A Meic Fhlanachadha Fosterage Document, c.1580

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A deed of adoption by the Meic Fhlanachadha (McClancy) brehon family of Tredraighge, Co. Clare, is translated from Latin. The document provides details on the practice of fosterage amongst learned Gaelic families in the late sixteenth century and is reproduced in the appendices to facilitate greater interest in this oft-neglected area of research into Gaelic social organisation.

A fosterage document dating from c.1580 can be found in its original Latin form in the Inchiquin Manuscripts.1 The Inchiquin Manuscripts, lodged in the National Library of Ireland and published by John Ainsworth in 1961,2 consists of an array of historical material including legal, rental, estate and personal papers in the possession of the O'Briens of Leamanagh and Dromoland.3 The utility of the Inchiquin Manuscripts is difficult to over-estimate. The foci on Co. Clare families lends further efficacy to this primary source; much local information can be gleaned by recourse to this source which serves as a repository of documents relating to landholding in early modern Co. Clare.

The fosterage document is one of the earliest documents in the collection of Inchiquin Manuscripts (see appendices).4 Given the relative dearth of contemporary sources that deal with fosterage in the later medieval period, this document presents an opportunity to distil key themes in fosterage among the Gaelic learned class (áos dáma). It is hoped that the translation of this document casts light on the activity of the Meic Fhlanachadha (McCllancy) brehon lineage of Tredraighge in Co. Clare.

The Meic Fhlanachadha were under the lordship of the Meic Chonnara Fionn lineage seated at the tower-houses of Knappogue and Dangan-i-viginn.5 As an established brehon family with lands clustered in the parishes of Kilmaleery, Kilnasoolagh and Clonlogan the Meic Fhlanachadha served as a hereditary service family to Clann Mhic Chonnara, Lords of West Clann Chuilín (barony of Bunratty).6

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3 See the description of the manuscript held in the National Library of Ireland, Collection List No.143: Inchiquin Papers, compiled by Brian Kirby, 2009.

4 The earliest document is the letters patent for the creation of Murachaidh Ó Briain as Earl of Thomond, dated July 1543. Ainsworth (ed.), Inchiquin Manuscripts, p. 272.

5 By the 1400s Ó Chaithin was called Clann Chuilín and was the territory of the Meic Chonnara Riabhach and Meic Chonnara Fionn clan. The division of Ó Chaithin occurred in 1366 after the death of Lochlainn Mac Conmara. His two half sons, Tadhg and Aodh, agreed to the division of lands whereby Tadhg retained the lands of west Clann Chuilín (barony of Bunratty). N.C. MacNamara, The Story of an Irish Sept: Their Character & Struggle to Maintain their Lands in Clare (London, 1896) p. 138 (reprint: Martin Breen, 1999). On Dangan-i-viginn (Dáinigé Éil Bhigíin), tower-house see Risteard Ua Cróinín & Martin Breen, 'Dáinigé Ó Bhigín Castle, Quin, Co. Clare', The Other Clare, vol. 10 (1986), pp 52-3.

Mac Fhlanachdha Fostering Deed, 1580
The ‘deed of adoption’ drawn up on 29 March 1580, was written in Latin by Cornelius Kentagh Mc Clanaghy son of Maricius Mc Clanagh (Conchochbor Mac Fhlanachdha mhic Muiris Mhic Fhlanachdha) and is published in the appendices of this paper. The deed adds to our understanding of the comparatively under-studied field of fostering and child-rearing in sixteenth century Gaelic Ireland. Reading between the lines we can glean information relating to the role of clientalism and patronage between ruling lineages and the Gaelic learned classes, and the political economy that sustained fostering as a social institution.

