

POEMS BY FEARGHAL ÓG MAC AN BHAIRD

THE FOLLOWING list of fifty-nine poems is an attempt to quantify what, at present, is believed to survive of the work of Fearghal Óg mac Fearghail mheic Dhomhnaill Ruaidh Mheic an Bhaird¹ (fl. 1567–c. 1620). It is presented here as a prologue to some forthcoming articles on the subject of the work of this poet.² With the exception of those of the dedicatory quatrains which take the form of *brúilingeacht*,³ these poems, which total almost 1,950 quatrains,⁴ were all composed in *dán díreach*, the metrical situation being as follows: 38 poems in *deibhidhe*, 8 *séadna*, 6 *rannaigheacht mhór*, 4 *rannaigheacht bheag*, 1 *droighneach*, 1 *leathrannaigheacht mhór*, 1 *snéadhbhairdne*.⁵ In date the poems span from 1567, the probable date of the composition of *Maith do suidhigheadh síol Néill*, to post-1618 when Fearghal Óg was in Louvain where he composed at least three poems: *Éisd rem éagnach a fhír ghráidh*, *Fuarus iongnadh a fhír chumainn*, and *Ní maith altuighim m'anáir*.⁶

No such list can ever be regarded as absolute, and additions and subtractions will doubtless have to be made in future. The question of authorship is crucial in this regard, and some matters pertaining to this subject may be addressed here.

¹ Among primary sources, this patronymic is represented in only one manuscript ascription, RIA MS 475 (24 P 25), f. 79v. Five instances of ascriptions in the style ‘Fearghal Óg mac Fearghail Mheic an Bhaird’ occur; four instances simply of ‘Fearghal Óg’; one instance of ‘Fearghal Mac an Bhaird’; and, apart from *idem*-ascriptions, the remaining ascriptions are in the style ‘Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird’.

²This is a development of material in my dissertation (‘Poems by Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird’, PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1988, henceforth Ó Macháin). It contains a comprehensive account of the poet’s life and work, and an edition of his unpublished poems.

³See Tomás Ó Conchearnainn, ‘A feature of the poetry of Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird’, *Éigse* 15/3 (1974) 235–51, at 240; cf. Cathal G. Ó Hainle, ‘Refrains in *ógláchas* poems’, *Ériu* 42 (1991) 83–98, at 96.

⁴Precisely 1,945.5, the half-quatrains deriving from *Uaibhreach misi ar Mhág Uidhir* of which only 17.5 quatrains now survive.

⁵These figures are generally proportionally in keeping with the findings of the late Professor Ó Cuív from his examination of other collections: Brian Ó Cuív, ‘Some developments in Irish metrics’, *Éigse* 12/4 (1968) 273–90, at 276–7.

⁶Fearghal Óg must have been born in or before 1550, the year of his father’s death (AFM v, 1518). The latest possible date for Fearghal Óg’s death is 1642, when a friar named Fergallus Juvenis was hanged from the mast of a ship on the river Shannon. Cuthbert McGrath is probably correct, however, in identifying this Fearghal with the brother of Eóghan Ruadh mac Uilliam Óig (‘Eoghan Ruadh mac Uilliam Óig Mhic an Bhaird’ in Sylvester O’Brien (ed.), *Measgra i gcuimhne Mhichíl Uí Chléirigh* (Dublin 1944) 108–16, at 108–10).

Dedicatory quatrains

As has been pointed out by Professor Ó Concheanainn,⁷ dedicatory quatrains are a feature of poems by Fearghal Óg. Of the fifty-nine poems listed below, thirty-seven contain a dedicatory quatrain to St Peter.⁸ In one of these (*Slán agaibh a fhiora Mumhan*) St Paul is also mentioned;⁹ in two poems (10 and 52 below) Peadar and the Virgin are mentioned in the same dedicatory quatrain.¹⁰

Fourteen poems contain a dedicatory quatrain to Mág Aonghusa, Aodh (*al. (an) Fear Dorcha*), of Rathfriland, Co. Down (†12 January 1595/6), ten of which quatrains were composed *post mortem*. Aodh was a significant patron of Fearghal Óg (see below). Seventeen poems contain a dedicatory quatrain, *post mortem*, to Conn son of Ó Ruairc, Brian Ballach, probably the Conn who died a young man in 1577;¹¹ in one of these – that in the poem celebrating the inauguration of Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill (*Ní fada ón Fhódla a tách a dtuaidheamhain*) – Conn is coupled with Brian na Múrtha, his brother. I have yet to find a poem addressed to Conn.

Of the poems in the list below, twelve contain dedicatory quatrains to Peadar, Aodh and Conn together. Quatrains to Conn and Peadar, but not to Aodh, occur in four poems, while Conn and Aodh, but not Peadar, are mentioned in one poem. A dedicatory quatrain to Conn without the other two never occurs, but a quatrain to Aodh alone is found in one poem. A dedicatory quatrain to Peadar alone is found in twenty-one poems. Of the items among these twenty-one poems about which there is no doubt as to authorship, only three are not on a religious theme.¹²

Though suspect as a dating criterion,¹³ these dedicatory quatrains are an important identifying signature in over two thirds of Fearghal Óg's work – such quatrains are absent in nineteen poems – with those to Peadar clearly of prime significance in this regard.¹⁴ While I have not

⁷Ó Concheanainn, 'A feature of the poetry of Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird'.

