

## Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí 1384-1534 AD

### Part II

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### Abstract

The starting place for *Part II* of Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí: 1384-1534 is Feartach, Cill Chainnigh (Fertagh, Co. Kilkenny) where a previously little known Mac Giolla Phádraig cleric, and unrecognised clan chieftain, was appointed Prior in 1506. There are many mysterious elements of *Kilpatrick's tomb* at Gráinseach Feartach (Grangefeartach), which is said to be the final resting place of Brian *na Lúireach* and his son Seán, and a critical examination of the tomb cannot fail to lead to the inevitable question – is it not they, but others, who are buried there?

In addition to the mysteries of Gráinseach Feartach, this article synthesises numerous entries in the Papal Registers, which provide clear evidence for Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí clerical lines that enjoyed power, wealth, and influence, both within and without the clan. The exploits of the clerics, their relationship to other clan members, and their associations with their neighbours, are presented against the backdrop of the political landscape around Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí country during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The key players from the House of Ormond, and the House of Kildare, and their networks with Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí of the era provide new insights into the clan's leadership and lineages, which are more complex than previously understood.

### A Note on Names, Styles, Edits and Records

This article is written in the English language, but the people and places discussed are Irish. In order to acknowledge the primacy of *Gaeilge* (Gaelic) in this article, the personal names and by-names of people are provided in modern *Gaeilge* using the most common spelling; the meanings of the latter are provided at the time of first use, for example, Tadhg Dubh (Teague *the Black*) Mac Giolla Phádraig. In similar fashion, at the time of first use place names are provided in modern *Gaeilge* with the English version in parentheses, for example, Garrán na Páirce (Parksgrove), unless the place name is titular, for example, the Baron of Upper Ossory. Quotations are italicised, and long or textually significant quotations are also indented. This article is a living work, i.e., it can be edited by the author; all versions will be retained. Every effort has been made to consult *all* available Mac Giolla Phádraig records that relate to the period relevant to this article (1454-1522).

### Introduction

Just as many mysteries begin with a body, and often a dead one, so this article does – or, at least, it starts with reliquiae and a tomb. *Part I* of Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí (Fitzpatrick, 2020) gave a brief introduction to *Kilpatrick's tomb*, a burial chamber at Gráinseach Feartach (from now simply Feartach), said by authoritative Fitzpatrick historian, Rev. William Carrigan (Carrigan, 1905), to be the final resting place of Johes and Bernard mkyllfyadryk. And yet mysteries abound for the tomb, not the least of which is that both Carrigan's and fellow Fitzpatrick scholar Rev. John Shearman's (1879) interpretations of the tomb inscriptions are not well corroborated by those who were able to view the tomb when it was in a lesser state of decay. Hence, Feartach is the starting place for *Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí 1384-1534 AD Part II* – the tomb is, at times, central to the treatment of late

medieval pedigrees of Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí and the Barons of Upper Ossory. As the mysteries of Feartach are explored, so too are those pedigrees seen with greater clarity.

*Part II* of *Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí* picks up where *Part I* left off (1454) and travels through until when a previously unrecognised Mac Giolla Phádraig chieftain, and the voice of the clan, is uncovered (1518). It is an era little studied by historians, and yet, contrary to assertions Mac Giolla Phádraig history between the thirteenth and sixteenth century *is largely undiscoverable* (Nicholls, Lydon & MacCurtain, 1972), records abound. Of particular note are the Lateran and Vatican Registers (Papal Registers), which are treasure troves that uncover not only the existence of hitherto unknown Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí clerical lines, but reveal incest, illegitimacy, and murder – and not only among the clerics!

## Article Overview

Rather than following a chronological arrangement, *Part II* has a deliberate narrative flow to engage the reader in some of the moments of riveting discovery, which the author was privileged to enjoy. The article highlights are:

- The Mysteries at Gráinseach Feartach: Part I
- Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí Clerical Lines
- Some Questions of Carrigan
- The Mysteries at Gráinseach Feartach: Part II
- The Ormond-Mac Giolla Phádraig Alliance: Part II
- The Ormond-Kildare *Situation*
- The Rise of Piers Butler and the Horses of Kildare
- Early 16th Century Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí Leaders and Lineages
- Miscellanea

## The Mysteries at Gráinseach Feartach: Part I

Once a critical eye is cast Feartach's way, several things don't add up as to how it is currently perceived. Making sense of Feartach demands an understanding of the geographical, historical, political, sculptural, and paleographic features that make *Kilpatrick's tomb* seemingly unique, and very mysterious. Carrigan certainly understood the geographical, historical, and political perspectives of Feartach when he wrote of it being a final resting place for two Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí chieftains,

*it is not easy to conceive why they selected Fertagh for that purpose in preference to Aghamacart or Aghaboe* (Carrigan, Vol. 2, 1905, p. 295).

Not easy to conceive, indeed. In modern language and an abbreviated vernacular, Carrigan says, *WTF are Mac Giolla Phádraig doing buried there?* It is mostly the geographic location of Feartach, south of the modern-day Cill Chainnigh-Laois border, and beyond the bounds of Mac Giolla Phádraig country as it was defined when the tomb was built (Rae, 1971; Mac Niocaill, 1992), that left Carrigan bamboozled. Not so Achadh Mhic Airt (Aghmacart) or Achadh Bhó (Aghaboe), both in modern Laois, and in the former Mac Giolla Phádraig country, and the latter of high significance to Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí; Finghin Óg established a Dominican Friary there ca. 1382 (Archdall, 1786).

The selection of Feartach was not easy for Carrigan to conceive of from historical or political perspectives either. A monastic community had existed near modern-day Feartach, in ancient times called Fearta-Caerach (O'Clery et al., 1856), long before the Norman invasions (Carrigan, 1905). A

round tower built in ca. 950 (Ó Riagáin, 2010), along with houses and church, were burned during Muircheartach Mac Lochlainn's rampage through Leinster in 1156 (O'Clery et al., 1856). A clear Norman presence in the former Barony of Feartach is evidenced from ca. 1210 when Henry de Hereford had a castle there (Curtis, 1923); soon after, the Blanchfields, *English Lords living in Ireland*, founded the Priory of St Kieran there (Archdall, 1786), and in 1251 AD the prior and canons obtained protection *without term* from Henry III (Lyte, 1901).

The priory probably became a house of the Augustinian Order shortly after the arrival of Augustinian friars, with their expansionist philosophy, in Baile Átha Cliath (Dublin) ca. 1275 (Kelly, 2005). Following the Norman invasions, the pattern of ecclesiastical patronage in Éire changed. Bishops had no interest in establishing Augustinian houses but were happy to give license to other patrons, and the primary patrons were not the great Norman Lords but their chief tenants (Empey, 1984). All the Augustinians needed were benefactors with land, and there was any number of Norman families seeking *tutors for their children and chaplains for their manors* (Kelly, 2005). In addition to Feartach, many other religious houses and churches across Osraí enjoyed the lay patronage of Norman families, such as the de Hereford, de Vale, FitzWarin, and Purcell (Carrigan, 1905; Lawlor, 1908).

Throughout the fourteenth century, Feartach appears to have gone without a lay patron, it belonging *to the prior*, although this did not appear to affect the prior's ability to pay his dues even during periods of war; in contrast, for example, the Prior of Aghmacart was not so able (Lawlor, 1908). Conflicts did, however, eventually take their toll, and in 1421 the monastery was,

*so destroyed and desolated and exposed to ruin by the wars and calamities which have long afflicted those parts that its religious cannot remain therein, but must wander about and beg their daily bread* (Twemlow, 1906, p.181).

However, by 1455 the formerly famous monastery, although still in a state of some decay, was in the process of repair due to the efforts of Augustinian canon Tadhg Mac Gearadhaigh, who had transferred from Inis Mac nÉirín, Ros Comáin (Church Island, Co. Roscommon) (Twemlow, 1906). In 1469 the priory is stated as being detained without title by Conchobhar Ó Cathail; an association between Feartach and the Ó Cathail family would continue until the early sixteenth century. Diarmaid Ó Reachtabhra's petition to unite Feartach and Adhairc (Erke) met with papal approval (Twemlow, 1933), but there is no evidence of tenure. In 1476 William Ó Duigan was nominated to the priory (Clohosey, 1957), but his term was short-lived; he was removed for non-payment of annates. In 1480 the priorship, elective and with a cure, came to Thomas Ó Cathail (Twemlow, 1955; Clohosey 1957).

The Feartach Ó Cathail, a clerical line from the diocese of Cashel (Clohosey, 1957), had proven difficult to displace, doubtlessly aided by a connection to a powerful Norman family of Archdekin (also known as Mac Óda, or McCody) who were based in Osraí from the time of the Norman invasions. Their seat in the fourteenth century was the Barony of Gabhalmhaigh (Galmoy) (Carrigan, 1905), which encompassed the parish of Feartach. Thomas Ó Cathail had married the heiress of Bhaile Uí Shpealáin (Ballyspellan), Honora Archdekin (Curtis, 1937), east of Feartach.

Hence, Feartach, as Carrigan knew full well, was a monastery on Norman lands, long in the patronage of Norman families who had been intermarrying for centuries. What strange circumstance then, when in 1506 the priory of Feartach was, by favour of Pope Julius II, conferred on William Mac Giolla Phádraig (Clohosey 1957; Haren, 1989). To understand that turn of events requires an understanding of the little before revealed clerical lines of the Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí; those lines unlock the mysteries of the tomb at Feartach, and much more. By way of introduction to the Osraí clerics, the Mac Giolla Phádraig clerics of Killaloe afford an outstanding example.

## Mac Giolla Phádraig Clerical Lines

Clerical lineages in Éire have recently been the subject of several scholarly articles and books (e.g., MacCotter, 2004; McInerney, 2014). Excellent coverage of a line of Mac Giolla Phádraig clerics in the diocese of Killaloe is provided by Gwynn and Gleeson (1962) and McInerney (2014), and it is Diarmaid Mac Giolla Phádraig who takes centre stage. The Papal Registers record the emergence of the 20-year old Killaloe cleric in Eas Géitine, Luimneach (Askeaton, Co. Limerick) in 1418 (Twemlow, 1906), but by 1426 he had relocated some five miles to the north at Oileán na gCanánach, (Inisgad or Canon Island) Clár (Co. Clare).

In the fifteenth and early sixteenth century, ecclesiastical appointments in Clár were dominated by a handful of families, such as the Meic Catháin (Keane) and the Uí Ghiolla Sheanáin (Shannon), as evidenced by the hereditary successions of coarbs, erenachs, and priors (McInerney, 2013). Among clerical positions, that of prior is readily understood, but those of coarb or erenagh have been variably interpreted by writers, doubtlessly because the nature and status of the positions evolved over time due to changes in the Irish Church (Seymour, 1932). A thorough exposition of the terms, and their origins, is provided by Lanigan (1822), who details that a coarb, whenever possible, was a member of a clan hierarchy elected by them to possess a patrimony while holding an ecclesiastical position, hence signifying a clan-Church *partnership*. Bishops and abbots may once also have been termed a coarb, but over time coarbs became distinct from, and accountable to, bishops.

