Vikings' Settlements in Ireland Before 1014

By
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PERHAPS THE MOST ENDURING CONTRIBUTION WHICH VIKINGS MADE TO IRELAND was through their foundation of major coastal towns, most notably those at Dublin, Limerick, and Waterford. However, Vikings also established many smaller settlements which have generally received less attention. In this paper I comment on a range of Viking-influenced settlement, including raiding bases, towns, coastal stations, and rural sites. A broad definition of the word 'viking' has been used to refer to people with Scandinavian cultural affiliations active outside Scandinavia[2].

This avoids the semantic difficulties posed by ethnic labels: for example, at what point should a Scandinavian settler in Ireland be called Hiberno-Scandinavian? What of Irish people who came to dwell in Scandinavian colonies, whose children may have borne Norse names and adopted Scandinavian cultural traits? The difficulties of being over-specific with ethnic terminology has been emphasised in recent studies, where the argument has been made that ethnic identities are subjectively, rather than objectively, created or assigned[3]. Such ambiguities carry over into the interpretation of material culture in Ireland.

The first records of Viking-attacks on Ireland relate to the 790's. Pádraig O'Riain has suggested that the earliest form of Viking-settlement consisted of ships remaining at anchor near a shore or riverbank during a raid[4]. The carrying of booty to Viking-ships is recorded in early Irish accounts of the Vikings and recent discoveries in Dublin may support his theory.

Linzi Simpson has uncovered five furnished warrior-graves around the site of the dub linn or 'dark pool' from which the city derives its name. Four of the five burials have carbon-14 intercept-dates of c. AD 800[5].

The burials suggest that an early group of raiders stayed long enough to bury their dead in customary fashion. No women or children are attested at the site at this early stage. The earliest non-violent contact recorded between Vikings and Gaels was of an economic nature. This seems to have included the payment of tribute as 'protection money' and the ransoming of captives[6].

During the 830's a few high-profile Irishmen were captured and then killed 'at the ships' of the Vikings, presumably because ransoms had not been agreed[7].

Irish chroniclers seem shy of recording successful negotiations; nevertheless, these can be inferred. Political figures, including Mael Dúin, king of Calatruim (Galtrim, Co. Meath), and Forannán, bishop of Armagh, were seized by Vikings in the 840's but re-appear later in the chronicle-record[8].

'The Life of St Findán of Rheinau' provides an insight into early contacts between Vikings and Gaels. Findán grew up in Leinster before travelling overseas and his Life seems to have been composed by an Irishman in Switzerland shortly after his death in the late ninth century[9].

According to this 'Life', Findán's sister was captured by Vikings and he went with an interpreter to negotiate for her release. He was promptly seized by her captors, but some of the raiders argued that it was improper to enslave someone who was offering to pay a ransom. In consequence, Findán was set free (although he was later captured in a separate incident, at the behest of his Irish enemies)[10]. This event suggests that, in the 830's and 840's, Viking-attacks were not always covert operations. A fleet might set itself up in a particular area for a sustained amount of time, not only as a campaign-base, but also to ransom or trade goods with locals or to be engaged as hit-men[11].'***The Life of St Findán***' suggests that codes of conduct may have developed for economic negotiations and that interpreters were available to help facilitate transactions.

These practices may have provided a lucrative incentive for short-term settlement[12]. From the 840's political alliances are attested between

Vikings and Irish and this may have further encouraged the establishment of Vikings' bases in friendly territories[13].

If ships at anchor provided the first stage of settlement, a logical development was the creation of embankments on land to protect them. This stage is frequently identified by the term longphort, 'ship-camp'. This word is mentioned in Irish records from the 840's[14] Annalists may have felt that a new label was necessary to describe the bases which Vikings established in Ireland from the end of the 830's[15].

These camps seem to have been established to enable Vikings to campaign over a longer distance. A Viking-camp may be broadly defined as any site where Vikings remained for more than a day and the life span of individual bases varied radically. The longphort at Emly (Co. Tipperary) in 968 lasted for two days. However the longphort founded at Dublin in 841 has endured as a settlement until the present day.

