

A note on the Uí Chiaróg clerical lineage of Rathbláthmaic¹

Luke McInerney

In the 2011 issue of the *Other Clare*, I presented a brief Irésumé of the Uí Mhaoir (O'Meere) clerical lineage of Drumcliffe. The chief focus of this article is much the same: to survey the Uí Chiaróg (O'Kireoge), an obscure clerical lineage of Rathbláthmaic parish church. The Uí Chiaróg are seldom cited in the Irish genealogical tracts and evade mention in the Irish annals. Despite the paucity of source material, we are fortunate that disparate references to the Uí Chiaróg allow us to partially reconstruct their history and status as a clerical lineage associated with Rathbláthmaic church. This article attempts to collate known information about the Uí Chiaróg and cast light on an otherwise forgotten hereditary church lineage.

The church at Rathbláthmaic has ancient monastic origins. As Dermot F. Gleeson has pointed out, Rathbláthmaic was the termon of the ancient bishopric of St Blathmac, a point confirmed by the survival of St Blathmac's episcopal staff (crozier).² He goes on to state there is no trace of a coarb family in later times at Rathbláthmaic, a point that this article attempts to correct.³

Rathbláthmaic church & termon

Founded probably in the seventh century and ostensibly associated with St Blathmac, the father of Onchú in c.640, Rathbláthmaic retained characteristics typical of the native monastic tradition.⁴ This included a round tower, probably similar in stature as that found nearby at Dysert, though it was demolished in 1838 and subsequently not recorded by the Ordnance Survey officials.⁵ Indeed it has been suggested that the religious settlements at Dysert and Rathbláthmaic were originally part of the same foundation, given their proximity to each other and their intertwined folklore.⁶

Rathbláthmaic was also endowed with termon lands, the revenue of which contributed to its upkeep and repair, as well as providing a fief for the coarb (*comharba*) or erenagh (*airchinneach*) who controlled the site. Though Rathbláthmaic's early history as a monastic site is obscure, it is reasonable to assume that in line with the native monastic tradition, Rathbláthmaic probably had a *scriptorium*, though no surviving manuscripts written there have survived. Certainly the presence of many richly adorned slabs inserted into the masonry near the door and south wall of the nave, each with intricate 'Celtic patterns', are suggestive of the site's former status and points to the native tradition of a monastic church.

In the life of St Flannán, compiled at the *Schottenkloster* in Regensburg around the mid twelfth century probably by a churchman originally from the Tulla district of Co. Clare, a *Sanctus Bathmecus* is recorded as the learned teacher of Flannán.⁷ It has been suggested that this unusual reference to *Sanctus Bathmecus* points to Rathbláthmaic as a possible centre of learning and ecclesiastical importance around the time of reform of the Irish Church in the twelfth century.⁸ The reforms to the Irish Church resulted in many former

monastic sites being downgraded in status to that of parish centres, while others such as Monaincha in Co. Tipperary, and Inchicronan and Kilshanny in Co. Clare adopted Augustinian rule, probably as a tacit way to retain their traditional status. With no Augustinian or Cistercian foundation, Rathbláthmaic diminished in status and became a parish centre, albeit an important site situated in the vicinity of powerful lineages such as the Uí Dheaghaidh (O'Dea) at Dysert and Uí Ghriobhtha (O'Griffey) at Kilnamona.

One of the earliest recordings of the church at Rathbláthmaic dates from an early fourteenth century ecclesiastical taxation list. It was recorded as 'Rayth' and valued at four marks per annum.⁹ This taxation list, reputed to have taken place after the Bruce invasion, valued parishes in Killaloe diocese in 1322.¹⁰ At this time areas of central and east Co. Clare were affected by the internecine warfare between various Uí Bhriain (O'Brien) factions and also the impact wrought by the collapse of the De Clare manor and colony at Tradraige which had culminated in their defeat nearby to Rathbláthmaic at Dysert O'Dea in 1318. The value ascribed to Rathbláthmaic, therefore, was possibly notional and did not reflect its full economic potential during peace time.