At one time, erenach meant archdeacon; they were a more numerous and inferior rank than coarbs, and their role was the management of church property and their economies. As with coarbs, erenach succession was hereditary – chosen by the clan, with the bishop's approval. And although erenachs ultimately became the *chief tenants of episcopal lands* (Jefferies, 1999), coarbs,

*differed from the erenachs in their possessing more extensive lands and sometimes having erenachs under them, whereas the erenach's power and influence were of an inferior kind* (Lanigan, 1822, Vol.4, p.85).

As will be demonstrated from the Papal Registers, sometimes there was a practice of laymen declaring themselves clerics, assuming the role of coarb or erenach, and usurping possession of church lands (once granted by the clan) back to themselves, yet still within the framework of brehon laws of succession (Lanigan, 1822). This is, perhaps, evidenced among Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí, however, it was not the case with Diarmaid Mac Giolla Phádraig at Oileán na gCanánach; he was born to an Order of St Augustine (OSA) priest and an unmarried woman (Twemlow, 1906) but he was not, at least by name, of any long-established Killaloe clerical lineage as identified by Gwynn and Gleeson (1962) or considered as being from a line of erenaghs (McInerney, 2014).

The only clear candidate for Diarmaid's father is Matthew Mac Giolla Phádraig. He was a Killaloe cleric appointed to Cill Churnáin (Kilcornan), Luimneach, just four miles east of Eas Géitne, in 1394 (Bliss & Twemlow, 1902) but at the time of his death (ca. 1416) was rector of the parish churches of Cill Fear Buí and Cill Mhuire (Kilfarboy and Kilmurry) on the west coast of An Clár (Twemlow, 1906). It is noteworthy, both in terms of clerical succession and likely paternity, that Cill Churnáin was assigned to John Mac Giolla Phádraig in 1426 (Twemlow, 1906) and, also, that Charles Mac Giolla Phádraig was assigned the rectory of Cill Fear Buí and Cill Mhuire in 1432, which he held until 1466 (Twemlow, 1933). Charles was *by both parents of noble race* (Twemlow, 1933) and Diarmaid was *by both parents of noble birth* (Twemlow, 1906); hence, Matthew and sons were possibly patrilineal or matrilineal descendants of Connor mac Scannlán Mac Giolla Phádraig who O'Hart (1892) considers the progenitor of Clár and Luimneach Fitzpatricks.

After the Norman invasions, Irish practices had adapted to, and become intertwined with, Anglo-Norman bishops who were entirely cognizant of, and often sympathetic to, the ancient connections to the pre-Norman Church in Éire (Seymour, 1932). Hence, given their status during the medieval period, one might expect the Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí would have, given the opportunity, evolved clerical lineages who descended from coarbs and erenaghs. And so it proves, in part. Ample subject matter is available, which offers remarkable insights into the clerics of the Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí, viz. their: positions in the Church; mode of operation; ecclesiastical boundaries; political networks; and, ancestors and descendants, although, to date, there has been no treatment of such Mac Giolla Phádraig clerics in the Diocese of Ossory. They are best understood as clerical lineages although they did not appear until the early fifteenth century.

The late emergence of Mac Giolla Phádraig clerics in Osraí requires consideration. By way of comparison, the Uí Cuanáin coarbs of Ros Cré (Roscrea) *supplied numerous candidates to the diocesan clergy* and they are first recorded from the twelfth century (Gwynn & Gleeson, 1962) –Isaac Ua Cuanáin, Bishop of Roscrea, died ca. 1161 AD (O’Clery et al., 1856). That Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí were driven from Cill Chainnigh by William Marshall (first Earl of Pembroke) ca. 1192 AD (Carrigan, 1905) effectively curbed such an early emergence of Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí clerical lines, although there was clearly no lack of devotion to the Church since it was Domhnall Mac Giolla Phádraig who had given Seireapún (Jerpoint) *to the monks* (Mac Fhirbhisigh & Ó Muraíle, 2003) following in the steps of his father, Donnchadh, the *religious prince* who founded Jerpoint’s Cistercian Abbey ca. 1158 AD (Carrigan, 1905).

The Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí re-emerged to the north ca. 1212 AD partially under Domhnall Mór of Magh-Lacha and Clanna, who may have been Domhnall’s great-grandson (Mac Fhirbhisigh & Ó Muraíle, 2003); the names of those ancient túath preserved today by the Baronies of Clár Maí Locha (Clarmallagh) and Clann Donncha (Clandonagh). The re-establishment of a foothold in Osraí was arduous and the climate scarcely conducive to clerical affairs or matters of learning. Rather, the period from the early thirteenth to the mid fourteenth century was noted for the establishment of military alliances with Gaelic clans, such as the O’Dempsey; campaigning against the Crown, enjoying both success and failure and in the process losing at least three clan chieftains; succumbing to making peace and entering the service of the Crown; and clan infighting (Butler, 1849; Hennessy, 1871; Murphy, 1896; Sweetman, 1879; Williams, 2007).

When Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí are recorded in this era as engaging in activities relating to the Church it is destructively against already war-torn Achadh Bhó where, in 1346 AD, they tore down the castle and burnt the town, cemetery and church along with the shrine, bones and relics of St Canice (Carrigan, 1905; Murphy, 1896). But by the late fourteenth century a change had come. *Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí 1384-1534 AD Part I* (Fitzpatrick, 2020) introduced Tadhg Mac Giolla Phádraig (1412/1413 - 1487) the son of Finghin Óg and, at the time of his demise, tanist of Ossory (MacCarthy & Hennessy, 1895), who may also have been a cleric of Ossory. But there are earlier recorded Mac Giolla Phádraig clerics in the diocese of Ossory, including Criomthann, who appears in the Papal Registers in 1427. Criomthann was assigned the rectory of Achadh Bhó, Laois (Aghaboe), having *studied canon and civil law for several years in places which are not universities* (Twemlow, 1906). It is not unlikely the lay patronage of Achadh Bhó at that time was with the Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí, who had established a Dominican Friary there ca. 1382 (Archdall, 1786).

Tadhg appears in 1428 at the age of just 16 years and already holding the rectory of the church of Domhnach Mór (Donaghmore), when he was granted *in commendam* (i.e., entrusted to a patron) the rectory of St Mugesius, Ros Chonaill (Rosconnell) until he reached 22 years of age (Twemlow, 1909). The patronage of Ros Chonaill lay with the family Sentleger, and the timing of Tadhg’s appointment came shortly after the March 1428 grant (Curtis, 1935) by Willig Sentleger *to Henry*

*Sentleger of Kilkenny ... manors ... together with the advowson of churches and chapels* in several towns including Leamhchoill (Loughill), Baile Osciail (Ballyoskill) and Ros Chonaill – these three townlands highlighted here since they occur in several other fifteenth and sixteenth century records that are key to understanding Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí clerics and their associations.

It is not clear why Tadhg came to be selected by the Sentlegers or when he came into their orbit. The Sentlegers (also St Leger and de Sancto Leodegario) came into possession of lands in the cantred of Uí Duach (Odogh), which corresponded to the later-defined Baronies of Fásach an Deighnín (Fassadinin) and Gabhalmhaigh, and parts of Crannach (Crannagh), Clan Donncha (Clandonagh), and Clár Maí Locha (Clarmallagh) (Empey, 1971), not long after the Norman invasion. Before that, much of Uí Duach was Ó Braonáin country, but by 1428 Leamhchoill, Baile Osciail, and Ros Chonaill had been under Sentleger control or influence for more than 200 years (Carrigan, 1905). While the appointment of Criomthann to Achadh Bhó is readily understood, Tadhg's selection further evidences the dawning of the era of Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí partnerships, other than occasional military excursions (O'Clery et al., 1856), with Anglo-Norman families much earlier than most scholars have previously recognised.

Criomthann, *by both parents of noble race* was, in 1440, again nominated to the parish church of Achadh Bhó (Clohosey, 1957). According to Carrigan (1905), the local tradition surrounding Baile Uí Chaollaí (Ballykealy) castle was that it *belonged to a branch of the Fitzpatricks known as the 'Criffins'* and that its last occupant was *Donnchadh, the descendant of Criomhthann*. Here lies no small intrigue because Diarmaid Mac Giolla Phádraig, brother of Brian who became the first Baron of Upper Ossory, executed ca. 1532 for his role in the death of Thomas Butler, son of Piers Butler then Earl of Ossory, had possession of Baile Uí Chaollaí at the time (Curtis, 1937).

Tadhg's clerical career passed by without further mention in the Papal Registers until 1450. As discussed in *Part I*, in that year Pope Nicholas V received a petition complaining of the mafia-like activities of Tadhg, who shared the company of none other than James fourth Earl of Ormond and his two brothers, Edmund and Robert. While the complaint made specific reference to the Cistercian monastery at Gráig na Manach (Graiguenamanagh), it is apparent the turf subject to the medieval gang's exactions went beyond the ecclesiastical since they were also *wont to exact and receive from their own lay subjects*. The Pope, furious, threatened excommunication and *other penalties which they shall the more fear...invoking if necessary the aid of the secular arm* (Twemlow, 1915). Stripped, then, of a cleric career, no further mention of Tadhg is found in the Papal Registers. Such a dire warning from Rome, coupled with the death of James Butler in 1452, probably led Tadhg to lead a quieter life. Duties closer to home may also have been on his mind; as well as his position among the clan tanists, there is also the possibility he was raising an heir.

A review of the clerical lines of Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí is forthcoming in the Journal of the Fitzpatrick Clan Society. There is no shortage of material, numerous references to Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí clerics exist, but published records are incomplete. To date, registers for the reigns of Leo X (1513-1521) and Clement VII (1523-1534) have enjoyed only partial coverage; further registers of Leo X and Clement VII, as well as those during the reign of Pope Adrian VI (1522-1523), are forthcoming in 2021-2023 (C. Hayes, pers.comm., 4 November 2020). Also, numerous Irish entries in the Papal Penitentiary, including many for the Diocese of Ossory, await publication (M. Haren, pers.comm., 8 September, 2020). Given the complexity of some of the relationships detailed in the Papal Registers, waiting for all material is better than risking reaching some incorrect conclusions. Yet many startling facts emerge that are, even if their context is not fully known, too important to omit here. Of much interest to Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí of the late fifteenth- and early-sixteenth centuries are the careers of two clerics both names William; one emerges in the Papal Registers in 1468 and the other, aged approximately 23 years, in 1498 (Fuller, 1986).

Much can be learned from records of the Williams. Between them they receive several mentions in the Papal Registers, Clohosey's *Obligaciones pro Annatis Diocesis Ossoriensis*, 1413-1531 (1957), which affords transcripts from various papal sources, and there are also appearances in the Kildare Rental and *Linea Antiqua*. Their careers overlap and there is, at times, difficulty knowing which William is which. But neither William receives more than scant award by Fitzpatrick historians. Shearman makes William the elder, in his *Ossorian Genealogy* (1879), a son of Finghin Mór (Lord of Osraí ca. 1448-1468), which is probably correct but achieved via an error in the transcription of a pedigree in *Linea Antiqua* (O'Ferrall, 1709). And it is puzzling that Carrigan (1905) makes only little mention of either William despite having access to Bliss' transcripts of Papal Registers and citing those records on numerous occasion (see Carrigan, Vol I, p. xxiii and, for example, Vol I, p. 65).