The translated deed also displays evidence of more intimate themes such as household goods, the wife and family of the brehon Conchochbor Mac Fhlanachdha, and gift-giving and ties of obligation as a fostered son is accepted as one’s natural son. It is possible to view the deed in the historical context of establishing client-patron inter-dependencies among the landholding classes in Gaelic society; it is also not too far afield to construe analogies between fostering and ‘gossipred’ in late medieval Ireland and the contractual custom of ‘manrent’ that existed in Gaelic Scotland up to the end of the seventeenth century.8

The deed of adoption that has been preserved among the Inchiquin Manuscripts relates to the exchange of payment and goods between Cornelius Kentagh Mc Clanaghy (Conchochbor Mac Fhlanachdha) of Kilmaleery in Tradraigh (‘Kyllmarii Intradrey’), and Donatus, son of Thaddeus McNemarra, and his second son Thaddeus. The deed sets out the money and goods gifted (confectis presentium) by nobleman Donatus McNemarra to Mc Clanaghy. The deed is a hybrid agreement concerning payment for fostering and entitlement of Thaddeus, son of Donatus McNemarra, to the goods, property and chattels of Mc Clanaghy. The deed details that Donatus McNemarra’s son Thaddeus was entitled to full seisin right and title to Mc Clanaghy’s interest in Kilmaleery, and was empowered to hold them as the chief demesne of the fief through service accustomed by law.

The deed is akin to a legal agreement that conferred the heriditaments of Cornelius Kentagh Mc Clanaghy to his fostered son, Thaddeus McNemarra. In this respect the deed shares similar characteristics to the medieval Gaelic custom of gossipred in that gossipred was a method of solidifying political relationships between important families through a pledge of service and obligation of mutual assistance.9 Pledges were commonly cemented by the exchange of gifts and entering into a contract. Entering into such a contract between members of a ruling lineage and a learned family underscored the political motive in both fostering and gossipred; a pledge of mutual assistance and augmenting client relationships by ‘acculturating’ local elites into beneficial alliances with dynastic lineages. This resembled analogous contracts in feudal Europe and in England, designed to expand a lord’s personal retinue and client-base. In Gaelic Scotland ‘manrent’ bonds were contracted between heads of lineages to form alliances and included ties of mutual assistance, obligation to render services and stipulations to regard each party as if they were kin.10

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Relationships formed by fostering and obligations agreed through gossiped pledges provided local elites an important network and possibilities for patronage. The Gaelic upper classes, in their position as law givers and law enforcers, could provide substantial benefits for the fostered family including preferential treatment of their interests in court—a particularly poignant point in relation to fosterage arrangements between the legal family Siol Fhlanncadhadha and their overlords, Clann Mac Chomara.

Marriages were contracted on the same basis as fosterage networks; that is, to solidify alliances between landholding lineages. Intermarriage between the Siol Fhlanncadhadha and Clann Mac Chomara—the ruling dynasty of east Co. Clare—is well documented. Sioda Mac Conmara, grandfather of Sioda of Mountallon who surrendered his lands to Henry VIII in the 1542, was married to Elizabeth daughter of Mac Fhlanncadhadha of Knockfinn. The Meic Chomara branch at Rosseve in Kilmurry were related to the Meic Fhlanncadhadha through the marriage of Maccon son of Sioda Mac Conmara to Aine Nic Fhlanncadhadha, who was living as a widow in 1512. 

A pedigree found amongst the papers of the Ulster King of Arms shows that Macalache MacNemara Esq. (Maelsheachlainn Mac Conmara) of ‘Cratiloe-Keil’ (Creatailach Caol) married Phedal daughter of John Clancy (Seán Mac Fhlanncadhadha) of Urlan, Esq. sometime in the late sixteenth century.

Intermarriage between learned lineages who probably also shared fosterage ties must have been common. A 1610 inquisition post mortem of Daniel son of James Neylan, scion of the Ó Niallain learned medical kindred of Ballyalla, states that he was married to Fionghuala Nic Fhlanncadhadha. The two learned lineages appear to have had intertwined interests for we read in 1622 the will of Hugh Mc Clanchy of Killfinne which states he is to be buried with his ancestors at Dysert parish church, and disavows any right of Nicholas O Nellnan or Flann his son, to lands at Killfinne. We read in a 1614 conveyance for Lismore (alias Lismoyle) and Clenaghmore in Kilmaleny parish between members of the Siol Fhlanncadhadha and Connor O’Brien, that ‘Maellmorey

