

Unique Onomastic Information in the *Lebor na hUidre Táin*

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TÁIN BÓ CUAILNGE (TBC), by far the longest extant saga in the corpus of early Irish literature, survives in three recensions. An incomplete copy of the first recension is found in *Lebor na hUidre* (LU), the earliest surviving codex dedicated to secular Irish literature, originally compiled in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries.¹ Save for a single missing leaf, a complete copy of the second recension is found in *Lebor Laignech*, or the Book of Leinster (LL), a codex formerly known as the *Leabhar Núachongbála*, written in Leinster sometime around the middle of the twelfth century. The language of these two earliest recensions differs greatly. As the earlier recension, Recension I naturally retains a linguistically older form of Irish as well as a simpler declarative style, whereas Recension II is composed in later Middle Irish and favors the more bombastic narrative style common to Irish sagas of that period. R.I. Best, who conducted an extensive paleographical survey of LU (1912) and produced its diplomatic edition (Best and Bergin, 1929), identified three scribal hands which he termed A, M, and H, in chronological order of activity. A is by far the most regular of the hands and is thus the easiest to locate and to read. In general, Best (1912, 164) notes that, “it is an elegant and somewhat formal hand, symmetrical, and uniformly good.” M’s text first appears at page 17a, l. 1356, and is the main hand of the codex. He provides the majority of the text from that point on, as well as making several interpolations to A’s text.

H appears to have had the completed codex before him, to which he added many interpolations and several intercalated leaves, even scraping down some of the extant text and writing a different version over it. It is certain that H was not a part of the project at its outset, but that he altered the finished product at a later date. H is the least regular of the hands and has a tendency to deteriorate to a distressing degree. Best (1912, 165) notes that it is a “hand exhibiting much greater variety than either of the preceding, liable to deteriorate, and ranging from a neat and careful script to an untidy scrawl, to account for which one is almost tempted to postulate a fourth hand.” He further describes it as “a plain sloping hand, somewhat stiff and irregular, the strokes usually terminating squarely as if made by a broad pen” (Best, 1912, 165). Best goes on to note that the variation in legibility and scribal quality may be the result of the goals particular to each of his contributions. In other words, when H had sufficient space, his writing was much more even and legible; but, when folio space was at a premium, his writing became cramped and harder to read. At his most legible, H is very difficult to distinguish from M, and Best (1912, 165) suggested that he may have borrowed some of the style of his predecessor.

H has been the subject of some scholarly controversy in the decades since Best’s publication first appeared. One of the scribes of LU left two *probationes pennae* in the margins of pages 55 and 70 of the codex identifying himself as a certain Máel Muire mac meic Cuinn na mBocht.² A colophon supplied on page 89 by Sigraíd Ó Cuirnín, the Connacht scribe who re-inked the manuscript around the year 1380, exhorts the reader to give “a prayer for Máel Muire mac Célechair, the son of the son of Cuinn na mBocht, who wrote and devised this book from various books.”³ There is no

¹ The LU text ends abruptly at l. 2546 shortly before Cú Chulainn’s combat with his foster-brother Ferdia.

² “Máel Muire son of the son of Conn na mBocht.”

³ *Oraít do Moelmuiri mac Ceileachair mac meic Cuind na mbocht ro scrib 7 ro scrút a lebraib egsamlaib in lebur sa* (ll.

indication that Ó Cuirnín was aware that LU was the work of multiple scribes, though it is improbable that, as an accomplished scribe himself, he would not have discerned the marked differences in script. Based on the paleographical evidence of the *probationes* and the colophon, Best believed that M should be equated with Máel Muire mac Célechair, the grandson of Conn na mBocht, whose death in 1106 is recorded in the Annals of the Four Masters (AFM).⁴ Later scholars have overwhelmingly followed Best's interpretation, although it has been challenged by Tomás Ó Concheanainn (1973; 1976; 1984) who asserted that hand H was in fact Máel Muire mac Célechair.⁵ Elizabeth Duncan's recent reappraisal of the paleography of LU has changed the debate entirely (Duncan, 2015). Duncan discerns six different hands among the text samples which Best assigned to H. She designates these as H1, H2, etc. The most prolific of this multiplicity of interpolators is H1, and he is the only one of the six to have altered or added to the text of LU laid down by A and M.