William the elder's debut entry in the Papal Registers was inauspicious, he was tarnished for his role in the simonious actions of fellow cleric Patrick Ó Beagáin in order to obtain the collation of St Fintan's, Darú (Darrow) (Twemlow, 1933). It is several years before he is mentioned again, but it is in no less controversial circumstances. In 1485 Pope Innocent VIII's attention was drawn to rectory of St Mary's Ráth Domhnaigh (Rathdowney), which was void although Malachy Ó Dubhshláine (O'Delany), a sub-collector for the Camera, held possession without right. Malachy was summoned to account for his actions with the understanding that unless he could offer good explanation the rectory and prebend without cure would be offered to William who, by papal decree was to be promoted to holy orders,

*notwithstanding his illegitimacy as the son of an unmarried man and a ravished unmarried woman, related in the third degree of kindred* (Twemlow, 1960, p.83).

That the Vatican Registers record William the elder was the child of a union between probable first cousins is only part of the story. The Lateran Registers, just one month later, provide an update of William's appointment to Ráth Domhnaigh, adding that William is with respect to both of his parents, *of noble birth* (Haren, 1978, p.5). Hence, William the elder's lineage is a topic of great interest. The Papal Registers provide numerous examples of clerics dispensed of their *defect of birth*. That defect, for example, might have been because they were the son of a cleric, who was not permitted to marry, or because they were the son of an unmarried layman. But William the elder, of double noble birth, is never once mentioned as having the defect of being the son of a cleric.

The statement of nobility via both parents is not inconsistent with William the elder's parents being Finghin Mór and the daughter of Edmund Butler. Given the first mention of him in the Papal Registers is in 1468 and that he, unlike Tadhg, did not require a dispensation because of his youth (25 years being the required age for priesthood; Chiflet, 1737), indicates his birth was probably no later than ca. 1443. While this is not the least inconsistent with the timeframe of Finghin Mór's introduction to a daughter of Edmund Butler, before ca. 1448 (O'Byrne, 2001; Fitzpatrick, 2020), complexities arise. The abduction of a Butler heiress would not have been the least bit helpful in promoting the Butler-Mac Giolla Phádraig relations, which were still in their tender years. This difficulty is not insurmountable; what if an abduction by Finghin Mór was part of the 1443 feud and the subsequent Ormond-Mac Giolla Phádraig peace treaty came afterwards, once children of Finghin Mór and his *wife* arrived, thereby softening sentiments on both sides? And the fourth Earl of Ormond understood full well that legitimate marriage in the eyes of the church was not everything since both he and his father sired children out of long-term *non-marital* relationships (Kirwan, 2018).

What other candidates for William the elder's father fit the bill? Donnchadh Mór, his line decimated by the feud with Edmund MacRichard Butler, still possessed two sons, Tadhg Ruadh and Toirealach, but both were too young to carry off a woman. Of Finghin Mór's brothers, Criomthann did raise a family, but William the elder's father is never mentioned to be a cleric. There is no evidence either

Séafra, the future Lord of Osraí, or Tadhg Dubh sired any children. However, it can be inferred that the latter's tumultuous lifestyle may well have included the ravishing of women. However, Tadhg Dubh was probably a cleric. Hence, Finghin Mór is the best candidate for William the elder's father.

By 1489 William the elder no longer held the benefices Ráth Domhnaigh (Rathdowney) and Ráth Sháráin (Rathsaran), although the former remained with the clan, being possessed by Donogh Mac Giolla Phádraig (Haren, 1978), who is of uncertain parentage. As will be seen, William the elder appears to have moved up Ossory diocese hierarchy while, from 1498, William the younger emerged and was the recipient of several benefices, which at times adds some confusion to which William records are referring to. There is, however, no confusion regarding the lineage of William the younger. *Linea Antiqua* (O'Ferrall, 1709) states: '*Florence na Cull Coille ancestor of the families of Cahir and Toyber*' (i.e., Cahir and Tobar, now Newtown and Tobermoe, south west of Darú (Durrow); Carrigan, 1905) was the father of Seán. And *Linea Antiqua* records that Seán was not only the father of Brian (the first baron), but also of William of Formaoil (Fermoyle), Edmund of Cill Chrónáin (Kilcronan), and Donogh Dubsúilech (i.e., *the black-eyed*). The townlands of Formaoil and Cill Chrónáin are part of a parcel of lands just east of Darú (Durrow) that includes Ros Chonail (Rosconnell), Leamhchoill (Loughill), and Baile Oskill (Ballyoskill), which were in the possession of the aforementioned Sentlegers. As will be discussed later, other connections can be found that link William of Formaoil and Edmund of Cill Chrónáin to the Sentleger possessions, which further establish Seán as their father. Moreover, William the younger, born ca. 1475, was of unmarried parents, who were both noble (Fuller, 1986).

The Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí lineages became highly complex at the turn of the sixteenth-century and a major failure of Fitzpatrick genealogists has been the assignment of men with the same given names to a singular identify. Much of the complexity is discussed in Part III, but at this juncture, another record in the Papal registers is worthy of mention. In 1506 William Mac Giolla Phádraig, a canon of Ossory, made complaint that Thomas Ó Cathail was *seriously unfit* for the Priory of St Kieran Feartach, knowing not how to *read, to understand, to hear confessions, to enjoin penances and to minister other ecclesiastical sacraments* (Haren, 1989). This discourse serves to illuminate the degree of approval that William the younger enjoyed from Rome. Despite detaining Uí Fairchealláin (Offerlane) *without any title or support of law in respect of it but of his own temerity* it was Pope Julius II's wish to *confer favour upon William*; he was dispensed with both the Priory and Parish church of St Michael (Haren, 1989; Clohosey, 1957) – and with the appointment of a Mac Giolla Phádraig cleric to Feartach the mysteries that lie there require revisiting. But first, it is necessary to examine the tomb closely and to ask some questions of Carrigan.

### Some Questions of Carrigan

It is not difficult to demonstrate that questions need to be asked of Carrigan concerning his transcriptions of the tomb at Feartach. To even suggest Carrigan may have been mistaken is a big claim against a man of doubtless, lasting, reputation in the field of paleography (Rae, 1970; Ó Fearghail, 1996). And yet questions need to be asked of Carrigan because his double assertion that Feartach was (i) built as the final resting place of John (Seán) Mac Giolla Phádraig, who (ii) died in 1468, cannot be correct. The tomb is authoritatively dated 1510-1540 (Rae, 1971), and the Lord of Osraí recorded as dying in 1468 (from the plague) was Finghin Mór, not Seán, (Lawlor, 1908; Fitzpatrick & Fitzpatrick, 2020).

In fairness to Carrigan, he may have been unduly influenced by others, including, Shearman whose earlier interpretation accounts for only two of the three lines inscribed along the tomb's edge and adjacent to the legs of the male figure,

*Hic jacet quondam humatus dns Ossirie Johes Mkilly Fadryk et dns Bernardis eis filis.  
Quorum anibis pper des* (Shearman, 1879, p. 392),

that is,

*Here lie buried the once Lords of Ossory John Mac Gillpatrick and Brian his son.  
On whose souls may God have mercy.*

In contrast Carrigan's translation reads.

*Hic jacet quoda. boni dn. Ossirie Johes. Mkylyfadryk et dns. Bernard' ei' filius.  
Quorum aiab' ppr. de.'  
P. Nori. ux. Bernardi pprre,*

that is,

*Here lie the once good Lords of Ossory. John Mac Gillpatrick and Brian his son.  
On whose souls may God have mercy.  
Pray for Honora, wife of Brian. (Carrigan, 1905, Vol.2, p. 297).*

The recent masters in the history of medieval Irish figure sculpture were John Hunt, whose two volumes were declared a triumph of both medieval archeology and art scholarship (White & Rynne, 1978), and Edwin Rae, who built on Hunt's pioneering work and also achieved high status in the field (Harbison, 1975). Hunt's corpus provides images and commentary on all the tombs in Osraí that are comparable to Feartach. It is noted that neither Hunt nor Rae saw fit to re-assess Carrigan's transcriptions; they simply took them on face value. From Hunt and Rae, we learn that almost all sixteenth century sculptured tombs in Osraí were the works of two distinct ateliers – the Ormond artists and the Ó Tunnaigh (O'Tunney), the latter being *closely associated with the MacRichard Butlers* (Rae, 1970). Differences, often subtle, existed between the two schools, but there was a standard format adhered to by the artists. The Feartagh tomb is the work of the Ó Tunnaigh (Hunt, 1974), and in the most fundamental form their tomb inscriptions followed a pattern (Cockerham & Harris, 2001), as follows:

- here lies;
- the title and/or name of the person buried and, if another was alongside them, their name;
- after the name, often a (former) title and a placename the title related to;
- the years(s) of the deaths and, often, the day(s) and month(s); and,
- often, an entreaty to pray.

Of the Ó Tunnaigh tombs, only Feartach is said to have no date. If Carrigan's and Shearman's transcriptions are to be believed, the tomb at Feartach is an unusual exception on that basis alone.

Before Carrigan's and Shearman's efforts, there were several attempts to transcribe and translate the Feartach inscriptions. In 1781 Austin Cooper captured the likeness of the head of the woman of Feartach in a remarkable pencil sketch. Cooper observed the tomb inscription but could not make it out, *except the date – 1430* (Price, 1942). That date is out by approximately 100 years, but the take-home point is that Cooper could make out a date.

In his essay on the dress of the ancient and modern Irish, Walker (1788) provides a copy of Cooper's image and refers to the woman on the Feartach tomb, stating

*the head-dress in which they descended into the tomb, appears on a monumental figure of the family of the Butlers.*

No qualification is given in support of the Butler assertion, although Feartach was a Butler graveyard from at least the mid-eighteenth century (Carrigan, 1905). Also of note is that Walker did not mention any variant of Mac Giolla Phádraig inscribed on the tomb. That honour goes to an anonymous writer to *Anthologia Hibernica* who, in 1793, offered a rough hand-drawn illustration of part of the tomb inscription and an interpretation; the words are consistent with the aforementioned standard format of the Ormond artists,

*Here lieth at rest entombed the chief Mac Gill-Patrick, who died May 1525, and God have mercy on his soul* (Anonymous, 1793; see also Seward, 1795).

Ten years later Wilson's *Post-Chaise Companion* repeated the connection to Mac Giolla Phádraig and also offered up a date, albeit another impossible one,

*About a mile further, on the R. is the church of Fertagh, once a neat Gothic building, as appears by the ruins, and was the sepulchre of the Fitzpatricks, old earls of upper Ossory, in which are still visible, the remains of a tomb appertaining to that family, bearing date, 1489* (Wilson, 1803, p.291).

The year 1489 is one of no small significance for Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí, and perhaps Wilson's was more an educated guess based on that knowledge rather than accurate reading. 1489 was the year Séafra mac Giolla Phádraig, Lord of Ossory, died. But if Séafra was entombed at Feartach, it would have required an exhumation and re-burial some 20 years or more later.

