

Cill Chiaráin

Sliocht as an leabhar Conamara Theas- Áit agus Ainm – aistriú Gaeilge a rinne Liam Mac Con Iomaire ar Mapping South Connemara le Tim Robinson. (Foilsithe ag Coiscéim, £5).

COINNIGH ORT SOIR BÓTHAR AN chósta ón mBantrach Ard agus tiocfaidh tú go dtí *An Chathair*, cuid de bhaile fearainn Chill Chiaráin a fuair an t-ainm ardnósach sin mar gheall ar fhir cheirde nó ceardaithe bheith ina gcónaí ansin tráth. Tá an duine deireanach de cheardaithe áitiúla ár linne féin, Mícheál Ó Ceannabháin, gabha, ag cleachtadh a cheirde fós ina cheárta i leataobh an bhóthair ag tús an chéad bhaile eile, *Aill na Brón*. Deirtear liom go bhfuair Aill na Brón a ainm ó aill atá ar an gcósta anseo a ngearrtaí brónna muilinn (quern stones) aisti sa tseanaimsir. Is dócha go bhfuil cineálacha áirithe eibhir ann atá níos feiliúnaí ná a chéile i geomhair na hoibre seo; tá cineálacha éagsúla cloiche eibhir sa réigiún seo, ó thaobh cruas na cloiche féin agus ó thaobh líon na gcristal sa gloch. Tá an aill áirithe seo le taobh na sean-ché a dtugtar *An Chéibh Bheag* uirthi, atá tógtha ar an ngóilín farralgc, díreach sula gcasann an bóthar agus an cósta o thuaidh. *Coirnéal na gCuag* nó *Cora na gCuag* atá ar an gcoirnéal seo, i ndiaidh clann den sloinne sin atá ina gcónaí ann leis na glúnta. Tá seanbheairic na bpóilíní, nach bhfuil fágtha anois di ach na ballaí, marcálta ar mhapa Suirbhé Ordanáis na bliana 1839.

Tá bóthar ag rith suas in aghaidh an chnoic ón gcoirnéal seo i dtreo Chnoc Bhinn Bhuí (agus deirtear liom go mbíodh 'pátrún' ar bharr an chnoic anseo). Gar do dheireadh an bhóthair tá tobar beannaithe, *Tobar Mhuire*, log beag i gloch a bhfuil scrín bheag chloiche ina thimpeall. Tá mullán (bollán) cloiche gar do láthair, atá thart ar 2'6" ar airde agus tá sé ráite gur caitheadh an chloch i bhfarraige agus go raibh sí ar ais ina háit arís go míorúilteach, an mhaidin

dar gcionn. Le taobh an tobair tá mar bheadh *leaba* dhronuilleogach chloch, agus ba mhaith liom a fháil amach an raibh aon deasghnáth nó aon traidisiún ag baint léi.

Tugann sé sin go baile Chill Chiaráin féin muid, lena dhá theach tábhairne, oifig an phoist, scoil, séipéal agus araile, agus thíos cois an chuain tá monarcha Arramara Teo., áit a dtagann feamainn ar leoraithe ó thimpeall an chósta go léir, lena dó ina luaith sna tornóga móra sorcóireacha. Bhíodh an lastlong St. Ronan ag tarraingt le cé anseo go minic, le luaith na feamainne a thabhairt chuig Alginat Industries in Albain le tuilleadh próiseála a dhéanamh uirthi (ach tá leoraithe curtha in áit na loinge le tamall anois). Nuair a bhíos an phróiseáil ar fad déanta úsáidtear ailgionáit na feamainne le tiúchan (tiubhachan) a dhéanamh ar phéint, ar ábhar smididh (cosmetics) agus ar ábhar bia.