Close comparison between the LU (O'Rahilly, 1976) and LL (O'Rahilly, 1967) texts of TBC reveals that M and H1⁶ have incorporated a significant amount of *dindsenchas* (onomastic lore) which does not appear in the LL text. I am unable to find any instance in which the reverse is true, and I believe that the inclusion of this additional, and entirely superfluous, onomastic information into the LU copy of TBC is indicative of the familial background of these two scribes who produced it. The Meic Cuinn na mBocht family's connections to co. Louth, the area in which the vast majority of TBC's narrative takes place, are well established. It is, therefore, entirely to be expected that they might have access to additional onomastic lore concerning the area and would be interested in adding such details to the narrative of the LU *Táin*. That both M and H1 added this type of information provides internal evidence that they belonged to the Meic Cuinn na mBocht or were otherwise closely affiliated with them. There are eleven passages in which M, H1, or both have added onomastic material. A table detailing each individual piece of unique onomastic information appears at the end of the article.

(1) Unique onomastic information is first encountered within a section entitled *Slicht sain so co aidid nÓrlám* ("A different version up to the death of Órlám"), the main text of which is in M's hand though H has made some small emendations, which directly follows the end of the *Macgnímrada Con Culainn* ("Cú Chulainn's Boyhood Deeds") (O'Rahilly, 1976, 26-28, 148-50). The account of Órlám's death is comprised of four sections. The first section concerns the challenge which Cú Chulainn imposes upon the invading army that they not proceed until one among them should successfully leap a chariot over an oak tree which he has felled in their path. Thirty unsuccessful attempts are made, and the place takes the name *Bélach nÁne* ("Path of Driving") as a result. Ultimately, it is Fergus who successfully leaps the oak tree, but sandwiched between his success and the previous failures is the second distinct section of this passage, *Aided Fraích* ("The Death of Fraích").⁷ Fraích is drowned by Cú Chulainn in a ford which is then known as *Áth Fraích*, and the *síd* into which the former's body is taken becomes known as *Síd Fraích*. The third section merely states that following Fergus's completion of the challenge, the host proceeded to *Áth*

2764–5).

⁴ "Máel Muire, the son of the son of Conn na mBocht, was slain in the middle of the stone church of Clonmacnoise by plunderers" (*Maol Muire, mac mic Cuind na mBocht, do mbarbhadh ar lar doim liacc Cluana Mic Nóis lá haos aidhbhille*).

⁵ David Dumville (1975; 1976) has endorsed Ó Concheanainn's view.

⁶ Scribe A begins the LU copy of TBC, but his work only extends part way through the saga's first episode, namely the encounter between Medb and the prophetess Fedelm. None of the text provided by A is relevant for present purposes.

⁷ For *Táin Bó Fraích*, in which an explanation for Fraích's presence in Medb and Ailill's army is found, see, Meyer, (1902); Anderson (1903); Byrne and Dillon (1933); Meid (1970; 1974; 1978).

Taiten where Cú Chulainn slew the six Dúngals of Irrus. The name of the ford and the identity of the hexad slain by Cú Chulainn are added by H1 who has erased and written over M's original text. The final section concerns Cú Chulainn's slaying of Baiscne, a young hound belonging to Medb, and the renaming of the place of the hound's death as Druim Baiscne ('Baiscne's Ridge'). The manner in which *Aided Fraích* is sandwiched between the account of the naming of Belach nÁne and Fergus's successful attempt at leaping it effectively splits the episode in two. This passage, providing an alternate account of the army's procession from Áth nGabla—where the Ulster exiles tell the rest of the host about Cú Chulainn—to Iraidr Culenn, seems to have been included solely for the purpose of providing additional onomastic information about southeast Ulster.

(2) Two more pieces of unique onomastic information occur within a short episode entirely in M's hand entitled "The Death of the Marten and of the Pet Bird" (*Aided in togmaill 7 in pheta éoin*) (O'Rahilly, 1976, 29-30, 151). Apropos of nothing, the reader is informed that Loch Reóin is named for Reúin who was drowned there; but how he was drowned is not explained. Maenén, a jester, is also slain by Cú Chulainn "on his hill" (*ina dind*) (O'Rahilly, 1976, 29, 151). Neither of these two place names appear in the LL version.⁸

(3) In the section entirely in M's hand entitled *Aided Úaland* ("The Death of Úalu"), it is briefly mentioned that the army of Ailill and Medb built *botha* ('huts') for shelter when they were in Glenn Dáil Imda in Cúailnge, and that the place is still known as Botha (O'Rahilly, 1976, 32, 153).