Letters relating to the ordinance survey of Kilkenny in 1839 (Herity, 2003) include a *fair copy* of the tomb inscriptions. The copy is, indeed, only of average quality as can be attested to by Rae's photographs (<http://www.tara.tcd.ie>), but they are still a valuable record; unfortunately, a unique translation was not offered by the surveyors who, clearly cognizant of *Anthologia Hibernica*, offered up only that same version. It is also unfortunate that Rev. James Graves and John Prim (1857) did not offer an analysis of the Feartach tomb in their outstanding review of *Cill Chainnigh monumental antiquities*, although Graves (*Proceedings and Papers*, 1860) made a report to the Kilkenny and South-East of Ireland Archaeological Society of *good progress* concerning restoration work of the Feartach tomb and noted it was *erected to John Fitzpatrick, and his son Bernard first Baron of Upper Ossory*. While no full inscriptions or translations were offered, this is the earliest record of John and Bernard associated with the tomb. The patron of the tomb repairs was John Wilson Fitzpatrick, first Lord Castletown, and it is, perhaps, by way of him that John and Bernard have ever since been linked to Feartach. Certainly, Shearman appears to have relied on an oral tradition since his *Ossorian Genealogy*, scant on primary sources, was printed at the instruction of Bernard Fitzpatrick, the second Lord Castletown (Shearman, 1879).

Healy (1893) makes reference to Shearman's attempts to solve the tomb inscriptions but offers no alternative, stating,

*the inscription on this tomb cannot be deciphered. I have made some fruitless attempts to do so, and on the occasion of our excursion to the place in connection with the Kilkenny meeting of Antiquarians, in 1890, it baffled also some better experts* (pp. 220-221).

Things are no easier 130 years later, but while a fully definitive translation of the inscriptions in their entirety may now be out of reach due to the ravages of time and the elements, a critical review and

alternative translations are possible. Such study reveals probable errors and, arguably, the greatest are those of omission – remarkably, among all the letters on the tomb, neither Carrigan nor Shearman described any as numerals and, therefore, saw fit to not associate any with a date. The former was particularly adamant, *there is no date on this monument* (Shearman, 1879), but he made no attempt to translate letters plainly inscribed where a date might be expected. Carrigan offered up *P. Nori. ux. Bernardi pprre*, which is baffling because both Hunt’s and Rae’s photographs of the 1970s show lettering with elements of a numeric format that can be made out (<http://www.tara.tcd.ie>; Hunt, 1974)

Apart from missing probable dates, there are other questions to be asked of Carrigan and Shearman. After reliable starts with, *hic jacet* (standard format) both insert a form of *quondam*, meaning *formerly* or at *one time*. This is problematic, but not because of the word itself – exactly half of the 32 inscriptions studied in Cill Chainnigh that are from the 16th century (Graves & Prim, 1857; Hunt 1974) utilise *quondam* or an abbreviated form. The problem exists because its use, before a title or a name, is unconventional in Latin, and not once does that form occur on the Cill Chainnigh inscriptions; it is *always* after the name. Hence, for *quondam* to be present, placed according to Carrigan and Shearman, would require another exception to the rule.

More unusual elements immediately follow. Carrigan sees *boni dn Ossirie* and Shearman *humatus dns Ossirie*. Both were sure, then, that the tomb was of the Lords of Ossory, either *good* (*boni*) or *buried*, or more accurately from the Latin *humatus* (passive perfect infinitive), meaning *to be buried* – it was not the least uncommon for such tombs to be sculptured while the donor was alive (Cockerham & Harris, 2001). Neither being good nor the promise of a future burial are problematic here; the problem comes with the fact that at the probable time the tomb was built, there was only one Lord of Ossory, and he wasn’t a Mac Giolla Phádraig – his name was Piers Ruadh Butler, called both Lord of Ossory and Earl of Ossory (refer numerous uses, e.g., State Papers of Henry VIII, 1528a). That Piers had long craved those titles, and even more so that of *Earl of Ormond*, is attested to in numerous historical records and, ultimately, they are carved in marble on his own tomb (Hunt, 1974). It is suggested it would have taken either a very brave or an extremely foolhardy Ormond sculptor to have carved *Lord of Ossory* on the Fertagh tomb, particularly since, by 1504, lands adjacent to Feartach were in Piers’ possession (Curtis, 1935; Curtis, 1937).

One final feature of the Feartach tomb mystifies. A Tudor rose is found on the head-rest of the male gisant and the surround adjacent to his side of the mensa. The symbol of the united Houses of York and Lancaster, the Tudor rose, can be found on any number of late fifteenth and early sixteenth century English tombs or church fixtures. In Ireland, they are much less common, leaving one observer of the Augustinian priory at Áth Dara, Luimneach to note, *of all things in an Irish church – a Tudor rose!* (Hewson, 1936). In Ireland, most often the Tudor rose is a symbol of the Butler family (Gleeson, 1951), such as that found on a decorated door stone at the parish church of Maigh Saotha, Tiobraid Árann (Monsea, Co. Tipperary) (Hewson, 1936), or in the Long Gallery of Ormond Castle (Fenlon, 1998). And it features on several Butler tombs (Kinsella, 2009), including James ninth Earl of Ormond as well as Margaret FitzGerald, the wife of Piers Butler (Hunt, 1974). If Mac Giolla Phádraig chieftains were buried at Feartach the presence of a Tudor rose on their tomb would be extraordinary and, perhaps, indicative of an unexpected Butler lineage. The association between the tomb at Feartagh and the Butlers is unequivocal and unsurprising,

*all 15 of the large and prestigious altar tombs put up before 1555 were commissioned by the richest families – and 12 (80%) are identifiable to the Ormonds and their supporters* (Cockerham & Harris, 2001).

Cockerham and Harris (2001) note further that mensa tombs to the Gaelic Irish in the first half of the sixteenth century are exceedingly uncommon, with the Feartagh tomb being a notable exception. So, yet another exception, and further reason to doubt Carrigan. But even if the association between the Butlers and Feartagh is clear, the nature of that association is less apparent. The claim that the Feartach tomb was created by those with an affinity with the Butlers, *tapping into and claiming to be part of their power - potent markers of social status* (O'Donovan, 2008), is more compelling than it being crafted as a Butler look-a-like as a *personal expression of familial independence*, or a kind of *anything you can do we can do better* type of rivalry (Cockerham & Harris, 2001). The latter argument is founded on an oft-repeated confusion – but while some lineages of Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí indeed were bitter enemies of the Butlers when the tomb was erected, one line had been Butler allies for nigh on one century (O'Byrne, 2001; Fitzpatrick, 2020). So, while the various considerations of what motivated the tomb construction have merit, they ignore one obvious and essential question. What if the man buried at Feartach is not a Mac Giolla Phádraig? But, sometimes, dominant narratives have a way of blinding even excellent researchers to the very obvious (Fitzpatrick & Fitzpatrick, 2020).

Was Carrigan's translation swayed by him trying to align the blackletters on the tomb with the pedigrees and oral traditions he subscribed to? Did he transcribe words that he thought should be there? Against the most authoritative records, Carrigan has the father of Brian, the first Baron of Upper Ossory, as another Brian who was the son of Seán. But this is incorrect and probably rooted in a failure to recognise Donnchadh Mór Mac Giolla Phádraig was a Lord of Osraí and that it was his son, and tanist, Finghin, who was slain by Edmund MacRichard Butler in 1443, not Finghin Mór (Fitzpatrick, 2020), the father of Seán. Hence, Carrigan makes 1468 the year Seán died but it was not Seán, it was Finghin Mór who died that year (Lawlor, 1908). The belief 1468 was the year Seán, the son of Finghin Mór, died must have led to a major dilemma for Carrigan – Brian, the first Baron of Upper Ossory died in 1575 being *ninety years of age or upwards* (Carrigan, 1905) but, even if Brian had lived to be 99 years of age, the birth year of 1476 simply did not work if his father died in 1468.

Therefore, Carrigan needed to find another father for Brian even if it did mean ignoring sources as authoritative as the Annals of Ireland, which has *Brian mac Seán mac Finghin* (O'Clery et al., 1856), *An Leabhar Muimhneach* (Ó Donnchadha, 1960; *Briain, mic Seain, mic Finghin na Culchoille*), *Linea Antiqua* (O'Ferrall, 1709; *Brian, son of John, son of Florence of Cull Coille*) and O'Hart (1892; *Brian, son of Shane, son of Florence*), as well as miscite both Keating (1857) and Mac Fhirbhisigh's primary Mac Giolla Phádraig pedigrees (Mac Fhirbhisigh & Ó Muraíle, 2003); they both have Brian as the son of Seán. Hence, Carrigan provides no evidence to verify the person of Brian *na Lúireach* (of the coats of mail) Mac Giolla Phádraig as the father of Seán. Only Mac Fhirbhisigh provides the primary record of Brian *na Lúireach*, albeit noting that Ó Muraíle's ascription of *na Lúireach* to Mac Fhirbhisigh's text (<https://www.isos.dias.ie/master.html?https://www.isos.dias.ie/libraries/UCD/english/index.html?ref=https://www.ucd.ie/>), may not convince all. Nevertheless, Brian '*na Lúireach*' is recorded at folio 480.7 as the ancestor of a Colonel John Fitzpatrick, who was living in 1666 (Mac Fhirbhisigh & Ó Muraíle, 2003). There is a well-documented Colonel John Fitzpatrick who died ca. 1693, who several definitive sources have as a great grandson of Finghin (Florence) Fitzpatrick (the third Baron). But Carrigan's extension of that Colonel John's pedigree back to Brian *na Lúireach* is deeply flawed.

Firstly, Carrigan (1905) claimed Brian *na Lúireach*'s pedigree was '*copied from MacFirbis' Book of Genealogies, p.480*', but this is patent falsehood. Rather, Carrigan inserted '*na Lúireach*' into pedigree 480.1 (the genealogy of Finghin, third baron) by his own presumption. Secondly, although the Colonel John Fitzpatrick of the Mac Fhirbhisigh pedigree does have a great grandfather called Finghin, the pedigree of that Finghin is to Brian, to Brian Óg, to Sein-Bhrian, to Brian *na Lúireach*. Hence, that Finghin *cannot* be the third baron; the pedigree of the third baron is to Brian, to Seán, to Finghin Mór. Equating Colonel John Fitzpatrick, the great grandson of Finghin (the third baron), with

the Colonel John Fitzpatrick who features in Mac Fhirbhisigh demands the insertion of three generations into the proven pedigree of the barons, which is untenable. The insertion of Brian *na Lúireach* into the pedigree of the barons suited Carrigan because it provided a bridge between Brian (first baron) and Seán (who supposedly died in 1468), hence solving his date dilemma. But there is no need for genealogical gymnastics once it is accepted that Seán irrefutably lived beyond 1468.

Brian *na Lúireach* demands only little further attention here but will be discussed again in *Part III*. Returning to the question of who is the man entombed at Feartach – a Mac Giolla Phádraig by name, or not at all, and yet so clearly associated with the House of Ormond? A possible answer to that question can be provided, but only after a yet more profound understanding of Feartach has been gained. Of remarkable interest is the identity of the prior of Feartach in the period just before the tomb was commissioned. In 1506, by papal appointment, the priory of Feartach was granted to William Mac Giolla Phádraig.

### The Mysteries at Gráinseach Feartach: Part II

Ahead of his appointment to Feartach, in 1507 William Mac Giolla Phádraig was removed from the vicarage of Uí Fhairchealláin (Offerlane) and the rectory Ráth Sháráin (Rathsaran) (Haren, 1989); on that basis William is identified as the younger since he had held the benefices from 1498 (Fuller, 1986). By February 1509 William the younger had still not taken possession of Feartach; the priory, although legally vacant, was still detained by Thomas Ó Cathail (Haren, 1998). William, seemingly pacified by being provided with the alternative possession of the united vicarage of Achadh Bhó (Aghaboe) and canonry of Cill Dara Maí (Killermogh) (Haren, 1998), had given up hope of obtaining the lucrative Feartach; Robert Shortall, whose proposition was to combine it with several other rectories, priories, and vicarages, to a total value of 64 marks (Haren, 1998), while seemingly not Rome's initial choice, was the preference of the patrons.