⁸In general, the quatrain to Peadar occurs in final position. Exceptions are numbers 25, 27, and 53 in the list below.

⁹A dedicatory quatrain to Peadar and Pól is also found in the poem beginning *Ní bean aonothruis Éire* (RIA MS 3 (23 L 17), ff. 34r–36v), which is ascribed to Diarmuid Riabhach Ó Dálaigh, and dated 1630. Such coupling of the two apostles was not unusual: cf. Brian Ó Cuív, 'An invocation of Saints Peter and Paul', *Éigse* 13/1 (1969) 52–8.

¹⁰Nine poems contain closing quatrains (as distinct from additional dedicatory quatrains) addressed to the Virgin: numbers 10–12, 23, 29, 31–2, 41, and 43 in the list below.

¹¹AFM v, 1690. Brian Ballach had three sons named Conn, the other two being Conn, killed at his father's behest in 1540 (ALC ii, 328, AFM v, 1464), and the martyr Connbhráthair, hanged at Kilmallock in 1579 (ALC ii, 426–8).

¹²Numbers 9, 45, and 50.

¹³For example, the elegy (number 18 below) for Conn mac an Chalbhaigh (†1583) contains a dedicatory quatrain, *post mortem*, to Aodh Mág Aonghusa (†1596).

¹⁴There are at least two instances in late manuscripts of quatrains to Peadar by Fearghal Óg being abstracted from their original setting: *Bíodh Peadar eadrom is sibh* (= O'Hara VIII.54) RIA MS 274 (24 C 11), p. 190; *Doirseoir Dé ná diúltadh meisí* (= O'Hara X.18) NLI MS G 180, p. 72.

succeeded to date in locating poems that are not ascribed to Fearghal Óg but that contain dedicatory quatrains to Aodh and/or Conn, I am aware of three poems not ascribed to Fearghal Óg but containing a dedicatory quatrain to Peadar, which one might consider to be the work of Fearghal Óg.

Inclusion of such poems among the work of Fearghal Óg is encouraged by the textual history of the poem beginning *Ná déana díomas a dhuine*. I have noted nineteen copies of this poem. In the Book of the O'Conor Don (f. 78r) it is ascribed to 'Goffraigh Finn'; five copies ascribe it to Ó Dálaigh Fionn, three to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh, two to Aonghus Ó Dálaigh, and one to 'Colmán'. The poem is anonymous in six manuscripts. With the exception of one manuscript, all copies contain twelve quatrains, the final one being a dedicatory quatrain to 'doirseoir Dé', that is to St Peter. On that basis I would incline to attribute the poem to Fearghal Óg, and it happens that this attribution is confirmed by the earliest copy of the poem, from which the dedicatory quatrain is in fact absent. This eleven-quatrain version survives in NLS MS 72.2.14, f. 27v, where it is ascribed to 'Ferghall Og' and where it is followed by another poem headed 'An .f.c.na .i. Firgall Og Mhac an Bhaird .cc.'

This methodology becomes less certain, however, when we take into account the fact that at least one other poet, contemporary with Fearghal Óg, also employed a dedicatory quatrain to St Peter in some of his compositions. The poet in question is Mathghamhuin Ó hUiginn:¹⁵ two religious and two secular poems by him contain such quatrains. These poems begin *Deacair foghnamh do thoil dá thighearna*,¹⁶ *Naomhtha an obair iomrádh Dé*,¹⁷ *Do cheinneóchainn comann Goill*,¹⁸ and *Geall re heighreacht eangnamh ríodhamhna*.¹⁹ This fact means that the three poems which I have identified as containing a dedicatory quatrain to Peadar, and which I propose to include tentatively in the list of poems by Fearghal Óg, may not be of his authorship. These three poems are as follows:

1. *Sbéacláir na cruinne an chroch naomh*. This poem survives in eleven manuscript copies. The earliest of these (O'Conor Don, f. 66r) bears no ascription, and the poem is attributed in the remainder to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh. The final quatrain is dedicated to Peadar.

2. *Mé féin m'éanbhráighisi ar Aodh*. This is a poem of twenty-two quatrains addressed to Aodh Mág Aonghusa. It survives in two manuscripts: Franciscan MS A 25 (UCD Archives Department),

¹⁵Hardly Tadhg Dall's father, as suggested by McKenna (*Aith. D.* i, pp. xxxiv–xxxv). The quatrain to Peadar is absent from two further poems by Mathghamhuin: *Créd do choisc cogadh Laighean* (*LBranach* 50 (pp. 178–83)), and *San Mhumhain is fearr Ultaigh* (RIA MS 3 (23 L 17), f. 47r).

¹⁶*Aith. D.* 76 (pp. 287–9; vol. ii, 175–7).

¹⁷*Ibid.* 75 (pp. 281–6; vol. ii, 172–5).

¹⁸RIA MS 744 (A v 2), ff. 2v–4r. To Theobald Dillon.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, f. 53. To Teabóid a Búrc.

pp. 204–6 (A), and the Book of the O'Conor Don ff. 272v–273v (B). In A, which appears to be the slightly older manuscript, the poem is attributed by *idem*-ascription to 'Ó Ruanadha', to whom the preceding poem (pp. 201–4), beginning *Foraois na horchra Íbh Eathach*,²⁰ is ascribed. In B the order is reversed — *Mé féin* ascribed to 'Ó Rúanadha' and preceding *Foraois*, which bears the *idem*-ascription — and the poems occur in the Clann Aonghusa section of the manuscript (ff. 264–276v), where nine poems to members of that family occur.

