

# A 1555 papal *bull*a for Clare Abbey

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*This paper presents a papal bulla that was issued to Clare Abbey on 23 March 1555. The Augustinian house of Clare Abbey in Co. Clare was founded in the late twelfth century by the ruling branch of the Uí Bhriain dynasty. By the late medieval period the abbacy had largely become an hereditary post of the Meic Craith lineage. Numerous examples exist in the papal registers of the abbacy transferred hereditarily by Mac Craith abbots, indicating that Clare Abbey had, like other Augustinian foundations in Gaelic areas, become the domain of clerical kindreds and enmeshed in the secular affairs of lineage and lordship. The papal bulla casts light on diocesan administration in the mid sixteenth century prior to the Protestant religious settlement of Elizabeth I and reveals details on ecclesiastical personnel during this tumultuous period.*

Presented here is a papal *bull*a issued to Clare Abbey on 23 March 1555. The original document survives among the Thomond papers at Petworth House, West Sussex, now in the possession of Lord Egremont.<sup>2</sup> The Thomond papers at Petworth comprise the estate and legal papers of the O'Briens, earls of Thomond, and is a rich repository of matters historical relating to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Co. Clare.

Petworth House contains many documents of historical interest, especially for the period preceeding the relocation of Barnaby O'Brien, sixth earl of Thomond, to Great Billing in Northamptonshire in 1646. Barnaby left Ireland after surrendering Bunnary Castle to a Parliamentarian force and his heirs remained in England until the extinction of the earldom (1st creation) on the death of the last earl of Thomond in 1741.<sup>3</sup> Since the papal *bull*a was issued to Turlough O'Brien (Toirdhealbhach Ó Briain), bishop of Killaloe (1554–69), a collateral kinsman of Barnaby O'Brien's forebears, it must have been among the documents transferred from Ireland during the residency of the earls of Thomond in England.<sup>4</sup> These documents possibly ended up at Petworth House during the lifetime of Henry O'Brien, eighth earl of Thomond, who served as lord lieutenant of Essex from 1722 to 1741.<sup>5</sup>

Papal *bullae* were issued by the Roman Curia for various kinds of communication and to confirm legal rights and immunities to religious communities and lay people. They were also issued to grant spiritualities and ecclesiastical benefices. The late medieval proclivity for clerics in Gaelic areas directly to petition the papal Curia for a grant of a benefice is known by the term 'Rome-running'. This paper will touch later on the seeking of benefices from the Curia by the Meic Craith clerical kindred who supplied many of the known abbots of Clare Abbey. In the case of Clare Abbey this papal *bull*a is the only known complete example from around the Reformation period issued to a monastic house in Co. Clare; the effective suppression of the monastic community at Clare Abbey did not occur until the establishment of English

administration in Co. Clare in the 1570s.<sup>6</sup> Other papal *bullae* have survived in Co. Clare but these relate to the *bullae* seal rather than the accompanying text. A papal seal that once held an indulgence from the pontificate of Innocent VIII from c. 1485 was uncovered in Ennis Friary<sup>7</sup>, while a papal seal dated to the pontificate of Gregory XI (1370–78) was recovered from Inis Cathaigh.<sup>8</sup>

Two particular reasons make the 1555 papal *bullae* issued to Clare Abbey remarkable: the fact that it is complete with the text attached and that the *bullae* was issued during the rather tumultuous reign of Queen Mary I (1553–8). The latter point is significant since it was during this time restrictive prohibitions against Catholicism were repealed and diplomatic channels with Rome re-established in the aftermath of the religious policy pursued during the reigns of Henry VIII and his son, Edward VI. Therefore, it may be taken that the *bullae* is unusual in that it was issued to a monastic house in a very short period of time after the lifting of prohibitions against Catholics. The *bullae* contains some interesting miscellanea relating to ecclesiastical administration in the mid-sixteenth-century diocese of Killaloe. Owing to the survival (and subsequent translation and printing) of the papal registers<sup>9</sup> and petitions to Rome (*registra supplicationum*)<sup>10</sup> for the fifteenth century, our understanding of diocesan administration immediately prior to the Reformation is fairly well documented. The situation during the mid to late sixteenth century, however, is rather less well documented; the *bullae* confirms the re-establishment of official links with the Curia and highlights some local clerics, including the notable Meic Craith ecclesiastical family.

Appreciation must go to Co. Clare Library for financing the translation of the *bullae* and also to Petworth House archive, which assisted in procuring the document. Through their efforts this sixteenth-century *bullae* can now be brought to light. The Latin text of the *bullae* and a tentative translation of the *stylus curiae* may be found in the appendices. Both transcription and translation may act as general guides only, owing to the folds and tears extant in the original manuscript, amid other difficulties in deciphering the original. A copy of the original *bullae* is appended at the end (Fig. 1).

## Textual commentary

### *Summary of the bullae*

The papal *bullae* was issued to Matthew O’Griffa,<sup>11</sup> canon of Killaloe, in order to assist the bishop of Killaloe, Turlough (Toirdhealbhach) O’Brien, in implementing certain papal ordinances that were to take effect concerning the administration of Clare Abbey. The *bullae* also grants some of the benefices, including certain rectories and prebends that were formerly detained by laymen and clerics, to Canon O’Griffa and empowers him to hold them for his lifetime and to enjoy their revenues. Some time after the issuance of the *bullae* to O’Griffa, he appears to have been appointed abbot of Clare, since he appears in a document from 1589 as the ‘late abbot of the dissolved monastery of Clare’.<sup>12</sup>

The *bullae* was issued during the eventful episcopacy of Bishop Turlough O’Brien. Bishop Turlough was appointed to the episcopacy by Pope Julius III in 1554. He left

Ireland for Spain in 1563 and died there in 1569.<sup>13</sup> The papal *bull*a was issued by Pope Paul IV (1555–9) on the day of the death of the former pope, Julius III (23 March). Surprisingly, the *bull*a was issued by Paul IV two months prior to his official election, which occurred on 23 May 1555.

The *bull*a was intended to reconfirm authority of the papal Curia over the benefices of Clare Abbey, with reprimands to those who persisted in obstructing episcopal directives. The *bull*a also confirms rights and duties to the bishop of Killaloe and certain ordinances for the cathedral chapter to implement. The *bull*a refers to a former bishop, Turlough O'Brien (Toirdhealbhach mac Mathghamhna Uí Bhriain, 1483–1525),<sup>14</sup> who had possessed an income from the church during his lifetime, but had died 'outside of the Roman court' (that is, he died *in situ* in his diocese of Killaloe) leaving his living and income vacant. This former bishop, like several of his predecessors who attained the episcopacy of Killaloe in the Middle Ages, was a corelative of the ruling Uí Bhriain of Thomond. Turlough was the grandson of King Turlough O'Brien of Thomond and the nephew of another Uí Bhriain king, Conchobhar na Sróna (d. 1496).<sup>15</sup>

Turlough's death is recorded in the Irish annals for the year 1525,<sup>16</sup> indicating that the *bull*a was designed to put on a sure footing the fiscal administration of Clare Abbey and certain other diocesan posts, which must have experienced difficulties during the upheavals associated with the Reformation. The *bull*a also refers to the deaths of other benefice holders such as the vicar of the 'Killmaed' (perhaps Kilmaley parish, which adjoins Clondagad) and the office of Canon Brodus Macgilloria (possibly Mac Giolla Riabhaigh, anglicised as Gallery) of Clondagad. Other churches are mentioned in relation to being in the patronage of laymen and should have been vacant at the issuing of the papal *bull*a, notwithstanding past problems of management and control over appointments.

In a passage marred by damage to the original document it is nevertheless clear that various clerics and laymen are admonished for the inadequate management of their offices. The accusation includes financial mismanagement and diverting the fruits, revenues and incomes to 'profane' (that is, secular) uses. The accusation suggests that, in the intervening period between the death of Bishop Turlough O'Brien in 1525 and the issuance of the *bull*a in 1555, certain laymen had usurped benefices attached to Clare Abbey. We may assume that allegations of lay interference are likely to have been made by ecclesiastical authority in the light of the uncertainties presented by the Reformation. Allegations of lay interference were not new and occur among petitions found in the papal registers; they often involved laymen in minor orders who claimed ecclesiastical functions or status, such as erenaghs and coarbs, but who were not ordained clergy. Allegations are also found in relation to the interference of secular patrons collating unsuitable candidates to rectories that they held the advowson (that is, right of presentation). The *bull*a directs that vacant livings with attendant benefices should be lawfully filled and that the bishop of Killaloe and others are directed to punish infractions and to assess the merits of financial provisions to the offices of canon and vicar, along with posts at Clare Abbey and the vicarages and the rectories of 'Ogormaie'

(*Ui Chormaic*/Drumcliffe), ‘Kilnamona alias Kynealboy’ (*Cinéal Bhaoith*)<sup>17</sup> and ‘Inishathe’ (Inis Cathaigh).

Bishop Paul (Pope Paul IV) conveyed to the bishop of Killaloe responsibility for the management of Clare Abbey and its attached benefices. He himself provides aid in the form of a reprieve on ecclesiastical tax through the secular canons and an apostolic dispensation in respect to the ‘fruits, revenues and incomes’ amounting to 120 marks sterling, a figure based on the valuation of a year’s economic worth. The *bullā* notes that Bishop Paul charges the bishop of Killaloe with ‘the care, control and administration’ of Clare Abbey, apparently on account of past financial mismanagement of the abbey. The *bullā* makes it clear that the bishop was to remove three named clerics – Thedricus (no surname), Laurence Macacan and John Ogriffa and other illicit detainees, and to recover their benefices (and revenues) for the lawful benefit of the bishop and the cathedral chapter at Killaloe.

Interestingly, from the point of view of the composition of the religious community at Clare Abbey in the mid-sixteenth century, the *bullā* provides for a one-fourth or one-third division (depending on local custom) of the revenues of the abbey to be paid to the bishop of Killaloe, after provision had first been made for the ‘conventuals’ or the other members of the monastic community. The *bullā* also makes provision for Canon Matthew O’Griffa to administer, either by himself or via his proctor, the entire ‘fruits, revenues, incomes, rights’ for a period of five years and that he was to uphold previous apostolic ordinances of the late Pope Boniface VIII (1294–1303). In order to enforce compliance the *bullā* ends with a strong admonition against anyone who should break the terms of this dispensation, whether ‘knowingly or in ignorance’.