The Shortalls were a family of Norman descent who, like the Archdekins, had been granted land in Cill Chainnigh in the early 13th century (Carrigan, 1905). Seated at Baile Uí Lorcáin (Ballylarkin) in the Barony of Crannach and a mere three miles southeast, as the crow flies, of Feartach, the Ormond Deeds record numerous instances of their involvement in the business affairs of families such as the de la Freynes, de Rochefords, Graces and Pembrokes, from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century. The best-known member of the Baile Uí Lorcáin line was *James Shortall, Lord of Ballylorcan* (Curtis, 1937,) who is interred at St Canice's Cathedral (Hunt, 1974). Robert Shortall, probably a brother of Lord James, remained prior of Feartach for 31 years until it was suppressed in 1541; Robert received a pension of 66s 8d (White, 1943).

It is understanding the Shortall family and Robert's career that brings an alternative light to shine down on the weather-worn marble tomb at Feartach. Today, although decayed beyond almost all recognition, quality photographs and drawings from days gone provide a possible alternative for those who lie at rest there. Since it is challenging from a geographic, historical, political, or sculptural perspective that any Mac Giolla Phádraig *Lord of Ossory* could have been buried at Feartach, a more critical assessment of the paleographic features of the tomb is demanded. And with that comes an alternative theory – are those resting at Feartach Robert Shortall and his wife?

That question is not intended to be leading or in any way definitive; it is simply a conversation starter. A 3D digital reconstruction of the tomb at Feartach is the subject of the forthcoming Journal of the Fitzpatrick Clan Society article, *The Mensa Tomb at Feartach: A Case of Mistaken Identity?* There the graphical methodology and a paleographic interpretation are discussed in detail. In short, as well as combining several hundred photographic images of Feartach from both archival and modern sources, the possible unlocking of the mystery of Feartach is aided by the comparison of

lettering there with that found on other similar and much less worn tombs. In fairness to Carrigan, who did not have high-powered techniques at his fingertips, the Feartach transcription would have been a difficult task. Some of the engraving lacks finesse, and the placement of various words is more about where they can be squeezed into a limited space than natural or logical flow. In that respect, the Feartach tomb mirrors others of the Ó Tunnaigh school, and perhaps it is simply a coincidence that the closest match is the tomb of James Shortall where,

*the inscription runs down the edge of the moulded border of the tomb and is continued in the space next to the leg* (Hunt, 1974).

It is not so much the contractions, which Carrigan (1905) referred to, that cause trouble but, as alluded to by Shearman (1875), parts of the inscription appear repeated and *blundered*; analysis of the images of the lettering on the tomb gives the clear impression they were the work of more than one sculptor. Tomb dates, known to be added after the body sculpture was complete, are notorious for being incomplete or being placed in a random fashion (Rae, 1970, Cockerham & Harris, 2001) – this is apparent at Feartach.

As well as Carrigan's *hic jacet*, his *quorum aiab'* looks very sound, as does the presence of *de*. However, both *Bernard* and *Bernardi* are problematic for Carrigan because, for the former, there is surely no *B* and the features of the letters make them look like they could have been inscribed as numerals. For the latter, the letters and spacing are clear – they appear as *..bt mai di* and are followed by numerals. It is much more likely the combinations of symbols are part of a reference to a month (perhaps May) and days preceded by *obt*, i.e., *obiit* meaning *died*. Alternatively, some numerals may reference a call to pray for a certain number of days as part of an indulgence (refer Hunt, 1974). Of similar difficulty for Carrigan is his *P. Nori*; it is considered a better interpretation is probably *P'quor'*, meaning *cry out*, i.e., *pray for*.

The big-ticket item is Carrigan's *boni dn Ossirie Johes mkylyfadryk*, which is now a very worn section of the tomb. Some letters are clear, however, and it is very difficult to rationalise Carrigan's *Ossirie* since there are the distinctive letter combinations *or* and *ll* in this section. Could this have been inscribed *Shortall*? Perhaps, and coupled with letters that look like they may once have read *Robert*, it makes for an intriguing section that will, hopefully, come back to life via digital reconstruction. But, perhaps, Mac Giolla Phádraig is entirely absent from the tomb. An entry in the Ormond Deeds provides insights to the *Who's Who* of Feartach in the early 16th century. The previously mentioned Honora Archdekin, heiress of Bhaile Uí Spealáin is named in a quit claim of that townland to Piers Butler (Curtis, 1937). Bhaile Uí Spealáin appears to have encompassed the modern day Baile Uí Chuidithigh (Ballycuddihy), which in times previous has appeared written as Ballycudihie, or similar; this is easily an alternative transcription for Mac Giolla Phádraig on the tomb since it can be readily seen to appear as *buylycudihik*. Hence, maybe it is some former Lord of Baile Uí Chuidithigh, who lies at rest at Feartach.

Little mention has been given here to the pillow of the woman, which is the most worn part of the mensa with an inscription. The words may never be recoverable but based on early copies and photographs the remnant of a year, perhaps beginning with *MCCCCC*, can be made out. Carrigan (1905) afforded the name Katrina Malloy (*Kat'na Miloi*) to this section on the tomb, but this appears ambitious. Given the obvious presence of what looks like a year, the rest of the inscription probably refers to the full date of her death. But critical here, and the basis for the entire collapse of Carrigan's assertion that the female tomb figure is Katrina Malloy, is one of Carrigan's own observations, which he failed to process. i.e.,

*On the flat of the tomb, beside her right arm, there is a small, half-obliterated shield charged with a chief indented (Carrigan, 1905).*

Such crystal-clear symbolism means only one thing – in accord with Walker’s assertion (1788), the female figure was a Butler. It must, therefore, be considered that the tomb figures could be Brian Mac Giolla Phádraig, the first baron, and one of his later wives, Margaret Butler. While further mysteries of the Feartach tomb must wait, there certainty about the possession of the priory. The failure to obtain Feartach, while probably a disappointment for the Mac Giolla Phádraig clerics, diminished neither their ambition, thirst for power nor vision. The old clan order was passing, and strong alliances needed to be forged with the emerging and powerful Piers Ruadh Butler. The Butler aligned clerics had clan succession on their minds. To understand that succession with only scant records is difficult, but much can be gleaned from an understanding of the politics of the era.

### **The Ormond-Mac Giolla Phádraig Alliance: Part II**

*Part I* evidenced a double marriage between the house of Ormond and Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí, and that such marriages were part and parcel of James Butler’s (fourth Earl of Ormond) practice of alliance building with Gaelic chieftains. It has been reasonably estimated the Ormond-Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí arrangement was in place by ca. 1448 (O’Byrne, 2001). But it isn’t easy to conceive how any agreement between the fourth Earl and Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí chieftain, Donnchadh Mór, could have arisen after the Butler slew three of Donnchadh Mór’s sons in 1443. Hence, it is reasonable to assume that by ca. 1448, Donnchadh Mór had died and that clan leadership was with another branch of Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí – that of Finghin Mór (Fitzpatrick, 2020).

Picking up from Part I, the marriages of Morena ny Giolla Phádraig to John *the Blind* Butler and Finghin Mór Mac Giolla Phádraig to the *daughter of Edmund Butler* are now explored in greater detail; aside from Finghin Mór, much more can be understood about their likely identities. Also, the territories of the various parties provide more detail of how the Ormond-Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí alliance maintained peace via the establishment of buffer-zones at the boundaries of their territories (Edwards, 1998); in this instance, along the border between Cill Chainnigh and Mac Giolla Phádraig country, or Upper Ossory.

Upper Ossory, suppressed in 1846 (Carrigan, 1905), is considered equivalent to the former baronies of Clár Maí Locha (Clarmallagh), An Choill Uachtarach (Upperwoods) and Clan Donncha (Clandonagh), which are modern creations, once being part of the Shire of Cill Chainnigh before they became part of the newly formed Queen’s County in the 16th century (Empey, 1970). That the southern borders of Clár Maí Locha and Clan Donncha do not correspond to the boundary between the more ancient cantreds of Aghaboe and Odogh is testimony to the southward advance of Mac Giolla Phádraig in the 14th and 15th centuries (Empey, 1971) and their disdain for feudally defined land divisions. Policing the southern border of border Upper Ossory from ca. 1448 became the dual responsibility of Edmund MacRichard, the fourth Earl of Ormond’s *alter ego* as he was absent in England (Beresford, 1999), and Finghin Mór, with both parties requiring the assistance of kin. There was a need to ensure the easily antagonised Mac Giolla Phádraig descendants of Donnchadh Mór were at a safe distance. And while there is certainty around the identity of Finghin Mór, then Lord of Ossory, the same cannot be said for the three other parties in the marriage alliance.

The least problematic of the three is the *daughter of Edmund Butler*, who is referred to in two records, *Liber Ruber* (Lawlor, 1908) and the Ormond Deeds (Curtis, 1937). The former relates to the determination of the bounds of Darú (Durrow) manor where she is named as one of several elders (seniors) who understood those bounds; it cannot be ascertained if she was alive at the time of the determination (1468-1478), or not, but since she was considered an elder an estimation of her age is possible. The latter record also relates to the boundaries of church lands and, on this occasion, it

was a dispute (in 1517) between the Bishop of Ossory and Thomas Purcell, Lord of Foulksrath; this record is useful for the detailed description of land possessions and tenures (Curtis, 1937). Hence, we learn of disputes that arose between Finghin Mór and the *daughter of Edmund Butler*, his wife, on one side, and Edmund McCody (i.e., Archdekin) on the other. There was disagreement between the parties regarding a field in An Ghráinseach (Grange, also known as Rathhill), indicating that Butler lands inherited by the *daughter of Edmund Butler* probably lay immediately to the east.

As for the identity of the *daughter of Edmund Butler*, O'Byrne (2001) states she was a daughter of Edmund MacRichard but without qualification, although MacRichard's was a northern frontier family. The primary role of MacRichard in the slaying of three sons of Donnchadh Mór Mac Giolla Phádraig, who were Finghin Mór's cousins, in 1443 is problematic, however, since any marriage between Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí and Butlers around that time would have required what O'Byrne refers to as *diplomatic acrobatics* (2001). Difficult to negotiate, also, is MacRichard's tempore and his recorded progeny. According to Beresford (1999) he was born ca. 1419, was granted the castle and manor of Baile Phóil (Paulstown) by third Earl of Ormond in 1440 (Curtis, 1935) and, in approximately the same year, married Geiléis, a daughter of Maolruanaidh Ó Cearbhaill (Beresford, 1999); he died in 1464 (O'Clery et al., 1856). Also, MacRichard is recorded as having only two daughters, Catherine, who married Edmund Butler, Lord of Dunboyne, and Elena, who married Richard Power (Mosley, 2003).