An examination of the textual history of the poem in question suggests that A and B are independent of each other and copied from a common exemplar. Taking into account the deliberate organisation of material in B, it is probable that A's *idem*-ascription over *Mé féin* represents the true state of the exemplar.

In *Mé féin m'éanbhráighisi ar Aodh* the author, by a clever conceit, seeks to return to Aodh Mág Aonghusa from whom he has been parted. It can be interpreted as a poem of conciliation, though the internal evidence is not strong. What concerns us is the final quatrain, which is dedicated to St Peter. The presence of this quatrain, added to Fearghal Óg's documented attachment to Mág Aonghusa — apart from the *roinn iargcomhairc*, two other poems²¹ by the poet concerning Aodh survive (numbers 27 and 28 below) — suggests that the poem is to be attributed to Fearghal Óg, and the Ó Ruanadha ascription confined to *Foraois na horchra* alone.²²

3. *D'Oilbh Éarus is beatha a bhás*. This is an elegy on Oilbh Éarus mac Seaáin Hosé, or Oliver Hussey, of Killiney, Co. Kerry. Oilbh Éarus was a renowned educator who became 'a professour of the Artes in Doway',²³ and returned to Ireland c. 1580 where he was involved in the preparatory education of Irish students prior to their departure for the

²⁰An elegy on Éamonn mac Domhnaill mheic Aodha Méis Aonghusa.

²¹One is tempted, on thematic grounds alone, to ascribe another Mág Aonghusa poem to Fearghal Óg, that beginning *Níor iomchuir meisí mé féin* (Paul Walsh, 'Interpretanda', *Irisleabhar Muighe Nuadhád* (1931) 41–3; Colm Ó Lochlainn, 'Prince and poet: a poem to Art Mac Aonghusa', *Éigse* 2/3 (1940) 157–62). *Níor iomchuir* is clearly addressed to Aodh's son Art (†1629), while the author ostensibly regrets that he did not fully reciprocate the 'ónóir ollaimh' which he received from Aodh. The ascription of an inauguration poem in honour of Art, beginning *Trí uaithne um inis Ghaoihead*, to Fearghal Óg in three related mid-eighteenth-century manuscripts can be traced to Muiris Ó Gormáin, the poem being generally anonymous in the remaining fourteen copies. I hope to discuss poems to Clann Aonghusa in a future article.

²²The Ó Ruanadha were a long-established poetic family, and were associated with Clann Aonghusa since at least the fourteenth century (*AFM* iv, 666). Contemporary with Fearghal Óg was Niall Ó Ruanadha whose work is found in the *Leabhar Branach* (poems 19–22, 72).

²³Liam Millar, Eileen Power, *Holinshed's Irish Chronicle* (Dublin 1979) 102.

Continent, among them Fearghal Óg's kinsman Hugh Ward.²⁴ His father and brothers having been slain in the second Desmond rebellion,²⁵ Oilbh Éarus himself became involved in the events of 1601, earning himself the reputation of 'a most pernicious member in this traitorous combination'.²⁶ 'Old Husse' was eventually captured at the siege of Ballingarry in Clanmaurice in March 1602/3.²⁷ The principals were subsequently reported as having been executed, but Hussey appears to have been pardoned in November of that year.²⁸ References in the poem to 'créachtgoin' and 'créacht' suggest, however, that he may have died of wounds shortly after this.²⁹

This poem bears no ascription in the three surviving manuscript copies, RIA MSS 2 (23 F 16), pp. 204–6, and 3 (23 L 17), ff. 37r–39r, and UCD O'Curry MS 18, pp. 62–5 (a copy of RIA MS 3). It does, however, have a concluding quatrain addressed to Peadar, and on that basis I tentatively include it in the list of Fearghal Óg's work.

Of the three poems discussed above, I would be most confident about counting *Mé féin m'éanbhráighisi ar Aodh* among the work of Fearghal Óg, while the authorship of the other two is more debatable.

A disputed ascription

Primary copies of the poem beginning *Fogus furtacht don tir thuaidh* (19 below) occur in four manuscripts: O'Conor Don, ff. 197v–199r, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, MS 6131–3, ff. 20r–21v, both of which attribute the poem to Fearghal Óg; and two related manuscripts — NLI MS G 167, pp. 296–300 (288–92), and RIA MS 4 (24 P 27), pp. 80–84 — which ascribe it to Eóghan Ruadh mac Uilliam Óig Mheic an Bhaird. G 167, written in 1727, is the latest of these four but carries the authority of a family *duanaire*. Against this is the support for Fearghal Óg's authorship by the two continental manuscripts.

The poem is addressed to 'an tIarla Óg', Aodh mac Rudhraighe Í Dhomhnaill (1606–1642), who, as the last representative of Clann Dálaigh, will lead an invasion of Ireland. This may fix the date of composition of the poem in *c.* 1627, when plans for just such an invasion were being orchestrated by Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire.³⁰ This date would not rule out Fearghal Óg's authorship, nor would the poet's

²⁴ Denis J. O'Doherty, 'Students of the Irish College Salamanca (1595–1619)', *Arch. Hib.* 2 (1913) 1–36, at 9, 11, 29–31.

