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The Relic Cult of St Patrick between the Seventh and the Late Twelfth Centuries in its European Contexts: A Focus on the Lives

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MA (Hons), MLitt

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Abstract

The cult of St Patrick in the medieval period has been largely neglected in modern scholarship, which has predominantly tended to favour analysis of the saint's own fifth-century writings; the troublesome area of fixing exact dates for his fifth-century career and context; the seventh-century Patrician *vitae* in the context of political rivalries between Armagh, Kildare and Iona; and Patrick's status as an icon of modern Irish identity. My thesis represents the first full-length study of Patrick's relic cult between the seventh and the late twelfth centuries by primarily concentrating on the evidence from his various Latin and Irish Lives belonging to this period.

Each of the Lives of Patrick provide us a lens through which we can observe a vibrant and diverse array of Patrician relics during our period, many of which survive only in these texts; however, these Lives also act like mirrors of the historical realities in which they were conceived. By studying the Lives over a broad chronological period we gain invaluable information on several key aspects: why authors have chosen or not to retain or omit certain stories featuring relics; whether the numerous and various miracles and functions that these relics perform in the narratives indicate the type of role they had in and their value to wider society; if there is a growth in the number of Patrician relics in the texts at any given point in our period. By placing these aspects in their historical contexts, this thesis musters a better understanding of the broader ecclesiastical and secular political fortunes in Ireland and elsewhere that helped shape the development of Patrick's cult as we know of it today.

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Introduction I

The Problem with Patrick: Historiography and the Quest for New Vistas

> 'From the seventh century onward [St Patrick] was regarded as pre-eminent among Ireland's early saints. His feast-day, as a kind of national day, was already celebrated by the Irish in Europe in the ninth and tenth centuries. In later times he became more and more widely known as the patron of Ireland. The crowds who march down Fifth Avenue in New York on 17 March each year, and down a thousand other avenues around the world, may not know a great deal about [Patrick], but in honouring his memory they follow a very ancient tradition.'[1]

How much do we really know and understand about Patrick, in particular his posthumous legend and cult before the thirteenth century which has fundamentally shaped the saint we celebrate today? John Carey pointedly observes that Patrick is a 'figure who is in danger of being obliterated by his very familiarity – a pretext for parades, fraternal organisations, and rounds of stout, or, at best, the protagonist of half-remembered and apocryphal anecdotes involving snakes and shamrocks.'[2] This is not to state that Patrician scholars have neglected Patrick, the fifth-century man, but that scholarship is guilty of neglecting the 'ancient tradition' honouring the posthumous memory of Patrick, the saint.

The Scholarly Tradition of Patrick, Man and Saint

Modern Patrician scholarship begins in the seventeenth century, when Patrick became a 'denominational saint'.[3] Bridget McCormack highlights that there exists a great deal of continuity between seventeenth- and eighteenth-century 'perceptions of Patrick', although the former century predominantly set this alongside theological and

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[1] Liam de Paor, *St Patrick's World: The Christian Culture of Ireland's Apostolic Age*, (Dublin, 1993), p. 95.

[2] John Carey, '*Discovering St Patrick* review', *Reviews in Religion and Theology*, Vol. 13 No. 4, (2006), pp. 507-9 at p. 507.

[3] Ludwig Bieler, *The Life and Legend of St Patrick: Problems in Modern Patrician Scholarship*, (Dublin, 1949), p. 11; also consult Bridget McCormack in *Perceptions of St Patrick in Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, (Dublin, 2000).   There are numerous works focusing on Patrick but which are far too many to mention, and thus only works in which Patrick, his own writings or that of his subsequent hagiographers is directly relevant to the discussion here are included in this section. This first section up to the the mid twentieth century is indebted to Bieler's analysis in his *Life and Legend* (1949); Bieler himself died in 1981 and his remarkable life is surveyed in Hermann Rasche, 'Ludwig Bieler', (ed.) Gisela Holfter, *German Monitor: German-speaking Exiles in Ireland, 1933-1945*, (2006), pp. 171-82.

doctrinal considerations.[4] In the seventeenth century Patrick was perceived the founder of two churches: the Church of Ireland ('Protestant' refers to its clergy and community for convenience) and the Roman Catholic Church. In this century an increased doctrinal struggle between the two Churches was characterised by mutual efforts to appropriate Patrick as their patron saint.[5]

The most detailed account of the Church of Ireland's position was by James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh from 1625 to 1656, in a controversy with David Rothe, Catholic bishop of Ossary.[6] In 1639 Ussher published the first critical account of Patrick's life in his *Antiquities of the British Churches*, which showed foresight in maintaining contact with Catholic scholarship, namely with John Colgan and the Bollandists (pioneers of the *Acta Sanctorum*).[8] The Catholic scholar Stephen White provided Ussher with many continental manuscripts on Patrick, and Ussher also received the *Catalogue of Irish Saints* from his Jesuit uncle Henry FitzSimon.[9] Ussher also owned a fourteenth-century collection of the *Lives of the Irish Saints*, i.e. the *Codex Kilkenniensis*, as well as a copy of Jocelin of Furness' late twelfth century *Vita Patricii*;[10] incidentally, Ussher is the first scholar to have consulted the *Book of Armagh's* Patrician texts in his work.[11]

Patrick was also the icon of the reformed Catholic Church, which is evident in a number of new late-sixteenth / seventeenth-century Lives which preserve a more developed patristic and biblical content and a reduction in miracles and curses.[12] Despite this, however, Geoffrey Keating's influential *History of Ireland*, or *Foras feasa ar Éireann*, of 1634 highlighted that progress depended on finding new

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[4] McCormack, *Perceptions*, p. 20.

[5] Ibid.; Bernadette Cunningham and Raymond Gillespie, '"The most adaptable of saints": the cult of Patrick in the seventeenth century', *Arch. Hib.*, xii, (1996), pp. 82-105.

[6] William O'Sullivan, 'The correspondence of David Rothe and James Ussher 1619-1623', *Coll. Hib.*, xxxvi, (1994), pp. 7-49.

[8] Bieler, *Life and Legend*, p. 13, and 'John Colgan as editor', (ed.) Richard Sharpe, *Ireland and the Culture of Early Medieval Europe*, (London, 1987), pp. 1-24 at p. 13; this account stands alone for the next two hundred years because it incorporated historical criticism, which generally did not emerge until the late nineteenth century. All acknowledged their debt to Ussher; also consult Hippolyte Delehaye's *The Work of the Bollandists through Three Centuries, 1615-1915*, (Princeton, 1922).

[9] Bieler, *Life and Legend*, p. 13.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

[12] McCormack, *Perceptions*, p. 23; the first of these *Lives* is: Richard Stanihurst's *De Vita S. Patricii Hiberniae apostoli*, (Antwerp, 1587), in which he drew on Jocelin's *Vita Patricii* and Gerald of Wales' *Topographia*, in *The History and Topography of Ireland*, trans. John J. O'Meara, (Hamondsworth, 1982), while emphasising biblical and patristic sources. Peter Lombard's *De regno Hiberniae sanctorum insula commentorius*, (Louvain, 1632), also drew from Jocelin and biblical and patristic sources.

manuscripts.[13] The majority of Irish manuscripts survive on the continent and were mainly consulted by Irish Franciscans in the seventeenth century.[14] In 1647 John Colgan showcased his new manuscript collection in *Trias Thaumaturga*, which contains: three *Vitae Patricii*, the hymn *Genair Pátraic* (ascribed to Bishop Fíacc of Sletty), and a Latin version of *Bethu Phátraic* (Colgan's *Vita Tripartita*).[15]

Yet some of the most important texts remained unpublished, namely Tírechán's *Collectanea* and Muirchú's *Vita Patricii* and Patrick's own *Confessio* and *Epistola*.[16] Instead Colgan collected fragments of Patrick's own writings from some Lives and reprinted Ussher's quotations from Muirchú and Tírechán in his *Antiquaries*.[17] However, Colgan did not know of some manuscripts in Belgium and northern France, such as *Confessio* and *Epistola* which were within his reach in St-Vaast near Arras and published by the Bollandists twenty years later.[18] In 1656 Colgan's work was supplemented by Ussher's pupil James Ware in his *Sancto Patricio adscipta opuscula* and also in an edition of Patrick's *Epistola* and *Confessio*[19] (unlike Colgan he did not list all known manuscript variants). The Bollandists' editions of Patrick's own works were based on the St-Vaast codex on March 17 in *Acta Sanctorum* in 1668, quoted under the name of a French Jesuit, André Denis; however Bieler states these editions to be Daniel Papebroch's work.[20]

In the eighteenth century Patrician scholarship marked a 'period of sterility in hagiographical studies', when no Patrician study of scholarly quality was produced and the enduring question of the nature of 'Patrick's Church' prevailed.[21] However, this all changed in the nineteenth century, when in Volume One of 1822 John Lanigan's *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland* almost entirely devoted itself to Patrick

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[13] McCormack, *Perceptions*, p. 24; Geoffrey Keating, *Foras feasa ar Éireann: The History of Ireland*, D. Comyn & P. S. Dinneen (eds.), (4 vols, London, 1902-14, Irish Texts Society), iii.
[14] Bieler, *Life and Legend*, p. 14; Irish Jesuits joined them late in this century.
[15] Bieler, 'John Colgan', pp. 1-4, states that other Lives of Patrick in *Trias Thaumaturga* are reprints from earlier editions; *Triadis Thaumaturgae seu Divorum Patricii Columbae et Brigidae, trium veteris et maioris Scotiae, seu Hiberniae santorum insulae*, (ed.) John Colgan, (Louvain, 1647); Richard Sharpe, *Medieval Irish Saints' Lives: An Introduction to Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, (Oxford, 1991), pp. 39-74.
[16] Patrick's original writings are preserved in the *Book of Armagh*: *Confessio*: 'St Patrick's declaration', trans. Liam de Paor, *St Patrick's World. The Christian Culture of Ireland's Apostolic Age*, (Dublin, 1993), pp. 96-108; Patrick, *Epistola*: 'St Patrick's Letter against the soldiers of Coroticus', trans. Liam de Paor, *St Patrick's World, The Christian Culture of Ireland's Apostolic Age*, (Dublin, 1993), pp. 109-16.
[17] Bieler, *Life and Legend*, p. 14.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid. p.15.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid. p.11.

and 'stands on the borderline of old and new scholarship'.[22] Lanigan was the first to question whether the Lives in Colgan's *Trias Thaumaturga* were much later than originally thought and he deemed Jocelin's *Vita Patricii* 'a wretched composition'.[23] Until Lannigan's work no one had attempted to trace Patrick's historicity, account for his personality, or place it into its historical contexts.[24] The first history that found success in this vein was James Henthorn Todd's analysis of the early Irish Church, even if it had the Church of Ireland's appropriation of Patrick in mind.[25] However, at least Todd noticed that Palladius (Patrick's predecessor), just as Tírechán had stated in the seventh century in his *Collectanea*, was also 'called Patricius by another name'.[26] This confusion of there being two or possibly three Patricks (as we will find out in chaper one) would haunt Patrician studies for generations to come.

Generally speaking until the nineteenth century Catholic scholars read the early Patrician texts at face value. For example, W. B. Morris deliberately used Colgan as his major source as he attempted to reinstate the authority of the *vitae* by Jocelin and Probus whilst censuring Lannigan for pandering to the Protestant appropriation of Patrick.[27] However, out of this climate of religious bias two major studies were produced by Catholic scholars, namely by Canon O'Hanlon and Archbishop Healy.[28] Catholic attitudes toward historical criticism also continued to change by the late nineteenth century, as evident in Sylvester Malone's work in 1892 where he defended historical truth over political bias.[29] Furthermore, Whitley Stokes emerged as the most avid producer of new editions and translations of Patrician and other early Irish manuscripts.[30] Stokes also produced a much needed edition of the

[22] Ibid. p. 5; John Lannigan, *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland, from the First Introduction of Christianity to the Beginning of the Thriteenth Century, Volume 1*, (Dublin, 1822).
[23] Bieler, *Life and Legend*, p. 16.
[24] Ibid. p. 17
[25] James Henthorn Todd, *St Patrick: apostle of Ireland: a memoir of his life and mission: with an introductory dissertation on some early usages of the Church in Ireland, and its historical position from the establishment of the English colony to the present day*, (Dublin, 1864).
[26] Todd, *St Patrick*, pp. 265-345; Tírechán, *Notes*, 56.2, ed. Ludwig Bieler with a contribution by Fergus Kelly, *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh*, (Dublin, 2004), pp. 122-66 .
[27] Bieler, *Life and Legend*, p. 17; Catholic fears of critical scholarship was widespread and Pope Pius X (1903-1913) treated it with suspicion, known as the Vatican's 'campaign against modernism' (Hippolyte Delehaye, *Légendes hagiographiques*, *The Legends of the Saints*, trans. [from the French] Donald Attwater, with a memoir by Paul Peters, and a new introduction by Thomas O'Loughlin, (Dublin, 1998), p. vii).
[28] Canon O'Hanlon, *Lives of the Irish Saints*, (Dublin, 1875); John Healy, *Life and Writings of St Patrick, with Appendices*, (London, 1905);.Rev. Dr. Healy, Archbishop of Tuam, *The Life and Writings of St Patrick, With Appendices*, (Dublin, 1905).
[29] Bieler, *Life and Legend*, p. 18.
[30] Dorothy Ann Bray, 'The State of Irish Hagiography', *A Journal of Early Medieval Northwestern Europe*, Issue 9, (Oct., 2006).

Middle Irish *Tripartite Life of St Patrick* in 1887 as based on the original manuscripts and on the Patrician documents in the *Book of Armagh*.[31]

French and German scholars also began to develop interest in Patrician literature and history, and all things 'Celtic' more generally, even if their criticism inclined toward the extreme, with German scholars taking the lead. For example J. von Pflugk-Harttung voiced grave doubts that Patrick was the author of *Confessio* and *Epistola*,[32] while Heinrich Zimmer denied Patrick's very existence, claiming that his Latin name, *Patricius*, was the name by which his predecessor Palladius came to be known in Ireland.[33] Zimmer's work has since been discredited, although he did question Patrick's historicity, known to us as the enigmatic 'Patrician problem'.

John B. Bury's *Life of St Patrick* of 1905 steered away from ecclesiastical bias and the extreme criticism of German scholars.[34] Although Bury focused on the early Lives as a window to Patrick's fifth-century career and context, he nonetheless treated each Life as an independent witness and attempted to highlight their mutual dependence and common sources.[35] Bury also interwove the broader European contexts into his writings on Patrick. Likewise Dom Louis Gougaud's work attempted to trace Patrick's medieval continental cult,[36] whilst A. M. Tommasini surveyed the influence of Irish saints' cults in Italy.[37] However, not enough of this type of research has made any real impact at present.

In 1905 Newport White published a new edition of Patrick's own works, hitherto the best edition produced.[38] In 1913 John Gwynn published an edition of the *Book of Armagh*, which had a preface full of insights to the Patrician material.[39] Then in 1910 and in 1922 Charles Plummer published the groundbreaking volumes *Vitae*

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[31] *The tripartite life of Patrick: with other documents relating to that saint*, ed. and trans. with indexes by Whitley Stokes, (London, 1887). Other examples include: *Three middle-Irish Homilies on the lives of the saints Patrick, Brigit, and Columba*, ed. Whitley Stokes, (Calcutta, 1877); Oengus, the Culdee, Saint (d.824), *Calendar of Oengus*, in *On the Calendar of Oengus the Culdee*, ed. Whitley Stokes, (Dublin, 1880), Tigernach, Abbot of Clonmacnois, 'The Annals of Tigernach', trans. Whitley Stokes in *Revue Celtique* (1895/6); Cuimmín, *Cuimmín's poem on the saints of Ireland*, ed. and trans. Whitley Stokes, (Niemeyer, 1897).

[32] Bieler, *Life and Legend*, p. 19.

[33] Ibid.; Heinrich Zimmer, (trans.) A. Meyer, *The Celtic Church in Britain and Ireland*, (1902), pp. 7-55.

[34] John B. Bury, *The Life of St Patrick*, (Dublin, 1905).

[35] Bieler, *Life and Legend*, p. 19

[36] Ibid. p. 20; Dom Louis Gougaud, *Les chrétientés celtiques*, (Paris, 1911), and *Christianity in the Celtic Lands: a history of the churches of the Celts, their origin, their development, influence and mutual relations*, (Dublin, 1992).

[37] Anselmo Maria Tommasini, *Irish Saints in Italy*, trans. G. Cleary with some additional notes by J. F. Scanlan, (London, 1937).

[38] Bieler, *Life and Legend*, p. 20; Newport J. D. White, *Libri Sancti Patricii*, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 25 C, (1905), pp. 201-326, and *St Patrick: His Writings and Life*, (London, 1920).

[39] *Liber Ardmachanus: The Book of Armagh*, ed. John Gwynn, (Dublin, 1913).

Sanctorum Hiberniae and the *Lives of the Irish Saints*, each of which comprise a two-volume collection of hagiography with commentaries and notes on the manuscripts.[40] In 1929 James Kenney published a plethora of medieval Irish ecclesiastical sources which includes a survey of Patrician hagiography and numerous documents concerning Armagh and its affiliated churches.[41] In 1939 another breakthrough was made when Kathleen Mulchrone published a critical edition of the *Tripartite Life*.[42] The general consensus up to that point was that the *Tripartite Life* originated in the later tenth century (e.g. Stokes' conclusion), but Mulchrone dated it firmly between 895 x 901.[43] Bieler comments that the title of Eóin MacNeill's *St Patrick, Apostle of Ireland* of 1939 doubles up as both homage and challenge to Todd's earlier work.[45] Before and after this work Mac Neill produced numerous papers concerning the problems of Patrick's historicity, which Bieler claims surpassed Bury's efforts.[46] No one challenged Mac Neill until T. F. O'Rahilly's *The Two Patricks* of 1942,[47] which caused great controversy by advocating the existence of 'two Patricks', one senior (d.461) and one junior (d.493).[48] Could it be that Palladius was in actual fact 'Patrick-senior' – the existence of whom O'Rahilly was also forced to admit just as Todd was before him – and Patrick of Armagh, i.e. 'Patrick-junior' the same person who died in 493? The debate stimulated by O'Rahilly continued throughout the 1950s and would do so far beyond it.

James Carney tackled O'Rahilly's theory in 1949 in *Studies in Irish literature and History*, where he argues that if Palladius continued as bishop in Ireland only to be succeeded by Patrick, who died in or around 493, then Patrick could not have arrived there in 432.[53] Carney furthered O'Rahilly's theory by reasoning that an extensive reconstruction of the chronology of fifth century Irish secular history was a tactic used by annalists and hagiographers loyal to Armagh to extend Patrick's history

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[40] *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, ed. Charles Plummer, (Dublin, 1910), Vols 1 & 2; *Bethada náem nErenn = Lives of the Irish Saints*, ed. Charles Plummer, (Oxford, 1922), Vols. 1 & 2.

[41] James F. Kenney, *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland. Vol. I. Ecclesiastical* (Dublin, 1929); James F. Kenney, 'St Patrick and the Patrick Legend', *Thought* VIII, (1933), pp. 1.34 and 213-29.

[42] *Betha Phátraic: the Tripartite Life of Patrick*, (ed.) Kathleen Mulchrone, (Dublin, 1939).

[43] David N. Dumville, 'The dating of the Tripartite Life of Patrick', David N. Dumville *et al* (eds.), *St Patrick AD 493-1993*, (Woodbridge, 1993), pp. 255-8.

[45] Bieler, *Life and Legend*, p.20.

[46] Ibid.

[47] T. F. O'Rahilly, *The Two Patricks: a lecture on the history of Christianity in fifth-century Ireland*, (Dublin, 1942); Bieler, *Life and Legend*, p. 20.

[48] The exception is in *Annals of Ulster*, where only the obit 493 is found; Gearoid Mac Niociall, *The Medieval Irish Annals*, (Dublin, 1975).

[53] James Carney, *Studies in Irish Literature and History*, (Dublin, 1955); David N. Dumville, 'The date 432', David N. Dumville *et al* (eds.), *St Patrick A.D. 493-1993*, (Woodbridge, 1993), pp. 39-44 at p. 42 n. 20, who rightly suggests there is no reason to conclude from Patrick's own writings that he was Palladius' immediate successor.

back to 432; this view has generally prevailed.[54] In 1956, however, a radically new theory of Patrick's historicity was presented by Mario Eposito.[55] Here he uniquely argued for Patrick having lived between 350 and 430 based on linguistic evidence of Latin and Brittonic loanwords into Irish.[56]

Despite the vogue in seeking definitive solutions to the Patrician problem, scholars – except for Stokes, Todd, Bury, O'Rahilly, and Carney – were reluctant to produce new critical editions or translations until Ludwig Bieler. In 1949 Bieler's first milestone book *The Life and Legend of St Patrick*,[57] preceded two important articles on Irish hagiography. [58] Following this in 1953 Bieler published new translations of Patrick's own writings and the *Audite Omnes Amantes* by St Secundinus,[60] including a more critical appraisal than previously seen and one which surpassed Arnold Marsh's work of 1961 in terms of the quality of his translation and textual analysis.[61]

In 1961 a myriad works were published to celebrate Patrick's first recorded obit of 461, and for example the journal *Seanchas Ardhmacha* devoted a whole issue to Patrician studies. Despite most scholars rejecting the obit 461, it was still perceived an important landmark which could not be lightly dismissed. Among its array of articles, Máire de Paor's work on Patrick's relic-cult displays a photographic feature with commentary and stands out from scholarship concerning Patrick's historicity,[62] as does Gertrude Mesmer's work, which presents a localised study of Patrick's cult in Germany.[63] It is a pity that these efforts to place Patrician studies into its broader European contexts did not, as highlighted above, make a broader impact at this time.

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[54] Dumville, 'The date', p. 43.

[55] Eposito, Mario, 'The Patrician problem and a possible solution', *Irish Historical Studies*, (1956), pp. 131-55.

[56] Ibid.; this was revived by John Koch (p. 16 below).

[57] Bieler's other works include: *Ireland and the Culture of Early Medieval Europe*, (London, 1987); 'Patrick's Synod – a revision', *Mélanges offerts á Mademoiselle Christine Mohrmann* (Utrecht, 1963), pp. 96-102; 'The "creeds" of St Victorinus and St Patrick', *Theological Studies*, Vol. 9, (1949), pp. 121-4; Ludwig Bieler with D. A. Binchy (eds.), *The Irish Penitentials*, (Dublin, 1963); 'The Lives of St Patrick in the Book of Armagh', *Saint Patrick*, (ed.) J. Ryan, (Dublin, 1958); 'The mission of Palladius. A comparative study of sources', *Traditio*, Vol. 6, (1948), pp. 1-32; 'Was Palladius surnamed Patricius?', *Studies*, Vol. 32, (1943), pp. 323-6.

[58] Ludwig Bieler, 'Recent research on Irish hagiography', *An Irish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 35 No. 138, (1946), pp. 230-238; Ludwig Bieler, 'Recent research on Irish hagiography: Part II', *An Irish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 35 No. 140, (1946), pp. 536-544.

[60] Ludwig Bieler, *The Works of St Patrick; St Secundinus' Hymn on St Patrick*, (London, 1953).

[61] Arnold Marsh, *St Patrick's Writings, A Modern Translation*, (Dundalk, 1961).

[62] Máire de Paor, 'The Relics of St Patrick: A photographic feature with some notes on the relics', *Seanchas Ardmhacha*, Vol. 4 No. 2 'The Patrician Year', (1961-2), pp. 87-91.

[63] Gertrude Mesmer, 'The cult of St Patrick in the vicinity of Drackenstein', *Seanchas Ardmhacha*, Vol. 4 No. 2 'The Patrician Year', (1961-2), pp. 68-75.

In 1961 also Carney's *The Problem of St Patrick* augmented much of the material presented in his *Studies* of 1949, although he did extend his use of the Irish annals as well as O'Rahilly's analysis. Christine Mohrmann's *The Latin of St Patrick* demonstrated some fifth-century linguistic elements in Patrick's own works, although more generally such approaches have not had a great success in indicating exactly when Patrick wrote.[64] In 1962 D. A. Binchy published 'Patrick and his biographers', in which a 'third-Patrick' of Ros Dela, or Rostella in Co Meath in Ireland was suggested.[65] In 1978/9 R. P. C. Hanson argued that Patrick lived and wrote in Ireland in the last half of the fifth century;[66] however, at present only a minority of scholars think the first obit of 461 indicates our Patrick of Armagh.

At this point a broader availability of Patrician materials, and particularly editions and translations of Lives post seventh century, was required. W. W. Heist's work supplemented Plummer's collections of Irish saints' Lives of 1910 and 1922, with editions of Lives from the Codex Salmantacensis.[67] In 1971 Bieler edited the anonymous Patrician Lives, i.e. the *Four Latin Lives of Patrick*.[68] Bieler criticised Colgan's edition of these texts, which, with the exception of *Vita Tertia*, had not been re-edited in almost three centuries.[69] Bieler also emphasised their importance for the 'critical restoration of Muirchú and Tírechán, as well as part of Patrick's *Confessio*.[70]

In 1978 A. B. E. Hood published Patrick's own writings and Muirchú's seventh-century *Vita Patricii*,[71] in which he offered a critical overview of Patrick's role in Irish Christianity and argued that '[Patrick] was the first Christian to make any substantial number of converts, and to leave behind him a lasting organised church.'[72] Hood used Muirchú to enhance his argument that his *Vita* was, with Tírechán's

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[64] Christine Mohrmann, *The Latin of St Patrick: Four Lectures*, (Dublin, 1961).

[65] D. A. Binchy, 'Patrick and his biographers: ancient and modern', *Studia Hibernica*, Vol. 2, (1962), pp. 7-173; David N. Dumville, 'The death-date of St Patrick', David N. Dumville *et al* (eds.), *St Patrick A.D. 493-1993*, (Woodbridge, 1993), pp. 27-33 at p. 33, states that 'much weight has been given to D. A. Binchy's view that the fifth-century annals contain nothing of any independent value for that period.' Thomas O'Loughlin comments that Binchy relied on Delehaye's methodology that the Patrician *vitae* reveal more about the period when they were crafted: 'it was not until 1962 that anyone in Ireland was prepared to apply this maxim of research to the legend of St Patrick' (Delehaye, *Légendes hagiographiques*, pp. x-xi n. 17).

[66] R. P. C. Hanson, 'The Date of St Patrick', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, Vol. 61 (1978-9), pp. 60-79.

[67] W. W. Heist, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, (Brussels, 1965).

[68] *Four Latin Lives of Patrick: Colgan's Vita Secunda, Quarta, Tertia, and Quinta*, ed. Ludwig Bieler, (Dublin, 1971)

[69] Ibid. Preface.

[70] Ibid. Preface.

[71] A. B. E. Hood, *St Patrick: His Writings and Muirchú's Life*, (London, 1978); this is the edition Bieler was referring to in his defence of Lannigan.

[72] Ibid. p. 1; Hood advocates the obit 461 as accurate.

Collectanea, a propaganda-weapon used to bolster Armagh's primatial claims.[73] This theory has never been wholly abandoned, and whilst it holds a degree of truth, it contributed to a comparative neglect in studying the seventh century Lives of Patrick and the relationship to their Irish and Latin descendants. In 1979 Bieler published a critical edition of the *Book of Armagh's* Patrician texts,[74] which once again excelled his contemporaries. In the mid 1980s Richard Sharpe edited many of Bieler's articles in two important books: *Ludwig Bieler: Studies on the Life and Legend of St Patrick* and *Ludwig Bieler: Ireland and the Culture of Early Medieval Europe*.[75] In 1988 Michael Haren produced a study on St Patrick's Purgatory, which contributed to a much needed comparative angle on Patrick's cult in Ireland and Europe, lacking since the 1960s.[76] Finally, in 2011 Ó Riain published a much need *Dictionary of the Irish Saints*, which will prove invaluable to students and scholars of saints and hagiography for generations to come.[77]

Just as a variety of Patrician studies were produced in 1961, in 1993 various works were produced to celebrate the 1500th anniversary of Patrick's death (if one accepts the obit of 493!), most notably by David N. Dumville *et al* in *St Patrick, A.D. 493-1993*.[78] In this collection, dominated by Dumville, a detailed survey of the debates in modern Patrician studies is presented, particularly on the two Patricks problem, as well as critical commentaries and translation of important and yet under-studied sources, such as *Audite Omnes Amantes*.[79] Liam de Paor's *St Patrick's World*, which is essentially a collection of translations of texts related to Patrick, was also published in this year.   De Paor juxtaposes his collection with brief commentaries, which are all scholarly but general enough so as not to dissuade the freedom of forming one's own perceptions of the material presented.   Cormac

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[73] Ibid. p. 1; Hood dated Muirchú's Life earlier than Tírechán's.

[74] *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh*, edited with introduction, translation and commentary by Ludwig Bieler, with a contribution by Fergus Kelly, (Dublin, 2004).

[75] Richard Sharpe (ed.), *Ludwig Bieler: Studies in the Life and Legend of St Patrick*, (London, 1986), and Richard Sharpe (ed.), *Ludwig Bieler: Ireland and the Culture of Early Medieval Europe*, (London, 1987).

[76] Michael Haren, *The Medieval Pilgrimage to St Patrick's Purgatory: Loug Derg and the European Tradition*, (Clogher, 1988).

[77] Padraig Ó Riain, *A Dictionary of Irish Saints*, (Dublin, 2011).

[78] Katherine Grabowski and David N. Dumville (eds.), *Chronicles and Annals of Medieval Wales and Ireland: The Clonmacnoise Group of Texts*, (Woodbridge, 1994); Dorothy Whitelock, Rosamond McKitterick, David N. Dumville (eds.), *Ireland in Early Medieval Europe: Studies in Memory of Kathleen Hughes*, (Cambridge, 1982); David N. Dumville, *Councils and Synods of the Gaelic Early and Central Middle Ages*, (Cambridge, 1997).

[79] Andy Orchard, 'Audite Omnes Amantes: a hymn in St Patrick's praise', David N. Dumville *et al* (eds.), *St Patrick A.D. 493-1993*, (Woodbridge, 1993), pp. 153-73 at pp. 166-73 for the English translation; the earliest known version is found in the *Antiphonary of Bangor*, 680 x 691 (p. 153).

Bourke's *Patrick: the Archaeology of a Saint* is also an important study.[80] Here Bourke explores an array of Patrician artefacts, even if achieved with far less textual knowledge, but which in essence provides a much needed up-to-date interdisciplinary approach to Patrician studies.

Since 1993 there has been a profound lack of publications focusing on Patrick, save only a couple meriting attention. Alannah Hopkin's *The Living Legend of St Patrick* in 1999 is an exceptional in its attempt to analyse the history of Patrick's legend from the seventh century to the present age.[81] Joseph Nagy's *Conversing with Angels and Ancients* in 1997 examines the literature connected to the Irish saints, paying close attention to the broader importance of the saintly-character and the nature of sanctity in the early medieval Irish world; here Patrick plays a prominent role, which combines literary and, to a lesser extent, theological considerations.[82] Thomas O'Loughlin - who also published insightful studies on Muirchú's *Vita Patricii* - wrote *St Patrick: The Man and his Works*, offering a highly empathetic translation of the saint's own writings accompanied by insightful notes on Patrick's theology.[83]

In 2003 John Koch attempted to revive the problem of trying to ascertain Patrick's fifth-century historicity with the publication of a paper building on Eposito's earlier work, which advocated the idea of an earlier chronology for Patrick: *c*.351 – *c*.428.[84] Here Koch strikingly concluded that he saw 'no way in which this piece of evidence favours post-Palladian mid or later fifth-century dates for the mission of Patricius Bannaventensis.'[85] Undoubtedly the enigmatic Patrician problem will continue to intrigue scholars for a long time to come.

Peter Harbison's 'Representations of Patrick' in 2004 refreshingly surveys the development of the saint's medieval iconography, thus drawing attention to Patrick's posthumous cult and the contemporary attitudes which have nurtured its

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[80] Cormac Bourke, *Patrick: the Archaeology of a Saint*, (Belfast, 1993).

[81] Alannah Hopkin, *The Living Legend of Patrick*, (London, 1999).

[82] Joseph F. Nagy, *Conversing with Angels and Ancients, Literary Myths of Medieval Ireland*, (Ithaca, 1997).

[83] Thomas O'Loughlin, 'Muirchú's poisoned cup: a note on its sources', *Ériu*, Vol. 56, (2006), pp. 157-62 and 'Reading Muirchú's Tara-event within its background as a biblical 'trial of divinities'', (ed.) Jane Cartwright, *Celtic Hagiography and Saints' Cults*, (Cardiff, 2003), pp. 123-35; Thomas O'Loughlin, *St Patrick: The Man and his Works*, (London, 1999).

[84] John Koch, 'The early chronology for St Patrick (*c*.351 – *c*.428: some new ideas and possibilities', (ed.) Jane Cartwright, *Celtic Hagiography and Saints' Cults*, (Cardiff, 2003), pp. 102-22.

[85] Ibid. p. 118.

evolution.[86] Finally, O'Loughlin's *Discovering St Patrick* of 2006 provides an 'admirable introduction to the Patrick of history and to the early mutations of the Patrician legend.'[87] Translations of Patrick's own writings, Muirchú's *Vita* and *Audite Omnes Amantes*, are provided and O'Loughlin's analysis of Patrick's fifth-century historicity centres on how future generations view Patrick and how his persona was changed in subsequent works. However, O'Loughlin does not go beyond the later seventh century and reuses an argument he made elsewhere: that Muirchú's *Vita* should be read 'first and foremost as an exposition of the theology of conversion'.[88] Since 2005 *no* single study which concentrates on any aspect of Patrick, his legend and cult, during the Middle Ages has been attempted.

Why Bother with Patrick?

This question is understandable at this stage, especially considering that my historiographical sweep above is but the tip of the iceberg of Patrician scholarship. As Patrician historiography currently stands, scholars of medieval Irish history and hagiography have mainly incorporated Patrick's posthumous cult piecemeal into studies focusing on other themes, on the production of further translations and commentaries of Patrick's own fifth-century writings, and have focused on the still unresolved Patrician problem. This needs to be redressed in future studies on Patrick's medieval posthumous career and contexts, which require fresh approaches and new way in which to exploit the available primary material, as is the primary aim here. Overcoming issues of historical periodisation, which is inherent in modern Irish scholarship more generally, also needs to be tackled and in particular with much more effort accomplished in order to bridge the Viking and Norman periods.

Generally speaking, in the later twentieth century there was an increased interest in fostering interdisciplinary approaches to the study of hagiography and saints' cults, which have injected linguistic, literary, historical, theological, archaeological, and socio-cultural perspectives.[89] As Robert Bartlett states:

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[86] Peter Harbison, 'Representations of St Patrick', (ed.) A. MacShamhráin, *The Island of St Patrick, Church and Ruling Dynasties in Fingal and Meath, 400-1148*, (Dublin, 2004), pp. 89-106.

[87] Thomas O'Loughlin, *Discovering St Patrick*, (London, 2005); quote from Carey, '*Discovering St Patrick*', p. 507, who also concedes that O'Loughlin's argument is 'considerably fuller than his earlier treatments.'

[88] Ibid. pp. 508-9.

[89] David Knowles, *Great Historical Enterprises*, (London, 1962). Two scholars excel in their contributions to hagiographical studies during the 1970s and 1980s: Peter Brown, 'The rise and function of the holy man in Late Antiquity', *Journal of Roman Studies*, Vol. 61, (1971), pp. 80-101, and André Vauchez, (trans.) Jean Birell, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, (Cambridge, 1997), English translation from the French and originally published in 1981.

> 'The corpus of saints' lives surviving from the medieval period forms
> an enormous body of material which, as has long been recognised,
> demands the application of a specialised critical apparatus… Saints'
> lives are both part of a genre of immense longevity and the products
> of individual circumstances and environments.'[90]

Over the last thirty years or so this has begun to be more fully appreciated, with more localised studies of saints and their cults in medieval Western societies produced, stressing hagiographical sources as a window to the Middle Ages. However we should also be cautious, bearing in mind Julia Smith's more recent observations on the use of hagiography in historical writing that:

> 'Since the early 1970s evidence drawn from hagiographical texts and
> from other manifestations of the cult of saints has permeated just
> about every nook and cranny of medieval studies… And yet,
> something is lacking… the early Middle Ages suffers from a
> particularly acute attack of scholarly unease, whose primary
> symptom is a dispersal of effort into a rash of tightly focused articles
> and monographs.'[91]

In 1982 the journal *Peritia* was launched, containing articles focusing on various aspects of Irish hagiography.[92] However, Patrick appears neglected in this 'Irish hagiographical revolution', here and more generally – perhaps as a response to the growth in interest in other early Irish saints and the frustration engendered by the troublesome Patrician problem and perhaps doubt over the dating of key Patrician texts, such as the *Tripartite Life* for example.

With the burgeoning interest in medieval Irish hagiography in mind, however, much needed resources were published and Ó Riain's *Corpus Genealogiarum Sanctorum Hiberniae* of 1985 suited the mood, enabling scholars to locate a range of hagiographical material.[93] However, just two years later Doherty states of hagiography as a literary genere more generally that:

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[90] Robert Bartlett, 'Rewriting saints' lives: the case of Gerald of Wales', *Speculum*, Vol. 58, (1983), pp. 598-613.

[91] Julia M. H. Smith, 'Review article: early medieval hagiography in the late twentieth century', *Early Medieval Europe*, Vol. 1, (1992), pp. 69-76 at p. 69.

[92] Dorothy Ann Bray, 'The State of Irish Hagiography', *A Journal of Early Medieval Northwestern Europe*, Issue 9, (Oct., 2006), p. 2; Charles Doherty, 'Some aspects of hagiography as a source for Irish economic history', *Peritia*, Vol. 1, (1982), pp. 300-28; Ian Wood, 'The *Vita Columbani* and Merovingian hagiography', *Peritia*, Vol. 1, (1982), pp. 63-80; Pádraig Ó Riain, 'Towards a methodology in early Irish hagiography', *Peritia*, Vol. 1, (1982), pp. 146-59.

[93] *Corpus Genealogiarum Sanctorum Hiberniae*, compiled by Pádraig Ó Riain, (Dublin, 1985).

'[F]ar from being the out-pourings of an over-credulous medieval mentality, is within its own terms of reference, a sophisticated means of communication which is of most value to the historian, not merely for its capacity to throw further light upon secular and ecclesiastical propaganda, but on an area which has scarcely been touched upon yet – the exploration of the mind of medieval man…'[94]

Certainly there is a long way to go before any achievement along the lines that Doherty highlights here is produced, in Irish scholarship or indeed in scholarship focusing on other regions. Nonetheless, there continued to be progress on the use of hagiographical sources as historical sources in Irish scholarship. The groundbreaking work of Máire Herbert in 1988, *Iona, Kells and Derry*, marked a crucial step forward in the development of studies in Irish medieval hagiography and history.[95] In 1991 Richard Sharpe wrote a critical examination of the surviving collections of Irish saints' Lives and their manuscript traditions.[97] He expounded the importance of seeking a historical foundation for these Lives and regarded them as an important component of Irish literature. Sharpe pushed back the date of nine Latin *vitae* between *circa* 750 and 850 and proposed that these *vitae* are invaluable for assessing various aspects of medieval Irish history,[98] stating that:

'[A]wareness of the limitations of hagiographical evidence has grown a good deal, and historical work has sometimes fought shy of using the saints' Lives. This trend is now reversed, and the opportunities which the saints' Lives offer the historian are… more appreciated.'[99]

However in her overview of the current 'state' of Irish hagiography, Dorothy Bray countered Sharpe's criticism of Charles Plummer's attempts in the 1920s to locate pagan elements in the saints' Lives, an area Bray claimed that with further research may actually reveal aspects of the hagiographers' spiritual lives as well as that of their intended audiences.[100]

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[94] Charles Doherty, 'The Irish hagiographer: resoucres, aims, results', (ed.) Tom Dunne, *The Writer as Witness: Literature as Historical Evidence*, (Cork, 1987), pp. 10-22 at p. 20.

[95] Máire Herbert, *Iona, Kells and Derry: The History and Hagiography of the Monastic* Familiae *of Columba*, (Oxford, 1988); 'Latin and vernacular hagiography of Ireland from its origins to the sixteenth century', (ed.) G. Philippart, *Hagiographies: International History of the Latin and Vernacular Hagiographical Literature in the West from its Origins to 1550 Vol. III*, Corpus Christianorum Hagiographies 3 (2001), pp. 327-60 at p.341; 'Hagiography', Kim McCone and Katherine Simms (eds.), *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*, (Maynooth, 1996), pp. 79-90.

[97] Sharpe, *Medieval Irish Saints' Lives.*

[98] Bray, 'State of Irish hagiography', pp. 2-3.

[99] Sharpe, *Medieval Irish Saints' Lives*, p. 8.

[100] Bray, 'State of Irish hagiography', p. 3.

Nonetheless, from the 1990s more studies soon emerged.[101] Ó Riain's milestone *History of Irish Martyrologies* in 2006 sums up a growing interest in the study of the various Irish martyrologies and their value as historical sources.[102] In 2009 Lisa Bitel's *Landscape with Two Saints* compared and contrasted the cults of Ss Brigit of Kildare and Genovefa of Paris;[103] as mentioned, it remains unusual to encounter such a work. A diversity of approaches has also been displayed in several recent edited collections on Irish or 'Celtic' saints' cults; however much remains to be done in this field and a plethora of localised studies continue to dominate.[104]

To echo what has already been highlighted, much remains to be done on the pre- thirteenth-century cult of Patrick. However, Patrick's posthumous medieval career and contexts continue to be neglected in this surging interest in Irish hagiographical studies, even if it is vitally important that since the 1970s studies of other Irish saints and their cults no longer struggle under the weight of Patrician scholarship. For too long Patrician studies has become bogged down by the problem of determining the saint's fifth-century chronology and too fixed on dating certain texts for which exact composition-dates may never be discovered. Marc Bloch once wrote that:

> 'At least three fourths of the lives of the saints of the high Middle
> Ages can teach us nothing concrete about those pious personages
> whose careers they pretend to describe. If, on the other hand, we
> consult them as to the way of life or thought peculiar to the epoch in
> which they were written (all things which the biographer of the saint
> had not the least intention of revealing), we shall find them
> invaluable.'[105]

Indeed, Patrick himself has left us with no fixed dates or event/s in his own writings for us to ascertain exactly when he wrote. On this matter Koch reasons that:

> 'One of the great advances in critical methodology for the study of St
> Patrick in the later twentieth century has been recognising the need to
> separate the evidence of hagiography and that for the early cult of St

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[101] Examples include Dorothy Ann Bray's *A List of Motifs in the Lives of the Early Irish Saints*, (Helsinki, 1992), Pádraig Ó Riain's *The Making of a Saint, Finbarr of Cork 600-1200*, (Dublin, 1997), and Paul MacCotter's *Colmán of Cloyne, A Study*, (Dublin, 2004).
[102] Pádraig Ó Riain, *Feastdays of the Saints: A History of Irish Martyrologies*, (Bruxelles, 2006).
[103] Lisa Bitel, *Landscape with two Saints. How Genofeva of Paris and Brigit of Kildare built Christianity in Barbarian Europe*, (Oxford, 2009).
[104] John Carey, Máire Herbert and Pádraig Ó Riain (eds.), *Studies in Irish Hagiography: Saints and Scholars*, (Dublin, 2001); Jane Cartwright (ed.), *Celtic Hagiography and Saints' Cults*, (Cardiff, 2003); Steve Boardman, John Rueben Davies and Eila Williamson (eds.), *Saints' Cults in the Celtic World*, (Woodbridge, 2009).
[105] Marc Bloch, (trans.) Peter Putman, *The Historian's Craft*, (Manchester, 1954), pp. 52-3.

Patrick, on the one hand, from that of the primary sources, essentially Patrick's own writings, on the other.'[106]

This process is not yet complete; mainly as seventh-century hagiographers and their descendants evidently used and augmented Patrick's own writings, making it difficult for scholars to ignore Patrick's fifth-century historicity.[107] This aspect only adds to further stagnation, and perhaps one is forced to accept that the process of separating Patrick's own writings from his earliest hagiography is unachievable – but why should it be achieved and what purpose does it ultimately serve? Is continuity with the past not more important? Future work in Patrician studies must spend less energy on the so-called Patrician problem and on producing linguistically-focused studies of some key medieval Patrician Lives, such as the *Tripartite Life*, for which an exact date may always be disputed with no general agreement on it ever reached.

My thesis focuses on Patrick's cult between the seventh and the late twelfth centuries by concentrating on the development of his relic cult. Raghnall Ó Floinn pointedly states that: 'With the possible exception of Patrick, the relic cult of Columba was one of the most prolific in medieval Ireland.'[108] All of the Lives of Patrick under scrutiny here mention various relics of Patrick in their narratives, thus providing one major vein through which an exploration of the contextual nuances of the cult of Patrick and his patron church of Armagh between the seventh and the late twelfth centuries can be understood. As Julia Smith explains, Christian relics were:

> '[P]altry remains endowed with an abundance of values and meanings. Relics, I contend, stood at the intersection of several different medieval discourses of value – material, spiritual, political, historical… they fluctuated between one discourse and another… Only the underlying premise that these earthly tokens [i.e. relics] were pledges of eternal life remained unaffected.'[109]

It is these 'discourses of value' that are the most intriguing facets for recent scholars. Jonathan Sumption states that 'the cult of the saints was the counterpart of the fear of evil. Just as men tended to associate evil with objects familiar to them, so they attempted to give a human quality to the forces of good.'[110] The veneration of saints' relics has been active since the second century AD, if not before, and by the end of the fourth-century churches were collecting relics *en masse*, especially the corporeal

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[106] Koch, 'The early chronology', p. 102.

[107] Ibid.

[108] Raghnall Ó Floinn, '*Insignia Columbae* I', (ed.) Cormac Bourke, *Studies in the Cult of Saint Columba*, (Dublin, 1997), p. 159.

[109] Julia M. H. Smith, 'Rulers and relics, c.750-c.950: Treasure on earth, treasure in heaven', *Past and Present*, Vol. 206 No. 5, (2010), pp. 73-96.

[110] Jonathan Sumption, *Pilgrimage, An Image of Mediaeval Religion*, (London, 1975), p. 22.

remains of the holy dead, deemed the most precious to acquire.[111] Other types of relics were also collected, traded, gifted and stolen and enshrined throughout our period: 'associative relics', or objects of various forms that came into contact with or which were used or owned by the saint during his / her lifetime, and also *brandea*, for example pieces of cloth which had touched the tomb of saint.[112]

Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century in particular many studies have traced the development of the medieval cult of relics in the Christian West, although they predominantly concentrate on English and continental regions.[113] In Ireland and in the British Isles more generally between the fourth and the seventh centuries the evidence is much patchier compared to that for the continent. However, by the seventh century Ireland had been Christianised for at least two hundred years, mainly accredited to Patrick, but it was a 'Dark-Age' for the British Isles more generally as regards a lack of internal textual evidence; the archaeological record is also patchy, although new scholarship on this dilemma is still developing at present.[114]

Several important works have refocused our understanding of Irish relics and relic cults in the period under scrutiny in this thesis. Among the most recent are Ó Floinn's *Relics and Reliquaries* and Herbert's 'Hagiography and holy bodies'; Tomás Ó Carragáin's *Churches in Medieval Ireland* is also important and concentrates on the archaeological evidence to *c*.1100.[115] However, further studies on individual saints' relic cults in Ireland more generally over a longer chronological period and/or larger geographical scope (such as attempted here) would continue to expand our knowledge beyond what has already been achieved. There are multiple Lives of Irish saints, including the Lives of Patrick, to still be exploited further by future scholars in

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[111] Ibid.

[112] The terms primary, secondary and tertiary, which are often used by modern scholars to categorise relics, will not be used here as they imply rank.

[113] Many more are referenced throughout this thesis, but we may include: Patrick Geary, *Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages*, (Princeton, 1978), and *Living With the Dead in the Middle Ages*, (New York, 1994); Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*, (London, 1981); Benedicta Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind*, (Philadelphia, 1982); Rollason, David, *Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England*, (New York, 1989).

[114] Nancy Edwards, 'Celtic saints and early medieval archaeology', Alan Thacker and Richard Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 225-67 at pp. 227 and see the notes for further reading; also consult Ó Carragáin's *Churches*.

[115] Máire Herbert, 'Hagiography and holy bodies: observations on corporeal relics in pre-Viking Ireland', *L'Irlanda e gli irlandesi nell'alto medioevo*: *Settimane di Studio della Fondazione Centro Italiano di Studi sull'alto medioevo* (Spoleto, 2010), pp. 239-60; Tómas Ó Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland Architecture, Ritual and Memory*, (London, 2010).

various ways, and the study of relic-cults is one major pathway to revealing new and exciting vistas in the study of medieval Irish history more generally.

Aims and Objectives of this Thesis

This thesis aims to first and foremost present one new way in which the Lives of Patrick can be exploited in order to gain further understanding and insight to Ireland's rich history between the seventh and the late twelfth centuries, for all of the reasons highlighted above. Since the Lives of Patrick contain much information on the various relics of Patrick – many of which only survive in these texts – this seems a good place to start introducing new approaches to the study of these Lives. The first task is to fix a working chronology for the Lives of Patrick belonging to our period, which is analysed throughout the second part of this introduction with an accessible list-form of their chronology in Appendix A. Although some of these dates for certain texts are still under debate and are likely to remain so, this thesis uses what follows as its underlying hypothetical chronological matrix, and, although it will not play a major feature in the thesis, the treatment of relics as explored in subsequent chapters can be seen to largely confirm this.

Since this thesis focuses on physical objects in the Lives of Patrick and their textual and contextual existence, there is little to no room to include a thorough discussion of other material remnants of Patrick's cult, such as sculpture and wells for example. In this thesis a variety of primary and secondary evidence is used in conjunction with the predominant focus on the content and historical contexts of the pre thirteenth century Lives of Patrick. These include an array of non-Patrician hagiographical sources, the various Irish annals, historical studies on saints' and relic cults in other regions of the Christian West, and an array of archaeological and art historical research. The decision to separate the Lives of Patrick from other prominent textual sources, especially the various Irish annals – which also contain much information on Patrick's relic-cult and which appear numerous times throughout this thesis – is justifiable. The Lives are narrative prose sources, thereby offering a much broader context to the physical composition, role, treatment and functions of relics in the anecdotes in which they appear. From this we may ask the following: is there any detail about the physical composition of the relic, especially for those objects which have not physically survived? Who or to/from where does the saint give or receive the relic? What do the stories tell us about the wider functions of relics in society in terms of miraculous cures, for example? Through this approach we can then discern certain key textual patterns, at least as far as relics are concerned, which best equips us to address the following questions: which stories

featuring relics have been retained by a certain period from an earlier time and which have been omitted, elaborated, shortened or even newly introduced? And, of equal importance, which Lives contain the most number and diversity of relics?

The Lives provide the best opportunity to place stories featuring relics into their broader historical contexts, and once the above questions are addressed then the next stage is to ask *why* such patterns emerge. Whilst it is the case that the Irish annals help greatly with this process, they work best when used in conjunction with the Lives and other sources given the concise and often vague nature of the annal-entries. We will see that throughout this thesis the various stories featuring relics in the Lives not only help to date some of these texts more firmly, as mentioned above, but they also give a much broader context to the available documentary evidence – especially the annals – as well as complementing the archaeological / art historical record as concerns the relics mentioned and whether they have physically surivived beyond the texts or not. Placing Patrick's relic cult in its broader European contexts (and this is not to be mistaken for 'continental perspectives' only, but includes other Celtic- / Gaelic-speaking regions, such as Scotland and Wales, as a firm part of Europe) also helps to break through the severe limitations of the so-called Patrician problem, i.e. the identification of Patrick-senior –junior and the third Patrick of Ros Dela, and the boundaries of historical 'periodisation'; as mentioned, this is an area sorely neglected in modern scholarship on medieval Ireland more generally.

There exists no other study that focuses on Patrick and his relic cult between the seventh and later twelfth centuries. The evolution of the Lives of Patrick in these centuries provides one main vein through which we can develop an understanding of the richness and diversity of Patrick's relic cult. Smith's apt description above that relics stand at the intersection of various 'discourses of value' and often 'fluctuated between one discourse or another' is considered throughout. Not only do we get a clearer sense of the sheer variety of Patrick's relics and their diverse functions and spiritual value in the texts and to wider society, but also of the ecclesiastical fortunes of Armagh (Patrick's cult-centre) and the influences that internal and external secular and ecclesiastical forces had on the development and success of Patrick's cult: relics are its main expression.

The next section guides us through a synopsis of the content in the individual chapters, which further clarifies the main research questions addressed in each chapter as well as the consolidation of this and their summations as presented in the final conclusion to this thesis.

Outline of the Thesis

Chapter one focuses on Patrick's corporeal relics and the dilemma surrounding the exact whereabouts of his grave and full bodily remains. The full implication of the so called Patrician problem is more fully explained and we learn that this has its known origins in the seventh century and is one which extended beyond Ireland. This chapter also analyses the dominant tradition in our various Patrician Lives that Down is the host of Patrick's grave and not his patron church at Armagh. Here we get a fuller sense of Armagh's assumption of and its struggle to maintain control over its patron's cult, from its seventh-century triumph in securing itself as Patrick's cult-centre to the Viking era when other Patrician relics begin to come into the fore, namely Patrick's *Bachall Ísu* ('Staff of Jesus'), to Glastonbury's efforts to claim the saint's corporeal relics and finally to the Norman period and their appropriation of Patrick's cult. Throughout this chapter the broader Irish and European contexts of corporeal relic cults is interwoven.

Chapter two explores what is probably the most famous of all medieval Irish relics, Patrick's *Bachall Ísu*, which also represents one of the largest sub-categories of associative relics in Ireland: croziers. *Bachall Ísu* has a fascinating history as essentially it was reputed to have belonged to Christ Himself, and a discussion of the relic's Late Antique origins as well as Armagh's collection of relics of Christ in our period is presented here. How and why Armagh came to possess *Bachall Ísu* has a long tradition in the Lives in particular, one which stretches back to the later eighth century at a time when Armagh needed a relic that represented its ecclesiastical ambitions in Ireland. That *Bachall Ísu* became Armagh's premier relic attracted the attention of the invading Norman forces, and the relic was finally removed to Dublin in the later twelfth century. This Chapter focuses on the build up to this symbolic event, charting in depth the rise and decline of Armagh's power in Ireland. The miracles and functions of *Bachall Ísu* and that of other Irish and non-Irish croziers are also discussed, which furthers our understanding of this important relic.

The third chapter focuses on the other significant category of associative relics in Ireland, namely the various bell relics associated with Patrick in our various major texts, in particular *Cloc ind Édachta* ('Bell of the Testament'). In this chapter the history and significance of *Cloc ind Édachta* is analysed and questioned, and more prominence is given to other bells of Patrick which have been neglected in modern scholarship but which strikingly feature far more than *Cloc ind Édachta* in our pre- thirteenth-century Lives as well as in other sources. Why bells were venerated as relics in Ireland and their various miracles and functions is analysed here, as is a comparison to bell relics in Ireland and elsewhere.

Chapter four includes an analysis of all other relics of Patrick which have not been easily accommodated in previous chapters, hence this is why I refer to them as 'miscellaneous' relics of Patrick. These miscellaneous Patrician relics include books, altars, chalices, patens, and some unusual examples such as a whole seal-skin and a pipe of gold. Their chronological position in the major Patrician texts is scrutinised, along with their context and various miracles and functions, mainly to discern whether there are any visible patterns. For example, is there a growth in the variety of Patrician relics in the texts at any one point during our period, and if so, then what does this tell us about Armagh's status or the diversity of Irish relic cults more generally? This chapter complements previous chapters, ultimately demonstrating the diversity and spread of Patrick's relic cult in general throughout our period.

The conclusion consolidates the findings of the chapters and the following primary research questions are addressed: why did Patrick's relic-cult have a bearing on the political and ecclesiastical fortunes of the saint's patron church at Armagh? Which relic of Patrick was Armagh's primary insigne at any one point during the period under scrutiny here and why? What were the consequences of Glastonbury Abbey's interest in Patrick's cult from the tenth century and the Norman appropriation of it in the later twelfth? Which of the Lives of Patrick contain the most number and / or variety of relics in our period and why? Which relics have most importance in medieval Ireland, corporeal or associative relics? What are the future directions for this research? Before we may begin the journey through the main body of this thesis, however, the following Introduction II presents a chronological overview of the various Latin and Irish Lives of Patrick in our period; it must be noted again that a basic list of all the Lives of Patrick under scrutiny here are presented in Appendix A.

Introduction II

The Latin and Irish Lives of Patrick between the Seventh and the Late Twelfth Centuries

Modern scholarship lacks a published overview of the medieval Latin and Irish Lives of Patrick belonging to our period. An origin-date for some cannot be agreed between scholars, especially for *Vitae Secunda* and *Quarta* and the *Tripartite Life*. This section presents various scholars' views on the dating of our Latin and Irish Lives of Patrick, and essentially my presentation of the chronology of these texts as applied throughout (also consult Appendix A for a list of all texts discussed).

The Patrician Texts in the *Book of Armagh*

The seventh-century writings of Tírechán and Muirchú, as well as *Audites Omnes Amantes*, each represent some of the earliest contributions to Irish hagiography.[116] The work of Tírechán's and Muirchú survives in the early ninth century *Book of Armagh*, written at least partly in 807 by Torbach during his reign as *coarb* ('heir') of Patrick.[117] Also in its Patrician section are *Liber Angeli*, *Notulae*, *Additamenta*, and Patrick's own works: *Confessio* and *Epistola*. The *Book of Armagh* entire comprises three sections which may once have formed three distinct books: a complete New Testament, the Patrician texts (also recognised as *Canóin Pádraic*), and the "Martiniana" (*Vita Martinii* and *Dialogues*) of Suplicius Severus.[118]

     Liber Angeli, or *Book of the Angel*, is preceded in the *Book of Armagh* by the prologue and the chapter-headings of Muirchú's *Vita*, followed by an abridged version of Patrick's *Confessio*.[119] It has been suggested that the lost *Lex Patricii*, or 'Law of Patrick', is preserved in *Liber Angeli* since it is a legal document in essence.[120] *Liber Angeli* is an elaborated hagiographical statement of Armagh's

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[116] David N. Dumville, 'The form of Patrick's *Confessio* in the Book of Armagh', *St Patrick A.D. 493-1993*, David N. Dumville *et al* (eds.), (Woodbridge, 1993), pp. 191-203 at p. 191; Bieler, *The Patrician Texts*, pp. 2-3 n. 3, notes that the *Book of Armagh's* Gospel section was once a separate manuscript, not dissimilar to the early 'Irish pocket-Gospel books'; Michael Curran, *The Antiphonary of Bangor and the Early Irish Monastic Liturgy*, (Dublin, 1984).

[117] Dumville, *St Patrick,* p.191.

[118] Bieler, *Patrician Texts*; it is probably during Torbach's short *coarb*-ship that the *Book of Armagh's* contents were finalised.

[119] *Liber Angeli*, ed. Ludwig Bieler, with a contribution by Fergus Kelly, *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh*, (Dublin, 2004), pp. 184-92; Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, p. 52; David N. Dumville, 'The Afterlife of the *Liber Angeli*', David N. Dumville *et al* (eds.), *St Patrick, A.D. 493-1993*, (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 253-4 at p. 253, where he referred to a lost 'Supplement' by Ferdomnach.

[120] Kenney, *Sources*, p. 336; Patrick's 'Law' is one of many promulgated in a saint's name; Liam Breatnach, *A Companion to the Corpus Iuris Hibernici*, (Dublin, 2004).

claims, territorially and in the emphasis of its ecclesiastical supremacy: the first part includes an introduction from which the name derives, and the second decrees Armagh's rights and privileges.[121] The latter part may date to 734, but more recently Thomas Charles-Edwards dated *Liber Angeli* to 678 x 686.[123] However, Doherty places *Liber Angeli* in the 640s, agreeing with Sharpe that it contains only a few paragraphs of later origin.[124] Appended to *Liber Angeli* are two notes, one containing certain liturgical regulations at Armagh and the other recognising Brigit as Connacht's sovereign, which probably postdate 800.[125]

Very little detail of Bishop Tírechán himself is discernible, except that he descended from Conall son of Ende and grandson of Amolgnid and was thus from Tirawley in Co Mayo.[126] However, Tírechán probably belonged to a church loyal to Armagh and authored this collection of 'memoranda' (hence the title *Collectanea* given by Bieler).[127] The *Book of Armagh* also verifies Tírechán as a disciple of Bishop Ultán moccu Conchobuir of Árd Breccáin (d.657), a midlands church.[128] Some of the *Collectanea* may be lost to us, since 'Book I' (Bieler's chapter-divisions apply[129]) probably derives from a text owned or written by Ultán, indicating that *Collectanea* was originally larger and comprised two sections: one based on a lost *Vita* written by Ultán (*liber Ultani*) and the other containing chronologically ordered memoranda with more detail on Patrick than has survived.[130] Although the *Collectanea* is not strictly a 'Life', in that its overall structure presents an 'itinerary' of Patrick's travels, it is nonetheless an intricate work.

Tírechán partly drew on oral sources; for example Patrick relied on *mihi testante Ultano episcopo* and 'many elders' for a number of details (although

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[121] Kenney, Sources, p. 336; *paruchia Patricii* denotes the personnel of churches subjugated to Armagh, though it has often been used as a synonym of *familia*; Etchingham argues that these are 'mutually exclusive forms' (*Church Organisation*, (Maynooth, 1999), pp. 12-45).

[123] Ibid.; Thomas Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, (Cambridge, 2000), p. 439.

[124] Charles Doherty, 'The cult of Patrick and the politics of Armagh in the seventh century', (ed.) Jean-Michel Picard, *Ireland and Northern France AD 600-850*, (Blackrock, 1991), pp. 53-94 at p. 6; Sharpe, 'Palaeographical considerations in the study of the Patrician documents in the Book of Armagh', *Scriptorum*, Vol. 36, (1982), pp. 3-28 at p. 21.

[125] Kenney, *Sources*, p. 336-7.

[126] Tírechán, *Collectanea*, 18.2.

[127] Ibid.; the loyalty of Tírechán's church to Armagh is clear from a 'grant of land made by Ende to Patrick' (to quote one example).

[128] Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, p. 36; however, this logic always had implications for scholars who reduce the seventh-century *vitae* to 'Armagh-propaganda', as it is clear Tírechán also intended to bolster his ancestry's status (Cathy Swift, 'Tírechán's motives in compiling the "Collectanea": an alternative interpretation', *Ériu*, Vol. 45, (1994), pp. 53-82).

[129] Sharpe 'Palaeographical considerations', pp. 3-28, where he argues that Bieler's chapter-divisions hinder his otherwise good edition of the *Book of Armagh*.

[130] Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, p. 36.

unknown) throughout Book I.[131] However, Tírechán also mentions *liber Ultani* and what Bieler describes as a '*plana historia*'.[132] The section listing Patrick's four names (Magonus, Succetus, Corthirthiascus, and Patricius[133]) and those which detail the saint's captivity and escape probably derive from *liber Ultani* (mainly evident in Book I). A primitive *Vita*, i.e. *plana historia*, was probably predominantly based on *Confessio* and concludes with Patrick's first visit to Tara which belies chapters 2-5, 8 and possibly 49 of *Collectanea*.[134] Bieler suggests that Tírechán and Muirchú only had access to extracts of the *Confessio* and that the majority of information was filtered through *plana historia*.[135] Tírechán likely drew upon more written than oral sources, but this does not mean that a common source was not used independently from that same source used by Muirchú in his *Vita*, namely the *plana historia*, as well as accessing a good copy of the *Confessio*, which Tírechán independently adapted to suit his own ends. [136]   Thus Tírechán probably wrote his *Collectanea* contemporaneously with Muirchú's *Vita* in the last quarter of the seventh century.[137]

Bishop Muirchú maccu Machtheni wrote *Vita Patricii* by order of Bishop Áed of Sléibte (Sletty in Co Leix), to whom it is dedicated.[138] Áed went to Armagh during Bishop Ségené's reign (661-88) to incorporate his church into the *paruchia Patricii*, and is possibly the same Áed (d.700), an anchorite who resigned his office at

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[131] Tírechán, *Collectanea*, 6.1.

[132] Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, p. 30, states that most of *liber Ultani* derived from oral sources.

[133] Gearoid Mac Eoin, 'The Four Names of Patrick', Michael Richter *et al* (eds.), *Ogma: Essays in Celtic Studies in Honour of Próinséas Ní Chatháin*, (Dublin, 2002), pp. 300-11 at p. 301.

[134] Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, p. 39.

[135] Ibid. p. 40; he states that Tírechán's quote about Victor in the *Confessio* is 'quite arbitrarily misapplied to Patrick's plan to visit Mount Egli, and belongs to the period of his mission.' David Howlett (ed.), *Muirchú Moccu Mactheni's 'Vita Sanctii Patricii' Life of St Patrick*, (Dublin, 2006), p. 34, claims that 'Muirchú had direct access to a 'good' copy of *Confessio*… the structural features of which he understood clearly.'

[136] Bury, *Life of Saint Patrick*, pp. 248-51; some '*seniores*' Tírechán mentions may have sent detailed letters as references. Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, p. 41, took up Bury's point and deemed it worthy of further thought along with Bury's suggestion that the sources of Tírechán and Muirchú were originally written in the Old Irish vernacular (Bury, *Life of Patrick*, p. 250).

[137] Kenney, *Sources*; Ludwig Bieler, 'Ancient hagiography and the Lives of St Patrick', (ed.) Richard Sharpe, *Studies in the Life and Legend of St Patrick*, (London, 1986), pp. 650-55, demolishes Carney, Flower and Szöverffys' views that Tírechán drew on the Latin *Life of St Gregory the Great* by an anonymous monk at Whitby in 713, for which they argue have clear parallels in form that render *Collectanea's* date of origin *circa* 720; however, this would make Tírechán impossibly old! Also see Howlett's *Vita Patricii*, p. 184, where he dates *Collectanea* – wrongly in my opinion – to the first quarter of the eighth century.

[138] Muirchú, *Vita Patricii*, ed. Ludwig Bieler with a contribution by Fergus Kelly, *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh*, (Dublin, 2004), pp. 61-121 at Perface 1 and p. 63; Muirchú's death-date is unknown, though we know he is recorded on the guarantor list of Adomnán's *Cáin* (Máirín Ní Dhonnchadha, 'The guarantor list of Cáin Adomnáin, 697', *Peritia*, Vol. 1, (1982), pp. 178-215); David N. Dumville, 'Muirchú's Life of St Patrick from the Book of Armagh', David N. Dumville *et al* (eds.), *St Patrick A.D. 493-1993*, (Woodbridge, 1993), pp. 203-21 at p. 203.

Armagh a few years earlier.[139] Áed probably met Muirchú around this time, since Muirchú's kin also originated in North Laigin where he was a cleric. Furthermore, Kilmurchon, or 'Church of Muirchú', in Co Wicklow, had a strong connection to Muirchú's 'father' Cogitosus, who wrote *Vita Brigitae* in the mid seventh century.[140] Perhaps both Áed and Muirchú were also engaged in reconciling the northern and southern Irish churches, since they both either attended the 697 Synod of Birr or signed their approval of *Cáin Adomnáin* without attending.[141] This reconciliation included a mutual exchange: the northern churches would practice the Roman dating of Easter by way of an exchange that meant that the southern churches would accept Patrick as Ireland's primary saint – perhaps this is the strongest motive for Muirchú's crafting of *Vita Patricii*.[142]

The textual tradition of Muirchú's work is less straightforward than for *Collectanea*, which has no known textual tradition outside of Ireland. Muirchú's *Vita* is preserved in three known manuscript collections, none of which contain a complete version: the *Book of Armagh* in Trinity College, Dublin; *Bibliothéque royale* in Brussels; and the MS Novara 77 which in the *Nationalbibliothek* Chapter Library in Vienna.[143] Although it is only these collections that are known to contain the surviving direct versions of Muirchú's *Vita*, his writings are also preserved indirectly in at least eight subsequent Latin and Irish Lives of Patrick.

Muirchú's Prologue speaks of sources in very general terms,[144] but, as mentioned, Muirchú also likely made use of the *plana historia* and another primitive Life that Bieler entitled *Vita Primitiva*, which attributes the Tara and Meath stories to the same original source in the works of Tírechán and Muirchú.[145] Some chapters quote or paraphrase Patrick's *Confessio*: 1, 16, 17, 19-22 and 23, except in its latter part when Patrick talks about a dream in which his vocation was revealed by the angel Victor.[146] The Bible is another obvious literary influence, and Muirchú largely

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[139] Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, p. 1.

[140] Muirchú, *Vita*, Preface; Kenney, *Sources*, p. 255, stated that Cogitosus' *Vita* 'marked a new departure in [Irish] hagiography' (p. 256).

[141] Adomnán, *Cáin Adomnáin*, trans. Gilbert Márkus, *Adomnán's Law of the Innocents*, (Kilmartin, 2008); see n. 135 below.

[142] Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 317.

[143] Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, p. 4 n. 4. Various versions of Muirchú's *Vita* survive in later copies (Ludwig Bieler, 'Studies on the text of Muirchú, II: the Vienna fragments and the tradition of Muirchú's text', (ed.) Richard Sharpe, *Studies in the Life and Legend of St Patrick*, (London, 1986), pp. 181-95).

[144] A couple of pertinent linguistic examples pertaining to Tírechán's references to his sources illustrate this point (Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, p. 16).

[145] Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, p. 17 n. 2.

[146] Ibid. p. 16 n. 4; Muirchú appears unfamiliar with *Confessio* beyond the second half of ch.23, mainly as he spoke of *multae visiones* and whenVictor compels Patrick through a vision to begin his mission, it is in words that do not correspond with the saint's own version

used a version of St Jerome's Vulgate.[147] Bieler suggested that many of the non-Vulgate variants on originated from some Hiberno-Latin hymns; however, MacNeill argues Muirchú partly depended on the Old Irish *Génair Pátraic*.[148] Other sources may have included some early Irish sagas, since one of Muirchú's obvious talents also lies in his ability to create a simple premise in his narrative containing extensive dialogue between characters.[149] Undoubtedly Muirchú, as well as Tírechán, drew on local traditions, particularly those of the Ulaid (Ulstermen) of Armagh and Down. Whether Muirchú collected local oral traditions in person is speculative, as is the question of whether his sources originated in the sixth century, as Bury argues.[150]

Following the *Notes Supplementary to Tírechán* (Bieler's title) are seven brief paragraphs known as *Additamenta*.[151] It is difficult to discern whether *Additamenta* were inserted by a later scribe or whether they were the deliberate insertion of one or more compiler of the *Book of Armagh*, since some other notes are found scattered in other places: in the marginalia to III 7 of the *Notulae* section, and in some marginalia of *Vita Martinii* from the last section in the *Book of Armagh*.[152] The *Additamenta* contains records similar in character to the *Collectanea*, which are supplementary to the *Collectanea* or to a text closely resembling it.[153] The longest of *Additamenta's* anecdotes concerns the foundation of Trim, near the River Boyne, twenty-five years before Armagh's foundation and the conversion of Trim's local ruler Fedelmid, son of King Loeguire of Tara, who pledges territory and property to Patrick. Interestingly a later addition to the story notes the privileges of Armagh by the Munster king Brian Bóruma in 1004, which was recorded by the king's scribe and confessor Máel Suthain (or *Caluus Perennis*) and denotes that the *Additamenta*

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but to the later *Audites Omnes Amantes* – only the voices from the Wood of Fochloth come from *Confessio*, thus allowing Muirchú to introduce Patrick's visit to Rome.

[147] Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, p. 19 and 'Commentary', pp. 193-213.

[148] *Génair Pátraic*, trans. Whitley Stokes, *The Tripartite Life of Patrick V2: with other Documents Relating to that Saint*, (London, 1887), pp. 402-11; Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, p. 20; states that MacNeill's argument was not 'cogent' but that the use of vernacular Irish poetical sources cannot be discounted nonetheless; more to the point, *Génair Pátraic* is too late to be one of Muirchú's sources!

[149] The most obvious early Irish saga is the Ulster Cycle tale of Cúchulain; Ann Dooley, *Playing the Hero: Reading the Irish Saga Táin Bó Cuailnge*, (Toronto, 2006).

[150] J. B. Bury, 'The tradition of Muirchú's text', *Hermathena*, Vol. 28, (1902), pp. 186-207; J. B. Bury, 'Notes and documents, sources for the early Patrician documents', *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 19 No. 75, (1904), pp. 493-503; this presents a handy explanation for arguing a common source for this and for Tírechán's work.

[151] *Additamenta*, ed. Ludwig Bieler, with a contribution by Fergus Kelly, *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh*, (Dublin, 2004), pp. 166-80.

[152] Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, p. 43 n. 4, also posites that some notes found elsewhere in the *Book of Armagh* are 'not enough of an articulation to mark out a meaningful grouping of the rather disparate materials' – this aspect warrants further research.