#### *Interesting miscellanea*

Some interesting points of miscellanea can be distilled from the *bullā*. The reference to the respective deans of Emly and Killaloe, Donald Omuleran and Boethius Maclanchae, to summon and remove Thedricus, Laurence Macacan and John Ogriffa, and other illicit detainees from benefices, provides a rare point of detail regarding diocesan personnel. The bishop of Killaloe had already been authorised to remove the three offending clerics from their posts; the bishop of Limerick and the aforesaid deans of Emly and Killaloe were appointed as guarantors to ensure that the directives in the *bullā* were implemented.

We know comparatively little about which clerics served at the diocesan chapter in the mid to late sixteenth century – a departure from the situation regarding the previous century in which copious papal correspondence, now printed in the volumes of the papal registers, is detailed enough to identify many of the personnel of the chapter (and the local clergy) for successive years. We read that Boethius Clancy (Baothghalach Mac Fhlannchadha) served as dean of Killaloe in 1559,<sup>18</sup> so that his inclusion in the *bullā* (as Boethius Maclanchae) confirms his deanship of Killaloe for the period 1555–9. Members of the Meic Fhlannchadha brehon lineage holding higher clerical posts at the diocesan see is again attested in the sixteenth century when Donald Clancy of the Tradraighe branch<sup>19</sup> of the family held the treasurership of Killaloe from 1573 to *c.*

1612.<sup>20</sup> Clearly the Meic Fhlannchadha, as a distinguished brehon lineage, secured these ecclesiastical posts on the grounds of being members of the Gaelic literate class and on account of their professional links to both the third and the fourth earls of Thomond.<sup>21</sup>

The same point holds true for the Meic Craith who were closely associated with Clare Abbey during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. A clerical member of the Meic Craith is recorded in an agreement in 1542 between the lord deputy Sir Anthony St Leger and Murchadh Ó Briain, and his nephews Donnchadh and Domhnall, in which the religious houses in Thomond on the western side of the Shannon were vested in the dynastic Uí Bhriain.<sup>22</sup>

The Mac Craith recorded in the papal *bull*a appears in connection to Clare Abbey. One of the signatories of the 1555 *bull*a appears under the designation ‘Mac Crath nisi Brican...al[ias] Kylbrigan ex’. This is Kilbreckan, a townland in Doora parish in the vicinity of Clare Abbey and where a holy well and a burial ground for unbaptised children are located. While the Mac Craith in the *bull*a signed his name without any further details, it can be surmised that he signed the *bull*a in right of his office as abbot of Clare. It is conceivable that the abbots of Clare had their abbatial residence near the abbey at Kilbreckan. Augustinian houses did not always contain the abbot’s house on the site of the cloister, but sometimes farther afield and, as in this case, a place where the abbot’s kingroup had proprietary interests. This was a cause of considerable concern for some Observant reformers because of the potential for laicisation that could arise from such an arrangement. In the case of Clann Chraith, this is a point probably not too distant from reality given that they had a proclivity to hold the abbacy of Clare by hereditary means.

Another interesting aspect of detail gleaned from the *bull*a is the concern regarding the exercise of ‘care of souls’ (that is, pastoral duties). Sufficient pastoral care was to be achieved through the appointment of chaplains ‘to be dedicated in the divine services, and to exercise the care of souls of the beloved sons those parishioners, and minister the ecclesiastical sacraments to the same parishioners’. This reference suggests that the alleged usurpation of the inappropriate rectories and vicarages of Clare Abbey<sup>23</sup> by clerics and laymen caused neglect of the parochial administration. We may take this to imply that the system of parochial administration had partially broken down, or at least was under strain, probably owing to the granting of the abbey and its inappropriate possessions to Donough O’Brien, baron of Ibricken, in 1543 and the reversal of the crown’s religious policy on the accession of Mary I in 1553.

A list of individuals’ names is appended in a different hand at the bottom of the papal *bull*a. The precise reason for the list of names is uncertain, but onomastic and toponymic evidence suggests that those recorded were local notables, presumably signatories to the directives contained in the papal *bull*a. Since these names have been added in another hand, they do not form part of the original papal document, but were probably endorsements indicating that those persons had either read or been apprised of the decrees set out in the *bull*a. While difficult to decipher, the names ‘Slaine Mcnamarra’ and ‘Jo. bap. Nylansius’ appear among the list of signatories. While it is uncertain who

Slaine McNamarra (Sláine iníon Mhic Chonmara) was, it is significant that a female featured in the list of names attached to the document. A possible explanation could be that Slaine was either the abbess or a high-ranking member of the Augustinian nunnery of Killone, a daughter-house of Clare Abbey founded by the same charter in *c.* 1189.<sup>24</sup> If this was the case, it would cast new light on Killone, which is generally regarded as a cloister for aristocratic women of the dynastic Uí Bhriain, three of whose names have come down to us.<sup>25</sup> Some widowed women of the Uí Bhriain held the position of abbess in later life by virtue of their aristocratic connections.<sup>26</sup> An alternative view is that Slaine may have been the daughter of a local notable such as Cumhedha Mac Conmara (d. 1510) or Tadhg Fionn Mac Conmara (d. 1571), lords of west Clann Chuiléin,<sup>27</sup> on whose lordship some of its inappropriate possessions of Clare Abbey were located.<sup>28</sup>

The inclusion of ‘Jo. bap. Nylansius’ (John Neylon) is interesting since members of this medical kindred (Uí Nialláin of Ballyallia and Corcomroe) received dissolved monastic properties. In 1574 it was recorded that Ennis Friary was held by James Nellan, having been granted to his father Dr Donnell Nellan in 1543;<sup>29</sup> ironically, the doorway of the friary was the scene of a killing of one of his kinsman in 1588.<sup>30</sup> Other members of the family, however, served as clerics such as John Neiland, who held the post of archdeacon of Killaloe in 1558<sup>31</sup> and whose wider family connections included John O’Neylon, bishop of Kilfenora (d. 1572)<sup>32</sup> and his son Daniel, Protestant bishop of Kildare (d. 1603).<sup>33</sup> It is probable that John Neiland was the same Jo. bap. Nylansius who witnessed the papal *bull*a in his capacity as the archdeacon of Killaloe.

## Clare Abbey

### *General history*

The history of Clare Abbey has been competently dealt with by Westropp and Gleeson.<sup>34</sup> It will be sufficient here to outline but a few points on its early history, before focusing on the role of the Meic Craith lineage in holding clerical posts at the abbey. Clare Abbey was founded in *c.* 1189 by Domhnall Mór Ó Briain, who invited the Augustinian canons into Thomond. The Uí Bhriain — in particular Domhnall Mór (d. 1194) and his predecessor Muirheartach (d. 1119) — were prominent supporters of the reform of the Irish church and were responsible for encouraging continental religious orders to found communities in their territories, in line with the reforms to monastic communities initiated by Máel Máedóc Ua Morgair (St Malachy).<sup>35</sup> According to the Clare Abbey’s foundation charter, the Augustinians also founded a nunnery for Augustinian canonesses at Killone and a smaller Augustinian priory at Inchicronan, which on available evidence did not graduate to a fully-fledged community until *c.* 1400.<sup>36</sup>

Clare Abbey is first recorded in 1226 when Pope Honorius III (1216–27) wrote to the unnamed abbot of the monastery of SS Peter and Paul (known in Latin sources as *de Forgio*) directing the archbishop of Cashel and the bishops of Limerick and Cloyne to proceed against Robert Travers, who had been intruded into the episcopacy of Killaloe



and was supported by Anglo-Norman lay power.<sup>37</sup> The pope also ordered the archbishop of Cashel to pay the abbot for his expenses incurred during his travel to Rome, citing the reason for his travel as labouring ‘in the business of the ... church’.<sup>38</sup> Clare Abbey featured in the 1302–6 (in fact *c.* 1322)<sup>39</sup> papal taxation assessment, where it was valued at 2 marks and the temporalities of the ‘abbot de Forgio’ at 3 marks.<sup>40</sup> Despite apparently sharing a contemporaneous foundation date, Inchicronan is the only monastic house in the papal taxation among Co. Clare foundations that does not include temporalities. This suggests that a house of Augustinian canons was established on the site only after the taxation levy was carried out.<sup>41</sup> The foundation charter of Clare Abbey was exemplified by Thady, bishop of Killaloe, in 1461 and is the only known charter associated with Clare Abbey, though recent scholarship suggests that it is probably a forgery.<sup>42</sup> The full copy of the supposed original 1189 charter was attested and sealed by Eugene O’Heogenayn, the public notary, at Clare Abbey on 18 July 1461 and was witnessed by the cleric Donat Macrath, vicar of Killofin.<sup>43</sup>

We are reminded in a papal mandate from 1434 that the fabric and buildings of the abbey must have fallen into a state of disrepair, requiring the papal Curia to issue an indulgence for the conservation of the monastery:

Relaxation, during twenty years, of five years and five quarantines of enjoined penance to penitents who on the principal feasts of the year and that of the dedication, the usual octaves and days, and of a hundred days to those who during the said octaves and days visit and give alms for the repair and conservation of the church of the Augustinian monastery of SS Peter and Paul the Apostles, Clare (*de Forgio* alias *de Clar*), in the diocese of Killaloe.<sup>44</sup>

A ‘quarantine’ signifies an ecclesiastical penance of forty days and it was often administered as part of an indulgence for individuals. The indulgence implied the remission of temporal punishment for undertaking a penitential act, such as restoring a church building or undertaking charitable works.