The term longphort (plural longphort) has been adopted as the main term for temporary Viking-bases by archaeologists and historians. However, its precise meaning is unclear. The term is infrequently and inconsistently used in contemporary records[16], Therefore it is uncertain whether longphort could refer to any kind of Viking-camp or whether it represented a specific type. As Raghnall O'Floinn has pointed out, Viking-bases might assume a number of different forms responding to the needs of a particular campaign and the environment in which the warriors found themselves[17].

In England a wide variety of sites were used as bases by Vikings, including towns, ecclesiastical settlements, islands, and newly built riverside-fortifications[18].

The non-uniform character of Viking bases in Ireland is suggested by the variety of labels used to describe them. The term longphort is not the only name employed by contemporaries. Another word used for Viking-bases is dúnad. This term was also describe marching camps established by Irish forces[19] Viking-camps are also described as dúin (singular dún)[20]. This label was also

applied to permanent Irish defences, notably ring forts[21]. Different chronicles sometimes use different words to describe the same Viking-base, and this may suggest that some of these terms had rather general meaning of[22]

To complicate the picture further, chronicles are sometimes ambiguous as to whether Vikings set up camp at a particular location. For example, occasionally it is only through reference that Vikings are still (beos) at a particular location that we can surmise the foundation of a camp[23]. In addition, when Vikings of a named place are mentioned, I have deduced that a base existed there.

Another difficulty in dealing with the term longphort is that it broadened its meaning over time. By the late tenth century it might refer to 'any military encampment'[24]. Its ethnic connotations were lost. The change in meaning may be explained by the adoption of Viking-style military techniques by the Irish and by more extensive use of encampments in long-distance military campaigns. In consequence, place-names which include the element longphort, and its variants, may be false friends in our attempts to locate Viking-settlements.

There are thirty-five town lands in Ireland whose Hiberno-English name-form includes the element 'longford'. Others include one or another variants of the term, such as 'lunkard', 'lonurt', and 'logurt'[25]

It would be a mistake to conclude that all hosted Viking-bases. To avoid confusion, it may be more helpful to use the formula 'Viking-camp' or 'Viking-base' rather than longphort.[26].

Chronicles are unlikely to provide a comprehensive record of Viking-camps. However, these are our best guides to their location. In the following maps (Figures 1 and 2) I have plotted out references to Viking-camps in the ninth and tenth centuries, drawing on all available Irish chronicles[27]. These maps enable some general observations to be made about the use of Viking-bases during the ninth and tenth centuries, but much work is necessary to interpret their locations

and the political contexts in which they were founded. In the ninth century records of Viking-bases peaked in the years from 839 to 850. This was a period of intense exploration of the coasts and rivers of Ireland by numerous Viking-groups. Interaction between Irish and Vikings is soon witnessed in the 840's, by political alliances. In the 850's, Gall-goídil - groups of mixed Gaelic and Scandinavian culture or ethnicity, are also recorded[28].

There is a noticeable decline in the record of the foundation of Viking-camps after 850.29 This could either be because the establishment of new camps became less remarkable or that there was a general decline in the number of Viking-campaigns[30].

Many Viking-camps suffered Irish attacks during the late 860's. In the north Aedmac Néill, over king of Cenél nEógain, plundered camps in his territory and that of Dál n'Araide in 866[31]. Other camps were destroyed at Youghal (Co. Cork) in 866 and at Cork and Clondalkin (Co. Dublin) in 867[32], king of Uí Bairrche Thíre destroyed another camp, presumably in Leinster, in the following year[33],

These bases are first mentioned at the time of these attacks and demolitions. It is not known how long they had stood at these locations. The wave of successful Irish attacks on Viking-bases corresponds with the years when the leading Dubgaill (or 'Dark foreigners') of Ireland, Óláfr and Ívarr, were fighting with their troops in Britain. It seems that Irish kings maximised the benefits of their absence.