[153] Ibid. p. 46; mentioned in the *Additamenta's* prefatory notes.

mustered legal status by the eleventh century at least.[154] Doherty points out that the *Additamenta* are essentially 'charters' claiming property and donations of land-grants to Armagh.[155]

Following the *Additamenta* are a series of catch-words, mostly in Irish, known as the *Notulae*; most concern Patrick except for a liturgical paragraph and another that refers to Pope Gregory the Great (I).[157] Some notes in the *Notulae* refer to events described in Tírechán's Book II, and one aligns with an episode in Muirchú; more seem to refer to events described in the later *Tripartite Life*. The *Notulae*, as with the *Additamenta*, though this is based on linguistic evidence from its present form, suggest a later- eighth-century origin as its collection may have spanned a considerable period;[158] if Charles-Edwards is correct, the *Notulae* may serve the basis for what becomes the *Tripartite Life*.[159] Bieler has preferred to endorse Père Grosjean's notion that the *Notulae* are jottings dating from the end of the seventh century by Tírechán to supplement his main work, but this is pure conjecture.[160] The *Notulae* are an index, although incomplete, of all the known Patrician material post-Muirchú, as almost all of Muirchú's *Vita* is absent and what is in Tírechán's work is replicated in the later *Tripartite Life*. The *Notulae* is not a key reference for subsequent works, though it is an attractive notion that it may have served as a foundation for the *Tripartite Life*, and, as Kathleen Mulchrone argues, the *Notulae* may have been composed by the *Book of Armagh's* master-scribe Ferdomnach in the early ninth century.[161]

The 'pseudo-Life' of Patrick in the *Historia Brittonum*

The *Historia Brittonum* dates to 829/30 and was probably written by an anonymous Welsh ecclesiastic who had access to a variety of Irish sources, since a reference to

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[154] Ibid. p. 47.

[155] Charles Doherty, 'The cult of Patrick and the politics of Armagh in the seventh century', (ed.) Jean-Michel Picard, *Ireland and Northern France AD 600-850*, (Blackrock, 1991), pp. 53-94 at pp. 83-4; Máire Herbert, 'Before Charters? Property records in pre Anglo-Norman Ireland', M. T. Flanagan and J. A. Green (eds.), *Charters and Charter Scholarship in Britain and Ireland*, (Basingstoke and New York, 2005), pp. 107-19. The first few anecdotes relate to Connacht, the next few more specifically to Cos Roscommon, Sligo and Leitrim (also in Connacht), whilst the last concern Leinster – sections first written in Latin and then continued in Irish, perhaps denoting multiple-authorship in certain parts (Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, p. 47).

[157] *Notulae*, ed. Ludwig Bieler, with a contribution by Fergus Kelly, *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh*, (Dublin, 2004), pp. 180-4; Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, p. 49.

[158] Ibid. p. 50.

[159] Charles-Edwards*, Early Christian Ireland*, pp. 11-13.

[160] Ludwig Bieler, 'The *Notulae* in the Book of Armagh', (ed.) Richard Sharpe, *Studies in the Life and Legend of St Patrick*, (London, 1986), pp. 89-97 at p. 89.

[161] Kathleen Mulchrone, 'What are the Armagh *Notulae*?', *Ériu*, Vol. 16, (1952), pp. 140-44.

his 'Irish informants' is clear.[162] In *Historia Brittonum* there is a short composite *Vita Patricii* between St Germanus of Auxerre's visit to Britain and the fantastic, but brief, story of the legendary Arthur.[163] However, there has been little scholarly attention accorded to Patrick compared to other sections of *Historia Brittonum*, although the *Vita Patricii* therein essentially follows Muirchú's work, except for his centrepiece narrative on the conversion of Tara, and thus it is valuable as one of a number of important witnesses to the Muirchú text.

<u>The Collection known as the *Four Latin Lives of Patrick*</u>

Subsequent Lives of Patrick followed, namely put together by Bieler in a collection he named the *Four Latin Lives of Patrick*: *Vitae Secunda* and *Quarta*, *Vita Tertia* and *Vita Quinta* (*Vita auctore Probo*). They were first edited by Colgan in *Trias Thaumaturga*, but except for *Tertia* they were not subsequently edited until the later twentieth century.[164] Independently these *Vitae* have tremendous value for their information on Patrick, and all have a strong literary connection to the work of Tírechán and Muirchú, the *Notulae*, and to the *Tripartite Life* itself.

Colgan first published *Vita Secunda*[165] from a manuscript of Saint-Hubert in the Ardennes, which is now lost and known only from his *Trias Thaumaturga*. This originally comprised the first of three volumes which formed a *Legendarium per circulum anni* of eleventh- to early- thirteenth-century origin.[166] A different recension of *Secunda* is preserved in manuscripts in Belgium and northern France,

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[162]*Historia Brittonum* in *Nennius, British History and the Welsh Annals*, (ed. and trans.) John Morris, (London, 1980) – this is the translation used throughout; *Historia Brittonum*, (trans.) Paul Halsall, *Medieval Sourcebook: Nennius: Historia Brittonum, 8th Century*, (1998), http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/basis/nennius-full.asp (visited October 2006); *Nennius, British History and the Welsh Annals*, ed. and trans. John Morris, (London, 1980); David N. Dumville, 'St Patrick in the *Historia Brittonum*: three texts', David N. Dumville *et al* (eds.), *St Patrick A.D. 493-1993*, (Woodbridge, 1993), pp. 221-33 at p. 221; Thomas Clancy, 'Scotland, the 'Nennian' recension of the *Historia Brittonum*, and the *Lebor Bretnach*', (ed.) Simon Taylor, *Kings, Clerics and Chronicles in Scotland, 500 – 1297*, (Dublin, 2000), pp. 87-107, discusses how the Nennian tradition was the most important strand in its early transmission, in which the prologue ascribes authorship to Nennius; Clancy argues a Scottish origin for the Nennian recension given its close relationship to *Lebor Bretnach* (*The British Book*).

[163] Dumville, 'Patrick in the *Historia Brittonum*', p. 221; the author was likely an ecclesiastic, given the weightier account of Patrick compared to King Arthur for example (Thomas Charles-Edwards, 'The Arthur of History', (eds.) Rachel Bromwich, A. O. H. Jarmin and Brynley F. Roberts, *Arthur of the Welsh, The Arthurian Legend in Medieval Welsh Literature*, (Wales, 1991), pp. 15-32).

[164] Bieler, *Four Latin Lives*; 'Two Latin Lives', Byrne and Francis, pp. 5-117.

[165] *Vita Secunda*, trans. Francis Byrne and Pádraig Francis, 'Two Latin Lives of St Patrick: *Vita Secunda* and *Vita Quarta*', *Journal of the Royal Society of the Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 124, (1994), pp. 20-51.

[166] Bieler, *Four Latin Lives*, p.1; Byrne and Francis, in 'Two Latin Lives', p.9, states the earliest manuscript dates to the eleventh century.

and another in Brussels' Bibliothéque Royale. [167] Byrne and Francis state that *Secunda* likely arrived on the continent in northern Francia in the early ninth century, when connections between Louth, Slane and Péronne were still vigorous.[168] Thus, dating *Secunda* to around the mid to later eighth century seems most reasonable.

Vita Quarta[169] is preserved in one manuscript in the British Library, which Bieler dated to *circa* 1100, claiming that it originally belonged to the abbey of Aulne-sur-Sambre in France.[170] *Quarta* is not a homogeneous text and its basis largely runs parallel to *Secunda* and the *Tripartite Life*.[171] The author of *Quarta* is unknown, although Stokes suggested it was Aileran the Wise (d.664); however, *Quarta* postdates Muirchú's *Vita* and its author does not appear to have known Irish, hence Bieler attributed authorship to a monk of Aulne-sur-Sambre based on certain linguistic details that imply he was French.[172] However, Byrne and Francis claim that the Preface of *Quarta* and its chapter-headings may have originally been written in Irish and that it passed through a stage of recension in Ireland before reaching Belgium.[173] Furthermore, the Irish author most probably intended to write for a continental audience, which may indicate an early- to mid- ninth-century origin. *Quarta* may have reached Europe before 900 where it henceforth acquired its more 'sophisticated' appearance from its French 'redactor';[174] in my opinion this appears the most logical conclusion.

Vita auctore Probo (i.e. *Vita Quinta*) is structured in two parts and was discovered by Ioannes Hervagius of Basel, who mistook the noun Probus for an adjective and appended it as an anonymous work to his edition of Bede's *Historia*.[175] The *Vita* of Muirchú accounts for four-fifths of the contents of *Quinta*, making it a direct witness to Muirchú's work; only in Book I.2 of the *Vita* does Probus exchange

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[167] Bieler, *Four Latin Lives*, pp.2-3, for manuscripts and palaeography.

[168] Byrne and Francis, 'Two Latin Lives', p. 13.

[169] *Vita Quarta*, trans. Francis Byrne and Pádraig Francis, 'Two Latin Lives of St Patrick: *Vita Secunda* and *Vita Quarta*', *Journal of the Royal Society of the Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 124, (1994), pp. 17-64.

[170] Bieler, *Four Latin Lives*, p. 3.

[171] Ibid. p. 6.

[172] Ibid. p. 7; Aileran is also mentioned in the *Tripartite Life* as among those who collected accounts of Patrick's miracles.

[173] Byrne and Francis, 'Two Latin Lives', pp. 9-10.

[174] Ibid. p. 10; Sharpe, *Medieval Irish Saints' Lives*, pp. 16-17, argued that with Bury and Bieler's dating criteria gone for *Secunda* and *Quarta* that 'all the evidence for extensive work on the Life of St Patrick in the eighth-century disappears, and one is left with older texts being copied into the *Book of Armagh* in 807' – however, this logic has profound weaknesses.

[175] *Vita auctore Probo*, *Four Latin Lives of St Patrick, Colgan's Vita Secunda, Quarta, Tertia, and Quinta*, ed. Ludwig Bieler, (Dublin, 1971), pp. 191-220 (this is a Latin edition and thus my own translation is used throughout this thesis); Bieler, *Four Latin Lives*, p. 39, where he refers to this *Vita* as '*Quinta*'; Kenney, *Sources*, p. 347.

Muirchú for Patrick's *Confessio*, which it follows accurately.[176] Probus may also have used a 'corrupt version' of the *Tripartite Life*, for passages such as when Patrick sees God on Mount Hermon or during his visit to St Martin, which also appear in *Tertia*; however, after this Probus reverts to Muirchú's work.[177] Virtually nothing is known of Probus or of the '*frater Paulinus*' to whom the *Vita* is addressed, but he was probably not Irish judging his ignorance of Irish topography and misinterpretations of some Irish words;[178] in fact Francis and Byrne persuasively argue that Probus was a Glastonbury monk.[179] Probus' *Vita* survives in two manuscripts,[180] although its date is harder to fix.[181] Francis and Byrne reasonable date this text to the 970s, since Probus 'makes a bold proposal to make St Patrick the patron saint of not just Ireland but the *imperium Britanniae* of King Edgar and St Dunstan'.[182]

Vita Tertia enjoyed the greatest popularity in the Middle Ages and is known in more manuscripts than any other Patrician Life, with a textual tradition ranging from England to Austria.[183] *Tertia* has several abridgements, one of which is an eighteenth-century litany honouring Patrick in Styria (southeast Austria), which Bieler claimed uncannily resembles *Tertia*.[184] All *Tertia's* recensions make reference to Ireland as *haec insula*, strongly indicating its origins there.[185] Bieler postulates that *Tertia* was composed anywhere between the eighth and the twelfth centuries,[186] although it is likely to have been written in the mid twelfth century. *Tertia's* author

[176] Probus, *Vita auctore Probo*, (ed. and trans.) Ludwig Bieler, *Four Latin Lives of St Patrick, Colgan's Vita Secunda, Quarta, Tertia, and Quinta*, (Dublin, 1971), pp. 191-220 (my translation is used throughout this thesis).

[177] Bieler, *Four Latin Lives*, p. 41.

[178] Ibid. p. 39.

[179] Francis Byrne and Pádraig Francis (trans.), 'Two Latin Lives of St Patrick: *Vita Secunda* and *Vita Quarta*', *Journal of the Royal Society of the Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 124, (1994), pp. 5-117 at pp. 8-9; this aspect is analysed further in Chapter 2.

[180] Bieler, *Four Latin Lives*, p. 1.

[181] Ibid. p. 40; Bieler offers a concise appraisal of the debates here.

[182] Byrne and Francis, 'Two Lives of St Patrick', p. 9.[183] *Vita Tertia*, ed. Ludwig Bieler, *Four Latin Lives of St Patrick, Colgan's Vita Secunda, Quarta, Tertia, and Quinta*, (Dublin, 1971), pp. 115-91 (this is a Latin edition and throughout this thesis my own translation of the text is used); Bieler, *Four Latin Lives*, p. 13.

[183] *Vita Tertia*, ed. Ludwig Bieler, *Four Latin Lives of St Patrick, Colgan's Vita Secunda, Quarta, Tertia, and Quinta*, (Dublin, 1971), pp. 115-91 (this is a Latin edition and throughout this thesis my own translation of the text is used); Bieler, *Four Latin Lives*, p. 13.

[184] Bieler, *Four Latin Lives*, p. 13; C. H. Slover, 'William of Malmesbury's Life of St Patrick', *Modern Philology*, Vol. 24 No. 1, (1926), pp. 5-20; C. H. Slover, 'William of Malmesbury and the Irish', *Speculum*, Vol. 2 No. 3, (1927), pp. 268-83.

[185] Bieler, *Four Latin Lives*, p. 25, reasoned that the best clue for dating *Tertia* is in William of Malmesbury's *Vita Patricii* – eds. and trans. M. Winterbottom and R. M. Thomson, *Saints' Lives: Lives of SS. Wulfstan, Dunstan, Patrick, Benignus and Indract*, (Oxford, 2002), pp. 315-4 – 1129x1135, since it is modelled on *Tertia*, which Bieler thought was composed before William wrote with an allowance made for two or more intermediate copies.

[186] Bieler, *Four Latin Lives*, pp. 25-6.

largely drew on the *Tripartite Life* – even though the author may have acquired access to Patrick's *Confessio* and the works of Tírechán and Muirchú – since *Tertia* and Jocelin's *Vita* form part of a separate group of texts in the *Bethu Phátraic* tradition and both *Vitae* are based on the same lost Latin version of the *Tripartite Life*, probably edited by Colgan.[187] *Tertia* was likely the text relied on by William of Malmesbury for his *Vita Patricii* and for the fact that it observably draws on the *Tripartite Life*.

<u>The Middle Irish *Tripartite Life of St Patrick*</u>

An evaluation of an origin-date for *Secunda* and *Quarta*, *Quinta* and *Tertia* must be taken into account of the known surviving textual history of the *Tripartite Life*,[188] so-called because it has three Books in Middle Irish with some Old Irish forms and a few Latin passages. Its tripartite form does not represent a new development in Irish hagiography, but rather it may have borrowed from Adomnán's *Vita Columbae*, which was heavily influenced by Severus' *Vita Martini*.[189] The *Tripartite Life* and its ancestors bridge a crucial stage in the transmission of Patrick's legend: from his own fifth-century works, to that of Tírechán and Muirchú, to the *Notulae*, *Secunda* and *Quarta*, and onto the fuller elaboration represented in the *Tripartite Life* itself.

The *Tripartite Life* is a composite text, probably multi-authored, and survives in late-fourteenth to early- sixteenth-century manuscripts, which include some post-twelfth-century abridged versions; like the *Collectanea* it has no known textual tradition outside of Ireland.[190] Bury initially recognised the important relationship of *Secunda* and *Quarta* to the *Notulae*, describing them as 'twins' descending from the lost eighth-century Life *W* – probably the same text alluded to in the *Notulae*.[191] Bieler proposed that *Secunda* and *Quarta*, *Tertia* and *Quinta* (i.e. *Vita auctore Probo*) offer the best insight to the transmission of Tírechán's and Muirchú's works and to

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[187] Ibid. pp. 235 and 244.

[188] *The Tripartite Life of St Patrick: with other documents relating to that saint*, ed. and trans. with indexes by Whitley Stokes, (London, 1887), pp. 1-207.

[189] J. M. Picard, 'Bede, Adomnán, and the writing of History', *Peritia*, Vol. 3, (1984), pp. 50-70; Bieler in his *Patrician Texts* also thought that Muirchú's *Vita* was originally structured as three books, also influenced by the *Vita sancti Martinii*, which is, incidentally, also found in full in the *Book of Armagh*.

[190] Brian Ó Cuiv, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and Oxford College Libraries*, (Dublin, 2001-2002), pp. 233-54; the abridged versions which structure the *Tripartite Life* into a single homily were the most popular of all the later medieval Irish Lives, and help to restore the lost parts of the *Tripartite Life* while revealing some new material, which has unfortunatelyreceived little scholarly attention.

[191] Bury, *The Life*, pp. 269-72, claimed that Ciarán (d.775) authored the lost eighth-century work, who among others the *Tripartite Life* mentions as gathering Patrick's biographical information (pp.61 and 257); in Charles-Edwards' *Early Christian Ireland*, pp. 12-13, some of Bury's views are corroborated, as in Byrne and Francis, 'Two Latin Lives', pp. 9-11.

Patrick's own writings;[192] all these texts have a direct descendant underlying *Quinta* and *Tertia*, which in turn descended from a different lost Life. Bieler also suggested that another lost seventh-century Life containing quotations from *Confessio* was *W's* ancestor, which he named *Bethú Pátraic*.[193] *Bethú Pátraic* was written in Irish with a few scattered Latin passages, just like its extant descendant the *Tripartite Life*, which helps to explain its language balance.[194] Nonetheless, it is probable that the *Tripartite Life* as we now have it was conceived around the mid to later ninth century with subsequent additions inserted into the eleventh.[195] Sometime in the eleventh century, however, we can discern that the *Tripartite Life* was edited into a single homily.[196]

William of Malmesbury's fragmentary *Vita Patricii*

William's *Vita Patricii* and his *Vitae Benignii* and *Indracti* are now lost, although 'they were still extant at Glastonbury when John Leland visited the abbey in the sixteenth century.'[197] However, all three *vitae* have been retrieved through John of Glastonbury's *Cronica*, 'which put John's basic dependence on William's lost Lives beyond doubt.'[198] As mentioned William's sources include *Tertia* (version II from the English family), but also Patrick's own *Confessio* and the lost Life W and its descendants *Secunda* and *Quarta*.[199] William (c.1090 – c.1143) likely wrote *Vita Patricii* before 1126, since his *On the Antiquity of Glastonbury* was only begun after this year and in which William himself claimed he wrote *Vitae Patricii, Benignii* and *Indracti* some years before *Vita Dunstani*, which was finished before 1126.[200] William must have been commissioned to write his *Vitae Patricii, Benignii* and *Indracti* by Glastonbury monks, who acquired a vested interest in Celtic saints more

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[192] Bieler, *Four Latin Lives*, pp. 115-90.

[193] Byrne and Francis, 'Two Latin Lives', pp. 6 and 8.

[194] Bieler, *Four Latin Lives*, pp. 6-9; Charles-Edwards stated (*Early Christian Ireland*, p. 12) that in Ireland most surviving pre-800 texts are Latin, even though some of the *Additimenta* is in the vernacular.

[195] Herbert, 'Latin and Vernacular', p. 341; Dumville, 'The Dating', pp. 255-58, argues there are aspects of the *Tripartite Life* that would not rule out a twelfth-century date, although this is not enough to argue against that which is presented hereor to compete with Herbert's recent appraisal on dating the *Tripartite Life* tothe ninth century with completion of this text finalised sometime inthe mid tenth.

[196] Dumville, 'The Dating', pp. 255-58

[197] William of Malmesbury, *Vita Patricii*, pp. 315-43; William of Malmesbury, *Vita Benigni*, ed. and trans. M. Winterbottom and R. M. Thomson, *Saints' Lives: Lives of SS. Wulfstan, Dunstan, Patrick, Benignus and Indract*, (Oxford, 2002), pp. 344-67; William of Malmesbury, *Vita Indracti*, ed. and trans. M. Winterbottom and R. M. Thomson, *Saints' Lives: Lives of SS. Wulfstan, Dunstan, Patrick, Benignus and Indract*, (Oxford, 2002), pp. 368-83; also see pp. 307-13 at p. 307.

[198] Winterbottom and Thomson, 'The fragmentary Lives' in *Saints' Lives*, p. 307.

[199] Ibid. p. 308.

[200] Winterbottom and Thomson, 'Introduction' in *Saints' Lives*, p. xv.

generally and who made attempts to appropriate the cult of Patrick from the tenth century (see my chapter one, especially the second part).

Jocelin of Furness' *Vita Patricii*

The last of our Patrician Lives is the *Vita Patricii* crafted by the Cistercian monk Jocelin of Furness, which is our fullest Latin medieval *Vita Patricii*.[201] Jocelin was commissioned by the Anglo-Norman John de Courcy, the Archbishop of Armagh and the Bishop of Down, after de Courcy secured his military base in Co Down, Northern Ireland, as a result of his victory there in 1177.[202]

Bury stated that he did not deem it worthy to speak of Jocelin's *Vita* in the context of the earlier Patrician material, 'since it is founded on sources that we possess, and the only value which it may have is that a minute examination might conceivably show that Jocelin used different recensions of some of our [the Patrician] documents.'[203] Bieler's plea in 1944 for a 'new appreciation of [Jocelin's] work from both the documentary and literary point of view' had vanished by 1975 when he described his *Vita* as 'little more than a rehash of an earlier *Life* of the saint'.[204] However, Jocelin's *Vita* represents a significant complement to the earlier Patrician material as well as being a highly individual work in its own right, one which, as we will discover throughout this thesis, reveals much information on the late- twelfth-century social, cultural and political climate in which it was written.

The *Vita* itself observably draws upon *Tertia*, which is perhaps unsurprising as it is a part of the same textual group in the *Bethu Phátraic* tradition and since both *Tertia* and Jocelin's *Vita* are based on the same lost Latin version of the *Tripartite Life*. Other Patrician sources also used by Jocelin included *Vitae Secunda* and *Quarta*, *Vita auctore Probo* and the *Additimenta*, but also another which provided an intermediary phase between *Tertia's* composition and Jocelin's work, i.e. *Vita Cottoniana*, a text small in scale enough to suggest its origin-date lies before Jocelin's

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[201] 'Vita {S. Patricii} auctore Jocelino monacho de Furnesio', *AASS Martii II*, pp. 536D-77D; the translation used here is: 'The Life and Acts of St Patrick by Jocelin', ed. John O'Leary, *The Most Ancient Lives of St Patrick, Including the Life by Jocelin Hitherto Unpublished in America, and his Extant Writings*, (Reprint of 1880 edition Honolulu, 2002), pp.131-347; Ludwig Bieler, 'The Celtic Hagiographer', (ed.) Richard Sharpe, *Ireland and the Culture of Early Medieval Europe*, (London, 1987), pp. 243-65 at p. 261.

[202] Kenney, *Sources*, p. 348.

[203] Bury, *Life*, p. 279, also discredits the *Homily on St Patrick* in the *Lebar Brecc* and the later Franciscan prefaces to the *Hymns* of Secundinus and Fíacc, found in the same collection.

[204] Ludwig Bieler, 'Anecdotum Patriciana: Fragments of a Life of St. Patrick from MSS Cotton Vitellius E. vii and Rawlinson B479', (ed.) Richard Sharpe, *Studies on the Life and Legend of St. Patrick*, (London, 1986) pp. 220-37 at p. 237, and Ludwig Bieler, 'Did Jocelin of Furness know the writings of St. Patrick at first hand?', (ed.) Richard Sharpe, *Studies on the Life and Legend of St. Patrick*, (London, 1986), pp. 161-67 at p. 161.

extant work.[205] More recent material was also available to Jocelin, such as William's *Vitae Patricii* and *Benignii*, as well as another *Vita* originating in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century and preserved at Gloucester Cathedral, i.e. the *Gloucester Vita*.[206] A date of *c.*1185 for Jocelin's *Vita Patricii* seems plausible, since, for example, Jocelin was probably aware of the *inventio* of Ss Patrick, Brigit and Columba at Down but unaware of the pilgrimage to St Patrick's Purgatory at Lough Derg.[207]

Conclusion

In the next four chapters it becomes clearer that my dating of the Patrician texts between the seventh and the late twelfth century best suits the overall development of their content and various contexts. Because of this incremental evolution of Patrick's hagiography, including several seventh-century texts, a range of Latin texts dating between the eighth and eleventh centuries, a largely vernacular text of probably ninth or tenth century date, and several twelfth-century compositions, Patrick's texts give us a major opportunity to understand the development of different aspects of his cult. The sheer bulk of this material defies comprehensive analysis in one thesis. This thesis approaches the evolution in ways that both confirm and can be understood within the context of wider Irish and European trends.

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[205] *Vita Cottonianna*, ed. Ludwig Bieler, 'Anecdotum Patricianum. Fragments of a Life of St Patrick from MSS Cotton Vitellius E. vii and Rawlinson B479', (ed.) Richard Sharpe, *Ludwig Bieler: Studies on the Life and Legend of St Patrick*, (London, 1987), pp. 222-29 at p. 228; Bieler, 'Anecdotum Patricianum', p. 236; the *Confessio*, Muirchú's *Vita* and Tírechán's *Collectanea* were used in all of the abovementioned Patrician material that Jocelin sourced directly, which is teased out in Helen Birkett's *The Saints' Lives of Jocelin of Furness Hagiography, Patronage and Ecclesiastical Patronage*, (Woodbridge, 2010), p. 26.

[206] Ludwig Bieler, 'Eine Patricksvita in Gloucester', (ed.) Richard Sharpe, *Studies on the Life and Legend of St. Patrick*, (London, 1986), pp. 346-63 at pp. 347-59, where the *Vita* is reprinted in Latin.

[207] The date 1185 was originally proposed by Colgan (*Triadis Thaumaturgae*, p. 64); Birkett, *Saints' Lives*, pp. 4-7.

Chapter 1

Patrick's Corporeal Relics and the whereabouts of his Grave: Uncertainty, Dilemma and Contention

<u>Introduction</u>

Even to the present day we cannot be precisely sure if Patrick is buried under the giant stone situated to the side of Downpatrick Cathedral in Co. Down, despite this location predominanting the tradition since the seventh century.[208] The issue of where Patrick's grave resides was much more pronounced then than it is today, mainly because there were originally two main contenders for its location: Saul and Down. The claim that Patrick's grave was located at Saul was never advanced after this century, and all of our post seventh century Lives of Patrick claim Down as the true location. Despite this, in the seventh century Armagh, and not Down, became Patrick's cult centre. Armagh's position as Patrick's cult centre is a tradition that has also prevailed to this day, and one which is all the more remarkable given that it could never claim Patrick's grave and full corporeal relics.[209]

The first part of this chapter discusses the seventh-century contention over the whereabouts of Patrick's grave and Armagh's rise to power as Patrick's cult centre. The second part spans the eighth to the eleventh centuries, when we can observe the escalating dilemma over the possibility there existed two or even three Patricks. In a major sense this paved the way for interest in appropriating Patrick's cult from outside of Ireland, namely at Glastonbury Abbey. In the third part we discover that after the destruction of *Scrín Pátraic* ('Shrine of Patrick') in 1066 that a

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[208] For example, Down Cathedral's official website uses Muirchú's *Vita* to claim itself as the place where Patrick's grave resides, whilst also subscribing to the validity of the *inventio* in *c.*1185 (*Annals of Ulster*) to also lay claim to the graves of Ss Columba and Brigit: http://www.downcathedral.org/index.cfm?do=page&id=17 (visited March 2007).

[209] 'In classical Latin the word *reliquiae* specifically refers to the physical remains or ashes of a dead human being, but by the end of the sixth century… it was used in this sense to include everything from the foreskin of Jesus at his circumcision, the hair or milk of the Virgin Mary, the bodies of the Apostles – but also anything which may have been associated with them… [such as] *brandea*' (Charles Freeman, *Holy Bones Holy Dust, How Relics Shaped the History of Medieval Europe*, (London, 2011), p. 8) It is difficult to discern a cult of corporeal relics in Ireland in our period, although corporeal relics, particularly in our Patrician Lives, were important even if they did not feature as prominently compared to associative relics. As mentioned, *reliquiae* is a common Latin term for human remains, although when used in and after the sixth century it could indicate any type of relic. In Ireland *relquiae* was borrowed into the vernacular as *reilic*, when 'it is not usually applied to a relic but to a cemetery' (A. T. Lucas, 'The social role of relics and reliquaries in ancient Ireland', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 116, (1986), pp. 5-37 at p. 6). The most common term for a relic in Irish sources in *mind* (*minn*; 'oath'), and *taíse*, more commonly found in its plural form *taisí*. *Martrae* was borrowed from the Latin word *martyrium*, literally meaning 'martyrdom', and was 'occasionally applied to relics in the collective sense' (p. 6); Raghnall Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines and Reliquaries of the Middle Ages*, (Dublin, 1994), p. 41.

relic of Christ gifted to Patrick, *Bachall Ísu* (or 'Staff of Jesus'), henceforth became Armagh's premier Patrician insigne. This does not mean Patrick's corporeal relics were no longer important to Armagh, as ecclesiastical and political events during the eleventh and twelfth centuries culminated in a spectacular *inventio* at Down in *c*.1185.

This chapter demonstrates that the fate and development of other relics of Patrick are inextricably linked to the location of his grave and possession of his corporeal relics. The broader context of the cult of corporeal relics elsewhere in Ireland and Western Christendom is also interwoven, which further enriches our understanding of the fate of Patrick's corporeal relics in this most formative period of his cult-development.

The Uncertainty of Patrick's Grave: Seventh-Century Origins

We begin in the seventh century, when the earliest surviving Lives of Patrick were written. From them – *Liber Angeli*, Tírechán's *Collectanea* and Muirchú's *Vita Patricii* – we can discern much about the cult of corporeal relics in Ireland more generally, and, of particular interest, we can also gauge much about the earliest phase of Patrick's cult through the individual narratives that focus on his death and burial.

Four sections of Tírechán's *Collectanea* directly relate to Patrick's own corporeal relics, the first of which contains the earliest known story in the tradition of Patrick's tooth. Tírechán tells us that Patrick's tooth 'fell' out on the plain of Ros Dregnige, where the saint 'gave his tooth to his beloved Brón as a relic.'[210] The significance here lies in the act of giving, which expresses Brón's close associations with the midland churches as bishop of the Uí Fiachrach in Co. Sligo; it is no coincidence that Tírechán himself was also native to this region.[211] Tírechán's inclusion of Patrick's tooth is not unusual in subsequent Irish hagiography more generally, although no other stories of saints' teeth in non-Irish *vitae* exist that I know of, despite collections of tooth-relics being fairly common to relic-lists originating later in our period.[212] However, that Tírechán's story of Patrick's tooth may have

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[210] Tírechán, *Collectanea*, 45.1: '*[e]t sedens ibi cecidit Patricii dens, et dedit dentem Brono suo in reliquias*'.

[211] Swift, 'Tírechán's motives', pp. 53-82; Charles Doherty, 'The cult of Patrick and the politics of Armagh in the seventh century', (ed.) Jean-Michel Picard, *Ireland and Northern France AD 600-850*, (Blackrock, 1991), pp. 53-94 at pp. 40-1; Lucas, 'Relics and reliquaries in Ancient Ireland', p.8; Patrick's gift-giving of various relics in the Lives is the theme for an article in progress: 'St Patrick: Gift-giver of Relics Extraordinaire'.

[212] I. G. Thomas, *The Cult of Saints' Relics in Medieval England*, (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 1974); for example St Brendan's tooth was claimed in Exeter, 1281 (p. 374), St Macharius' tooth in a sixteenth century Salisbury list (p. 426), St Martin of Tours'

spawned subsequent imitation stories in the Lives of other Irish saints is an interesting one. For example, the anonymous *Life of St Molua of Clonfert* tells us when his tooth fell out the saint gave it to a monk for safe-keeping. Sometime after Molua's death other monks came to Clonfert asking for Molua's corporeal relics. Because Molua's relics were enshrined the monks refused to open the reliquary, and instead gifted his tooth to the visiting monks.[213] The anonymous *Life of St Finnian of Clonard* narrates how Finnian's tooth fell out at Moone and was then hidden in a blackberry-bush.[214] Later on Finnian was approached by men who wished to possess a corporeal relic of his for protection, so the saint revealed his tooth by lighting the bush where it lay hidden.[215]

Patrick's tooth, just like that of Molua and Finnan, must have been highly prized, especially if it was gifted whilst he was physically alive; A. T. Lucas comments that realistically teeth can be 'comfortably and easily' obtained during a saint's lifetime;[216] although hair is another possibility. Even though Patrick's tooth is gifted to an important midland church, there is not a similar sense of a 'trade-off' occurring between two distinct places or groups of people, and in this instance Patrick's tooth does not act as an 'insurance-policy' for protection or for peace-keeping between two or more churches. Most importantly, the appearance of Patrick's tooth-story in Tírechán's work indicates that the cult of corporeal relics in Ireland was certainly underway – to what extent, however, remains murky.[217]

Tírechán's narrative of Patrick's death and burial demonstrates the last point to an even greater degree, even if Sharpe reminds us that the evidence from Ireland generally in this period is:

> '[S]ilent on the subject of translating bodies, whether of old saints or
> new ones. Even the places of primary burial are rarely mentioned
> and almost never the setting for miracles… The pattern of cults,
> however, is less focused on the body of the saint, and translation

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tooth in Exeter in the late thirteenth century (p. 429), and St Peter's tooth was claimed to have been gifted to the monastery at Ely 1189x1198 (p. 447).

[213] *Life of St Molua of Clonfert*, ed. Charles Plummer, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae, Volume 1*, (Oxford, 1910), at p. 222; Lucas, 'Relics and reliquaries', p. 8

[214] *Life of St Finnian of Clonard*, ed. W. W. Heist, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae ex Codice olim Salmanticensi nunc Bruxellensi*, (Brussels, 1965), pp. 96-107 at p. 100.

[215] Ibid.; Lucas, 'Relics and reliquaries', p. 8.

[216] Ibid.

[217] Tírechán, *Collectanea*, for corporeal relics: 5, 14, 22, 24, 26, 42, 43, 45, 48, 16, and 17 (*translatio* of Bruscus' remains in 16), and Muirchú's *Vita* I.24 and I.11 for Armagh's *Ferta Martyrium* and the 'spiritual treasures' taken to Inber Dee (the exact type is unknown).

never acquires the importance it would have in seventh-century Gaul or England.'[218]

We initially learn from the *Notes Supplementary to Tírechán* that 'no one knows where Patrick's bones rest.'[219] Following this are details of the contention over Patrick's corpse between two un-named Irish 'war-bands' occurring over twelve days, only ceasing when Patrick's body appears on a bier; Tírechán then declares that Columba 'showed Patrick's grave… in Saul… where is the coming together of the martyrs… and all Ireland's saints at Judgement.'[220] However, as Nagy writes this 'statement of Columba's intervention and discovery contradicts an immediately preceding note that compares Patrick with the similarly missing Moses.'[221] Not only does Tírechán temper any possible doubt that the readership may raise by introducing Columba to his narrative – a saint wholly independent from Armagh – but he also clarifies that Patrick's corporeal relics exist. This in turn also reveals that the seventh-century Irish *vitae* cannot be wholly reduced to expressing political rivalry between Kildare, Armagh and Iona.[222]

The account in Muirchú's almost contemporaneous *Vita* contradicts Tírechán's version of events, in that an angel visits Patrick to state he will not die at Armagh as wished, but at Saul, after which point his body is to be taken to Down.[223] A bitter contention over Patrick's 'relics' ensued with the Ulaid against the Airthir of Armagh and the Uí Néill; Muirchú recalls that as the battle abated this still did not deter the Airthir and Uí Néill from charging once more against the Ulaid after Patrick

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[218] Richard Sharpe, 'Martyrs and local saints in Late Antique Britain', Alan Thacker and Richard Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 75-154 at p. 152.

[219] *Notes*, 54.iiii; O'Rahilly regards the *Notes* to be a part of Tírechán's original work whilst Binchy dates them to the mid eighth century; I prefer to treat the *Notes* as Tírechán's work (O'Rahilly, *The Two Patricks*, pp. 10-11; Binchy, 'Patrick and his biographers', pp. 129-33). Bieler concludes that the *Notes* were by 'divers hands (including, possibly, Tírechán's) which had been entered at the end of the exemplar from which Ferdomnach copied Tírechán's *Collectanea*' (*Patrician Texts*, p. 46).

[220] *Notes*, 55.2: 'Columb Cille Spiritu Sancto instigante ostendit sepulturam Patricii, ubi est confirmat, id est in Sabul Patricii, id est ossuum Coluimb Cillae de Brittannia et conduction omnium sanctorum Hiberniae in die iudicii.'; *Annals of Ulster* at 553.3, where it is also claimed that Patrick's grave and other relics were discovered by Columba, including Patrick's goblet, the Bell of the Testament and the Angel's Gospel, but it does not reveal where and the entry is an eleventh-century construct possibly based on Tírechán's *Notes* (p. 198 below).

[221] Nagy, *Conversing with Angels*, p. 198; it may be that the *Notes* were written by an author other than Tírechán, although I would argue that this still does not rule out ascribing the authorship of the *Notes* to Tírechán as they may have been a later addition to *Collectanea* and depict what could well be a most recently invented tradition (also see n. 221 above).

[222] In *Vita Columbae*, dated to *c.*700, Adomnán has Columba referring to Patrick as 'our Father', acknowledging 'Maucte' (Mochtae) as 'a disciple of the holy Patrick' and as prophesying Columba's success (Adomnán, *Vita Columbae*, eds. and trans. with notes by the late Alan Orr Anderson and by Marjorie Oglivie Anderson, *Adomnán's Life of Columba*, (Edinburgh, 1961), second Preface, p. 183).

[223] Muirchú, *Vita*, II.5 and II.13.

was buried, but that the former then 'invaded the resting place of Patrick, but were misled by a fortunate illusion'.[224] At this juncture a wagon takes Patrick's body to Down for burial, only for the reader to discover that the saint's corpse disappeared when the perusal of it by the war-parties involved resumed; Muirchú writes: 'For it was impossible there should be peace with such a renowned and blessed body… and so this delusion was arranged to secure concord between the people'.[225]

Contentions over corporeal relics, especially as regards who may or not have rightful claim to ownership, and indeed thefts and claims made by a church to possess one saint's corporeal remains at around the same time as another church, are not unfamiliar phenomena before and in this century. One only has to think of the seventh-century contention over a saint's corpse is that of St Benedict of Nursia, who, in the *Dialogues* ascribed to the sixth century pope Gregory I, was buried along with his sister Scholastica at Monte Cassino.[226] Fleury's monks, however, claimed that Benedict's body was brought to them for burial after the Lombard destruction of Monte Cassino in 653; it was this act, quite likely a theft, which marked the beginnings of a contention which only reached its zenith in the eleventh century.[227] This sort of occurrence is something that Armagh clearly sought to avoid, which perhaps is why the contention over Patrick's body was devised in the first instance and why a potential readership could perceive the contradictory versions in Tírechán and Muirchú as having been deliberately constructed to counteract a similar situation.

The sixth-century contention over and theft of St Martin of Tours' body is another example. Gregory of Tours tells us that the men of Poitiers surrounded the saint as he lay dying in Candes, insisting on their rightful claim to Martin's body because he had once visited their abbot in nearby Ligugé; the response from Tours

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[224] Ibid. II.13: '*De reliquiis sancti Patricii in tempore obitus sui dira contensio ad bellum usque perueniens inter neoptes Neill et Orientales ex una parte <et inter Ultanos ex altera parte>*…'; II.14 (see the quote directly below).

[225] Ibid. II.14: '*Impossibile enim ut de tanto ac de <tam> beato corpore pax fieret nissi Dei nutu taliter uideretur uissio ad tempus ostensa, ne quod animarum salus innumerabilium in exit<i>um et mortem uerteretur {felici fallacia ostensum est}; sicut Siri antea excaecati, ne sanctum profetam Helesseum occiderent, +ad Helesseum+ diuina prouissione ad Samariam usque ducti sunt, haec etiam seduction ad concordiam populorum facta est.*'; this is based on the Ark of the Covenant story in Samuel II 6:6-7, which is said to have contained Aaron's Rod (Hebrews 9:4), although later biblical accounts from the Book of Kings I 8:9 inform us it contained the tablets of law given by God to Moses and nothing else.

[226] Gregory I, *Dialogues*, (trans.) Odo John Zimmerman, (New York, 1959), Dialogue Two p. 104; Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, pp. 32-3; Barbara Abou-el-haj, *The Medieval Cult of Saints, Formations and Transformations*, (Cambridge, 1994), p. 138; the 'theft' of Benedict's corpse is astonishingly rare in this century.

[227] Ibid. p. 138; Benedict's relics were rediscovered by Monte Cassino monks in 1121 (Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, p. 116), which fuelled an even fiercer contest with Fleury.

was that Martin should be buried where he died, i.e. in Tours.[228] This argument was only resolved after the men from Poitiers fell asleep, which enabled the men of Tours to reclaim Martin's body.[229] Of course Gregory aimed to prove that Tours would always deserve Martin's relics, and Sharon Farmer points out that ultimately 'competitive localism was the central theme in Gregory's account of Martin's death'.[230] This is similar to the scenario in the works of Tírechán and Muirchú, in that the contentions and claims to Patrick's burial place also reflect a degree of local competitiveness.

Since the seventh century Armagh's 'propagandists were forced to admit… the saint had been buried at Down following his death at Saul'.[231] Muirchú states that Patrick died at Saul before being taken to Down for burial, but perhaps Patrick was buried twice in this *Vita* and his journey to Down was actually a *translation* of his corporeal relics.[232] Charles-Edwards suggested that 'one of the principal elements in the Patrician legend… stemmed from local political and ecclesiastical rivalries in the province of Ulster no later than *c*.650.'[233] At this time the descendants of Díchu were the primary ecclesiastical family of Saul and then later of Down,[234] and Díchu holds an important place in Muirchú's *Vita* as after Patrick visits his former slave-master Miliucc 'he returned to Mag Inis, to Díchu, and stayed there for many days… He favoured and loved the district, and the faith began to spread there.'[235] Crucially, it is also a place that came to be known as Patrick's Barn, or *Saball Pátraic*, where Patrick died, i.e. at Saul before his *translatio* to Down (according to Muirchú). Nagy states that: '[D]espite all the potential for confusion and deadly misleadings, the encounter between Patrick and Díchu ends successfully for all concerned.'[236]

The projection of Patrick's evangelical success in this region, as well as the kindred bonds forged between Díchu's descendants and Armagh is revealing, and as

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[228] *Gregory of Tours, The History of the Franks*, trans. with an introduction by Lewis Thorpe, (London, 1974), 48, I.47.

[229] Sharon Farmer, *Communities of St Martin, Legends and Ritual in Medieval Tours*, (New York, 1991), pp. 26-7.

[230] Ibid. p. 26; for more examples also read Geary, *Furta Sacra*, pp. 78-89.

[231] Cormac Bourke, 'Notes on the relics of St Patrick', *Lecale Miscellany*, Vol. 7, (1989), pp. 5-10 at p. 9.

[232] See p. 94 below where it is clear that although Saul is not directly mentioned, there is an emerging tradition pertaining to Patrick's *translatio*.

[233] Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 67.

[234] Ibid. p. 65; Down's royal fort was traditionally the centre of the Ulaid, 'who dwelt between Dundrum Bay and Belfast Lough' and the ruling dynasty were Dál Fiatach (Francis J. Byrne, *Irish Kings and High Kings*, (London, 1973), p. 108).

[235] Muirchú, *Vita*, I.12: '*Et his dictis orans et armans se signo cruces conuertit cito iter suum ad regions Ulothorum per eadem uestigia quibus uenerat et rursum peruenit in campum Inis ad Dichoin ibique mansit diebus multis et circumiit totum campum et elegit et amauit et coepit fides crescere ibi.*'

[236] Nagy, *Conversing with Angels*, p. 52.

Charles-Edwards states 'the story of Patrick's burial at Saul, on Díchu's land, gave them a claim to the church as 'the kindred of the land'.[237] Down was essentially a royal fort with likely connections to the church of Druim Lethglaise nearby, which only became important around the mid- eighth-century judging by obits in the various annals, at which juncture it is known as Dún Lethglaise after the royal fort. Charles-Edwards reasons that: 'Druim Lethglaise was acquired by the Uí Díchon of Saul; they may have translated Patrick's relics to Downpatrick, thus explaining Muirchú's attribution of Patrick's burial-place to both Saul and Downpatrick.'[238] This does not explain why Armagh became Patrick's cult-centre in this century, however, especially as Down was acknowledged as the traditional burial place of Patrick in Muirchú's *Vita*, a tradition which has endured to this day.

Tírechán's adamancy that Patrick's grave lies at Saul stems from an earlier tradition when Armagh was not a strong contender for Patrick's cult and the claim to it was contested between Saul and the more powerful church at Down (hence Armagh's interest in maintaining the latter as the site of Patrick's grave). However, in the *Collectanea* this underlying rift between Saul and Down is better understood: Tírechán clearly investigated many older churches with associations to Patrick in his native midlands. It is no coincidence Tírechán endeavoured to promote these churches into Armagh's *paruchia* as it was beginning to forge ties with the Uí Briúin, who were to dominate Connacht in the next century; this explains the strong presence of the Connacht narratives in Tírechán's work.[239] Armagh was likely the main church of the Airgialla, a kindred subject to the Ulaid, but as the Ulaid's power diminished in the 630s the Airgialla rose in strength until the ninth century when they became subject to the Uí Néill.[240] As Doherty states it is likely Armagh became the Patrician cult-centre from the 640s through an alliance with the dominant Airgialla kings.[241] At this point at least a portion of Patrick's relics might have been disinterred and taken to Armagh for enshrinement, i.e. in what came to be known as *Scrín Pátraic*, which features in the various Irish annals between the eighth and eleventh centuries and was likely purpose-built to accommodate some or all of Patrick's corporeal remains (see the discussion on *scrína* later in the second part below).

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[237] Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 65.
[238] Ibid. pp. 65-6.
[239] Charles Doherty, 'The basilica in early Ireland', *Peritia*, Vol. 3, (1984), pp. 303-15 at p. 309; he states 'the Uí Briúin were tied to Armagh in Tírechán's claim that Patrick baptised the sons of Brión and that this was paralleled by the presentation of major relics by Patrick to the main church in the area.'; Swift, 'Tírechán's motives', pp. 53-82.
[240] Bart Jaski, *Early Irish Kingship and Succession*, (Dublin, 2000), p. 215.
[241] Doherty, 'Cult of Patrick', pp. 40-1.

Moreover it is no coincidence that Armagh first issued *Liber Angeli* in the 640s, in which it laid claim to the relics of the apostles Peter and Paul and the martyr-saints Lawrence and Stephen, as well as a 'rag-relic' stained with some of Christ's blood; [242] details of a ceremonial procession to the southern Basilica in Armagh where the relics were kept is also outlined in the text.[243] These Roman relics[244] in *Liber Angeli* may have been gifted to Armagh from the southern Irish churches, since we know their representatives traveled to Rome in 631/2 to debate the correct dating of Easter.[245] Although it is impossible to tell which type of relics, they were likely associative given the general wave of papal policy against disturbing corporeal relics at this time, which may express the legacy of the relic-distribution policies of Gregory I. Gregory, the first monk to become pope in 590-604, created a lasting legacy in respect of the traffic of relics generally during the sixth and seventh centuries. Gregory's cult was only officially recognised in Rome around mid-century, when in 668 his associative relics were dispatched to various English kings on request, and it is perhaps no surprise that an anonymous *Vita* was written for Gregory in Northumbria – in a double-house presided over by Abbess Ælfflaed in 680x714 – and his cult blossomed in the Anglo-Saxon regions because of his sanction of St Augustine's (the Lesser) mission to Kent in 595; perhaps unsurprisingly, Gregory's own body was never translated.[247] Conrad Leyser describes how on the feast of St Pancras in Rome, Gregory used this occasion to 'attack conventional martyr-piety'; however, this was likely to do with his involvement in a competition with St Agatha's cult in Rome which continued long after his death.[248] During Gregory's pontificate he ceased to give out martyrs' corporeal relics, instead opting for associative relics, such as filings of the chains used to bind the apostle Peter for example. Attitudes in Rome after Gregory's pontificate became increasingly conservative, with many subsequent popes condemning any disturbance of saintly

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[242] *Liber Angeli*, 19; see my chapter two pp. 135-8.

[243] Ibid. 16.

[244] Later traditions in the Lives tell of Patrick acquiring such relics from Rome, such as in the *Tripartite Life* (p. 78), and perhaps even in Muirchú's *Vita* when after Palladius' death 'the boat of the holy man (Patrick), laden with marvels from across the sea and with spiritual treasures, reached a convenient port' (*Vita*, I.11); the 'spiritual treasures' most probably indicate a mix of relics.

[245] Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, pp. 405-11; the hoard of Roman relics Patrick steals from Rome in the *Tripartite Life* may also have been used to gift to other churches to gain allies.

[248] Alan Thacker, 'Memorialising Gregory the Great: the origin and transmission of a papal cult in the seventh and early eighth centuries', *Early Medieval Europe*, Vol. 7, (1998), pp. 59-84 at pp. 60 and 61 and 73 respectively; R. A. Markus' *Gregory the Great and his World*, (Cambridge, 1997), Chapter 9; Peter Llewellyn, 'Roman Church in the seventh century: the legacy of Gregory I', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 25, (1974), pp. 363-80.

[248] Conrad Leyser, 'The temptations of cult: Roman martyr piety in the age of Gregory the Great', *Early Medieval Europe*, Vol. 9, (2000), pp. 289-307 at pp. 304 and 293 respectively.

corpses. Thacker points out, however, that this conservatism helped to 'retain, even enhance, the localisation of western sanctity in Rome, although this was not the primary intention'.[249]

Equally, however, these relics could have been acquired from Louth in the midlands, given its strong continental connections via its founder St Fursa. We know that Armagh's bishop, Tomméne, signed the original letter to the pope-elect John and other Church officials in 640, all of which demonstrates that Armagh was, to use Doherty's words, 'taking the initiative among the northern churches'.[250] This may also explain the central and abiding tradition of Patrick's contest with Loegaire's druids during Easter.[251]

It is also interesting that when the earliest sections of *Liber Angeli* were composed in the 640s Armagh saw fit to call the various relics 'insignia' of Patrick:

> 'Further, whosoever insults or violates the consecrated insignia [*insignia consecrata*] of the same saint, that is, Patrick, shall pay twofold; if, however, in respect of the contempt of the insignia the due is (to pay) two female slaves, four female slaves shall be rendered in respect of the consecrated (insignia) of the said supreme doctor Patrick.'[252]

Nowhere in *Liber Angeli* are Patrick's corporeal relics or the whereabouts of his grave mentioned, which is significant since the passage indicates that the Roman relics and the rag-relic soaked with Christ's blood were perhaps Armagh's premier insignia at this point. Armagh's claim to possess Roman and apostolic relics in particular could also be indicative of a more general picture in Ireland whereby such

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[249] Alan Thacker, '*Loca Sanctorum*', Alan Thacker and Richard Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Medieval West*, (Oxford, 2002), pp..1-45 at p. 6.

[250] Doherty, 'Cult of Patrick', p.69

[251] The southern Irish churches changed to the Roman system of dating Easter inthe 630s, whilst the northern churches took longer to conform. Although the Whitby Synod of 664 might have impacted on changing the views of the northern churches, its outcome favouring the Roman system only changed the situation in Northumbria; however, Iona, an island off the coast of western Scotland, only changed to the Roman system in *c.*716 despite its Northumbrian contacts; Marilyn Dunn, *Emergence of Monasticism: From the Desert Fathers to the Early Middle Ages*, (Oxford, 2000), p. 160, mentions resistence toward Columbanus' episcopate on the continent, one of the reasons being that Columbanus 'took the step of writing to Pope Gregory I, defending the Irish method of the calculating the date of Easter.'

[252] *Liber Angeli*, 26: '*Item quicumque contempserit aut uiolauerit insignia consecrata euisdem agii, id est Patricii, duplica solute; si uero de contempt aliorum insignium reddita fuerit duas ancellas, <quattuor ancellae> de consecrates summi praedicti doctoris Patricii reddentur.-,.-*'; *doctoris Patricii* is a phrase which builds up 'Patrick as an Irish substitute for St Peter', and one example which verifies Armagh's pretensions to be the 'Rome of Ireland' (Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, pp. 426-7).

relics were acquired by other churches also 'at a time when contacts with Rome… produce new interests.'[253]

It is true that the seventh century in particular created great opportunity for Irish churches to become powerful in and beyond their territories, with Armagh and Kildare in particular each contending for primacy;[254] it is also clear that Armagh's ecclesiastical ambitions also seep into its architectural design from this period.[255] A generation after *Liber Angeli*, Kildare commissioned the first known surviving saint's *Vita* in Ireland, i.e. Cogitosus' *Vita Brigitae*, in which we learn that: 'Conláeth and this holy virgin Brigit lie right and left of the ornamented altar, in shrines of gold, silver, gems and precious stones, with gold and silver crowns hanging above them.'[256] Kildare also boasted 'an increasing number of the faithful… the church is spacious… and it rises to an extreme height.'[257] However, Adomnán's late seventh century *Vita Columbae* simply states that Columba 'had bare rock and stone for a pillow, which today stands as memorial to his grave'.[258] Although Armagh could never claim to be the site of Patrick's grave, it did not succumb to Kildare's bold claims in the long term, and similarly Adomnán's modest hints as to the whereabouts of Columba's grave were not detrimental to Iona's posterity in Ireland either. Kildare may have boasted a thriving tomb-cult, but by the close of the century all hope of attaining primacy was dashed.[259] It is interesting that in the two subsequent eighth-century Hiberno-Latin Lives of Brigit no reference to her tomb-cult is made, perhaps denoting

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[253] Sharpe, 'Martyrs and local saints', p. 150, points out that although 'the reception of these relics has sometimes been seen as almost the beginning of interest in relics in Ireland' it is actually not the case (p. 151). There is archaeological evidence of burials around Armagh 'which contain disarticulated remains in special tombs which suggests translation of the bodies of revered individuals at an early date' (Nancy Edwards, 'Celtic saints and early medieval archaeology', Alan Thacker and Richard Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 225-67 at p. 239); for more see C. J. Lynn, 'Excavations at 46-48 Scotch Street, Armagh 1979-90', *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 51, (1988), pp. 69-84 at p. 80.

[254] Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, pp. 416-438.

[255] Nicholas B. Aitchison, *Armagh and the Royal Centres in Early Medieval Ireland: Monuments, Cosmology, and the Past*, (Woodbridge, 1994), pp. 198-295, who argues Armagh's site was a cosmological Sacred Centre and an *imago mundi*, or a map of the world: the quadrants of the site represented the four provinces of Ireland with Armagh in the centre, and the church dedicated to Brigit in the south-east quadrant was also built to geographically symbolise Kildare and its subservience to Armagh (Ó Carragáin, *Churches*, p. 67).

[256] Cogitosus, *Vita Brigitae*, (trans.) Liam de Paor, *St Patrick's World The Christian Culture of Ireland's Apostolic Age*, (Notre Dame, 1993), pp. 207-225 at p. 222; Conláeth is Kildare's first bishop/abbot.

[257] Ibid. p. 222; apparently the 'treasures of kings were in secure safe-keeping in Kildare' (Charles Doherty, 'Exchange and trade in early medieval Ireland', *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 110, (1980), pp. 67-89 at p. 72), and he wonders if such church treasures were claimed by kings as their own deposited wealth (see pp. 254-5 below).

[258] Adomnán, *Vita*, 129a.

[259] This is evident in the appropriation of Brigit into Patrick's posthumous legend.

that Kildare's boasts of jeweled encrusted shrines and flocks of pilgrims defied that monastery's initial expectations.[260]

Compared to the *vitae* of other non-Irish saints it is unusual that no hint of tomb-cults for either Patrick or Columba is expressed in their seventh-century *vitae*.[261] Perhaps in Ireland the cult of corporeal relics was, as mentioned above, in its formative period. However, this did not necessarily mean that pilgrims in Ireland were not attracted to their saints' burial places or to the churches where corporeal remains were believed to have been kept. The power of the saintly-tomb and corporeal relics is well attested throughout our period, and pilgrims in Ireland must have desired to be near their saints' remains or grave for healing, cure, spiritual fulfillment, oath-taking, sealing treaties or compacts just as elsewhere in the West.[262] From Muirchú and Tírechán it is evident that pilgrimage in Ireland was active in the seventh century,[263] for example to Croagh Patrick and to Patrick's grave in Down,

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[260] Bitel, *Landscape*, pp. 198-212; it is important to state that the majority of pilgrims would not have seen actual corporeal relics but only their reliquaries glimmering in the distance or the stone face of the saintly-tomb (read Cynthia Hahn's 'What do reliquaries do for relics?', *NVMEN*, Nos. 3-4, (2010), pp. 284-316, and 'The voices of the saints: speaking reliquaries', *Gesta*, Vol. 36 No. 1, (1997), pp. 20-31).

[261] Posthumous healing and curing miracles are rare in our earliest Patrician Lives; see Wendy Davies, 'The place of healing in early Irish society', Daihbhi Ó Corráin, Liam Breatnach and Kim McCone (eds.), *Sages, Saints and Storytellers, Celtic Studies in Honour of Professor James Carney*, (Maynooth, 1989), pp. 43-55 at p. 43; Davies also notes that healing miracles in *Bethu Brigte*, *Vita prima 1*, *Vita prima 2*, *Vita Ita*, *Vita Wrdisten* (all of which are early eighth-century Lives) reveal, except for the last mentioned, a higher percentage than in Ireland's four seventh-century *vitae* (p. 44), and that this is a particularly stark contrast compared to saints' *vitae* elsewhere (Benedicta Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind Theory, Record and Event*, (Aldershot, 1987). Such healing miracles, posthumous or otherwise, do become more common in subsequent Patrician texts, for example in the *Tripartite Life* where there are a few episodes in which the blind and lame come to Patrick for healing (for example see p. 133); for miracles at Patrick's supposed gravesite in Down, see *Vita Quarta*, p. 97, where there are distinct hints of tomb-cult activity.

[262] G. I. C. Snoek, *Medieval Piety from Relics to the Eucharist, A Process of Mutual Interaction*, (Leiden, 1995), pp. 132-57, focuses on oath-taking on relics and the Eucharist.

[263] In the late fourth and fifth centuries pilgrimage to Rome became increasingly popular and developed with the cult of saints in the Christian West; (Peter Brown, *Cult of Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*, (London, 1991)). In the seventh-century construction on saints' tombs in Rome, for example at St Peter's and St Paul's, intended to provide better access for pilgrims, even if pilgrimage to the Holy Land was kerbed as Muslims continued to advance through these regions, and thus local saints' tombs as well as the larger basilicas in Rome increased in popularity (Debra J. Birch, *Pilgrimage to Rome in the Middle Ages, Continuity and Change*, (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 24-5). We know from various early sources that Irish clerics frequently went on pilgrimage to the continent (Kathleen Hughes, 'The changing practice of Irish pilgrimage', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 11, (1960), p. 143-51). However, Hughes focuses more on the restrictions of pilgrimage to the continent during the Carolingian period and preference of many Irish to remain at home, as expressed in the 'fantasy of the voyages', i.e. the *immrama*; also see Peter Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland, the Monuments and the People*, (London, 1992). Interest in pilgrimage to the 'Holy places' is evident in Adomnán's later seventh century *De Locis Sanctis*, in *Scriptores Latini Hiberniae III, Adomnán's De Locis Sanctis*, ed D. Meehan, (Dublin, 1958), in which Adomnán presents a tour of the Holy Land based on the experience of the cleric Arculf, although Marie-Therese Flanagan reminds us that the 'text was intended to contribute to biblical exegetical scholarship

where pilgrims could potentially bring riches including 'livestock, food, candles, gold and silver jewelry, and… coinage'.[264]

Moreover, tradition of Palladius in the seventh-century Patrician Lives has considerable bearing on the origins of contention over the whereabouts of Patrick's grave. In the *Notes* 'Bishop Palladius was sent first, called Patricius by another name, and that he suffered martyrdom at the hands of the *Scotti*' (i.e. the Irish).[265] In Muirchú's *Vita*, however, Palladius' mission was outright unsuccessful and its earliest version states that Patrick died in the 'land of the Picts.'[266] Patrick's cult was in its infancy in the seventh century and thus a drive to exorcise Palladius' historicity was in operation as Armagh's appropriation of the cult of Tírechán's 'Patrick-junior' got underway. For example, Muirchú connected Patrick to clergy known to have attended the Council of Orange in 441, namely the deacon Auxilius of Vienne and the priest Segetius of Carpentras in the province of Vienne,[267] thus attempting to disassociate these two churchmen from Palladius.[268] Tírechán particularly sought to involve the midland churches with Patrick's cult, and therefore Palladius – who we know from *Secunda* and *Quarta* likely founded churches there [269] – had to be disassociated for posterity.

The relationship between Germanus and Patrick in our earliest Patrician *vitae* also demonstrates Armagh's drive to substitute Palladius with Patrick. Charles-Edwards suggested a link between Palladius' mission and Germanus' expedition to Britain, which 'goes beyond the probability that Palladius was Germanus' deacon and was sent by him to Rome to get permission for the visit'.[270] In Constantius' *Vita Germani* it is clear Palladius' mission against Pelagianism was a successful one.[271] But exiling Pelagian heretics prompted the Church to fear that the heresy would move

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rather than to serve as a travel guide' (*The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth and the Thirteenth Centuries*, (Woodbridge, 2010), p. 228).

[264] Snoek, *Medieval Piety*, p. 25.

[265] *Notes*, 56.2.

[266] Muirchú, *Vita*, footnote for I.8: '*in regione Pictorum*'; the earliest manuscript however, the *Book of Armagh* version, has him die 'in the land of the Britons' (*Patrician Texts*, I.8: '*Reuertente uero eo hinc et primo mari +ransito coeptoque terrarium itenere in Britonum finibus uita functus.*').

[267] *Council of Orange*, pp. 57-8.

[268] De Paor, *Patrick's World*, p. 39.

[269] *Secunda* and *Quarta*, 24.XIX and 25 respectively.

[270] Thomas Charles-Edwards, 'Palladius, Prosper and Leo the Great: mission and primatial authority', David N. Dumville *et al* (eds.), *St Patrick A.D. 493-1993*, (Woodbridge, 1993), pp. 1-12 at pp.7 and 11, where he argues Palladius' mission had much to do with expelling the Pelagian heresy.

[271] Constantius of Lyon, *Vita Germani*, trans. F. R. Hoare in Thomas F. X. Noble and Thomas Head (eds.), *Soldiers of Christ, Saints and Saints' Lives from Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, (London, 1995), pp. 75-107, (written 475 x 480); in 418 there was a law passed by Emperor Honorius that demanded exile for those with Pelagian sympathies (Charles-Edwards, 'Palladius', pp. 1-13 at p. 7).

elsewhere, which may be why Palladius was chosen to evangelise Ireland in the first instance.[272] It appears seventh-century hagiographers were driven to investigate more about Palladius from Prosper's *Chronicle* in order to exalt Patrick as Ireland's first missionary-saint.[273] Furthermore, Tírechán's use of *qui martyrum* to announce Palladius' death and that it occurred among the *Scotti* is also pertinent. That Palladius might be Ireland's first 'red-martyr' surely caused anxiety in Armagh;[274] as Doherty states: 'it is not the clergy of Armagh who said that 'Palladius was Patrick by another name', but those who wished to persuade Armagh that she should accept their [i.e. the midland churches'] offer of allegiance.'[275]

According to Muirchú, though Tírechán does not mention it, Patrick visited Germanus and spent years under his tutelage before being prompted a vision directed by the angel Victor to return to Ireland.[276] That Tírechán and Muirchú recognised that Palladius and Patrick were sent by Pope Celestine directly links Armagh to Rome; however Muirchú's inclusion of Victor gives Patrick's mission an additionally invaluable divine sanction. Germanus' visit to Britain coincided with his support against the Pelagian bishop Agricola and, just as hinted in Constantius' *Vita* and stated in Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* respectively, Germanus apparently exchanged relics at the shrine of Britain's first martyr Alban and gifted relics of the Apostles and other early martyrs.[277] It is no wonder that Armagh sought to link Patrick's mission firmly to Rome as well as to the potential morass of relics available in Gaul, where Germanus had considerable influence. Moreover, whilst Patrick is not acknowledged in St Columbanus' *Letter to Pope Boniface IV*, (613), it is Palladius who is stated as first bishop of the Irish.[278] However, this is perhaps not surprising as Columbanus himself was a native of Leinster where Palladius' mission was focused. Bede's

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[272] Charles-Edwards, 'Palladius', p. 8.

[273] Ibid.

[274] Clare Stancliffe, 'Red, white and blue martyrdom', Dorothy Whitelock *et al* (eds.), *Ireland in Early Medieval Europe: Studies in Memory of Kathleen Hughes*, (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 21-46; she bases the different colours of martyrdom on a text dating to the seventh or eighth century known as the *Cambrai Homily*, a vernacular prose text. Red martyrdom signifies a Christian who is physically murdered for his/her faith; white martyrdom applies to confessor-saints, who have devoted their lives to serve God; and blue (or green) signifies the purging of one's body, usually through fasting, although there are other forms of asceticism (*Cambrai Homily*, Whitley Stokes and John Strachan (eds.), *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus: A Collection of Old Irish Glosses, Scholia, Prose and Verse*, (Cambridge, 1987), 11.247).

[275] Doherty, 'Cult of Patrick', p. 94; also consult Swift's 'Tírechán's motives', pp. 53-82.

[276] Muirchú, *Vita*, I.6 and I.7.

[277] Constantius, *Vita*, 16; Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, trans. Leo Shirley-Price, revised by R. E. Latham, (new trans.) D. H. Farmer, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People with Bede's Letter to St Cuthbert and Cuthbert's Letter on the Death of Bede*, (London, 1990), Chapter 18 at p. 67.

[278] De Paor, *Patrick's World*, p.141; Columbanus refers to the origins of the Irish Church. See the 'Letters of Columbanus' at CELT: http://www.ucc.ie/celt/published/T201054/index.html (trans. G. S. M. Walker).

Historia Ecclesiastica and *Martyrology* do not mention Patrick either;[279] nor is Patrick mentioned in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, though it draws heavily on Bede's writings.[280] Although much of Bede's information derives from Gildas' sixth century *De Excidio*, nowhere does Gildas mention Patrick either.[281]

Despite this, however, we know St Fursa introduced Patrick's cult to Neustria in the seventh century and that upon Fursa's death his corporeal relics were translated to Péronne in Picardy, which became an Irish centre of monastic activity, or *monasteria Scotorum*, until the ninth century.[282] Moreover, Fursa's brother Foillán (murdered in 655) brought Patrick's cult to Nivelles after Fursa's death.[283] It is interesting that Fursa was originally from Louth, where the cult of Patrick had a special place as its founder Mochtae was reputedly a disciple of Patrick's; Mochtae is also given a place, no less, in Adomnán's *Vita Columbae* as prophesying Columba's birth.[284] Louth's continental connections via Fursa yields some evidence that it was trying to reinforce, perhaps even resist, Armagh's rising prominence in Ulster; or, more to the point, to exploit Armagh's vulnerable position regarding Down's hosting of Patrick's grave.

At Péronne itself there are two groups of distichs, the first of which 'represents an inscription in a chapel dedicated to Patrick where it was erected by its Irish abbot Cellán' (675x706).[285] Kuno Meyer suggested that the second group of

[279] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*; Bede, *Martyrology*, trans Felice Liftshitz, (ed.) Thomas Head, *Medieval Hagiography An Anthology*, (London, 2000), pp. 169-98.

[280] David N. Dumville and Simon Keynes (eds.), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, (Cambridge, 1983).

[281] Gildas, *De excidio Britanniae*, in *The Ruin of Britain and other Works*, ed. Michael Winterbottom, (London, 1978); de Paor, *St Patrick's World*, p. 144.

[282] Doherty, 'Cult of Patrick', p. 53; Pádraig A Breatnach's 'Irish churchmen in pre-Carolingian Europe', *Seanchas Ardmhacha*, Vol. 11 No. 2, (1985), pp. 319-330 at p. 320.

277 Doherty, 'Cult of Patrick', p. 53; details of Foillán in, *Vita Gertrudis*, (ed.) Bruno Krusch, MGH SSRM 2, rev. ed. (Hannover, 1956), 461---462B.7, which was composed 729 / 30 (thanks to Professors John Carey and Pádraig Ó Riain for direction here).

[284] Doherty, 'Cult of Patrick', p. 53; Adomnán, *Vita*, 3a; it is interesting that Tírechán ascribes Louth's heritage to Patrick: Mochtae of Louth was apparently the mentor of St Darerca, or 'Monnina' the abbess, and it is possible that Tírechán's introduction of Patrick here can therefore be discounted, mainly as later founders of churches under Armagh's *paruchia* were connected to Patrick in subsequent Irish hagiography more generally; for a translation of Darerca's *Vita* see *St Patrick's World*, pp. 281-295

[285] Kuno Meyer, 'Verses from a chapel dedicated to St Patrick at Péronne', *Ériu*, Vol. 5, (1911), pp. 110-11 at p. 111; these distichs are modelled on the epitaph of Virgil; thanks again to Professors Pádraig Ó Riain, and John Carey for directing me here. The verses read: '*Istam Patricius sanctus sibi vindicate aulam (I.1), Quem merito nostril summon venerantur honore (I.2). Iste medelliferi monstravit dona lavacri (I.3). Hic etiam nobis Dominumque Deumque colendum (I.4), Iussit et ignaram docuit bene credere gentem (I.5). Carpurnus genuit istum, alma Brittania misit (I.6), Gallia nutrivit, tenet ossa Scottia felix (I.7), Ambo stelligeri capientes praemia caeli (I.8). Quid Vermendensis memorem tot milia plebis (II.1), Francigenas inter populos felicia facta (II.2), Gestaque nobilium totum vulgata per orbem (II.3)? Haec loca non flavae Cereris, non indiga mellis (II.4), Fertilis est Bachi campus fecundaque rura (II.5); Multa per herbosos errant animália campos (II.6). Semper ab antiquis*

distichs may be from this same chapel in Péronne which was dedicated to Ss Peter and Paul.[286] That one distich is found in a chapel dedicated to Patrick may suggest that Péronne claimed at least a portion of Patrick's corporeal relics, although this is impossible to tell; these distichs are nonetheless 'the earliest reference to [Patrick] on the continent.'[287] It is perhaps not surprising that a monastic foundation with a strong Irish community should adopt reverence for Patrick and ambitions to set up a cult-centre on the continent to reinforce the links with its affiliate churches in Ireland.

This may have been achieved without mentioning Patrick's associations with Armagh, which could in turn account for Muirchú's addition of the story of Patrick's tutelage under Germanus.[288] However, after the seventh century we hear nothing about any claim over Patrick's relics at Péronne or Nivelles.[289] It is noteworthy, however, that these distichs have survived to this day, indicating that Patrick was, at the very least, not forgotten at Péronne beyond the seventh century.

The seventh century indicates an impressive growth in the prominence of Patrick's cult at Armagh, but it was not achieved without minimising the extent of Palladius' mission. Armagh's achievements were nothing short of remarkable in its seventh-century appropriation of Patrick's cult, especially as it lacked any legitimate claim over his grave. Armagh's attainment of its position as Patrick's cult-centre despite its inability to host its patron's tomb is unique in the British Isles in this period at least. By the eighth century it is evident from our Patrician *vitae* that Down emerged the victor over Saul in claiming Patrick's grave; control over Down and the cult of Patrick was at this point firmly in Armagh's domain, thanks to its clerics' shrewd alliances with the dominant Airgialla kings of the region.

However from the eighth century Patrick was fast becoming Ireland's premier saint, almost on an island-wide scale, bringing tremendous pressure for Armagh to maintain its primatial claims in Ireland: the acceptance of Patrick's burial place at Down from the late seventh century might otherwise be taken advantage of by any potential challenger to its ecclesiastical power.[290] In the seventh century

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tellus erat ínclita regnis (II.7). Ista pio gaudet Transmaro praesule terra (II.8). Haec modo Cellanus venerandi nominis abbas (II.9), Iussit dactilico describi carmina versu (II.10).'

[286] Ibid.

[287] Ibid.

[288] Muirchú, *Vita*, I.6.

[289] There is a story attested by 700 of Patrick's formation in Gaul, which is thought to have been accessible to Abbot Céllan at Péronne; see Meyer, 'Verses', p. 111, and David N. Dumville, '*Acta Palladii* preserved in Patrician hagiography?', David N. Dumville *et al* (eds.), *Saint Patrick A.D. 493 – 1993*, (Woodbridge 1993), pp. 65-85 at p. 77. It is interesting that Gertrude shares her feast day with Patrick on March 17 (David H. Farmer, *Oxford Dictionary of Saints*, (Oxford, 2004), pp. 219-20).

