

CAITHREIM CEALLACHAIN CAISIL

The Victorious Career of Cellachan of Cashel or The Wars Between the Irishmen and the Norsemen in the Middle of the 10th Century

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The English translation portion of this book was scanned using Xerox Textbridge optical character recognition (OCR) software and proofread for corrections by Kevin L. Callahan against a copy of the book. References to the original book's page numbers are enclosed within [[double brackets.]] The English translation begins on page 57. Any matter enclosed within [single brackets] are additions from Professor Bugge. Copies of Caithrem Cellachain Caisil are also available from many libraries, through interlibrary loan, and the Library of Congress. Scanned .jpgs of the published pages are available for comparison at the First Callahan, 10th Century website at the above referenced link. Professor Alexander Bugge's Introduction, Notes, and Index of Persons and Index of Places and Tribes are also scanned and available there. In order to view the text of the saga efficiently on the web I have artificially divided it into three parts that can fit into three webpages. When I print out Part 1 (this page) on a HP Deskjet printer on regular 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper it is 15 pages long. Part 2 is 21 pages long, and part 3 is 12 pages long for a total of 48 printed pages. For more information about Ceallachan of Cashel, visit the website at <http://www.geocities.com/kevinlcallahan/callahan.html>

[[Topics covered in Part 1

The list of the kings of Munster before Ceallachan and their causes of death

The oppression of the Irish by the Vikings

Ceallachan's ancestry

*Ceallachan prepares to be king by posing as a cleric for a year and a half,
secretly reconnoitering the countryside*

His mother collects arms and retains soldiers

*Cennedig's (Kennedy's) rivalry for the kingship during the election at
Glennamain*

Ceallachan's mother's speech to the assembly at Glennamain

Cennedig and Donnchad leave the assembly mound

The inauguration of Ceallachan

Ceallachan's call for war and an attack on Limerick

Suilleban (Sullivan) addresses the soldiers

The Battle of Limerick

Ceallachan's combat with Amlaib

Suilleban's combat with Morann

Donnchad's combat with Magnus

Ribordan's combat with Lochlann and the battle inside the town

The poem composed about the Battle of Limerick
The Battle of Cork
The Battle of Sliab Crot
The Battle of Thurles
Ceallachan's address to Donnchad before the Battle of Cashel and the poem
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Taking hostages and pledges from the Deisi, Ui-Mic-Caille, and Ui Liathain
The Battle at Muscraige with the Loch Lein Eoganachts
The Battle with Congal in Aes Irrais
The Battle of Glenn Corbraigi
Donnchuan, son of Cennedig, joins Ceallachan to fight Flannabra, king of Ui
Conaill and the poem
The Battle of Cromad
The celebration in Cashel of the expulsion of the Norsemen from the towns and
fortresses
Demanding taxes from Ossory and the battles with the Leinstermen]]
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The battle-career of Cellachan of Cashel, here.

1. A noble, lofty-spirited high-king whose name was Airtri, son of Cathal, son of Finguine, got the sovereignty and possession of the two provinces of Munster. And it was during his time that the Lochlannachs first obtained power over Erin. But from the time of Airtri to the good time of Cellachan they found battles and conflicts. And these were the kings who were over Cashel during that period, and the length of their reigns, and the [different] deaths that carried them off.

2. Airtri, son of Cathal, [reigned] 20 years, and he died a natural death. Feidlimid, son of Crimthan, 27 years over Munster and over Erin, and he died a natural death through the curse of the great Ciaran, son of the Carpenter. Olchobar, son of Cinaed, 4 years. And it was he who gained the battle of Sciach Nechtain over the Foreigners, in which twelve hundred of them were killed along with Tomar the earl. And he [i. e. Olchobar] died a natural death. Maelguala, son of Dungal, 7 years, and the Foreigners killed him. Cennfaelad, son of Mochtigern, 7 years, and he died a natural death. Donnchad, son of Dubdaboirenn, 4 years, and he died a natural death at Cashel.

Dublachta, son of Maelguala, 7 years, and he died of pestilence in his banqueting house.

Finguine, son of Laegaire, 7 years, and his own brothers killed him because of his having (only) half-drunk a feast.

Cormac, son of Cuilennan, 7 years, and the Leinstermen killed him in the battle of Leithglinn.

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Flaithbertach, son of Inmainen, 37 years, and he died a natural death.

Lorcan, son of Conligan, one year and a half, and he died a natural death.

3. These were the tributes and taxes of the abominable Foreigners from the soldiers of Munster, namely, a king over every cantred, and a chieftain over every tribe, an abbot over every church, a bailiff over every village, and a billeted soldier in every house. Without as much as a clutch of eggs of one hen for his own food or drink. Without a cloak or a good dress on king or noble lady, but only the cast-off cloaks and clothes of the Danes and the ignoble Lochlannachs. Without sages, without noble clerics, without books, without full reliquaries in church or in building or in monastery, but Danes in [possession of] their temples, and their churches, and their beautiful forts. Without philosophers, without poets, without minstrels pursuing the lawful customs and hereditary rights of their good kings despite of the hatred of the rough Lochlannachs. Without any daughter of a king or high lord or chieftain to work embroidery, or to practise charity ? or skilful handiwork. Without any son of a king or chieftain to acquire agility, or to practise or to learn true feats of arms. Without [permission] for the Munstermen to give banquets or old ales to a champion or to a neighbour, unless it were against the command of these true tyrants. And in this condition they were during a time of eleven and seven score years, viz. from the ninth year of the reign of Airtri to the time of Lorcan, son of Conligan.

4. Then arose a heroic, battle-victorious, valorous gentle king to repel this oppression and to contest the country against the battalions of the Lochlannachs, viz. Cellachan, son of Buadachan, son of Lachtna, son of Artgal, son of Snedgus, son of Donngal, son of Faelgus, son of Natfraech, son of Colgan, son of Failbe, son of Aed dub, son of Cremthann, son of Feidlimid, son of Aengus, son of Natfraech, son of Corc, son of Lugaid, son of Ailill Flann Bec, son of Fiachu Muillethan, son of Eogan Mor, son of Ailill Olom. It seems from the writings of the historians that from Airtri to noble Brian the heroes or terri-

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ties of Munster were not freed, except what the nimble-sworded Ceallachan did to defend them. For that was the man who spent a year and a half in searching Munster, both wood, and hill, and gentle valley, both stream, and lake, and full river, both harbour and smooth strand and seaport, both fort and strong fortress and the broad land of every Norseman, seeking charity in every fortress, and shelter in every town, poorly for his melodious clerical offices, and with his mottled bag round his neck, spying out every place, and making a close examination of every stronghold, in order that he might get knowledge of its lands, its waterfalls, and its fresh woods, when it should be laid upon him to fight for its territory. So that he did not leave one stead of a landholder or purveyor in the two provinces of Munster unvisited, in order that he might know

the name of every village and of every tribe and have knowledge of every lord of the country. And after searching the territories he came to Cashel. For it is there his mother was, and she, the noble queen, was the wife of the coarb of Cashel. And Cellachan had been begotten in violation of her marriage with him. And during the year and a half that Cellachan was traversing the country, she was herself collecting arms, and clothes, and treasures, and retaining companies of foot-soldiers and gentle household-troops. And this is the number of those who were fed (?) by and fully bound to her, viz. 500 armed men.

5. The day on which Cellachan came to Cashel after he had obtained this host, was the day on which there was a great host of the two provinces of Munster at Glennamain of Cashel electing a king. And according to their opinion it was Cennedig, son of Lorcan, whom they would make king. For this is the arrangement of the high-kingship that was between the descendants of Eogan Mor and the descendants of Cormac Cas: The man who was the senior of the gentle clans, his was the kingship. If the high-king was of the descendants of Eogan, the tanist-ship belonged to the descendants of Cormac Cas. And if the noble king was of the descendants of Cormac, the tanist-ship went to the descendants of Eogan Mor. The kingship not to go to any of them, unless he were

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the best in knowledge, and true learning, and princely honour of the noble heroes. On that day while they were electing a king, his mother said to Cellachan, that he should come to visit them, and that she would herself go before him and tell his story to Cennedig and to gentle Donnchad. And [she told him that] when the nobles of Munster were sitting down, he should come with his people in the best of arms and dress, and ask hostages and pledges of them and tell Cennedig to remember justice.

6. The queen proceeded to Glennamain, and arriving there, she said to the nobles of Munster: "Remember the arrangement, which Cormac Cas and Fiachu Muillethan made between their great descendants! And there is of the descendants of Eogan a man who is senior by age and knowledge to you, o Cennedig, and he is a king in figure and appearance". Cennedig asked who he was. The queen said that he was the son of Buadachan and she made the lay:

Remember, o pleasant Cennedig!
the arrangement of Fiachu and Cormac Cas.
that they left it so that Munster should be divided
rightly between their gentle descendants, etc.

When the champions of Munster heard these great words and the speech of the woman, Clan Eogan said that the heir (?) should be brought to them, that they might make him king. Cennedig left the assembly, for he did not consider it an honourable or proper thing that the kingship should be assigned away from himself to another man. And moreover, he did not consider it an honourable thing that his brotherhood should be broken. And Donnchad left the mound, when he saw

that the chiefs of the tribes were electing Cellachan. And that is what they said, that they would not quarrel with him, for neither rent nor tax nor fair tribute would any of them get out of it [i. e. the land of Munster?], but the full benefit of it would go to the Lochlannachs, and they themselves would defend it [i. e. Munster?]. And thus it was arranged.

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7. Then arose the seventeen tribes right readily in order to make Cellachan king. And they set up his "gairm rig" [i. e. they proclaimed him king] and gave thanks to the true, magnificent God for having found him. The following were the best of those chieftains. The slender, valiant Suilleban before the festive race of Fingin, and the sportive Ribordan before the valorous children of Donngal, and the fierce Caellaidi, and the heroic soldier Laidacan, and the bold Duinechad, and the brave Cuilen, and the battlesome Eigertach, and Ligan of daring deeds. These nobles came to Cellachan and put their hands in his hand and placed the royal diadem round his head, and their spirits were raised at the grand sight of him. For he was a king for great stature, and a brehon for eloquence, and a learned saga-man for knowledge, and a lion for daring deeds.

8. However. Cellachan addressed the clan Eogan and told them to make valiant war with him, and they said they would do it. And they said that they would advance, ten hundred men in number, to Limerick to burn it. And when they arrived, they sent word to the heroic Amlaib of Limerick, and to the clan Connra, namely to Morann, and to Magnus, and to great Lochlann, to tell them quickly to leave Limerick or to give hostages to them.

When the messengers came to the heroes of Limerick, they began to deride them, and this is what they expected, that never would Munster or even Limerick be contested against them. And they said that they would give battle.

9. When the clan Eogan heard this, Suilleban of the noble hosts addressed them, and told them to fight a brave and hardy battle against the Lochlannachs and valiantly to guard their king in this onslaught. And he said to the nobles of the Eoganachts: "Let not the clan of Cormac Cas hear of (any) conditions in your deliberations, let not clan Echach hear of weakness in your princes, but proceed together to the battle, and give your first battle valiantly in defence of your own country against the Danes, If there be defeat and rout of battle before you upon the heroes, it will be all the better for

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yourselves, and for your prosperity, and your positions. Limerick will be in your hand, and Cashel in your succession, and Munster will be in the possession of your nobles, if yours is the victory in this battle to day. And if it is not yours, I do not see land or dwelling-place left to your nobles, but only defeat on your soldiers, and destruction upon your heroes on this very day. Hence it behoves you to contest it and to fight bravely against the champions of Lochlann. And the following lay was made to urge them on.