Clare Abbey was dissolved by Henry VIII and granted to Donough, baron of Ibricken, in 1543 together with a moiety of the rectories of Kilchrist, Kilmoyle, Kilmacduane, Ballinregdan, Ballylogheran and Ballylegford.<sup>45</sup> In 1573, and again on 2 October 1578, it was regranted to Conor, earl of Thomond.<sup>46</sup> In addition to the 1461 ‘copy’ of the foundation charter of Clare Abbey, an inventory of the abbey’s lands has survived. Gleeson reckoned the inventory to be of a fifteenth-century hand.<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, a recent inspection of the original in the British Library and the fact that the manuscript is written in Latin and English point to a sixteenth-century provenance.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, that the manuscript in which the inventory is found was once in the possession of Conor O’Brien, third earl of Thomond (d. 1581) suggests that the inventory was drawn up as an ancillary document to support the grant of the abbey to the earl.<sup>49</sup>

The inventory lists the lands attached to Clare Abbey, many of which situated in the barony of Islands, including the ‘monkes ylande’ that can be identified as Canon Island (Inisgad), an Augustinian house with links to Clare Abbey. Other denominations included ‘ylande of cronane’ which is Inchicronan, and ‘mc craighes ylands’ which we

can take as Islandmagrath in Clareabbey parish. Sir Donal O'Brien of Ennistymon held Clare Abbey in 1574<sup>50</sup> and an inquisition in 1589 found that a moiety of the tithe belonging to Clare Abbey was again in the hands of Sir Donal of Ennistymon and valued at £6 13s. 4d. (20 marks) annually.<sup>51</sup> The abbey was confirmed to the earls of Thomond — to Donough on 19 January 1620, and to Henry on 1 September 1661.<sup>52</sup> By 1703 Clare Abbey was a ruin and in the vicinity stood a 'thatched house, an orchard and two or three cabins'.<sup>53</sup>

#### *Clerics of Clann Chraith*

The Meic Craith exercised virtual dominance over the abbacy of Clare during the fifteenth century. Judging by references to Clare Abbey canons in the papal registers, they also dominated at the canonical grades. For the Meic Craith, control over Clare Abbey and its landed estate of fifteen quarters<sup>54</sup> conferred power and status on the family and provided a stepping stone to the episcopacy; four bishops of Killaloe were from this family and another, also with connections to Clare Abbey, was bishop of Clonfert in 1463.<sup>55</sup>

The Meic Craith were a leading ecclesiastical family in Co. Clare. Judging from a petition dated 1382 by Thomas Mac Craych, a student of canon law in Paris who petitioned for the rectory of Uí Chormaic, Clann Chraith produced career-minded clerics, many of whom were appointed higher clergy.<sup>56</sup> Foreign studies were often prohibitively expensive, being affordable only for those clerics from dynastic lineages or for those families with entrenched clerical interests such as Clann Chraith. Various successions to appointments at the abbey — often inter-generational transfers — by Meic Craith clerics suggest that Rome-running was frequent. This was due to the fact that papal dispensations were required for benefice holding if a cleric was illegitimate and on a number of occasions the canons at Clare Abbey were recorded as being sons of an abbot. Direct petitions to Rome by Gaelic clerics also circumvented having to seek dispute resolution for ecclesiastical matters from English authorities.

The papal registers clearly show that Meic Craith control of the abbacy at Clare was hereditary. On three occasions (1458, 1473 and 1482)<sup>57</sup> the registers record hereditary succession among Meic Craith abbots. The size of Clare Abbey's estate and its location on fertile lands in central Co. Clare determined the influential role of Clann Chraith in ecclesiastical matters. From 1399 when Donatus Mac Craith, abbot of Clare Abbey, was appointed by the pope to be bishop of Killaloe to 1482–3 when Thomas Machray was recorded as the son of an abbot we can identify numerous instances of direct father-to-son succession of the abbacy.<sup>58</sup> In 1458 Roderick Maceayh, who is first recorded as a canon at Clare Abbey in 1423, resigned the abbacy and his son Matthew, who contracted an abbreviator of apostolic letters as his procurator, was confirmed in the abbacy.<sup>59</sup>

Matthew was provided to the episcopacy of Clonfert in 1463,<sup>60</sup> after he had received his education at Oxford.<sup>61</sup> In 1473 we read of Donatus Macrach, a canon at Clare Abbey promoted to the abbacy, he himself being a son of the abbot.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, a papal mandate from 1482–3 refers to the previously mentioned Thomas Machray, a canon of



Clare Abbey, who was ‘the son of an abbot of the [Augustinian] order and an unmarried woman’.<sup>63</sup> He was to be dispensed from his illegitimacy and assigned the vicarage of Loughrea in Clonfert diocese.<sup>64</sup> From this mandate it is clear that the Meic Craith had established an ecclesiastical dynasty centred on Clare Abbey.

#### *Concluding remarks*

Meic Craith control of the abbacy of Clare resembled that of the Meic Ghiolla Phádraig abbots at the Augustinian house on Canon Island (Inisgad). There, the Meic Ghiolla Phádraig abbots held the abbacy by hereditary means during much of the fifteenth century,<sup>65</sup> and continued to do so into the sixteenth. As previously stated, Meic Craith clerics are mentioned in connection with Clare Abbey in 1542 and again in the 1555 papal *bull*a. Rather tellingly, the close attachment of Clann Chraith to Clare Abbey is also displayed in a local toponym: Islandmagrath occurs as a townland in Clareabbey parish and the tower-house there was under Meic Craith proprietorship in 1574.<sup>66</sup>

Fifteenth-century papal correspondence indicates that the appointments and activity of Meic Craith clerics at Clare Abbey verged on that of incumbent proprietorship. The role of the Meic Craith at Clare Abbey leaves one to almost conclude that Clann Chraith were indispensable in the administration of the abbey. This point had currency right up to the mid sixteenth century when we read that a cosignatory to the 1555 papal *bull*a was, predictably, a Mac Craith.

## Appendix A: Latin text<sup>67</sup>

[23 March 1555]

1. PAULUS ep[iscopu]s seruus seruor[um] dei dilecto filio Matheo Ogriffa Canonico Laonen[sis] Sal[ut]em et ap[osto]licam ben[edictionem] Roman[i] Pontificus prouidentia circumspecta eccl[esi]is et Monasteriis
2. singulis que vacationis incommoda deplorare noscuntur [u]t [...] gubernatorum vtilium fulciantur presidio prospicit diligenter ac personis eccl[esi]asticis quibuslibet presertim nobilitate generis pollentibus vt in suis oppo[rtu]nitatibus congruum suscipiant releuamen[tum] de subuentionis auxilio
3. prout decens est prouidet opportuno et ad illos dext[er]um sue liberalitatis extendit quos ad id propria virtutum merita multipliciter rec[om]mendant Cum itaq[ue] sicut accepimus Monasterium de Clar al[ia]s de [...] ordinis sancti Augustini Arresien Laonen[sis] dioc[esis] quod bone

## Appendix B: Translation<sup>68</sup>

1. Paul, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to his beloved son Mathew Ogriffa canon of Killaloe, [sends] greeting and apostolic blessing. The Roman pontiff with watchful providence looks out diligently for individual churches and monasteries
2. which are known to bewail the inconveniences of a vacancy so that they may be supported by the leadership of practical governors and provides in an opportune way for any such ecclesiastical persons, especially those possessed of noble lineage that in their advantages they may, as is fitting, receive a suitable remuneration by way of help from a grant
3. and he extends the right hand of his generosity to those whom the proper merits of their virtues recommend for this in many ways. And so, since just as we have accepted the monastery of Clare, otherwise of [...], of the order of Saint Augustine Arroasian<sup>69</sup> of the diocese of Killaloe, that Turlough O’Brien, bishop of Killaloe, of happy memory

4. memorie Thedricus Obrien Ep[iscop]us Laonen[sis] ex concessio[ne et] dispensatione ap[osto]lica in commendam dum viueret obtinebat com[m]enda h[uius]mo[d]i per ob[it]um dicti Thedrici Ep[iscop]i qui extra Roman[am] Curiam diem clausit extremum cessa[n]te adhuc eo quo ante commendam ipsam vacabat seu illud al[ia]s ac
5. Canonicatus et de Clondagad nuncupata prebenda eccl[es]ie [...] quos etia[m] quondam Brondus Macgilloria Vangh[?] ip[s]ius eccl[es]ie Canonicus dum [vi]ueret obtinebat per obitu[m] eiusdem Brondi qui etia[m] extra dicta[m] Curia[m] diem clausit ext[remu]m ac perpetua Vicaria parrochialis eccl[es]ie de Killmaed va[ca]n[te] Laonen[sis]
6. dioc[esis] et que de iurepatronatus laicor[um] etia[m] nobiliu[m] existunt [...] Inishathe et alia de Killnamona al[ia]s de Kynealboy et reliqua de Ogormane dicte dioc[esis] [parr]ochialium eccl[es]iarum Rectorie certo modo vacauerint et vacent ad presens et [?] [t]empore vacauerint q[uo]d p[ro]uisio Monastero [sic] ac Canonicatus et
7. [...] necnon Rectoriar[um] ac Vicarie h[uius]mo[d]i collatio iuxta [...] statuta Concilii aut al[ia]s canonicas sa[n]ctiones sunt ad sedem ap[osto]licam legitime deuoluta licet [. . .] Johannes Ogriffa cl[er]icus dicte dioc[esis] nunc vero quidam laici Monasterium [qu]o? [...] temporum seu malo regimine eorum qui illud obtinuerunt in suis
8. [...] [O?]ficiis aut bonis eo[rum] [...] bropenid[?] [...] [?]rutum extitit et Thadeus Corneley Obry[?] pro lacio Canonicatum et prebend[am] [?] Thedricus Donati pro cl[er]ico Vicariam ac Thadeus Maurn[?] etiam Obro[... ]se et seu Laurentius Macacan pro p[re]s[by]te[ro] se gerentes de
9. [...] prefatus Johannes d[?] filii de [?] [...] [?]libus h[uius]mo[d]i nullo titulo seu iuris adminiculo eis desuper suffraganti se[...] de facto per certum tempus detinuerint [?] detineant [...] [fruc]tus [re]dditus et prouentus dilapidando ac in suos pro
10. phanos et damnabiles vsus respectiue conuertendo [...] [anim]rum suar[um] periculum [ac] Monasterii et [Rec]toriar[um] ac Vicarie predictorum [...] pernicios[is]sum quoq[ue] ex[em]plum et scandalum plurin[orum] [...] voluimus statuimus et ordinauimus q[uo]d quicunq[ue] bene
11. ficium eccl[es]iasticum tunc per annum immediate preceden[tem] [?] [p]oss[es]sum et quod certo modo [va]care pretenderet extunc [dein]eps impetrat[et] [nomen] gradum et nobilitatem] possessoris eiusdem et
4. obtained in commendam<sup>70</sup> by apostolic grant and dispensation while he should live, this *commenda* having ceased by means of the death of the said Bishop Turlough, who has died<sup>71</sup> outside the Roman court<sup>72</sup>, and which up to that point had been vacant prior to the grant of *commendam*, so also otherwise
5. the office of canon and from the place called Clondagad the prebend of the church [...], which also formerly Brondus Macgilloria Vangh[?], canon of the same church obtained for his lifetime, by means of the death of the same Brondus, who likewise has died outside the said court, and the office of perpetual vicar of the parish church of Killmaed, being vacant, of Killaloe
6. diocese, and which are under the right of patronage<sup>73</sup> of laymen, even noblemen, [...] Inishathe, and others of Kilnamona alias Kynealboy, and the rest of Ogormane of the said diocese, of the rectory of the parish churches, should they have become vacant in a certain manner or they should be vacant up to the present, and [?] at the time should have they been vacant, because provision to the monastery, and collation of the office of canon, and [...]
7. and also of the rectories and of the vicarage of this kind, according to [...] the statutes of the council, or [of] other canonical sanctions, are lawfully devolved to the apostolic see, it is permitted that [...] John Ogriffa, cleric of the said diocese, now, in reality, certain laymen, the monastery [...] of the times, that is by the maladministration of them who had obtained it in [carrying out?]
8. their duties, or it stands ruined by the [...] of the goods [...], and presenting themselves, Teige mc Corneley [mcConor?] Obry[n?] as a layman, the office of canon and the prebend, [?] Turlough mc Donough as a cleric of the vicarage, and Thadeus Maurn[?], likewise [...] and Laurence Macacan as a priest,
9. [...] the aforementioned John [?] of the son of [...] of this kind, by no title or favourable support for them of law from above in fact, during a certain time have detained and they continue to detain [...] the fruits, revenues, and incomes by consuming, and respectively turning aside to their prof-
10. ane and damnable uses, [bring about], the peril of their souls, and of the monastery and rectories and vicarage aforesaid [...] also the most pernicious example and scandal of very many [...], we have willed, established, and ordained that whoever the ecclesiastical
11. benefice then possessed during the year immediately preceding, and which he should allege in a certain manner to be vacant, from then thereafter he should request the name, degree and nobility of the possessor of the same, and each