(4) As the army of Medb and Ailill crosses from Mag Muirthemne into Cúailnge and begin their search for the Donn Cúailnge,⁹ the frequency with which unusual onomastic information is provided increases substantially. The account of the death of Redg the Satirist at the hands of Cú Chulainn (*Aided Redg Cáinte*) mentions the following place names in the district of Cuib: "Nath Coirpre at his trees, Cruthen on his ford, Meic Búachalla at their cairn, Marc on his hill, Meille in his stronghold, Bodb in his tower, Bogaine in his Marsh" (*Nath Coirpre occá chbrannaib. Cruthen fora áth. Maccu Búachalla ocá carnd. Marc ina thelaig. Meille ina dind. Bodb ina thur. Bogaine ina grellaig*) (O'Rahilly, 1976, 47, 167). Cú Chulainn's slaying of the Meic Búachalla and the cairn named after them are also mentioned in the LL version, but otherwise the places listed are unknown (O'Rahilly, 1967, 48, 187). The entire episode, save for the interpolation of a single word by H1, is in M's hand.

(5) The death of Forgemen, the Ulster herdsman charged with the care of the Donn Cúailnge, is described in both the LU and LL text, and in both versions he is trampled to death in a stampede (O'Rahilly, 1976, 47-8, 167-8; 1967, 49, 188). It is only in Rec. I, however, that one is told that the name of the hill upon which he was trampled is known as Cnoc Forgemen. In LU the passage concerning Forgemen's death immediately follows the account of Redg's death and is entirely in M's hand.

(6) The unique episode in Rec. I in which Finnabair comes with her father's jester to bargain falsely with Cú Chulainn includes explanations of the origins of two standing stones, *corthi Findabrach* and *corthi in druith*, in Conaille Muirthemne. This passage is part of one of H1's longer interpolations, and he adds that "their two pillar-stones are still there" (*Atát a ndí chorthi and*) (O'Rahilly, 1976, 49, 169), possibly indicating that he has seen them himself.

(7) In both the LL and LU texts, the place name Focherd Muirthemne (Faughart, Co.

⁸ Even when LU and LL both contain the same onomastic information, there is often a wide discrepancy between the nominal forms. It may be that Róen, one of the two historians of the expedition who are slain by Cú Chulainn in the LL version (TBC II, 37, 175), is the same personage as the Reúin who appears in LU. Even if this were the case though, the death of Róen in TBC II does not result in a new place name.

⁹ The Donn Cúailnge is the central catalyst for the action of the Táin. In brief, he is a supernatural, brown bull in the possession of the Ulstermen. Medb, the queen of Connacht, covets him and leads an invasion of Ulster to seize him for herself.

Louth) is explained as the result of the spearcast (*focherd*, ‘a feat of arms’ or ‘cast’) made by Cú Chulainn when he kills Fer Báeth, one of his foster-brothers (O’Rahilly, 1976, 53-5, 173-75; 1967, 50-1, 190-91). As in the previous examples, however, the LU text furnishes additional topographical information missing from LL, stating that the place where Fer Báeth fell is known as Glend Fir Baíth. Moreover, the LU text also gives an alternate explanation for the place name, that is, that “Focherd remained as the name of the place, that is, *fó cerd*, good was the feat of arms which Cú Chulainn performed there”¹⁰ (*Combad de sin dano rod lil a n-ainm as Focherd dond inud .i. fó cerd .i. maith in cherd gascid donemaic do Choin Culaind and sin*) (O’Rahilly, 1976, 60, 179). The account of Fer Báeth’s death is primarily in M’s hand. H1 has made several glosses and interpolations, but they are minor and have no bearing on any of the onomastic information presented in the passage.

(8) Following Cú Chulainn’s second encounter with the Morrígan, who tricks him into healing the three injuries he had previously given her, the LU text states that “Cú Chulainn killed Fota in his field, Bó Mailce on his ford; Salach in his marsh, Muinne in his stronghold; Lúar in Lethbera and Fer Toíthle in Toíthle. Wherever any one of those men fell their names have remained for ever [sic] in those districts” (*Geogain Cú Chulaind and sin Fota ina roí, Bó Mailce fora áth, Salach ina imliuch, Muinne ina dind, Lúar i l-Lethberaib, Fer Toíthle h-i Toíthlib. H-it é a n-anmand na tíri sin co bráth, cach bale i torchair cach fer díb sin*) (O’Rahilly, 1976, 63, 182). Both LL and LU conclude this episode with bits of onomastic data, but LL does not mention any of the places just referenced. This entire episode, *Slánugud na Mórrígna* (“The Healing of the Mórrígan”), is in M’s hand.