It is only after the major defeats of Vikings in England – of Ívarr's brother in Devon and of Hálfdan and others at the battle of Edington (Wiltshire) in 878 that more Viking-bases are recorded in Ireland. From 879 to 900, five further camps are named[34]. No bases are recorded for the years from 903 to 914. This followed the expulsion of Viking leaders from Dublin by a coalition of Irish forces. However, several Viking-camps were used from 914. Røgnvaldr, grandson of Ívarr, seized Waterford in this year and proceeded to attack neighbouring districts. In 917 a camp was established near St. Mullins (Co. Carlow), and Sigtryggr grandson of Ívarr

won back the settlement at Dublin[35] From 920 until 935, thirteen camps can be identified[36].

These often appear to result from warfare between Dublin and Limerick, as each side sought to protect its sphere of influence against the enemy[37]. The men of Dublin set up bases at Strangford Lough (Co. Down), Linns (Co. Louth), and Athcrathin (Co. Down)[38]. Their allies from Waterford founded a base at Lough Gur (Co. Limerick), and their rivals at Limerick founded camps at Lough Corrib (Co. Galway), at Lough Ree on the River Shannon, and in Ossory[39].

In 937, Óláfr Guðrøðsson, king of Dublin, won a decisive victory over the men of Limerick, and this phase in the foundation of Viking-camps ceased. In the late tenth century new Viking-camps are mentioned sporadically[40]. The growing number of alliances between Irish rulers and Vikings in these years may have meant that military camps were often joint-ventures. Certainly Irish rulers made increasing use of such bases in their own campaigns[41].

The intensive use of military camps by Vikings in the 840's, 920's, and 930's reflects a series of high points in their activities in Ireland. However, camps may have served a variety of purposes, and some in due course developed into prominent economic and political centres.

Dublin was probably the first Viking-settlement in Ireland to develop an urban character, although the date at which it acquired this status is uncertain. Mary Valante has argued that 'by the end of the ninth century, Dublin acted more like a town than a Viking camp' on the basis of its trading links attested in hoards and archaeology[42]. John Sheehan has suggested that Dublin was on the verge of establishing a mint prior to the expulsion of Viking-leaders from the settlement in 902[43].

Nevertheless Howard Clarke and Poul Holm have argued (independently of each other) that Dublin became a town in the mid-tenth century. Their arguments are based on archaeological evidence for plot divisions, specialised trade and organised defences as well as the expansion of trade-networks in Ireland[44].

Dublin is the best-recorded settlement in both written sources and archaeology before 1014. The presence of organised divisions of land and defensive walls indicates the existence of a governing body, regulating the settlement's affairs. The rulers of the port were called kings and there is evidence for earls, royal heirs (tánaise), viceroys, and law-speakers within the government of the town[45].

The Thing-mound (which once stood near College Green) would have served as the centre of legal proceedings, while the 'long stone', at the entrance to the port, presumably marked the boundary of the town's jurisdiction[46]. In the 990's a mint was established in Dublin[47].

This reflects the town's economic development and the organisation of government to oversee coin-production and its regulation. Viking-Age coin-hoards in Ireland are found almost exclusively within a fifty-kilometre radius of Dublin, and this suggests the immediate range of the town's economic influence and its wealth[48].

Patrick Wallace has identified England as a major source of overseas trade before 1014, and archaeological and numismatic evidence has accumulated to support his theory[49]. A range of trading contacts stretching as far as the Near East and the Baltic is also witnessed in the Dublin excavations, although some of this long-distance trade may have come via Scandinavia or Britain[50].

The second most important Viking-settlement before 1014 was Limerick. A Viking-camp is first mentioned there in 845, and a series of references suggests that it lasted throughout the ninth century[51]. It has been supposed that the settlement was abandoned in 902 and then re-founded as a town in 922[52]. However, there is no evidence to support this assertion. The absence of Dublin's political leaders at the turn of the tenth century could have aided Limerick's economic development. This might explain why Limerick was able to rival Dublin politically during the 920's and 930's. Silver-hoards demonstrate Limerick's trading links across Munster and along the Shannon-basin[53]. The hoards associated with Limerick are markedly different from those near Dublin, in their lack of coin[54]. It is apparent that Limerick had less trade with the developed

coin-economy of England than did Dublin. It may be, as John Sheehan has suggested, that the settlement had a more localised economic base[55].