The termon at Rathbláthmaic consisted of four quarters in c.1661 according to Bishop Worth.¹¹ It was also surveyed as four quarters at the time of Composition in 1585 where it was specifically called 'Kinalwye' (Cinéal Bhaoith),¹² a point noted by Bishop Worth as 'ye old name of ye parish & ye four quarters always said to belong to ye Bishop'.¹³ In 1622 the church land at Rath ('Rathblanage'), however, was recorded as being 12 plough lands valued at £120 per annum¹⁴ and in the seventeenth century numerous leases were entered into by the Bishop of Killaloe and tenants from the Uí Ógáin (O'Hogan) and Uí Dheaghaidh families.¹⁵

Uí Chiaróg clerical lineage

The original coarbs of Rathbláthmaic were the obscure Uí Chiaróg lineage who, according to the genealogies, descended from Cailíne Ciarodhar (Cailíne of the black-brown hair) of the Uí Bhloid grouping of septs.¹⁶ The genealogies also link the Uí Chiaróg to Blathmac himself, from whom the appellation Rathbláthmaic is derived, as they shared the same tribal group.¹⁷ Many coarbial families claim a genealogical link (fictitious or otherwise) to a monastic founder in order to bolster their legitimacy and hereditary claim to termon lands and clerical status. The Uí Chiaróg were no exception in this regard.

Cailíne, the eponymous ancestor of the Uí Chiaróg, descended from Bréanain Bán, the ancestor of other Uí Bhloid clerical families such as the Uí Mhael Uidhir of Cille Laisre (Killestry, Killaloe parish).¹⁸ The Uí Chiaróg are largely absent from the Irish genealogies; rather the Uí

Chiaróg (or muinnter Chiaróg) appear in the compilation of genealogical information relating to Munster, collectively known as *An Leabhar Muimhneach*:

Sé meic ag Fearadhach mhac Bréanainn Bháin amhail as-bert an file:
Cailíne, Breacán gan chleith
Maoilín, Aodh Molt Gabhaidh,
Díoma, Damhán a daraigh
Sé meic feartha Fearadhaigh.¹⁹

[Fearadhach son of Bréanainn Bán (the white) had six sons, as the poet said:
Cailíne, Breacán without crozier.
Maoilín, Aodh Molt Gabhaidh,
Díoma, Damhán, who rises up,
Six manly sons of Fearadhach]

It is therefore apparent that Cailíne, ancestor to the Uí Chiaróg, had an ecclesiastical connection, though the reference to Breacán without a crozier is rather uncertain. The Breacán referred to here is not St Breacán of his namesake Kilbreckan in Doorra, as St Breacán's father was Eacha Bailldearg.²⁰ Without a crozier may refer to a particular clerical status that is non-episcopal, but still of importance as denoting Cailíne as a clerical forebear of the Uí Chiaróg.²¹

An insightful reference exists in the late fourteenth century compilation *Leabhar Bhaile an Mhóta*. The reference to the Uí Chiaróg is illuminating and reads: '*Calin Ciarodhar ota Uí Ciarog Ratha Blathmaic*'²² (i.e. Calin Ciarodhar from who [derives] the Uí Chiarog of Rathbláthmaic). As a lineage of Uí Bhloid origin, the recording of the Uí Chiaróg from the late fourteenth century must have been considered, already by that date, as being a lineage of attested antiquity and attachment to the church of Rathbláthmaic.

The other recording of the Uí Chiaróg appears in the other important genealogical compilation from the early fifteenth century, *Leabhar Leacáin*. This reference is more explicit in linking the Uí Chiaróg to other Uí Bhloid clerical families:

Brenaind Ban mac Blaid is uadha atait muinnter Urrthaille, agus muinnter Ciarog, agus muinnter Bruig agus Uí Ceindeidigh agus muinnter Ceallaigh agus muinnter Maeldomnaigh...²³

[the son of Blaid, Brenain the white, from whom descends the Hurley lineage, the Ciarog lineage, the Brug lineage, the O'Kennedy lineage, the Kelly lineage and the Moloney lineage]

Elsewhere, we know that muinnter Urrthaille (*recte* Uí Urthuile) served as an erenagh sept at Inis Cealtra, supplying hereditary clergy there throughout the fifteenth century,²⁴ while the genealogies records muinnter Ceallaigh (Uí Cheallaigh lineage) as 'combharba Tulach' (coarbs of Tulla).²⁵ Muinnter Maeldomnaigh, otherwise the Uí Mhaoil Dhomhnaigh lineage, were responsible for the original land grant to St Brecán in central Co. Clare according to a fifteenth century poem which is also suggestive of their historical role as an erenagh lineage in that area.²⁶ The chief lineage of the family were seated around Kiltanon in Tulla though a branch of the family were settled on the five quarters of land on the Co. Clare side of the Shannon near Killaloe known as 'Glanamuntermalone'. Where, perhaps, the kindred held the land in their capacity as erenaghs as the land apparently belonged to the See of Killaloe.²⁷

