

On reconstructing medieval Irish chronicles

Abstract

Examination of Kathleen Hughes' 1972 hypothesis of a 'Chronicle of Ireland' reveals that her primary assumption that the Annals of Ulster represent 'the most complete version of the Irish annals' was mistaken. This assumption has strongly influenced the understanding of early Irish annals by most subsequent scholarship. However, this article contends that the kalend and ferial structure of the Clonmacnoise group of annals embodies the earliest surviving witness to the early annals. The methodology of Roy Flechner's recent analysis of the compilation, motivation, and classification of the 'Chronicle of Ireland' is also examined and found to be misjudged.

Introduction

A number of publications over the past decade have undertaken to analyse aspects of the corpus of chronicles known as the Irish annals. This corpus consists of ten major compilations preserved in manuscripts from the eleventh to the seventeenth centuries. A recent instance is the article by Roy Flechner entitled 'The Chronicle of Ireland: then and now',¹ in which he presents a discussion of the so-called 'Chronicle of Ireland', a title introduced in 1972 by Kathleen Hughes to identify a hypothetical set of lost Irish annals that supposedly underlies some of the surviving compilations up to the early tenth-century. Flechner's abstract commences with the statement: 'This is the first systematic analysis of the earliest monastic chronicle in the Latin west, the so-called Chronicle of Ireland, which spans the years 431/2–911'.² He then lists as his aims, 'to establish the reasons for which the Chronicle was compiled, unravel the process of compilation, and challenge the generic classification of the Chronicle and other European chronicles of this kind as works of historiography'.³ Along the way Flechner expresses opinions on the value of some recent publications on the subject, including my own. The main purpose of this article is to examine the basis for Flechner's analysis of the early annals, and the analysis itself.⁴

The hypothesis of the 'Chronicle of Ireland'

It is clear from both his title and his introductory remarks that Flechner believes implicitly in the medieval existence of the 'Chronicle of Ireland'; indeed all his arguments rest upon this assumption. So much so, in fact, that he did not consider it necessary to justify this belief, nor to document the basis for it. He credits Hughes merely with having 'coined the term

[‘Chronicle of Ireland’] in 1972’, whereas in fact she identified almost all of its salient features. Hughes proposed that:

1. a common source lay behind the Annals of Ulster (AU), the Annals of Tigernach (AT) and the *Chronicum Scottorum* (CS), which common source she termed the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’;⁵
2. AT and CS were of ‘Clonmacnoise provenance’;⁶
3. AU was to be considered the ‘most complete version’ of Irish medieval annals;⁷
4. the chronological structure of the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’ was the same as that of AU;⁸
5. AU, and hence the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’, commenced at the year 431;⁹
6. AU and AT/CS diverge at 913;¹⁰
7. the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’ was compiled shortly after 913.¹¹

With the exception only of Hughes’ concluding year of 913, all of these features of the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’ are assumed by Flechner.

In 1984 Kathryn Grabowski and David Dumville adopted Hughes’ concept of a ‘Chronicle of Ireland’, and accepted the features identified by her as described above, with two minor modifications. They expanded the annals of ‘Clonmacnoise provenance’ to occasionally include the Annals of Roscrea (AR) and the Annals of Clonmacnoise (MB), for which they introduced the useful collective term ‘Clonmacnoise group’. They set back the year of the supposed divergence of AU and AT/CS from 913 to 911.¹²

In 2006 Thomas Charles-Edwards published a two-volume collection, under the title *Chronicle of Ireland* that is essentially a conflate English translation of AU/AT/CS over the years 431–911. In his introduction to this edition he effectively repeated Hughes’ description of the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’, as emended by Grabowski and Dumville, though without explicitly acknowledging any of them. Charles-Edwards wrote: ‘The title “Chronicle of Ireland” is modern and is appropriate for a text which no longer exists in its original form: the common source of the Irish annals from 431–911’;¹³ ‘in the Annals of Ulster we have the best text of the early annals ... When text is both in the Annals of Ulster and in one of the Clonmacnois group of annals, a very strong argument exists for saying that the text was part of the Chronicle of Ireland’;¹⁴ ‘hence the standard one-year correction to the Annals of Ulster AD dating which is followed in this translation’.¹⁵ The font and indentation principles that Charles-Edwards adopted for the presentation of the entries represent the assumed priority of AU entries over those of the Clonmacnoise group.¹⁶

The fundamental flaw in these analyses of the common source of AU and the Clonmacnoise group is that none of them undertook a comprehensive analysis of the chronological structure of the Clonmacnoise group, nor indeed of AU. Instead, they all imposed on the Clonmacnoise group the chronological structure of AU's *Anno Domini* (AD) dating system.

These were indeed significant editorial decisions given that Hughes had stated emphatically that 'One other very important point becomes clear in comparing *AU* and *Tig*. The Chronicle of Ireland had no *anno domini* dating'.¹⁷ Having made this important identification she then unaccountably ignored the fact that, on the one hand, the Clonmacnoise group confirms her conclusion in that their AD series does not commence until the eleventh century, while on the other hand, AU's AD series commences at 431. Instead, Hughes systematically cited only AU's AD in her chronological references to the Clonmacnoise group entries.¹⁸ Indeed, Hughes appears not to have realised the significance of the alternative system of ferial data in AT or CS, which provides a reliable system for accurately recording chronology. Instead, when she tabulated the chronological structure of AT against AU she silently omitted all of AT's ferials.¹⁹

Grabowski and Dumville repeated Hughes' statement regarding the absence of AD dating from the early annals, but nevertheless used AU's AD system in all their tabulation of entries from AT and CS.²⁰ However, and in contrast to Hughes, they did recognize the importance of the Clonmacnoise group ferials, and tabulated some of AT's ferial data, apparently taken from Stokes' edition. They also briefly considered the possibility that these ferial data had derived from an unspecified 'source', writing, 'it is certain that the 'Clonmacnoise Chronicle' used, or retained from a source, a sequence of ferial data extending into the mid-seventh century'.²¹