10. Come to Limerick of the ships,
O Clan Eogan of the noble deeds!

Around the gentle Cellachan,
To Limerick of the riveted stones.

Defend your own beloved land,
O descendants of Ailill dear!
In the battle of Limerick of the swift ships.
Set Munster of the great tribes free!

Defend Cellachan valiantly,
The king of your country, the noble of your host!
Do not leave the van of battle to him
Against the usurpers!

Let the sportive Ribordan come
Before us into the hard-contested battle!
Let the valiant Caellaidi come,
Let the full-lively Ligan come!

Let Duinecadh of many colours come,
And Fogartach of the variegated arms!
Let Lannechan of the forts come
Before us into the hard, well arranged battle!

Let Donnchad, famous in song,
Come before us against the heroes of Lochlann,
And Cuilen of the hard battles,
The descendant of Eogan, who carries off fair victory!

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Let Aed, son of Coll, the friend of the clergy [or of the band of poets],
come before us to the slaughter of battle,
And Aed, the son of fair Ailginan,
Let the ready king come before us!

I myself shall come, with a hundred and fifty swords,
Before you to the great and fierce Morand,
And I shall slay for you the hero of the blades,
The festive descendant of the king of Cold Lochlann.

Arise, o handsome, valiant host,
Whose hereditary right is Munster of the great forts!

Contest Cashel eagerly
Against the sharp-bladed host of Lochlann!

Let not nimble Cennedig,

The son of Lorcan of the new-blue blades,
Hear that your fighting is weakspirited and cowardly.
O host of Cashel of the beautiful spears!

Let not Donnchad in his house hear,
The son of the gentle descendant of the warlike Caem,

Of our having been overthrown in the battle, routed ignominiously,
By the champions of Lochlann.

Seventeen dexterous tribes to you,
O son of gentle, generous Buadachan!
A champion of each bold-tribe
Of Clan Eogan is with us.

Give battle bravely,
O heroes of Munster with great pride!
Let your country be delivered from bondage
O heroes of Munster, it is you who can do it!
Come to Limerick of the ships.

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11. Then towards the battle arose the descendants of Eogan fiercely, prudently, bravely around their gentle king. around Cellachan. And there was arrayed bravely by the heroes an ever beautiful, very strong, fold (?) of battle, surrounded by standards, and a solid very thick pallisade of spears, and a strong, princely-ensigned tower of chiefs, and a skilful phalanx of blue blades, and a handsome (?), strong enclosure of linen cloth around the heroes. For the heroes had neither blue helmets nor shining coats of mail, but only elegant tunics with smooth fringes, and shields, and beautiful, finely wrought collars to protect bodies, and necks, and gentle heads.

12. Then there was arrayed by the heroes of Lochlann a solid, skilful and firm rampart of strong coats of mail, and a thick, dark stronghold of black iron, and a greenpolished, hard-sharp city of battleshields, and a strong enclosure of stout shafts around the heroic Amlaib, and around Lochlann, and Morann, and Magnus. For these were the four battle-heroes of the Lochlann champions, and four hundred accompanied each hero of them.

13. Then the valorous descendants of Eogan placed themselves at the upper end of the plain in high spirits around their gentle king Cellachan, and they put the hooks of their shields over each another, and they made "championknots" by attaching their broad belts to each other, and they arrayed the seventeen brave men who were the most noble of the high lords around their royal prince to protect him well. Great spirit arose in their king, and anger in their champions, and courage in their soldiers, and fury in their heroes, and valour in their gallant men and fierceness in their youths.

14. However, when their youths, their champions and their proud, haughty folk came to the front of the battle to throw their stones and slender arrows and pointed spears from each side of the heroes, the ground of the plain was left to the soldiers, and the battle-field to the heroes, and the place of slaughter to the veterans. And when the noble warriors of Lochlann and the soldiers of Munster arrived at the place of defence they began to smite their battle-clubs heroically and to strike their swords on each another. However this full encounter was one-sided. For the bodies and skins and hearts of the bright champions

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of Munster were quickly pierced through the fine linen garments, and their very sharp blades did not take any effect upon the Lochlannachs because of the rough solidity of their blue coats of mail, and their clubs did not maim the heroes, and the swords did not lacerate the heads because of the hardness of the helmets that protected them, and the Lochlannachs made a great havock among the Munstermen during a part of that day.

15. However when Cellachan perceived, that the soldiers were being slain, and that the heroes were being wounded, and that the champions were being maimed, and that Clan Eogan was being slaughtered, then arose his wrath, his rage, and his vigour, and he makes a royal rush, caused by fits of mighty passion, at the nobles of the Lochlannachs, while the noble descendants of the race of Eogan protect him. Cellachan reached the warlike Amlaib and made an attack on the rough mail-coat of the warrior, so that he loosened his helmet under his neck, and split his head with his hard strokes, so that the Lochlannach fell by him.

16. Then Suilleban with his 150 brave, valiant swordsmen arrived to his defence, and he made a breach of savage ferocity through the centre of the heroic battallion of the Lochlannachs. Then arose the unviolated pillar, and the unsubdued hero, and the lion unconquered until that day. namely the long-haired, high spirited Morann of the fierce people, i. e. the son of the fleet-king of Lewis, with 150 heroes who arose with him. And when the chiefs had met, they smote each another fiercely, like true foes, and with hard strength. Suilleban however planted his spear through the boss of the buckler and beneath the rim of the helmet into the hero, so that it passed quickly into the heros neck, and placed the head in the power of the battle-soldier. And he beheaded the brave man and brought the head with him to Cellachan to boast of his triumph. And the people of the Lochlannach fell in that fight.

17. Then Donnchad and brave Magnus met together in the battle. They struck off the points of their broad-grooved swords, and battered their shields into pieces with their full-heavy clubs, and wounded their bodies with their javelins. Magnus however fell by great Donnchad.

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18. Then Lochlann and Ribordan engaged in battle before Cellachan, and Lochlann inflicted very sharp, terrible wounds on Ribordan. When the hero was wounded, and the champion pierced through, and when he perceived that his arms took no

effect upon the veteran who was before him. Ribordan made a heroic rush upon Lochlann, and left his sword, and his longbladed spear, and he put in mind his sharp iron-blue mail-coat and laid dexterously hold of the lower part of the cuirass of the Lochlannach with his left hand, and gave the champion a sudden pull, so that he maimed the broad bosom of the hero, and that his bowels and entrails fell out of him. And he beheaded the champion and lifted his head in triumph. Nevertheless there fell these four valiant champions of the Lochlann heroes, and the (other) heroes left their places, and the soldiers were overthrown and made for Limerick to shut themselves quickly up there. And it was through the rear of the Lochlannachs that the nobles of Munster went into the town, so that the Lochlannachs were not able to close the gates, and the champions were killed in the houses and in the towers. They brought their wives, and children, and people in captivity to the nobles of Munster, and collected the gold, silver and various riches of the town, and brought the heads, trophies, and battle-spoils of the heroes to Cellachan, and the heads of the four who were the most noble of the Lochlannachs were exhibited to him. Therefore to testify to this the poet sang the following words in relating the slaughters and triumphs, and in enumerating those who were killed of the great Lochlannachs and those who were slain of the Munstermen in this great battle, and he said:

Valiant are you, o descendants of Eogan,
And fierce are your lions,
Noble is your king as he comes from the battle,
The heroic, triumphant Cellachan.

Valiant Suilleban of the hosts,
Son of Mael Ugra of the red arms,
After having slain the long-haired Morann
From the country of Lewis of the Norsemen.

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Valiant Donnchad, red his face,
When he killed the cheerful Magnus,
And let his fury play upon him,
So that the red-handed hero fell.

Valiant Ribordan of the quatrains,
By him fell the hero of the blades,
Morann, son of plundering Connra,
Of the "stranger tribe" [?] of Eogan of the high judgments.

By the nimble Cellachan fell
Amlaib of Limerick of the blue blades,
And thirty by wound of spears

Of his people in the great fight.
Five-hundred heroes -- hard was their fight --
Of the host of Lochlann, without full deceit,
That is the number, that was slain by you,
Of the host of Limerick of the mighty ships.

Three-hundred heroes -- it was no trifling number --
Of the heroes of Munster of the great blades,
This is the number that fell in the battle
Of our champions with bright success.

Sweet Buadachan is not to be pitied,
The descendant of Aed of the beautiful arms,
Since he left a son without deceit,
Cellachan who defends his home.
Valiant are you, o descendants of Eogan.

20. Thereupon the heroes collected the spoils, and some of them said that they should stay that night in the town and proceed the next morning to Cashel to plunder and burn it. Suilleban said to the hosts that they should go that very night to Cork, the place where their hostages and captives were, so that no news or messengers might get there before them. The champions decided on this plan and they came to Cork that night. The Danes and Black Gentiles of the town came out against them to

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fight with them. The battle was gained on the Danish Black Gentiles, and the town was wrecked by the champions, and they brought away with them their hostages from the captivity in which they were. The men of Munster were that night in Cork consuming their banquets and provisions (?) and they stayed three days in the city and then made up their mind to proceed to Cashel. When they were passing the corner of Sliab Crot, the men of Fermoy, and the Ui Cuanach, and the billeted soldiers of the Lochlannachs assembled against them, and gave them battle. And the battle was gained by the men of Munster, and 400 were killed of the billeted soldiers and their host. And of the ten hundred, who were of Clan Eogan at the battle of Limerick, no more than three hundred were alive on this day. They march on plundering each district, until they reached Thurles. The northern and the southern Eile assembled at Thurles to meet them to give them battle, and the Danes of the fortress along with them. When the Ui Luigdech and the Eoganachts heard this, they assembled to join Cellachan, with Cuilen, son of Aindiaraid, son of Dunadach, the lord of their country, and these two tribes with their champions with spears and swords, 500 in number, reached Cellachan. A battle is fought between them and the people of Ely. And they captured the king of Ely on that day, and the billeted soldiers of the Lochlannachs were slain by them, and 200 of Clan Eogan fell on that day. They plundered the

country, but did not burn the town. And they go forward to Cashel, 600 in number. Donnchad son of Caem arrived at Cashel to meet them. Cellachan addressed him and reminded him of their friendship and promised him his turn [i. e. the alternative right] of Munster and to reward him properly, and he recited the lay:

21. Welcome! bold Donnchad,
O descendant of Eogan of the wooden arms,
Do not break our sweet brotherhood,
O descendant of Ailill Olom!
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When the great Lochlannachs are against us,
O descendant of Echu of the golden diadems,
Do not debase thy own people,
O descendant of magnanimous Mug.

Doest thou know, descendant of kings of Munster,
Of the race of Cathal of the heroes,
By whom we are divided from him.
Since there is a space of time between us and then?

Aengus, son of Natfraech of your family,
After the coming of Patrick into the country.
It is through him we are parted,
O descendant of Aillill Olor.

Eochaid and great Fedlimid,
The two Sons of Aengus, 'twas a noble deed!
With them we can boast of an equal relationship,
O Donnchad of the hardfought battlespoils.

Three and ten (in descent) without deceit
There are from me to Aengus, the descendant of Eogan.
Twice five and one, it is known,
Is from you Aengus of the high forts.

Such is their family-relationship,
O Donnchad of the fair face.
Nor has it been destroyed ever since
By the noble descendants of Eogan.

Far from you is hereditary relationship
With any Lochlannach hero.
Near to you is their venomous enmity,

O descendant of sword-wielding Cathal.
The taking prisoner of your slender grandfather
By the Lochlann army at the Gap of heroes,
And the killing of your father, -- it has long been heard --,

By the Lochlann army of fierce numbers.