- quotannis ipse possessor [...] [huius]mo[d]i impetratione exprimere deberet et teneretur alioquin
12. impetratio predicta et indesequata quecuq[ue] nullius existere [...] tam eidem Monasterio de gubernatore vtili et idoneo per quem circunsp[ec]te regi et salub[riter dir]igi valeat q[ue] tibi in dicta Curia presenti asserenti te [...] viroq[ue] parente procreatum existere vt commodius sustentari
  13. valeas de alicuius subuentionis auxilio prouidere ac pr[emi]ssorum meritorum tuor[um] intuitu specialem gra[tia]m facere volentes Teq[ue] a quibusuis exco[m]munication]is suspensionis et interdicti aliisq[ue] eccl[es]iasticis sententiis censuris et pen[is] a [iure vel ab] homine quauis occasione vel causa latis si quibus quomo[do]l[ibe]t inno
  14. datus existis ad effectum presentium dumtaxat consequend[um] har[um] serie absolutentes et absolutum fore censentes ac verum et vltimum Monast[er]ii ac Canonicatus et prebende necnon Vicarie et Rectoriar[um] predictor[um] vacationis mo[dum] etiam si ex illo queuis generalis reseruatio etiam in corpore iuris
  15. clausa preterq[ue] per obitum apud sedem predicta[m] resultet nec [nomen] gradum et nobilitatem Thedrici et Laurentii ac Johannis predictor[um] si qui sint necnon tempus per quod Vicariam de Ogormaie ac de Killnamona necnon de Inishathe prefatas detinuerint p[rese]ntibus pro expressis habentes Tibi
  16. Canonicatum et prebendam ac Vicariam necnon que siue [?] sunt Rectorias cum plenitudine iuris canonici ap[osto]lica auct[orit]ate conferimus et de illis e[st]ia[m] prouidemus Monasterium vero predictu[m] de quo consistorialiter minime dispon[?] [?] per c[an]on[ic]os seculares in com[m]endam ad vitam ex concessione seu dispen-
  17. satione ap[osto]lica obtineri consuevit cuiq[ue] cura etiam forsam [iuri]s[di]ctionalis etiam forsam dilectorum filiorum parrochianor[um] illius eccl[es]ie que etia[m] forsam parrochialis existit imminet animar[um] ac quor[um] insimul et illis forsam annexor[um] fructu[s] redditus et prouentus Centum et Viginti Marchar[um] Sterlingorum
  18. secundum com[m]unem extimationem valorem annuu[m] vt etiam non excedunt siue Canonicatus et prebenda vt premititur siue illi al[ia]s ac [Monas]terium et Vicaria necnon Rectorie h[uius]mo[d]i quibusuis modis et ex quorumcuq[ue] personis [?]to inhabilitate vel incapacitate aut irregularitate siue per liberas
- year the possessor himself [...] of this kind, ought expressly to request, and the aforementioned request should be held otherwise
12. whatever follows is invalid [...] so to the same monastery with regard to a useful and suitable governor, by whom it may be able carefully to be ruled and beneficially to be directed, that to you, present in the said Court, asserting you [...]are born of a male parent,<sup>74</sup> that you may be more conveniently supported
  13. wishing to provide by the help of financial means and to grant a special favour by reason of your aforementioned merits. And we absolve you and decree you to be absolved for the future from whatever censures and penalties of excommunication, suspension, and interdict, and other ecclesiastical sentences, whether imposed by [the law itself or by] man, on whatever pretext or cause, if you are bound by these in whatsoever manner,
  14. by the effect of these presents, as set out, and the true and final way of vacancy of the monastery, and the office of canon, and prebend, and also of the vicarage and the rectories aforesaid, even in that regard some general reservation [exists] even in a clause of the *Corpus Iuris*<sup>75</sup>
  15. apart from death occurring at the aforementioned see, neither the name, degree and nobility of Turlough and Laurence and John aforesaid, if any they should be, and also the time during which they should have detained the vicarage of Ogormaie and of Killnamona, and also of Inishathe [?] aforesaid, by these express presents on you
  16. we confer the canonry and prebend and vicarage and also the rectories, with fullness of canon law, by apostolic authority, and from those likewise we provide for the monastery, truly, aforesaid, with regard to which in consistory is in no way customary to be disposed by means of secular canons,<sup>76</sup> or is to be obtained *in commendam* for life, by the grant or apostolic dispen-
  17. sation, and to whom the care, even perhaps in jurisdiction, even perhaps of the beloved sons the parishioners of that church, which even perhaps proves to be parochial, is a threat of souls, and of which together, and those perhaps in addition, the fruits, revenues, and incomes of one hundred and twenty marks sterling,
  18. the economic value for a year according to the common valuation, also so that they do not exceed, whether the office of canon and the prebend, as it is forwarded, or those otherwise, and the monastery and the vicarage, and also these rectories, by whatever means, and from whatsoever persons [?] disqualified or incapacitated or irregular, whether by the free reservations

19. illorum vltimor[um] possessorum aut quorumuis aliorum res[eruati]o[n]es(?) de Canonicatu et prebenda ac Vicaria nec non Rectoriis ac cessionem de Regimine et a[dm]inistratiōe Monasterii h[uius]mo[d]i in dicta Curia v[el] extra eam etiam c[or]am Notario publico et testibus sponte factas aut Vicarie per Constitutio
20. nem felicitis recordationis Johannis p[ap]e xxii predecessoris n[ost]ri [...] Execrabilis ac illa necnon Canonicatus et prebenda a[Re]ctorie prefati per assecutionem alterius beneficii eccl[esi]astici quauis auct[orit]ate collati vacent etiam si dispositio[n]i ap[osto]lice specialiter vel dictum Monasterium generaliter reseruata
21. existant Et super Canonicatu et prebenda nec non Vicari[a] et [R]ectoriis ac regimine et administratione pref[atis] inter aliquos lis aut eorundem regiminis et administrationis possessoris vel quasi molestia cuius statum p[re]sentibus hab[er]i [v]olumus pro expresso pendeat indecisa dummodo tempore Dat[i]
22. presentium in Canonicatu et prebenda necnon Vicaria et [R]ectoriis p[re]fatis alicui specialiter ius quesitum et eidem Monasterio de Abbat[is] p[ro]uisum aut illud alteri com[m]endatu[m] canonice non existat per te [quemadu]m iuris etiam vnacum Canonicatu et prebenda ac Vicaria et Rectoriis prefatis
23. tenendum regendum et gubernandum ita q[uo]d liceat tibi debet[is] et consuetis ipsius Monasterii ac dilector[um] filior[um] illius Conuentus supp[orta]tis oneribus necnon Quarta si Abbatialis separata et seorsum a Co[n]uentuali si vero com[m]unis inibi Mensa fuerit Tertia parte omnium et singulorum fructuu[m]
24. reddituum et prouentuum ipsius Monasterii in restauration[em] [ipsius] fabricae aut ornamentor[um] emptione[m] vel fulcimentum aut pauper[um] alimoniam prout maior exegerit et suaserit necessitas omnibus aliis deductis oneribus annis singul[is] impartita de residuis fructibus redditibus et prouentibus
25. Monasterii h[uius]mo[d]i disponere et ordinare sicuti illius Abbatialis qui pro tempore fuerunt de illis disponere et ordinare potuerunt [...] debuerunt alienatione tamen quorumcunq[ue] illius bonor[um] immobilium et preciosorum m[obi]lium tibi penitus interdicta prefata auct[orit]ate commendamus cum anneris
26. h[uius]mo[d]i ac omnibus iuribus et pertinentiis suis cur[am] regim[en] et administrationem ips[ius] Monasteriitibi in
19. of their last possessors or of anyone else of the office of canon, and the prebend, and the vicarage, and also the rectories, and the surrendering of the control and administration of this monastery in the said court, or outside it, even before the notary public and witnesses, voluntarily made, or of the vicarage by the appointment<sup>77</sup>
20. of Pope John XXII, our predecessor, of happy memory, *Execrabilis*,<sup>78</sup> and those and also the office of canon, and the prebend, and the rectories aforesaid, by means of the attaining of another ecclesiastical benefice, by whatsoever authority of conferring, become vacant, even if they or the said monastery should prove generally reserved by specific apostolic disposition specifically.
21. And the lawsuit between certain people over the office of canon, and the prebend, and also the vicarage, and the rectories, and the control and administration aforementioned or of the possessor of the ruling or administration of the same or difficulties as it were the status of which by these presents we expressly wish to hang undecided, provided at the time of the
22. present date, no right has already been granted especially to anyone in the office of canon, and the prebend, and also the vicarage, and the rectories aforementioned, nor the same monastery having been provided for with regard to the abbot, or that it has been commended canonically to another, through you the one whom you have produced, even together with the office of canon, and the prebend, and the vicarage, and the rectories aforementioned,
23. to hold, rule, and govern, in such wise that it is permitted to you by the customary dues of the same monastery, and by the supported works of the beloved sons of that convent, and also a fourth, if the [table] of the abbot is separate and apart from the conventual table, but if in that place there is a common table, the measure should be a third part of the fruits,
24. revenues, and incomes all and singular, of the same monastery for the renewing of the same fabric, or the purchase of decorations or support or the nourishment of poor men, just as the greater need demands or persuades, all other obligations in a single year having been deducted, from the remaining fruits, revenues, and incomes
25. of this monastery are imparted, to dispose and appoint, just as for those who were of that abbey at that time, could have disposed and appointed of them [...] they had been indebted, nevertheless, to dispose by alienation of whatsoever those immoveable, and the precious moveable goods of the [monastery], is altogether forbidden to you, by the aforementioned authority we commend to you, with draught animals
26. of this kind, and all their rights and appurtenances, the care, control, and administration of the same monastery, in matters