The Uí Chiaróg represented an ancient pre-Dál gCais lineage who must have held the original stewardship of the monastic lands of Rathbláthmaic. Though by the later middle ages the Uí Chiaróg were probably displaced by the

Dál gCais erenagh sept, the Uí Ógáin, who held lands in the parish and were associated with the church lands of Rathbláthmaic by the mid-seventeenth century.²⁸ The termon lands at Rathbláthmaic, like those of other former monastic sites, experienced a downgrading in status as a consequence of the twelfth century reforms, and so probably did the Uí Chiaróg coarbs.

The petition by Conor Kerroge, recorded in the Bishop Worth's c.1661 survey of lands which claimed proprietorial interest over church lands, is instructive as to the history of the Uí Chiaróg of Rathbláthmaic:

This land is 2qrs and Arthur O Connor undertake to me to prove it belonging to y^e Bishop and desires to be admitted tenant. Arthur O Connor brought to me Connor Kerroge, who says that he and his ancestors for many years were tenants to y^e Bishop...and y^t his ancestors were clerks to y^e parish of Rath, & paid y^e Bishop 10sp annú [annually], and to Bishop Maloenie since y^e wars, & y^t it is now in the possession of Jo. [John] McEdmond Hogan.²⁹

We know that in the 1620s all four quarters of the termon paid refectons to the Bishop of Killaloe and that those refectons were set down in leases made from 1616 onwards by Bishop Rider.³⁰ The fact that Connor Kerroge (Conchobhar Ó Ciaróg) recited in c.1661 that two quarters of Rathbláthmaic termon paid a rent to the Bishop of Killaloe, both anciently and presently, may suggest that the other two quarters were not under the stewardship of the Uí Chiaróg, but also paid refectons to Killaloe. Rather, evidence suggests that the other two quarters were under Uí Ógáin stewardship.

In 1636-7 one Teige O'Keroge (Tadhg Ó Ciaróg) was charged with trespass and rioting on the Bishop's freehold land at Letter (*alias* Dromnoone in Rathbláthmaic) which was in dispute with Thomas O'Gripha.³¹ The Uí Chiaróg are last mentioned in 1715 when Gilla Kireoge of Rath was recorded as a defaulter on paying for the repair of the Protestant church of Killinaboy, indicating that unlike some coarbial families the Uí Chiaróg did not make the transition to the Protestant Church of Ireland.³² Note the usage, even at this comparatively late date, of the recognisable ecclesiastical forename 'Gilla' (*Giolla*, devotee or servant), symbolically congruent with their former role as a coarbial lineage.

The Papal Registers are silent regarding the Uí Chiaróg of Rathbláthmaic, suggesting that in their case their function was limited to the office of coarb and they were not a church family in the wider sense of supplying churchmen to local benefices.³³ The chief lineage in the Papal Registers holding benefices at Rathbláthmaic during the fifteenth century were the Uí Chuinn (O'Quin).³⁴ Instead it is likely that the Uí Chiaróg only farmed the lands of Rathbláthmaic, possibly more akin to minor erenaghs or termoners. However their link with the parish appears to be of considerable antiquity; themselves being of Uí Bhloid descent and pre-dating Dál gCais claims to church lands suggests characteristics of a coarbial family. The Uí Bhloid ancestry that many clerical lineages in Co. Clare shared, augurs for a pre-twelfth century origin.