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Let us march together to battle.
Let us destroy them one after another!
Do not let us abandon Munster of the victories
To the Lochlann host of the full-red arms!

I shall give substantial reward
To you, o descendant of a highking of Erin!
But come with me to the battle
Against the usurpers.

A hundred swords and a hundred shields,
A hundred servants to serve the king,
A hundred helmets and a hundred steeds
To you, o descendant of kings of the Munstermen.

Do you not think it a pity, O clear Donnchad,
O descendant of beloved Ailill,
That the women of Munster should be in captivity -- without deceit --,
And that the Lochlannachs should carry off their cows?

22. Donnchad however accepted these conditions from Cellachan, and it is thus he accepted them, namely that the burden of the battle of Cashel should be left on him, and that Cellachan should not go into it. The battle was fought by Donnchad, and it was gained over the Danes, and 300 were slain there by them. They were that night in Cashel, and consumed the feasts and prepared food of the Danes and Dark-Lochlannachs. The next morning they made up their mind, namely to proceed to Port Lairge, the place where the women and families of the Lochlannachs were, and to burn the town. And they proceed to the green of Port Lairge. But on the same day Sitric son of Turgeis arrived at Port Lairge with a division of six ships and a hundred on each ship of them. But they had not reached the land when the van of the host of Munster arrived at the city. The Danes closed the gates and began to defend the town. However, it was useless for them to engage in combat with the champions; for Cellachan, and gentle

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Donnchad, and Suilleban, and Ribordan, and the quick. valiant soldiers of Munster leapt into the town. And the Danes were slaughtered in crowds by them,

and the Norsemen were cut into pieces. Sitric left the town and went on board his ship, and his wife with him. And only one hundred fugitives of them reached their ships. The race of Eogan burned the town and plundered the district. And they proceed thence to the country of the Deisi, and take hostages and pledges of Domnall son of Faelan. There was concluded a matrimonial alliance and made friendship with him, and Gormflaith. the daughter of Buadachan, was given to him. Thence they proceed into the territory of the Ui-Mic-Caille and the Ui Liathain, and took hostages from them.

And they brought the host of these territories with them into the district of the Eoganachts of Loch Lein and plundered the country. They brought these spoils with them into Muscraige, and the Eoganachts came up with them there, and the king of the Eoganachts was slain there, viz. Aed. son of Scannal, and 500 Eoganachts. They brought the same spoils with them to the two kings of Aes Isde, and took hostages from them, and they went themselves with them into the territory of West Munster, viz, to Aes Irrais. Congal, son of Annrathan, gave battle to the van of the army, and 200 were killed there. When Cellachan and the nobles of the race of Eogan reached the battle, Congal was captured by them, and a multitude of his people was slain. They plundered the district and stayed there for a fortnight. And they released Congal and took hostages from him.

23. Afterwards they went into the territory of Ciarraige and plundered the district. The inhabitants of Ciarraige and the Lochlannachs who previously had escaped from them in the battle of Limerick assembled against them and they went to them at Glenn Corbraigi. They fought with them there and made a great havock of the descendants of Eogan. But though they did so, they left the battlefield to them, and Conchubar, the king of Ciarraige, was captured by them. And their forces were greatly diminished after that battle. On that day Flannabra, son of Ciarmacan, king of Ui Conaill, assembled

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his forces to meet them to get hostages from them. But when he perceived the small number of their host, the resolution he made was to demand hostages or battle of them. But when they were about to begin the battle, then Donnchuan, son of Cennedig, arrived to join Cellachan. For he had been the night before in the house of Uainide, son of Cathal, king of Ui Cairbre, and after his arrival he began to inspect the Danes and the foreigners. At seeing him the descendants of Eogan welcomed him and told him to remember his friendship. Cellachan promised Ui Conaill to himself, if he subdued them in this battle. Donnchuan assented to this, for he thought it an evil thing to let Clan Eogan be slaughtered and reduced in numbers, and he recited the lay.

[Donnchuan] .Alone are you, o descendants of Corc.
Alas! Your bodies were cut into pieces.
And your men were stretched on their backs

In the battle of Limerick of the great ships.
It seems to us that your hosts have been slain,
O descendants of Eogan of the red arms,
And that your heroes have been defeated,
O race of Ailill Olom.

It is a pity that I have not come to the battle,
O host of Cashel of the gentle graces,
Before the Ciarraige arrived here,
And the heroic host of Lochlann.

[Cellachan]. Since thou didst not overtake us there,
O Donnchuan of the hundred helmets!
Keep from us the valiant Ui Conaill,
And overthrow their gatherings!

Remember, what they did in the North,
Mog Corb and Fiacha, who found victory,
The son of Eogan, from whom we are descended,
And the son of the fairhaired Cormac Cas.

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The slaying of Eogan and of Aed
By Mog Corb, 'twas a . . . deed!
The son of Dimchadh of the coloured weapons
And the son of the great Ath . . . [?]

Let both of us do, o gentle, pleasant one,
What the son of Cormac Cas did,
And the son of Eogan -- without deceit --,
Fiacha Muillethan the very slender.

I will do, and you, a gentle plunderer,
O descendant of Eogan of the high judgments,
What those two did without hatred,
Since it has happened to us to be but few in number.

25. Cellachan then said to Donnchuan that he should not kill the king of the Ui Conaill if he happened to fall into his power. Donnchuan gave his word that he should spare no one in battle or conflict even if he had been a friend of his before. And they went to the battle together. Flannabra, son of Ciarmacan, was captured by them, and there was made a great slaughter of his people, and the Ui Conaill were overthrown in the battle. The country was plundered by Cellachan, and they were that night in Ui Conaill. Uaithne, son of Cathal, and the Ui Cairbre, and the remnants of the Ui Conaill, assembled against them at Cromad to give them battle, and when they were about to begin the battle, then Donnchad, son of Caem, with 500 men arrived to their assistance. The battle was fought.

and the king of Ui Cairbre was slain there, and they stay that night in Cromad. The two Corcamruads and the two Corco Baiscinn assembled at Cromad to meet them, for they did not know, that Cenneidig had not a share in the battles and they sent messengers to Cellachan to demand battle of him. When Cellachan heard this he told Donnchuan to go against them and not to let them give battle to him. And he made the quatrain:

It is no wonder that the descendants of Cas
Defend the country of the green soil
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Since the Cuirc of the harbour come
To fight about the grass-green land.

26. However when Donnchad came to speak with them, the battle was stayed, and Cellachan went to Cashel. The men of Munster assembled to meet him after the expulsion of the Danes and the base Norsemen from the towns and fair fortresses. He who arrived first there was Cennedig, son of Lorcan, with the nobles of Dal Cais, and the tanist-ship of Munster and its kingship after Cellachan was given to him. They consumed the banquets of Cashel happily and calmly there, and they sent messengers to demand their tributes and taxes of the people of Ossory, viz, from Donnchad son of Cellach. For it was a long time when this tribute had not been exacted by the champions of Munster, viz, seven score and eleven years, while the territory was in the power of the Danes. The people of Ossory did not give them tribute, and because they did not give it, they plundered the country. And they gained four battles over the men of Leinster during that year, and in the fourth battle Donnchad, son of Cellach, was captured by them, and the people of Ossory gave hostages afterwards.

[[The saga has been divided into three sections for purposes of putting it up on the web. This is the end of part 1]]

[[Caithreim Ceallachan Caisil Part 2

Index to Part 2

Donnchadh, the King of Ireland, agrees to the Viking plot to kill Ceallachan because Ceallachan had not agreed to pay him tribute

Ceallachan wants to go with an army to Dublin but is dissuaded and instead goes with 80 men

Sitric tells his wife, Mor of the plan and because she is secretly in love with Ceallachan she warns him on the road to Dublin

The poem describing the meeting between Mor and Ceallachan

Ceallachan and his men are pursued by the Vikings on foot and by horse

Several of Ceallachan's men fight rear guard actions against the pursuing Vikings

Ceallachan and Donnchadh are captured, and the Vikings exhibit the heads of the slain Irish for identification

Ceallachan's poem lamenting the death of the riders of Munster
Sitric's ransom demands
Ceallachan instructs Aistrechan, son of Ailgisech, what to tell the men of Munster (2 poems)
Ceallachan tells Cennedigh to stay and defend Munster
Aistrechan returns to Munster and describes the situation
Donnchad, the son of Caem, agrees to a rescue expedition and recites Ceallachan's 15 battles
The expedition is organized
Donnchad is made the leader of the expedition
The route of the hosting
Muirchertach son of Airnelach, the king of Cenel Conaill, warns the Vikings to move Ceallachan to Dundalk
The Battle of Armagh
Donnchadh is told that Ceallachan was moved to Dundalk
The army goes to Dundalk and Sitric binds Ceallachan and Donnchuan, the son of Cennetig to the mast
Donnchadh reproaches Sitric (poem)
Ceallachan addresses Donnchadh and sees the approaching Munster fleet (poem)
Duinechad, son of Fiangus, arranges the order of battle
The Battle at Dundalk Harbor
Failbe leaps on to Sitric's ship and cuts Ceallachan loose]]

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For Cellachan had not consented to pay tax or tribute to him. The king of Erin agreed with this plan, and they sent messengers to Cellachan.

28. Cellachan asked the nobles of Munster what he should do in that matter, and they told him to go there. "Let us assemble an army", said Cellachan, and "let us proceed in battle-array to Ath Cliath. Let us not go into the fortress there, but let yonder woman be sent out to us." "That is not what is right", said Cenneidig, "but go there with 80 sons of kings, and we shall continue to stay at Cashel. For we shall not leave Munster unprotected, and there is not in Erin a fortress of the Lochlannachs, that we shall not reach, if you are betrayed." They did so, and Cellachan went there with 80 princes.

29. That night there happened to be a discourse between Sitric, the son of Turgeis, and his wife. And his wife asked him why he gave his sister to Cellachan, as it was he who had destroyed the Lochlannachs. He answered that it was not out of kindness to him, but in order to capture himself and to slay his people. The woman arose early the next morning, and put a bondmaid's dress round her. For this discourse which she had heard was grievous to her as she herself greatly loved Cellachan. She left the town, and came upon the road where she supposed that the Munstermen would come. And as she stayed there she beheld Cellachan approaching, and the woman told this news to him. Cellachan asked her who she herself was. "Mor, daughter of Aed, son of Echu, am I," said the woman, "daughter of the king of the Islands of the Foreigners (i. e. the Hebrides), and

my husband is Sitric, son of Turgeis, of the Fair Lochlannachs. And I fell in love with you the day I saw you at Port Lairge." And she recited the song; but there is nothing in this song but a repetition of the story. 1)

[[Footnote 1; appearing at the bottom of pages 75-77]]

1) The poem is found in full in the papercopies of the Royal Irish Academy (23 / H.I. a., p. 68) and of Egerton 106, p. 89. The text being very corrupt, it is impossible, with this as well as with the following poems to give a correct translation

"I have news for you, O bold hero,
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O descendant of Ailill Olom,
O king of Munster of the swift ships,
O Cellachan of the lovely cups.

If you come to Ath Cliath,
O king to whom the raven is truly grateful,
You will not come back again,
O king of Munster of the great forts.

They have made a cruel plot,
The children of Turgeis, south and north,
In Ath Cliath of the battle-hurdles,
With Donnchad of the princely countenance.

To kill you, he said meaningly,
The man from the house of the royal three (i. e. Tara),
And that he would come with you among the Foreigners,
From the hosts of your lands and your countries.

I heard the speech of my husband,
O man, for whom poems are made,
And the secret of the champion of white wrists,
O king of Munster of the great spears."
Cellachan. "What is this? Who are you, O sweet-voiced woman,
O proud, beautiful maiden?
Who is your father, who is your husband"
Said the king of Munster of the great spears.