- sp[irit]ualibus e[tem]poralibus plen[arie] com[m]itte[n]dis  
Et insuper tibi vt l[ite]rarum studio in loco vbi illu[d] vigeat  
generale insistendo omnes et singulos fructus redditus et  
prouentus
27. tam Monasterii ac Canonicatus et pre[be]nde necn[on]  
V[icari]e et [Recto]riarum pr[edic]torum q[ue]  
quorumcunq[ue] aliorum beneficiorum eccl[esi]astic[ar]um  
per te quomo[do]l[ibe]t pro tempore in quibusuis eccl[esi]is  
siue locis obtentorum et al[ia]s qualitercunq[ue]  
qualificatorum ac etiam ex statuto fundatione
28. priuilegio vel al[ia]s quomo[do]l[ibe]t person[al]em  
residentiam et [sin]odis ac congregat[i]onib[us] specialibus  
vel generalibus comparit[i]onem requir[entibus] cum ea  
integritate distrib[utio]nibus quotidianis dumtaxat excep[ti]s  
cum qua illos perciperes si in eisdem eccl[esi]is siue locis  
personaliter
29. resideres ad Quinquennium proxime futurum perc[?] [?]  
[i]nterim eisdem beneficiis per Capellanum seu Capellanos  
ad cui initum [?]endos in diuinis deseruiri ac dilector[um]  
filior[um] illor[um] parrochianor[um] anim[a]r[um]  
curam exercere et eccl[esi]astica sacramenta eisdem  
parrochianis
30. ministrari facere etiam diocesanor[um] locor[um] vel  
quorumcunq[ue] [?] licentia super [eo] [m]inime requisita  
libere et licite val[earis] et ad [residendum...] seu eccl[esi]is  
ac eis deseruientum aut in sinodis seu congregationibus  
[?]tis comparendum minime tenearis nec ad id etiam per  
locoru[m]
31. ordinarios seu alium vel alios quoscunq[ue] inuit[us]  
comp[elli...]tari neq[ue] [pro]pterea beneficiis h[uius]mo  
[di] priuari possis dicta auct[orit]ate ap[osto]lica de  
sp[eciale] [ind]ulgent[ia] [Qu]ocirca venerabili fr[at]ri  
n[ost]ro Ep[iscop]o Limeric[i]en[si] et dilectis filiis Donald  
Omuleran ac Boethio Maclanchae Imelacen[sis] et  
Laonen[sis] eccl[esi]ar[um] decanis
32. per ap[osto]lica scripta mandamus quat[in]us ipsi vel duo  
aut [vn]us eorum vocatis dictis Thedrico et Laurentio ac  
Johanne et aliis qui fuerint euocandi pro se vel alium seu  
alios tibi in adipiscenda possessione vel quasi regiminis et  
administrationis predictorum ac bonor[um] dicti Monasterii  
auct[orit]ate n[ost]ra assistentes
33. faciant tibi a Conuentii [sic] prefatis obedientiam et  
reueren[tiam] congruentes ac dilectis filiis Vassallis et aliis  
subditis eiusdem Monasterii consueta seruicia et iura tibi ab  
eis debita congrue exhiberi necnon te vel procuratore tuum  
nomine tuo in corporalem possessionem Canonicatus et  
prebende necnon
- spiritual and temporal, fully entrusted. And in addition, a  
general [right] to you so that on the study of letters in a place  
where this may flourish, by insisting that the fruits, revenue,  
and income, all and singular,
27. both of the monastery, and the office of canon, and the  
prebend, and also of the vicarage, and the rectories aforesaid,  
and of whatsoever other ecclesiastic benefices obtained by  
you, in whatsoever manner, for the time being, in whichever  
churches or places and otherwise of whatever qualifications,  
and even according privilege established by foundation,
28. or otherwise in whatsoever manner personal residence or  
appearance, that synods and congregations, special or general,  
require, with that integrity, daily distribution only being  
excepted, with which you would share, if you were personally  
resident in the same churches or places, in person.
29. For the next five years, that you may be able to receive[?]  
meanwhile providing for the same benefices by means of a  
chaplain or chaplains, to which the entry [...] are to be  
dedicated in the divine services, and to exercise the care of  
souls of the beloved sons those parishioners, and minister the  
ecclesiastical sacraments to the same parishioners,
30. likewise of diocesan or any other places [?], freely and  
lawfully with no need for any permission in that regard, and  
that you are in no way bound to reside in the churches and  
those of the ones providing service or to appear in synods or  
congregations, nor to be compelled to this
31. even by local ordinaries, or another, or others, whomsoever,  
against your will [...] nor, by the said apostolic authority of  
special indulgence, can you be deprived for this reason of these  
benefices. Wherefore to our venerable brothers the bishop of  
Limerick and his beloved sons Donald Omuleran [Ó  
Maoilriain] and Boetius Maclanchae [Mac Fhlannchadha]  
deans of the churches of Imelaco–Ibbair [that is, Emly] and  
Killaloe,
32. by means of this apostolic letter we command so far as  
themselves, either two or one of them, by summoning the said  
Turlough, Laurence and John, and to others who should have  
been summoned, in person, or through another, or others, are  
to secure for you the possession, or as it were, the control and  
administration of the aforesaid, and of the goods of the said  
monastery, assisting by our authority
33. they should bring about on the part of the convents  
aforementioned, obedience and respect to you, at the same  
time, and from the beloved sons, vassals, and other  
subordinates of the same monastery, suitably to present the  
customary services and rights owed from them to you, and also  
induct you, or your procurator in your name, in bodily  
possession of the office of canon, and the prebend, and also

34. Vicarie et Rectoriar[um] ac annexor[um] iuriumq[ue] et pertin[enti]ar[um] predictor[um] inducant auct[orit]at[e] n[ost]ra et defendant inductum amotis Thedrico et Laurentio ac Johanne et aliis illicitis detentoribus ab eisdem Facientes te vel pro te procuratorem predictum ad prebendam h[uius]mo[d]i in dicta eccl[es]ia Laonen[sis] in Canonicum
35. recipi et in fr[at]rem stallo tibi in Choro et loco in Cap[itu]lo ips[ius] eccl[es]ie Laonen[sis] cum dicti iuris plenitudine assignatis nec non ad Vicariam et Rectorias h[uius]mo[d]i vt est moris admitti Tibiq[ue] de illarum ac Canonicatus et prebende et annexor[um] predictorum fructibus redditibus prouentibus iuribus et obuentionib[us]
36. vniuersis integre responderi necnon fructus redditus et [pro]uentus dictorum beneficior[um] in quibus non resideris tibi dicto Quinquennio durante vel procuratori tuo prefato iuxta indulti de illis percipiendis in absentia h[uius]mo[d]i tenorem integre ministrari Non permittentes te per locor[um] ordinarios
37. ac dilectos filios Laonen[sis] et aliarum eccl[es]iarum in quibus benefic[ia] h[uius]mo[d]i fors[an] fuerint Cap[itu]la seu quoscunq[ue] alios ad residendum interim in eisdem eccl[es]iis compelli aut al[ia]s contra h[uius]mo[d]i n[ost]re concessionis tenorem quomo[do]l[ibe]t indebite molestari Contradictores auct[orit]at[e] n[ost]ra appellatione postposita compesce[n]do
38. Non obstantibus voluntate priori statuto et ordinatione [?] nec non si in eisdem eccl[es]iis siue locis prima[m] non feceris residentiam personalem consuetam ac pie memorie Bonifacii p[ap]e viii etiam predecessoris n[ost]ri et aliis ap[osto]licis constitutionibus ac Monasterii et ordinis nec non Laonen[sis] et aliar[um] eccl[es]iarum
39. predictor[um] iurame[n]to confirmatione ap[osto]lica vel quauis firmitate alia [r]ob[ora]tis statutis et consuetudinib[us] etiam si de illis s[er]uandis et non impetrandis l[itte]ris ap[osto]licis contra ea et l[itte]ris ipsis ab alio vel aliis impetratis aut al[ia]s quouismodo concessis non vtendo tu per te vel procu[ato]rem tuum prestiteris fors[an] hactenus vel impos
40. terum te prestare contigerit iuramentum contrariis quibuscun[que] [non obstantibus] aliqui prefata ap[osto]lica vel alia quauis auct[orit]at[e] in dicta eccl[es]ia [Ca]nonicos sint recepti vel vt recipiantur insistant Seu si super prouisionib[us] sibi faciendis de Canonicatibus et prebendis dicte eccl[es]ie Laonen[sis] ac h[uius]mo[d]i speciales vel aliis beneficiis
34. of the vicarage, and the rectories, and of the attached rights and appurtenances aforesaid, by our authority and they should defend the one inducted by removing Turlough, Laurence and John, and other illicit detainers from the same. Causing you or your procurator aforesaid, to be received in this prebend in the said church of Killaloe, as a canon
35. and as a brother to install to you in the choir and place in the cathedral chapter of the same church of Killaloe, with the said fullness of right assigned, and also to be admitted to the vicarage and these rectories, as is customary. And to answer entirely to you from those, and the office of canon, and the prebends and the aforesaid annexations of fruits, revenues, incomes, rights, and whatever may accrue
36. in their entirety, and also the fruits, revenues, and incomes of the said benefices in which you should may not be resident, to supply to you completely during the said period lasting five years, or to your procurator aforementioned, in accordance with the indult<sup>79</sup> for receiving these in absence, observing the tenor of this. Not permitting you to be compelled by local ordinaries,
37. and the beloved sons of Killaloe, and of the other churches in which these benefices may perhaps have been located, the chapters, or anyone else, to take up residence meanwhile in the same churches, or otherwise against this tenor of our concession, to be unduly vexed in whatsoever manner. Restraining opponents by our authority, the appeal having been postponed,
38. notwithstanding the will, prior statute, and ordinance, [?] even if in the same churches or places, you should not have made first the customary personal residence, nor the apostolic constitutions of Pope Boniface VIII our predecessor of happy memory and others, nor the statutes and customs both of the monastery and of the order, and also of Killaloe, and of the other churches
39. aforesaid, albeit having been strengthened by oath, apostolic confirmation, or whatsoever other firmness, even if it should happen that hitherto or in the future you in person or through your procurator should have made an oath to observe these and not to seek apostolic letters against them nor to make use of the same letters sought by another or others or otherwise granted in whatever way,
40. anything to the contrary notwithstanding, or if any should be received as canons by the aforementioned apostolic or whatsoever authority in the said church, or insist that they be received. That is to say if, they should have sought about the provisions made to themselves with regard to the office of canon, and the prebends of the said church of Killaloe, special letters of this kind, or general letters about other ecclesiastical benefices



