Section 4

Ireland 1660–1800

POETRY IN IRISH

Translated and edited by Marie-Louise Coolahan and Wes Hamrick (except where otherwise noted)

Úna Ní Bhroin (c. 1670–1707)

Úna Ní Bhroin was married to the poet Seán Ó Neachtain (c. 1640–1729); their son, the poet Tadhg Ó Neachtain, was born between May 1670 and May 1671. While some sources state that Ní Bhroin was Ó Neachtain's second wife (an assertion first alleged by the late eighteenth-century scribe Brian O'Farrell), Cathal Ó Háinle has conclusively argued this was not the case. Ó Háinle (2005b, 57–60) argues that O'Farrell would not have known either Ó Neachtain man personally, and he cannot therefore be accepted as an authority on their relationships.

'Ó thugas mo ghrádh dhuit mo láimh is mo ghealladh' ('Since I gave my love to you, my hand and my pledge') is an answer poem to 'Rachainn fón gcoill leat, a mhaighdean na n-orfholt' ('I would go about the woods with you, maiden of the golden locks'), a love poem written by Ó Neachtain. Ó Neachtain composed three poems addressed to Ní Bhroin (this, plus two *caointe* on her death), all three of which were copied by Tadhg Ó Neachtain in NLI MS G 135 (copied 1739–52).

There is some debate over the attribution of this poem to Ní Bhroin. Máirín Ní Dhonnchadha argues that the poem was composed by Ní Bhroin in response to Ó Neachtain's 'Rachainn fón gcoill leat, a mhaighdean na n-orfholt', while Ó Háinle argues that Ó Neachtain composed the response in Úna's voice. Ó Háinle's argument (2005b, 62 n. 17) rests on the unreliability of the scribe Brian O'Farrell, whose heading 'Freagra Úna, más fíor' (Úna's answer, if true) is not in the copies of the poem made by Tadhg Ó Neachtain or Risteard Tuibear (RIA MS 23 L 32). All three copies of the poem include Ní Bhroin's answer to Ó Neachtain, but only in the Brian O'Farrell copy are the lines explicitly attributed to her. The version of the poem given here is based on Tadhg Ó Neachtain's text because it is roughly contemporaneous with the time of composition and because of the close social proximity of the author and scribe.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

1 *Ó thugas mo ghrádh dhuit mo láimh is mo ghealladh*

Ó thugas mo ghrádh dhuit mo láimh is mo ghealladh
aonuair amháin dhuit a Sheáin bhig Uí Neachtuin
ar chomhairle mo chairde mo pháirt leat ní sgaradh
Is fearr liomsa láimh leat nó náit ar an damhan.

A stór se mo[1] dhoigh bheith bheo go cionn bliadhna
gan tada do ól no lón air bith íarradh
mo bheol ar do bheolsa mo dhóid air do chliabhsa
ag éisdeacht do ghlór ghlic do thóigfeadh ó phian mé.

Rachadh mé féin leat gan éarradh gan diultadh
'g éisdeacht 's ag féachainn na n-éan sin ag súgradh
céad fearr liom féin sin ná féastadh na cúirte
ailleadhan 's a théagair so mé leat gan diúltadh.

[1] Following both other surviving copies, which read 'se mo dhoigh' ('it is my expectation'); this version's 'se do dhoigh' ('it is your expectation') is considered a scribal error.

1 *Since I gave my love to you, my hand and my pledge*

Since I gave my love to you, my hand and my pledge,
one time only, to you, little Seán Ó Neachtain,
on the advice of my friends, I will not part with you
and I prefer to be next to you than in any place in the world.

My darling, I expect to be alive for a year
with nothing to drink nor wanting food at all,
my mouth on your mouth and my hand on your chest
hearing your clever voice would relieve me of pain.

I will go with you without hesitation, without refusal
hearing and watching those birds sporting
that is a hundred times better to me than the feasting of the court
o my handsome one and my strength, here I am, without refusal.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Banaltra Shéamais Óig Mhic Coitir (fl. 1720) James Cotter's Nurse (fl. 1720)

Edited and translated by Tomás L. Ó Murchú

This *caoineadh* was composed on the death of James Cotter (1689–1720) by his unnamed nurse. Cotter, an east Cork Catholic landowner with Jacobite leanings, patron to the Gaelic literati and darling of the native Irish, was hanged for the rape of a Quaker called Elizabeth Squibb in Cork City on 7 May 1720. The *caoineadh* is copied into a manuscript written by Seán Ó Muláin in Cork in 1818, immediately after a formal lament for Cotter attributed to the same nurse. There are fifteen extant Gaelic compositions on Cotter's death – twelve elegies, two epitaphs, and one prayer. Ours is perhaps a fragmentary version of a longer poem and can be related to another *caoineadh* known as 'Léan ort, a Chorcaigh' ('Blast you, Cork') collected, along with an air, by Séamas Goodman around 1857.

Seven lines in Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill's 'Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire' (1773) are almost identical to ll. 2–4, 6–9 in the present text (see the version in *Field Day* IV, 1373, ll. 30, 32, 35–8, 45). The Cotter elegy was probably well known in Eibhlín Dubh's time; indeed, she may have been related to Cotter as his paternal grandmother was Eilís Ní Chonaill of the famed Iveragh sept of Ó Conaill from which Eibhlín came. Similarities between Cotter's and Art Ó Laoghaire's fractious relationships with the English Ascendancy would have easily enabled Eibhlín to incorporate the nurse's words into her poem.

The nurse warns that if Cotter's father Sir James were still around, those responsible for his death would be punished. She chides Cotter for his decision to have relations with a woman deemed to be unbefitting of his status and laments that Elizabeth Squibb, or in a broader sense the Quaker people, were ever made welcome in Ireland. The scribe introduces the poem as 'An caoineadh sonn ag an mnaoi gcéanna' ('The keen here by the same woman'), which refers to the heading on the previous manuscript entry, 'Tuireabh do rín a bhanaltra do Sur Séamas mhac Coitair' ('A lament that his nurse composed for Sir James Cotter'). See also Breatnach (2010), Ó Buachalla (2012), Ó Murchú (2025) and Irish Traditional Music Archive (goodman.itma.ie) for Goodman's air.

2 *Mo chéad cara thu*

Mo chéad cara thu
is breá thíodh hata dhuit,
claíomh cinn airgid,
bhíodh sráid dá glanadh duit 4

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bóirthe dhá ngealadh dhuit
cóiste ocht gcapall duit,
's Sacsanaigh ag umhlú go talamh dhuit
is ní le taitneamh dhuit
acht le haonchorp eagla.

Greadadh oraibh is brón,
a lucht na mbolg mór,
fanaidh siar go fóill
is leigidh Séamas reómhaibh,
mar is do ba chuí is ba chóir.

A mhná ó mo scairt!
druididh uaim amach
chuim go bhféachad san aird aneas
go bhféachfainn an Ridire críonna ' teacht
– ná Séamas Óg a mhac –
srian bhéil óir na n-each,
claíomh cinn óir 'na ghlaic
's a choisí roimhis amach
ag dul go doimhin sa chath,
do dhéanfadh sé díbh spreas,
nó gheobhadh sé díol 'na mhac.

A dhianghrá lár na gcarad,
is iomdha dailtín smeartha
ód chistin gonad halla
do gheobhadh bean in aisce
nó bean ar chárt leanna,
ní áirmhim bean gan baisteadh
gan ionladh gan aisceadh
nár chrom a glúin chuim sagairt
is ná dúirt riamh a paidir
is nárbh fhios cia hé a hathair –
acht Beití Sciobs a hainm
táinig anall tar caise
chuim mo lao do thachtadh,
is nárab dé 'na beatha!

2 *My friend a hundred times*

My friend a hundred times
how fine a hat suited you
with a silver-hilted sword,
they used to clear the street for you,
roads were vacated for you,
an eight-horse coach for you,

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English bowing down before you,
and not out of a liking for you
but out of absolute fear of you.

May you suffer and be sorrowful,
you the class of the fat bellies,
stay back a while,
let James ahead of you,
as would befit him and would be his due.

Women of my heart!
move away from me
so that I may survey from the south
to see the old Knight[1] approach,
– not his son James Jnr –
the gold bridles of his horses,
grasping a golden-hilted sword,
his footman out in front,
heading deep into the fray
lifeless he'll leave you,
or get revenge for his son.

My steadfast love, my most beloved –
many a dirty-faced brat
from your kitchen to your hallway
could get a woman for nothing,
or a woman for a quart of ale,
not to mention an unbaptised woman
unwashed and uncleansed of vermin
who never knelt to a priest
and never said [the] *Our Father*,
and 't wasn't known who her father is –
but Betty Squibbs[2] is her name,
who came from yonder across the current,
in order to strangle my darling,
and that she were never welcomed!

[1] Sir James Fitz Edmond Cotter (c. 1630–1705), James Cotter's father.
[2] Elizabeth Squibb (b. c. 1701). Wordplay may have been applied with the Irish spelling 'Sciobs' and the verb 'sciob', meaning 'to snatch'.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Máire Ní Reachtagáin (d. 1733)

Máire Ní Reachtagáin, whose family appear to have been based in Laracor, County Meath, was the third wife of the poet and scribe Tadhg Ó Neachtain, whom she married in February 1716/17. Máire's brother, Seoirse Ó Reachtagáin, died 15 November 1725 and was buried in Laracor; her *caoineadh* on his death is published in *Field Day* (IV, 424–7). Tadhg Ó Neachtain's 'Faoi liag sa Láithreach, crá mo chroí is mo chléibh' is another *caoineadh* on his death (NLI MS 132, 109–11). Ní Reachtagáin herself died 11 April 1733 and was also buried in Laracor; see Tadhg's *caoineadh* on her in RIA MS 23 I 23, 71–6.

This poem welcomes Father Francis Leynagh (Proinsias Laighneach) to Dublin. Leynagh was parish priest of Laracor, 1704–20, and subsequently took orders as a Dominican, moving to Áth Troim, County Meath, on the other side of the river Boyne to Laracor. Leynagh's time in Laracor overlapped with that of Jonathan Swift, who was vicar there from 1700 to 1713 before becoming Dean of St Patrick's in Dublin. Laracor was also the home of Swift's friend Esther Johnson, the addressee of his series of birthday poems to 'Stella'.

Fr Leynagh was approached by Tadhg Ó Neachtain, following Seoirse Ó Reachtagáin's death, to intervene with another Ó Reachtagáin brother, Tomás, who was expected to take care of Seoirse's widow (Eastair Ní Bhreasail) and children in Laracor, but had succumbed to melancholy. The letters relating to this are dated 6 and 12 February 1725/6, Tadhg's in Irish and Leynagh's to Tomás in English (see Ó Háinle 2005a; 2005b; Ó Mathúna 2011).

From background information on Leynagh's visit to Dublin, we can infer that the poem was composed 1725–33, because Leynagh responded to Ó Neachtain's invitation in 1725 and Máire Ní Reachtagáin died in 1733. However, he clearly enjoyed a close relationship with the Ó Neachtain/Ó Reachtagáin clans, and could have visited them in Dublin while he was a parish priest in Laracor.

3 *Roimhe an Airmhidneach Proinnsias Laighneach, fáilteadh Mháire Ní Reachtagáin .i. bean Taidhg Uí Neachtain*

Fáilteadh romhat go Duibhlinn daoineach,
'oideadh fhíre an fhíorchrádhbhadh,
'aoidhreadh ionnraic úir-thréid Íosa,
chroídhe dhílis na hiolghrádhagh. 4

Réalt eolais (as slighthibh)
go dún naomhtha Dé dúileach,

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Proinnsias pártach, gidh Laighneach,
i bhfhoidne is i n-úmhladh. 8

Chéile cumainn an chóirchreideamh
i dteagasg is i bhfuighleadh,
míle fáilteadh rómhat, a chumainn,
go hÁth ionmhain Duibhlinn daoineach. 12

Abhrán
Dia do bheathadh, a charadh 's a chéile an ghrinn;
Dia do bheathadh go cathair an Bhéarladh[1] bhinn;
cían do bheathadh sul rachair i gcria ná 'gceill[2]
iarradh is aisgeadh do Mhailidh bhocht féin, a chuim, etc. 16

3 *Before the Reverend Francis Leynagh, the welcome of Máire Ní Reachtagáin, i.e. the wife of Tadhg Ó Neachtain*

Welcome to populous Dublin,
true guardian of the truly pious,
honest shepherd of the vibrant flock of Jesus,
faithful heart of abundant love. 4

Star of knowledge (of all the ways)
as far as the holy refuge of God the Creator,
Francis, though a Leinsterman, sharing
in patience and in humility. 8

Companion in fellowship of right religion
in teaching and in words
a thousand welcomes to you, my fellow,
to the dear Ford of populous Dublin. 12

Song
You are welcome, O friend and mirthful companion;
You are welcome to the city of sweet English speech;
Long life to you before you go to the churchyard's soil
as was the demand and request of poor Molly herself, O bosom friend, etc.[3] 16

[1] Because *Bhéarladh* is capitalised here and used in reference to early eighteenth-century Dublin, we read it as a reference to the English language. An alternative translation might render it simply as a term for 'speech'.
[2] Spelling variant of *cill*, 'churchyard'.
[3] Another reading of this line is: 'Wanting and seeking your own poor Molly, O bosom friend, etc.'; 'Molly' is thought to be a nickname for Ní Reachtagáin.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Úna Nic Cruitín (fl. 1740)

Úna Nic Cruitín's family were hereditary poets and historians to the ruling family of Thomond, the O'Briens. Her father, Aodh Buí Mac Cruitín, was a celebrated scribe, author, and lexicographer. He was the main scribe of *Duanaire Uí Bhriain*, the source for five *caointe* composed by Caitilín Dubh in the early seventeenth century. In 1713 he moved to Dublin, 'where he was closely involved with Seán and Tadhg Ó Neachtain, who shared his Jacobite politics, and their circle of scholars in Dublin', later moved to the Continent, and returned to Clare in 1736 (*Field Day* IV, 454). Thus, he may well also have come into contact with Máire Ní Reachtagáin and Úna Ní Bhroin, even if his daughter did not.

This is the only poem by her that is known to survive, dated approximately 1740 by Pádraig Breatnach (whose edition is available in *Field Day* IV, 434). Like Fionnghuala Ní Bhriain, who addresses the third Earl of Thomond for succour in the wake of her husband's death, Nic Cruitín here seeks patronage, her claim based on hereditary privilege, obligation, and patronage. But, in this case, a female patron is addressed. Eisibéal Ní Bhriain, daughter of Criostóir Ó Briain of Ennistymon, married Somhairle Mac Domhnaill of Kilkee, a beneficiary of the Williamite Wars, in 1718, after which she became Protestant. They helped Aodh Buí, who composed two poems to Eisibéal, during the famine of 1740–41 (see *Field Day* IV, 429–30 for one of these).

4 *Úghna iníon mhic Cruitín cecinit do Eisibéal ní Bhríain*

A bhuimme don bhród mhórdha ba raitheamhail réim,
is do chruinneacht na slógh sróillgheal, ba sleachtamhuil saor,
ba coimeirce mhór d'órdaibh, 's ba ceanamhuil céim[1],
cá duine dhamh shórt beó annois gan mearúghadh a méin? 4

A bhán uath na Ríghthe 's a bhruinniall don mhór chraoibh thréan,
léar buadh an t-oinneach gan time tar chóigeadhaibh Néid,
ós dualgas duitse mo choimeirce tóg faoid sgéith,
Fuasgail meise, 's ná fuiling i mbrón díth mé. 8

4 *Úna, daughter of Mac Cruitín, composed this for Isobel O'Brien*

O foster-mother of the exalted brood whose line was thriving,
and of the foremost[2] of the bright, illustrious hosts, who were prolific and free,

[1] We read *céim* as an older form of the adjective *céimh*/*caomh*/*cóemh* rather than as *céim*, 'step, degree, rank'.
[2] A reference to *cruithneacht*, 'wheat, crop', in the original; here used metaphorically.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

who were great patrons of the clerical orders, and were affectionate and gentle,
where is any person of my kind now alive without their minds maddened? 4

O fair progeny of the Kings, and O fair maiden of the great, strong branch,
by whom renown was won without faint-heartedness over the provinces of Néid,[3]
since my patronage is an obligation for you, take me under your protection,
relieve me, and do not suffer me to be in the sorrow of deprivation. 8

[3] An ancient Irish god of war.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Eibhlín Ní Heichiaruinn (fl. c. 1745)

This Jacobite poem prophesies the happy overthrow of Seán Buí (John Bull), a figure for English tyranny, and the restoration of Charles Stuart, associated with Irish Gaelic self-determination and Catholicism. Breatnach (*Field Day* IV, 435) suggests that it was written in direct response to Uilliam Inglis' more gloomy 1742 poem on the same subject. The song survives in more than twenty copies, attributed alternatively to Eihblín Ní Heichiaruinn, as here, or Eibhlín Ní Choillte (as in *Field Day*). It is the third in a group of six poems on Seán Buí copied as a group in our copy-text (TCD MS 1418).

Little is known of the author, whichever the attribution. However, Prút (2011) has suggested that Ní Heichiaruinn is a surname synonymous with Ní Artnáin/Ní Ifearnán and that the author may, therefore, be related to the Tipperary poet Liam Dall Ó hIfearnáin. The latter's *caoineadh* 'Och! Mo nuar, mo ruaig mo lean tu', on the death of Eibhlín Ní Artnáin, pays tribute to her as a poet; this woman is described as the wife of a tavern-keeper in Cahir, County Tipperary. Furthermore, Prút (1985, 205) argues that Liam Dall's reference in that poem to '*ghasra ghaosmhar*' echoes the '*ghasraidh chaomsho*' of Eibhlín's first line. Little definitive is known of Liam Dall's biography unfortunately, meaning that conclusive disentanglement of these possibilities is elusive.

5 *Eilín ní Eachíaruinn do sheinn mar leanas ar Chseághan bhuídhe*

Stadaigh do bhúr ndéaraibh a ghasraidh chaomhso
Ná sgaipidh bhur ngéarghol ní ghábhaidh dhíbh
Táid fearchoinn aodhrach na halladh gléasda
Go bagrach baoghlach a ngarrdhuighibh
an aicmese an bhéarladh tá a cceannas na héireann
do cheangail ar ngaoidhl bhocht fá árdcios
beid feasda fá daorbruid a' freasdal do ghaodhluibh
's gan acfuinn a saorthadh aig S. bhuídhe.

Casfuid na Semuis le feartuibh an dé dhil
Staduig go haosga do bhúr nárdchaoi
Gidh fadadh go fhaon sibh a tarrang na cléithe
'S bhur mbailte aige méirdrig gan faghail slíghe
Gach spreallaire craosach léar spalpadh an t-éitheach
Go ccaithfidh do léim dul a mbár cládha
Le heagladh Sheárluis an faruire tréightheach
Is glanfar as éirinn leis Seághan buídhe.

Beidh garm na dhéighsinn go farsiang ag gaodhlaibh
Is gallaibh dá dtraochadh mar támaoid

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Gearradh agus ádhchuir as fhearnnuibh eilge
As an ccathairse féinnidh ní cás linn
Aifrinn naomhtha a ccealluibh na héireann
is cantuinn ag éigse go hárd binn
ar mhanam go mbéadsa is céad aingir mar aon liom
a magadh gan traochadh fá Sheághan bhuidhe.

5 *Eileen Heffernan sang this that follows about John Bull*

Stop your tears, dear youth
Do not spread your sharp cries, you do not need to do so;
The lively fierce warriors of the halls are armoured
Threateningly and dangerously guarding
This people of the English language that is in charge of Ireland
That has bound our poor Gaels under high rent
They will henceforth be in bondage serving the Gaels
And John Bull will not have the means to free them.

The Jameses will return by the powers of abiding god
And will stop readily your high lamentation
Though it is long that you are prostrate and dragging the hurdle[1]
And your towns, run by prostitutes, without means of getting by
Every open-mouthed fool bursting with falsehood
Will have to leap over the top of a wall
With fear of Charles the accomplished warrior
And John Bull will be swept out of Ireland.

And after that there will be a general summons of the Gaels
And the foreigners being subdued as we are now
Excision and expulsion out of the lands of Ireland
Even out of the city – it is no matter to us –
Holy masses in the churches of Ireland
And songs from the learned, high and sweet,
By my soul, I will be, together with a hundred girls,
Relentlessly mocking John Bull.

[1] A wicker frame or sled used for transporting grain.

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Máire Ní Dhonnagáin (fl. 1760–69)

Máire Ní Dhonnagáin's dates of birth and death are unknown, but her elegy on her brother, Séamus, places her in Dungarvan, County Waterford, around 1769, and the headnote to her poem 'An Peacach' ('The Sinner') dates it to 1760. She lived in Sliabh gCua (anglicised as Slieve Goe) between the Knockmealdown and Comeragh Mountains in Waterford. Her reputation was as a prolific poet; her work circulated in manuscripts and to the mid-twentieth century in the oral tradition. Numerous accounts of her versifying may be found in the National Folklore Commission archives. Writing in 1860, John O'Daly observed: 'Her compositions … prove her to have been of the highest order among the bards of her time' (O'Daly 1860, 211–12). The celebrated *sean nós* singer Labhras Ó Cadhla (1889–1961) also hailed from the Decies area; his repertoire included at least two of Ní Dhonnagáin's songs.

Three substantial poems survive. The best known of these, 'An Peacach' ('The Sinner'), ostensibly composed on a priest's refusal to accept her for the Catholic sacrament of confession, meditates on Christ's passion and seeks to make penance (see *Field Day* IV, 468). Her elegy on her brother, 'Caoineadh ar Shéamus Ó Donagáin' ('Keen on James Donagan'), recounts her journey to Dungarvan to keen him. The third substantial poem, 'Caoineadh Mháire Ní Dhonnagáin' ('The Keen of Mary Donagan') is another elegy, likely in honour of the same brother as its final line identifies 'Séamus'.

The oral tradition has preserved short quatrains that attest to her fame as a wordsmith, particularly in relation to the clergy and the role of the *bean chaointe*. 'Ní hiad na géanna ba mhaith liom a chaoineadh' ('It is not the geese that I would like to keen'), below, is reputed to derive from the occasion of another brother's death. According to tradition, this brother travelled far from home, finding work as a smith. Hearing of his whereabouts from an itinerant, Ní Dhonnagáin went in search of him, only to stumble upon his funeral. Disliking his wife's behaviour at the wake, Ní Dhonnagáin stood over his corpse to keen her brother and castigate her sister-in-law publicly. Ó Madagáin (1982, 315–17) renders Ó Cadhla's version of the second stanza, noting that the singer used the same tune for 'Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire'.

Her sharp verses on religion and the clergy were preserved via such quatrains as 'Sidé chughainn Seán 's a bráthar scadúlach' ('Yonder comes Seán and the bashful brother'). See also Ó Bróithe, whose Irish texts of 'Caoineadh Mháire Ní Dhonnagáin', 'Ní hiad na géanna ba mhaith liom a chaoineadh', and 'Sidé chughainn Seán 's a bráthar scadúlach' are reproduced here with permission (2005, 87–8, 85–6, 80, respectively).

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6 Caoineadh ar Shéamus Ó Donagáin

A dhearbhráthair ó mo mhíle díth thú,
'S mé rin' an aisling do chealg an croidhe 'gam,
An oidhche roimh shollamuin oirdhearc Íosa,
Go bh-feacas leóghan do'n chrodh-fhuil dob' aoirde,
Dul d'á phósadh a róbaidhibh síoda,
A m-bratacha bána 'sa m-bábhair chíor-dubh'
'S a' dá leór de dhaoinibh óga 'n-a thimchioll.

Rígh na ngrás a's gárda naoimh ort
'S gur a n-Dún na m-Bád ar lár do bhí tú.
Do ghluaisigheas, gídh buartha bhí m' inntinn,
Go h-uaigneach gan shluaightibh dem' mhuinntir;
Teacht faoi d' thuairim ón d-tuaith liom ad' chaoineadh:
Bhain fán fairge, a's mearbhal slíghe dhóibh;
Mar is marbh faoi leachaibh do bhíodar;
An t-am 'nar ráinig Máire shíos tú,
Ní raibh aon dod' phréimh chirt taoibh leat,
Acht Brighid a's Uilliam gan chiall gan chuimhne.
Do shuidhios ad' aice as ní fheadar cread déarfainn;
Mar do bhí m'aigne a n-anfa traochda;
Chuir tasg do mharbh ar mearbhal m' éirim;
Acht amháin gur smaoineas dá maoidhfinn an méid sin,
(Agus a shuidheacant le firinne go m' fhéidir;)
Gur tú an fear nár fhan le h-aos ceart,
Gur tú an fear fuair searc na cléire,
Gur tú an fear 'na raibh gean Mhic De ort:
Gur lamhais triomsa saidhioda geura
'S go raibh mo shearc no a leath am Sheamus.

A dhearbhrathair, ó mo mhíle leun tú!
A's do réir mar mheasaim níor chaithis do theurma,
A b-péin, a b-peanaid, no ann anfa an t-saoghail so:
Nuair do chonnairc Iosa an t-slíghe bheith réidh dhuit,
Chuir sé a bharántus bán faoi sheula,
Ó Fhlaithis na ngrás as gárda naomh leis,
Ag ionnsuighe an leómhain chródha, Séamus,
Faoi bhratacha grása Mháire an réaltan.
A Righ na n-Dúl tre n-ar g-cúis a ceasag,
Tá mo shúil-se go dhlúth led' dhaonacht,
Gurab ar an uair úd do fuarais do shaor-bhreáth.

A dheárbhrathair, ó mo míle díth tú.
Do bheidhinn a g-cúmha 'sa b-péin tríod choidhche,
Muna m-beidheadh go bh-fuil mo shúil go dluth le h-Iosa,
Nár bh'é do ghnódh-sa an foghmhar saoighealta;
Meisge nó póit ól no díomas;
Brise talmhan, no aistriughadh daoine.

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A m-ba no a g-capaill níor chuiris-se suim ann,
A n-ór ná a n-airgiod, ná a n-earra dá dhaoire;
Chuiris do stór a g-coimhead go dílis,
A n-áit nár bhaoghal do gaoth ná síontha,
Meirg dá dhreoigh, nó leomhain da chiorrbhadh
Is beidh se romhat-sa fos no díol ann.

A dhearbhrathair ó, mo mhíle leun tú!
S budh bhreagha an sgaothán liom chlár geal t-éadain;
Do mhalaidhe cearta bhi teacht le n-a céile;
'Rosg ríghin mall nár bh'fallsa feuchain;
Sron dheas leabhair gan cham gan staona
Is ann do leacaibh bhí an lasa na tréigeadh;
Budh í do theanga an teanga nár bhreugach;
Agus do bhrághaid nár ghradhuigh a bheith craosach;
Do dhóid mar chailc gan snas ar aon chor;
'S do chroidhe bhí líonta de'n daonacht;
Clár geal d' uchta bhí coigilte a bh-féile:
Budh shliasad gheal tú ar each na tréine,
'S le siúbhal do chos níor loitis aonne.

A dhearbhráthair ó mo mhíle milleadh!
Dá m-beidhinn suidhte, mar budh chuibhe dham a bh-foirm,
Do chuirfinn síos do ghniomhartha as tuilleadh;
Go rabhais ad' phártaidhe ag Dáibhidh Rígh mar thuigim,
Déanadh aithridhe 'na n-deárnaighis de chorthaibh;
Mar phíosa thar lion tú d'imthigh,
Ní mar aon bhean do ghéilis do Mhuire;
Glór duanach ó'd bheul tana tuigeadh;
An lón deigheanach fán g-cré leat gur thugais
An Corp Naomhta, agus glaodhach air go minic.
A leómhain groidhe, de phór-bhuidhin mo chinidh.
Mo brón sgís do lóistin 'san roilig!

A dhearbhráthair, ó mo mhíle gleódh tú!
A's dá m-budh agam-sa bheidheadh roinn na glóire,
Is ró mhaith an chuideachta léigfinn 'san ród leat,
An dá abstol deug 'san Tighearna trócaireach;
Peadar a's eochracha ag osguilt na n-dóirseadh:
Is shuas a b-Parrthas bheidheadh do leaba 'gam tógtha,
Mar a m-bíd sean-daoine 'na n-daoinibh óga.

A dhearbhráthair, ó! mo mhíle treighid thú!
Dá m-beidheadh maitheas dann m'eachtra d'innsin,
Cia rachfas liom tar abhainn am' choinleacht?
Cia thógfas suas an ghruaim dom' inntinn?
Cia chorreóchas suas o'n tuamba m'aghaidh-si?
Beannacht Mhuire geal mhilis na foighide;
Beannacht na n-ógh agus fós na maighdean;

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Beannacht na n-aingeal ag lasadh go soillseach;
Beannacht na mairtíreach le deigh-inntinn;
Beannacht Mhic Dé go d-teidh sí a bh-feidhim duit;
'S mo bheannacht féin, gan pléidh gan aighneas,
Dá iarraidh ar an Leanbh fuair peannaid ó Philate.
A righeacht na bh-flaitheas do ghlacadh mar oidhre.

6 Keen on James Donagan

Oh brother, you are my thousand losses,
It is I who had the vision that pierced my heart,
The night before the renowned feast-day of Jesus,[1]
That I saw a lion of the noblest, brave blood,[2]
Going to be married in robes of silk,
In white mantles and in jet-black beaver hats[3]
And plenty of young people about him.

The king of grace and a guard of saints be upon you
And it is in Dungarvan that you were laid low.
I set out, though my mind was troubled,
Lonely without crowds of my people;
Coming with me from the country, keening you:
For they were drowned by the sea, and lost their way;
For they were dead beneath the flagstones;
When Máire reached you,
None of your true stock were by your side,
But Brighid and William, without sense, without memory.
I sat beside you and did not know what I would say;
Because my stormy mind was overcome;
News of your death has thrown me off course;
Except that I thought, if I could claim that much,
(And establish with truth, perhaps)
That you are the man who did not live to a proper age,
That you are the man who gained the affection of the clergy,
That you are the man beloved by the Son of God:
That you shot sharp arrows through me
And that my Séamus had nearly all my love.

Oh Brother, you are my thousand woes!
And by my reckoning, you did not spend your allotted time
In pain, in torment nor in the turmoil of this world:
When Jesus saw that the way was ready for you,
He put his white warrant under seal,
From the heaven of grace, and a guard of saints with him,
Advancing upon the brave lion, Séamus,

[1] i.e. Christmas Day. [2] Throughout, the lion is a figure for the deceased, Séamus.
[3] Beaver hats were popular in early modern Europe.

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Under the banners of grace of luminous Mary.
O Lord of Creation, who for our sakes was crucified,
My own hope is closely bound with your humanity,
That upon that hour you received your absolution.

Oh brother, you are my thousand losses.
I would be in sorrow and in pain because of it forever,
Were it not that my hope is closely bound to Jesus,
Your concern was not earthly affairs;
Drunkenness nor excessive drinking nor pride;
Increase of land, nor displacement of people.
In neither cattle nor horses were you interested,
In gold nor silver, nor in goods however valuable;
You put your store in faithful observance,
In a place without danger from wind or storm,
Rust corroding, or lions being slaughtered
And it will be your due or recompense.

Oh brother, you are my thousand woes!
And I loved the image of the fair plain of your forehead;
Your honest brows complement each other;
A slow deliberate eye that did not look falsely;
A nice, slender nose without crook or bend
And in your cheeks there was a flush that would not fade;
Your tongue was the tongue that would not lie;
And your throat which did not love to be gluttonous;
Your hand like chalk without any refinement;
And your heart which was filled with humanity;
The bright plane of your chest which harboured generosity;
You were a bright thigh on the steed of power,
And by your passage did not injure anyone.

Oh brother, my thousand devastations!
If I were seated, as would be proper for me,
I would describe your deeds and more;
That you were a partner of King David as I reckon,
Penance was performed of the transgressions you made;
You are like a piece[4] that is gone beyond reach;
Not as to any woman, you yielded to Mary;
A melodious voice would come from your thin mouth
The last provision you bore with you beneath the clay was
The Holy Eucharist, and you called for it often.
O stout lion, of the seed-stock of my race.
My sorrow it is that your lodgings are in the graveyard.

Oh brother, you are my thousand strifes!
And if I were to have a share of the glory,

[4] i.e. of silver or gold.

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I would admit the best of company on the road with you,
The twelve apostles and the merciful Lord;
Peter and the keys opening the gates
I would have your bed raised up to Paradise,
Where the old are young again.

Oh brother!, you are my thousand pains!
If there were benefit to me in telling my tale,
Who would go with me across the river?
Who would lift the gloom from my mind?
Who would turn my face from the tomb?
The blessing of bright, sweet, patient Mary;
The blessing of the virgins and also the maidens;
The blessing of the angels burning brightly;
The blessing of the martyrs of virtuous mind;
The blessing of the Son of God, that it might be of service to you;
And my own blessing, without dispute, without discussion
Pleading with the Child who received punishment from Pilate
To accept you as heir in the kingdom of the heavens.

7 *Caoineadh Mháire Ní Dhonnagáin*

Mo chreach dheacrach's m'atuirse léirghoirt
Ná fuilim i gcruinneas, i bhfoirm nó in éirim
Nó go laoicheach im' intleacht céille
Go bhfaighinn mar roimhse tuille an Ghaeilig
Go gcuirfinn síos i mbeagán bréithre
Gach óg's ársa a ráinigh i ngaol leat
In Teamhair ó aimsir Mhilésius.
De réir mar a scríobhadh na daoine léannta,
Sean Ó Conaill's Dochtúir Céitinn,
Go mba bhráthair do Mhac Carthaigh féin tú,
Agus don phrionsa a rinn' tionscailt do Ghaelaibh,
Do Dhonnchadh an Chúil 's dá thrúpaí tréana,
Don Tóibíneach i dTír Chraobhach;
Bráithrín Uí Shúilleabháin Bhéara
'S do Cheallachán do bádh sa ngéarghaise.

Chonaic mé lá agat, a ghrá ghil 's a chara,
Is iomdha fear culaith ghléigheal 's hata,
Fear cruaspoir agus buataisí greanta,
Fear muarphoic lá an fhiaigh a lascadh,
Fear lúbán a rútáil sa talamh,
Fear madra rua d'fhiaich ar shliabh le caithis,
Fear gunna lán's a lámhach go tapaidh
Fear leabhar do léamh 's bhéarsa Laidin,
Fear focal a labhairt i gcúis gan mhasla,
Fear claímh chaoil díreach a tharraingt.

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Ar an dtaobh thall den tSiúir dá bhfaighinn le casadh
Dhearbhóinn daoibh le brí, gan bhladar
Go raibh gach nduine díobh i líne t'athar.

Naoi n-oíche a thug sé faoina díonbhrat naofa,
Trí bliana déag ar fhichid faoi iomarca péine;
D'fhulaing sé bás agus páis dár saoradh;
A Rí na Grás a shlánaigh saor sinn,
Aon achainí amháin atá uaim féin ort,
Áras fairsing gan eagla péine
Agus radharc na bhFlaitheas a thabhairt do Shéamus.

7 *The Keen of Mary Donagan*

It is my distressing loss and my most bitter dejection
That I am not steady, in proper form or capable
Nor fighting fit in my reasoning
May I find, as before, flowing Irish
To describe in few words
Every youth and ancient who was related to you
At Tara from the time of Milesius.[1]
Just as the learned people would write,
Seán Ó Conaill and Doctor Keating,[2]
That you were brother to MacCarthy himself,[3]
And to the prince who sired the Gaels,
To Donnchadh an Chúil[4] and his mighty troops,
To the Tobin in the Land of Creagh;[5]
To the young Brother of O'Sullivan Beare[6]
And to Callaghan who drowned in the fast current.[7]

I saw you one day, my bright love and friend,

[1] According to one strand of tradition, the Irish were descended from Míl Easpáine (or Milesius), the name derived from the Latin *miles Hispaniae* (soldier of Spain).
[2] Seán Ó Conaill (c. 1675–c. 1725), author of 'Tuireamh na hÉireann' ('Ireland's Lament'), a verse history of Ireland from the great flood to Oliver Cromwell's time, lamenting the fall of his patron, MacCarthy Mór. Geoffrey Keating (Seathrún Céitinn; c. 1580–1644), historian and Catholic priest, whose *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* (Compendium of wisdom about Ireland) was completed c. 1634.
[3] The MacCarthy sept ruled substantial parts of Munster. Mac Cárthaigh Mór (the Great MacCarthy) was the central line, with the major constituent branches of Mac Cárthaigh Riabhach (Reagh) of Carbery and MacCarthy of Muskerry (Earls of Clancarty).
[4] Donough MacCarthy, 1st Earl of Clancarty (1594–1665), who owned estates in Waterford.
[5] An Chraobhach (Creagh) is a district of Carbery, County Cork. Tobin is a surname of Norman derivation, associated with counties Tipperary, Kilkenny, Cork, and Waterford; the particular Tobin denoted here has not been identified.
[6] Eoghan Ó Súilleabháin (Sir Owen O'Sullivan), younger brother of Domhnall Cam O'Sullivan Beare, who inherited on the latter's death in 1563.
[7] Callaghan MacCarthy, 3rd Earl of Clancarty (d. 1676), was the middle son of Donough, 1st Earl. However, it was his elder brother, Charles (1633–65), who died at sea, killed fighting the Dutch while serving on the same ship as the Duke of York (later James II).