"Mor is my name in each good town,
The daughter of Aed of fair cheeks,
Sitric is my husband in every battle,
The son of Turgeis of the mighty spoils.

I fell in love with your red face,

In Port Lairge on the battle-field,
With your valour as you charged through the battalions, With your size among
the Munstermen.

If you go eastwards on expedition,
O high-king, to whom I have given love,
You will get wound and woe,
We have not had, but sad stories to tell.

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30. Cellachan asked his men what they should do. This is, what they said, that they should not go into the town. but avenge themselves on the fields and great plains, and take the woman with them, as far as they went.

When the Norsemen perceived this, they ordered those who were in the town to pursue them, both foot and horse. And Cellachan and his princes had not gone far, when the van of the Norsemen overtook them.

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31. Then Aed, the son of Domnall the descendant of Faelan, and Domnall the descendant of Niall of Magh Dachonn said: "We are here twenty men of the Deisi, and let us remain behind the rest and avenge ourselves, before the body of the host overtakes us" And they stopped and slew twenty heroes of the Norsemen, and only five of them came back to their people alive.

32. Then Aed, son of Donnchad son of Caem, and Spelan, son of Suilleban, and Muirchertach son of Muirchertach, remained behind, and killed twenty men, and only three of them returned to their people alive.

33. Then Aengus, son of Assid, and Donnchad, son of Conchubar, and Fiangal son of Congal remained behind, and killed twenty men. But they were themselves slain there.

34. Then Cudub, son of Failbe, and Donnchad, son of Muirchertach, and Finn, son of Eterscel, remained behind, and they slew a multitude of the Lochlannachs, but were themselves slain.

35. Then an overwhelming number of the Norse champions pressed upon the champions of Munster. Cellachan and Donnchuan were captured by them, and brought to Ath Cliath. And when they reached the green of the town. Cellachan saw a man coming towards him, with a

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head in one hand and spoils in his other hand. And he asked Cellachan whose head it was. "That is the head of Aed, son of Donnchad son of Caem" said Cellachan, "and the descendants of Echu will lament that head", said he.

36. He saw another man coming towards him with a head in his hand. And he asked Cellachan, whose it was. "The head of Spelan, the son of Suilleban", said Cellachan, "and the noble queens of Cashel will lament that head".

37. He saw another man coming towards him, with a head in his hand, and he asked whose it was. "I regret to have brought the man to whom this head belongs with me", said Cellachan, "even Aengus, the son of Assid, and the descendants of Carthinn Finn will lament that head."

38. He saw another man coming towards him and he asked the same question of Cellachan. "That is the head of Aed son of Domnall the descendant of Faelan", said he, "and this head will be lamented among the Deisie".

39. Then he saw another man coming towards him, and he asked, whose was the head that was in his hand. "It is the head of Muirchertach, son of Muirchertach, and the women of Muscraige will lament that head."

40. Then he saw another man coming towards him, and he asked him whose head this was, He said: "The head of Donnchad, son of Conchubar, is that, even the son of the king of Ciarraige Luachra, and the descendants of Cer will lament that head," said Cellachan.

41. Then he saw three men coming towards him, with three heads in their hands, and they asked Cellachan, whose they were. "The heads of the three princes of Corcoduibne", said he, "namely Cudub, son of Failbe, and Aed, son of Segda, and Fiangal, son of Congal, and the descendants of Corc, son of Cairbre, will lament those heads," said Cellachan.

42. Then he saw another man coming towards him, and he asked him the same question. "This is the head of Donn-chad, son of Muirchertach", said he, "even the son of the king of the Eoganachts, and the descendants of Cairbre the Pict will lament that head. And that other

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head is the head of Finn son of Eterscel, and the descendants of Lugaid will lament that head. But do not show them to me henceforward, for I cannot endure to look at them. And although I have not been wounded by you, I am killed through the wounds of yonder men. And it is a pity that I have not found death in their company." And he recited lay:

"Alas for the heads without bodies". 1)

[[Footnote at the bottom of pages 79-81]]

1) The poem is found in full in 23 / H. I. a. p. 69 f., and in Egerton 106, p. 60 f., from which I print the following translation.

Alas for the heads without bodies,
For whom dark tears will be shed.
It was no folly, although the men were valiant.
The horsemen of the race of Eogan will fall.

Aed, son of Donnchad is without a head,
Alas for the blood upon his slender side!
The fair descendant of wound-dealing Ua Cathail,
Of the bright-weaponed champion of the rough spears.

The head of Suibhne you have brought with you,
O host of the Foreigners,
[The head of] the son of Suilleban, who reddens spears. Alas for the
descendant of Maelughra!

Sad to me the head with the braided hair
Of Muirchertach, son of Muirchertach,
That the fair and valiant one,
Is plainly in the power of the Lochlannachs.

I repent that he came with me,
the champion whom I see without head.
He was a gentle hero of a royal race,
Aengus the Young, son of Assid.

A head to whom women gave love.
The head of the brave son of the king of the Deisi.
His side is in sore stress from spears --
Aed, son of Domnall, the descendant of Faelan.

Fiangal, son of Conall of the raids.
The son of the chieftain of the high judgments,
the women of the Foreigners will be lamenting him,
although his head is exhibited in triumph.

There was many a theme of a good story
About Finn, the son of Eterscel.
Many were the men whom he attacked with spears,
He whose head is that in your hand.

Sad to me that his head should be exhibited,
The brave son of the king of Magh Coinchinn.
It was a success their fight with spear,
The brave man, Aed son of Segda.

The head of Donnchad which you have brought with you,
O host of the Foreigners,
There will be darkness upon my eyes,
Because of the death of the son of Muirchertach.

Alas for the head opposite you,
Of Donnchad, son of Conchubar!
A more heroic in powerful slaughter there has not been
Than the son of the king of Ciarraige Luachra.

A triumph for you is the slaying of the head
Of the brave son of the beautiful Ribardan.
Many were the graves from the hands of his father
Throughout Munster of the great fights.

Grievous to me the head in your hand,
The head of Spelan, the grandson of Suilleban.
No sadder to me the other head,
The head of Domnall, the descendant of yellow Niall.

Through the great number that has been exhibited to me.
Of the heads of the youths of Munster,
Though I am alive, it has been a torture to me,
I cannot enumerate them further.

If you keep me in fetters,
Since the riders of Munster are no more,
It is a pity that I did not find my death there.
Among the noble sons of the race of Eogan.

Let me be put to death.
And Donnchuan along with me.
Though it is a shame, my time has come to an end
To the host of Munster it is sad.

'Tis a pity that Mor has not come with me,
The Kings daughter of the Islands of the White Foreigners.
That I should be brought eastward,
'Tis not to you it is sad.

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43. Then Sitric asked Cellachan, whether the Munstermen would ransom him. "What is the ransom"? said Cellachan. "A ransom, which they are not able to obtain, viz. for the fifteen battles which you gained over us an eric for each man who was slain in them, and for the twelve hundred men who were slain by Olchobar, the son of Cinaed, in the battle of Sciach Nechtain together

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with Thomar the earl, an eric for each man of them, and spoils for spoils. Cork, Limerick, Port Lairge and Cashel to be our fortresses, as they were in our possession before. A son of each king and of every chieftain in Munster to be given to us as

pledges for this. This is what Cellachan replied: "Let me and Donnchuan have

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a conference with Aistrechan son of Ailgisech in order that we may send him to tell these conditions, and let it be told us in what place you will be found, if they are obtained for you. "In Armagh", said Sitric, "for it is thither you will be brought to be guarded." They were allowed to hold a conference, and Cellachan told Aistrechan to relate these conditions to the men of Munster, and he recited the lay:

"Relate, o splendid Aistrechan 1),
[To the men of Munster and to their wives
That their king is in Ath Cliath,
With Sitric of the hundred curved shields.

Sitric will carry with him over the sea
Eastwards to Lochlann of the dark ships
Their cups and their curved drinking-horns,
Their rings and their chess-boards.

Unless they bring everything to him.
Shields and ornamented swords,
To be carried by Sitric across the sea
For the sake of Cellachan of the pallisade.

The hostages of Munster, the tribute of her lands.
Shall come together to Ath Cliath,
A son of every chieftain and of every king
Throughout Munster of the great deeds.

Cork, and Limerick of ships,
and Port Lairge of full waves,
along with Cashel of the dykes
To Sitric the swift Norseman.

The battle of Sciach Nechtain valiantly
Famous Olchobar has gained,
wherein twelve hundred of the Norseman
were put to a swift death.

[[Footnote]] 1) Only the first line of the poem is found in the Book of
Lismore. the rest
between brackets -- is translated from 23/H.I.a., p. 70--71.

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Let them be brought to Sitric of the hosts,
Since he has perjured himself
To fulfill this henceforth
With Eric, king of the Islands (i. e. the Hebrides).

Donnchad in the fetters of the Foreigners,
the son of Cellachan of the handsome blades,
The hostages of Munster with him splendidly,
Both chieftain and strong king.

This is what he says to us,

The son of Turgeis with great fierceness,
Unless they give this now.
He will kill the high-king.
Relate, etc.]

46. And, O Aistrechan, say to the men of Munster not to give those gifts. But let them defend the territory of Munster, and let them make Cennedig son of Lorcan king, and tell them to remember the words they said the day I left Cashel, and let them defend us by the help of blades and armour. And say to the descendants of Corc to make a brave fight. Tell Donnchad son of Caem to come to seek us at Armagh. And let the descendants of Eogan come there before everybody, and let every chieftain bring the nobles of his territory and his land with him. Let Donnchad, son of Caem, son of Art, son of Cathal, come there at the head of the descendants of Echu. And let Maelfothartaigh, son of Flann, come. Let Suilleban, the son of Maelugra, come at the head of the descendants of Fingin. Let Donnchad, son of Duinechad son of Fianguis, come there together with Ribardan son of Assid, and Donnchad son of Domnall, and Donnchad son of Lorcan, and Domnall son of Cathal, and Eigirtach son of Cormac, and Cu-calma, son of Cennfaelad. Let Cuilen, son of Aindiarrad come, and let him bring the descendants of Failbe with him. Let Muirchertach son of Murchad come. Let Fogartach son of Fianamail come, and the nobles of Ui-Muiredhaigh along with him. Let Domnall, son of Diarmaid, and Fiana son of Feicine come there. Let Cuanachtach son

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of Cu-gan-mathair come there and bring the Eoganachts of East Cliu with him. Let Anmchad, son of Dunchad, come there. Let Flannabra, son of Airindan son of Flannabra. come there and bring the Ui Conaill with him. Let Ceithernach, son of Ceilechar son of Coman, come there. Let Cennfaelad, son of Dubdaboirenn, come there and bring the Ui-Cairbre with him. And he recited the lay:

"Tell the descendants of Eogan,
The hospitable host,
That their high-king is being carried northwards,
Till he come to Lochlann of the good ships.

Tell all Eoghanachts,
Both king and nobleman,
that I am being carried by Sitric across the sea,
Eastward to Lochlann of the brown fleet.

Unless the hosts come hither
Northward at the end of one month,
Until they reach molodious Armagh.
They will not find us in Erin.

Let the descendants of Corc be assembled,
The Eoganachts of Cashel of the pleasant dykes,

Before they carry away over the sea
Their valiant triumphant king.

Let the descendants of warlike Eogan come
To seek their king with a great vow,
From the wave of Cliodhna of the heavy storms
To the river of the Two Kine.

Donnchad son of Caem of the roads of spoil,
the son of the highking of the noble young steeds,
Let him bring to the army without reproach
The descendants of generous valiant Echu.