(9) A short onomastic episode entitled *Imroll Belaig Eóin* (“The Misthrow at Belach Eóin”) occurs in both the LU and LL texts (O’Rahilly, 1976, 75, 192-3; 1967, 67, 206-7), but the LU text, entirely in M’s hand, ends with a brief explanation of the place name Ard in Dírma (“The Height of the Troop”) which is so-named because “the army (*dírma*) rushed upon the opposing force” (*Maitti a ndírím fó arailh*).

(10) The LU text of TBC ends with *Comrac Maind* (“The Fight With Mand”), an episode entirely missing from LL (O’Rahilly, 1976, 77, 194-95). H1 has erased and written over M’s text entirely, save for the first two words of the passage, *foidis Medb*. The passage finishes with an explanation that Mág Mandachta, meaning the “plain of Mand’s death” according to H1, is named for Mand Muresci whom Cú Chulainn slays there.

None of the onomastic information included in LU but absent from LL adds any significant context. If anything, it tends to confuse the narrative rather than aid its flow or expand it in any real way. This is true of much of the onomastic material found in Rec. I and is also true for most of the onomastic information present in Rec. II. The catalog of unique onomastic information I provide here, however, is somewhat unusual in that most of the place names do not appear to be otherwise known. Most, for example, are not cited at all in Hogan’s *Onomasticon Goedelicum* (1910). This unique onomastic information is also frequently placed within or at the end of episodes which M and H1 have titled either in the main text or in the margin. It seems that M, who had access to two divergent exemplars and attempted to reconcile them, not only compiled a new recension, but also took the opportunity to add obscure topographical information about Louth; none of the unique onomastic information he adds concerns any other part of the country. At a later date, H1 appears to have approached the codex with the same interests, though he felt freer to alter the text put down by A and M in a far more radical manner than M approached A’s text. M and H1, therefore appear to have possessed a fuller knowledge of the *dindsbenchas* of Louth than the standard narrative and wished to include it in their text. I should note that Gearóid Mac Eoin (1994) proposed some twenty years ago that H was a member of the Ua Maol Chonaire, a learned family of Connacht who

¹⁰ I.e., by killing fourteen men single-handedly

flourished in the thirteenth century. As Mac Eoin was, like everyone, unaware that Best's "Hand H" encompassed the work of several scribes, only his evidence concerning the additions made by H1 to TBC need be considered here. The relevant evidence which Mac Eoin presents in support of his hypothesis is the glossing, in two instances, by H1 of Cúil Sibrinne and the fact that the other three copies of TBC I—the Yellow Book of Lecan (Dublin, Trinity College, MS. 1318 [H 2.16]), Egerton 1782 (London, British Library, MS. Egerton 1782), and O'Curry 1 (Maynooth, Russell Library, MS. 3 a 1)—are all connected with the Ua Maol Chonaire. The glosses in question inform the reader that Cúil Sibrinne was known in the scribe's time as Loch Cairrcín and that its former name came from Silind, the daughter of Madchar.¹¹ I have not discussed this bit of onomastic information because, as Mac Eoin himself notes, the gloss indicates that the proper form of the place name in question is Cúil Silinne; and Cúil Silinne is also included in the itinerary of Medb and Ailill's army in LL (O'Rahilly, 1967, 8, 145). Although the onomastic information conveyed by H1's gloss is not present in TBC II, the place in question is; and it is referred to by the toponym one would expect from the gloss, i.e., Cúil Silinne rather than Cúil Sibrinne. Moreover, as can be seen from my own investigation of H1's onomastic additions to TBC, greater interest is shown in the place names of northern Brega, Mag Muirthemna, and Cúailnge, districts which all lie within the modern Co. Louth. Indeed, as Gregory Toner (2009) has discussed at length, the LU interpolator(s) demonstrated great interest and depth of knowledge concerning the Ulster Cycle tales and heroes not only within TBC but throughout the codex. Best also believed that hand H had made a number of marginal and interlinear glosses to the copy of the Annal of Tígernach which now form the first twelve folios of Rawlinson B 502; and, as John Carey (2015, 111) notes, "most of these relate to the events and personalities of the Ulster Cycle."¹² Perhaps the largest objection to Mac Eoin's conjecture is that he places the activity of H within the twelfth century but can provide no evidence of any activity, or even the existence, of the Ua Maol Chonaire before the 1240s (1994, 44). Ultimately, I have found Mac Eoin's argument that H was a member of the Ua Maol Chonaire unconvincing, but his more basic argument that H was associated with Clonmacnoise is far more probable. Taken together with the fact that H1 demonstrates a special interest in Ulster tales and the topography of Louth, it seems extremely probable that H1, and perhaps his fellow interpolators,¹³ were members of the Meic Cuinn na mBocht family whose concocted pedigree emphasized their connections with Louth, Brega, and Armagh, frequent settings for the Ulster tales generally and TBC in particular.