For his part Charles-Edwards, referring to 'the original Chronicle of Ireland', stated that 'the AD dating was added at some point after 911 to a text from which the Annals of Ulster descend'.²² So he too accepted that the 'Chronicle of Ireland' did not include AD dating, and that AU's AD data were a later addition. Nevertheless, he resolved that it was 'the standard one-year correction to the Annals of Ulster's AD dating which is followed in this translation', though he nowhere explains this 'standard one-year correction', nor whence it derived.²³ Regarding ferials, even though there had been a comprehensive analysis of all 644 years of the Clonmacnoise group ferial data published eight years before his edition, as will be discussed below, Charles-Edwards made the following declaration: 'I have tried to work them out independently of Mc Carthy's articles so as to provide for myself, and then for others, a check on the crucial arguments'.²⁴ However, Charles-Edwards in fact made no effort

to engage critically with earlier scholarship regarding the ferial data, while his attempt ‘to work them out independently’ resulted in a reconstruction of just the years 586–664, incorporating multiple transcription errors, conflating interpolated AU ferial data with that of AT/CS, and silently imposing the chronological structure of AU onto AT and CS.²⁵ This exercise, intended to provide a ‘check on the crucial arguments’, culminated in Charles-Edwards’ dismissal of the Clonmacnoise group ferial data with the unsubstantiated conjecture, ‘Not a single ferial in AT and CS began life in a chronicle; they were taken by a careless scribe from a table and never corrected’.²⁶ He provided neither evidence nor explanation for this hypothetical source ‘table’, nor the ‘careless scribe’. Thus, while all of these scholars accepted that the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’ did not contain any AD data and that their introduction into the annals post-dated 911, they all passed over the Clonmacnoise group’s unique series of kalends and ferias, and instead imposed AU’s AD structure on their reconstructions of the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’. I shall return to these matters in due course.

In 1985 an independent witness to the early Irish ecclesiastical use of kalends and ferias to represent chronological structure emerged when Dáibhí Ó Cróinín identified the 84-year Paschal table in Padua, Biblioteca Antoniana I.27, ff. 71^r–75^v, as an instance of the Insular Paschal *Latercus* or Easter table.²⁷ This was the Paschal tradition known from Bede’s *Historia Ecclesiastica* to have been followed by many early Irish and British churches, and, in particular, in Iona from its foundation by S. Columba up until 716, when it was abandoned.²⁸ The primary chronological sequencing of this 84-year table is by the kalends of January (i.e. 1 January) followed by the ferial of this day (i.e. the weekday number). Thus we know that the chronological apparatus of the Clonmacnoise group of annals conforms to that of the Paschal table used by early Irish churches, north and south.²⁹

Earlier modern discussions of the ferial data of AT and CS had made no serious attempt to analyse them; Paul Walsh simply stated that they were ‘almost entirely wrong’, while T.F. O’Rahilly dismissed them as ‘hopelessly confused’.³⁰ However, in 1998 I published the first comprehensive analysis of the ferial data of the Clonmacnoise group, and in this it was demonstrated that the 28-year cycle of the ferias possesses powerful error-detection properties that allow the methodical location and correction of sequencing errors.³¹ These properties, when combined with the comprehensive collation of the ferial data in AT, CS, and AR, enabled the reconstruction of the ferial series of the Clonmacnoise group for six and one half centuries commencing at the year registering the Incarnation.³²

This reconstruction of the ferial series was followed in 1999 by a comprehensive tabulation of these chronological data, together with precise references to all the annalistic textual

entries over AD 1–722, which was published on the Internet.³³ This tabulation also included AU’s chronological structure and exact references to all of its textual entries. In consequence it provided a complete specification over 1–722 of the relationship between both the chronological structure and entries of the Clonmacnoise group and AU.

Over the post-Patrician period this tabulation shows that the chronological structure of the Clonmacnoise group differs significantly from that of AU over the years 431–663. These variations consist of different sequencing of entries over 431–585,³⁴ following which six non-consecutive kalends are missing from the Clonmacnoise group over 612–663. On the other hand, AU possesses four unique additional kalends at the manuscript years 634, 640, 647, and 654, and a fifth additional kalend at 574. Examination of the details of the textual entries at and proximate to these additional kalends showed that all five kalends ‘in AU are later additions relative to AT/CS’.³⁵ These interpolated kalends in AU show that it is the result of an attempt to restore chronological integrity to a chronicle of the form of the Clonmacnoise group. This in turn implies that the Clonmacnoise group with the six missing kalends represents their common source at an earlier stage of its evolution than does AU. Other relationships highlighted by the tabulated comparison also imply this. Namely, the numerous duplicate AU entries *in prima manu* over 436–667, where one duplicate synchronizes with the Clonmacnoise group entry, while the other duplicate randomly precedes or succeeds the synchronous entry;³⁶ the repeated re-sequencing of entries in AU over 438–585; AU’s elaborate chronological apparatus comprising for each year a kalend, ferial, lunar epact, and *Anno Domini* datum. These features identify AU as the re-organisation of a chronicle that earlier had the chronological structure of the Clonmacnoise group over the first two and a half centuries of the post-Patrician period.

I turn next to consider the pre-Patrician period, which all proponents of the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’ ignored as a result of their belief that AU commences at 431.³⁷ However, Seán Mac Airt, the first editor of the modern edition of AU, identified the presence of these pre-Patrician annals in 1956, writing, ‘All our relevant early Irish Annals have in their present form pre-Patrician as well as post-Patrician material’, subsequently making it explicit that this included AU.³⁸ Accordingly, Mac Airt included the acephalous and truncated annals of TCD 1282 ff. 12–14 in his edition, and these were retained by Gearóid Mac Niocaill when the edition was published.³⁹ Collation of the script of ff. 12–14 with the entries written *in prima manu* in ff. 16–129v showed that Ruaidhrí Ó Luínín had written both sections. Furthermore, examination of the codicology of TCD 1282 revealed that ff. 12–14 had been bound to the remainder of the codex in the first stitching.⁴⁰ Thus all the available evidence

indicated that ff. 12–14 formed part of the original compilation of AU. The pre-Patrician annals in both AU and the Clonmacnoise group consist of world history entries taken from Biblical and earlier Christian sources, together with intermittent Irish entries. These Irish entries represent later, retrospective, additions to the world chronicle and cannot, of course, be considered a reliable record of contemporary events in Ireland.

My collation of these fragmentary AU pre-Patrician annals showed that almost all of its entries are also found in the Clonmacnoise group in the same sequence. But it also showed that in AU a radical chronological structure had been imposed on these entries, which included an interpolated Incarnation entry ‘secundum Dionissium’ at *Anno Mundi* 4205, equivalent to AD 254. Following this 171 kalends had been interpolated into the subsequent period of 133 years up to the entry registering Jerome’s preaching in Jerusalem.⁴¹ These annals had also been provided with a very elaborate chronological apparatus which supplies, for every year with an entry, an *Anno Mundi*, kalend, ferial and lunar epact.⁴² Thus collation of AU’s pre-Patrician annals with those of Clonmacnoise group revealed similar features to those found in the first two and a half centuries of AU’s post-Patrician annals. Namely, substantial re-arrangement of their chronological structure, and significant elaboration of their chronological apparatus. On the other hand, over this period the Clonmacnoise group presents a uniform apparatus of kalend and ferial, which defines a chronology that reconciles closely for those events where we have an independent chronology.

In consequence, I was obliged to conclude that the assumptions by proponents of the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’ that 1) the common source of AU and the Clonmacnoise group commences at 431, and that 2) AU should be considered the pre-eminent representative of the early Irish annals, are both mistaken.