41. eccl[es]iasticis in illis partibus generales dicte sedis vel Legat[orum eiu]s[?] l[itte]ras impetrarint etiam si per eas ad inhibitionem reservationem et decretum vel al[ia]s quomo[do]l[ibe]t sit processum Quibus omnibus te in assecutione Canonicatus et prebende ac Vicarie et Rectoriarum predictor[um] volumus anteferri Sed
42. nullum per hoc eis quoad assecutione[m] Canonicatuu[m] et prebendar[um] [vel] beneficioru[m] alior[um] preiudiciu[m] generari Seu si venerabili fr[at]ri n[ost]ro Ep[iscop]o Laonen[sis] et aliis locor[um] ordinariis ac Cap[itu]lis prefatis vel quibusuis aliis co[m]mun]iter vel diuisim ab eade[m] sit sede con[cessum] vel [im]posterum concedi contingat q[uo]d Canonicos et personas eccl[es]iar[um] suar[um] Ciuitatu[m]
43. et dioc[esium] etia[m] in dignitatibus personatib[us] administrationib[us] vel officiis constitutas [sic.] per subtractione[m] fructuu[m] reddituu[m] et prouentuu[m] beneficior[um] suor[um] eccl[es]iasticor[um] aut al[ia]s compellere valeant ad residendum personal[ite]r in eisdem Aut si Ep[iscop]o et aliis ordinariis ac Cap[itu]lis prefatis vel quibusuis aliis co[m]mun]iter vel diuisim ab eade[m] sit sede indultu[m]
44. vel imposterum indulgeri contingat q[uo]d Canonicis Rectoribus et personis suar[um] Ciuitatu[m] et dioc[esium] etia[m] in dignitatib[us] personatib[us] administrationib[us] vel officiis const[itu]tutis et in illis non residentib[us] vel qui in eis prima[m] non fecerit residentia[m] personale[m] consueta[m] fructus redditus et proue[n]tus suor[um] beneficior[um] eccl[es]iasticor[um] in absentia sua ministrari
45. ac q[uo]d ad receptione[m] vel prouisione[m] alicuius minime teneantur et ad id compelli ac illis necnon Conue[n]tiu[m] [sic] vasallis et subditis prefatis q[uo]d interdici suspendi vel exco[m]municari non possint Q[uo]dq[ue] de Canonicatib[us] et prebendis ipsius eccl[es]ie Laonen[sis] ac h[uius]mo[d]i vel aliis beneficiis ecclesiasticis ad eorum collatione[m] prouisione[m] presentatione[m] seu qua[m]uis
46. aliam dispositione[m] coniu[n]ctim vel separatim spectantib[us] nulli valeat prouideri per l[itte]ras ap[osto]licas non facientes plena[m] et expressa[m] ac de verbo ad verbu[m] de indulto h[uius]mo[d]i mentione[m] Et qualibet alia dicte sedis indulgentia g[e]n[er]ali vel spe[ci]ali cuiuscunq[ue] tenoris existat per quam p[rese]ntibus non expressa[m] vel total[ite]r non inserta[m] effectus h[uius]mo[d]i gr[ati]e impediti valeat q[uo]mo[do]l[ibe]t
47. vel differri Et de qua cuiusq[ue] toto tenore habenda sit in n[ost]ris l[itte]ris mentio spe[ci]alis Seu si p[rese]ns non fueris ad prestandu[m] de obserua[n]dis statutis et consuetudinib[us] d[i]cte eccl[es]ie Laonen[sis] solitum
41. in those parts, from the aforementioned see or his legates even though it should have been decreed or in any other way so drawn up through them to [create] a prohibition [or] reservation [of benefices], to all these we wish you to be preferred obtaining the office of canon, and the prebend, and the vicarage, and the rectories aforesaid. But
42. for nothing by this to create a pre-judgement in their regard with respect to the obtaining of canonries and prebends, or other benefices. That is to say, if to our venerable brother, the bishop of Killaloe, and other local ordinaries, and the chapters aforementioned, or any [of] it should have been granted by the same see or may happen to be granted in the future, in common or separately, that the canons and persons of churches of their [episcopal] sees
43. and dioceses, even those established in dignities, positions of standing, offices of administration, they are permitted to compel to personal residence in the same, by taking away from the fruits, revenues, and incomes of their churches, or other measures. Or if to the bishop, and the other ordinaries, and chapters aforementioned, or any others, in common or separately, it should be granted by the same see
44. or should happen hereafter to be granted, that to the canons, rectors, and persons of the churches of their [episcopal] sees and dioceses, even those established in dignities, positions of standing, offices of administration, or offices, and not residing in them, or who in them should not have made the customary first personal residence, the fruits, revenues, and incomes of their ecclesiastic benefices, to be supplied in their absence,
45. and that, they may in no way be bound to the reception or provision of someone, nor to be compelled, nor can they be interdicted, suspended, or excommunicated by them nor also the convent's vassals and subordinates aforementioned. And that regarding the office of canon, and the prebends of the same church of Killaloe, and these or other ecclesiastical benefices, in respect of their collation, provision, presentation, or looking towards whatever
46. other disposition, jointly or separately, no one has the power to be provided by means of apostolic letters, not making full and distinct mention, word for word, regarding this indult. And whatsoever other indult of the said see may exist, general or specific, and of whatsoever tenor, by means of which the content of these presents are not expressed, or not wholly inserted, the effects of such a favour can be impeded in any manner,
47. or to be delayed. And regarding which, special mention is to be made in our letter with regard to the whole tenor of the above. That is, if you should not have been present to make the customary oath to observe the statutes and customs of the

iuramentu[m] dum[m]odo in absentia tua per procur[ator]em idoneu[m] et cum ad eccl[es]iam ipsa[m] ccesseris [sic] corporal[ite]r illud prestes Nos enim tecum vt Monasteriu[m] ac Vicariam

48. h[uius]mo[d]i vigore presentiu[m] recipere et insimul Monasteriu[m] videlicet in com[m]end[am] Vicaria vero h[uius]mo[d]i in titulu[m] quoad uixeris retinere libere et licite valeas Quo[m]o[d]o in eode[m] studio residendo tam ratione predictor[um] quoru[m]cunq[ue] alior[um] beneficior[um] eccl[es]iasticor[um] per te quomo[do]libet et pr[o] t[em]p[or]e obtinendor[um] ex fundatione vel statuto aut al[ia]s sacros etia[m] p[re]s[b]iteratus ordines
49. quomo[do]libet requirentium vsq[ue] ad bienniu[m] a fine anni a iure stat[uti] [...] comp[ut]andum t[er]m[in]u[m] aliquem ex h[uius]mo[d]i etia[m] subdiaconatus ordinibus promoueri facere minime tenearis ne[c] ad id a quoq[ue] quauis etiam ap[osto]lica vel ordinaria auct[orit]ate inuitus co[m]pelli possis ac postmodum seu etia[m] antea si uolueris a Vicario n[ost]ro g[e]n[er]ali vel ab
50. eo deputato in dicta Curia vel extra eam a tuo ordinario [...] a quoq[ue] malueris catholico Antistite gra[tia]m et comunem dicte sedis [...] Tribus Dominicis vel aliis festiuis diebus etia[m] extra t[em]pora a iure statuta etia[m] sacros et p[re]s[b]iteratus [sic] ordines h[uius]mo[d]i promoueri facere et in illis pro
51. motus [sic] etiam in altaris ministerio ministrare libere et lic[ite] generalis Concilii et quibusuis aliis ap[osto]licis ac in prouincialibus et sinodalibus [cons]iliis editis generalibus vel specialibus constitutionibus et ordinationibus necnon [...] ac prefatar[um] et aliarum eccl[es]iarum in quibus sacros ordines
52. requirentia beneficia h[uius]mo[d]i forsitan fuerint etia[m] iuramento co[n]firmati[one] ap[osto]lica vel quauis firmitate alia roboratis statutis et consuetudinibus Ceterisq[ue] contrariis nequaquam obstantibus dicta auct[orit]ate ap[osto]lica eorundem tenore presentium de spec[ia]le dono gratie dispensamus tibiq[ue] pariter ac eidem [...]
53. dines predictos promouere possit indulgemus Decern[imus] [in]terim Monasterium et Vicariam ac alia beneficia per te obtenta et obtinenda h[uius]mo[d]i propterea minime vacare posse Sicq[ue] per quoscunq[ue] Iudices quauis auct[orit]ate fung[en]tes sublata eis et eorum cuilibet quauis aliter iudicandi et interpre
54. tandi facultate et auct[orit]ate iudicari et diffiniri debere irritum quoque et inane si secus super hiis a quoq[ue] quauis auct[orit]ate scienter vel ignora[n]ter contigerit attemptari Volumus autem qu[od] Vicaria et alia in quibus

said church of Killaloe provided that in your absence by means of your qualified procurator, and when you enter into the same church you should make the oath in person. We, in fact, [are] with you, so that by these presents you may be able to receive at the same time both the monastery, evidently *in commendam*, and freely and lawfully retain this vicarage