²⁵ *Kerry Archaeological Magazine* 1 (1908–12) 272–4.

²⁶ *Pacata Hibernia* (London 1633) 146.

²⁷ *Calender of state papers relating to Ireland 1603–1606*, 5–6.

²⁸ *Pacata Hibernia*, 383. *Irish patent rolls of James I*, 35 (lxxxv).

²⁹ Cuthbert Mág Craith suggested that Hussey died peacefully, but this seems at variance with the evidence of the poem: 'Oilbhearus Hosé', in Terence O'Donnell (ed.), *Franciscan Donegal* (Ros Nuala 1952) 109–12. Kenneth Nicholls has suggested to me that perhaps the Oliver Hussey who was pardoned in November 1603 was not the Oliver who may have been killed at Ballingarry.

³⁰ Brendan Jennings, 'The career of Hugh, son of Rory O'Donnell, Earl of Tirconnel, in the Low Countries', *Studies* 30 (1941) 219–34, at 231–2.

own expectation of returning to Ireland (q. 39), which is consonant with a similar intention expressed in quatrain 8 of *Éisd rem éagnach a fhír ghráidh*.

In support of the Eóghan Ruadh ascription one can cite that poet's connections with Aodh mac Rudhraighe as attested in the poems beginning *Cia ré bhfáiltigh fian Éirne*,³¹ *A leabhráin anmnighther d'Aodh*,³² and *Ionmhuin sgríbhionn sgaoiltear sunn*.³³ One may also cite the dedicatory quatrains to Aodh in poems addressed by Eóghan Ruadh to Niall Garbh and Neachtan Ó Domhnaill, which quatrains contain verbal and thematic echoes of *Fogus furtacht*.³⁴

The ascription to Eóghan Ruadh may appear to have the balance of probability in its favour, and is accepted as genuine by Professor Ó Buachalla.³⁵ One cannot, however, unreservedly dismiss Fearghal Óg's claim to authorship, and on that basis I include it in the list below.³⁶

Wrong ascriptions

A number of poems are occasionally ascribed to Fearghal Óg without any apparent textual authority, or internal supporting evidence. These may be referred to here.

1. *Cóir súil le seasamh Gaoidheal*. This is a messianic poem addressed to Seaán (†1655)³⁷ mac Aodha mac Cuinn mheic an Chalbhaigh Í Dhomhnaill. Of nine copies that I have noted, two of the three eighteenth-century copies ascribe the piece to Maoilín Óg Mac Bruaideadha,³⁸ the third bearing no ascription.³⁹ The remaining six manuscripts are nineteenth-century Ó Longáin items, one of which ascribes the poem to 'Feargal Mac an Bháird'.⁴⁰

2. *Iomdha éagnach ag Éirinn*. A poem lamenting the plight of Ireland the harlot. Ascribed to Flann Mac Craith in its earliest manuscript,⁴¹ it is ascribed to Ó Dálaigh Fionn in the early eighteenth century,⁴² followed by a number of nineteenth-century manuscripts,

³¹Tomás Ó Raghdhaigh, *Duanta Eoghain Ruaidh Mhic an Bhaird* (Gaillimh 1930) 2.

³²Bard. P. 1. See Breandán Ó Madagáin in *Éigse* 14 (1972) 250–251, and Breandán Ó Buachalla, 'Cúlra is tábhacht an dáin *A leabhráin ainmnightheir d'Aodh*', *Celtica* 21 (1990) 402–16.

³³Ó Raghdhaigh, *Duanta Eoghain Ruaidh* 1; *Ir. Syll. Poetry*, 26.

³⁴*Duanta Eoghain Ruaidh* 5.23, 9.30.

³⁵Ó Buachalla, 'Cúlra is tábhacht', 407 n. 10.

³⁶With this situation one might compare that of *T'aire riot a Riocaird Óig* (TD 22a) ascribed to Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn in the Book of the O'Conor Don, against all other manuscripts, which ascribe the poem to Brian Ó Domhnalláin.

³⁷Date given in an elegy composed by Gofraidh Óg Mac an Bhaird, BL MS Eg. 112, f. 488v31–2. For possible confusion of Seaán's father with Aodh Buidhe mac Toirdhealbháigh see Eoin Mac Cá�thaigh, 'Marbhna ar Aodh Buidhe Ó Domhnaill', *Ériu* 50 (1999) 41–78, at 43.

³⁸King's Inns MS 4, p. 20; BL MS Eg. 112, f. 489r.

³⁹TCD MS 1411 (H. 6. 7), p. 514.

⁴⁰RIA MS 1060 (24 A 28), f. 179v.

⁴¹RIA MS 2 (23 F 16), p. 156.