Furthermore, comprehensive collation of AU and AT/CS over the tenth and eleventh centuries revealed that they continue to preserve common entries after the years 911 and 913, so that neither year can be taken as the conclusion of their common source as has been assumed by all proponents of the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’.⁴³

In summary, most of Hughes’ hypotheses repeated by Flechner cannot be sustained. Consequently, in selecting her ‘Chronicle of Ireland’ as the basis for his ‘systematic analysis of the earliest monastic chronicle in the Latin west’, Flechner chose a chimera, an implausible assembly of disparate parts.

Flechner's analysis of the 'Chronicle of Ireland'

Flechner begins his analysis of the 'Chronicle of Ireland' as follows: 'In order to proceed with investigating the Chronicle's contents and development, I tabulated (see Appendix) all the events that overlap between the Annals of Ulster (AU) and the Clonmacnoise Group of Annals (consisting of the Annals of Tigernach (AT) and the *Chronicum Scotorum* (CS)) before 911. I counted 1700 such events in total.'⁴⁴ Examination of his Appendix shows, however, that it does not tabulate any annalistic events whatsoever, but rather it endeavours to classify these 1700 entries common to AU and AT/CS according to seven categories, variously divided into sub-categories, and then to tabulate a tally of each category and sub-category. The seven categories are: 'Deaths', 'Violent events', 'Events outside the British Isles', 'Natural phenomena', 'Ecclesiastical events', 'Political', and 'Other'.⁴⁵ These categories and their sub-categories are then tallied over the two periods, 432–562 and 563–911, except for 'Violent events', where the second period is subdivided into the periods 563–739 and 740–911. Flechner provides no rationale for the principles he employed in choosing these categories, sub-categories, and time periods, despite the fact that their choice will determine just what aspects of the 1700 entries his analysis will record. Annalistic entries are rich in semantic, genealogical, spatial, and temporal information, but Flechner's chosen categories can register only a limited semantic range; for example, no genealogical information, only the spatial boundary of the entire British Isles, and essentially two temporal periods extending for 131 and 349 years respectively. In particular, given that these are Irish annals which supply abundant Irish place-name references, the choice of the British Isles as his only spatial boundary is especially inappropriate. Likewise, his choice of two time intervals, one extending for three and a half centuries, to represent a chronicle that registers 480 individual years, is disproportionate.

It appears from Flechner's only collective reference to his chosen categories that he was confused regarding this process, for he wrote: 'The data from the tables allows [sic] us to classify events covered by the Chronicle under five main categories: deaths, violent events (e.g. battles, raids), ecclesiastical events (e.g. the foundations of churches and consecrations), natural phenomena (e.g. eclipses, earthquakes, harvests, disease), and political events (e.g. accession to the kingship, abdications)'.⁴⁶ In fact, the 'data from the tables' are a direct result of the system of categories imposed by Flechner, so his explanation for them has reversed cause and effect. There are other problems. For example, there is considerable semantic overlap between his chosen sub-categories, so that some entries may be classified under more than one, as he acknowledges, 'Since certain events occur in a number of categories ... the

total number of events under each category does not match the subtotals and sum-totals'.⁴⁷ In consequence his tallies cannot be checked, even though such a check is clearly necessary; for example, for the period 432–562 he registers under 'Deaths' that 13 of these 'occurred outside the British Isles', while under 'Events outside the British Isles' he records 'Deaths: 11'. Similarly it is impossible to reconcile his statement that, 'the entry 804.6 contains four events: a battle and the deaths of three named casualties', with Charles-Edwards' entry 804.6: 'Fáelán son of Cellach, princeps of Kildare, and Cernach son of Dúinchad, king of the Mugdornai, died'.⁴⁸

In this way Flechner reduces 1700 annalistic entries distributed over 480 years into a series of sub-categories divided temporally into those that fall before 563, and those that fall on or after that year. Based upon his tallies Flechner makes some general observations, such as: 'The tables show an overwhelming preponderance of deaths and violent events'; 'A negligible portion of the clerics recorded died violently, whereas around half of the secular figures did'; 'no significant fluctuations in the records of secular deaths (both peaceful and violent) before and after the watershed year of c.740'; 'more raids (0.66 per year) and more violent deaths of clerics (6.5% of overall clerical deaths) are recorded after 740 than before'.⁴⁹ These are all observations readily apparent to anyone who would carefully read through the texts in question, while the tallies and percentages that Flechner cites are all conditional on how he has distributed his sample of the entries common to AU and AT/CS amongst his categories and sub-categories. This flawed analysis of the contents of the 'Chronicle of Ireland' is the basis for the remainder of his article.

In his next section, entitled 'Interpreting annalistic evidence', Flechner criticises Kathleen Hughes' 1966 analysis of the annalistic distribution of references to abbots and bishops over the interval 601–64, from which she concluded that 'from the seventh century onwards the preponderance of abbots is decisive'.⁵⁰ Flechner, by examining the references to abbots and bishops in the 'Chronicle of Ireland' for four consecutive sixteen-year periods over 601–64, asserts 'that a decisive "preponderance" only occurs between the years 601–48', and concludes that, 'Hughes's conclusion is incompatible with the evidence'. This example, he states, 'underlines how an artificial choice of dividing the years may lead us to infer false trends'.⁵¹ He does not appear to have seen the irony in the fact that his critical condemnation of Hughes' methodology applies *a fortiori* to his own methodology in constructing his Appendix, where he has taken entries distributed over 480 years and divided them into the periods of 432–562 and 563–911. He has, like Hughes, ignored the annalistic character of the chronicle he was analysing, and substituted simple tallies of arbitrary categories over

capricious intervals, instead of comprehensively examining both the textual details of the entries and their annual chronological distribution. Following this convincing – if unintended – repudiation of his own methodology, Flechner proposes that his discussion of Hughes’ interpretation allows him ‘to posit the following principles for using annals’:⁵²

First, annals must be understood on their own terms (e.g. obits are deaths, no more no less). Second, the annalist is not all-knowing. Third, annals are not exhaustive, nor do they provide even coverage of events, as Colmán Etchingham has often reminded us. Fourth, not all entries are contemporary. And finally, the annals do not lend themselves to arbitrary divisions into periods, beyond the (already arbitrary) year-by-year division.