11 Fitzsimons, ‘Fosterage and Gossiprid in Late Medieval Ireland’, p. 143.
14 Sir William Betham, Ulster King of Arms, British Library, Add MS 23689, p. 323 [p. 175 original pagination]. The pedigree presented was drawn up by James MacCulloch Ulster King of Arms in 1764 in order to confirm the descent of Alexius MacNemara of Cadiz, Spain, as legitimate descendant of Daniel MacNemara of Cratiloe-Keil. The pedigree refers to the Meic Chomara lineage of ‘Cratiloe-Keil’ marrying into the Meic an Ortchinnigh of Kilnasoolagh with Cornelius MacNemara of ‘Koppenbuoy’ marrying Maudlin daughter of MacCon Macnethry of Killasses, Esq. in the first half of the 1600s. For notes on this pedigree see R.W. Twigge, Materials for a History of Clann Cullen, Add MS 39263, Twigge Collection, British Library, p. 196.
15 On genealogical information concerning learned lineages, some of which touches on intermarriage between Clann Bhruaidheadhach and Siol Fhlanncadhadha, see Cornel O’Mollony, Anatomys Examon Enchiridii Apologiitici, Prague, 1671, pp. 123-132. Consider, for example, ‘Moriathus Clancy of Ballynaklohy, Mariam Broodlinn Cornelii, de Moyne flijan’.
17 National Library of Ireland; MS 45,691/1 [1622] [Inchiquin Collection; Testamentary Material].
18 Others mentioned include Dermot Mc Clancy and his wife Margaret ny Clancy.
O Mollconrey and wife Un[a] ny Clanchy' held an interest in the conveyed lands.¹⁹ Marriage ties between the Siol Fhlanachadha of Kilmaleery and the historian-chronicler Uí Mhaolchúcháin family of Ardkyle²⁰ mutually strengthened their status in Gaelic society and further intertwined their shared interests.

The deed between Cornelius Kentagh Mc Clanaghy and Donatus McNemara reflects elements of a fosterage agreement and a gosspier pledge. Mc Clanaghy, as a chief representative the Meic Fhlanachadha lineage of Kilmaleery, was conveying his proprietary interests to Donatus’ son Thaddeus. Thaddeus (Tadhg) was the second lawful son of Donatus McNemara (Donnchadh Mac Connara) and a member of a cadet branch of the Meic Chonnara Fionn who held the lordship of West Clann Chuiléin. Donatus can be identified as the brother of Seán Mac Connara Fionn (d.1602) and his obituary was recorded by the Irish annals in 1584.²¹ Seán Mac Connara Fionn, Lord of West Clann Chuiléin, notably refused to sign the Composition of Connacht ostensibly over misgivings that the agreement conferred too much power to the Earl of Thomond.²² In contrast, leading kinsmen of the Meic Fhlanachadha branches at Killilagh and Traidaigh signed the final agreement.²³

This deed also indicates that Donatus gifted Mc Clanaghy with money and goods and that he was acquitted of further payment. The deed refers to Mc Clanaghy as ‘taking in’ and accepting the second son of Donatus McNemara, thus inferring the fosterage connection. However, the obligation seems to have included that Thaddeus, the son of Donatus, was accorded the full status as a ‘son’ of Mac Clanaghy and eligible for inheritance, presumably on the basis of his noble status. It is significant that the document was composed in Latin as we know that the brehon class were versed in classical scholarship and spoke and read Latin.²⁴ Even hereditary church tenants such as the comharbai and airchinnigh were noted to have retained Latin learning down to the time of the Plantations in Ulster.²⁵ Only two of the witnesses’ names were written in Irish.²⁶ Somewhat surprisingly Cornelius Kentagh Mc Clanaghy signed his name in Latin, rather than Irish.