The Meic Cuinn na mBocht were the leaders of the community of the Céili Dé at the monastery of Clonmacnois as well as the owners of the associated ecclesiastical site of Íseal Chiaráin nearby.¹⁴ They occupied many of the important scholastic offices of Clonmacnoise from the early

¹¹ I.e., Loch Cairrcín, and it was named from Silind, daughter of Madchar (*i. Loch Carrcín. 7 ó Silind ingin Madchair ro aimniged*) (O'Rahilly, 1976, 5, 128).

¹² In her paleographical analysis, however, Duncan (2015, 50) has cast doubt on the belief that these glosses in ATig. have all been made by the H scribes, explaining that "a cursory study of these annotations reveals that although some stints of Rawlinson H reveal similarities to some of the LU H hands, others do not bear direct paleographical resemblances."

¹³ Duncan's analysis (2015, 45, 49) suggests that the various H scribes whom she distinguishes worked in close chronological and geographical proximity to one another and that some may even have worked together. "The fact that Best's defining paleographical features cannot be applied in equal balance to all of the writing attributed to H rather indicates a style of script that represents the habits of different scribes of the same school . . . Whether one can think of a group of scribes representing H who collaborated on LU, or whether different scribes stepped in here and there over a period of time is an issue that requires more research; indeed, as I have hinted, a mixture of the two seems possible."

¹⁴ For a summary of the history of the Meic Cuinn na mBocht family at Clonmacnois, see, Kehnel (1997). They take their name from Conn na mBocht (fl. 1031, †1059/60).

tenth until the early twelfth century. Their lineage is well preserved in the extant annals, and John Kelleher (1971) has reconstructed their pedigree according to these entries. He summarizes the pedigree as follows: “The genealogy, as it can be reconstructed from the annals, runs from 738 to 1034, covers twelve generations, and includes nineteen certain names. There are seven other names that may belong to it, and three that do belong but for which the linkages cannot be made. We have, then, an actual line connecting the LU Táin with Louth and, I think, with the Clonmacnois Version annals and *Liber Cuanach* as well” (Kelleher, 1971, 126). Donnchadh Ó Corráin (2015) has more recently conducted a more critical appraisal of the Meic Cuinn na mBocht’s putative lineage. Ó Corráin’s interpretation is that much of the pedigree is fictitious, particularly the portion falling in the eighth and ninth centuries, and he makes a compelling argument that the earliest portion of the pedigree was constructed to associate the ancestors of the Meic Cuinn na mBocht with Armagh, Louth, and Clonmacnois, thus claiming for the family a place at the center of Irish intellectual life for over five centuries. Ó Corráin (2015, 7-10) also casts doubt upon the notion that Dúnadach mac Écertaich, the (great-) great-grandfather of Conn na mBocht,¹⁵ was fostered by Cáencomrac (†903), bishop and abbot of Louth. He further argues that the likely intent of the twelfth-century Meic Cuinn na mBocht in linking Dúnadach and Cáencomrac was to justify or solidify their claims to Inis Éndaim, a nearby estate in Tethbae (Ó Corráin, 2015, 10). Throughout the annalistic record concerning the Meic Cuinn na mBocht and their ancestors, they are consistently provided with two different origins. One, which Ó Corráin (2015, 5) shows cannot be correct due to anachronism, is that they are of the Ó Cellaig Breg, a royal family of eastern Meath which did not rise to power until the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The other origin asserted in the annals is that they were of the Mugdorna Maigen,¹⁶ a fairly obscure tributary population group who occupied the area of the baronies of Cremorne and Farney in the east of Co. Monaghan and just west of Mag Muirthemne and Conaille Muirthemne (i.e., along the Meath-Monaghan border).¹⁷ Ó Corráin (2015, 7) notes that “[t]he claim that [Dúnadach and Óenucán] belonged to the relatively obscure Mugdorna Maigen is puzzling. These were a subdivision of the Mugdorna on the Meath–Monaghan border. Domnach Maigen (parish of Donaghmoynne, barony of Farney, Co. Monaghan) was an early and prestigious Patrician church in the area but they make no claim to it.” Whether he believes that these two sons of Écertach really were of the Mugdorna Maigen is not clear, but the relatively low prestige of such an extraction would provide good motivation for the Meic Cuinn na mBocht annalists at Clonmacnois in the eleventh and twelfth centuries to fabricate a new, more prestigious genealogical linkage with the ascendant Ó Cellaig Breg.