48. as your title for your lifetime. And that while you reside in the same, study so by reason of the aforesaid and whatsoever other ecclesiastical benefices may be obtained by you for the time being in whatsoever manner, from foundation or statute, or which may require otherwise the sacred orders, even of the priesthood
49. in whatsoever manner, for a period of two years, to be calculated from the end of the year decreed [...] you are in no way bound to cause someone of this kind to be promoted even to the orders of the subdiaconate to the orders, nor can you be compelled to this by anyone by any authority whether apostolic or ordinary against your will and afterwards, or even before if you should wish, from our vicar general, or from
50. the person deputed in the said court, or outside it from your ordinary [...] from whatever Catholic bishop, you should have preferred [this] favour and the communion of the said see [...] On three Sundays or other feast days, even outside the seasons by law established, to cause [yourself] to be promoted to sacred and priestly orders and promoted to these,
51. freely and lawfully to minister in the ministry of the altar, [?] whatsoever other general statements or special constitutions and ordinances of a general council or of the apostolic [see] or of provincial and synodal councils, and also [...] of the aforementioned and other churches, in which benefices requiring holy orders,
52. perhaps existed, [to be confirmed] by oath, apostolic confirmation, or whatsoever other reinforcement, strengthened by statutes and customs. Everything else to the contrary notwithstanding by the said apostolic authority, by the tenor of these presents, and by a special gift of favour we dispense, and to you equally, and the same [...]
53. we permit to be promoted to the aforesaid orders. Meanwhile, we will decree the monastery and the vicarage, and the other benefices obtained by you and to be obtained of this kind, for this reason can in no way be vacant. And thus through whatsoever judges enjoying whatsoever authority is removed from them and theirs any faculty and authority of judging or interpreting otherwise for anyone.
54. Any judgement or definition must also be null and void, if otherwise it should happen to be attempted over these matters by anyone and any authority whether knowingly or in ignorance. However that the vicarage, and the other benefices

- non resider[et ...] non sacros ordines requirentia beneficia h[uius]mo[d]i debitis propterea
55. non fraudentur obsequiis et animarum cura in Vicaria et aliis quibus illa imminet nullatenus negligatur ac in dicto Monasterio diuinus cultus et solitus Canonicorum et ministrorum numerus nullatenus minuatur sed eius et ipsorum Conuentus congrue supportentur onera
56. antedicta ac in eisdem beneficiis quorum fructus in absentia te percipere contigerit per bonos et sufficientes vicarios quibus de beneficiorum eorundem prouentibus necessaria congrue ministrentur diligenter exerceatur et deseruiatur inibi laudabiliter in diuinis Et insuper exnu[n]c
57. irritum decernimus et inane si secus super hiis a quoq[ue] quauis auct[orit]e scienter vel ignoranter contigerit attemptari Nulli ergo omnino hominum liceat hanc paginam n[ost]re absolutionis collationis prouisionis com[m] [unis?] indulti mandati voluntatis dispensationis et decreti infringere
58. vel ei ausu temerario contraire Si quis autem hoc attemptare presumpserit indignationem omnipotentis dei ac beatorum Petri et Pau[li] Ap[osto]lorum eius se noverit incursum Dat[um] Rome apud Sanctum petrum Anno Incarnatio[n]is d[omi]nice Millesimo qui[n]gesimo qui[n]quagesimo quinto
59. Decimo k[a]l[endar]um Aprilis Pont[ificatus] n[ost]ri Anno Primo :-
60. Jo. bap. Nylansius Do . &
61. Jo Mahe[?] o : A P . Bartinicus[?]
62. P . ) Mattias[?]
63. Mu : die[?] Mar[c]ij[?]: p[ro] an[n]uo[?] ob[it]u[?] &c, Domus petri in iusti [sic.]
64. n . faillonet[?] [?] al[ia]s Al an -
65. m<sup>ac</sup> Crath . vr[?] nisi brican
66. al[ia]s Kylbrigan ex
67. Slanine Mcnamarra
68. cu[m] multis ali[i]s [undeciphered symbols] Baron Ruiz
- of this kind in which one might not reside [...], not requiring holy orders, therefore
55. should not be defrauded of the due attention and care of souls in the vicarage, and the others in which that might be a danger in no wise should be ignored, and in the said monastery divine worship and the usual number of canons and ministers, in no-wise should be reduced, but the aforementioned responsibilities of his and of their convent, should suitably be supported,
56. and in the same benefices of which the fruit you should happen to receive in absence, through good and adequate vicars, the necessities for whom are to be supplied from the incomes of the same benefices, diligently should be administered, and served in that place, in the divine services in a praiseworthy manner. And in addition, from now
57. we decree null and void, if otherwise any attempt should happen to be made about these things, by anyone or whatsoever authority, knowingly or in ignorance,. To no one at all, therefore, is it permitted to infringe, this page of our absolution, collation, common provision, indult, command, will, dispensation, and decree,
58. or to anyone boldly to oppose. If anyone should have presumed to attempt this, let him know that he will incur the anger of Almighty God, and of his blessed apostles Peter and Paul. Given in Rome at St Peter's in the year of the incarnation of the Lord one thousandth five hundred [and] fifty-five.
59. On the tenth of the kalends of April<sup>80</sup> in the year of our pontificate the first :-
60. Jo. bap. Nylansius Do . & [ . . . ]
61. Jo Mahe[?] o: A [ . . . ] P . Bartinicus.
62. P . ) Mattias.
63. [?] : day[?] of March[?]: for an annual service for the dead &c The House of Peter in justice
64. [?] alias Alan [?] -
65. MacCrath. If not Brican
66. alias Kylbrigan
67. Slaine Mcnamarra
68. with many others [undeciphered symbols] Baron Ruiz





Fig. 1: Papal bulla granted to Turlough O'Brien, bishop of Killaloe, for Clare Abbey in 1555 (reprinted from the Petworth House archives with the permission of Lord Egremont)

## NOTES

- 1 The author wishes to acknowledge the efforts of Donal de Barra of Miltown Malbay, Co. Clare, who first brought attention to the papal *bull*a among the documents at Petworth House. The author also wishes to thank Kenneth Nicholls for his comments on an early draft, Brian Ó Dálaigh and Martin Breen for their helpful comments and revisions on the text, and Mgr Gordon Read of Kelvedon parish, Essex, for his kind assistance with the translation.
- 2 The papal *bull*a is found in the section of the catalogue entitled ‘deeds, evidences and writings, the major part relating to the whole of his lordship’s estates in Ireland’ at shelfmark MS B26/T16. The author wishes to thank Alison McCann, archivist of Petworth House, for her advice regarding the cataloging of the *bull*a.
- 3 Brian Ó Dálaigh, ‘From Gaelic warlords to English country gentlemen: the O’Briens of Thomond 1543–1741’ in *The Other Clare*, xxv (2001), p. 42.
- 4 The author thanks Kenneth Nicholls for his advice on this point.
- 5 F. W. Steer and N. H. Osborne (eds), *The Petworth House archives: a catalogue*, i (Chichester, 1968), p. viii.
- 6 In 1576 the lord deputy, Sir Henry Sidney, travelled through Co. Clare and Connacht and abolished native titles, and in the following year assizes were held in Ennis (James Frost, *The history and topography of the county of Clare from the earliest times to the beginning of the eighteenth century* (Dublin, 1893), pp 245–6).
- 7 Brian Ó Dálaigh, ‘A papal ‘bull’ from Ennis Friary’ in *The Other Clare*, xxix (2005), p. 69.
- 8 John Rattigan, ‘Archaeological finds from the baronies of Moyarta, Ibrickane and Clonderlaw’ in *The Other Clare*, xxix (2005), p. 17.
- 9 See *Cal. papal letters*; also the papal annates for Killaloe printed in D. F. Gleeson, ‘Obligaciones pro annatis diocesis Laoniensis, 1421–1535’ in *Archiv. Hib.*, x (1943), pp 1–103.
- 10 Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Registra Supplicationum (N.L.I., Special list 43, excerpted for the years 1417–20).
- 11 Matthew O’Griffa (Mathghamhain Ó Griobhtha) may be traced in other contemporary documents. He featured as a witness in a deed dated 4 Mar. 1557 in which ‘Cornelius mcTeig’ and his kinsmen granted the possession of Tromra in Ibrickan to Conor O’Brien, third earl of Thomond, signing his name as ‘Matheus O Griffa’ (T.C.D., MS 1429, formerly I.6.12). The author thanks Kenneth Nicholls for this reference.
- 12 See the award dated 19 Feb. 1589 between Donough O’Brien, fourth earl of Thomond and Conor McGillarewgh (Mac Giolla Riabhaigh) regarding the castle and lands of Craigbrien. He signed his name under its latinised form ‘Matheus Griphius’ (Petworth House archives, MS C.27.A.60, being no. 5 of a bundle in MS C.13.36). The author thanks Kenneth Nicholls for this reference.
- 13 Ignatius Murphy, ‘The O’Briens and Killaloe diocese’ in O’Brien Clan Association, *The royal O’Briens: a tribute* (n.p., 1992), p. 30.
- 14 On his episcopacy, see D. F. Gleeson, *A history of the diocese of Killaloe* (Dublin, 1961), pp 442–8.
- 15 *A.F.M.*, s.a. 1496.
- 16 The translated entry in the Annals of the Four Masters for 1525 reads ‘Turlough, the son of Mahon, son of Turlough, son of Brian Catha an Aenaigh O’Brien, bishop of Killaloe, died’. See also the obit in the Annals of Loch Cé, which presents a more eloquent, if not hyperbolic, account of the bishop’s life (*A.F.M.*, s.a. 1525; *A.L.C.*, s.a. 1525).
- 17 The rectory of Kilnamona was called after the secular territory, Cinéal Bhaoith, in which it situated.
- 18 Henry Cotton, *Fasti ecclesiae Hibernicae* (5 vols, Dublin, 1860), v, 72.
- 19 On the Meic Fhlannchadha of Tradraige, see Luke McInerney, ‘A Mac Fhlannchadha fosterage document, c. 1580’ in *N. Munster Antiq. Jn.*, li (2011), pp 61–70.
- 20 Donald Clancy appears as treasurer of Killaloe in 1573 and 1593, and also in 1612. In the last-mentioned year he was recorded as contracting a parcel of land called ‘Carhowkriskyne’ in Kilmaleery parish, which he transferred to a member of the Meic Mhathghamhna lineage (N.L.I., Inchiquin collection, MS 45.669/3).
- 21 Donnchadh Ó Briain, fourth earl of Thomond, was reputedly fostered by Conchobhar Mac Fhlannchadh and his wife Finola Nic Bhruaideadha (Finola Bruodin) of Ennis (Cornel O’Mollony, *Anatomicum examen enchiridii apologetici* (Prague, 1671), pp 112–13).
- 22 Kenneth Nicholls, ‘A list of the monasteries in Connacht, 1577’ in *Galway Arch. Soc. Jn.*, xxxiii (1972–3), p. 40.
- 23 Some of the rectories inappropriate to Clare Abbey, and which later were held by the earls of Thomond, are detailed in a chancery case between the fifth earl of Thomond and the bishop of Killaloe (N.A.I., Chancery bills: survivals from pre-1922 collection, no. 131, 13 Feb. 1625). A list of the rectories in the (allegedly forged) 1189 charter of Clare Abbey is discussed in M. T. Flanagan, *Irish royal charters: texts and contexts* (Oxford, 2006), pp 163–74, 326–31. See also Michael MacMahon, ‘The charter of Clare Abbey and the Augustinian “province” in Co. Clare’ in *The Other Clare*, xvii (1993), pp 21–8.