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Let Donnchad the Dun come there,
And Suilleban of the radiant eye,
Along with nimble Duinechan,
And Eigertach together with them.

Let sportive Ribardan come,
(And) his valiant, victorious host.
Let the people of the house of the king come with you,
Four hundred noble men.

The race of Echu and of generous Fingin,
Let them all come together,
Let them come to the valiant host,
The descendants of Mac Caille and those of Liathan.

Let the Ui Conaill and the Ui Cairbre the fierce
Assemble the number of their host,
Let the Ui Cormaic come from the sea
In defence of Cellachan of the pallisade.

Proceed to fair Dun Bailc
Where are -- -- -- artists of the lovely hair.
And bring with you from Loch Lein
The two Eoganachts with one will.

Tell from me brave Fergal
To make a strong valiant gathering,
before Cellachan is carried off
in ship eastward out of Erin." 1)

46. "And when you have done speaking to the descendants of Eogan and mustering them in one place, proceed forward to the king of Dal Cais", said Cellachan, "namely to Cennedig son of Lorcan, and tell him to remain and defend the territory of Munster, lest the Connaughtmen plunder it in battle. And tell the men of Uaithne and the men of Ormond to come to this gathering. Proceed

[[Footnote]] 1) Only the first line of this poem is found in the Book of Lismore; the rest is translated from a paper-copy in the Royal Irish Academy) 23/H.I.a.

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to the people of Ely and tell them to remain defending the territory of Munster, and tell their lord, even Cerbhall, son of Dublaidh, son of Cennamhan, that we are brothers of Ailill (i. e. that we are closely related to the race of Ailill Olom). Proceed to the descendants of Connla, namely to the hosts of Ossory, and tell them to protect Munster from Bladhma southwards to the sea and to protect Ely as far as Bladhma, as it has always been done. Proceed to the hosts of the Deisi, and let them and the inhabitants of Muscraige come into this great hosting. And when you have finished addressing Cennedig and the descendants of Eogan, go for me to the chieftains of my fleet and bring them with you to Sruth-na-Maeile, and if I am carried away from Erin, let the men of Munster take their ships to follow me. For it is not more proper for the champions of Lochlann to show valour in contesting our country than it is for the soldiers of Munster to act bravely in defence of their own country and in revenging ourselves upon them. Go first to the three kings of Corcolaighde, to Flann, to Eiterscel, and to Cobthach, and to Dubdaboirenn, the king of Western Ui-Echach. Go to Seghdha, to Failbhe, and to Conghal, the three kings of Corcoduibhne. Go to Conchobar, the son of Bethach, the king of Ciarraige Luachra, to Domnall and to Baiscinn, the two kings of Corcobaiscinn, and to Conchobar and Lochlann, the two kings of Corcomruadh, and let them bring with them ten ships from each cantred, for that is the full muster of our own fleet.

47. After this Aistrechan proceeded to Cashel, where the champions of Munster were, and he told them these news, namely that Cellachan and Donnchuan were captured, and that the 80 men who had accompanied them were slain. They were sorrowful, heavy in mind and sad on that account, when they heard that Cellachan their noble king was captured and their young men slain. Aistrechan addressed them and related the admonitions Cellachan had given in his song, namely to redeem him by the power of blades, and armour, and broad shields, and not to allow Munster to be put into slavery or servitude by Danes or ignoble Norsemen. He told them

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to remember the promise they had made the day Cellachan left them, and he told them that Cellachan was being carried to Armagh to be there in close custody. When Donnchad, the son of Caem, heard those words, he told the clan of Cormac Cas to form an alliance, and the descendants of Eogan to go in search of their king, and the clan of Cairbre to arise, and the clan of Lugaid to show full valour, and the descendants of Fergus to show

true nobility, and the descendants of Cellachan to show devotion, and the descendants of Tadg to make a powerful defence, and the descendants of Fiachu Suigde muster in full. "Indeed", said Donnchad, "if it were your brave men and your chieftains who were in the power of the Lochlannachs, Cellachan would collect an army in search of you and give battles to rescue you. For he has fought fifteen battles with the Danes in your defence, viz. the first of these battles at Limerick, the second battle at Corc, the third battle at Sliab Crot, the fourth at Thurles, the fifth at Cashel, the sixth at Port Lairge, the seventh at Muscraighe, the eighth at Ard Osraighe, the ninth at Glenn Corbraighe, the tenth at Senguala Cladard of Ui Conaill, the eleventh at Cromad, and four battles against the men of Leinster and Ossory. And all this will be concealed by the champions of Lochlann if Cellachan goes with them without being rescued.

48. Then they deliberated in council how to begin that hosting, and they settled to be a fortnight from that day at Magh Adhar, those of them who were an land, and those of them who were on sea to be at Bel Atha Laighin. Well, the day they had promised that their hosts should be at these places, they were there, as they had promised. This was the number that came to Magh Adhar, namely four battalions of equal size. And Cennedig, son of Lorcan, and the Dalcassian nobles also arrived there, and Cennedig entertained them that night.

49. When they arose the next morning, Cennedig said that he would go with them. Donnchad said that they would not let him go with them under any conditions. "For it is in search of your king and for his defence that we go, and we will not take you with us, but

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remain and protect the country. " If that is so", said Cenneidig, "since I shall not myself go there, I shall send two thousand men with you, and I myself shall remain with the same number to defend Munster, and I shall send my three brothers with you. He told a young nobleman of his people to go to seek his brothers, and he said to him: "Let Coscrach, and Lonngarcan, and Congalach come, with two-thousand men. Let Assid. son of Assid, come, and 500 of the descendants of Cairthenn along with him. Let Deghadh, son of Domnail, son of Donn, come and 500 of the men of Ely with him. And I know, said Cennedig, a thing which, I expect, will cause you to be defeated, namely that you have no king to lead you, who might give you counsel and contest the battlefield for you. And since there is none, let Donnchad, son of Caem, be made king by you, and if Cellachan is rescued, let his kingship be given to him. Cennedig put his hand in the hand of Donnchad in presence of the men of Munster, and they did so all after him.

50. Cennedig began to tell Donnchad to act bravely and to relate to him, how many kings there were of his family, who had obtained the kingship of Munster before him, namely Airtri, and Cathal, and Finguine, and Cathal, and Cu-gan-mathair, and Cathal, and Aed, and Flann, and Cairbre, and Crimthan, and Eochaid, and Aengus son of Natfraech, from whom the nobles branched off, so that from Aengus to Donnchad there were eleven kings, who obtained the kingship of

Munster, and the length of their reigns was 52 years, and in order to verify this the historian has made the following song:

"Enjoy thy noble kingships, etc.

51. After that they marched forward in their arranged battallions, and their fleet set out the same day. The place, where their host was that night, was in Ath-na-Righ. They went next morning to Sliab Cain, and set up huts and open sheds. But although the rain fell heavily, nobody was heard complaining, so great was their eagerness to reach the Lochlannachs.

52. They sent out foragers as far as the Muaidh, and spoils were collected by them to be brought to their camp.

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While they were there, they saw a host coming towards them. Ten hundreds was their number. And they were arranged in the following way. One man was right in front of them. They asked, who he was, and who were the host. "A host of Munstermen", answered he, "but the Munstermen do not know that they belong to them, namely the Dealbhna, the Gailinga, and the Luighne, of the descendants of Tadg, son of Cian. And there are three valiant chiefs leading them, viz. Aed son of Dualascach, and the Gailinga around him, and the Luighne around Diarmuid son of Finnachta, and the Dealbna around Donnchadh son of Maeldomnaill. And this is their number, five hundred with armour and five hundred without armour." They encamped besides the Dalcassians, and they stayed there that night happily and peacefully.

53. They arose early the next morning, and crossed Esdara, and the bright little bridge of Matra, and the ancient streams of the Sligeach, their right hand towards the windycold Ben Gulban. They crossed the Dubh and the Drobais, and crossed the verdant appleblossomed Magh Ene, and came to royal Ess Ruaid. They sent foragers eastwards across Ath Senadh, and collected the spoils of Crich Conaill from the east and brought them to their camp. Muirchertach son of Airnelach, the king of Cenel Conaill, pursued them and was demanding his spoils from them. Donnchadh replied that he would not restore them, before the host had been satisfied from them. "But we shall not take with us the least of our leavings; for it will not be a country without cattle to which we shall come." Muirchertach however returned northwards before them, and sent messengers to Armagh to tell the Norsemen that they were approaching towards them, and to tell the children of Turgeis to bring Cellachan to Dundalk.

When the children of Turgeis heard this, they left the town with the nine earls who had been around Cellachan when he was taken prisoner at Ath Cliath. But the Norsemen of the town itself remained there, namely Lulach, and Amlaibh, and Lagmann, and Turcaill, and Gilla Ciarain, son of Henruc the old king, and Oitir the Black. And their number was, 700 and an arranged battallion.

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54. As to the men of Munster, they arrived at the southern side of Armagh. Donnchadh then told them to take their battle apparel, "and let four battallions of us attack the fortress. Let the Dal Cais, and the Gailinga, and the Dealbhna, and the Luighne approach Armagh from the west. Let the Ui Conaill, and the Ui

Cairbre, and the Ui Meic Cailli, and the Ui Liathain go from the north into the town. Let the Deisi go to the southern side. I myself, and the Eoghanachts, i. e. the Eoghanachts of Cashel, and the Eoghanachts of Aine, and the Eoghanachts of Glennamain, and the Eoghanachts of Cliu, and the Eoghanachts of Durlus, and the Eoghanachts of Loch Lein, and the Eoghanachts of Rathlinn shall come to the eastern side. Let the battallion of the Muscraighe, the Uaithne the Fir Maige, and the Ui Cuanach remain stationary. For a battle without a check is not common. And we do not know whether we or a part of our people shall be routed, and if that should happen, they will know the way in which they may escape."

They did so, and marched forward to the town, as Donnchadh had instructed them.

55. As to the Danes of the fortress, they assembled in one place. Lagmann addressed the champions, and this is what he said: "We are not sufficient in number to cope with them, as they do not come from one side. But let us attack one battallion of them, and give battle to them. And if a part of them is routed, it is likely that they will be so all of them. That advice was adopted by them, and they arranged themselves into a glittering, deathbringing circle of combatants. Then they attacked the battallion nearest to them, namely the battallion of the Deisi. There was fought a hard, stubborn battle between them, so that soldiers were destroyed and champions wounded by them, and skins were lacerated. Nevertheless the nobles of the Norsemen fell, and the Norse heroes were forcibly driven from the battlefield northward through the centre of Armagh, until they met the battallion of the Ui Cairbre who came bending their standards and battleflags against them from the north, so that the Norsemen were turned westward in full derout, until the battailion of the Dal Cais

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and the Gailinga. and the Dealbhna, and the Luighne met them, coming against them from the west, so that they were turned back eastward, quickly, perilously, and through sharp wounding. until the battallion of Clan Eoghan came against them, so that there was opened a brave, highspirited breach in the close phalanx like a very large court, and the Eoghanachts then dexterously carried out a firm, compact flank-movement round them, until they got the stream of those rough Lochlannachs into that passage and into that fold. Then the breach was eagerly and very strongly closed behind them, and the champions were slaughtered, so that they did not find any opening or escape from their kings, but fell like heavy, deadly thunder on that battle-held. It is then, that the van of the Eoghanachts destroyed the people (?) who escaped from them. When Donnchadh saw that the battallions were intermingled, he ordered them all to separate and to stop. They did so, and entered the town, and the town was in their power that night. But they got no news of Cellachan.