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Many a man in an immaculate suit and hat,
A man with hard spurs and polished boots,
A great buck-hunter on the day of the running of the deer,
A man stooped with rooting in the ground,
A man fox-hunting with relish on a mountain,
A man with a loaded gun, handling it dexterously,
A man reading a book and Latin verse,
A man speaking with purpose, without insult,
A man drawing a straight slender sword.
On the far side of the Suir, if I could meet them,
I would assure them with vigour, without flattery
That each one of them was in your father's line.

Nine nights he spent under a holy protective cloak,
Thirteen years and twenty under great pain;
He suffered death and the passion that freed us;
Oh King of Grace who redeemed us,
Only one request I myself make of you,
That a spacious place without fear of pain
And with sight of the Heavens be given to Séamus.

8 *Ní hiad na géanna ba mhaith liom a chaoineadh*

Ní hiad na géanna ba mhaith liom a chaoineadh;
Ná na madraí rua bhíonn amuigh san oíche;
Ach planda mín d'fhíor-stoc na tíre,
Ó Shliabh na gCua[1] 's na suadh ab' aoirde.

A mhic an ghabhann ó bhun Abha' Bríde,
Nach fada ó bhaile a thángas id' chaoineadh;
Tú ag bualadh an úird ar thaobh na gaoithe,
Is colann gan chineál ag friotháil faobhair ort.

A bhean úd thall leis an gciarsúir síoda,
Cos ar mhuin coise leat 's tú ag caitheamh do phíopa;
Má chaill tú t'fhear gheobhair arís é;
Ach mo dhriotháir, go deimhin, ní bhfaghad-sa choíche.

8 *It is not the geese that I would like to keen*

It is not the geese that I would like to keen;
Nor the foxes that frequent the night;
But an upstanding scion of the true stock of the country
From Slieve Goe and of the most eminent sages.

[1] Ó Bróithe (2005, 85) 'Sliabh na mbua'; altered here to accord with the native home of poet and subject.

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O son of the smith from the mouth of the River Bride,
Isn't it far from home that I came for your keening;
You beating the hammer into the wind,
And your peerless body wielding power.

O woman over there with the silk kerchief,
With your legs crossed while smoking your pipe;
If you lose your husband, you will get him again;
But my brother, indeed, I will never find again.

9 *Máire Ní Dhonnagáin a dúbhairt é seo le Seán éigint is bráthair a thug suas an creidimh*

Sidé chughainn Seán 's a bráthar scadúlach
Dís i bpáirt nár ghráigh na deagh húdair.
Mhic Mhuire na nGrást, cad a thá dhá bharrú acu
Ach ifreann go bráth 's gan trácht ar Flaithiúnas.[1]

Ní sagart tú nach[2] spreallaire gan chlú gan mheas
A thug an tAifreann ar radaireacht 's ar póga ban.
Nuair a bheidh sagairt eile i bParrathais is Críost ar neamh
Beidh t'anam-se go hatuirseach i dtinte cheap.

[1] Ó Bróithe (2005, 80 n. 19) reads 'Flathúnas' as scribal error, substituting 'mhaithiúnas' (forgiveness, mercy).
[2] i.e. *ach*.

9 *Mary Donagan said this to some Seán and a brother who gave up the faith*

Yonder comes Seán and the bashful brother
Two in partnership who did not love the good authors.
O Son of Mary of Grace, what is being gained by them
But eternal hell, to say nothing of Heaven.

You are not a priest, but a fool without reputation or respect
Who gave over the Mass to flirting and the kisses of women.
When another priest is in Paradise and Christ in heaven
Your very soul will languish in the fires.

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Máire Nic a' Liondain (fl. 1771)

Máire Nic a' Liondain, also known as Molly Nic Giolla Fhiondáin and Molly Lindon, (fl. 1771) was born in the Fews, south County Armagh. Her grandmother, Siubhan Nic Ardail, was a poet, historian, and musician, and Siubhan's son (Molly's father) Pádraig Mac Giolla Fhiondáin (Patrick MacAlindon or Lindon; c. 1666–1733) was one of the Oriel poets of south Ulster, as well as a harpist and composer. His house was a welcoming destination for poets and musicians, and he ran a school of poetry at Killen Hill, near Dundalk – a location memorialised by his daughter.

Molly was a gifted harpist and poet. A dialogue recording a musical and verse duel between herself and the poet Ó Doirnín is recorded, erroneously moved from Ulster to Connacht by Douglas Hyde (1931, 61–2). Her 'Coillte Glasa an Triúcha' ('The Green Woods of Truagh') is a well-known song; the Tyrone harpist Arthur O'Neill performed it twice at the Granard Harpers' Ball in 1781 and 1782, and again at the Belfast Harp Festival in 1792. It was collected and published by Edward Bunting in 1809. Composed in the voice of a male lover, this song was reputedly written by Molly on behalf of her brother, also Pádraig, to a woman named McBride who lived near Dundalk. (For editions with translations, see Ní Uallacháin 2003, 224–7; *Field Day* IV, 436–8.) For Pádraigín Ní Uallacháin's performance of the song, see 'Oriel Arts', www.orielarts.com/songs/coillte-glasa-triucha/ (accessed 23 May 2025).

Both poems collected here are celebrations of Joseph Plunkett (1699–1771), another generous host of poets and musicians, who lived in Rocksavage House, Inishkeen, County Monaghan. The harpist Arthur O'Neill mentions visiting his home. Joseph's son, James (1730–1808) continued this tradition, to which the poet alludes; he was the recipient of a poem by Art MacCumhaigh (see Ó Fiaich 1973, 127–9). The first of Nic a' Liondain's poems welcomes Plunkett to the area in which she lived, imagining an old-style assembly on the side of Fás na h-Aon Oíche (One Night's Growth), the location of an ancient monument at the top of Killen Hill. The second is an elegy on Plunkett's death, lamenting his loss in traditionally hyberbolic bardic terms, and via classical analogies. This edition of the elegy is based on two copytexts: a manuscript copied by Padraig Mhac Gashan, or Gathan (Patt McGahan) of Dunguille (Dungooly) in the parish of Faughart, County Louth 1820–23, and a transcription printed in the journal *An tUltach* (1951–52). These two witnesses agree with each other but appear to transmit some corruptions in places (see footnotes). We have followed the printed copy's stanza arrangement, and altered punctuation where necessary.

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10 *Fáilte Maighstir Ió Pluinceat*

Ar a theacht a chómhnuidhe dhó chum an mhúinilte.
Le Mailligh Inghean Phádraig Mhic Alionduin

I.
Is aoibhinn Tulach áluinn Mhic Cáinte feasda a choidhch,
Is cian a mhaoidhtear athas léithe de ráitibh cheart bheol na ndraoi,
Ach anois, ní bréag a thráchtaim, 'sí an dara Parnassus í,
Na srotha sin Castália teacht láimh léithe ar ngabhail sgíth,
Ag leanann naonmhar maighdean, dálta caoimh na h-éigsí,
An mac sin Chaiptin Shéamuis fuair céim as gach chrích
Le linn a theacht go ceann do'n phlanda toradh is tréithighe
Béidh ór is muirrh is rógh na cruinne ag Fás na h-Aon Oidhche.

II.
Is a thulach is duit budh h-uadhbhar ar ngluaiseacht do'n fhlatha tsaoi,
Dálta na n-aol Stuaire fá do thuairim ar dteacht i gcrích,
Ag Helicon a luaidhtear go bhfuair sé de'n fhabhairt chaoin,
Is gur shlad gan tart an uair sin de nua-chuirn i dtiobrad sídhe.
Budh líonmhar taithighe uaisle ann ar mhagh an Fheadha suaichnidh,
Re linn a ríoghraidh is uachtaraighe a fuair buan theas na ndraoi;
Béidh éigsí ó dheas go tuaisceart, is na céadta bocht dá bhfuasgailt,
Siúd rogha 'na fhrasa' is tortha meas ag Fás na h-Aon Oidhche.

III.
Sí an tulach áluinn chéadna-sa thug céim mhaise ó chlár na Midhe,
Ó mhurthaibh rathamhail ró-ghlan chrích' Laighean gach áird ar suidheadh,
Le maoidhtear dís de chéilibh budh h-éifeacht re trácht a mbíodh,
An t-athair 's a mac i n-éinfheacht le tréan-chuidiughadh an Spiorad Naoimh:
Tóirsigh, trilseacha tréarthacha go conla na ngaisgidhigh' Gaedhealacha,
Glóir do'n comh-Dé ghléasach a mbíodh i dtréan-neart ar aon;
Is dá mairfeadh ollamhuin Éireann do líonfadh startha 'n-éifeacht,
Ar a dtriall da thaithighe dhaltainn chaithfidh ar Fhás na h-Aon Oidhche.

IV.
Más a theacht go Tulaigh chéadna, budh rogha ris an mhacraidh áird,
Budh cheannus feasda do Ghaedhilibh an méad-sa a bheith marthain slán,
An suadh sin mhic Ignásius, agus Séamus is uile táin,
Seabhac luath na ngéar-lann na ngliadh ghortha is líomhtha lámh:
Acht guidhim buime an Aon-mhic is na n-abstaill uile 'n-éinfheacht,
Re Tib a thabhairt saor as na críochaibh shoir re h-áin,
Is re linn a theacht go ceann do'n planda thoraidh is tréithighe,
Béidh gach riaghail i gceart aige ló, do mhac, ag Fás na h-Aon Oidhche.

V.
A leinbh shoghnaoidh suaichnidh do ghluaiseadh de'n aicme úd a fritheadh
De scoith na leomhan uachtrach da'r dual dhóibh a bheith i gceannus chríoch,
Fáilte dhuit an uair-si ar do nua-theacht go Fás na h-Oidhche,

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Go mba saoghalach annsin suaimhneach gan dubhailce gan aicid chlí:
Go mairir leat an fhuaim-si nochad bliadhain fá luascaibh,
Mar aon re do chuallaidhe do ghlúin threibh na ríogh;
Dís a gheabhas ceann ar shluaightibh, agus tusa le na nguaillibh,
Ag riaghludhadh catha chrích' an bheatha ar nós na naomh.

VI.

'S a thulach bheir gach éifeacht gan léithbhe gan freachnughadh dhíbh,
An tusa gaírdín Éadain ag freámhadh go h-óg is tír?
Ní heagal Adhamh i gcéin a theacht nó Éabha chum na h-aithrighe claoidh,
Béidh torrtha soghnaoidh saor ar do chraobhaibh gan chosg ar aon,
Acht le linn a theacht do'n árd-fhlaith 'sa chéile a leanas rása,
Ioseph agus Máire a fuair gárdan na naomh,
De eochraibh thighe phárrthais beidh creideamh fíor is grádh leo,
Is cléir gan chol arís ag moladh Fás na h-Aon Oidhche.

VII.

'S a thulach sin mhic Cáinte ar a dtarla mé tráth bhí mé óg,
Ní scarfainn fhéin go bráth leis an áird-mhagh gíon a mhaireann beo,
Acht a féachain ar na barcaibh 'sa n-aibheis ag teacht faoi sheol,
Is éanlaith binne phárrthais gach áird díom ag canadh ceoil;
Ag féachadh na h-iara ruaidhe 's a n-eilit mhaol dá ruagadh,
Is na gártha binne buadhbhaill dá ngluaiseacht chum spóirt;
De díleamhain ní luaidhim, acht torrtha meala ar uathaibh,
Re dín nar b'annamh breaca geala caortha agus cnódh.

10 *Welcome, Master Joe Plunkett*

On his coming to live at Moynalty
By Molly, daughter of Patrick McAlindun

I

Lovely Killen Hill is delightful always, forever,
From ancient times, that joy is claimed for her in the just words of the mouths of the druids,
But now, no lie I relate, she is the second Parnassus,
Those Castalian streams meandering by her,[1]
Following the nine muses, the gentle foster-child of poetry,
That son of Captain James,[2] esteemed in every land
In the course of flowering to accomplished leadership,
There will be gold and myrrh and worldly abundance at One Night's Growth.[3]

[1] Castalia was a nymph transformed by Apollo into a fountain at Delphi. The waters were consecrated to the Muses.
[2] Captain James Plunkett was the addressee's father.
[3] The monument at the top of Killen Hill was known as Fás na h-Aon Oíche (One Night's Growth), also the name for a type of mushroom.

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II
And you, Oh hill, will take pride in the coming of the sage lord,
Foster-child of the lime-white Maidens coming under your shadow,
At Helicon it is said that he found gentle favour,
And then drank without thirst from a new cup in the well of the fairies.
Many are the nobles who will come there on the illustrious plain of the Fews[4]
During their dynasty and mastery, that won the perpetual passion of the druids;
There will be assemblies of poets from south to north, and hundreds of poor being relieved,
In that place are the choicest and the best, at One Night's Growth.

III
That very same lovely hill brought a degree of prestige from the plain of Meath,
From prosperous, pure ramparts of the region of Leinster – in every direction,
Let it be claimed that she would have two spouses most renowned,
The father and the son together with the almighty assistance of the Holy Spirit:
Torches, blazing and flourishing, constant like the Gaelic heroes,
Glory be to the shining three-fold God, that is all-powerful in one;
And if Ireland's ollavs still lived, then they would write numerous histories of their importance,
In their wake, disciples will frequent One Night's Growth.

IV
If he comes to Killen Hill, he will be the choice of the noble youths,
He will be a leader henceforth to the Gaels, the portion that survive,
That seer of Ignatius' son, and James of great renown,[5]
Swift hero of the sharp blades of heated battle and quickness of hand:
But I beseech the mother of the Only Son and also the apostles,
To please bring Tib safely out of the lands eastward,[6]
And with his flowering to accomplished leadership,
Every rule will be set aright by him one day, your son, at One Night's Growth.

V
Oh comely, illustrious child derived from that well-begotten tribe
From the elite of the exceptional lions for whom it is natural to rule.
Welcome to you having lately come to Night's Growth,
May you be long-lived there, peaceful without unhappiness without bodily affliction:
May you live ninety years long,
As well as your companion[7] from a generation of the tribe of kings;
A couple in command of multitudes, shoulder to shoulder with them,
Conducting the final battle of life in the manner of the saints.

[4] A region on the border of Louth and Armagh.
[5] Joseph Plunkett's father was Captain James; his grandfather Colonel the Hon. Ignatius Plunkett.
[6] Morris (1915, 391) identifies Tib, or Tobias, as a brother to Joseph Plunkett, at that time in Braganza, Portugal.
[7] i.e. Plunkett's wife. According to 'Tuireamh', Molly McMahon was his second wife. Charlotte Throckmorton, his first wife, died in 1750.

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VI

And Oh hill where they bore every achievement without partiality without travail,
Are you the Garden of Eden taking root anew?
There will be no fear of Adam being driven out nor of Eve to penitence,
Comely fruits will hang freely on your branches unchecked,
But with the coming of the high lord and his wife who sustain the race,
Joseph and Mary who gained the garden of the saints,
They will have the keys of the kingdom of paradise, true belief and love,
And clergy without impediment[8] will again praise One Night's Growth.

VII

And Oh Killen Hill, where I found myself when I was young,
I would never part from the high plain as long as I live,
But to watch the ships in the sea under full sail,
With the melodious birds of paradise all around me making music;
Watching the red squirrel and the hornless doe being chased,
And the melodious cries of the bugle stirring them to sport;
To say nothing of friendship – a place of honeyed fruits on the whitethorn,
Bright trout, berries and nuts in copious numbers.

[8] The Penal Laws prohibited Catholic priests from their ministry.

II *Tuireamh Joseph Pluincéad*

I

A shean-chríoch Fáil nach náir an sgéal duit
a dtugann tú do shár gach lá ar an Ghaedhil-treibh!
Ach is mar súd budh ghnáth dod cháil a dhéanamh,
bheith cothughadh do námhad is a' básughadh do ghaolta—
sliocht Sheáin is Mhairtin ar sgáth i n-éifeacht
is gach aicme dar fhás ón Spáinn dá dtréigean.
Is mairg atá dod chathughadh a mheirdreach,
a mhalartach lúbach chluainteach bhréagach.
Nachar fhóir dhuit ar dtús gach cúis a ndearna tú
i nEachroim an áir is gach áit dar chlaon tú,
nó gur bhris tú an stiúir se re humhail do ghéilleadh
do chreideamh na n-abstal is do theagasg na cléire?

II

Réab tú an stóras a d'fhóirfeadh don éigse
is ghaduigh tú fós dá n-ór is dá n-éideadh;
d'fhág tú na dílleachtaidhe claoite doinach,
is baintreabhacha tláith go dtrásta ag géar-ghol.
Fána sgiath re tártháil budh ghnáth ag réidhiughadh dhóibh,
flaith na ngreagh, na bhfleadh, is na bhféastaidhe,
bile na n-each slim budh hiomchubhaidh tréartha.
Acht teacht go hAnas Caoin is fíor gurab éigean,

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's gan tilleadh dhó arís ar a chaomhthach céillidh.
Ní sgarfadh sé a choidhche re hinghin a' *mhajor*,
an réalta maoith-gheal míon-tais méir-gheal
budh chiallaidh sgolartha galanta tréitheach;
i dtus a cinneamhna a hoileadh go réimeamhail.

III

Níl deilbh dá bhfacaidh nach mbreacfadh 'na ngréasaibh;
an long 's an seól san mbóchna bhraonaigh,
an mhuc mhara 's an rón is tóir na n-iasgaibh,
crainn na coilleadh is fioghair na n-éanlaith,
an t-athair nimhe 's an abhall fár pheacuigh síol Éabha.
Go dtug sí i gcló an mhuir bheó gach gné dhíobh.
Is na tíortha ar milleadh ar ghiorrra do chéilidhe,
bheir cách ar mearadh i mbarúnacht Fhearn'aighe;
re cluistin do halla a bheith gan tathaidh na laochraidhe,
's do phárlus gan táiphleisg, gan téad-chruit,
gan ord, gan aifreann, gan freasdal na cléire,
gan cantail na Psalmaibh ann dá léigheadh,
gan bhantracht ag dealbhadh na ngréasaibh.
'S aithnighim ar amharc na bhfiormaimint' 's na néallaibh
gur atharruigh pláinéid da n-áitibh re chéile.

IV

Do dhorchuigh Lúna i dtús gach oidhche,
bhain tuisleadh do shiubhal is do chúrsa na gréine,
is táid uile faoi smúid is do mhúch na réalta.
Do chuaidh san gcróchar ní bhia ró re haon raod,
ní mheasaim níos mó go mbia tórtha ar ghéagaibh,
is ní mó bhias fós ar mhóinéar féartha.
Biaidh gach mion-mhagh ar bearaonaigh go treagchruth
is biaidh na branaraibh gan lán-toradh déise,
gan bólacht ag dáil bainne i bhfásaighibh no sléibhte,
is biaidh na linntibh go cinnte gan iasgaibh,
is taid na coilltibh gan bhinn-ghuth na n-éanlaith,
is gan fuaim ghuth na gcuach ina bhfonnrann,
gan chantail na londubh 's na smaolach,
ach dá ruagadh ar fhuarlaigh gan téagar.

V

Biaidh na tulcha is na mullcha gan phléisiúr,
gan uaill chon ag ruagadh an mhaol bhuidhe,
gan bhuabhall don uaisle dá shéideadh,
gan suairceas dá ngluasacht chum féasdaidhibh.
Táid an uair se go gruama tinn tréithlag
fána gcuallaidh bheith fuaradh san gcriadh uatha.
A Rí na gcréacht dá mb'éidir a rádh dhuinn,
nó dá ma chuibhthe dhuinn fhiafraighe do Dhia na ngrása—

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ach má chanamuinn tréas tabhair féin duinn párdún,
gidh go n-abraid nach ndéan tú an éagóir, a Aird-rí.
Ó gheallais do na dílleachtaibh go bhfuighdís athair,
is don mbaintreabhaigh céile 's nach mbiadh gan árus,
cionnus do creidfeam an scéal soin tar éis an áir se?

VI

Do bhuail tú an té se bheireadh braighde as gábhadh,
is ceann cothaigh don méid sin tar éis réamh-ráite.
Acht ó leag tú an ghéag do chraoibh ar fhéaghadh dith,
is maith thú má léigir Séamus slán duinn.
A ghleacaigh na ngleó gé león an bás thú,
a chaithmhílidh dreach-nálainn do chonnairc mé lá thú,
is do dheaghla thrí dtriúr ní dhiúltfadh an t-áth dhíobh,
is dá gcuirfeadh a nguaille do chomhar go dtiocfá slán uatha.
Fear mar Hearcuil na mbuadh thú i gcruas gach gábhaidh,
nó mar Hector fá Traoi ag dío-chur náimhde,
nó mar Chú na Heamhna thug geall ar thánaigh;
is bamhaidh Fir Dhiadh i ngliaidh go gáibhtheach thú.

VII

Fear mar leanbán re fann-lag do ghnáth é,
fear mar uan chum truagh do thárrtháil
an mheirge bheódha chródha chráibhtheach,
mar Pharis mhac Prímh sa tslighe dá dtarla.
Gé budh líonmhar teacht cíosa ó thíortha 'na lámha,
budh tighearna ar muir é, budh mhinic ar sáile,
's dá dtéigheadh fearaibh Éireann mar aon leis san áibhéis
nár bhaoghal do neoch dhíobh basgadh ná báthadh.
Budh síothchánta Neptune ag taisdeal 'na mbárc dhó,
bhíodh Eolus is Boreas go sáimh dhó,
deabhtha na Mara ní lamhadh bheith dána
ó théigheadh sé ar tuinn go dtilleadh go tráighe,
is tá mo dhóigh mór go dtug an Cóimhdhe grádh dhó.

VIII

Ach ó chaill Éire a céile cródha,
's gur follus an léan so ar theampall na Rómha,
ag sgaramhain a sréad is ag méadughadh bróin dith;
ní bhfuil deabhaidh re déanamh do Ghaedhil budh mhó dith,
ach amháin muna dtearthar Séamus óg uainn.
'S a Thulaigh mhic Chuainte, gruaim go deóidh ort!
Is gearr a mhaoidhim gur éirigh an ró leat,
ag triall na flatha so id aice chum comhnaidhe.
Níorbh fhiú thú fhagháil, a thriall, mar chomharsain;
a mhurthuille na tubaiste, ní ghoirim níos mó thú.
Níor aithin tú an tráth d'fhás a' mogaill óir ort;
is nach daor an lán so atá san gcomhraigh!

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IX
Laochraidh Parrthais, táid go leór dhíobh,
is go meas damh féin tá an méad díobh fhóireas.
Creideamh an Naomh Pádraig, grádh is dóchas,
féile re fáilte is árus don deóraidh,
don ór-fhlaith bhláith se d'fhás go cródha
don fhíon-ubhall dob áirde 's dob áille tórtha,
Magnes na nGaoidheal san taoibh se na hEórpa,
an *Jasper* do phríomh na líoga lóghmhar,
Carbuncle dob fhearr ná leagaidh óir sin;
an t-emerald a d'fhás as lár coróna,
Carnelian budh daoire d'éifeacht Fódla,
an tóirse soluis i ndorus an chóigidh.

X
Tré laige mo chéadfadh ní dhearna mé an t-eólas
ar an seiseadh cuid déag don chéim mar chóir dhó,
óir ní fios damh féin i nÉirinn fhód-ghlais
ó lá Eachroim na gcréacht sin béad budh mhó linn,
bheir tuirseach tinn tréith-lag Gaedhil is nua-Ghaill.
Fá Dhún Libhis 's i nAontruim beid go brónach,
do dh'aicme na Niall is a' fial-teach foirle,
mar 'gcomhnuigheann an Rialtsa an t-iarla mór Cónaill,
fána gcaraid ghlan-ghaoil ni chim san gcróchar,
's ar n-imtheacht, faraor, as tír na mbeó uainn.

XI
Bráthair na dtriath, bráthair tighearna na Bóinne,
bráthair thigherna Lugh sna Cairrge fós é,
tighearna an dá bhaile dhéag 'chois Bóinne é,
is i mBaile a' Bharúin do háirmhthí an ró leó;
bráthair thighearna Thurfaidh an Chaisleáin sa mhóta,
bráthair Phluincéadach cuimseach na Rátha Móire,
bráthair Chrúisigh crothmore crú-ghlan cródha,
bráthair Balbhach, gé táid faoi smóil duibh,
's gan uaisle re fagháil san gclár so Chobhthaigh
nach raibh srotha ar bhfás tar aird-lí an rós' ann.

XII
San taoibh ó dheas dá mbeamuis eólach,
is iomdha féinidh fuileachtach curata cródha
do thogha gach fola do threabhaibh na hEórpa,
a mbiadh a marc-shluagh ag teachtadh 'na mbóithribh,
le réim na n-eachraidh 's re hastar na gcóistidhe,
is ní lia ná Ríogan mhíonla mheóir-leabhar
do stuaidhribh na gcuacha mar an ómra,
bhiadh ag cruadh-ghol 'sa ndualaibh as ordughadh—
gan fios cia is lugha creach ag teacht 'un a thóraimh.

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XIII

Sguirimse annsin agus fillim an taobh so—
Eistidh amach an tan so is féachaidh
an bhfuil Caiptin Throgmorton ag teacht 'sna bóithribh,
nó an bhfuilid a chuallacht ban uasal mar aon leis,
an dá Bhetty, an dá Nancy tair bhantracht a scéimhe,
nó an bhfuil Mistress Bath ag teacht rena céile,
's a' Caiptin Tiobóid chodail aréir leat?
Nó an féidir nach dtug do Phriur sgéal duit?
Muna ndeachaidh Melpomene an tan so dod fhéachain,
nó nár imthigh Terpsichore sna críochaibh ar saobhadh?
Tá an naonbhar deirbhshiúr so sgreadfaigh 's ag géar-chaoi,
ar fuaidreadh seachráin gan fasgadh dá gcéadfaidhe
re linn na flatha bheith creapailte i ngéibhean.

XIV

Chuaidh srotha Chastalia i dtráigh suil braon diobh,
is Parnassus gé hard a háit gur thréig sí
fá leannán Chleopatra na naoi maighdean
is fá dhalta na Muses bheith ar suanluighe n-éaga.
Cá bhfuilid an uaisle dar dhual a bheith dream leis,
ar dheise, ar áille, ar cháil is ar chéadfaidhe?
Carraic na tuigse 'san Scrioptúir dá léigheadh,
starthóir is freachnóir Laidin 's i nGréigis,
an Francach, a Spáinneach, an Gearmán 's a' Gaedheal glan,
maighistir gach teanga é dar canadh sna réagúin
fuair oideas na hEórpa i gcló go réimeamhail;
is gan duan dar seóladh i bpróis nó i bhéarsa
nacharbh aithne 's nacharbh eól don ór-fhlaith mhéir-dheas,

XV

Ní bhfuil feidhm feasda re cruitire téid-bhinn,
file nó bárd chum dáin do réidhiughadh dhuinn.
Cia thuigfeas a nglór má labhraid Gaedhilge
's dá gcanaidís ceól ar nós *Orpheus*?
Ní shinnfid níos mó deith ó torcharadh an té se
lerbh ionmhain cuairt na ndruadh 's na n-éigse.
Acht is cosmhail gur fhág an dáimh se Éirinn
ó nach gcualais fán gclár sin gártha céad díobh.
Muna bhfuilid i ndiamhair ní féidir féin sin;
Is biadh feasda faoi ghruaim ó sgar uatha a saidhbhreas;
ó theasduigh sé uainn, mo-nuar an sgéal sin,
's go Luan bhruinne an bhráith nach dáil go n-éirigheann.

XVI

Molaidh don Chóimhdhe ghlórmhar ghlé-gheal
go maireann go fóill an t-óigsa Séamus,
craobh chosanta cháich—goma slán budh saoghal dó;

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chum baintreabhach a athara go dtrásda réaghlughadh,
Malaigh Nic Mhathghamhna an tan so 'tá tréith-lag,
ag greadadh a lámh 'sa sgáineadh a céibhe,
creachta go bráth fá bhás a céile,
's a dís mhaoith-leanbh nachar abuigh a gcéadfaidhe,
nach aithne dá ndeabhaidh 's nach dtuigeann an créachtnughadh;
ní heagail dóibh smál ó bhráthair Rí Séarlus,
ar marthain cian-ársaidh gan bhás, gan bhearnadh,
gan bhagair,[1] gan bháthadh ag árdughadh céime.

XVII

An sgeallán so a treabhadh do abhaill budh tréine,
an chnú don chraoibhín nár sgaradh dá fréamhaibh,
leómhan loinneardha drithleanach deallradhach,
bradán Bóinne agus seabhac na hÉirne,
an caith-mhílidh frasach mar achnill ós éanlaithe,
an fear-chú so d'fhás do bhláth na Réaxa.
Gé go sguirfead ar ball tá cáil 'mo dhéidh dhe,
is mo thriall go hAondruim d'innsin sgéal dóibh.
Tá an halla sin Luigh faoi chumhaidh go déarach,
's gur duibhe no smál dá mbláth is dá n-éideadh,
's toigh Bhaile Aláird, mo chrádh, mar an gcéadna.

XVIII

Ní bhfuil fáth da a n-áireamh ach a rádh i n-éinfheacht:
'sgan ríogh-bhrugh árd gidh álainn aolta
do threabha na Spáinne do bhláth Mhilésius,
ná d'uaisle Gall darbh ionmhain pléisiúr
ó gheataidh Dhroichead Átha go Cathair Áth Cléithe,
ó Theamhair na mbuadh is go Cruachain Mheidhbhe,
ón tSeanainn anuas go bruach Loch Géise,
ó Dhún Geanainn go Lúigh is go Dún Dá Leath-ghlas,
ó Iubhar Chinn Trágha go hArd Mhacha na cléire,
ó Ros Treabhair go Cairlinn is go Dún Dealgna dá éis sin—
nach bhfuil i gceasnaoi go tláith is ag ban-chur déara,
ó chasgair an bás, mo chrádh, go déidheanach
Joseph Pluincéad coimseach treigheach.

XIX

Ach, is fíor re rádh gur bás os andé dhó,
is go foircheann an bhráith nach dáil go n-éirgheann.
Beannacht na n-easbog is na sagart i n-éinfheacht,
beannacht gan clódh do dh'ord na cléire,
beannacht na ndoctúir is beannacht na liaghadh,
beannacht gach compáin don bhantracht riaghalta,
beannacht na mbaintreabhach fann is na ndeóradhaibh,

[1] MS reads *'s an bhanguir,* which is not an Irish word; print reads *'s an bhanríoghan*, which also makes little sense. We have altered to *gan bhagair* to agree with the list and the sense.

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beannacht na mairtíríbh d'astruigh an saoghal leis,
beannacht na suadh, na ndruadh is na dtréan leis,
is beannacht a bhfuilmid i bhfios go léir leis—
a' méadughadh sóláis is d'aithghiorradh péin dó,
ar dheas-láimh an Chóimhdhe go glóir na naomh dhó.

AN ANNÁLACH
Míle is seacht gcéad do réir gach peann dar sgríobh,
dhá thríochaid dá éis, dhá cheathair is dó re haon,
ó ghabh colain daonna an Réalt thug solus an tsaoghail
go dul Mhaighistir *Joseph*, mo bhrón, i bhfeart faoi líg.

AN t-EPITAPH
Faoin líogsa fá dheóidh atá an ór-fhlaith shuairc i dtámh,
faoin líogsa 'tá éifeacht shaidhbhris chiste lucht dáin,
faoin líogsa 'tá an té do léighfeadh startha go lán,
gan uirgheall 'na bhéal, gan léarsa ar leabhar 'na láimh.
Faoin líogsa go faon 'tá éifeacht cheannais an tsluaigh,
faoin líogsa 'tá an té re daidhbhir nach minic budh chruaidh;
a gheil-chneas mar laoige 'sar bhféachaint a stán-rosg uatha,
budh samhailt mar léar-lasadh Réalt fras ón thuaidh.
Nachar ttáinic do shaoghilsa do éifeacht prionnsa ar fhuadh?
Nach é críoch gach aon, faraor, go gclaoidhfeadh an bás?
Nach bhfuighfidh re spré don méidse dá dtugadh an cás,
nach gceannaidhthear ón éag ar shaidhbhreas neoch do shíol Ádhamh?

11 *The Elegy of Joseph Plunkett*

I
Oh ancient land of Ireland, isn't it shameful for you
that you visit humiliation every day on the Gaelic tribe!
But it was ever thus that your reputation was made,
to be sustaining your enemies and slaying your kindred—
the race of John and of Martin profitably protected[1]
and every family that came from Spain abandoned.[2]
It is sorrowful to grieve you,
you fickle, crooked, dissimulating, false harlot.
Firstly, doesn't every choice that you made befit you
in Aughrim[3] of the slaughter and every place you abandoned,
or that you broke the rudder of humble obedience to
the faith of the apostles and the teaching of the clergy?

[1] John Bull, a figure symbolising English tyranny, and Martin Luther (1483–1546), the German reformer whose ideas initiated the Protestant Reformation.
[2] According to one strand of tradition, the Irish were descended from Míl Easpáine, the name derived from the Latin *miles Hispaniae* (soldier of Spain).
[3] The Battle of Aughrim, County Galway, in 1691, in which William III's army comprehensively defeated the Jacobite army loyal to James II.

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II
You tore asunder the storehouse of the learned
and you stole their very gold and their vestments;
you left the orphans ruined and wretched,
and weak widows even now weeping shrilly.
Safeguarded under his protecting shield, ever relieving their distress,
the lord of the horses, of the feasts, and of the banquets,
champion of the graceful steeds, whose accomplishments came naturally.
But it is true that he was compelled to come to Inishkeen,[4]
and without returning again to his wife.
He will never again part from the daughter of the *Major*,[5]
the tender-bright, smooth-soft, bright-fingered star
who was prudent, learned, elegant, accomplished;
from early life, she was nobly bred.

III
No image was seen that she would not render in embroidery;
the ship and the sail in the wide ocean,
the porpoise and the seal and the pursuit of fish,
trees of the forests and the figure of birds,
the serpent and the apple by which Eve's seed sinned.
She brought the sea to life—every aspect of these.
The districts were distraught upon the untimely death of your wife,
Everyone driven crazy in the barony of Farney;
to hear your hall unfrequented by warriors,
and your parlour without gaming tables, without a stringed harp,
without friars, without mass, without the attendance of clergy,
without chanting of the psalms there being recited,
without women stitching embroidery.
And I recognise by the appearance of the firmament and the clouds
that the planets have changed places with one another.