¹⁹ National Library of Ireland, MS 45,669/5 [dated 1614] [Inchiquin Collection; MacMahon Estate Papers].
²⁰ See Brian Ó Dalaigh, ‘The Uí Mhaolchúcháin of Thomond’, Studia Hibernica, 2009-2010, pp 45-68.
²¹ On a genealogy of the Meic Chonnara Fionn, Lords of West Clann Chuiléin, and which is peppered with other historiographical information see R.W. Tigge, Materials for a History of Clann Caille, Add MS 39263 & 39270, Tigge Collection, British Library, [genealogical rolls: A-T; O-Z]. Also see Annals of the Four Masters, sub anno, 1584.
²² Annals of the Four Masters, sub anno, 1585.
²³ Those Mac Fhlanachadha who signed the Composition Agreement included: ‘Donough McN glitch of the Urrilon chief of his name’; ‘Cosny Mc Clanniche of Cahirc mhie Clanniche’; and ‘Glanhie of Knocklyne‘ (i.e. Cnoch Fionn). Boeitus Clanachy is mentioned in the text of the Agreement as being in receipt of three and a half quarters exempt from composition rent. A. Martin Freeman, (ed), The Composition Booke of Conought (Dublin, 1936) pp 7, 11, 29.
²⁶ The text reads, ‘lám Donnchaídh Mecladach: lámn Donnchaídh Mechnamara’ (lám meaning ‘hand of’).
The deed is also useful from a nomenclature point of view. For example, Cornelius Kentagh Mc Clanaghy was possibly the ‘Cornelius alias Connoger Clany’ who petitioned the Lord Deputy for the moiety of Urlan in 1606. The eponym ‘Kentagh’ could be an anglicised version of ceann tighe (head of household) alluding to his status. The document also presents two spellings of Kilmaleery—‘Kyllmarii’ and ‘Kyllmalry’—both which are phonetic attempts of Cill Máiliaraidh (Church of Máil Liaraich). The indenture was drawn-up and witnessed at ‘Kyppagh’ (Cappagh) in Kilfinaghta parish. Cappagh tower-house was held by a cadet branch of the Meic Chonmara Fionn lineage and the 1570 list of tower-houses confirms ‘Donogh Mac ne Mara’ as its principal occupier. By 1574 possession of Cappagh tower-house had passed to ‘Shane McNemare’, who was probably the same Shane who held Dangan and Knappogue. Shane (Seán) Mac Conmara Fionn was the chief representative of Clann Mhic Chonmara and whose death was recorded by the Irish annals in 1602.

A driving factor behind fosterage agreements was the underlying political economy. Leading lineages and conical clans secured themselves in two ways: networks of kinship and alliances, and control of land and primary resources. The Gaelic learnt classes were patronised by ruling lineages in order to legitimise control over land and justify prolific lineage expansion. Aristocratic fosterage and gossiped pledges therefore was a way of binding personal relationships in a lordship more closely to the centre of power. Fosterage tended to be contracted between non-agnatic kin rather than close family networks of consanguinity because of dynastic competition for clients and control of corporate lineage property.

That fosterage was a central political resource is evident even from the early law texts which date from the seventh century. The bond between a fosterer and foster son was strengthened by the fact that having dispersed supporters amongst cadet branches of one’s own lineage, or amongst rival or conical clans, was a rational way of building a power-base which would not rival one’s own pursuit of office within the same lineage. Fosterage was also deployed in the early Irish Church though probably within the bounds of ‘educational patronage’ whereby a young man was fostered with the intention of becoming an ecclesiastical novice.

Within this context it is possible to view fosterage by a learned lineage as an extension of ‘educational or literary patronage’ albeit in a secular context. Such fosterage arrangements would be suitable for members of ruling lineages and junior members of the Gaelic literati class, a point borne out in the Mc Clanaghy deed. Brehon residences