[290] One example resides in the Patrician traditions concerning St Brigit in post- seventh-century Lives, when Kildare was no longer a contender for primacy; for example in *Quarta*,

Armagh's shrewd clerics kept one eye fixed on secular politics and the other on neighbouring churches to attain its position as Patrick's cult-centre. It is in the next century, however, when we can begin to appreciate the fruits of this labour as well as Armagh's battle to maintain its central position.

Multiple Patricks? The Eighth to the Eleventh Centuries

Between the eighth and the eleventh centuries the importance of corporeal and associative relics was 'at its zenith, not only for the "people," but in every segment of Christian society.'[291] Pilgrimage in Ireland also blossomed, and from the mid eighth century the religious / reform movement, *Céli Dé* ('Servants of God'), became a major influence on monasticlife in Ireland and Scotland.[292] During this time pilgrims were encouraged to remain in Ireland, especially as it's 'relics would have had the beneficial result of enriching the people spiritually – and the monasteries materially.'[293] It is perhaps no coincidence that new reliquaries were also crafted throughout Ireland – from small house-shaped reliquaries to larger *scrína* ('shrines'), to external stone slab shrines and mortared shrine-chapels. Travel to Rome in particular may have been discouraged in Ireland from this period, possibly as a result of *Céli Dé* influence, but also because Carolingian administrators preferred that the often solitary wanderings of Irish *peregrini* be controlled, with Charlemagne decreeing it illegal for *peregrini* to travel at will.[294] It was also decreed that all pilgrims should carry letters of recommendation because it was difficult to tell a genuine pilgrim from other persons on the roads.[295] However, Peter Harbison notes that from the ninth century the traffic of Irish clerics to Rome increased once more after the siege of Rome in 756, when the papacy was eager to regain both secular and clerical allies through its numerous gifts of relics.[296]

The Carolingian rulers undoubtedly played an important role in the growth of the cult of relics in the eighth and ninth centuries in general, which is most evident in

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91, Brigit is instrumental in the events leading up to Patrick's death: Brigit said 'Our holy father Patrick will lie buried in a place near here (i.e. Down) and not long afterwards he will be moved to another place, and there the holy man and his venerable body will rest.' Brigit even weaves a linen shroud in which Patrick's body will be wrapped, which is repeated throughout our period (*Quarta*, 93). This may also explain Armagh's interest in appropriating churches in Connacht, as is evident from the time *Collectanea* was written; Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, pp. 441-68.

[291] Geary, *Furta Sacra*, p. 30.

[292] Westley Follet, *Céli Dé in Ireland: Monastic Writing and Identity in the Early Middle Ages*, (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 1-9.

[293] Harbison, *Pilgrimage*, p. 237.

[294] Ibid. p. 236.

[295] Webb, *Pilgrimage to Rome*, p. 88; she points out that this also meant genuine pilgrims 'could claim hospitality, safe conduct and exemption from the payment of tolls.'

[296] Harbison, *Irish Pilgrimage*, p. 236.

Gaul and Germany and especially during Charlemagne's reign (768-814). Carolingian power in ninth century 'placed virtually all of Western Christendom on the European continent at least nominally under a single political hegemony'.[297] Corporeal, and to a lesser extent associative, relics were increasingly housed in monasteries as 'intimate relationships between monastic communities and the liturgies and the relics of its saints' developed, even if the vogue for collecting *brandea* was declining.[298] Royal pilgrimages to Rome increased from the eighth century, despite restrictions on pilgrim traffic, mainly to acquire the relics of Roman martyrs as well as to forge strong papal alliances.[299] For example, the alliance of Pepin I and Pope Stephen II in the mid eighth century was solidified by Pepin's adoption of the cult of St Petronilla,[300] who was apparently the daughter of St Peter, whose *translatio* was celebrated in Rome in 757 with great ceremony.[301]

Charlemagne's reign is also particularly important 'in the history of canon law because it marks the reappearance of Roman influence'.[302] However, his push to formalise the canonisation of saints proved to be a most difficult task,[303] mainly as the canonisation of martyrs and confessors was not formalised until Alexander III's pontificate in the later twelfth century,[304] before which canonisation itself was a spontaneous and pragmatic system based on the prospective saint's miracles and cult-popularity.[305] The Carolingians endeavoured to bring saints' cults under ecclesiastical control, ensuring that every church acquired at least one portion of corporeal relics, despite frequent reports of shortages.[306] In 813 the Council of Mainz declared that 'no new saint was to be recognised without the council of the prince or

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[297] Noble and Head, *Soldiers*, p. xl.

[298] Head, *Hagiography*, pp. xix; see Snoek, *Medieval Piety*, p. 24, stated the 'ecclesiastical authorities seldom opted for *brandea* or other objects which had merely been in contact with the saint'. However, the popularity of associative relics of universal saints, particularly of Christ, increased from this century.

[299] Rudolph Schieffer, 'Charlemagne and Rome', (ed.) Julia M. H. Smith, *Early Medieval Rome and the Christian West, Essays in Honour of Donald A. Bullough*, (Leiden, 2000), pp. 279-96 at p. 281.

[300] Feast on 31 May, date of martyrdom unknown, although her sixthcentury *Acts* were fictitious and portrayed her asPeter's daughter; Farmer, *Dictionary*, p. 430.

[301] Julia M. H. Smith, 'Old saints new cults: Roman relics in Carolingian Francia', (ed.) Julia M. H. Smith, *Early Medieval Rome and the Christian West, Essays in Honour of Donald A. Bullough*, (Leiden, 2000), pp. 317-35 at pp. 320-1.

[302] Eric W. Kemp, *Canonisation and Authority in the Western Church*, (Oxford, 1948), p. 36; this is also celebrated in the *Annals of Ulster* at entry 741.11 (see Appendix C).

[303] Ibid. pp. 36-55.

[304] Ibid. pp. 82-106.

[305] Ronald C. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims, Popular Beliefs in Medieval England*, (Surrey, 1977), p. 36.

[306] One such shortage was reported by the 816 Council of Chelsea in England, just postdating the Council of Mainz's assumption that all churches already complied with such requirements; Kemp, *Canonisation*, pp. 38 -9.

license from a holy synod of bishops',[307] which itself built on the Second Council of Nicea in 787[308] which also decreed relics as necessary for consecrating altars.[309]

From the ninth century a great period of hagiographical production was underway throughout the West, especially for compiling lists detailing posthumous miracles as proof of a saint's authenticity.[310] Relic-lists also had a devotional aspect, as highlighted by the abbot of St Albans' response to them in the fourteenth century, which reflected a sense of 'communal pride and advertisement… [and] that oral reports [of the lists] may have been disseminated to pilgrims who visited religious centres.'[311] Furthermore, whilst some saints' relics were kept in separate reliquaries others were grouped together in one reliquary and tagged with small parchment labels,[312] indicating that the authenticity of relics was henceforth zealously guarded. In Ireland there was a great increase in the production of saints' Lives, and from *circa* 750 to 850 Sharpe estimated that only nine such texts from the *Vitae sanctorum Hiberniae* can be comfortably dated to this period.[313] A production of martyrologies is also evident from the ninth century, such as the *Martyrology of Óengus* (or *Félire Óengusso*), and the *Martyrology of Tallaght*.[314] Maelruain of Tallaght (d.792) 'inspired a revival of devotional life in Irish monasteries and led a movement which popularised several literary works'; however, we have no Life of Maelruain except for a short anecdote in the twelfth-century *Book of Leinster*.[315] Indeed, the lists of Irish saints in Ireland's martyrologies have caused much angst among modern scholars because they contain multiple variations of saints' names, which led Ó Riain to ponder whether 'this has obscured many churches [in Ireland] from claiming the full corporeal relics of their saints.'[316]

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[307] Noble and Head, *Soldiers*, p. xxxix.

[308] *The Second Council of Nicea*, trans. Paul Halsall, (1996), *Medieval Sourcebook Online*: http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/nicea2-dec.asp

[309] Caroline Walker-Bynum and Paula Grierson, 'Body-part reliquaries and body parts in the Middle Ages', *Gesta*, Vol.36, No. 1 (1997), pp. 3-7 at p. 3.

[310] Noble and Head, *Soldiers*, p. xxxviii; in this period a great deal of discussion ensued among Western Christians concerning the employment of saints' relics as part of worship; see one example in.*The Apology of Claudius of Turin*, where Claudius criticised the cult of relics, stating that 'surely if men are to be adored, it is the living rather than the dead who should be so adored' (Claudius of Turin, *Apology: An Attack on the Veneration of Relics*, trans. Thomas Head, *Medieval Sourcebook*, (2000): http://urban.hunter.cuny.edu/~thead/claudius.htm).

[311] Thomas, *Cult of Saints' Relics*, pp. 41-2.

[312] Ibid. pp. 44.

[313] Sharpe does not reckon *Secunda* and *Quarta* are eighth-century products (*Medieval Irish Saints' Lives*, Introduction).

[314] For an excellent introduction see Ó Riain's *Feastdays*.

[315] Sharpe, *Medieval Irish Saints' Lives*, p. 10 n. 25.

[316] Ó Riain, *The Making of a Saint*, p. 13; for more on the Irish martyrologies see Pádraig Ó Riain, *Feastdays of the Saints, A History of Irish Martyrologies*, (Bruxelles, 2006). This statement can easily be transposed on the two or possibly three Patricks problem, to which we shall return shortly.

There was also a great shift from Latin literature to the vernacular in Ireland, especially between the ninth and twelfth centuries; the *Tripartite Life* reflects this, as do the great Irish centres of learning including the Tallaght school, which was translating 'the most basic monastic books' into the vernacular.[317] However, Ireland has nothing like the great miracle-compilations or relic-lists that began to be produced on a very large, although unquantifiable, scale in Anglo-Saxon England and on the continent. For textual evidence of relic-cult activity in Ireland we have to rely on saints' Lives as well as notes and glosses found in martyrologies, which are often much later in origin. One example is in the eleventh-century notes accompanying the main text of the ninth century *Félire Óengusso* (Martyrology of Óengus), in which contains one story of the relic-collecting activities of Onchu the poet, who reportedly stayed in the:

> '[O]ratory of Relic na n'aingel ['the angel's graveyard']… he gave heed to collect the relics of Ireland's saints… So that he had a great shrine… Now, he went to Cluain mó Máedóc… Máedóc happened to be alive before him. "Somewhat of thy relics [cut] off for thee, O cleric..."… So the cleric cuts off his little finger and gives it to the poet…'[318]

A similar episode also appears in the *Tripartite Life*:

> 'Then Patrick asks for what cause Conall had come… [Conall] said that he had not been let into Tara. (And Patrick said): "Enter now, the doors being open, and go to Eogan son of Níall, a faithful friend of mine, who will help thee if you secretly take the finger next his little finger, for this is always a token between us.'[319]

Here we can discern a corporeal relic being used to seal a friendship between two clerics, although such events involving corporeal relics are rarely recorded in the sources, with the most common by far involving associative relics. However, such examples nonetheless offer insight to the multiple functions of corporeal relics in early Ireland, namely their ability to heal, cure, and offer spiritual solace, just as they were famed for providing elsewhere in Western Christendom.

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[317] Sharpe, *Medieval Irish Saints' Lives*, p. 22.

[318] *Félire Óengusso*, p. 74; however, such glosses are extremely difficult to date and are not always contemporary to the main text.

[319] *Tripartite Life*, p. 129: '*INterrogat autem Patricius qua causa venit Conall, ocus roaisned Conall doPatraic infochum, [et] dixit naroléicet[h] isinTemraig. Cui dixit Patricius. "INgredire nunc, ianuis apertis, et adii Eogan macc Neill, amicum mihi fidelem, qui te adiuvabit, capiens tu o[c]culte mér tanaissi aloetanán signum inter nos semper."*'

But how could one be sure that the relics venerated were genuine? Indeed, counterfeiting and thefts of relics was a major concern during these centuries.[320] There are several notable examples of relic thefts inthis period, such as undertaken by Count Arnulf the Old of Flanders (919-64), who stole the relics of Ss Valerius and Richerius as spoils for this victor's own community when he sacked St.-Valery and St.-Riquer.[321] There was also a theft in Ireland of St Abban's corpse, which according to his ninth-century Life was perpetrated by the monks of Killaban, Co. Laois, the place of Abban's birth; his corporeal relics were resting at the monastery where Abban died, Magh Arnuidhe, or Adamstown, Co. Wexford, when the incident occurred.[322] Of this situation in Ireland more generally we cannot be sure.

In Francia and Anglo-Saxon England an increased interest in the relics of old Roman saints was also accompanied by a growth in the translation and enshrinement of many local saints; in Bede's eighth-century historical *Martyrology*, for example, only a third of its saints were Roman.[323] Furthermore, most Anglo-Saxon saints were royal martyr-saints, such as St Oswald of Northumbria, or bishops, such as St Aethelwold of Winchester.[324] Moreover, ninth-century English lists of saints' resting places emphasise the preservation of whole and undisturbed bodies of their native saints.[325] However, a general reluctance to disturb Anglo-Saxon saints is nonetheless discernible and may account for claims to shortages of corporeal relics; however, such complaints might have been used to acquire more Roman relics.

Armagh's claims to possess Roman relics are well attested in the *Tripartite Life*, which might also indicate their short supply to Ireland more generally:

> '[S]leep came over the inhabitants of Rome… so that Patrick brought away as much [relics] as he wanted… to Armagh… three hundred and sixty-five relics… of Paul and Peter and Lawrence and Stephen, and many others… a sheet with Christ's blood (thereon) and hair of Mary the Virgin. Patrick left the whole collection in Armagh according to the will of God and of the angel and of the men of Ireland… A letter was brought [from the Pope] that there should be

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[320] Geary, *Furta Sacra*, pp. 28-9.
[321] Patrick Geary, *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages*, (New York, 1994), p. 211.
[322] *Life of St Abban*, ed. Charles Plummer, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae, Volume I*, (Oxford,1910), pp. 3-34 at pp. 3-10; Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines*, p. 6.
[323] Bede, *Martyrology*, pp. 169-99.
[324] Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, p. 27; S. J. Ridyard, *The Royal Saints of Anglo-Saxon England: A Study of West Saxon and East Anglian Cults*, (Cambridge, 1988).
[325] Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, p. 27.

watching of [the relics] with lamps and lights… they should be exposed every year for multitudes [to see].'[326]

There are two definite references to corporeal relics: Christ's blood and the Virgin Mary's hair.[327] Apart from the latter claim, however, others appear similar to those in the earliest sections of *Liber Angeli*, excepting the Virgin's hair which may have been added in the *Tripartite Life* to reflect the contemporary growth of her cult in Ireland.[328] *Liber Angeli* was augmented at a later period, most likely in the ninth century and enforced as a legal document once more, hence it is stated in the *Tripartite Life* that the relics at Armagh were there 'according to the will… *of the angel*'. Secular sanction in retrieving these relics is also clear, as not only was the will of God and an angel required, but also the 'will of men'. This is reminiscent of Geary's abovementioned affirmation that the papacy's distribution of its vast hoard of Roman relics 'placed intangible evidence of papal importance in every region that received these gifts'.[329] Armagh's acquisition of these Roman relics serves to *mimic* Rome, namely that from this point Armagh found itself in a position to potentially gift these relics to other Irish churches to gain or affirm allegiances.[330] Also of intrigue is the mention of a papal letter and annual pilgrimage to Armagh to see the hoard of Roman relics, which, as mentioned, coincides with a ninth-century renewal in the flow of relics from Rome itself.[331] No doubt pilgrims flocked to Armagh from all over Ireland, and possibly from further afield,[332] to benefit from the healing powers corporeal relics were famed for throughout Christendom.

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[326] *Tripartite Life*, pp. 239-41: '*Foracaib Sechnall inepscopoti lafiru Erend co tised in bare do breith oBordgail Letha. Luid Patraic hisuidiu. Et uenit ad Romam; et peruenit somnus super habitatores Romae, cotuc Patraic afolortataid dona martraib. Ructha iarum innamartrasin do Arttmachai acomarli Dé ocus acomarli fer nErend. ISed tucad and cóic martir artrifichtib artrib cétaib, imreilcib Póil ocus Petair ocus Laurint ocus Stefain et aliorum plurimorum, ocus anairt and cofuil Crist ocus co folt Mairi Ingeine. Forácaib Patraic inteclaimsin huili inArd-machai doréir De ocus indaingil ocus fer nErend. Conselsat amartrai arPatraic seta letha od co cmarli imbi co abaid Rome dobreth epistil o suidiu arambethe icconairi collochrandaib ocus sóutrallaib indaidchi cobrath, ocus oifrend ocus salmcetul fried, ocus aurnaigthe ind aidchi ocus a toucbail incechbliadain arromuinset doib sochaidi impu.*'
[327] Armagh's claims to relics of Christ are discussed in my chapter two, pp. 135-8.
[328] Consult R. Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800-1200*, (New York, 2002); furthermore, in the contemporaneous *Martyrology of Óengus* the Virgin's hair is also recorded among a number of relics which Secundinus brought back from Rome (p. 221).
[329] Geary, 'Sacred commodities', p. 183.
[330] I explore this in a forthcoming article: 'St Patrick: Gift-giver of Relics Extraordinaire'.
[331] This is a modern term, and is helpful only insofar as the surviving evidence dictates as it fails to account for the period between the early seventh century and the eighth because of the lack of textual evidence.
[332] The *Tripartite Life* tells us of a Lombard king and his nine daughters visiting Armagh in 'pilgrimage to Patrick' and the death and burial of three of the virgin princesses there with the other six being sent to a monastery nearby in Druim Fendeda (p. 233).

In Ireland secular politics also continued to play a crucial role in the success of Patrick's cult, just as we have discussed that the very same is evident under the sway of Carolingians elsewhere in the West. In the eighth century Armagh's goal to attain premier ecclesiastical status over other Irish ecclesiastical communities began to be realised. This is evident in the *Tripartite Life* where by the time of its composition we can see that Patrick has become an altogether more ruthless saint, largely expressed through his many curses, a factor ultimately demonstrating that Armagh's drive to maintain its ecclesiastical primacy was spurred by the increasing popularity of Patrick's cult, or indeed vice-versa.[333] Furthermore, we can also discern that while Tírechán did not take Patrick on a journey through the province of Munster the *Tripartite Life* does,[334] and this latter text is replete with Patrick's claims over churches throughout Ireland's four provinces as much as it is with claiming the allegiances of numerous secular kings along the way.

Armagh's ambitions continued to be boosted through its increasingly powerful secular allies with the Airgialla, who in turn were also benefiting from their new ties to the Northern branch of the Uí Néill. John Byrne states that the 'struggles between the Airgiallan dynasties for control of the abbacy of Armagh and other ecclesiastical offices became frequent'.[335] He also proposes that because the Ulaid accepted Armagh's primacy, since 'their kingdom was in their direct *paruchia*', they became cautious that the new bond between the Airgialla and the Uí Néill should not 'entail the subservience of Armagh';[336] however, it is clear that Armagh had ambitions to enter a mutually beneficial relationship with the Uí Néill despite this sentiment. The legend of Patrick's contest with King Loegaire, which first appears in the works of Tírechán and Muirchú, where in the latter's *Vita* the story is most extant, ultimately served to bond Armagh to the Uí Néill dynasty.[337] Charles-Edwards stated that Muirchú's purpose 'was to assert the spiritual authority of the heirs of Patrick over the Uí Néill and, through the Uí Néill, over Ireland'.[338] The connections between ecclesiastical and secular power 'were a commonplace feature of this period

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[333] In Gerald of Wales' *Topographia* (83), it is stated that: '[J]ust as the men of this country are in this mortal life more prone to anger and revenge than any other race, so in eternal death the saints of this land that have been elevated by their merits are more vindictive than the saints of any other region';*Gerald of Wales, The History and Topography of Ireland*, trans. John J. O'Meara, (Hamondsworth, 1982).

[334] Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, pp. 441-69; the *Tripartite Life's* Munster narratives, which are mainly in Books II & III, become extremely important in the eleventh and twelfth centuries when relations with Munster overkings emerge as mutually beneficial; it is almost as if Armagh's clerics have predicted the rise to power of the Munster kings!

[335] Byrne, *Irish Kings*, p. 117.

[336] Ibid.

[337] Muirchú, *Vita*, I.15 to I.22.

[338] Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 472.

of dynastic consolidation and monastic wealth';[339] the consolidation of the southern and northern Uí Néill in the later ninth century ensured Armagh's prosperity continued to be cultivated by its secular allies. However, by the eleventh century waning Uí Néill power gave rise to the Munster over-king Brian Bóruma.[340]

There was clearly a degree of resistance toward Armagh between the eighth and eleventh centuries, especially from larger ecclesiastical centres such as Clonmacnoise and Kells; we can discern one such expression of this in architecture. Before the Uí Néill consolidation Armagh was allied to its Northern branch, namely the Cenél nÉogain, whilst its rivals, Clann Cholmáin, were the primary kindred of the Southern branch. The building of Armagh's great church in the ninth century was possibly undertaken with Cenél nÉogain support, whilst Clann Cholmáin 'may have been involved in building the shrine-chapels of Kells and possibly Clonmacnoise… modelled on the biblical cities of refuge and Jerusalem itself.'[341] Conversely, however, Armagh's architecture was modelled on Rome, just as is also evident in Canterbury .[342] Tomás Ó Carragáin cautions that:

> 'Politics was not the principal motivation for this *Imitatio Hierusalem*, and it certainly did not imply a lack of interest in Rome, but developing their founder's cults in this way must have helped these sites in their successful resistance to Armagh's primatial claims.'[343]

Ó Carragáin also points out that Armagh's preoccupation with relics of Christ and those of universal and Roman saints, such as Peter and Paul, was not only due to the fact that it could never claim Patrick's corporeal relics but that:

> '[A]s a general rule in early medieval Europe centralising forces tended to promote universal saints while those with an interest in resisting them chose local ones. Thus the principal relics of almost every other site in Ireland were corporeal and/or associative ones of its own saints.'[344]

Without doubt Armagh was a centralising force in Ireland; and it is also no coincidence that its secular ally, the Uí Néill, was also a centralising force.

As mentioned, 650-850 marks a formative period of the cult of corporeal relics in Ireland with the 'move towards *translation* and enshrinement… related, then,

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[339] Byrne, *Irish Kings*, p. 124.
[340] Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, *Brian Boru: Ireland's Greatest King?*, (Stroud, 2007), pp. 48-51.
[341] Ó Carragáin, *Churches*, p. 85; he states Iona also, but this is highly unlikely considering the lack of evidence.
[342] Ibid. pp. 60-66.
[343] Ibid.
[344] Ibid. pp. 65-6; Noble and Head, *Soldiers*, p. xxxviii.

to a need to re-create special distinction around saints.' [345]   Indeed, the earliest evidence for *translatio* derives from the later seventh century *vitae* of Brigit, Columba and Patrick, excepting Adomnán's *Vita* since Columba's remains were not enshrined until the mid eighth century as far as we can tell.[346] From the later ninth century, however, the translation and enshrinement of corporeal relics is far out-weighed by the abundance of enshrinements for various associative relics; which become clearer in the discussion of Irish *scrína* below. However it is fitting to note that:

> 'Translations were not essential for the development of Irish saints' cults because, already by the eighth century, Irish clerics had devised rituals to consecrate whole sites, along with the idea of saying Masses for the dead, so that the proximity of burials to translated relics was of secondary importance… relics were often kept separate from the principal church.'[347]

Ó Carragáin's observations correlate well with this exerpt from the *Life of St Flannan*:

> '[Flannan expressed] a wish to the clergy and people that they would allow his remains to rest in the bosom of the earth. However, should any persons… venture to take his body from its coffin and enshrine it, they must be prepared for temporal punishment on account of their rashness… after [Flannan's] death the fame of his sanctity attracted crowds to his tomb where, through his intercession, miracles took place… the Church, the King, and the nobility applied to the Roman Pontiff for the usual leave to disinter the venerable body of Flannan, and have it placed in a shrine. Rome gave its sanction…Owing to the injunction of the Saint when dying, there was some difficulty in getting persons to disinter and touch the body. However, two very holy persons…unearthed the coffin and exposed the relics. But lo at once a strong vapour arose, struck against the eyes and mouths of these two persons; and the result was the loss of sight for ever to one of them, and a paralysis in the body of the other.'[348]

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[345] Ó Carragáin, *Churches*, p. 67; Herbert, 'Hagiography and holy bodies', p. 17.

[346] John Bannerman, '*Comarba Coluim Chille* and the Relics of Columba', *The Innes Review*, Vol. 44 No. 1, (1993), pp. 14-47 at pp. 22-3.

[347] Ó Carragáin, *Churches*, p. 85.

[348] *Life of Saint Flannan, Patron of Killaloe Diocese*, (ed.) Rev. S. Malone, (Dublin, 1902), pp. 49-51; the Life is probably twelfth century in origin if not later, but it may nonetheless reflect a continuity of earlier attitudes toward disturbing the holy dead. Malone states that its date is determined as follows (pp. vii-viii): '[T]he words Hibernia and Scotia are used [in the

This excerpt may be a later expression of a more conservative attitude in Ireland whereby saints remained undisturbed in their tombs, which goes a long way in accounting for the popularity and high status – sometimes higher status – of associative relics there (and in the other Celtic regions more generally) compared to other regions. This also explains why Armagh could not likely possess Patrick's full corporeal relics, despite Down's subordination to that church.

Initially *translatio* may not have been essential to mould a saint's cult in Ireland, although there is nonetheless evidence that *translatio* occurred throughout our period even if less frequently than on the continent. It is also most certainly the case that when a *translatio* did occur that it more often than not comprised of exhuming a portion of remains rather than full corporeal relics; I also suspect that *translatio* was very relunctantly considered. One reason for *translatio* in Ireland may have been to take corporeal along with other associative relics on circuit to attract alms and/or collect taxes, but other reasons might also have included the sealing of compacts and treaties between ecclesiastics and/or secular rulers. Certainly, Ó Carragáin's notion that entire ecclesiastical sites were consecrated signifies that they were tailor-made to attract local pilgrims, especially those seeking to benefit from the healing and curative power provided by the holy tomb, is feesible.

In this period also many saints were disinterred and translated to new communities, and 'in the Carolingian gift economy of spiritual exchange, saints' bodies became prestigious items to acquire.'[349] However Rome's most important martyrs, namely Peter and Paul, remained intact in their tombs, which is an example most Irish churches may have followed.[350] Just as early Roman martyrs were associated with their graves during the initial stages of the cult of saints, only to be disinterred and moved into the congregational church under or beside the main altar, so we can see a revival in Rome of these practices during the Carolingian centuries.[351] Furthermore, from the eighth century many corpses were also divided as 'saints were translated to Rome and from Gallo-Roman sites to new churches.'[352] In the ninth

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text] as synonymous, and yet it is generally held that the term Scotia was exclusively applied to Scotland after the twelfth century. Thus, too, the writer of the Life refers to the destruction of Milan as a late occurance (*noviter factum*), and we know that it was in the twelfth century, in the year 1164 Milan was razed to the ground by Barbarossa. Nor should the Life be limited to the twelfth century; for then the writer only condensed or threw into a shape the previous Lives of the Saint. The Life is the more to be appreciated as very little is to be found elsewhere about St Flannan.' Thanks to Anne Paton for bringing my attention to this text.

[349] Smith, 'Old saints new cults', p. 318.

[350] Tómas Ó Carragáin, 'The architectural setting of the cult of relics in early medieval Ireland', *Journal of the Royal Society of the Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 133, (2003), pp. 130-76 at p. 142.

[351] Brown, *Cult of Saints*, pp. 4-12 and pp. 36-8.

[352] Smith, 'Oral and written', p. 336.

century Einhard in his *Translation of the Relics of Ss Marcellinus and Peter* pondered over the knowledge that 'in Rome there were a huge number of neglected burial places of the martyrs… [and so] I began to enquire how… I should obtain some small portion of the true relics of the saints who are buried at Rome'.[353]

However, such disturbances of holy bodies did not necessarily 'affect that particular link between saint, tomb and community.'[354] *Translatio* occurred for several reasons: as an act of high politics and diplomacy; intense personal devotion; reinventing cults of saints left in abandoned churches; demonstrating the saintly succession of a church's episcopal office by disinterring past bishops; *translatio* for fear of destruction or theft.[355] Moreover, removing relics from the original tomb often meant that bodies could disappear for years, even decades. For example Martin of Tours' body was taken in flight from the Vikings in 853 to Coméry, then to Chablis, Orléans, and finally to Auxerre; it did not return to Tours for over one hundred years.[356] Alfred Smyth points out that the monks of Tours moved his relics to Coméry because they were warned of a Viking attack, which came on 8 November because 'no doubt, as in Ireland, the Northmen had become well known for raiding churches on or close to patronal festivals, and St Martin's feast fell on 11 November.'[357]

We can also glean a sense of Viking raids in Ireland in the various annals from the 820s,[358] which is especially evident in entries involving *scrína* in the eighth and ninth centuries. Examples are found in the *Annals of Ulster*: when Scandinavians plundered Bangor in 824.2 they took the *scrín* containing Comgall's relics, and in 832.5 the *scrín* ('shrine') of Adomnán was stolen from Domnach Maigen, Co.Monaghan, 'by the heathens'; in 825.17, Blathmac was martyred on Iona

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[353] Einhard, trans. Barrett Wendell and ed. David Appleby, *Translation of the Relics of Sts. Marcellinus and Peter*, *Preface*, (ed.) Thomas Head, *Medieval Hagiography, An Anthology*, (London, 2001), pp. 199-226 at p. 205.

[354] Smith, 'Old saints new cults', p. 320.

[355] Ibid. p. 319, also pointed out that 'Only in such fearful circumstances did a community welcome the relocation of its patron saint'; and 'the absence of a saint's relics did not remove his protective patronage'. St Germanus was also removed from his church in 846 in fear of the Vikings (p. 320); Noble and Head, *Soldiers*, p. xxxvi-xl.

[356] Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, p. 114; also gives a similar example pertaining to St Cuthbert's corpse, when after Vikings raids at Lindisfarne in the late ninth century its monks wandered Northumbria, before finding a home in Chester-le-Street for more than a century until Cuthbert's body was taken once again for the same motive until a permanent residence at Durham was finally established (pp. 114-5).

[357] Alfred P. Smyth, 'The effect of Scandinavian raiders on English and Irish churches: a preliminary reassessment', (ed.) Brendan Smith, *Britain and Ireland 900-1300, Insular Responses to Medieval European Change*, (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 1-38 at p. 16

[358] Clare Downham, *Viking Kings of Britain and Ireland, The Dynasty of Ívarr to A.D. 1014*, (Edinburgh, 2007), p. 11; she points out that 'from the 830s Irish chroniclers recorded the founding of numerous camps at coastal points and deep into the interior of the island.'

for hiding Columba's *scrín* from the Scandinavians, and its later recovery at Dunkeld in Scotland saw it return to Ireland once again in 'flight from the foreigners' in 878.9.[359] Interesting also, although they concern an incident not documented in the annals, is one unique anecdote in the *Tripartite Life*: 'Erdit and Agustín are in the lesser island, and since it was taken by the pagans their shrines (*scrína*) are in Sletty.'[360]

In the eighth and ninth centuries many entries in the annals pertain to corporeal relics being taken on circuit in portable *scrína*, usually after a devastation of sorts or to promulgate the 'laws of saints', or *cánai*. That a part or all of a saint's body was enshrined in a *scrín* is intriguing; however, it is also likely other relics accompanied the corporeal relics of the saint concerned, such as *brandea* of some sort and even corporeal and associative relics of other saints, such as pieces of hair, skin and/or nails. Even more so is that a few entries tell of the existence of *Scrín Pátraic*, which suggests that Armagh was asserting its control over Patrick's corporeal relics. *Scrína* appear to be similar to the portable *arca* Bede describes, such as that which contained St Cuthbert's relics;[361] however, no Irish *scrína* survive intact to confirm this, although Ó Floinn states that 'the Irish word *scrín* is equivalent to the Latin *arca*… the very term used by Walafrid Strabo for the shrine that held Columba's bones.'[362] *Scrína* were doubtless made of wood with decorative metal-work, quite likely impressed on precious metals.[363] In 800.6 Clonaed of Kildare's relics were apparently placed in a *scrín* made of gold and silver, and in 801.1 (*Annals of Ulster*) St Ronan's relics were also placed in a *scrín* 'in a gold and silver casket'.[364]

John Bannerman suggests that *scrína* are not to be confused with the much smaller portable house-shaped reliquaries, such as the *Breccbennach Coluim Chille*, or the 'speckled peaked one of Columba'.[365] Bannerman points out, however, that only nine examples of the much smaller house-shaped reliquaries survive from Ireland and Scotland.[366] These smaller house-shaped reliquaries were likely designed to include corporeal relics, from shavings of bone to teeth, hair, nails and digits, or even *brandea*,[367] but they are nowhere directly described as *scrína*. For example, a

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[359] The relics were divided between Dunkeld and Kells, though details are unclear.
[360] *Tripartite Life*, p. 193: '*Erdit ocus Augustin hisindinsi aslaigiu, ocus iarnagabail dogentib hiSlebtiu ascrína atáat.*'
[361] Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, Chapter 30 p.263; Charles Thomas, *Bede, Archaeology and the Cult of Relics*, (Jarrow, 1973), p. 17.
[362] Bannerman, '*Comarba*', p. 21; Ó Floinn, '*Insignia Columbae* I', p. 139.
[363] Thomas, *Bede*, p. 17; Bannerman, '*Comarba*', p. 21.
[364] Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines*, pp. 5-11.
[365] Bannerman, '*Comarba*', p. 21.
[366] Ibid.
[367] Edwards, 'Celtic saints', p. 226.

regular component of the descriptor for these smaller reliquaries would be *brecc*, meaning 'speckled', which indicates the decorative metal work, whilst *bennach*, or 'peaked', suggests gable finials.[368] One example may be Patrick's tooth-reliquary, and the first phase of its crafting occurred in the tenth century with the second in the mid fourteenth;[369] as mentioned, teeth are common to relic-lists surviving from the ninth century, with the English monastery at Ely even claiming to possess the tooth of St Peter's.[370] Another is the twelfth century *Breac Máedóic* ('Speckled Shrine of Máedóc'), which reputedly included the relics of Ss Stephen, Laurence and Clement, as well as the ankle of St Martin and the hair of the Virgin.'[371] It would also be misleading to equate *scrína* with the permanent shrines which were also house-shaped and variously sized – from basic slab-shrines with their characteristic hole through which relics may be reached,[372] to the larger mortared reliquary-chapels, which were usually situated close to the congregational church, although their position in relation to the church is variable.[373]

There is also the curious poem entitled *A Maccucáin, Sruith in Tíag*, which James Carney dated to the seventh century but which probably originates in the ninth. [374] The poem is essentially about a boy who carries around various relics in his satchel. Carney suggests this is a metaphor for the reality that 'all the relics one would ever need are in the Gospels', but I would not so lightly dismiss the idea that Maccucáin's satchel was in fact an actual reliquary.[375] Among the many relics of various Irish and Scottish saints mentioned throughout this poem is Patrick's tooth,

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[368] Bannerman, '*Comarba*', p. 21.

[369] Bourke, *Patrick*, pp. 50-1; the second phase was undertaken at the behest of Thomas de Beringham, Lord of Athenry in Co.Galway, d.1376. Patrick's tooth reappears in the *Tripartite Life* (p.141) 'on the flagstone at Caissel Irre', although in another episode it is unclear if the same tooth is referred to: 'One day, as he was washing his hands… a tooth fell out of his head onto the ford. Patrick went on the hill to the north of the ford, and sends to seek the tooth, and straightaway the tooth shone in the ford like the sun; and 'Ford of the Tooth' is the name… and 'Church of the Tooth'… in which Patrick left the tooth' (pp. 197-9). It is nowhere clear whether the abovementioned reliquary was made for Patrick's tooth gifted to Brón, for the one left in the Church of the Tooth, or for some other undocumented tooth of the saint claimed in Galway or which was sent there at a later date. To an extent this story may confirm that Irish churches heeded the Second Council of Nicea's decree in 789 toobtain corporeal relics for the altar.

[370] Thomas, *Cult of Saints' Relics*, p. 429.

[371] Flanagan, *Transformations*, p. 224; this reliquary is even larger than that crafted for Patrick's tooth.

[372] The first mention of such a shrine in our major texts is in *Quarta*, 37, where Patrick is upbraided by Bishop Loarnnus for letting boys play beside his tomb: 'for one day some boys were playing… when the ball went through a hole into the tomb. Then one of the playing boys put his hand inside wanting to get a hold of the ball, but when he tried to pull back his hand he could not do so at all.'

[373] Bannerman, '*Comarbra*', pp. 21-2; Ó Carragáin, *Churches*, p. 68.

[374] James Carney, '*A Maccucáin, Sruith in Tíag*' *Celtica*, Vol. 15, (1983), pp. 25-41; Pádraig Ó Riain (pers. comm.) reckons this poem dates to the ninth-century.

[375] Carney, '*A Maccucáin*', p. 25-6.

but also the hair of the Virgin and the teeth and various other corporeal and associative relics of other saints etc. More recently Ó Floinn suggests this poem is also known as *The Shrine of Adomnán*, and that a twelfth-century note:

> '[E]quates this shrine with the shrine of Adomnán which was brought
> to Ireland in 727… the collection of 'relics' referred to in the poem
> does read like the contents of a shrine containing multiple relics of
> the type represented by *Brecc Máedóic*.'[376]

Whatever one takes from the poem, Ó Floinn's idea highlights the variety of relics that *Scrína* held aside from corporeal remains.

When not taken on circuit or fleeing from destruction a *scrín* was most likely chained to the altar.[377] That Armagh housed, or was believed to have housed, at least some of Patrick's corporeal remains in *Scrín Pátraic* is indicative of its control over its patron's cult, even if the saint's full corporeal remains could not be accessed; in fact Bannerman went so far to suggest that a *scrín* was 'almost as necessary as a permanent one [i.e. tomb].'[378] That there are not enough *scrína* documented in the annals to represent all of Ireland's saints may indicate that only larger ecclesiastical communities could afford their manufacture and/or *scrína* were so commonly crafted and taken on circuit that only those deemed important by annalists were recorded. Certainly, the only known surviving example of an Irish pre-Norman reliquary that enshrined corporeal relics is that of St Manchán, and all other surviving body-part reliquaries of Patrick – excepting that made for his tooth – do not predate the fifteenth century.[379] It indeed remains 'a remarkable fact that enshrined corporeal remains figure little in the Irish cult of relics.'[380]

Whilst other principal Patrician relics existed at Armagh, namely *Bachall Ísu* and *Canóin Phádraic* (i.e. the *Book of Armagh*), the latter was not enshrined until the tenth century. Given that *Scrín Pátraic* was not plundered and destroyed until 1066, Patrick's corporeal relics were most probably Armagh's premier insigne before this point.[381] Lucas states that in Ireland many various 'relics and reliquaries were regarded as badges of office… and a considerable number of contexts suggest that

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[376] Ó Floinn, '*Insignia Columbae* I', p. 148.
[377] Bannerman, '*Comarbra*', p. 23.
[378] Ibid. p. 24.
[379] Ó Floinn, '*Insignia Columbae*', pp. 160-1, points out that the same applies for Columba's corporeal relics. Patrick's Tooth-reliquary was opened in the nineteenth century and was found to contain pieces of cloth and a small lead cross (Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines*, p. 20). There are several Patrician body-part reliquaries of the later medieval period, including the shrine of Patrick's hand, a head-reliquary, the shrine of Patrick's jaw and another for his thumb (Bourke, *Patrick*, pp. 48-55).
[380] Ó Floinn, '*Insignia Columbae* I', p. 160.
[381] Bourke, *Patrick*, p. 5; the *Book of Armagh* was enshrined in 937 by the southern Uí Néill high-king Donnchad mac Flainn.

they functioned as such.'[382] Whilst his observations are fair, it seems appropriate to pause briefly and consider Lucas' descriptor 'badges of office', to recognise what cannot be elaborated here with Gilbert Márkus' words, that they:

> '[S]hould rather be understood as what we might call an 'effective sign', since it brings about and conveys the very authority that it signifies, putting into the hands of the lawful bearer the *virtus* of the saint, for the blessing or punishment of those with whom the bearer comes into contact, and validating the bearer's claim to the authority of the patron.'[383]

Lucas observes that there exists 'no overt statement' of which relics were the premier insigne of a patron saint in any case stated in the annals.[384] However, from the many occasions on which *scrína* feature in the eighth and ninth centuries that *Scrín Pátraic* must have been Armagh's premier insigne, in this period taking precedence over the insignia described in *Liber Angeli*.[385] This view is heightened by events in 1066.1 (*Annals of Ulster*) when 'Aed ua Ruairc, king of Uí Briúin, died immediately after plundering Patrick's shrine'; Bannerman's concluded that:

> 'Initially and logically a saint's authority would be represented by the often recently translated bones enshrined in a portable shrine. Leaving aside *Bachall Ísu*, first recorded in 789, the earliest reference in *Annals of Ulster* to a specific relic of a saint is always to the *scrín*…'[386]

In the latter half of the ninth century, however, the activity of *scrína* in the annals generally declines and none are mentioned until the solitary entry featuring *Scrín Pátraic* over a century later. Perhaps relic-veneration was disrupted due to the Scandinavian invasions that wreaked havoc across Europe, despite coinciding with the resurgence in the flow of Roman relics in the Christian West.[387] After all, the eighth to tenth centuries were marked by the Christianisation of Hungary, Poland, Bohemia and Denmark, and the Scandanavians who settled in Ireland, for example, were in turn also absorbed into its Christian culture, even if this was not without

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[382] Lucas, 'Relics', p. 13; also consult pp. 14-7 for the various functions of such relics.
[383] Gilbert Márkus, 'Dewars and relics in Scotland: some clarifications and questions', *The Innes Review*, Vol. 62 No. 2, (2009), pp. 95-144 at p. 107.
[384] Lucas, 'Relics', p. 13.
[385] Ninth-century entries in *Annals of Ulster* for *scrína* at: 818.4, 824.2, 825.17, 831.5, 832.5, 878.9; in entry 831.5 there is a distinction made between the *scrín* of Mac Cuilin and the relics, *minda*, of Patrick (Ó Floinn, '*Insignia Columbae* I', p. 139). See Appendices B and C for these entries in full.
[386] Bannerman, '*Comarba* ', p. 28.
[387] Smith, 'Old saints new cults', pp. 320-1.

causing some degree of internal strife.[388] It is perhaps no surprise that after the destruction and plunder of several *scrína* in the annals it might have been deemed by their authors most prudent to no longer publicise such matters – not because corporeal relics were henceforth any less venerated in Ireland but because these reliquaries and their contents were deemed too precious to risk further exposure.[389] Perhaps this was also in part due to the breakdown of Carolingian authority, which predominantly occurred as a result of internal civil strife towards the end of the ninth century, and an event which was certainly felt throughout the British Isles.[390]

Most intriguingly, the eventual plunder of *Scrín Pátraic* in 1066 coincided with the Norman invasion of England.[391] That the Uí Briúin plundered and destroyed *Scrín Pátraic*, and not any other of Armagh's principal relics, such as *Bachall Ísu* or *Canóin Pátraic*, is significant. Armagh now needed a premier Patrician *insignium* that both symbolised its ecclesiastical ambitions and could not be claimed elsewhere, and 'certainly by the opening of the twelfth century that was *Bachall Ísu*'.[392]

The Patrician Lives of our period, particularly the *Tripartite Life*, not only reflect Ireland's ecclesiastical and secular political landscape, but also a widening non-Irish interest in Patrick's cult, in particular that propagated by Glastonbury from the tenth century. Patrick's corporeal relics are not mentioned in the later- eighth / early- ninth-century *Secunda*, but in *Quarta* the saint's gravesite is claimed to be located in Down, and most interestingly *Quarta's* author even hints at a thriving tomb-cult of Patrick there.[393] Added to this is the ongoing tradition of Patrick's *translatio*, and Brigit reputedly states in *Quarta* that 'Patrick will lie buried in a place near here (i.e. Down) and not long afterwards he will be moved to another place' (n.

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[388] Noble and Head, *Soldiers*, p. xli; Lesley Abrams, 'The conversion of the Scandinavians', (ed.) Christopher Harper-Bill, *Anglo-Norman Studies, Proceedings of the Battle Conference in Dublin*, (Woodbridge, 1997), pp. 1-30 at pp. 3-5, where she reminds us that 'Scandinavians did not all do the same things at the same time in all parts of Ireland' (p. 5).

[389] Bannerman points out that 'none of the large portable shrines survived intact because they provided such irresistible targets for plundering Scandinavians' ('*Comarba*', p. 28).

[390] Noble and Head, *Soldiers*, p. xli.

[391] Consult William M. Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans, The Church of Durham, 1071-1153*, (Suffolk, 1998), esp. pp. 61-100; Bartlett, 'Cults of Irish, Scottish and Welsh saints', pp. 67-86.

[392] Bannerman, '*Comarba*', p. 28.

[393] *Quarta*, 97: 'Because… [Patrick's body] was buried with great honour among the nations of the Ulti [i.e. Ulstermen] in the fortress which called Dunlethglasse [i.e. Down], in which place divine favours throught the merits of the blessed apostle Patrick are bestowed upon the faithful by the generosity of divine clemency until the present day.' '*Quod, ut praefati sumus, inter Vltorum gentes in castro quod dicitur Dunlethglasse cum ingenti honore sepultum est, in quo loco diuina beneficia pro meritas beati Patricii apostolic credentibus largiente diuina clementia usque in hodiernum diem conferuntur.*'

229).[394] For the first time in *Secunda* we encounter Patrick's sister Lupait, 'whose relics are in Armagh.'[395] It is likely that Lupait's corporeal relics are referred to and that they were translated to Armagh at some point, although from where and exactly when is unknown.[396] Above all, Armagh's claim to possess the relics of one direct member of their patron's bloodline is most significant.

The *Historia Brittonum*, written in Britain, states that 'Patrick was buried in secret… no one knowing where'.[397] This statement may well point to the first British expression of earlier seventh-century debates over the location of Patrick's grave. The tradition that Patrick's grave is in Down however is continued in the *Tripartite Life*, whose individual narratives essentially reflect the content in *Collectanea* and in Muirchú's *Vita*. Interestingly, Probus, the Anglo-Saxon author of another Patrician Life, (four-fifths of which essentially follows Muirchú's work and was probably composed by a Glastonbury monk),[398] does not mention Patrick's grave-site which agrees with the *Historia Brittonum*. Crucially, however, in Probus' version of the famous contention over Patrick's corpse, which is absent in the *Historia Brittonum*, strikingly involves the peoples of 'Ireland *and* Britain'.[399] As for the dating of this text, Francis and Byrne's estimation of its composition-origin in the 970s is most likely correct, and that this work may have originally been written at Glastonbury is not to be lightly dismissed given its 'British' interest.[400]

The seventh-century contradictions over the location of Patrick's grave undoubtedly gave rise to claims outside of Ireland, namely at Glastonbury. But we will learn that this has much to do with an age-old dilemma over the fifth-century historicity of Patrick himself as being inextricably linked to Palladius. The issue of whether there is a Patrick-senior (Palladius) and Patrick-junior (our Patrick) inevitably spilled into Glastonbury's claims to possess Patrick's corporeal relics and

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[394] *Quarta*, 91 <xlii>: '*Quadam die sedente uiro Dei Patricio in loco quodam et praecepta Dei praedicante omnes qui illic aderant nubem lucidam de alto uenientem uiderunt et ad locum ubi beati uiri sepulchrum habetur descendentem, hoc est castrum Lethglasse, ibique diutius morata euanuit.*'

[395] *Secunda*, 1: '*Natus est igitur in illo oppido Nemthor nomine eratque illi soror Lupita nomine, cuius reliquae sunt in Ardmacha.*'

[396] However, in the later *Tripartite Life* we learn that Patrick has two sisters, Lupait and Tigris (p. 17), and also that when Lupait died – after Patrick ran over his pregnant sister three times with his chariot – and we learn she was buried at the *ferta*, perhaps in Armagh given the claim to her relics in the earlier *Secunda* (p. 235).

[397] *Historia Brittonum*, 55: '*Res autem exigebat amplius loqui de sancto Patricio, sed tamen pro compendio sermonis volui breviare.*'

[398] Francis and Byrne, 'Two Latin Lives', p. 8.

[399] Probus, *Vita*, 39: '*In tempore transitus santissimi patris nostril Patricii dira quaedam belli contention inter Orientales +Britanniae populos+ ex parte una et inter Vltanos ex alia parte orta est de tollendo corpore eiusdam sanctissimi uiri in loco qui Collum Bouis nominator….*'

[400] Francis and Byrne, 'Two Latin Lives', p. 8.

claims to house his grave.[401] As discussed, Armagh's claims were heavily reliant on cordial relations with other churches and secular elites in Ireland. That Patrick himself states in *Confessio* that he sought to spend the remainder of his life in Ireland inevitably meant that Glastonbury's claims always rested on shaky foundations, despite the confusion over Patrick-senior and -junior in a myriad of sources.[402]

We already have Tírechán's impression that Palladius was martyred and that it occurred outside of Ireland, just as Muirchú expressed. Like Tírechán's version, *Secunda* and *Quarta* are explicit that Palladius died a martyr although they differ on the location of his death. *Quarta* states that 'some say' Palladius was given a martyr's crown in Ireland, whilst *Secunda's* author claims that 'some say he received the martyr's crown [at Fordun]'.[403] Both *vitae* were probably written in Ireland, possibly in Leinster where Palladius founded three churches.[404] Consider *Quarta's* statement: 'Palladius, seeing that he could not advance much [in Ireland]… departed'.[405] Fundamentally, Armagh still controlled Palladius' fate although Patrick nonetheless occupies most of the text; in other words it is Patrick's legend that provides the perfect vehicle for the growth of Palladius' cult. This is especially clear if we consider that Patrick's cult spread to Dumbarton, in Scotland, from the early ninth century and almost contemporaneously to Palladius' cult.[406] By placing Palladius' death somewhere in Scotland, clerics loyal to Armagh may have been advised to introduce this tradition after Tírechán's evident confusion over Patrick-senior and -junior: however, if Palladius died in Scotland then he could attain an identity somewhat detached from Patrick-senior.

Armagh's control of Palladius' cult is also focused on Leinster, and in the *Tripartite Life* Patrick travels to Mag Liphi, where 'he founded churches and cloisters… and left Auxilius in Celi Usaili and Iserninus and MaccTail in Cella Culind, *and other saints*.'[407] Incidentally, Auxilius and Iserninus were held to be disciples of Patrick who travelled to Ireland with him from Gaul, and they were likely

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[401] The seminal work on this matter is undoubtedly O'Rahilly's *Two Patricks*; for a digestible analysis of the issues raised here read Dumville's appraisal in *St Patrick*, pp. 59-64.

[402] Patrick, *Confessio*, p. 108.

[403] *Secunda*, 24 XX: '*Post paruum denique interuallum defuncto Palladio in campo Girgin in loco qui dicitur Forddun – dicunt enim alii martyrio coronatum esse eum illic_*.'

[404] *Quarta*, 28: '*Videns autem sanctus Palladius quod non multum illic prodesse potuit, Romam reuerti uolens in regione Pictorum ad Dominum migrauit*.'

[405] Ibid.; no early medieval textual evidence exists for Palladius beyond that contained in the Patrician material, except for the very early information in Prosper's fifth century *Chronicle*.

[406] Thomas O. Clancy, 'The cults of Saints Patrick and Palladius in early medieval Scotland', Steve Boardman, John Rueben Davies and Eila Williamson (eds.), *Saints' Cults in the Celtic World*, (Woodbridge, 2009), pp. 18-41 at pp .20-22.

[407] *Tripartite Life*, p. 187: '*Luid iar sin iMagh Liphi. Rofothaig cella ocus congbala hisuidia, ocus forácaib Úsaili icill Úsaili ocus Iserninum ocus Macc Tail hiCella Culind, et ali[i] sancti*.'

important enough to have been venerated in these places; as stated both Auxilius and Iserninus are firmly connected to Palladius in fifth-century external sources. We then find Patrick in Sletty, where 'Cremthann offered that spot to Patrick… and in Sletty [he] is buried… [where] Fíacc was afterwards ordained [bishop].'[408] The reasons for introducing this story – which situates the associations between Patrick and the church at Sletty before the mid- seventh-century era of Fíacc back to the fifth century – are difficult to discern, but Cremthann's corporeal relics in this anecdote serve to solidify links between Armagh's *paruchia* and Sletty through their antiquity. We learn that Cremthann gifted Leinster churches numbering in the 'thirties and forties' to Patrick, possibly as a reaction to the growing cult of Palladius in that area, quite plausibly exemplified by the composition of *Secunda* and *Quarta*.[409] Regardless of the separate identity in *Secunda* and *Quarta* of Palladius and Patrick-senior, there was always the risk that the tradition that Palladius is Patrick-senior prevailed; thus one could perceive why Armagh strove to influence Palladius' cult at home and away.

There are a number of Irish and non-Irish sources which subscribe to this 'confusion' and which must have occupied Armagh's immediate concerns. *Génair Pátraic*, an Old Irish verse-text ascribed to Bishop Fíacc of Sletty, states that: 'When Patrick went he visited the other Patrick; together they ascended to Jesus, Mary's son.' [410] There is also an eighth-century source ascribed to Bede, *Liber Epigrammaticum*, most of which is now lost and survives only in small fragments;[411] one excerpt reads: 'Calpurnicus begot [Patrick], Britain sent him, Gaul fed him, blessed *Scotia* (Ireland) holds his limbs.'[412] In the section concerning the saintly-guarantors of *Cáin Adomnáin*, which is later than the original seventh-century essence of the *Cáin* itself and most likely dates to the tenth century, there is a record of two Patricks.[413] Moreover, there is also a Patrick-junior and -senior recorded in a litany in the Old Irish *Stowe Missal*.[414]

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[408] Ibid. p. 193: '*Batar intansin foingreim láríg Laigen Cremthan macc Censelaig, collotar forlongais.*'.

[409] Ibid. p. 193.

[410] *Génair Pátraic*, pp. 402-11, 33: '*INtan conhualai Patraic adella inPatraic naile, ismalle connucaibset dochum nÍsu meicc Maire.*'

[411] Michael Lapidge, 'Some remnants of Bede's lost *Liber Epigrammaticum*', *Anglo-Latin Literature, 600-899*, (London, 1996), pp. 357-80 at pp. 363-4.

[412] Leland's insertion in William's *Vita Patricii*, p. 337 n. 1: '*Calpurnus genuit istum,, alma Britannia misit, Gallia nutriuit, tenet artus Scottia felix.*'

[413] *Cáin Adomnáin*, 22: 'There are sureties, sun and moon, and the elements of God besides: Peter, Paul and the rest of the apostles; Gregory, the two Patricks…'; Máirín Ní Dhonnchadha, 'The guarantor list of *Cáin Adomnáin*, 697', *Peritia*, Vol. 1, (1982), pp. 178-215.

[414] *The Stowe Missal: MS. D. II. 3 in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin*, ed. George F. Warner, (London, 1906-1915), p. 15: '*Patrici, Patrici*'.

In the ninth century *Martyrology of Tallaght* (828 x 833) there is a record of two Patricks, with Patrick-senior described as 'the dear fosterer of our sage'.[415] However, confusingly Patrick-senior is affiliated to Armagh whilst the other to Ros Dela and both Patricks share their feast on the 24 August.[416] This confusing suggestion of a third Patrick, i.e. 'Patrick of Ros Dela', is mysterious. However, since the *Hieronymian Martyrology* is the base-text of the *Tallaght* material and records information for the fourth century St Patrick of Nevers in France, whose feast-day is also falls on 24 August, it makes sense that this 'third Patrick' of Ros Dela may simply have been mistaken for Patrick of Nevers in Tallaght-circles.[417] Binchy suggested Patrick of Ros Dela may have been the 'other' / 'elder-Patrick' whose cult he thought was located at Rostalla in Ossory and is not to be confused with Tírechán's Palladius-Patrick.[418]

The problem of the two Patricks likely spilled into Glastonbury's claims since a variety of pre thirteenth century Irish and non-Irish sources regard the saint's grave to reside at the abbey. Glastonbury's claim, however, is predominantly over the burial place of Patrick-senior, whose feast is most commonly dated to 24 April.[419] The lost tenth century Glastonbury kalendar lists Patrick-senior's feast as 24 August,[420] a date corroborated by the Exeter *Leofric Missal*, 979x987, which in addition accords Patrick-senior a higher grading than Patrick-junior of Armagh whose feast is on 17 March;[421] the same is also stated in the contemporary Canterbury kalendar.[422] *Félire Óengusso* states that Patrick-senior is buried at Glastonbury, but this is in a gloss of eleventh- or twelfth-century origin[423] The late tenth century *Bosworth Psalter* states Patrick-senior is buried at Glastonbury ('*Sancti Patricii*

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[415] *Martyrology of Tallaght from the Book of Leinster and MS. 5100-4 in the Royal Library, Brussels*, eds. Richard Irvine Best and Hugh Jackson Lawlor, (London, 1931), pp. 365-6; its dating is suggested by Pádraig Ó Riain in 'The Tallaght martyrologies, redated', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies*, Vol. 20, (1990), pp. 21-38; David N. Dumville, 'Patrick senior and junior', David N. Dumville *et al* (eds.), *Saint Patrick A.D. 493 – 1993*, (Woodbridge 1993), pp. 59-65 at pp. 60-1.

[416] Dumville, 'Patrick senior and junior', pp. 60-1.

[417] Ibid. pp. 59-64; this suggestion was argued by Binchy in 'Patrick and his biographers', pp. 125-9.

[418] Dumville, 'Patrick senior and junior', pp. 125-9.

[419] Ibid. pp. 60-1.

[420] Lesley Abrams, 'Patrick and Glastonbury', 'St Patrick and Glastonbury Abbey: *nihil ex nihilo fit*?', David N. Dumville *et al* (eds.), *St Patrick A.D. 493-1993*, (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 233-43 at p. 237 n. 23.

[421] *The Leofric Missal*, ed. Nicholas Orchard, *The Leofric Missal*, (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. lii-liv; Orchard has commented that Patrick's 'feast is entered in an early- eleventh-century copy of Usuard's martyrology from Abington, now Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 9, which is late eleventh century, and from Worcester' (p. 172).

[422] Dumville, 'Patrick senior and junior', p. 59.

[423] *Martyrology of Óengus*, pp. vii-xxii; this gloss emphasises a general Irish attraction to Glastonbury.

senioris in Glaestonia'), whilst *Chronicum Scotorum* and *Annals of Roscrea*, which are direct witnesses to the lost early to mid tenth century *Clonmacnoise Chronicle*, also claim Patrick-senior was buried there;[424] whether these are later medieval entries is impossible to discern. Also of interest is a story in the *Collectanea* concerning a swineherd who was raised to life again by Patrick, called Cas, son of Glas.[425] Finberg ingeniously suggests 'it was a simple matter to bring him over to Somerset, invert his family tree by calling him Glas, son of Cas, and identify him with the finder of the Glastonbury octoped.'[426] However, there is no evidence for the antiquity of Glastonbury's foundations or of its Irish connections. Moreover, Finberg misleadingly argues that Tírechán's story of Cas stated he lived to be one hundred and twenty years old – just like Patrick – but in Bieler's edition of the *Collectanea* Cas is one hundred and twenty feet long! This argument, clever as it is, does not stand up to scrutiny.[427]

The later tenth century 'B-text' of the earliest version of *Vita Dunstani*; Dunstan himself was Glastonbury abbot later sainted and the *Vita* tells us that during his early- tenth-century youth that Irish pilgrims flocked to Glastonbury because they were attracted to Patrick's relics and that Dunstan studied with them.[428] In addition, the *Vita* claims it was Patrick-junior whose corporeal relics rested at Glastonbury, which may be a sign that possible Irish suggestions Patrick-senior was the saint

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[424] *The Bosworth Psalter: an Account of a Manuscript formally belonging to O Turville-Petre Esq. of Bosworth Hall*, ed. G. Bell, (London, 1908), p. 18, where Bell stated that Patrick-junior, who is allocated a lower grade in the mass, placed in the list of 'common' martyrs, confessors and virgins; Abrams, 'Patrick and Glastonbury', p. 238.

[425] Tírechán, *Collectanea*, 40.7; there is a section about Glastonbury in the *Glossary of Cormac*, John O'Donovan and Whitley Stokes (eds.), (London, 1894), p. 111, which was written later than the *Book of Armagh*; Cormac died in 908 but there is no reason to think the *Glossary* was not his (H. P. R. Finberg's *West County Historical Studies*, (Newton Abbot, 1969), p. 81).

[426] Ibid.

[427] Ibid. p. 81; this is because he lifted information from John Gwynn's edition of the *Book of Armagh*: *Liber Ardmachanus: The Book of Armagh*, ed. with introduction and appendices by John Gwynn, (Dublin, 1913), and not in Bieler's more reliable edition.

[428] *Vita Dunstani*, ed. and trans. M. Winterbottom and R. M. Thomson, *Saints' Lives: Lives of SS. Wulfstan, Dunstan, Patrick, Benignus and Indract*, (Oxford, 2002), pp. 165-304 at p. 179: '*Conueniebat honestis studiis diuinae serenitatis assensus, conciliando ei magistros, cum indigenas tum et Hibernenses. Huiusce quipped nationis homines cum magna frequentia locum incolebant illum, uiri usquequaque pertissimi, et qui liberals artes ad plenum subdidissent ingeniis, quique ut perfectius philosoaffectibus abiuratis, Glastoniam contenderant, Patritii primi predicatoris sui amore adducti, cuius corporals exuuiae ibi ab antique habentur repositae*'; Dunstan's feast was celebrated at Canterbury at the highest grade since the late tenth century (Alan Thacker, 'Cults at Canterbury: Relics and Reform under Dunstan and his successors', Nigel Ramsey, Margaret Sparks and Tim Tatton-Brown (eds.), *St Dunstan, His Life, Times and Cult*, (Suffolk, 1992), pp. 221-47 at pp. 223-4); for the 'B-text' of *Vita Dunstani* see Michael Lapidge, 'B. and the *Vita S. Dunstani*', Nigel Ramsey, Margaret Sparks and Tim Tatton-Brown (eds.), *St Dunstan, His Life, Times and Cult*, (Suffolk, 1992), at pp. 247-61.

claimed at Glastonbury were also being countered within the abbey itself.[429] It is without doubt, however, that *Vita Dunstani* shows Glastonbury's attempts to account for its fifth-century antiquity via Patrick by exploiting the two-Patricks dilemma initially flagged by Tírechán and subsequent Irish and non-Irish writers: an exploitation which may potentially gain the abbey access to Ireland's rich array of saints and relics as well.

Glastonbury's special interest in Patrick must also have been motivated by the abbey's geographical position. Glastonbury is located on the eastern end of the Bristol Channel in the south-west of England; this, O'Rahilly argued, was one of the regions of western Roman Britain that might have beenwhere Patrick was born, even if it is unclear how Glastonbury monks would have known that information.[430] Indeed, we can see evidence of some claim over the origins of Patrick's birthplace spilling into the Lives of this period, especially into the *Tripartite Life* (i.e. perhaps as far back as the common text behind *Quarta*), which claims Patrick's birth-origin in Dumbarton, Scotland. Could this have also been a counter-action to Glastonbury's advances on claiming Patrick from the tenth century and an attempt to control the spread of the cults of Palladius and Patrick into Scotland by the early ninth? That said, *Secunda* and *Quarta* did not mention Glastonbury hosting Patrick's grave and nor did the *Tripartite Life*, so the tradition of Patrick at Glastonbury must have occurred later than the composition of these aforementioned texts.

As indicated, the antiquity of Irish involvement at Glastonbury is difficult to discern,[431] but the ninth-century Irish monk Indrechtach (Indract), possibly the Iona abbot of that name, whose death is in *Annals of Ulster* entry 849.7 and who was apparently martyred with his companions *en route* to the continent, makes it possible that Patrick's cult was brought with these or other like Irish *peregrini* in the ninth century.[432] However, we know that Glastonbury claimed to two very obscure 'Celtic' saints, Rumon and Kea, who were associated with the region around the River Fal.[433] It is evident that Glastonbury claimed the corporeal relics of northern Anglo-Saxon

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[429] *Vita Dunstani*, p. 179 (see the Latin quote in the note directlyabove).

[430] Patrick's birth-origins are impossible to discern, although we know he was Romano-British;O'Rahilly, *Two Patricks* and Abrams, 'Patrick and Glastonbury', p. 241.

[431] Finberg, *West Country*, pp. 70-88; Louis H. Gray, 'The Origin of the name of Glastonbury', *Speculum*, Vol. 10 No. 1, (1935), pp. 46-53.

[432] Michael Lapidge, 'The cult of St Indract at Glastonbury', (ed.) Michael Lapidge, *Anglo Latin Literature, 900-1066*, (London, 1993); Finberg, *West County*, pp. 85-6, although he does not identify Indract with the Iona abbot of that name, but with a 'bishop-abbot' of Armagh!

[433] G. Doble, 'Four saints of the Fal: St Gluvias, St Kea, St Fili and St Rumon', *Downside Review*, Vol. 47 (1929), pp. 1-29; David Rollason, *Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England*, (New York, 1989), p. 154.

saints as well, such as Bede, Hild of Whitby, Ceolfrith and Aidan.[434] David Rollason suggests Glastonbury was exploiting relic cults 'to consolidate rule over the south-west just as in the north and the Midlands [of England].'[435] In the tenth century there is evidence of an emerging trend by which the southern English churches were asserting dominance over their northern neighbours.[436]

The so-called *Charter of St Patrick* dates Glastonbury's foundation to the fifth century and ascribes it to Patrick.[437] As Finberg points out, however, the *Charter* makes some rather fantastic claims:

> '[T]he brothers showed me writings by saints Phagan and Deruvian which asserted that twelve disciples of saints Philip and James had built that old church in honour of out patroness, instructed by the blessed archangel Gabriel; and that moreover, the Lord of Heaven had consecrated that church in honour of his mother, while three pagan kings had given twelve portions of land to those twelve for their sustenance…'[438]

This *Charter* is unlikely to predate the tenth century when there is a growing trend for venerating apostolic saints in the West . There are also two subsequent charters, the first of which is in the name of King Ine (688x726), which is dated to 704, and the second which details a gift of land from Ealdred to St Mary's church (where Patrick's relics reputedly lie); however Lesley Abrams, like Finberg, also displays caution about the early provenance of these texts, and rightly so.[439] All known textual evidence collectively points to a cult of Patrick (-senior) in Glastonbury in the latter

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[434] Thomas, *Cult of Saints*, pp. 169-87 and Appendix III; William of Malmesbury*, De Antiquitate Glastonie ecclesie*, p. 68 (section 21).

[435] Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, p. 154; the *Charter* is in William of Malmesbury's *The Early History of Glastonbury*, (ed.) John Scott, *The Early History of Glastonbury, An Edition, Translation and Study of William of Malmesbury's De Antiquitate Glastonie Ecclesie*, (Woodbridge, 1981), 3, p.57: '*Et cum uitam monasticam ita duceremus iuxta normam probabilium partum, ostenderunt mihi prefati fratres scripta sanctorum Phagani et Deruuiani, in quibus continebatur quod XII discipuli sanctorum Philippi et Iacobi ipsam uetustam ecclesiam construxerant in honore prelibate aduocatricis nostre per doctrinamentum beati archangeli Gabrielis. Insuper et quod Dominus eamdem ecclesiam celitus in honore sue matris dedicauerat, et quod tres reges pagani ipsis XII ad eorum sustenementum XII porciones terre dederunt. Nec non et in scriptis recencioribus inueni quod sancti Phaganus et Deruuianus perquisierant ab Eleutherio papa, qui eos miserat decem annos indulgencie.*'

[436] Ibid. p. 152-3.

[437] Abrams points out that this *Charter* purports to date to 681 (following H. Edwards, *The Charters of the Early West-Saxon Kingdom*, (Oxford, 1988), pp. 11-15), but that it is 'unlikely to antedate the tenth century' ('Patrick and Glastonbury', p. 233); William's *De Antiquitate* includes the charter in its Chapter 9.

[438] Finberg, *West Country*, pp. 70-1.

[439] Ibid.; Abrams, 'Patrick and Glastonbury', pp. 233-4; she states these to be of twelfth- and thirteenth-century date respectively.

half of the tenth century.[440] Only in the eleventh and twelfth centuries do we discover a more aggressive stance over the claims to Patrick's corporeal relics, not only from Glastonbury, but also from the Irish responses in *Vita Tertia* and in Jocelin's *Vita*.

The Peak of the Contention: the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries

The eleventh century witnessed a particularly high demand for corporeal relics among a background of developments: a notable population boom; a new 'golden age' of monastic revival accompanied by a general increase in the literary output of clerics; the re-building of churches, known as the 'Romanesque' period of architecture; relative stability in the aftermath of the breakdown of Carolingian power in the later ninth century, as well as the end of Scandinavian expansion and other foreign invasions (i.e. Magyars, Slavs and Muslims); crusading fervour, in part fuelled by a desire to acquire Eastern relics;[441] and the sense of certain apocalyptic currents felt around 1000 years after Christ, culminating in the Peace and Truce of God movements which have origins at Charroux in France.[442]

The eleventh century also saw increased pilgrimage activity, as the French monk Ralph Glaber (writing in the 1030s) described:

> '[I]t transpired throughout the world – but especially in Italy and in Gaul – that ecclesiastical buildings were renovated… each tribe of Christians strove against one another to have the use of a more beautiful church… The faithful at that time remade almost all Episcopal basilicas, as well as monastic churches dedicated to various saints…'[443]

Glaber continues on pilgrimages made *en masse* to Jerusalem:

> '[T]he relics of many saints were revealed by various indications where they had long laid hidden… News of this attracted the faithful, not just from the provinces of Gaul, but from almost all of Italy and

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[440] Ibid. p. 240.

[441] This was marked by the largest theft of Eastern relics known to history duringthe sack of Constantinople in 1204; Holger A. Klein, 'Eastern objects and Western desires: relics and reliquaries between Byzantium and the West', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, Vol. 58, (2004), pp. 283-314 at pp. 306-13; for general background read Robert Bartlett's seminal *The Making of Europe, Conquest, Colonisation and Cultural Change, 950-1350*, (London, 1994).

[442] Thomas Head, 'The cult of relics in the eleventh century', (ed.) Thomas Head, *Hagiography, An Anthology*, (London, 2000), pp. 273-94 at p. 274; Geary, *Furta Sacra*, pp. 26-9; a similar millenarian mood can be discerned in Ireland, when at *Annals of Ulster* entry 1033.9 (see Appendix C below for full entry); see Benjamin Hudson, 'Time is short: the eschatology of the early Gaelic Church', Caroline Walker-Bynum and Paul Freedman (eds.), *Last Things, Death and the Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, (Philadelphia, 2000), pp. 101-24.

[443] See Ralph Glaber's *The Five Books of Histories*, (ed.) Thomas Head, *Hagiography, An Anthology*, (London, 2000), p. 273.

the lands beyond the sea. No small number of them was sick from fever, but they returned home cured by the intervention of the saints.'[444]

Sumption defines this era as 'the great age of pilgrimage' and one which marks a 'strong local character' of piety.[445] There was also a vogue for rebuilding churches in the Romanesque-style, which extended to Ireland; Harbison attributes this to the influence of Cluny (founded in 909), which came into fruition in the twelfth century.[446] It is impossible to tell the number of Romanesque churches built in Ireland, but we can ascertain that it was popular, even if the Norman arrival from 1169 favoured Gothic architecture.[447] Indeed, Harbison describes the twelfth century as one of the most active periods of pilgrimage in Ireland,[448] even if Irish pilgrims were warned that foreign destinations were not the only route to eternal salvation; one example is in the twelfth century *Betha Colum Cille* (or 'The Irish Life of Columba'), which says 'for it is not by track of feet nor by physical movement that one draws near to God, but by practice of good habit and virtues.'[449]

Furthermore, many saints' cults, especially those with Late Antique origins, were given a new lease of life through the sudden (re)discoveries of many holy corpses. For example, the monks of Saint-Jean-d'Angély in Aquitaine claimed to have discovered the head of their patron John the Baptist in 1016, although that very head had also been simultaneously venerated in Antioch.[450] The corpse of the early fourth-century martyr Katherine of Alexandria was also rediscovered on Mount Sinai in the later tenth or early eleventh century;[451] despite this, however, there is evidence for such cultic activity in eighth century Byzantium.[452] Even so – and only if we credit Katherine's *Passio* which survives in her earliest twelfth century *Vita*– nothing

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[444] Ibid.

[445] Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, p. 117.

[446] Harbison, *Pilgrimage*, p. 175; Ó Carragáin, *Churches*, pp. 293-304.

[447] Harbison, *Pilgrimage*, p. 177.

[448] Ibid. p. 177; Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 605-6, stated that 'in Lorraine in the tenth and eleventh centuries Irish churchmen played an auxiliary part in the ecclesiastical reform movement… In Germany in the eleventh and twelfth centuries a long series of monasteries… drew their inmates continuously from the western isle… The influence of this Irish monastic body was even felt in the remote dominions of Poland and Russi' (p. 606).