By 1468-1478 the *daughter of Edmund Butler* was considered an elder (Lawlor, 1908), but if she were MacRichard's daughter, the oldest she would have been was around 38 years old. It is more likely she would have been at least 60 years old to be thought of as an elder (Shahar, 1993), meaning her birth was before ca. 1418, i.e., contemporary with her husband's birth but before MacRichard was born. O'Byrne's smoking gun is that Finghin Mór rode together with MacRichard on Loch Garman (Co. Wexford) in 1454 (Curtis, 1932), although that does not require a direct familial relationship. That Finghin Mór's father-in-law, Edmund Butler, was somebody of note is apparent by how his wife is named the *daughter of Edmund Butler*, hence it is worthwhile to consider the four other Edmunds who were prominent in Finghin Mór's era and, particularly, before the problematic events of 1443. A good fit is Edmund, an illegitimate son of the third Earl of Ormond out of a relationship with Katherine of Desmond, since he was most likely born before 1399 (Curtis, 1932) and was a known associate of Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí (Twemlow, 1915).

Other candidates are either of the two Edmunds who dueled against each other in 1420 at the decree of the fourth Earl of Ormond (Dunboyne, 1980). One was the son of Thomas the Prior of Cill Mhaighneann (Kilmainham), purportedly another illegitimate son of the third Earl of Ormond, but there is no record of him having a daughter (Butler, 1941). The other duellist was the fifth Baron Dunboyne who met his demise in the conflict, going his way without issue (Butler, 1948). Elsewise the *daughter of the late Edmund Botiller, of the diocese of Ossory* (Twemlow, 1906) deserves consideration, although it depends on this Edmund's daughter's youthful relationship with her half-brother, David de Geraldinis of Luimneach, having ended after ca. 1423. As a sidenote, it would also have required that Edmund's widow went on to marry a descendant of a FitzGerald line with holdings in Luimneach, such as that of the Knight of Glyn or the White Knight (O'Donovan, 1858). None of the latter three Edmunds had any known connections with Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí.

Uncovering the identities of John *the Blind* Butler and Morena ny Giolla Phádraig is also not trivial. That Morena was the daughter of Finghin Mór makes good sense, but there is no conclusive evidence to take Beresford's assertion as a fact. Although possible, with the rancour over the sons' of Donnchadh Mór still fresh, it is unlikely Morena's father was Donnchadh Mór even if he was dead by the time she married John *the blind* Butler. An indenture from 1453 between William and Edmund Mac Óda Archdekin and Owen Mac Giolla Phádraig's daughter (Curtis, 1935) provides a

plausible, but unprovable, option; an Owen of the correct generation is unknown elsewhere. Beresford (1998) has, also without attribution, John as the son of John Butler (son of Edmund MacRichard) and Joan, daughter of James Butler the 6th Baron Dunboyne, and Morena as the daughter of Finghin Mór. Following Theodore Blake Butler (1948), Joan was born ca. 1430; hence, evidence points to the births of both John *the Blind* Butler and Morena ny Giolla Phádraig in the generation after that of Finghin Mór and the *daughter of Edmund Butler*, i.e., ca. 1450. John *the Blind* Butler is referenced in two Ormond Deed records: (i) in relation to the aforementioned Bishop of Ossory and Purcell dispute (Curtis, 1937); and, (ii) as the father of John Butler who had, in 1495, *with the assent of his heir, sons and kinsmen*, leased Áth Charna (Aharney), Lios Dúnaigh (Lisdowney) and Cill Bhríde (Kilbreedy) to Oliver Cantwell, Bishop of Ossory (Curtis, 1932). That John the younger had sons in 1495 is noteworthy since it affords a consistent estimate of his father's birth, ca. 1450.

More apparent than who he was and when he was born are the territories of John *the Blind* Butler – they were much more significant than those of the *daughter of Edmund Butler* with at least 6,900 acres in his possession. Immediately east of An Fheoir (River Nore), they ranged from Béal Átha Conrátha (Ballyconda) in a westerly direction to An Seisceann (Seskin), Áth Charna, Tigh na Slaite (Tinnaslatty), and then east back to An Fheoir traversing Lios Dúnaigh, (Lisduff) and An Ghráinseach. At the north-eastern boundary were the See lands of Tigh an Mhaoir (Tinwear) and Baile na Slí (Ballynaslee); west of there, and at times in dispute between Butler and the Bishop of Ossory, were Cluain na gCaorach (Clonageera), Ceapach Niallín (Capponellan) and Baile an Áirséaraigh (Archerstown). The rights that John, son of John *the Blind* Butler, had to Cill Bhríde, which lies northeast of Chúlchoill (Cullohill), can only have come via his marriage contract with Morena.

Hence, in the times of Finghin Mór and his Butler wife, and Morena and her Butler husband, there was a sizeable territory at the border that was, at least for Butlers and Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí, *dispute free*. Any land disputes that did occur were due to differences of opinion over the extent of Bishop of Ossory's demesne (ca. 1468-1478) or, later in 1517, due to the voidance of verbal agreements made between the Butlers and laymen who were for fees, prior to interference from Thomas Purcell, able to sow, farm and keep animals – one witness recalling that *his father was a farmer and had one pig* in Garrán na Páirce (Parks Grove) (Curtis, 1937).

After the death of Finghin Mór in 1468, his brother Séafra became the next Mac Giolla Phádraig leader. There is no evidence of a failure in the Ormond-Mac Giolla Phádraig alliance during Séafra's term. An isolated incident in 1478 did not relate to the Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí Clan as a whole, but one faction; the revenge killing of a son of Edmund MacRichard was carried out by Finghin Ruadh mac Finghin mac Donnchadh Mór (O'Clery et al., 1856; Fitzpatrick, 2020). In the thirty years following Séafra's death, blind and full of years, in 1489 (Mac Carthy & Hennessy, 1895), many of the key events in Éire related to the actions of two giants of Irish history – Gerald Mór FitzGerald the eighth Earl of Kildare and Piers Ruadh fitz James Butler, the Earl of Ormond in waiting.

### **The Ormond-Kildare Situation**

*Part I* provided an account of the power struggle between Sir John Talbot and Sir James Butler, fourth Earl of Ormond, in the first half of the fifteenth century and how that struggle dictated much of the tempo of Irish politics at that time. Although initially siding with Talbot, from ca. 1450, it is certain the Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí entered into a close alliance with the House of Ormond, one that was to endure for more than 100 years. Edwards' (1999) assertion that Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí were, in that era, *steadfast supporters* of the FitzGeralds to the extent they *were Geraldines* (by inference meaning *Kildares*) has a measure of accuracy. But, befitting of the political complexity of the times, by the mid fifteenth century, while some Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí were more closely aligned to the Ormonds than they were to Kildares, other Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí were bitter

enemies of the Ormonds and drew strength from Kildare protection. That Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí relations with the Ormonds and Kildares were more than simple binaries is due, in no small part, to the fact that Ormond-Kildare relations were themselves complex.

The late medieval rivalries between the Houses of Ormond and Kildare had, at times, escalated into conflict, but it was not sustained as some have posited. In fact, *there were few serious disputes between these families before 1518*, and from 1400 to 1515, *the Butlers and the Kildare Geraldines clashed seriously on only two occasions* – relations were usually peaceful. When peace in that period was broken it was along factional lines. From ca. 1440, the MacRichard Butlers had forged marriage alliances with the Caomhánach (Kavanagh), Ó Mórdha (O'More), Éile Ó Cearbhaill (Ely O'Carroll), the Desmonds, the Butlers of Dunboyne, and, in one way or another (via Morena and/or Finghin Mór) with Mac Giolla Phádraig. But the critical marriage, which aimed to secure a long-term and ultimate power-sharing alliance, was with the Kildares. And in 1485, Piers Ruadh fitz James Butler, a descendant of James the third earl of Ormond and from the MacRichard line, married Margaret FitzGerald, daughter of Gerald Mór FitzGerald (Beresford, 1998).

Hence, the major Ormond-Kildare conflict of the 1490s was not the direct result of an age-old feud but had major elements relating to Kildare's closeness to Piers, who had become his protégé. Piers' main rival to the Earldom of Ormond was Sir James Dubh Butler, the illegitimate nephew of Thomas Butler, the seventh Earl of Ormond – the Wool Earl. Sir James and the Earl of Kildare had crossed swords on several occasions in the early 1490s. Various factors, other than Sir James' stock rising with the Earl of Ormond, contributed to their mutual animosity. At the heart of matters were FitzGerald's removal, in 1492, from his position as the Deputy Lieutenant of Ireland and accusations of treason against him, and the elevation of Sir James to *King's Governor and Treasurer of his land of Ireland* (Beresford, 1998; Curtis, 1923). The *situation* bubbled over into spiteful tit-for-tat raids and killings – when peace between the pair was demanded it came with lingering tensions; they were abruptly resolved in 1497 when Sir James met his demise at the hands of Piers, who came across his adversary by chance and speared him through (Graves & Prim, 1857). In 1498, to protect Piers from future punishment, Kildare issued him *a most comprehensive pardon*. In the years that followed, *Kildare cooperated closely with Thomas, the absentee Earl of Ormond* (Quinn, 1939), and *Piers stood with Kildare for the rest of Kildare's life*, Butler being *no firmer ally* (Beresford, 1998).

The absence of any recorded conflicts between Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí and Ormonds between 1479 and 1516 points to the willingness of both parties, with Kildare's encouragement, for harmonious relationships at the border. And, as will be demonstrated and contrary to that opined by Carrigan (1905), a well-documented clash between Piers Butler and Brian Mac Giolla Phádraig in 1517 involved another of Donnchadh Mór's grandsons, not Brian the first baron. There was no conflict between Piers and the faction who descended from Finghin Mór; the Ormond-Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí alliance forged by marriage continued to hold firm. And not only were conflicts absent, but acts of political support were present, and these exclusively involved the Fin Mór faction, which includes those who were clerics. In 1516 William Mac Giolla Phádraig sat as Papal judge delegate in the case of the archdeaconry of Ossory, which was a matter of dispute between Edmund Butler and Robert O'Hedian; William's choice was Butler (White, 1936). The flow of support was not unidirectional. In 1524 Dermot Mac Giolla Phádraig is named, along with William Ó Mórdha alias Archdekin, as detaining the vicarage of Adhairc (Erke), which was of lay patronage. In 1533 advowson of Adhairc was with Piers Butler, and there is no reason to think it wasn't also the case nine years earlier (White, 1936) – of passing note here is the evidence of fosterage between the Ó Mórdha and Archdekins.

The leases of Ros Chonaill, Leamhchoill, and Baile Oscaill, along with their advowson, were, in the late 1400s, granted by long-time Ormond allies the Sentlegers to Edmund Ruadh Mac Giolla

Phádraig; the lease was renewed to John Mac Giolla Phádraig ca. 1500 (Curtis, 1937). Based on naming conventions and that Edmund was, before 1500, never before recorded as a name amongst Mac Giolla Phádraig, it makes sense that Edmund Ruadh was the grandson of Finghin Mór and the *daughter of Edmund Butler*. And the lease successor, John (Seán) was probably either the father of Edmund Ruadh (O'Ferrall, 1709), or an as yet unaccounted for kinsman. But between 1488 and 1515, there are records of several Seáns whose place in the clan require deep consideration – just how the Seáns are assigned requires a punt on the horses.

### The Rise of Piers Ruadh Butler and the Horses of Kildare

Gerald Mór FitzGerald died in 1513, and Thomas Butler seventh Earl of Ormond followed him in 1515. Even though Piers had disposed of Sir James Butler, there was still significant uncertainty around who Thomas' successor would be. Without a male heir, the former Earl's grandson, Sir Thomas Boleyn, was the favoured of the heirs general. Mindful of Brehon Law and politically astute, Piers used all his powers to position himself as the leading Irish claimant (Kirwan, 2018). The dispute surrounding the Ormond title was not resolved until 1528; during the interim period, Piers embarked on what Edwards (1998) refers to as a *new direction*.