IV
The moon darkened at the start of each evening,
the sun was tripped up in its path and its course,
and they are all under fog and the stars are extinguished.
He went in the hearse, nothing will have success,
I do not think any more that there will be fruit on the branches,
and there will be no more grasses on the meadow.
Every small field will be in distress, seeming abandoned
and the fallow fields will be without full-yield of corn,
no dairy cattle bestowing milk in the pastures or mountains,
and the lakes will surely be without fish,
and the forests are without the sweet voices of the birds,
and without the sound of the cuckoos and their languid song,

[4] Inishkeen (*Inis Caoin*), County Monaghan, location of the Plunkett family's graveyard.
[5] Plunkett was first married to Charlotte, daughter of Major Theobald Throckmorton, who died aged forty-two on 20 August 1750.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

without the singing of the blackbirds and the thrushes,
and they being put to flight on the marshes, without shelter.

v

The hills and the summits will be without pleasure,
without the howl of a hound chasing the hornless yellow cow,
without the blowing of a bugle for the nobility,
without mirth prompting them to feasts.
They are at this time gloomy, sad and weakened
because their companion is lying cold in the ground below them.
Oh King of the wounds, if you could tell us,
or if it would be proper for us to ask God of the graces—
but if we speak unfaithfully, give us fair pardon,
even though it is said that you are not unjust, oh High King.
As you promised the orphans that they would find a father,
and the widowed wives that they would not be without a home,
how will we believe that story after this slaughter?

vi

You struck the one who brought captives out of bondage,
and one who nourished to the extent aforesaid.
But since you broke the branch of your tree upon seeing it,
it will be a blessing if you leave James[6] safe to us.
Oh champion of the battles, even though death afflicted you,
oh hero of handsome countenance, I saw you one day,
and you sundered three men who would not yield the way,
and if they opposed you, you would emerge unscathed.
You are a man like victorious Hercules[7] in every perilous adventure,
or like Hector of Troy[8] repulsing enemies,
or like the Hound of Eamhain who pledged in the Táin;
the foe of Fear Diadh in dangerous combat, you are.[9]

vii

A man like an infant accustomed to gentleness,
a man like a lamb that is rescued for pity's sake
—the lively, valiant, godly banner—
like Paris son of Priam in the way it happened.[10]

[6] Joseph Plunkett's son, James (1730–1808); by his second marriage, according to internal evidence.
[7] Roman god famed for his strength and associated with a repertoire of adventures known as 'the twelve labours'.
[8] Hero of the Trojan War and brother to Paris; killed by Achilles.
[9] Eamhain was the seat of the Ulaidh, the first inhabitants of Ulster. Cúchulainn, the pre-eminent champion in the Ulster Cycle, is the hound. In the prose epic *Táin Bó Cuailnge* (*The Cattle Raid of Cooley*), Cúchulainn defends Ulster against the forces of Queen Maedhbh of Connacht. He and Fear Diadh, who trained together as youths, engage in single combat, the latter finally dying in his friend's arms.
[10] Paris was sent away as a baby because of a prophecy that he would cause Troy's destruction. He was rescued and raised by shepherds, eventually being restored to his family when identified while competing in public games. His later abduction (seduction, in some sources) of Helen, who was then married to Menelaus, king of Sparta, led to the Trojan War. The reference here may be to Paris' childhood, although these four lines may be corrupt, as they counter the laudatory thrust of the poem.

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Although the rents came in abundance from his lands,
he was lord of the sea, often on the water,
and if the men of Ireland would go with him into the abyss
it would be no danger to any of them to be beaten or drowned.
Neptune would be peaceful as he travelled the waves,[11]
Aeolus and Boreas would be tranquil for him,[12]
the Sea's quarrels would not dare to be bold
from his departure on the waves to his return to shore,
And it is my great hope that the Lord God would love him.

VIII

Since Ireland has lost her valiant spouse,
and this loss has been felt at the temple of Rome,
pulling asunder her flock and multiplying her sorrow;
there is no struggle necessary for the Gaels, who are dearest to her,
unless young James is taken from us.
And oh, Killen Hill,[13] may you forever be in gloom!
It is but a short time, I declare, that you had success,
enjoying this lord dwelling beside you.
It was not worth it to get you,[14] to have you come here, as a neighbour;
oh flood of misfortune, I no longer invoke you.
You did not recognise that you were enjoying a golden season;
how burdensome that all this is in the grave!

IX

Heroes of Paradise, they are sufficient,
and I myself reckon their number fitting.
The faith of Saint Patrick, love and hope,
a welcome feast and a resting-place for the stranger,
from the very fair golden prince—he grew hardily
from the noblest vine bearing the loveliest fruit,
Magnes[15] of the Gaels on this side of Europe,
the *Jasper* that was prime of precious stones,
the best *Carbuncle*[16] in a setting of gold;
the emerald from the centre of a crown,
the *Carnelian* most prized of Ireland's treasure,
the torch of light at the threshold of the province.

X

Because of the weakness of my understanding, I did not reckon
one sixteenth of the honour that was due to him,
for in Ireland of the green sod there is not known to me

[11] Roman god of the sea. [12] Greek gods of wind.
[13] Killen Hill, near Dundalk, County Louth; the site of her father's school of poetry, and addressed in the same poet's 'Fáilte Maighstir Ió Pluinceat' ('Welcome to Master Joe Plunkett').
[14] The speaker appears to address Plunkett here, and then reverts to addressing Killen Hill.
[15] Figure of Greek mythology; possibly Magnes the shepherd, who allegedly discovered magnetism and might therefore serve as a symbol for leadership.
[16] A red gemstone.

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any greater injury since grievous Aughrim,
that made the Gaels and Foreigners weary, sick, exhausted.
Throughout Dunluce and in Antrim they will be sorrowful,
the race of the O'Neills and their abundant, bountiful house,[17]
where lives that star the great earl of Connell,[18]
among the friends and true kindred that I do not see at the bier,
at his departing from us, alas, out of the world of the living.

XI

Brother of the nobles, brother of the lord of the Boyne,[19]
brother of the lord of Louth and Carrick[20] furthermore,
the lord of twelve towns by the Boyne he is,
and in Barronstown, associated with great success;
brother of the lord of Turfad castle and moat,[21]
brother of the mighty Plunket of Rathmore,[22]
brother of Cruise[23] of Crothmore, pure-blooded, brave,
brother of Balfe,[24] even though they are under a black stain,
and without nobility to be found on this plain of Cobhthach[25]
where no stream springs beyond the high-coloured rose.

XII

On the southern side, had we been informed,
are many champions, red-blooded, knightly, brave
the choice of each bloodline of the tribes of Europe,
whose riders would be approaching upon the roads,
with a train of horses and a procession of coaches,
and a great many noble ladies, gentle, slender-fingered,
beautiful maidens with tresses like amber,
who would be crying hard and their locks disordered—
there is no telling who would be least distressed coming to his funeral.

XIII

I leave off there and return here—
Listen closely now and behold
is Captain Throckmorton approaching upon the roads,
or is his company of noble ladies with him,
the two Bettys, the two Nancys, the most comely of women,

[17] The Uí Néill (O'Neills) were ancestral rulers of Tyrone.
[18] The Uí Dhomhnaill (O'Donnells) were ancestral rulers of Tyrconnell, modern-day Donegal. The earldom was created in 1603, at the conclusion of the Nine Years War.
[19] Frederick Hamilton (1718–72) was the third Viscount Boyne.
[20] Thomas Oliver Plunkett (1757–1823) was eleventh Baron Louth. His father, Oliver (1698–1754), was tenth Baron *de jure* by virtue of an earlier attainder.
[21] Turfad lies near Cootehill in County Cavan; this lord is unidentified.
[22] A branch of the Plunkett family had been long established at Rathmore, County Meath. The first of note was Alexander (d. 1503), Lord Chancellor of Ireland.
[23] The Cruys, or Cruise, family had owned the estates of Cruisetown and Moydorragh in County Meath since the fifteenth century.
[24] This Balfe is unidentified.
[25] Cobhthach Caol, or Coel, a fictional king and foe of Labhraidh in the Leinster origin story.

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or is Mistress Bath coming together with them,
and Captain Theobald who slept with you last night?[26]
Or is it possible that your Prior did not bring you word?
Did Melpomene[27] not come this time to see,
or did Terpsichore[28] not go deranged into the countryside?
These nine sisters[29] are screaming and sharply keening,
wandering and reeling having lost their senses
while the lords are hobbled in chains.

XIV

The Castalian streams[30] would ebb with their tears,
and Parnassus,[31] however high its place, that she[32] abandoned
for the lover of Cleopatra of the nine maidens,
for the pupil of the Muses,[33] now reclining in the slumber of death.
Where are the nobility who would be his natural tribe,
in adornment, in beauty, in fame and in discernment?
The pillar of understanding when reading the Scriptures,
historian and labourer in Latin and in Greek,
French, Spanish, German and the pure Gaelic,
master of every language, he was, that was sung in foreign lands
who acquired his European learning prolifically in print;
there was no song despatched in prose or in verse
that was not familiar to, and known by, this refined golden lord.

XV

There is no role, henceforth, for the sweet-stringed harpist,
nor poet nor bard to compose a poem for us.
Who will understand their voices should they speak Gaelic
And should they sing music in the style of *Orpheus*?[34]
They will not perform any more since this one was laid low
who was loved in the courts of the druids and the learned.
But it appears that the very poets have left Ireland
since their many cries have not been heard about this plain.
Unless they are hidden away, that cannot be possible;
and they will henceforth be forlorn since their riches were severed from them;
since he was lost to us, that news is my sorrow,
and he will not rise for judgement until doomsday.

XVI

Praise be to the Lord God
that the young man James[35] lives still,
the protective branch of all—may he have long life;

[26] Plunkett's first wife, Charlotte, was a Throckmorton; as far back as the Williamite War, a Captain Theobald Throckmorton had served in Lord Louth's regiment.
[27] The muse of tragedy. [28] The muse of lyric poetry and dancing. [29] i.e. the nine muses.
[30] Castalia was a nymph transformed by Apollo into a fountain at Delphi. The waters were consecrated to the Muses.
[31] A sacred mountain associated with the Muses. [32] i.e. Castalia. [33] i.e. Plunkett.
[34] A renowned musician and poet in Greek mythology. [35] Plunkett's surviving son.

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to the widow of his father, hitherto resplendent,
Molly McMahon, now devastated,
beating her hands and cleaving her breast,
anguished forever over the death of her husband,
and her pair of tender children who have not reached the age of understanding,
who do not recognise their trouble nor comprehend the blow;
they have no fear of stigma from the brother of King Charles,[36]
The line subsists of old without death, without a gap,[37]
Without threat, without eclipse, advancing in rank.

XVII

This pip yielded from the strongest apple-tree,
the nut of the little branch that was not separated from its roots,
the lion glistening, glittering, refulgent,
the salmon of the Boyne and the hawk of the Erne,
the generous warrior like the prince of the birds,
this fierce warrior who grew from the royal flower.
Although I will leave off soon, there is yet more to come,
and my journey to Antrim to tell them the news.
That hall of Lugh[38] is in lachrymal melancholy,
and their flowers and their clothes are dark and dreary,
and the house of Allardstown, it pains me, is the same.

XVIII

There is no reason but to consider them together:
and with no high kingly mansion, however lovely and lime-washed,
of the tribes of Spain from the flower of Milesius,
nor of the foreign nobility that loves pleasure
from the gates of Drogheda to the city of Dublin,
from Tara of the triumphs and to Meadhbh's Cruachain,[39]
from the Shannon down to the bank of Swan's Lake,
from Dungannon to Louth and to Downpatrick,
from Newry to Armagh of the clergy,
from Rostrevor to Carling and to Dundalk beyond—
no place unbeset by affliction and floods of tears
since death lately vanquished, it pains me,
masterful, accomplished, *Joseph* Plunkett.

XIX

But it is true to say that death came to him yesterday,
and that he will not rise until the end of days.
The blessing of the bishops and all the priests,
the unending blessing of the clerical orders,
the blessing of the doctors and the blessing of the physicians,

[36] James II and VII, King of England, Scotland and Ireland (1633–1701).
[37] i.e. of long lineage.
[38] Celtic deity and mythological hero.
[39] Tara, County Meath, was the power base for the High Kings of Ireland. Queen Maedhbh of Connacht lived in Cruachain (Rathcroghan, County Roscommon). She initiated the Cattle Raid of Cooley, related in the prose epic *Táin Bó Cuailnge*.

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the blessing of every companion of the women religious,[40]
the blessing of the feeble widows and the beggars,
the blessing of the martyrs who passed through the world,
and the blessing of the sages, the druids and the mighty,
and the blessing of all whom we know—
these blessings will increase solace and reduce pain for him,
may he sit at the right hand of the Lord God, to the glory of the saints.

THE ANNALIST
One thousand and seven hundred according to each pen that writes,
Two thirties beyond, two fours and two plus one,[41]
since the Star that gave light to life took human form
until Master *Joseph*, my sorrow, was laid in the grave.

THE EPITAPH
Here lies, at last, the gracious golden lord at rest,
here lies the poets' source of riches and treasure,
here lies one who would read histories in abundance,
without words from his mouth, without seeing the book in his hands.
Here lies, prostrate, the vigorous leader of men,
here lies one who was seldom harsh with the poor;
his white complexion like stone, his eyes cold and still,
would be like the image of a shooting star from the north.
Didn't your life amount to that of any prince?
Is it not the end of everyone, alas, that death would prevail?
Would it not be discerned instantly to those who would understand the case,
That riches do not redeem from death any of the seed of Adam?

[40] i.e. nuns. [41] i.e. 1771, the year of Plunkett's death.

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Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill (c. 1743–c. 1800)

Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill ('Black-haired' Eileen O'Connell) composed the most famous *caoineadh* in Irish literature. A member of the landed gentry, she was raised at Derrynane, County Kerry. Her father was Dónall Mór Ó Conaill (d. 1770). Her mother, Máire Ní Dhonnchadha Dhuibh (c. 1702–95), was also a poet: her barbed extemporal verses to workers and tenants are preserved in the oral tradition; and a poem on the birth of her grandson Daniel O'Connell, 'The Liberator' (1775–1847), in manuscript (Ní Ógáin 1981; O'Connell 1892, I, II–12 and II, 202–3; Ó Muirithe 1993). Ní Chonaill's first marriage lasted only six months. Her second, to Art Ó Laoghaire (Art O'Leary; d. 1773) of Macroom, County Cork – the subject of her lament – took place in December 1767.

The occasion of her husband's death prompted her to compose a famous elegy that articulates her grief as a widow and political defiance. Art Ó Laoghaire was a propertied Catholic who had served as an officer in the army of the Habsburg Empress Maria Theresa (1717–80). It was prohibited for a Catholic to own a horse worth more than £5 5s., according to the Penal Laws. When Ó Laoghaire refused to sell his valuable horse to Abraham Morris, a Protestant and former sheriff of Cork, Morris and an escort of soldiers pursued his arrest at Carraig an Ime (Carriganimmy), where he was shot and killed on 4 May 1773.

Ní Chonaill's *caoineadh* enjoys a complex transmission history, passed down via oral tradition and surviving in multiple versions. It was considered exemplary from the eighteenth century, as attested by the French traveller Charles Étienne Coquebert de Montbret, who wrote in 1790 that 'the song of Mme O'Leary on the death of her husband is praised above all others' (Ní Chinnéide 1973, 92). There are four main lines of transmission. Two are recorded from oral recitations made by Nóra Ní Shíndile (Nora, or Norry, Singleton) of Millstreet, County Cork. One of these was taken down by Éamonn de Bhál and is associated with the approximate date of 1800. The second Ní Shíndile recitation was transcribed by Dómhnall Mac Cába, in a manuscript compiled in 1873; this was the basis for the Feiritéar version published in *Field Day* (IV, 1372–83). As Henigan (2012, 225 n. 130) points out, the long life herein suggested might also be explained by the earlier date's referring to 'the *floruit* of Norry Singleton or the date of the manuscript itself – and the actual transcription may have been made some years later'. Both these manuscripts are now lost; however, they are the ascribed points of origin for later versions. Another version, published in 1944, was based on a different manuscript ostensibly dated around 1845. But this, too, is lost (see Ó Mathghamhna 1944; Ó Tuama 1961, 78–81).

The version here is edited from the oldest extant manuscript copy, representing another primary line of transmission. This version was transcribed

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anonymously into a composite manuscript; in the relevant section, concerned mainly with devotional materials, this lament is signed off: 'Written in Taughmaconell by a Reader of the Story of Peace' and dated 1858. Mac Lochlainn (1972, 111) suggests that the scribe was learning Irish and may have been a Protestant missionary; possibly George French, who was in the parish in 1862. This version is almost identical, including the prose segues in English, to another taken down in a fourth line of transmission by Denis Henry Kelly (John Rylands Library, Manchester, MS Irish 72), suggesting that both were derived from the same source in east County Galway, and made prior to 1858 (Mac Lochlainn 1972, 112).

This version is not published as a coherent entity elsewhere. Its focus on the murder's impact on the bereft speaker distils the lament to her experience of shock, grief, and rage. This variant also offers evidence of the blood-drinking motif, independent of Ní Shíndile's recitation. It may be that episodes in the longer versions – the couple's elopement, details of Ó Laoghaire's bearing and reputation in the area, stanzas attributed to his sister, Ní Chonaill's vow to pursue legal justice and appeal to the king in London – are later interpolations. The dynamics of oral transmission mean that songs evolve and adapt according to the singer; *caoineadh* is reiterated and remade in performance. The rich textual tradition associated with 'Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire' illustrates the interplay and longevity of tropes and performance. For detailed discussions, see Bourke (1993; 1997); Cullen (1993); Henigan (2012, 91–110); McKibben (2010, 99–125); Ní Ghríofa (2020); Nic an Airchinnigh (2010; 2012; 2014); Ó Tuama (1995); Ó Buachalla (1998). For a synthetic scholarly edition of other versions, see Ó Tuama (1961) and Dillon's English translation (1971).

The manuscript renders each couplet as a single line; these are disaggregated below in order to clarify the end rhymes and metre. We have also regularised the orthography where necessary for the sake of clarity; spelling and punctuation are retained.

12 *Caointeachán mnaoí Áirtuir Uí Laogharadh, Ceántaidh Cíaruigh*

Lá brá Seatharuinn
ansa tsráid sin Cheannatuirc
Thug mo croídhe teannthuibh duit,
thug mo shúil aire duit
Do loíos ar thaithuint ort,
cum mé bhreith bhaile leat
Is dhamsa nár mh astar sin,
níor thug tú béal na bata dhom.
Ná cogadh an chinn ceangaluigh,
acht codhla go hághdhara

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A gclúmh eán tras gartha,
is gan dul na bharra liom
Acht marcuigheacht fhada dham
ar aonach is maraguidh
Is go pobal an afrionn,
agus tar nais a bhaile riom
Thug tú cion is cathuis dham
agus ór lé glacadh dam,
Agus fíon le cathaimh dam,
go dtanuig chugham da ceapuill
A luirig is a sgreaduig
is a díalatuigh air leatha
Tugas léim as mo leabuigh
an tara léim go tairsinn
An tríú léim ar mo chapuil
is go fuair mé tú leath mharbh.
A chnocíon íosal atuinn
agus fuill do chroidhe leá caisagh
Níor ghanas le thu nídhe ná ghlana
acht e dol súas leam bhasaibh

Mo charadh is mo láo thú
is ní raibh duine beó táobh leat
Acht beanuin aosta
agus leathbhinn dá bráod ort
Sul loitfheas an spéir tú,
m'fhear brá glégeal
Graduigh críodh cruag ort.
Sheághan bán Coúntha
Más brab do bhí úaitsi,
na tanuigh fáom thúarim
Bheurtuinn capuill faoí grúadh dhoit,
Agus caoíruigh fáoi uann duit,
agus or na sluaghta
Sul do bheanuis an laóch dha bhuinuibh,
Aig Iónradh-Charuig-an Ime,
nar mharuighsi a thál na sline
Agus ná raibhsi an a chuigadh —

Mo caradh is mo rún tú
is thoill liómsa na ramhair ar da ghuiluibh
Go ngeann an púdar
agus an grán triom ghúnadh
Is go léacfhuinn cead súibhall leat,
mar ceann beann ar an dhuithuidh

— *The above rhyming she composed when she discovered her husband murdered on the mountain, as she specifies in her* cáona, *on her being returned home bereaved, her children inquired (as you see, infra, at wh[en] she composed the following stanza)* = Cá bhfuil mh 'athair, ghrádhach

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Tanuig fein a bhaile,
go dúbhach mar abhí agam
Tanuig chúgham do leanuibh,
da fíaruigh gan aon mhaga.
Cá dhág me féinuig [a athair][1]
D'ionsíos fein doibh
mar do bhí agam.
Go bhfuídegh tháll e marbh
An Cnocuionn íosal atuinn.

— *It appears that her her* [sic] *young child had been crying at this time, the mother hus[hed] it to sleep in bed, and while thus engaged, some one expressed her carelessness about her murdered husband who yet was [lying on]*[2] *the mountain! saying she went to sleep! At which she comp[osed] as follows* —

Mo caraid agus mo úan tu,
ná credsi an duansin
Ná sgéul fior fuatadh
ga codla do chúadhsa
Níor bhaith úainuig
níor throm súan dam
Achd cuir do leanuibh chum súamhnis
do bhí ró bhúartha —

Mo charadh tu is mo rún,
'sé déir na mnása liom
Gur uirasbhadh deanas cúmha,
bréug mnási iad súd
Ata mo sheisreach ar súbhall,
tá mo bha bogadh da gcrúadh
Tá mo stealuinn faoí na stúir,
tá ór am thróanc
Ca bhfuil a mhaith an súd,
tá mo chroidhe 'stigh faoí chúmhadh
Mar a bheith glas a bheith ar thróanc,
go ríoch an ocar amúgh
Is go tucaghadh meirg ar an screú,
is na bhfuil aón Gabhaíg sa Múghan,
cuirfhach é niagha chúmhail

Mo mhíle tú ghrádh
is óill lióm tú fán clar,
go thdhugtá loiléich agus láir,
cráin agus a tháill,
siduigh agus láuns

[1] Inserted from Kelly's witness (Mac Lochlainn 1972, 118, l. 59).
[2] Inserted from Kelly's witness (ibid., 118).

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A tháobh na gáonuigh thál
ar léanbh an cúmhal bán

Mo mhíle grádh thú agus mo theanuibh,
ní chreidim óna marion
Ná gur rith na teachtrúigh gara,
nó bheith do gáolthuibh ansa ó mhadain,
na thrúipuibh is na gcaithuabh
Agus a ndíolatúibh ar leathadh,
dá gclosuidís Arthur
Ó Croughcúir a beith marbh, —
A mhná úd asteach an sgoil,
staduig go léir ar bhur gol
Go n-dóilthuig Aurtur Ó Crocuir scot,
ní a fealuim lean na fort[acht][3]
Ac og ampar cré agus cloch —

Written in Taughmaconell by a Reader of the Story of Peace

[3] Inserted from Kelly's witness (ibid., 119, l. 102).

12 *Keen by the Wife of Arthur O'Leary, County Kerry*

A fine Saturday morning
in that street of Kanturk
My heart delighted in you,
my eye took notice of you
I decided to beseech you,
to bring me home with you
To me that was no inconvenience,
you gave me neither harsh words nor the stick.
Nor locking of horns,
but sleep till milking time
Lying on a feather mattress,
and not depriving me of it
But a long ride for me
to fair and market
And to mass,
and back home with me.
You gave love and affection to me,
and gold for taking
And wine for drinking,
until your horse came to me
Howling and screaming
and its saddle undone
I leapt out of my bed,
the second leap to the threshold

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The third leap onto my horse,
and I found you half-dead.
On a low hillock of gorse
and the blood of your heart a gushing stream
I did not pause to wash or clean you,
but drank it up with my palms.

You are my friend and my darling
and there was no person alive by your side
But a little ancient woman
and a half-corner of her mantle on you
Lest the open air spoil you,
my fine radiant man.
A hard heart-scald upon you,
Shawn Bawn Cooney,[4]
If it is a bribe that you sought,
I received no word of it.
I would give horses bearing manes to you,
And sheep bearing lambs to you,
and gold in great quantities
Before you knocked the hero off his feet,
At the Battle of Carraig-an-Ime.[5]
May neither his progeny nor his name endure
And may he be banished from the province —

You are my friend and my darling,
I wish that you were not flat on your back
That the powder
and the shot had thrust through my dress
And I would forgo walking with you,
as the first woman of the district.

— *the above rhyming she composed when she discovered her husband murdered on the mountain, as she specifies in her* cáona, *on her being returned home bereaved, her children inquired (as you see, infra, at wh[en] she composed the following stanza)* =
Where is my beloved father?

I myself came home,
sorrowful as I was
Your children came to me,
asking without any joy,
Where did I leave their father.
I told them
what I knew,
that he would be found dead
On that low hillock of gorse.

[4] John Cooney was the informer who betrayed Ó Laoghaire's whereabouts to Morris.
[5] i.e. Carriganimmy, where Ó Laoghaire was killed.

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— It appears that her her [sic] *young child had been crying at this time, the mother hus[he]d it to sleep in bed, and while thus engaged, some one expressed her carelessness about her murdered husband who yet was [lying on] the mountain! saying she went to sleep! At which she comp[osed] as follows —*

You are my friend and my lamb,
do not believe that tale
Nor the truly hateful story
that I went to sleep
It was but intermittent,
I had no deep slumber
But I comforted your children
who were so upset —

You are my friend and my lover.
What the women say to me is
That I did too little grieving,
lying women those are.
My plough is at work,
my cows are being milked,
My stallion is reined in,
there is gold in my trunk.
What good are all these?
My heart is crushed with grief
Like a lock on a trunk
for which the key has been lost,
And like rust on a screw,
for which there is not a single smith in Munster
who could turn it back

You are my great, great love;
it galls me, your being dead,
who gave me milk cow and mare,
a sow and her yield,
silks and lawns,
Beside the milk cow that suckled
the fair-haired child

My great, great love and my joy,
I do not believe of those living,
Nor had speedy messengers run,
your relatives would be, there from morning,
in troops and showers,
And their saddles undone,
if they heard that Arthur
O'Connor[6] was dead, —

[6] i.e. Art Ó Laoghaire.

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You women of the school,
put a stop to your cries
So that noble Arthur O'Connor is tutored,
not finding ale or comfort,
But in bearing clay and rock. —

Written in Taughmaconell[7] *by a Reader of the Story of Peace*

☙ ☙ ☙

[7] A village near Ballinasloe, in present-day County Roscommon.

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Máire Bhuí Ní Laoghaire (1774–c. 1848)

Máire Bhuí Ní Laoghaire[1] (Yellow Mary O'Leary) was born in 1774, in Túirín na nÉan (Tureenanane), near Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh (Ballingeary) in West Cork. Her branch of the Uí Laoghaire, 'Buí' (yellow), had been clients of the MacCarthys of Muskerry; the area Uíbh Laoghaire (Iveleary) is named after them. She married Seán de Búrca (John Burke) in 1792. They had nine children and built up a 150-acre farm at Céim an Fhia (Keimaneigh) by 1821. They were evicted during the Famine in 1847.

Ní Laoghaire was a prolific, political poet; as many as sixteen songs and short verses are ascribed to her. She regularly employed the *aisling* form; a dream-vision in which the poet encountered a *spéirbhean*, an otherworldly woman figuring Ireland, lamenting political adversity, and prognosticating better times. The female poet's adoption of the traditionally male speaking position plays with the form's heteronormativity, one interpretation of 'Maidean Mhoch ar Leabaidh Bhoig', below. Even her lullaby ('Seo Leó, a Thoil' ('*Seo leó*, my dear')) and apparent drinking song, 'An Cruiscín Lán' ('The Full Jug'), articulate forthright political resistance. Her songs are littered with references to Greek and Irish mythology.

Ní Laoghaire supported the Rockite movement of the 1820s, which embraced agrarian violence against Protestant landlords. The movement adopted the millenarian 'Pastorini's prophecy' (a reading of the Book of Revelation made by Bishop Charles Walmesley, published in 1770): that Protestantism would be overcome in 1825. Her most famous song, 'Cath Chéim an Fhia' ('The Battle of Keimaneagh'), is concerned with the January 1822 conflict between the yeomanry and soldiers of Muskerry and the local Whiteboys – a secret society of Rockites – among whom numbered her sons and brother. Her articulation of visionary and millenarian prophecy in this poem leads Ní Shíocháin to compare her to the British Romantic women poets (2018, 91–9). Her songs reveal the circulation of these ideas in popular culture; indeed, Ní Shíocháin, emphasising performance as a means of ideological transmission, argues that her songs were drivers of the population's political engagement and activism. Ní Úrdail (2002) has argued that she combined the Stuart yearnings of Jacobite poetry with the anti-elitism of French Jacobinism.

Ní Laoghaire straddles the timeframe of this anthology. Her earliest dateable song 'Ar Leacan na Gréine' ('On the Sunny Slopes'; *Field Day* IV, 288–90) is an *aisling* in response to the failed French naval effort to support the United Irishmen by landing in Bantry Bay in December 1796. 'Fáinne

[1] Ní Shíocháin (2018, 21 n. 1) prefers the spelling 'Ní Laeire', as a better reflection of the dialect pronunciation.

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an Lae' ('The Dawning of the Day'), another *aisling* composed prior to the 1798 rebellion, survives in two variant versions; and 'Seó Leó, a Thoil' ('*Seo leó*, my dear') is a lullaby that promises political upheaval.

The Irish texts here are edited by Tríona Ní Shíocháin (2012), reproduced with permission. These versions are in standardised spelling; for the dialect orthography, which is more reflective of their circulation as songs in the oral tradition, see Ní Shíocháin (2012, 177–8, 206–7; 2018, 137–8, 163–5; 2021).

13 *Maidean Mhoch ar Leabaidh Bhoig (Fáinne an Lae [B])*

Maidean mhoch ar leabaidh bhoig
do chuala amuigh na héin
do smaoiníos-sa gur chóir dom dul
ag múscailt stoic chun féir;
do bhuail umam, is a ciabh ina hucht,
's í ag cíoradh a foilt go réidh,
an chúileann ghlic ba bhreátha cruth
ná an eala ar sruth an éisc.

Mo chroí gur chrith á fhiafraí dhi
cad é an tír gurbh as an bhé:
'An tú péarla an tsuilt ón nGréig do rith
is d'fháig in a raic an Trae,
nó Deirdre a thug grá cléibh is cion
do Naoise a cailleadh léi,
nó an bhean do rug le háilleacht cruth
an t-úll ó iomaidh ghéar?'

'An tú Clíona ghlic a chuir draíocht is broid
ar Aoibheall dheas gan chlaon,
nó stuaire an toir do ghluais tar muir
is d'fháig na mílte tréith,
nó an bhean sa chnoc do thraoch na coin
go nglaoidís Cuileann tSéimh
a chuir Fionn sa tsruth gan chrích gan chion
d'fhúig deorach fliuch an Fhéinn?'

Do labhair sí liom, 'a shéimhfhir, suigh,
go n-insead fáth mo scéil:
ní stuaire mé do ghluais tar muir
gur thúrnaigh cath ná plé –
do *natives* chirt Uíbh Laoghaire mé
is de shíolrach mhaithe Ghael,
is mo chomhra dein mara bpósair mé
go moch le fáinne an lae.'

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'A bháb an tsuilt is breátha cruth
ná sneachta ar chnoc le gréin,
d'fhágais-se tinn breoite mé,
is ní mór mo shos ó phéin;
do phósfainnse gan feoirling thú
is ní iarrfainn ba ná spré
ach tá móid orm le hóigmhnaoi dheis
den chomharsanacht roimh ré.'

13 *One early morning on a soft bed (The Dawning of the Day [B])*

One early morning on a soft bed
I heard the birds outside
I thought that I should go
To rouse the cattle to pasture;
I met her before me, her hair falling on her bosom,
while she softly combed her locks,
the clever maiden, of finer form
than the swan on the fish's stream.

My heart trembled asking her
from what land the maiden came:
'Are you the pearl of pleasure from Greece who ran
and left Troy in ruin,[2]
or Deirdre who gave her heart's love and affection
to Naoise who was lost due to her,[3]
or the woman who won by beauty of form
the apple from bitter rivalry?'[4]

'Are you clever Clíona who put witchcraft and bondage
upon gentle, guileless Aoibheall,[5]
or the handsome woman of the tower who went overseas
and left thousands powerless,[6]
or the woman of the hill who subdued the hounds
whom they called gentle Cuilleann
who put Fionn in the stream, forever helpless
and left the Fianna wet with tears.[7]

[2] Helen, whose abduction (seduction, in some sources) by Paris of Troy led to the Trojan War.
[3] Deirdre and Naoise fell in love against the wishes of the king of Ulster, and fled to Scotland. Persuaded back home, Naoise and his brothers were killed; Deirdre ultimately killed herself.
[4] Paris chose Venus/Aphrodite over Juno and Minerva as the most beautiful, because Venus had offered him Helen of Sparta, the world's greatest beauty – thereby sparking the Trojan War.
[5] *Mná sí* (fairy women) associated with Munster; according to folklore, as sisters and love rivals for the same man, Clíona turned Aoibheall into a white cat.
[6] Helen of Sparta and Troy.
[7] Sliabh gCuillinn (Slieve Gullion), Armagh, where Fionn (leader of the Fianna) was tricked by Cuilleann's daughter into swimming in the lake on top of the mountain; he emerged an old man with grey hair, his hounds dispersed, which caused great sorrow among the Fianna. Cuilleann gave him an antidote to drink, but he did not regain the colour of his hair.

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She said to me, 'O gentle man, sit,
that I might tell the grounds of my story:
I am not a handsome woman who went overseas
who descended into battle or disputation –
of the proper *natives* of Iveleary I am
and of the genuine progeny of the Gaels,
and make my coffin unless you marry me
early by the dawning of the day.'

'O pleasing maiden of finer form
than snow on a sunny hill,
you left me sick and ailing,
and I need my respite from pain;
I would marry you without a farthing
and I would not seek cows nor dowry
but I am long pledged to a pretty young woman
of the neighbourhood.'

14 *Seo Leó, a Thoil*

Mo ghraidhin go brách thú, a pháistín óig,
mar taíonn tú buartha suaite dearóil;
má thíonn tú liomsa, gheobhair fothain is cóir,
agus gheobhaidh tú duais nár luadh leat fós;
agus seo leó, a thoil, agus ná goil go fóill.

Do gheobhair chun bainne uaim macha breá bó,
is gheobhaidh tú an tarbh chun clasaithe leo,
gheobhair na capaill chun branair is rómhair,
is do gheobhair fíon dearg is a mhalairt ar bord;
agus seo leó, a thoil, agus ná goil go fóill.

Gheobhair an clogad is an sciath ón Amadán Mór
is gheobhaidh tú an t-úll ón gcúilinn óig,
gheobhair an gadhar ba mheidhrí ceol
do cheangail an laoch a héill ina dhóid;
agus seo leó, a thoil, agus ná goil go fóill.

Gheobhair an corn faoi dheochanna soil
do chuireadh an draíocht ar na mílte sló,
do gheobhair an chathair úd Dhún an Óir
a bhí ag an nGruagach Mór chun spóirt;
agus seo leó, a thoil, agus ná goil go fóill.

Gheobhair an lomra do foilceadh le hór
a thug Jás ina loing thar toinn ar bord,
gheobhair na capaill faoi bhratannaibh sróil
ó mhac Rí an Deirg cé gur fada dho id chomhair;
agus seo leó, a thoil, agus ná goil go fóill.

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Gheobhair Maigh Chromtha gan dabht chun bróg,
is gheobhaidh tú an Droichead chun *provision* lóin,
gheobhair Baile Átha Cliath chun fiaigh is spóirt,
is gheobhair chun stoiceanna Luimneach Mhór;
agus seo leó, a thoil, agus ná goil go fóill.

Gheobhaidh tú Béarra chun éisc ar bord,
is gheobhair an margadh leathan faoi fheoil,
gheobhair na cuanta faoi bhádaibh seoil,
is gheobhair Uíbh Laoghaire chun sméar is cnó;
agus seo leó, a thoil, agus ná goil go fóill.

Ar an mbliain seo chugainn beidh búir faoi bhrón
is cathair is dún gan smúit gan cheo,
is gheobhair gach ní nár mhaíos ort fós:
iníon an diúic id chlúid chun spóirt;
agus seo leó, a thoil, agus ná goil go fóill.

Ná goil a thuilleadh is ná feicim do dheoir,
mar beid siúd scriosta sara dtigidh an fómhar,
beidh a súile ag sileadh agus briste ar a nglór,
is a gcóistí againne in a ngliugaram spóirt;
agus seo leó, a thoil, agus ná goil go fóill.

14 Seo leó, *my dear*

My endless pity on you, oh little young child,
as you are worried, agitated, wretched;
if you come with me, you will get shelter and your proper share,
and you will get an unsuspected prize;
and *seo leó*, my dear, and cry no more.

You will get from me, for milk, a fine herd of cows,
and you will get a bull for charming them,
you will get horses for breaking and tilling the lea,
and you will get red wine and white at table;
and *seo leó*, my dear, and cry no more.

You will get the helmet and the sword from the Great Fool[1]
and you will get the apple from the fair, young maiden,

[1] *Eachtra an Amadáin Mhóir* ('The Adventure, or Lay, of the Great Fool'), in which the hero (the Great Fool) drinks a magic draught, offered by a giant, which removes his feet. The Fool nevertheless runs swiftly on his stumps, spearing a stag and capturing a white hound, tying the hound on a leash and instructing it to make music until found. The giant who owned the hound arrives and makes a deal with the Fool that he will guard his Golden Fort and wife. Ultimately, the Fool stands guard and is rewarded by the giant's return of his feet.

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and you will get the dog of the merriest music
whom the hero tied on a leash in his fist;
and *seo leó*, my dear, and cry no more.

You will get the cup bearing tasty drinks
that would put the spell upon the multitudes,
you will get that city of Golden Fort
that the Great Giant had for sport;
and *seó leó*, my dear, and cry no more.

You will get the fleece that was dipped in gold
that Jason brought over the sea on board his ship,[2]
you will get horses bearing satin mantles
from the son of King Derg[3] though it was long intended for you;
and *seo leó*, my dear, and cry no more.