Ciallaíonn Cill Chiaráin, ar ndóigh, 'séipéal Chiaráin', an naomh a deirtear a tháinig thart sna bólaí seo agus é ar a bhealach go dtí *Ara na Naomh*, áit a raibh sé ina dhiaidh sin ina dhalta ag Naomh Éanna sula ndeachaigh sé agus ar bhunaigh sé Cluain Mac Nóis. Tá a thobar beannaithe, Tobar Chiaráin, cois an chosáin atá ag dul suas taobh an chnoic, díreach ó thuaidh den reilig. Taobh thuas den reilig tá seanbhalla beag dronuilleogach a dtugann an Suirbhé Ordanáis St. Kieran's Church air agus a dtugann muintir na háite An Chill nó Leaba Chiaráin air. Sa tsean-chuid den reilig, istigh sa lár, tá mar bheadh altóir atá cosúil le bosca déanta as clocha, a d'fhéadfadh a bheith an-sean. Ar an 9ú lá de Mheán Fómhair, Lá Fhéile Ciaráin, tugann daoine turas ag na trí láthair atá luaite agam agus déanann siad seacht dtimpeall ag gach aon cheann acu.

Díreach ó thuaidh den reilig tá bóthar ag dul isteach faoin tír tríd an nGleann Mór agus ansin siar i dtreo Chaladh Fhínse. Ag an gcasadh sa mbóthar seo, leathmhíle isteach ón gcaladh, tá sé marcálta ar Chairt Aimiréalachta na

bliana 1868 go raibh 'Glenmore House' agus 'Model Farm' ann. (Níl siad seo marcálta ar mhapaí Suirbhé Ordanáis na mblianta 1839 ná 1899). An bhféadfadh aon duine tada eile a insint dom fúthu? Ba le Nicholas Lynch (duine de Loingsigh Bhearna) Cill Chiaráin agus na bailte fearainn sléibhe atá ina thimpeall - Leitir Poibrum, Seanach Dónaill, Glionnán agus Caladh Fhínse - i lár an chéid seo caite. Bhí muileann plúir is coirce freisin aige (cé go raibh sé folamh nuair a cuireadh Griffith's Valuation i bhfeidhm go gairid roimh 1855); is cosúil gurb é seo an muileann mór atá ina fhothrach anois, taobh ó thuaidh de bhaile Chill Chiaráin ar *Abhainn an Mhuilinn* nó *Sruthán na Teorann* mar a thugtar freisin air.

Bhí baile fearainn eile, Beitheach Átha (*Bé Chatha* a deirtear) atá taobh thiar de Sheanach Dónaill, i seilbh na Loingseach freisin. Ciallaíonn *beitheach* coil beithe (birchwood) agus ciallaíonn *áth*, ar ndóigh, bealach trasna abhann. Tá Beitheach Átha chomh fada as an mbealach nach bhfuair mé seans é a lua roimhe seo. Ní raibh aon chónaí ann le fada an lá, ach de réir mhapa na bliana 1839 bhí trí theach cónaithe sa *tamhnach* idir an cnoc a dtugtar Beitheach Átha freisin air (Beaghy i mbéarla) agus an loch, *Loch Thamhnach Bheitheach Átha* (Beaghy Lough ar an Suirrhé Ordanáis). Bhí an baile fearainn seo ar cheann de na bailte a cheannaigh an eagraíocht ar a dtugtar *an Irish Waste Land Improvement Society* mar aon le go leor bailte sléibhe ina thimpeall, agus go leor de Chill Chiaráin, thart ar an mbliain 1845. Ba é aidhm na heagraíochta daoine a mhealladh le cur fúthu i gceantair aduaine den chineál seo trí chíos íseal agus deontais i geomhair draenáil agus tógáil fálda a thairiscint dóibh. Cé gur éirigh go maith leis an scéim ar dtús thit sí as a chéile ar fad de bharr an Ghorta Mhóir, agus faoi lár na 1850aí bhí na ceantair seo ar ais arís i lámha na n-iar-úinéirí, Loingsigh Bhearna.

Sula bhfágaim Cill Chiaráin luafaidh mé dhá ainm áite eile i dtuaisceart an bhaile fearainn. Ar dtús, ceathrú míle suas ón séipéal, tá *Loch na Sióg* agus, ansin, díreach taobh ó dheas den teorainn le Coill Sáile tá *Crompán na bhFiann*. Is cosúil le dhá ainm iad sin a mbeadh scéalta ag baint leo, scéalta nach bhfuil cloiste agamsa fós.