For Beresford (1998), *the supposedly perennial Butler-Kildare feuds began* in 1519 only after Gerald Óg FitzGerald, his brother-in-law and the ninth Earl of Kildare, refused to support Piers' claims to the earldom of Ormond. Edwards (1998) does not see it this way. Drawing on the thought that Piers knew Gerald Mór arranged his marriage to Margaret *for polissye* and that Piers was known for his *politic and far-seeing character* (Graves & Prim, 1857), Edwards develops the thought that Piers was a conniving character who was playing the waiting game who,

*maintained an outward show of friendship, biding his time until his strength had reached a level appropriate to his ambitions* (1998, p. 135).

But the purpose of this treatise is not to debate the motivations of Piers Butler; it is enough to understand that Piers was an expert at *putting the fragmentation of a neighbouring Gaelic lordship to good use* (Edwards, 1998, p.139). Just as other Irish clans, such as the Mac Murchadha Caomhánach, Ó Mórdha, and Éile Ó Cearbhaill had, by 1517, developed both pro-and anti-Ormond and Kildare factions (Edwards, 1998), so had the Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí. And in 1517, bent on avenging the slaying of a son of Edmund MacRichard in 1478, Butler, *lost no opportunity of carrying fire and sword into Upper Ossory* (Graves & Prim, 1857, p. 219). The event is recorded in Liber Primus Kilkenniensis, by which the recently constructed tholsel in the town of Cill Chainnigh obtained a new gate, which was *violently carried off the castle of Bernard then McGillpatrige, called the Cowlkyll, in Ossory by the sovereign and community of the town of Kilkenny, then in a hostile army with Sir Peter Butler* (Othway-Ruthven, 1961).

Carrigan (1905) relates this event and assigns the identity of '*the Mac Giolla Phádraig*' to Brian, later first Baron of Upper Ossory, who he claims was clan chieftain from ca. 1511. That Chúlchoill (i.e., Culohill) translated above as Cowlkyll) was the Mac Giolla Phádraig's primary fortress, and home of their garrison is certain. Equally certain is that the Mac Giolla Phádraig, who was robbed of his feature front-door, was not the future first Baron. But before that is explained, there is a need to back up a little. Following the death of Gerald Mór FitzGerald in 1513, his son, Gerald Óg, the ninth Earl of Ormond and Lord Deputy of Ireland, understood the importance of making a good impression and strong political statements just as much as Piers Butler. And what better way than to send gifts to friends; hundreds of gifts – hundreds of horses. Kildare set about restoring his family as the dynasts of west Leinster and the Irish midlands and,

*in the traditional Irish manner ... distributed gifts ... amongst the midland lords such as the MacGillapatricks, O'Dempseys, O'Connor Falys and Giollapádraig O'More (O'Byrne, 2001, p.264).*

Norman families, however, were the priority recipients and, in true Irish fashion, those recorded at the top of Kildare's list of horses gifted were the most prominent – and in 1513 it was *Sir Pers Butler knyght* (Mac Niocaill, 1992); he was given not one horse, but two.

Mac Giolla Phádraig's lofty status is then confirmed; sitting in thirteenth-place out of a total of 123 recipients, he received *a don*. One behind him was another Mac Giolla Phádraig. High ranking in the clan? Yes, undoubtedly, and maybe even a tanist in waiting. So, it must be imagined he was the son of the thirteenth-placed Mac Giolla Phádraig. But he wasn't, and if ever the understanding of Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí leadership in the first quarter of the sixteenth-century is to be shaken up, it comes with the knowledge, until now unaccounted for by historians. The next horse recipient was Seán Óg, the son of William Mac Giolla Phádraig – he received *a blak* (Mac Niocaill, 1992). When Kildare next chose to gift horses to Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí, it was two years later; it is notable that Piers Butler was not a horse recipient then, or ever after. But in 1515 Kildare recognised there was a growing complexity around Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí leadership. That year Mac Giolla Phádraig received a hackney, however along with *Shane mac William macgilpatrik*, who received *a grey*, was *Shane son to macgilpatrik* who received a horse of the same coat (Mac Niocaill, 1992). At this juncture, there come several challenges to the traditional scholarly (i.e., Carrigan and Shearman) views of Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí leadership and lineages.

There are now three Seáns near the forefront of leadership to contend with around this time: Seán Óg (i) being the son of William the cleric, (ii) Seán being the son of the clan chief, and (iii), Seán, as various records attest, being the father of Brian, later the first Baron. Logic dictates Seán (i) cannot be Seán (iii) since the father of Seán (iii) is authoritatively Finghin Mór, not William. And Seán (ii) cannot be Seán (iii) since his father was living and was the Mac Giolla Phádraig, whereas the father of Seán (iii) was Finghin Mór who died of the plague in 1468 (O'Clery et al., 1856; Laylor, 1908). Might one of the three Seáns be the John, who received the leases of Ros Chonaill, Leamhchoill, and Baile Osaill ca. 1500 (Curtis, 1937)? As discussed earlier, yes. Although the leases were not re-granted to any Mac Giolla Phádraig in 1511 (Curtis, 1937), this does not demand Seán the leaseholder had died by that time. Yet, there needs to be an account of another Seán (John) record.

John MacCostigan first appears in the Papal Registers in 1481, as a 24-year-old cleric of Ossory, when he makes a petition to unite the rectories of Achadh Bhó (Aghaboe) and Bordaíol (Bordwell) (Twemlow, 1955). Despite John's youth Pope Sixtus IV dispensed him to receive the said rectories. Yet, in 1488 he is accused by Thady Ó Beirgin, before Pope Innocent VIII, of detaining possession of Achadh Bhó *for some years, without any title* and is removed (Twemlow, 1960). Innocent VIII's decision makes mention of Achadh Bhó's lay patronage, and it is worthwhile considering how that may have weighed on the minds of those in Rome because it is revealed that John went by two names – he is named as John Mac Costigan, alias Mac Giolla Phádraig. John's proposal to unite the rectories of Achadh Bhó and Bordaíol was re-visited under Pope Alexander VI in 1493. In a lengthy discourse, we learn that after his appointment in 1488, John, who is again referred to as alias Mac Giolla Phádraig, entered into a simoniacal pact with Ó Beirgin, *so that he should be left in peace in the rectories* – in doing so John incurred the *sentence of excommunication and other papal sentences, censures and pains against simoniacs*. John's punishment and *infamy* must have resulted in outrage amongst the Mac Giolla Phádraig because Rome soon backtracked, claiming *no mention was made* of the lay patronage previously. It is apparent that Rome had little appetite for infuriating the Mac Giolla Phádraig; John, with his familial bond to the clan now realised, was reinstated and

absolved, and those who had resisted the unification had no option but to comply before *the force of the Apostolic See* (Fuller, 1998) – an ominous-sounding threat.

Further mention is made of John, now going only by Mac Giolla Phádraig, in 1501 and 1509, where he is there referred to as a Canon of Ossory; holding that title effectively resolving the battle with the Ó Beirgin over parish benefices (Fuller, 1994; Haren, 1998). The latter mention is the last we hear of John, but questions linger. Is he the John who became leaseholder of Ros Chonaill, Leamhchoill, and Baile Oiscaill and who had advowson there? This is plausible, because in 1488 the pact Seán entered in to with Thady Ó Beirgin related to the Rectory of Ros Chonaill, and Mac Giolla Phádraig interests in Ros Chonaill are documented in several Papal records between 1429 and 1506 (Twemlow, 1909; Haren, 1978; Fuller, 1986; Haren, 1989).

Also, then, was John MacCostigan the son of Finhin Mór, and the father of both William the younger and Brian, the first Baron of Upper Ossory? Two words loom large in the consideration – *noble birth* (Twemlow, 1955). And for John MacCostigan, alias Mac Giolla Phádraig, born ca. 1457, the choices are few if he was of noble birth and bore noble sons. In addition, William the younger came into the benefice of Achadh Bhó (Aghaboe), which was once with John MacCostigan, and this via the adjudication of the latter (Twemlow, 1960; Haren, 1998). Hence, all the evidence points to John MacCostigan being the aforementioned Seán (iii).

That resolved, aside from still needing to account for Seán (i) and Seán (ii), a greater understanding of Mac Giolla Phádraig leadership in the period after the death of Séafra in 1489 is required. And that requires an analysis of Brians, of which there were more than one of prominence.

### Early 16th Century Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí Leaders and Lineages

1528 was the year Piers Butler became Earl of Ossory (State Papers of Henry VIII, 1528b) and in that year, as the Ormond-Kildare conflict headed toward its climax, Butler looked for the support of Gaelic lords to the north, such as the Ó Mórdha, the Éile Ó Cearbhaill, and, surprisingly, the Mac Giolla Phádraig (State Papers of Henry VIII, 1528c). The record evidences Butler was clearly pleased with *'McGylpatrikes ayd and help'*, and also keen to let the Crown know he was *'contentid to remytt and fore geyv hym dyvers great injurys and wrongis'*, which had left him 400 marks out of pocket.

That citation is often used to support the widespread belief that Brian mac Seán (later first baron) was the victim when, in 1517, Piers Butler removed the gate of Chúlchoill (Cullohill) castle. But it is too simplistic to assume that the 1528 *'Mac Giolla Phádraig'* was Brian mac Seán since there was more than one Brian of prominence on the scene at the time. In 1517 Brian mac Seán would have been considered too junior among the clan, at approximately thirty-nine years of age, to have been granted headship ahead of more senior clan members. Accordingly, just one year later, in 1518, it was another Brian – the son of Toirealach mac Donnchadh – a grandson of Donnchadh Mór, who was responsible for granting tithes to the Earl of Kildare for *'McGyllepatrikis countre'*. Kildare's Rental makes no mistake; Brian mac Toirealach was chieftain and Brian mac Seán was nowhere in sight (Mac Niocaill, 1992). It is not until 1532 that Brian mac Seán's position as clan leader is certain:

*Thomas, the son of Pierce Roe, Earl of Ormond, was slain in Ossory by Dermot MacGillapatrik, who was heir to the lordship of Ossory. Not long after this, Dermot was delivered up by his own brother (the Mac Gillapatrik) to the Earl, by whom he was fettered, in revenge of his son and of every other misdeed which Dermot had committed against him up to that time (O'Clery et al., 1856).*

With the death of Finghin Mór in 1468, and Séafra, the last remaining son of Finghin Óg – his tanist brother Tadhg Dubh having died in 1487 – in 1489, leadership among the Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí probably alternated to one of the sons of Donnchadh Mór, i.e., Toirealach and Tadhg Ruadh, who were born before ca. 1448, both living ca. 1468-1478 (Lawlor, 1908), and would be expected to have lived until the late 1400s/early 1500s; they were of greater seniority than the sons of Finghin Mór. Yet, unfortunately, there is a record gap between 1489 and 1513 that clouds when the transition of chieftainship from the the sons of Donnchadh Mór to the sons of Finghin Mór occurred.

