the lack of recognition which his work received. Some of the major contemporary debates in the antiquarian world of the period are discussed in the context of how they were perceived, if at all, in Cork. These range from the Three Age System (largely ignored), to Round Towers, Ogham Stones and Fulachta fiadh. Interesting current debates on the function of the latter mirror to a great extent the discussions in Cork in the nineteenth century. One of the foremost men

involved was William Hackett from Midleton, who anticipated the bronze age dating of these sites now established through radiocarbon dating and also argued that they may have been permanent settlements rather than temporary hunting camps.

This work sheds fascinating light on how nineteenth-century Cork antiquarians approached the study of their past and how they reacted to the major discoveries made elsewhere in science, human origins and the antiquity of the earth. The problems they faced, internal tensions and external rivalry (interestingly they had good relations with those in the north of Ireland but very bitter conflicts with Dublin based contemporaries) and the role they played in cultural and intellectual life are comprehensively and judiciously discussed. There is also a valuable appendix giving brief biographical details on the more important antiquarians and scientists of the period while the index is comprehensive and user-friendly.

Michael O'Brien

Curtin, *West Limerick: Crime, Popular Protest and Society 1820-1845*, Sliabh Luachra Books, Ballyhahill, 2008, viii + 309pp. ISBN 0 9533321 44.

West Limerick, as defined in this work, consists of forty-four civil parishes bordering on counties Cork and Kerry on the West and South while the parishes of Kildimo, Adare, Kilfinny, Ballingarry and Kilmeedy form the boundary with East and South Limerick. This area consists of two distinct physical regions, the western hill country and the flat land of the Limerick plain. This is perhaps not the usual geographical or administrative division that historians use but in this instance, in addition to providing a manageable area for research and study, it allows comparison between two quite contrasting regions.

The period chosen for the study was one of economic depression. Changed market conditions after the end of the Napoleonic wars led to a move away from tillage farming to dairying. This was much less labour intensive and impacted most strongly on the increasingly large labouring population. This class came to depend increasingly on the potato which was to culminate so disastrously during the Great Famine but five separate failures of the crop occurred in the twenty-five years examined here. Landlords began to become involved more directly in managing their estates, abandoning the use of middlemen and either assuming direct control or employing agents for that purpose. Long leases were no longer given with a resulting insecurity of tenure.

As with Ireland in general in the pre-famine period, West Limerick was a violent region. Crime was endemic and was largely confined to the rural areas. The central issues leading to the majority of criminal acts and violence were land access and occupation, the cost and availability of food and issues of employment. There were significant regional variations often linked to specific local concerns. In general the areas with the highest densities of population, especially of labourers and small farmers, tended to have the highest levels of crime and disturbance. This was particularly true in the baronies of Kenry and Lower Connello. One of the many revealing discoveries of the author's research is the fact that organised unrest by secret societies like the Whiteboys was largely absent, only occurring for a brief period in the early 1820s with the Rockite movement which seems to have had many different causes in various areas, often very local issues. This was sometimes the result of, or linked to, sectarianism but apart from tithe agitation this seems to have declined quickly also. Objections and resistance to tithe payments to the Church of Ireland clergy were often due to the economic and financial burden rather than actual sectarian prejudice.

The author argues that once an efficient and effective system of policing and administration of the law was introduced in the 1820s there was a widespread acceptance of the system. He shows that this was particularly true of the lower classes in society and interestingly of women. There was a particular desire to have local disputes dealt with by civil actions and such decisions were accepted. It would appear that the Catholic Church strongly encouraged this trend. The courts conducted their business through English even though at least half of the population was still Irish speaking. Interpreters were, however, used in cases where people did not understand English. On the other hand when illegal or threatening notices, mostly directed at the farming class, were posted they were invariably in English. This has led the author to conclude that English had already spread more widely among the farming class by this time with Irish confined to the poorer levels of society and in the more remote areas.

It was here also that the practice of abduction of women continued. This is a complex subject as many of the incidents seemed to have been arranged and collusive due to the refusal of parents to agree to their daughters' choices. After abduction, such parental approval was usually then forthcoming due to the diminished marriage prospects of such women. However there were undoubtedly genuine incidents also, motivated by greed for dowries or, in the case of only daughters, by hunger for land. The crime of rape also seems to have been more prevalent in such regions. Six times more rape cases were recorded in the period 1835-43 than in the preceding thirteen years. It is argued however that this represents a greater willingness to report or record such crimes rather than any dramatic increase. A similar conclusion is reached in regard to infanticide.