You will, without doubt, get Macroom for shoes,
and you will get Droichead[4] for the *provision* of sustenance,
you will get Dublin for hunting and sport,
and you will get Great Limerick for herds of cattle;
and *seo leó*, my dear, and cry no more.

You will get Beara[5] for fish at table,
and you will get a bountiful market for meat,
you will get harbours bearing boats with sails,
and you will get Iveleary for berries and nuts;
and *seo leó*, my dear, and cry no more.

This coming year, boars will be downcast
and city and fort without gloom, without anguish,
and you will get everything I have declared and yet more:
even the duke's daughter in your embrace for sport;
and *seo leó*, my dear, and cry no more.

Do not cry anymore and let me not see your tears,
because they will be swept away before the autumn comes,
their eyes will be weeping and their voices broken,
and we will be riotously rattling in their coaches;
and *seo leó*, my dear, and cry no more.

❧ ❧ ❧

[2] Jason and the Argonauts were sent on their quest for the golden fleece in order that Jason be kept from his rightful throne of Iolcus.
[3] Bodb Derg, a king of Tuatha Dé Danann; sometimes in mythology a friend of the Dagda, sometimes his eldest son.
[4] Literally 'Bridge'; a common prefix for placenames in Irish.
[5] Beara Peninsula, County Cork.

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Muirn Ní Shúilleabháin (fl. 1754)

Muirn Ní Shúilleabháin composed this elegy on the death of a relative, Murtach Óg Ó Súilleabháin (c. 1710–54), whom she had fostered as a child. Murtach Óg was the last leading descendant of the O'Sullivan Beare dynasty of the Beara Peninsula in west Cork. Murtach Óg was born in Eyeries, reportedly educated in France and Spain, and fought with Lord Clare's regiment at the Battle of Fontenoy in 1745. According to oral tradition, he met Empress Maria Theresa, for whom he fought in the War of Austrian Succession. On his return to Ireland, where he married a member of the extended O'Sullivan clan, and had a son, Seán na hInse (John of the Inches), Murtach kept a ship and retained his military connections, enlisting volunteers for the French brigades and smuggling brandy, tea, and tobacco.

His nemesis was John Puxley, a Protestant from County Galway, who was appointed revenue officer for Beara in 1750. The provocation was the murder of Denis O'Sullivan, a young cousin, by English soldiers. According to local tradition,

> Muirin or Madge … possessed the poetic faculty to a considerable extent, and her effusions were popular among the people. This woman when she heard of the boy's death went to Dunboy and defiantly cursed Puxley, and threatened him in the presence of his servants with the vengeance of Morty Oge. The next night Puxley and his men came to her house, while the old lady was asleep, and fired the thatch above her. When the woman screamed in terror, Puxley called out – 'Now, you witch, you can mutter your curses in hell.' (O'Mahony 1892, 119)

On 10 March 1754, Puxley was ambushed and killed by Murtach and his men. Murtach fled Ireland but returned to his home in May, where he was besieged although supported by twenty men. Ultimately, the thatch roof was set alight and Murtach killed as he attempted to escape. Two of his crew (Domhnall Ó Connaill and Seán Beag Ó Súilleabháin) were arrested and brought to Cork by ship; Murtach's body was reportedly carried by sea. The heads of all three were placed on spikes outside Cork jail on 28 August 1754.

Ní Shúilleabháin's is one of four laments in Irish on these events: this and another for Murtach Óg, one in the voice of his accomplice Domhnaill Ó Connaill, and one for Puxley. The quatrain cursing Tadhg Ó Scolaí, who allegedly divulged Murtach's whereabouts to the authorities, is also attributed to Ní Shúilleabháin by O'Mahony, whose text is reproduced here (1892, 123–4). See also Breatnach (1997, 159–237).

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15 *The Curse of Muirin for Scully*

A Thadhaig Í Sgulluidhe, diog trí d' chroidhe sdeach,
Nár théir d'on t-saoghal go n-deuntar gniomh ort,
Do theang' ar do cheann, 's do bhrannra sinte,
'Gur tu'd dhoghadh 's do'd loscadh a bh-follus do dhaoinibh. 4

15 *The Curse of Muirin for Scully*

Tim Scully, death pain through your heart in,
May you not depart life till you be barbarously treated;
May your tongue protrude and your collar-bone be stretched,
And may you be burned and roasted in the presence of people. 4

16 *Caoine ar bhás Mhuircheartaigh Óig uí Shúiliobháin i mbéara bean de shíol Shúiliobháin ro chan*

I
Osna go cruaidh le guais na scéal so a' rith,
Osna go cruaidh ban uasal séimh a's a ngoin,
Osna go cruaidh le sluaightibh Éireannach,
Ár bhfosta chum suain le ruathar piléar gur thuit. 4

II
Do thuit an cura dob' ursa i gClár Fódla Mumhan;
Do cuireadh an briseadh ar ar thiomairg thar téorann chúgainn;
Sin tubaist a's mille ar an gcine go deo buinscionn
Ó leagadh an bile, fear ionaid an leóghain fuair clú. 8

III
Clú do tharraing le h-arm gur smaoinidh sé
A's dúil i gceannas do ghlacadh 'san tír go léir.
Bhí lonnradh an tsneachtaidh 'na leacain tré rós na gcaor
A's a shúile glasa mar an seamair ar a luigheann an braon. 12

IV
Braon dóighte gach deórach dár goileadh 'na dhiaidh,
An chraobh órdha ó Dhúnmhóra chuir spiorad 'sa triaith,
Laoch déolach dá shórt sin do cailleadh le bliadhain,
A's a thórramh 'sa bhfódsa gan choinniol gan chliar. 16

V
Tá an chléir go dúbhach dar liom ó marbhadh é,
Na ceudta liúgh 'san Múmhain do labhairt an scéil,
Is céas an chúis do'n chúige an gaiscidheach séimh,
An péarla fionn a's an prionnsa gealchroidheach saor. 20

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VI
Go saoraidh an t-Athair naomhtha t-anam gan chiach
Fé scéithibh an Éinmhic fuair peanaid a's pian.
Is creach éachtach gach n-aon acu d'fhuil Eachaidh an triaith
A's ón éirleach is aorach fir Chonnachta triall.

VII
Ag triall go bráthach ar an árd mar a gcodlann an seabhac
A's gan fear coiméadta ar hestát do choiscfeadh a namhaid;
Múchla do chuirp bhreágha bheith acu mar gheall
Dá thaisbeáint do lucht sparán i gCorcaigh gan ceann.

VIII
Seo an ceann do b'fhearra dár cheangail le pearsain daonda
Chum cóir do sheasamh do lagaibh bhí ar easbaidh an t-saoghail,
Ba chrann maith bagair dá charaid dá maireadh tréimhse
A's is canntlamh greaduighthe an dragan so ar spara 'na aonar.

IX
Na aonar uain is fuar an mharcuigheacht sin
Ag an réilltean suairc nách fuair cead casaoide,
Do réighfeadh cuanta ón scuaine calaoise
A's do dheunfadh buartha ag ruagadh bhfear gcuímhtheach.

X
Nách cúimhtheach an gníomh sin do déanadh 'san áit
Mar dhíoghaltas chum an tigheasaigh bhí cúmhachtach, sámh,
Mo sceímhle tar taoide nár imthigh i dtráth
Sul ar scaoileadh 'na thimcheall an luisne tar bárr.

XI
Sin bárr atuirse ón nDaingean go cois na Baoi
Tré lár Chairbreach treasna a's go Dóinn arís,
Do rug barr gaisce 'sna ballaibh nách eólach díbh
An buineann d'eascar d'fhuil Eachaidh a's Dómhnaill Chaim.

XII
Is é Dómhnall Cam a bhfeall do cailleadh 'san Spáinn
D'fhúig brónach fann gach dream de'n aicint sin d'fhág.
Siúd an seabhac do shamhlaidh seasamh 'na áit.
Sin sgóip a's leabhar do mheabhra faraire an stáit.

XIII
Stát marbh do gealladh ón righe dó saor
A's úrlámhas airm gan eagla buidhne a bhfaobhar,
Teacht fé ghradam mar atharuigh míle réx
A's bheith sámh seascair 'na thalamh gan cíos le réim.

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XIV
An réim sin do thréigis mar ghrádh dod' mhnaoi
A's an t-aon mhac thar théis-se 'na bhláth do bhí.
A bhfuil éirleach i n-Éirinn dod' chairdibh gaoil
Is diúl faoiseamh do'n tréad bocht chráidh an dlighe.

XV
An dlighe 'sa cogadh do dhortaigh tú ad t-aonarán
Nuair bhís-se ag cosaint do dhóirse a's na piléir dá lámhach
Na teinte ad' ghoradh gur loisceadh do chaomh shlinneán
A chroidhe gan chadam dob' oirdhearc méin a's cáil.

16 *Keen on the Death of Murtagh Oge O'Sullivan in Beara, a woman of the O'Sullivans composed this*

I
It is with a heavy sigh that this dismaying story is told
It is with a heavy sigh that a gentle noble woman, wounded,
It is with a heavy sigh by Irish crowds
That our buttress was felled to eternal rest by a rush of bullets.

II
The knight who was a prop of Ireland's Munster was felled
The one who was brought to us from abroad was broken,
That is the most ruinous disaster on the tribe, disarrayed forever
Since the scion was struck down, heir of the lion who won fame.[1]

III
Fame that he thought to win with arms
And desire to take leadership in all the land,
The brightness of snow in his cheeks aglow
And his green eyes like the clover on which the dewdrop lies.

IV
A burning dewdrop each tear that was wept in his wake,
The golden branch from Dunmore that gave courage to the weak,
A suckling calf of the kind that would be gelded within a year,
And his wake in this ground without candle, without clergy.

V
The clergy are gloomy, it seems to me, since he was killed
Hundreds of cries in Munster that spoke the news,
The plight is agony to the province, the gentle warrior,
The fair pearl and the light-hearted free prince.

[1] Domhnall Cam O'Sullivan Beare (1560–1618), who fought at the Battle of Kinsale, went into exile and was appointed knight of the Order of St Iago and Count of Bearehaven (Conde Birhaven) by Philip III.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

VI
May the holy Father free your soul without sadness
Under the protection of the Only Son who got punishment and pain!
The lord is a ruinous loss to each who is of the blood of Eochaidh,[2]
And lively were the men of Connacht[3] proceeding from the slaughter,

VII
Forever roaming on the high plain where the champion sleeps
And without a defender on your estate that might stop their enemies;
My groan it is that your fine body is theirs as a prize
Being displayed headless to the wealthy crowd in Cork.

VIII
Here is the finest head ever joined to a human body
That stood for the rights of the weak who were dispossessed,
A tree of protection to his friends had he lived longer,
It is a grievous sorrow that this dragon is on a spike, unattended.

IX
Alone and far from us, cold is that journey
For the affable star who was uncomplaining
Who would clear harbours of the fraudulent flock
And would crush the spirit of foreigners while putting them to flight.

X
Isn't it barbarous, the event that occurred in that place
As revenge on the householder who was powerful and peaceful!
My horror! that he did not go abroad in good time
Before the blazing fire was set upon him.

XI
That is the source of dejection from Dingle to Dursey
Through the centre of Carbery and again to the Blackwater,
He fought bravely at ramparts, about which you do not know,
The shoot that sprang from the blood of Eochaidh and Domhnall Cam.

XII
It is Domhnall Cam who was treacherously lost in Spain[4]
Who left weak with sorrow every group of that sept,
There is the champion who was imagined firmly in his place,
That is the storied ambition that the watchman of the estate envisaged.

XIII
The moribund estate that was pledged freely by the king to him,
And military command without fear of troops in arms,

[2] Mythical ancestor of the O'Sullivans.
[3] i.e. the relatives of Puxley, who hailed from County Galway.
[4] He was assassinated in Spain in July 1618.

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Held in esteem though a thousand kings came and went
And content and stable holding his lands in freehold.

XIV
That career you left behind for the love of your woman,
And your only son who afterwards flourished;
There is havoc in Ireland for your friends and relatives
And a craving for relief for the poor flock who are tormented by the law.

XV
Solitary and alone, the law and the war injured you
When you yourself were defending your doors and the bullets flying,
The fires warming you until they burned your dear shoulder,
O valiant heart of illustrious mien and reputation.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Banaltra Thoirdhealbhaigh Uí Bhriain (fl. c. 1760–80)

This anonymous poem is attributed to the nurse of Toirdhealbhach Ó Briain (Turlough O'Brien); the placenames locate the poem on the border of east Limerick and Tipperary. The keen laments the murder of Toirdhealbhach Láidir (Strong Turlough), a member of the extended O'Brien clan associated with Limerick and Clare, at the hands of street urchins paid by two culprits whose names are disguised in the poem as 'T __ l' and 'B __ r', identified as John Tuthill, high sheriff of County Limerick in 1774, and James John Bourchier (m. 1766). Ní Dhonnchadha therefore dates the event and composition to c. 1760–1780. She also proposes that the first-named place, Bansha, given its precedence in the poem, likely has the closest connection with its subject (Ní Dhonnchadha 2002, 186–90).

Nothing is known of the author herself, who laments Toirdhealbhach's death far from his relatives, curses the alleged culprits, and closes the song with the intention of returning him to his mother's home. It apparently survives in a unique copy, Huntington Library, MS 4542, which also contains a copy of 'Osna go cruaidh' by Muirn Ní Shúilleabháin. This manuscript was compiled by Tadhg Ó Conaill in 1827. The Irish text here is reproduced, with permission, from Máirín Ní Dhonnchadha (2002, 200–3).

17 *M'fhada-chreach chráite*

M'fhada-chreach chráite
's do bhí do ghaol san mBáinsigh,
's i dTiubraid Árann,
i nEatharla Dháson,
is in Imligh an bháire,
i gCuilleann 'tá lámh leis,
's i gCnoc Loinge na mbánta,
i bPort na Má thiar,
i mullach Cnuic Áine,
's in Óispidéal Mháire
mar ar leagadh ar lár tu
i ndoras na ceártan
le dailtíní sráide
do bhí ag tuilleamh a bpá ort
is nár fhága siad go bráth é
a Thoirdhealbhaigh Ó!
Uch! uch! agus ó go dubhach!

Is mo chreach fhada reamhar ghoirt
a T__l 's a B___er
más sibhse is ciontach

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nár bheire bean clann díbh,
nár bheire bó gamhain díbh,
nár thige gort geamhair díbh,
nár bheirig an tSamhain oraibh
ná an tEarrach ina dheaghaidh sin,
a Thoirdhealbhaigh Ó!

Mo chreach ghéar is mo ghreadadh
tu a chailleamhain le mac mic poitín an tarra
le dailtíní na sní d'aisceadh,
is le dailtíní na léadhb do lascadh,
is le dailtín ná déar a ainm
mar nach feas cé hé a athair,
is le mac Shéamais Rua na gcapall,
go h-imthíg íde air is measa
ná mar d'imigh ar a athair,
's é sin, a chrochadh ar lár na faiche,
agus ceathrú dhe do chur ar gach sparra,
a Thoirdhealbhaigh Ó!

M'fhada-chreach bhrónach
cá raibh do ghaol nó do chóngas?
le striapach an phóirse
do bhíodh ad dheochadh is ad phógadh
is ag cur na ngiobal id' phóca,
go bhfeice mé spórt uirthi,
a hiníon ar an mbóthar
's a siolán faoina scornaigh
ní áirím an striapach dob óige
do bhíodh i gcochall a cóta,
ina bonn ar bóthar
ag bailiú na tórach
chum tusa do leonadh
a Thoirdhealbhaigh Ó!

M'fhada-chreach thúirseach
's is deas a thiocfadh súd duit –
hata trí gcúinge
is peiribhic phúdair
is fuip bhreá lúbach
ar ghillín tsúgach
is claíomh breá cúil tharat
ag buain trí gcúrsa
as bhodaigh na dúiche
go gcaithfidís umhladh
duitse gan chúinse
a Thoirdhealbhaigh Ó!

Nár bheannaíthear dhuit a fhaiche an aonaigh
is créad chuige a mbeannóinn féin duit

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is feabhas an stóir a chaill mé inné ionat,
m'easnamh lem' shaoghal,
teinneas mo chéinn is
treighid mo chléibh tu,
m'fhiabhras ná féadfad a réiteach,
is mo niosgóid ná cneasóch lem' ré thu
a Thoirdhealbhaigh Ó!

M'fhada-chreach thúirseach,
corraigh is múiscil,
oscail do shúile
is tair abhaile liomsa
go dtí do bhaile dúchais
mar a bhfuil do mhúdar
is a steilingí ag lúbadh
is a bairillí ag cúradh
a ba boga ag búthraigh,
's a searracha ag súgradh
ar maidin laoi samhraidh
a Thoirdhealbhaigh Ó!

Mo chreach fhada is mo chiach,
a dhalta dhil 's a chiall,
ná faiceann tu chughat aniar
do bhráthair is do chliamhain
Toirdhealbhach Ó Briain,
ceann urra na gcliar
do bhí ar an gcnoc so thiar
go moch ag múiscilt an fhia
a Thoirdhealbhaigh Ó!

17 *My enduring, agonising loss*

My enduring, agonising loss
and your relatives were in Bansha
and in Tipperary
in Dawson's Aherlow,[1]
and in Emly of the sporting match[2]
in Cullen that is beside it,
and in Knocklong of the grassy plains
in *Port na Má*[3] to the west,

[1] Colonel James Dawson (d. 1737/8), who lived in Aherlow, County Tipperary.
[2] It is feasible that the spelling for *Imleach Iubhair* (Emly of the yews), by which the town was known, was corrupted in transcription.
[3] Unidentified. Ní Dhonnchadha (2002, 204–5) suggests this may be a location on the river Maigue, which runs from east Limerick south to Cork, i.e. '*port na Máighe*' (port of the Maigue). A well-known court of poetry was held in the early to mid-eighteenth century at Croom on the river Maigue, the local male poets known as '*filí na Máighe*' (the Maigue poets).

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at the top of Knockainy,
and in Hospital
how you were overthrown
in the door of the forge
at the hands of street urchins
who were earning their pay at your expense
and that they would never leave off
oh Turlough O!
Uch! *Uch*! and mournfully!

And my enduring, full, bitter loss
oh T___l and oh B___er[4]
if it is you who are guilty
may no woman bear a family for you,
may no cow bear a calf for you,
may no field spring for you,
may November not prosper you
nor Spring in its wake,
oh Turlough O!

My sharp loss and my lashing
to lose you at the hands of the tar poteen man's son[5]
at the hands of lice-ridden urchins who were handpicked
and at the hands of the ragged urchins who were whipped
and at the hands of the urchin who would not say his name
because his father was not known,
and at the hands of the son of James Roe of the horses
may he be abused worse
than his father was,
that is, hanged at the centre of the fair green,
and a quarter of him put on each spike,
oh Turlough O!

My enduring, sorrowful loss
where were your relatives or your kin?
at the hands of the hussy of the alley
who would be smothering you with kisses
and turning your pocket into rags
that I might gloat over her,
see her daughter on the road
and her noose about her throat
to say nothing of the youngest hussy
who would be in her hooded coat
standing in the road
gathering the posse
to injure you
oh Turlough O!

[4] Identified as John Tuthill and James John Bourchier (Ní Dhonnchadha 2002, 190).
[5] Ní Dhonnchadha (2002, 198) proposes that this means poteen made from barrels of tar; but also allows for the possibility it refers to alcoholism.

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My enduring, woeful loss
and it is good that these things would come to you –
a three-cornered hat
and a powdered periwig
and a fine supple whip
on a lively gelding
and a fine sword across your back
tearing paths
through the louts of the area
that they had to bow
to you unconditionally
oh Turlough O!

May you not be blessed, o fair-green
and why would I myself bless you
excellent is the treasure I lost yesterday there,
my loss with my life,
the ache of my melancholy and
pang of my breast you are,
my fever that cannot be resolved,
and your loss is my boil that can never be healed
oh Turlough O!

My enduring, woeful loss,
stir and awaken,
open your eyes
and come home with me
to your home town
where your mother
and her stillions[6] are bending
and her barrels are frothing
and soft cows bellowing,
and her foals playing
in the morning of a summer's day
oh Turlough O!

My enduring loss and my gloom,
oh dear child and my purpose,
may you not see coming to you from the west
your brother and your son-in-law
Turlough O'Brien,
the head man of the company
who was on that western hill
rousing early the deer
oh Turlough O!

[6] Stands for distilling.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

ANGLOPHONE POETRY

Edited by Sarah Prescott (except where otherwise indicated)

Dorothy Smith (fl. 1670s–1701)

Little is known about Dorothy Smith apart from her authorship of *The Shepherds Jubilee* (1701) and her acting career at Dublin's Theatre Royal in Smock Alley from the 1670s onwards. She was associated with Joseph Ashbury, Master of the Revels, and her husband was fellow actor Henry Smith, who died in 1682. She is mentioned by the London writer and bookseller John Dunton in *The Dublin Scuffle* (1699), recounting the year Dunton visited Smock Alley in 1698 (Mac Góráin 2013, 82–3; Carpenter 2000). The poem should be read in its theatrical context as it is primarily a pamphlet seeking the patronage of the incoming lord lieutenant of Ireland, Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, as the dedication 'To his Excellency the Earl of *Rochester*, &c. Lord Lieutenant of IRELAND' and the subtitle of the poem make clear. Mac Góráin suggests that Hyde's attendance at Smock Alley on 6 October 1701, 'less than three weeks after his arrival', is an indication that Smith's attempt to secure his support was successful (2013, 87). Hyde's early presence at the playhouse was also indicative of the close relations between the court of Dublin Castle and the theatre, both aligned with an increasingly powerful Protestant Ascendancy. In effect, the Dublin theatre was a Royalist theatre that relied on the patronage of Dublin Castle, as Smith's poem demonstrates (Mac Góráin 2013, 84).

Smith's dedicatory epistle and poem reflect this political and cultural context, and her expression of Royalist allegiance alongside Irish concerns adumbrates approaches employed by later women poets when addressing subsequent lord lieutenants of Ireland and members of the monarchy (Barnard 2016; Prescott 2021a). As the epigraph indicates, the poem is a pastoral encomium in the mode of Virgil's *Eclogues* via John Dryden's recent translations (Mac Góráin 2013). In the dedication, Smith draws attention to her gender in this regard, stating that she chose this mode because 'Pastorals are more suitable to a Womans feeble and Enervate Muse' (3). The poem is a total of sixteen pages, and Mac Góráin (2013) provides a useful section-by-section summary and an overview of the poem, highlighting Smith's praise of Hyde's 'noble qualities as well as those of his predecessors' in addition to the 'lengthy descriptions of the golden-age beauty that his presence is already imagined as generating' (82). The lines below are sections 1–4 of the 17 sections identified by Mac Góráin, and are taken from the pamphlet's first four pages. They provide a representative taste of the overall text.

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1 *The Shepherds Jubilee, or, A Pastoral Welcome, To his Excellency the Earl of Rochester, &c. On his Arrival in Ireland*[1]

O Melibœe, Deus nobis hæc Otia fecit
Virgil. Ecl. I.[2]

Come forth, ye Swains, forsake your Herds and Flocks,
And leave your Grooms to tend 'em on the Rocks.
Forsake your Groves, your Plains, your Folds and Home,
And hither, quickly, to our Village come.
Come all with one Consent, to Welcome o're
Your New-made Lord, and Greet him on the Shore;
With Tabers, Pipes, with Dances and with Songs,
And all those Artless Sports which Life Prolongs,
Prepare! To Solemnize this Happy Day;
Prepare! Your Love and Duty to Display.
Let no Due Honours, here, be wanting now;
Which may his Grandure, or your Homage show.
Bring softest Numbers, and Delightful Strains,
Such as th' Arcadians Tun'd upon the Plains.
Such Charming Lays, as *Hermes*[3] Pip'd and Sung;
When he by *Argus*[4] Drove his sheep along:
And with the Melting Melody of Sound,
The Watchful Guardians Eyes with Musick bound.
Come, Shepherds, come; Your Pipes and Voices Raise,
To Welcome o're, the Patron of your Lays.

See, see! The Royal Swain is come to Land,
And lo! What Throngs of People Crowd the Strand!
In Town, their Shouts with Boundless Joy began;
And then with Doubl'd Cries, along the Beach they Ran.[5]
Nor ev'n Old, or Young; nor Man, nor Maid;
But willingly the Grateful Call Obey'd:
The Trumpets Clangor, and the Allarming Drum

[1] Laurence Hyde, 1st Earl of Rochester (1642–1711). An influential statesman and Tory, Hyde was related through marriage to James II. He married Lady Henrietta Boyle, daughter of Richard Boyle, 1st Earl of Burlington and Cork in 1665. He was largely absent from Ireland during his office as lord lieutenant from 1700 to 1703.

[2] 'O Melibœe, it is a god who has made this leisurely life for us', *Eclogues* 1.6, spoken by Tityrus.

[3] The Greek God Hermes, messenger of Zeus and, for Smith's purposes, God of herds and flocks and associated with shepherds.

[4] Argus Panoptes, a character in Greek mythology who was a giant with 100 eyes on his body, thus making him an excellent watchman. This couplet seems directly to paraphrase John Dryden's (1701) translation of the first book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, in *Poems on Various Occasions; and Translations from Several Authors* (London); in the section *The Eyes of* Argus *Transformed into a Peacock's Train*, he is described thus: 'Clad like a Country Swain, he Pip'd and Sung; / And playing drove his jolly Troop along' (163). As Mac Góráin notes, the fact that Hermes slays Argus 'gives the reader a strong hint that Smith is not fully mistress of her own medium (2013, 90–1) nor of the possible implications of the allusion for her avowed purpose in the poem.

[5] Mac Góráin (2013) references a contemporary account of Hyde's arrival in London's *Flying Post*, no. 994, 18–20 September 1701, that suggests Smith's poetic description of the pageantry was based in fact.

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Had Drawn 'em forth, to make their Triumph one.
For n'er till now, such I'mense Joy was Shown,
Since worthy *Cæsar*[6] took the British Crown.
Excess of Mirth, no Moderation knew,
No more than Frenzy, or excess of Woe.
In Swarms, they Flock around their Welcome Guest,
Pressing to give the Salutation First.
Like Waves, they Beat against his Chariot Wheels,
And he on Land, a Friendly Tempest Feels.
And while their Gen'rous Huzzas Fill'd the Air,
Strugling with Fame, he lent a Modest Ear.
Accepts their Zeal; but wou'd their Praise refuse,
Were he Allow'd the Liberty to Chuse.
    Then, Shepherds, come, your Pipes and Voices raise,
    To Welcome o're, the Patron of your Lays.

Hail! Godlike Swain! Hail, great *Hibernia's* King!
Hail! till the Vales with Gladsome Volleys Ring.
Till Sylvan Glades, and Bourns, and Flowry Downs,
Repeat Loud Io Pæns,[7] from the Towns.
Till Streams, till Fountains, Rivers, Brooks, and Floods;
Till Caves, till Rocks, till Shades, till Grotts and Woods,
The Joyful Tydings of his Landing Spread,
As far as Waters Flow, or Wind's convey'd.
From East to West, let the glad Sound be heard;
Where e're the Gods are Lov'd, or Men Rever'd,
That All, his Lust'rous Virtues may confess;
All share their Joy, and all their Joy Express.
He, who is come, to shield your Flocks and grain;
Preserve your Commons and your Rights Maintain.
Extend your Pow'r, and Antient Laws Restore,
Secure your Pastures, and Encrease your Store.
Deserves to be in Deathless Verse Renown'd;
Deserves to be with Lasting Praises Crown'd.
Since under Pan,[8] he's Lord of all the Swains;
Protector of the Woods, and Guardian of the Plains.
    Then, Shepherds, come, your Pipes and Voices Raise,
    To Glad the Great Defender of your Lays.

[6] Julius Caesar, Roman general and statesman. The parallel generally evokes the sense of a powerful ruler.
[7] Io Paen, an exclamation of joy and an expression of praise; a triumphal song.
[8] The Greek god Pan, like Hermes also the god of shepherds and flocks.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Mary Monck (née Molesworth) (1677?–1715)

Mary Monck, 'Marinda', was born in Dublin, the second daughter of the politician, diplomat, and writer Richard Molesworth (1656–1725), who was made Viscount Molesworth in 1716. Around 1700, she married George Monck, who 'had entered Trinity College, Dublin, in 1690 and was Member for Philipstown in the Irish Parliament 1703–13' (Lonsdale 1990, 70). The most detailed critical account is Gillian Wright's chapter on Monck in *Producing Women's Poetry, 1600–1730* (2013). As Wright notes, it was not until 1720 that the connection between Molesworth and Monck was established in Giles Jacob's *An Historical Account of the Lives and Writings of our most Considerable English Poets* (1720) and endorsed by George Ballard in his *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain* (1752). The source of this poem is the posthumously published *Marinda. Poems and Translations Upon Several Occasions* (London, 1716), printed by the prominent bookseller Jacob Tonson. The collection of poems, songs, and translations (mostly by Monck) is prefaced by a lengthy dedicatory epistle dedicated to Caroline of Ansbach, Princess of Wales, written and signed by Richard Molesworth (26 March 1716), where he does not make his relationship to the poet explicit. Wright provides a good summary of the political context at work in Moleworth's dedication and explores how the letter 'provides an implicit justification for the Hanoverian succession' (2013, 213) through its praise of Caroline as well as presenting an opportunity for personal and familial political advancement.

In the dedication, Molesworth claims of the poems that 'we found most of them in her Scrittore [writing desk] after her Death, written with her own Hand', but no manuscript evidence has survived. Marinda herself is described in terms of virtuous and accomplished femininity, her poems are

> the Product of the leisure Hours of a Young Gentlewoman lately Dead, who in a remote Country Retirement, without any Assistance but that of a good Library, and without omitting the daily Care due to a large Family, not only perfectly acquired the Languages here made use of, but the good Morals and Principles contain'd in those Books, so as to put them into Practice, as well during her Life and languishing Sickness, as at the Hour of her Death. (*Marinda*, sigs b7v—b8v)

The poem below is addressed to Queen Anne ('Anna'), the last of the Stuarts, who reigned from 1702 to her death in 1714. Although a generic example of women's poems to female monarchical figures, it is individually significant as a celebration of the queen as defender of 'Liberty', illustrated by the allusion to the queen's support of Protestant refugees arriving from the Palatinate in Germany in 1708–09. Wright suggests that this poem, dated 1709, 'thus takes advantage of moment to create an "Anna" selectively fashioned in Molesworth's preferred image and to attempt to recruit her permanently to the cause of liberty. Its inclusion in *Marinda*, six years

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later, encourages the new Hanoverian dynasty to live up to the standards set by "Anna" at her best' (Wright 2013, 229).

2 *An Ode on the Queen's Birthday*

PHæBUS arise, and with the dawning Light[1]
Haste and dispel the Mists of Night.
Less welcome was the first kind Ray
That pierc'd the dark Abyss, and lighted up the Day,
Less welcome to the barren Earth,
Than is to us the Morn, that gave to *Anna* Birth.
Be *Anna* Heaven's peculiar Care;
Ye Angels be her Guardians here,
And watch around her Head, whilst she
Is Guardian of our *Europe*'s Liberty.

II.

To Her th'Oppress'd for Refuge fly,
To Heaven and Her, in vain th'Oppress'd can never cry:[2]
She with impartial Hand does weigh
Contending Princes rights, and each prevails
As her Power turns the Scales;
A Power too great for any Hand, besides
That which equal Justice guides.
Long while had Vict'ry, that Bird of Prey,
Stoop'd to the Tyrant's Lure;
Anna has chain'd her to the juster Side,
Taught her the Rights of Nations to secure.
Be *Anna* Heaven's, &c.

Thrice happy they
Under her wise and gentle Sway,
Who stand upon the Shoar, and only see from far
All the Rage and Storms of War;
Safe in her pious Care they rest,
And with the Sweets of Peace in midst of Wars are blest.
Thus when thick Darkness *AEgypt* spread around,
In *Goshen*'s Land alone the Light of Day was found.[3]
Be *Anna*, &c.

❧ ❧ ❧

[1] Phoebus/Apollo, deity in Greco-Roman mythology often associated, as here, with the sun.
[2] Alluding to the 'poor Palatines', Protestant refugees fleeing Germany in 1708–09 to escape religious persecution. Wright notes that the number of refugees was 'some 10,000 people' (2013, 229).
[3] Exodus 8:22. God protected Goshen (land of the Israelites) from the plagues affecting the rest of Egypt.

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Esther Johnson (1681–1728)

Esther Johnson is best known for her friendship with Jonathan Swift and is often referred to as 'Stella', a name bestowed on her by Swift and used by her in this poem. She was born in England and baptised in Richmond, Surrey, on 20 March 1681 (*ODNB*). Johnson's parentage was modest: her father appears to have been a merchant and her mother a waiting woman. In *An Essay upon the Life, Writings, and Character of Dr. Jonathan Swift* (1755), Deane Swift (Jonathan's cousin) dwells on the 'obscurity' of Johnson's origins. During a speculative discussion as to whether she secretly married Swift in later life, he suggests that 'her descent from a servant of Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE' meant that 'she was by no means worthy to have been the acknowledged wife of DR. SWIFT' (*Essay*, 80). However, her mother's connections to Sir William Temple and his sister Lady Giffard meant that Esther came to meet Swift at Temple's house Moor Park in Surrey. The *Essay* records that Swift took notice of her 'genius quick and lively' and provided some 'instructions for the improvement of her mind' (86). Possibly on the invitation of Swift, Johnson moved to Dublin in 1701 with a companion, Rebecca Dingley, where she resided most of her life and never returned to England apart from a short visit in 1705 (*Essay*, 90).

Swift maintained a close lifelong friendship with Johnson until her death in 1728, writing her annual poems on her birthday in March from 1719 until 1727. Moyra Haslett notes that poetic commemoration of the birthdays of private individuals (as opposed to royalty) was 'extraordinarily unprecedented in the eighteenth century', and that its development in Dublin at this time was 'exemplified in Swift's birthday poems to the women he called Stella' (2019, 1, 2). By 1723, poetic celebration of 'Swift's birthday appears to have become a regular fixture in the civic life of Dublin' (Haslett 2019, 3), as shown by Laetitia Pilkington's 'To the Rev. Dr Swift on his Birth-day'. The poem below is an example of Johnson returning the favour, and although she highlights Swift's national role as Dean of St Patrick's, the more extensive focus is on her private relationship to the Dean as his 'pupil' and 'humble friend'. Haslett notes that Johnson's poem 'centres on the same theme as many of the Swift birthday poems to Stella: the greater value of virtue and wit over mere appearance' (2019, 1, n. 37). Deane Swift confirms that the poem printed there is probably the only example of her poetry that has survived: 'The delicacy of her taste we may conjecture from the following copy of verses, the only remaining performance of hers that I know of in the poetick strain' (*Essay*, 81).

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3 *To Dr Swift on his Birth-day November 30, 1721*

ST. PATRICK's dean, your country's pride,
My early and my only guide,
Let me among the rest attend,
Your pupil and your humble friend,
To celebrate in female strains
The day that paid your mother's pains;
Descend to take that tribute due
In gratitude alone to you.
  When men began to call me fair,
You interpos'd your timely care;
You early taught me to despise
The ogling of a coxcomb's[1] eyes;
Shew'd where my judgement was misplac'd;
Refin'd my fancy and my taste.
  Behold that beauty just decay'd,
Invoking art to nature's aid;
Forsook by her admiring train
She spreads her tatter'd nets in vain;
Short was her part upon the stage;
Went smoothly on for half a page;
Her bloom was gone, she wanted art,
As the scene chang'd, to change her part:
She, whom no lover could resist,
Before the second act was hiss'd.
Such is the fate of female race
With no endowments but a face;
Before the thirti'th year of life
A maid forlorn, or hated wife.
  STELLA to you, her tutor, owes
That she has ne'er resembled those;
Nor was a burthen to mankind
With half her course of years behind.
You taught how I might youth prolong
By knowing what was right and wrong;
How from my heart to bring supplies
Of lustre to my fading eyes;
How soon a beauteous mind repairs
The loss of chang'd or falling hairs;
How wit and virtue from within
Send out a smoothness o'er the skin:
Your lectures cou'd my fancy fix,
And I can please at thirty-six.

[1] A fashionable and foolish young man.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

The sight of CHLOE at fifteen
Coquetting, gives not me the spleen;[2]
The idol now of every fool
'Till time shall make their passions cool;
Then tumbling down time's steepy hill;
While STELLA holds her station still
Oh! turn your precepts into laws,
Redeem the women's ruin'd cause,
Retrieve lost empire to our sex,
That men may bow their rebel necks.
Long be the day that gave you birth
Sacred to friendship, wit, and mirth;
Late dying may you cast a shred
Of your rich mantle o'er my head;
To bear with dignity my sorrow,
One day *alone, then die to-morrow.*

[2] Coquetting: flirtatious behaviour; spleen, used in the eighteenth century to denote melancholy or depression, particularly associated with women as seen, for example, in the 'Cave of Spleen' in canto IV of Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (1714) and Anne Finch's poem *The Spleen: A Pindarick Poem* (1701).