With the rise of the subsequent generation, beginning with Brian mac Toirealach mac Donnchadh Mór by 1517, the only possibilities for prior clan headship among the sons of Finghin Mór are with William the elder (b. ca. 1447) and John MacCostigan (also known as Seán Mac Giolla Phádraig b. ca. 1457). And it is William the elder who comes into focus because of his irrefutable seniority and position of power in the Church. Irish clan succession was not determined simply by who was the oldest eligible male; seniority was determined by who was *eldest and worthiest*. And, at least *theoretically*, both chief and tanist were elected by the nobles of the territory, both clerics and laity. Who was *worthiest* essentially means who was *richest*, i.e., having the most *clients and power* (Nicholls, 1972). At the dawn of the sixteenth century, the *worthiest* of Finghin Mór's sons was William the elder, the illegitimate career cleric, who had grown in wealth and power and risen through the ranks of the Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí and the Church.

William's high status is also borne out via a closer analysis of Kildare's horses that were gifted to the Mac Giolla Phádraig between 1513 and 1515. William the elder was clan chieftain in 1513 because only 'Mac Kilpatrick' and the precisely named Seán Óg, 'William Mac Kilpatrick's son', were horse recipients that year. Yet by 1515 William the elder had died; Seán mac William again received a horse, but 'Shane son to Mac Gilpatrick' and 'Mac Gilpatrick' did as well. The obvious position is that Seán mac Finghin Mór, who had a son called Seán, was successor to his brother, William. The death of Seán mac Finghin Mór must have been 1515-1517; with Seán being the last of his generation, the clan leadership reverted to Brian mac Toirealach and the non-Ormond aligned Mac Giolla Phádraig faction. Brian mac Toirealach's tenure was short-lived and notable for the conflict with Piers Ruadh Butler. Aside from the 1517 tholsel incident, there is the remarkable account of Oliver Morres, Baron de Marisco and de Montmorency, who during a raid on Castletown castle engaged his Irish foe, and

*cast him and his horse head long down the rock on which the castle stands, into the river Nore that flows underneath, in which they perished* (Montmorency-Morres, 1817, p.237).

The event occurred between 1505, when Morres married Ellice, the fourth daughter of Piers Ruadh Butler, and 1523, based on the estimated death of Morres – probably at the hands of a revenge seeking Mac Giolla Phádraig – since Ellice remarried that year (Montmorency-Morres, 1817). A date of 1522 is a considered estimate because that year is assigned to the well-known, curiously worded, variably recorded, yet poorly attributed, threat made by the Mac Giolla Phádraig chieftain via his ambassador to Henry VIII, King of England:

*Sta pedibus! Domine Rex! Dominus meus, Gillapatricius, me misit ad et, et jussit dicere, quod si non vis castigare Petrum Rufum, ipse faciet bellum contra te. That is: Stand on your feet! Oh King! My Lord Gillapatrik sent me and commanded me to say, 'If you don't want to chastise Peter the Red, I will make war against you'* (this example is from Gordon, 1806).

It is unlikely the wild threat went unattended; Morres probably exacted Henry's wrath, and swiftly.

At the close of Part II there are some major loose ends. What became of Seán mac William mac Finghin Mór and Seán mac Seán mac Finghin Mór? The latter was clearly an older brother of Brian mac Seán. As well as Brian, Seán fathered two other sons who were Brian's juniors – Diarmaid and

Finghin. Diarmaid, a political liability to his brother Brian, was taken into custody and never heard of again following his peripheral role in the slaying of Thomas, son of Piers Ruadh Butler, ca. 1532 (Curtis, 1937; State Papers of Henry VIII, 1532). And Finghin was slain during the period when Miles Baron was Bishop of Ossory (1528-1550) (White, 1936); there is no evidence to substantiate Edwards' (1999) claim he died at the hands of the Butlers while fighting for the FitzGerald. A fourth son, older than Brian, is plausible if the narrative that Seán is the same as John MacCostigan (born ca. 1457) is adhered to because Brian was born ca. 1478, and it was not uncommon for Irish men in medieval times, clergy or lay, to sire children as soon as they were able. This is exemplified by none other than Brian mac Seán, whose first marriage contract was probably secured when he reached the legal age of 14 years of age (Cosgrove, 1985).

As for Brian, as well as possibly being junior he may also have been viewed dimly amongst the clan hierarchy. Brian had more wives than those accounted for by Fitzpatrick scholars such as Shearman, and in non-scholarly works, such as that of Fitzpatrick family historians Zalewski and Fitzpatrick (2013) who claim their work is definitive. Those parties miss that Brian had at least three wives before his marriage to Margaret Butler. But Carrigan understood earlier marriages must have occurred even if he didn't grasp the full details. And assertions the children of those marriages were illegitimate (Carrigan, 1905; Zalewski & Fitzpatrick, 2013) may be valid under English law (Simms, 1975), but they weren't in the eyes of Rome (Fuller, 1998) or under Brehon law (Hickey, 2020). Not that Brian mac Seán, future Baron of Upper Ossory, appeared to have much regard for any law or any thought that his early offspring would be ineligible for any title granted by the Crown. Brian was a hellraiser from his youth; perhaps the tales of Thadhg Dubh were known to him, and he sought to emulate them, and more. Destined for greatness, his career was highlighted by one controversy after another, whether it fratricide, filicide, betrayal, or duplicity (O'Clery et al., 1856; State Papers Henry VIII, 1541; Edwards, 1999). And in 1493, Brian made a no less controversial entrance into the affairs of Éire, singlehandedly almost bringing Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí to the brink of war within and without. Complex family affairs were, seemingly from the outset, Brian's particular penchant.

The first marriage contract entered into by a youthful Brian was with the daughter of Ó Mórdha, but it was unlawful in the eyes of the church because they were first cousins. After her untimely death, which one might guess was in childbirth, Brian then married another first cousin (who was also either his niece or aunt), who was also the first cousin of his previous wife; without dispensation from the church the second marriage was declared null. Brian then entered into a marriage contract with Catherine Ní Mórdha, his half-sister (who was also either his niece or aunt), who was also the half-sister of his first wife. Predictably, this resulted in an uproar of rampant *dissensions, scandals and enmities* among the relatives of the second wife and Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí, mainly since Bernard and Catherine were living as man and wife and had started a family. But leaving Catherine was not an option for Brian since doing so would have left her *defamed and perhaps without hope of a husband*. A clan war, not only between septs of Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí but between Brian's line and long-time Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí allies, the Ó Mórdha, threatened to erupt. Given the risk of *homicides and scandals ... among blood relations and friends*, a papal dispensation was sought to legalise Bernard and Catherine's relationship. The Pope absolved the pair, permitted their marriage, and decreed their present and future children were legitimate (Fuller, 1998).

It is fitting that the conclusion of this article should be with Brian, for he takes centre stage in *Part III*. All that remains is to comment on some peripheral Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí individuals and septs.

## Miscellanea

There are many fragmentary records of Mac Giolla Phádraig from the late medieval that are worthy of note. Fortunately, most can be made sense of when a long-range view, even as far forward as the

seventeenth century, is taken. Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí clerics such as Thady (died ca. 1465), Malachy (died ca. 1469), Patrick (fl. 1489-1493), Donatus (fl. 1489-1497), Tarreleus (fl. 1510), and Theodoric (fl. 1514-1516) will feature in a forthcoming review of all Mac Giolla Phádraig clerical lines. Of particular interest is, (a) the exploration of familial relationships between those clerics who were active in the Dioceses of Killaloe, Limerick, and Ossory, and (b) that both Diarmaid and Brian, the sons of Seán mac Finghin Mór, were probably clerics (MacQuarrie, 2018; Brewer, 1875).

And there is a swathe of records relating to several Mac Giolla Phádraig septs that are almost entirely unaccounted for: the McDonnough, McEdmond, McFynne, McShane, McShera, McTeige, McTirrelagh, McDavid, McWilliam and others, who either descended from the first Baron or his close kin. These likely add significantly to the number of *all* (Zalewski & Fitzpatrick, 2013) male descendants of the first Baron. Carrigan makes incidental reference to the sept of McShera, who descend from Geoffrey Mac Giolla Phádraig, brother of the first Baron, when discussing the disappearance of the name Mac Giolla Phádraig, who *are now never mentioned by Irish speakers in Ossory, under any other name than that of MacShaerha, O'Shaerha, or O'Sheerrha* (Carrigan, 1905, p.8). The disappearance of Mac Giolla Phádraig after the first Baron's submission was probably due to the need for compliance with the expectation embedded in Brian's agreement to *forsake and refuse the name of MacGilpatrick* (State Papers of Henry VIII, 1541). Still, some septs chose not to associate with the name Fitzpatrick either. And yet other septs with Osraí associations did maintain Mac Giolla Phádraig well into the seventeenth century; these septs mostly did not descend directly from Finghin Mór Mac Giolla Phádraig (d. ca. 1468) or his descendants. They and their territories are discussed in the forthcoming article, *Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí records in the Patent and Close Rolls, and Fiants: 1509-1625*, which provides not only coverage of septs in Laois, but also in Ceatharlach (Co. Carlow), Cill Dara (Co. Kildare), Cill Mhantáin (Co. Wicklow), and Loch Garman.

Finally, various Mac Giolla Phádraig Individuals and septs are also documented here because, even though they appear to be only minor-actors or are currently challenging to connect to any lineage, they are mostly of future importance. All appear within, or close to, the time boundaries of this article. Many of these characters feature in Part III. Introduced chronologically, they are:

- Dearbháil ny Donnchadh Mór, who was living ca. 1468-1478 (Lawlor, 1908);
- Owen of Ráth Tuathail (Rathtoole) Cill Mhantáin in 1518 (Mac Niocaill, 1992), who is important because of his association with the Ó Tuathail;
- Maurice of An Bhuaile Bheag (Boley Little) Cill Dara in 1518 (Mac Niocaill, 1992), who is important due to his association with the Earls of Kildare;
- Clan Maeleachlainn Ruadh of Baile Dhabhag (Ballygauge) Laois in 1518 (Hore, 1859), from whom came various other septs;
- Callagh, who is important because he was a witness in a case brought against Piers Ruadh Butler; Callagh's testimony was given despite his fear of being killed by Butler (White, 1936).
- Fiach, who is highly significant because he was the recipient of a horse from the ninth Earl of Kildare in 1523 (Mac Niocaill, 1992).

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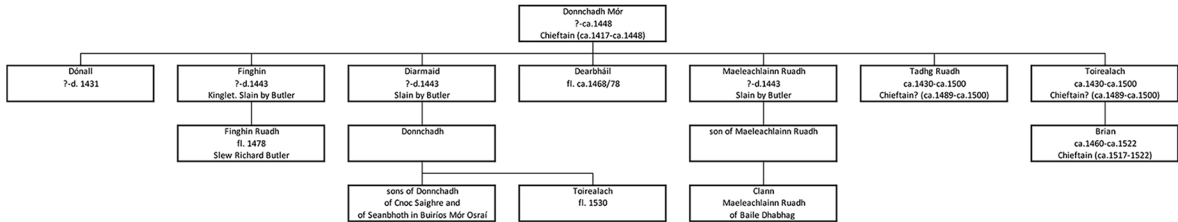
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## PROPOSED GENEALOGY OF DONNCHADH MÓR MAG GIOLLA PHÁDRAIG





## PROPOSED MAG GIOLLA PHÁDRAIG OSRAÍ LEADERSHIP CA. 1417-1522