Uí Ógáin of the Dál gCais

The local family Uí Ógáin may have also had a coarbial or erenagh function at Rathbláthmaic. This connection may have had its origins in the later middle ages. Edmund McHugh O'Hogan was recorded in 1641 as paying a 'chiefry' on certain lands to the See of Killaloe.³⁵ Members of the O'Hogan (Uí Ógáin) family of Rathbláthmaic had conformed to the Church of Ireland by the eighteenth cen-

ture and were still important locally at that time.³⁶ As an offshoot family of the ruling Dál gCais, the Uí Ógáin had early medieval ecclesiastical connections to Killaloe which they retained throughout the period. The earliest references to them holding the abbacy of Killaloe are to Cathal and Coscrach, cousins of Ógáin the eponymous ancestor of the Uí Ógáin, and date from 1013 and 1040 respectively.³⁷

It is conceivable that the Uí Ógáin connection to Rathbláthmaic can be attributed to their Dál gCais origins. And as allies of the ruling Uí Bhriain were placed at Rathbláthmaic to supplant the Uí Chiaróg who were of Uí Bhloid stock. Their exact relationship to the Rathbláthmaic monastery and later parish church, and their role and position *vis-à-vis* the Uí Chiaróg, however, remains uncertain. It is conceivable that by the mid-seventeenth century the Uí Chiaróg were tenants on the church land of Rathbláthmaic, possibly on the lands which the Uí Ógáin had proprietorship of because the Uí Chiaróg were not recorded as proprietors there in 1641.³⁸

In the nearby townland of Moyhill existed in 1839 a ruin known as Cuirt Mhaothail, formerly the residence of the leading lineage of the Uí Ógáin.³⁹ The townland of Moyhill was recorded in c.1661 as belonging to Edmond mc Hugh O Hogan.⁴⁰ As mentioned previously, Edmund mc Hugh O Hogan held certain lands in 1641 out of which was due a cheifry to the Bishop of Killaloe, indicating that at that time the Uí Ógáin held the erenaghy of Rathbláthmaic.⁴¹ The Uí Ógáin feature prominently in the seventeenth century history of Rathbláthmaic and were successful in securing leases to the termon lands there. Bishop Worth's notes from c.1661 are again illuminating:

And in ye Bishop's rental March 23rd 1630, it is said Mr Edmund Hogan of Mohill in ye parish of Rath holdeth ye Termon of Rath being 4 qrts the lease made by Mauritius O'Brien Bishop of Killaloe at 20s per annum.⁴²

If the Uí Chiaróg claimed in c.1661 that their ancestors had paid an annual rent to the Bishop of Killaloe on two quarters, both anciently and during the episcopacy of Bishop Moloney (1630-1651),⁴³ then perhaps the other two quarters were under Uí Ógáin stewardship until the seventeenth century when the latter appear to have held leases for the entire termon at Rathbláthmaic.

The Uí Ógáin served as important churchmen to the Dál gCais and a branch of the family in the nineteenth century were custodians of the crozier of St Coonlaun in Youghallarrah parish across the Shannon in Co. Tipperary.⁴⁴ It is not known if the reliquaries of Rathbláthmaic were ever under the custodianship of the Uí Chiaróg. The ancient