[449] *Betha Colum Cille*, (ed. and trans.) Máire Herbert, *Iona, Kells and Derry: The History and Hagiography of the Monastic Familia of Columba*, (Oxford, 1998), pp. 180-202 at pp. 221 and 250: '*Uair nocon ó shet choss nó I imluad cuirp chomhfhocsiges nech do Dia acht is tria denam sobés 7 sualach.*'; Columba is depicted as contemplating a pilgrimage to Martin's tomb at Tours as well as to Rome and Jerusalem.

[450] Richard A. Landes, *Relics, Apocalypse and the Deceits of History: Ademar of Chabannes, 989-1034*, (Cambridge, 1995); you can read a contemporary account in Ademar of Chabanne's *Chronicle*, trans. Thomas Head in *Medieval Sourcebook Online*, pp. 1-2.

[451] Christine Walsh, *The Cult of St Katherine of Alexandria in Early Medieval Europe*, (Burlington, 2007), see Chapter 1 and pp. 7-21.

[452] Ibid. p. 5.

is mentioned of her corporeal relics.[453] In fact, the author explained away this absence for centuries by suggesting that before her martyrdom Katherine prayed for her body not to be divided.[454] Claims to Katherine's corporeal relics appeared in Rouen in Normandy, even if only for three tiny finger bones, in the early eleventh century after the discovery of her corpse on Sinai; the only other relics of Katherine to surface in the West were of the associative variety.[455] Into this context we can place the sudden *inventio* of Patrick's grave –and that of Brigit and Columba – at Down in *c.*1185.[456] Both Ss Katherine and Anne, mother of the Virgin, are fine comparisons to Patrick in this vein,[457] emphasising that corporeal relics were not always necessary for the initial flourishing of a saint's cult.

In Ireland there were other *elevationes* (exhumations) of saints, particularly in the twelfth century, and for example in 1170 the relics of St Commán of Roscommon (d.747) were exhumed by its abbot Giolla Iarlaithe Ua Cormacáin (*Annals of the Four Masters*).[458] There are a few examples of Irish saints' relics translated to newly commissioned shrines in the twelfth century, as discernible in the Irish annals: in 1122.2 St Colmán of Lann (Co. Westmeath) was rediscovered on the Wednesday before Easter Sunday; in 1162 the relics of Bishop Móenu (d.572) and of St Cummíne Fota (d.662) were removed from their graves by clergy at Clonfert and placed in a *scrín* (*Annals of Ulster*); Commán's remains, as mentioned, were translated to a *scrín* crafted in gold and silver.

Generally speaking, corporeal relics remained highest in status compared to other relics and the desire to acquire them is evident in this century through the many contentions over their possession, through false claims and also thefts of corporeal relics arising as a result. Glastonbury was one of many southern English churches struggling to dominate its neighbouring northern churches, and acquiring corporeal relics was one major expression of its ecclesiastical supremacy. Gloucester's claim

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[453] Ibid.

[454] Ibid.

[455] Ibid. pp. 68-78; this is also true for England, where her cult was unusually kick-started by the introduction of associative relics in lieu of the corporeal variety, including 'phials of some kind filled with oil that had oozed from bone relics housed elsewhere' (p. 98). Sumption (*Pilgrimage*, p. 277) states that the 'cult of the Virgin Mary remained relatively independent of relics. They were certainly not considered essential, as they would have been in any other cult.'

[456] Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hiberniae*: 'The discovery in the city of Down of that noble treasure, I mean the bodies of Patrick, Brigit and Columba. Their remains were translated under the auspices of John de Courcy' / '*Modico, gladio sublatis, et centum capitibus Dublianiam transmissis. De nobilis thesauri, trium videlicet corporum Patricii, Brigide, Columbe apud urbem Dunensem invencione, et eorundem, procurante Iohanne de Curci, translacione.*' (*Expugnatio Hibernica*, eds. and trans. and historical notes by A. B. Scott and F. X. Martin, *The Conquest of Ireland by Geraldus Cambensis*, (Dublin, 1978), p. 235).

[457] Walsh*, Cult of St Katherine*, p. 3 n. 8.

[458] Lucas, 'Relics and reliquaries', p. 7.

over St Oswald's body – enshrined at Bardney in the seventh century but apparently translated to Glouchester in 909 by Alfred's daughter Æthelflæd and her husband Æthelred, in what was basically a raid into enemy territory – provides one example. The translation is in essence a theft, but was used to gain control over Lincolnshire where Oswald's corporeal remains were originally enshrined.[459] A similar situation is observable in the *translatio* of St Neot from Cornwall to Huntingtonshire in 980, and in this instance the saint himself apparently insisted that his body should not be returned to his patron church in Cornwall and his eleventh century *Vita* even claimed him as a relation of King Alfred the Great of Wessex.[460]

As mentioned, in the ninth and tenth centuries relic collections were tagged at numerous houses, including Chelles, Sens, Exeter and Reading, and copious lists of *miracula* were produced, which continued into the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[461] Denis Bethell states that English relic-lists 'have been little studied… no catalogue exists for them… for there can be little doubt that the twelfth century was the greatest age of the cult of relics in England';[462] however, this can also be applied elsewhere. Reading's relic list – whose 'impressive collection [included] some twenty-nine relics of Our Lord, six of Our Lady, nineteen of patriarchs and prophets, fourteen of apostles, seventy-three of martyrs, fifty-one of confessors and forty-nine of virgins' – is one fine example.[463] Bethell reported that approximately sixty-seven of these relics at Reading were shared with other English houses, and that two groups of relics stand out: Roman relics and those from Constantinople.[464] Reading even claimed to have a hand-relic of St James, apparently gifted by the empress Matilda and fitting the twelfth-century trend for apostolic relics.[465]

Reading's relic-lists document that most new saints' relics were obtained from local holy persons. Probably the most famous relics of a new saint are of Thomas Becket, with a variety being collected internationally, even if most were

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[459] Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, p. 154.

[460] Ibid.

[461] Michael McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy Communications and Commerce AD 300-900*, (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 283-318.

[462] Dennis Bethell, 'The making of a twelfth-century relic collection', (eds.) G. J. Cuming and D. Baker in *Popular Belief and Practice: papers read at the ninth Summer Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, (Cambridge, 1970), pp. 61-72 at p. 61.

[463] Ibid. p. 65.

[464] Ibid.; he also notes the influence of the relic-collections of Anglo-Saxon houses.

[465] Bethell, 'Making', p. 67; Thomas, *Cult of Saints' Relics*, pp. 207-9; Eric Kemp, 'Miracles of the Hand of St James', *Berkshire Archaeological Journal*, Vol. LXV, (1971-2), pp. 1-19. Thomas (*Cult of Saints' Relics*, p. 208) states that the hand was stolen by Henry of Blois in 1136 in support of his brother King Stephen against Matilda, and that the relic was only restored to Reading after Matilda's son Henry II ascended the English throne.

Becket's blood and *brandea*.[466] Other new saints in Reading's collection include: Bernard of Clairvaux, Malachy of Armagh, William of Norwich and Robert of Bury St Edmunds (the last two alledgedly martyred by Jews).[467] According to Bethell, Reading also expressed interest in recent discoveries of saints' bodies, particularly that of Brigit in 1185 at Down and Amphibalus at St Albans in 1177.[468] It is curious that Patrician relics feature sparsely in English relic-lists until the later Middle Ages, and although the majority of our Lives have notable pre twelfth century continental transmissions; this is not to state that Patrick is unimportant, just not as well-known outside of Ireland as one may initially think, and we will discover later that this situation does not change until the craze for Patrick's Purgatory from the late twelfth century .[469]

The Norman invasion of England in 1066 also had a considerable impact on the social, religious and political make-up throughout the British Isles. Bartlett states that the Normans had a notable enthusiasm for adopting the cult of local saints in the regions they governed.[470] One famous example is the *translatio* of Cuthbert's relics into Durham Cathedral in 1104, which signified 'a significant change in the ecclesiastical profile of the Church of Durham [that] would eventually enhance the authority of the Norman regime in the north-east of England.'[471] However, the Normans also held a suspicion about the authenticity of many native Anglo-Saxon saints' cults. One example is provided by an initial Norman suspicion over the cult of Dunstan, who at one point was removed from Canterbury's calendar, even though that place entered into a long drawn out contest over ownership of his corporeal relics with Glastonbury toward the end of our period.[472] Bartlett recounts that 'at the abbey of St Albans there was a wholesale destruction of the shrines of pre-Conquest saints by the first Norman abbot, who regarded his Anglo-Saxon predecessors as *rudes et*

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[466] Bethell, 'Making', p. 68.

[467] Ibid.

[468] Ibid.; Reading claimed to possess the head, jawbone, vestments and hair of Brigit, perhaps not unsurprising in that its abbot Reginald, who was deposed by Henry II, had an unsuccessful mission in Ireland between the 1170s and 1190s, which is perhaps when these Brigitine relics were acquired. Thomas, *Cult of Saints Relics*, p. 216, states that Amphibalus earned his martyrdom because he had lent Alban his cloakand hewas discovered three miles from St Albans at Redburn and translated beside Alban behind the high altar, until his relics were moved in 1186 by Abbot William who sent some to St Alban's daughter church at Redburn.

[469] Julia M. H. Smith noticed that Brigitine and Columban relics feature more in English relic-lists, particularly claims to possess Brigit's belts. Also see Bartlett, 'Cults of Irish, Scottish and Welsh saints', who states that while 'Patrick is commemorated in 68 per cent of pre-1100 kalenders, he occurs in only 17 per cent of the later material' (p. 75).

[470] Ibid. p. 67.

[471] William M. Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans, The Church of Durham, 1071-1153*, (Suffolk, 1998), p. 99.

[472] Thomas, *Cult of Saints' Relics*, pp. 57-8.

idiotas – 'uncouth and ignorant'.' [473]   Perhaps as a direct result, pre-Conquest foundations in England were also often initially without relics and Shrewsbury is one example of a new foundation having to resolve this situation quickly for posterity.[474]

Contention over corporeal relics remained, particularly highlighted by the contention over our saint's relics between Armagh and Glastonbury.   However, Marie-Therese Flanagan's observation of a growth in the veneration of devotional images in twelfth century Ireland is noted:

> 'Alongside long-established cults of Irish saints associated with their church foundations or objects that they were reputed to have owned, such as books, bells, and croziers, was added the growth of more universal cults, evidenced by the increase in dedications to the Virgin Mary and the Holy Trinity.   While earlier devotion to saints had focused on corporeal and associative relics, in line with developments elsewhere in Europe, there was a shift towards a piety focused on images and statues.'[475]

This in part helps to explain the quantityand variety of relics in the *Tripartite Life* compared to subsequent Patrician Lives.   It would not have helped that Glastonbury's claim to Patrick's grave and corporeal relics escalated in the eleventh and twelfth centuries and that the Norman appropriation of Patrick late in our period ensured Armagh's full control over the saint's cult was weakened.

Tertia and Jocelin of Furness' *Vita Patricii*, written around the mid twelfth century and in *c.*1185 respectively, maintain the tradition that Patrick's grave resides at Down.   Both *vitae* essentially elaborate Muirchú's version of Patrick's death, the contention over his corporeal relics between Irish tribes, and the saint's burial in Down; none of the texts acknowledge Glastonbury's claims.   Further, and similar to *Quarta's* version, Jocelin also speaks of a thriving tomb cult at Down, which as we will discover ultimately serves to divert attention from Patrick's cult-centre at Armagh to the Norman power-base in Ulster in Down itself.   Nowhere does Jocelin mention the *inventio* of Patrick, Brigit and Columba in *c.*1185 either, although this does not indicate ignorance of it.[477]   However, in Jocelin's *Vita* we learn of a new

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[473] Bartlett, *Making of Europe*, p. 272.

[474] Thomas, *Cult of Saints' Relics*, pp. 57-8.

[475] Flanagan, *Transformation*, p. 233; Marie-Therese Flanagan, 'Devotional images and their uses in the twelfth-century Irish Church: the crucifix of Holy Trinity, Dublin, and Archbishop John Cumin', (eds.) H. B. Clarke and J. R. S. Phillips, *Ireland, England and the Continent in the Middle Ages and Beyond: Essays in Memory of a Turbulent Friar, F. X. Martin, OSA*, (Dublin, 2006), pp. 67-87.

[477] Gerald of Wales, *Topography*, 97, writes that de Courcy 'took charge when these three noble treasures were, through divine revelation, found and translated'; indeed, we know that Gerald himself attended this event (Antonia Grandsen, 'The growth of Glastonbury traditions

tradition whereby Glastonbury features as the burial place of Patrick's 'grand-nephew Patricius… who after the death of his uncle died in the church of Glascon (Glastonbury)'.[478] This is a clear example of a counter-statement against the abbey's continuing attempts to appropriate themselves as Patrick's cult-centre in Britain.

Helen Birkett suggests that 'details in the *Vita* suggest that the burial place of Patrick may already have been known' to Jocelin.[479] However, whether Jocelin knew in actuality and not through his adept grasp of previous Lives of Patrick that preserve the predominant tradition of Down, namely *Tertia* and the *Tripartite Life*, is difficult to determine.[481] According to the later *Office*, Patrick's grave was revealed to Bishop Malachy of Down by a light shining on the eastern part of Down's cemetery.[482] The *Office* credited Malachy for the entire process (since only after Malachy's prayers were the saintly corpses revealed), as well as for the *translatio* into Down's newly built cathedral. De Courcy is left out of the process, only being summoned by Malachy to assist with the exhumation, contrary to Gerald of Wales' accounts in which de Courcy is heavily involved in the *inventio*.[483] Intriguingly, Jocelin tells us that after Patrick's death his corpse was buried 'five cubits deep in the heart of the earth', which, as Birkett also notices, is a 'statement that cannot be found in any other extant Patrician text.'[484] Moreover, it is clear de Courcy did not have as much of a contribution in the main content of the work as Jocelin's other ecclesiastical patrons, although he is mentioned in the prologue; Birkett suggests it 'may well be that this secondary role reflects de Courcy's participation in other

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and legends in the twelfth century', (ed.) James P. Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 29-54 at p. 31).

[478] Jocelin, *Vita*, CLXXXVI: '*S. Patricius filiolus eius (qui post decessum patrui sui Britanniam remeans in fata decessit, & in Glasconensi ecclesia sepultus est honorifice) conscripsisse referuntur.*'

[479] Birkett, *Saints' Lives*, p. 6.

[481] Approximately the first and third sections of Jocelin's *Vita* follow the layout of *Tertia*, which drew on the *Tripartite Life*, both forming much of the material Jocelin used for the mid-sections of his work. *Vita Cottoniana* may provide further evidence of a lost base-text for Jocelin's *Vita*, and Birkett demonstrates that several episodes in this *Vita* share more in common with Jocelin's composition than any other Life of Patrick (*Lives*, pp. 22-56).

[482] Marie-Therese Flanagan, 'John de Courcy, the Ulster plantation and Irish church men', (ed.) Brendan Smith, *Britain and Ireland, 900-1300: Insular Responses to Medieval European Change*, (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 154-78 at pp. 175-6, describes how the *Office* 'takes the form of six historical lessons' (see p. 164 n. 41 for publication details); Birkett, *Lives*, p. 146.

[483] R. H. Buchanan and A. Wilson, *Downpatrick*, Irish Historical Towns Atlas 8, (Dublin, 1997), p. 3; Birkett, *Lives*, pp. 146-7; Flanagan, 'John de Courcy', p. 175, states Gerald 'may actually have been referring to the *inventio*, rather than the *translatio*, although he used both terms.'

[484] Birkett, *Lives*, pp. 6-8; she suggests a date of before the 1180s (p. 8) for this *Vita*, based on Jocelin's account of Patrick's grave and on his apparent ignorance of the true location of St Patrick's Purgatory, although she notes that details of the *inventio* are found in the *Chronicle of Melrose* and that some scholars therefore concluded a date of 1186/7 (see her n. 32).

aspects of the renewed Patrick cult at Down'.[485] Jocelin probably had knowledge of the *inventio*, which indicates that his *Vita* was predominantly commissioned as a response.

Both *Tertia* and Jocelin's *Vita* are clear responses to Glastonbury's ongoing claims in twelfth century. The abbey's commissioning of William's *vitae* and other works undoubtedly sought to further solidify the abbey's own fifth-century antiquity and its 'Celtic connections'.[486] In William's *Vita Benigni* Patrick's foster-child Benignus is claimed to succeed him as Glastonbury's abbot, asserting that he came from Ireland to settle on the island of 'Ferramere' in Somerset, three miles north-west of Glastonbury, where many miracles are listed as emanating from his corporeal relics. These were later translated south of the altar on Ferramere along with this epitaph:

> 'Within his tomb his bones Beonna lays, Was father here of monks in
> ancient days. Patrick of old to serve he had in his honour (So Erin's
> sons aver, and name Beonna.)'[487]

Near the end of this *Vita* Benignus was then translated to the church originally dedicated to St John in Bath in 1091 by Glastonbury's abbot Thurstan, where his relics are 'to this day.'[488] Also in this *Vita* and in *De Antiquitate* it is claimed that in old age Patrick came from Ireland to Cornwall and then to Glastonbury 'on his floating altar… which is still held in veneration by the Cornish for it holiness, and its value for the treatment of the sick'.[489] We then discover that Patrick finally reposed

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[485] Birkett, *Lives*, p. 147; Flanagan points out that '*princeps* was the title accorded him by Jocelin of Furness' ('John de Courcy', p. 176).

[486] Twelfth-century interest in appropriating the cults of 'Celtic' saints was fashionable; G. Le Duc, 'Irish Saints in Brittany: Myth or Reality?', John Carey, Máire Herbert and Pádraig Ó Riain (eds.), *Studies in Irish Hagiography, Saints and Scholars*, (Dublin, 2001), pp. 93-119 at p. 113, where he also observed a twelfth-century fashioning to ascribe unknown saints outside of Ireland an Irish origin. Claiming the relics of Irish saints also became fashionable, and Bartlett ('Cults of Irish, Scottish and Welsh saints', p. 77) states that 'one of the most obscure but also among the more dramatic cases of new interest in Irish saints in twelfth-century England was the discovery in Ludlow in 1199 or 1200, while the church there was being extended, of the bodies of the father, mother and brother of St Brendan.'

[487] William of Malmesbury, *Vita Benignii*, pp. 347-57 and p. 355: '*Hoc patris in lapide Beonne sunt ossa locata, Qui pater extiterat monachorum hic tempore prisco. Hunc fore Patricii quondam fortasse ministrum Fantur Hybernigene et Beonnam de nomine dicunt.*'

[488] Ibid. p. 365; Thurstan was later exiled to France where he 'finished his life wretchedly, as was only right, far way from this house' / '*Turstinus, aliquot annis monasterii regimen occupans et per eiusdem possessions peruagatus, longe ab ipso ut dignus erat miscre uitam finiuit*' (p. 367 for William's quote and n.1, p.366 for further details). Findberg, in *West Country*, pp. 82-3, states that Benignus' cult probably did not originate at Glastonbury until the eleventh century, and Winterbottom pointed out in n. 1 on p. 344 that William must have taken his account of Benignus' fosterage by Patrick from *Tertia*.

[489] William of Malmesbury, *Vita Patricii*, p. 337; *De Antiquitate*, 8: '*[Patricius] priorem celsitudinem salutacionesque in foro respuens, super altare suum Cornubiam appulit; quod usque hodie apud incolas magne ueneracioni est, tum propter santitudinem et ultilitatem, tum*

in Glastonbury after serving his vocation there as an abbot for many years, where he apparently 'rests on the right side of the altar of the old Church, in a stone pyramid… it is an established custom amongst the Irish to visit Glastonbury to kiss the relics of their patron saint.'[490]

However, William did express doubt as to whether Patrick held office at Glastonbury:

> 'Any hesitation… is dispelled by the vision of one of the monks, who after the saint's death, when the tradition was already uncertain whether [Patrick] had been a monk and abbot [at Glastonbury], and the question was much discussed, had his faith established by the following oracle. In his sleep he seemed to hear someone reading, at the end of an account of St Patrick's many miracles, the following words: 'So he was honoured with the sacred palium of an archbishop; but afterwards became a monk and abbot here.' The reader added that if he did not fully believe, he would show what he said, written in letters of gold.'[491]

That 'the question was much discussed' may have raised doubts in Glastonbury circles about Patrick's connection with it, which possibly reached the ears of clergy beyond the abbey. William coyly acknowledges the fact that Patrick was 'honoured with the sacred palium of an archbishop', which refers to Patrick's status at Armagh, and in turn Armagh's as yet unofficial status as an archbishopric.

Interestingly, William's *Vita Indracti* also emphasises that Patrick's corporeal relics and grave reside at the abbey:

> 'Arrived in England and aiming for the Irish sea he turned off at Glastonbury, where he knew the relics of St Patrick were to be found… [Indract stated that] No more suitable place will be found in the realm of the English for the burial of the relics of these martyrs (though they are not named here) than Glastonbury, where there is

propter infirmorum salutem'; also see Wiiliam of Malmesbury for a similar version in his *Vita Patricii*, pp. 339-43 at p. 337: '*Ille igitur munus iniunctum gnauiter exsecutus, et extremis diebus in patriam reuertens, super altare suum Cornubiam appulit, quod hodieque apud incolas magnae uenerationi est propter santitudinem et uilitatem propter infirmorum saultem. Ita Glastoniam ueniens ibique monachus et abbas factus...*'

[490] Ibid. pp. 339-43 at p. 343: '*Hinc Hiberniensibus mos inolitus ad exosculandas patroni reliquias locum frequentare.*'

[491] Ibid., p. 339: '*Cuius assertionis omnem absoluit scrupulum uisio cuiusdam fratris, qui post obitum beati uiri, iam nutante memoria utrum ibi monachus et abbas fuerit, cum de hoc frequens uerteretur question, tali confirmatus est oraculo. Resolutus enim in soporem, uisus est audire quondam legentum post multa eius miracula haec uerba: 'Hic igitur metropolitan pallii sanctitate decorates est; postmodum uero hic monachus et abbas factus.' Adiecit etiam ut non integre credenti litteris aureis quod dixerat scriptum ostenderet.*'

the noble church of the Mother of God. There, on the right of the

altar, St Patrick apostle of the Irish was buried of old.'[492]

Near the close it is then claimed 'they buried Indract's holy body on the left of the altar, and eight companions similarly beneath the floor in front of the altar… But the ninth of the company was not found with them.'[493] We do not know who the ninth person was, but the important point is William claims that Patrick was buried on the right side of the altar whilst Indract was buried to the left of it. The likely location for the high altar is St Mary's church on the Glastonbury site, where today there is a small chapel dedicated to Patrick not far from this church.[494] Interestingly, Indract's cult at Glastonbury yielded an early twelfth century *passio* 'which claims that Patrick was buried in a stone shrine to the south of the high altar.'[495] Abrams points out early twelfth-century references to Patrick's shrine that are also found in William's *Gesta regum Anglorum* and *De Antiquitate*.[496]

We know that the later tenth century 'B-text' of *Vita Dunstani* claims Patrick-junior rather than Patrick-senior, but William does not claim this in *Vita Dunstani*.[497] This is perhaps because he felt no need to do so, especially since it is evident that contentions between Glastonbury and Canterbury over Dunstan's corporeal remains preoccupies his main narrative; this is especially clear in Book II, and perhaps also in the fact that William composed three independent *vitae* for

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[492] Malmesbury, *Vita Indracti*, pp. 371-81 at pp. 379-80: '*Igitur his ita gestis rex cum suis proceribus consilium iniit quo in loco tante [sic] pretii margarite conderentur. Cui, ut fertur, mox ita responsa dedere: 'Non repperietur' inquiunt 'in Anglorum regno pro condendis horum martyrum reliquiis locus habilior Glastonia, ubi gloriosa genitricis Dei habetur ecclesia. In qua in parte altaris dextra Sanctus Patricius Hybernorum apostolus est ab antiquis temporibus humatus. Ad hanc ergo iubeat celsitudo uestra Sancti Indracti martyris una cum sociorum transferri reliquias...' Cumque hoc regi consilium placuisset, statim libitinas fieri imperauit, quibus pretiosa martyrum corpora superimposita ad supradictum Glestoniense cenobium allata sunt... Cuius corpus sanctissimum in sinistra parte altaris... sepelierunt. Verum octo socios eius simili modo conditos ante altare in pauimento tumulauerunt. Nonus uero ex sociis eorum non cum eis est repertus.*'
[493] Ibid. p. 381 (see the quote directly above).
[494] For more consult Glastonbury Abbey's official website: http://www.glastonburyabbey.com/history.php (visited August 2011); claims to Patrick ebbed in the thirteenth century, but the saint is still very much venerated there today.
[495] The connection between the *passio* and William's *Vita Indracti* is unclear, although it is possible that hedrew on its Patrician traditions. Abrams, 'Patrick and Glastonbury', p. 237 in *St Patrick*; Lapidge argued that the lost Old English *Life of Indract* was probably written before the abbacy of Dunstan ('Cult of St Indract', pp. 179 and 202).
[496] Abrams, 'Patrick and Glastonbury', p. 237; William of Malmesbury, *De gestis regum Anglorum*, *History of the English Kings*, ed. and trans. R. A. B. Mynors, completed by R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom, with a general introduction and commentary by R. M. Thomson in collaboration with M. Winterbottom, (Oxford, 1998-1999), I.22 pp. 256-7; William of Malmesbury, *De Antiquitate Glastoniae ecclesiae*, ed. J. Scott, *The Early History of Glastonbury: an Edition, translation and Study of William of Malmesbury's De Antiquitate Glastonie ecclesiae*, (Suffolk, 1981), 10.
[497] Malmesbury, *Vita Dunstani*, pp. 165-305; however William did discuss that Dunstan was educated by Irish clerics (p. 179).

Patrick, Benignus and Indract. There is one important point here, and that is William's knowledge of the relics of Patrick's sister Lupait, which we know were alleged to be in Armagh from the later eighth century in *Secunda*. William's *Vita Patricii* states: 'He had a sister… called Lupida, a woman who later showed remarkable qualities; her remains now rest at Armagh, an important city in Ireland.'[498] Perhaps Glastonbury's claim to Lupait's relics was intended to reinforce its claims to Patrick.

Whilst the authenticity of Glastonbury's antiquity may have strengthened its 'Celtic connections', the claim to Indract's relics were geo-political in the sense of its seeking to appropriate other local churches. Indract's church appears to have been on the River Tamar: it is possible that King Ine of Wessex granted it to Glastonbury in the later seventh or early eighth century, thus marking the abbey's expansion westwards at the expense of the native British whilst opening up a more convenient passage to Ireland.[499] Furthermore, Ine's *translatio* of St Beona's relics could also have been used to boost Glastonbury's claims over their original resting place on the island of Meare (i.e. Faramere).[500] However, this information derives from a period when Glastonbury's history is wholly unsubstantiated, since charters issued during the reign of King Ine survive in later copies and cannot be reliably dated.[501] Stephen Rippon points out that Meare, which is situated in the Wetlands area to the west of Glastonbury as part of a group of islands known as the 'Glaston Twelve Hides', was granted to the abbey in a series of charters dating between the late seventh to the mid tenth centuries.[502] Rippon states that Glastonbury's islands, including Meare, had 'special significance' in that region and that the abbey used Irish saints to verify its fifth century antiquity.[503]

Conversely, Rollason suggests 'it is possible that the relics were really those of local English saints of the south-west, transmogrified into Irish saints in order to

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[498] Malmesbury, *Vita Patricii*, pp. 319-21: '*Habebat sororem, ut ante dixi, Lupidam, uenerabilium post haec meritorum feminam, cuius nunc reliquiae pausant in Ardmacha, urbe Hiber<niae(?)> praecipua.*'

[499] Thomas, *Cult of Saints' Relics*, p. 171.

[500] Ibid.

[501] Abrams, 'Patrick and Glastonbury', p. 233.

[502] Stephen Rippon, 'Making the most of a bad situation? Glastonbury Abbey, Meare and the medieval exploitation of Wetland resources in the Somerset Levels', *Medieval Archaeology*, Vol. 48, (2004), pp. 91-130 at p. 99; by the end of the eleventh century the Doomsday Book records Glastonbury Abbey as the wealthiest house in England.

[503] Ibid. pp. 99-102; 'William of Malmesbury and John of Glastonbury describe how the 5th-century Irish saint Bridget is said to have spent some time at Beckery. While this account may have been invented in order to create an illustrious history for the site, and provide a context for the Abbey having some relics of the early Irish saint, it forms part of the wider pattern of Glastonbury's islands having a special significance' (p. 101).

enhance Glastonbury's claims to antiquity.' [504]   He also hypothesises that Glastonbury's 'Patrick' might actually be the Cornish saint Petroc, and argued that the abbey's Patrician traditions became confused with Petroc, thus enabling the abbey to establish links with Padstow, which provided the regional focus of Petroc's cult. Finberg also suggests that Glastonbury confused Patrick's cult with Petroc's, whose cult-focus was in Padstow.[505] However, a recent study of Petroc's cult flags up new perspectives on this question. Here Karen Jankulak notices William's account of Patrick coming to Glastonbury via Cornwall on a floating altar, and she states that:

> 'We can be fairly confident, however, that William himself was not confusing Ss Patrick with Petroc (it should be well noted that William's *De antiquitate* does not seem to have mentioned St Petroc at all, even amongst the section dealing with Glastonbury's relics)'[506]

Jankulak disagreed with Rollason's suggestion that Petroc's cult was primary at the abbey, and states that 'if such a process was underway by the twelfth century at Glastonbury, Patrick was taking on some of Petroc's characteristics, not vice-versa.'[507] Rollason also hypothesises that Benignus might be the otherwise unknown and very obscure saint Beonna, and that Indract might otherwise have been the patron of the parish of Landrake, in south-east Cornwall.[508] These statements have no solid truth but are only valid in the sense that Glastonbury, as Rollason states, 'more than any other English house' used corporeal relics as a means to acquire land and rights over other churches it wished to appropriate.[509]

Glastonbury also claimed that Brigit's relics rested at the abbey. Rollason points out that this claim probably originated in the later tenth century, when their house tradition has it that Brigit spent a solitary life on Beckery, part of the group of islands that includes Meare, which is 'a name interpreted by the Glastonbury monks as early as 971 as "Little Ireland"'.[510] Glastonbury's claims also extended to Wales with its attempts to appropriate St David's cult in particular, for whom the abbey's

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[504] Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, p. 204.

[505] Finberg, *West Country*, pp. 81-2.

[506] Karen Jankulak, *The Medieval Cult of St Petroc*, (Woodbridge, 2000), p. 148; she also notes that John of Glastonbury, writing in his fourteenth-century *Cronica*, included an account of Patrick's altar which he apparently traveled on from Ireland to Cornwall, and that it was kept in Padstow as a cure for the sick, which: 'would suggest some local knowledge. Nevertheless, there is no other tradition of a miracle-working altar (indeed there are few traditions of secondary relics at all at Padstow), and John and his source may well be merely indulging in embellishment' (pp. 148-9).

[507] Ibid. p. 149; she has suggests that perhaps by the fourteenth century John of Glastonbury attempted to strengthen the abbey's Cornish connections, the home of Petroc's cult (p. 151).

[508] Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, p. 205.

[509] Ibid. p. 203.

[510] Ibid. p. 204; Rippon, 'Making the most', p. 101.

tradition recalls how David arrived with seven bishops to dedicate the church.[511] William even claimed that St Columba may have died at the abbey:

> 'In 504 St Columba came to Glastonbury. Some men say that this saint completed the course of his life there, but whether this is so or whether he returned to his own country I cannot determine'; Columba was not even born as yet![512]

William's *De Antiquitate*, which commences its narrative with an account of the eminent founders of the abbey, who included Christ, the disciples of Philip (among whom is Joseph of Arimethea[513]), Ss Phagan and Deruvian, Glasteing and his eight-footed pig, and Patrick-junior or Patrick-senior (it is not clear which).[514]

William also claimed that Patrick returned to Glastonbury from Ireland in old age and found twelve hermits there (obvious Biblical resonances), whom he gathered to form a community over which he presided as abbot, hence the founding of Glastonbury Tor, details of which were apparently written in his *carta sancti Patricii episcopi*.[515] In Jocelin's *Vita* there is a similar story which includes 'twelve brothers' relating to Patrick's founding of Armagh, which is a new strand in the Patrician legend; Jocelin writes that: '[Patrick] brought to dwell therein twelve citizens (to Armagh)... And he beautified the city with churches...'[516] Glastonbury even claimed to have discovered the relics of Arthur and Guinevere in a spectacular ceremony in 1191, which Gerald of Wales attended in order to publicise the occasion just as he had done in Down some six years before.[517] Abrams declared this story to be a work of fiction dating to the thirteenth century.[518] Arthur and Guinevere are not saintly but secular characters, enveloped in myth and legend, but their *inventio* at the abbey shows how extravagant Glastonbury's claims became by the thirteenth century and how concerned the abbey remained to express its continuity with the ancient past.

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[511] Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, p.204; Thomas, *Cult of Saints' Relics*, pp.171-2, where he points out that David's *translatio* to Glastonbury occurred in 962, when a Saxon woman named Aelswith received his corpse from a relative who was a bishop in Wales and that Welsh pilgrims brought the relics to Glastonbury(*De Antiquitate*, 15)..

[512] Ibid. 14: '*Anno Domini DIII sanctus Kolumkilla uenit Glastoniam. Quidam affirmant hunc santum uite sue cursum ibidem consummasse, sed utrum sic, aut inde repatriauerit, non diffinio.*'

[513] Ibid. 1: '(*Joseph ab Arimathia nobilem decurionem cum filio suo Iosephes dicto et aliis pluribus in maiorem Britanniam, que nunc Anglia dicta est, uenisse et ibidem uitam finesse testator liber de gestis incliti regis Arturi...*; Rollason stats it is Joseph of Arimathea who becomes the abbey's founder from the thirteenth century instead of Patrick.

[514] Ibid .8-9; Abrams, 'Patrick and Glastonbury', p. 234.

[515] *De Antiquitate*, 8-9; Abrams, 'Patrick and Glastonbury', p. 234.

[516] Jocelin, *Vita*, CLXV; furthermore, Birkett points out that this story may also be 'an allegory for the structure of the Irish Church as outlined at the Synod of Rathbresail in 1111' (*Lives*, p. 154); an appraisal of twelfth century Irish reforms in Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 745-9.

[517] Grandsen, 'The growth of Glastonbury traditions ', pp. 29-54 at p. 31.

[518] Abrams, 'Patrick and Glastonbury', p. 234.

Abrams also indicates that Glastonbury's house tradition date to no later than the mid thirteenth century and claim that Patrick-senior's death occurred in 472, around thirty nine years after his apostolate, i.e. in 433 and 'suspiciously close to the known end of Palladius' career in 432'.[519] Could Glastonbury claim Patrick-senior: Tírechán's Palladius-Patrick? Glastonbury was far more likely to have intended its claims over the cult of Patrick-junior by exploiting the two Patricks dilemma. After all, the overwhelming evidence in the English calendars, possibly including the lost Glastonbury calendar, suggests the predominant view was that Glastonbury's claim was over Tírechán's Palladius-Patrick, i.e. Patrick-senior.

The Norman Conquest of Ireland from 1169 and the claim in Jocelin's *Vita* that Patrick's corpse resides at Down suggests that Glastonbury's claims no longer had any real value in Ireland, and added to this its value at the abbey itself was also fizzing out. De Courcy's appropriation of Patrick's cult and the *inventio* of *c.*1185 solidified this view, as did the fact that by the end of the twelfth century the abbey had become the wealthiest in England.[520] An important factor also resides in Christ Church in Dublin now claimed Patrick's *Bachall Ísu* as well as some other relics of Patrick's, possibly corporeal in nature though we do not know when exactly many of these claims arose. However, these events ultimately signify that Armagh's control over Patrick's cult was weak and its political status in Ireland had drastically declined by the close of our period.[521] As indicated Jocelin felt moved or provoked, or both, to invent an obviously fictitious story of the grand-nephew of our saint, also called Patricius, as being affiliated to Glastonbury. This invention of Patrick's grand-nephew likely intended to detract from Glastonbury's claims to Patrick-junior to that of the saint's nephew, which is especially evident in Jocelin's statement that this story stemmed from St Evinus, who collected into 'one volume the acts of St Patrick… written in partly Hibernian and partly in the Latin tongue.'[522]

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[519] Abrams, 'Patrick and Glastonbury', p. 241.

[520] Rippon, 'Making the most of a bad situation?', pp. 99-100.

[521] There is also a curious claim that at sometime in the twelfth century the monastery of Sens in central France obtained a deposit of the relics of Peter and Paul (brought from Rome to Ireland by Patrick), the relics of other Irish saints (though I do not know to whom they are attributed) and the relics of Patrick himself, although whether these are corporeal or otherwise remains unclear; see (author unknown) 'Veneration of Patrick in Italy and Spain, *Seanchas Ardmhacha*, Vol. 4 No. 2 'The Patrician Year', (1961/1962), pp. 101-3 at p. 101. Here it is also stated that a piece of Patrick's skull was also claimed in the Chapel of St Patrick in Torre San Patrizio in the Province of Fermo, which was named in honour of Patrick from the eleventh or twelfth century, and a piece of the saint's skull was apparently given to the town in 1653, although the author wonders if in fact the relic was brought from Ireland by the same Rinuccini, 'who was of course Archbishop of Fermo' (p. 102) – I find this notion unlikely as there is no record of such a relic in Ireland that I am aware of.

[522] Jocelin, *Vita*, CLXXXVI: *'Sanctus nihilominus Euinus simili modo actus S. Patricij in vnum codicem compilalauit, quem partim Latino sermone partim Hibernico composuit. De*

Conclusions

From the late seventh century Armagh's status as Patrick's cult-centre was achieved: it is nothing short of remarkable that Armagh became the cult centre of a saint whose gravesite was located elsewhere, even if it is fortune that Armagh was able to assert authority over its host-church at Down. In this century it is clear that Armagh's premier insignia comprised apostolic and Roman relics, as well as the blood-relic of Christ; this latter relic is unique to Ireland in the period under scrutiny here.

From the eighth century when at least a portion of Patrick's corporeal relics become Armagh's premier insigne, its alliance with the Uí Néill was also beginning to strengthen. However, outside interest in appropriating Patrick'scult emerged at Glastonbury from the tenth century, from which time that we can observe the abbey capitalising on the fact that Armagh could never claim Patrick's grave as well as on the two Patricks problem of which the abbey's clerics were well aware. However, the changing fortunes of Irish secular politics meant that by the mid eleventh century Armagh's position as Ireland's premier ecclesiastical centre was under threat at home and abroad for various reasons, not least the end of Uí Néill domination, the rise in the political and episcopal power of the see of Dublin and the Norman Conquest of Ireland from 1169.

That Glastonbury's claims to Patrick's relics reached its heights in the eleventh and twelfth centuries did not deter counter-claims being acknowledged in *Tertia* and Jocelin's *Vita*, even if Glastonbury did not care to become directly involved inIrish politics. The Norman presence in Ireland, and particularly de Courcy's in Ulster, finally cemented the predominant tradition that Patrick's grave belongs to Down: the spectacular *inventio* of Patrick, Brigit and Columba in *c.*1185 is its ultimate showcase. At this point Armagh is forced to concede its control over Patrick's grave and over the future direction of his cult more generally, even if its association as 'the place Patrick loved more than any other' would never be lost.[523]

Our next chapter analyses the fact that despite Patrick's *Bachall Ísu* appearance in sources from the later eighth century, in actuality this relic only became Armagh's premier insigne in or around 1066. There are several reasons for

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quibus omnibus quæcumque fide digna reperire potui, in hoc opus collecta communicare notitiæ posterorum gratum duxi.'

[523] Muirchú, *Vita*, II.4: '[W]hen the day of [Patrick's] death was approaching, an angel came to him about his death. He therefore sent word to Armagh, the place he loved more than any other, that a number of men should come with him and bring him to the place where he wished to go' / '*Post uero miracula tanta, quae alibi scripta sunt et quae ore fideli mundus celebrat adpropinquante die mortis eius uenit ad eum anguelus et dixit illi de morte sua. Ideo ad Ardd Machae missit, quam prae omnibus terries dilexit; ideo mandauit ut uenirent ad eum uiri multi ad eundem deducendum quo uoluit*'; this is a common sentiment repeated in most of our subsequent major texts, excepting *Historia Brittonum* and William's *Vita Patricii*.

this: the destruction and plunder of *Scrín Pátraic* in that same year, the two Patricks dilemma, Glastonbury's interest in appropriating Patrick's cult, as well as the rise of the see of Dublin and the changing ecclesiastical and political fortunes in Ireland and elsewhere toward the end of our period.

Chapter 2

The Origins, Traditions and Functions of Bachall Ísu (Staff of Jesus)

Introduction

The *Bachall Ísu* has an impressive literary tradition and is documented as being capable of performing various miracles and functions in the Lives of Patrick post seventh century and in a variety of other sources; yet little of it is discussed in modern scholarship.[524] This is astonishing when we consider that *Bachall Ísu* was considered a unique relic believed to have belonged to Christ who later bestowed it on Patrick at some point in the fifth century. This relic's career also came to encapsulate the changing fortunes of Armagh's ecclesiastical ambitions, success and the eventual demise of its primacy in Ireland, at which point it also came to define that of another major Irish church. Writing in the late twelfth century, Gerald of Wales sums up the reverence and status that *Bachall Ísu* had accumulated in Ireland:

> 'Of all the croziers in Ireland, and other relics in wood of the saints,
>
> the famous staff which is called the Staff of Jesus, seems deservedly
>
> to hold the first place… It was with this, at least according to popular
>
> belief, that St Patrick expelled all the venomous beasts from the
>
> island. Its origins are as uncertain as its virtues are notorious…'[525]

As Armagh could never claim Patrick's gravesite or full corporeal relics, it is interesting that *Bachall Ísu* only became its premier insigne from the mid eleventh century. This may be due to two main reasons: the changing political climate inside and outside of Ireland, especially towards the end of our period, and an increased awareness in the confusion caused by the multiple Patricks dilemma. This is not to say that Patrick's corporeal relics were unimportant after the destruction of *Scrín Pátraic* in 1066 (as emphasised in the last chapter). The famous *inventio* of *c.*1185, which occurred only around five years after *Bachall Ísu* was stolen and taken to

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[524] For example, Miles V. Ronan, 'St Patrick's Staff and Christ Church', *Downside Historical Review*, Vol. 5, No. 4, (1943), pp. 121-9, and B. Mac Giolla Phádraig, 'St Patrick: his crozier; his writings', in *Downside Historical Review*, Vol. 24, No. 1, (1970), pp. 189-99; these largely focus on the relic's twelfth-century context, as does Birkett's *The Lives*, especially Chapter 5, Part 2. *Bachall Ísu* is also mentioned in works concerning Patrick's medieval cult generally or those including piecemeal discussion of the relic within a broader theme and/or chronology, for example in Bourke's *Patrick* and Harbison's *Pilgrimage*. There are also many studies on croziers from an art-historical perspective, although few mention *Bachall Ísu* as it does not survive, and such works are referenced throughout; one article that stands out is Edwin S. Towill's 'The Isle of Youth and the *Bacalus Iesu*', *Folklore*, Vol. 90 No. 1, (1979), pp. 53-65, which focuses on how Patrick acquired the relic in the various Lives and argues that the 'original historical basis [for acquiring the relic] was located within Britain' (p. 59).

[525] Gerald of Wales, *Topographia*, 36.

Christ Church in Dublin, contradicts this notion. In this chapter we explore why *Bachall Ísu* became the ultimate symbol of Armagh's ambitions to attain and maintain ecclesiastical primacy, and the realisation of its ambitions to become the 'Rome of Ireland'. This chapter also explores the various functions and miracles performed by *Bachall Ísu* in the Lives and inother sources as compared and contrasted to that of other saints' croziers in Ireland and elsewhere in Europe.

What is a Bachall?

A *bachall* is defined as meaning 'pastoral staff' or 'crozier'.[526] Croziers typically comprise of a wooden shaft, usually covered by a metal casing, with a crook mounted on top.[527] T. A. Heslop stated that 'staffs of office are a recurrent attribute of authority in many human societies' and that 'a bishop's or abbot's role as protector of a flock of souls is perhaps the most fundamental and enduring meaning which we attribute to them.'[528] One Old Testament miracle in particular highlights subsequent Christian interest in croziers: when Pharaoh commanded Aaron and Moses to turn their rods into serpents they did, so Pharaoh's priests did the same, only for 'Aaron's rod to devour their rods'; this miracle might be represented on croziers decorated with

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[526] Bourke, *Patrick*, p. 18; in Etchingham's *Church Organisation*, p. 398, variations of the noun *bachall* appear in various contexts: the ninth century *Críth Gablach* records the *flaith*, or 'lord', who converts by 'taking the staff' (*gabáil bachala*) (p. 388); *Seanchas Már* mentions an *aire*, or 'nobleman', 'who reneges on his vow of *bithbachall*, literally 'perpetual staff(-bearing)' / permanent ecclesiastical retirement (p. 388); *bachlach*, from *bachall*, 'could distinguish a convert to paramonasticism from arms-bearing, sinful laymen' (p. 398). Bourke, in '*Insignia Columbae* II', pp. 173-4 n. 16, states the term *cathbuadach* is used of a musical pipe associated with St Brigit and described as her 'Episcopal staff'. Bourke also states the term *cathbuaid* is used in its literal sense in an interpolation in the twelfth century Life of St Columba, and that 'no staff attributed to Columba has survived outside Ireland, but a crozier termed the *Cathbhuaidh*, or 'battle victory', which appears to have been kept at Dunkeld, in Perthshire, Scotland, was attributed to him (p. 174); however, Bourke misses the first mention of the *Cathbuaid* in the *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland* at entry 918. Thomas O. Clancy, 'Columba, Adomnán and the cult of saints in Scotland', Thomas O. Clancy and Dauvit Broun (eds.), *Spes Scotorum: Hope of Scots, Saint Columba, Iona and Scotland*, (Edinburgh, 1999), pp. 3-34 at p. 28, states that along with the *Cathach* and *flabellum*, the *Cathbhuaidh* was kept at Kells. In Latin texts 'staff' is universally *bachallus/bachalus*, but sometimes *ferula* (cane, baton, staff, or walking-stick) 'describes the ecclesiastical staff… a plain rod, the symbol of office' (Henry Norris, *Church Vestments, their Origin and Development*, (London, 1949), p. 116). R. G. Calkins, *Monuments of Medieval Art*, (Oxford, 1979), p. 119; abbots and abbesses have left a legacy of personal croziers buried with them instead of inherited by successors; *Paradoxplace Photo Galleries*: www.paradoxplace.com/Church_Stuff/Croziers.htm (visited August 2010). The *Bromane*, or crozier, of St Bronagh which was preserved at Kilbroney in the fifteenth century with her bell; there are many more examples of women as well as men inheriting staffs in Ireland and elsewhere in the West (William Reeves, *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor and Dromore*, (Dublin, 1847), p. 309).
[527] Ruth Johnson, 'On the dating of some early-medieval Irish crosiers', *Medieval Archaeology*, Vol. 44, (2000), pp. 115-58 at p. 115.
[528] T. A. Heslop, 'Towards an iconology of croziers', *Studies in Medieval Art and Architecture presented to Peter Lasko*, D. Buckton and T. A. Heslop (eds.), (Stroud, 1994), pp. 36-45 at pp. 36 and 37 respectively.

a serpent, or the representation refers to the snake which tempted Eve in Eden.[529] Bartlett ponders whether 'the conjurations of magicians are miracles', one which was discussed by Thomas Aquinas' teacher Albertus Magnus, who declared that:

> '[I]t is natural for wood to turn into serpents' and that 'all that happened in the case of Pharoah's magicians was that this natural process was speeded up by the help of demons, who were able to do so through the subtlety and agility of their nature'.[530]

According to Bartlett this biblical story 'proved a favourite peg on which to hang discussion of this topic', i.e. of the 'boundaries of the supernatural' and the true miracles of saints.[531] It is also interesting that from the twelfth century Patrick is famed for having expelled serpents from Ireland, and perhaps such a representation once featured on the *Bachall Ísu*, which helped spark the tradition in later sources as we have them today.[532] Conversely, however, this aspect could also have gained some influence from Bede, who stated that: 'there are no reptiles [in Ireland], and no snake can exist there; for although often brought over from Britain, as soon as the ship nears land, they breathe the scent of its air, and die'.[533]

Of the origins of croziers, Bourke also comments that 'shepherding and viticulture inform the symbolism of Scripture and both have a long history in the Fertile Crescent of the Near East… Crook-headed staffs were found in the tomb of Tutankhamun, who in death was identified with Osiris' (and perceived to be a 'Good Shepherd').[534] There is evidence that bishops used a staff from the fourth century, although Henry Norris cautions that it is unclear 'whether the reference is to the staff (*ferula*) or to the crooked staff (*baculum*)'.[535] However, the earliest reference to a pastoral staff as an emblem of ministerial office originates in the fifth century, although it is likely that abbots also had personal staffs from an early period.[536] Norris points out that an anonymous writer described how the physical appearance of bishops' croziers represents their important role of office:

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[529] Exodus 7 : 9-12; . Heslop, 'Towards an iconology', pp. 42-3. Robert Bartlett (*The Natural and the Supernatural in the Middle Ages, The Wiles Lectures given at the Queens University of Belfast, 2006*, (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 23-5.

[530] *The Natural and the Supernatural in the Middle Ages, The Wiles Lectures given at the Queens University of Belfast, 2006*, (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 23-5

[531] Ibid. p. 25.

[532] Jocelin's *Vita*, XV; for the tradition's first known appearance see *Vita Cottoniana*, p. 234.

[533] Bede, *Historia eccleiastica*, Chapter 1 p. 46.

[534] Cormac Bourke, 'From shepherd's crook to pastoral staff', *Lecale Miscellany: Journal of the Lecale Historical Society*, Vol. 16, (1998), pp. 86-9 at p. 86; the Good Shepherd appears in early Christian art in catacomb paintings, sculpture, miniatures and mosaics' (pp. 87-8).

[535] Norris, *Church Vestments*, p. 117.

[536] Ibid.

'[T]he top (*crocea*) is curved to indicate that the bishop should
collect the sheep which have wandered from the fold; the middle part
of the staff (*ferula*) is straight, that he may rule the weak, obstinate,
and disobedient; and the lower end has a sharp pointed iron ferrule,
to enable him to spur the slothful of his flock.'[537]

Whether croziers in Ireland actually contained the original wooden staffs of
its saints remains unclear. Some scholars like Norris adhere to Margaret Stokes'
view that Irish croziers were 'not designed to represent the shepherd's crook, only to
be carried as an emblem of Episcopal functions, but it was the covering made to
protect the old oak staff or walking-stick of the founder of the church in which it had
been preserved.'[538] Current opinion makes for a stark contrast, as surmised by G.
Murray that 'Irish croziers do not seem to enshrine the full-length staffs of the early
saints', and that 'the wooden staffs that one finds inside Irish croziers in most cases
are merely functional supports for the metal fittings, thus implying that the wooden
core is no older than the mountings and therefore not a relic.'[539] However, this
somewhat misses what relics symbolise and the possibility that even if a saint's full
staff was not encased in the crozier then a chunk or splinter of it might have been.

Approximately fifty Irish croziers and crozier-fragments have survived our
period,[540] and along with non-survivors many are attested in a variety of texts and
especially in saints' Lives.[541] Lucas points out from these survivors that the 'wooden
core was functionally essential as a stiffener for the tube of comparatively thin bronze
which formed the staff and crook of the crozier so that its identification as the original

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[537] Ibid.

[538] Margaret Stokes, *Early Christian Art in Ireland*, (London, 1887), p. 101; Norris, *Church Vestments*, p. 120.

[539] G. Murray, 'The 'hidden power' of the Irish crosier', *Archaeology Ireland*, Vol. 18 (2004), pp. 24-41 at pp. 26 and 27 respectively.

[540] Cormac Bourke, 'Irish croziers of the eighth and ninth centuries', (ed.) Michael Ryan, *Ireland and Insular Art, Proceedings of a Conference at University College Cork, 31 October – 3 November 1985*, (Dublin, 1987), pp. 166-73 at p. 117; Bourke built on the work of Henry S Crawford, 'A descriptive list of Irish shrines and reliquaries', *Journal of the Royal Society of the Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 52 (1922-3), pp. 163-73. Moreover, there are examples of early croziers from Scotland that draw upon the Irish tradition (Johnson, 'On the dating', p. 115, and P. E. Michelli, 'Four Scottish croziers and their relation to the Irish tradition', *Proceedings of the Society of the Antiquaries of Scotland*, Vol. 116 (1986), pp. 375-92 at p. 116).

[541] Lucas, 'Relics', p. 9; the earliest known surviving extant crook-headed crozier is that attributed to St Germanus of Delémont (Delsberg), Jura, Switzerland, of seventh- or eighth-century provenance (Bourke, 'From shepherd's crook', p. 87. However, Bourke also points out that St Columbanus, who left Bangor for the continent in the 590s, 'was said to have bequeathed his staff to his follower Gallus in 615… References multiply thereafter and confirm the ubiquity of the crook-headed *bacalus* among the abbots and bishops of the early insular church.'

staff of the saint may be no more than pious folklore.'[542] However, the crooks of Irish, Scottish and Welsh examples differ in that they consist of a 'hollow, angled terminal known as the 'drop', frequently treated as a compartment with a separately made closure or lid',[543] which may have accommodated another relic.[544] Ruth Johnson points out that two basic crook shapes for Irish croziers have been identified: 'one is angular in profile and the other horseshoe-shaped.'[545] However, we have no comprehensive description of the physical appearance of *Bachall Ísu*, and therefore its exact reconstruction is impossible.[546] Certainly, the distinctive Irish design of crozier was definitively replaced from the thirteenth century by English and continental models, although some examples of croziers in the Irish design continued to be manufactured, such as the Ardclinis crozier in Co. Antrim. However, the only known 'natively produced crozier from the later medieval period is the magnificent fourteenth-century crozier of the bishop of Limerick, which is firmly in an English Gothic style.'[547]

So, by the eleventh and twelfth centuries 'there is evidence for the use of at least four different forms of crozier or staff' in Ireland.[548] The most common are those hitherto outlined as used in the Celtic-speaking regions: i.e. those croziers which have a distinctive shepherd's crook-form with a straight drop and existed between the eighth and twelfth centuries. The croziers most commonly associated with continental bishops and abbots by the twelfth century were either volute or tau forms, but they did find their way to Ireland in our period, as mentioned above. The tau form is distinguishable by its T-shaped head, and the earliest datable type belongs to the ninth century, whilst the volute form, the head of which appears as loosely spiral-shaped, also exists from the ninth century and after the twelfth 'became the type universally used in the western church'.[549] Ó Floinn surmises that:

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[542] Lucas, 'Relics', p. 9.

[543] Johnson, 'On the dating', p. 116.

[544] Bourke, *Archaeology*, p. 18.

[545] Johnson, 'On the dating', p. 117.

[546] Bourke, *Archaeology*, p. 18; however, there are numerous medieval images of Patrick bearing a staff; see Peter Harbison's 'Representations of St Patrick', (ed.) Aílbhe MacShamhráin, *The Island of St Patrick, Church and Ruling Dynasties in Fingal and Meath, 400-1148*, (Dublin, 2004), at pp. 89-106. However, there is an extant image of the *Bachall Ísu* on the fifteenth-century Limerick Crozier, which could be a late medieval attempt to represent the relic, although this is terribly unclear; thanks to Mr Antony Harpur at the University of Limerick for bringing my attention to this; the most extant physical description of *Bachall Ísu* is in St Bernard's *Life of Malachy* (see p. 131 below).

[547] Murray, 'The hidden power', p. 27.

[548] Raghnall Ó Floinn, 'Bishops, liturgy and reform: some archaeological and art historical evidence', Damian Bracken & Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel (eds.), *Ireland and Europe in the Twelfth Century, Reform and Renewal*, (Dublin, 2006), pp. 218-39 at p. 219.

[549] Ibid. pp. 222-29; also consult Norris on 'staffs' in his *Church Vestments*.

'Despite their relatively small numbers, the surviving tau and volute crosiers from Ireland indicate that Irish churchmen as patrons and their craftsmen were aware both of current forms and of the changing meanings of the pastoral staff during the period of reform.'[550]

Knop-headed staffs are a rarer form used in Western Christendom and are typically short with a ball-shaped head or a circular knop on top; the best known example of a surviving pre twelfth century staff is that of St Peter kept in Cologne, a shard of which was claimed at Christ Church in Dublin in the twelfth century (below).[551]

Bourke suggests that the *Bachall Ísu* may have been modified at Armagh to create its characteristic 'drop' in the later eighth century, perhaps so that a shard of Christ's Staff could be enshrined in it, and that 'the powerful precedent of such a staff-reliquary might explain the significant departure of the Irish crozier with simple crook and undifferentiated end'.[552] Bourke argues this despite the existence of an eleventh-century gloss attached to *Fíacc's Hymn* stating that Tassach was reputedly the first to 'put a cover' on *Bachall Ísu*.[553] He also posits that Armagh acquired the shard of Christ's Staff during the 640s when *Liber Angeli* was compiled,[554] and whilst this is not impossible it is a view I believe would not have been documented in *Liber Angeli* if this were the case – before the eighth century Armagh emphasises possession of apostolic relics and relics of Christ.

Bachall Ísu may have been so-called because it essentially contained a piece of Christ's Staff in the crozier's drop, or perhaps it was a shard of Patrick's own staff which was wrapped in or set alongside a portion of the linen cloth with Christ's blood on it, as mentioned in *Liber Angeli* for example. This idea better befits the contents of the drop in the early twelfth century Lismore Crozier, which Ó Floinn reckons contained a shard of wood which might be a piece of *Bachall Ísu*. As we shall discover, however, the stories in the Lives of Patrick project that Christ's Staff was gifted to Patrick, either personally or through an intermediary – although admittedly

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[550] Ó Floinn, 'Bishops, liturgy and reform', p. 229
[551] Ibid.
[552] Bourke, *Archaeology*, p. 18.
[553] *Notes on Fíacc's Hymn*, p. 425; it should be noted that glosses are notoriously difficult to date. St Tassach was the bishop who administered Patrick his last rights in Saul before his own death approximately two years later, although Tassach's own church is found about a mile away from the aforementioned site; beyond this virtually nothing is known of this individual's historicity. This important tradition appears in Muirchú, *Vita Patricii*, II.9, Fíacc's *Hymn*, and in the last section of Book II of the *Tripartite Life*; it is in this latter text where for the first time the attribution of metal-working to Tassach himself is discernible. There seems to have been some confusion over whether Tassach was in actual fact St Assicus, a metal-worker and bell-founder, but this is most likely not the case since Assicus' church is in Elphin, Co. Roscommon.
[554] Bourke, *Archaeology*, p. 17.

this could be a narrative fiction that disguises the truth of the relic and the reasoning behind the name of *Bachall Ísu*.[555] That *Bachall Ísu* was modified at Armagh in the later eighth century is evident in the documentary sources and in the strong evidence for metal-working at Armagh from this century.[556] Indeed, many Irish croziers did not function as reliquaries until the early ninth century, which may indicate that *Bachall Ísu* was the 'prototype' of this design.[557]

Relics of Christ at Armagh

That *Bachall Ísu* was modified at Armagh to house a shard of Christ's wooden cross seems unlikely. Bourke's suggested that Armagh was *inspired* by the fate of such relics of Christ as the True Cross[558] – which was broken up and distributed to churches throughout the West in the early Middle Ages – but to my knowledge no such claims to possess shards of Christ's wooden Staff exist anywhere in the West before, during or after our period.[559] Whilst Armagh claimed relics of Christ from the mid seventh century, *Bachall Ísu* only features in sources from the later eighth century.[560] An augmentation of *Liber Angeli's* claim to a relic of Christ seems to occur in the *Tripartite Life*, where a portion of linen soaked in Christ's blood, a piece

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[555] Bourke, '*Insignia Columbae* I', pp..180-2.

[556] Bourke, *Archaeology*, p. 24; other metal-working centers include Clonmacnoise and Kells (Raghnall Ó Floinn, 'Clonmacnoise: Art and patronage in the early medieval period', (ed.) Cormac Bourke, *From the Isles of the North, Early Medieval Art in Ireland and Britain*, (Belfast, 1994), pp. 251-61 at p. 251).

[557] Bourke, 'Irish croziers', p. 166; Michelli instead suggests that this was a feature of all pre eleventh century croziers ('Four Scottish croziers', p. 389 n. 3).

[558] *Annals of Ireland: Three Fragments, copied from Ancient Sources by Dubhaltach Mac Firbisigh*, ed. John Donovan, (Dublin, 1860); entry 868 describes how Níall, 'king of Ireland' raided cattle from Flann, king of Brega, who chased after Níall only to be confronted by: 'six standards, the cross of the Lord and the Staff of Jesus.' Lucas, in 'Relics', p. 17, suggests this cross was a reliquary containing a shard of the True Cross, thought I am unconvinced.

[559] Kelly M. Holbert, 'Relics and reliquaries of the True Cross', Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe (eds.), *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, (Boston, 2005), pp. 337-63, esp. pp. 337-57 for before 1200. Christ is never associated with a staff in the New Testament, but claims were made to the staffs of Ss Peter, Thomas and John the Baptist; see Hahn, 'What do reliquaries do for relics?', pp. 284-316. Interestingly, the monastery at Sens reported the sudden discovery of Moses' Staff itself in the early eleventh century (Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, p. 37).

[560] *Liber Angeli*, 19: '*Quanto magis quoque ualde ueneranda atque dilegenter ab omnibus honoranda pro sancta ammiratione nobis beneficii prae omnibus ine<na>rrabilis, quod in ea secreta consitutione exstat sacratissimus sanguis Iesu Christi redemptoris humani generis in sacro lintiamine simul cum sanctorum reliquiis in aeclessia australi, ubi requiescunt corpora sanctorum perigrinorum de longue cum Patricio transmarinorum caeterorumque iustorum!*.' Rag-relics containing the blood of early martyrs was common on the continent in the seventh and early eighth centuries, especially in Francia, but Armagh's claim to Christ's blood on such *brandea* is unique to Ireland in this period (Felice Lifshitz, 'The migration of Neustrian relics in the Viking Age: the myth of voluntary exodus, the reality of coercion and theft', *Early Medieval Europe*, Vol. 4 (1995), pp. 175-92).

of the Virgin Mary's hair and a multitude of other unidentifiable Roman relics, numbering three hundred and fifty, were all claimed to reside at Armagh.

Another relic of Christ deserving consideration, the *Epistil Ísu*, or 'Letter of Jesus', promoted Sunday observance and was believed to have been delivered from Heaven to the altar of St Peter's basilica in Rome.[561] It bears a close relationship to *Cáin Domnaig*,[562] or 'Law of Sunday', which feature together in the *Annals of Ulster* at 887.3 (see Appendix B). Westley Follet points out that *Epistil Ísu* and *Cáin Domnaig* are found together in several manuscripts dated to the eighth or the ninth centuries, though he doubts whether *Cáin Domnaig* was a *Céli Dé* composition, although it coincided with their emergence and preference for stricter Sunday observance.[563] That *Epistil Ísu* appears in the ninth century *Annals of Ulster* is unsurprising as in the *Tripartite Life* Armagh's claims to possess numerous Roman relics is also evident.

Epistil Ísu itself was credited to Conall ua Coelmaine, abbot of Inniskeele in Co. Donegal, who was also believed to have written the '*epistil in domnaig*', or 'the epistle of Sunday'.[564] Follet estimated that *Cáin Domnaig* was written at Armagh and was reliant on the earlier *Cáin Pátraic* for a basis of surety, speculating further that *Cáin Domnaig* might have been 'intended to eclipse *Epistil Ísu*, written by churchmen who were favourable to the Cenél Conaill'.[565] This logic stems from the fact that the northern claimants over the Uí Néill kingship were Cenél Conaill and that Armagh capitalised on *Cáin Phátraic* in the context of *Cáin Domnaig*.[566]

Bourke also points out that in Patrick's own *Confessio* the saint applied the term of 'letter of Christ' to himself, but I believe this to be out of context[567] as the letter's connection to Sunday observance is wholly absent.[568] It is an attractive idea that the Armagh *literati* would hone in on Patrick's direct reference to a 'Letter of Christ', but Bourke is right that the *Epistil Ísu* compares with the *Bachall Ísu* only by 'virtue of [that letter's] title'.[569] There is no tradition of the *Epistil Ísu* in our Lives of Patrick, perhaps except for references to Patrick advocating a full Sunday observance in the *Tripartite Life* and subsequent Lives. Apart from the solitary *Annals of Ulster* entry at 887.3, *Epistil Ísu* does not appear again in any source I am aware of, except,

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[561] Bourke, *Archaeology*, 20; Follet, *Céli Dé*, p. 152.
[562] Vernam Hull, '*Cáin Domnaig*', *Eriu*, Vol. 20, (1966), pp. 151-7.
[563] Follet, *Céli Dé*, p. 152; he, rightly I think, reasons that *Céli Dé* were not the only group interested in Sunday observance, as both texts target an island-wide audience (p. 153).
[564] Ibid.
[565] Ibid.; *Cáin Pátraic* survives only in fragmentary form.
[566] Ibid. p. 153.
[567] Bourke, *Archaeology*, p. 20.
[568] Patrick, *Confessio*, p. 11.
[569] Bourke, *Archaeology*, p. 20.

perhaps, the lists of Sunday observances engraved on stone crosses in Meath and Ulster, some of which reside in the Armagh region.[570] However, we cannot fully discount that Armagh not only endeavoured to eclipse *Epistil Ísu*, but that it may also have tried to claim it as a relic. To all intents and purposes, however, if this is true then it appears to have been unsuccessful.

As stated, Armagh's claims to relics of Christ are unique in Ireland during our period, especially in its claim to possess Christ's blood, and compares better with claims made to similar relics in England and on the continent; these claims were, however, treated with great suspicion in some quarters. Guibert of Nogent once attacked the claims of Soissons to possess Christ's milk-tooth, and similarly in the thirteenth-century Thomas Aquinas expressed doubts over Bruges' claim to possess some of Christ's blood.[571] Sumption points out that the veneration of Christ's blood occurred:

> 'In a growing number of churches after the eleventh century... A phial of Christ's blood was discovered in Mantua as early as 804, and created a profound sensation… a second phial of blood was unearthed in the garden of the hospital of St Andrew in Mantua in 1048.'[572]

Throughout the West, relics of Christ's blood began to appear much more frequently from the thirteenth century, when the popularity of the cult of Christ itself did not truly blossom until the later Middle Ages; as far as we can tell, Armagh's claim of relics of Christ, especially of His blood, is unique to Ireland in this period.[573]

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[570] Ibid. p. 20.

[571] Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, p. 45, wherehe states Christ's foreskin and umbilical cord (p.46) were also housed in the Lateran basilica, brought by an angel to Charlemagne at Aachen 'whence they had been brought to Rome by Charles the Bald', and which later reputedly caused some embarrassment to Innocent III in the early thirteenth century; However, Sumption points outthat this has much to do with the confusion over Transubstantiation and the Trinity, which was rife in the Middle Ages.

[572] Ibid. p. 46.

[573] There is the claim of the Sudarium of Oviedo in Spain, i.e. the blood-soaked face-cloth of Christ, dated to the early 600s; see http://www.shroud.com/heraseng.pdf Also see Nicholas Vincent, *The Holy Blood: Henry III and the Westminster Blood Relic*, (Cambridge, 2001), especially the map on pp. 52 which shows 'the distribution of relics of the Holy Blood before 1204'. This distribution is not extant, with only a Norwich and Reading marked as having such relics in this period, so giving much further weight to the uniqueness of Armagh's claims to possess linen soaked in Christ's blood in the mid seventh century – the is not even recorded on the map! Vincent states that the first recorded claim to possess a blood-relic of Christ is in 'seventh century Spain, where in the 640s bishop Braulio of Saragossa was questioned by a close associate, recently returned from Rome, on the authenticity of those relics of Christ's blood which, according to Braulio, were to be foundin several cathedral churches, although not in Saragossa itself' (pp. 50-3). Thanks to Professor Robert Bartlett for flagging this in conversation.

<u>The Origins of the Staff of Jesus</u>

Around one hundred and fifty years after relics of Christ were claimed at Armagh, its clerics claimed a unique relic of Christ – *Bachall Ísu*, or Staff of Jesus – and its origin is found in Late Antiquity. The 'Good Shepherd' of early Christian art is stated by Bourke to be: 'Christ by implication and sometimes carries a sheep on his shoulders… Sometimes he holds a staff (or *pedum*), and crook-headed forms on tiny gemstones might be his allusive emblems.'[574] In a recent appraisal of the origins and development of the image of the Staff of Jesus in Late-Antique Christian art in the third and fourth centuries, Lee Jefferson states that:

> 'The Staff of Jesus is more than just a symbol of power… [its] connection with Moses illustrates that early Christians were utilising the visual medium… to portray Christ with a familiar stylistic accessory that places Moses in the minds of their viewers in order that Jesus will be viewed not only as a fulfilment of prophecy but greater than Moses.'[575]

As Christianity better rooted itself in the West from the fifth century, many images of Jesus bearing His staff began to fade from view and were gradually 'written out of art and replaced with a cross, a hand, or nothing at all'.[576] In the New Testament, Christ did not traditionally bear a staff or perform miracles through it, which is also echoed throughout our period 'when Jesus is depicted performing healings and miracles… without paraphernalia.'[577]

Whilst Christ was seen as superior to Moses and 'cast as the supreme miracle worker, greater than Moses', St Peter was 'inaugurated as the "New Moses", the

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[574] Bouke, 'From shepherd's crook', p. 86; however, for all of Bourke's excellent analysis on early Irish artefacts, particularly relics and reliquaries, there is nothing in this article as concerns the origins of the Staff of Jesus in Late Antiquity and Armagh's subsequent acquisition of it, which encapsulates his very general discussion on the shepherd's crook developing its status as a pastoral staff in the Christian period.

[575] Lee M. Jefferson, 'The Staff of Jesus in early Christian art', *Religion and the Arts*, Vol. 14 (2010), pp. 221-51 at p. 247; he convincingly argued that 'when examined closely, the Staff of Jesus in early Christian art shows an intentional connection to Moses' (p. 223); as commented above, Jefferson, along with many other scholars, also fails to recognise Armagh's acquisition of the Staff of Jesus later in the early Middle Ages.

[576] Ibid. p. 248; pre- fifth-century images of Jesus with staff in R. M. Jensen,'s *Understanding Early Christian Art*, (London, 2000), pp. 120-4, for a very brief but useful discussion on 'Jesus as wonderworker', where the author states that 'Jesus often carries a wand (*virga*) in certain narrative scenes, both before and after the Constantinian era, especially when he is shown raising Lazarus from the dead or performing such wonders as changing water to wine at Cana or multiplying loaves and fishes. The wand, a prop not given to Jesus in scripture, belongs to Moses in scenes where he is shown parting the Red Sea or striking the rock the gushes the water for the Israelites in the desert' (pp. 120-1).

[577] Ibid. p. 247.

Christian patriarch of the Church'[578] (Peter is also not depicted with a staff in the Gospels, but with a sword[579]). In the fourth century Peter was known to have performed a well known Mosaic miracle whereby he struck a rock with his Staff bringing forth water, a story which is detailed in the apocryphal *Acts of Peter*;[580] however, this story is likely to be much older, having been sustained by oral tradition.[581] It is no coincidence this and other such Mosaic miracles are performed by Patrick in the various Latin and Irish Lives that postdate the eighth century, from which time the tradition of *Bachall Ísu* begins to permeate Patrician hagiography; from this century Patrick's staff has either been replaced with *Bachall Ísu*, in which case that latter is indeed a different staff, or that from this point Patrick's staff directly bears the name *Bachall Ísu*.[582]

The connection between the Staff of Jesus, Peter and Patrick is therefore most intriguing. One can reasonably concur with Jefferson that 'with the inclusion of Peter in the imagery, Christ allows Peter, the leader of His Church and feeder of His sheep to inherit the symbol of His ability and carry that tradition forward.'[583] Images of Peter bearing a staff did not outright disappear from the fifth century.[584] However, that Jesus' Staff did fade from view from around this time certainly left the door ajar for someone, somewhere, at some juncture to lay claim to it. That from the later eighth century clerics at Armagh did so is perhaps no surprise, for by the close of that century Armagh was realising its ambitions as Ireland's premier church. Armagh's claim to possess *Bachall Ísu* through Patrick's receipt of this special gift was no less than tantamount to claiming itself to be the 'Rome of Ireland': just as Peter was perceived to be the 'New Moses' of late antiquity, so Patrick henceforth became the

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[578] Ibid. pp. 246-7.