Let us consider these ‘principles’ in turn. First, if the ‘annals must be understood in their own terms’, then this surely must include their spatial, temporal, and genetic information. Moreover, annalistic obits are not simply ‘deaths’, they are, in almost all cases, accounts of the deaths of persons of high social status, and include details of both the individual and the event. Flechner is here imposing his semantically narrow category ‘Deaths’ on well over one thousand entries, each recording the year of death of a named individual, and regularly including such details as familial relationships, social status, location, and circumstances of the death. Regarding his ‘principles’ two and three, he cannot seriously believe that there are scholars who would claim that the annalists were ‘all-knowing’, or that their coverage was ‘exhaustive’ or ‘even’. His fourth ‘principle’ that ‘not all entries are contemporary’ is a common-place of any critical discussion of chronicle entries. His fifth and final ‘principle’ that ‘annals do not lend themselves to arbitrary divisions’ does indeed identify a crucial issue, but his belief in it would have carried more conviction had he himself not violated the principle on such a vast scale by making ‘arbitrary divisions’ of the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’ into the two periods 432–562 and 563–911.

In his next section, ‘The process of compilation’, Flechner turns to the second of his stated aims and commences with the assertion, ‘The Chronicle not only exhibits a uniformity with respect to form and style (e.g. concise entries and a dispassionate tone) but also a uniformity in content, as is evident from the tables which show that the range of topics covered remained by-and-large unchanged throughout the period of contemporary chronicling’.⁵³ But, except for violent events, his table for 563–911 gives no temporal distribution information whatsoever of his categories over this period. There is no evidential basis in his Appendix for his assertion of ‘uniformity in content’ over this period. Moreover, he acknowledges that Colmán Etchingham had ‘noted changes over time in the preferences of the annalists’,⁵⁴ but is unable to resolve the conflict inherent in Etchingham’s conclusion and his own assumption.

Instead, he writes: ‘By and large, therefore, the Chronicle can be seen to exhibit an overall consistency in form and content. It is therefore possible to treat the Chronicle as a textual unity’.⁵⁵ There is no evidential or logical basis here for either of his two ‘therefores’; rather, Flechner is trying to buttress his decision to treat the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’ as ‘a textual unity’, regardless of the contrary evidence. For, he continues, ‘it is precisely this unity that gives us the justification to raise questions about the Chronicle as a whole’.⁵⁶ Thus all of his subsequent exploration of these questions is based upon his unsupported assumption of ‘textual unity’.

It is this supposed ‘textual unity’ that furnishes the basis for Flechner’s reflections upon the ‘Chronicle as historiography’. I leave to others the evaluation of his ponderings on the historiographical significance of the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’, but there is no mistaking the indecisive outcome, for he ends the section by acknowledging an ‘inability to identify the Chronicle and similar texts like it with historiography’.⁵⁷ Flechner concludes his article with the rhetorical question, ‘The Chronicle as eschatology?’, which section, like the preceding, is inconclusive: ‘However, whether the Chronicle’s annalists recorded events with eschatological intent, and viewed certain events as ‘signs’ or ‘types’, are issues that cannot be definitively settled’.⁵⁸

In summary, in this article Flechner presents a brief and superficial survey of an unexplained set of categories imposed upon the entries found in common between AU and AT/CS over 432–911, the methodology of which he himself repudiates. Upon this survey he bases some emphatic but ultimately inconclusive opinions regarding the process of compilation of these entries, the motives of the annalists, and whether or not their chronicle constitutes historiography.

Flechner’s reflections on contemporary annalistic scholarship

The foregoing review demonstrates that Flechner had not formulated clear guidelines for himself when considering the textual history of the Irish annals. In the course of his discussion he repeats some criticisms of my own published work, and I consider therefore that I am entitled to a right of reply. Referring to me, Flechner wrote:⁵⁹

His attempts to dismiss the Chronicle hypothesis, which culminated with publication of his *Irish Annals* in 2008, was met with fierce resistance, especially from Evans and Charles-Edwards, both of whom (as well as other reviewers) were dismayed by Mc Carthy’s inventive historical narratives, narratives that he adduced in order to account for certain turning points that he identified in the development of the Irish annals. Evans argued that Mc Carthy exhibits a ‘tendency to draw far-reaching conclusions with utmost

certainty based on questionable or slight evidence'. Charles-Edwards went further and, in a departure from his characteristic courteous style, wrote that 'Mc Carthy is somewhat prone to conspiracy theory'. Although it is not my intention to reject Mc Carthy's work altogether ... I concur with those who found serious flaws in the methodology of his historical analysis, and heed Charles-Edward's advice to the student of early Irish history 'to accept no new theory in Mc Carthy's proposed evolution of the medieval Irish chronicles without checking for himself'.

Nicholas Evans' accusation here of 'far-reaching conclusions with utmost certainty', and Charles-Edwards' assertion of my susceptibility to 'conspiracy theory' suggest that neither is familiar with the principle of a hypothesis based upon circumstantial evidence. In a footnote Flechner identifies two of these supposed certain 'conclusions'.⁶⁰ The first of these is my hypothesis that it was an annalistic world chronicle compiled by Rufinus of Aquileia that provided the prototype for the Irish annals, which hypothesis was based upon the details of the annalistic Imperial succession, the Alexandrian episcopal succession, the prominence the annals afford to Origen, and textual details of world-history entries unique to the annals.⁶¹ The second instance is my hypothesis that the chronological disruptions and lacunae found in the Clonmacnoise group at 425–31 and 612–64 were the consequence of revisions by the Northumbrian monk Ecgberht. This hypothesis was based upon the temporal distribution of these disruptions and lacunae, the silence of the annals regarding the *Latercus* Paschal tradition followed in Iona until 716, and the close synchronism of the annalistic Anglo-Saxon entries extending over 611–718 with the start of the lacunae at 612 and the Paschal reform at 716. Of course, neither of these hypotheses can be considered a 'certainty', but they were presented simply as the best interpretation that I could offer of the available circumstantial evidence. Certainly, both the circumstantial evidence and hypotheses should be subjected to critical evaluation, but neither Charles-Edwards nor Evans nor Flechner has undertaken any such diagnostic analysis, preferring instead to dismiss the hypotheses without making any effort to engage critically with them.

I have pointed out above where Charles-Edwards passed over in silence my comprehensive analysis of the Clonmacnoise group chronological structure for AD 1–644, which forms part of the circumstantial basis for the Ecgberht hypothesis. Likewise he passed silently over the published palaeographical and codicological evidence for AU's pre-Patrician annals, which evidence precludes the possibility that AU commences at 431.⁶² Such selective elision of published evidence impedes the progress of scholarship.

Conclusions

The hypothesis of the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’ was formulated, without significant reference to manuscript evidence, by Kathleen Hughes. This hypothesis was reiterated and developed by subsequent generations of Hughes’ successors in Cambridge, and eventually taken over by Thomas Charles-Edwards. A fundamental weakness common to all these contributions is that, despite the fact that the defining feature of any chronicle is that it systematically represents χρόνος, ‘time’, they all neglected to consider this aspect of the annals. Hughes ignored the chronological structure of both AU and the Clonmacnoise group, and her successors either followed her example, or at most offered brief, superficial accounts. Roy Flechner places himself firmly in the former cohort with his opening declaration that ‘the present essay is not concerned with matters of chronology’, and this in an essay whose title makes three separate references to time.⁶³ Whenever these scholars required to make a chronological reference they all seized upon the AD series of AU, to which they introduced a one-year increment in the later fifth century, neither citing an authority for this procedure, nor offering a rationale for it.⁶⁴ Not one of them considered it necessary to examine the manuscript evidence for AU’s chronological structure.