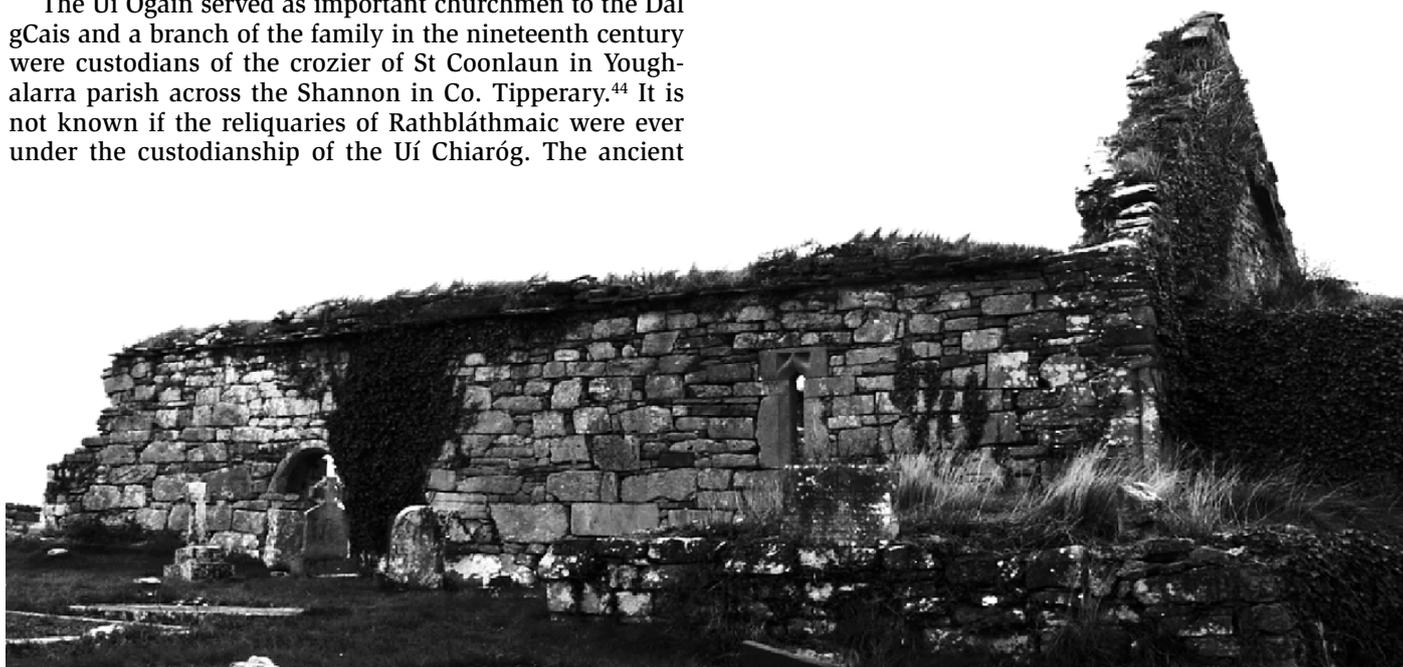
bronze bells of Rathbláthmaic and the crozier shrine of Blathmac made in c.1100⁴⁵ was preserved at Rathbláthmaic but the hereditary keepers are not recorded.⁴⁶ The production of high status reliquaries points to the historic importance of Rathbláthmaic as a pre-reform monastic site.

Uí Chiaróg in later history

The story of the Uí Chiaróg appears to end in the eighteenth century as, possibly, the lineage became extinct. None of the name survived into the nineteenth century and no phonetically anglicised variants are recorded in the *Tithe Applotment Books* (1820s) or the *Griffith Valuation* (1850s). Neither do we find translated variants of *Ciaróg* – such as Black or Beatle – among surnames found in Rathbláthmaic or adjoining parishes in the nineteenth century.⁴⁷ Ainsworth, in the index to his work *Inchiquin Manuscripts*, erroneously places the name O'Keroge under the appellation Carrig.⁴⁸ This, of course, is incorrect for Carrig is a truncated and anglicised version of *Mac Con Chairrge*, a lineage whose patrimony was further west at Kilfenora.⁴⁹ And who, according to the poem on the Dál gCais by Maoilín Óg Mac Bruaideadha, scion of the learned *seanchaidhe* lineage Clann Bhruaideadha, were a distinct sept and without clerical origins.⁵⁰

It is uncertain as to whether the Uí Chiaróg survived as a lineage into modern times.⁵¹ What we can be sure of, however, is that the Uí Chiaróg were of an ancient stock, one that was closely associated with Rathbláthmaic church and termon. Ironically it is in the seventeenth century when they first appear in documentation; suffice to say the sum of knowledge concerning their clerical connections comes to light during this period, a point when they were being dislodged from their customary position as ecclesiastical tenants. Probably they had already lost their coarbial status before this date, perhaps being eclipsed by the prolific Uí Ógáin family also settled at Rathbláthmaic.

Further work remains in better understanding the origins and history of the hereditary clerical lineages of Co. Clare who held a unique position in Gaelic society. This gleaning of the Uí Chiaróg serves to highlight the collective history of clerical lineages which retained a special status in Gaelic society up until the calamities of the seventeenth century.



Rathbláthmaic church and former monastic site - original patrimony of the Uí Chiaróg