[579] That Jesus told his disciples to take a staff is a contentious issue in the Gospels, as the Gospels of Matthew (10 : 9–10) and Luke (9 : 3) conflict with the Gospel of Mark (6 : 8), with the latter Gospel claiming that Jesus instructed the apostles 'that they should take nothing for their journey, except a mere staff', whilst the former two Gospels claim that Jesus said to 'take nothing for your journey, neither a staff, nor a bag, nor bread, nor money'. Jefferson states that 'other miracles [i.e. except Peter striking a rock with his Staff] are rare in early Christian art' ('Staff of Jesus', p. 246).

[580] Consult the translation in J. K. Elliot, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, (Oxford, 1993).

[581] Jefferson, 'Staff of Jesus', p. 243 and esp. pp. 244-7 for more on Peter as the "New Moses"; for more on Peter and the performance of miracles in the *Acts of Peter* see M. Misset-van de Weg, ''For the Lord always takes care of His own'. The purpose of the wondrous works and deeds in the *Acts of Peter*', ed. J. N. Bremner, *The Apocryphal Acts of Peter Magic, Miracles and Gnosticism*, (Leuven, 1998), at pp. 97-111.

[582] See my article in preparation: 'St Patrick and Moses: comparisons of the miraculous'.

[583] Jefferson, 'Staff of Jesus', p. 248.

[584] Ibid.

'New Peter' of Ireland.[585] That the gift of the Staff of Jesus might have been received by Patrick in the fifth century is also strikingly demonstrative of the shrewd opportunism of Armagh's clerics to claim such a unique relic for themselves; at least, this is the view of Patrician hagiographers writing from the eighth century.

<u>The Conception and Emergence of *Bachall Ísu* in the Lives of Patrick</u>

The *Bachall Ísu* does not feature in any surviving seventh-century sources except in the writings of Tírechán and Muirchú, which contain references to Patrick's 'Staff'; for example, in Muirchú's *Vita* it features in the druids' prophesy of Patrick's arrival in Ireland 'with his stick bent in the head'.[586] However, Muirchú intended to heighten Patrick's role as 'shepherd of his flock' and the saint's traditional comparison to Moses.[587] Tírechán's *Collectanea* – although he does not detail the abovementioned prophecy – also contains an anecdote featuring Patrick's Staff:

> 'Patrick came to a huge grave of astounding breadth… [Patrick] struck the stone on the side of the head with his staff [*cum bacalo*] and signed the grave with the sign of the cross and said: 'Open, o Lord the grave', and it opened…'[588]

It is noteworthy to mention here that the two principal Patrician relics from the eighth century, i.e. the saint's corporeal relics kept in *Scrín Pátraic* and *Bachall Ísu*, are absent in the seventh- and ninth-century sections of *Liber Angeli*.

Vita Secunda also fails to mention *Bachall Ísu*, and even the druids' prophecy of Patrick arriving with a 'staff' mentioned previously in Muirchús *Vita*, and in its so-called 'twin' *Quarta*, is omitted.[589] Pádraig Francis and Francis Byrne suggest *Secunda* excluded the relic because its narrative suited an audience at Slane in Ireland or Péronne in France; furthermore, Péronne, whose connections with Louth and Slane were still strong, may have been more interested in Patrick's triumph over paganism

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[585] Ó Carragáin states: '*Romanitas*… remained central to it's [i.e. Armagh's] identity', which is also a sentiment expressed in contemporary literature and in its architecture (*Churches*, pp. 60-6), and one which is observable here in particular through its acquisition of *Bachall Ísu*!

[586] Muirchú, *Vita*, I.10: '*Adueniet ascicaput cum suo lingo curuicapite, ex sua domu capite perforate incantabit nefas a sua mensa ex anteriore parte domus suae, respondebit ei sua familia tota "fiat, fiat"*.'; this prophecy appears in every subsequent Life of Patrick under scrutiny here except *Collectanea*, *Secunda* and in William's *Vita Patricii*.

[587] Later on in *Quarta's* Preface, Patrick led the Irish to salvation 'by preaching as if by the staff of Moses.'

[588] Tírechán, *Collectanea*, 40: '*Et uenit Patricius in Dichuil ad sepulcrum magnum magnitudinis mirae ingentemque longuitudine, quod inuenit familia illius et magno stupor mirabantur pedes traxisse centum uiginti, et dixerunt: 'Non credimus hoc negotium quod esset homo longuitudinis huius.' Et respondit Patricius et dixit: 'Si uolueritis, uidebitis eum,' et dixerunt: 'Volumus,' et percussit baculo suo lapidem iuxta caput eius et signauit sepulcrum signaculo crucis et dixit: 'Aperi, Domine, sepulcrum', et aperuit.'*

[589] *Secunda*, pp. 21-51; for the prophecy see *Quarta*, 38<xvii>.

than in his relics.[590] This can be questioned as an audience in Péronne might have been interested in Patrick's relics precisely because of his triumph over paganism! Moreover, it is difficult to imagine that any powerful Irish monastery would have no interest in relics of any type kept at Armagh. Even if we could be clearer of the extent of connections between Péronne and Ireland in the ninth century, it is also difficult to imagine Péronne's disinterest; after all, Péronne made claims of its own to possess at least a portion of Patrick's corporeal relics (pp. 69-70 below). It is more probable that *Secunda's* author was unaware of *Bachall Ísu's* existence.[591]

Quarta contains the first known story of how Patrick acquired his Staff, which is directly named *Bachall Ísu*. After Patrick visited Germanus of Auxerre he embarks for Rome and 'crossed the Tyrrhene Sea, and received the Staff of Jesus from a youth on an island who offered hospitality to Christ. And the Lord… commanded him to go to Ireland.'[592] The exact name of the island is not disclosed and thus indisputable. In Tírechán's *Collectanea* Patrick's travels on the Tyrrhene Sea took him to an island called Aralanensis, but this may not be the island referred to in *Quarta*.[593] It is likely that Aralanensis is not mentioned in *Quarta* because *Bachall Ísu* was only recently introduced into the Patrician tradition, which meant no longer identifying the island in case of investigation into the relic's authenticity and to protect it against potential rival claimants.[594]

The *Tripartite Life* deviates from *Quarta's* version of how Patrick receives *Bachall Ísu*. In this account Patrick goes to an island and arrives at a dwelling where he meets a young couple and a 'withered old woman':

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[590] Byrne and Francis, 'Two Latin Lives', p. 11.

[591] The story of a 'staff' sent by God, the head of which landed 'in Patrick's bosom and its ferrule in that of Mochoe' (*Secunda*, 32: '*Is isin ind Itchech Mochoe Noendroma*'), is not to be confused with *Bachall Ísu* and is in a story which continues to appear in subsequent texts. This also strengthens my view that *Secunda* is the slightly earlier of the texts and that *Secunda* and *Quarta* cannot therefore be strictly perceived as 'twins', but rather that the latter *Vita* continues where the former has finished (pp. 40-4).

[592] *Quarta*, 29: '*Alii autem affirmant quod in Hybernia martirio coronatus est. Misit ergo, ut praefati sumus, sanctus Germanus beatum Patricium Romam, ut cum apostolicae sedis episcopi licentia ad praedicatonem exiret; sic enim ordo exigebat. Igitur per mare Tyrrenum nauigando transiuit, et acepit baculum Iesu a quodam iuuene in quadam insula hospitium Christo tribuente. Et locates est Dominus cum Patricio in monte et praecepit ei ut ad Hyberniam ueniret. Perueniente uero illo Romam a sanctoPatricius ab eodem papa Celestino in Hinerniam transmissus peruenit ad hostium euisdem fluminus, id est Deae, et ibi erat iniquus comes Nathi, qui sancto Palladio ante restitit, et beato Patricio eiusque doctrinae contradicebat. Sinell uero filius Findchatho per praedicatonem sancti Patricii omnipotenti Deo creditit et a sancto Patricio primus ex gente Scotorum baptizatus est. Propter hoc etiam et sibi et semini eius benedixit.*'

[593] Tírechán, *Collectanea*, I.1; the Tyrrhene Sea is also mentioned in *Quarta's* Preface.

[594] Refer to Réne Louis, 'St Patrick's sojourn in Auxerre and the problem of the Insula Aralanensis', *Seanchas Ardmhacha*, (1961-2), pp. 37-44.

> "'What is it that the hag is?" said Patrick: "great is her feebleness."
> The young man replied and this he said: "She is a granddaughter of
> mine… If you were to see the mother of that girl, she is feebler still."
> "How did that come to pass?" said Patrick… said the young man
> "We are here since the time of Christ, who came to us when he dwelt
> among men here, and we made a feast for him… and that blessing
> came not upon our children, and we shall abide, without age, without
> decay, here until Judgement… And God left a token with us, His
> staff, to be given to you [i.e. Patrick].'"[595]

However, Patrick does not take the staff from the married couple and instead
demands that God Himself gives the staff to him. Patrick then receives *Bachall Ísu*
directly from God on Mt. Hermon after waiting three days and nights; Patrick does
not receive the relic through an intermediary as in *Quarta*.[596] The *Tripartite Life*
mentions an 'island' although we are only told that it lies within the vicinity of the
mountain.[597] One facet of the story proving this point is that when God asks Patrick
to 'preach to the Gael', Patrick replies that he will not 'until He himself gives me this
staff.'[599] However, in subsequent Lives of Patrick this story does not prevail.

    Neither *Historia Brittonum* nor *Vita auctore Probo* mention *Bachall Ísu*.
However, there is a reference to Patrick's 'staff' in the latter *Vita*, which is perhaps
not surprising as it mainly draws upon Muirchú's work.[600] Probus' *Vita* also contains

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[595] *Tripartite Life*, p. 29: '*Luid Patraic iarom formuir, nónbur ilín. Isann séin roláa inninsi, conaicci a tech núe ocus in lánamuin inóitid ann, ocus conaicci sentani crin indorus intighi foralámaib. "Cid daas incaillech?" ól Pátraic, "ismór a lobra." Frisograt indoclach ocus issed roradi: "Óa damsa sin," ol indolach. "Mad á máthair," olsé, "a clerig, inainginise atchethesu islobru sidi doridisi." "Cía cruth aralad sin?" ol Pátraic. "Ni anse," ol indólclach, "ataam súnn óamisir Crist, doaraill ar[n]dochum díambai itir doinib hifos, condernsam fleid dó. Ben[d]achais a[r] tegdais ocus ronbendach fadeissin, ocus ni táraill in bendachtusin ar clanna, ocus beimini cen áos, cen érchra sunn cobrath, ocus isfota órotairgered dún," ol indóclach, "do thuidechtsu, ocus faracaib Día linn condigesta do praicept do Gaedelaib, ocus foráccaib comartha linni .i. abachoill do tabairt duitsiu." "Ni gébsa," ol Pátraic, "co tarda féin a bachoill dam."'*

[591] *Tripartite Life*, p.31: '*Anais Pátraic tri láa ocus tri aidchi occo, ocus luid iarsein hislaib Hermóin, hifail na insi, coroárdraig dó inCoimdiu hi suidiu, ocus conerbairt fris techt doprocéupt do Góedilaib, ocus cotárat bachaill nIsu dó ocus atrubairt ropad fortachtaigthid do hi cech guasacht ocus hi cech écomnart imbíad. Ocus durothlaigestar Pátraic tri itgi fair, i.i bith dia deis hi flaith nime, combad é pa breithemh do Goi[d]elaibh hillathi bratha, ocus here in nónbuir choimthechtaigi di ór ocus argutt dia thabairt do Góidelaib ar creitem*.'

[597] Ibid. p. 31. Mt. Hermon borders the 'Promised Land' far to the north of Galilee and is never mentioned again in our texts; medieval scholars were divided over whether Mt. Hermon or Mt. Tabor hosted Christ's Transfiguration, and for more on this see the *Advent Catholic Encyclopaedia*: www.newadvent.org/cathen/15019a.htm (visited October 2010).

[599] *Tripartite Life*, p. 29.

[600] 'Muirchú accounts for no less than four-fifths of the text of Probus' (Bieler, *Four Latin Lives*, p. 40).

Tírechán's version of how Patrick's staff helped resurrect a giant pagan.[601] Most importantly, *Bachall Ísu's* absence raises a question-mark over when texts that do feature the relic, namely *Quarta* and *Tripartite Life*, became accessible to non-Irish audiences, particularly in Britain. The *Tripartite Life* has no known textual tradition outside of Ireland, so knowledge of *Bachall Ísu* could not have been gleaned from it elsewhere. *Quarta* may have been transmitted to the continent around 900, although none of its recensions survive in Britain.[602] We may assume, therefore, that neither author of *Historia Brittonum* or Probus knew of *Bachall Ísu*.

The *Bachall Ísu's* tradition continues strongly in our twelfth century Lives of Patrick, except in William's *Vita Patricii* where it is nowhere mentioned. [603] However, it is difficult to imagine that *Bachall Ísu* was unheard of in Britain by this time, particularly at Glastonbury where William wrote.[604] By omitting *Bachall Ísu* we may suggest that William was upholding Glastonbury interests, especially since his *Vita Patricii* supports Patrick's death and burial at the abbey. Above all, it is clear that William was not interested in Armagh's most powerful symbol of its ecclesiastical power and position as Patrick's cult-centre: *Bachall Ísu*.

However, *Vita Tertia* picks up the tradition of *Bachall Ísu* by relying on the versions found in *Quarta* and the *Tripartite Life*. In *Tertia* there are a few references to *Bachall Ísu*, one of which illustrates how Patrick received this relic on his way to Rome after visiting Germanus, and just as in *Quarta's* version:

> 'Patrick went straight forward to that place to live as a hermit,
> whereby Patrick carried the staff which was in the hands of our Lord
> Jesus Christ, how he favourably brought aid while he had been living
> there. And the staff to this day remains among the citizens of
> Patrick's people, where they can call upon the staff of Jesus.'[605]

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[601] Probus, *Vita*, 21, II: '*Respondit eis sanctus Patricii dicens: 'Si uoleritis, uidebitis illum,' et dixerunt: 'Maxime et libentissime uolumus.' Tunc sanctus Patricius percussit lapidem sepulcri baculo suo, iuxta caput scilicet hominis sepulti, siggnauitque sepulcrum signaculo crucis...'*

[602] Francis and Byrne, 'Two Latin Lives', pp. 10-2, also assert – and I agree with their point – that *Quarta* reached Europe 'before the devastation of the region between Somme and Meuse by the Great Danish Army in they years 879 to 892, and the concomitant destruction of Péronne in 880' (p. 11).

[603] Winterbottom, *Malmesbury*, xvii, where he stated that this *Vita* and *Vita Dunstani* were 'cunningly constructed pastiches of several pre-existing Lives.'

[604] William of Malmesbury, *Vita Patricii*, pp. 315-44; however, in William's *Vita Benignii*, pp. 344-68, we learn that Patrick gives Benignus his 'staff' to take with him; however, we cannot be clear if this refers to *Bachall Ísu*, although unlikely, despite that Glastonbury traditions claim Benignus as its second abbot, having inherited this office from Patrick himself – just as episcopal croziers would have been inherited!

[605] *Tertia*, 23: '*Tunc Patricius iter ingressus perrexit ad quondam heremitam in quodam loco habitantem, a quo Patricius portauit baculum qui fuit in manu Iesu Christi Domini nostril, ut*

This anecdote essentially draws on *Quarta's* version, except that it ends: 'And to this day it remains among Patrick's people… known as the Staff of Jesus.'[606] Where exactly Patrick received *Bachall Ísu* is again not clear, but as in *Quarta* we learn that it was obtained after Patrick left Germanus somewhere *en route* to Rome. *Tertia's* statement that *Bachall Ísu* 'remains among Patrick's people' may indicate it was not kept at Armagh and that its exact whereabouts was a closely guarded secret.[607]

Jocelin's version of how Patrick received *Bachall Ísu* essentially elaborates *Tertia*, but also to a lesser extent the *Tripartite Life*, and is the most extensive version. Here we learn that while Patrick was journeying to Rome he came to an island:

> 'Proceeding, therefore, by the divine impulse, or by the angelic revelation, he [i.e. Patrick] went out of his course unto a solitary man who lived in an island on the Tuscan Sea… after their holy greetings were passed, this man of God gave unto Patrick a staff which he declared himself to have received from the hands of the Lord Jesus… And Patrick, giving thanks unto God, abided with the man of God certain days… at length he [i.e. Patrick] bade him farewell, and went on his way with the Staff of Jesus… And the staff is held in much veneration in Ireland, and even unto this day it is called the Staff of Jesus.'[608]

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per huius comitis auxilium prosperum haberet iter. Et baculus usque hodie manet in ciuitate Patricii, et uocatur baculus Iesu.'

[606] Ibid.

[607] One *Annals of the Four Masters* entry in 1135 states that the relic was kept 'in a cave', epitomising the vulnerability of such relics (see Appendix B).

[608] Jocelin, *Vita*, XXIV: '*Sedit animo S. Patricij Sedem S. Petri petere in petra fundati, & sanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ canonicis institutis vberius imbui; [Romam proficiscens] cupiens auctoritate Apostolica iter & actus suos roborari. Cum autem quod corde conceperat enodasset B. Germano, approbauit sanctum ipsius propositum S. Germanus, adiungens ei Christi seruum Sergecium Presbyterum, [cum Sergecio socio,] itineris socium, laboris solatium, sanctæ conuersationis testem idoneum. Profectus vero diuino instinctu seu reuelatione Angelica ad quemdam, in quadam insula Thyrreni maris degentem, secessit solitarium; sacræ vitæ, opinionis optimæ, magni meriti virum, nomine ac opere Iustum: cumque post sanctam salutationem salutaria mutuo verba conferrent, dedit idem vir Dei Patricio baculum, [diuertit ad Iustum eremitam:] quem se suscepisse asseruit de manu Domini Iesu sibi apparentis ipsi conferendum..... [d] S. Patricius Deo gratias agens cum viro Dei diebus aliquot mansit, [a quo accipit baculū Iesū.] ac eius exemplo magis ac magis in Deū proficiens, ei tandem vale facto, cum baculo Iesu proficiscebatur quo proposuit. O datum optimum descendens a patre luminum: eulogia egregia, ægris remedium, signorum effectiuum, munus a Deo missum, fatigato sustentaculum, vianti ministrans iter prosperum. Sicut enim Dominus multa signa per virgam fecit in manu Moysi, educturi populum Hebræorum de terra Ægypti; sic per Patricium in baculo, quem proprijs manibus formatum gestauerat, ad conuersionem gentium plurimarum multa & magna voluit operari. Baculus iste in Hibernia magnæ venerationis habetur, & vsque in præsens baculus Iesu nominatur.*'; Mt. Hermon is not mentioned, but Jocelin described an island where those waiting for Patrick did not age; this could refer to the 'Promised Land', possibly as depicted in *Fís Adomnáin*, a tenthcentury Armagh composition, which might have been accessible to Jocelin whilst he wrote at Inch Abbey, Co. Down (*The Vision of Adamnán*, trans. C. S. Boswell, *In parentheses*

Whilst Jocelin states that Patrick received *Bachall Ísu* from Christ, unlike the *Tripartite Life's* version this was not passed directly to him by God but through a custodian chosen by Christ who himself did not physically age from the moment he was elected for the task.

It is clear *Bachall Ísu* does not have a definite tradition in our Lives of Patrick until *Quarta* in the later eighth century, despite clear seventh-century references to Patrick's 'Staff'; we can only ponder whether Patrick's Staff as mentioned in the seventh century Lives was given the new name of *Bachall Ísu* or whether the latter is a different crozier altogether. It is interesting that nowhere in the tradition of how Patrick received *Bachall Ísu* did he do so in Rome, but rather on his journey there at some indiscernible location. This is important, as there is no substantial evidence for pieces of Christ's Staff existing at any point in the Middle Ages[609] and for the fact that Armagh's procurement of Roman relics is well attested in the Patrician Lives under scrutiny here, and none of these particular accounts mention *Bachall Ísu*. It suited Armagh to invent the story that Patrick received somewhere other than Rome, and in the fifth century when depictions of Jesus bearing a staff began to disappear.

The Rise to Prominence of *Bachall Ísu* as Armagh's Premier Insigne

Indeed, the direct naming of Patrick's Staff as *Bachall Ísu* in *Quarta* is more or less contemporaneous to its first known reference in *Annals of Ulster* for 789.17.[610] In the eighth and ninth centuries the annals reveal that circuits of relics were in operation throughout Ireland, which must have demanded many reliquaries, not least for *Scrín*

Publications, Medieval Irish Series, (Cambridge, Ontario 1999)), which ends (p. 13): 'the righteous, the charitable and the merciful, shall be borne to the right hand of God… to abide without death… for ever and ever.' Moreover, there is also the legend of the apostle John immortality on the Grecian island of Patmos, where it is believed he wrote the *Apocalypse* (*Advent Catholic Encyclopaedia*: www.newadvent.org/cathen/11547a.htm However, Andrew Breeze in 'Where were the Middle Gaelic *Glenn na Leóman and Inis Salutóiris*?'', *The Innes Review*, Vol. 58 No. 1, (2007), pp. 101-6 at p. 104, discusses *Inis Salutóiris*, in an eleventh-century poem on St Brendan's pilgrimage, identifying it as Megaris off modern Naples, which was a popular pilgrimage route; he points out that the *Life of Patricia*, a seventh-century Byzantine saint, states she fell ill close to Naples and was taken to die on *Insula Salvatoris* 'where the body of our Lord was and is honoured.., so that the place has taken from the church the name of Salvator' – whether earlier authors, especially *Quarta's*, knew of this island when they wrote of how Patrick received the *Bachall Ísu* remains unknown. However, in Towill's 'Land of youth', he argues that the island was originally located somewhere in Britain, namely in Wales, where he places the setting of the *Tripartite Life's* Mt. Hermon. Towill rejects that the island in the Tyrrhenian Sea is linked to Patrick's sorjourn at Lerins (pp.58-61), but I am afraid that endeavours to find a historical basis for locating such an event as Patrick's receipt of *Bachall Ísu* is going to remain unresolved, just as for trying to locate his birthplace for example.
[609] As Bourke freely admits in his *Archaeology of a Saint*, p. 18.
[610] See the full entry in Appendix B.

Pátraic and *Bachall Ísu*.[611] As indicated in the first chapter, the plunder of *Scrín Pátraic* in 1066.1 (*Annals of Ulster*) coincides with the Norman invasion of England, itself sanctioned by a papal curia eager to reform the English Church and an event which would eventually open the gateway to Ireland (more below).[612] That the Uí Briúin Bréfne destroyed *Scrín Pátraic*, and not any of Armagh's other principal relics, such as *Bachall Ísu* or *Canóin Pátraic*, is significant. After all, at this time the Uí Briúin were expanding their territories with ambition to obtain the kingship of Connacht: this endeavour failed, but they nevertheless succeeded to 'drive a wedge' between the Southern and Northern Uí Néill.[613] *Bachall Ísu* was clearly intended to become Armagh's chief defender, particularly after 1066 when the contents of *Scrín Pátraic* were stated to have been plundered and destroyed.

That *Bachall Ísu* is first and foremost a relic of Christ is also significant: the *Annals of Ulster* always refers to the pope as '*coarb* of Peter', but the fact *Bachall Ísu* itself became Armagh's premier insigne denotes that Patrick, and his heirs, was thus '*coarb* of Christ'; possession of *Bachall Ísu* essentially meant that Armagh's image as the 'Rome' of Ireland could be further engrained.[614] As suggested in the first chapter, Patrick's corporeal relics may have been deemed at Armagh as having become unsatisfactory as not only were they a constant reminder of Down's traditional claims over their patron's grave, but because we know that from the later tenth century they became a vulnerability Glastonbury Abbey was to continually exploit for the rest of our period.[615] After the plunder of *Scrín Pátraic* we do not hear of Armagh claiming any corporeal relics of Patrick to the end of our period, perhaps for these very reasons. From 1066 it is clear that a new premier relic to replace *Scrín Pátraic* and its contents (which probably included a portion of the saint'scorporeal remains) was

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[611] That associative relics, such as *Bachall Ísu*, were taken on circuits is evident from entries which do not define the type of relic and those which directly refer to a bell or *bachall* (see Lucas, 'Relics', pp. 13-7). As mentioned in n. 24, *Secunda's* story of Patrick's and Mochoe's receipt of a 'staff' from God reappears in later Lives. In the *Triparite Life* (pp. 40-1, Book I) it is called *ind Etech* (*DIL*; *ettech*: 'flying', 'winged'), or 'flying-one', for which Bourke stated that its 'name… terms a quality or portability, doubtless a reflection of taking such insignia on circuit' ('What the pilgrim saw', *Down Survey, Yearbook of the County Down Museuem*, (2000), pp. 7-12 at p. 8); Jocelin also states 'it is called by the Irish the "flying-staff"' (XXXVII): '*baculusque volans ab Hibernicis nominatur*'.

[612] Consult Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans,* pp. 61-100, for the Norman impact on the English Church through analysis of one native saint's cult; Bartlett, 'Cults', pp. 67-86.

[613] Byrne, *Irish Kings*, p. 266.

[614] This is also prevalent in architectural make-up of Armagh's ecclesiastical centre, which is based on that of Rome and Canterbury (Ó Carragáin, 'Architectural setting', pp. 150-2). Armagh's emulation of Rome does not mean that no recognition of Rome's authority was accorded, however, quite the reverse!

[615] Refer to Part 1, esp. Chapters 2 and 3; Abrams, 'Patrick and Glastonbury', pp. 233-43.

required by Armagh – one which symbolised its ecclesiastical ambitions in Ireland, and 'certainly by the opening of the twelfth century that was *Bachall Ísu*.'[616]

Ireland's political climate approaching the twelfth-century suggests that Armagh's power was declining, especially in the wake of the see of Dublin's rising power, economically and politically. Armagh's gradual loss of power was influenced by secular affairs and by church reforms (more below). In the tenth century the Southern and Northern branches of the Uí Néill abandoned their ninth-century unity since the impact of the Uí Briúin bid to usurp the kingship of Connacht:

> 'The able northern high-king, Domnall ua Néill [Cenél nEógain], who during his reign between 956 and 980… wished to displace Clann Cholmáin and establish a dynastic monarchy of Ireland based in the midlands. When Máelsechnaill mac Domnaill of Mide [Southern Uí Néill] restored the alternate succession the disappointed Cenél nEógain refused to help him maintain his position against Brian [Bóruma].'[617]

Ultimately Brian Bóruma, an over-king of Munster, benefited from this Uí Néill fracture, given that the Cénel nEógain were unmoved by Bóruma's success and for the fact that Uí Néill power would soon become 'eroded by successive wars against Dublin.'[618] Although Viking incursions 'impinged remarkably little in the course of Irish politics in the ninth and tenth centuries',[619] the Norse economy in Ireland did cause major societal change subsequently, and this was the factor which undoubtedly 'helped Bóruma's bid to centralise authority on the island.'[620] After all, 'the Irish provincial king who could milk Dublin, Waterford or Limerick for tribute was far more powerful than his peers who extorted allegiance from twenty tribal kings.'[621] The Uí Néill eventually managed to regain power under Mael Sechnaill when Brian Bóruma died at the battle at Clontarf in 1014, which ironically saw his army defeat the Norse-Dublin forces and heralded 'a significant stage in the decline of Viking-power in Ireland.'[622] However, Uí Néill overkingship was interrupted by Bóruma's

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[616] Bannerman, '*Comarba*', p. 28.

[617] Byrne, *Irish Kings*, p. 267; Mide is important as along with Brega, both midland regions 'contained more monasteries than any other Irish over-kingdom' (p. 269).

[618] Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 61; Ní Mhaonaigh, *Brian Boru*, pp. 126-8; Bóruma's obit is found in a gloss in the *Book of Armagh* – not surprising as he was buried at Armagh, where an inscribed stone marking his grave is visible: http://www.stpatricks-cathedral.org/cathedral-history/brian-boru/ (visited July 2011).

[619] This is remarkable compared to England (Byrne, *Irish Kings*, pp. 267 and 8 respectively); Clare Downham states that 'the re-establishment of Viking power in Ireland can be dated to 914 (*Viking Kings*, p. 31).

[620] Ibid. p. 62.

[621] Byrne, *Irish Kings*, p. 268.

[622] Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 61.

grandson Muirchertach, who succeeded as 'the dominant overking in Irish politics at the end of the [eleventh] century.'[623] Clare Downham writes that in the eleventh and twelfth centuries:

> 'Viking-rulers became increasingly subject to powerful Irish kings. Even so, it can still be argued that the continuing efforts of Dublin to retain a measure of independence operated against the ambitions of those kings who wanted to bring all Ireland under their rule.'[624]

Secular politics and economics were not the only factors explaining Dublin's resistance to powerful Irish kings. The notable rise of Dublin's ecclesiastical power would eventually prove enough to usurp Armagh's position as Ireland's premier church by the close of our period. There were crucial twelfth-century reforms implemented in the Irish Church via three major synods: Cashel in 1101, Ráith Bressail in 1111, and Kells in 1152. Two archiepiscopal provinces with metropolitian sees were created at the Synod of Ráith Bressail, Armagh and Cashel, each containing twelve sees with 'primacy accorded to Armagh'; the Synod of Kells created 'two additional archdioceses of Dublin and Tuam' (Co. Galway in Connacht).[625] As Flanagan indicates:

> 'Armagh and Cashel… had been coterminous… with the two most powerful contenders for the high-kingship, Domnall Mac Lochlainn, king of Cénel nEógain (*ob.*1121), in the northern half of Ireland, and Muirchertach Ua Briain, king of Munster (*ob.*1119)… Dublin and Tuam reflected… the emergence of… Connacht under its king, Toirdelbach Ua Conchobair (1106-56)… coupled with the growing dominance of the provincial kingship of Leinster under Diarmait Mac Murchada (*a.*1133-1171), and the increasing commercial importance of the Hiberno-Norse towns of Dublin, Waterford and Wexford. The elevation of the see of Dublin to archiepiscopal status also secured its acknowledgement of the primacy of Armagh.'[626]

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[623] Ibid. p. 60.

[624] Ibid. p. 62.

[625] Flanagan, *Transformations*, pp. 34-5, where she states that 'taken together, the synods of Ráith Bressail and Kells… imposed fixed diocesan boundaries on the Irish Church for the first time' (p. 35). Gerald of Wales rather misleadingly glorified the Kells' synod in his *Topography*, 96: 'There were no archbishoprics in Ireland, but the bishops just consecrated one another, until John Papiro, legate of the Roman see… He established four *pallia*… One he gave to Armagh; another to Dublin; a third to Cashel; and the fourth to Tuam in Connacht.'

[626] Flanagan, *Transformations*, p. 35; M. Holland, 'The twelfth-century Reform and Inis Pátraic', (ed.) A. Mac Shamhráin, *The Island of St Patrick: Church and Ruling Dynasties in Fingal and Meath, 400-1148*, (Dublin, 2004), pp. 159-77.

Muirchertach attained overkingship by 1100 and shortly after he soon sought Armagh's endorsement, which makes sense since he presided over the synods of Cashel and Ráith Bressail, both of which worked in Armagh's favour.[627]

The various circuits in the annals which feature *Bachall Ísu* highlight this mutually dependant relationship between Munster and Armagh up to just before this period, for example, when *Bachall Ísu* was brought to Munster, Cashel and Lismore in 1093.11 (*Annals of Inisfallen*):[628]

> 'Diarmait, son of Tairdelbach Ua Briain, submitted to Muirchertach,
>
> i.e. his brother, and they made peace and a covenant in Caisel and in
>
> Les Mór, with the relics of Ireland, including the Staff of Jesus, as
>
> pledges, and in the presence of Ua hÉnna and the nobles of Mumu.'

This flags another connection between *Bachall Ísu* and Lismore in particular, in that the Lismore Crozier is inscribed with the name Niall mac meic Aeducain, its first documented bishop and the reliquary's commissioner (d.1113).[629] The Lismore Crozier has the distinctive Irish drop, which is hollow and contains various relics, including a metal box and 'a sliver of wood covered in sheet metal and a piece of linen. It is possible that one of these was part of the Bachall Íosa or staff of Jesus, the most famous of all Armagh relics'.[630] However, there is no sure way of knowing this as *Bachall Ísu* itself has not survived, but broadly speaking the physical appearance of the Lismore Crozier could resemble what *Bachall Ísu* looked like in the twelfth century. Close ties were maintained between Lismore and Armagh during the course of Niall's office and with other northern churches, including Bangor, which endured into the 1120s. In this decade various visits were made by clerics between the churches, not least the visits of the reformer St Malachy[631] to Lismore in 1121 and 1127, and who would later accept the office of *coarb* at Armagh in 1132.[632]

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[627] Ó Floinn, 'Bishops, liturgy and reform', p. 221; for more on Muirchertach see Ní Mhaonaigh, *Brian Boru*, pp. 111-8; Bóruma also acknowledged this when 'after a battle at Craebh Tulcha, Brian marched through Meath to Armagh, where he stayed a week and offered gold on the altar of the great church and acknowledged the ecclesiastical supremacy of Armagh' (http://www.stpatricks-cathedral.org/cathedral-history/brian-boru/); in the *Book of Armagh* he also entered a confirmation of the privileges claimed by Armagh (Máire de Paor, 'The relics of St Patrick', p. 88, *Seanchas Ardmhacha*, Vol. 4 No. 2, 'The Patrician Year', (1961/2), pp. 87-91).

[628] Ó Floinn, 'Bishops, liturgy and reform', p. 220; Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines*, Photo 19.

[629] Ó Floinn, 'Bishops, liturgy and reform', p. 219, reasons Niall commissioned the crozier to 'stamp his authority on the see' as he was bishop and not abbot, and perhaps also to assert independence from Waterford, 'to which it had been united at the synod of Ráith Bressail' (p. 221).

[630] Ibid.

[631] In 1190 Pope Clement III declared Malachy a saint, which was the 'first canonisation of an Irish person' (Diarmuid Scully, 'Ireland and the Irish in Bernard of Clairvaux's Life of Malachy: representation and context', Damian Bracken & Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel (eds.), *Ireland and Europe in the Twelfth Century, Reform and Renewal*, (Dublin, 2006), pp. 239-256

Indeed, Malachy's visits to Lismore indicate he had responsibilities which surpassed the office of a priest, since Armagh's *coarb* Cellach (1106-1129) may well have 'entrusted him (Malachy) with his own office', as the great Cistercian reformer St Bernard of Clairvaux claimed.[633] At *Annals of Ulster* entry 1120.4 Cellach is recorded as visiting Munster, and his absence from Armagh is again noted in 1128.9 when 'a year and a half's peace or a little more was made by the successor of Patrick between the Connachta and the men of Mumu'. It is not clear if on Cellach's visits the *Bachall Ísu* and Armagh's other insignia of Patrick were taken also, as one function of croziers was to make peace between warring kings (next section); it is equally unclear whether Malachy, in his stand-in role for Cellach, was occasionally accompanied by *Bachall Ísu*. There is also an obscure reference in the *Chartularies of St Mary's Abbey* about Cellach anticipating Niall's rebellion and so acquiring land in Fingal, now known as 'Ballyboughall', or the 'town of the crozier', where Mac Giolla Phádraig reckons the relic itself was kept for a while. However, the later *White Book of Christ Church* and Archbishop Alan's *Register* also claim that the *Bachall Ísu* was kept at Ballyboughall and was taken and given to Christ Church by Strongbowe himself in 1180 – a blatant falsehood as he actually died in 1176.[634]

Malachy did not acquire control of Armagh's primary insigne until 1132, an astonishing two years after being appointed *coarb*. The Irish annals contain many entries testifying to the increasingly close relationship of Armagh's *coarb* with *Bachall Ísu* up to and including the 1160s, and it is certain that there are many more occasions on which this relationship is observable but simply lost to the historical record.[635] This is exemplified by events in the 1130s, when Armagh faced internal strife over its *coarb*-ship: Malachy or Niall of Armagh. As leader of Armagh's 'reforming-party',[636] Malachy supported the move to oust Uí Sinaích control over

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at p. 239). *Chronicon Scotorum* remembers Malachy as 'chief bishop and a virgin and a scribe, head of the religion of all Ireland and Scotland, apostolic legate of *Pope* Innocent and the man who established monasticism and canons regular in Ireland, ended his life happily in Clairvaux on his way to speak to the successor of Peter' (1148).

[632] Ó Floinn, 'Bishops, liturgy and reform', p. 221; where he states that Niall spent some time as a cleric of Armagh and is thought to be related to Imar Ua hAedacain, who built Armagh's stone church (*réicles*) dedicated to Peter and Paul in 1126.

[633] St Bernard, *Vita Malachiae*, (trans.) H. J. Lawlor, *St Bernard of Clairvaux's Life of St Malachy of Armagh*, (London, 1920); Flanagan, *Transformations*, p. 42

[634] Mac Giolla Phádraig 'Patrick', pp. 189-91; Todd, *Book of Obits*, pp. x-xi.

[635] Bannerman, '*Comarba*', pp. 28-9; entries occur in various Irish annals: 1101 and 1113 (*Annals of Ulster*), 1135 (*Annals of the Four Masters*), 1139 (*Annals of the Four Masters*), 1143 (*Annals of the Four Masters*), 1157, 1166 and 1167 (*Annals of Ulster*); Lucas, 'Relics', pp. 13-7.

[636] The reform that occurred in this century was part of the wider Reforms of Gregory VII (1073-1085); R. I. Moore stated that 'reform… was nothing less than a programme to divide the world' (*First European Revolution,* p. 11).

who was elected its *coarb*, a privilege they had held for around two hundred years.[637] Armagh's current *coarb* Cellach (d.1129) was also a reformer and had, as mentioned, installed Malachy with additional authority, perhaps equal to his own, when he visited Munster in 1120. However, because Cellach's kin were Uí Sinaích he was widely accepted as *coarb* and trusted in his position whereas Malachy could not claim Uí Sinaích descent. It is possible this prevented Malachy from taking *Bachall Ísu* and other insignia of Patrick with him on diplomatic visits during Cellach's frequent absences in the 1120s. According to Bernard, Cellach's will of 1120 nonetheless stated that Malachy succeed him.[638] Malachy finally accepted the promotion to *coarb* in 1132, only to be forced to wait until 1134 to access the insignia of his office and until 1135 before obtaining *Bachall Ísu*; Bernard wrote that:

> 'Niall… took certain insignia… a copy of the Gospels [i.e. the *Book of Armagh*]… and the staff covered with gold and adorned with costly gems, which they call the Staff of Jesus, because the Lord Himself held it and fashioned it… deemed in the highest honour and sanctity… so revered by all that he who is seen to hold them is held by foolish people to be bishop… [i.e. Niall]… went about bearing the holy insignia… withdrawing as many as he could from Malachy.'[639]

In 1134 Malachy visited Munster, possibly with *Bachall Ísu*, to 'collect his tribute', and in 1135 he 'purchased the Staff of Jesus and took it from its cave', signifying that Niall's power in Armagh was waning st this point (*Annals of the Four Masters*; see Appendix B).[640] We do not know if the absence of *Bachall Ísu* meant that Malachy's official ascent to office was delayed until the relic was returned, but certainly the fuss over its absence suggests he may have not yet been formally consecrated and had all but 'acted' as *coarb* since *c*.1120. Bernard's anxiety over how venerated *Bachall Ísu* was and how people connected the relic to Armagh's

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[637] Cellach consecrated Malachy whilst visiting Munster; Gwynn, 'Tomaltach', p.241; Flanagan, 'John de Courcy', p. 159; Birkett (*Lives*, p. 144 n. 16) suggests that Malachy was not accepted because he was a Connacht man, and yet he was born in Armagh and his father was *fear léinn*, or chief teacher of its monastic school (R. Ó Muirí, 'Saint Malachy', *Down Survey*, (2000), pp. 9-15 at p. 15).

[638] According to Ó Floinn, 'Bishops, liturgy and reform', p. 221, Cellach was buried at Lismore; Gwynn, 'Tamaltach', p. 242; St Bernard's *Vita* offers an account of Malachy's struggle at Armagh in the immediate years after Cellach's death (St Bernard, *Vita Malachiae*, IV). The *Annals of Ulster* reports that from 1129-1132 'Muirchertach son of Domnall was appointed as successor.'

[639] Bernard, *Vita*, Chapter IV, pp. 53-4; note that Bernard may doubt *Bachall Ísu's* ownership by his words 'the Lord *fashioned* it'; we also get an idea of the extravagance of its reliquary, compared to Gerald of Wales' mere description of it as being 'made of wood' (Gerald of Wales, *Topographia*, 108).

[640] '*Fochla*' here means "from the North" (see 1 *fochla* in eDIL); thanks to Professor Thomas Clancy for pointing this out, although he admits it may make no real difference!

bishop, particularly during Niall's possession of it, weights this further. However, in 1136 *Annals of the Four Masters* report another change of 'abbots in Armagh… Niall in place of Malachy', and that Malachy '*coarb* of Patrick… visited Munster'.[642] Then in 1137 Niall's rebellion ended 'with his surrender of the Patrician insignia to Malachy',[643] and in this year *Annals of the Four Masters* reports a 'change of abbots at Armagh… the *airchinneach* of Derry [i.e. Malachy] in place of Niall.'[644]

However, the *Annals of the Four Masters* conflict with Bernard's *Vita* and other sources, such as the *Book of Leinster* where Niall is not recognised as Malachy's successor in 1136 and instead names Gille-mac-Leig.[645] Whichever version is truest, 'St Malachy's long battle won recognition for the establishment of Episcopal authority, in place of the control by bishops who were not bishops but laymen.'[646] In further agreement with Aubrey Gwynn, when Malachy passed his office to Gille mac Leig in 1136 he did so handing over *Bachall Ísu* in accordance with his wishes that he inherit the office of *coarb*, which was likewise passed to Conchobhar mac meic Conchaille in 1174.3, whose short reign as *comarba Pátraic* and Armagh's archbishop ended just a year later (*Annals of Ulster*). Some confusion is evident over the identity of Conchobhar's successor, but it was probably Gille-in-Coímdedh Ua Carain (Gilbert) until his death in 1179/80.[647] After Gille-in-Coímdedh's death, however, contention in Armagh over who might succeed him ensued once more. What is clear is *Bachall Ísu* did not leave Armagh after 1136, when Malachy passed his office to Gille-mac-leig. However, the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 might well have loomed heavy in the minds of Irish clerics and kings, and when the Norman Conquest of Ireland finally impacted from 1169, Armagh's hold over *Bachall Ísu* would be threatened once again.

Dublin was the first city to fall to the Normans, but just two years after Gille-mac-leig was elected *coarb* the Norman presence began to be felt in Ulster. By this time Dublin was already a powerful see having recently been granted the status of archbishopric at the reforming synod of Kells in 1152.[648] In 1155 Pope Adrian IV

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[642] For example, before becoming Armagh's archbishop and *coarb* of Patrick, Conchobhar was abbot of Ss Paul and Peter in Armagh (Gwynn, 'Tamaltach', p. 242), and so this abbatial office may have been passed to Niall to appease those against Malachy's office as *coarb*.

[643] Gwynn, 'Tamaltach', p. 242.

[644] Niall is not recorded in the ancient list of Armagh's *coarbs* (Gwynn, 'Tamaltach', p. 242), but *Annals of the Four Masters* (1139) states that he was.

[645] Discussed by Lawlor in *Life of Malachy*, pp. 169-70; Gwynn does not discuss it in 'Tamaltach'.

[646] Ibid. p. 242.

[647] Ibid. p. 243.

[648] Aubrey Gwynn, *The Irish Church in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, (Dublin, 1992), pp. 265-70; four archdioceses were created at Kells: Armagh, Tuam, Cashel and Dublin. This synod amended the structure implemented at Ráith Bressail in 1111 that placed Armagh as the

issued the bull *Laudabiliter*, which sanctioned the Norman invasion of Ireland under the flag of Church reform, and is the same papal tactic – or should we say 'Norman tactic' – used around a century before to justify the invasion of England.[649] In actual fact, the predominant reason for the Norman Conquest of Ireland boiled down to economics and not religion; David Wilson states:

> 'The increasing power of the Irish towns was one of the factors that led to the English conquest of Ireland… Henry II quite clearly saw that if he could control Dublin… he could demolish the power of the only group of traders who could challenge English commercial influences to the west.'[650]

After Dublin fell it became the ideal base from which the Normans could penetrate further into Ireland, and, as Birkett states, 'considering the firm Anglo-Norman grip on Dublin, compared to the much weaker hold on Armagh… English interests would be served best by asserting the primacy of the church of Dublin.'[651] Furthermore, from the later eleventh century Canterbury's archbishops were already consecrating bishops of Dublin, at least nominally.[652]

In the *Martyrology of Christ Church* in Dublin there an impressive array of relics listed as being in possession of the cathedral since the time of Bishop Dúnan in the mid eleventh century.[653] The original section of the list claims a piece of the True Cross (Christ Church's principal relic before 1180) and various apostolic relics of Ss Peter, Paul and Andrew, relics associated with St Ursula's cult, relics of the Virgin,

premier church over eleven other sees in the north of Ireland (also consult Kenney's *Sources*, pp. 745-73 and esp. p. 768). In Flanagan's *Transformation*, pp. 1-34, there is an excellent appraisal of the developments and changes in the Irish Church in the twelfth century.
[649] Haren, '*Laudabiliter*'; there was also a royal council held at Winchester in this year presided by Henry II, who proposed that his brother William govern Ireland, but his mother, Empress Matilda, opposed the idea and thus it was abandoned (Francis X Martin, 'Diarmait mac Murchada and the coming of the Anglo-Normans', (ed.) A. Cosgrove, *A New History of Ireland II, Medieval Ireland 1169-1534*, (Oxford, 1987), pp. 43-66 at p. 56).
[650] David M. Wilson, 'The Irish Sea and the Atlantic trade in the Viking Age', *European Review*, Vol. 8 No. 1, (2000), pp. 155-21 at pp. 115 and 121; various trades occurred in Scandinavian Dublin, for example in wool-making and metalworking, and in 997 there is evidence for minting coins, particularly for kings such as Sihtric Silkbeard (p. 119).
[651] Birkett, *Lives*, p. 154.
[652] Gywnn, *Irish Church*, pp. 50-67; more recently Flanagan wonders whether Canterbury's role has been overplayed (*Irish Society, Anglo-Norman Settlers, Angevin Kingship*, (Oxford 1989), pp. 8-13). Also consult Flanagan's *Transformation*, p. 6-8 and pp. 1-36, where Ó Floinn's analysis as regards Christ Church's relic-lists areacknowledged, which speak of a connection to Cologne in Southern Germany with origins in the eleventh century; there is also the more detailed essay by Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel, 'Cashel and Germany: the documentary evidence', Damian Bracken & Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel (eds.), *Ireland and Europe in the Twelfth Century, Reform and Renewal*, (Dublin, 2006), pp. 176-218.
[653] *The Book of Obits*; Raghnall Ó Floinn, 'The foundation relics of Christ Church cathedral and the origins of the diocese of Dublin', (ed.) Séan Duffy, *Medieval Dublin VII, Proceedings of the Friends of Medieval Dublin Symposium 2005*, (Dublin 2006), pp. 89-103 at p. 89.

relics of the tombs of Christ and Lazarus, as well as of a number of other saints' relics including that of David of Wales. None of the relics have survived and those attributed to Irish saints are not included in this earliest section of the list. It is clear that here we have another example of a church collecting the relics of universal and apostolic saints, which becomes increasingly common in the twelfth century – in the case of Christ Church, to bolster its status and ability to compete with its neighbouring churches, especially with Armagh.[654] Among the relics claimed in the original Christ Church list is a piece of St Peter's Staff, which must have been obtained from Cologne, and of which Ó Floinn intelligently hypothesises that:

> '[T]he relic of the True Cross and the apostolic relics… may well have been chosen to counter similar relics in the possession of Armagh. The relic of the Staff of St Peter may have been specifically intended as a counter to Armagh's most important relic, the *Bachall Ísu*'.[655]

Dublin's status as an archbishopric in 1152 and its subsequent Norman alliance soon bolstered its ambitions to challenge Armagh further with its eventual acquisition of *Bachall Ísu* in 1180, which became its principal relic in that year, the circumstances leading up to which would lead to the conquest of Ulster. Indeed, Bartlett describes the conquest of Ulster as one example of a 'splinter expedition', and that 'the Anglo-Norman lordship of Ulster was created by such a tangential freelance movement.'[656]

In 1177 John de Courcy left Dublin to invade Ulster, where he was initially defeated and captured by the Ulstermen when he attempted to acquisition Down,[657] but in the second encounter that same year de Courcy emerged victorious.[658] According to *Mac Carthaigh's Book* (1178.1) the following events unfolded as a result of the first battle:

> 'John de Courcy came secretly with a band of knights and archers from Dublin to Down, and reaching it unperceived, they made a dyke from sea to sea about Down. The Ulaidh then assembled, under Ruaidhrí Mac Duinn Shléibhe, to make an attack on Down against John, but on reaching it they retreated without striking a blow when they saw the Englishmen with their horses in full battle-dress. When

[654] Ibid. p. 96.
[655] Ibid. p. 102; it is interesting claims were also made to St Peter's Staff from the tenth century, which must have been obtained in Cologne, since there is evidence of Dublin's connections with its church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries; for more on Peter's Staff at Cologne see Hahn's 'What do reliquaries do for relics?', pp. 285-9.
[656] Bartlett, *Making of Europe*, p. 32.
[657] Séan Duffy, 'John de Courcy', *Oxford Database of National Biography*, pp. 1-4 at p. 1.
[658] Ibid.

the Englishmen saw the Ulaidh in flight, they followed them with
their people, and inflicted slaughter upon them, both by drowning
and by the sword. The *Bachall Fínghin* and *Bachall Rónáin Fhinn*
and many other relics were left behind in that slaughter.'

Among the relics taken into this second battle was the *Canóin Pátraic*, which as a
result of de Courcy's victory was stolen to Dublin along with Gille-in-Coímdedh
himself, *comarba Pátraic*.[659] Most interestingly many other relics were captured in
this second battle, including the bells and croziers of prominent Irish saints,
undoubtedly brought by clerics from elsewhere to defend Armagh against de Courcy
and his forces in battle (see *Mac Carthaigh's Book* at entry 1178.2 in Appendix B).[660]

When these relics arrived in Dublin they were soon joined by *Bachall Ísu*,
which was likely captured by Fitz Audelin in 1180 after de Courcy's victory;[661]
Gerald of Wales later remarked that Fitz Audelin 'had done nothing of any note in
Ireland, except that he arranged for the miracle-working Staff of Jesus, to be removed
from Armagh to Dublin.'[662] It is striking that *Bachall Ísu* was not taken into battle,
perhaps denoting it was instead hidden from view and perceived by Armagh's clerics
to be in danger of theft. Whilst *Bachall Ísu* remained in Dublin, however, Gille-in-
Coímdedh and the *Canóin Pátraic* were returned to Armagh, although we do not
know exactly when. The *Annals of Loch Cé* state that *Canóin Pátraic* was captured
in Ulster again by de Courcy at the battle of Dún-Bó in 1182 (see Appendix B);
however, no record exists of when it returned, although it was at some point with
Tigernach's Bell and before Jocelin's *Vita* was commissioned.[663] That the croziers of
Comgall, Da Chiaróg, Éimine, and Muru were retained 'by the Galls' is significant,
as ultimately this retention also projects Christ Church's ecclesiastical ambitions in
Ireland by revealing and rewarding its secular alliances, just as they once did for

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[659] 'Fragment I: Mac Carthaigh's Book [AD 1114-1437]', (ed.) S Ó hInnse, *Miscellaneous Irish Annals (AD 1114-1437)*, (Dublin, 1947), pp. 2-115 at p. vii and pp. 64-7.
[660] Ibid.; Ó Floinn, '*Insigna Columbae I*', pp. 140-1.
[661] Birkett states that the relics taken joined *Bachall Ísu* in Dublin 'which had been seized previously', but this is misleading (*Lives*, p. 49). The *White Book's* account of how the *Bachall Ísu* arrived in Dublin is unreliable, but the *Black Book of Christ Church* is more trustworthy; however, both sources agree that the relic arrived in Dublin in 1180. Moreover, Gerald of Wales later corroborates the *Black Book* that the *Bachall Ísu* was taken from Armagh to Dublin by the Anglo-Normans and that it was taken by Fitz Audelin (*Expugnatio*, 20: '[Fitz Adelin] arranged for the… staff of Jesus, to be moved from Armagh to Dublin.'); Todd, *Book of Obits*, pp. viii-xi; thanks to Pádraig Ó Riain for direction. Fitz Audelin accompanied Henry II to Ireland in 1171 and was sent with Hugh de Lacy to gain the loyalty of Ruaidrí, king of Connacht (1156x1186); Gwynn, 'Tomaltach', pp. 248-491.
[662] Ibid.
[663] *Annals of Loch Cé*, pp. 162-3 n. 4; Ó Floinn, '*Insignia Columbae*', pp. 140-1.

Armagh; this would explain why none of the other relics were never returned to Armagh or to her affiliated churches to which they originally belonged.[664]

As indicated, the fact *Bachall Ísu* remained in Dublin at the time of Gille-in-Coímdedh's death must have caused great anxiety in Armagh, which is most evident in the career of his successor Tomaltach (1181-1201).[665] It is intriguing that around the time of Tomaltach's succession *Bachall Ísu* arrived in Dublin. Similar to the situation in which Malachy found himself around fifty years before, Tomaltach was not officially recognised as *comarba Phátraic* until 1181. However, unlike the situation with Malachy's *coarb*-ship, it is clear Tomaltach's succession as archbishop of Armagh 'cannot have been wholly dependant on *Bachall Ísu* as an essential part of the ceremony', since it still remained in Dublin at this time.[666] Moreover, the lack of support Tomaltach received from kindred close to Armagh, which was a situation reversed by the death of the papal legate Lawrence O'Toole in the same year of his succession, also played a major role. However, it cannot be denied that *Bachall Ísu* played a key role, possibly even in equal measure, as not even Gwynn could deny that the 'recent loss of *Bachall Ísu* may well have been one cause for the long delay in granting to Tomaltach full recognition as the new *comarba Pátraic* '.[667]

Significantly, Tomaltach was a patron of Jocelin's *Vita*, along with de Courcy and Malachy, bishop of Down, and it was likely written in response to the *inventio* of Patrick's grave at Down in *c*.1185.[668] Jocelin was the obvious choice as author

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[664] I know of no evidence of why these relics were used in battle, nor is there any to indicate when these croziers and bells came into Armagh's possession – indeed if they ever did as gifts from other loyal churches, or whether they just resided at Armagh for safe-keeping, or if it is simply the case that Armagh's daughter churches turned up with their relics in support. However, there are many instances in our Lives of Patrick gifting croziers, for example: Patrick gifts a crozier to Fíacc in Leinster (*Additimenta*, 13) and to Conall (*Tripartite Life*, p. 139). Andrew R. Mac Donald in *Manx Kingship in its Irish Sea Setting 1187-1229, King Rognvaldr and the Crovan dynasty*, (Dublin, 2007), points out that the Staffs of Patrick and Maughold were claimed among the '3 Reliques of Man', but that 'though the objects themselves had long since vanished, traces of them in fact survive in the so-called 'Staffland' estates in Maughold and Patrick parishes' (pp. 179-80). Jocelin's *Vita* narrates how Patrick brought Christianity to Man, but it is only the cult of Maughold that is known to have been venerated before the Scandinavians came in the ninth century. It is possible that a version of Patrick's 'Staff', but not *Bachall Ísu*, was claimed as one of the '3 Reliques of Man'. Likewise, not all the stories in the Lives which feature a 'staff' of Patrick directly name it as *Bachall Ísu*, such as when Patrick accidentally pierces King Óengus mac Natfriach's (of Cashel) foot with his 'Staff' during the baptism ceremony (*Tripartite Life*, pp. 194-6). Although we might presume that the staff on this occasion was *Bachall Ísu*, such ambiguity is nonetheless observable here and in other Lives.
[665] Gywnn, 'Tomaltach', p. 231; Flanagan, 'John de Courcy', pp. 170-2; Birkett, *Lives*, p. 143, points out in n. 14 that Tomaltach was 'translated to the see of Armagh at the instigation of his uncle, Ruadrí Ua Conchobair, provincial king of Connacht and high-king of Ireland,' and either consecrated by Archbishop Lorcán Ua Tuathail of Dublin or his successor John Cumin.
[666] Gywnn, 'Tomaltach', p. 249.
[667] Ibid. p. 251.
[668] Birkett, *Lives*, pp. 141-71.

considering his monastery of Furness had connections to the Isle of Man in the diocese of Sodor, and to de Courcy's 'political' marriage to Affreca, daughter of the King of the Isles, Godfred, who held considerable influence in pre-Norman Dublin and the Isle of Man.[669] De Courcy proved an enthusiastic patron, and one example of this is evident through his issue of coinage bearing Patrick's image and others lie in the possibility he named his illegitimate son after the saint and sponsored six religious houses around Down, one of which, Grey Abbey, was founded by his wife Affreca.[670] Bishop Malachy also benefited from his patronage of Jocelin's *Vita*, as did Tomaltach, and Birkett states that Jocelin's *Vita* 'attests to the close alliance of the reformed church and the new Anglo-Norman regime in the north of Ireland'.[671] As well as displaying a high literary creativity in selecting and adapting traditions from earlier Lives of Patrick, Jocelin also succeeded in representing the concerns of all three of his patrons, and in particular Tomaltach's, since Armagh gained least from Anglo-Norman rule via the *inventio* of Patrick's grave at Down and Christ Church's gain of *Bachall Ísu*.

Jocelin's version of how Patrick acquired *Bachall Ísu* is already noted, but shortly before a different version of how Patrick received *Bachall Ísu* was written by the Cistercian monk Henry of Sawtrey in *Tractatus de Purgatorio Sancti Patricii*.[672] The *Tractatus* was composed in *c.*1184 and represents the earliest account of the Irish knight Owein's pilgrimage to Patrick's Purgatory, Lough Derg, in 1146/7.[673] In Sawtrey's version, to help Patrick teach the Irish about Heaven and Hell, the saint received *Bachall Ísu* and the Gospels directly from Christ (only the earlier *Tripartite Life* contains this element), who appeared to Patrick on the Purgatory island in a bright light.[674] The fact that Gospels were also gifted introduces a new feature in the tradition of *Bachall Ísu*: the Gospels may be none other than the *Book of Armagh*. Moreover, it is not surprising that Dublin would strive to keep *Bachall Ísu* after its

[669] Duffy, 'de Courcy', p. 1.

[670] Sean Duffy, 'The first Ulster plantation: John de Courcy and the Men of Cumbria', T. B. Barry, R. Frame, and K. Simms (eds.), *Colony and Frontier in Medieval Ireland: Essays Presented to John F. Lydon*, (London, 1995), pp. 1-27 at pp. 5-11; Bartlett, 'Cults', pp. 76-7; Birkett, *Lives*, p. 143 n. 11.

[671] Ibid. p. 170.

[672] Henry of Sawtrey, *Tractatus de Purgatorio Sancti Patricii*, ed. R. Easting, *Early English Text Society*, (Oxford 1991), pp. 121-155 at pp. 121-5.

[673] Bartlett ('Cults of Irish, Scottish and Welsh saints', p. 77) dates it to the 1180s, but Birkett states that scholarship has settled on *c.*1184 (*Lives*, p. 8). There is perhaps an earlier tradition of an account of the Purgatory by David Scotius in *De Purgatorio Patricii* 'perhaps still exists, at Würzburg where David was in charge of the cathedral school inthe early twelfth century. This would be the first record of the tradition of St Patrick's Purgatory' (John Henning, 'Irish saints in German literature', *Medieval Academy of America*, Vol. 22 No. 3, (1947), pp. 358-74 at p. 364).

[674] Sawtrey, *Tractatus*, pp. 123-4.

capture in 1180, especially as the *Tractatus* mustered international success almost instantaneously and pilgrimage revenue must have henceforth been lucrative to Christ Church. However, Carol Zaleski stated that ultimately:

> 'The legend of the Purgatory rode on the wave of enthusiasm for St Patrick which followed the "discovery" of his relics and their solemn translation to Down… accounts of this extraordinary pilgrimage site appear as homage to Patrick in influential thirteenth- and fourteenth-century works…'[675]

Jocelin's account of Patrick's expulsion of snakes is also relevant:

> 'And the most holy Patrick applied all his diligence unto the extirpation of this threefold plague… Therefore he… bore on his shoulder the staff of Jesus, and aided of the angelic aid, he by its comminatory elevation gathered together from all parts of the island all the poisonous creatures into one place; then compelled he them all unto a very high promontory, which then was called Cruachan-ailge, but now Cruachan-Phadruig; and by the power of his word he drove the whole pestilent swarm from the precipice of the mountain headlong into the ocean… [Patrick] turned his face toward Mannia… he freed all these likewise from the plague of venomous reptiles. But other islands, which had not believed at his preaching, are still cursed…'[676]

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[675] Carol Zaleski, 'St Patrick's Purgatory: pilgrimage motifs in a medieval otherworld vision', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 46:4, (1985), pp. 467-85 at p. 471.

[676] Jocelin, *Vita*, CLXX: '*Sanctissimus Patricius pestilentiæ triplici eliminandæ summam operam & diligentiam adhibuit, & tum salutari doctrina tum feruentissimæ orationis obtentu, [omnia venenata pellit in mare] Hiberniam huius grassantis veneni exsortem exhibuit: ipse namque Pastor præstantissimus manu Domini Iesu baculum baiulauit, eiusque eleuatione comminatoria omnia venenata animantia, Angelico suffultus suffragio, ex vniuersis Hiberniæ partibus in vnum congregauit: deinde omnia vsque ad editissimū insulæ promontorium in fugam compulit, (quod scilicet Cruachan-aigle dicebatur tunc nunc vero Cruach-phadraig dicitur) ibiq; totam turbam pestiferam de prærupta mōtis crepidine in virtute præcepti præcipiti lapsu Oceano absorbendā depulit. O miraculum magnificum a mundi exordio inexpertum, nunc tribubus, populis & linguis compertum, cunctis fere nationibus notorium, specialiter Hiberniæ incolis pernecessarium! Huic tam miraculoso, tamque perutili spectaculo numerosus populus intererat, quorum pars plurima ad signa videnda, quædam ad verba vitæ percipienda vndique confluxerat. [itemq; ab insulis a se conuersis.] Conuertit deinde faciem suam versus Manniam & ceteras insulas, quas fide Christi & Sacramentis imbuit & benedixit; ac precum suarum obtentu reptilium venenatorum omnes illas tandem expertes fecit & reddidit: aliæ vero insulæ, quæ ad eius prædicationem non crediderant, adhuc virulenta animalia procreant. Maleficorum quoque innumerabiles ad fidem Christianam conuertit; plures etiam obstinatos in peruersitate & incorrigibiles, sicut iam diximus, terribiliter de terra deleuit. Ab hominibus nihilominus, quos in Hibernia Christi Sacramentis initiatos Deo viuo & vero subiugauit, dæmonum visiones & solitas læsiones arceri atque auferri, a Domino poposcit & impetrauit.*'

Not only does Patrick expel all snakes from Ireland, but he also performs this miracle in Man, which is an obvious reference to the connections between de Courcy and his wife Affreca's family. This story may have also served to draw attention away from Croagh Patrick as the original place of Patrick's Purgatory by imposing the legend that Patrick destroyed Ireland's snakes in that place.[677]

Whether or not Jocelin knew of Sawtry's tale, or vice-versa, it is nonetheless certain given the current political climate that two of his patrons, Malachy and de Courcy, desired a fresh revival of Patrick's cult at Down; Glastonbury's persistent interest in appropriating Patrick's cult must also have factored in this, albeit to a lesser extent. Indeed, Jocelin's *Vita* primarily concerned itself with projecting Down as the new Patrician cult-centre, capitalising on the very recent *inventio* of 1185.[678] Likewise, Jocelin's narratives concerning Patrick's prophesying of Dublin's greatness and his founding of that city,[679] but particularly his conversion of it, undoubtedly

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[677] Ibid. CLXXXII, where Jocelin confused the Purgatory with Croagh Patrick, since the first known genesis of this tradition is in *Collectanea*, 38; Croagh Patrick could have been known as 'Patrick's Purgatory' before the tradition attached itself to Lough Derg in the later twelfth century (Birkett, *Lives*, p. 7 n. 34).

[678] Jocelin, *Vita*, CXCVI, where for the first time details of the physical structure of Patrick's grave 'covered by a stone, five cubits in the earth' is given: *'Ingressi interim Vltani vrbem Dunensem, Missarum solennijs celebratis, veneranrandum corpus veneratione debita in loco luce præostenso sepelierunt; & thesaurū desiderabilem & lapidem pretiosum multum, [& sepelitur Duni.] sub lapide, quinque cubitorum profunditate, in corde terræ, ne forte furtim tolleretur, posuerunt'*.; Bartlett, 'Cults', p. 76; Birkett, *Lives*, pp. 148-50; the 1185 *translatio* is described by Gerald of Wales in *Topographia*, 97 and in *Expugnatio*, 35, pp. 233-5.

[679] Jocelin, *Vita*, LXIX: *'Discedens Patricius de Midiæ finibus, versus Lageniam euangelizandi gratia dirigebat gressus: [Prædicta Dubliniæ futura magnitudine] cumque iter agens deuenisset trans flumen, Finglas nomine, ad quemdam collem, qui a pago Athcliath, qui modo dicitur Dublinia, vno ferme milliari distat, considerans locum & circumiacentia eius, & benedicens, in hanc fertur prophetando prorupisse vocem: Pagus iste nunc exiguus, eximius erit, diuitijs & dignitate dilatabitur, nec crescere cessabit, donec in regni solium sublimetur. Quod profecto verbum, quā fuerit veritatis assertiuum, probat præsentis temporis indicium manifestum. Post paullulum præfatam intrauit villam, eiusque habitatores, auditis signis, quæ fecerat Dominus in manu illius, cum gaudio processerunt ei obuiam. [ibidē mortuum viuificat,] Domini vero loci illius filius vnicus laborabat in extremis, ita vt iam expirasse diceretur a multis, Sanctus autem rogatu patris & ceterorum accurrentium, ad ægroti lectum accessit, genua in terram fixit, preces fudit, seminecem benedixit, ereptumque de faucibus mortis mox in oculis omnium sanum exhibuit. Homines autem videntes hoc signum in auctorem vitæ crediderunt, & in eius nomine a sancto Pontifice baptizati sunt. [& aquæ dulcis penuria laborantibus incolis] S. Patricius in domo cuiusdam matrisfamilias manentis in prænominato pago hospitabatur, quæ in eius præsentia de dulcis aquæ penuria multum conquerebatur: flumen namque secus villam præterfluens, ex accessu rheumatis maris, penitus amaricabatur; nec ante recessum refluuij aqua dulcis, nisi de longe hausta, sibi afferebatur. Sanctus vero Patricius, qui iugiter ad Deum fontem viuum sitiuit, compassus hospitæ suæ querimoniæ, necnon & labori multitudinis in Christo recenter renatæ, quin potius vt ad fontem vitæ ardentius anhelarent, ipsius virtutem declarare congruum duxit. In crastinum coram multis astantibus ad quemdam locum aptum accedens, terram cuspide baculi Domini Iesu, [fontem baculo elicit:] prece præmissa, percussit, & in nomine Domini de illa fontem optimum produxit. Eodem pene modo signum iterauit Dominus per baculum in manu Patricij sui præconis, quo quondam per virgam operari dignatus est in manu Moysi legislatoris, petram percutientis. Ibi petra bis percussa largissimas aquas emanauit; hic terra transfixa fontem perspicuum effudit. Est itaque fons ille Dublinij scaturigine lætus, profluxu*

reflect Tomaltach's interest in expressing the general anxiety felt at Armagh in the aftermath of the *Bachall Ísu's* departure. For example, after Patrick raises many pagans from their graves:

> '[The pagans] were baptized at the fountain of Patrick, at the southern side of the city, which the saint, striking the earth with the staff of Jesus, had caused to arise, to increaset he faith of the believers… and there, even to this day, is honour and reverence paid Saint Patrick and his successors, the primates of Armagh. And from that time King Alhunus and all the citizens of Dublin vowed themselves and all their posterity to the service of Saint Patrick and the primates of Armagh… if their deeds agreed with their words, then they might be unconquered and fortunate, but weak and unhappy if they ever falsified their vows. Which was plainly proved when this people, becoming proud and regardless of the blessing of the saint, neglected to pay the appointed tribute.'[680]

This narrative reflects Armagh's anxiety over the power that the see of Dublin had attained by this time, evident in Jocelin's portrayal of Dublin in a subordinate role to Armagh via its demand of tribute; whether any tribute was paid in actuality is unknown.[681] Ultimately, however, the subordination of Dublin to Armagh also served Malachy and de Courcy since it was in their political interests not to allow Dublin to appropriate Patrick's cult absolutely: Dublin had *Bachall Ísu* but Down claimed Patrick's corporeal relics. As a gesture of the friendship / alliance between Down and Dublin, and between de Courcy and his Norman allies there, it could well be that in the aftermath of the *inventio* and subsequent *translatio* into Down Cathedral that some of Patrick's relics were given to Dublin, as claimed in the *Martyrology of Christ Church*. However, it is not known when exactly Patrick's relics were claimed or their exact type, but it is significant they appear alongside Brigit's relics in the list, even if Columba's are notably absent from it.[682]

Ultimately, Armagh's permanent loss of the *Bachall Ísu* as its premier Patrician insigne finally symbolised the demise of its ecclesiastical supremacy in

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peramplus, gustu sapidus, qui, vt dicunt multis infirmitatibus medetur & vsque in præsens S. Patricij fons recte vocatur'

[680] Ibid. LXX and LXXI (consult the footnote directly above).

[681] Birkett observes that all Patrick's requests, which were a major tradition in earlier texts relied on by Jocelin were omitted by him (*Lives*, pp. 159-60).

[682] *The Martyrology of Christ Church* in *The Book of Obits and Martyrology of the Cathedral Church of the Holy Trinity, commonly known as Christ Church, Dublin*, (ed.) John C. Crosthwaite (intro.) James H. Todd, (Dublin, 1844), p. xxiii; it is stated that: 'The only other Irish relics in the Christ Church Catalogue are those of St Brandon; some bones of Patrick and some of Brigit and "*plures relique de sancto Laurencio archiepiscopo*".'

Ireland, and certainly from Tomaltach's death in 1201 it is possible that the *Book of Armagh* superseded this relic, although no firm evidence exists. Furthermore, although Armagh would never lose its associations with Patrick, 'the place he loved more than any other',[683] by the later twelfth century Patrick's cult was certainly cut loose from Armagh's centralised authority. Armagh's drive to project itself as Patrick's cult-centre worked against it in the long term. From the late twelfth century the *Tractatus* mustered increasingly global success, and churches in Ireland and beyond undoubtedly benefited by dedications to Patrick, and/or though possession of a Patrician relic and/or a Life of the saint. Certainly, in the later medieval period Christ Church benefited immensely from pilgrims flocking to see *Bachall Ísu*.[684]

<u>Miracles and other Functions of *Bachall Ísu*</u>

But what can this 'biography' *Bachall Ísu* tell us of the relic's various uses and functions in wider society? Generally speaking the sheer number of surviving croziers testifies to their popularity in the early insular Celtic-speaking regions by the late twelfth century. Bartlett states that:

> '[T]here were other embodiments of the miraculous too. In Ireland, Scotland, and Wales cult objects tended to be quasi-totemic, highly wrought artefacts which served as channels of supernatural power to the community.'[685]

Gerald of Wales wrote about the miracles of staffs and bells, and although bell-relics are the focus of the next chapter his description gives considerable insight to many of the functions of such relics in wider Irish, and indeed in Welsh, society:

> 'I should not omit to mention also that the people and clergy of both Wales and Ireland have a great reverence for bells that can be carried about, and staffs belonging to the saints, and made of gold and silver, or bronze, and curved at their upper ends. So much so that they fear to swear or perjure themselves in making oaths on these, much more than they do on swearing on the Gospels. For through some hidden power, as it were divinely given to these, and vindictiveness, in which the saints of this country seem to be very interested, those who

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[683] Armagh was also where Patrick wished to die (see Muirchú, *Vita*, 4, Book II).

[684] C. Lennon, 'The *Book of Obits* of Christ Church Cathedral', R. Gillespie and R. Refaussé (eds.), *The Medieval Manuscripts of Christ Church Cathedral*, (Dublin, 2006), pp. 163-83 at p. 165.

[685] Robert Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales 1146-1223*, (Oxford, 1982), p. 118 and n. 58-61.