28 Alternatively Kentagh could be an anglicisation of cionnach, meaning guilty—a humorous possibility.
29 Spelling variation as per R. W. Twigge, Materials for a History of Clann Cuilein, British Library, Add MS 39261, p. 229. The official modern form in Irish is Cill Mhaoilfithirigh.
31 Twigge, ‘Edward White’s Description of Thomond in 1574’, p. 79.
32 Annals of the Four Masters, sub anno, 1602. His son Donnabhann succeeded him.
35 Donnchadh Ó Corráin cited in ibid., p. 365.
36 Ibid., p. 370
frequently had a school house (scoilteach)\(^{38}\) attached to their principal demesnes and it is conceivable that these training academies operated a system akin to fosterage for young scholars. The process of interpreting and transmitting the Old Irish law texts was carried on by the later medieval legal schools operated by specialist legal lineages such as the Úi Dhubhhdábhóireann law school at Cahermacnaughten in the Burren and at the Meic Aodhagáin legal school at Park in Co. Galway.\(^{39}\) Many of the law schools compiled glosses to accompany Old Irish law texts to aid reading of what had become archaic Old Irish terminology.\(^{40}\)

Historic examples of fosterage can be divined from the Caithréim Thoirdhealbhuaigh which recounts events in early fourteenth century Thomond. Consider the fosterage relationship between Toirdhealbhach Ó Briain and the Úi Dheaghaidh, or the fosterage (and marriage ties) between the Úi Bhriain and Meic Chonnara of Clann Chuiléin. The text also refers to a fosterage tie between the Úi Bhriain and Úi Eachthigheirn.\(^{41}\) In the sixteenth century, while still being subjected to official proscription, fosterage was used even by Anglo-Irish lords: Gerald Earl of Desmond procured a royal licence to foster his son with Conchobhar Ó Briain of Thomond.\(^{42}\)

The act of fosterage as a long-term fraternal association between fostered-child and adopted parents was enduring. The twelfth century Welsh chronicler Giraldus Cambrensis noted the affection of the Irish for their foster-brothers\(^{43}\) and the topic was a common sub-theme in bardic poetry. The Irish annals attest to the longevity of fosterage ties and we read in 1396 that Iriel Ó Lochlainn Lord of Corcomroe was slain by a member of the sub-sept Meic Ghír an Adhastair (Nestor) in revenge for the killing of a foster brother by Ó Lochlainn.\(^{44}\) This affection and recognition of foster-ties is evident in the Mc Clanaghy deed as he refers to the son of Donatus Mc Nemarra as ‘my fostered son & heir’ and that ‘I have accepted the two lawful son of the honest and noble man Donatus, son of Thaddeus Mc Namara...(by) this manner I take him in, of course just as if a true foster-son’.

The appointment of Thaddeus as Mc Clanaghy’s ‘executor and heir’ points to the deed being made at the beginning of the fosterage contract as it initially states that Donatus

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38 The Úi Dhubhhdábhóireann law school at Cahermacnaughten included a law school and casheal residence. Archaeological excavations of the law school—known as Cabhall Tighe Breac—have revealed that the building was divided into three separate rooms, possibly reflecting the bardic school tradition in which three dwellings were utilised— teach neabhraighthe (house of memorising); teach laighe (house of reclining for poetic composition); and teach breithimh (house of the critic or examiner). The composite settlement included ancillary buildings, pens and field enclosures, and a large casheal residence which presumably was the seat of the Úi Dhubhhdábhóireann. Bardic poems allude to rooms of learning in these academies, referred to as ‘three sanctuaries’ (tri róna) in a seventeenth century poem (RIA 23. L.17. fo.97a). 2008 Archaeological Excavation at Cabhall Tighe Breac, Cahermacnaughten Co. Clare (OS435) preliminary report for the Royal Irish Academy and David Greene & Fergus Kelly (eds) Osborn Bergin, Irish Bardic Poetry; (Dublin, 1970) pp 159-160, & 286.


40 Kelly, A Guide to Early Irish Law, p. 251. The Meic Aodhagáin school at Park in Co. Galway must have housed manuscripts from various legal families. In a scribal note in Egerton 88, Maghnús Ó Dubhhdábhóireann of the law school at Cahermacnaughten in the Burren, wrote, ‘is air chuid aithrithe an meic Dohair in boinn beir in pingin nó in pingin tairse mhbein. Maghnúis sin.’ (‘This is a comical thing that the O'Dorans cannot distinguish a great from a penny nor a penny from a great. That is Maghnús). The reference appears to refer to charters compiled by the O'Dorans (Úi Dheoradháin), a legal family seated in Co. Wexford.