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Mary Barber (c. 1690–1757)

Barber's *Poems on Several Occasions* (dated 1734 but first printed in 1735 by Samuel Richardson) is notable for the size and substance of its subscription list which was, 'excepting Matthew Prior's 1718 folio, without precedent for its resplendent length and illustrious contents' (Budd 2002, 204). Barber's achievement in this regard was due in large part to her friendship with Jonathan Swift and his efforts on her behalf to promote her volume. She also benefited from high-profile connections with Lord and Lady Carteret as well as Lord Orrery, to whom *Poems* is dedicated. The volume advertises these connections, beginning with a letter signed by Jonathan Swift to John, Earl of Orrery, dated 20 August 1733, in which he writes on behalf of Barber to support her choice of dedicatee. Swift seems to have genuinely admired Barber's poetry, commenting on her 'Wit and good Sense', adding that 'she seemeth to have a true Poetical Genius, better cultivated than could well be expected, either from her Sex, or the scene she has acted in, as the Wife of a Citizen' (1734, vii). Barber was the wife of Jonathan (or Rupert) Barber, a wool merchant in Capel Street, Dublin, and the mother of four children, who often feature in her poems and inform her maternal authorial persona (Lavoie 2021).

In her Preface, Barber comments on 'the generous Treatment' she has received as 'a Stranger' in England and adds that 'It is my happiness to have received Encouragement from many in both Kingdoms' (1734, xxiii–iv). The autobiographical sections in the preface show her frequently moving back and forth between Dublin, Tunbridge Wells, and Bath, and the poems reflect this shifting mobility in terms of subjects, addressees, and context. She published a handful of poems in Dublin in the 1720s and became part of a literary circle centred on Swift, also comprising Laetitia Pilkington and Constantia Grierson. *Poems* (1734) includes verses by Grierson and a poem by the well-known writer Elizabeth Singer Rowe (1674–1737). Examples of her work were reprinted in *Poems by Eminent Ladies* (1755), alongside Pilkington, Grierson, and Katherine Philips, among others. By the 1740s her health had deteriorated, and she had relocated to Glasnevin, in north Dublin near Delville, the estate of Swift's associate Dr Patrick Delaney and his second wife, the memoirist Mary Delaney. Critical evaluations of Barber have rightly noted the significance of her poems to and for her children, especially her son Constantine, her lively style, and her propensity to satirise the wealthy and champion those in need. The poems included here demonstrate these qualities but also reflect Barber's identity as an Irish woman writing and living between two nations. As Aileen Douglas remarks, 'On occasion, Grierson and Barber write as Hibernians, addressing specifically Irish matters, but the London publication of the volume signals the containment of these ideas within a metropolitan idea of cultural production' (2020, 241).

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

4 *An* APOLOGY *to the Earl of* Orrery, *Dr.* Swift, *and some others of my Friends, for falling into Tears before them, on my leaving* Ireland

NOT *Persia*'s Monarch could, unmov'd, survey[1]
Those num'rous Hosts, which Time must sweep away.
He wept Misfortunes of a distant Date;
I mourn the Rigour of my instant Fate.
The dreaded Hour, approaching fast I see,
When you, alas! will all be dead to me.
Then cease to wonder, if my Bosom rise,
And Tears, unbidden, rush into my Eyes.
'Tis thus, and only thus, a grateful Breast
Pours out those Thanks, which cannot be express'd.
For, O *Hibernia!* when I quit thy Coast,[2]
Such Friends I leave, as few could ever boast.

[1] The most famous Persian monarch was Cyrus the Great, Cyrus II (590–580 BC), founder of the Achaemenid Empire.
[2] Hibernia/Ireland.

5 *Written for my Son to his Master, on the Anniversary of the Battle of the* Boyne

IS what we owe great WILLIAM then
Forgotten by ungrateful Men?
And has *His* Fame run out its Date,
Who snatch'd us from the Brink of Fate?
Else, why should Scholars, Sir, I pray,
Be Pris'ners on this glorious Day;
When NASSAU's Arms, by Heav'n's Decree,[1]
Devoted it to Liberty?

[1] William III, William of Orange-Nassau (1650–1702).

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Constantia Grierson (c. 1705–32)

In the preface to her *Poems on Several Occasions* (1734), in which she printed six of Grierson's poems, Mary Barber provides some biographical background about her friend:

> The Author of those Verses was born in the County of *Kilkenny* in *Ireland*, and was one of the most extraordinary Women that either this Age, or perhaps any other, ever produc'd. She died in the Year 1733, at the Age of 27, and was allow'd, long before, to be an excellent Scholar, not only in *Greek* and *Roman* Literature, but in *History*, *Divinity*, *Philosophy*, and *Mathematicks*. She gave a Proof of her Knowledge in the *Latin Tongue*, by her dedication of the *Dublin* Edition of *Tacitus* to the Lord CARTERET, and by that of *Terence* to his Son, to whom she likewise wrote a *Greek* Epigram. She wrote several fine Poems in *English*, on which she set so little Value, that she neglected to leave Copies behind her but of a very few. (xxvii–viii)

A. C. Elias (1987) since discovered Grierson's commonplace book, which also contains some of her poetry.

Grierson had moved to Dublin when she was about eighteen to study midwifery with Dr Van Lewen, the father of Laetitia Pilkington, who also included two of her poems and a fragment in volume 1 of her *Memoirs* (1748, 29–32). However, in 1726 she married the printer George Grierson and engaged in the editing activities for his publications outlined by Barber above. As Barber also mentions, Lord Carteret, when lord lieutenant of Ireland, 'obtained a Patent for Mr. *Grierson* her Husband to be the King's Printer, and to distinguish and reward her uncommon Merit' (1734, xxx).

The poem below is the first of two poems to Mrs Percival in Mary Barber's *Poems* (1734), the other being '*To the Honourable Mrs.* Percival, with Hutcheson's *Treatise on* Beauty and Order'. Mrs Percival was the sister-in-law of Lord Percival, a friend of George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne, whose project was to establish an educational establishment in Bermuda. Clíona Ó Gallchoir notes that the poem celebrates Mrs Percival's 'decision to remain in Ireland rather than to take part in Berkeley's ultimately ill-fated plan to open a missionary college in Bermuda (2018, 115–16 (ebook); see also Carpenter (1998, 115)). As Ó Gallchoir observes, the poem also employs what was to become a notable theme in eighteenth-century Irish women's poetry, in the way in which 'The valuable contribution of patriotic female citizens, such as Mrs Percival, is juxtaposed with the drain of capital, both human and financial, from Ireland to Britain' (2018, 116 (ebook)).

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

6 *To the Honourable Mrs.* Percival, *on her desisting from the* Bermudan *Project*

SOME Guardian Pow'rs, in Pity to our Land,
Your Voyage to the *Summer-Isles* withstand.
Heav'n will by other means convert the *West*;
And you must make your native Country blest:
Your Business there was but to serve Mankind;
And here, for that, an ample Field you'll find;
To Virtue, here, may thoughtless Souls persuade,
Instruct the ignorant, the Wretched aid:
Of these no Realm, from *Lapland* to *Japan*,
Displays such Numbers, as *Hibernia* can.[1]
Haste then, O haste! return, and bless our Eyes
Nor more the Call of Providence despise:
Let others still near *Albion*'s Court reside,[2]
Who sacrifice their Country to their Pride,
And squander vast Estates at Balls and Play,
While public Debts increase, and Funds decay;
While the starv'd Hind with Want distracted lives,
Nor tastes that Plenty, which his Labour gives.
Let those alone to foreign Countries stray,
Who, with their Wealth, their Follies take away.
Whatever such may act, where-e'er they go,
Do thou return, to mitigate our Woe.
Our Gold may flow to *Albion* with each Tide;
But let them with that Gold be satisfy'd:
The Want of that we long have learnt to bear,
But Souls like thine accomplish'd, cannot spare.

[1] Hibernia/Ireland. [2] Albion/Great Britain, hence the British court.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Laetitia Pilkington (c. 1708–50)

Laetitia Pilkington is most well known for *Memoirs of Mrs. Laetitia Pilkington, wife to the Rev. Mr. Matthew Pilkington,* which appeared in two volumes published in Dublin in 1748–49, with a third volume posthumously published in London in 1754, edited by her son John Carteret Pilkington. The *Memoirs* are the source for most of her poems, which are, as the subtitle indicates, 'occasionally interspersed' throughout the volumes and are therefore often contextualised within the autobiographical narrative frame. She also published an allegorical poem, *The Statues: or, the Trial of Constancy. A Tale for the Ladies* (1739), and *An Excursory View on the Present State of Men and Things. A Satire* (1739) as well as writing an unpublished, now lost, 'Burlesque Satirical Piece', 'The Turkish Court; or, The London 'Prentice', performed at Capel St, Dublin (Lonsdale 1990, 138), and an 'operatical farce', 'No Death but Marriage by a Lady', acted at Smock Alley on 3 May 1738 (*ODNB*). She was engaged in writing a tragedy, *The Roman Father*, mentioned in volume II as 'from the story of *Virginius* and *Virginia*, two Acts of which I had finished', the first Act of which is printed towards the end of that volume (323–240). However, Pilkington's primary authorial identity was that of poet. She describes herself as having 'a strong disposition for letters' as a precocious infant reader, illustrated by the second poem below, but adds, 'chiefly I was charmed with the Sweets of Poetry; all my Hours were dedicated to the Muses; and from a Reader, I quickly became a Writer' (I, 15–16). Pilkington had clearly planned to publish a collection of poetry by subscription, like her former friend and later rival Mary Barber. In compensation for her lack of success in this regard, Pilkington 'strategically includes all her extant poems in her *Memoirs*' with the effect that 'within the *Memoirs*, the poems constitute a phantom book – a book of poems imagined but never realised' (Ingrassia 2016, 320).

In *Memoirs*, Pilkington gives her year of birth as 1712 and stresses her descent from 'an antient and honourable family on her mother's side', a Meade descended from the Earl of Kilmallock (I, 4). Her father, Dr John Van Lewen, was a Dutch physician and 'Man-Midwife' who instructed Constantia Grierson (see pages 268–9). She married cleric and aspiring poet Matthew Pilkington on 31 May 1725 and, together with Grierson, Barber, and the Delaneys, she briefly became part of Swift's Dublin coterie. Pilkington relates her strong ambition 'to be known to Dr. *Swift*' to Dr Delaney and records that 'As they were to meet the next Day at the Deanery-House to keep the Anniversary of his Birth-day, I inclosed to Dr. *Delaney* the following Lines' (I, 50), as seen in the poem below. By 1738 Pilkington was divorced from her increasingly hostile husband on suspected adultery and she moved to London, declining 'into demimondaine life as hack author, print shopkeeper and ghost writer for the infamous James Worsdale' (Gerrard 2018,

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

491). Although she had supporters in Colley Cibber and Samuel Richardson, Pilkington struggled to make a living and was briefly imprisoned for debt in 1742. She eventually returned to Dublin in 1747 and died there on 29 July 1750. Pilkington is buried in St Anne's Church, Dawson Street, Dublin.

7 *To the Rev. Dr Swift on his Birth-day*

WHILE I the God-like Men of Old,
  In Admiration wrapt behold!
Rever'd Antiquity explore,
And turn the long-liv'd Volumes o'er,
Where *Cato*, *Plutarch*, *Flaccus*[1] shine
In ev'ry Excellence divine;
I grieve that our degen'rate Days,
Produce no mighty Souls like these;
Patriot, Philosopher and Bard,
Are Names unknown, and seldom heard.
Spare your Reflection, *Phoebus*[2] cries,
'Tis as ungrateful as unwise;
Can you complain this sacred Day,
That Virtues, or that Arts decay?
Behold in SWIFT reviv'd appears
The Virtues of unnumber'd Years;
Behold in him with new Delight,
The Patriot, Bard and Sage unite;
And know, *Ierne*[3] in that Name
Shall rival *Greece* and *Rome* in Fame.

[1] Cato the Elder (Roman senator and historian); Plutarch (Greek biographer); Valerius Flaccus (Latin poet).
[2] Greek god of light, poetry, and music. [3] Ierne: ancient name for Ireland.

8 *VERSES wrote in a LIBRARY*

SEAT for Contemplation fit,
  Sacred Nursery of Wit!
Let me here enwrap'd in Pleasure,
Taste the Sweets of learned Leisure:
Vain, deceitful World, adieu;
I more solid Bliss pursue

  Faithful Friends, surround me here,
Wise, delightful, and sincere;
Friends, who never yet betray'd
Those who trusted in their Aid;
Friends, who ne'er were known to shun
Those by adverse Fate undone.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Calm Philosophy and Truth
Crown'd with undecaying Youth,
Glowing with celestial Charms,
Fondly woo me to their Arms.
Here immortal Bards dispense
Polish'd Numbers, nervous Sense;
While the just Historian's Page
Back recals the distant Age;
In whose Paintings we behold
All the wond'rous Men of old;
Heroes fill each finish'd Piece,
Once the Pride of *Rome* and *Greece.*

Nor shall *Greece* and *Rome* alone,
Boast the Virtues all their own;
Thou, *Ierne*,[1] too shalt claim
Sons amongst the Heirs of Fame;
Patriots who undaunted stood,
To defend the public good;
Foremost in the sacred Line,
Ever shall the DRAPER[2] shine:

Next be virtuous STANNARD[3] plac'd,
With unfading Honours grac'd;
Godlike Men! Accept my Praise,
Guard, and elevate, my Lays.

Learning can the Soul refine,
Raise from human to divine.
Come then, all ye sacred Dead,
Who for Virtue wrote or bled;
On my Mind intensely beam,
Touch it with your hallow'd Flame.
And thou chaste and lovely Muse,
Who didst once thy Dwelling chuse
In *Orinda*'s[4] spotless Breast,
Condescend to be my Guest;
Bring with thee the bloomy Pair,
Young-ey'd Health, and Virtue fair;
Here your purest Rays impart,
So direct and guard my Heart,
That it may a Temple be
Worthy Heav'n, and worthy thee.

[1] Ierne: ancient name for Ireland.
[2] 'the Draper': a name often used for Swift after the publication of his *The Drapier's Letters* (1724–25).
[3] Stannard/Eaton Stannard (1685–1755), politician, lawyer, and Recorder of Dublin. Pilkington wrote a poem about his election, 'Advice to the People of Dublin in their Choice of a Recorder'.
[4] *Orinda*: the poet Katherine Philips (1632–64)

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Frances Greville (née Macartney (c. 1724–89)

Frances Greville's 'A Prayer for Indifference' has been described as 'the most celebrated poem by a woman in the period' (Lonsdale 1990, 190). It was first published incompletely in the *Edinburgh Chronicle* for 1759 and often reprinted from the 1760s onwards. Born in Longford in the mid 1720s, by the early 1740s she was living in London and associated with Sarah Lennox, the Duchess of Richmond. She eloped with and then married Fulke Greville of Wilbury House, Wiltshire in 1748. Her daughter, Frances Anne Crewe (1748–1818), became a famous Whig hostess and her god-daughter was the novelist Frances Burney. As a result of her husband's profligacy, the family faced financial ruin in 1782, and she returned to Ireland for the years 1783–88. She was legally separated from her husband in 1788 when she returned to London. She died in London on 30 July 1789 (*ODNB*). It has been suggested that she may have written more poetry which she hid from her husband, but very little survives. Lonsdale (1990) also prints an earlier poem, 'Miss F[an]ny M[acar]t[ne]y to Miss P[egg] y B[ank]s' from c. 1745 (191). Dorothea Tuite's *Poems by Lady Tuite* (1796) opens with an 'Answer to Mrs. Greville's "Ode to Indifference"', showing the continued influence of the poem (see page 314).

9 *A Prayer for Indifference*

By Mrs. G.

OFT I've implor'd the gods in vain,
And prayed, till I've been weary;
For once I'll try, my wish to gain
Of Oberon, the Fairy.[1]

Sweet airy being, wanton sprite,
That lurk'st in woods unseen,
And oft by Cynthia's silver light[2]
Trip'st gaily o'er the green!

If ere thy pitying heart was mov'd,
(As ancient stories tell)
And, for th' Athenian maid, who lov'd,[3]
Thou sought'st a wondrous spell,

O! deign once more t'exert thy power;
Haply some herb, or tree,

[1] Oberon/King of the Fairies. [2] Cynthia/the moon.
[3] A reference to the character Helena from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Sovereign as juice from western flower,
Conceals a balm for me.

I ask no kind return in love,
No tempting charm to please;
Far from the heart such gifts remove,
That sighs for peace and ease.

Nor ease, nor peace, that heart can know,
That, like the needle true,
Turns at the touch of joy or woe,
But turning trembles too.

Far as distress the soul can wound,
'Tis pain in each degree;
'Tis bliss goes but to a certain bound;
Beyond is agony.

Take then this treacherous sense of mind,
Which dooms me still to smart;
Which pleasure can to pain refine,
To pain new pangs impart.

O! haste to shed the sovereign balm!
My shatter'd nerves new-string;
And for my guest, supremely calm,
The nymph Indifference bring.

At her approach, see Hope, see Fear,
See Expectation fly,
With Disappointment in the rear,
That blasts the promis'd joy.

The tears, which pity taught to flow,
My eyes shall then disown;
The heart, that throbbed at others woe,
Shall then scarce feel its own.

The wounds, which now each moment bleed,
Each moment then shall close,
And tranquil days shall still succeed
To nights of calm repose.

Oh, fairy elf; but grant me this,
This one kind comfort send,
And so may never-fading bliss
Thy flowery paths attend!

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

So may the glow-worm's glimmering light
  Thy tiny footsteps lead
To some new region of delight,
  Unknown to mortal tread.

And be thy acorn goblets fill'd
  With heavens ambrosial dew,
From sweetest, freshest flowers distill'd,
  That shed fresh sweets for you.

And what of life remains for me
  I'll pass in sober ease,
Half-pleas'd, contented will I be;
  Contented, half to please.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Dorothea DuBois (1728–74)

Dorothea DuBois' life and literary output were dominated by her father's ill-treatment of her due to his repudiation of marriage to her mother, his subsequent marriage to Juliana Donovan, and his disowning and disinheriting of DuBois and her siblings. *Poems on Several Occasions. By a Lady of Quality* was published by subscription in Dublin, her birthplace, in 1764, and a handwritten note on the flyleaf declares that 'Dorothea deBois or Lady Dorothea DuBois as she chose to call herself was the [natural] daughter of Richard 6th Earl of Angelsea by Anne Simpson and married a Dublin musician'. A crossed-out sentence states that 'she is the heroine of her own novel' and 'died in great indigence'. DuBois' autobiographical novel *Theodora, A Novel* was indeed published in 1770, and the first poem in her 1764 collection, 'A True Tale', where she appears as the character 'Dorinda', is similarly based on the author's life and highly critical of her father's actions. The detailed narration of her life story seems to have been motivated by understandable anger, but also reveals that her broader motivation for publishing was to raise money as well as her profile. As such, the two representative poems below were most probably motivated by economic necessity in a hope for patronage and reward; the collection overall is dedicated 'To the King', George III. Both poems are pro-monarchy in approach and archipelagic in frame. 'On the Death of his late Majesty' describes George II (who granted her mother a pension) as being of equal importance to Britain, Scotland, and Ireland as '*Britannia*, *Scotia* and *Hibernia*'s Pride' (l. 17). The poem to Hugh Percy, 2nd Earl of Northumberland, on his arrival in Ireland as lord lieutenant makes it clear that he is venerated primarily as the king's representative, and the poem works on a series of parallels between Ireland and Britain. It could be argued that her poetry simply demonstrates her political and social position as a (former) member of the Irish-Protestant elite. However, this generalisation obscures the interesting tension in her work between this privilege and her position as a woman under severe financial distress and downward social mobility who was trying to use her poetry as a way of rectifying both. The fact that she died in poverty shows that both attempts ultimately failed despite a series of complex and lengthy legal claims over the Annesley estates (Lonsdale 1990; Prescott, 2021a).

10 *On the Death of his late Majesty, and on the Accession of his present Majesty to the Throne*

THE mournful Muse, in dismal Sable drest,
Her Head, sunk low upon her pensive Breast;
With Arms across, unanimated lies,
And speaks her Grief, 'tween interrupting Sighs. 4

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Mourn, mourn with me, ye People, and give way
To honest Tears—a Tribute we shou'd pay,
To the blest *Manes*, of our belov'd King!
Our Father! Friend!—Legitimately spring
The deep-felt Sorrow, which your Looks express;
Nor shou'd it, for so good a King, be less.
He, as a tender Parent, and to shew his Love;
The Monarch, and the Man, he equal wore,
Nor, as a Monarch, priz'd himself the more:
Thus did he live—and thus lamented dy'd
Britannia, *Scotia* and *Hibernia*'s Pride.

But now, behold! The Genius of our Isle
Advancing, with a manly placid Smile,
His Looks denote Contentment, Joy and Love,
And hark! His Voice doth ev'ry Care remove.
Rejoice, ye People, tho' your *George* is dead,
Behold, a blooming Monarch in his Stead
Another *George*, within whose youthful Breast,
Both *George* and *Fred'rick*'s Virtues, are imprest;
Imbib'd in infancy, their Maxims rare,
And *George*, shall prove, he's worthy all their Care.
Britannia's Genius watchful at his Side,
Shall guard the Royal Youth, and damp the Pride
Of *Gallic* Foes—And by a lasting Peace
Crown this bless'd Isle with Honour and Encrease.
The prudent Labour, of our late good King
Shall prove a Root, from which shall surely spring.
Unfading Laurels, to adorn the Head
Of *George* the Third—o'er whom may Virtue Spread
Her Sacred Wings, and Heav'n still pour down
It's choicest Blessings, on the *British* Throne.

11 *On the Landing of his Excellency the Earl of Northumberland, 1763*

IERNE[1] wipes away the silent Tear,
And with fond Smiles doth welcome *Percy* here;
With open Arms she meets her honour'd Guest,
And takes Great *George*, in *Percy* to her Breast.
Most wishfully she gazes on his Face,
Then seals her Pleasure, with a close Embrace,
Thrice welcome! says she, to this fertile Isle,
Where Peace and Harmony are wont to smile;
Where Trade and Commerce, raise on high their Head,
And Arts and Science wonderfully spread;
Where Hospitality and Freedom reign,
Encircled, like thy *Britain*, by the Main.

[1] Ierne: ancient name for Ireland.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Behold! My Sons in Crouds, thy Landing greet,
And *Sol* replendent shines, on all you meet;
The glitt'ring God emblazons all around,
And, like the Day, each Face in Smiles is crown'd.
Auspicious Omen!—such O may it prove!
And may'st thou, *Percy*, all our Fears remove
Lull busy Faction into soft Repose,
Or rather crush this horrid, worst of Foes.
Ideal Grievance, is our greatest Ill,
We form the Evils—and, like Children, still
We start at Bugbears—by our Fancy drest,
Altho' we've genuine Courage in each Breast.
We're grateful, loyal, jealous of our Rights,
Kindness our Love—but Wrongs our Hate excites.
Fierce in Resentment, but in Nature Mild,
Bright in our Genius, tho' in Manners wild.

Thus, I the Portrait of my Sons have giv'n:
To them, prove thou the bount'ous Gift of Heav'n!
Reclaim them from their Error—save my Fame;
'Tis not a Task, unworthy *Percy*'s Name.

Adorn'd with Beauty, and it's native Sweets,
Behold! My Daughters, thy fair Part'ner greets,
Truth, Innocence and Love, at once combine,
To speak them lovely, —these conspicuous shine.
In Fair *Northumberland!* and seem divine!
Her bright Example, shall ne Lustre give
To all their Charms; —they'll thankfully receive
The pleasing Lesson, which shall glide unknown
Into their Hearts, and so become their own.
Fair Virtue, in Example, hath more Sway,
Than all the Precepts which the Sage convey
In Speech austere: —and she that represents
Britannia's Queen, all Excellence cements
Within herself—and gently deals around
Those heav'nly Virtues, that's in her Compound.

Thus spoke *Hibernia*, and our Viceroy, see!
With Looks complacent, seems for to agree
To her Request: his benign Aspect wears
So good a Grace, it banishes our Fears;
New Life restores to ev'ry Patriot Heart,
And He, like GEORGE, shall act the Father's Part;
Defend our Rights, our Liberties and Laws,
And still atchieve the popular Applause!

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Olivia Elder (1735–80)

Edited with headnote by Andrew Carpenter

Olivia Elder was the daughter of John Elder (1693–1779), a prominent New Light Presbyterian minister, who ministered to a congregation at Aghadowey near Coleraine. Like most Presbyterian ministers in eighteenth-century Ulster, John Elder had to supplement the meagre sums donated to him by his parishioners by farming. Olivia, who never married, lived at home and, as the first poem below shows, involved herself in all aspects of life on the farm and in the home. However, she far preferred reading and writing poetry to household chores and, from her early thirties, Olivia styled herself 'a poetess', preserving the poems she wrote carefully in a quarto notebook; she tried her hand at verse of all kinds – elegies, a pastoral, an ode, songs, and several satires referring directly to persons she knew, as well as lively verse letters to her female friends. Sadly, we only have Olivia's side of these verse exchanges between Ulster women of the 1760s and 1770s as the work of her correspondents has been lost. Olivia Elder seems to be the only woman poet living and working in eighteenth-century Ulster whose poetry is still extant.

Elder's verse covers a remarkable range of subjects in a considerable variety of poetic styles. She was a voracious reader of English poetry, often placing an epigraph from a writer such as Pope, Thomson, or Milton at the head of her poems; she also (probably because she had access to books through her father) knew some Latin and even a little Greek. She was not afraid to experiment with unfamiliar verse styles, and her poems even include parodic verse in Ulster Scots. In several poems, Olivia Elder represents direct speech with great skill, and her use of the couplet is much more sophisticated than that of many other poets of the period. Though Olivia Elder's work compares very favourably with that of other women poets writing in English at the time, her outspokenness and the vividness of her imagery make her poems stand out strongly even in that company. Hers is a highly distinctive, female voice and one that invites us to look again at the social and cultural life in eighteenth-century Ulster, and at the place of women in that society. It is interesting that Olivia Elder sought the friendship of Anna Lætitia Barbauld, the most significant English woman poet of the 1770s and one whose work was widely admired and read by women writers throughout England and Ireland (Barbauld's poems were reprinted in Belfast by James Magee in 1774). It is also possible that Olivia contemplated publishing her own work, as the manuscript of her poems contains notes that might be directed to a compositor; but the material was still in manuscript when she died in 1780.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Many of those living in eighteenth-century Ulster maintained close cultural as well as familial links with their relatives in Scotland: when Olivia Elder wrote verse letters to her friends, she was emulating patterns of cultural interaction followed in Scotland by, for instance, the most famous Scottish poet before Burns, Allan Ramsay. Equally, when she wrote (using her local dialect of Ulster-Scots) an imitation 'or alteration' of the elegy written in Scots by Ramsay on John Cowper, she was following in the steps of Ramsay himself, several of whose poems and songs were imitations and extensions of existing songs or poems in Scots. Ramsay's 'Elegy on John Cowper' dates from 1718; it had been reprinted many times in the eighteenth century, in Belfast as well as in Dublin, Edinburgh, and London, and was a popular poem. Obviously, Olivia Elder's imitation of it was intended as a piece of light-hearted banter, echoing Ramsay's original but relocating the piece to the area near Aghadowey (the townland near Coleraine where Olivia Elder lived) and reconstructing the poem so that it referred to a local man, John Shirley (who was assistant to Mr Gregg, the 'clerk' to the Presbyterian congregation at Aghadowey) and to a local rumour about his ghost. To clarify the context, Olivia wrote an extended footnote to her poem:

> This was occasiond by a report of the gentlemans being dead, on which ye author wrote to a friend to know ye truth of it, who assured her he was alive the day before for he was seen walking at such a place. She answers yt that was no proof of his being alive for it was no uncommon thing for people to be seen walking after they were dead & buried too[.] She then proceeds to prove him dead from arguments of ye same nature with those the latter uses to prove the death of Partridge the Almanack maker; & so concludes with this Elegy.

The reference is to Swift's hoax *Predictions for the year 1708* which mischievously foretold the death of the almanac-writer John Partridge (1644–1715). Olivia Elder has not only brought local people into the main part of the poem but into the Postscript as well – daring one of her neighbours to confront John Shirley's ghost.

12 *To Mrs A.C.H., an account of the Authors manner of spending her time*[1]

Written Octobr 20th 1769

When far from you, dear Anna, placed,
Think not my life I idly waste;

[1] Olivia Elder often added footnotes to her work, and her notes are indicated in this and the following poems by angle brackets. Mrs A.C.H., though not positively identified, was probably a member of the Higginbotham or Hamill families of Coleraine. <this is placed by ye author at ye beginning as an apology for ye poorness of ye following performances: as little can be expected from one so variously and often meanly employed.... >

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

But when I tell you how it's pass'd,
You'll say it is an odd contrast,
And that I strangely spend my time
Between the mean, and the sublime.

I oft forsake both Pope and Swift
The House to sweep, and Pots to lift;
With Princely Queensb'ry leave his Gay,[2]
To call the folks from making hay;
Or Young[3] upon the morning Star
To help the boy down with a Car:[4]
Quit Tragick Queens in all their clutter,
And help to churn, or dress the Butter.

Oft from my hand the Pen I whisk out,
And in its place take up the Dishclout;[5]
For spite of all sublimer wishes,
I needs must sometimes wash the dishes.

No wonder if my work but trash is,
When I'm obliged to lift the ashes,
Or that I sing in homely lays;
I'll site the Besom with the Bays.[6]
Unfinish'd I must leave a fable,
To go and scour the Kitchen table,
Or from ye writing of a Poem,
Descend my Neighbours turf to throw 'em:
For trust me, I'm not quite unskill'd in
A good turf stack the art of building,
And yesterday, a sight uncommon,
I help'd with one a poor old Woman.
Nay, at this very present writing,
As this Epistle I'm inditing,
When all are busy b[ea]ring hay to us,
I'm forced to go and boil Potatoes.

In politicks I never dabble
Nor e'er in party matters squabbl
But sometimes curious, read the news,
Then take a Brush and clean my Shoes.

Tho never at a school or College,
Of ancient fables I've some knowledge;

[2] The Duke and Duchess of Queensbury were patrons of the poet and dramatist John Gay (1685–1732).
[3] Edward Young (1683–1765). [4] 'cart'. [5] 'dishcloth'.
[6] The poet puts a sweeping brush made of twigs beside a crown of bay leaves, a sign of poetic pre-eminence.

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Yet Beauties Queen, and wisdoms Goddess[7]
I quit to mend my whale bone bodice;
Or like the Shepherd God Apollo,
Leave wit and verse a Cow to follow.[8]

Philosophy I seldom need it,
My brain will hardly bear to read it,
Yet I have got some little notion
Of heavenly bodys, and their motion;
And neither wonder, gape nor stare,
When I hear learned folks declare
The moon to be a peopled world,
And round, each day, this Earth is whirl'd;
And when I hear of Saturns Ring,
I neither take it for a thing
That's round the finger put for shew,
Nor turns[9] old God for modern Beau;
But yet the stars I never survey
Till wool and flax go topsy turvy.[10]

I sometimes sew, and sometimes knit:
And oft in social circle sit;
Leave mending of ye Kitchen fires,
And pay a visit at the Squire's:
Drink Tea and Coffy, laugh and chat,
And hear him talk of this and that;
How he himself must prime the Pudding[11]
Or else he never gets a good one;
Of method new his meat to cure up,
Then swear it is the best in Europe;
How cheap he purchases things new:
Doubt if all he says be true;
Or hear dull Storys where no wit is
From stupid Rector,[12] who more fit is
For feasting Aldermen than Preacher,
Else of good eating make his teacher.
But to return from these digressions;
Were I to tell of my professions,
Of Cook, Slut,[13] Butler, Laundry maid,
Of ricks and housewifry my trade,

[7] Venus and Minerva. [8] Apollo was the god of shepherds as well as of poetry.
[9] 'transforms the old (classical) god Saturn into a modern beau' (?).
[10] Meaning unclear. Flax was processed into linen and sheep's wool into spun wool in the area around Coleraine, so the phrase may mean 'until the everyday world is turned upside-down'.
[11] <his Phrase for puting brandy in it>
[12] <i.e. Rev Henry Barnard, son of Bishop William Barnard (1697–1768)>; his brother was Samuel Johnson's friend Thomas Barnard (1728–1806), dean of Derry.
[13] 'kitchen-maid' or 'drudge' – a more playful word in the eighteenth century than now.

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You'd swear, I was the perfect ape
Of Proteus, god of changing shape.[14]

What need I speak of candles dipping,
Of Brewing, baking, and Tea sipping
With Ladies, then entreat excuse
Till I shew Nan to kill a goose.
Or how I went from spinning tow[15]
To entertain a Paris Beau;
For once, when thus employ'd, I hapt on
A visit from the sprightly Captain[16]
Who comes with fishing tackle here,
And likes to taste my Bottled Beer;
Or how from whitewashing a wall
I'm dress'd, and dancing at a Ball;
Sometimes engaged in Mirth and folly
And oft immers'd in melancholy.

You with my skill would never quarrel
In tighting Hoops upon a Barrel;[17]
Nor wou'd believe with what art
I play the Manteau makers[18] part;
What pictures of old fans have made;
And grottos in the rural shade:[19]
How catgut, envied work have wrought on,[20]
For working muslin how thin Cotton,
Now spri[21] a gown, and now an apron,
And now a steed I sometimes leap on,
Or learn to do some Dresden stitches:[22]
Then go and mend an old man's Bri[t]ches,
And then begin ye very trade
In tother world of Ancient Maid.[23]
For planting flowers the ground I rake up
Or make fictitious ones of Tea cup:[24]
Sometimes explain a learned Word,
And sometimes glue a broken board.

And now of all this strange account
What think you is the just amount?

[14] 'ape' = 'imitator'. Proteus, a mythical sea deity, assumed various shapes when on earth.
[15] 'tow' is the unworked stem or fibre of flax.
[16] <Captain, now Major W–d Nephew to R----t W–d Esqr author of ye ruins of Palmira.> 'Robert Wood' (c. 1717–71) was a traveller and politician.
[17] The staves of small barrels were held in place by hoops made of saplings of green wood.
[18] 'dress maker': a manteau was a loose upper garment worn by women.
[19] <A method of making pictures out of old broken china.>
[20] i.e. how I have wrought work which has been admired on [coarse] catgut as if it had been worked on muslin or thin cotton.
[21] To decorate with patterns of springs or sprays of flowers or plants.
[22] A kind of embroidery or *petit point*.
[23] i.e. spinning cf. spinster.
[24] <a method of making flowers of broken china.>

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Why sure a Nymph of such Eclat[25]
Preceding Ages never saw,
And Poets, in all after times
Will sing her fame in deathless rhymes;
Historians tell, adorned what reign is
By such an universal genius;
But hold — in vanitys despight
I'll set myself in proper light,
For tho' each sylable is true,[26]
I'll frankly own my dear to you,
What all my works themselves have shewn,
I'm Jack of all trades good at none.*[27]

[25] 'brilliance' (the word was pronounced 'eclaw' [eklō]).
[26] <not exactly in the order yt they here follow one another tho' some of them did, as ye building ye turf stack, boiling ye Potatoes, entertaining Capt W. & some others.>
[27] <this is a Poetical licence for which I have Mr Popes authority who for ye sake of ye Rhyme calls Minerva a God.>

13 From: *To Miss Aikin, now Mrs Barbauld*[1]

Written Febry 1774

Without a hope to emulate thy lays,
Without a hope thy soaring fame to raise,
Scarce hoping to obtain the name of friend
So little worth to plead, her only end
Freely to speak the overflowing heart,
And tell what Joy thy numbers[2] can impart,
Sweet Nymph! to fame and to the muses dear,
A sister Puritan bespeaks thine ear;
A sister maid, but not [a] sister Bard,
For O! how poor my verse to thine compared,
Where Sheakspears line with Popes correctness Join,
And Wallers sweetness flows in every line.[3]
Thou born to glow with all the Poets fine
And by the muses tuned thy happy Lyne.
Thy genius bright like days refulgent Car,[4]
Serene and steaddy like the polar star.