(Tá muid fíorbhuíoch do Liam Mac an Iomaire agus do Tim Robinson, a thug cead dúinn an mír seo a fhoilsiú.

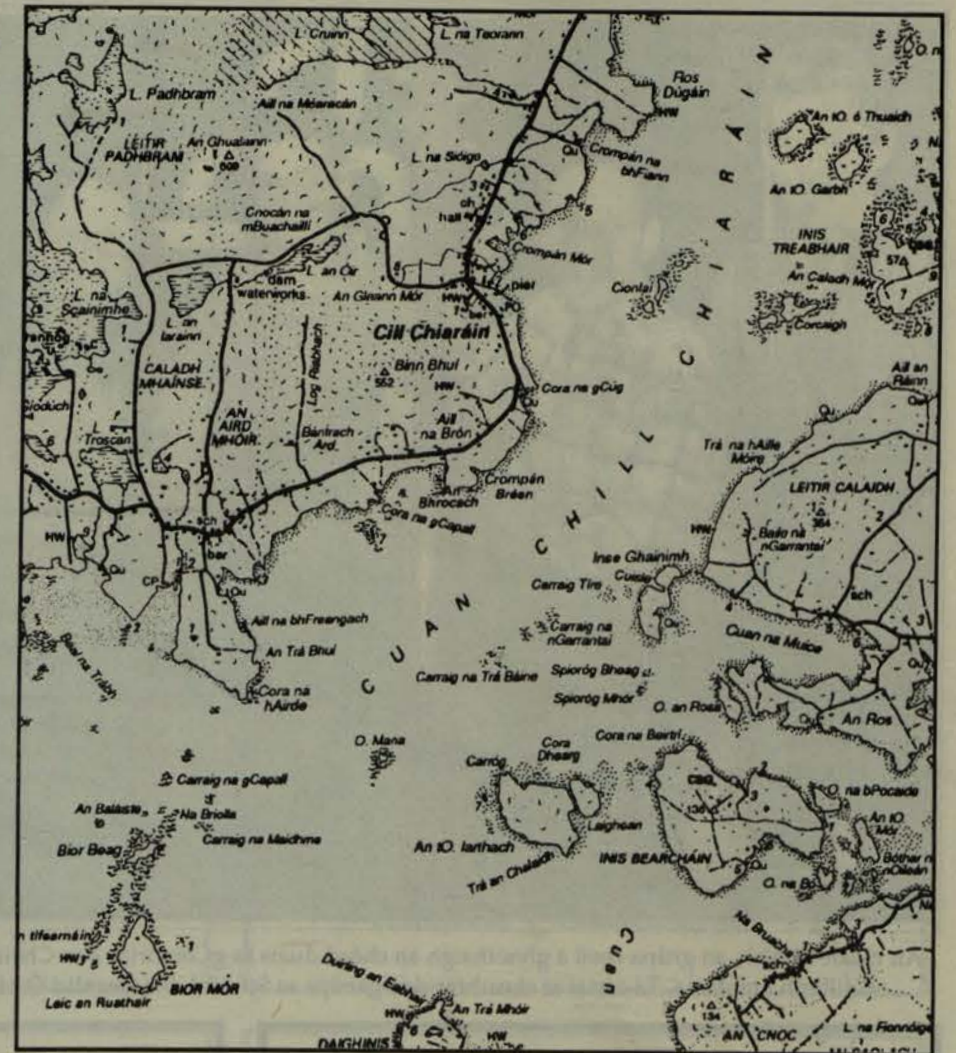
D'éirigh comhfhreagras san iris acadúil "Irish Geography" idir an tOllamh le Tíreolaíocht Breandán Mac Aodha agus Tim Robinson:

[...] One must commend Tim Robinson highly for attempting a very complex and urgent task. His energy and enthusiasm ought to put many professional scholars to shame. He has displayed remarkable patience and tenacity of purpose in seeking to unravel the almost forgotten toponymy of the Carna peninsula. Unfortunately, one of the basic tools essential for that task, namely a deep understanding of the Irish language, seems lacking. This failing is coupled with an insufficiently critical approach to the contribution of local informants. Ignorance abhors a void. Even in O'Donovan's day stories were being concocted to 'explain' obscure place-names. The outcome of these two weaknesses is that the work is marred by some derivations which are etymologically unacceptable.