⁴²RIA MS 303 (23 L 37), p. 189, MS 953 (23 G 1), p. 363.

and leading to its inclusion in McKenna's edition of Aonghus Ó Dálaigh's work.⁴³ Other late ascriptions of convenience include Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, Séathrún Céitinn and Tadhg mac Dáire. Of twenty-seven extant copies noted by me, one from the mid eighteenth century ascribes the poem to 'Fearghal Mac an Bhaird'.⁴⁴

3. *Tobar fíoroinigh Fir Mhanach*. A poem to Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir (†1589). It is anonymous in the primary source, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Copenhagen, Ny kgl. Samling 268b ('Duanaire Mhéig Uidhir') f. 10r. In RIA MS 540 (C iv 1), f. 145v, however, it is headed 'An fer céadna c.c.t.', referring to the preceding poem which is headed 'Fergal Óg Mac an Bhaird'. Given that five pieces addressed by Fearghal Óg to Cú Chonnacht survive in the Copenhagen manuscript one might be inclined to consider *Tobar fíoroinigh* among his compositions also. I have demonstrated elsewhere, however, that this *idem*-ascription is a concoction of Aodh Buidhe Mac Cruitín, and was repeated by Tadhg Ó Neachtain in TCD MS 1361 (H.4.20), p. 31.⁴⁵

4. *Foghmhar na bhfileadh fuli Bhrianach*. A *crosántacht* addressed to Mac Í Bhriain Aradh, Donnchadh mac Toirdhealbhaigh Chairbrigh mheic Thoirdhealbhaigh mheic Mhuircheartaigh, of Béal an Átha (Ballina, par. Templeachally, Co. Tipperary), fl. 1655.⁴⁶ It is anonymous in its earliest source,⁴⁷ and is ascribed to Eóghan Mac Craith in two manuscripts by Mícheál Ó Longáin.⁴⁸ It is ascribed to Fearghal Óg by Tomás Ó Iceadha in an *idem*-ascription in a manuscript — Dunnington MS 2, p. 197 — where the poem follows Fearghal Óg's *crosántacht* to Uilliam Búrc of Ard na Riagh (*Mairg im dheaghaidh cheanglas comann*).⁴⁹ Given the late date of the piece, this ascription would scarcely merit notice did it not occur in a manuscript which, together with another Ó Iceadha manuscript — RIA MS 1382 (23 O 73) — and one by Eóghan Caomhánach — RIA MS 672 (23 C 21) — preserves an ascription of yet another *crosántacht* to the joint authorship of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn and Tadhg mac Dáire, an ascription which I believe to be

⁴³L. McKenna, *Dánta do chum Aonghus Fionn Ó Dálaigh* (Dublin and London 1919) 73–5.

⁴⁴TCD MS 1281 (H.1.7), f. 175r.

⁴⁵Pádraig Ó Macháin, *Téacs agus údar i bhFillíocht na Scol* (Baile Átha Cliath 1998) 23.

⁴⁶Probably to be identified with 'Donogh O Bryen Esqr alias mc. I Bryen Arra of Bealanaha': Robert C. Simmington, *The Civil Survey A.D. 1654–1656 County of Tipperary Vol. II* (Dublin 1934) 152–70. It was perhaps Donnchadh who succeeded to the Mac Í Bhriain title on the death of his cousin, Toirdhealbhach in 1626 (cf. R. A. S. Macalister, 'The history and antiquities of Inis Cealtra', *PRIA* 33 C (1916–17) 93–174, at 166).

⁴⁷RIA MS 7 (24 L 13), p. 55.

⁴⁸RIA MS 253 (F vi 2), p. 516; Maigh Nuad MS M 1, p. 270.

⁴⁹It is followed in the manuscript by three further *idem*-ascriptions to Fearghal Óg.: Edgar M. Slotkin, 'Two Irish literary manuscripts in the Mid-West', *Éigse* 25 (1991) 56–80, at 69–70.

genuine.⁵⁰ In the case of *Foghmhar na bhfileadh*, however, Ó Iceadha's *idem*-ascriptions on pp. 197–209 of the Dunnington manuscript are not supported by his copy of an identical sequence of poems in RIA MS 1382, pp. 221–227, where different ascriptions occur, or by the same sequence in Eóghan Caomhánach's RIA MS 672, pp. 112–20, where the items are anonymous.

5. *Th'aire a chumthaigh red chomhrádh*. A poem of ten quatrains, anonymous in the three surviving manuscript copies, in which the author accuses the addressee of having disparaged his competence as a poet 'a measg thuatadh' (q. 4b). As this critic is addressed as 'a mhic Fíthil' (q. 3b), O'Rahilly suggested that the person in question was possibly Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire (c. 1560–1629), Archbishop of Tuam.⁵¹ The only reference which might suggest that the subject was in holy orders is the ambiguous 'a measg thuatadh'; the line which, in the published version, reads 'má tharla, a athuir na héigsi' (q. 5b), and which might otherwise be taken as supporting the clerical status of the addressee, is in fact a gratuitous and unmetered emendation by Mhág Craith: it should read 'má tharla a thuir na héigsi'.

Based on this suggested identification by O'Rahilly, Cuthbert Mhág Craith included the poem in *Dán na mBráthar Mionúr* (poem 25) where he questioningly ascribed it to Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird,⁵² on the basis that two poems by Fearghal Óg addressed to Ó Maoil Chonaire in Louvain survive, those beginning *Éisd rem éagnach a fhir ghráidh* and *Fuarus iongnadh a fhir chumainn* (numbers 16 and 20 below). This ascription is accepted by Professor Breatnach who sees *Th'aire a chumthaigh* as forming part of a sequence composed by Fearghal Óg in Louvain, coming between *Fuarus iongnadh* and *Éisd rem éagnach*.⁵³