The hoard-evidence for long-distance trade focuses on the northern route from the Irish Sea to the Hebrides and Norway[56]. This complements evidence for political links between Limerick and the Hebrides in the mid- to late tenth century[57]. Limerick appears to have suffered economic decline during the late tenth century[58]. This culminated in the town's conquest by Brian Bóroma, over king of Munster, in 977[59].

Waterford was the next most important Viking-settlement during the ninth and tenth centuries[60]. Recent discoveries of a Viking-settlement at Woodstown, near Waterford, have raised new questions about the origins of this port[61]. A Viking-camp is recorded at Waterford in 'The Annals of the Four Masters' in the years 860 and 892[62].

Waterford was the first landing place of the royal dynasty of Ívarr when they returned to Ireland in 914, following their lengthy exile from Dublin[63]. In consequence, the settlement was mentioned as an ally of Dublin in the 920's and 930's[64].

Politically, Waterford rose to prominence following Limerick's decline in the late tenth century. It may be from then that Waterford became 'second in importance only to Dublin'[65]. Several silver-hoards dating from the tenth century can be identified within Waterford's economic sphere along the river-valleys north of the town[66]. These hoards indicate strong trading links with England and to a lesser extent with the Continent, while pottery-finds dating from the eleventh century show that the Severn Estuary and western France were major sources of imports[67].

The last identifiable Viking-king of Waterford died in 1035, and thereafter the port appears as subject to Irish over kings[68].

The Scandinavian origins of Waterford are reflected in its name, which translates as 'ram fjord' or 'windy fjord'. Other permanent settlements bearing Norse names developed at Wexford, Wicklow, and Arklow[69]. However it is unlikely that any of these could have been identified as

towns before 1014. Wexford is mentioned as a Viking-camp in 892 and 935, and Arklow is only mentioned once before the battle of Clontarf, as the location of a camp in 836[70].

The discovery of furnished burials near Arklow and Wicklow provides further evidence of Viking-settlement along the east coast of Leinster[71]. It is possible that these ports developed within the sphere of influence of Dublin, although they may have been ruled independently[72].

Cork is often included within discussions of Viking-towns. Henry Jefferies has commented that 'the Scandinavian settlement at Cork has–-remained the subject of speculation rather than of scholarship'[73]. Bold assertions have been made regarding the Viking-settlement there, but very little evidence has survived. Viking-camps are mentioned as existing at Cork in 848 and 867, but both were reported as destroyed[74].

No Viking-leaders of Cork are mentioned after the ninth century, and there is no reference to a Viking-campaign being led from the settlement in the ninth or tenth centuries. In contrast, the church at Cork continued to flourish throughout the Viking Age, and the officers of that church are well recorded[75]. Cork suffered attacks by Viking-fleets in 914, 960, and 1013, but it is not clear whether the church or the neighbouring secular settlement − or both − was the victim[76].

The settlement at Cork was sufficiently important in the late twelfth century for Henry II to take it directly under his control[77]. This makes the lack of reference to the Viking-inhabitants prior to the twelfth century more striking. The activities of Vikings in the region are suggested by the local place-names Haulbowline and Foaty Island which have Norse origins[78].

Anglo-Norman documents also refer to a cantred of the Ostmen at Cork[79]. Nevertheless, it seems evident that Vikings at Cork were not politically dominant and that they quickly reached some kind of understanding with the nearby church[80]. David Dumville has raised the possibility that Cork could have originated as an urban centre under Irish patronage, possessing a community of Viking-entrepreneurs[81]. There

are many instances in the Middle Ages of foreign craftsmen and traders being recruited to a settlement to aid economic development[82]. This theory would explain the lack of evidence for political activities of Vikings resident at Cork. As yet there is no pre-twelfth century archaeological evidence from Cork which can further elucidate the origins of permanent secular settlement[83].

Viking-burials can help qualify the picture of Viking activity developed from chronicle sources. A recent excavation at the caves of Cloghermore (Co. Kerry) has yielded evidence of up to six non-Christian burials of late ninth or early tenth century date accompanied by a series of finds and a silver hoard. The burials comprise four adults, one infant and a neonate[84].