> show disrespect for these objects are usually chastised, and those that
>
> have transgressed are severely punished.'[686]

In Gerald's world a saint's bell or staff was 'a physical object which encapsulated both the past event and the present power'.[687] The miracles attributed to *Bachall Ísu* are indeed numerous and varied in the documentary sources. As our Lives of Patrick progress chronologically, it is clear that miracles performed by *Bachall Ísu* increase in number. However, the documentation of croziers performing miraculous feats is, at far as I know, rare in saints' Lives written in England or on the continent compared to those written in Ireland for Irish saints.[688]

We already know how *Bachall Ísu* came into Patrick's possession in the Lives, but there are many more occasions when the relic appears in other contexts in these and other sources. After the first known narrative account of Patrick's acquisition of *Bachall Ísu* in *Quarta*, we can observe Patrick using the relic to turn sand into stone:

> 'Patrick made a circle around the grains of sand with the staff of
>
> Jesus which he was holding in his hand and turned one of them into
>
> stone… the stone followed Patrick and, adorned with gold and silver,
>
> it is held with great honour in a certain small city up until today.'[689]

This stone could well have been used as an altar when it was enshrined, since there are similar stories of stone altars following Patrick (see chapter four), but regardless this miracle was proof enough in the presence of two fighting men to then convert to Christianity. In another anecdote *Bachall Ísu* was raised by Patrick in his right hand to threaten to kill a demon in a stone idol, but the demon feared Patrick, and thus the saint then 'turned the stone away to the south and the mark of the staff remains on the stone to the north side'.[690] After *Quarta*, however, *Bachall Ísu* does not appear as frequently in the Livesas we might expect. In the *Tripartite Life* the miracle of the mark on the stone idol is elaborated from *Quarta's* version, and there is also the first

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[686] Gerald of Wales, *Topographia*, 108.

[687] Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, p. 119.

[688] I cannot discuss all examples of croziers performing miracles as there are too many, but see Bray's *List of Motifs*, esp. under the sub-heading 'Marvels', where examples range from a saints' staff revealing treasure in *Life of Brendan*, to St Abban travelling out to sea on his staff, to stories of a staff producing a fountain in various other Lives (p. 127).

[689] *Quarta*, 30: '*Audiens haec beatus Patricius baculo Iesu, quem manu tenebat, harenas in modum circuli circumdans in unum transforauit lapidem. Videntes autem homines miraculum dantes gloriam Deo pacificati sunt. Lapis autem secutus est sanctum Patricium, qui auro et argento ornatus in quadam ciuitacula cum diem habetur honore*'; the 'city' referred to here is most likely a monastery.

[690] Ibid. 53: '*Demon autem qui in idolo fuerat timens sanctum Patricium lapidem in latus dextrum uerit et in latere sinistro uestigium baculi adhuc manet, et tamen de manu sancti baculus non recessit. Caetera autem duodecim simulacra terra obsorbuit usque ad capita, quae tantum uidenter in miraculi memoriam.*'

known version of the famous story in which Patrick pierces King Oengus of Cashel's foot with 'Patrick's Staff' and another involving Patrick's blessing the graves of the pagan-dead with his staff.[691] In Jocelin's *Vita* we have already mentioned the instance whereby Patrick uses *Bachall Ísu* in one story to baptise thousands in Dublin, but although all of the abovementioned stories featuring this relic reappear in this work, it is in this *Vita* where we see *Bachall Ísu* most.[692]

It is fair to conclude that in the Lives miracles attributed to *Bachall Ísu* are predominantly designed to halt or convert paganism in some way or another, whilst on many an occasion they combine to compare Patrick to Moses, often with additional political undertones, which is clearest in Jocelin's narratives. However, in *Quarta* and in subsequent Lives it is discernible that Patrick undertakes his journeys with *Bachall Ísu* in tow: just because the relic is not mentioned in every anecdote does not mean it was necessarily absent. In fact, the spread of the relic's appearances in the Lives indicate that *Bachall Ísu* did not just 'fly' from one place to another whenever the author featured it – the staff was a steadfast companion of Patrick's.

In other sources, however, we can observe that *Bachall Ísu* has many other functions which have much in common with other Irish and non-Irish croziers. From Gerald of Wales we gauge that bells and staffs are often perceived to be 'twin insignia', which is most obvious in the iconography of stone sculpture in particular, where staffs and bells are often locked into primarily expressing pilgrimage; after all, a 'staff was not just the symbol of a saint, it was also the sign of the pilgrim'.[693] This facet is therefore best discussed in my next chapter after we are better acquainted with bells and bell-relics more generally.

One of the more common functions of a saint's crozier was to make peace between two or more warring parties or to collect tribute and accompany armies into battle. In 1079.4 (*Annals of Tigernach*) Maelsechlainn accompanied the *coarb* of Armagh and *Bachall Ísu*, which was carried by its keeper, to offer a submission to the Munster king Toirdhealbhach Ua Briain whilst marching to Dublin. At *Annals of Ulster* entry 1113.8 we learn that (see full enrty in Appendix B):

> 'An army *was* brought… both laity and clergy, to Grenóc.
> Domnall… with the nobles of the north of Ireland went to Cluain

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[691] *Tripartite Life*, p. 90, p. 197 and p. 237 respectively; there are a few appearances of *Bachall Ísu* in *Tertia*, such as the piercing of Oengus' foot (60) and another story in which Patrick raises a pagan from his grave to baptise him in (67).

[692] Jocelin, *Vita*, XXXI (the druids' prophecy of Patrick coming to Ireland); LVI (the demonic idol); LXXIV (piercing the king of Cashel's foot); LXXXI (raising a giant pagan from his grave); LXXXII (raising a pagan from his grave).

[693] Harbison, *Pilgrimage*, p. 217.

> Caín of the Fir Rois… until Cellach… with the Staff of Jesus, made a
>
> year's peace between them.'

As suggested, there are other instances when clergy embarked on diplomacy missions to other churches, just as Cellach and Malachy did in the 1120s, and there is no reason to doubt that *Bachall Ísu* accompanied them and others on similar missions. No doubt part of the duties of a *coarb* whilst on such a mission was to collect tribute, which also may have been part of taking relics on circuit more generally. As Lucas points out there are no less than fifteen entries in *Annals of Ulster* which pertain to Armagh's abbots going on circuit, and that it 'seems improbable that the custom of taking relics and reliquaries on circuit was laid aside on these occasions.' [694] Moreover, Ó Floinn surmises that: 'it appears that the circuit of relics may have followed natural disasters such as plagues or bad weather', and in these instances it is understandable why relics might alleviate a potentially bad or upsetting situation.[695]

As stated, croziers were taken into battle, often along with other relics, such as in the Ulstermen's battle against de Courcy in 1177. At entry 1087 in *Chronica Scottorum* we learn of St Ciarán's crozier being used to swing the fortunes of battle as follows:

> 'The battle of Conacla by Ruaidrí ua Conchobuir and Cormac ua
>
> Cillín, chief vice-abbot of Síl Muiredaigh, with the staff of Ciarán in
>
> his hand before the battle when it was being fought between the
>
> Connachta and the Conmaicne, and the Conmaicne were defeated…
>
> Ruaidrí ua Conchobuir was victor.'

Joseph Anderson wrote there is a belief, though it is questionable, that St Fillan's crozier was taken to Bannockburn to bring victory to the Scots, but cautioned that 'all contemporary or near contemporary records are silent on the subject.'[696] One Scottish crozier known to have been taken into battle is the *Cathbhuaidh*, meaning 'battle victory', which was kept at Dunkeld in Perthshire.[697] Apparently the crozier was taken into battle by the army of Foitriu against the Vikings in 918, and although Bourke states that 'no staff attributed to Columba has survived outside of Ireland', the same 'talismanic was used to such Columban insignia as the *Breccbennach* in Scotland and the *Cathach* in Ireland.'[698]

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[694] For these entries see Lucas, 'Relics and reliquaries', p. 17; also seechapter one (pp. 86-93).

[695] Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines*, p. 11.

[696] Joseph Anderson, *Scotland in Early Christian Times, the Rhind Lectures in Archaeology – 1879*, (Edinburgh, 1881), p. 239.

[697] Bourke, '*Insignia Columbae* I', p. 173.

[698] Ibid. pp. 173 and 174 respectively; see n. 16 p. 173 where Bourke states from Ó Floinn's research that 'the term *cathbuadach* is used of a musical pipe associated with St Brigit and described as her episcopal staff. Bourke pointed out that only 'one crozier alone with an

Swearing oaths on croziers was also commonplace and known to Gerald of Wales, as quoted near the beginning of this section. Lucas states that:

> 'Virtually all records to swearing which occur in the ancient documents in what purport to be Christian contexts involve relics or reliquaries. The hagiographers depict the saints as accepting as a matter of course that their relics will be used for swearing upon.'[699]

It is also clear the 'majority of the recorded instances of swearing by relics relate to the cementing of treaties', as evident in one *Annals of Ulster* at 1015.7 (see Appendix B for the full entry) and at 1275.9, which also suggests that some form of compact was broken and shows that blood was sometimes integral to swearing on relics:

> 'Brian the Red, son of Conchubhar Ua Briain, king of Thomond, was taken prisoner by the son of the Earl of Clare… after putting their blood in one vessel and making gossip and after pledging relics and bells to each other. And he was drawn between steeds after his capture.'

Swearing oaths on relics at a more local level was also likely, although for obvious reasons to do with the nature of entries in annals, this is not terribly evident compared to the use of relics on these and other special occasions. These last two entries in particular also highlight that profanation of a saint's crozier could have serious, even deadly, consequences.

Croziers also had the ability to cure or to heal,[700] although examples are rare, with belts and bells the most common agents for these types of miracles; none involve *Bachall Ísu* at any point in our Lives or in other sources. Gerald of Wales' *Itinerarium Kambriae* does mention, however, that St Curig's Staff was renowned for curing tumors, and that St Tathwy's Staff was could cure all manner of diseases.[701] Croziers also had the ability to curse, and just as the case with profanation, such curses wielded through croziers had serious, even deadly, consequences. In the Latin Life of St Samthann she sent her prioress Nathea with workmen to search for pine trees, but they could not find any and thus Nathea told Samthann to instead fell willows which would become pines; after this the local lord objected and appearing in his dream the next night Samthann struck him with her *bachall* and said that he

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ascription to Columba has come down to us, that associated with Durrow, Co. Offaly, founded by the saint in the 580s and his principal Irish church' (p. 179).

[699] Lucas, 'Relics and reliquaries', p. 21.

[700] Ibid. pp. 29-31; by far the most common relic used for this purpose are relic-belts, of which none are ascribed to Patrick that I know of.

[701] Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, p. 108, and Julia M. H. Smith, 'Oral and written: saints, miracles and relics in Brittany, c. 850-1250', *Speculum*, Vol. 65 No. 2, (1990), pp. 309-343 at p. 341 and n. 138 respectively.

should repent or face death.[702] If maledictions to ill-doers or profaners were not delivered by the saint directly, then certainly we can observe secular intervention in such wrongful acts against relics: at *Annals of Ulster* entry 1013.1 'Mael Sechnaill… made a raid on Conaille in revenge for the profanation of Patrick's *Finnfaídech* and the breaking of his staff'.

Conclusions

It is clear *Bachall Ísu* held immense status in Ireland throughout our period, not only because it became Armagh's premier Patrician relic from around the mid eleventh century, but also because of the diversity of miracles and functions it performed and for the unique fact it was claimed to be a relic of Christ bequeathed to Patrick. The lack of interest in *Bachall Ísu* from Glastonbury also affirms it was not interested in Armagh's ecclesiastical power in Ireland, just in appropriating Patrick via claiming his grave and corporeal relics to add to its own political agenda in England. As we shall discover, the miracles and functions performed by corporeal relics and croziers are not so far removed from the capabilities of other associative relics in Ireland and elsewhere; and we shall continue this discovery with bell-relics in chapter three.

The *Bachall Ísu* itself was burned in Dublin during a public display in 1538 presided by the Protestant archbishop George Browne, which occurred during the period of 'state-sponsored iconoclasm'.[703] However, Raymond Gillespie presents evidence contrary to this common perception, and reckons that the *Bachall Ísu* was passed into lay hands, since the Dublin apothecary reported in 1561 that 'men were going about the countryside "with the *bachal* of Jesus as they call it" and using it to assist women in labour.'[704] During a period of increasingly tighter clerical control on the use of relics in general, in the 1686 'statutes of Meath' stated that no one should be observed carrying Patrick's 'Staff'.[705] Whether *Bachall Ísu* was ever physically destroyed in Dublin remains a mystery, although to wonder if it was appears unimportant as the relic's glorious medieval tradition has not since been matched.

In the next chapter the various Patrician bell-relics are the focus of the discussion, in particular *Cloc ind Édachta* ('Bell of the Testament'), mainly to investigate whether this bell-relic was more ancient or deemed higher in status than other Patrician bell-relics. Many of the bells ascribed to Patrick in the Livesand other

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[702] *Vita Samthanne*, ed. Charles Plummer, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, *Volume II*, (Oxford, 2010), pp. 253-62 at pp. 257-8; this story also appears in Lucas, 'Relics and reliquaries', p. 33.
[703] Lennon, '*Book of Obits*', p. 165.
[704] Raymond Gillespie, *Devoted People, Belief and Religion in Early Modern Ireland*, (Manchester, 1997), p. 161.
[705] Ibid.

sources have not survived to this day; as shall also become clearer, bells and croziers were often paired as ecclesiastical insignia and are also found together as representative of pilgrimage. Bells also served a number of functions and a variety of miracles are attributed to them, many of which exist in the Lives of Patrick. The next chapter places a discussion of Patrician bell-relics into its broader contexts, which also highlightes why such relics, along with croziers, were so venerated in Ireland in our period.

Chapter 3

Cloc ind Édachta ('Bell of the Testament') and other Bells in the Lives:
Traditions, Functions, Miracles and Contexts

<u>Introduction</u>

Staffs and bells[706] form the most numerous type of relics among the associative variety in medieval Ireland,[707] and bells ascribed to Patrick appear frequently in our various Lives. Generally speaking, many bells and staffs are 'represented in insular sources as the twin insignia of early ecclesiastics of rank',[708] which is an aspect discussed in more depth later on. Perhaps Ireland's most famous bell-relic is Patrick's *Cloc ind Édachta*, or 'Bell of the Testament / Will', which reputedly belonged to the saint himself. The textual and contextual tradition of *Cloc ind Édachta* facilitates a broader discussion on the significance of bells in early Ireland. This is not because *Cloc ind Édachta* is the most important Patrician bell relic, as various modern scholars would have us believe, but it is precisely the recognition that it is not which enables us to present a more even-handed discussion of other, perhaps more, important Patrician bell-relics and their traditions and functions. That bells were perceived as relics is a phenomenon Ireland shares with other Celtic-speaking

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[706] Not a great deal has been written about medieval bells from a historical angle and the majority of studies focus on archaeological / art-historical perspectives. The exception among the Patrician bells is *Cloc ind Édachta*, for which there are studies, albeit dated, that combine art historical and historical approaches. One author stands out for his contribution to our understanding of medieval hand-bells of the Celtic regions, particularly in Ireland and Scotland, and that is Cormac Bourke; many of Bourke's works are referenced below. Modern scholarship on medieval bells of the non-Celtic variety is rare; I have, however, included key works in this field in subsequent notes.

[707] Lucas, 'Relics', p. 8; there are several Irish and Latin terms which are used to define bells and / or their music. Simon Keane discusses Durandus (born in Provence, *c*.1237-1296), who described the gradual introduction of bells into ecclesiastical use: 'the *squilla* was used in the refectory, the *cymbalum* in the cloister; the *campana* necessitated the building of the 'campanile', whilst the *signum* boomed in the tower' ('Bells and their origins', *The Irish Monthly*, Vol. 42, (1914), pp. 94-7 at p. 97). Keane also stated that from the sixth-century *campana* was the favoured term for a church bell, but questions whether this noun in fact more generally indicates 'any instrument used to call people together' ('Bells', pp. 96-7). In Adomnán's *Vita* the Latin noun *cloca* (Irish *cloc, clocán, clog*; see *eDIL*) is used to signify a bell and *signum* is used in relation to its sound; when Adomnán describes Columba as telling his assistant Diarmait to 'strike the bell', the verb is *pulso* (18a, 129b, 96b and 114a); the Old Irish for *pulso* is *benaid* (*eDIL*), and in modern Irish *bain an clog* means to 'ring the bell' (Bourke, '*Insignia Columbae* II', p. 166). Bourke notes that early iron or bronze quadrangular bells were not rung by striking, despite what sources such as Adomnán suggest, as they were instead 'universally provided with clappers' ('*Insignia Columbae* II', p. 166). There are other Irish terms: *cloicthech*, or bell-house (for example the *Annals of Ulster* at entry 950 detailing the burning of the *cloicthech* at Slane); *aistirecht* for bell-ringing (*eDIL*); *béimnech* for noise / striking; *ceólán*, indicating a small hand-bell or mass-bell; *clinnid*, rings or sounds; *cluicíne*, meaning bell / warning; *doirnín*, usually referring to a handle of a bell (*eDIL*).

[708] Bourke, '*Insignia Columbae* II', p. 166.

regions, particularly in the Gaelic regions. This chapter begins with a discussion of bells more generally, in particular their origins and importance to Christianity, as well as which type of bells functioned as relics and why they were held in such high reverence in some regions but not others. This is followed by an analysis of how bells feature in the Lives of Patrick, predominantly focusing on the origin and traditions of *Cloc ind Édachta*, the miracles and functions it performed, and its broader historical contexts as documented in an array of contemporary sources.

<u>The Origins of Bells and their Veneration as Relics</u>

Transitions from Paganism

Bells are known to have been used in religious rituals by priests in Old Testament times, and are attested in Egypt and Babylon, as well as in ancient China and India.[709] Bells were intended primarily for communal use because the sounds they produce call others to attention for a variety of reasons. Simon Keane surmises:

> '[T]hough we cannot historically prove the bell was one of the many forms mirrored in the creative brain of the first metal workers, nevertheless, we claim for it an honoured niche amid the remnants of antiquity, since we find it mentioned in the oldest historical documents which we possess.'[710]

Perhaps the oldest and most obvious source of information about bells and their uses is the Old Testament, where, for example in Exodus, God prescribed that bells were to be attached to the garments of the high priest.[711] This of course provides an exegetical basis for the persistant presence of bells in hagiography. John Purser suggests that in Scotland there is also evidence for an ancient pagan use of bells in the form of 'rock gongs', which are 'naturally resonant and ring out clearly, like a bell, when struck with a hard object, usually a small stone.'[712] According to Purser rock gongs have also been discovered in Sweden and Brittany, as well as in many various countries around the world.[713] However, rock gongs were not the only form of 'bell' used in pre-Christian societies and small, portable hand-bells were also common for

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[709] Neil Christie, *On Bells and Belltowers: Origins and Evolutions in Italy and Britain, AD 700-1200*, 16th Brixworth Lecture, 1998, (Brixworth, 2004), p. 4; for examples see Keane, 'Bells', pp. 94-6.

[710] Keane, 'Bells', p. 94.

[711] Exodus: xxviii. 33; Keane, 'Bells', p. 94.

[712] John W. Purser, 'Hand-bells of the Celtic Church in Scotland', *The Gaelic Society of Inverness*, (2003), pp. 267-91 at p. 268.

[713] Ibid. p. 270; read pp. 268-9 for examples of rock gongs in use, which include the early medieval period, such as the story of St Gildas (from one of his later *Vitae*) striking a rock outside his hermitage near Castenec in Brittany to call his followers to prayer (p. 269).

all manner of functions, especially in the Mediterranean world and in Rome.[714] It makes sense that bells made the transition to the Christian world, just as with staffs, although hand-bells were not likely introduced to Ireland before Christianity.[715] As Bourke points out the use of hand-bells may have been particularly common in early Ireland because its churches were typically small in size, and hand-bells were thus required 'to punctuate the liturgy for a congregation listening outside.'[716]

Bells in the Early Christian Church

The earliest archaeological evidence for bell-towers and belfries in the West points to the fifth century, although surviving examples from this period are rare and 'for a city like Rome, the majority of early extant bells date from the thirteenth centuries and are large units.'[717] There is archaeological evidence for the existence of these large bells in the Adriatic region of Italy, where excavation has unearthed the bell towers of Sant' Apollinare in Classe and Sant' Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna, both of which date from the early sixth century.[718] We also know a bell-tower was one firm feature of the fifth century church of St Martin in Tours.[719] However, bell-towers were generally rare in Rome itself, and it is only 'after the turn of the twelfth century [that] bell towers began to pierce [its] skyline.'[720]

Christie states that by *c.* AD 800 bell-towers and belfries may have 'only become commonplace in the context of major church and monastic foundation in the wider economic upturn of the so-called Carolingian Renaissance of *c.* AD 750-825.'[721] He also suggests that in surviving texts 'the general absence of references to bell-towers is perhaps not that surprising, since these must soon have become fairly standard additions to churches and were thus unremarkable to our early sources.'[722] It appears that hand-bells were most commonly used in early religious communities and that bell-towers only came into importance around the fifth century when there was:

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[714] Christie, *On Bells*, pp. 4-5.
[715] Bourke, 'Hand-bells of the Western Church', *Irlande et Bretagne, Vignt Siécles d'Histoire*, (Rennes, 1994), pp. 77-82 at p. 77.
[716] Bourke, *Patrick*, p. 40.
[717] Christie, *On Bells*, p. 5, where he also explains that most of the earliest bells were melted down, 'perhaps replaced as the need for larger bells grew'.
[718] Bonnie Young also comments on this in 'A Medieval Bell', *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin, New Series*, Vol. 11, No. 10, (1953), pp. 293-6 at p. 294.
[719] Christie, *On Bells*, pp. 10-13.
[720] Ann Priester, 'Bell towers and building workshops in medieval Rome', *Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 52 No. 2, (June 1993), pp. 199-220 at p. 199; however, sheclaims the building of bell towers in Rome declines inthe thirteenth century (p. 217).
[721] Christie, *On Bells*, pp. 7-8.
[722] Ibid. pp. 6-7.

'[T]he need to house bells too heavy for a person to ring; and heavier bells must also relate to the need in an *urban* context to compete against a variety of noisy neighbours.'[723]

These larger bells must have also provided considerable protection, warning of potential invaders.[724]   In Ireland Purser points out that by the eleventh century 'such was the significance of hand-bells, that they gave their name to one of the unique structures of the Celtic church – the round towers, whose name in Gaelic is *cloicthech* – bell-house' (for example see the *Annals of Ulster* entry at 950.7 in Appendix C).[725] Hand-bells in lieu of the larger permanent bells 'would have been rung from the top of the tower where the small windows would allow the sound to carry a fair distance';[726] however this departs from continental bell towers which were architecturally larger and required far grander bells that were permanently fixed.[727]

Probably the first known textual evidence for bells in a firmly Christian context is in a letter composed in *c*.515 by Ferrandus, deacon of Carthage in North Africa, to Eugippius, abbot of Lucullanum near Naples, in the context of bells being used to beckon monks to observe the canonical hours.[728] Ferrandus specified that the use of a bell (*campana*) was 'a holy custom among monks.'[729] In that same century Gregory of Tours and Benedict of Nursia both document the ringing of bells in monasteries to signify the canonical hours.[730] Around AD 600 the Irish *Alphabet of Devotion* state bells to be an essential part of monastic life.[731] Christie points out that by the seventh century Isidore of Seville noted his preference for certain types of bells, suggesting the Latin noun for bell, *campana*, derives from Campania in central Italy where bells of the highest quality were produced.[732] Interestingly, Christie suggests that whilst Paulinus of Nola never mentions bells in his early fifth century

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[723] Ibid. p. 6; for example, bell-towers were generally more common in Frankish Gaul than in Italyduring this early period.

[724] Ibid. p. 33.

[725] Purser, 'Hand-bells', p. 279; he points out the term *cloicthech* was in use inthe eleventh and twelfth centuries when round towers were being built, 'although building probably [in origin] commenced in the tenth century.'

[726] Ibid. p. 280.

[727] For a brief but informative discussion on the origins of round towers in Ireland see Hughes and Hamlin, *Modern Traveller*, pp. 72-4.

[728] Bourke, *Patrick*, p. 40; Bourke, '*Insignia Columbae* II', p. 165.

[729] Bourke, 'Hand-bells of the Western Church', p. 79.

[730] Christie, *On Bells*, p. 5; Gregory of Tours, *Liber in Gloria Martyrum*, trans. with an introduction by Raymond Van Dam, *Glory of the Martyrs*, (Liverpool, 2004), 75; Benedict of Nursia, *Rule for Monasteries*, ed. Patrick Geary, *Readings in Medieval History, Volume 1: The Early Middle Ages*, (Ontario, 1989), pp. 179-213 at 43; see also Young's'A Medieval Bell', p. 293. However, in Benedict's *Rule* the Latin *signum* imay simply translate as 'signal' rather than bell, as Geary has done.

[731] *Alphabet of Devotion*, eds. Thomas O. Clancy and Gilbert Márkus, *Iona: Earliest Poetry*, (Edinburgh, 1995), p. 201.

[732] Christie, *On Bells*, p. 5.

writings there survives a tradition he 'invented' the church bell in Campania; whether this predates the sixth century is unknown.[733] Adomnán reported in *Vita Columbae* how a bell sounded on Iona to gather the monks and how on another occasion a bell was rung to observe the canonical hours.[734] That Tírechán mentions how Patrick took no less than fifty bells across the Shannon among other liturgical objects is probably exaggerated, but it indicates that bells were already an essential part of religious service in Ireland. By the eighth and ninth centuries in Ireland hand-bells might have been more in demand (thus fitting with the earliest evidence for prolific metal-working at the major monastic centres). By the eighth century 'the monastic routine revolved around the regular services; rules from the eighth and ninth century when there was an ascetic revival are particularly strict about the observance of monastic hours.'[735]

It is perhaps not surprising to discover that the appearance of bells, particularly hand-bells, increases in texts post fifth and sixth centuries, coinciding with the expansion of monasticism in the West. Bells and towers feature in some written sources (such as in Gregory of Tour's description of the bells inthe later fifth-century church of St Martin of Tours), but they are far less documented than hand-bells and mainly feature in Germany and Gaul.[736]

Hand-Bells and their Veneration as Relics

As for the material composition of early medieval bells more generally, Bourke observes that:

> 'Bells of both iron and bronze are known from contexts of the early
> first millennium in Britain, France and Germany… Those of iron are
> four-sided, those of bronze four-sided or round.'[738]

The overwhelming majority of hand-bells before the ninth and tenth centuries would have been constructed from iron. [739] In Ireland, bells which were forged of iron but dipped in bronze tend to be older, although trying to discern how much older is extremely difficult.[740]

Many early iron and bronze hand-bells were known to Ireland and are generally quadrangular in shape; those of a rounded appearance did not become

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[733] Ibid. p. 5 n. 8.
[734] Adomnán, *Vita*, 96b and 114a.
[735] Hughes and Hamlin, *Modern Traveller*, pp. 98-9.
[736] Christie, *On Bells*, p. 10; he also suggests Rome may have been reluctant to adopt such similar 'northern trends', until the ninth century when Carolingian influence increased.
[738] Bourke, *Patrick*, p. 40.
[739] Bourke, '*Insignia Columbae* II', pp. 164-5.
[740] Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines*, p. 34.

fashionable in Ireland until the Norman Conquest from 1169.[741] Joseph Anderson states it is the quadrangular shape and character of these bells that 'were peculiar to… the early Celtic Church.'[742] These quadrangular bells are also found to exist in Scotland, nineteen of which have been catalogued,[743] and all of them can 'be reasonably attributed to the influence of the Irish ecclesiastical tradition';[744] furthermore, Ireland provides the 'parent group' for the seven surviving Welsh bells.[745] There are also six such bells surviving in Brittany, and Bourke observes that they are 'very diverse and therefore suggest the absence of an indigenous manufacturing tradition…'[746]

Bourke argues that the 'four-sided bells of iron or bronze are emblematic of the early Irish Church,' whilst cautioning that 'although we can recognise an insular preference for the hand-bell the question of local priority is left open'.[747] The influence of Irish bells spread beyond the Celtic regions of the British Isles and Brittany, and two examples exist in France and another in Switzerland, and Anderson asserts that their 'principal group is Celtic'.[748] Bourke points out one example in the shape of a 'bronze-coated iron bell attributed to St Magnus from Ramsach, Upper Bavaria [which] can alone be cited as a probable insular export to the continent.'[749]

Bourke categorises iron bells as Class 1, alongside iron bells coated in bronze; Class 2 bells are made purely from bronze.[750] Ó Floinn states that hand-bells cast from bronze date to the early ninth century and 'although many of these were regarded as relics, there is no definite evidence that they were enshrined.'[753] In fact, Bourke observes that physically speaking the 'iron bells of Ireland, Scotland and Wales form a homogeneous group and are not readily distinguishable, while those of

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[741] Raghnall Ó Floinn, 'Two ancient bronze bells from Rath Blathmach, Co. Clare', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, Vol. 32, (1990), pp. 19-31 at p. 26.

[742] Anderson, *Scotland*, p. 169; Purser in 'Hand-bells', p. 281.

[743] Cormac Bourke, 'The hand-bells of the early Scottish Church', *Proceedings of the Society of the Antiquaries of Scotland*, Vol. 113, (1983), pp. 464-8 at p. 465; Bourke also points out that 'nowhere in Scotland is the survival of three ancient hand-bells attested in such close proximity as in Glen Lyon, Perthshire' ('*Insignia Columbae* II', p. 162).

[744] Bourke, 'Hand-bells', p. 464; quadrangular bells may have inherited their shape from the bells tied around the neck of cattle, as, for example, suggested in Purser, 'Hand-bells', p. 270.

[745] Anderson, *Scotland*, p. 184; for more on surviving Welsh hand-bells see J. K. Knight, 'Relics, shrines and ecclesiastical metalwork', (ed.) H. N. Savoy, *Glamorgan County History*, Vol. 2: *Early Glamorgan*, (Cardiff, 1984), p. 370.

[746] Bourke, 'Hand-bells of the Western Church', p. 80.

[747] Bourke, *Patrick*, p. 40; Bourke, 'Hand-bells', p. 465; 'Hand-bells of the Western Church', p. 77.

[748] Anderson, *Scotland*, p. 185; so does Bourke in 'Hand-bells of the Western Church', p. 77.

[749] Ibid.

[750] Cormac Bourke, 'Early Irish hand-bells', *Journal of the Royal Society of the Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 110, (1980), pp. 52-66 at p. 52.

[753] Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines*, p. 34.

bronze have a tendency to regional variation.'[754] But whilst the iron hand-bells of Scotland come in different sizes to their Irish or Welsh counterparts, Scottish bronze hand-bells generally fall within the same size range as those of Irish provenance.[755] Bronze bells were probably used as altar bells and for signalling the canonical hours in enclosed communities. Moreover, it is significant that the dating of these earliest known bells more or less coincides with the first known textual evidence for the use of bells in the early insular Church, which, as mentioned above, appear in such texts as the seventh century *Alphabet of Devotion* and in Adomnán's *Vita Columbae*.

In addition Bourke points out that the metal with which bells were made in Ireland and Scotland can be connected to particular monastic churches, arguing that the first iron bells were certainly forged at Iona and those of bronze at Armagh for distribution to her smaller satellite churches.[756] Indeed, if one observes Bourke's distribution map of bells in Ireland, it is clear that Class 1 bells have the widest spread and are concentrated in the midlands and south midlands, whilst Class 2 bells are more localised and are generally clustered in Cos. Meath, Monaghan and Tyrone.[757] Bourke also reckons that iron bells first came to Scotland via the Columban church on Iona; for example, via the interest of its monks in the northern islands around and including Orkney where there survive examples of early iron bells.[758] Scottish bronze bells are 'more uniform than their Irish counterparts and less comparable in their morphology with those of iron. They may form a tenth-century cluster.'[759] However, it is my view that such geographical mapping of the distribution of surviving bells in both Ireland and Scotland does not account for those bells which have not survived either archaeologically or textually – there may have been many more that are now lost to us, at least some of which might have been of an earlier date and may speak of a less uniform variation in physical character.

In Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Brittany the model of many medieval bells found must have been brought over from the continent by the earliest Christian evangelists from the fourth century. To use Fr. Thurston's words:

> '[E]arly Irish missionaries in Germany adopted the same means of
> gathering auditors around them… the 'clocca' was deemed almost
> the first essential of the preacher's outfit, and that some kind of bell

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[754] Bourke, 'Hand-bells', p. 464.

[755] Ibid.

[756] Ibid. p. 466.

[757] Bourke, 'Early Irish hand-bells', p. 61; he also observes that 'south Munster, west Connacht and south Leinster were largely blank.'

[758] Bourke, 'Hand-bells', p. 466.

[759] Bourke, '*Insignia Columbae* II', p. 164 n. 2.

seemed next in importance to the altar and the font in every

permanent church.'[760]

Many handbells in Ireland were reputed to have belonged to its earliest saints, just as in Scotland, Wales and Brittany. In these regions bells were revered for their various miraculous capabilities, for calling the faithful to prayer, for the burial of the dead, for protection, and even for healing or curing the sick.[761] Those daring to profane or steal a bell could find themselves cursed in some way or even in mortal danger[762]. Many surviving Irish bells were also discovered in churchyards or in graves, and thus Ó Floinn concludes that bells 'were of sufficient importance to be buried with prominent churchmen.'[763] Indeed, 'croziers and bells must have been set out in honour of the saints and for the delectation of pilgrims; otherwise investment in their making or enshrinement could scarcely have been repaid.'[764] It is from this that the transition from manufactured bell to bell-relic was accomplished in the Celtic-speaking regions of the British Isles. Enshrinement of bell-relics in Ireland is known to have mainly occurred in the eleventh and twelfth centuries and we will discover there is a noticeably 'inflated role of the bell in hagiography' in this period also.[765]

Cloc ind Édachta and other Patrician Bells: the Lives and their Contexts

Dating and Describing Cloc ind Édachta

There are several medieval bells associated with Patrick, but *Cloc ind Édachta* is perhaps the most famous, and until recently was believed by some to have been in the personal possession of the saint himself.[766] Of *Cloc ind Édachta* and the many other bells attributed to Patrick, Bourke warns us that:

> 'Despite rich documentation, all of it later than [Patrick's] lifetime,
> no bell, lost or extant, can confidently be attributed to Patrick.
> Coming from the edge of the Roman Empire, he may never have
> possessed one.   But Palladius, who was of Gaulish if not
> Mediterrenean background, is likely to have been so equipped.'[767]

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[760] Keane, 'Bells', p. 98.
[761] Purser, 'Hand-bells', p. 274.
[762] Ibid.
[763] Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines*, p. 34.
[764] Bourke, 'What the pilgrim saw', p. 7.
[765] Bourke, *Patrick*, p. 40.
[766] To quote John M. Batchelor, 'Reeves must claim the honour of helping to prove beyond all doubt the authenticity of the Bell of the Will… actually used by the saint' ('Two ecclesiastical bells: St Patrick's (and its shrine) and the Bell of Armagh', *Dúiche Néill*, Vol. 7, (1992), pp. 9-23 at p. 9); this has been disproved in Bourke's various works.
[767] Bourke, *Patrick*, pp. 46-7.

However I would imagine that Patrick was equipped with a bell and other liturgical regalia, for we cannot comfortably accept that Patrick and other early Romano-British clergy were not 'orthodox' in their practices and in bearing certain regalia that would mark them out as Christian. Perhaps, like *Bachall Ísu*, bells belonging to Patrick that once existed are now just simply lost to the archaeological record and thus we should instead learn to trust the written sources as true indications of their physical existence at some point; we should bear in mind that from all the known surviving evidence 'our picture reflects differential survival rather than original patterns of use.'[768]

This bell now referred to as *Cloc ind Édachta* itself is a quadrangular bell formed of two plates of sheet iron held together by iron rivets and covered with bronze.[769] Its height, including its handle, is seven and three quarter inches, its breadth five inches, and its width one and a half inches; it weighs three pounds and eleven ounces.[770] However, unlike other Class 1 bells, *Cloc ind Édachta* differs in that it was forged from two iron sheets, although Bourke wonders whether the smaller of the two was introduced as a subsequent repair; the handle of the bell is also different from other Class 1 bells.[771] Bearing in mind Ó Floinn's comment that iron bells covered in bronze are more difficult to date, Bourke nonetheless concludes that because of 'these ambiguities we are thrown back on the documentary record and can date the bell with confidence no earlier than the tenth or eleventh century.'

We know *Cloc ind Édachta* was elaborately enshrined between 1091 and 1105 by the Uí Néill king Domnall Ua Lochlainn and by Domnall mac Amalgado, Abbot of Armagh, whose name was the first of four engraved on it's reliquary.[772] The reliquary of *Cloc ind Édachta* is carved with interlace and encrusted with precious jewels, with what looks like a mitre-shaped part on top of its main square casket which contains the hand-bell.[773] Henry Crawford also describes the reliquary as:

> '[F]ormed of bronze plates, covered with elaborate ornamentation…
>
> The top or handle portion is of silver, decorated with boldly designed

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[768] Bourke, 'Hand-bells of the Western Church', p. 80.

[769] William Reeves, 'On the Bell of St Patrick, called the *Cloc ind Édachta*', *The Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 27, (1877-86), pp. 1-30 at p. 8.

[770] Reeves, 'On the Bell', p. 8.

[771] Bourke, *Patrick*, pp. 46-7.

[772] Crawford, 'List of Irish shrines', p. 157; Seaton F. Milligan, 'Ecclesiastical bells in Ulster', *Journal of the Royal Society of the Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 13 No. 1, (1903), pp. 46-57 at p. 51; a prayer for the abbot who commissionedthe shrine was inscribed, as on the Cross of Cong for example, although we do not know much about the shrine's craftsman (Perette E. Michelli, 'The inscriptions on pre-Norman reliquaries', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 96C No. 1, (1996), pp. 1-31 at pp. 6-11; also Bourke, *Patrick*, p. 43).

[773] Henry Norris, 'The shrine of St Patrick's Bell', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society*, Vol. 1 No. 4, (1907) at p. 28.

interlacements and enamels… Many of the panels are filled with gold filigree work, and others with stones in oval settings, some or all of the latter being additions.'[774]

The keepers of *Cloc ind Édachta* can be identified as the [O] Mulhollands (Ó Maolchalláin) from the inscription on the bell's reliquary.[775] However, Bourke notes that the Mulhollands were:

'[L]ater joined by the O Mellans as joint and alternate keepers [which] is clear from a number of sources, although the annals link the 'bell of the testament' to the O Mellans alone and are silent on the Mulhollands' keepership.'[776]

Before 1838 a bronze bell was sold by the O Mellans of Donaghmore in Co. Tyrone to George Petrie, who declared it as the 'bell of the will'. Bourke states that Petrie's bell has etched on it the name PATRICI and the date 1272, but that the inscription is:

'[I]n a style no earlier than the sixteenth century, although the bell is of ninth- or tenth-century date. A second bell 'discovered' at Donaghmore in 1849 was sold to John Bell, who described it as the 'bell of the testament' in the Belfast exhibition of 1852.'[777]

In 1847 that William Reeves proved that the inscription on the shrine of *Cloc ind Édachta* (claimed neither by Petrie or Bell), combined with evidence from an array of written sources, demonstrates that the enshrined iron bell owned by the McClean family in Belfast was actually the genuine 'bell of the testament'.[778]

Other bells attributed to Patrick have not physically survived, but include the *Findfaídech*, or 'sweet-sounding bell', and the *Bernán*, or 'gapped [bell] of St Brigit'.[779] *Finnfaídech* translates as 'a full measure or volume of the bell', quite likely for the tribute of pure silver in the abovementioned *Annals of Ulster* entry, and if so then the bell was both significant and greater in size than one may initially envisage. The *Bernán*, as we will discover, is mentioned in the *Tripartite Life*, but the first appearance of a bell attributed to Patrick in other sources is in *Annals of Ulster* at entry 947.2 when 'the Cenél Eógain gave the full measure of the

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[774] Crawford, 'List of Irish shrines', pp. 157-8.

[775] Bourke, *Patrick*, p. 43.

[776] Ibid.; the O Mellans are evidenced as keepers in *Annals of Ulster* entry 1353, with the obit of 'Soloman Ua Mellain, keeper of the Bell of the Testament'.

[777] Ibid.

[778] Reeves, 'On the Bell', pp. 1-30; Bourke, *Patrick*, pp. 43-4, where he points out that Bell's collection can be seen at the Royal Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh and the bell he claimes as *Cloc ind Édachta* 'may [in face] lie unattributed and unprovenanced' among those now housed there.

[779] Bourke, *Patrick*, p. 40.

Finnfaídech of pure silver to Patrick' (see entry in Appendix B). It is uncertain the bell was held as a relic but only that it was bequeathed to Patrick and thus to Armagh.

Essentially the importance of *Finnfaídech* accounts for its appearance in *Annals of Ulster*, in that only the more prominent artefacts, people and events tend to feature in such texts, and in particular that this bell acknowledges one powerful family's loyalty to Patrick's cult-centre. In any case, this bell cannot be dismissed as an insignificant commodity within a world which thrived through gift and exchange. The bell's use as a 'measure' suggests it has significance beyond commodity status or religious value. The *Finnfaídech* appears later in the annals,although the 1178.2 entry in which the bell is captured by de Courcy is discussed later. *Finnfaídech* makes its first appearance in the *Tripartite Life*, before its debut in the *Annals of Ulster* at entry 947, where we learn of Patrick's three smiths, 'namely Macc-Cecht, [Laebán] of Domnach Laebáin, (it is he that made the [bell called] *Finnfaídech*…'[780] The bell appears again in *Annals of Ulster* at entry 1013.1 (see Appendix B), and that it does so alongside *Bachall Ísu* is important and demonstrates the general perception of bells and croziers as 'twin insignia'. However, the appearance of *Finnfaídech* with *Bachall Ísu* indicates that it was the premier Patrician bell before *Cloc ind Édachta* in the early eleventh century, and in the later twelfth century the *Finnfaídech* ends up in de Courcy's possession, which tells us this bell retained its relic-status.

We shall discuss these other bells in more detail shortly, but it is also significant that other bells of Patrick were attested in the written sources of the ninth and tenth centuries, some years before the appearance of *Cloc ind Édachta* in the eleventh. The *Annals of Ulster* entry 553 seeks to explain the origin of *Cloc ind Édachta* (see the full entry in Appendix B):

> 'Three splendid halidoms were found in the burial-place: his goblet,
> the Angel's Gospel, and the Bell of the Testament. This is how the
> angel distributed the halidoms: the goblet to Dún, the Bell of the
> Testament to Ard Macha, and the Angel's Gospel to Colum Cille
> himself.'

Of course this entry is an eleventh-century construct 'attributed to a need for retrospective legitimacy',[781] as shall become clearer in the next section.[782] To discern

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[780] *Tripartite Life*, p. 267: '*A thri gobaind .i. Macc Cecht, [Laebán] oDomnach Laeban, ise doroine indFindfaidech, ocus Fort- 5 chern iRaith Adine.*'
[781] Bourke, '*Patrick*', pp. 40-1.
[782] Other examples include 'legends designed to account for certain customs relating to Michaelmas and Martinmas', i.e. *The Michaelmas Sheep* and *The Martinmas Pig* (Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 348-50).

more about the origin and tradition of *Cloc ind Édachta* and other bells ascribed to Patrick, we must first of all mine the evidence in his various Lives.

The Absence of Cloc ind Édachta in the Lives of Patrick

There are few appearances of bells in the Livesbefore the tenth century, none of which concern *Cloc ind Édachta*. This surprising observation is something to which we shall return shortly, but it is necessary to state that when bells do feature there appears to be differences between those used purely for liturgical purposes and those which were venerated as relics. In *Liber Angeli* there is no mention of bells in either its original mid seventh century or later sections. Muirchú's *Vita* does not feature bells either, which is perhaps not surprising given this text likely served a more specialised audience compared to Tírechán's *Collectanea*.

The entry at 553 elaborates part of the seventh century *Notes* attributed to Tírechán which credits Columba with unearthing Patrick's grave.[783] However, in Tírechán's version although Columba 'shows where Patrick's grave was', there is no mention of any other artefacts buried with him; Patrick's grave is, according to Tírechán, 'in Saul...'[784] The emphasis here is on Patrick's corporeal relics and the tradition of Saul's claim to it, and not on Armagh's claims and gifts of other associative relics. It makes sense that the *Annals of Ulster's* eleventh-century revisers may have re-vamped Tírechán's version and added the information that other relics were among the discovery of the grave, namely *Cloc ind Édachta*, at a time when it suited Armagh to make this addition of the bell-relic to join *Bachall Ísu* and the *Canóin Pádraic* as its primary insignia. After all, this entry omits mention of Saul and the emphasis shifts dramatically from Patrick's corporeal relics onto the other associative relics supposedly buried with him (the next section clarifies this).

However, Tírechan's reference to Patrick bringing 'fifty bells across the Shannon'[785] is in evidence from the seventh century at the least when bells were 'part of a complement in regular use, including also the wine strainer, the pastoral staff, the tomb-shaped reliquary and clerical vestments.'[786] We are aware that one major use for bells was to gather the faithful, but in the context of Tírechán's text as a whole,

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[783] Tírechán, *Notes*, 55.2: '*Columb Cille Spiritu Sancto instigante ostendit sepulturam Patricii, ubi est confirmat, id est in Sabul Patricii, id est aeclessia iuxta mare proxima, ubi est conductio martirum, id est ossuum Coluimb Cillae de Brittannia et conductio omnium sanctorum Hiberniae in die iudicii.*'

[784] Ibid.; see the quote above.

[785] Tírechán, *Collectanea*, II.1: '*Portauivt Patricius per Sininn secum quinquaginta clocos, quinquaginta patinos, quinquaginta calices, altaria, libros legis, aeuanguelii libros, et reliquit illos in locis nouis.*'

[786] Bourke, '*Insignia Columbae* II', p. 163.

the significance of bells here is their distribution by Patrick as gifts for various churches he reputedly founded.[787]   Patrick's gift of a bell also occurs in the *Additamenta*, where in one episode we read of Fíacc, bishop of Leinster, gaining from Patrick certain equipment: 'a bell, a reliquary, a crosier, and tablets.'[788]   Whether the bell was ever held as a relic at Fíacc's church in Sletty is unknown, but here also is an established indication that the bell was a part of the complement of materials in regular use by the clergy.   In this anecdote the noun *clocc* unfortunately tells us nothing else of this bell's physical composition or whether it was kept as a relic; it is certain, however, that *Cloc ind Édachta* was not the gift in question.   However, we must recognise that *Cloc ind Édachta* itself is also a gift, a bequest supposedly made by Patrick to Armagh, at least according to later evidence; similar to croziers, bells 'were likewise subject to the mechanisms of bequest and inheritance'.[789]

Ó Floinn suggests that *Cloc ind Édachta* 'served as a functional hand-bell before it was elevated to the status of a relic through the belief that it was used by the saint.'[790]   Perhaps this bell existed as an 'ideological' relic before its actual physical manufacture in the eleventh century.   If this was so, then one would expect *Cloc ind Édachta* to have been named in the narratives of Muirchú or Tírechán – and one might also have expected this to be the case in subsequent Patrician Lives.   In all instances there is no hint of Patrick carrying around his own personal bell in quite the same manner as he does with *Bachall Ísu*.

There is only one story featuring a bell in *Quarta*, which elaborates Tírechán's version of events when Patrick does battle with demons on Croagh Patrick for forty days and forty nights;[791] in *Quarta's* version, however, a bell belonging to Patrick appears as a new addition to this story:

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[787] See my article in progress: 'St Patrick: Gift-Giver Extraordinaire' for more on the purpose and ambitions of Patrick's generosity in the early and high Middle Ages.

[788] *Additamenta*, 13.5, p. 177: '*Is di sin didiu furráith Fíacc Find Dubthach, 7 berrsi Pátraic 7 baitzisi.   Dubbert grad n-epscoip foir, conid e escop insin citaruoirtned la Laigniu.   7 dubbert Pátraic cumtach du Fíacc, idon clocc 7 menstir 7 bachall 7 poolire.*'

[789] Bourke, 'Hand-bells of the Western Church', p. 78.

[790] Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines*, p. 33.

[791] Tírechán, *Collectanea*, 38.3: '*Et exit Patricius ad cacuminal montis super Crochan Aigli et mansit ibi quadraginta diebus et quadraginta noctibus, et graues aues fuerunt erga illum et non poterat uidere faciem caeli et terrar et maris <...> quia Hiberniae sanctis omnibus praeteritis praesentatis futuris Deus dixit: 'Ascendite, o sancti, super montem qui inminet et altior omnibus montibus qui sunt ad occidentem solid ad benedicendos Hiberniae populos', ut uideret Patricius fructum sui laboris, quia corus sanctorum omnium Hibernensium ad eum uenit ad patrem eorum uissitandum; et plantauit aeclesiam in campo Humail.*'; Harbison points out that 'Tírechán referred to [Croagh Patrick] as Mons Egli, an Hiberno-Latinisation of 'Aigle'.   It would seem, therefore, that the present name associating this mountain with Patrick post-dates the seventh century, and here is yet another example of the Church suppressing an older name – in this case one that was pre Christian in order to promulgate the

> '[C]limbing to the summit which is called Cruachanus (Croagh
> Patrick), [Patrick] fasted for forty days and forty nights. Then the
> most wretched demons… came to the blessed Patrick in the form of
> the blackest birds… having faith in God's mercy [Patrick] fought
> alone against the crowd of demons, and finally angered threw his bell
> at them, which falling down was broken in pieces… an angel of the
> Lord put the bell back together… This bell is honoured in Ireland to
> this day.'[792]

Therefore, this bell was evidently venerated as a relic by the later eighth or early ninth century. Of course, that the bell may have been one of Patrick's personal possessions and used to gather pilgrims on Croagh Patrick explains one of its functions as well as its intrinsic value as a relic. Moreover, the author seems to ascribe antiquity to this bell relic by placing it in the context of a much older tradition, which principally indicates that venerating bells as relics was certainly underway in Ireland by the early ninth century. Moreover, the angel's only role in this version is to mend Patrick's bell: no demands made from Patrick to the angel are specified, as in later versions.

There is a nineteenth-century tradition of the 'black bell' of Patrick which was associated with the annual pilgrimage to Croagh Patrick.[793] Bourke points out that this tradition refers to 'a cross engraved on its surface' but that in these earlier accounts the bell 'survives in a very damaged condition with no trace of engraving, although holes suggest the former presence of mounts (and their attachment would amount to enshrining).'[794] We know that the bell was at one time domiciled at Killower in Co. Galway, approximately thirty miles from Croagh Patrick itself,[795] and this close proximity may account for a consistent regularity of the bell's use on the pilgrimage. However, this has not been ascertained and Bourke offers no alternative dating of this artefact except in pointing out that this bell was also claimed by the antiquarian John Bell.[796] Harbison states that this bell has 'long been in the hands of

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cult of a national apostle, interest in whom began to increase from the seventh-century' (*Pilgrimage*, p. 70).

[792] *Quarta*, 59: '*Diende uerticem montis ascendens qui dicitur Cruachan quadraginta diebus et quadraginta noctibus ieiunauit. Tunc inimici humani generis miserrimi demones in forma nigerrimarum auium ad beatum uenerunt Patricium tantum ut nec caelum neque mare aut terra<m> uidere potuisset. Tunc beatissimus Patricius in Dei misericordia confidens contra demonum cateruas solus pugnauit, et postremum iratus cloccam suam super eos proicit, quae deorsum cadens confracta est. Angelus autem Domini cloccam reintegrans ad beatum transtulit Patricium. Quae clocca in Hibernia usque in hodiernum diem cum honore habetur.*'

[793] Bourke, *Patrick*, p. 46 n. 23.

[794] Ibid. p. 46.

[795] Ibid.

[796] Ibid.

its hereditary keepers, the Geraghty family, until the last traditional steward sold it to Sir William Wilde, through whom it came to its present home in the National Museum in Dublin.'[797] That the 'black bell' was named as such, particularly as the narratives speak of demons disguised as black birds, fits in with the Croagh Patrick tradition, though its name may have been given at a later period when the bronze had worn off the iron to reveal its blackened colour.

The *Historia Brittonum* and *Probus' Vita* do not mention any bell of Patrick, except for a tantilising reference to Patrick 'having filled the ship with foreign gifts and spiritual treasures' in the former text.[798] There is no way of knowing if bells were among the hoard of other liturgical objects. It is perhaps not surprising that there is no mention of bells by Probus as Muirchú also made no mention of them, and we know that approximately four-fifths of the former text relies on the latter. That both Probus' *Vita* and *Historia Brittonum* were not composed by Irish authors or authors domiciled in Ireland lends considerable weight to the complement of archaeological and documentary evidence that relic bells were prevelant in the Celtic, and more specifically in the Gaelic, regions than elsewhere in the West.

However, the *Tripartite Life* has several other stories which feature bells. One intriguing reference concerns the druids' prophecy where Patrick's arrival bearing a staff is predicted, but also that: 'Adzeheads will come, who will build cities, who will consecrate churches, pinnacled music-houses, many conical caps (for belfries), a realm round croziers.' [799] 'Pinnacled music-houses', or *ceoltigi béndacha*,[800] may refer to the round towers thathoused the hand-bells rung from their small windows; if this were the case then it correlates with the earliest archaeological evidence for the building of such towers in Ireland. It is certainly a facet of the prophecy which was absent beforehand and denotes that by the ninth century bells featured in Christian and secular life outside the cloister.

In the *Tripartite Life's* version of our saint's battle with the demons on Croagh Patrick the role of the bell is emphasised more, drawing inspiration from Tírechán's version:

'Then [Patrick's] anger grew against [the blackbirds]. He strikes his

bell at them, so that the men of Ireland heard its voice, and he flung it

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[797] Harbison, *Pilgrimage*, p. 67.

[798] *Historia Brittonum*, 52.

[799] *Tripartite Life*, p. 35: '*Ticfa táilcend tar muir meircenn: a bratt tollcend, a chrand cromchend: a mías inairthiur a tigi: fris[g]erat a múinter huili, 'Amen, amen.' Ticfat tailcind, conutsat ruama, noifit cella, ceoltigi béndacha ben[n]chopuir ili: fla[i]th himbachla.*'.

[800] *Béndacha* also refers to the 'peaks' of rectangular church roofs (*e*DIL; 'pinnacled / pointed').

at them so its gap broke out of it and that [bell] is 'Brigit's
Gapling'.'[801]

We then learn more about the bell when an angel appears to Patrick granting him
three requests and afterwards commands him to: "Strike your bell… so that you shall
fall on your knees, and there will be a consecration of the folk of Ireland, both living
and dead."[802] The three petitions (or requests to the angel) are: that Patrick leads the
Irish out of purgatory; that the 'Saxons' should not dwell in Ireland by 'consent or
perforce'; that anyone who sings Patrick's Hymn will not enter Hell.[803] This
Tripartite Life's fullest account reappearslater, and is principally aimed at
highlighting Armagh's ecclesiastical superiority through the success of its patron's
cult, which was most probably at its heights around the time the *Tripartite Life* was
conceived; that the bell is attributed to St Brigit also accentuates this notion;for the
first time we learn more about this bell, i.e. the *Bernán*, which emphasises its
association with Brigit . The presentation of a name for this bell appears only once in
our Patrician Lives, and there is no hint of where the attribution of this bell to Brigit
originates in any other source I know of.[804]

Shortly after, Patrick departs to celebrate Easter and it is here that we learn
something of the bell's keepers, presumably what the *Tripartite Life*'s names the
Bernán:

'There is a man from him in Cruachan Aigle (Croagh Patrick) – they
hear the voice of his bell and he is not found – and there is a man
from him in Gulban Guirt. And there is the third man from him in
Cluain Iraid, together with his wife… There is a man from him in
Drummann Breg. There is another man from him in Sliab Slánge,
namely, Domongart son of Echaid: it is he that will upraise Patrick's
relics before Doom.'[805]

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[801] *Tripartite Life*, p. 115: '*Ní lotar úad airi. Doforbatt fergg iarum fríu. Benaid achlocc foraib cocualatar fir Erenn aguth ocus foceirt forru commebaid ass abernn, conidé sin Bernán Brigte.*'

[802] Ibid. p. 121: '*Ben do chlocc," ol-intangel, "Firfid glés fort donim coticfe glúne ocus bid cosecrad dferaib dolucht inna hEirend huli iter biu ocus marbu." "Bennacht forsinríg sochernidi dorat," [ol Pátraic] "ocus dingébthar dinChrúachan.*'

[803] Ibid. pp. 117: '*"Fil," olPatraic, "Saxain ná rotrebat Erind ar áiss nách ar éicin cén mbéosa fornim." "Rotbía," olintangel, "ocus dingaib din Cruachan." "Ní dingéb," olPatraic, "ol romcraided condomdigdider.*'.

[804] Bourke has previously substantiated this observation in *Patrick*, p. 42.

[805] *Tripartite Life*, p. 121: '*Atá fer húad hiCrúachan Aigli: roclunetar guth achluic ocus nifogabar. Ocus atá fer huad inGulpain Gurt. Atá intress fer [húad] fri Cluain nIraird anair ocus aseitigh. Dogénsat óigedecht do Patraic hiflaith Loeguiri maicc Neill. Issed anáess cetna attát ocus beitit cobráth. Atá fer húad inDruimnib Breg. Atá fer aili huad hi Sleib Slánge .i. Domongart macc Echach: isé tocéba martra Patraic gair riambrath. Issí achell*

This excerpt might be detailing several generations of keepers of this bell who are 'alive in Ireland still'.[806] Validating the historicity of the keepers is impossible, but we know something from later sources about the keepers of various bell-relics, not least the keepership of *Cloc ind Édachta*; we shall revisit this later. However, it is interesting at the start of the quote that 'the voice of [Patrick's] bell is heard but not found'; this perhaps indicates that the *Bérnan* – and this is under the assumption this is actually the bell referred to given that Croagh Patrick is mentioned here and this excerpt does not appear in other versions – was deemed to be too valuable a relic to allow knowledge of the exact location of the keeper to be exposed. It is therefore nonetheless evident we are dealing with a highly valued relic of Patrick.

Another bell of Patrick is mentioned slightly later in the *Tripartite Life*. Oengus, a foster-son of Loegaire's, refuses to let Conall into Tara, and we learn that 'while Conall was outside the court he heard the voice of Patrick's bell from Patrick's well by the fortress'[807] That the bell was sounded beside a well makes sense in the context of beckoning pilgrims who have journeyed to one for baptism or healing. This type of action might also have been deemed especially potent if a relic of some sort was associated with a saint, in this instance a bell believed to have personally belonging to Patrick. It is a pity, however, that the bell referred to is not named directly or that no hint as to where the bell was kept is given.

In the next anecdote featuring a bell of Patrick we learn its name and who its keeper is. Immediately following the part where our saint turns cheeses into stone:

> 'Patrick flings his hand-bell under a thick brake there. A birch grows through its handle. It is this that Dichuill found, the Bethechán ('Betullanum') [i.e. 'little birch tree'], Patrick's bell, a little bell of iron, which is now in the oratory of Dichuill.'[808]

The oratory of Dichuill mentioned is in Ernaide, somewhere in Ulster, most probably near to Down, and it is clear Patrick's gift of this bell was intended to remain in that church. Later on when Dichuill went to Louth as its bishop the bell is left behind, which also indicates that the church in Ernaide benefited from its associations with Patrick, and therefore with Armagh, and that this might well have been lucrative for

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Ráith Murbuilc hitaeb Sléibi Slánga, ocus bííd loracc conatimthucc ocus chilornn cormma arachnid arcach cáisc cotabair do aess oifrin[n] die lúain cásc dogres.'.
[806] Ibid.
[807] Ibid. pp. 129: '*Ambói Conull fri less anechtair, rochúala guth cluic Patraic otiprai Patraic ocundún.*'
[808] Ibid. p. 249: '*Scrid Patraic achlucene fomune ndluith and. Ássaid beithi triadoirnnin. Ishé fonúair Dicuill. Bethechan cloc Patraic, cluccenc becc íairnd qui est isindErnaidi Dicollo, ocus ataat and indichloich doronta dinaib fascrib. INtress immorro rucad laDícuill doLugmag diambu abb and. Itá indíu inGort Chonaich, dochuindchith ani isincill.*'

the church in terms of attracting more pilgrims for example. That the bell is crafted of iron also suggests an artefact of some antiquity, as bells made from iron tend to be of older provenance, although there are no surviving iron bells from Patrick's fifth-century world.

In the section immediately following (and the abbreviated list of Patrick's miracles) the activities of the following individuals are presented: 'The smiths making the bells, namely, Macc-cecht and Cúanu and Macc-táil.'[809] Placing this in context in which this text was written, i.e. in the ninth and tenth centuries, offers a picture of a thriving industry of metal-working in Ireland already underway, doubtless fuelled to a great extent by the needs of many local churches to possess such liturgical wares. Further on in the *Tripartite Life* there is also a list of twenty four individuals 'who were in orders with Patrick', including 'Sinell of Cell Riada and his bell-ringer'.[810] The mention of a bell-ringer is rare in any source, but that does not mean that such duties had no importance to a church / monastery or its wider community. In fact, it is obvious that such employment was an essential part of a church's day-to-day running, and gives us a feel for the vibrancy of medieval communities, not just in colour but also in sound.

Vita Tertia's only account of a bell belonging to Patrick takes us back to Croagh Patrick, where:

> '[D]emons violently flew about [Patrick] and hindered his praying…
> Patrick struck his bell and he put them to flight over the sea… and on
> the whole mountain a multitude of angels brightened the wilderness
> and sang verses that were like kisses to him. Patrick asked for three
> petitions… descended from the mountain, blessing this island by
> striking his bell and all living there whether alive or dead would have
> heard the noise of his bell.'[811]

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[809] Ibid. p. 251: '*Na gobaind oc denam na clocc .i. Macc-cecht ocus Cuanu ocus Macc-tail.*'

[810] Ibid. p. 265: '*Sinell o Chill Dareis aastire.*'

[811] *Tertia*, 85: '*Deinde sanctus Patricius secundum exemplum Domini exiit in desterum, id est hi Crochan Aigle, in tempore quadragesimae ante Pascha, et erat ibi super lapidem sedens et quatuor lapides circa ipsum a quatuor partibus. Tunc magna multitude de auibus nigris, id est demonibus, uolabant super eum et grauiter impediebant orationem eius. Patriciius uero percussit cymbalum suum et fugauit eos trans mare. Et statim repleuit totum montem multitudio angelorum in formis candidissimis auium et suauia carmina cantabat ei. In isto monte tres petitiones rogauit. Prima, ut omnes habitatores huius insulae, si quis ex ipsis una hora paenitentiam eregit, infernus non claudatur super eum. Secunda, ut alienigenae in hanc insulam non habitant usque in diem iudicii. Tercia, ut quatuor annis ante diem iudicii istam insulam mare operiat. Cum uero de monte illo descendisset, benedixit hanc insulam percussitque cimbalum suum, et omnes habitatores huius insulae siue uiui siue mortui audierunt sonum cimbali illius.*'

In fact these three petitions (echoing the *Tripartite Life*) glorify Patrick as Ireland's premier saint, indicating *Tertia's* composition in a more optimistic political climate, i.e. during a time when the Norman invasion was not as yet a reality. It is interesting that the demons are not described as 'black', which is a striking feature of all hitherto versions. Perhaps the bell referred to is not the 'black bell', as it was likely known in popular terms, but *Cloc ind Édachta*. Moreover, that angels accompanied Patrick from the mountain when the striking of his bell was heard throughout Ireland is clearly symbolic of the bell being used to gather Patrick's flock; it certainly harks back to the glory days of Armagh's episcopal supremacy– a sentiment originally intended in the *Tripartite Life*.

In William's *Vita Patricii* bells do not feature, but this is perhaps not surprising given Glastonbury's concentration on appropriating Patrick's cult through claims to his grave and corporeal relics. Furthermore, bell-relics are known to feature much more in the Celtic / Gaelic regions than elsewhere in the West.

Vita has only a few references to bells. This anecdote originally features in the *Tripartite Life*, as quoted above, although Jocelin's version is significantly elaborated:

> 'A certain man of the servants of Patrick carelessly lost a cymbal…
> the saint forgave him, and directed that he should no longer seek the
> cymbal until a church was built in that place.. And after a long
> time… Dicullus (Dicuill) built a church, and there he found the
> aforementioned cymbal… And many who were infirm, drinking out
> of or being sprinkled with water from this cymbal, often received
> instant health; and when this instrument was tuned, they experienced
> the holiness of the saint breathing forth and sounding through its
> music.'[812]

Nothing is stated of the miracles of the cheeses being turned into stone as in the *Tripartite Life*, in which Patrick deliberately 'threw' his bell into a bush; in Jocelin's version Patrick has nothing directly to do with the fate of his bell as it is kept in the custody of another, just as was the case with such enshrined relics generally. The

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[812] Jocelin, *Vita*, CXL: *'Quidam ministrantium S. Patricio cymbalum eius per incuriam amisit, amissum quæsiuit, [de cymbalo suo amisso prophetat:] diu quæsitum non inuenit, de non inuento pœnitendo satisfecit: satisfacienti vero Præsul clementer indulsit; & quod nullatenus inueniretur, priusquam ibidem ecclesia construeretur, indicauit. Emenso enim multo tempore, quidam Religiosus Dicullus dictus, in illo loco ecclesiam ædificauit, ibique cymbalum memoratum reperit, repertum in ecclesia noua locauit. Ex cymbali vero illic locati lotique latice, infirmi potati vel aspersi frequenter celerem adepti sunt sanitatem, & in instrumento ad exteriorem sonum emittendum composito, Patricij personantem atque perseuerantem experti sunt sanctitatem.'*

church at Ernaide that was originally mentioned in the *Tripartite Life* no longer features here and is perhaps this indicates it is of no importance by the period in which Jocelin was writing. Also of great importance is whenJocelin emphasises that the breath of the saint was carried by the bell's ringing. Such a statement verifies the high status of bells to the medieval Church, especially since such objects as hand-bells were believed to have at one time been in the personal possession of a saint.

The next story in Jocelin's *Vita* that features a bell is taken from the Croagh Patrick tradition:

> 'And the demons grieved for their lost dominion, and assailing the saint they tormented him in his prayers and his fastings; and they fluttered around him like birds of the blackest blue… but Patrick… drove far from him those deadly birds; and by the continual sound of his cymbal, utterly banished them forth of the island… And the cymbal of the saint, which from his frequent percussions thereof appeared in one part broken, was afterward repaired by the angel's hand; and the mark beheld on it to this day. Likewise on the summit of this mountain many are wont to watch and to fast, conceiving that they will never enter the gates of hell; which benefit they account to be obtained to them of God through the merits and the prayers of Patrick. And some who have thereon passed the night relate them to have suffered grievous torments, whereby they think themselves purified of all their sins; and for such cause many call this the Purgatory of St Patrick.'[813]

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[813] Ibid. CLXXII: '*Dolebant dæmones deletum dominium suum in Hibernia per Patricium, [multum a dæmonibus exercitus,] nimisque infesti insistebant illi ieiunanti & oranti, pariter conglobati contra eum in specie namque nigerrimarum auium forma & magnitudine horribilium ac multitudine, super & circa cum volitabant, & horrisonis garritibus gestientes impedire orationem eius, diutius virum Dei molestabant. Patricius tandem Dei gratia præuentus protectusque adiutorio, signo Crucis edito, aues illas mortiferas a se longius abegit, ac continua crebraque cymbali sui percussione eas ab Hiberniæ finibus effugauit. [omnes trās mare fugat:] Dæmones itaque a S. Patricio trans mare fugati fugerunt, & in insulis a fide & dilectione Dei alienis per phalanges diuisi degere ac phantasias suas exercere soliti sunt. Ab illo ergo tempore vsque in præsens venenosa animantia in Hibernia, meritis & precibus sanctissimi Patris Patricij, penitus esse cessarunt; dæmonumque phantasmata, & illorum illusoria schemata, sicut in ceteris regionibus, apparere non consuescunt. [pulsu cymbali sui,] Cymbalum etiam Sancti ex crebris ictibus in vna parte apparuit effractum, quod postmodum Angelica manu est resolidatum; cuius cicatrix adhuc apparet oculis intuentium. In huius igitur montis cacumine ieiunare, ac vigilare consuescunt plurimi, opinantes se postea numquam intraturos portas inferni: quia hoc impetratum a Domino existimant meritis & precibus S. Patricij: referunt etiam nonnulli, qui pernoctauerant ibi, se tormenta grauissima fuisse perpessos, quibus se purgatos a peccatis putant, vnde & quidam illorum locum illum ᵇ purgatorium S. Patricij vocant.*'

This version essentially draws upon *Tertia*, particularly given its strong purgatorial elements and explicit links to Croagh Patrick. However, no reference to the three petitions Patrick made in *Tertia* and the *Tripartite Life* is present; this has an important contextual explanation to which we shall return in the next section. Here Jocelin expounds the earlier traditions of Patrick's Purgatory on Croagh Patrick in previous Lives, and has not yet been influenced by Henry of Sawtry's account which places Patrick's Purgatory on Lough Derg. Another intriguing aspect is Jocelin's statement that the bell 'appeared in one part broken', recalling a similar feature on *Cloc ind Édachta* and on the *Bernán* (which means 'gapped-one'). If this is the case, then another problem presents itself when we question why Jocelin and previous authors have not specifically named any of the bells in their narratives; however, this is better analysed in the contextual discussion below.

In the story that immediately follows, Patrick's bell (though once again it is not named) is used once more for celebrating the saint's victory over the demons:

> '[A] multitude of angels… with wondrous melody comforted the
> saint… Then being led by the angels [Patrick] descended from the
> mountain, and smote his cymbal, the sound whereof the Lord caused
> to be heard through all parts of Hibernia. Thence let none of the
> faithful doubt that every man even over the whole world will hear the
> sound of the last trumpet.'[814]

As emphasised, the sound of Patrick's bell resonating throughout Ireland, which helps assert Patrick as Ireland's national saint, leaves no doubt that the last trumpet will definitely be heard through the whole world also – this is an indication of how distinct and symbolic to the Christian faith the ringing of such bells was. Also, here the bell is used in its traditional role of gathering the faithful, and the miracle is that all of Ireland hear its chimes, implying that Patrick's bell is *the* most prized of all Ireland's bell-relics, just as *Bachall Ísu* was the most prized of all Ireland's croziers; it is hard to imagine this bell as *Cloc ind Édachta* given the long tradition of this particular bell's connection to Croagh Patrick.

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[814] Ibid. CLXXIII: *'Miserante Moderatore omnium Deo, qui post nubilum ducit serenum, statim eiectis spiritibus malignis, Angelorum multitudo maximo fulgore perfundebat locum, mirabilique melodia permulcebat Sanctum: ipse vero expleto ieiunio, gratiarum ac laudum hostias immolabat Deo, qui homini mortali tantę abstinentię adimplendę virtutem tribuit, & tanta beneficia ob sui intercessionem largiri dignatus fuit; insuper & Angelica visitatione se lætificauit. Angelico igitur comitatu deductus de monte descendit, ac cymbalum suum percussit, [totā Hibernia exauditi:] cuius sonitum per omnes fines vndique Hiberniæ Dominus audiri fecit: ex qua re nullus fidelium ambigere debet, quod nouissimæ tubæ sonum omnis homo audiet.'*

From these texts it is clear that bells do not feature often, but when they do appear their role is potent and decisive. Unlike the appearance of other Patrician relics in the Lives, such as *Bachall Ísu*, whose tradition predominantly appears from the ninth century, bells are more consistent in the number of times they feature in the various Lives. Some anecdotes have long-rooted traditions, such as the story of the bell on Croagh Patrick for example. As for the miracles and uses of bells in the Lives, we can discern a wide range: congregating the faithful for conversion / pilgrimage; healing; warding off evil; having the ability to be heard over remarkably long distances; for distribution as gifts to individuals or churches. In the following section we will better discern that the various functions and uses of bell-relics more generally are not exclusive to those which feature in our Patrician texts, but are also common features of other saints' relic cults in a variety of sources.

Perhaps the most intriguing facet of all to be gained from focusing on our Lives of Patrick; however, we should note the striking absence of *Cloc an Édachta*. This point cannot be solely considered without a fuller appraisal of the broader context of this bell-relic, as provided in the next section. Perhaps *Cloc an Édachta* was not as yet named as such and instead confused with some other contemporaneous bell presently lost to us, and which was also reputed to have been in Patrick's possession. This confusion is particularly evident in the tradition of the mysterious bell used on Croagh Patrick, and we only have a modern, popularised tradition of a 'black bell' being ascribed as the one used by Patrick on the mountain (i.e. the one which is presently housed in the National Museum of Ireland). The bell used by our saint on Croagh Patrick had too long a tradition for it to be *Cloc ind Édachta*; the aforementioned 'black bell' is the most likely candidate.

Contexts, Miracles and Functions of *Cloc ind Édachta*

As we have seen, it is not clear whether *Cloc ind Édachta* features in any of our Lives. However, we do come across an appearance of *Cloc ind Édachta* in the *Annals of Ulster* at 1044.4:

> 'Niall son of Mael Sechnaill, king of Ailech, made a raid on Uí Méith and Cuailnge and took away two hundred cows and a large number of captives in revenge for the profanation of the *Bell of the Testament*. Muirchertach ua Néill moreover made another raid on the Mugdorna and took away a cow-tribute and captives in revenge for the profanation of the same bell.'