Mhág Craith's suggested ascription has no textual support, either internal or external. There is no indication of where the poem was composed, unlike Fearghal Óg's poems both of which specify 'Labháin'. Nor is there any thematic connection between this piece and Fearghal Óg's two compositions. *Th'aire a chumthaigh* is different in nature to Fearghal Óg's poems, which contain specific requests for patronage (*Éisd rem éagnach*), and for improved lodgings (*Fuarus iongnadh*). Fearghal Óg makes these requests of a younger man, based not on the intimate personal acquaintance suggested by 'lucht éanbhoithe sinn re seal' of *Th'aire a chumthaigh* (q. 9a), but rather, on the basis of a 'seanbháidh' and a 'móid ghráidh' between Clann an Bhaird and Flaithrí's family (*Fuarus iongnadh*, q. 14, *Éisd*

⁵⁰Pádraig Ó Macháin, 'Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn: foinse dá shaothar', in Pádraig Ó Fianachta (ed.), *An Dán Díreach*, Léachtaí Cholm Cille XXIV (Maigh Nuad 1994) 77–113, at 89–90.

⁵¹RIA Cat., 23.

⁵²Dán na mB. M. i, 124–6, ii, 155–6.

⁵³Pádraig A. Breatnach, *Téamaí taighde Nua-Ghaeilge* (Maigh Nuad 1997) 131–6; 'The aesthetics of Irish Bardic composition: an analysis of *Fuaras iongnadh, a fhir chumainn* by Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird', *CMCS* 42 (Winter 2001) 51–72.

rem éagnach, qq. 16–21) which was established two generations previously.⁵⁴ In these two poems Fearghal Óg is, as it were, trading on an old family debt in his dealings with a powerful man. This is a far cry from the basis on which the author of *Th'aire a chumthaigh* addresses his subject.

6. *Leachta carad i gcath Bhriain*. This poem on the aftermath of the battle of Dún in 1260, particularly with regard to those of the Í Chatháin who fell there,⁵⁵ is bizarrely ascribed to ‘Feargal Og Mhac an Bhaird’ by Aodh Ó Dálaigh writing in the mid eighteenth century in TCD MS 1291 (H. 1. 17), f. 109r. Even more bizarrely, the ascription was accepted without question by the poem’s editors.⁵⁶ It is clear that this ascription was Ó Dálaigh’s own invention, as the poem is anonymous in his exemplar, TCD MS 1381 (H. 5. 9), p. 60, and in the related BL MS Add. 40766, f. 71v.

List of Poems by Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird

The poems are arranged alphabetically by first line. An asterisk preceding an item indicates that the attribution of that poem to Fearghal Óg is not certain. In the case of the secular poems, each first line is followed by the name of the person to whom the poem is addressed, and by a suggested date of composition or range of dates. This is followed by an indication of the presence of dedicatory quatrains to Aodh (A), Conn (C), or Peadar (P). A select bibliography of editions and translations is also provided. Abbreviations follow *DIL* with these exceptions: *Dán na mB. M.* = Cuthbert Mhág Craith, *Dán na mBráthar Mionúr* i–ii, *Scrébhinní Gaeilge na mBráthar Mionúr* VIII (Baile Átha Cliath 1967, 1980); *DMU* = David Greene, *Duanaire Mhéig Uidhir* (Dublin 1972, repr. 1991); *BAR* = Paul Walsh, *Beatha Aodha Ruaidh Uí Dhomhnaill* i–ii, Irish Texts Society XLII, XLV (London 1948, repr. 1988, Dublin 1957, repr. 1994). I wish to acknowledge the assistance of my colleague Dr Aoibheann Nic Dhonnchadha, who has read and commented on this article.

1. *Ar sliocht trír atáid Gaoidhil*. Írial and Rudhraighe, clann Í Fhearghail, c. 1590. (ACP). Tomás Ó Concheanainn, ‘Dán molta ó Fhearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird’, *Celtica* 16 (1984) 73–85.
2. *Bean glas dom chroidhi a Choimhdhe*. Pre-1582. Ó Macháin, Poem I.
3. *Beannacht siar uaim go hÉirinn*. c. 1581? (ACP). *Bard. P. 5* (pp. 37–40, 225–7).

⁵⁴ Compare also Fearghal Óg’s appeal to the memory of Flaithrí’s father: ‘Nír bheag let athair mar iongnadh / gan m’ana ag fás’ (*Fuarus iongnadh*, q. 7ab).

⁵⁵ For some discussion see Katherine Simms, *From Kings to Warlords: the changing political structure of Gaelic Ireland in the Later Middle Ages*, Studies in Celtic History VII (Woodbridge etc. 1987) 23–4; N. J. A. Williams (ed.) *The poems of Giolla Bríghde Mac Con Midhe*, Irish Texts Society LI (Dublin 1980) 317–8.

⁵⁶ John O’Donovan, *Miscellany of the Celtic Society* (Dublin 1849) 404–15; Lambert McKenna, ‘Some Irish Bardic Poems LXXXII’, *Studies* 36 (1947) 175–80.