A nearby Viking base at Dún Mainne (Co. Kerry) was destroyed c. 867, but this may be too early to be linked with the burials in the cave[85]. An attack by the Viking leaders of Dublin on the caves of Kerry in 873 could refer to Cloghermore[86]. This raid could have resulted from rivalry between different Viking groups. (It may have been part of the war between the 'Dark Foreigners' based in Dublin and the 'Fair Foreigners', who I would argue were based at Limerick at this date).87 The presence of women and children among the burials should not occasion surprise as non-Irish written sources indicate that women and children sometimes accompanied Vikings on campaign[88].

The discoveries at Cloghermore provides evidence for the existence of a temporary Viking base which is not named in the chronicles. Michael Connolly has drawn attention to other cave sites in Ireland which offer parallels to Cloghermore[89]. Perhaps the best known of these is Dunmore Cave (Co. Kilkenny). Two silver hoards of tenth century date have been discovered here along with quantities of human and animal bone and finds including a woodman's axe head and personal ornaments[90].

Dunmore was the site of a massacre by Vikings from Dublin in 930. The event could also be linked with the rivalry between Dubliner and Limerick, as the Vikings of Limerick founded a base in Ossory in the same year[91]. Other caves near Waterford and in County Clare have yielded evidence

which could be interpreted as pagan burials influenced by Scandinavian ritual, but further study of these sites is required before any conclusions can be drawn.

Stephen Harrison has noted a clustering of Viking-graves along the north-east coast of Ireland, at Rathlin Island (Co. Antrim), Larne (Co. Antrim), Ballyholme (Co. Down) and St John's Point (Co. Down)[92]. These finds suggests that some Viking-settlement took place around the strategically significant North Channel after the destruction of Viking-camps in the area by Aed mac Néill. An isolated burial at Eyrephort (Co. Galway) provides evidence for the activity of Viking-ships along the west coast, but it need not indicate that a viking-base was established in the area[93].

Place-names also point to Viking activity at coastal sites. Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig has identified thirteen islands which bore Old-Norse names[94]. Some of these sites may have served only as navigation-points for Viking-ships[95]. Some may have been used as trading-posts. The Copeland Islands (Co. Down) are called Kaupmanneyjar, 'Merchant Islands', in the thirteenth century Icelandic saga-compendium Heimskringla 96]. They are well placed in the North Channel of the Irish Sea as a stopping point for ships crossing between Britain and Ireland or passing from the Atlantic into the Irish Sea. Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig has linked the Saltee Islands (Co. Wexford; Norse Saltøy, 'Salt Island') with salt-manufacture, evidenced on the nearbymainland in the laterMiddle Ages[97].

Another possible trading post which bears a Norse name is Dalkey Island (Co. Dublin), conveniently situated near the major port of Dublin[98]. Archaeological evidence has shown that goods were traded here prior to the Vikings' arrival[99]. It seems that Dalkey served as a location where prisoners were collected by Vikings from Dublin, perhaps prior to their sale overseas[100].

In 940, an Irish bishop drowned there while escaping from Vikings[101]. Islands also served as refuges and religious settlements. Christian Vikings worshipped at churches on Scattery (Co. Clare), Dalkey, and possibly

Lambay (Co. Dublin) from the late tenth century[102]. Scattery is also mentioned as a refuge for Vikings of Limerick during periods of political turmoil in 974 and 977, while Ireland's Eye and Dalkey served a similar function for the inhabitants of Dublin in 902 and 944[103]. These islands thus served an important defensive role for nearby towns. Their Viking-connections are indicated by their names, each bearing the characteristic Norse element - øy ('island').

Scandinavian toponyms are found for some other coastal features, notably sea-lochs (namely Strangford and Carlingford) and harbours or inlets (Larne, Kinsale, Smerwick, and Helvik)[104].

These indicate places frequented by Viking-shipping and the subsequent loan of these names into English[105]]. A recent re-assessment of archaeological finds from Beginish (Co. Kerry) has led John Sheehan, Steffan Hansen, and Donnchadh Ó Corráin to conclude that the island served as a way-station for ships travelling between Cork and Limerick in the tenth and eleventh centuries[106].