By constitution not by genius taught,
My Pen but paints some melancholy thought
Or mirthfull Sally, where too plain is seen,
With ever varying face, the Vapoury Queen

[1] Anna Lætitia Barbauld (*née* Aikin) (1743–1825); her first volume, *Poems* (1773), was widely admired, and reprinted five times in the year of its publication.
[2] 'verses'.
[3] cf. 'Where Denham's strength and Waller's sweetness join', Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Criticism* II, l. 161.
[4] 'chariot', i.e. the sun.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

That from her bright or gloomy aspect flings
Darkness or light o'er all terrestrial things.[5]
As o'er the Moon by feirce Eolus driven,
A sable cloud obscures the face of heaven;
Sudden the soft-illuminated glade
Appears in mournings gloomy garb arrayed:
Again returns the cloud-compelling blast,
Bright Cynthia[6] shines and all the gloom is past;
As quickly comes the shadowy veil again;
So Joy and Sorrow claim alternate reign.

Around me, too, external things conspire
To damp the genius rather than inspire.
Far north in bleak Hibernias stormy Isle
Where softest seasons scarcely know to smile;
Where fruitless labour toils the painfull year,
Scarce ploughs in hope, and often reaps dispair;
And honest industry disponding flies
His native home, for more indulgent Skys:[7]
Where civil liberty her forehead droops,
August Religion to the shackles stoops,[8]
But where, indignant of the sham[e]full chain,
Hard war with bigot rage her sons maintain,[9]
Has fortune fix'd my lot; forbid to tell
The lines to me in pleasant places fell.[10]
From that lean branch of Levys tribe I sprung
To which no tythes nor Revenues belong;[11]
But where frugality can barely live,
On the scant pittance poor plebeans give.
My line,[12] far distant from each selfish thought,
No soothing systematick doctrines taught
He scorned pragmatick ignorance to please,
Nor meanly pliant earned the dear bought cheese;[13]
With single aim he sought his peoples good:
Ungratefull task! that scarce procur'd him food.

[5] This is one of several references in Olivia Elder's poems to her suffering from depression.
[6] The moon.
[7] Large numbers of Ulster Presbyterians emigrated to America in the 1760s and 1770s.
[8] Presbyterians as well as Catholics were disadvantaged by the Irish Penal Laws.
[9] A reference to the sectarian strife which periodically flared up in eighteenth-century Ulster.
[10] <the author means in a poetical not a religious sence.>
[11] John Elder, Olivia's father, was a Presbyterian minister who, unlike his Anglican counterpart, was not entitled to tithes but was supported by offerings from members of his congregation ('poor plebeans').
[12] i.e. Olivia's father.
[13] <see ye first part of considerations on religious Liberty.> John Cameron (?1772), *Considerations on Religious Liberty* (Belfast) contains the phrase a 'cheese-earning parson' (72). This follows a claim that if a dissenting minister who has been accused of preaching 'false doctrine' swallows the insult and makes peace with the 'tawny rustic' who has accused him, he will receive a more generous offering of butter or cheese from the parishioner's wife at the next harvest. The clergyman who obtains extra cheese by pandering to the 'vulgar prejudices, caprices, whims and oddities of the meanest of his parish' in this way is deemed to be a man lacking in spirit or sentiment (71).

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Hence strict oeconomy must be my care,
And duller industry my genius share;
The distaff[14] oft, and oft my humbler doom
To hold the duster and ignoble Broom.
Yet spite of adverse circumstances round

For Books some leasure, some for converse found;
Amidst th'instructive dead or living placed,
Acquired, not wit and genius, but, a taste,
Yes, sure, to taste I claim undoubted right,
Since Aikins numbers give so much delight....

[14] A stick or spindle onto which wool or flax is wound for spinning.

14 *An Elegy on J.S., J.G---ggs Clerk, An imitation or rather Alteration of Allen Ramsays on Jon: Cowper, Kirk-treasurers man*[1]

Octbr 1770

1

I warn ye a' to weep and moan,
Jack S—ys dead, ohon! ohon!
To fill his place, alak there's none,
that wi' sic glee,
Could ape an Irish Priest like John,
But he maun die.

2

He was right Nacky[2] in his way
And merry baith by Night and day
When with the Lads his pranks he'd play
Wi' sides sae sair[3]
They'd laugh till on the ground they lay
but he's nae mair.

3

Of counting cash he gat his fill,
And made by't mony a pint & gill;[4]
Of his braw post[5] he thought nae ill,
nor had he need;
Now G—g may make a Kirk and Mill
O't,[6] since he's dead.

[1] Source: NLI MS. 23254. cf. Allan Ramsay (1718), *Elegies on Maggy Johnston, John Cowper, and Lucky Wood* (Edinburgh), 9–14. Thanks are due to Dr Linde Lunney for help in identifying the people mentioned in this poem.
[2] 'clever', 'artful'.
[3] 'sore'. [4] A gill was a measure of a quarter of a pint of whiskey or other spirits. [5] 'fine job'.
[6] i.e. now that Shirley is dead, Mr Gregg can make enough money to buy whatever he wants.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

4

Fye upon death, he was to blame,
To hurl poor John to his lang hame;
But tho' his head be cauld, yet fame
wi' tout o'Trumpet,
Will tell how S—ys awfu' name
could flee a Strumpet.[7] 16

5

He ken'd the Bawds and louns[8] full weel,
And where they used to rant and reel;
But when the Lass disguised did steal
on him in sport,
Aft did he wish the mickle Deel[9]
might take her for't.[10] 20

6

To take a Glass[11] he never spared,
Tho H—y,[12] McC-y, and L—d,
Might preach an hour, and make a faird[13]
about the vice;
For these auld springs[14] sae aften heard
they gi' nae price. 24

7

At Beefstake treat he spared nae cost,
He was a kind and gen'rous host:
Poor Jo[15] neist day his stakes al lost
upon the floor;
Then he for pennance maun be cross'd,
and mind the poor.[16] 28

[7] <vide. one he kick'd from his office door N.B. he was alive to virtue then.>
cf. ll. 33–6 of Ramsay's elegy: 'But tho' his Arse be cauld, [i.e. cold] yet Fame | Wi Tout of Trumpet, | Shall tell how Cowper's awfou Name | Cou'd flie a Strumpet.' 'flee' = 'scold'.

[8] 'loon', 'rascal'. [9] 'great devil'.

[10] <Mr E—rs maid, whom he was Hurr[y]ing [*this is a conjectural reading*] to a House of ill fame, & when he found her out curs'd her heartily for puting the trick on him. this was one approach towards his metaphorical death.>
Mr E—r is currently unidentified, though it might refer to Olivia Elder's father, John Elder, and the 'sign' (see the authorial note to l. 59) might be that outside his Presbyterian meeting house.

[11] i.e. of whiskey.

[12] <a dissenting minister of B—t.>
Belfast. Two of the preachers were probably the Rev Henry and the Rev Laird. The third is unidentified. Presumably, all had preached in Aghadowey.

[13] 'fuss'. [14] i.e. attempts to 'catch' sinners by denouncing vice.

[15] <Mr E—n who having thrown up his supper lamented next day yt he had lost his stakes.>
Probably Mr Erwin or possibly Joseph Ekin of Coleraine.

[16] i.e. when he confessed that he had been drunk, his penance would be to look after the poor.

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8

But Jack poor Soul, withouten din,[17]
Maun at the window be let in,
With mickle danger to his shin,
and aking Head.
Wi' punch he had a weel fill'd skin,
but now he's deed.

9

Although he was nae man of weir,[18]
Yet mony a ane wi' quaking fear,
Durst scarce before his face appear,
But hide their head;
For aft the entry[19] he wad clear
of louns wi' speed.[20]

10

But now the Bucks may scour the town
Break windows and ding signposts down,
And safly gang their walks around
But[21] fear or dread
For that great kow[22] to Buck and loun[23]
Jack S—y's dead.

11

Now wae betide thy fingers, death
For stopping up Jack S—s breath,
The loss of him was publick skeath,[24]
I dare weel say
To fill his place will not be eith,[25]
this mony a day.

Postscript

12

But now that I'm his picture chalking,
Ill storys of him to be talking
Wad shew me but a spiteful maulkin;[26]
yet fifty Head
Will gi' their aith[27] they've seen him walking,
since he was dead.

[17] Without making a noise, i.e. he had to be let in through the window quietly. [18] 'war'.
[19] 'alley' or 'passage-way'.
[20] <viz. a sweetheart of one of Mr E—rs maids who was found lurking in ye entry & kick'd out of it by Mr S—y.>
[21] 'without'. [22] A bugbear or frightening creature.
[23] <this alludes to a challange that Miss G [Gage?] was made believe had past between Mr S---y & a Buck, who had broke Mr E—rs Sign.>
[24] i.e. brought harm to everyone. [25] 'easy'.
[26] = 'maukin', a fool. [27] 'give their oath'.

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13
Keek up and down the stinking stile,[28]
On weekday mornings a wee while;
On Sunday, at ye Kirk north Isle
It will appear,
But take guid tent ye dinna sile
y're sell for fear:[29] 52

14
For well I wat[30] it is his Ghaist,
O wad friend B—k[31] that can do't best,
Speak til't, and see what it confest;
tis a good deed,
To send a wandring saul to rest
among the dead. 56

[28] <the Shambles, or Slaughter House.> The line means: 'Take a look around the slaughter-house.'
[29] i.e. be careful not to soil yourself out of fright. [30] 'know'.
[31] i.e. I wish that friend B—k [unidentified] would speak to it [since] s/he can do it best.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Jane Elizabeth Moore (1738–96?)

Jane Elizabeth Moore was a Protestant Englishwoman who lived latterly in Dublin, where she published her *Miscellaneous Poems on Various Subjects* by subscription in 1796 (second edition in 1797). In 1786 she had published an autobiography entitled *Genuine Memoirs*, but her life after the publication of her poems is obscure. Like many other Irish women poets in their attempts to secure patronage and an income, Moore's 1796 collection includes a clutch of poems to various lord lieutenants and odes to the British monarchy. Moore was widowed in 1781 and briefly imprisoned for debt (Behrendt 2021). 'On the Arrival of Earl Fitzwilliam, as Viceroy of the Kingdom of Ireland' opens, for example, with the command 'Hibernia, hail thy new Viceregal King' and evokes the otherwise potentially radical national tropes of bards and harps to bolster a unionist view of Britain and Ireland that chimes with the sentiments of Mary O'Brien (see page 338). However, Moore's collection also contains a set of poems that address the local contexts in which she found herself. For example, 'On the Discovery of The Gold Mine' argues that this 'discovery' will promote the future prosperity of an impoverished Ireland and raise the nation to a position of global commercial strength (Prescott 2021).

15 *On the Discovery of The Gold Mine, in the County of Wicklow*

SAY why so long in dark oblivion lay,
This mystic metal, in it's native clay?
Which millions long in distant climes have fought,
And from it's torrid regions millions brought;
The glitt'ring lore, thus grasp'd with ardent speed,
Has harmless millions doom'd at times to bleed!
And tho' by Poets oft have been despis'd,
By them possest, it's pleasures have been priz'd;
To Nature yielding in her state deprav'd,
Perverted gifts, which they before had crav'd.
Prolific bounties, Wicklow, long thy boast,
May with this golden gleam upon thy coast,
Vie with all Europe, Asia rich defy,
And barb'rous Spanish maxims e'er decry.
No harass'd victims to the torture brought,
To fully true benevolence of thought;
'Tis by true efforts of industry gain'd,
That ne'er by ghastly av'rice was arraign'd!
Replete with hope, shall commerce swell her sail,
And deep the plough in culture fresh prevail;
The tatter'd peasant by such bounty clad,
With joyful toil shall make his children glad!
What happy prospects will in course combine,
Where arts and science in a country shine;

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Those well united in a nation's cause,
Shall yield protection to it's pristine laws:
Thus if dispos'd on Reason's solid ground,
Shall gold diffuse it's use to all around!
By Virtue's clue in each department spread,
Shall this pure* metal raise each drooping head,
And deck Hibernia with a pleasing grace,
That may allure to home† each native face;
Where precept and example may entwine,
To strew that blessing in kind Heav'n's design,
In gifts transcendent of superior kind.
"Thus draw the line, preponderate success,
"And this new blessing shall with blessings bless."

* Alluding to the metal being found in a pure state.
† Meant to recommend to the Landholders the spending the income of their estates upon the spot.

16 *On the Arrival of Earl Fitzwilliam, As Viceroy of the Kingdom of Ireland 4TH JANUARY, 1795*

AWAKE, my Muse, and thy fresh laurels bring!
Hibernia hail thy new Viceregal King!
Whose glowing breast with bounteous zeal inspir'd,
Long, long has the Parnassian field aspir'd;
Long the melodious prize has gladly won,
Hail! then, ye sisters, your much welcome son;
Who long the lyre and tuneful harp has strung,
And choicest sounds of Heav nly music rung;
Sweet harp, now emblem true of regal power,
Shall wield the sceptre, and just blessings shower;
Propitious Heaven has dignified the choice,
The Guardian Angel joins Hibernia's voice;
Thankful she smiles, on Hope's glad wing is led,
While Arts and Science raise their drooping heads;
By Commerce own'd, the glad'ning clue shall trace;
Joy in each string and pleasure in each face;
On the proud basis Rockingham was found,
Shall rise his virtues on this sacred ground.
Hail! then, ye Choristers of modern fame!
Hail! all glad tidings in Fitzwilliam's name.

No false eulogium, or panegyric verse,
This lay has sullied, or false praise rehears'd;
'Tis on Truth's solid ground alone she stands,
Defiance bids to Envy's ghastly bands;
Holds up the mirror of ennobl'd deeds,
As flowerets sweet o'er come the nauseous weeds.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Charlotte Brooke (c. 1740–93)

Charlotte Brooke's ground-breaking anthology *Reliques of Irish Poetry* was published by subscription in Dublin in 1789 amid the widespread interest in antiquarianism and Celticism sweeping across Europe at the time. The title of the volume paid tribute to Thomas Percy's popular collection of ballads and songs in *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1766) as well as being 'a definitive Irish response to the Ossianic controversy' (Ní Mhunghaile 2009, xxi). In Wales, Evan Evans had also published *Some Specimens of the Poetry of the Antient Welch Bards* in 1764, a volume which similarly presented translations of ancient bardic poetry to a contemporary audience. Ní Mhunghaile notes the way in which Brooke's volume demonstrates the convergence of print and oral culture together with manuscript traditions, drawing attention to its status as 'the first literary work in which the Irish and English languages appear to have been given parity of esteem' (2009, xxvii), and as a founding text in the Anglo-Irish literary tradition. In the preface, Brooke emphasises how the poems reflect the civility, heroism, refinement, and honour of Gaelic Ireland, 'at a period when the rest of Europe was nearly sunk in barbarism' (Ní Mhunghaile 2009, vii). She also informs her British audience of Ireland's venerable literary heritage, commenting that 'The British muse is not yet informed that she has an elder sister in this isle; let us then introduce them to each other! together let them walk abroad from their bowers, sweet ambassadresses of cordial union between two countries that seem formed by nature to be joined by every bond of interest, and amity' (Ní Mhunghaile 2009, vii–viii), sentiments repeated in the extract below. Despite this conciliatory tone of assimilation, both the preface and the poem 'Mäon' also articulate a robust Irish patriotism that underpins Brooke's recuperative project as well as gesturing to more subversive themes pertinent to Brooke's contemporary Ireland, such as dispossession and the question of rightful succession. 'Mäon: An Irish Tale' is Brooke's own composition and concludes the volume. It is based on 'the love story of Mäon and Moriat related in Keating's *Foras feasa ar Éirinn* and its significance lies in the fact that it led the way in demonstrating to other Anglo-Irish poets how Gaelic mythology could provide a new source of inspiration' (Ní Mhunghaile 2009, 156). The poem reproduced below serves as an introduction to 'Mäon' and adumbrates some of its themes and the agenda of the volume overall.

Charlotte was the devoted daughter of Henry Brooke – author of plays, political pamphlets, and a novel, *The Fool of Quality* (1765) – and his wife Catherine Meares, a Methodist.

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17 *Introduction* to *Mäon: An Irish Tale*

Accomplish'd Pair! these simple lays,[1]
With favour's eye peruse;
And take from me, in artless phrase,
The message of the Muse.

A Muse, who ne'er, on Pindus' mount,[2]
Trod inspiration's ground;
Nor drank sweet frenzy from the fount,
Where raptures breathe around.

But a bright Power, whom Nature forms,
And Nature's scenes inspire;
Who mounts the winds, and rides the storms,
And glows with Heaven's own fire!

Who train'd, of old, our sires to fame,
And led them to the field;
Taught them to glow with Freedom's flame,
And Freedom's arms to wield.

With the wild WAR-SONG fir'd the soul,
And sped the daring blow!—
Or, bow'd to Pity's soft controul,
Wept o'er a dying foe.

Or search'd all Nature's treasures round,
To deck a favourite fair;
Or turn'd to love a tender sound,
And sang a faithful pair.

This power, while late my couch I press'd,
To mental sight appear'd;
To my charm'd soul sweet words address'd,
By waking Fancy heard.

Shrin'd in the form of reverend age,
The friendly vision came;
Rob'd as of old, a Bardic Sage,
And took* Craftiné's name.

"O thou (he cry'd) whose timid mind
"Its purpose woudl delay!
"Half shrinking from it, —yet inclin'd—
"Half daring, to essay.

[1] The 'Accomplish'd Pair' are Mr and Mrs Dominic Trant to whom 'Mäon' is dedicated. Dominic Trant was the author of *Considerations on the present disturbance in the province of Munster* (1787) (Ní Mhunghaile 2009, 156).
[2] Pindus, a mountain range in northern Greece and southern Albania.

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"Let not the frown of critic wrath,
"Or smile of critic scorn,
"Affright thee from the splendid path,
"Fame and the Muse adorn.

"The critic storm, that proudly rends
"The oaks of Learning's Hill,
"Will pass thy shrub, that lowly bends,
"Nor deign its growth to kill.

"Shine, while thou can'st, pale trembling beam,
"Ere sun's eclipse thy ray;
"Thy little star awhile may gleam,
"'Till Phœbus brings the day.

"For oft the Muse, a gentle guest,
"Dwells in a female form;
"And patriot fire, a female breast,
"May sure unquestion'd warm.

"No more thy glorious talk refuse,
"Nor shrink from fancy'd harms,
"But, to the eyes of Britain's Muse,
"Present a sister's charms.

"Thee hath the sweet enchantress taught
"The accents of her tongue;
"Pour'd on thine ear her lofty thought,
"Celestial as she sung.

"Now let her see thy grateful heart
"With fond ambition burn,
"Proud if thou canst, at least in part,
"Her benefits return.

"Long, her neglected harp unstrung,
"With glooms encircl'd round;
"Long o'er its silent form she hung,
"Nor gave her soul to sound.

"Rous'd from her trance, again to reign,
"And re-assert her frame,
"She comes, and deigns thy humble strain
"The herald of her claim.

"Swells not thy soul with noble pride,
"This honor to embrace,
"Which partial fates for thee decide,
"With such distinguish'd grace? —

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"Coward! —from the bright path assign'd,
"Thy feet had turn'd away,
"From the bright prize thine eye declin'd,
"Too weak for Glory's ray:

"Did not a steadier soul exhort,
"A steadier counsel guide,
"With zeal thy timid mind support,
"And its vain terrors chide.

"I know the Pair by Genius lov'd,
"By every Muse inspir'd,
"Who thy unpractis'd strains approv'd,
"And thy ambition fir'd!

"To *them* the Muse[b] of ancient days
"Avows the tribute due;
"To *them* her grateful thanks she pays,
"And—coward!—not to you.

"What should she do her love to shew?—
"From all her ample store,
"What favours can her hand bestow
"That were not theirs before?

"Yes, she can add those generous joys,
"That sympathy of hearts,
"Which kindred sentiment employs,
"And worth to worth imparts.

"Go then to thy accomplish'd friends;
"The Muse commands thee go;
"Bear then the grateful gift she sends,
"Tis all she can bestow.

"Bear then the pride of ancient days;
"Truth, science, virtue, fame;
"The lover's faith, the poet's praise,
"The patriotic flame!

"All in the royal pair confess'd
"Whose TALE the Bard pursues;
"Like them, united, grac'd and bless'd
"By Virtue, and the Muse.

[*] **Craiftine**, a celebrated Irish Bard who flourished in A. M. 3648. *Vide* KEATING.

[b] The mention of *the Muse*, in this place, may appear rather too classical, but the ancient Irish had their Muse, as well as the Greeks and Romans, and her name was **be-Sgua**.

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Mary Alcock (c. 1742–98)

Poems, by the Late Mrs. Mary Alcock was published posthumously by subscription in 1799, edited by her niece, Joanna Hughes, who supplied a preface containing biographical details about her aunt. In this prefatory memoir 'To the Reader' she states that Alcock 'never held herself up as a writer', the poems being the 'secret aspirations of her unobtrusive piety, and as such, she kept them private; for in her blameless composition vanity had no part' (iii–iv). However, Alcock had in fact previously published *The Air Balloon; or, Flying Mortal. A Poem* (London, 1784), included in *Poems* (1799, 107–111) as well as another anonymous poem 'for the relief of the debtors in Ilchester gaol', the latter only published 'from motives of pure benevolence'. According to her editor, the poem, *The Confined Debtor, A Fragment from a Prison*, had the desired effect of raising funds to secure their release. The posthumous collection of poems contains further examples of Alcock's altruism and charitable nature as well as riddles, charades, biblical paraphrase, and loco-specific poems from both Irish and English contexts. The first poem below indicates her anti-Jacobin sympathies in its satirical tone and the second, 'Written in Ireland', also betrays her political and social conservatism, and dislike of civil unrest and conflict. The list of over 600 subscribers is headed up by the Prince and Princess of Wales and the Princesses Sophia and Amelia, and may therefore have brought some much-needed financial relief to her niece and family, described in the preface as 'a whole orphan family of dependant Nieces' (vi).

The memoir states that she 'was the daughter of Dr. DENISON CUMBERLAND, bishop of Kilmore, in Ireland, by JOANNA, daughter of the learned Dr. RICHARD BENTLEY' (v), a classical scholar. Alcock was born in England but moved to Ireland in 1763 'when her father became Bishop of Clonfert (Lonsdale 1990, 461). As Lonsdale elaborates, her father had been Vicar of Stanwick, Northamptonshire, and after the move to Ireland was made Bishop of Kilmore in 1772, dying in 1774. The dramatist Richard Cumberland (1732–1811) was her brother and mentions her in his *Memoirs* (1807). She appears to have married in Ireland, 'perhaps to John Alcock, who entered Trinity College, Dublin in 1750 and became Archbishop of Raphoe' (Lonsdale 1990, 461). After her husband's death, she lived in Bath, as some of her poems illustrate, and died on 28 May 1798 at the age of fifty-seven. She was buried at Haselbeach in Northamptonshire, where she had been staying with friends during an illness (*Poems* 1799, vii).

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18 *Instructions, Supposed to be Written in Paris, for the Mob in England*

OF Liberty, Reform, and Rights I sing,
Freedom I mean, without or Church or King;
Freedom to seize and keep whate'er I can,
And boldly claim my right—The Rights of Man:[1]
Such is the blessed liberty in vogue,
The envied liberty to be a rogue;
The right to pay no taxes, tithes, or dues;
The liberty to do whate'er I chuse;
The right to take by violence and strife
My neighbour's goods, and, if I please, his life;
The liberty to raise a mob or riot,
For spoil and plunder ne'er were got by quiet;
The right to level and reform the great;
The liberty to overturn the state;
The right to break through all the nation's laws,
And boldly dare to take rebellion's cause:
Let all be equal, every man my brother;
Why one have property, and not another?
Why suffer titles to give awe and fear?
There shall not long remain one British peer;
Nor shall the criminal appalled stand
Before the might judges of the land;
Nor judge, nor jury shall there longer be,
Nor any jail, but every pris'ner free;
All law abolish'd, and with sword in hand
We'll seize the property of all the land.
Then hail to Liberty, Reform, and Riot!
Adieu Contentment, Safety, Peace, and Quiet!

[1] Thomas Paine (1737–1809), author of *The Rights of Man* (1791–92).

19 *Written in Ireland*

How blest would be Iërne's isle,[1]
Were bigotry and all it's guile
  Chac'd as a cloud away;
Then would Religion rear her head,
And sweet Contentment round her spread,
  Like a new dawn of day.

Come then, oh come, thou Truth divine!
With double radiance deign to shine,
  Thy heavenly light expand;

[1] 'Iërne', an ancient name for Ireland.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

'Tis thine to chase these clouds of night,
In this divided land,

Attendant on thy prosp'rous train
I see sweet Peace with honest gain
Spread wide her liberal hand,
While Discord, mask'd in deep disguise,
Abash'd from forth her presence flies,
Struck by her magic wand.

Around, where now in ruins lie
Thy sacred altars, I espy
Fair Order rear each pile,
Whilst o'er thy wilds forlorn and waste,
Lo, Industry with nimble haste
Makes hill and valley smile.

No more thy sons in fell despite,
A murderous band *array'd in white*,[2]
Shall deal destruction round;
Each man beneath his vine shall rest,
No more by Bigotry opprest,
But Truth by Peace be crown'd.

Then shall Iërne tune her lyre,
And with united voice conspire
To hail her happy state;
All hail, Iërne, Nature's pride,
No more shall wars thy land divide,
Wert thou as good as great.

[2] The Whiteboys in Ireland were an eighteenth-century agrarian secret vigilante movement who defended tenants' land rights and resisted the payment of tithes.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Mary Goddard (bap. 1717–52)

In the prefatory verses that open her *Poems on Several Occasions* (Dublin, 1748), Mary (née Egan) Goddard states that although 'Love inspir'd me first to sing', due to adverse circumstances she is now writing to support 'the Infant Objects of my Care'. Thus, she is prepared to endure the sneers of critics and wits as 'The Wise, the Virtuous, will approve my Lays, / And not the Author, but the Mother praise'. Although the print volume was not attributed to her, the collection had been advertised in the *Dublin Journal* for 19–23 July 1748 as written by 'Mrs. Goddard' (*ODNB*). Most of the biographical information about Goddard stems from the scholarship of A. C. Elias Jr, in the *ODNB* entry and an article in *Swift Studies* from 1994. As Elias notes (*ODNB*), Goddard was baptised on 12 July 1717 at St Nicholas Within, Dublin. Her father, Terence Egan, 'seems to have been a Catholic who conformed under the act of 1709 to safeguard a place in the legal profession' (*ODNB*). In 1734, Mary married the Rev Valentine Goddard (d. 1745), an assistant curate at the same parish where she was both baptised and buried (on 16 February 1752) in what appears to have been a happy marriage, according to the internal evidence of the poems (where he is referenced as Fidelio as well as Valentine). Only one of her five children survived infancy. After her husband's death, Goddard worked as a milliner in Hoey's Court to support her family, but she was also part of a literary circle that included Edmund Burke 'and his friends Richard Shackleton, the future author Beaumont Brenan, and William Dennis' (*ODNB*). Members of this group contributed poems to the 1748 collection, including a poem 'To the Author of the following Poems' by 'R.S' (Richard Shackleton) that praises her as a contemporary Sappho: '*Sappho* seems to bless *Hibernia*'s Isle, / And make her barren Rocks and Mountains smile' (1748, 3). Some of the poems collected date from the 1730s, such as 'On the New Star, 1737', and Elias notes that one Goddard poem had also previously anonymously appeared in print 'in praise of the former viceroy Lord Chesterfield, which appeared in the *Dublin Journal* for 19–22 April 1746' (*ODNB*). In its celebration of George II's victory commanding the Allied forces against the French at the Battle of Dettingen in south-west Germany on 27 June 1743 as part of the War of the Austrian Succession, the poem below is in a similar establishment patriotic vein in its praise of the king's personal leadership of his troops to victory.

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20 *On his Majesty's Success at the Battle of Dettingen*[1]

COU'D I like *Homer* or like *Virgil* pen,
  Immortal Verses for immortal Men,
Charm'd with *Great Britain*'s King I'd tune my Lyre,
To sing his calm Command amidst the Fire;
From mounted Batteries, and of charging Hosts,
Of Houshold Troops, which *Lewis* vainly boasts,[2]
The Prime of Men, with whom he means to gain,
All *Europe*'s Ballance, and to succour *Spain*,
But *GEORGE!* Heroick Prince oppos'd his Way,
And left him nothing, but the Dream of Sway:
Exalted Courage in so just a Cause,
Soon check'd a Pride, unlimited by Laws:
His glittering Squadrons yield to *British* force,
And flying perish in *Mains*' rapid Course:
Defeated in his Views, at length he'll find,
He must submit to *George*'s nobler mind;
Thus wild Ambition by his Sword restrain'd,
The glorious Cause of Liberty's maintain'd.

❧ ❧ ❧

[1] The Battle of Dettingen, 1743, fought during the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–48), and a victory for George II, who was active in combat.
[2] Lewis/Louis XV (1710–74), King of France.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Elizabeth Ryves (c. 1750–97)

Although Elizabeth Ryves was 'descended from a family of distinction in Ireland' and apparently received a good education, she was apparently 'swindled out of her inheritance and fled to London in 1775', where she attempted to make a living as a writer and to petition the king as to her lost inheritance (Behrendt 2021, 45): the first two patriotically British poems in her 1777 collection are addressed to the king and, as the title to the first indicates, were presented to him 'with a petition, in May 1775'. In the *Calamities of Authors* (1812), her acquaintance Isaac D'Israeli commented that 'In her distress, she looked up to her pen as the source of existence; and an elegant genius, and a woman of polished manners, commenced the life of a female trader in Literature' (*Field Day* v, 817). She never married. Her collection of *Poems on Several Occasions* was subscription-based and published in London in 1777, dedicated to Lord Viscount Barrington, Secretary at War; other publications include *The Triumph of Hymen* (1771), *Ode to the Rev. William Mason* (1780), *Dialogues in the Elysian Fields* (1785), and a political poem in three cantos, *The Hastiniad: an Heroick Poem*, a satire on Warren Hastings, as well as an anonymously published semi-autobiographical novel set in Wales, *The Hermit of Snowden: or Memoirs of Albert and Lavinia* (1789). She also wrote a three-act comic opera entitled *The Prude*, which was published in her *Poems*, and another play, *The Debt of Honour*, which 'were accepted by a theatrical manager, but were never acted' (*ODNB*). She produced various translations from French authors (including Rousseau and Delacroix) and is thought to have contributed the 'historical and political portions of Dodsley's *Annual Register*' (Behrendt 2021, 45). Ryves' attempts to make a decent living as a writer were not successful, and she died in poverty in London on 29 April 1797. The poem below is from the 1777 collection and movingly expresses her continual misfortune.

21 *Ode to Hope*

I.

SWEET Hope, thou heav'n born cherub! Why
  From me regardless dost thou fly?
Ah! why no more my lonely path illume?
Thy soothing voice, thy angel smile,
Did oft my cares, my wrongs beguile,
And lead me safe thro' wayward Fortune's gloom.

II.

But now abandon'd, shun'd by thee,
I float on life's tempestuous sea

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

A helpless wreck, the sport of ev'ry tide.
Bewilder'd, lost, forlorn I stray,
No beam to chear my weary way,
Or thro' the trackless path my steps to guide.

III.

Sister of Faith! once more descend,
Not as a flatterer, but a friend,
And leave thy visionary train behind:
Religion's tranquil mien assume,
Fix all my views beyond the tomb,
And make me bless'd, by making me resign'd.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Henrietta Battier (c. 1751–1813)

The poet, satirist, and Irish nationalist Henrietta Battier was the daughter of John Fleming of County Meath and married a Dublin banker of Huguenot descent, with whom she travelled to London in 1783–84. While in London she was befriended by Samuel Johnson, who helped her prepare a subscription edition of her poems. However, due to the death of Johnson in 1784, the poems were not published until 1791, when they appeared as *The Protected Fugitives. A Collection of Miscellaneous Poems, the Genuine Productions of a Lady. Never before Published.* Interestingly, the subscription list is arranged by nation and cities as follows: 'IRISH; ENGLISH (Liverpool, Chester, Manchester, London)', and the dedicatory letter to the Reverend D. Paul, Prebendary of St Patrick's and Rector of St Thomas', Dublin is signed 'Henrietta Battier'. 'The Author's Preface' to that collection references Ireland as 'my native country', to which she expresses 'true filial affection'. However, Battier goes on to declare her gratitude for 'the kindness of the Sister Kingdom, on whom I had no claim, natural or acquired', and especially to Johnson, who helped her success 'by beginning the subscription with his own name' (1791, xii). Battier went on to publish several lively and topical satirical poems and lampoons under the alias Patt. Pindar, and is described in the *Field-Day* anthology as 'the most assured and humorous poet to appear after Mary Barber' (v, 818). Her satires include: *The Kirwanade, or, Poetical Epistle* (1791), targeted at Walter Blake Kirwan, dean of Killala, a Catholic convert to the Church of Ireland; *The Gibbonade, or, Political Reviewer* (three numbers, 1 May 1793–12 September 1794); *The Lemon* (1797); and *An Address on … the Projected Union* (1799). She died at Sandymount, Dublin, in the autumn of 1813 (*ODNB*).

The poem to the Earl of Westmoreland is one of several formal panegyrics included in her 1791 collection, written in the hope of patronage, both social and financial. She ends the poem by highlighting her 'humble' and 'honest' position as an 'anxious Parent'. By contrast, *The Gibbonade* adopts a combative and political mode in order to defend the United Irishmen and their leader Simon Butler, and is representative of Battier's nationalist views (Prescott, 2021).

22 *An Address to his Excellency the Earl of Westmoreland. On his Arrival*[1]

WHILE fawning crowds each hackney'd mode employ,
To speak a welcome by mechanic joy,
Yet, pre-determin'd every act to scan,

[1] John Fane, 10th Earl of Westmoreland (1759–1841) arrived in Dublin to take up the post of lord lieutenant (viceroy) in January 1790 and served until his replacement in December 1794.

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And hate the Viceroy, ere they know the Man.
An humble twig of unregarded bays,
Bids honest welcome, tho' in rustic phrase.

And may the wayward Genius of this isle,
Thy conduct mark with approbation's smile,
Safe may'st thou steer, upheld by Truth and Sense,
'Tween Adulation and Impertinence;
Unmoved by either, may'st thou rule the helm,
And tune to Concord this discordant realm,
With cool contempt, behold th'imperial tribe
Of patriot Printers, bello'ing for a bribe,
Who in my mem'ry, or for pique or pelf,
Each Ruler lash'd, from Townsend to thyself:[2]
And now, forgetful of a Chatham's fame,[3]
Would blast as well the Genius as the Name.

For me, unvers'd in all the varied rules
Either of courtly or poetic schools,
For me, whose pen has yet ne'er wrong'd my heart,
I'll act an honest, tho' an humble part;
And tho' I come unfriended and alone,
Yet, let the motive for the mode atone,
And should my suit no favour'd audience find,
The silent sigh shall prove my soul resign'd;
A mother's ardent wishes, to enlarge
The stinted fortunes of an infant charge,
Inspires my pen, and will, I trust, excuse,
The anxious Parent, and the humble Muse.

[2] Lord Townsend, George (1724–1807), Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1767–72).
[3] Earl of Chatham, a peerage created in 1766 for William Pitt the Elder, Prime Minister of Great Britain 1766–68.

23 From: *The Gibbonade. First Number*

O GUARDIAN Genius of Hibernia, say,
How long her sons must feel th' oppressive sway.
Of *rude perogative?*—While honest zeal,
And upright efforts for the public weal
Are represented to the Royal ear,
By each *mean placeman*, and *each puppy peer*,
As the effects of some disloyal cause,
Subversive of religion and the laws.

United Irishmen, whose bosoms beat,[1]
With native honour as with native heat.

[1] 'United Irishmen': the Society of United Irishmen formed in Belfast in 1791 to secure equality for the people of Ireland across the religious divide of Protestant and Catholic.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

United Irishmen, a glorious band,
Who stood the guardians of their native land,
When all Britannia's *hireling troops* were hurl'd[2]
On wakening freedom, in a distant world.
—United Irishmen were surely they,
Who volunteer'd it in affliction's day*.

—United Irishmen, must now forbear
One hope, those blessings they maintain'd to share.
—Proscribed, insulted, in a pillag'd land,
Whose partial parcels feed a hungry band.
—*A servile pack of ministerial hounds*,[3]
Who hunt preferment over falshood's,
Whose souls no purity of thought retain,
No friend but Interest, —and no God but gain.

See public spirit shrin'd in BUTLER's form,[4]
With every other grace and virtue warm,
Condemn'd six moons within those walls to dwel
Where felon horrors, form a local hell.
—Where desp'rate wretches, draw contagious breath,
And their cells open—but for sin or death.