Let us briefly consider one aspect of this manuscript evidence, namely the chronological data in the primary manuscript of the Annals of Ulster, Dublin, Trinity College Library, 1282, for the years 431–1012 where the first scribe, Ruaidhrí Ó Luinín, wrote a kalend, ferial, epact, and AD, each of which is explicitly identified. However, over 431–998 he omitted almost all ferial and epactal data, and over 923–981 he left each AD datum incompletely written. Subsequently, the second scribe, Ruaidhrí Ó Casaide, interpolated sporadic ferial, epactal, and *Anno Mundi* data, completed Ó Luinín’s partly-written AD data, and intermittently over 501–1012 interpolated an alternative AD datum of value one greater than that first written.⁶⁵ For example, on f. 50^{vb} at the manuscript year 954 is the first instance where Ó Luinín has written all four data, reading as follows:⁶⁶

95^o5^o

Kl̄.iañ.ui.f^a.iiii.lū.Año.dò.dcccc^o.***.l.iii.***

Here Ó Luinín left unwritten the least significant digits of his AD datum, and it is the case that his feria ‘ui’ is incorrect for both 954 and 955. Ó Casaide’s interpolations have been shown in bold italic and his alternative AD datum, inscribed in Arabic numerals super-linearly, is one greater in value than the AD datum that he completed below. The character of this chronological data is, therefore, one of uncertainty on the part of its two compilers, and

their ambiguity should prompt caution in any scholar. However, notwithstanding this, it is on their AD data alone that the proponents of the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’ have relied, taking Ó Luínín’s AD data for 431–485, and considering Ó Casaide’s intermittent alternative AD to be extended continuously over 486–1012. Neither Ó Luínín’s nor Ó Casaide’s AD data for 431–1012 are found in any earlier annalistic manuscript, so that all the available evidence shows that these AD data are a late fifteenth-century composition by two compilers who were uncertain of their sources. Neither are their AD data found in any subsequent Gaelic annalistic compilation. Later, when reproduced in the printed editions of William Hennessy, and Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, the ambiguity of their AD data was registered.⁶⁷ However, when adopted as the editorial chronology of Charles-Edwards’ *Chronicle of Ireland*, all ambiguity has been eliminated.

On the other hand, the earliest manuscript evidence for the kalend and ferial series of the Clonmacnoise group is in the first part of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson B 502, dated to c.1100, so it is about four centuries older than the evidence for AU’s AD series. The same ferial series is preserved and further continued in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson B 488, dated to the later fourteenth century, and more copies of the series are found in the seventeenth-century manuscripts for CS and AR, showing that it held the respect of Gaelic annalistic scholars for well over five centuries. Furthermore, the Clonmacnoise group representation of a ‘K’ or ‘Kl’ followed by the ferial, e.g. ‘K.uui.’, is consistent with both the cryptic literary style of the entries recorded in the early annals, and with the *Latercus* Paschal table followed in early Christian Ireland.⁶⁸ The reason that my conclusions concerning the evolution of the early annals differ so markedly from those of the proponents of the ‘Chronicle of Ireland’ is that I have considered the textual and structural features of the manuscript chronological evidence, and they have not.

Roy Flechner’s stated aim is to establish ‘the reasons for which the Chronicle was compiled, the process of compilation, and its classification as a work of historiography’.⁶⁹ He apparently believes that by reducing 1700 entries selected from three annalistic chronicles to a handful of categories and sub-categories, and then tallying these over two extended periods, he can draw far-reaching inferences regarding their compilation, and the motives of their compilers. However, when his methodology and ideas are examined one repeatedly finds conflict and inconsistency. For my part, I believe that it is first necessary to examine comprehensively the full range of surviving annals, and then to draw on the insights offered by the disciplines of history, palaeography, codicology, linguistics, chronology, astronomy,

dendrochronology, ice-core chronology, and meteorology, in order to seek a proper understanding of their meaning.⁷⁰

Postscript – 6 July 2016

In 2013 the journal *Early Medieval Europe* published Roy Flechner's article, 'The Chronicle of Ireland: then and now', in which he endorsed Kathleen Hughes' 1972 hypothesis of a 'Chronicle of Ireland', and added a number of his own hypotheses. In this he found it necessary to reiterate and approve dismissive criticism of my own published analysis of the origin and evolution of the Irish Annals. As I considered that both Hughes' and Flechner's hypotheses rest upon mistaken assumptions and that I was entitled to a right of reply to his criticism, I submitted an article entitled 'On reconstructing medieval Irish chronicles' to *Early Medieval Europe* on 27 August, 2015. On 26 November, 2015, the Editors notified me by email that Reviewer 1 disputed my right of reply, with which view they concurred, and so they rejected my submission.

Here follows the Editors' email of 26 November, 2015, including the Reviewers' 'Comments to the Author', so that scholars may judge the situation for themselves.

26 November 2015 – *Costambeys to Mc Carthy*

From: costa@liv.ac.uk ; To: mccarthy@cs.tcd.ie

26-Nov-2015

Dear Dr McCarthy,

I must start by apologizing for the time it has taken to respond to your submission. Getting input from reviewers and editors is often a lengthy business, and your article occasioned some additional deliberation between the two co-ordinating editors (Prof MacLean and I).

Your manuscript (ID EME-2015-022) entitled "On reconstructing medieval Irish chronicles" has been reviewed. The comments of the reviewers are included at the bottom of this letter. The reviewers have recommended some significant revisions to your manuscript. I therefore invite you to respond to their comments and revise your manuscript.

As you can see, the reviewers differ over whether the principle of 'right of reply' is in itself a reason for accepting a submission. We share the view of Reviewer 1 that the principle does not by itself constitute adequate grounds for publication.

On resubmission we will send your article to reviewers in the usual way. One or more of these may be different from the first set of reviewers, but we will of course continue to exclude from communication any individuals named in the 'Author Opposed Reviewers' section.

There are two ways to submit your revised manuscript. You may use the link below to submit your revision online with no need to enter log in details:

https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/eme?URL_MASK=2d6fe4137c9b48fca973ffcc5abadfc8

Alternatively log into <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/eme> and enter your Author Center. You can use the revision link or you will find your manuscript title listed under "Manuscripts with Decisions." Under "Actions," click on "Create a Revision." Your manuscript number has been appended to denote a revision. Please DO NOT upload your revised manuscripts as a new submission.