The onomastic episodes peculiar to the LU copy of TBC which I have identified adds to the substantive body of evidence that M, who is almost certainly Máel Muire mac Célechair, the grandson of Conn na mBocht, had access to a library with an unusually broad array of sources concerning the Ulster Cycle and its environs. Indeed, Kelleher (1971) has made much the same argument that I am making here (though not on onomastic grounds), namely that the Meic Cuinn na mBocht were intimately involved in the compilation of TBC I and related texts found in LU.

¹⁵ Dúnadach’s exact relation to Conn na mBocht is somewhat confusing. Ó Corráin refers to Dúnadach as Conn na mBocht’s great-great-grandfather on p. 7, correcting the assertion in the CS 949 death notice for Óenucán, Dúnadach’s brother, which claims that Dúnadach was Conn’s great-great-great-grandfather. According to the pedigree which can be reconstructed from the annals, Dúnadach was Conn’s great-grandfather. Ó Corráin (2015, 6) does not believe this is correct, however, and argues that the fact that Dúnadach and Óenucán “die 57 and 50 years respectively after their father . . . At least a generation is missing, perhaps more.”

¹⁶ *Chronicon Scotorum* (615, 1103); the Annals of the Four Masters (610, 949.2, 1067.1); the Annals of Clonmacnois (1067).

¹⁷ Edmund Hogan, *Onomasticon*, s.v. “Mugdornai.”

Were the unique onomastic information solely found in M's hand, there would be nothing more to add; but the fact that H1 *also* demonstrates a significant knowledge of the topography of Louth suggests that he might have been a member of the Meic Cuinn na mBocht as well. Indeed, H1 may have had access not only to the sources utilized by M but to yet more variants which had come into his possession since 1106 (Oskamp, 1966/67, 130). Given the exclusion of the Meic Cuinn na mBocht from high office at Clonmacnoise, beginning in 1109 with the installation Giolla Chríst Úa Máeil Eoin as abbot (Kehnel, 1997, 150-2), H1 may have removed LU and other manuscripts from that monastery at that time and relocated them to one of the several nearby estates under the control of the Meic Cuinn na mBocht. Such a hypothesis corresponds with Ruairí Ó hUiginn's recent conjecture (2015, 169) that "the reviser of [*Táin Bó Flidais*] and possibly other scribes represented by the designation 'H' worked in a location other than Clonmacnoise, the monastery in which we believe M was active. If we are correct in dating the scribal interventions of H to the first third of the twelfth century, then the transfer of LU from Clonmacnoise and subsequent scribal interventions by other H scribes seems likely to have taken place shortly after the death of Máel Muire in 1106." If H1 was a member of the Meic Cuinn na mBocht, it may also explain the liberties that he, and the other interpolators, took with the codex. Certainly the apparent removal of the codex from Clonmacnoise in the early twelfth century implies that it may have been familial property rather than the property of the ecclesiastical library there. Ó Corráin (2015, 28) lists three members of the Meic Cuinn na mBocht whose obits occur in the first half of the twelfth century and are therefore likely candidates to be identified with H1: Gilla an Choimded (†1128), and the two sons of Máel Muire's cousin Cormac, Máel Cíaráin (†1134) and Céilechair (†1134).¹⁸

In summary: the Meic Cuinn na mBocht family was intimately involved in the production of LU. M, the main hand of the codex, is almost certainly Máel Muire mac Céilechair (†1106), the grandson of Conn na mBocht. The Meic Cuinn na mBocht traced their origins to Louth, the primary setting of TBC, and appear to have had access to onomastic information concerning the area which was either not available or not of interest to the redactor of the LL version of TBC. Recent research (Carey, 2015; Ó Corráin, 2015; Ó hUiginn, 2015) indicates that LU and associated manuscripts remained in the possession of the Meic Cuinn na mBocht following the death of Máel Muire and their exclusion from the leadership of Clonmacnoise. The addition, by H1, of still more topographical information adds another bit of supporting evidence to this hypothesis.