56. They arose next morning, and went to the battlefield, and collected the bodies of their people into one place, and the heads of the Lochlannachs, and they placed the heads upon spikes. Donnchadh son of Caem then asked if there was any Gael in the town from whom he might get news of Cellachan. A man in the town answered him, and said that his origin was from the clans of the Gael. Donnchadh asked who he was.

57. (He answered): "It is I who was chief prophet of Armagh, before the Lochlannachs arrived; but now I am doorkeeper here." "Have you any news of the king of Munster?" said Donnchadh. "I have", said he. "The night you were at Ess Ruaid, there came messengers from the king of Cenel Conaill to this town to tell news of you. And Cellachan and the ten earls who were around him, when he was captured, were removed to Dundalk, the place where their ships are." "Let us march after them !" said Donnchadh, "for we shall not leave a Norse stronghold in Ireland which we shall not reach, in fulfilment of our word."

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58. They went forward in arranged battallions to Sliab Fuait and to Fid Conaill, and to Magh Murthemne and straight to Dundalk. But the Lochlannachs went away from them in their ships, and they themselves went to the seashore. And the ship that was next to them was the ship of Sitric son of Turgeis, and it was in that ship that Cellachan was. Donnchadh asked them if they might get Cellachan for a ransom. Sitric pledged his word that he should never be given up, unless they brought back to him all who were slain in the fifteen battles which Cellachan had fought, and all who were slain in the battle of Armagh. When Donnchadh heard this he began to reproach them, and he said that they had not captured Cellachan in battle or open fight, but by lying and open perjury. And he said that after this he would not trust any oath of the Norse. "Give honour to Cellachan in the presence of the men of Munster!"

said Sitric, "let him even be bound to the mast! For he shall not be without pain in honour of them." Thus it was done. "The women of Munster will lament this" said Donnchadh, "and your own wife will lament it, O Sitric. And there is not among you a man to carry out that cruelty but has been spared by his sword and his fight." Donnchuan the son of Cennetig was likewise lifted up in the ship of the son of the king of Fuarlochlan. But Donnchadh said, that he would rather prefer to have a fair fight with them, and he recited the lay: 1)

"O Sitric, who flees over the sea,
Stay to converse with us!
Since we cannot, O dark man,
Follow you out on the open sea.

You pledged your word in the south,
O Norseman of the azure blades,
To Cellachan of the fair hair,
That you would not destroy him in Erin.

1) Only the first line of the poem is translated from the Book of Lismore, the rest is translated from 23/H.I.a., p.80 f.

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You pledged a false word, O man,
That if the champion were destroyed by you,
Nobody after you should trust
The oath of a Norseman.

The women of Munster will lament,
If Cellachan comes to harm.
Their loud weeping will not be gentle,
From Uighne to the fort of Eochar-mag.

If Gormflaith of the white hands hears,
The daughter of Buadachan of the banquets,
Her outcry will not be gentle, The good wife of Domnall, the descendant of
Faelan.

If the death of Cellachan of the sharp weapons
Is related to your own wife,
Mor of the soft eyes will lament him,
The daughter of the king of the Islands of the Fair Foreigners

Well has curly Cellachan deserved
Of you that you should not let him out!
Often with the feet of his ships
He has followed the Norse heroes.

There is not among you without death
A warrior, but has been spared by his sword,
Who has fled through cowardice without strength.
In dread or in panic from the high-king.

Every reward, which a man may choose,
The king of Cashel of the pleasant banquets has given,

'Tis from the wealth of the Norse he gave it
To the host of Munster, O Sitric."

59. Then Cellachan said: "It is not the revenge you will take upon me, that is
to be lamented. For I give you my word that I feel more sorry that Cashel is
without a

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successor of the descendants of Eoghan than because I myself am in this torture.
And my benediction upon the Dal Cais, as a reward because they have come to my
help." After this Cellachan lifted his head and said: "O Donnchadh, has a fleet
set out with you?" "It has", said Donnchadh. "I see them" said Cellachan, and he
said the lay.

60. "O Donnchadh, who darkens the spear,
Do not reproach the Norse heroes!
They have not destroyed us till now,
In fulfilment of their truth.

The word Sitric gave in the south,

It is that which is still helping us.
It is because of that I am taken eastwards
To be destroyed in Norway.

It is a greater sorrow upon my mind,
Than to be in great torture
Not to be able to protect Cashel for you.
O noble descendants of the race of Eogan.

To me has ever been attributed
What you did both east and west.
To yourself it shall now be attributed.
Show bravery without me!

A king worthy of Cashel,
A match for the splendid Munsterman,
Shall help you out of every need: --
Let Cenneidigh be made king by you!

My benediction -- the cause is true --
Upon the Dal Cais who excel the rest!
Bravely they have come hither
to fulfil their brotherhood.

You have come on a warlike hosting,
O valorous descendants of Eogan,
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Through the province of Medb northward;
Great was the courage of the noble host.

When you crossed Assaroe,
There came messengers northward,
From Muirchertach -- a great deed --,
From the high-king of Cenel Conaill.

Although we left Armagh,
We left there a full battalion
Of champions of Norse heroes
For the Gaels to destroy them.

Thanks to God that he has heard it,
O valorous host of Munster,
That the hue of every spear was reddened
Yesterday in the battle of Armagh.

It is sweet to see you to-day,
O valiant host of Munster,
Your travelled faces without stain
Upon the lawn of Dundalk.

I see what your champions do not see,
Since I am at the mast of the ship,
A fleet that will not flee to the sea;
It is a place of watching where I am.

Gentle royal nobles of Western Munster,
Beloved the fleet that has not been shown,
It they have set out from home,
It is they I see, O Donnchadh.
O Donnchadh, who
darkens the spear."

61. Then the Munstermen raised their heads and lifted their nobles eyes, and they saw the harbour being filled with ships and swift barks, and 'tis they who were there, the fleet of the men of Munster. Sitric asked who they were, and Donnchadh told their names. "It would be better for us", said Sitric, "if we got to know which of those

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yonder will undertake to check us in battle to-day, and who are the chiefs of those who are there." Duinechad, son of Fiangus, said that if he got a boat to man and permission to go and to come, that he would go and get knowledge of these news on behalf of Sitric. He got what he asked.

62. Duinechad went to the place where the fleet was, and asked news of them, and told them news of the men of Munster at Armagh, and he related that Cellachan was in the ship of Sitric, bound to the mast. "But" continued Duinechad, "you said, that when all your hosts were assembled you would have a sufficient number to give battle for us. And it would be a shame for you now to let your chieftain and your lord be taken away from you to the sea, since you have followed him to the waves."

63. "We have given our word", said they, "that if the Munstermen and the Norsemen were joined together, we would not let Cellachan be taken away by them without giving them battle." "If that is so", said Duinechad, "then tell me which of the Lochlann heroes you will choose to match yourselves against? And these are they: Lochlannach of the Blades, and the handsome (?) Lochlannach, and Old Amlaib, the three guardians of Cork." "Let them be given to us", said the three kings of Corcauibne, namely Flann, and Cobthach. and Edirscel." For it is to us that they have given cause after coming to Inis Clere, when they carried off our women and youths in captivity. And we have not overtaken them to avenge ourselves upon them, but we shall take them in hand to-day." Which of you", said Duinechad, "will undertake to fight against Lenn-Turmun of the Journey?" "Let him be left to me", said Dubdaboirenn, the king of Westem Ui Echach, "for he has

slain a good son of mine", (viz. Aedh, the son of Dubdaboirenn). "Which of you", said Duinechad, "will undertake to fight against the three sons of Turgeis, namely Sitric, and Tor and Magnus? And it is in their ship Cellachan is." "Let them be left to us", said Segda, and Failbe, and Congal, for they went to Scelig Michil and devastated the country. But we shall take them in hand for our share to-day."

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64. "Another reason" said Failbe, "is that we have given our word that there shall not be on sea or on land a place where we see them that we shall not reach to attack them." "Which of you", said Duinechad, "will engage the son of the king of Fair Lochlann?" "Let him be left to me", said Conchubar, king of Ciarraige Luachra, "for he has burned Ard Fothaig Brenaind. But I shall avenge that upon him to-day." "Who will engage in battle with Lenn Turmun na Pers (i. e. of the Berserks)?" said Duinechad. "Let him be left to me", said Diarmaid and Baiscinn, the two kings of Corcobaiscinn. "For they have plundered Inis Cathaig, and we have not overtaken them before to-day." "Who will engage in battle with the king of Cold Lochlarin?" said Duinechad. "It is in his ship that Donnchuan is, and he bound fast." "Let him be left to us" said the two kings of Corcamruadh, "for they went to Arann, and it was plundered by them, and we shall avenge it upon them to-day."

65. "How shall the ships recognise each another?" said Duinechad. "For the shields and ensigns you have are not those that are known to them." That is easy", said Failbe the Fair, "for they know the situation of our territories belonging to our houses, namely Corcolaighdi furthest to the south, and the Ui Echach next to them. Corcoduibne next to them. Ciarraige next to them. Corcobaiscinn next to Ciarraige. Corcamruaid next to Corcobaiscinn. And let us arrange our fleet according to our lands, and let them come to meet us." Duinechad [then] went to the Norse fleet, and related those answers to the children of Turgeis. "This has fallen out prettily", said Sitric, for these are the very opponents we have chosen." Duinechad went ashore and told the Munstermen of these engagements. And the sagaman said the lay.

Relate, O Duinechad the Dun, [etc.] 1)

To us, who are they, the couples

[[Footnote]] 1) The poem is found in full in 23/H.I.a., p. 80 f., whence I translate the whole.

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Which they have chosen, the twelve chieftains

From western Munster of the great riches.

Name each brave Norseman

Whom every single man of them has chosen,

And each man of those whom they have taken upon themselves.

Of the Norsmen in the quick fight!

Eiderscel yonder has chosen

From among you Lochlann of the blades.
Cobthach and Flann of Fal have promised
To beat off the other couple.

Failbhe [will go] against Sitric of the hosts,
Segh[dh]a against redhaired Maghnus,
Conall against Tor over the wave,
The (?) Ciarraige against Fair Lochlann.

Conchobhar against noble Ilbrec,
The king of Ciarraige of the rough sword.
And the Corcobaiscinn from the wave
Against the Berserks of the two strong Tormuns.

[To fight with] the Cold Norsemen of the harbour
The two Corcamruadhs have undertaken.
These are, as we think manifest,
The full number of the engagements made."

67. However, when those redarmed chiefs of Western Erin, namely the powerful, very brave, noble clans, arrived from the whitebodied wave of Cliodhna in the south to the ever pleasant harbour of Traigh Baili in pursuit of their champion and their lord, and to fight for their heroic king and deliver him from the strait in which he was, when they saw him bound and fettered to the mast of the Norse ship, the senses, and feelings, and thoughts of the heroes underwent a change, their aspect became troubled, their colour changed, their looks became threatening, and their lips grew pale. And to defend Cellachan there was bravely arranged by the heroes a strong and

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cunning, quick [i. e. quickly arranged] circle of ships, and a fortified city of helmets, and a firm fold of bows, and a manly, angry, venomous hedge of bright spears.

68. Then arose those truly heroic, broadweaponed Norsemen and the darkfaced, sullen, terrible Foreigners, and the base, lowborn Danes [who were] without any hereditary right to the truly beautiful island of Fodla, and without origin in, or relationship to Banba. There was arranged by them a dense fortress of dark shields, and an immovable oakwood of venomous and strong spears. But, however, when they had reached the warriors in their impetuous and headstrong course, their ships went bravely to the battle so that listening to the noble clans was like listening to the sound, which arises from a seashore full of stones trodden by teams, and herds, and cattle, horses and racing horsemen, and bright cavalry, as the bloody, sharp showers poured down, and their swords and javelins rang forth in cutting up cuirasses and splitting shields, breaking helmets and head-gear and each others fair bodies around Cellachan.