You will be unable to make your revisions on the originally submitted version of the manuscript. Instead, revise your manuscript using a word processing program and save it on your computer. Please also highlight the changes to your manuscript within the document by using the track changes mode in MS Word or by using bold or colored text.

Once the revised manuscript is prepared, you can upload it and submit it through your Author Center.

When submitting your revised manuscript, you will be able to respond to the comments made by the reviewers in the space provided. You can use this space to document any changes you make to the original manuscript. In order to expedite the processing of the revised manuscript, please be as specific as possible in your response to the reviewers.

IMPORTANT: Your original files are available to you when you upload your revised manuscript. Please delete any redundant files before completing the submission.

Because we are trying to facilitate timely publication of manuscripts submitted to Early Medieval Europe, your revised manuscript should be uploaded as soon as possible. If it is not possible for you to submit your revision in a reasonable amount of time (the system makes a default allowance of six months), we may have to consider your paper as a new submission. If you feel that you will be unable to submit your revision within the time allowed please contact me to discuss the possibility of extending the revision time.

Once again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to Early Medieval Europe and I look forward to receiving your revision.

Sincerely,

Dr. Marios Costambeys

Co-ordinating Editor, Early Medieval Europe

costa@liv.ac.uk

Editor Comments to Author:

Please take on board the comments below.

Reviewers' Comments to Author:

Reviewer: 1

Comments to the Author

As it stands this article is couched entirely as a rebuttal of Roy Flechner's article in EME 21/4 (2013), 'The Chronicle of Ireland: then and now'. It is of course an element of good academic practice to review the previous historiography on a topic, advancing reasoned criticism of arguments within that historiography, and naming the scholars involved where appropriate. Equally, however, an article in a scholarly journal cannot consist solely of such criticism, especially when it is aimed very largely at one scholar. This is true even if the work in question appeared in the journal. If EME were to offer an automatic right of reply to those whose views are criticized in its articles, it would probably be able to publish little else.

I am therefore going to recommend major revision in this case. For the article to be considered afresh, it really needs to identify more

explicitly the originality of the thesis being advanced, framing its argument in terms of a direct analysis of the relevant primary sources, rather than as a response to previous analyses of those sources (whether by the author or by others).

Reviewer: 2

Comments to the Author

Ref. should be made somewhere in the art. to D.N. Dumville, 'On editing & translating medieval Irish chronicles: the Annals of Ulster', Cambridge Med. Celt. Stud. 10 (Winter 1985) 67-86 & R.W. Burgess & M. Kulikowski, Mosaics of Time. The Latin chronicle traditions from the 1st c. BC to the 6th c. AD, 1 (2013). As Burgess & Kulikowski disagree fundamentally with the author's views on the origins of Irish chronicling (p. 213 n. 73) it might be advisable (in the interests of balanced discussion) to state that fact, even tho' that disagreement does not affect the substantive nature of the argument in the art. submitted. The subj.-matter is important & the author is entitled to Right of Reply.

Endnotes

- ¹ R. Flechner, 'The Chronicle of Ireland: then and now', *Early Medieval Europe* 21:4 (2013), pp. 422–54.
- ² Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 422.
- ³ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 422.
- ⁴ D.P. Mc Carthy, *The Irish Annals – their genesis, evolution and history* (Dublin, 2008), pp. 18–60 describe the annalistic corpus; pp. 81–116 describe annalistic literature from c.1850 up to 2006; pp. 361–3 list annalistic manuscripts.
- ⁵ K. Hughes, 'The Annals' in *Early Christian Ireland: Introduction to the Sources*, (1972), pp. 99-162, at p. 101 'Anyone who does this very simple job of collating the two texts will realise immediately that both *AU* and *Tig.* go back ultimately to the same version. Let us call it the Chronicle of Ireland'; p. 107 'We have, therefore, in *CS* an abbreviated copy of a manuscript of *Tig.* [AT] for the years 765–973 where our copy of *Tig.* is defective'.
- ⁶ Hughes, 'The Annals', pp. 105–7 assign both AT and CS a 'Clonmacnoise provenance'.
- ⁷ Hughes, 'The Annals', p. 99 'the most complete version of Irish annals is contained in the Annals of Ulster (*AU*)';
- ⁸ Hughes, 'The Annals', p. 101 n. 1 'Beginning with AD 487, one year must be added to that given in the nineteenth-century edition of *AU*. The *Tig.* date in Whitley Stokes's edition is that of *AU* and other sets of annals, which Stokes gives'.
- ⁹ Hughes, 'The Annals', p. 144 'The Annals of Ulster start at 431'.
- ¹⁰ Hughes, 'The Annals', p. 107 'CS, as a faithful though much abbreviated, copy of a MS of *Tig.* will tell us when the two families of *Tig.* and *AU* diverged. After 913 (*AU*) the two texts [AU and CS] separate'.
- ¹¹ Hughes, 'The Annals', p. 107 'To sum up, *AU* and *Tig.* represent a Chronicle of Ireland which must have been drawn up at some time before 913, for at this point the two families diverge. A copy was made then and was subsequently taken to Clonmacnoise ...'.
- ¹² K. Grabowski & D.N. Dumville. *Chronicles and Annals of Mediaeval Ireland and Wales* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1984), p. 111 'The content of the 'Chronicle of Ireland' for the years 431–911 is established by the agreement of *AU* (*prima manu*) with a member of the Clonmacnoise group'; p. 28 'My comparison of AI with other texts of the Clonmacnoise group (AClon [MB], ARC [AR]) made little difference in the list of entries ...'; p. 60 'The evidence of ARC [AR] is particularly helpful here. That text, which (it has been suggested) is a Clonmacnoise-group text ...'; p. 55 'After the annal for 911 the differences between *AU* and *CS* become marked ... For three years in sequence, then, we have no clear evidence of a relationship between *AU* and the Clonmacnoise group. We can suppose that the texts diverge after the annal for 911, on the evidence which I have presented above'. For a critical appraisal of this choice of 911 see Mc Carthy, *Irish Annals*, p. 103, and for the siglum 'MB' for the Annals of Clonmacnoise, see p. 14.
- ¹³ T.M. Charles-Edwards, *The Chronicle of Ireland: Translated with an introduction and notes*, vol. 1 *Introduction and Text*; vol. 2 *Glossary, Bibliography and Indexes*. Translated Texts for Historians (Liverpool, 2006), vol. 1, p. 2.
- ¹⁴ Charles-Edwards, *Chronicle of Ireland*, vol. 1, p. 7.
- ¹⁵ Charles-Edwards, *Chronicle of Ireland*, vol. 1, p. 36.