Onomastic Information Present in the LU *Táin* but Absent From the LL Redaction

Place	Scribal Hand	<i>Onomasticon</i> Entry	Named for person slain by Cú Chulainn
Áth Fráech	M	Y	Y
Síd Fráech	M	Y	Y
Áth Táiten	H1	Y ¹⁹	N/A ²⁰

¹⁸ It appears that Ó Corráin has made a typo. He gives the death of Céilechair as 1124, but the deaths of both Céilechair and Máel Cíaráin occur in the 1134 entry of both the *Annals of the Four Masters* and *Chronicon Scotorum*.

¹⁹ s.v. "Áth Táiten." But the only citation is from H1's erasure and emendation in LU.

²⁰ Áth Táiten and Lethbera are the only toponyms in this list which do not take their name from a personage.

Druim Baiscne	M	N ²¹	Y
Máenan's hill*	M	N	Y
Botha	M	Y	N
Nath Coirpthe's trees*	M	N	Y
Cruthen's ford**	M	Y ²²	Y
Marc's hill*	M	N	Y
Meille's stronghold**	M	Y ²³	Y
Bodb's tower*	M	N	Y
Bogaine's marsh**	M	Y ²⁴	Y
Cnoc Forgemen	M	Y ²⁵	N
The two pillar stones	H1	N	Y ²⁶
Focherd ²⁷	M	Y	N
Fota's field*	M	N	Y
Bó Mailce's ford*	M	N	Y
Muinne's stronghold*	M	Y ²⁸	Y
Lethbera	M	N	N/A
Salach's marsh*	M	N	Y
Ard in Dírma	M	N	N
Mág Mandachta	H1	Y ²⁹	Y

*Actual toponym of the form [topographical feature] + [personal name in genitive] not given in LU.

**Actual toponym not given in LU but attested in the *Onomasticon*.

This chart details the unique onomastic information found within the LU *Táin* on an individual basis rather than according to the passage in which it appears as in the main text of the article. The

²¹ Many of the toponyms not included in the *Onomasticon* are present in the later copies of TBC Rec. I.

²² s.v. "Áth Cruithne"

²³ s.v. "Dind Meille"

²⁴ s.v. "gréine Bogaine." The only citation in the entry is from the YBL copy of Rec. I. The toponym seems to be unique to Rec. I.

²⁵ As with the previous entry, the place name is attested in the *Onomasticon*; but the only citation comes from Rec. I.

²⁶ Despite Finnabair's reappearance later in Rec. I, the impression given in this episode is rather clearly that both she and the drúth have been killed grotesquely.

²⁷ This entry refers only to the explanation unique to Rec. I that Focherd comes from fó cerd. The other etiology, that it is from the spear cast (*focherd*) Cú Chulainn made to kill Fer Báeth is, as discussed above in (7), common to Rec. I and Rec. II.

²⁸ s.v. "Dál Muine." It is not certain that this is the same place as the Muinne's stronghold (*dind*), and of the two citations provided in the entry neither are from LU. Still, it seems likely that the same location is intended, since Hogan places it in Conaille Muirthemne.

²⁹ s.v. "Mag Mandachta." There may be another location of this name. Most of the citations in this *Onomasticon* entry refer to the Battle of Mag Mandachta fought between Brian Boráma and Máel Sechnaill in 1000 in Brega (*Annals of Ulster*, 1000).

hand in which the information is supplied is indicated in the second column, and the third column indicates whether the placename in question appears in Hogan's *Onomasticon Goedelicum*. It should be noted that many of these placenames do not appear in the *Onomasticon*, and so appear to be otherwise unknown. The fourth column indicates whether the placename is said to have been derived from the name of someone slain by Cú Chulainn, the hero of TBC who defends his homeland of Ulster against the armies of Medb and her allies. The overwhelming majority of the toponyms are said to have come about in this manner, indicating that for the people who lived in Cú Chulainn's home territories, Mag Muirthemne and Cúailnge in co. Louth, death at the hands of Cú Chulainn was a favored means of explaining the origins of local toponyms.

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