69. Then the three fiercely active kings of Ui Luigdech, namely Flann, and Cobthach, and Eiderscel reached the southern angle of the brave hosts. They and

the three guardians of Cork, namely Lochlannach of the blades, and the handsome (?) Lochlannach, and Old Amlaib, the senior of the army, went at each other and encountered each other in the battle. However, neither the great size of their shields, nor the excessive strength of their spears, nor the whistling shots of their arrows, nor the smiting of swords upon the heroes were of any use to the Norse heroes. For those chiefs leapt into the Norse ships and singled them out under the masts of the galleys till they met in the middle of each ship. And those six fell together along with their hosts, as the poet has said:

70. I am grieved for the fall of the chiefs
Of the children of Lugaidh of the bright shields,
From the southern part of Munster in the south,
By the host of Lochlann of the swift feats.

I grieve for the noble Eiderscel,
The brave, red-sworded hero,

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Though through him by force was slain
The Norseman of the full-sharp blades.

I am sorry that Flann, the descendant of Lugaidh of Luan (?),
Should be in famous Traigh Baile,
Though he cut off -- without treachery -- in the battle
The head of the handsome (?) Lochlannach.

Sorrowful the fall of the son of great Mac Niadh,
Of the descendants of Ith of the noble host
I grieve for Cobthach with the ruddy face,
The descendant of Lugaidh, a hero without deceit.

Ten ships and twenty in truth
Of the Clan Luigdech, with full force
Of them did not reach home -- it is known --
The crew of a ship of his garrison of heroes.
I am grieved.

71. Then the chief of Ui Echach, namely Dubdaboirenn, and Lenn-Turmun of the Journey met with their swift barques to fight and to smite each other like two dragons for cunning wounds or like two hawks for eager deeds. The army of the active, and famous clan of Cas leapt into the ships of the Norsemen so that they fell upon the rowbenches and strong oars of the mighty ships.

72. Then the three valiant champions, namely Segda, and Failbe, and Congal came up to the strong fleet of the sons of Turgeis, to Sitric, Tor, and Magnus. The Irishmen quickly flung tough ropes of hemp over the long prows of the Norse ships in order that they might not be separated from each other. The Norsemen

then flung rough chains of blue iron over the stately prows of their vessels. There were arranged between the heroes smooth-shafted, sharp-pointed rows of long and stout, most venomous spears. Their helmsmen left off steering, and their crews arose with the oars around the splendid sides of their strong ships, and they raised a barbarous uproar against each other, so that the

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and mighty onset of those fierce was a raging sea of

73. Then the ship of the heroic Failbe was hurried up and rowed up to the battle-ship of Sitric, and Failbe made a high, and deerlike leap from the broad deck of his ship to the mast of [the ship of] Sitric. The royal champion unsheathed his two brisk, keen-edged blades, and he took one of the swords in his stout right hand encountering the champions of the ship, and the other sword in his heroic left cutting the ropes and fetters that were round Cellachan.

[[*Caithreim Ceallachan Caisil Part 3*

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74. The nobles of Clan Corc [then] arranged an artfully weaponed, hard and keen-edged enclosure round the mast while the hero was cutting the long ropes, so that they left the battle-soldier in the centre of the ship between the

champions. Failbe gave one of the two blades into the hand of Cellachan in the hard fight. Cellachan began to smash the bones of the heroes along the sides of the noble ship, until he leapt in to the ship of the heroic Failbe.

But there was poured down a vehement and fierce shower of arrows upon the brave Failbe in the dark ship, as many are wont to overpower few.

75. When the Foreigners had slain and stripped that true hero, they struck off the brave mans head and raised it upon the prow of the ship. When the hard, impetuous troops and the sprightly young men of Munster saw that decapitation, the battle became more furious, and the fight closer with the brave hosts.

Fiangal arose bravely, though every good hero had become weak, lowspirited and thinking of flight after the fall of his chieftain. He began to lament his lord and pledged his word that Sitric should not get back alive to the Lochlann hosts. For the hero was a fosterbrother of the gentle Failbe. But he was aware that his weapons would take no effect upon the mailclad veteran, and he thought it a pity that his lord should lay in the ship without revenge. And he said the lay:

"Do you grieve for the body of the Ua Conaire?" etc. 1)

1) The poem is found in full in 23/H.I.a., p. 85. whence I translate.

Do you grieve for the body of Ua Conaire
Being in the Norse ship,
And his head upon its curved prow,
The descendant of Mugh of the beautiful heroic hands?

He did not deserve above all others.
Not to be followed [i. e. to be abandoned] -- the cause is true -,
If I myself could have been in the ship
Of Failbe, the man of the heavy, golden hair.

Cheerful and thoughtful before the hosts,
Was the champion of the great victories.
He was a generous giver in the banquetting-house,
The descendant of Aengus with great nobleness.

Fair Failbe! O fair Failbe!
He gave his life for my sake.
I grieve that he is left behind me
In the ship of Sitric, the son of Turgeis.

I shall not come alive southward
To the country of Munster of the great forts,
Unless he is left behind shamefully
The man whose handsome body has fallen. The body.

76. Fiangal then made an eager, falconlike leap into the warship of Sitric and fixed his fair hands in the bosom of the Norseman's coat of mail, and dragged the Fair Lochlannach down into the sea so that they together reached the gravel and the sand of the sea, and rested there.

77. Then the two other valiant, redarmed chiefs of the same warlike clan, namely Seghda and noble Congal reached the two strong sons of Turgeis, namely Tor and Magnus. But the looks of the heroes were no faces of friends around ale, nor was it a maidens love for her mate. But the champions sprang like lions from the massive

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ships, (or) like the violent indomitable waves over the long sides of the Norse ships. And the heroes left their own ships void and empty, while the Norse ships became full in their hold, and their sides leaned over. For the pouring in of the clan of Corc into their wombs was a terrible addition to the ships, and they [i. e. the ship] were full of Norsemen before; so that the ships did not wait for the fight of the heroes, but burst open to the salt sea, so that every barque was swamped with its troops. Hence the poet said these words:

"Great the courage of the noble soldiers", etc. 1)

1) Only the first line of the poem is found in the Book of Lismore. The poem is found in full in 23/H.I.a.,p. 86. from where I give a translation of it here below.

Great the courage of the noble soldiers,
Failbhe, Seaghda and fierce Conall,
Two of them of the blue-weaponed race of Conaire,
Men most brave at maiming bodies.

They leave their own ships empty,
Those soldiers -- 'twas not a grievous thing --
So that they leapt into their ships,
Upon the chosen children of Turgeis.

Those strong and brave three
Made battle upon the foaming sea
To that they leapt -- though difficult the feat --
upon the troop of the full-blue armour.

Too heavy for each hard ship
Were the crews of two ships though it was a full disturbance --
And the sides of the barques tilted
For the Norsemen of the fair sea-shores.

The sea sucks down alas!
Each ship, each boat with hard swords,

They did not therefore abandon their strife,
The sons of Turgeis and of strong Cairbre.

Thus did my nimble heroes die,
On the sea -- 'tis not a false tale --,
Seghda and Conall of the hosts,
Tor and active, great Magnus.

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78. Then the martial warships of Ciarraige and the furious angry crews of Fair Lochlann met, and they exchanged showers of arrows, and sudden fusilades of hard stones, and sharp showers of javelins, and skilfully directed, very stout spears. And they made a sudden, fierce attack, and a rough, hostile combat. Then Conchubar, the heroic king of Ciarraige, met the slaughtering Ilbrech, son of the king of Fair Lochlann. They fought very hard and eagerly, because the Ciarraige remembered the plundering of their country by the champion. They plied their spears with excessive eagerness, their battle-axes with powerful onslaught, their swords with fierce fight, and their knives with furious, sudden assault. For the good ships were close to each another, and their weapons reached each others breasts and bosoms, so that they fell together on this side and that in their ships. Conchubar however dragged Ilbrec by his head towards him, and struck off the head of the good champion, and exhibited it in triumph. But he fell himself on the neck of the soldier, and thus died. And to verify this the poet sang the lay:

Conchubar, valiant was the champion 1),
The king of Ciarraige of the beautiful hair,
His fall - sorrowful is the deed --
By the people of the full-blue cuirasses.

1) Only the first line of the poem is found in the Book of Lismore; the rest is translated from 23/H.I.a., p. 86.

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His sprightly men did not abandon
The descendant of Fergus, the fair, bright man,
But they fell in the north on the sea,
By the steady host of Fair Lochlann.

Conchubar and glorious Ilbrec,
The son of the king of Lochlann -- he was a complete hero --,
The valiant heroes fought
In their full-great ships.

Wide were the wounds of men,
The handsome heads of heroes were cut off,
Their sides were quickly pierced,
Each nimble hero lost his strength.

He leaves that man upon his back,
The fairhaired son of the king of Fair Lochlann,
And cuts off his head without hindrance,
Conchubar the son of Mac Bethadh.

80. Then the descendants of Cairbre which are called Baiscne and the fleet of the Berserks met to attack each another. But they remembered their recent enmities and their hostility, and the noble hosts especially laid to the charge of the cruel fleet the violation of Senan and the plundering of Scattery Island. Diarmaid and Baiscenn skilfully steered their barque, they hurled their arrows and spears against each other, went upon their stout oars of strong ash, and dealt hard blows to each other.

80. However, this eager, indomitable couple, namely Diarmaid and Baiscenn, rushed in their fierce onset into the ship of the Norseman, and slew the champion in the very middle of his ship, viz. Lenn Turmun of the Berserks. Diarmaid fell in the black ship, but Baiscenn struck off the head of the fierce Norseman, and exhibited it in triumph, as the poet has said:

There fell in the hard battle
the descendants of red-sworded Cairbre,
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and the battallion of the Berserks, though it was in vain
All except Baiscenn of lasting victories (?).

81. Then the strong and vigorous descendants of Fergus and the far-plundering descendants of Corc reached the watchful Donnchuan. When they saw the hero as a bound and fettered captive, they ordered that the swift, big ship of Lochlann should be brought up to the one side of the Norse ship and the brownplanked ship of Conchubar to the other side of the high ship. This advice was adopted by the champions, and they leapt over the broad railings of the ship of the Norseman, and untied the hard fetters, and let down the ropes, so that the hero-champion, i. e. Donnchuan son of Ceinneidigh, was left free in the middle of the ship. But while the chiefs were removing the champion from the mast, the Lochlannachs of the ship slaughtered their people.

82. The champions became fiercely angry because of this, made a violent attack upon the sullen Lochlannachs, and dealt hard, dangerous blows upon the gloomy Lochlannachs, so that they cleft their shields, and cut their armour into pieces, and tore their targes. And the son of the king of Cold Lochlann fell with the flower of his people. While they were slaying the great Lochlannach, the Lochlannachs of the ship were harassing the rear of the brave champions. They then quickly and suddenly turned round upon the warriors and gave a hard, vehement onslaught on the champions, so that they did not stay in the ship before the heroes, but the champions of the ship leapt over the broad railings into the sea, where they were quickly drowned. But when they found no more

Norsemen to slay in the ship, they raised the head of the son of the king of Cold Lochlann in triumph upon the prow of the galley. Conchubar came upon the bow of the ship, and the Norsemen and they severed their bodies from their souls. Donnchuan began to lament, and he said:

"Valiant the triumphs of the fierce heroes", etc. 1)

1) I have not been able to find more than the first line of this poem.