¹⁶ Charles-Edwards, *Chronicle of Ireland*, vol. 1, pp. 58–9 ‘Presentation of the text’ for the supposed AU priority over his ‘Clonmacnois group’. Charles-Edwards never explicitly identifies the members of this ‘Clonmacnois group’, but it implicitly includes AT, MB, AR, and CS from his statement in vol. 2, p. 27, ‘Square brackets enclose identifications of persons or places, or material taken from AFM, AI or FA, that is not in AU, AT, AClon, AR or CS’. Likewise the source references given on the line preceding each set of his entries, cf., e.g., vol. 2 *s.a.* 473–89.

¹⁷ Hughes, ‘The Annals’, 104.

¹⁸ Hughes, ‘The Annals’, pp. 101–3, 122, 127, 140, 143, 151 for Clonmacnoise group references.

¹⁹ Hughes, ‘The Annals’, p. 143 where her ‘kl.’ systematically omits the following ferial datum, and also misrepresents the ‘K.’ of both the manuscript and Stokes’ edition. Her AD data listed under ‘AU’ are derived without acknowledgement from Stokes’ cross references to AU, cf. W. Stokes (ed.), ‘The Annals of Tigernach – Third Fragment A.D. 489–766’, *Revue Celtique* 17 (1896), pp. 79–223, at pp. 122–6; Hughes’ AU ‘501, 502’ has conflated under one ‘kl.’ the two separate AT years of ‘K.uiii’ and ‘K.i’.

²⁰ Grabowski & Dumville, *Chronicles and Annals*, p. 25 for AD dating; pp. 128–52, 184, 190–1 for AT/CS entries ordered by AU’s Anno Domini.

²¹ Grabowski & Dumville, *Chronicles and Annals*, p. 210; pp. 128–32 for AT’s ferial data from ‘AU 490’ to ‘AU 656’, where at p. 128 their ‘K8’ twice reproduces Stokes’ misreading of ‘K.uiii’, an invalid ferial value.

²² Charles-Edwards, *Chronicle of Ireland*, vol. 1 p. 36.

²³ Charles-Edwards, *Chronicle of Ireland*, vol. 1 p. 36 n. 2 where he referenced P. Walsh, ‘The Dating of the Irish Annals’, *Irish Historical Studies* 2:8 (1940–1), pp. 353–75, at pp. 365–9 for this supposed ‘standard one-year correction’, but Walsh proposed this to commence at the year 713, whereas Charles-Edwards, like Hughes, ‘The Annals’, p. 101 n. 1, commences his ‘correction’ at the AU manuscript year of 486. Neither provided any authority or explanation for their increment of AU’s manuscript AD at 486.

²⁴ Charles-Edwards, *Chronicle of Ireland*, p. 45 n. 4, where he provided no bibliographic references to ‘Mc Carthy’s articles’.

²⁵ Charles-Edwards, *Chronicle of Ireland*, p. 45–51 for his analysis, for an appraisal of which see the review by D.P. Mc Carthy, *Peritia*, 20 (2009), pp. 379–387, at pp. 384–5.

²⁶ Charles-Edwards, *Chronicle of Ireland*, vol 1 p. 51.

²⁷ D. Mc Carthy & D. Ó Cróinín, ‘The “lost” Irish 84-year Easter Table rediscovered’ *Peritia* 6–7 (1987–8), pp. 227–42, reprinted in D. Ó Cróinín, *Early Irish history and chronology* (Dublin, 2003), pp. 58–75; D. Mc Carthy, ‘Easter principles and a fifth-century lunar cycle used in the British Isles’ *Journal for the History of Astronomy* xxiv (1993), pp. 204–24.

²⁸ B. Colgrave & R.A.B. Mynors (trans. and ed.) *Bede’s Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, (Oxford, 1969), pp. 220–5, 294–309 for *H.E.* iii. 4 & 25. The letters of S. Columbanus in *c.*600 and of Cummian in *c.*632 also attest to the use of the *Latercus* in Ireland and Iona, cf. M. Walsh & D. Ó Cróinín, *Cummian’s Letter De controversia pascalii and the De ratione computandi* (Toronto, 1988), pp. 20–5.

²⁹ D.P. Mc Carthy, ‘On the arrival of the *Latercus* in Ireland’ in I. Warntjes & D. Ó Cróinín (edd.), *Proceedings of the second international conference on the science of computus*, (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 48–75, at p. 66, plate 2

for reproductions of the parallel kalend and ferial series in Padua, Biblioteca Antoniana, I.27 f. 71^f and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson B 502 f. 10^{va}.

³⁰ Walsh, 'Dating the Irish Annals', p. 359; T.F. O'Rahilly, *Early Irish history and mythology* (Dublin 1946, repr. 1971), p. 239.

³¹ D.P. Mc Carthy, 'The chronology of the Irish annals', *PRIA* 98C:6 (1998), pp. 203–55, at p. 212–15.

³² Mc Carthy, 'The chronology', pp. 245–50 for collation of the kalends and ferias of AT, CS and AR over AD 1–644.

³³ D.P. Mc Carthy, 'Chronological synchronisation of the Irish Annals' at www.irish-annals.cs.tcd.ie s.a. AD 1–722, first placed on the Internet on 1 September, 1999.

³⁴ Hughes, 'The Annals', p. 108 observed the different sequencing, 'Up to 585 there are very considerable discrepancies in the sequence of events given by the two texts [*sc.* AU and AT]'; p. 143 'the texts [of AU and AT] are not in agreement about the order of events'. She did not, however, investigate these differences.

³⁵ Mc Carthy, 'The chronology', p. 254; pp. 251–4 examine and document the textual details of each of AU's additional kalends.

³⁶ Mc Carthy, 'The chronology', p. 255 lists all AU duplicates *in prima manu* over 436–667, identifying which synchronizes with AT/CS, and which does not.

³⁷ Hughes, 'The Annals', p. 144, referring to AT, simply stated, 'I have not compared the texts in the pre-Patrician section'; she made no reference to AU's pre-Patrician section. Grabowski & Dumville, *Chronicles and Annals*, p. 5, evidently aware of Mac Airt's inclusion of AU's pre-Patrician annals in his galley proofs, dismissed them writing, 'There is little indication that this text [AU] ever included any 'pre-Patrician' section'. They did however acknowledge the pre-Patrician sections in AT, CS, and AR, cf. p. 6. Charles-Edwards, *Chronicle of Ireland*, p. 3 n. 2 did not consider the evidence presented in D.P. Mc Carthy, 'The original compilation of the Annals of Ulster' *Studia Celtica*, 38, (2004), p. 69 – 95, and passed over the earlier evidence presented in idem, 'The chronological apparatus of the Annals of Ulster AD 82–1019', *Peritia* 16 (2002), pp. 256–283.