44 Annals of the Four Masters, sub anno, 1396.
Mc Nemarra had already gifted Mc Clanaghy money and goods probably as recompense for fostering his son. Mc Clanaghy elevated Donatus' son to the same position as he would his own son; that is 'executor and heir' thus demonstrating the familial association a foster-son received by his adopted parents. Contemporary Highland Scottish fosterage and 'manrent' agreements also stipulated a fostering's inheritance of his father's moveable goods, sometimes at the expense of the natal children of the foster father.\textsuperscript{45}

We have no knowledge of the type of training that Thaddeus would have received from the Meic Fhlannchadha. We can be certain, however, that foster-children of aristocratic families were taught pursuits fitting for their status.\textsuperscript{46} Board games such as chess and physical training in terms of horse-riding were certainly practised, reflecting a mixture of play and military training.\textsuperscript{47} Fosterage by a Gaelic learned lineage must have come with at least elementary education including instruction in Latin and perhaps English, and an appreciation of the learning of the brehon class which was revered in Gaelic society.

\textbf{Concluding Remarks}

As a specialist legal lineage the Meic Fhlannchadha of Thomond possessed tower-houses and received patronage from the dynastic families of Uí Bhirain and Meic Chonnara. The fosterage document compiled for the Meic Chonnara by the Meic Fhlannchadha is in keeping with their status as a learned lineage and chief sept in the West Clann Chuiléín lordship. The practice of fosterage amongst the Gaelic Irish has been well documented by historians and attested in the Irish annals. Despite this the mechanism of its operation remains obscure and English sources which primarily come into focus in the sixteenth century cast light on fosterage ties at that later date when Gaelic society faced the disorder of the Tudor re-conquest. Key points that emerge from the fosterage deed are that as a kinsman of the Síol Fhlannchadha of Tradraigh, Conchubhar Mac Fhlannchadha was of suitable status to foster a son of the ruling Meic Chonnara Fionn lineage, and that gift of presents underlined the exchange.

The deed also informs us that a fostered aristocratic son was entitled to a portion of the inheritance of his fosterer. Fosterage, therefore, was not without obligations and liability; however the real driving factor was the political economy of clientalism in a society that emphasised kinship and control of land and subordinate clients. Fosterage amongst the Meic Fhlannchadha as a learned kindred may have conferred additional benefit to the Meic Chonnara, of which we can now only speculate: preferential treatment in legal arbitration and access to learning are possible examples.

A century after the deed was written the practice of native law was relegated to the realm of antiquarian interest. The survival of legal texts, glossaries and references in Gaelic annals—as well as the physical remains of their tower-house residences—serve as testament to the formerly important existence of the Síol Fhlannchadha of Tradraigh.