Around this time the annals document that other bell-towers were also under attack and destroyed completely, such as that at Imlech Ibair at *Annals of Ulster* entry

1058.1 (see Appendices B and C for more details). *Cloc ind Édachta* was in all probability kept away from Armagh in the custody of its keepers, especially when it was enshrined fairly recently, except in times when it was required for display during Patrick's feast or when collecting taxes for example.

Besides, it is highly unlikely that such valuable relics as *Cloc ind Édachta* would have been stored in or taken, unless in haste, to such places as the round bell-towers, as these structures themselves acted as chimneys when set alight.[815] More functional and weightier hand-bells specifically used for ringing from such towers, for example to gather the faithful or to warn of troublesome invaders, were housed in round towers; a possible example is at *Annals of Ulster* entry 950.7 (see Appendix C). Kathleen Hughes and Ann Hamlin point out that: 'Towers would admittedly have attracted attention to monasteries, as they still do, unwelcome in Viking context, but perhaps a symbol in peaceful times, like the spires which were so popular in thirteenth and fourteenth England.'[816]

Before we move on to elaborate on the various functions and miracles of *Cloc ind Édachta* there is also the question of why this bell only appears in the historical record from the mid eleventh century. We know that sometime between 1091 and 1105 *Cloc ind Édachta* was presented with an elaborate reliquary, which along with the eleventh-century *Annals of Ulster* entry at 553 claiming that the 'Bell of the Testament' was one of three relics unearthed from Patrick's grave, set this bell apart from all others ascribed to Patrick. This likely elevated *Cloc ind Édachta* to form a primary trio of Armagh's insignia alongside *Bachall Ísu* and *Canóin Pátraic*.[817]

The general perception of many scholars is that bell and crozier are always found together as 'twin insignia'. Bourke states that:

> 'The distinction between the bell as 'communal' and the staff as
> 'personal' is a real one… although [this distinction is] blurred by
> later iconography, which show them together, and by hagiography
> and vernacular tradition, which treat them as twin insignia. Such

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[815] Hughes and Hamlin, in *Modern Traveller*, have pointed out from the example of the burning of the *cloictech* of Slane highlighted at the end of this paragraph that in this instance 'the outer stone shell failed to prevent a disastrous fire, and internally, chimney-like and wooden, these towers must have been horribly combustible' (p. 72).

[816] Hughes and Hamlin, *Modern Traveller*, p. 72; thanks also to Dr Mhaire-Claire Semple for discussing the architecture of the round towers in this context.

[817] Bourke in *Patrick* (p. 20) states 'the bell of the testament... was to be accorded equivalent status before the middle of the eleventh century', and is a point of view with which I strongly disagree.

they certainly became, and the difference of nuance in their primary

roles have been eclipsed by a process of assimilation.'[818]

This may not be so neatly applied to *Bachall Ísu* and *Cloc ind Édachta*, since it is the former relic that held the primary position throughout much of our period. *Cloc ind Édachta* was likely below the status of the *Canóin Pátraic* in the *Book of Armagh* also, as the latter's elaborate enshrinement occurred in 938 (*Chronicon Scottorum*) and since it holds the personal writings of Patrick.[819] Moreover, logically speaking the relic which replaced *Bachall Ísu* in the late twelfth century was most probably *Canóin Pátraic* and not *Cloc ind Édachta*. There is the notable pairing of *Bachall Ísu* and the bell ascribed to Patrick and known as *Finnfaídech* in the *Annals of Ulster* at entry 1013.1, where both the staff and bell were profaned. Whether the *Finnfaídech* and *Bachall Ísu* could be described as twin insignia is unlikely, as this is the only occasion on which they appear together and *Bachall Ísu* appears more independently in various sources, and namely in the Lives, than any other Patrician relic. However, on no occasion in any source known to me does *Cloc ind Édachta* appear with *Bachall Ísu*, thus inviting us to speculate whether in fact *Finnfaídech* was in fact the premier Patrician bell and a member of the trio of Patrician insignia which also included *Canóin Pátraic*.

Such perceptions of staff and bell as twin insignia may be predominantly locked into pilgrimage, since a 'staff was not just the symbol of a saint [but] also the sign of the pilgrim'.[820] Iconographical examples of displays of twin insignia include a detail from a high cross in Kilcullen, Co. Kildare, where depicted is a figure holding a crozier in his left hand, an axe in his right with a bell and book placed above-right of his head.[821] There are also examples on stone carvings which show ecclesiastics with bells and croziers at Cardonagh, Killadeas, and White Island, which Hughes and Hamlin perceive as 'bringing us face to face with the artists' view of some Early Christian churchmen.'[822] Another example is at Glendalough on an engraving on 'The Priest's House', which was built in the twelfth century and the tomb-shrine of its monastic founder St Kevin (d.618). Beranger's drawing of it in 1779 shows St Kevin sitting in the centre, 'flanked by two bowing figures, that on the left bearing an incurving staff of a kind used on the continent, and that on the right a bell.'[823]

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[818] Bourke, '*Insignia Columbae* II', p. 167.
[819] Lucas, 'Relics and reliquaries', p. 11.
[820] Harbison, *Pilgrimage*, p. 217.
[821] Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines*, p. 33.
[822] Hughes and Hamlin, *Modern Traveller*, p. 98.
[823] Harbison, *Pilgrimage*, pp. 120-1.

It may be true that *Cloc ind Édachta* and *Bachall Ísu* were publicly displayed together on certain occasions, such as during public celebrations of Patrick's feast; however, that is not to say that the *Canóin Pátraic* and other relics at Armagh were not displayed also. In addition, there is no evidence that such instances actually occurred, but possibly such public displays of various saints' relics happened so frequently as to be deemed unworthy of documentation. *Cloc ind Édachta* itself only rarely appears in the documentary sources before the thirteenth century, and more often in entries after this juncture, which poorly contrasts with the frequency of *Bachall Ísu*. Moreover, as highlighted *Bachall Ísu* and the *Canóin Pátraic* were stolen by a contender for the *coarb*-ship of Armagh in 1134; *Cloc ind Édachta* was nowhere mentioned in this context.

In the *Annals of the Four Masters* entry at 1143.13, we again find that *Cloc ind Édachta* is not mentioned in amongst a wide variety of relics (see Appendix C). Although the bell of Feichin is mentioned in a manner that suggests it was the primary hereditary symbol of office, it appears that *Cloc ind Édachta* or any other bell of Patrick were not deemed to hold such a primary function at Armagh. However, this is not to state that *Cloc ind Édachta* or *Canóin Pádraic* were not inherited by each successive *coarb*, just not with the same symbolic value as *Bachall Ísu*, which, after all, was inherited by Patrick from Christ Himself. *Cloc ind Édachta*, in Bourke's words, 'seems to declare a belief in the method of its transmission, namely that Patrick formally willed the bell to a successor'; [824] chronologically, however, this relic does not have comparable antiquity. If Armagh propagated its protection of one secular kindred or another it was done so through *Bachall Ísu*, the ultimate symbol of its ecclesiastical influence. As for *Canóin Pádraic*, we can be more certain from the general absence of it from the sources that it was kept in Armagh, perhaps stored in its *scriptorium* except when occasion called for it to be publicly displayed or taken into battle, for example, as demonstrated below.

During De Courcy's invasion of Ulster from 1177, according to *Mac Carthaigh's Book* (see Appendix B for full entry) among the relics captured were two bells associated with Patrick: *Fionn Faoidheach Pádraig* and *Cloc Timchill Arda Macha*; one bell we are already familiar with, *Finnfaídech*, and the other known as the 'Bell of the Circuit of Armagh'. Whilst we are aware from this account that *Bachall Ísu* remained in Dublin (from 1180), it is clear *Canóin Pátraic* was returned to Armagh during that year with *Ceolán Tighearnaigh*, or the 'Bell of Tigernach'. It is interesting that of the two captured bells ascribed to Patrick that *Cloc ind Édachta*

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[824] Bourke, 'Hand-bells of the Western Church', p. 78.

was not among them. However this does not imply that *Cloc ind Édachta* was not present at the battle, but that it may have been taken away before it was stolen; *Bachall Ísu* was not present either, and perhaps the Norman threat was perceived too great to risk the exposure of either of these relics at this particular battle.

So, what can we discern of the various miracles and functions *Cloc ind Édachta* performed in sources other than in our Lives of Patrick, and why was it deemed to be such an important Patrician relic? To fully ascertain this we must now turn to look at other bell-relics in the sources, as well as return to the already familiar stories of bells mined from our Lives in order to ascertain a fuller picture of their importance.

Bell-relics and their Various Miracles and Functions

From the various Lives of Patrickit is discernible that bells served a variety of functions and were capable of performing a diversity of miracles, most notably of the curative and healing variety. Although bells do not feature as often in the Lives as other relics, principally *Bachall Ísu*, they still have a strong presence. Bell-relics were simply more than objects once worn or touched by the saint, they could readily appeal to most of the senses, touch and sight, but particularly sound, as beautifully expressed by Jocelin when he described the 'holiness of the saint breathing forth and sounding through its music'.[825]

Bells and bell-relics were undoubtedly used to beckon the faithful. Indeed, we know that pilgrims to Patrick's Pugatory in the later Middle Ages would kiss a heap of stones placed between the church and the Cave when first arriving on Lough Derg, and later would arrive to the east of the church where there was a cross made of twigs, which had three pieces of a bell reputed to have belonged to Patrick.[826] Harbison notes a 'similar folk tradition between Croagh Patrick and Lough Derg… [which is] only applied centuries later apparently to Lough Derg.'[827] An Ordinance Survey was compiled by John O'Donovan in 1838, in which year he visited its traditional keepers, the Geraghtys', in search of the 'black bell':

> '[I]t had gone on its annual outing to Croagh Patrick, where every
> pilgrim ought to have passed it three times sunwise round the body,
> and kiss three times a cross engraved on it. But the kissing seems to

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[825] Jocelin, *Vita*, CXL.
[826] Harbison, *Pilgrimage*, pp. 60-2 (Michael O'Clery's account of a pilgrim's itinerary here).
[827] Ibid. p. 65.

have been so intensive that not a trace of a cross can be found on the bell...'[828]

However, this or a similar sort of practice must have occurred at Croagh Patrick at least from the late seventh century, where in our earliest Lives Patrick's bell is a major deterrent against the attacking demons disguised as birds, and one may conclude that pilgrims to this mountain must have expected such a bell to be present as a symbol of Patrick's victory over evil.

On the Cardonagh pillar in Co. Donegal (*c*.800) there is a depiction of a figure in a knee-length robe carrying a satchel (a sign of the traveller, or perhaps a book-shrine) and a small staff and bell which may represent a pilgrim.[829] Harbison also draws attention to a stone at Killadeas, Co Fermanagh, on which we can observe a figure carrying a staff and a bell 'wearing a fine pair of shoes, which may help to identify him as a pilgrim.'[830] There are numerous other examples, such as engraved on pillars at Fermanagh and at Lough Erne, but the drawing of 'The Priest's House' at Glendalough mentioned above is also significant. Indeed, Harbison suggests that 'some of the bells in the towers could even have been pilgrim's bells donated to the monastery on completion of a pilgrimage.'[831] Moreover, he also suggests:

> 'If the staff-bearing figure is taken to be a pilgrim, there would be all
> the more reason to interpret the bell-bearing figure on the opposite
> side in the same way… it could help us to see the figure with bell and
> staff on the small Cardonagh pillar as a pilgrim rather than a saint.'[832]

Bourke also makes similar observations although slanted in another direction, and suggests that 'croziers and bells must have been set out for the delectation of pilgrims; otherwise their investment in their making or enshrinement could scarcely have been repaid.'[833] Bourke's notion that bells and croziers were hung over the graves of saints' remains is attractive, and fits with the idea of displaying certain symbols meant to represent the pilgrim *en route* to his/her destination. Bourke points out the example of the seal of the chapter of thirteenth-century Dunkeld, Perthshire, which shows 'the crozier of Columba… exhibited – perhaps suspended – over the shrine which held his bones.'[834] There is also the iron hand-bell from Downpatrick, which has a bar that once had wires twisted around it that may show it was once

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[828] Ibid. pp. 67-8.
[829] Ibid. p. 217; he points out that the satchel was the symbol of a pilgrim to Santiago in northern Spain.
[830] Ibid. p. 219 fig. 94.
[831] Ibid. p. 173.
[832] Ibid. p. 218.
[833] Bourke, 'What the pilgrim saw', p. 7.
[834] Ibid. p. 7.

suspended above an important holy-person's grave.[835] The bronze hand-bell now preserved in Scotland and attributed to St Finnan, lies on the altar of the ruinous church and whenever there is a funeral the bell is brought down and carried in front of the procession;[836] I know of someone who has visited this site very recently. Indeed, Hughes and Hamlin point out that 'sometimes objects have stayed in the neighbourhood of the sites… The bell at Fenagh is kept in the parish priest's house, whilst St Bronagh's Bell from Kilbroney is in the Catholic Church at Rostrevor nearby.'[837] As mentioned, there are also the hand-bells attributed to Adomnán at Glenlyon in Scotland; these and other such bell-relics must have been, and perhaps to some extent still are, a great attraction to pilgrims.

The portability of bells in particular is most important to their value in wider society, and along with their sound which could often carry itself over long distances it is perhaps easier to ascertain that bells provided a distinctive call to eager pilgrims. Moreover, enshrined bells would have had a great visual appeal to pilgrims. Gilbert Márkus eloquently states of those who used such bell-relics that they:

> '[W]ere part of a rich and dynamic religious culture in which visual symbolism played an important part in the expression of belief… the bell and shrine together represent two different strands of the medieval religious imagination. The bell itself provides a visual connection to the saint who first owned the bell… But the shrine made to contain the bell has no visual reference to the saint.'[838]

This statement was in reference to the Torbhlaren bell-shrine of Kilmichael-Glassary in Argyll, but it applies equally to the jewel-encrusted shrine of *Cloc ind Édachta*.[839] Such enshrined bells would have glistened in the sunlight, becoming even more symbolic to the power of the saint and the 'light' of Christ, just as in His Transfiguration. As Márkus suggests, this may appear to cause tension between belief in Christ and belief in the saints, 'but [that] such a tension would have been alien to the medieval believer.'[840]

What pilgrims would have expected when they encountered such relics as bells is paramount to understanding the diverse uses and functions bells had in wider society. Whether the bells are seen as symbols of pilgrimages on sculpted stones, or suspended above important holy-persons' graves, or for display in churches, or taken

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[835] Ibid. pp. 8-9.
[836] Anderson, *Scotland in Early Christian Times*, p. 198.
[837] Hughes and Hamlin, *Modern Traveller*, p. 113.
[838] Gilbert Márkus, *Power and Protection: The 'Torbhlaren Bell, its Shrine and the Relic Tradition*, (Kilmartin House Trust, 2009), at p. 8.
[839] Morris, 'The shrine of St Patrick's Bell', p. 28.
[840] Márkus, *Power and Protection*, p. 8.

on circuit, all help us to understand the varying contexts in which bells featured. After all, in our Lives of Patrick we have already seen multifarious uses for bells, from healing and warding off demons to being miraculously rediscovered after a length of time; such uses were not uncommon to bell-relics of other saints.

As Gilbert Márkus states the 'authority of such a relic (i.e. bells) was not only institutional… [and] might be detached from high ecclesiastical office… We have evidence of such 'dewars' (keepers) holding all kinds of relics – bells, croziers, books and body-parts of saints.'[841] Indeed, other contexts, such as pilgrimage, set bell-relics apart from this exclusivity into the heart of a community for use to a wide range of individuals. Márkus informs us that when a shrine was crafted for the Torbhlaren Bell of Kilmichael Glassary in the twelfth century there is strong evidence to suggest that its keepers were using this bell to administer oaths, 'with witnesses swearing on the relic that they spoke the truth'.[842] Indeed, swearing of oaths on bells, and on other relics as croziers, was a common in Ireland; Gerald of Wales' commented:

> '[T]he people and clergy of both Wales and Ireland have a great reverence for bells that can be carried about… they fear to swear or perjure themselves in making oaths on these much more than in swearing on the Gospels… those who show disrespect to these objects are chastised, and those that have transgressed severely punished.'[843]

In the last chapter we discovered examples of this in relation to the *Bachall Ísu* and other saints' croziers, but bells were also precious; we have already learned of the revenge wrought due to the profanation of *Findfáidech* and *Bachall Ísu* in 1013, for example. Not only was swearing oaths important, but bells were also used to solidify friendships, for example the "full measure" of the *Finnfaidech* being given as tribute, most probably in a solemn and binding manner.

The Bell of St Ciaran of Saighir was, according to one *Vita*, apparently taken through various regions for 'the mutual swearing of nobles.'[844] At *Annals of Ulster* entry at 1275.9 we discover that a treaty of friendship was made between Ua Briain, king of Thomond, and the Earl of Clare, whereby they put their 'blood in one vessel… after pledging relics and bells to one another.' We have already mentioned the instance whereby in *Annals of the Four Masters* at entry 1143 various relics, including the Bell of Feichin, saw Murchadh Ua Maeleachlainn under their

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[841] Ibid. p. 2.
[842] Ibid. p. 3.
[843] Gerald of Wales, *Topographia*, 108.
[844] Lucas, 'Relics and reliquaries', p. 25.

protection. At *Annals of Ulster* entry 1044, twelve hundred cattle – an amazing amount considering this is an economy predominantly based on cattle, which testifies in itself to the economic and spiritual value of bell-relics – were taken in revenge for the profanation of *Cloc ind Édachta*. Collecting tribute was also commonplace, and was undoubtedly undertaken during the numerous circuits of relics as documented in the various annals, especially during the late seventh and early ninth centuries, and again the 'measure of silver' of the *Finnfaídech* is one example, even if in the majority of instances we cannot be sure exactly which relics were used. The 'Bell of the Circuit of Armagh' taken into battle against de Courcy, might have been one such bell that survived from this era, hence its name.

Cursing with bells, as with croziers, is another key function, although this is noticeably less prominent in the Lives of Patrick. A prime example is in the *Tripartite Life*, where Patrick sang 'maledictions' at the black birds and then proceeded to throw his bell at them. Lucas points out another from the *Amra Cholmchille* where Conall enticed a crowd to throw clods at the clerics and for this Columba cursed him: 'So he cursed Conall, and thrice nine bells were rung at Conall and someone said: "Conall gets bells".'[845] One other example is found in the tenth century Prologue to Adomnán's *Cáin*, where murderous kings who pay no heed to the *Cáin* are cursed by the saint's bell which then rings in anger.[846] Taking bell-relics into battle is also a common attribute, particularly evident in excerpts from *Mac Carthaigh's Book* in 1178 when various bells – and notably two bells associated with Patrick – are taken into battle in Ulster against de Courcy.

Miraculous healings and cures are also strongly associated with bell-relics. For example we may be reminded that in Jocelin's *Vita* when Dicuill finds one of Patrick's bells it is declared: 'many who were infirm, drinking out of or being sprinkled with water from this cymbal, often received instant health'.[847] Indeed, drinking water from a bell-relic is often a sign that pilgrims have come for healing or to seek cure. There is also the story of St Molagga leaving Wales, where St David had gifted to him a bell named 'Boban Molaggae'; Lucas tells us that 'Molagga returned to Ireland where in Dublin he found the king suffering from a wasting disease… Molagga touched him with his bell whereby he was cured.'[848] In Ardmore in Co. Waterford there is a boulder known as St Declan's Stone believed to have

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[845] Ibid. p. 33.
[846] Adomnán, *Cáin Adomnáin*, pp. 13-4; Márkus also cites this in *Power and Protection*, p. 3; ringing saints' bells against enemies features in other Lives, and for references to this see Bray, *List of Motifs*, p. 102 under the heading 'Marvellous Object'.
[847] Jocelin, *Vita*, CXL.
[848] Lucas, 'Relics and reliquaries', p. 32.

floated from Rome in the wake of the saint's ship carrying a bell he apparently forgotten about: 'it was claimed that anyone who could creep under the stone would be cured of rheumatic pains.'[849] There is also the story whereby a priest took a bell, known as the 'white bell' of St Ciaran, and filled it with water and some clay from the saint's grave to cure King Diarmuit of deafness.[850]

As well as curing the body, the Lives emphasise their potent role of bells in fighting the spiritual battle against evil. Patrick's defeat of the demons disguised as black birds on Croagh Patrick is symbolised by the throwing of his bell at them. Pilgrims to the mountain may have come to seek spiritual solace against the 'inner demons' which obscure their path to salvation, for example. Columba reputedly threw his *Dub Duaibsech* for the Devil's undoing and to expel the demons from Glencolumbkille, which was also a popular pilgrimage site in later medieval times as it is today; Bourke has picked up on the theme of 'black bells' as a name which is 'typical of the battery of pet names attached to the insignia of the saints.'[851] Bells for spiritual healing were especially attractive to pilgrims who must have perceived their everyday lives as one long struggle against losing their faith, as well as to heal or even cure various physical or mental ailments and disabilities.

Conclusions

In this chapter we have learned much about the diverse and various functions of Patrick's, as well as other saints', bell-relics in Ireland and elsewhere. However, the actual status and antiquity of *Cloc ind Édachta* is difficult to ascertain. Its absence from our Patrician Lives, as well as its sparse appearance in the various Irish annals, strongly suggests that it perhaps only became the premier Patrician bell from the early eleventh century; before then the position was likely filled by *Findfáidech*. However, aside from *Cloc ind Édachta* we hear of no other bell attributed to Patrick being provided with such an elaborate reliquary at any point during our period, and this is probably the main reason why scholars think this bell to be the premier medieval bell of Patrick. As for the other bells attributed to Patrick the identity of the 'black bell' in particular, as well as of the bell which was lost by Patrick and later found by Dicuill, is difficult to discern. The one constant is that such stories featuring bells in our Patrician Lives become more commonplace and detailed as our period progresses, and common to other saints' relic-bells, they appear more frequently during the great period of enshrinement in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

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[849] Harbison, *Pilgrimage*, p. 136.
[850] Ibid. p. 149.
[851] Bourke, '*Insignia Columbae* II', p. 168.

In chapter four we discover many more relics of Patrick are to be unpacked from his various Lives, and that only some of which still exist. These 'miscellaneous' relics of Patrick, although important, were not among the primary group of relics at Armagh; the exception is *Canóin Pátraic* in the *Book of Armagh*, which is also discussed here. This chapter proves that these miscellaneous relics of Patrick were a vital complement in Armagh's pre- thirteenth-century collection of relics.

Chapter 4

Miscellaneous Relics Associated with Patrick in the Lives

Introduction

Over the course of this thesis we have discussed a wide variety of relics of Patrick from the Lives and other sources: aside from Patrick's own corporeal relics, his *Bachall Ísu* and *Cloc ind Édachta* and the other bells attributed to him, we have also encountered various other relics of Christ, apostolic relics, as well as a variety of Roman relics and other saints' corporeal relics, croziers and bells. In this chapter we examine other relics of Patrick not mentioned previously. The majority of relics we will encounter here are 'Eucharistic' relics, from gospel books to the 'gold-pipe' relic described in the *Tripartite Life* for example.[852] Some of these relics have survived to this present day while others have not, but all have an equally important place in this thesis, one which accentuates the growth and diversity of our saint's relic cult as fated with that of his cult-centre at Armagh.

The Lives of Patrick between the Seventh and Late Twelfth Centuries

Book-Shrines

In Ireland certain manuscripts were enshrined and venerated as relics.[853] In Lucas' words: 'Books, whether for ritual use or private devotions, were, of course, intimately associated with the saints, who, in some cases, are said to have copied them with their own hands.'[854] The earliest known book-shrine from our period (although it survives in a dismantled state) dates to the eighth century and was found in Lough Kinale, Co. Longford, and 'its size and sumptuous decoration suggest it contained a large Gospel book, similar in size to the *Book of Kells*.'[855] As mentioned, the enshrinement of the *Book of Armagh* in 937 conveys it was one of Armagh's primary insignia of Patrick, although its reliquary has not survived; this is true of other examples of book-relics. For example, when the *Book of Kells* was stolen in 1007.11 (*Annals of Ulster*; see Appendix C for the full entry) we know that the

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[852] It is a pity that Elizabeth Boyle's new study, *The Body and the Blood: Eucharistic Doctrine in Medieval Ireland*, (forthcoming in the Medium Ævum Monograph Series), could not be included here, but might nonetheless have added another dimension to this chapter.

[853] The common Irish term for book-shrine is *cumdach* (*e*DIL; literally meaning 'cover'); Michael Ryan, 'The Book of Kells and metalwork', (ed.) Felicity O'Mahoney, *The Book of Kells, Proceedings of a Conference at Trinity College Dublin 6-9 September 1992*, (Dublin, 1994), pp. 270-279 at pp. 273-4; Ryan states that: 'The word *cumdac* or *comdag* which appears here in the possessive case is not definitive. A variant of *cumtach*, it can mean either a cover, a case or shrine or more simply, ornament (eg *lebor chumdaigh* – a decorated book).'

[854] Lucas, 'Relics', p. 9.

[855] Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines*, pp. 36-7.

manuscript was discarded and the elaborate shrine retained by the perpetrators.[856][857] There is no doubt that such grand illuminated manuscripts were invaluable to the churches to which they belonged, but on special occasions they were perhaps taken outside to be read aloud.[858] However, at the same time we can discern that churches made a great effort in ensuring that books were protected by their enshrinement; many 'were designed as sealed containers, making access to their contents difficult.'[859] Furthermore, *Canóin Pátraic* contains the writings of Patrick himself, and such writings were undoubtedly held in high reverence: the crafting of a *cumdach* ('book-cover') for *Canóin Pátraic* is perhaps the primary expression of such veneration and protectiveness. There is also the 'Gospels of the Angels', which was one of the relics unearthed by Columba in 553 (*Annals of Ulster*; see Appendix B) and which was given to Columba. Ó Floinn suggests that this Gospel was possibly 'kept at Iona by the early ninth century', although we know that the entry itself, as argued elsewhere, was not recorded until the eleventh.[860]

At present the *Book of Armagh*, which contains the *Canóin Pátraic*, is preserved at Trinity College in Dublin, and has been described by Máire de Paor as 'the most important historical manuscript of Ireland prior to the twelfth century.'[861] In our period *Canóin Pátraic* may have only contained the writings of Patrick, i.e. his *Epistola* and *Confessio*, as well as the works of Tírechán and Muirchú – not Severus' *Dialogues* and the *Vita Martinii*, along with the Gospels that together comprise the *Book of Armagh*. Indeed, De Paor asserts 'it is probable that originally several of the divisions of the book were separate codices.'[862] The *Book of Armagh's* presence, in fact its very existence, throughout our period testifies to its importance as a relic and also of its bond to Armagh, as exemplified in the entries in *Mac Carthaigh's Book* for 1178 which show that the relic was only one of two returned to Armagh (see

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[856] We know the manuscript was recovered after 'twenty nights and two months' because of charter-entries in the *Book of Kells*, which state the manuscript was found 'under a sod' (John O'Donovan, *The Irish Charters in the Book of Kells*, (1846), trans. in CELT, 2008). As mentioned, book-shrines were designed as sealed containers, and the force with which the manuscript would have been torn from its reliquary may explain the missing folios rather than an unfinished state.

[857] Unless we consider Smyth's observations (p. 86) that such associative relics or other church treasures were, like corporeal relics, stolen for ransom. From this same *Annals of Ulster* entry we learn 'this Gospel was recovered after two months and twenty nights, its gold having been taken off it and with a sod over it.'

[858] See Carol Farr, *The Book of Kells: Its Function and Audience*, (London, 1997).

[859] Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines*, p. 37.

[860] Ó Floinn, '*Insignia Columbae* I', p. 153.

[861] de Paor, Máire, 'The relics of St Patrick', *Seanchas Ardmhacha*, Vol. 4 No. 2, 'The Patrician Year', (1961/2), pp. 87-91 at pp. 88; Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, pp. 1-3.

[862] De Paor, 'Relics of St Patrick', p. 88.

Appendix B). The *Book of Armagh* may have acted as compensation for the taking of *Bachall Ísu* to Dublin and for the recent *inventio* at Down.

Another famous Irish book-relic is the *Cathach*, a copy of the Psalter believed to have been personally written by Columba and datable to the sixth or seventh century.[863] From the information in various *vitae* on book-relics, noted by Lucas as including those of Ss Canice and Cronan (Co. Tipperary), St Declan of Ardmore and St Enda of Aran, we may conclude that these were also venerated as relics.[864] Declan's book-relic apparently performed miracles and the *Book of Cronan* apparently survived unblemished after forty days and nights in water, whilst angels presented the book containing the four Gospels presented along with a priestly chasuble which itself was 'held in great veneration in the saint's church.'[865] It is possible these books were once enshrined and chained to the main altar of the church when not taken outside for display, for example during certain saints' feasts. Other surviving book-shrines include the earliest intact extant example, the *Soiscéal Molaise*, dated to the eleventh century,[866] which coincides with the great age of enshrining relics in Ireland.

Book-relics were not just confined to the interior of a church and occasionally displayed in public, but like bells and staffs, they might also have been used as battle talismans. *Canóin Pátraic* was one such book-relic carried with relics of Patrick and other saints against Norman and Irish soldiers led by de Courcy; furthermore, the name of the *Cathach* ascribed to Columba literally means 'Battler'.[867]

Lucas also points out that the *Domnach Airgid* (below) kept in Brookeborough in Co. Fermanagh was loaned by their keepers for money so the hirers could swear oaths on it.[869] The profanation of book-relics could also bring doom to the perpetrator and at *Annals of the Four Masters* entry 1179.4 we learn the

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[863] Lucas, 'Relics', p. 9, and the *Cathach* is preserved in the Royal Academy, Dublin; Bourke states ('*Insignia Columbae* II, p. 164) that 'thus while there is no difficulty in accepting that material things might indeed have been transmitted from the age of the great monastic founders, we yet lack any item confidently attributable to a 6th-century figure – unless the *Cathach* of Columba is one such – much less to any 5th-century figure such as Patrick.' Ó Floinn suggests as there is no reference to the *Cathach* before the thirteenth century that this relic 'may be identified with the Gospels of St Martin of Tours, the *Soscéla Martain*, one of the chief relics of Derry in the 12th century (last heard of in 1182 in the *Annals of the Four Masters* III when taken by the Normans after the battle of Drumbo, Co Antrim, where it appeared as a battle talisman or *cathach*)' ('*Insignia Columbae* I', p. 153).
[864] Bourke, '*Insignia Columbae* II', p. 164; references to these *vitae* are found here.
[865] Ibid.
[866] Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines*, p. 38; the *Book of Armagh* and the *Cathach* were also enshrined in this century.
[867] *Cathach* translates as a relic/reliquary taken into battle, or bellicose/vehement (eDIL); Lucas, 'Relics', p. 17 for various entries detailing the relic's role in battle.
[869] Ibid. p. 22.

'Lord of Iveagh died of three nights' sickness, shortly after he had been expelled for violating the *Canóin Pátraic*.' Book-relics also assisted with the healing or cure of animals or people. In Conal Mageoghagan's seventeenth-century account we learn that Columba wrote three-hundred copies of the New Testament to leave to each of his churches, and that:

> 'Bookes have a strange property which is that if they or any of them had sunk to the bottom of the Deepest waters they would not lose one letter, signe or character … I saw an Ignorant man that had the same in his Custody, when sickness came upon cattle, for their Remedy put water on the booke and suffered it to rest there a while and saw alsoe cattle returne thereby to their former pristin state and the book to receave no loss.'[870]

Generally speaking, mentions of books are very common in the Lives of Patrick and they appear in various contexts. In Patrick's fifth-century world books were an essential component of his evangelical mission – at least according to the saint's hagiographers. As we know, Tírechán stated that 'books of the law and books of the Gospels' were among many items taken over the Shannon and 'left in new places'.[871] In this text we can even discern that books were perceived as deadly weapons of Christians and evidently treated with suspicion and fear:

> '[A]nd people saw [Patrick] with eight or nine men, holding written tablets in their hands like Moses. The pagans shouted as they saw them, (demanding) that one should kill the holy men, and said: "They have swords in their hands for killing people. In their hands they look wooden by day, but we believe they are swords of iron for shedding blood."'[872]

Shortly after we learn that Patrick 'wrote for [Sechallus] a copy of the Psalms', and along with Patrick's gift of apostolic and martyrs' relics, it is possible Tírechán

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[870] Ibid. p. 32; tales of books and their ordeal by water are common, as in one of the *Tripartite Life's* stories (p. 57) a druid backs out of such a contention with Patrick: 'And even as Nero said to Simon (Magus) and to Peter, said the King to them: "Cast your books into the water; and we will honour him whose books come out unhurt." Patrick replied: "I will do so." And the wizard said: "I am unwilling to go with him into the ordeal of water… because he had heard that Patrick used to baptise with water…' / '*Et amal roráidi Ner fri Simon [ocus fri] Petar, ait rex ad illos, "Libros uestros in aquam mittite, et illum cuius libri illaesi euaserint adorabimus." Respondit Patricius, "Faciam ego." Et dixus magus, "Nolo ego ad iudicium íre aquae cum ipso: aqua[m] enim deum habet."*
[871] Tírechán, *Collectanea*, I.1.
[872] Ibid. I.3: '*Patricius uenit de campo Arthicc ad Drummut Cerigi et ad Nairniu Toiciurt, ad Ailich Esrachtae, et uiderunt illum cum uiris octo aut nouem cum tabulis in manibus scriptis more Moysaico. Exclamauerunt gentiles super illos, ut sanctos occiderent, et dixerunt; 'Gladios in manibus habent ad occidendos homines. Videntur lignei in die apud illos, sed ferreos gladios aestimamus ad effundendum sanguinem.*'.

implies that Patrick's book was also kept at Armagh.[873] Patrick's gifts to Fíacc included a 'bell, a reliquary, a crozier and tablets',[874] the last of which indicates that books were also an essential component of clerical regalia. In the *Tripartite Life* Patrick bestows a gift of the Gospels (*soiscela*) to Mochae along with a credence-table (*menistir*) after baptising him; Patrick's gift of a book is also highly indicative of holy manuscripts being a staple of the Church. Indeed, near the end of the *Tripartite Life* we read of Sechnall (Secundinus) asking Patrick when he could write a panegyric for the saint, which was then completed near to Patrick's death, and was so important that Patrick rewarded Sechnall by equalling the number of hairs in his chasuble to the number of sinners accepted into heaven.[875]

The *Domnach Airgid*,[876] which has been dated to sometime between the sixth and the twelfth centuries, makes its debut appearance in the *Tripartite Life* as follows:

> 'And Patrick then left bishop Macc Cairthinn in Clochar, and with
> him [he placed] the [silver reliquary called] Domnach-Airgit, which
> had been sent to Patrick from heaven when he was at sea coming
> towards Ireland.'[877]

This might have contained a minute piece of the True Cross, as mentioned in the Middle Irish *Life of St Mac Cairthinn*; such an acquisition was not unheard of in Ireland during our period.[878] The relics contained in *Domnach Airgid* are not mentioned in the *Tripartite Life*, although the fourteenth-century Codex Salmanticensis containing the *Life of St Mac Cairthinn* does, indicating that these two

[873] Ibid. I.5: '…*et ordinauit illum in urbe Roma et dedit nomen nouum Sachellum; et scripsit illi librum psalmorum, quem uidi, et portauit ab illo partem de reliquís Petri et Pauli, Lauentii et Stefani quae sunt in Machi.*'

[874] *Additamenta*, 13.5: '*Dubbert Pátraic cumtach du Fíacc, idon clocc 7 menstir 7 bachall 7 poolire.*' .

[875] *Tripartite Life*, pp. 243-7: '*Asbert Sechnall friPatraic, Ciachiuin dogensa molud duitsi ?*''

[876] It is essentially a box made from yew wood, initially covered with bronze plating coated with a white metal which may have been painted with silver, although more recent analysis shows it was covered in tin and some copper lines and that its religious decoration was elaborate with one scene depicting Patrick, Columba and Brigit. The shrine's alternative title is 'great shrine of St Mac Cairthinn' (E. C. R. Armstrong and H. J. Lawlor, 'The *Domnach Airgid*', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 34C, (1917-1919), pp. 96-126 at pp. 98-100 and 119 respectively); the shrine currently resides in the National Museum of Ireland, Dublin.

[877] *Tripartite Life*, p. 177: '*Ocus forácaib Patraic íarom espoc macc Cairthinn hiClochur; ocus inDomnach Airgit less, doralad doPatraic donim diamboi formuir octudecht dochum nErenn.*'

[878] Armstrong and Lawlor, '*Domnach Airgid*', p. 104; Petrie argues that the relics listed in the *Life of St Mac Cairthinn* – none of which mentions a book, although this could be because it too obviously accommodated a book – were not kept inside *Domnach Airgid* but in the outer recesses of its case; for example, a piece of the True Cross is known to be under one of its gemstones (relics were stored in this fashion in the *Cathach*; pp. 115-6),.

accounts are sufficiently different enough to be mutually independent.[879] It was presumed today that the shrine belonged to St Tigernach's monastery at Clones, but it was more probably kept at Clogher since it is 'likely that the Gospels [it contained] were the Mass Book of St Cairthinn, the Abbot of Clones.'[880] This appears confusing, but the account in the *Tripartite Life* clarifies this by stating that Macc Cairthinn was left in Clogher along with the *Domnach Airgid* 'so that mutual visiting between us [i.e. Patrick and Macc Cairthinn] be continued.'[881] Perhaps we may be convinced that the *Domnach Airgid* was used to solidify alliances and to maintain good diplomacy between clerics.

Also in the *Tripartite Life* we encounter the already familiar story of Patrick's gifts of several relics to Bishop Muinis, among them a book-shrine 'in the likeness of the case of the book of John… by the relics of Peter and Paul and others'.[882] Nothing more is said about the book-shrine, but that it is always 'on the point of the shrine',[883] weights that such manuscripts were chained to or hidden under the altar and opened only during special Masses.

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[879] Armstrong and Lawlor, '*Domnach Airgid*', p. 113; among these relicsPatrick presented to St Mac Cairthinn was St Patrick's Staff, and is a detail which the *Tripartite Life* omits (p. 114). However, unlike Armstrong and Lawlor, perhaps this offers us but a glimpse into competitiveness between churches over Patrician relics and indicates that Clogher had ambitions to gain independence from Armagh whilst still retaining a claim over Patrick's cult. I do not agree with Armstrong's and Lawlor's dating of the *Tripartite Life* to the eleventh century and that the *Life of St Mac Cairthinn* can be so confidently dated to this period either, but we may be inticed to accept, if ever so cautiously, that 'the two accounts seem to be bifurcations of a tradition older than either of them' (Armstrong and Lawlor, p. 113); however.if this is true then one would expect to have seen it, at least in the Patrician material, beforehand, which is not the case. However, if competition for Patrician relics was occurring between these churches then the dating of both in or around the same periodwould make sense if considering the broad historical context ofArmagh's grip on ecclesiastical primacy, and indeed on Patrick's cult in the face of Glastonbury's claims to possess his corporeal relics. The shrine was opened in 1832 by William Betham when ten fragments containing Matthew's Gospel were found: http://www.ria.ie/library/special-collections/manuscripts/domnach-airgid.aspx (visited January 2011). Cormac Bourke, 'The Domnach Airgid in 2006', *Clogher Record*, Vol. 19 No. 1, (2006), pp. 31-42; George Petrie, 'An account of an ancient Irish reliquary, called the Domnach-Airgid', *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 18, (1835-8), pp. 14-24. Armstrong and Lawlor, '*Domnach Airgid*', p. 122, state that 'the manuscript found in it was probably put into it in some later century… the question of its date must be settled, if settlement is possible, by the palaeographers.'

[880] Armstrong and Lawlor, '*Domnach Airgid*', p. 119, which indicates that both churches had claims over the shrine, although I agree with the view that Clogher was its original home; quote from http://www.ria.ie/library/special-collections/manuscripts/domnach-airgid.aspx

[881] *Tripartite Life*, p. 177: '*Ocus forácaib Patriac íarom espoc macc Cairthinn hiClochur, ocus inDomnach Airgit less, doralad doPatraic donim diamboi formuir octudecht dochum nErenn*.'; Mac Cairthinn was reputedly a disciple of Patrick's, although Armstrong and Lawlor argued that this tradition 'was never current at Clogher… It may well have been invented to support the ever-growing pretensions of the see of Armagh' ('*Domanch Airgid*', p. 122).

[882] *Tripartite Life*, p. 87: '*ocus foraccaib laiss mind ali .i. cosmailius cometa libair Iohain nád mór hifail martrai Poi locus Petair ocus alaili ocus biid dogrés arbeinn innascríne.*'

[883] Ibid.: '*ocus bíid dogrés arbeinn innascríne.*'

A little before this story, there is another intriguing anecdote in the *Tripartite Life* as follows:

> 'When Patrick was journeying from Rome he met six young clerics… their books in their girdles… "Weakly has one gone there", said Patrick. "Make for you a wallet of this hide which is along with me. This has been under my seat and under my side in Ireland for twenty years, and at mass."… Patrick said, "At every ecclesiastical dwelling you set up, put your wallet into the earth, and the stead which swallows it, in that place it shall abide."… This is *Breifnech Pátraic* in Cluain Ernainn. It is doubtful what hide (it was), whether a seal's or a cow's. It was then adorned with gold and white bronze.'[884]

This does not appear in any other text during or beyond our period, and it is most likely the wallet referred to is a book-satchell which contained a copy of the Gospels. There is a similar story concerning a satchel being made from a whole seal-skin in Jocelin's *Vita* (below); in fact, this narrative is most probably the version found in the original *Tripartite Life* story. That a satchel was made to assist the priest who carried 'in his bosom all their volumes' signals that such leather-wares were used to clothe manuscripts. Moreover, the satchel's composition from an animal hide lends further weight to the notion that the wallet Patrick had crafted from his saddle was intended to encase a manuscript. That *Breifnech Pátraic* was 'adorned with gold and white bronze' in a reliquary attests to its prestige, even if we cannot account for its subsequent fate; however, it is possible that the relic was so-called because it was kept somewhere in Bréifne (i.e. the Uí Briúin Bréifne kingdom in the Cos. of Leitrim, Cavan and in parts of Sligo).

Altars, Chalices and other Liturgical Furnishings

The *Tripartite Life* in particular contains dozens of stories in which altars feature, although not all are definable as relics.[885] An altar is essentially 'the table on which

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[884] Ibid. p. 75: '*Ambaí Patricc forest inocáscnám Romae oc tuidecht úadi, ar do chóid fotri doRoim iarmbith ic foglaim isintír, cocomarnic fri seisiur mac clerech, ocus se gillai léu, ocus allibair ina criss dollotar díanailithri. "Isdinnim dodechas and," ol Patraic. "Dénid téig duib don crocundsa fil im coimitechtsa: ishé robai fomsuidiusa ocus fomtaeb inErind xxii. Annis ocus occoifriund." "Ceist, ocus intan scermait, coich uáin hí/" "Ni anse, " olPatraic, "nach congbail congaibid tabraid far téig I talmain, ocus dú dadaslugai isisinport bíend," quod impletum est. Is hísin in Breifnech Patraic iCluain Ernainn. Iscumtabairt cia crocann in rúon nó incethra. Immdernad iarom di ór ocus findruine*.' I am not exactly sure where Cluain Ernainn is, but it is probably somewhere in Bréifne as described later in this paragraph.

[885] There are various terms in the sources, but the most common include *altare* (Latin) / *altaria* (altar-stones; Tírechán II.1) and altoír (Irish; eDIL); Stokes has translated *menistir* as

the Eucharistic Sacrifice is offered. Mass may sometimes be celebrated outside a sacred place, but never without an altar, or at least an altar-stone'[886] Generally speaking, from the late twelfth century altars were constructed of stone or marble in Ireland,[887] and it is possible when new and larger stone churches were being constructed in the post-Conquest period, for example, that many larger stone altars once positioned outside were brought into the main congregational church. A smaller type of altar, the credence-table, is also present and particularly evident in the *Tripartite Life*. Credence-tables are small wooden or marble tables that usually reside in the eastern part of the church, on which 'a chalice, paten, corporal, and veil are placed'.[888] Stokes suggests that credence-tables in the *Tripartite Life* were largely manufactured by Tassach and thus crafted in metal, although it is just as likely that for portability purposes they were made from wood or stone, if permanently housed in the congregational church or situated outside it.[889] Furthermore, Stokes' translation of *menistir* as 'credence-table' rather than 'box/case/insignia', may signify that a type of wooden or metal case, or reliquary, was actually meant in some instances, the top of which was consecrated as an altar but was hollow enough to contain other liturgical items and relics.[890] One such example of a portable altar-reliquary is dated to AD 1200 from Hildesheim, Lower Saxony in Germany, and currently on display at the British Museum in London.[891] In one instance in the druidic prophecy it was said

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credence-table (box/case/insignia; eDIL), though I have doubt about his translation of this term in every instance because sometimes, as we shall discover, *menistir* clearly refers to a credence-table, whereas in other instances it raises considerable doubt over what the object actuallyis.

[886] *New Advent Catholic Encyclopaedia*: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01346a.htm (visited March 2011).

[887] In 1186 the *Constitutions* of Archbishop John Comyn of Dublin prohibited priests from administering the sacraments from a wooden table and states that altars must to be made of stone or marble (*Book of Obits*, p. xx n. y). However, in April of 1070 the replacement of wooden altars with altars of stone was decreed in canon 5 of the Legatine Council at Winchester, the canons of which were copied into a book of ecclesiastical law especially made for Wulfstan, and canon 5 is clearly stated in William of Malmesbury's *Life of Wulfstan* , which tells us that the wooden ones were being destroyed inthe previous century (*William of Malmesbury Saints' Lives*, (ed.) Winterbottom, pp. 128-0 n. 1). It is evident that from the later eighth / early ninth centuries that some churches were being built over the position of external altars, as perhaps is evident from the story of Patrick's birth in *Secunda* and *Quarta*, 2 and 1 respectively; *Secunda's* version is as follows: '*Hic autem natus est super lapidem, qui adhuc honorifice habetur. Omnes enim periurantes iuxta se uident illum aquam effundere quasi flentem falsum testimonium; alias uero in sua natura stat.*'

[888] *New Advent Catholic Encyclopaedia* online: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04476a.htm

[889] *Tripartite Life*, p. 251; Stokes, p. clxxxvii, *Tripartite Life.*

[890] Ibid. pp. 41, 87, 191, 251; in all instances Stokes translates *menistir* and its variations in this manner. The purpose of a priest having such a portable altar would also be to administer the Eucharist to the sick and infirm, for example.

[891] http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/pe_mla/p/portable_altar .aspx The relics of some forty saints are kept in this altar-reliquary, which was only very recently opened, and mainly contain the bones/dust of various saints, with one small wrapping tagged as containing a piece of John the Evangelist's golden hair.

that Patrick's 'dish (*mías*, or paten) will be in the east of his house', which is possibly an error as *mías* was glossed over with *altoir*, and should therefore be read as 'altar-slab';[892] in other cases where *menistir* is used, however, it is not clear whether they in fact refer to credence-tables. It is puzzling why certain altars came to be venerated as relics, but there are nonetheless clear traditions of this in our Lives of Patrick.

Immediately following *Bachall Ísu* on the Christ Church relic-list is the *Superaltare Marmoreum Sancti Patricii*, or the 'leper's altar-relic'.[893]   Aside from Christ Church's claim to it in the later twelfth century, there are no definitive indications of where the leper's altar-relic resided before its appearance in Dublin; as Todd observes, 'of its subsequent history nothing is known.'[894] The *Tripartite Life* contains the conception of this altar-relic,[895] and from it we may discern its original home in Domnach Pátraic,[896] or Donaghpatrick in Co. Meath, where Patrician relics might also have been collected:[897]

> 'As Patrick went east from Domnach Pátraic to Tara… his flagstone
> (*lecc*) came after him eastwards to the hill, where stands the cross…
> And Patrick left a number of his household at his flagstone in
> Domnach Pátraic, and this he said: "Whosoever should outrage it,
> his life and his realm be cut off." Cinead, son of Igalach, king of
> Tara outraged it… three drops of blood trickled from it at once and
> did not cease until Cinead offered to Patrick three *senclethi* with their
> land.'[898]

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[892] *Tripartite Life*, p. 251 and 35 respectively; Stokes, p. clxxxvi, *Tripartite Life*, stated that because it is positioned in the eastern part of the church it is undoubtedly referring to a credence-table.

[893] *Book of Obits*, p. xx; Patrick's association with lepers is clearly present throughout our period, as with other saints, such as Brigit, and there are many diverse contexts explaining why this is, but it can be broadly related to the medieval perception that Christ Himself was a leper (Stokes, *Tripartite Life V1*, p. cxcvi).

[894] *Book of Obits*, p. xxii

[895] Ibid. pp. xx-xxi; Todd presents a Latin passage from a version of the *Tripartite Life* found in John Colgan's *Trias Thaumaturga* (p. 123), which contains the original story of the leper's altar not dissimilar to the version inJocelin's *Vita* below.

[896] It is clear Donaghpatrick (certainly during the *Tripartite Life's* composition) was an important church to Armagh, since Patrick baptised Conall son of Níall and 'blessed his seed forever', which obviously marks Armagh's claims over its founding; thus it is not inconceivable Donaghpatrick would collect relics in honour of its founding saint.

[897] Ó Floinn, 'The foundation relics', p. 89.

[898] *Tripartite Life*, p. 73: '*Oc dul do Patraic sair do Temraig [co Loegaire, uair rogniset cairdeas,] o Domnach Patraic, dobert bendacht for Conall macc Neill. O doluid ass dofoid a lecc inna degaid isintailich sair .i. dú itá inchross oconmuiliund osindusciu... Ocus foracaib Patraic fairend dia muintir occalicc inDomnach Patraic, ocus ised adunairt: "Cibbe nodasaraigfed ropad timdibe saeguil ocus flaithiusa do. Rodosáraig Cináed macc Irgalaig rí Temrach .i. rogeguin fer forachomairchi, ocus doreprendset tri bainne fola cissi focetóir ocus ní roansat do silid coro edbart Cináed macc Congalaig tri sencleithi cona ferann doPatraic .i. Uachtar Nessa ocus Ói Midgnai ocus Tír meicc Conaigg ó chill sair, ocus ni ro an in tress*

This 'flagstone' (*lecc*) is evidently a relic of some importance given the punishment to profaners and because of Patrick's personal connection to it. It may be reckoned that the flagstone in this instance is an altar because the altar is always the focal point of any new church, which Domnach Pátraic clearly is. At some point later, however, and if it is indeed the leper's altar-relic as suggested by Todd, then it must have been acquired by Armagh, either by gift or by force, and it may have been clothed in a reliquary prior to its relocation to Dublin in the later twelfth century.[899] However, as we shall see from the next excerpt in Jocelin's *Vita*, whether these are part of the same tradition is difficult to gauge.

The altar-relic's reappearance in Jocelin's *Vita* best explains this link, even if it echoes the original story in the *Tripartite Life* and the version in the mid- twelfth-century *Vita Tertia*;[900] here is Jocelin's account, in which Patrick was:

> '[A]bout to embark with his disciples at a British port [when] a certain leper standing on the shore met him… [Patrick] listened to the prayers of the poor leper; but the sailors and the others forbade him, saying that the vessel was already enough loaded… Then the saint… cast into the sea an altar of stone that had been consecrated and given to him by the Pope… and caused the leper to sit on top of it… The stone thus loaded was … floating along with the ship… and the altar being found with its freight… [Patrick] reproved his disciples...'[901]

The *Tripartite Life's* version also included how the altar was a papal gift to Patrick and of the miracle which likely elevated it to 'relic-status'.[902] The leper's altar is not

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bainde béos cotoracht féin foachroiss .i. coro marb Flaithbertach mac Loingsig Cináed macc Irgalaig icath Droma Corcán.'.

[899] *Book of Obits*, p. xxii.

[900] *Tertia*, 27.

[901] Jocelin, *Vita*, XXVII: '*B. Patricius iter accelerans aduersus Hiberniam, cum in portu in Britanniæ finibus sito, nauem cum suis transfretaturus conscenderet, quidam leprosus littori astans se Sancto obtulit, obsecrans & obtestans in nomine Domini Iesu quatenus ipsum in naui secum assumptum, in Hiberniam transueheret. Vir Dei pietatis visceribus affluens, [leprosum in nauim non admissum,] annuit precibus pauperis miserandi: sed nautæ contradicebant & ceteri, qui erant in naui, asserentes, quod nauis satis onusta esset, & ipse foret omnibus oneri & horrori. Sanctus de Dominicæ potentiæ clementia confidens, altare lapideum sacratum, a Domno Papa sibi donatum, super quod diuina mysteria celebrare consueuerat, in pelagus proiecit, ac super illud leprosum sedere fecit. Sed horret animus, hæret stylus exprimere quod accidit diuinitus. Tabula illa lapidea taliter sarcinata ferebatur super aquas, [super aræ lapidem facit transfretare:] regente illam lapide angulari; ac contra naturam natans, nauique collaterans, cum ea concertabat pari cursu; sicque eodem momento in eodem loco applicabatur littori. Applicatis itaque omnibus prospere, inuentoque altari cum onere suo, sonat gratiarum actio, & vox laudis in ore sancti Præsulis, exprobratque discipulis & socijs itineris incredulitatem ac duritiam cordis, emollire moliens corda lapidea in carnea, ad exercenda opera caritatis.*'

[902] The motif whereby a stone is able to float across the sea behind a boat carrying a saint is not unheard of, and for example St Declan's stone in Ardmore in Co. Waterford is also 'believed to have floated from Rome in the wake of St Declan's ship, bearing a bell which the

stated anywhere in the Lives as capable of performing healing and curing miracles, though it facilitated aid to the leper by carrying him when others refused, and thus one could envisage that pilgrims with various ailments – especially lepers – may have come into the presence of such a relic to seek a cure and solace.

Another explanation underlies a tradition in a Glastonbury source which mentions an altar but not the leper; to quote William's early- twelfth-century *Vita Patricii*:

> 'After [Patrick] executing his mission with vigour, at the end of his life, he came back home, and landed in Cornwall, voyaging on his altar, which is still held in great veneration by the Cornish by its holiness, and its value in the treatment of the sick.'[903]

It is possible that this relic, alongside the claim over Patrick's corporeal relics, also highlights the level of competition between Armagh and Glastonbury. However, we cannot be certain that both altars were in fact one and the same relic, although the connection between our saint and the floating altar projects its status as a known type of Patrician relic of considerable value.

As mentioned, altars appear in Tírechán's *Collectanea* of the later seventh century, but only in the context of their use and distribution by Patrick as essential liturgical objects of ministry, for example alongside patens and chalices.[904] By the time we get to the *Tripartite Life*, altars are not among the many items Patrick takes across the Shannon;[905] perhaps this is a sign of the times, when new, larger stone churches were beginning to appear in Ireland and when some larger stone altars were brought in from their original positions elsewhere. In the *Annals of the Four Masters* at entry 1143.13 (see Appendix B for full entry) there is a clear indication that if some saints' altars were themselves deemed to be relics, then it is logical to assume that some others may have been used to house relics.[906] In the *Tripartite Life* Bishop

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saint had forgotten to bring with him. It was claimed that anyone who could creep under the stone would be cured of rheumatic pains' (Harbison, *Pilgrimage*, p. 136).

[903] William of Malmesbury, *Vita Patricii*, pp. 336-7: '*Ille igitur munus uniunctum gnauiter exsecutus, et extremis diebus in patriam reuertens, super altare suum Cornubiam appulit, quod hodieque apud incolas magnae uenerationi est propter santitudinem et utilitatem propter infirmorum salutem*'; *De Antiquitate*, 8.

[904] Tírechán, *Collectanea*, II.1.

[905] *Tripartite Life*, p. 147; the author stated that 'thrice Patrick crossed the Shannon' with these objects.

[906] Altars were common features in the inventories of medieval English churches, where at York, for example, we can discern that their reliquaries were often elaborately decorated in precious metals and encrusted with gemstones (*Book of Obits*, p. xx); however, whether these altars reportedly worked miracles and were thus perceived as 'relics' is unknown to me, but it is clear that theyalmost certainly contained relics; Snoek, *Medieval Piety*, pp. 209-26 for more on the 'relic altar' and the placing of relics near to or in the altar; he does not point out any examples similar to some of those displayed in our Patrician Lives however.

Muinis returned from Rome to Connacht and sought to establish his church without opposition; on hearing about such opposition, however, Patrick miraculously moved Loch Cróni from the warriors who resisted Muinis' residency and left with, among other relics, 'his *Derg-derc*, that is his credence-table (*meinistir*), which used to be in his own keeping [and] it was made of bronze'.[907] It is likely that the *menistir* was not a credence-table as Stokes concludes, but an altar-relic and venerated as such since it was a personal gift from Patrick to that new foundation.

Flagstones[908] are common in the *Tripartite Life*, where we learn that Patrick himself was born on such a flagstone (*lecc*) in Nempthor (Old Kilpatrick, Scotland), and that 'when anyone commits perjury under it pours forth water as if it were bewailing the false testimony. But if his oath be true the stone remains in its proper nature.'[909] The *Tripartite Life*'s version is elaborated from *Secunda* and *Quarta*, but particularly the latter text, where we learn that 'a church was built over the spring in which [Patrick] was baptised. And that spring flowing out next to the altar has the shape of a cross'.[910] 'Flagstones' appear in our Lives in various contexts, and some were consecrated and used as altars outside the congregational church.[911]

However flagstones also appear in other contexts, such as in the *Tripartite Life* when Patrick 'went to Ailech of the Kings, and blessed the fortress, and left his flagstone there, prophesying that kings and ordained persons out of Ailech would be over Ireland'.[912] This might signify the building of a new church, one built around the focal point of the liturgical space provided by this external altar; in this instance,

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[907] *Tripartite Life*, p. 87: '*Foraccaib Patraic hiForgnaidi ocus foraccaib a Deirgdeirc leis .i, meinistir nobith fó a coim fadesin…*'

[908] Flagstones appear most frequently in the *Tripartite Life* as per Stokes' translation of the most commonly used term *lecc* (s) *leaca* (pl) (flat/slab/rock; eDIL), but there are other terms likely used elsewhere including *tuigithir* (covers; eDIL), and *béillic* (stone/flagstone; eDIL).

[909] *Tripartite Life*, p. 9: '*Concess ainim a mathar: di Frangcaibh dí, ocus síur do Mártan hí HinNemthur, immorro, rogenair intí noebPatraic. Occus ind lec fors[a] rogenair intí Patraic, cech oen dogní luga neithig foithi dofuisim husce amal bid oc cained ingúforgaill. Mád fír, immorro, a luga, tairsid in cloch in a haicned choir.*'; Patrick's cult expanded into Scotland and during the ninth / tenth centuries the saint's 'birth-stone' must have attracted pilgrims and possibly also served as a meeting place equivalent to a modern courthouse, where the oaths and compacts were secured.

[910] *Secunda* and *Quarta*, p. 21; the version in the former is as follows: '*Aedificata est autem ecclesia super fontem in quo baptizatus est. Ipse autem fons est iuxta altare, habens figuram crucis, ut periti aiunt.*'

[911] One example is the altar in the south-west corner of the main enclosure within the Caiseal on Inishmurray (around eight miles off the coast of Co. Sligo), which has a pillar and a number of stones around it. The *Altóir Beag*, the 'Small Altar or Station', is 'only one of a number of finely carved stele [i.e. wooden or stone slabs] preserved in the Caiseal, though not always in their original position', and Harbison notes that such altars were stopping points for pilgrims walking around the island (*Pilgrimage*, pp. 102-4); see Jerry O'Sullivan and Tómas Ó Carragáin, *Inishmurray: Monks and Pilgrims in an Atlantic Landscape*, *Volume 1, Archaeological Survey and Excavations*, (Cork, 1997-2000).

[912] *Tripartite Life*, p. 153: '*Luid Patraic co Ailech naRíg corobennachastar indún ocus cofarcaib aleic and cotairchet rígu ocus ordnidiu for Érenn aAiliuch.*'

however, it is likely a stone chair on which kings were inaugurated, as argued by Elizabeth Fitzpatrick. [913]   Another example is when Patrick visits Munster and Oengus, son of Natfraich, where he 'gave them welcome and brings them to the fort to the place where Patrick's flagstone is today.'[914] It is also clear from our Lives that flagstones were more than mere geographical markers orientating travellers to their destination or coverings for graves. On reading the context in which may of these flagstones are set it appears that some were used as seats for royal inauguration or as large external altars, which by the time the *Tripartite Life* was composed were possibly firm focal points in the new type of stone churches.

By the time Jocelin wrote his *Vita*, we discover that in a different province from Munster another altar attributed to Patrick was certainly venerated as a relic:

> 'And it was in the heart of the saint to visit Connacht; and chiefly for the vision which he had heretofore beheld in his sleep… [Patrick] prepared for his journey, blessed Conallus, and in memorial of himself he left in the aforementioned city his altar of stone, for the relieving of the sick and for the working of miracles; but when he proceeded on his journey the altar followed, nor to the eyes of any man was it visible how it was carried… He might show unto all the holiness of Patrick, cause this holy stone to be moved without human hand… And the prelate… placed it in a fixed place. And from that day it did remain fixed, yet ceased it not to shine in miracles, as if the virtue of Patrick had remained in it or flowed from it.'[915]

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[913] Elizabeth Fitzpatrick, '*Leaca* and Gaelic inauguration ritual in medieval Ireland', Richard Welander, David J. Breeze, Thomas O. Clancy (eds.), *The Stone of Destiny, Artefact and Icon*, (Edinburgh, 2003), pp. 107-22; Fitzpatrick argues that the abovementioned example was in fact one which 'the saint ordained for the making of future kings' (p. 34).

[914] *Tripartite Life*, p. 197: '*Ocus robathis íarsuidiu maccu Natfráich ocus firu Muman olchenai.*'

[915] Jocelin, *Vita*, LV: '*Sedit cordi S. Patricij Connactiam regionem visitare; & præcipue, propter oraculum sibi quondam in somnis factum, quo inuitaretur ab infantulis vteris matrum illius regionis inclusis, patriotis illis regnum Dei optabat euangelizare. Proposuit postea circuire totam insulam, [in discessu] & perambulare eam, vt ad Christum conuerteret eam. Sanctus ad iter procinctus, Conallum carissimum suum benedictione muniuit, & in sui memoriam in ciuitate præscripta, quasi quoddam pignus sanctitatis suæ, [suum Conallo altare relinquit:] altare suum lapideum, ad salutem languentibus conferendam, signorum effectiuum reliquit: cumque iter arriperet altare illud sequens illum egrediebatur, nec alicuius hominis oculis perceptibile fuit a quo portabatur: sed (vt reor) eius potentia & virtute, lapis ille post S. Patricium portabatur in via, cuius nutu de Iudæa in Chaldæam transuectus est Habacuc Propheta. Vt enim lapis ille angularis, Iesus Christus cunctis ostenderet Patricij sanctitatem, absque humana manu ferri fecit illum sanctum lapidem. Respiciens Antistes sanctus altare modo tam miraculoso post se gestari, exultabat in Domino, reuersusque collocauit illud in loco idoneo. Ab illo ergo die vsque in præsens fixum perstitit, sed miraculis coruscare non destitit, acsi virtus Patricij mansisset in eo, aut manasset ex eo.*'

This altar must also have served as a popular pilgrimage destination, particularly because Jocelin acclaimed its healing and curative properties and because it miraculously follows Patrick, just as the altar carrying the leper did.

Altars are the focal point of the liturgical space within churches, where the corporeal relics of saints and other important holy persons were most often placed near to it according to rank. The Second Council of Nicaea in 787 stipulated that relics were required for the consecration of altars.[916] This may explain the existence of some altars as relics or reliquaries from this time, which coincides with the ever-blossoming information about all manner of relic-groupings in our Lives and in other sources. As Ó Carragáin points out:

> '[S]aints were usually moved from their original humble gravesite…
> to jewel-encrusted shrines in prominent positions… next to the high
> altar… This was seen as a form of canonisation because they were
> taking their place at the altar alongside the martyrs, whom St John
> depicted as calling to God from the foot of the altar...'[917]

However, Geary notes that in the tenth century:

> '[S]ome tension between the Eucharistic devotion and that accorded
> to other relics was evident in the Cluniac tradition. Odo of Cluny
> tells of the relics of a saint which ceased working when exposed on
> the altar… The next three centuries saw vastly increased devotion to
> the eucharist. Ralph Glaber reports eucharists working miracles
> usually performed by saints.'[918]

The examples of altar-relics in the Patrician Livesare all personally connected to Patrick, and the abovementioned quote highlights how much of an important symbol the altar was to experiencing closeness to God. Another common trait is that three of the altars are depicted as miraculously following the saint – the flagstone in Donaghpatrick, the leper's altar and the Connacht altar – and implies a reciprocal relationship between the altar as a stage for offering spiritual intimacy with God (Eucharist / Transubstantiation) and it in turn being symbolically bonded to Patrick and thus expressing Divine favour toward his calling as a cleric and status as a saint. Generally speaking, it is clear that altars were presented as a central platform for the administration of the Eucharist. One has to wonder, however, if the altars and other

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[916] Canon VII in Medieval Sourcebook: http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/nicea2.html
[917] Ó Carragáin, 'Architectural setting', p. 139; there were also frequent processions for the washing of altars in the medieval period, which also demonstrates the significance of their central position in the liturgical space (Roger E. Reyonolds, 'The drama of medieval liturgical processions', *Revue de Musicologie*, T. 86e No. 1er, (2000), pp. 127-142 at p. 134).
[918] Geary, *Furta Sacra*, pp. 28-9, describes the Eucharist as 'one relic among others' (p. 28).

liturgical items that Tírechán stated were gifted by Patrick to various churches were held as relics also, since they were once in the possession ofPatrick whilst he was physically alive.

Other liturgical items, namely patens and chalices, are also mentioned in our Lives. Patens appear frequently, particularly in the *Tripartite Life*, and in all cases none appear to have been venerated as relics but are mentioned among other liturgical items that Patrick brought to Ireland.[919] There are instances when miracles are attached to chalices in our texts,[920] but these are very few and far between and do not necessarily indicate their status as relics either; consider this from Jocelin's *Vita*:

> '[Patrick] stood before the altar… when an evil-doer… thrusting with accursed boldness a rod through the window, overturned the chalice… suddenly the earth… swallowed up this magician… and the chalice… stood erect before him, being raised by the divine Power…'[921]

Whilst a miracle has occurred here, the emphasis is clearly fixed on preserving the holy Sacrifice it contains; nothing suggests the chalice's status as a relic, although it may have been held as such at that church but has not been documented. There is one story in which a chalice may have held relic-status where we learn from the *Tripartite Life* that Patrick leaves it along with a paten to a nun called Atracht in a church Patrick founded which is named after her.[922] Once again there is no known evidence for the status of these items.

Another intriguing little anecdote lies inBook I of the *Tripartite Life*, and is set in Strathclyde in Scotland:

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[919] Tírechán's *Collectanea*, II.1; the Latin for paten is *patinus* and the Irish is *teisc*, which is a loanword from the Latin *discus/mulloe* (Stokes, p. clxxxvi, *Tripartite Life,* Vol. 1).

[920] The Irish for chalice is *cailech*, the Latin is *calix* (*Collectanea*, II, 1); Stokes suggests the chalices made by Tassach in the *Tripartite Life* (p. 251) are bronze (p.clxxxvi, *Tripartite Life* Vol.1).

[921] Jocelin, *Vita*, XXXIII: *'Quadam die cum in eadem ecclesia almificus Antistes Patricius astaret altari diuina mysteria agens, quidam maleficus filius perditionis, satelles Sathanæ, accessu ausuque execrabili foris stans, [Mago qui calicē euerterat absorpto a terra,] per fenestram cum virga calicem euertit, & sacrosancta sacrificia sacrilegus super altare effudit. Dominus autem scelus tam horribile in instanti terribiliter vindicauit, hominemque nefarium nouo, imo innouato modo e medio tulit. Repēte enim terra terribili hiatu aperiens os suum, sicut quondam Dathan & Abiron, deglutiuit magum illum, descenditque viuus vsque ad infernum. Absorpto vero mago, tellus discissa & dirupta hiatum contrahendo conclusit; sed fossa ibidem remanens, cernentibus diuinæ vindictæ indicium ostendit. Contristatus autem sanctus sacrifex super effuso calice, cum grauissimis lamentis se afficeret, [Sanguis Christi ex integro calici restituitur.] calix cum diuinis sacrificijs integris loco suo compositus diuina virtute coram illo erectus stetit, nec vllum vestigium effusi libaminis vspiam apparuit.'*

[922] *Tripartite Life*, p. 109: *'Forothaig iarsin Cill Atrachtae ingGrecraidi ocus ingen Tálan inti… Machari indíu. Docoras casal donim inucht Patraic. "Bíth lat inchasal, achaillech," ol Patraic. "Nato," olsí, "ní dam doratad acht dut bonnae.'.*

'Then said his foster-mother: "Though every other child brings honey to his foster-mother, you bring none to me." Then Patrick took a vessel to the water, so that it was turned into honey, and it healed every ailment and disease to which it was applied, that is, they held it as a relic.'[923]

We can only guess that the 'vessel' was a small drinking cup of some kind, not dissimilar to a chalice. Certainly, when Patrick blessed the water and it turned to honey this in a sense it is a metaphor for the taking of the Eucharist and benefiting from the union with God that clearly heals physical as well as spiritual ills;[924] the vessel becomes a functional chalice and was likely kept inside a church, which was probably near Dumbarton, Scotland. This story reappears in Jocelin's *Vita*, but again there is no mention of it as a relic.[925]

Only seven early medieval chalices, 'of undoubted insular workmanship', survive from the British Isles, and among them two Irish chalices stand out for their high level of craftsmanship: one from Ardagh and another from Derrynaflan, both of which are silver with two handles.[926] In the *Tripartite Life* we also have examples of glass chalices, one of which lay at each of corner of a subterranean altar which Patrick claimed lay under the ground, saying: "Beware of breaking the edges of the excavation."[927] We can describe these ecclesiastical treasures in our present age as 'relics' of early medieval Irish metalworking, but whether they were relics in the sense of the term applied throughout this thesis is unknown.

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[923] Ibid. p. 15: '*Dobeirtis meic an poirt in roalt Pátraic mil dia mait[h]rib asna miltenaib. Is and [sin] adrubairt a muime fri Patraic, "Cia dobera cech mac [aile] mil dia muime, ni thabraidsi damsa." Roucc iarsin Patraic lestar laiss docum ind usque, ocus rolín ocus rosén ind usque corosóad immil, ocus roíc cech ngalar ocus cech nancess forsa tardad .i. roboi do cretraib léo.*'.

[924] Relates to the story of Christ changing the water into wine at a marriage in Cana at the request of his mother, which is normally a pre-cursor of the Mass (John 2:1-11).

[925] Jocelin, *Vita*, X.

[926] Michael Ryan, 'The formal relationships of insular early medieval Eucharistic chalices', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 90C, (1990), pp. 281-356 at pp. 285-6; see p. 286 for the list of the other surviving chalices. The Ardagh chalice (p. 289) belongs to the eighth century, whilst the Derrynaflan example likely originated from the same century as the Derrynaflan paten, dated to the mid to later eighth / early ninth centuries (p. 289). Although the physical survival of chalices and patens from our period may seem considerably small for Ireland and elsewhere, this is supplemented by the surviving texts, and there are many examples in Ryan's article. Also see Ryan's 'Early Irish Chalices', *Irish Arts Review (1984-1987)*, Vol. 1 No. 1, (1984), pp. 21-25 at p. 25, for more on the context of Irish chalices.

[927] *Tripartite Life*, p. 95: '*Ocus do dechatar tar Sinaind cu Dumai Graid. Isisuidiu roortne Ailbi uasalsacart, ocus iseisidi itá iSenchói láhúa Aillella. Ocus roincossc Patraic dó altóir chlochta isléib ua nAilella fotalmain, ocus ceitri cailig glainid[i] foracheithri uillib (.i. altares), et dixit: "Cauendum ne frangantur ore fosure." Inter nepotes enim Ailella fuit, et baptiz[a]uit Maneum sanctum quem ordinavit episcopus Bronus filius Iccni, qui est ieCaisel hIrroe, seruus Dei, socius Patricii.*'

Michael Ryan points out that 'Western European chalices have attracted a considerable amount of attention in recent scholarship' as compared to insular chalices.[928] The earliest handled chalice to survive from the medieval Westis found with a small rectangular paten among a sixth-century hoard of coins at Gourdon near Chalon-sur-Saône, and which is now preserved in Paris.[929] Once again, however, we cannot definitively claim that this chalice was venerated as a relic, though it is a relic of the medieval past. Another important chalice was believed to have been crafted by St Eloi (d.659), and is made of gold and was kept at Chelles until its destruction in 1792;[930] it is possible this chalice was revered as a relic, but again this is unknown.

However, some chalices were clearly venerated as relics during our period, and this was not a practice restricted to Ireland and has roots in a more ancient milieu. Consider this extract from the Gospel of Matthew (26:27):

> '[Christ] took a cup and… He gave it to [the disciples] saying "drink this all of you; for this is my covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins… I shall not drink again from the fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."'