- 24 A copy of the Clare Abbey charter of c. 1189 is printed in Latin and translated in full in Flanagan, *Irish royal charters*, pp 326–7.
- 25 These include Sláine, daughter of Donnchadh Cairbreach Ó Briain, king of Thomond, whose death was recorded in 1259; Abbess ‘Dubcollaithigh ini Bhreyn’ who died in 1350; and Abbess Renalda Ní Bhriain (c. 1447–1510). See *A.F.M.*, s.a. 1259; E. J. Gwynn (ed.), ‘Fragmentary annals from the west of Ireland’ in *R.I.A. Proc.*, xxxvii (1926), sect. C, p. 153. On Renalda, see the next note.
- 26 Brian Ó Dálaigh, ‘Mistress, mother and abbess: Renalda Ní Bhriain (c. 1447–1510)’ in *N. Munster Antiq. Jn.*, xxxii (1990), pp 50–63.
- 27 See the pedigree of the Meic Conmara in R. W. Twigge, ‘Materials for a history of Clann-Cuillein’ in B.L., Add. MS 39270, Genealogical roll (1915).
- 28 On the lordship of west Clann Chuiléin, see Luke McNerney, ‘The west Clann Chuiléin lordship in 1586: evidence from a forgotten inquisition’ in *N. Munster Antiq. Jn.*, xlvi (2008), pp 33–62.
- 29 Brian Ó Dálaigh, ‘Doctors Donnell and James Neylon and the O’Briens of Thomond 1530–1599’ in *The Other Clare*, xv (1991), pp 15–19. See also R. W. Twigge, ‘Edward White’s description of Thomond in 1574’ in *N. Munster Arch. Soc. Jn.*, i, no. 2 (1910), p. 84.
- 30 *A.F.M.*, s.a. 1588.
- 31 He appears to have been succeeded briefly by a member of a well-entrenched ecclesiastical lineage, Donough Oge O’Grady, who died that same year (Philip Dwyer, *The diocese of Killaloe from the Reformation to the eighteenth century* (Dublin, 1878), p. 467; *A.F.M.*, s.a. 1558).
- 32 *A.F.M.*, s.a. 1572.
- 33 N.L.L., MS G177. See also R.I.A., MS 24 P 41.
- 34 T. J. Westropp, ‘The Augustinian houses of the county of Clare: Clare, Killone, and Inchicronan’ in *R.S.A.I. Jn.*, xxx (1900), pp 118–35; Gleeson, *Diocese of Killaloe*, pp 452–7.
- 35 Máel Máedóc Ua Morgair (St Malachy), archbishop of Armagh and bishop of Down and Connor, championed the reform of the Irish church and the primacy of Armagh as the chief inheritor of the patrician legacy. His links to continental reformers such as St Bernard of Clairvaux were instrumental in bringing continental monasticism to Ireland (Seán Duffy (ed.), *Medieval Ireland: an encyclopedia* (New York, 2005), pp 312–14).
- 36 The earliest evidence for a community of Augustinian canons at Inchicronan dates from a 1421 citation in the papal registers. Inchicronan is referred to in the 1302–6 papal taxation as ‘Inchegronayn’ with no reference to its priory status (that is, no tax on temporalities), allowing us to conclude that Inchicronan was not a fully-fledged Augustinian community in communication with Rome until the early fifteenth century (*Cal. papal letters, 1417–31*, p. 181; Flanagan, *Irish royal charters*, p. 329).
- 37 *Cal. papal letters, 1198–1304*, p. 110; M. P. Sheehy, *Pontificia Hibernica* (2 vols, Dublin, 1962–5), i, no. 179.
- 38 *Cal. papal letters, 1198–1304*, p. 110.
- 39 It has been suggested that the papal taxation for Killaloe was actually taken c. 1322 since the date that the tax rolls reached Westminster was Oct. 1322 (G. J. Hand, ‘The dating of the early fourteenth-century ecclesiastical valuations of Ireland’ in *Ir. Theol. Quart.*, xxiv (1957), pp 271–4). See also *Cal. doc. Ire., 1302–7*, p. 301.
- 40 *Cal. doc. Ire., 1302–7*, pp 300, 303.
- 41 Frances Narkiewicz, ‘Liturgy and architecture in medieval Ireland, ca. 1100–ca. 1315: evidence from the diocese of Killaloe’ (Ph.D. thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 2011), p. 171.
- 42 On the charter of Clare Abbey and views about its authenticity, see Flanagan, *Irish royal charters*, pp 326–7.
- 43 Westropp, ‘Augustinian houses of the county of Clare’, p. 121.
- 44 *Cal. papal letters, 1427–47*, p. 501.
- 45 John O’Donovan and Eugene Curry, *Ordnance Survey letters: the antiquities of County Clare*, ed. Maureen Comber (Ennis, 2003), p. 169.
- 46 For a detail version of the grants made of dissolved monastic property, see Westropp, ‘Augustinian houses of the county of Clare’, pp 118–35.
- 47 Gleeson, *Diocese of Killaloe*, p. 204. The author wishes to acknowledge the advice by Dr Katharine Simms, T.C.D., on dating the handwriting of the inventory.
- 48 The original manuscript was inspected by the author at the British Library in Sept. 2011. It is recorded in the catalogue notes of the manuscript that it was once in the possession of Conor O’Brien, third earl of Thomond (d. 1581).
- 49 B.L., MS Royal 13 A. XIV, f. 117, formerly in the possession of the Dominican friars of Limerick and of Conor O’Brien, third earl of Thomond.
- 50 Twigge, ‘Edward White’s description of Thomond in 1574’, p. 84.
- 51 O’Donovan and Curry, *Ordnance Survey letters*, p. 169.
- 52 *Ibid.*
- 53 Brian Ó Dálaigh (ed.), *The strangers gaze: travels in County Clare 1534–1950* (Ennis, 1998), p. 90.



- 54 A. M. Freeman (ed.), *The Compossicion booke of Conought* (Dublin, 1936), p. 8.
- 55 D. F. Gleeson, 'The episcopal succession of Killaloe, A.D. 1317–1616' in *N. Munster Antiq. Jn.*, ii (1940–1), pp 51–62.
- 56 W. H. Bliss (ed.), *Petitions to the pope, 1342–1419* (London, 1896), pp 564–5.
- 57 *Cal. papal letters, 1455–64*, pp 73–4; *Cal. papal letters, 1471–84*, pp 376, 835.
- 58 *Cal. papal letters, 1471–84*, p. 835. Thomas may have had a brother Donatus who was also the son of an Augustinian abbot and likewise a canon at Clare Abbey; he was dispensed for his illegitimacy and appointed to the parish church of Clooney in Kilfenora diocese, around the same time as Thomas's recording in the papal registers (*ibid.*, p. 132).
- 59 *Cal. papal letters, 1455–64*, pp 73–4.
- 60 *Cal. papal letters, 1458–71*, p. 180.
- 61 Gleeson, *Diocese of Killaloe*, p. 455. On his education at Oxford, see Walter Harris, *The whole works of Sir James Ware concerning Ireland: revised and improved* (2 vols, Dublin, 1764), ii, 641.
- 62 *Cal. papal letters, 1471–84*, p. 376.
- 63 *Ibid.*, p. 835.
- 64 *Ibid.*
- 65 See, for example, *ibid.*, p. 605.
- 66 In the 1574 tower-house list it was given as 'Mac Craigh of Ilandvecraigh' (Twigge, 'Edward White's description of Thomond in 1574', p. 84). On Islandmagrath, see Paddy Connors, 'Islandmagrath and the Macraith family' in *The Other Clare*, xxi (1997), p. 16.
- 67 All parentheses in the document have been inserted by the author. The numbering corresponds to the line number in the original *bull*.
- 68 The author wishes to acknowledge the kind assistance of Mgr Gordon Read of Kelvedon parish, Essex, for his revision to this translation and his help in ensuring that the text reads lucidly. Suggestions for likely content have been included in square brackets. Ritual phrases and abbreviations have been silently expanded in the translation to aid readability. Gaps in the document and unreadable sections of text are displayed as [...].
- 69 That is, the rule of St Augustine according to the customs of Arrouaise. On the Augustinian order in medieval Ireland, see P. J. Dunning, 'The Arroasian order in medieval Ireland' in *I.H.S.*, iv (1944–5), pp 297–315.
- 70 In canon law, *in commendam* refers to a grant of entitlement to the revenues of a benefice but with dispensation from fulfilling the attendant duties and responsibilities.
- 71 Literally 'has closed his last day'.
- 72 That is, died *in situ* in his diocese of Killaloe, rather than in Rome.
- 73 The term *iure patronatus* could also be translated as 'right of presentation', that is, the laymen held the advowson.
- 74 Presumably the meaning of this is that he was of legitimate birth.
- 75 That is, *Corpus iuris canonici*.
- 76 The wording of elements of this section is rather ambiguous and difficult to translate with full accuracy.
- 77 *Constitutio* in this context should be read as appointment.
- 78 *Execrabilis* is to condemn and anathematize appeals by anyone to a future council as opposed to appeals to the current pope and the organs of the Curia. The decree of *Execrabilis* was set down during the papacy of Pius II (1458–64) in 1460.
- 79 In canon law an *indult* is a permission granted by an ecclesiastical authority for an exception from a church law regarding a particular case.
- 80 That is, the tenth day before the kalend, which falls on 1 Apr., therefore dating this document to 23 Mar. 1555.