³⁸ S. Mac Airt, 'The Chronology of St. Patrick', *Seanchas Ard Mhacha* 2:1 (1956), pp. 4–9, at p. 5.

³⁹ D.P. Mc Carthy, 'The contribution of Armagh scholarship to the Annals of Ulster', *Seanchas Ard Mhacha* 25, (2014), pp. 63 – 83 at pp. 72–3 for Mac Airt's inclusion of AU's pre-Patrician annals of TCD 1282 ff. 12–14. S. Mac Airt & G. Mac Niocaill (edd), *The Annals of Ulster (to A.D. 1131)* (Dublin, 1983), pp. 2–37 for AU's pre-Patrician annals.

⁴⁰ Mc Carthy, 'Original compilation of the Annals of Ulster', pp. 73–5, 87–9 for Ó Luinín and codicology.

⁴¹ Mc Carthy, 'Annals of Ulster AD 82–1019', pp. 261–9 documents the details of the pre-Patrician chronology.

⁴² Mc Carthy, 'Annals of Ulster AD 82–1019', pp. 266–9 points out that computational details of AU's radical pre-Patrician chronology, are also discussed in the late eleventh-century chronicle of Marianus Scottus.

⁴³ Mc Carthy, *Irish Annals*, pp.103–5 for AU and AT/CS common entries after 913.

⁴⁴ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 427.

⁴⁵ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', pp. 450–4 for his Appendix.

⁴⁶ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 428.

⁴⁷ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 450 n.2.

-
- ⁴⁸ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 428; Charles-Edwards, *Chronicle of Ireland*, vol.1 p. 265.
- ⁴⁹ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', pp. 428–9.
- ⁵⁰ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 430, cf. K. Hughes, *The Church in Early Irish Society* (New York, 1966), pp. 65–78, at p. 65.
- ⁵¹ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 431.
- ⁵² Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 432.
- ⁵³ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 432.
- ⁵⁴ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 434.
- ⁵⁵ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 434.
- ⁵⁶ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 434.
- ⁵⁷ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 435–40, at 440.
- ⁵⁸ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 448.
- ⁵⁹ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', pp. 426–7. His citations are from: N. Evans' review of Mc Carthy, *Irish Annals*, in *The Medieval Review* (9 April 2009) <http://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/tmr/article/view/16787/22905>; T. Charles-Edwards' review of Mc Carthy, *Irish Annals*, in *Studia Hibernica* 36 (2009–10), pp. 207–10, at p. 209.
- ⁶⁰ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 427 n. 19.
- ⁶¹ D.P. Mc Carthy, 'The Status of the pre-Patrician Irish Annals' *Peritia* 12 (1998), pp. 98–152, at pp. 116–40.
- ⁶² Charles-Edwards, *Chronicle of Ireland*, vol 1 p. 3 n. 2; Mc Carthy, 'Original compilation of the Annals of Ulster', pp. 73–7, 87–9, and idem, 'Annals of Ulster AD 82–1019', pp. 259–61, for the codicological and palaeographical evidence. For a more recent discussion see D.P. Mc Carthy, 'Ruaidhrí Ua Caiside's contribution to the Annals of Ulster' in S. Duffy (ed), *Princes, prelates and poets: Essays on Medieval Ireland in honour of Katharine Simms*, (Dublin, 2013), pp. 444–59, at pp. 445–7, 454–5.
- ⁶³ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 423.
- ⁶⁴ Charles-Edwards, *Chronicle of Ireland*, vol. 1 pp. 37–8 stated that his translation 'gives an editorial AD date for each annal which is the corrected date of the edition of Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill', but this edition inserts its editorial AD increment at the manuscript year of 488, while Charles-Edwards inserts his at 486, so that on p. 78 none of his editorial years 486–8 correspond to their edition.
- ⁶⁵ Mc Carthy, 'Original compilation of the Annals of Ulster', pp. 73–7 identifies Ó Casaide as the second scribe of TCD 1282, H² in the edition of Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill. Ó Casaide's intermittent *Anno Mundi* data over 432–492 all observes the relationship AM – AD = 4204, and so it represents a continuation of AU's pre-Patrician *Anno Mundi* series, cf. Mc Carthy, 'Annals of Ulster AD 82–1019', pp. 265–7.
- ⁶⁶ The earliest manuscript witness to this prolix apparatus of an identified kalend, ferial, epact and AD, is in the Annals of Inisfallen, in the earliest part of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson B 503 dated to c.1092, where it is first found at the year 1032, written almost entirely in Irish. It appears to have been the intention of Ó Luínín and Ó Casaide, or their source, to extend this apparatus backwards to AD 431, and to translate it all to Latin, though in the event the Irish 'Ienair' was retained for 431–478.
- ⁶⁷ W.M. Hennessy, *Annála Uladh: The Annals of Ulster I* (Dublin, 1887 repr. 1999), p. 4 n. 1 notes that some chronological data have been 'added subsequently in paler ink', most of which he identifies by placing them

within parentheses. Mac Airt & Mac Niocaill, *The Annals of Ulster*, passim, identify Ó Casaide's interpolations in their apparatus as 'H²', and in their edition using a smaller font size.

⁶⁸ For manuscript examples see Mc Carthy, *Irish Annals*, plates 2, 3, 4 and 7.

⁶⁹ Flechner, 'Chronicle of Ireland', p. 423.

⁷⁰ For recent publications illustrating some of these approaches see D.P. Mc Carthy, 'The Irish Annals - their origin and evolution V to XI sec'. in CISAM (Centro Italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo), *L'irlanda e gli Irlandesi nell'alto medioevo*, (Spoleto, Italy, 2010), pp. 601 – 22; idem, 'Ruaidhrí Ua Caiside's contribution to the Annals of Ulster' in S. Duffy (ed), *Princes, prelates and poets: Essays on Medieval Ireland in honour of Katharine Simms*, (Dublin, 2013), pp. 444 –59; idem, 'TCD MS 1282 (The Annals of Ulster): A scholar's book and exemplar' in W. Vaughan (ed.), *The Old Library - Trinity College Dublin 1712-2012*, (Dublin, 2013), pp. 33 – 9; idem, 'The contribution of Armagh scholarship to the Annals of Ulster', *Seanchas Ard Mhacha* 25, (2014), pp. 63 – 83; idem, 'The Chronology of Saint Columba's Life' in P. Moran & I. Warntjes (edd.), *Early Medieval Ireland and Europe: Chronology, Contacts, Scholarship - Festschrift for Dáibhí Ó Cróinín*, (Turnhout, 2015), pp. 3 – 32; idem, 'Recovering years lost from the Irish Annals' in J. Fenwick (ed.) *Lost and Found III* (Dublin, 2016), forthcoming; B. Jaski & D.P. Mc Carthy (edd.), *The Annals of Roscrea – A diplomatic edition* (Roscrea, 2012), pp. v–xxxiv.