4. *Brath lendáin ac Leic Lughaidh.* Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir. 1566–89. *DMU* IV (pp. 34–45).
5. *Brian Ó Ruairc mo rogha leannán.* Brian (na Múrtha?) Ó Ruairc. 1566–91. *Ir. Syll. Poetry*, 23.
6. *Buidhioch me do Mhág Uidhir.* Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir. 1566–89. *DMU* III (pp. 32–3).
7. *Cia a-deir gur imthigh Éamonn.* Éamonn Mac Suibhne. 1580. Ó Macháin, Poem II.
8. *Cia re bhfuil Éiri ac anmhuin.* Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir. 1566–89. *DMU* II (pp. 16–31).
9. *Cía rér fháiltigh Inis Fáil.* Pilib Ó Raghallaigh. c. 1590. (P). *O'R. Poems XIX* (pp. 92–9).
10. *Díomhaoin gach dán acht dán Dé.*
11. *Dlige a dhuine déanamh lóin.* (P). L. McKenna, ‘Viaticum’, *Irish Monthly* 56 (1928) 192–6; *DDána* 20 (pp. 53–7).
12. *Do bháidh teine Tír Chonuill.* 1601. (P). L. McKenna, ‘On the ruins of Dún na nGall Monastery’, *Irish Monthly* 49 (1921) 372–7; *DDána* 81 (pp. 257–61); *Dán na mB. M.* 22 (pp. 111–16; vol. II, 50–53).
- *13. *D’Oilbh Éarus is beatha a bhás.* Oilbh Éarus mac Seaáin Hosé. c. 1603. (P). Ó Macháin, Poem X.
14. *Dursan mh’eachtra go hAlbuin.* c. 1581. (P). *Aith. D.* 53 (pp. 204–7; vol. ii, 120–122).
15. *Earradh cumhadh um Chruachain.* Tadhg Ó Ruairc. 1605. Ó Macháin, Poem XI.
16. *Éisd rem éagnach a fhir ghráidh.* Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire. c. 1622–6. (P). L. McKenna, ‘Poem to Florence Conry, Archbishop of Tuam’, *Irish Monthly* 48 (1920) 51–4; *DDána* 90 (pp. 293–6); *Dán na mB. M.* 23 (pp. 117–21; vol. ii, 53–6).
17. *Fáth cumhadh ag crích Luighne.* Cormac Ó hEadhra. 1581–97. (ACP). *O’Hara XXIV* (pp. 250–257).
18. *Fill th’aghaidh uainn a Éire.* Conn mac an Chalbhaigh Í Dhomhnaill. 1583. (ACP). Ó Macháin, Poem IV.
- *19. *Fogus furtacht don téir thuaidh.* Aodh mac Rudhraighe Í Dhomhnaill. c. 1627. L. McKenna, ‘To Aodh Ó Domhnaill’, *Irish Monthly* 55 (1927) 468–73; *DDána* 93 (pp. 307–12); Ó Raghallaigh, *Duanta Eoghan Ruaidh Mhic an Bhaird* 20 (pp. 282–301, 399–406).
20. *Fuarus iongnadh a fhir chumainn.* Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire. c. 1622–6. (ACP). *Bard. P.* 6 (pp. 41–4, 227–9); *Dán na mB. M.* 24 (pp. 121–4, vol. ii, 56–7).
21. *Gabh a Bhriain liom fám lochtaibh.* Brian (Óg ?) Ó Ruairc. 1596–1604? (AC). Tomás Ó Concheanainn, ‘Dán réitigh ó Fhearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird’, *Celtica* 15 (1983) 88–95.
22. *Grádh mo chroidheisi Cormuc.* Cormac Ó hEadhra. 1581–97. (A). *O’Hara XI* (pp. 150–153).
23. *Iomdha fáth ag feirg an Choimheadh.* (P). *DDána* 31 (pp. 94–7).

24. *Ionnmhas ollaimh onóir ríogh*. Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill. 1592–1602. Lambert McKenna, ‘Some Irish bardic poems . . . C : to Red Hugh O’Donnell’, *Studies* 41 (1952) 99–104.

25. *As fiacha ar neach an ní gheallas*. Cormac Ó hEadhra. 1581–97. (CP). *O’Hara* X (pp. 144–9).

26. *Leath re Fódla fuil Uidhir*. Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir. 1566–89. (P). *DMU* I (pp. 2–15).

27. *Lubhghort fíneamhna fuil Ír*. Aodh Mág Aonghusa. 1577–96. (CP). Ó Macháin, Poem V.

28. *Mairg atá an uairsi gan Aodh*. Aodh Mág Aonghusa. 1596. Cáit Ní Dhomhnaill, *Duanaireacht* (Baile Átha Cliath 1975) 108–10.

29. *Mairg bheireas díogha dá dheóin*. (P). L. McKenna, ‘Choose Heaven or Hell’, *Irish Monthly* 56 (1928) 331–2; *DDána* 35 (pp. 106–8).

30. *Mairg im dheaghaidh cheanglas cumann*. Uilliam Búrc. 1582–91. (CP). Ó Macháin, Poem VII.

31. *Mairg nach diongnadadh dán do Dhia*. (P). L. McKenna, ‘The duty of praising God’, *Irish Monthly* 56 (1928) 379–83; *DDána* 38 (pp. 114–17).

32. *Mairg nach doirteann a dhéara*. (P). L. McKenna, ‘Sorrow for sin’, *Irish Monthly* 56 (1928) 437–40; *DDána* 39 (pp. 117–20).

33. *Maith do suidhigheadh síol Néill*. Toirdhealbhach Luineach Ó Néill. 1567. L. Cl. A. B. IX (pp. 101–10).

34. *Mé ar t’fhaosamh a ógh*. (P). Aith. D. 54 (pp. 207–8; vol. ii, 122).