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83. However, it was ebb-tide when the fleets met, and the broad waves of the flood-tide brought the ships of the Munstermen to land. But when the ships had reached land, the Munstermen went into them to join those who were left of their people. But when the Lochlannachs who were left perceived this, they went away in thirteen ships and left the harbour at once, and carried neither king nor chieftain with them.

84. Then Cellachan arrived in the ship of Failbe the Fair, but Failbe lay slain in it on his bed of gore. Cellachan was greatly lamenting him and said: "It is a loss to us that this man has fallen, and there will not be found a hero after him who will rescue his lord, as he did, for his sword gave a brave sound as he fought for me in the galley. And he said, lamenting Failbe:

A loss to Munstermen is Failbe the Fair.
Who gave his life for my sake,
He sprang to bring it back
into the ship of Sitric, son of Turgeis.

There was a sword in his right hand,
And a sword in his nimble left,
So that he drove them into the sea,
Where the Norsemen perished.

By him my fetters were cut,
Though not with the consent of the men.
The sword which was in his left
the heroic king put into my hand.

I myself destroyed with the sword
All that were between me and the side of the ship,
Failbe fought in my rear,
So that I left the ship of the son of Turgeis.

Failbe was not slain alone,
Woe that he should have been in peril!

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[He did not fall], until the ship was red of their blood.
[of the blood] of his hosts and [of] the Norse host.

Manly Fiangal leapt away from us
To avenge his lord.
He carried Sitric with him from his ship,
So that the son of the Lagmann's son was drowned.

A blessing upon the soul of Fiangal,
Though he died without fierce wounds,
If Sitric were not under the sea,
The drowning of Fiangal were a loss.

He was the darling of the maidens,
the descendant of Aengus, the fair bright man
He brought me out of their fetters,
He was the flower of our noble Munstermen.

He was the leader of our battalions,
He was the conqueror of every chieftain,
Our man of battle at every hour,
The descendant of red-weaponed Conall of great deeds.

Failbe, king of Corcoduibhne,
He was a comely man at courtship,
He was the love of the women of Munster,
The gentle-worded descendant of Conaire.

I would have enjoyed to night,
Although I have sustained battle and great evil -

If Failbe were alive after him,
The drowning of Sitric son of Turgeis.

It is sad that Failbe of the comely hair
Should not return to the land of Cashel,

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It would have been delightful to us in the south,
If he had come with us to be healed.

O Donnchad, and o Donnchuan!
Gather forthwith your hosts
. marching homewards,
Although we took Failbe fair is a loss to the
Munstermen."

86. The heroic Munstermen assembled their ships from the wide sea, and brought them to land, and Cellachan and Donnchuan were welcomed by the heroes. They began to lament their nobles, their chiefs, and their warriors. And Donnchadh son of Caem said the lay:

It is good for us, O gentle Cellachan,
O son of Buadachan of fair aspect,
That you have not gone over the full sea,
With Sitric, eastward over the bitter brine.

The Munstermen have delivered you,
O Cellachan of the blue blades,
It is they who made a bold march,
To Armagh of the great towers.

If they had not gone in their ships
Across the waters, across the heavy waves,
The chieftains of Western Munster,
Your hard fetters would have been long and lasting.

There came six score ships,
To seek you with fierce resolve,
The men of (Corco) Laigde and Duibne across the sea,
The Ciarraige and Corcobaiscinn.

The Ui Echach and the Corcamruadh
Came over the sea of cold waters,

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Until they reached the beautiful Sruth na Maeile
To slay the bright-blue Foreigners.

They sprang upon the fierce battalions
Around the Height of red-haired Macha,
North, east, and south,
And west alike dexterously.

88. Then they brought the nobles of their people into the town to bury them. And they were greatly sorrowful and exhausted after the battle during that night: They arose early next morning in order to bury their people, and they carried the highest of their chieftains and the nobles of their people with them to the church on the northern side of Dundalk. Their chieftains were placed in four graves, and Donnchadh son of Caem came before them and began to relate their

triumph. And he made the lay at the end of the story [i. e. which finishes our story].

89. Seven score ships on the sea
Came with the chieftains;
There escaped not without slaughter
But three score of their people.

Cobthach of the battles was slain,
Bloody Flann was slain,
. . . Eiderscel was drowned,
And his crew was slain.

Cobthach fell in the battle
Together with the Lochlannach Ladhach.
.....a vast amount of gold In Ath Cliath of the
drinking-horns.

Eiderscel fell here
Together with the Lochlannach of the blades.
And bloody Flann fell
Together with Old Amlaib, the mighty dealer of wounds.

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Dubdaboirenn, a brave man (?) (fell)
With Lenn-Turmun of the Journey,
When the earl was slain there,
Who was the strongest of the men of Lochlann.

Segda and Failbe were slain,
It was a cause of woe to us,
And wounded to death was fierce Conall
From the country of Munster of the great host.

They encountered them upon the sea,
Sitric with the Norse ship,
And Magnus, the strong tower,
And Tora of the sharp spear-points.

Magnus fall on the sea
And Segda of the shining armour,
Tora arid Congal likewise,
Sitric and ever-active Failbe.

The hard Ciarraighe fought
With Fair Lochlann from the northern land,
When noble Conchobar fell
Together with the king of Fair Lochlann of the drooping hair.

Corcobaiscinn, the expert troop, [fought]
Against Lenn-Turmun of the city of the Berserks.
When there fell together upon the sea
The Berserks and Corcobaiscinn.

There met in the harbour,
Cold Lochlann and Corcamruadh,
Until they had slain each other
On the sea full readily.

Then the flood-tide brought to land
Some of their ships with full force.
In them the Munstermen went out
Upon the sea full of ships.

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After Cellachan had gone on board
To the people of Failbe of the dark weapons,
When he had arrived at the battle-place,
They did not dare to encounter the chieftains son.

The Norsemen went away
From the prows of their shining ships.
There did not come on the journey
But only six out of seven.

90. When their people had arrived at one place, they collected their own ships and the ships of the Lochlannachs, and burned them all, and they (also) burned the town. Some of them were saying that they ought to decide which way they would take, and some of them were asking where they should go to reach their own country. "The way right to the south", said some of them. "Not so", said Cellachan and Donnchadh son of Caem, "but let us proceed to Ath Cliath, where the sons, and women, and people of the Lochlannachs are, and the woman for the sake of whom Cellachan was captured and our men were slain, even Mor, the daughter of Aedh son of Echu". And he made the lay:

91. "Make a valiant resolution,
O handsome, active heroes,
Which way you will go to the south
Into the country of Munster of the great forts.

If you go across the plain of Cruachan,
You will meet a fierce, overwhelming contest;
They will not let you reach your home
Without battle and hard fight.

If you cross the plain of Meath,
O host whose valour is all-sufficient,
You will find on the way to the east,
Donnchadh and the Lochlannachs.

We shall proceed through the plain of Meath.
For 'tis there is the hostile tribe,
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Until we reach -- though it be a hard task --
South to Munster the red maned.

Proceed ye to Ath Cliath.
To Meath it shall be great sorrow.
Though its aspect is fair to-day,
There shall be forts there under black smoke.
Make a valiant resolution.

92. Then the men of Munster set out on their way, and journey, and expedition orderly, bravely, and prudently. They plundered each territory, and burned each fortress and town that they met on their straight way from Dundalk to Ath Cliath. There came a message before them to the royal town, and it was told to the women of the Norsemen that their husbands were slain, and that Cellachan was taken from them by force.

93. Then the wife of Tora, son of Turgeis, namely Mor, the daughter of Donnchadh, said: "I know", said she, "a plot that will result in the death of Cellachan and in the destruction of the Munstermen: Let us even go to the summerhouse where Mor, the daughter of Aedh, son of Echu, is, the woman, who loves Cellachan, and tell her that Cellachan has perished, and that the Munstermen are slain, and she will die from grief for Cellachan, and he himself will die from grief for her, and the Munstermen will be routed, when he has died." "Let this be done", said the women, and they told the young woman these tidings. "It is not true for you, O women," said Mor, "and it would be better for you if that story were true. And it is certain that Cellachan would die, if I should die. But I get news of him every night in my bed, and yet I am not his wife", said the woman.

94. Then the van of the Munster army reached the town, and they collected the cows and cattle-droves of the town, and its gold, and silver, and many riches, and brought the women and young men of the town together. Mor, daughter of Aedh, son of Echu, and Bebinn, the daughter of Turgeis, were brought to Cellachan, who

said to Donnchuan. son of Cennedig, that he should take Bebinn to his wife. And so it was done by them, and

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each man of them likewise had his choice of women afterwards. They spent a week in arranging this. And as they went away they burned the town.

95. They proceeded forward to the eastern point of the plain of Almhuin. And as they were there, they saw five battalions drawn up in the middle of the plain with choice shields, and swords, and coats of mail, and with shining spears, and targets, and helmets. And he who was there was Murchadh, son of Finn, king of Leinster, and his three brothers, Donnchadh, Finn, and Aedh, and Conghal, son of Laigsech, king of Leix of Leinster, and Donnchadh, son of Aedh, king of Fotharta of Leinster, and Muirchertach, son of Tuathal, king of Ui Mail, and Conchubar, son of Donnchad, king of Ui Failghe. and Bran Berba, son of Amalghadh, king of Omagh and of Ui Mairgi.

96. When the king of Leinster saw the Munster army coming towards him, he said to a priest of his people: "Arise", said he, "and go to the men of Munster, and demand hostages for me from them, and those hostages shall be Cellachan and Donnchuan, and tell them that I shall not accept other hostages, but those two, or else let us fight on the mountain." The Priest proceeded to the place where the Munstermen were, and delivered his message to them.

97. Anger and rage arose in the champions of Munster at those big words.

Donnchadh, son of Caem, said: ".

our march, and it will not be easy to save (?) and for destroying nobles and chieftains in fighting for those two, if we gave them to them. And tell them that we would not give to them the worst gillie in this host to avoid battle."98. Then Donnchadhli said: "I wish to ask a boon from you. O men of Munster, namely to let me be in the front of the battle and have what is left of the descendants of Eoghan here, and that Cellachan shall not go into battle. That was granted to him. And Cellachan said: "Since I am not myself permitted to come into the battle, avenge ye Cormac, the son of Cuilennan, well upon the men of Leinster; for there are two years and a halt and two score years without revenge. And for every cleric who

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was slain there they offered but one cow". And he recited the lay:

"Send against Leinster of the graves!" etc.

99. Then the noble, valiant descendants of Eoghan arose, and arranged themselves into a furious, steady, brave battalion of champions. 1)

100. However, when all the fierce Lochlannachs were drowned, and when the noble lords of Munster had fallen, Cellachan went on land, and the minds and spirits of the high chieftains rejoiced before him. Cellachan sent people to burn the bulk of the fleet which had not gone down in the salt sea. And the resolution the champions came to, was to attack the king of Cenel Conaill, for it was he who had sent messengers (as we have told before) to Armagh to the Lochlannachs, to tell them to bring Cellachan to Dundalk. Muirchertach did not show himself before them, although they raided and plundered the whole country. After that

they came to Tara, and sent messengers to proclaim battle against Donnchadh, son of Flann Sinna, king of Erin, for he had previously permitted that Cellachan was taken prisoner in Ath Cliath. Donnchadh refused to fight with them, and when he had refused, they plundered the territory of Tara. After this they came to Cashel in Munster, and the territories were divided suitably by Cellachan among the nobles. And thenceforward they spent the time peacefully and tranquilly, until Cellachan of Cashel, the son of Buadachan, died a laudable death at Cashel Anno Domini 952.

1) Here the story ends abruptly. The last chapter is translated from the paper manuscript 23/H.I.a. in the Royal Irish Academy p. 87-88.