References

- 1 The author wishes to acknowledge the kind assistance of Brian Ó Dálaigh, Martin Breen, Dr Katharine Simms (Trinity College Dublin) and Prof. Pádraig Ó Riain in the preparation of this article.
- 2 Dermot F. Gleeson, 'The Coarbs of Killaloe Diocese', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, No.79, 1949, pp.160-169, p.168
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 T.J. Westropp, 'The Churches of County Clare, and the Origin of the Ecclesiastical Divisions in that County', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 1900, pp.100-176.
- 5 Marcus Keane, *The Towers and Temples of Ancient Ireland: Their Origins and History Discussed from a New Point of View*, Hodges, Smith and Co., Dublin, 1867, p.365.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p.364.
- 7 Pádraig Ó Riain, *A Dictionary of Irish Saints*, Four Courts Press, Dublin, 2011, p.348.
- 8 Raghnaill Ó Floinn, 'Two ancient bronze bells from Rath Blathmach, Co. Clare', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, Vol.XXXII, 1990, pp.19-29, p.22.
- 9 H.S. Sweetman, *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland: 1302-1307*. Her Majesty's Public Record Office, London, 1886, p.300.
- 10 It has been suggested that the Papal taxation for Killaloe was actually taken around c.1322 as the date that the rolls of taxation reached Westminster was October 1322. The suggestion is that Killaloe, Kilfenora, Meath, Cloyne, Limerick, Ross, Ardfert, Waterford, Lismore, Cork, Cashel, Emly dioceses were taken in response to the order to re-value after the Bruce wars showing, in many cases, a lower valuation for benefices than that which would have prevailed in times of peace. Geoffrey J. Hand, 'The Dating of the Early Fourteenth-Century Ecclesiastical Valuations of Ireland', *The Irish Theological Quarterly*, Vol. XXIV, 1957, pp.271-274.
- 11 See MS 1777, *Typescript copy of a survey of lands in the diocese of Killaloe made for Bishop Worth*, 1661, transcribed by (Rev) James B. Leslie, National Library of Ireland, 1936, p.22. In this transcribed manuscript version of the original notebook of Bishop Worth, all denominations are set down showing their respective proprietorship.
- 12 See A. Martin Freeman (ed), *The Compassion Booke of Conought*, Irish Manuscripts Commission, Dublin, 1936, p.10. The whole territory comprised 17 quarters as whereof 4 quarters belonged to the Bishop of Killaloe.
- 13 See MS 1777, *Typescript copy of a survey of lands in the diocese of Killaloe made for Bishop Worth*, 1661, transcribed by (Rev) James B. Leslie, National Library of Ireland, 1936, p.24.
- 14 Rev. Philip Dwyer, *Diocese of Killaloe from the reformation to the eighteenth century*, p.135.
- 15 *Ibid.*, p.332.
- 16 In the context of a verse about Breacán in the *An Leabhar Muimhneach* ['Breacán gan chleith' – i.e. without a crozier] Cailíne and Breacán were the sons of Fearadhach. See Tadhg Ó Donnchadha, *An Leabhar Muimhneach*, p. 311. Genealogies place Muinnter Chiaróg as originally of Uí Bhloid origin and derive them from 'Brenaind bán' [white-haired] son of Bloid. Seán Ó hÓgáin, *Conntae an Cláir: A Triocha Agus A Tuatha*, Oifig an tSoláitair, Baile Átha Cliath, 1938, p.13.
- 17 Seán Ó hÓgáin, *Conntae an Cláir: A Triocha Agus A Tuatha*, p.13. On Blathmac see the recording of his feast day in the Irish calendar and which was supposedly 24th July where it is also written: 'Onchú Mac Blaitmhneic in Dal gCais, i.e., ó Raith Blaithmach, 9th July' [Onchú, the son of Blathmac in Dalcais, i.e., from Rath Blathmac, 9th July]. John O'Donovan & Eugene O'Curry, *Ordnance Survey Letters: The Antiquities of County Clare*, CLASP Press, Ennis, 2003, p.56.
- 18 Tadhg Ó Donnchadha, *An Leabhar Muimhneach*, pp.311-312.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p.311.
- 20 Pádraig Ó Riain, *A Dictionary of Irish Saints*, p.112.
- 21 The phrase 'gan chleith' could also read as 'without spear'. However, in this context perhaps 'without crozier' is more accurate, signifying a lack of official temporal power or authority, emphasising the humble nature of these saints of the early medieval church.