The cup, or chalice, is not mentioned in any other context in the New Testament except in the story of the Last Supper, which is the foundation for the Christian ritual of the Eucharist. Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis* for Arculf's account of the chalice believed by pilgrims to be kept in the Holy Sepulchre in Jerulsalem, which apparently also contained the sponge soaked in Christ's blood as presented to him on Calvary and which has been widely confused with the Holy Grail; Adomnán wrote:

> 'Also… there is a chapel in which is the Chalice of our Lord… The Chalice is silver, has the measure of a Gaulish pint, and has two handles fashioned on either side... The Holy Arculf saw it through an opening of the perforated lid of the reliquary where it reposes, and he touched it with his own hand which he had kissed. And all the people of the city flock to it with great veneration.'[931]

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[928] Ryan, 'Formal relationships', p. 293; some chalices have survived encrusted with precious gemstones, and chalices with two handles are apparently rarer than those without (p. 300).
[929] Ibid. pp. 294-5.
[930] Ibid. p. 307.
[931] Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis*, 7 p. 51 : '*Inter illam quoque Gologaothanam basilicam et martirium quaedam inest exedra, in qua calix Domini, quem a se benedictum propria manu in caena pridiae quam pateretur ipse conuiua apostolis traditit conuiuantibus; qui argenteus calix sextarii Gallici mensuram habens duasque in se ansulas ex utraque parte altrinsecus contenens conpositas. In quo utique calice illa inest spungia quam aceto plenam hisopo circumponentes fertur, Dominus post resurrectionem cum apostolis conuiuans bibit. Quem sanctus Arculfus uidit, et per illius scrinioli ubi reconditus habetur operculi foramen pertusi manu tetigit propria osculatus. Quem uidelicet calicem uniuersus ciuitatis populos cum ingenti ueneratione frequentat.*'

It is widely believed in the Church that the cup of the Last Supper, or the Holy Grail, was protected by St Peter who used it to administer Mass and who subsequently took it with him to Rome. Clearly there is a profound symbolism attached to the chalice as a container for administering the Holy Sacrifice, and it is not too much of a leap of faith to presume that chalices, like the Holy Grail, were venerated as relics because they were continually in the Mass in contact with Christ or the saints.[932] As Michael Ryan eloquently states in the context of Adomnán's account of the Holy Chalice:

> '[S]uch ideas of a chalice design might have been transmitted to those who lived too far away to go and see for themselves… and could have played their part in forming fashions in the far west of Europe more or less in step with those of the great churches of Christendom. The fact that local technologies and style of ornament had to be adapted to reproduce the imported forms, together with the genius of the individual artist would be sufficient enough to account for the emergence of what is essentially a new style of communion cup.'[933]

Other chalices and liturgical church furnishings, however much they were adorned with precious jewels, were most likely gifts made by various wealthy families to local churches.[934] Doherty states that:

> 'What wealth existed in the forms of precious metals was transformed into ornaments for display… Did kings retain a claim on such gifts as chalices and patens? Cogitosus writing in the mid-seventh century tells us that the treasures of kings were in secure

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[932] Interestingly, there is a legend that 'the crucifixion of Jesus lore has it that Joseph of Arimathea (who according to the Bible donated his own tomb for Christ's interment after the Crucifixion) came to Britain, bearing the Holy Grail - the cup used by Christ at the Last Supper and later by Joseph to catch his blood at the crucifixion. When Joseph landed on the island of Avalon, he set foot on Wearyall Hill - just below the Tor. Exhausted, he thrust his staff into the ground, and rested. By morning, his staff had taken root - leaving a strange oriental thorn bush - the sacred Glastonbury Thorn. For safe keeping, Joseph is said to have buried the Holy Grail just below the Tor at the entrance to the Underworld… a spring, now known as Chalice Well, flowed forth and the water that emerged brought eternal youth to whosoever would drink it.' See: http://www.glastonburyabbey.com/arimathea This legend appears to post-dates the twelfth century and originates in the early thirteenth, which John Scot asserts helps to date the fake *Charter of St Patrick* in *De Antiquitate* to before *c.*1230 (for this text's complex textual traditions see *De Antiquitate*, p. 34-36); for further reading see: Felicity Riddy, 'Glastonbury, Joseph of Arimethea and the Grail in John Hardyns's Chronicle', (ed.) James Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 269-284; this article previously appeared in Lesley Abrams and James Carley (eds.), *The Archaeology and History of Glastonbury Abbey, Essays in Honour of the Ninetieth Birthday of C A Raleigh Radford*, (Woodbridge, 1991), pp. 317-331.
[933] Ryan, 'Early Irish Chalices', p. 25.
[934] See *Annals of Ulster* entry at 1197.2 quoted in the next paragraph for examples of this; I wonder if the 'great altar of the church of Daire [i.e. in Derry]' was actually venerated as a relic or contained relics associated with him?

safe-keeping at Kildare. Was such treasure in the form of a church plate?'[935]

There is also evidence in the Irish annals for various products of metalworking being gifted by kings to churches. We have already come across such a gift of a precious metal at *Annals of Ulster* entry 947, when 'the Cenél Eógain gave the full measure of the *Finnfaídech* of pure silver to Patrick.' Interestingly, thefts of such liturgical treasures also occur, for example one particularly elaborate theft is detailed at *Annals of Ulster* entry 1197.2 (see Appendix C for full entry). Clearly these are liturgical artefacts, and the ascription of some to various saints or secular donors may denote their veneration as relics. However, it is their economic worth and the secular donors attached to the chalices in particular that best indicates their donation to the church in question by powerful local families.

When we think about Patrick's experience in his own fifth century *Confessio* to participate in the pagan world of gift and exchange, he shows caution to not accept anything material in return.[936] There is an altogether different mindset of the saint (or rather Armagh's clerics) by the later seventh century, when we can observe the Church participating in the mechanism of gift and exchange in Ireland.[937] However, Doherty's question ofwhether kings retained a claim over their bequests to chalices and patens deserves caution, as such gifts to the Church surely demanded intercession in return instead of the giver claiming the material gift back. Exceptions may be the various altars, patens and chalices attributed to the saints and which may have been venerated as relics and, presumably, crafted directly out of church coffers. There is no firm way of knowing, however, as our texts indicate that few liturgical church furnishings were venerated as miracle-performing relics and that most of both types were gifts from Patrick, and therefore from Armagh, to satellite churches. Secular patronage is absent from our texts, but this does not indicate their lack of involvement in the process, at least financially.

Other Miscellaneous Relics of Patrick

There are a number of unusual relics present in the *Tripartite Life* in particular, one of which is described among Patrick's gifts of various relics to Bishop Muinis as a 'pipe (*buindi*) of gold on it [i.e. the *menistir*, or reliquary-box / credence-table]'.[938] Stokes suggests that this 'pipe of gold' may be derived from the Irish *buinne* meaning

[935] Doherty, 'Exchange and trade', p. 72.
[936] Patrick, *Confessio*, p. 103.
[937] Doherty, 'Exchange and trade', pp. 75-6.
[938] *Tripartite Life*, p. 87.

'Fistula', which is was a gold 'pipe through which the sacramental wine was sucked'.[939] The appearance of such a liturgical object is unique to our Lives, and thus it is logical to conclude that the gold pipe was venerated as a relic because it was a personal gift from Patrick – even if it does not reappear in subsequent sources.

Among the relics bestowed on Muinis is one which Patrick apparently 'made with his own hand, *Donaide Matha* was its name; and a cross… was made upon it and four points of…''[940] *Donaide Matha* appears to be a reliquary as it is preceded by the term *mind*, which is the general Irish term for relic and has survived to modern Irish as *mionn*, or oath, which Ó Floinn suggests gives us a clue as to one major use of relics.[941] Substantiating this is the following description which suggests the reliquary was perhaps square-shaped with four corners which possibly contained hidden compartments in which to place other relics. As for the actual name of this reliquary it is most unclear as to how it translates into English. It might mean something like 'the ill-tempered / wretched one of the dangers', which does seem to suit the reputation of some relics, particularly bells.[942] Most interestingly, however, there is a glossed word which Stokes did not follow up, '*crúan*', the compound of which is '*crúan-maithne*', which has something to do with red enamel.[943] *Donaide Matha* could therefore have been embossed with four red enamel crosses in its four corners or one red enamel cross in the central section of the box, or even a combination of these designs. However, there is no clear answer as to this reliquary's composition or to its exact contents and various functions.

In the *Tripartite Life* there is also the feature of Patrick's chasuble (a cleric's garment), which might well be a relic judging by the narrative in which it is nested; here we learn that Patrick:

> '[L]eft a paten and a chalice with her, Atracht … Drummana was the
> place… It is called Machare today. A chasuble was sent from heaven
> into Patrick's breast. "Let the chasuble be yours, O nun," said
> Patrick. "Not so," said she: "not unto me has it been given, but to
> your goodness."'[944]

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[939] Stokes, *Tripartite Life*, p. clxxxvii; *e*DIL; 'torrent/flood/stream/gush of water', which could possibly fit with it being a Fistula in this instance, although this is difficult to discern).

[940] *Tripartite Life*, p. 87: '*…ocus foraccaib mind doringe cona laim feissin, Donaidi Matha a ainim, ocus doronad cross cruan moithni fair ocus ceithri ardda cruanmoin; ocus foraccaib laiss mind ali .i. cosmailius cometa libair Iohain nád mór dogrés arbeinn innascríne.*'

[941] Ó Floinn, *Irish Shrines*, p. 41.

[942] (*e*DIL *donaide* 1; *matha*).

[943] (*e*DIL under *crúan*); thanks to Professor Thomas O. Clancy for helping with this.

[944] *Tripartite Life*, p. 109

The fact this chasuble was gifted to Patrick from heaven indicates that it was probably perceived to be a desirable relic. The protective quality of the chasuble is attested in one episode – which may refer to the same chasuble aforementioned – where one of Loegaire's druids challenges Patrick and his foster-son to a trial by fire: 'The chasuble of the druid was burnt about the body of Benignus to ashes… but Benignus' chasuble… was worn by the druid [who] was burnt to death in it.'[945] Perhaps this signifies what pilgrims may have been seeking if visiting such a relic, and if the nun had have kept Patrick's chasuble then certainly its veneration as a relic would have been ensured; it is noteworthy to mention here that to decline a gift from Patrick is an extremely rare act indeed.

Étach Pátraic, meaning 'Patrick's Garment/Cloth', could have been a clerical vestment, such as a chasuble is, or a 'veil' (*velum*), like that mentioned by Tírechán which was used as a wrapping for the relics from Dún Sobairche, west of the Shannon near Patrick's Rock.[946] The relic exists only in an unique *Annals of the Four Masters* entry at 895.8: 'The foreigners were on Loch Loch nBachach on the Calends of January, and they seized on *Etach Padraig.*'[947] As it seems to nowhere feature in our Lives it is impossible to discern its true nature, although *Etach* does translate as 'garment'.[948] Indeed there is a long tradition of venerating such relics, and for example St Martin's biographer, Sulpicius Severus, wrote that threads from the saint's garment had the power to heal; and the French king kept Martin's cloak, or *capella*, 'as if it were a precious jewel'.[949] Furthermore, there is also the miracle-

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[945] Tírechán, *Collectanea*, I.8.2-4: '.*uiii. super Argetbor, in qua <fuit> Kannanus episcopus, quem orinauit Patricius in primo pasca hi ferti uirorum Feicc, qui portauit secum ignem primum benedictum ac ceiales lucernas primas Patricii de minibus [portauit] domni<ni>, ut accenderet fumum benedictum in oculos ac nares hominum gentilium et regis Loiguiri et magnorum illius, quia contra <i>uerunt illi +tres magi fratres ex uno uiro nominibus +et genere Cruth Loch Lethlanu+ de genere Runtir, qui fecerunt conflictionem magnam contra Patricium et Benignum. Cassula autem magi inflammata est circa Benignum et in cinerem finite erat. Sanctus quoque filius sanus effectus est firma fide Dei in conspectu regis et hominum et magnorum, cassula autem Benigni filii Patricii infixa est circa magnum et inflammatus est magnus in medio ac consumptus est, et dixit Patricius: 'In hac hora consumpta est gentilitas Hiberniae tota.*'

[946] Ibid. 48.3: '…*et in Duin Sebuirgi sedit supra petram, quae petra Patricii usque nunc, et ordinauit ibi Olcanum sanctum episcopum, quem nutriuit Patricius et dedit illi partem de reliquiis Petri et Pauli et aliorum, et uelum quod custodiuit reliquias; et reuersus est in campum Elni et fecit multas aeclessias quas Coindiri habent.*'; Bourke, *Patrick*, p. 17.

[947] Ibid.; verifies its location in Lough Neagh, Co. Down in Ulster.

[948] (*e*DIL 1; 'covering/rainment').

[949] Sulpicius Severus, *Vita Martinii*, trans. F. R. Hoare, *Soldiers of Christ, Saints and Saints' Lives from Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, Thomas F. X. Noble and Thomas Head (eds.), (London, 1995), pp. 1-30 at Chapter 3 p. 7, where Severus tells us that: 'Martin saw Christ wearing the half of his cape from which he had clothed the beggar. He was told to look closely at Our Lord and takle note that it was a garment he had given away. Then he heard Jesus say aloud to the throng of angels that surrounded Him: "Martin is still only a

working relic which Adomnán describes as 'Columba's tunic' (*léne*), which was also said to be white in colour.[950] In the mid- twelfth-century *Betha Colum Cille* the author also recounts Columba's tunic being divided with one of the pieces in the possession of Cainnech of Aghaboe, Co Laois.[951]

> Jocelin tells us of the story of a whole seal-skin, which Patrick bestows on:
> 'Six priests... by a happy chance met Patrick returning out of Britain; and [Patrick] blessed them… and foretold that they would all be bishops. And the saint observing one of them, who appeared elder and stronger than the rest, carrying in his bosom all their volumes, for he had nothing wherein he might bear them in his hand, bade that a seal-skin should be given unto him on which he was wont to stand while he was celebrating the Mass, that he might make thereof a satchel. And they, receiving with manifold thanks the gift of the holy man, prosperously journeyed; nor from that day forth was there among them any want… for they were wont to relate many miracles to have been worked by the aforementioned seal-skin, the which even to this day remaineth entire, and is preserved as a relic in honour of St Patrick.'[952]

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catechumen but he has clothed Me with his garment."'; Snoek, *Medieval Piety*, p. 11; Delehaye, *Hagiography*, pp. 45-6.

[950] Adomnán, *Vita*, II.44; Ó Floinn points out that pieces of cloth found in St Cuthbert's tomb were also white, and that the *Cathach's* reliquary contained 'fragments of cloth… The crystal and cloth behind it were, however, lost by 1874' ('*Insignia Columbae* I', p. 149).

[951] *Betha Colum Cille*, 57, p. 218: '*Tan and tanic Caindech uadsom a Híí. Dermatis a bachall tair. In tan do-riacht ille fuair a bachall for a chind ifhus 7 léne Colum Cille imalle fria .i. cuit Chaindig sin dia rechullsom 7 is aire do-rígnesium sin uair ro fhitir co mba fochraib dia etsecht.*'

[952] Jocelin, *Vita*, XCIII: '*Sex Clerici natione Hibernici, vnanimi desiderio discendi Scripturam ducti atque loca sancta visitandi, versus transmarinas partes iter arripuerunt; [septem Clericis obuiā factus] casuque felici S. Patricium de Britannia regressum, obuium habuerunt. Ipsis vero genibus flexis, benedictionem petentibus, Sanctus benedixit, ipsosque omnes Episcopos futuros prædixit. Agnoscens Pontifex vnum ipsorum, qui natu maior & robustior ceteris videretur, omnium codiculos in sinu portantem, eo quod non haberet aliud in quo portaret ad manum; iussit illis dari pellem phocinam, super quam in celebration. Missarum stare consueuerat, ad sacculum inde faciendum. Munere sancti viri cum gratiarum actione recepto, [subuenit, & omnes Episcopos futuros prædicit.] prospere transfretauerunt; nec ab illo die aliqua grauis eos apprehendit inopia; sed siue itinerando, siue in scholis commorando, semper arrisit eis honesta sufficientia. Cognouerunt igitur Sanctum subuentorem sui in benedictionibus suis, Dominumque conseruantem illis misericordiam suam ipsius meritis. Processu vero temporis optime litteris imbuti repatriauerunt; & infra tempus breue, secundum verbum S. Patricij, omnes Episcopi effecti sunt. Horum autem Sacerdotum sanctorum nomina sunt, Lugacius, Columbanus, Meldanus, Lugadius, Cassanus, Ceranus: quorum Sedium Episcopalium nomina describere, certa ratione supersedemus. In multis etiam vocabula locorum, & etiam personarum, ob inconditam verborum barbariem deuitamus, ne Latinis autibus fastidium aut horrorem ingeramus. Prædicti tamen Pontifices, in Ecclesia Dei verbo & exemplo plurimum profecerunt, & in magna sanctitate vitā*

A seal-skin venerated as a miracle-working relic may appear strange, but the use of such a skin fits into the broader context of North Atlantic trade in these types of materials. It was not unusual to see animal skins either displayed in and/or having a functional use in churches. For example in the early fifteenth century in Trondheim's Nidaros Cathedral, a relic of a pure white bear-skin was 'admired in 1432 by the Venetian traveller Pietro Querini… which lay at the foot of the archiepiscopal throne there.'[953] The economic trade in seal-skins was lucrative and common, one which has considerable antiquity.[954]

In addition there is the wallet which Patrick had made from his saddle, which is either seal- or cow-hide – the author could not be sure which – known as the *Breifnech Pátraic*; this too shows trade in such skins was lucrative and was active before the twelfth century. The relic is described by Bourke as a 'metal-mounted leather satchel', and its name literally translates as 'Patrick's looped [one]'.[955] As suggested, that Jocelin's story could well have been a version of that originally found in the *Tripartite Life*. Equally plausible is the possibility that the wallet made from seal-skin in the *Tripartite Life* could have been a whole skin, likely made into a book-satchel and known by Jocelin to be kept as a relic of Patrick.[956] Where this relic was kept is kept a mystery in Jocelin's account, although in the *Tripartite Life* the place it is kept is known as Cluain Ernainn. Moreover, Jocelin does give us the names of the six priests he prophesied would become bishops – Lugacius (Mo Luóc), Columbanus (Colmán), Meldanus (Mellán), Lugadius (Mo Lua), Cassanus (Cassán) and Ceranus (Ciarán) – although Jocelin cautiously states that 'we for good reason omit to mention the names of the bishoprics'.[957] For this reason we do not know where the miracles exuding from the seal-skin relic were worked, although Richard Vaughn points out that seal-skins adorned the inside of Scandinavian churches and it is thus not unreasonable to suggest that perhaps it was housed in a church in one of five

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terminauerunt. Multa etiam miracula solebant narrare in pellem præfatam patrata: quæ adhuc manet integra, & pro reliquijs ob S. Patricij memoriam conseruata est.'

[953] Richard Vaughn, 'The Arctic in the Middle Ages', *Journal of Medieval History*, Vol. 8, (1982), pp. 313-42 at p. 313; Dane Claudius Clavus spoke of 'what was probably the first of the many kayaks… to be hung up in European public buildings in the fifteenth, sixteenth and subsequent centuries' – presumably in churches also (Ibid. p. 115).

[954] Wilson, 'The Irish Sea', pp. 115-6; the first recorded visit by the Vikings is at *Annals of Ulster* entry 794, when they 'first came as raiders to the Irish Sea and Western Scotland' (p. 115) – however I think it likely that trade was already established, for the Vikings must have already reasoned which places in particular were the most lucrative places to initially strike, and this is further reinforced by Wilson (p. 116).

[955] Bourke, *Patrick*, p. 17

[956] Through a conversation with Thomas Clancy he pointed out that the sixteenth-century Irish *Life of St Columba* by Mánus Ó Domnáill, a copy of which is kept in the Bodleián Library in Oxford University, is completely covered in seal-skin!

[957] Jocelin, *Vita*, XCIII (see the full quote in n. 950); tracing these names might well be fruitless as there are multiple variations on these names in the various Irish Martyrologies.

Scandinavian cities in Ireland – Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Wexford and Waterford[958] – we can perhaps be more dubious to guess that the relic was kept at Christ Church, as it appears nowhere on any relic-list there.

<u>Conclusions</u>

Throughout this chapter we have encountered a varied assortment of relics which could not be comfortably accommodated in the discussions of previous chapters. Most of these 'miscellaneous' relics of Patrick are to be found in the *Tripartite Life*, which is probably due to the fact that this text has no known tradition outside of Ireland and therefore was geared towards a predominantly Irish audience; thus one should expect a predominantly Irish audience to appreciate these more obscure Patrician relics than a continental one might, for example. In our other Patrician Livesgeared toward a non-Irish audience – namely *Tertia*, which has the largest continental transmission of all our texts – the main relics of Patrick focused on are *Bachall Ísu*, his corporeal remains and the whereabouts of his grave. This may be to do with Armagh's wrangles with Glastonbury over its attempts to appropriate Patrick's cult, but it is nonetheless projecting that it is the primary and most well known Patrician relics that would mainly capture the imaginations of non-Irish audiences.

Many of the relics discussed here have not survived the Middle Ages, such as the leper's altar, and often some of these relics appear only once in our texts, such as the mysterious *Donaide Matha*. However, these other 'miscellaneous' relics of Patrick are just as important in the study of his relic-cult as his corporeal relics and gravesite, *Bachall Ísu* and the various bells ascribed to him. As demonstrated from our Patrician Lives, the 'miscellaneous' relics examined hereultimately complement the overall picture of the diversity and growth of Patrick's relic cult as our period progresses.

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[958] Vaughn, 'The Arctic in the Middle Ages', pp. 313-5; Wilson, 'The Irish Sea', p. 117.

Conclusion

In this thesis Armagh's appropriation of Patrick's cult from around the mid seventh century saw it go from strength to strength. Despite that Armagh could never claim to be the place where Patrick's grave resides, primarily due to the dominant tradition that the saint's grave resided at Down, it did gain the subordination of Down and the Ulaid through its alliance with the dominant kings of the region, the Airgialla. Armagh's definitive appropriation of Patrick's cult by the mid seventh century was epitomised by its promulgation of *Liber Angeli*. In this text we learn of Armagh's claims to possess certain apostolic and Roman relics, as well as a rag-relic containing Christ's blood, which most probably indicates that these relics were Armagh's chief insignia at this time. However, in the eighth and ninth centuries Armagh's premier insignium comprised of at least a portion of Patrick's own corporeal relics, which were housed in *Scrín Pátraic*. Armagh's politically shrewd clerics ensured that alliances were forged with the most powerful kings of Ireland, the Northen Uí Néill, whose consolidation with its Southern branch in the mid- ninth-century guaranteed Armagh's ambitions to become the premier ecclesiastical force on the island; it is in this century also when Patrick truly became Ireland's pre-eminent saint. Armagh's alliance with the Uí Néill was a necessary achievement as although Down was under Armagh's ecclesiastical jurisdiction, Armagh's full control over Patrick's cult remained vulnerable through its inability to accommodate Patrick's grave. Given the general practice in Ireland to not disturb the full remains of its holy dead, it seems logical to reason that Armagh could never claim Patrick's full corporeal relics either.

This crucial factor proved detrimental to Armagh in the longer term. Patrick's and Palladius' cult began to branch into Scotland from the ninth century, and interest in Patrick also emerged elsewhere in the tenth, namely at Glastonbury Abbey. There was also the late- seventh-century admition by Tírechán that 'Palladius was called Patrick by another name', which in subsequent centuries was followed by numerous expressions of a similar confusion from Irish and non-Irish authors across a variety of sources. Whether there were two or possibly even three Patricks was another aspect that churches elsewhere might potentially exploit. Certainly, there appears to have been some initial confusion in the tenth century among clerics at Glastonbury itself over whether they were claiming Patrick-junior or -senior's relics.

The period between the tenth and the mid twelfth centuries marked a crucial time for determining the fortunes of Patrick's cult, and therefore that of the saint's patron church at Armagh. In the later tenth century Uí Néill power was declining and

the rise of Scandinavian power in Dublin and its increasingly strong ecclesiastical links, most notably with Canterbury Cathedral in the twelfth century in particular, contributed to loosening Armagh's grip on its ecclesiastical primacy toward the end of our period; this was also exacerbated by Glastonbury's attempts to appropriate Patrick's cult. Armagh's possession of at least a portion of Patrick's corporeal relics and its control over Down, and therefore its patron's gravesite, proved to be an inadequate statement of its power in the longer term. Since the destruction of *Scrín Pátraic* in 1066, the unique relic of Christ gifted to Patrick, *Bachall Ísu*, officially became Armagh's premier insigne. *Bachall Ísu* was designed to be known as the ultimate symbol of Armagh's expression of itself as the 'Rome of Ireland'. However, when *Bachall Ísu* was taken to Dublin in 1181 this in turn saw the relic reinforce Christ Church's own recently founded eccleisiastical primacy on the island.

In the twelfth century Armagh's full control over Patrick's cult began to loosen considerably. The commissioning of Jocelin's *Vita Patricii*, among other events, also largely served to counter Glastonbury's claim over Patrick's relics, which had been pushed earlier in the century in William's *Vita Patricii* and in some of his other works. The twelfth century also saw the notable rise in the ecclesiastical and economic power of the Norse city of Dublin, one motive which really drove the Norman Conquest of Ireland from 1169. Papal sanction was sought by the Normans to invade Ireland under the finely woven veil of Church reform, and de Courcy's conquest of Ulster was later marked by the famous *inventio* of the bodies of Patrick, Columba and Brigit in *c.*1185. Crucially, this occurred only five years after *Bachall Ísu* was taken by Fitz Audelin to Christ Church in Dublin: it was the taking of this relic that marked the end of Armagh's ecclesiastical dominance in Ireland symbolically. However the *inventio* of Patrick's grave and the subsequent *translatio* of his corporeal relics into the newly built cathedral at Down marked the end of Armagh's full control of its patron's cult in actuality. From this point Glastonbury's counter-claims also declined, perhaps because on the one hand the abbey became more concerned with concocting more fantastical claims over an increasing amount of saints and of mythical figures, such as the legendary Arthur, but on the other it was as a result of the strong Norman appropriation of Patrick's cult, which from 1185 was certainly felt across the British Isles and especially in England, namely at Glastonbury Abbey. For the first time we can see the expressions of a complement of the interests of Armagh, Down and Dublin in Jocelin's *Vita*, and henceforth it is clear that although Armagh never lost its fundamental association with Patrick as her patron, its church no longer played centre-stage to the destiny of its paton's cult.

So, it is evident that the richness, diversity and growth of Patrick's cult throughout our period are inextricably interwoven to the political fortunes of Armagh, and relics are perhaps the main expression of this. As we have discovered, many relics of Patrick no longer survive except in the pages of our Lives under scrutiny here, where it is clear that the amount and diversity of relics of Patrick have some interesting variables; this aspect is especially noticeable in the *Tripartite Life*. One reason for such a high number and variety of Patrician relics in this text in particular is that it may reflect an internal Irish interest in collecting such relics, especially of the associative variety. Texts geared toward non-Irish audiences, such as *Tertia* for example, would not necessarily accommodate such relics of Patrick due to the interest of non-Irish audiences in the saint's life, death and miracles and not in the expressions of Irish politics, which associative relics in particular, with their more distinctive local connections, clearly are. Moreover, the *Tripartite Life* was written when Armagh's ecclesiastical authority was at its heights in Ireland and when Uí Néill power was also prominent alongside it, i.e. during the ninth and tenth centuries. The demand at Armagh must have been high for such a text as the *Tripartite Life*, one which would best express both Armagh's spiritual and temporal wealth: what better way to show this off than through inclusion of a morass of relics of Patrick? Jocelin's *Vita* also has a high variety of relics of Patrick, and this too is perhaps not surprising as it was written at a time when Patrick's cult was being actively appropriated under a new Norman order, one in which Armagh no longer played a central role.

It is interesting to note also that in the late twelfth century Gerald of Wales presents a reflection of Ireland as an island of staffs and bells, and the evidence concerning relics of Patrick in the various Irish and Latin Lives appear to verify his observation: after all, it is clear these texts are dominated by *Bachall Ísu*, a variety of Patrick's bells, as well as host of relics of Christ and other 'miscellaneous' relics of the saint. One way this is expressed in the Lives (and indeed elsewhere) is that we get more of a picture of how certain relics functioned in wider society; *Bachall Ísu* and the variety of Patrick's bells certainly provide the most amount of information regarding this. As for corporeal relics and their status and functions, our Lives of Patrick offer no firm clues in terms of offering a definitive statement on the importance of corporeal relic-veneration in Ireland more generally in this period.

It needs to be stated here, however, we cannot use Gerald's observation to outright conclude more generally that the cult of corporeal relics were *not* as important as associative relics in Ireland. Although our Lives of Patrick cannot definitively offer the full picture for Ireland more generally in this period, it cannot be denied that the role of Patrick's grave and corporeal relics play a prominent role in

our texts. Chapter one highlighted that Armagh's inability to accommodate Patrick's grave proved to be detrimental to maintaining full control over his cult in the long term. Moreover, the dilemma of there having been two or possibly three Patricks only added to Armagh's burden. The evidence from the various Irish annals highlight that corporeal relics were taken on various relic-circuits in their *scrína*, even if we do not know why these entries ceased after the ninth century and whether they did because of a growing focus on associative relics; we can only imagine that collecting taxes, swearing oaths and sealing compacts were among the many functions corporeal relics served to wider Irish society as they did elsewhere in the West. The records of exhumations in the twelfth century in particular and of Glastonbury's plight to appropriate Patrick's corporeal relics and grave, for example, attest to the significance of corporeal relic veneration in Ireland, even if compared to most other Western regions there was a general reluctance to disturb the remains of its holy dead more generally speaking. Far less evidence for corporeal relic veneration in Ireland than for associative relics does not necessarily offer a full picture.

As stated in the Introduction I, more research on individual saints' relic cults needs to be undertaken before such conclusions can ever be reached and before we can confidently reinstate Gerald's observations into our modern reckoning. Our Lives of Patrick can only offer us one part of a whole picture, but judging by their accounts it seems that modern scholarship should endeavour to continue the investigation into the role and importance of corporeal relics in Ireland in this period more generally through more studies of individual saints' cults both materially and textually.

It may be surprising that to date there has hitherto been no single study published on Patrick's relic cult which spans the boundaries of historical periodisation and which treats our various Latin and Irish Lives belonging to the period under scrutiny here as a 'family', containing as they do, certain continuities and discontinuities. This thesis is not the definitive study on Patrick's relic cult between the seventh and the late twelfth centuries, but rather its value lies in its potential to uncover new vistas in medieval Irish history by using the same broad approaches to the various Patrician Lives applied here. Undoubtedly, this thesis has revealed new ways in which this group of primary sources, i.e. our various pre thirteenth century Lives of Patrick, can be mined and exploited as historical sources; indeed, there is still much that remains to be accomplished with these particular group of texts. This study also opens up aspects that have unfortunately had little to no room to fully explore here and which I am at present pursuing in smaller studies, namely: Patrick's acts of gift-giving and the presence of Roman and apostolic relics

in Ireland. What I hope this thesis will also bring to wider attention is the benefit to be reaped by placing Patrick's relic-cult in its broader European contexts – an ingredient poorly mixed into modern Irish scholarship – which has been achieved here by looking at the general development of relic cults elsewhere in Ireland and the West.

Going beyond the late twelfth century to analyse the development of Patrick's relic-cult in the later Middle Ages, the nuances of which have also yet to be consolidated in a single study, should be left open for others to research; this would be an invaluable and very relevant line of enquiry to undertake. The Norman appropriation of Patrick's cult and the international appeal of Patrick's Purgatory from the late- twelfth-century ensured a broad non-Irish interest in acquiring relics of Patrick, which would be most interesting to explore. In my reckoning, this therefore seems the best place in which to end this study.

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Appendix A

A Basic List of the Irish and Latin Lives of Patrick and other Patrician Texts in the Chronological Order presented in this Thesis (see Introduction II for details of each text)

1. **Tírechán, *Collectanea*:** dated to the last quarter of the seventh century.
2. **Muirchú, *Vita Patricii*:** dated to the last quarter of the seventh century.
3. **Unknown Author:** *Vita Secunda*, dated to the mid to late eighth century.
4. **Unknown Author:** *Vita Quarta*, dated to the last quarter of the eighth century.
5. ***Book of Armagh*:** dated to 807 and contains the ***Liber Angeli***, ***Notulae***, ***Additamenta***, *Collectanea* of Tírechán and *Vita Patricii* of Muirchú, as well as Patrick's own fifth-century writings, *Confessio* and *Epistola*.
6. **Psuedo *Vita Patricii* in the *Historia Brittonum*:** dated to the ninth century and authoriship ascribed to Nennius.
7. **Unknown Author/s, Middle Irish *Tripartite Life of St Patrick*:** dated to the later ninth century but with some textual additions extending into the eleventh century.
8. **Probus, *Vita auctore Probo* (*Vita Quinta*):** dated to the 980s.
9. **William of Malmsbury, *Vita Patricii*:** dated to the 1230s.
10. **Unknown Author, *Vita Tertia*:** dated to *circa* mid twelfth century.
11. **Unknown Author, *Vita Cottoniana*:** dated after *Tertia* but before Jocelin's *Vita Patricii*.
12. **Jocelin of Furness, *Vita Patricii*:** dated to *circa* 1185.
13. **Unknown Author, *Gloucester Vita*:** dated to late twelfth / early thirteenth century.

Appendix B

Instances when Relics of Patrick appear in the Irish Annals to circa 1200: Annals of Ulster, Annals of the Four Masters, Annals of Loch Cé and Mac Carthaigh's Book

*** Other saints' relics that appear in these entries are also emboldened:

Annals of Ulster
U553.3
I have found this in the **Book of Cuanu**: The **relics of Patrick** were placed sixty years after his death in a **shrine** by Colum Cille. Three splendid halidoms were found in the burial-place: his **goblet**, the **Angel's Gospel**, and the **Bell of the Testament**. This is how the angel distributed the halidoms: the goblet to Dún, the Bell of the Testament to Ard Macha, and the Angel's Gospel to Colum Cille himself. The reason it is called the Angel's Gospel is that Colum Cille received it from the hand of the angel.
U734.3
The bringing on tour of the relics of Peter, Paul and Patrick to fulfil the law; and the slaying of Coibdenach son of Flann grandson of Congal.
U789.17
Dishonouring of the staff of Jesus and relics of Patrick by Donnchad son of Domnall at Ráith Airthir at an assembly.
U809.7
The invasion of Ulaid by Aed son of Niall, **as a result of the profanation of Patrick's shrine** to the dishonour of Dúnchú.
U811.1
Nuadu, abbot of Ard Macha, **went to Connacht with Patrick's law and his casket**.
U818.5
Artrí, superior of Ard Macha, **went to Connacht with the shrine of Patrick**.
U819.8
At Ard Macha Whitsun *5 June* was not *publicly* celebrated **nor the shrine [of Patrick?] taken on tour**; and there was a disturbance in which the son of Echaid son of Fiachna fell.
U831.5
The fair of Tailtiu was disturbed at the platforms **owing to *dissension over* the shrine of MacCuilinn and the halidoms of Patrick**, and many died as a result.
U836.4
Diarmait went to Connachta **with Patrick's law and his insignia**.
U846.9
Forannán, abbot of Ard Macha, **came from the lands of Mumu with the halidoms of Patrick**.
U887.3
A letter, with the 'Law of Sunday' and other good instructions, **came to Ireland with the Pilgrim**.
U947.2
The Cenél Eógain **gave the full measure of the Finnfaídech of pure silver to Patrick**.
U1013.1
Mael Sechnaill, at the request of Mael Muire and Brian, made a raid on Conaille **in revenge for the profanation of Patrick's Finnfíadech** and the **breaking of Patrick's staff**.

U1015.7

Aed ua Ruairc, king of Bréifne, was wickedly slain by Tadc, king of Connacht, i.e. at Loch Néill in Mag Aí **despite being under the safeguard of the Bachall Ísu**. It was this which deprived his seed of kingship, save only his son Aed.

U1020.4

All Ard Macha was completely burned on the third of the Kalends of June *30 May*, the Monday before Whitsun, i.e. the great stone church with its lead roof **and the bellhouse with its bells** and the Saball *church* and the Tóae *church* and the abbots' chariot and the old preaching chair.

U1034.9

Maicnia ua hUchtáin, lector of Cenannas, was drowned coming from Scotland, **and Colum Cille's fan (cuilebad) and three relics of Patrick** and thirty men *were lost* as well.

U1066.1

Aed ua Ruairc, king of Uí Briúin, **died immediately after plundering the shrine of Patrick**.

U1073.2

Conchobor ua Mael Sechlainn, king of Temair, was killed by the son of Flann ua Mael Sechlainn, **despite the protection of the Staff of Jesus**, *and* in the presence of the Staff**.

U1074.3

Ard Macha was burned on the Tuesday after Mayday *6 May* **with all its** churches **and bells**, both the **Ráith** and the Third.

U1101.7

Donnchad ua Eochada, king of Ulaid, was released from bonds by Domnall grandson of Lochlainn, king of Ailech, for the sake of his son and his co-fosterling, i.e. in the stone church of Ard Macha, through the intercession of the successor of Patrick and the community of Patrick also, after *making* **mutual oath on the Staff of Jesus and other relics**, on the eleventh of the Kalends of January *22 Dec.*.

U1113.8

An army *was brought* by Muirchertach ua Briain and Leth Moga, both laity and clergy, to Grenóc. Domnall grandson of Lochlainn, however, with the nobles of the north of Ireland, *went* to Cluain Caín of the Fir Rois, and they were confronting one another for a month until Cellach, successor of Patrick, **with the Staff of Jesus, made a year's peace between them**.

U1157.2

Cu-Uladh Ua Caindelbain was killed in treachery by Donnchadh, son of Domnall Ua Mael-Sechinnaehli Merry, who thereby **dishonoured the successor of Patrick and the Staff of Jesus** and Mac Lachlainn, along with the nobles of the North.

U1166.8

Eochaidh Mac Duinnsleibhe *[Ua Eochadha]* was blinded by Muircertach Ua Lochlainn, **in violation of the protection of the successor of Patrick and of the Staff of Jesus** and of Donnchadh Ua Cerbaill, namely, the arch-king of Airgialla.

U1166.10

A hosting by Donnchadh Ua Cerbaill, with the Airghialla and with the Ui-Briuin and the Conmaicni, into Tir-Eogain, to attack Ua Lochlainn, by direction of the Cenel-Eogain themselves, in consequence of Ua Lochlainn, arch-king of Ireland, being abandoned by them. So that *[Ua Lochlainn]* came, with a small party of the Cenel-Eogain of Telach-og, to deliver an assault upon them at Fidh-O-nEchtach. And even those very men, they abandoned him. So there fell in that place Muircertach (son of Niall) Ua Lachlainn, arch-king of Ireland. And he was the Augustus of all the North-West of Europe for valour and championship. And a few of Cenel-Eogain were killed there, namely, thirteen men. A great marvel and wonderful deed was done then: to wit, the king of Ireland to fall without battle, without contest, **after his dishonouring the successor of Patrick and the Staff of Jesus** and the **successor of Colum-cille and**

the Gospel of Martin and many clergy besides *[by blinding Mac Duinnsleibhe Ua Eochadha]*. Howbeit, his body was carried to Ard-Macha and buried there, in dishonour of the successor of Colum-cille with his Community and Colum-cille himself and the head of the students of Daire fasted regarding it,—for his being carried to *[Christian]* burial.

U1167.4

Muiredhach Mac Canai was killed by the sons of Mac Lochlainn **in reparation to Patrick and the Staff of Jesus**, by direction of his own kinsmen.

Annals of the Four Masters

M784.10

The profanation of the Bachall Isa and the relics of Patrick by Donnchadh, son of Domnall, at Rath Airthir, at the fair.

M804.10

The plundering of Ulidia by Aedh Oirdnidhe, the king**, in revenge of the profanation of the shrine of Patrick**, against Dunchu.

M817.12

Artri, son of Conchobhar, **went to Connaught with the shrine of Patrick**.

M945.5

The **full of the Finnfadhach of silver** *was given* **by the Cinel-Eoghain for the blessing of Patrick** and his successor at that time, i.e. Joseph.

M1004.9

A hosting by Brian, son of Ceinneidigh, with the men of the south of Ireland, into Cinel-Eoghain and Ulidia, to demand hostages. They proceeded through Meath, where they remained a night at Tailltin. They afterwards marched northwards, and remained a week at Ard-Macha; **and Brian left twenty ounces of gold** *as an offering* **upon the altar of Ard-Macha**. After that they went into Dal-Araidhe, and carried off the pledges of the Dal-Araidhe and Dal-Fiatach in general.

M1010.2

Muireadhach, son of Crichan, successor of Colum-Cille and Adamnan, a learned man, bishop, and virgin, rector of Ard-Macha, and intended successor of Patrick, died after the seventy-fourth year of his age, on the fifth of the Calends of January, on Saturday night precisely; and he was **buried with great honour and veneration in the great church of Ard-Macha, before the altar**.

M1012.18

A great depredation upon the Conailli by Maelseachlainn, **in revenge of the profanation of the Finnfaidheach, and of the breaking of Patrick's crozier** by the Conailli, i.e. by the sons of Cucuailgne.

M1030.9

The staff of Jesus was profaned *in a matter* **relating to three horses**, and the person who profaned it was killed three days after.

M1034.3

Maicnia Ua hUchtain, lector of Ceanannus, was drowned coming from Alba **with the** *cuileabadh* **of Colum-Cill, and three of Patrick's relics**, and thirty persons along with him.

M1044.8

A predatory excursion was made by Niall, son of Maeleachlainn, lord of Aileach, into Ui-Meith and Cuailgne; and he carried off twelve hundred cows, and led numbers into captivity, **in revenge of the profanation of Clog-an-Eadhachta**.

M1044.9

Another predatory excursion was made by Muircheartach Ua Neill into Mughdhorna, whence he carried a cattle spoil and prisoners, **in revenge of the profanation of the same bell**.

M1044.10

Ua h-Aedha, lord of Ui-Fiachrach-Arda-Sratha, was slain by the son of Aralt, **by whom also the shrine of Patrick was burned**.

M1074.6

Ard-Macha was burned on the Tuesday after May-day, **with all its churches and bells**, both Rath and Trian.

M1080.10

An army was led by Toirdhealbhach Ua Brien to Ath-cliath; and the men of Maelseachlainn **came into his house with the staff of Jesus, and with the successor of Patrick,** and the clergy of Munster.

M1109.6

A predatory excursion was made by Murchadh Ua Maeleachlainn, King of Teamhair, on which he plundered the Feara-Rois, and slew Ua Finn, lord of Feara-Rois, **in violation of the Staff of Jesus and the successor of Patrick**; but God took vengeance of him for this.

M1113.10

An army was led by Muircheartach Ua Briain, with the men of Munster, Leinster, and Connaught, to Magh-Cobha, to aid Donnchadh. Another army, composed of the forces before mentioned, was marched by Domhnall Ua Lochlainn to Magh-Cobha, to relieve the Ulidians; and there was a challenge of battle between them, but the successor of Patrick separated them, under the semblance of peace and tranquillity. Donnchadh Ua hEochadha was blinded by Eochaidh Ua Mathghamhna and the Ulidians. An army was led by Muircheartach Ua Briain and the people of Leath-Mhogha, both laity and clergy, to Greanog. Domhnall, grandson of Lochlainn, with the chiefs of the north of Ireland, proceeded to Cluain-caein, in Feara-Rois; and both *armies* remained for the space of a month in readiness, confronting each other, **until the successor of Patrick**, **with the Staff of Jesus, made a year's peace between them**.

M1120.1

An army was led by Toirdhealbhach Ua Conchobhair into Meath, and he expelled Murchadh Ua Maeleachlainn into the North; and he carried off hostages, **under the protection of the successor of Patrick and the Staff of Jesus**.

M1135.7

Flann Ua Sinaigh, **keeper of the Bachall-Isa**, died after good penance.

M1135.10

Maelmaedhog Ua Morgair, **successor of Patrick, purchased the Bachall-Isa, and took it from its cave** on the seventh day of the month of July

M1139.11

A year's peace was made between the men of Munster and the Leinstermen, **by the successor of Patrick, and the staff of Jesus**.

M1143.13

Murchadh Ua Maeleachlainn, King of Meath and its Fortuatha, was taken prisoner by Toirdhealbhach Ua Conchobhair, King of Connaught, while he was under the protection of the relics and guarantees of Ireland. These were they: the altar of Ciaran, with its relics; the shrine of Ciaran, called the Oreineach; the Matha-mor; the abbot and the prior, and two out of every order in the Church; Muireadhach Ua Dubhthaigh, the archbishop, the lord of Connaught; **the successor of Patrick, and the Staff of Jesus**; the **successor of Feichin, and the bell of Feichin**; and the **Boban of Caeimhghin**. All these were between Toirdhealbhach and Murchadh, that there should be no treachery, no guile, no defection of the one from the other, no blinding, no imprisoning, and no circumscribing of Murchadh's territory or land, until his crime should be evident to the sureties, and that they might proclaim him not entitled to protection; however, he was found guilty of no crime, though he was taken. He was set at liberty at the end of a month afterwards, through the interference of his sureties, and he was conveyed by his sureties into Munster; and the kingdom of Meath was given by Toirdhealbhach to his own son, Conchobhar. This capture was effected as

follows: a hosting was made by Toirdhealbhach, as if to proceed into Munster; the Connaughtmen, the Conmaicni, and the Ui-Briuin, collected to one place, and Ua Maeleachlainn was taken and conveyed to Dun-mor, together with the hostages of Meath in general; but not the smallest part of Meath was injured on this occasion.

M1148.12

A meeting was held at Ard-Macha by Ua Lochlainn, with the chieftains of the Cinel-Eoghain; by O'Cearbhaill, with the chieftains of the Airghialla, and the chief men of Ulidia, with their lords, **and made perfect peace under the Staff of Jesus**, in the presence of the successor of Patrick and his clergy; and they left hostages with O'Lochlainn. The hostages of the Cinel-Conaill were also in the hands of Ua Lochlainn.

M1152.8

A meeting took place between Ua Lochlainn and Toirdhealbhach Ua Conchobhair at Magh-Ene, **where they made friendship under the Staff of Jesus**, **and under the relics of Colum-Cille**.

M1157.7

Cuuladh Ua Cain-dealbhain, lord of Laeghaire, a man of unbounded hospitality like Guaire Aidhne, courteous and prosperous like Mongan, son of Fiachna, a brilliant lamp in charity to the poor, the chief lamp of chivalry of the Irish race, was killed through treachery and guile, while under the protection of the laity and clergy of Ireland, by Donnchadh, son of Domhnall Ua Maeleachlainn, King of Meath. These were the sureties for him: **the successor of Patrick and the Staff of Jesus,** together with the legate, i.e. Ua Condoirche; the **successor of Colum-Cille, with his relics**; Grene, Bishop of Ath-cliath; the abbot of the monks *of Mellifont*; the **successor of Ciaran, with their relics**; the **successor of Fechin, with his relics**; Ua Lochlainn, King of Ireland (i.e. with opposition); Donnchadh Ua Cearbhaill, lord of Oirghialla; Tighearnan Ua Ruairc, lord of Breifne; Diarmaid Mac Murchadha, King of Leinster; and the chiefs of the men of Meath, and of the men of Teathbha in general. Wo to the country in which this deed was perpetrated!

M1196.2

Murtough, the son of Murtough O'Loughlin, Lord of Kinel-Owen, presumptive heir to the throne of Ireland, tower of the valour and achievements of Leth-Chuinn, destroyer of the cities and castles of the English, and founder of churches and fair nemeds (sanctuaries), was killed by Donough, the son of Blosky O'Kane, at the instigation of the Kinel-Owen, who had **pledged their loyalty to him before the Three Shrines and the Canoin-Phatruig** *i.e. the Book of Armagh*. His body was carried to Derry, and there interred with honour and respect.

Annals of Loch Cé

LC1020.6

Ard-Macha was altogether burned, viz.:—the great stone-church with its roof of lead, **and the belfry with its bells**, and the Sabhall, and the Toai, and Carbad-na-nAbadh, and the old preaching chair, on the 3rd of the kalends of June, the Monday before Whitsuntide.

LC1034.7

Macnia Ua hUchtain, lector of Cenannus, was drowned while coming from Alba; and the cuilebhadh of Colum-Cille, **and three reliquaries of the reliquaries of Patrick**, and thirty men along with them, *were also drowned*.

LC1066.1

Aedh Ua Ruairc, king of Uí-Briuin, **mortuus est, immediately after the plundering of the shrine of Patrick**.

LC1073.1

Conchobhar Ua Maelsechlainn, king of Temhair, was slain by the son of Flann, son of Maelsechlainn, **in profanation of the Bachall-Iosa, baculo praesente**.

LC1074.1

Ard-Macha was burned on the Tuesday after May-day; **with all its churches and bells**, both Rath and Trian.
LC1101.4
Donnchadh Ua hEochadha, king of Uladh, was released from bondage by Domhnall Mac Lachlainn, king of Oilech in exchange for his son and his foster-brother, viz.:— in the stone-church of Ard-Macha *he was released,* through the intercession of the comarb of Patrick, and the congregation of Patrick likewise—**after mutually swearing by the Bachall-Isa, and by other principal relics**—on the 11th of the kalends of January.
LC1113.9
Domhnall Mac Lachlainn, with the nobles of the North of Erinn, viz.:—of the *Cenel*-Conaill and *Cenel*-Eoghain, and Airghialla, *proceeded* to Cluain-caein, in Feara-Rois; and they were during the space of a month confronting one another, until Ceallach, **comarb of Patrick, with the Bachall-Isa, made a year's peace between them**.

Mac Carthaigh's Book
MCB1145-7.2
Tadhg son of Diarmaid Ó Briain was released by Toirdhealbhach son of Diarmaid Ó Briain, his kinsman, **in deference to the Bachall Íosa**, Patrick's coarb and the principal clerics of Ireland, after he had been taken prisoner **in violation of the protection of all these**.
MCB1165.2
Muircheartach son of Niall Ó Lochlainn, king of Oileach, captured Eochaidh son of Cú Uladh Mac Duinn Shléibhe, king of Ulaidh, his own gossip, at Camus Comhghaill, in his Easter house, after they had been at the same guest-table up to that, and he carried him off to Inis Aonaigh and blinded him there, **in violation of the protection of Patrick's coarb, the Bachall Íosa**, **Clog an Udhachta**, **Soisgéala Mártain**, **Míosach Cairnigh**, the **three shrines in Teampall na Sgrín**, together with the **relics of the north of Ireland**, and in violation of the protection of Donnchadh son of Cú Chaisil Ó Cearbhaill, king of Oirghialla, together with the nobles of the north of Ireland, including Cinéal Conaill and Cinéal Eóghain, laymen and clergy. An account reached Ó Cearbhaill of this violation of his protection and of the blinding of his foster-son. He made peace with Ruaidhrí Ó Conchobhair, king of Connacht, and Tighearnán Ó Ruairc, and taking with him the Oirghialla south of Sliabh Beatha, the Conmhaicne, and the Uí Bhriúin, he went into Tír Eóghain. Muircheartach son of Niall [Ó Lochlainn] was at Teallach Óg, and he came to Fiodh Ó nEachach to meet Ó Cearbhaill, and they fought a battle there in which Cinéal Eóghain were defeated, and Muircheartach son of Niall Ó Lochlainn, king of Oileach, was killed and his head cut off for the [outraged] honour of Jesus, Patrick, and Ó Cearbbaill. Ó Cearbhaill went from there to Magh nImchláir, and Aodh Ó Néill proclaimed his kingship of Cinéal Eóghain.
MCB1178.2
A hosting by Maol Sheachlainn Ó Lochlainn with Cinéal Eóghain, Ruaidhrí Mac Duinn Shléibhe with the Ulaidh, Giolla an Choimdhe Ó Caráin, **Patrick's coarb, having with them the relics of the north of Ireland, together with their clerical keepers to Downpatrick to capture it from John [de Courcy]**. When they reached it, they fled without striking a blow, **leaving behind Patrick's coarb with his clergy, and the Canóin Pádraig**, **Fionn Faoidheach Pádraig**, **Clog Timchill Arda Macha, Bachall Comhghaill, Ceolán Tighearnaigh, Bachall Da-Chiaróg Argail, Bachall Eimhine, Bachall Mhura, and many other relics**. There fell there Domhnall Ó Flaithbheartaigh, chieftain of Clann Fhlaithbheartaigh, Conchobhar Ó Ciaralláin, chieftain of Clann Diarmada, Giolla Mic Liag Ó Donnghaile, chieftain of Fir Dhroma, Giolla Criost Ó hAdhmaill, chieftain of Clann Adhmaill, Giolla Mártain Mac Con Allaidh, chieftain of Clann Chonchadha, Giolla Comhghaill Mac Tiúlacáin, chieftain of Muinntear Mhongáin, Cionaoth Mac Cartáin, chieftain of Cinéal Faghartaigh, and

many others who cannot be reckoned here. Patrick's coarb was captured, but was released by the English of their own accord, **and the Canóin Pádraig and the Ceolán Tighearnaigh** were brought back from the Galls, after they had been found in the slaughter, when their young keepers were killed. **The Galls have all the other relics still**.

MCB1196.8

Muircheartach Ó Lochlainn, king of Cinéal Eóghain, was treacherously killed by Conchobhar Ó Cathain and the Cinéal Eóghain themselves, **in violation of the security of Patrick and his saints, the Three Shrines**, **the Canóin**, **and Clog an Udhachta.**

Appendix C

Relics of other Saints in the Irish Annals to circa 1200: Annals of Ulster,

Annals of the Four Masters, Annals of Loch Cé and Mac Carthaigh's Book

Annals of Ulster
U617.1
The burning of the **martyrs of Aig**—the **burning of Donnán of Aig** on the fifteenth of the Kalends of May **with one hundred and fifty martyrs**; and the slaughter of Torach and the burning of Condaire.
U668.3
The **voyage of bishop Colmán, with the relics of the saints**, to Inis Bó Finne, where he founded a church; and the voyage of the sons of Gartnaid to Ireland with the people of Scí.
U727.5
The relics of Adomnán are brought over to Ireland and the law is promulgated anew.
U741.11
The **body of Petronilla**, daughter of *St* Peter, was **translated** this year, and **these words, written in Peter's own handwriting, were found in the marble tomb from which it was taken** i.e. 'The restingplace of Petronilla, most dearly beloved daughter.'
U743.11
The **taking on tour of the relics of Trian** of Cell Deilge; and the bolgach *was rampant*.
U753.13
A whale was cast ashore in Bairche in the time of Fiachna son of Aed Rón, king of Ulaid. It had three gold teeth in its head, each containing fifty ounces, and **one of them was placed on the altar of Bennchor** this year, that is, in AD 752.
U776.5
The **taking on tour of the relics of St Erc of Sláine and** of the **relics of Finnia*n* of Cluain Iraird**.
U782.2
Artgal son of Cathal, king of Connacht, **took the pilgrim's staff**, and *made* his pilgrimage in the following year to the island of Í.
U784.5
Dúnchad son of Dub dá Tuath, king of Uí Maine, **took the pilgrim's staff**.
U784.9
The **coming of the relics of Erc's son to** the city of **Tailtiu**.
U785.2
The **taking on tour of the relics of Ultán**.
U790.5
The **taking on tour of the relics of Caemgein and of Mo-Chua moccu Lugedon**.
U793.5
The **taking on tour of the relics of Tóla**.
U794.5
The **taking on tour of the relics of Trian**.
U798.2
The burning of Inis Pátraic by the heathens, and they took the cattle-tribute of the territories, **and broke the shrine of Do-Chonna**, and also made great incursions both in Ireland and in Alba.
U800.6
The **placing of the relics of Conlaed in a shrine of gold and silver**.
U801.1

The **placing of the relics of Rónán son of Berach in a gold and silver casket**.
U811.2
The fair of Tailtiu was prevented from being held on Saturday under the aegis of Aed son of Niall, neither horse nor chariot arriving there. It was the community of Tamlacht who caused the boycott **after the Uí Néill had violated the sanctuary of Tamlacht of Mael Ruain**; and many gifts were subsequently made to the community of Tamlacht.
U818.4
Cuanu, abbot of Lugmad, went into exile into the lands of Mumu **with the shrine of Mochta**.
U824.2
The heathens plundered Bennchor at Airtiu (?), and destroyed the oratory, and **shook the relics of Comgall from their shrine**.
U831.1
Diarmait came *back* to Ireland **with the halidoms of Colum Cille**.
U841.5
Feidlimid led an army as far as Carmain. Niall marched against him to Mag Óchtar.
(The **crozier of devout Feidlimid**
Was abandoned in the blackthorns;
Niall, mighty in combat, took it
By right of victory in battle with swords.)
U849.7
Indrechtach, abbot of Í, **came to Ireland with the halidoms of Colum Cille**.
U878.9
The **shrine of Colum Cille and his other halidoms arrived in Ireland**, having been **taken in flight to escape the foreigners**.
U891.2
Conchobor son of Flannacán, king of Uí Fhailgi, was destroyed by fire in Cluain Fhata. The community (?) of Finnia was outraged in the church, **and Finnia's halidoms were profaned by him and burned**.
U950.7
The bell-house of Sláine was burned by the foreigners of Áth Cliath. The **founder's episcopal staff, and the best of all bells**, the lector Caenachair and a large number with him, were *all* burned.
U1007.11
The Great Gospel of Colum Cille was wickedly stolen by night from the western sacristy in the great stone church of Cenannas. **It was the most precious object of the western world** on account of the human ornamentation(?). This Gospel was recovered after two months and twenty nights, **its gold having been taken off it** and with a sod over it.
U1087.9
(**The translation of the relics of St. Nicholas** in this year on the seventh of the Ides *9th* of May.)
U1097.4
The bell-tower of Mainistir with its books and many treasures was **burned**.
U1123.2
An unprecedented attack was made on the successor of Ailbe, i.e. Mael Mórdha grandson of Clothna, i.e. a house was stormed against him in the middle of Imlech itself, and against the son of Cerball ua Ciarmaic, i.e. king of Áine, and seven were killed therein. The nobles, however, escaped from it by the grace of Ailbe and the church. **The Bernán of Ailbe**, moreover, **was burned**. The person who stormed the house was killed within a month, i.e. Gilla Caech ua Ciarmaic, and he was a deacon in name, and he was beheaded for offending Ailbe and the Lord.
U1182.1

A hosting by Domnall Ua Lochlainn to Dun-mbo in Dal-riatai and battle was there given by him to the Foreigners and defeat *[was inflicted]* upon Cenel-Eogain and Raghnall Ua Breislein was killed there and Gilla Crist Ua Catha*[i]*n was killed there and many others *[were killed]*. **And the Gospel of *[St.]* Martin was carried off with them by the Foreigners**.

Annals of the Four Masters
M721.4
St. Conall, son of Moudan, **received the crown of martyrdom**.
M777.14
Artghal, son of Cathal, King of Connaught, **took the *pilgrim's* staff**, and went to Hi on his pilgrimage.
M790.6
The burning of Reachrainn by plunderers; and **its shrines were broken and plundered**.
M793.7
Inis Padraig, was burned by foreigners, **and they bore away the shrine of Dochonna**; and they also committed depredations between Ireland and Alba *Scotland*.
M822.3
The plundering of Beannchair by the foreigners; the oratory was broken, **and the relics of Comhghall were shaken from the shrine** in which they were, as Comhghall himself had foretold, when he said:
It will be true, true,
by the will of the supreme King of kings,
My bones shall be brought, without defect,
from the beloved Beannchair to Eantrobh.
M948.13
The belfry of Slaine was burned by the foreigners, with its full of relics and distinguished persons, together with Caeineachair, Lector of Slaine, **and the crozier of the patron saint, and a bell** *which was* **the best of bells**.
M1006.12
The Great Gospel of Colum Cille was stolen at night from the western Erdomh of the great church of Ceanannus. **This was the principal relic of the western world, on account of its singular cover**; and it was found after twenty nights and two months, its gold having been stolen off it, and a sod over it.
M1021.5
Branagan, son of Maeluidhir, a chief of Meath, was drowned on May-day, in Loch-Ainninn *Lough Ennell*, and MacConailligh, chief lawgiver of **Maelseachlainn, died, after the plundering of the shrine of Ciaran** by them both; this happened at the end of nine days after the plundering.
M1097.10
The cloictheach of Mainistir (i.e. of Mainistir-Buithe), **with its books and many treasures**, were **burned**.
M1123.12
An unusual attack was made upon the successor of Ailbhe, i.e. Maelmordha, son of Cloithnia. A house was forcibly taken from him, and the son of Cearbhall Ua Ciarmhaic, lord of Aine-Cliach, in the very middle of Imleach, and seven persons were therein killed; but the chiefs escaped through the miracle of God, Ailbhe, and the Church. **The Bearnan-Ailbhe was burned** on this occasion. The person who had taken the house, i.e. Gillacaech Ua Ciarmhaic (who was after being named a deacon), was killed before the end of a month; and his head was cut off, in revenge of the violation *of the laws* of God and Ailbhe.
M1129.12

The altar of the great church of Cluain-mic-Nois was robbed, and jewels were carried off from thence, namely, the carracan *model* of Solomon's Temple, which had been presented by Maelseachlainn, son of Domhnall; the Cudin *Catinum* of Donnchadh, son of Flann; and the three jewels which Toirdhealbhach Ua Conchobhair had presented, i.e. **a silver goblet**, a **silver cup with a gold cross** over it, and a drinking-horn with gold; the drinking-horn of Ua Riada, King of Aradh; **a silver chalice, with a burnishing of gold upon it**, with an engraving by the daughter of Ruaidhri Ua Conchobhair; **and the silver cup of Ceallach, successor of Patrick**. But Ciaran, from whom they were stolen, afterwards revealed them.

M1130.1

Sord-Choluim-Chille, **with its churches and relics, was burned**.

M1130.6

The jewels of Cluain-mic-Nois were revealed against the foreigners of Luimneach, they having been stolen by Gillacomhgain. Gillacomhgain himself was hanged at the fort of Cluain-Bhriain, by the King of Munster, he having been delivered up by Conchobhar Ua Briain. This Gillacomhgain sought Corcach, Lis-mor, and Port-Lairge, to proceed over sea; but no ship into which he entered found a wind to sail, while all the other ships did *get favourable wind*. This was no wonder, indeed, for Ciaran used to stop every ship in which he attempted to escape; and he said in his confessions at his death, **that he used to see Ciaran, with his crozier**, stopping every ship into which he went. The name of God and Ciaran was magnified by this.

M1135.22

Lightning struck off the head of the **Cloictheach of Cluain-mic-Nois, and pierced the cloictheach of Ros-Cre**.

M1136.23

Ruaidhri Ua Conchobhair and Uada Ua Concheanainn were taken prisoners by Toirdhealbhach Ua Conchobhair, **they being under the protection of the successor of Iarlath and Ua Dubhthaigh, and of the Bachall Buidhe *i.e. the yellow staff or crozier***, and Ua Domhnallian.

M1139.9

Fearghal, son of Raghnall, son of Muireadhach, chief of Muintir-Eolais, was killed by Tighearnan Ua Ruairc, **while under the protection of the Ul-Briuin and the men of Breifne**, both laity and clergy, **relics and shrines**.

M1143.14

A predatory excursion was made by the Eili into Feara-Ceall, **in violation of relic-oaths** and sureties.

M1155.21

A battle was gained by Imhar Mac Carghamhna and Gillachrist, his son, and by Muintir-Maelsinna, over the Breaghmhaini, Muintir-Thadhgain, and Muintir-Tlamain, in which fell the chief of Muintir-Tlamain, Gillafiadnatan Mac Aedha, and his son, Gillariabhach. It was Ciaran that turned this battle against the Breaghmhaini, for they had gone to Cluain, bringing with them cots, in which they carried off all they could find of the pigs of **Ciaran's** clergy. **The clergy went after them with their shrine**, as far as Lis-an-tsoiscela, but they were not obeyed. On the following day **they sustained a defeat, in consequence of disobeying Ciaran's clergy**.

M1156.4

Eochaidh Ua Cuinn, the chief master, **was burned in the cloictheach of Fearta**.

M1157.9

A synod was convened by the clergy of Ireland, and some of the kings, at the monastery of Droicheat-atha, the church of the monks. There were present seventeen bishops, together with the Legate and the successor of Patrick; and the number of persons of every other degree was countless. Among the kings were Muircheartach Ua Lochlainn, Tighearnan Ua Ruairc, Ua hEochadha, and Ua Cearbhaill. After the consecration of the church by the successor of Patrick, Donnchadh Ua Maeleachlainn was excommunicated by the clergy of Ireland, and banished by the kings from the

kingdom of Meath; and his brother, Diarmaid, was made king in his place. Muircheartach Ua Lochlainn presented seven score cows, and three score ounces of gold, to God and to the clergy, as an offering for the health of his soul. He granted them also a townland at Droicheat-atha, i.e. Finnabhair-na-ninghean. O'Cearbhaill also gave them three score ounces of gold; and the wife of O'Ruairc, **the daughter of Ua Maeleachlainn, gave as much more, and a chalice of gold on the altar of Mary, and cloth for each of the nine other altars that were in that church**.

M1159.10

There was a pacific meeting between Ruaidhri Ua Conchobhair and Tighearnan; **and they made peace, and took mutual oaths before sureties and relics**. Tighearnan and the men of Breifne then turned against Muircheartach Ua Lochlainn, and joined the standard of Connaught.

M1162.4

The relics of Bishop Maeinenn and of Cummaine Foda were removed from the earth by the clergy of Brenainn, and they **were enclosed in a protecting shrine**.

M1182.3

Donnell, the son of Hugh O'Loughlin, marched with an army to Dunbo, in Dal Riada, and there gave battle to the English. The Kinel-Owen were defeated, and Randal O'Breslen, Gilchreest O'Kane, and many others, were killed. **On this occasion they carried off with them the Gospel of St. Martin**.

M1197.2

Mac Etigh, one of the Kienaghts, robbed the altar of the great church of Derry, **and carried off the four best goblets in Ireland**, viz. Mac Riabhach, Mac Solas, the goblet of O'Muldory, and the goblet of O'Doherty, called Cam-Corainn. These he broke, and took off their jewels and brilliant gems. On the third day after this robbery, these jewels and the thief were discovered. He was hanged by Flaherty *O'Muldory* at Cros-na-riagh (i.e. the Cross of Executions), **in revenge of Columbkille, whose altar he had profaned**.

Annals of Loch Cé

LC1055.4

The battle of the relic-house *was gained* by Dubh-da-leithe, comarb of Patrick, over the son of Loingsech Ua Maelsechlainn, i.e. the comarb of Finnén and of Colum Cille, in which many were slain.

LC1076.3

Murchadh, son of Flann Ua Maelsechlainn, king of Temhair during the space of three nights, **was slain in the cloicteach of Cenannus** by the son of Maelan, king of Gailenga.

LC1132.2

An engagement was fought by the people of Scrín-Choluim-Chille and Lochlainn Ua Baeighellain, **in which the airchinnech of the Scrín**, i.e. Macraith Ua Niallain, and Lochlainn himself, were killed.

LC1133.6

Lusca, **with its church full of people and treasures, was burned** by the same party.

LC1196.18

Mac Gilla-Eidigh of Cianachta robbed the altar of the great church of Doire-Choluim-Chille, **and took therefrom the four best goblets that were in Erinn**, viz:—Mac-riabhach, and Mac-solus, and the goblet of O'Maeldoraidh, and the Cam-coruinn, i.e. the goblet of O'Dochartaigh; and he broke them, and took off their precious things. These articles were found on the third day after being stolen; and the person who stole them was discovered, and he was hanged at Cros-na-riagh **in revenge of Colum-Cille, whose altar had been profaned**.

Mac Carthaigh's Book

MCB1115.5

A fleet [was brought] on the Shannon by Toirdhealbhach son of Ruaidhrí [Ó Conchobhair]. He cleared Buinne an Bheithe against the Munstermen, and after that he had a conference with Murchadh son of Domhnall [Ó Maoil Sheachlainn], king of Midhe, at Clonmacnois, and they made peace and an alliance there. Great forays by Toirdhealbhach son of Ruaidhrí in that maritime expedition, and he plundered a great portion of the Conmhaicne, and he came to Clonmacnois, where he fasted **and gave a drinking-horn ornamented with gold and a silver goblet ornamented with gold to God and Ciaran**.

MCB1116.1

The year before this, Diarmaid Ó Briain turned against Muircheartach son of Toirdhealbhach Ó Briain, his own brother, and took the kingship of Munster from him, **in violation of [the security of] the relics and sanctuaries of all Ireland, at Cashel and Lismore**.

MCB1118.5

Ruaidhrí Ó Conchobhair, who was blinded by Ó Flaithbheartaigh and who was called Ruaidhrí na Soidhe Buidhe, son of Aodh in Gha Bhearnaigh son of Tadhg an Eich Ghil, died at Clonmacnois **after a victory of repentance, and after receiving the Body of Christ and wine out of Fraochán Ciaráin.**

MCB1126.10

A hosting by Conchobhar son of Ardghar Mac Lochlainn and the [men of] the north of Ireland into Midhe, **and they burned Trim, including the belfry and church**, with many people in them.

MCB1153.1

Tadhg son of Diarmaid Ó Briain turned against Toirdhealbhach, his own kinsman, **in violation of relics and sureties**, and joined with Diarmaid son of Cormac Muighe Thamhnach [Mac Carthaigh], Toirdhealbhach son of Ruaidhrí Ó Conchobhair, king of Connacht, and Diarmaid Mac Murchadha, king of Leinster, and they banished Toirdhealbhach son of Diarmaid Ó Briain to Cinéal Eóghain to Muircheartach son of Niall Ó Lochlainn.

MCB1153.5

Tadhg son of Diarmaid Ó Briain **was blinded through the miracles of the clergy and the relics of Ireland**, which were security between him and Toirdhealbhach Ó Briain, his kinsman.

MCB1163.1

A.D. 1163. Donnchadh son of Donnchadh son of Cithach Mac Carthaigh, candle of generosity and valour of Clann Charthaigh, was treacherously killed by Diarmaid son of Cormac Muighe Thamhnach after excelling one another(?) ... **Mo Chuda as well as all the other relics between them**.

MCB1167.5

Donnchadh son of Cú Chaisil Ó Cearbhaill, high-king of Oirghialla, who obtained the kingship of Midhe as far as Clochán na hImrime, and the kingship of Ulaidh, and to whom was offered many times the kingship of Cinéal Eóghain, chief ornament of the north of Ireland, and even of all Ireland, for appearance, wisdom, bravery, friendship, brotherliness, vigour, kingship, power, for bestowing treasure, food, bounty, and reward to laymen and clergy, for overwhelming all evil and exalting all goodness, **for protecting bells, croziers, and the monasteries of canons and monks**, and like unto Solomon for peacefulness in his own native territory and towards every territory around, died after repentance, having bequeathed much gold, silver, and stock, and having partaken of the Body of Christ.

MCB1178.1

A.D. 1178. The valiant knight John de Courcy came secretly with a band of knights and archers from Dublin to Downpatrick, and reaching it unperceived, they made a dyke from sea to sea about Downpatrick. The Ulaidh then assembled, under Ruaidhrí

Mac Duinn Shléibhe, to make an attack on Downpatrick against John, but on reaching it they retreated without striking a blow when they saw the Englishmen with their horses in full battle-dress. When the Englishmen saw the Ulaidh in flight, they followed them with their people, and inflicted slaughter upon them, both by drowning and by the sword. **The Bachall Fínghin and Bachall Rónáin Fhinn and many other relics were left behind in that slaughter**.

Appendix D

List of Patrick's Bells

Bells of Patrick which have not physically survived:

1. *Findfaídech*, or 'sweet-sounding bell'.
2. *Bernán*, or 'gapped [bell] of St Brigit'.

Bells of Patrick which have physically survived:

1. **Black Bell of St Patrick:** the keepers are called 'Boland', and the bell's provenance is in Killower in Co. Galway and is presently housed in the National Museum of Ireland.
2. **Black Bell of St Patrick:** the keepers are called 'Geraghty', and the bell's provenance is in Killower in Co. Galway and is presently housed in the National Musuem of Ireland.
3. **Bell of Armagh:** the keepers are called 'O Hannon', and the bell's provenance is in Terryhoogan in Co. Armagh and is presently housed in the National Museum of Ireland.
4. **St Patrick's Bell (i.e. *Cloc ind Édachta*):** the keepers are called 'O Mellan', and the bell's provenance is in Armagh itself and is presently housed in the National Museum of Ireland.

(Consult Ó Floinn's *Irish Shrines and Reliquaries*, p. 45, for his list of surviving bell-relics and associative relics of Patrick and of other saints; also see Bourke's chapter on 'Patrick's Bells' in *Patrick*, pp. 40-8.)