The frequently expressed concern about crime in contemporary Ireland usually makes the assumption, or even specifically states, that it is a problem of relatively recent origin or at least that its nature and scale is new. However as this excellent study shows this is a fallacy. West Limerick has a violent and troubled past and in exploring it the author has shed valuable new light on the complicated reasons and complex explanations for this phenomenon. Based on the author's doctoral thesis it is the fruit of many years of painstaking and detailed research in newspapers, government reports, police records, landlord papers, diaries, census returns and a wide variety of other sources. It is a major contribution to historical scholarship in a field which has until now been largely neglected.

Liam Irwin

Roisin McLaughlin (ed.), *Early Irish satire*, School of Celtic Studies, Institute for Advanced Studies Dublin 2008, xi+300pp, ISBN 978 1 85500 207 4. Price €35.

This is an important contribution to the history of early Irish literature and to the body of Old and Middle Irish texts edited by the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies. It is divided into four chapters. Chapter 1 provides a short introduction to the legal and literary contexts for Irish satire with an analysis of various images used as insults and the types of people who represented the targets of the surviving verses. Chapter 2 is an edition with translation of an Old Irish tract on satire *Cis lir fodlai aire* (how many divisions of satire are there?) Chapter 3 is an edition of an Old Irish list of 7 types of satire and the penalties for using them. Chapter 4 is a miscellany of various satirical verses drawn from a medieval handbook of poetic metres, compiled to illustrate the potential range of metrical forms available to Irish poets.

An important point is that this edition incorporates English translations of all texts discussed – important because the tradition in the Dublin Institute has been to produce editions of Irish literary material with extensive glossaries but without translations in its *Medieval and Modern series*. Given the decimation of Old Irish scholarship in Irish universities, the number of academics and students who can profitably use such editions is currently so low that such a practice can no longer be defended and the Institute is to be commended for changing its literature policy.

The material discussed here will be relevant to a wide range of readers with interests stretching from the literary to the legal as well as to those who are interested in the general social history of early Ireland. Satire was used by Irish poets as a weapon – sometimes at the behest of their patron but also for their own benefit. As in the modern images of witchdoctors, a poet's curse, in its strongest form, was credited with the ability to maim and to kill. Such power was not to be used lightly or without proper care in its formulation and it had to be seen as inherently justifiable by the community; the penalty for an unlawful satire was a fine worth half the author's honour price (p.7).

Not all satires were of such high status. Also identified as legal satire were barbed comments such as that of the hungry (and somewhat ungracious) guest who, when asked whether he wanted salt on his food, replied 'No, for I have not had anything on which it may be sprinkled unless it is sprinkled directly on my tongue' (p. 53). Some poets were discreet enough to leave their insults un-attributed as in the following description of a farting woman (classified by the medieval lawyer as *dallbach cen tuinide* or unestablished innuendo):

*Atá ben is' tír
Ní epur a ainm
Maidid esse a deilm
Amail chloich a tailm*

There is a woman in the land
- I do not say her name -
her noise breaks from her
like a stone from a sling.

McLaughlin makes the point that by not identifying the woman, the potential fines that could be levied in riposte were considerably lessened (pp 71-2) and one presumes that the poet's circle of acquaintances were able to make any necessary connections themselves.

Of the verses that are attributed, the one addressed to Flannacán úa Cellaig may be a reference to a mid eleventh-century king of the eastern coastal kingdom of Brega while another, addressed to Gilla Cellaig may refer to the king from south Galway *rí Húa Fiachrach Aidne* whose death is recorded in 1003. It seems fair to deduce that this man was both corpulent and somewhat inactive (p.160):

*Gilla Cellaig, cenn for sallaib
seilche co ndíb mbennaib
inna ar gúaire cullaig allaid
challaig Gilla Cellaig*

Gilla Cellaig, a scum on two flitches of bacon
a snail with two horns
a hair on the bristles of a fat (?) wild boar
is Gilla Cellaig.

In general, however, the dating of individual verses remains quite vague due to their relative lack of clearly datable linguistic features (although it seems likely that many are Middle Irish or Hiberno-Viking in date - pp 119-127).