- 22 *An Leabhar Bhaile an Mhóta*, f.185 cited in Seán Ó hÓgáin, *Conntae an Cláir: A Triocha Agus A Tuatha*, Oifig an tSoláitair, p.235.
- 23 Cited in Seán Ó hÓgáin, *Conntae an Cláir: A Triocha Agus A Tuatha*, p.13. An almost identical genealogical tract has survived in Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh's 1660s compilation, *Leabhar Mór na nGenealach*. The tract does not substantively depart from the passage in *Leabhar Leacáin*. However, in Mac Fhirbhisigh's work it does make mention of the Uí Cheallaigh under the appellation Muintir Maoil Cheallaigh. The inclusion of *Maoil* (tonsured or devotee) is suggestive of their ecclesiastical origins. Nollaig Ó Muraíle, *The Great Book of Irish Genealogies [Leabhar na nGenealach]* Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh, edited, with translation and indices by Nollaig Ó Muraíle Five volumes. Dublin, DeBurca, 2004–2005, p.601 [Dál Cais].
- 24 See, for example, 'Lateran Regesta 232: 1422-1423', *Calendar of Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, Volume 7: 1417-1431 (1906), p. 265.
- 25 Tadhg Ó Donnchadha, *An Leabhar Muimhneach*, p.312
- 26 Anne O'Sullivan, 'Saint Brecán of Clare', *Celtica*, Vol.XV, 1983, pp.128-139, pp.128-139.
- 27 Rev. Philip Dwyer, *Diocese of Killaloe from the reformation to the eighteenth century*, p.137. On the Uí Mhaoil Dhomhnaigh lineage of Glanamuntermalone see Luke McInerney, 'Documents from the Thomond Papers at Petworth House', *Archivium Hibernicum*, Vol. LXIII, 2011, pp.7-55.
- 28 R. Simington, *Books of Survey and Distribution, Being Abstracts of Various Surveys and Instruments of Title, 1636-1703*, [Co. of Clare], pp.525-526, p.530.
- 29 See MS 1777, *Typescript copy of a survey of lands in the diocese of Killaloe made for Bishop Worth*, 1661, transcribed by (Rev) James B. Leslie, National Library of Ireland, 1936, p.24.
- 30 *Ibid.*, p.25.
- 31 National Library of Ireland, *Inchiquin Manuscripts*, MS 45, 705/4 [1636-6] On the identification of 'Letter' see R. Simington, *Books of Survey and Distribution, Being Abstracts of Various Surveys and Instruments of Title, 1636-1703*, [Co. of Clare], IMC, Stationary Office, Dublin, 1949, Rath parish.
- 32 *Papers of the Consistency Court of Killaloe*, 1715 [parish of Rath], ADD MSS 31881, British Museum [now British Library], p.238. The churchwardens for the Union of Killinaboy were Thomas Blood and Edmund Hogan, the former representing the post-Cromwellian Protestant elite, while the latter can be held as representing those Gaelic families who conformed to the Protestant settlement. The Uí Ógáin were responsible for erecting a side chapel to Rath church in the 1660s, the remains of which can still be seen and the erection celebrated on a tablet stone on the south side of the church. Gilla Kireoge was recorded as being in the denomination of 'Cahirnacrshe' (perhaps the 'Carownecrossy' of 1659). See Séamus Pender (ed) *A Census of Ireland Circa 1659*, IMC, Stationary Office, Dublin, 1939, parish of Rath.
- 33 Katharine Simms makes the distinction between families that claimed a specific parish function in a cathedral chapter or 'erenaghy', and the claim of a family's role as hereditary churchmen in general. Clearly some coarbial and erenagh families fell into either group. It is, however, difficult to distinguish the reality 'on the ground' and by using limited primary sources such as the Papal Registers which tend to capture ecclesiastical business relating to the procuring and disputation of benefices. Katharine Simms, 'Frontiers in the Irish Church – Regional and Cultural', in *Colony and Frontier in Medieval Ireland: Essays Presented to J.F. Lyndon*, Terry Barry, Robin Frame & Katharine Simms (eds), London, 1995, pp.177-200, p.181.
- 34 Uí Chuinn (O'Quin) clerics recorded in the Papal Registers appears under the years 1427, 1442, 1443, 1445, 1485 (some are probably repeat mentions of the same cleric). See *Calendar of Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, [various volumes] *sub anno*, 1427, 1442, 1443, 1445, 1485.
- 35 R. Simington, *Books of Survey and Distribution, Being Abstracts of Various Surveys and Instruments of Title, 1636-1703*, [Co. of Clare], pp.525-526 p.530. The lands were Moyhill,