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., p. 30.
APPENDICES

Latin deed
29 March 1580

Universis et singulis Christi fidelibus ad quorum noticiam hoc presens scriptum perveniret salutem & in auctore salutis fidem indubitam [interlined] adhibere dignemini cum favore, neueritis enim (?) quod licet ego Cornelius Kentagh Maricii Mc Clanagh de Kyllmaliyry Intradrey in baronii de Dagenbybigyn ac in comituatu de Clarnor in consideratione cuissimae causae peccucian & aliis diversis bonis de quibus quidem bonus & peccucian summa a Donato Thadei Mc Nemarre generoso propter meam maximam pernuriam paupertatem et necessitatem etiam ad victimum & vestitum xoris prosis care & familie mece respectu a predicio Donato Mc Nemarre ante confectis presentium prout presens scripture testator fator me fuisse fore ac cssc persolutum & satisfactum ad beneplacitum & voluntatem meam pro [sic] manibus recepi atque omneo mino soluta dictum vero Donatum Mc Nemarre heredes & assignatos suos deinde ad imposteriorum per presentes acquiecius & liberatos imperpetuum in hac lege & ratione etiam cum aliis legitimis causis & racionibus bonis animum meum in hac movimenti [interlined] non invitus coactio timore neque metu sed cum mea spontanea sana menteque [sic] integra voluntate libenter & voluntarie vnaminitore de concessu & concessu amicorum meorum cum magna reuerentia & honore iuxta omnium factam meam facultatem potestatem & auctoritatem recepi & pro perpetuis duratis & futurus temporibus condicionali & cum effectu per presentes accipio secundum legitimam filium pro bi & generosi viri Donati Filii Thadei Mc Namara nominatae videlicet Tathuem filium eiusdem donati me nemarre hoc modo cum recipio silecit tanequum verum alllumnum propriumque filium intubilatium etiam & ectoriam atque heredem meum constituo ordino & facio super omnia mea bona temporaria videlicet mobilia & immobilia presenta & futura ubique fuerint inventa etiam non solum in parte mea & in possessione in quantum attinet ad me [interlined] de Kyllmaliyry sed etiam in tota mea terra tenemtum [sic] & hereditatem erga premissa aut in aliquo alio quoniam loco, mi alto modo iure sive titulo jure heridario seu successorio decessero descenderit cum omnibus meuisque terris locis tenementis membris particularis partellis proprietatibus fructibus presentibus in visi & semitis introitibus & exitibus fossis & fossatis ceterisque emolumentis pertinentibus universis antedicto meo alllumno filio & heredi suisque heredibus & assignatis libere quiete plenaria integre bene ac in pace & imperpetuum et si contingat nihil etiam habere aliquem filium de corpore meo legitime procreato [sic] nunc et tunc volo de concedo & per presentes affirmo talem filium similiter pro deno cum omnia & singula bona sua temporaria verum etiam possessionem terre tenementorum & hereditate [sic] omniumque rerum & bonorum suorum mobilium & immobiliu totaliter committit sedepidico Tathue Donati Mc Nemara moequo alllumno filio executori pariterque herediti ut iam fei constitui & per presentes ordinavi imperpetuum de capitaillis dominium fidei illius per servicia inde els debita & de iure consuetudo et ego vero predictus Cornelius Mc Clanagh universitatem omnia & singula premissa prenomiato alllumno filio & heredi in forma predicta ut predictit contra omnes homines & feminas warrantiace acqietare & defendere imperperium per presentes et viterius sciant me prescriptum Cornelium Kentagh Mc Clanagh cum mea propria manu dedisse atque deliberans perpetuum quietam & pacifiam possessionem & securam jurs tituli ac interesse mei in tota mea parte de Kyllmaliyry & in aliis mei locis terris tenementis cum omnibus & singulis meus rebus mobilibus & immobiliis presentibus & futurus quae quod vel quos unaquin habui seu habere potero in premiosis secundum tenorem & formam superius recitant in cuius rei [interlined] robur fidem & testimonium sigillum meum cum signo meo manu premissus apposui seu apponii curau & fei datum apud Kyppagh vicesimo nono die marci, 1580 per me supradictum Cornelium Mc Clanagh testibus his tunc presentibus honestius & distrestis viris quem nona nomina hic subscribuntur lám Donnchaidh Mc Aclainide; lám Donnchaidh McEanamara Quirin (?) [both in Irish characters]; Diemitus O Dwyer studiosus testis; Laurentius Mc Shylda Oyg.

Endorsed in a later hand, ‘The will of Cero. Mc Slida’.