Tobar na hIfearnan (p. 53) is linguistic nonsense. The definite article is normally followed by eclipsis in the genitive plural so that *Aill na Brón* (p. 55) is incorrect: in any case the standard plural is *brónna*, so that the proper form would be *Aill na mBrónna* ('the cliff of the quern stones'). Similarly *Loch na Calgaí* (p. 9) ought to read *Loch na gCalgaí*. *Cuan an Chailín* could not possibly render. '(St) Cailin's Bay' since the definite article could not precede a personal name in Irish any more than it could in English one does not say 'The Peter's Point' 'The Helen's Harbour' 'The Roderick's River' 'The Cathleen's Cliff'. 'Sceird' is a feminine noun so that the following adjective requires aspiration *an sceird bheag* must replace *an sceird beag* (p. 32). The same applies in the case of *an scaip mhór* (p. 37). The plural of 'scoláire' is 'scoláirí' so that the 'scholars' road' ought to be rendered *Bóthar na Scoláirí* (p. 50). There is no such word as 'mulán' even the English transliteration Mullaun Rocks (p. 51) retained the double l. 'Glasóg' is a feminine noun so that *Easc an Ghlasóg* (p. 11) should read *Easc na Glasóige* 'the hollow of the wagtail'. *Loch Buaille* (p. 71) rings false as do *Loch Poibrum* (p. 14), *Binn an Duine* (p. 11) and *Roisin na Mainiach* (p. 47). *Tamhnach Ruaidí* (p. 22) is probably a misprint for *Tamhnach Ruairí* [...]

Despite all these failings one cannot but welcome this little work. It does bring into juxtaposition a rich mass of facts and folklore relating to numerous features of the Carna landscape. It gives promise of better work to come. For the moment, however, all that is on offer is a lively guide for the keen amateur rather than a polished piece of professional scholarship.

Breandán S. Mac Aodha
(Iml. 19, Irish Geography)



Foilsíodh an píosa seo ó Tim Robinson in imleabhar 21 de Irish Geography mar fhreagra

MAPPING SOUTH CONNEMARA. A REJOINDER

Breandán Mac Aodha, in his review of my Mapping South Connemara says that I seem to lack the deep understanding of Irish essential to my toponymical ask. I certainly do not claim a deep understanding of the language, which indeed I picked up as best I could in the middle of a busy lifetime. However, I have been working on Connemara placenames for many years now, I take much expert advice, and in general I feel no need to bow before Prof. Mac Aodha's standard Irish. In fact the little lectures on elementary grammar in his review are not only insulting and redundant, they are, amazingly, for the most part incorrect.

For instance, Prof. Mac Aodha says my *Aill na Brón* should be *Aill na mBrónna*: but since brón is a variant genitive form of bró, my version is perfectly grammatical and to emend this well-known placename would be absurd. Similarly he says my *Loch na Calgaí* should be *Loch na gCalgaí*, but since calgach is a

Foilsithe le caoinchead Tim Robinson, Folding Landscapes, Cloch na Rón

collective noun like giolcach, his suggested plural form is unnecessary; in any case there is no 'g' sound in the spoken name. Rúaidí is not a misprint for Rúairí, but a dialect form of it. There is nothing wrong with my *Aill an Duine*; placenames involving *duine*, person, are in fact rather frequent, usually referring to a place where someone died by falling or drowning. *Mulán* is a well-established variant of *mullán*; I find it in T. Ó Máille's fine old book on Connemara Irish. An Béal Beo, and in Seán Mac Giollarnáth's transcripts of Connemara lore, and I could not wish for two better authorities. Further, the remark that even the English transliteration 'mullaun' retains the double 'l' is quite pointless, for what sound would 'mullaun' be supposed to represent?

Prof. Mac Aodha's other remarks I largely disagree with, but they are within the bounds of legitimate criticism. Those I have rebutted above suggest to me the academic's urge to find fault with the amateur!

- Tim Robinson, Roundstone

Fáigheann daoine an-oibríthe faol logainmneacha!
(An tEagarthóir).