There Butler dwells, the gentle the humane;
—Butler the generous; thro' whose every vein
Illustrious blood has flowed without a stain.

*The Author alludes to the year 1780, when deserted by the sister kingdom, Irishmen first united in defence of their country, in laws and liberties.

[2] 'hireling troops', 'mercenary soldiers'. [3] 'ministerial hounds', 'politicians'.
[4] Simon Butler (1757–97), lawyer and First President of the United Irishmen.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Mary (née Shackleton) Leadbeater (1758–1826)

Born into the Quaker community of Ballitore, County Kildare in December 1758, writer and diarist Mary Shackleton was the daughter of Richard Shackleton and Elizabeth Carleton. She married William Leadbeater, a local man, in 1791 and remained in Ballitore most of her life, where she was postmistress. Leadbeater was friendly with the poet Melesina Trench, helping with the school Trench set up in 1808 (*Field Day* IV, 515), and fellow Quaker Mary Birkett Card (see page 321). She died on 27 June 1826 'and was interred in the Quaker cemetery' (Feldman 1997, 387). As her extensive journal shows, she had first-hand experience of the violence of the 1798 United Irishmen Rising, recorded as part of *The Annals of Ballitore, 1766–1824,* which were posthumously published as volume I in the two-volume *The Leadbetter Papers* edited by Richard Davis Webb in 1862. Through her family connections, Leadbetter was introduced to Edmund Burke on a visit to London with her father in 1784, and maintained a correspondence with him as well as addressing him in her poetry (see vol. II of *The Leadbetter Papers*). In 1794 her volume *Extracts and Original Anecdotes; for the Improvement of Youth* was published anonymously in Dublin. This book includes examples of her poetry as well as an 'Account of the Formation of the Society of the People called Quakers' that opens the volume. She published a further volume of *Poems* in 1808 but was probably best known for her instructive writing, starting with her first collection and featuring also in later volumes such as *Cottage Dialogues Among the Irish Peasantry* (Dublin, 1811; second part 1813), which has an introduction and notes by Maria Edgeworth; *Tales for Cottagers, Accommodated to the Present Condition of the Irish Peasantry* (Dublin, 1814); and *Cottage Biography, being a Collection of Lives of the Irish Peasantry* (Dublin, 1822). More broadly, Leadbeater's poetry includes examples of anti-slavery sentiment and a moral preoccupation with social issues and the situation of the poor in Ireland, as demonstrated in the elegy below. The second, later, example of her poetry below probably documents her return to Ireland from the visit to London in 1784, and described her journey through Wales and across the Irish sea. Leadbeater's Quakerism is discernible in the final stanza in its emphasis on 'The temple of a quiet mind'.

24 *On the Death of a good* POOR-WOMAN

IN even scale, by Truth divine
  When greatness weigh'd shall be,
Nor laurel'd chiefs shall equal shine,
  Nor scepter'd kings with thee. 4

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Thy patient faith no grief defaced,
  No form of woe could move,
Not meagre want, securely placed
  On God, thy Hope, the Love.

What though by fawning crouds enclosed
  They grasped a wider frame,
No finer dust their limbs composed,
  Their minds no purer flame.

O'ercharged with vanity and sin,
  To impartial fate they bend:
In death thy glories but begin,
  Where all their glories end.

The sovereign drops his pomp and show,
  And lays his scepter down,
A richer robe adorns thee now
  A never-fading crown.

25 *Farewell to England*

  To Britain's isle a long farewell,
Where plenty smiles and pleasures dwell:
Farewell, ye woods, all waving wide,
Ye vales, attir'd in summer's pride
Ye tow'rs, which proudly rise in air,
Ye cots, so cleanly and so fair!

  Now Cambria's[1] rocky wilds appear,
Her mountains rude and valleys drear;
While solemn midnight rules the sky,
And darkness veils the danger nigh,
Save where the sullen gleams display
The rocky steep beside our way;
While the full torrent's hollow roar
Sounds sadly on the naked shore,
And fancy dreads, in ev'ry shade,
The midnight robber's murd'ring blade.

  And now we view the ocean wide,
And now the swelling surge we ride:
Loud roars the wind, the billows heave,
Swift bounds the bark from wave to wave,
Opprest with sickness, pale we lie,
And wish for land: – the land is nigh.

[1] Wales.

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Hibernia's[2] welcome isle appears;
Returning health our spirits cheers.
There, seated in her beauteous bay,
Eblana's[3] domes their pride display:
But there tumultuous Folly raves,
And high her torch high Discord waves.

Then haste me to my native plain,
Where all the peaceful pleasures reign!
Once more my longing eye devours
Her silent stream and modest bow'rs;
Once more the welcome kind I prove
Of friends, whom as myself I love;
Once more confess, where'er I roam,
No spot I find so dear as home.

O Thou, whose kind, paternal hand,
Preserves by sea, protects by land,
Grant us that peace, 'tis thine alone,
To a tumultuous world unknown;
That whether warring winds engage,
Or ruthless human passions rage,
A sacred refuge we may find,
The temple of a quiet mind.

[2] Ireland. [3] Dublin.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Henrietta (née Boyle) O'Neill (1758–93)

Henrietta Boyle was born into a wealthy family; her father was Charles Boyle, Lord Dungarvan, son of the 5th Earl of Cork and Orrery. In 1777 she married the future baron and viscount, the politician John O'Neill of Shane's Castle, County Antrim, who was later killed in the 1798 uprising. An amateur actress, she frequently visited London, where she became acquainted with and supported Sarah Siddons, and became a close friend of the poet and novelist Charlotte Smith. She had two sons, who were commemorated in another of her poems, 'Written on Seeing her Two Sons at Play', which was published in volume 11 of the eighth edition of Smith's *Elegiac Sonnets, and other poems* (1797). It is through Charlotte Smith that O'Neill's poems are known as she did not publish a collection of poetry herself, although her 'Ode to the Poppy' became a popular choice in the literary magazines of the day (Lonsdale 1990, 459). The poem first appeared in the third volume of Smith's novel *Desmond* (1792). 'Ode to the Poppy' is embedded as if written by the character Geraldine Verney in a melancholy letter to Miss Fanny Waverly, her younger sister, from Meudon in France. Geraldine describes her favourite seat on the steps of a chapel, near the convent of the Capuchins: 'I usually take my evening seat on the flight of steps I have described to you' (1792, 163). She describes herself sketching the wild flowers seeded on the broken steps 'and last night I observed, mingled with them, a root of the field poppy, still in flower—On the qualities of this plant I fell into a reverie, —To you, my Fanny, and to you only, I entrust the little wild ode—almost, indeed, an impromptu, which this contemplation produced' (1792, 164). After O'Neill's death in Portugal in 1793, Smith included 'Ode to the Poppy' in the second volume of *Elegiac Sonnets* (1797) with an illustration of the scene from the novel, together with the poem to O'Neill's two sons and an elegy, 'Verses on the Death of the same Lady, written in September 1794'. In most editions of her sonnets Smith had also included the poem 'Sent to the Honorable Mrs. O'Neill, with painted flowers' as Sonnet XXXVII.

26 *Ode to the Poppy. Written by a Deceased Friend*

NOT for the promise of the labour'd field,
Not for the good the yellow harvests yield,
I bend at Ceres' shrine;
For dull, to humid eyes, appear
The golden glories of the year,
Alas!—a melancholy worship's mine.

I hail the goddess for her scarlet flower!
Thou brilliant weed,

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

That dost so far exceed
  The richest gifts gay Flora can bestow:
Heedless I pass'd thee, in life's morning hour,
  (Thou comforter of woe)
Till sorrow taught me to confess thy power.

In early days, when Fancy cheats,
  A varied wreath I wove
Of laughing Spring's luxuriant sweets,
  To deck ungrateful Love:
The rose, or thorn, my labours crown'd,
As Venus smiled, or Venus frown'd;
But Love, and Joy, and all their train, are flown;
  E'en languid Hope no more is mine,
And I will sing of thee alone,
Unless, perchance, the attributes of Grief,
The cypress bud, and willow leaf,
  Their pale funereal foliage blend with thine.

Hail, lovely blossom!—thou can'st ease
The wretched victims of Disease;
Can'st close those weary eyes in gentle sleep,
Which never open but to weep;
For, oh! thy potent charm
Can agonizing Pain disarm;
Expel imperious Memory from her seat,
And bid the throbbing heart forget to beat.

Soul-soothing plant! that can such blessings give,
By thee the mourner bears to live!
  By thee the hopeless die!
Oh! Ever "friendly to despair,"
Might Sorrow's pallid votary dare,
Without a crime, that remedy implore,
  Which bids the spirit from its bondage fly,
I'd court thy palliative aid no more;

  No more I'd sue that thou shoud'st spread,
  Thy spell around my aching head,
  But would conjure thee to impart
  Thy balsam for a broken heart;
And by thy soft Lethean power,
  (Inestimable flower)
Burst these terrestrial bonds, and other reasons try.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Frances O'Neill (c. 1760–1802?)

The only information available for the life of Frances O'Neill is from the internal evidence of the poems she published in 1802 as *Poetical Essays: Being a Collection of Satirical Poems, Songs and Acrostics*. The collection is sixty pages in length and offers a variety of genres, from satire to descriptive and reflective verse. The introduction states that the volume is published 'at the ardent request of the Authoresses intimate Friends'. It opens with an extended satire on 'two Characters, drawn from real Life': Patrick Kelly an Irish butler and Mrs/Miss Sangster, a Scots cook, both employed by a 'respectable Family' in London's Berkeley Square. From the title of the poem below, we know she was in Dublin in 1789, and it seems that she moved to London shortly after this date, perhaps to find work as a writer but also in more conventional employment such as needlework and as a servant (perhaps a co-worker of Kelly and Sangster). She notes that although she was 'Born with a mind / To write inclin'd', she is 'Condemn'd to get my bread by stiching' (1802, 43). In the poem 'On my Arrival in London', she expresses her sense of awe at 'The stately town its vast extent, / Its op'ning streets, and shining spires'. However, despite the grandeur of the city, O'Neill's poem is full of trepidation on her vulnerability as a stranger of limited means: 'Yet here my Muse no friendship meets' (1802, 24).

In the pensive 'My Own Wish', the penultimate poem in the collection, O'Neill expresses her nostalgia for rural Ireland in contrast to the inhospitable and harsh environment of London. She contrasts the pleasure gained from the mountains and 'wide horizon' with 'London's noisy streets' filled with 'thund'ring coaches' where 'No calm contentment ever sooths my soul' (1802, 60). It seems that her life was indeed hard and that she was not successful in making a decent living by writing, as she notes in a poem to Rev John Hurdis, Professor of Poetry at Oxford, 'Amidst a world of wealth I hardly glean / A bare subsistence for a life of pain' (1802, 53). The ode for Leixlip, a town in County Kildare, seems to have been written at a happier point in her life when she is inhabiting the landscape she evokes nostalgically in later poems. The allusion to Alexander Pope's *Windsor Forest* (1713) demonstrates a particular regard for his poetry that runs throughout her work. As Isobel Grundy notes, although the poems display some reformist political ideas at times, 'O'Neill is not herself a radical: her volume ends with praise of Pitt […] and "An Ode to New Year's Day" celebrates Britannia's arms, battles, trade, and learning, and prays: "Let proud rebellion sink to endless night"' (2008, 2).

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

27 *An Ode for Lexlip. Written at Dublin, 1789*

O may some Muse my breast inspire,
The same who strung the Heavenly lyre,
And chaunt the tuneful tongue,
Of him whose genuine wit confess'd
The flame of genius in his breast,
Who Windsor's beauty sung.[1]

O would kind Heaven propitious smile,
And send some bard to bless our isle,
Some bard like thee inspir'd,
'Tis sure to court his fav'rite Muse,
Amidst ten thousand charms he'd chuse,
In Lexlip's shade retir'd.

When gloomy winter clouds the skies,
And bids rude blust'ring tempests rise,
And warblers cease to sing,
And fill with frost the pregnant gale,
Or fleecy snow, or rattling hail,
'Tis here eternal Spring.

Here as we view the enchanting ground,
With diff'rent prospects varied round,
And diff'rent beauties grac'd,
There weaving woods, and rising spires,
At once the wond'ring eye admires,
And here a flowery waste.

Lo! echoing temples, green retreats,
And low-brow'd rocks, and mossy seats,
Repeat each deaf'ning sound
Of sighing storms, and heaving floods,
And whisp'ring winds and gloomy woods
Far echoing round and round.

Here from that beauteous rising shore,
With thund'ring force and deaf'ning roar,
The impetuous torrent pours,[2]
Prone down the rock, with echoing sweep,
Till far below th'unfathom'd deep,
The roaring wave devours.

There the river's beamy face,
In circling waves from place to place,
Reflects in ruffling forms,

[1] Alexander Pope, *Windsor Forest* (1713).
[2] The Salmon Leap on the River Liffey, near Leixlip, which forms two waterfalls.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

The lofty trees, that smooth and tall,
O'erhang the dashing water's fall.
And wave before the storms.

What boundless scenes that still commands,
Where yonder beauteous fabric stands,[3]
That from its airy brow,
O'er looks the prospect, far and wide,
The stately town, and circling tide,
That distant roars below.

So when th' immortal Thunderer sate,[4]
To fill the fix'd decrees of fate,
On Ida's cloudy head,[5]
He view'd fair Illion's[6] opening streets,
The circling seas, and crowded fleets,
In one bright level spread.

[3] Leixlip Castle. [4] Zeus, Greek king of the gods and of thunder.
[5] Mount Ida in Anatolia (modern Turkey), birthplace of Zeus. [6] Troy.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Lady Elizabeth Dorothea Tuite (1764–1850)

Poems by Lady Tuite (London, 1796) is dedicated to her maternal aunt, Elizabeth Rawdon, the Countess of Moira, and signed by Eliza Dorothea Tuite, Gay Street, Bath in March 1796 as 'Your Lady's most dutiful niece'. A second edition of the poems appeared in 1799. A member of the Anglo-Irish elite, Eliza Dorothea was the daughter of Thomas Cobbe and Lady Elizabeth Beresford (Lady Betty Cobbe), daughter of the first Earl of Tyrone (Burke, 2008). The Countess of Moira was well known for her literary and political salon at Moira House in Dublin in the 1780s and 1790s, and was a friend of Maria Edgeworth and Charlotte Brooke as well as a supporter of Mary Wollstonecraft. Unlike her aunt, Tuite was mostly apolitical or tending to a conservative appreciation of social propriety and support of the British establishment, as the poem below demonstrates. After 1798, she mostly resided in London or Bath. The collection opens with an 'Answer to Mrs. Greville's "Ode to Indifference"', a response to the Longford poet Frances Greville's popular poem 'Prayer for Indifference' (see page 273). Tuite declares that she will instead be inspired by 'tender feeling' and sensibility in order to 'string my long neglected lyre, / And court once more the Muse', noting 'I seek not fame, I want not praise, Nor envy all the verdant bays, / That blooms around GREVILLE's head (1796, 1–2). However, in a further poem to Greville, 'On Reading These Last Lines of my Answer to Mrs. Greville' she appears to reassess the merits of indifference as superior to sentimental feeling in the light of bitter experience. Despite her response to her literary compatriot, Tuite's poems avoid any direct mention of Irish concerns, and she is often seen as typical of the ambivalent status of the Anglo-Irish in this period (Behrendt 2021, 181). Nevertheless, as Tim Burke suggests, 'the dedication to Lady Moira holds the door open to other possibilities' in terms of further 'understanding the deeply disconnected Anglo-Irish elite and its cultural preoccupations in the approach to 1798 and political union' (2008).

28 *Song. In the Year 1794*[1]

THO' still triumphant o'er the main,
Britannia's thunders roar;
She fondly mourns her warriors slain,
On yonder hostile shore. 4
Britons.

[1] This was the year of the Treason Trials, led by Tory Prime Minister William Pitt (1759–1806) to quash the British Radical movement of the 1790s.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

She grieves, that while on foreign ground,
They bleed at honor's call,
At home one traitor should be found,
Exulting in their fall.
Britons.

Such alien children, lost to shame,
She views with aching heart;
Who under Freedom's sacred name,
Would play a tyrant's part.
Britons.

They do but flatter to ensnare,
And sell her to her foe;
O may her gen'rous sons beware,
And timely ward the blow.
Britons.

Awake, arise, defend your laws,
Your monarch's rights maintain;
So may your blood, in England's cause,
No more be shed in vain,
Britons.

So may fair Peace, round Albion's[2] throne,
Her choicest blessings shed;
While Heav'n approving guards its own,
And shields your Brunswick's[3] head.
Britons.

[2] England. [3] George III.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Lady Catharine Rebecca Manners (1767–1852)

Lady Manners was born in Lehena, County Cork, to wealthy Protestant parents. Although she was brought up in Ireland and continued to stress her connection to her native land in her poetry, in 1790 she married an Englishman, the Tory politician Sir William Manners, later Lord Huntingtower of Leicester, and spent most of her married life in England. *Poems. By Lady Manners* was published in 1793 (with a second edition the same year), and her 'considerable celebrity' in the 1790s has been compared to that of Charlotte Smith and Mary Robinson (Behrendt 2010, 329). A further volume appeared in 1790, entitled *Review of Poetry, Ancient and Modern*, *A Poem, by Lady M*****, which appears to be a collection of classical and contemporary verse intended for children. Backscheider and Ingrassia (2009) note of the latter volume that 'the title poem was a progress of poetry poem from Homer and Pindar through Akenside and Churchill' (879). The poem below dramatises a moment of reluctantly leaving Ireland to return to England after a visit, and is a companion piece to the earlier poem documenting her arrival, 'On Returning to Ireland, In May, 1788'. The verses reveal a deep nostalgic attachment to the place of her birth and childhood, where the security of family and friendship are directly aligned to the imagined protection of a familiar landscape. The poem also serves as a lament for lost loved ones and the relentless passing of time and mortality.

29 *On Leaving Lehena*

IN OCTOBER, MDCCLXXXVIII (1788)

DEAR fields, where oft in infancy I stray'd,
When every trifle charms the vacant mind!
Kind groves, that wrapp'd me in your circling shade,
When thoughtful Science first my soul refin'd.

Say, must I bid this lov'd recess adieu,
Once more to float on Dissipation's tide?
Where shall I meet with friends so safe, so true,
To whom I may my careless youth confide?

Where yon tall elms have form'd a dark retreat,
How oft the showers of April did I shun!
Beneath the limes that overhang yon seat,
How sweet my shelter from the summer sun!

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Or when rude Boreas[1] urg'd the chilling blast,
And desolation darken'd all the plain,
Musing I wander'd o'er the wintry waste,
And knew my charms more transient and more vain:

For soon again shall Phoebus'[2] golden beams
Restore the meadows to their pristine bloom:
But not his brightest, not his warmest gleams
Can wake my slumbering ashes from the tomb—

Till the last trumpet with terrific sound
Shall call the trembling culprit to appear,
Where perfect Justice shall my guilt confound,
Or endless Mercy ease my anxious fear.

Whene'er the inclement skies compell'd my stay
Within the walls of yon sequester'd dome,
How very short appear'd each sullen day,
While o'er storied page my eyes did roam!

Or when, exchanging books for free discourse,
A Parent's words instructed as they pleas'd,
While to her words her actions gave new force,
My mind example more than precept rais'd.

She taught me humbled goodness to revere,
To cheer the sad, to succour the forlorn;
Taught me to think bright Virtue only fair,
And senseless Pride to treat with equal scorn.

Sometimes the Friendly Sisters* too would come,
Their conduct blameless, and their souls sincere,
Adding new pleasure to our peaceful home,
For heaven-born Friendship can each scene endear.

But now no more Maria[3] glads our eyes,
No more with her the verdant fields we tread:
Med'cine in vain its healing virtue tries;
Our lov'd Maria's number'd with the dead!

Yet, Anna, cease this unavailing tear,
Utter no more that deep, heart-rending sigh:
Maria's body wastes upon the bier;
Maria's purer soul can never die.

[1] North wind in Greek mythology. [2] The sun; Greek god of light and poetry.
[3] A deceased relation, perhaps her sister (see Manners' note * at the end of the poem).

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Methinks, she views you now with tender care,
She drops a tear of pity to your woe:
Ah! then your sainted Sister's quiet spare,
Who can no sorrow now but Anna's know.

Alas! while I indulge the pensive strain,
Apollo[4] sinks into the lap of Night:
When he illumines next yon western plain,
No more this lawn shall open to my sight.

Stay, envious Cynthia,[5] suffer yet one view!
To-morrow I these blissful meads forsake;
From her moist veil she shakes the silver dew,
Deaf to each feeble accent that I speak.

Then farewell each regretted, rural scene,
Each rising tree my careful hand has nurs'd!
Long may your branches crown this happy green,
When these frail limbs lie mouldering in the dust!

*Relations of the Writer.

[4] God of light and the arts. [5] The moon.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Dorothea Herbert (c. 1767–1829)

Although she appears to have had ambitions to publish her writing, Dorothea Herbert's work was not published until many years after her death. Even then, it was her journal, published originally in 1929–30 as *Retrospections of Dorothea Herbert, 1770–1806* (subsequently republished in 1988 and 2004), that defined the parameters of critical interest in her life and work. One of the title pages of the manuscript of *Retrospections* (in Trinity College Library) indicates that this is the fourth volume of a wider collection which also includes plays, poems, and novels and casts Dorothea as 'An Outcast': *Retrospections of an Outcast or the Life of Dorothea Herbert Authoress of the Orphan Plays and Various Poems and Novels. In Four Volumes. Written in Retirement. Volume the Fourth*. Herbert was from the lower echelons of the Protestant ascendancy class, and her journal is fascinating as 'a vivid introduction to the society of south Tipperary and as a still rarer guide to the mental world of an accomplished though ultimately anguished lady in rural Ireland' (Finnegan, xxviii). The journal documents Dorothea's obsession with a local man, John Roe, who she styled as her husband although he later married elsewhere, and her perception of her family's cruelty towards her as an 'outcast' and often a recluse. The poem below addresses this social status as an 'old maid'. Nevertheless, she was clearly a highly intelligent woman whose circumstances thwarted her ambitions and chances for happiness, and the journal makes for poignant reading. For many years it was thought that her poetry was lost (apart from the examples in the *Retrospections*), but Frances Finnegan's volume *Introspections: the poetry and private world of Dorothea Herbert* reveals that 'the poems exist in a manuscript volume of 145 pages, mislaid for two centuries and only recently recovered' (Finnegan, 1). This volume appears still to be in private hands (although there is a microfilm in the National Library of Ireland (call no. POS 6073)). Finnegan's volume reprints these poems as well as Herbert's 'notes' for the planned, but not accomplished, continuation of her Journal/*Retrospections*. The poems range from the occasional and loco-specific to abstract meditations on, for example, melancholy and sensibility, including the substantial mock-heroic *The Buckiad*. A lengthier poem that precedes the poem below, *An Address to Old-Maids By one of the Sisterhood*, demonstrates Herbert's preoccupation with the fact that she never married.

30 *Epitaph for an Old-Maid Author of the Above*

Under this cold and moss grown Stone is laid
In peace the Body of an Ancient-Maid
Whatever triffling Merits She cou'd boast

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Were often in a sea of Errors lost
Yet all who knew her well must e'en confess
That some good Qualities she did possess
Her Heart with Anguish bled at Other's Woes
She ne'er wish'd Mischief to her greatest Foes
To Friends her Soul was open loving kind
A Friend's good Name she never yet resign'd
She cou'd indifferently read and write
Cou'd spell La-La Poor Verses cou'd indite
Cou'd draw a little, play and sing a Song
Tho' we must own in each she oft went wrong
She once her Sisterhood did well advise
Yet Lord know she was not herself too wise
Scraps of most English Books she did peruse
But her Delight lay chiefly in the News
On politicks she cou'd harangue with ease
Condemn the French and sound King Georges praise
But Faults she had too many to be told
Yet some we here will candidly unfold
Sometimes to Spleen and fretfulness inclin'd
Tho' she e'er strove the Fiends in Chains to bind
She oft about the Walks did Idly lurk
And unlike all good Dames detested Work
Her Alms Deeds and Donations were but few
In fact she ne'er had power much good to do
Her store of Knowledge also was but small
Perfect in Nothing tho' just dipp'd in all
She was too silent, lived retir'd, took snuff
Was singular and whimsical enough
Nor let those who shall this Inscription read
Blame us for speaking evil of the dead
In Life she loathed praises undeserv'd
For things wherein she knew she often swerv'd
So we alike her Faults and Merits Scan
Which here claim pity both from God and Man

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Melesina Trench / Melesina Chenevix St George Trench (1768–1827)

Melesina Chenevix was born in Dublin on 22 March 1768 of Huguenot descent from her father's side. She was orphaned at the age of four, after which she lived with her grandfather, Dr Richard Chenevix, Bishop of Waterford and subsequently with her maternal grandfather, Archdeacon Gervais. She inherited money from both sides of the family, which enabled her to travel extensively in Europe after her first marriage ended on the untimely death of her husband. She married Col Richard St George of Carrick on Shannon in 1786, but was widowed in 1790. In 1803 she married the Irish barrister Richard Trench, whom she met while in Paris. After her second marriage she chose to live between London and Hampshire but continued to make frequent visits to Ireland. She kept a journal throughout her life, published as *The Remains of the Late Mrs. Richard Trench* (1862), heavily edited by her third son Richard Chenevix Trench, the Dean of Westminster, and described by Kittredge (2011, 3) as 'a mid-Victorian best-seller', mostly due to her scathing description of meeting Lord Nelson and Emma Hamilton in Dresden while on an extended trip to Germany from 1799. She maintained a lifelong correspondence with Mary Leadbeater, (see pages 306–7), which is preserved in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (Yale U. OSB MSS 50): the two women met 'in April 1802, when Trench visited Ballitore to assist the Irish peasantry residing on her estate at nearby Ballybarney' (Behrendt 2020, 36). Most of her extensive archive, 'more than two thousand personal documents', is in Hampshire Record Office in Winchester (Kittredge 2011, 1). In 1800 she anonymously published her first collection of poems, *Mary, Queen of Scots; an historical ballad: and other poems*, a mix of ballads, sonnets, and occasional verse. Behrendt's anthology includes the later poem *Laura's Dream; or, The Moonlanders* (1816), described there as 'widely recognised as one of the earliest works of science fiction, and the first in verse' by a woman (2021, 311). Two volumes had previously appeared in 1815: *Campaspe, an Historical Tale; and Other Poems* (published privately) and *Ellen: A Ballad* (published in Bath and 'Sold for the Benefit of the House of Protection'). Her final poetic production was *Aubrey: In Five Cantos* (Southampton, 1818), described as an attempt to 'translate the gothic novel into poetic form' (Kittredge, 2008). Her educational treatise *Thoughts of a Parent on Education* was published posthumously in 1837. As Behrendt (2020, 36) notes, 'Her poems attracted admirers including Anna Seward and her friends the "Ladies of Llangollen" […] as well as Mary Leadbeater'. Clearly, poems from her first collection had been circulating prior to publication; in March 1797 Seward wrote to the Ladies of Llangollen, Lady Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby, on the titular 'epic' poem from her 1800 collection, seemingly recommended by Ponsonby, declaring 'Very sweetly is it told, indeed, in harmonious numbers,

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and often presenting images that bear the stamp of genius' (Kittredge 2005, 203). The sonnet below is addressed to Butler and Ponsonby, who travelled together from Ireland to Wales in 1778. They eventually settled in Plas Newydd, Llangollen, which became known as an intellectual salon, visited by numerous writers and prominent figures, including Hester Thrale Piozzi and Mary Tighe. The celebrated 'recluses' and their environs were often the subjects of poetry, such as Anna Seward's 'Llangollen Vale' (1795). Trench's poem recalls a visit to Plas Newydd, where she had seemingly enjoyed the intellectual friendship of Butler, Ponsonby, and their circle in person. Such friendships often continued via epistolary networks, although in the preface to *Remains*, it is noted that examples of her correspondence 'are very incomplete' (1862, vi), especially that between Trench, Butler, and Ponsonby: 'Of her letters to some, with whom for years she maintained a lively correspondence — as, for instance, "the ladies of Llangollen" — I do not possess a single specimen' (1862, vii). Despite the loss of the letters, these comments nevertheless prove they once existed and there are also various references to Butler and Ponsonby in *The Leadbetter Papers* (1862), all of which attest to the vitality of the female intellectual and literary networks that the poem below evokes.

31 *Sonnet. On Leaving the Cottage of Lady E —— B —— And Miss P ——*[1]

DEAR Mem'ry, guardian of each past delight,
  Whose voice recalls the fleeting form of joy,
  Select such tints as Time can ne'er destroy,
And in unfading hues, serenely bright,
The lavish beauties of that vale unite,
  Where Friendship (only bliss unapt to cloy),
  Taste, Science, Converse, all their spells employ,
And urge the circling hours with rapid flight.

The soft enchantment of the scene renew,
  Re-echo oft the harp's melodious tale;
Inspir'd by thee, I still shall fondly view
  The sweet recluses of Llangollen vale,
Still catch the accents of their last adieu,
  And still their mountain-bosom'd cottage hail.

[1] Lady Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby, the famous 'Ladies of Llangollen'.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Mary Tighe (1772–1810)

Mary Tighe is most well known for her epic poem 'Psyche; or the Legend of Love', published posthumously in 1811 with a selection of other poems as *Psyche, with Other Poems*, for which she was lauded throughout the nineteenth century. A second collection was also published privately in Dublin in 1811 as *Mary, a Series of Reflections During Twenty Years*. Her novel *Selena* and her other poems remained in manuscript until this century (Kramer Linkin 2005; 2012). An extensive selection of her poetry appears in *The Collected Poems and Journals of Mary Tighe*, edited by Kramer Linkin (2005) and in the manuscript copy of *Verses Transcribed for H.T.* (her husband Henry Tighe), housed in the NLI and reproduced with Tighe's beautiful accompanying engravings reproduced on the online resource https://romantic-circles.org (accessed 16 January 2025), also edited by Kramer Linkin: the manuscript comprises 121 poems and 72 original illustrations. Tighe was born into the wealthy Blachford family in Dublin in October 1772. Her father, Rev William Blachford, who died when Mary was seven months old, was the keeper of Marsh's library and her mother, Theodosia Tighe, was a prominent Methodist and author who encouraged Mary to acquire a literary and linguistic education. In 1793, Mary married her first cousin Henry Tighe (of Rossana, County Wicklow) and, after spending the early years of their marriage in London, they moved back to Ireland in 1801. Mary wrote most of her well-known work in Ireland, but the poems included here are from the 1790s, a period when she moved between England, Wicklow, and Dublin. Until the 1801 Act of Union, Henry had represented Inistioge (County Kilkenny) in the Irish Parliament. From 1804, Tighe suffered from tuberculosis, and she died on 24 March 1810.

Her poem on the Devil's Bridge waterfall near Aberystwyth, a tourist attraction from the mid 1700s, was 'Written in the late 1790s and copied by Henry Moore in May 1811 from Tighe's manuscript into the Henry and Lucy Moore MS Album: Poems HM 1811, Chawton House Library (63–66)' (Linkin 2005, 285 n. 1). The manuscript referenced is *Verses Transcribed for H.T.* The poem did not appear in the 1811 collection. The second poem on Rossana did appear in *Psyche, with other Poems*, and is illustrated in the manuscript with a depiction of 'the famous chestnut trees at Rossana' (Kramer Linkin, romantic-circles.org). Similarly to other poets who moved between England and Ireland, Tighe depicts Rossana as a tranquil retreat from the 'throng'. The final poem did not appear in the published collections and references first-hand experience of the 1798 rebellion when Henry Tighe 'fought with the loyalist yeomen cavalry against the rebels in the Wicklow mountains' (Kramer Linkin, romantic-circles). Kramer Linkin further notes that Tighe's illustration for this poem dates the poem to 'Dublin July 13, 1798'.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

32 *Verses Written at the Devils Bridge in CARDIGAN*

Hic licet occultus proferre impune dolores,
Propertius[1]

When pleasure departs, what a blank there remains.
How dreary each object around us appears!
While the soul, sick of life, from each object refrains,
And in solitude longs to indulge in vain tears.

If the eye of compassion has ceas'd to look kind,
If the voice which delighted, no longer is heard;
If sorrows unutter'd oppress the sad mind,
And the labouring breast by no comfort is cheer'd.

When 'tis past, and the moment of pleasure is o'er,
When to joys that are gone the sad mourner returns,
While memory faithful still guards in her store
The hopes he has lost, and the friend whom he mourns.

Oh! bear him to the scenes, where rude Nature appears,
Let solitude sooth him, & pensive repose,
No eye to restrain the sweet freedom of tears,
No ear to forbid the expression of woes.

Near woods, interrupted by white jutting rocks
Oh! place him beside some rivers dark course,
Where the torrents impetuous gush thro brown oaks,
And the steep groves re-echo their murmurings hoarse.

In a glen deep sequester'd, surrounded by woods,
By mountains o'er topped, inaccessibly high,
Let him view the swell'd stream's irresistible floods
Unappall'd by the tempest which roars thro' the sky.

Oh! there let him wander thro' underwoods dark,
Unmolested by man, by no comforter teaz'd;
No stranger unfeeling his sorrows to mark,
And unheard be the groans which his bosom have eas'd.

When Nature deplores her lost beauty and pride,
Her drear lamentations more soothing shall sound,
The voice of complaint to his heart is allied,
And in desolate scenes, is sad sympathy found.

Let Fancy to May's rosy bosom retire,
And quit the sad season, & shun the sad heart,

[1] *Elegies*, 1. 18.3. 'Here may I freely speak my secret angst.'

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

In the soft vacant breast, let her passion inspire
And double each pleasure by magical art.

For treacherous power! while seeming to cheer,
To sooth his distress, & to soften his woes,
The scenes thou recallest, but rouse the sad tear,
And thy warm glowing pictures destroy his repose.

In the regions of sorrow thy lustre is vain,
It there on no exquisite prospects can shine,
Oh! add not to anguish, nor magnify pain,
But the wretched to wisdom and reason resign.

Thy aid he requests not, he asks not relief,
From the cruel assistance which thou canst impart,
The image of joy but awakens his grief,
Of joy, which no longer inhabits his heart.

But thou, cheering Hope! sweet peace breathing guest,
Assure him, bright joy on his days soon will shine,
Dispel this sad gloom, & revisit his breast,
And whisper, soft pleasure again shall be thine—

'Tis thou canst pour balm on his anguish alone,
Though nought can restore, yet thou canst relieve,
For his losses compensate, his sorrows atone,
And teach him with calm resignation to grieve.

33 *Written at Rossana*

August 1797

Dear Chestnut Bower, I hail thy secret shade,
Image of tranquil life! escaped yon throng
Who weave the dance, and swell the choral song;
And all the summer's day have wanton play'd,
I bless thy kindly gloom in silence laid:
What though no prospects gay to thee belong;
Yet here I heed nor showers, nor sunbeams strong,
Which they, whose perfumed tresses roses braid,
Dispersing fear. Their sunny bank more bright,
And on their circled green more sweets abound,
Yet the rude blasts, which rend their vestments light,
O'er these dark boughs with harmless music sound,
And though no lively pleasures here are found,
Yet shall no sudden storms my calm retreat affright.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

34 *Verses Written when a detachment of Yeomen were sent against the rebel army*

Oh! my gallant dear defenders,
Beloved Yeomen! Erin's Pride!
Every hope my soul surrenders,
If we thus your force divide.

When, to meet a savage foe,
Each exulting hero armed,
Weeping I beheld them go,
Every fear my heart alarmed.

Yes, I marked the electric flame
Run thro' every bosom bold,
As o'erjoyed, each heard his name
In the glorious list enrolled.

In the hour of doubt and terror,
For myself I felt no fear,
But I mourned my country's error,
Shed for her the bitter tear.

And for you, loved Yeomen!
Oh! what tears I shed for you!
Save them Heaven! From foes inhuman,
Shield those breasts so firm, so true.

Must those chosen youths then perish?
Is it thus, just Heaven! Decreed?
Must the fondest hope we cherish,
Must our gallant Yeomen bleed?

No, with omens auspicious,
Linda,[1] cheer thy trembling heart
Heaven shall hear thy prayers propitious,
Heaven shall take thy heroes' part!

All my wishes Heaven hath granted,
If, my fears and sorrows past,
I shall see these youth undaunted
Gloriously return at last.

But if, o'er my country lowering,
Ruin must her banners wave,
Sheltered from the storm devouring,
Let me find a timely grave.

[1] Linda was Tighe's coterie name.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Mary Byrne (b. 1770–71?)