Translated deed
29 March 1580

Deed of adoption by Connor Mc Clanachy

[To] All and singular the faithful of Christ, to whose knowledge this present writing will reach, salutation and in the author of salvation, faith undoubted [interlined]; to apply that it be considered with favour, accepted as valid, that is to say, that it is permitted I, Cornelius Kentagh, son of Maricii Mc Clanagh of Kilmaleery in Tradnaigh, in the barony of Dagenbybigyn, and in the county of Clare, in consideration of some certain sum of money and other diverse goods, regarding which certain goods and sum of money from Donatus (son) of Thaddeus Mc Nemarra, gentleman, on account of my greatest want, poverty, and need, and also towards the nourishment and clothing of my wife, offspring, (objects of) care, and household respectively, from the
aforesaid Donatus McNemarra, before the dispatching of these presents, just as the present writing bears witness, I acknowledge myself to have been, to be (in future), and to be (now) paid and satisfied according to the best plea and my will, for into my hands I have accepted, and entirely (to) me having been released the said, truly, Donatus Mc Nemarra, (and) the heirs and assigns of him, henceforth and for the future, by these presents, discharging and releasing in perpetuity (by) this bill and account, furthermore, with other lawful pleas and valid accounts my soul in this moving [interlined] not unwilling (by) constraint, fear, nor dread, but with my voluntary, sane and sound mind, willingly, freely, and voluntarily, unanimously in respect of the agreement and approbation of my friends, with great respect and esteem, according to all my ability, power, and authority, I have taken in and for perpetual duration and future times, by agreement, and with effect by these presents, I have accepted the second lawful son of the honest and noble man Donatus, son of Thadeus McNamara, by name, that is, Thadeus, son of the same Donatus Mc Namara, (by) this manner I take him in, of course just as if a true foster-son, and (my) own son indisputably in addition, and my executor and heir I constitute, ordain, and make (him) over all my temporal goods, that is, moveable and immovable, present and future, and in whatever place they will be found, furthermore, not only in my part, and in the possession as far as for my part of Kilmealery, but also in all my lands, tenements, and heredittament(s) to the premises, or in any other place whatsoever, in any manner, by right or title, by hereditary or successive right, henceforth (he) will descend with all things belonging to me, lands, territories, tenements, portions, parts, parcels, profits, fruits, (and) proceeds, in the ways and paths, entrances and exits, ditches and trenches, and the remaining benefits (and) appurtenances all together before-said, (to) my fostered son and heir, and his heirs and assigns, freely, quietly, fully, wholly, rightly, and in peace, and in perpetuity; and if it befalls me also to have any son from my body lawfully begotten, now and at that time, I will, give, grant, and by these presents confirm such son similarly, for the giving with all and singular his own proper temporal goods, also the possession of lands, tenements, and hereditaments, and of all things and goods of his own, moveable and immovable, entirely; I entrust the oft-mentioned Thakheus son of Donatus Mc Nemara, and my fostered son, executor, and equally heir, that now I make, constitute, and by these presents ordain in perpetuity, respecting the chief demesne lands of this fief, by service thenceforth (to) them bound, and accustomed by law, and I, truly, the aforesaid Cornelius Mc Claneghy, collectively all and singular the premises, (to) the aforesaid fostered son and heir, according to the form aforesaid, in order to prescribe to all men and women, to warrant, discharge, and maintain in perpetuity by these presents, and further, that (they) should know, directed (by) me, Cornelius Kentagh Mc Claneghy, with my own hand, to have given and delivered perpetual orderly and peaceful possession and seisin of right, title, and of my interest in all my part of Kilmealery, and in my other territories, lands, (and) tenements, with all and singular my properties, moveable and immovable, present and future, that which or with respect to what ever I have held or will be able to hold in the premises, according to the tenor and form above recited, regarding the force, faith, and testimony [interlined] of which business, my present seal together with my manual sign, I have assigned or appointed, arranged, and made, dated at Kyppagh (on) the twentieth (and) ninth day of March 1580 by me, the above said Cornelius Mc Claneghy, these witnesses then present, honest and discreet men, of whom the names [are] here below-written: the hand of Donnchadh Meleachad; the hand of Donnchadh Mcnamara Quirin (?); Dermot O Dwyer, zealous witness; Laurence Mc Shyda Oyg.

*Endorsed in a later hand, ‘The will of Coro. mc Slida’.*
Inchiquin Manuscripts, National library of Ireland [MS 45,138/1]