The poetic metres used for individual verses range widely. They include well known Irish syllabic metres such as various forms of *rannaigeacht*, *rinnard* and *deibide*, as well

as others but McLaughlin also makes the point that there seems to be a higher than normal correlation between satires and the uncommon metres, sometimes with irregular number of syllables in the lines (pp 130-2) and she suggests that certain metres were considered particularly appropriate for praise poetry while others were favoured for historical accounts or for satire.

One difficulty about this valuable publication must be mentioned. Most booksellers do not stock the book and nor do they have it listed on their computerised data-set of published works. To acquire it, you must first contact the Dublin Institute website (www.dias.ie) where you download the order form, fill it out and send it to 10 Burlington Road, Dublin 4 by ordinary post. This procedure could surely be simplified. On the other hand, it is Institute policy not to let their books go out of print which hopefully means that this learned and enlightening exposition of a largely unknown branch of early Irish literature will remain permanently available to interested readers everywhere.

Catherine Swift

Máire Lohan, *An 'antiquarian craze': the life, times and work in archaeology of Patrick Lyons RIC (1861-1954)* Edmund Burke Publisher, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, 2008 ISBN 978 0 9461 30 45 0. Price €19.50.

Patrick Lyons was born in Lisronagh, near to Clonmel, Co Tipperary in 1861. His family were poor, having been evicted from the land they had farmed, and he left school at the age of ten to become a farm labourer. Unusually his employers, the Purcell family (relatives of the novelist Charles Kickham) continued his education themselves in the evening principally it would seem through literature and history. This educational foundation, supplemented later by attendance at night classes enabled Lyons to join the RIC in 1886 at the age of 25. He spend his police career of thirty-four years mostly in counties Mayo and Galway.

In 1897 the focus of his life was to change when he discovered an ogham stone near Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo. This event, he later admitted, led him to abandon any ambitions for promotion within the RIC and he decided instead to concentrate most of his attention on archaeology, to what he termed himself 'my antiquarian craze'. He was encouraged and supported by, and collaborated in research with, Hubert Knox a Ballinrobe landlord who had been forced by ill health to resign from his position as a judge in India and who devoted the rest of his life to antiquarian study. Lyons did field work, provided photographs and offered interpretation of monuments for most of the nineteen publications by Knox in journals such as *JRSAI* and *JGHAS*. Lohan did not receive acknowledgment for his contributions to this work, at his own request, as he feared the reaction of his employers should his activities become known to them. The RIC authorities, he tells us in a letter 'disapproved of antiquarian activity' and he could only 'come out' when he left the force in 1920. There is no direct evidence of the reason for his resignation but it seems highly likely that it was related to the IRA campaign against RIC men at that time allied to the fact that he was fifty-nine years old. It is clear that he was not popular with those under his command which might also have been a factor.

It is assumed that he returned to Clonmel on his retirement though documentation on his life there only begins in 1929 and nothing is known about him or his activities during the 1920s. In a letter written shortly before his death he states that as a former RIC man he came under 'the suspicions of the gunmen' and was forced to abandon his

field work, presumably for his own safety. He certainly had resumed his antiquarian work by the 1930s and from then until his death in 1954 he published a variety of articles in *JRSAI*, *JCHAS* and the *Journal of the Clonmel Historical and Archaeological Society*. He also had a strong interest in folklore and folklife and published material in *Béaloides*.

Máire Lohan is a Galway based archaeologist who has painstakingly uncovered the details of Lyons's life and has used two major bodies of source material to examine in detail and evaluate his antiquarian work. The numerous photographs of monuments and features taken by Lyons are mainly in the Hardiman Library at the National University of Ireland, Galway and in the library of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland and this latter repository also houses the notebooks of Hubert Knox. Some of these record transcriptions from letters sent to him by Lyons and provide invaluable information on his life and work.

Patrick Lyons died in August 1954 in his ninety-fourth year. He had never married and lies buried in an unmarked grave in Clonmel. He had led a long, active and fruitful life. Near the end of his life, he wrote that he was still 'the only man living who has found 4 ogham stone inscriptions', one of the very few records of his having any sense of pride in his achievements or wish to be in the limelight. He was pleased however that in 1905 the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland had invited him to become a member, in recognition of his dedicated fieldwork, and no doubt he appreciated their gesture in making him an Honorary Fellow in 1953. One may suggest that he would equally be pleased that he has now been lucky to acquire, even posthumously, a biographer and celebrator who has written such a valuable, scholarly and affectionate account of his life and work.

Peter Murphy