- Sconellbeg and Sconellmore, Carnane and Cahirnemoana and Polbane.
- 36 Edmund Hogan was a churchwarden for the Union of Killinaboy in 1715, as referenced previously in the endnotes. Consider also the conversion of Edmond Hogan of Cregmoher, Rath parish, who was recorded on the 'Convert Rolls' for the year 1752. James Frost, *The History and Topography of the County of Clare: From the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the 18th Century*, Mercier Press, Dublin, [re-print], 1973, p.632.
- 37 Raghnaill Ó Floinn, 'Two ancient bronze bells from Rath Blathmach, Co. Clare', p.22. Also see *Annals of Inisfallen, sub, anno*, 1013 and 1040.
- 38 R. Simington, *Books of Survey and Distribution, Being Abstracts of Various Surveys and Instruments of Title, 1636-1703, [Co. of Clare]*, pp.525-526 p.530.
- 39 John O'Donovan, *Ordnance Survey Letters: The Antiquities of County Clare*, CLASP Press, Ennis, 2003, p.57. In c.1661 Bishop Worth recorded that 'In ye year 1641 there was in Moyhill a new stone house in repair', presumably the residence of the Uí Ógáin. MS 1777, *Typescript copy of a survey of lands in the diocese of Killaloe made for Bishop Worth, 1661*, transcribed by (Rev) James B. Leslie, National Library of Ireland, 1936, p.24.
- 40 MS 1777, *Typescript copy of a survey of lands in the diocese of Killaloe made for Bishop Worth, 1661*, transcribed by (Rev) James B. Leslie, National Library of Ireland, 1936, p.23.
- 41 *Ibid.*, p.22.
- 42 *Ibid.*, p.25.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p.24.
- 44 Raghnaill Ó Floinn, 'Two ancient bronze bells from Rath Blathmach, Co. Clare', p.22.
- 45 Margaret Cormack (ed), *Saints And Their Cults in the Atlantic World*, University of South Carolina, 2006, p.188.
- 46 Thomas J. Westropp, 'The Churches of County Clare, and the Origin of the Ecclesiastical Divisions in That County', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 6, 1900 - 1902, pp.100-180. The crozier-head of Rathbláthmaic was purchased from the Rev. Stephen Walsh, parish priest of Corofin for £5 in 1850. Two ancient bronze bells, also from Rathbláthmaic were purchased at the same time by the Royal Irish Academy. Raghnaill Ó Floinn, 'Two ancient bronze bells from Rath Blathmach, Co. Clare', p.19.
- 47 Another surname which may have been a borrowed form and found locally, Kerwick, was recorded along with Kieroge in 1715 confirming that it is, indeed, a distinct surname. See Daniel Kierwick in Loghmagowne in Rath parish *Papers of the Consistency Court of Killaloe, 1715* [parish of Rath], ADD MSS 31881, British Museum [now British Library], p.237.
- 48 John Ainsworth (ed), *Inchiquin Manuscripts*, IMC, Dublin, 1961, p.707
- 49 R. Simington, *Books of Survey and Distribution, Being Abstracts of Various Surveys and Instruments of Title, 1636-1703, [Co. of Clare]*, Kilfenora parish.
- 50 See Mac Bruaideadha's poem titled *Cuirfead comaoin ar Cloinn Táil* wherein it states of the Mac Con Chairrge: *a-nois cuirim o clan tail/ Mec Con C[h]airrge is Í Beoláin/cia an uair-si dob aipce im reir/ d'úaisle na haicme haimce iad séin* [now I claim from Clan Táil/the Mac Con Carrigs and the O'Bolans /who are now matured in my service/they are noble class]. Damian McManus & Eoghan Ó Raghallaigh (ed) *A Bardic Miscellany*, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin 2010, p.176.
- 51 There is a modern tradition that the current Culliny (or Killeeny) family were the coarbs of Dysert and Rathbláthmaic. Neither lineage, however, feature in the Irish genealogical tracts of the Dál gCais. The Kileenys (perhaps from Ó Cillín, keeper of the church yard) appear clustered around Kilfenora and Rathbláthmaic at the time of the Tithes Applotment Books (1820s). This fact points to them as a minor sept with local origins. The lineage may have indeed had a minor ecclesiastical role which, certainly by the seventeenth century, was extinguished; at any rate the absence of documentary evidence denotes any further discussion as speculation. Any local tradition suggesting that they were the coarbs of Rathbláthmaic is likely to be false or confused with the real association of the Uí Chiaróg and Uí Ógáin, for which documentary proof obtains.