*35. *Mé féin m’éanbhráighisi ar Aodh*. Aodh Mág Aonghusa. 1570–1596. (P). Ó Macháin, Poem VI.

36. *Mithidh sin a mhaca Míleadh*. Conchubhar Óg Mac Diarmada. c. 1596. (ACP). Ó Macháin, Poem VIII.

37. *Mór an lucht arthraigh Éire*. Cú Chonnacht Óg Mág Uidhir. 1607. L. McKenna, ‘The flight of the Earls’, *Irish Monthly* 54 (1926) 471–5; *DDána* 107 (pp. 363–7).

38. *Mór cóir chách ar chrích Laighean*. Fiachaidh Ó Broin. c. 1580–1590. *LBranach* 23 (pp. 90–97).

39. *Mór do mhill aoibhneas Éireann*. Aodh Ó Néill. 1608–16. (ACP). Ó Macháin, Poem XII.

40. *Ná déana díomas a dhuine*. Pre-1582. (P). *Timthiridh Chroidhe Neamhtha Íosa* 8 (1918) 49–50; *DDána* 43 (pp. 134–5).

41. *Ní díol grádha gleann na ndeór*. (P). L. McKenna, ‘Vanity of the world’, *Irish Monthly* 56 (1928) 487–8; *DDána* 45 (pp. 137–8).

42. *Ní fada ón Fhódla a táth a dtuaidheamhain*. Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill. 1592. (ACP). L. McKenna, ‘Poem to Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill’, *Irish Monthly* 48 (1920) 481–5; *DDána* 109 (pp. 370–373).

43. *Ní maith altuighim m’anáir*. c. 1626? (P). L. McKenna, ‘Ingratitude to God’, *Irish Monthly* 56 (1928) 263–8; *DDána* 46 (pp. 139–44).

44. *Ní rí fíre acht flaith nimhe.* (P). L. McKenna, ‘Christ the King’, *Irish Monthly* 56 (1928) 654; *DDána* 47 (pp. 145).

45. *Ní thréigfe mé Mac Suibhne.* Domhnall Mac Suibhne. 1570–1618. (P). Ó Macháin, Poem III.

46. *Ní tráth aithreachais d’fhuil Chonáill.* Aodh Ó Domhnaill. 1618. (ACP). L. McKenna, ‘Elegy on Aodh Ó Domhnaill’, *Irish Monthly* 48 (1920) 207–9; *DDána* 110 (pp. 373–8).

47. *Saor meisí a Mheic an Dúilimh.* Pre-1582. Ó Macháin, Poem IA.

*48. *Sbéacláir na cruinne an chroch naomh.* (P). L. McKenna, ‘To a crucifix’, *Irish Monthly* 50 (1922) 250–253; *DDána* 54 (pp. 162–4).

49. *Sgol gan oide an t-ord gaisgidh.* Seaán Ó Dochartaigh. 1601. Ó Macháin, Poem IX.

50. *Slán agaibh a fhiora Mumhan.* c. 1604? (P). *Bard. P.* 7 (pp. 44–6, 229–30).

51. *Slán uaim ag oiléán Pádraig.* Pre-1582. Shane Leslie, *Saint Patrick’s Purgatory* (London 1932) 172–3.

52. *Sona sin a chlanda Cuind.* Cormac Ó hEadhra. 1581–97. (ACP). *O’Hara* IX (pp. 130–143).

53. *Táinig san chluiche ag Cormac.* Cormac Ó hEadhra. 1581–97. (CP). *O’Hara* VIII (pp. 112–29).

54. *Teasda easgcara an fhiadhaigh.* Cú Chonnacht Óg Mág Uidhir. 1608. (ACP). L. McKenna, ‘To Mag Uidhir’s hound’, *Irish Monthly* 57 (1929) 107–10; *DDána* 118 (pp. 408–11).

55. *Teasda Éire san Easbáinn.* Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill. 1602. (ACP). Pádraig A. Breathnach, ‘Marbhna Aodha Ruaidh Uí Dhomhnaill (†1602)’, *Éigse* 15/1 (1973) 31–50.

56. *Trí coróna i gcairt Shéamais.* James VI of Scotland. c. 1581. *Aith. D.* 44 (pp. 177–80, vol. ii, 104–6).

57. *Truagh liom Máire agus Mairghréag.* To two daughters of Aodh mac Maghnasa Í Domhnaill. 1608–11. *Bard. P.* 8 (pp. 46–8, 230–31); Paul Walsh, ‘An Irish elegy’, *Catholic Bulletin* 18 (1928) 623–8; Paul Walsh, *Gleanings from Irish manuscripts* 2nd ed. (Dublin 1933) 108–10; *BAR* ii, 126–36.

58. *Turnamh dóchais díoth muirne.* Rudhraighe Ó Domhnaill. c. 1603? L. McKenna, ‘To Rudhraighe Ó Domhnaill’, *Irish Monthly* 51 (1923) 586–9; *DDána* 121 (pp. 419–22).

59. *Uaibhreach mise ar Mhág Uidhir.⁵⁷* Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir. 1566–89. *DMU* V (pp. 46–51).

⁵⁷This line is Greene’s emendation from what appears in the manuscript to be ‘Marmbreath arís ar Mag Uidhir’ (Ó Macháin, *Téacs agus údar*, 45).