The Blind Poem. Written by a Girl, Born Blind, and now in her Eighteenth Year. Dedicated to the World by the Authoress, Mary Byrne, of Wicklow was published in Dublin in 1789. Overall, the poem is 564 lines in length and those printed below are from the first section of the poem. On the title page, the price is advertised as 3s. 3d. 'or such Greater Price as the Affluent choose to bestow on Poverty', which indicates a charitable motive for publication. As Behrendt (2021) notes, and similar to Ellen Taylor, nothing is known of Byrne beyond the biographical details provided in the Preface and in the poem itself. The Preface states that 'The Authoress of this little Work is the daughter of a labouring Man, near the Town of Wicklow, whose Genius was first discovered, at the Age of twelve Years, by a Gentleman, then Priest in that Parish, and to whose Instructions and unwearied Attention, she is indebted for her religious Knowledge.' The Preface also relates that the idea to publish came from an unnamed 'Lady' who transcribed some of Byrne's poems 'into a kind of general Poem' as the best way to secure 'some pecuniary Advantages'. *The Blind Poem* clearly only represents a fraction of Byrne's poetry, as 'Had the Whole of her Works been printed, they would have made a large and an expensive Volume, which would have defeated the End proposed.' The poem thus ranges from biographical and self-reflexive elements to satirical and primarily religious reflections and includes a dedication 'To the World', signed by 'Mary Byrne. Ballyguile Hill, Wicklow, Nov. 1st 1789', in which she hopes her distinct situation in life will make people curious to read her poetry and therefore be compelled to buy her book.

35 From: *The Blind Poem*

To be a Poet, I've oft heard it said
  You must be born so—one you can't be made,
What then is Poetry but chosen words?
Taken from Prose, just as from whey the curds,
And as the whey to weak and sick is giv'n,
So Sing-Song catches Fools, while Prose is driv'n
Like curds, to those whose strong digestive Pow'rs
Can *Food* from *Solids* take, from *Wit* it's *Flow'rs*;
Poor Simile this you will say I've made,
Whilst others to the depths of Hell would wade;
Call on the Planets and their Stars that wait;
Nay Heav'n itself would finish their Portrait.
But I whom Nature hath not form'd to soar
Past her due Bounds, or her great depths explore,
Will write contented on my curds and whey,

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Nor censure those who take another way,
My lines 'tis true, may like my whey appear,
Weak and *insipid*, nor *well-turn'd* nor *clear:*
But when I tell you that *I cannot write,*
Am uninstructed—*and depriv'd of Sight*;
That I ne'er lived amongst the wise or great,
Ne'er saw nor heard an Orator once speak,
Nor dream'd of Poets but as they've been read
By Clown unletter'd with a vacant Head,
Perhaps you'll pity first and then despise
My vain Attempts to open other's Eyes,
Bid me the Beam from my own Organs take,
E'er I the Moat[1] in theirs shall think to wake:
But should I let your Sneers affright or check,
My goodly Purpose, or my Wrath provoke;
Weak, weak indeed would I to God appear,
Whose Aid when granted, makes e'en Darkness clear,
Then holy Lord, and pow'rful Prince of Peace,
Accept my Lays and fill my Soul with Grace;
Thou who enthron'd in Heav'n dost sit on high,
Breathing thy Presence still thro' Earth, Sea, Sky,[2]
Who hast in Mercy been so kind to me,
Knowing my Heart and its Propensity:
To Veil in Darkness my exterior Sight,
Yet shew'st thy Wonders by internal Light;
Give then pure Thoughts, that while I undertake
This holy Work and Labour for thy Sake;
I may find Utt'rance equal to the task,
And sanctified be in what I ask:
Nor let the dread of *Vulgar Censure* fright
Or cloud those Rays which now appear so bright;
For well I know thou seest each Heart and Thought,
And sett'st the *Wisdom of this World* at nought;[3]
Canst fathom to be *the Source of Critick Sneers*,
False Wisdom's Gibes—vain Arrogance's Leers,
Turn *Sense* to *Folly*, and out of the mouth
Of *Babe* or *Suckling* call thy glory forth;[4]
Laugh then who may, for while I live I'll write,
Of heavenly things to set the weak Mind right;
And let *the Scorners* keep this truth in mind,
That she who writes is unimprov'd and blind;
Nor think that Life mispent howe'er obscure
Which pleases God and makes our Calling sure.

[1] 'particle of dust'.
[2] Psalm 33.6: 'By the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host.'
[3] 1 Corinthians 3:19: 'For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.'
[4] Psalm 8:2: 'out of the mouth of babes and sucklings'.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Mary Birkett, Mary Birkett Card (1774–1817)

Mary Birkett was born in Liverpool to Quaker parents. The family moved to Ireland and settled in Dublin in late 1784 where they prospered financially, becoming members of the Anglo-Irish middling class and part of the Dublin Quaker community. She wrote two poems on arriving in Dublin when she was only nine years old, the poem below and 'A Farewell to Old England'. Birkett married her second cousin Nathaniel Card on 13 March 1801. Despite writing from an early age, she published only two poems in her lifetime: *A Poem on the African Slave Trade, Addressed to her Own Sex* (Dublin, 1792) and an elegy on the Quaker elder Joseph Williams, *Lines to the memory of our late esteemed and justly valued Friend Joseph Williams* (1807). The rest of her output remained in manuscript until the surviving material was transcribed into two volumes by her son, Nathaniel Card, in 1834:

> Volume 1, entitled 'The Miscellaneous Works of Mary Card', mainly contains prose: a spiritual autobiography spanning the years 1794–1817, forty-three letters, miscellaneous 'meditations' and prose pieces on events such as the sufferings of the Quakers in the 1798 Irish Rebellion. Volume 2, entitled 'The Poetic Works of Mary Card', contains over two hundred and twenty poems written from the young Mary Birkett's arrival in Ireland in 1784 until circa 1809. (Teakle 2004, x)

Sadly, many of these poems are elegies to her deceased siblings. The original volumes remain in the possession of her descendant Josephine Teakle, whose mother inherited them in 1955, and these surviving works are edited and transcribed in volume II of Teakle's doctoral thesis (2004).

In 1792, Birkett's uncle, the abolitionist George Harrison, published *Address to the Right Reverence and the Prelates of England and Wales on the Subject of the Slave Trade,* which points to her direct engagement with the anti-slavery context of the 1790s. Hannah More had published her poem 'Slavery' in 1788, and many other women poets supported abolition in their work. Teakle also draws attention to the significance for Birkett of *An Appeal to England, on Behalf of the Abused Africans* (1789) by the Quaker Thomas Wilkinson. Birkett's poem, written when she was seventeen, is in two parts (Part 1 made two editions), the second part (as in the extract below) focusing on abstention and the boycotting of sugar as ways to practically support the abolition movement. What is interesting about Birkett's poetic contribution to these debates is her direct address to the women of Ireland, the 'Hibernian fair', to refuse 'the blood-stain'd lux'ry' goods associated with slavery (sugar and rum) and thus to further the abolitionist cause to end slavery. In the second part of the poem, Birkett compares 'virtuous' Ireland favourably with 'Tarnish'd' England's involvement in the

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slave trade: 'No – never were her peaceful vessels mann'd / To ravage helpless Afric's guiltless land' (4). In 1806, she wrote a poem to Hans Hamilton, MP for Dublin County, to enlist his support for the Foreign Slave Bill in the House of Commons, 'An Address to Hans Hamilton M.P. On behalf of the Injured Africans'.

Birkett Card was a friend of the Shackletons of Ballitore and wrote an elegy on Richard Shackleton in 1792. Shackleton's daughter was Mary Leadbeater (see page 306), and Birkett Card wrote a poem addressed to her dated January 1807, 'An Epistle to M. Leadbeater', in which she addresses her as the 'Lov'd muse of Ballitore'.

36 *On Entering into Dublin 1784*

Blest Liverpool! no more my eyes thee meet
Tis to Hibernia[1] I guide my feet
Her towers & grandeur often for to view
Which please the taste & mind being often new
Yet still methinks Britannia has more charms
For here the thief & robber oft alarms
Oh! will kind fortune me one favour give
That is, that in dear England I may live
And spend my days in quietness and rest
No more I ask, & think myself quite blest
Where virtue, please & usefulness combined
Together make a very quiet mind
My native land once more I wish to see
If e'er that pleasure is reserved for me
Just so, a bird took from the wood while young
Kept in a cage to vent its tender song
In vain it wishes in the woods to be
For that alone poor bird has charms for thee.

[1] Ireland.

37 From: *A Poem on the African Slave Trade, Addressed to her Own Sex*

OPPRESSION! thou, whose hard and cruel chain,
Entails on all thy victims woe and pain;
Who gives with tyrant force and scorpion whip,
The cup of mis'ry to a Negro's lip;
Marks with stern frown thy wide, unhallow'd[1] reign,
And broods with gloomy wing o'er Afric's[2] injur'd plain!

[1] 'unholy'. [2] Africa.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Thy voice which spreads pale desolation round,
While trembling myriads grown beneath the sound,
Thy voice more rude than Boreas'[3] chilling breath,
Calls thousands forth to feel a living death!
Which in hoarse thunders bids injustice rise!
While oft beneath the strokes the suff'rer dies:
Yes! thy infernal voice impels my song,
And o'er my soul its crude ideas throng;
A sorrowing sympathy surrounds my heart,
And mild compassion bleeds in every part.
Move'd at the dire distress my brethren know
My mind in vain participates their woe;
In vain for them I raise the fervent sigh;
Ah! still they bleed! – they languish! – still they die!

How little think the giddy and the gay
While sipping o'er the sweets of charming tea,
How oft with grief they pierce the manly breast,
How oft their lux'ry robs the wretch of rest,
And that to gain the plant we idly waste
Th' *extreme of human mis'ry* they must taste!

Yes! 'tis no lying fable I relate,
Th' *extreme of mis'ry* is their fate!
Let sordid traders call it what they will,
Men must be men, possest with feelings still;
And little boots[4] a white or sable skin,
To prove a fair inhabitant within.

[...]

Hibernian fair,[5] who own compassion's sway,
Scorn not a younger sister's artless lay;
To you the Muse would raise her daring song,
For Mercy's softest beams to you belong;
To you the sympathetic sigh is known,
And Charity's sweet lustre – all your own;
To you gall'd Mis'ry seldom pleads in vain,
Oh! let us rise and burst the Negro's chain!
Yes, sisters, yes, to us the task belongs,
'Tis we increase or mitigate their wrongs.
If we the produce of their toils refuse,
If we no more the blood-stain'd lux'ry choose;
If from our lips we push the plant away
For which the liberties of thousands pay,
Of thousands once as blest, and born as free,

[3] Boreas was the Greek god of the North wind. [4] 'avails'. [5] The women of Ireland.

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And nurs'd with care (tho' not so soft), as we.
If in benev'lence *firm*, we this can dare,
And in our brethren's sufferings hold no share,
In no small part their long-bourne pangs will cease,
And we to souls unborn my whisper peace.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Sydney Owenson (Lady Morgan) (c. 1783–1859)

Sydney Owenson is most well known as a novelist (she published nine novels) and early proponent of the 'national tale', most notably *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806), which features the semi-autobiographical heroine Glorvina, 'a harp-playing young woman as the spokeswoman of her nation' (*DIB*). Her first collection of verse was *Poems, Dedicated by Permission, to the Right Honourable Countess of Moira* (Dublin, 1801), from which the poem below, written in 1799, is taken. Further collections of poetry followed: *The Lay of an Irish Harp: or Metrical Fragments* (London, 1807) and *The Mohawks; A Satirical Poem* (1822). Owenson, the daughter of an Irish Catholic actor and an English Methodist, is thought to have been born in Dublin, but the exact date has not been established. She attended school in Clontarf and Dublin and clearly received an extensive education, although, because of financial difficulties after the death of her mother in 1798, she worked as a governess. In 1812 she married the surgeon Sir Thomas Charles Morgan and subsequently became known as Lady Morgan, enjoying a lively literary and cultural life based in fashionable Kildare Street, Dublin. The couple moved to London in 1837 and, after her husband's death, she was the first woman to receive a literary pension from the British government. However, as she got older 'Her Grattanite combination of patriot-style liberalism and anti-papist protestantism meant that she fell foul of all parties: British Tories, Irish Unionists, and O'Connellite repealers' (*DIB*). Nevertheless, Owenson is an important figure in terms of her contribution to Irish cultural nationalism in the nineteenth century and for the Irish inflection she brings to Romantic poetry. The poem below encapsulates her poetic style in its Gothic setting by a tomb in the ruins of an abbey and in its extravagant language and rhetorical flourishes, yet it is also carefully placed in the specific Irish location and landscape of Sligo Abbey on the west coast of Ireland.

38 *Effusions. Written on a Tomb among the Ruins of Sligo Abbey,*[1] *September, 1799*

And must I, ghastly guest of this dark swelling,
  Pale, senseless tenant must I come to this;
And shall this heart congeal, now warmly swelling
  To woe's soft languor, rapture's melting bliss! 4

[1] A Dominican friary founded in the mid thirteenth century that includes the O'Craian or Crean tomb, dating from 1506.

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And must this pulse that beats to joy's gay measure,
Throbbing with bloomy health, this pulse lie still;
And must each sense alive to guileless pleasure,
Torpid resist the touch of transport's thrill?

And must each sensate feeling too decay,
(Each feeling anguished by another's sorrow,)
This form that blushes youth and health to-day,
Lie cold and senseless thus, like thee, to-morrow?

Terrific Death! to shun thy dreaded pow'r,
Who would not brace existence' direst strife?
But that beyond thy dark shade's gloomy low'r,
Faith points her vista to eternal life!

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Anna Maria Edwards (fl. 1787)

Poems on Various Subjects, Pastoral, Elegiac, &c. By the Author of the Enchantress was published in Dublin in 1787 and dedicated 'To the Royal Irish Academy of Sciences, Polite Literature, &c. &c. by Anna Maria Edwards, dated 1 November 1787. The first part of the volume comprises *The Enchantress*, 'A Favourite Musical Entertainment; performed at the Opera House, Capel Street.' The Prologue by the Author ends on a patriotic wish that 'Hibernia be the Happy Isle' of Arcadia. The second part, which has its own divisional title page, comprises the *Poems*, a collection of pastoral ballads, songs, tales, fables, elegies, and odes often with Irish settings and Irish themes, evoking both the Liffey and the Shannon rivers. Of particular interest is the lengthy poem 'The Princess of Killarne, A Traditionary Tale', whose heroine Eilleen is comparable to Owenson's Glorvina (see page 333) in being 'the last of all her princely line' defending Ireland against the 'faithless' British, 'the worst of foes', who pretend friendship but 'only meant / To seize the fertile land'. Another poem, 'From a Gentleman in the East-Indies to his Mistress', is stated to have been 'Already publish'd in a Novel, Written by the Author'. The 1780 publication *Otha and Ruth: A Dramatic Tale* by 'Miss Edwards' has been suggested as the novel in question (Behrendt 2021, 52), but there is nothing in the text to back up this assertion and the poem in question does not appear there (it was also published in Edinburgh). Overall, little is known about Edwards and there has been speculation as to whether she was Irish or Welsh in origin. The subscription list to the volume includes many Irish but also many Welsh names and lists various North Wales locations, which has led to speculation that she had Welsh origins, also suggested by her surname (O'Donoghue 1912, 130). However, in another poem 'Inscribed to Mrs. Mendez', the lines 'On Tagus banks a while you stray'd / Then long near silver Thame; / While on my native plains I staid, / By Liffey's lucid stream' suggests she was Irish by birth. The poem 'Female Friendship. A Tale; Founded on Fact' relates the story of two young friends growing up 'In fair Hibernia's happy Isle' who, because of their different faiths, are separated by their parents as 'One begg'd of heaven to guide her ways, / Before her saint the other prays'. In an act of solidarity, the friends escape 'to Cambria's neighb'ring shore', where they live in peace in a 'pleasing spot' under a hill growing their own produce and tending their beehives. This may be autobiographical or a poem about the Ladies of Llangollen, Lady Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby, who left Ireland together in 1778 and set up home in Wales (see page 322). Whatever the truth of her origins, Edwards' work shows both a clear Irish patriotic pride and a knowledge of and fondness for neighbouring Cambria. The poem below clearly expresses happy memories of earlier times on Anglesey and an unusual knowledge of Welsh history and culture from an Irish perspective.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

39 *Mona*[*1]

Through Mona's Isle, in former days,
As happily I roved,
My time I pass'd in peace and ease,
No care my bosom proved.

Sometimes the rocks I wander'd o'er,
The foaming deep survey'd;
Or walked along the sandy shore,
When ev'ry wave was laid:

And wond'ring view'd the smiling sea,
Which late with passion rose;
And struck each sailor with dismay,
Who dared it's rage oppose.

Serenely now, and smooth it flows,
And sparkles in the sun;
Unconscious seems, or careless shews,
Of ills in anger done.

Thus man by furious passions sway'd,
To reason's dictates lost;
Ne'er minds the wreck his rage has made,
When e'er his will was crost.

But in a moment calmly smiles,
Forgets his actions wild;
And with deceitful look beguiles,
The world, to think him mild.

These grave reflections in my mind,
The fickle sea would raise;
And taught me, that in man we find,
The same inconstant ways.

Then to the fields I'd turn my eyes,
And see the harvest mow'd;
Watch the green hay in hillocks rise,
Or o'er the meadow strew'd.

For Ancient Britons[2] warlike race,
Are chang'd to simple swains;
Content to pass their days in peace,
Upon their native plains.

[1] Mona is the Latin name for Anglesey and the Welsh is Ynys Môn.

[2] The Welsh.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Their Bards[3] now mourn their long lost pow'r,
To raise the glorious flame;
Their minstrels tune their harps no more,
To deeds of martial fame.

No more they sing the fate of Kings,
Of battles bravely fought;
To love's sweet strains, the trembling strings
To vibrate, now are taught.

The soft infection through the throng,
Of list'ning youths doth spread;
Who hasten with the tender song,
To charm the fav'rite maid.

May Mona's sons have pow'r to please,
And may that pleasure last;
For there whole months of peace and ease,
In former days I've past.

* *Antient name of the Isle of Anglesea*.

[3] The Welsh bards.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Mary O'Brien (fl. 1790)

Mary O'Brien's collection *The Political Monitor; or Regent's Friend. Being a Collection of Poems published in England during the agitation of the regency, consisting of curious, interesting, satyrical and political effusions of poetry* (Dublin, 1790) is, as the title indicates, written as an anti-Pittite, pro-Regency appeal to the Irish Parliament to appoint the Prince of Wales as regent during the King's illness. The dedication is addressed 'To the Commissioners of the Irish Parliament, Appointed to wait on his Royal Highness the PRINCE of WALES, to request his Acceptance of the Regency of Ireland during his Majesty's Indisposition'. The collection is signed Mary O'Brien and dated Dublin, 24 February 1790. In this prefatory address, O'Brien describes her poems 'as the production of a female', 'most of them written, with ardent zeal with however feeble a pen in support of the noble cause dignified by your co-operation, and in opposition to those mean and suspicious measures adopted in another kingdom, that were so deservedly reprobated by the generous sons of Ireland' (1790, v–vi). As Behrendt notes (2005, 175), 'O'Brien casts some of the poems in the voice of "Paddy Teague", a sharp-tongued Irishman who refers to Pitt in phrases like "Billy, my dear" within O'Brien's rollicking ballad stanzas, shrewdly turning against the English the condescending rhetorical posturing that English writers (and politicians) routinely directed towards the Irish'. However, and similarly to Henrietta Battier, O'Brien also wrote many panegyric and birthday odes for the King, the royal family, vice-regents, and various social superiors. Although an Irish patriot, she is also a committed anglophile. O'Brien was married to Patrick O'Brien. She also published *The Pious Incendaries* (Dublin 1783), *The Fallen Patriot, A Comedy* (1790), and a two-volume novel entitled *Charles Henley*, as referenced in the full title to *The Political Monitor*.

40 *Salutation to the Right Honourable William Pitt*[1]

Now Billy, my dear,
  Accept Teague's[2] salutation,
For the care of the Prince,[3]
  And the good of the nation;

Not forgetting your wits,
  When in council they sit,
To make a Prince Regent,
  While you reign King Pitt.[4]

[1] William Pitt (1759–1806), Tory Prime Minister of Great Britain 1783–1800 and 1804–06.
[2] Anglicisation of Tadhg or 'poet'; a familiar term for an Irishman.
[3] Prince of Wales Regency Bill of 1789. [4] Pitt is seen as usurping royal authority.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Now had Richard[5] and Noll,[6]
In a scene of debating,
Attended your summons,
In Parliament stating:

Their wisdom at once
Must give place and retire,
And stand at a distance
Your plans to admire.

In all their contrivings
They ne'er could have hit
On creating a Regent,
To reign under King Pitt.

When Marius and Sylla,[7]
Those chiefs of old story,
Cram'd Romans like turkies,
To feed their own glory,

Made laws and gave titles;
They never had wit
To make such a Regent
As our noble King Pitt.

Sure the same of our Billy
No tongue can unravel—
He exceeds all the heroes
At home or on travel;

Old grandams unborn
Shall in aftertimes sing,
The glories and wisdom
Of Billy Pitt, King.

"Now," says Billy to Sawney,[8]
"Observe, my dear *creature*,
"The times are grown big,
"Both in gesture and feature;

"The whigs get a head,
"By the gift of their gabble,
"Raise a tumult and rout
"In the minds of the rabble.

[5] Richard Grenville-Temple (1711–79), British politician and brother-in-law of William Pitt.
[6] Noll may be Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658)?
[7] Rival Roman generals Lucius Cornelius Sulla Felix (c. 138–78 BC) and Gaius Marius (157–86 BC).
[8] English nickname for a Scotsman, here John Stuart, Earl of Bute (1713–92), Tory Prime Minister 1762–63.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

"Suppose—'tis a maxim
"Worth Cæsar's caressing—
"Some friends in the north[9]
"Pay their court by addressing.

"My virtues you know,
"With submission, may suit" —
"All the ends we can wish,"
Replies Counsellor Bute.

"Assistance, my friend,
"In a trial of right,
"Needs all we can muster,
"From demons of might."

"By my *shoul*,[10] says myself,[11]
"What needs all this speaking;
"The Devil's most kind
"When his pupils are quaking.

"When my mistress Hibernia
"Calls her sons and her daughters,
"Oh then, my dear Billy,
"We'll beat up your quarters.

"By the beard of Bryan Boiroihm,[12]
"We'll see who's most fit,
"To reign o'er Britania,
"Prince George or King Pitt."

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[9] Scotland. [10] 'By my soul'.
[11] As in Teague, the poem's speaker.
[12] Brian Boroimhe, or Brian Boru (c. 941–1014), Irish king.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Eliza Ryan (fl. 1791)

The verse exchange between Eliza Ryan and Henrietta Battier is preserved in the latter's privately printed volume *The Protected Fugitives* (1791), with Ryan being described in the title of one of the poems as 'the Lady of the Rev. Doctor Ryan'. Her husband was the Church of Ireland clergyman Rev Edward Ryan, D.D., Rector of Donoughmore in County Wicklow, Prebendary of St Patrick, and Minister of the Parish of St Luke, Dublin (as described on the title pages of his *The History of the Effects of Religion on Mankind*, published originally in 1791 (Dublin) with a second volume in 1793 (London) and a second edition in 1802). In the preface to the second edition, Rev Ryan notes that his volume was published by subscription 'to serve the sick POOR of the Author's Parish in Dublin' (1802, 5). Eliza Ryan self-published her collection of *Poems on Several Occasions* 'for private circulation only' in 1816, but her poems clearly circulated in manuscript before this date as evidenced by Battier's initial response to Ryan's poem 'On Contentment', which is the subject of the first in the series of verse epistles between the two women. Although outside the date scope of this anthology, Ryan's 1816 collection includes two poems 'In Time of the Rebellion in Ireland', which again dates more of her work to the 1790s. Overall, the collection includes mostly occasional verse, often in localised settings in South County Dublin, including Donnybrook and Ranelagh. Many women of the period used poetry as a means of social exchange and as a vehicle for expressing literary or personal admiration, and social interaction was also the impetus for the verse exchange published between Ryan and Battier, who frequently allude to social visits and praise each other's literary talents and wit. The verse epistles reveal how female friendship could generate poetic creativity and production, but in this case it appears that their husbands did not approve of the activity, as shown in the opening lines of Ryan's poem below and in Battier's poem 'In Continuation', where she writes, 'My husband (now a critic grown) / Desir'd I'd let the pen alone' (1791, 291). Although the poetic correspondence ended as a result of the husbands' interventions, 'in publishing both her poems and Ryan's she [Battier] effectively *prevented* her friend's (and her own) erasure from the public records. The published correspondence therefore manages to overcome within the public sphere of the print medium the attempts to silence it that occurred in the private sphere' (Behrendt 2010, 336).

41 *To Mrs. Battier*

Since both our husbands are agreed,
That we no longer should proceed,
I take my pen with grief to tell,

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

That now I write a long farewell.
For oft my Edward[1] does declare,
Eliza, you are grown severe;
A little idle imp like you,
May write who've nothing else to do,
But thus to trespass on her time,
Is truly what I call a crime,
With which I never can dispense,
'Tis void of friendship, well as sense;
For tho' she answers every line,
With graces that so far outshine
Each weak and poor attempt of thine;
We cannot wonder, when agreed,
That Poets always best succeed
In fiction, when the fancy flows
Without restraint, where'er she goes,
And they are licens'd by the Muse,
To stray from truth whene'er they chuse;
But should I thus attempt to soar
To sense, I might return no more;
For when we oft with fancy stray,
We lose our senses by the way;
And therefore I to truth confine,
Which you may see in each dull line.
Then prithee, take a friend's advice,
And weave no garland in a trice,
Assist not in a task so vain,
Or well the Muses may complain;
Besides the world may plainly see,
The garland ne'er was made for me;
My temples must with truth disown,
And prove the garland was thy own.

[1] Rev Edward Ryan, Eliza's husband.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Ellen Taylor (fl. 1792)

In 1792, ten of Ellen Taylor's poems were prepared for subscription publication by an unknown 'Editor' with the charitable purpose of alleviating the poverty and distress of the author. The introduction to her slim volume of poems (only fourteen pages), *Poems, By Ellen Taylor, The Irish Cottager* (Dublin, 1792), sketches out the little that is known about her background and circumstances: 'It appears that she was the daughter of an indigent Cottager, in a remote part of the Queen's County, who had barely the ability to afford common sustenance to her and a numerous family during his life-time.' Following the death of her father, Taylor's circumstances worsened, and she took up a place as a domestic servant for the Porter family, as indicated in the first poem included here. However, due to the extreme melancholy she experienced after the death of a beloved brother, she was unable to perform her duties and, at the time of publication, was living 'in a poor Hut on the Common of Lyons, where to earn a scanty livelihood she keeps a small day school'. The volume only attracted a small number of subscribers (forty-two in total), but they appear to include some figures from the Dublin literary social circle, such as Lady Mount Cashell (Prescott 2021). The introduction indicates that the appearance of her work in 'one of our News-papers' drew attention and 'induced the Editor to make minute enquiries into the life and situation of the Writer'. Despite her obscurity and the scarcity of further examples of her poetry, Taylor is nevertheless an important Irish counterpart to other labouring-class eighteenth-century women poets such as Jean Adam and Janet Little (see Section 5 Scotland 1660–1800, page 520). Both poems reproduced here demonstrate a tension between Taylor's social situation and her poetic and intellectual aspirations. Although lamenting the death of Miss Porter and recording the sympathy and taste of the family she worked for, the fourth stanza of this poem nevertheless focuses on the 'chain' of her servitude, enforced by the repetition of 'servile state' and 'sordid state' in contrast to the invocation of the 'sacred muse' in the opening line. The second poem, written on the banks of the river Barrow in County Kilkenny, has been relatively well represented in modern anthologies (Carpenter 1998; Lonsdale 1990; Johnston & Linnie 2021; *Field Day* v, 2002). This poem also demonstrates deep alienation, indeed anguish, as to her position of servitude in life when compared with her education and literary tastes; she is constantly pulled between 'Fond fancy' and 'servile weight', with the resigned conclusion that: 'I shall taste but little bliss, / Experience doth me teach'.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

42 *Written on Miss PORTER, during a lingering Illness*

I NOW once more invoke the sacred muse,
Though I must own she long has dormant lain,
Yet hope at present she will not refuse
Me to assist, in this my plaintive strain.

Beneath yon spire in the adjacent vale,
There stands a lonely hospitable seat;
Where art, and nature, try who'll most prevail,
To render each embellishment compleat:

The shorn hedge-rows, mantled o'er with green,
The shady limes, in nicest order plac'd;
The Beech, and Elm, encrease the rural scene;
And all around proclaim the owner's taste.

There once I lived, and though in servile state,
My situation was to me no pain,
Nor did I then regret my sordid state;
For in that house, I could not feel the chain:

My mistress, ever tender, good and kind,
I there received her mild commands each day;
Nor did it once disturb my peace of mind,
With utmost chearfulness to obey.

An only daughter did the Mansion grace,
Whose sympathising soul and feeling heart,
To all around diffused nought but peace,
Nor could she bear to see another smart.

But ah! too soon, does lingering sickness come,
And by degrees consumes her tender prime;
For why the lady, in her youth and bloom,
Like frost-nipt blossoms, dropt before her time.

43 *Written by the BARROW side, where she was sent to wash LINEN*[1]

THY Banks, Barrow, sure must be
The Muses choicest haunt;
Else why so pleasing thus to me,
Else why my Soul enchant!

[1] The River Barrow, which flows through Graiguenamanagh, County Kilkenny. It is likely that the Porter estate, where she was employed as a servant at the time of composition, was in the same locale.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

To view thy dimpled surface here,
  Fond fancy bids me stay;
But Servitude with brow austere,
  Commands me straight away:

Where Lethe's[2] virtues in thy steam,
  How freely wou'd I drink,
That not so much as on the name
  Of Books, I e'er might think.

I can but from them learn to know
  What's misery compleat,
And feel more sensibly each blow,
  Dealt by relentless fate.

In them I oft have pleasure found,
  But now it's all quite fled,
With fluttering heart, I lay me down,
  And rise with aching head.

For such a turn, ill suits the sphere
  Of life in which I move,
And rather does a load of care,
  Than any comfort prove.

Thrice happy she condemned to move
  Beneath the servile weight,
Whose thoughts ne'er soar one inch above,
  The standard of her fate.

But far more happy is the soul,
  Who feels the pleasing sense;
And can indulge without controul,
  Each thought that flows from thence.

Since nought of these my portion is,
  But the reverse of each;
That I shall taste but little bliss,
  Experience doth me teach.

Cou'd cold insensibility,
  Thro' my whole frame take place;
Sure then from grief I might be free,
Yes, then I'd hope for peace.

[2] The river Lethe, symbolic of oblivion and forgetfulness in Greek mythology.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

A Lady, A Native of Newry (fl. 1807)

The anonymous collection *Poems on Several Occasions* was privately published for the author by Robert Moffett, Sugar Island, in 1807 and appears to have been written primarily for a local audience in the town of Newry, a flourishing commercial centre and port on the Clanrye river in Ulster, between Belfast and Dublin. The town had benefited from the building of the Newry Canal in the mid eighteenth century, mainly for the transportation of coal. The industrial development of Newry and its growing prosperity is the subject of the Lady's poem below. Written in the turbulent year of 1799, this 'public panegyric ode on the hopes of Newry' demonstrates that 'The Lady is proud of her city and sees it, perhaps, as a model of a renewed and future Ireland, an Ireland of hope' (Page 2007), possibly achieved through her optimistic vision of the future union with Britain. In the later poem 'Hibernia: A Vision, on Saint Patrick's Eve, 1807', for example, she writes about her hopes for Ireland's sons to regain their liberties as 'free-born men' through 'Britain's promis'd succour' (1807, 52). Newry was a centre for 'Catholic political activity in Ulster' and there was a majority middling-class Catholic population who owned their own wealth; most likely, the Lady was part of this community as the localised political context is implicit throughout her collection (Page 2007). The volume contains fourteen poems and a short preface from which it is possible to piece together some further biographical details about the Lady. In the opening poem, titled 'Introduction', she declares that like many other of her female contemporaries, she is writing due to financial need: 'An Author am I doom'd for bread, And verses make to live' (ll. 5–6). In the prefatory lines, she hopes that a general wish to 'support orphan helplessness – may plead an extenuation of her temerity' to publish. Another poem, 'Elegy – Written in the Newry-Chapel Yard', describes the poet standing at the graves of her parents and other friends and relatives, such as Miss Mary Dromgoole, 'the Author's cousin german', and Mr William Dromgoole, 'The Author's Uncle' and 'my dear instructor'. This poem also reveals that she had children at the time of writing. Written from a non-metropolitan and vividly localised and personalised context, this slim volume of poems nevertheless gestures to the broader national contexts of Irish history at the turn of century, including debates about the impending union and the development of Irish commerce and trade on a global scale.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009489904.006 Published online by Cambridge University Press

44 *Ode – to Newry*

Written in the Year 1799

Hail Newry! in the lap of Peace,
Long may thy size, thy wealth encrease.
By active trade's still busy hand;
Conducted did thy steps advance,
And rose from insignificance,
At sovereign Industry's command.

'Twas thy own Sons that built thy name,
Progressive, rose thy steps to fame,
Not in a Lord's dependent train:
Nor does thy native gold augment,
But in another land is spent,
That wealth that should in thee remain.

Nor does his[1] valu'd presence grace;
Far distant from his grateful place,
Sojourns the Man, these lands doth own:
Yet are his generous acts rever'd,
By Tenants, who have never shar'd
His smiles, but who his absence moan.

Now while thy full throng'd streets and quays,
Thy prosper'd trade to view display,
Thy buildings rise, some neat, some grand:
Thy sons for quickness fam'd, and parts,
Thy graceful daughters charm all their hearts,
Their Virtues added love demand.

Although thy hills surrounding rise,
And mountains seem to touch the skies,
Concealing thee from distant view:
Yet doth convenience well supply
Defects, thou couldst not remedy;
Thou standst to nearer interests true.

Thy smooth Canal,[2] with cheapen'd ease
And speed, to other shires conveys,
And brings thee back, well satisfied,
The comforts of thy native clime,

[1] 'The late MR. NEDHAM.' (Author's note). William Nedham (1741–1806), MP for Newry 1767–76. The Nedham (Needham) family of Mourne Park held the main political interest in Newry; William's father, Robert Nedham, a British MP and brother-in-law of William Pitt, also sat for Newry 1753–1760.

[2] The Newry Canal opened in 1742.

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For foreign imports, sent to them,
Reciprocally gratified.

Thy chearful walks do health impart,
Oft soothe from self the care worn heart,
When straying, unmindful of the past,
Wrapt in the present glowing scene,
When summer gives a richer green,
Forgets the vision cannot last.

Thy much improv'd romantic Glen
Demands a more descriptive pen
Than mine, to paint the high cascade;
Nor will I weakly dare to name,
The Mansion, Well, or gurgling stream,
The neat cut walk or solemn shade.

The rural shades of Violet-Hill,[3]
Health aiding sweets the air do fill,
And now surveys – the raptur'd eye;
The distant view, the nearer ground;
Where art's and nature's charms are found,
Canal beneath, and town hard by.

What benefits to trade accrue,
We feel, when we the Basin[4] view.
And in its smooth reflective face;
As in a polish'd mirror shewn,
The fair we proudly call our own,
Whom animated beauty grace.

And in those fair and neat domains,
Where beauteous order ever reigns,
A picture of the owner's mind;[5]
Whose mild and gentle soul receives,
A pleasure, more than e'en he gives,
When pleasure others from him find.

The melancholy spirit loves,
To range thro' Fathom's awful groves,[6]
And by its dark meandering stream;
Recalls the scenes of other days,

[3] Violet Hill is an area to the north of Newry.
[4] 'The Basin, – at the time the above was written, the Mall of Newry.' (Author's note.)
[5] 'This beautiful little spot has been particularly favoured in the change of its inhabitants: the spirit which animated its former Owner was never suffered to be extinct – and the above lines may with equal justice be applied to its present possessor.' (Author's note.)
[6] Fathom (or Feedom) Castle, near Newry, demolished in 1730 to make way for the canal.

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Its time-worn ruins pleas'd surveys,
  While modern beauties task proclaim.

Contrasted to the onward shore,
Where cultivation seen no more,
  But barren mountains rugged rise:
The rich domains – the silver tide,
Those fairer views on other side,
  Where sprightlier prospects meet our eyes.

Oh! could a theme so fair inspire,
Like Thompson's[7] muse, with sacred fire,
  I'd sing thy praise in glowing strains;
But conscious that my feeble lays,
But injure, what they mean to praise,
  The subject lov'd, my pen refrains.

[7] James Thomson, poet (1700–48), author of *The Seasons* (1730) and a popular reference point for women poets of the period.

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