Scandinavian influence has also been posited for the site excavated at Truska (Co. Galway) on the coast of Connemara[107]. Whether these sites were inhabited by individuals of Viking or Gaelic culture is a bone of contention. Michael Gibbons has highlighted the pitfalls of identifying Viking-settlement on the basis of two or three finds of Hiberno-Scandinavian character[108]. These sites may show the cultural influence of Vikings on communities dwelling around the Irish coast, rather than Viking-colonisation.

The final issue to be considered in this brief survey is rural settlement. Recent studies have stressed the dependence of Viking-ports on surrounding areas to provide food, building materials, fuel, and other day-to-day goods, raising the possibility of Viking-settlement in these areas[109].

John Bradley has done pioneering work in establishing the extent of Vikings' urban hinterlands in the late twelfth century[110]. However, these boundaries cannot simply be projected back to the ninth and tenth

centuries, as the territory dominated by Viking-towns varied over time[111]. The only documented hinterland before 1014 was associated with Dublin. The creation of a Viking-camp at Clondalkin by Óláfr before 867, and the temporary occupation of islands off Brega in 852, may represent the beginnings of the port's territorial conquests[112]. In the late tenth century the kings of Dublin seem to have held sway over large parts of Brega as over kings or allies of the local rulers[113]. A smaller area north of Dublin entitled Fine Gall ('kindred of the foreigners') is mentioned in relation to 1013[114]. This name is preserved as modern Fingal.

In 1052 this territory was bounded by the Devlin River (near Gormanstown, Co. Dublin), corresponding with the modern county-boundary[115]. If one looks inland, the only known land-locked Norse place-name in Ireland is Leixlip (Old-Norse laxhlaup, 'salmon-leap') which lies 20 kilometres east of Dublin. This may reflect the extent of Dublin's jurisdiction at some point in the Viking Age[116].

According to 'The Annals of Ulster', in 938 Dublin may have possessed a territory stretching southwards and eastwards to Áth Truisten, identified as Athy, or Mullaghmast, in County Kildare[117]. Viking-influence across this broad sweep of territory may be seen from the evidence of burials and stone monuments[118]. The latter group comprises the carved stone 'hogback' monument at Castledermot (Co. Kildare) and the so-called 'Rathdown' slabs bearing abstract designs with affinities across the Irish Sea, which may date from the eleventh century[119].

The cultural influence of Dublin on communities dwelling south of the port is also witnessed in the domestic site excavated at Cherrywood (Co. Dublin)[120].

The evidence suggests that the hinterland of Dublin was an area of Vikings' political and / or cultural influence whose boundaries changed according to the political fortunes of successive kings of Dublin. Other Viking-towns had less political and economic strength, and one might deduce that their hinterlands were probably smaller.

Some Viking-settlement probably occurred beyond the bases, coastal sites and hinterlands mentioned above. The presence of Viking entrepreneurs at Irish trading-posts might explain the bilingual rune stone at Killaloe (Co. Clare)[121]. Furthermore, while some Viking-camps became towns, others may have developed as permanent settlements of a non-urban character[122].

Irish rulers employed Vikings as mercenaries, and some may have received land for their services[123]. Intermarriage between Irish and Scandinavian families is also well attested in the chronicles[124].

Nevertheless, a number of factors may have determined whether descendants of Vikings retained distinctive cultural traits or assimilated with Irish neighbours. The distribution of finds classified as being 'Scandinavian' or 'Hiberno-Scandinavian' at various sites across Ireland illustrate the influence of Viking ports as producers and disseminators of cultural artefacts (both in technological and aesthetic terms)[125].

These finds also show that over time the distinctions between Vikings and Irish in terms of their material culture cannot be sharply drawn[126]. The brief discussion presented above is intended to demonstrate that a variety of Viking-influenced settlements existed in Ireland. The towns at Dublin, Limerick, and Waterford were politically the most important Viking-settlements. Military camps enjoyed brief heydays in the 840's and 920's and 930's, but from the late tenth century they seem no longer to have been the sole preserve of Viking-settlers. Apart from this there are a wide range of sites displaying evidence of Vikings' cultural influence, although these may or may not have been 'viking' settlements.

Although individuals in the past may have had a strong sense of their identity, the difference between Vikings and Gaels is not always clear-cut in archaeological terms.

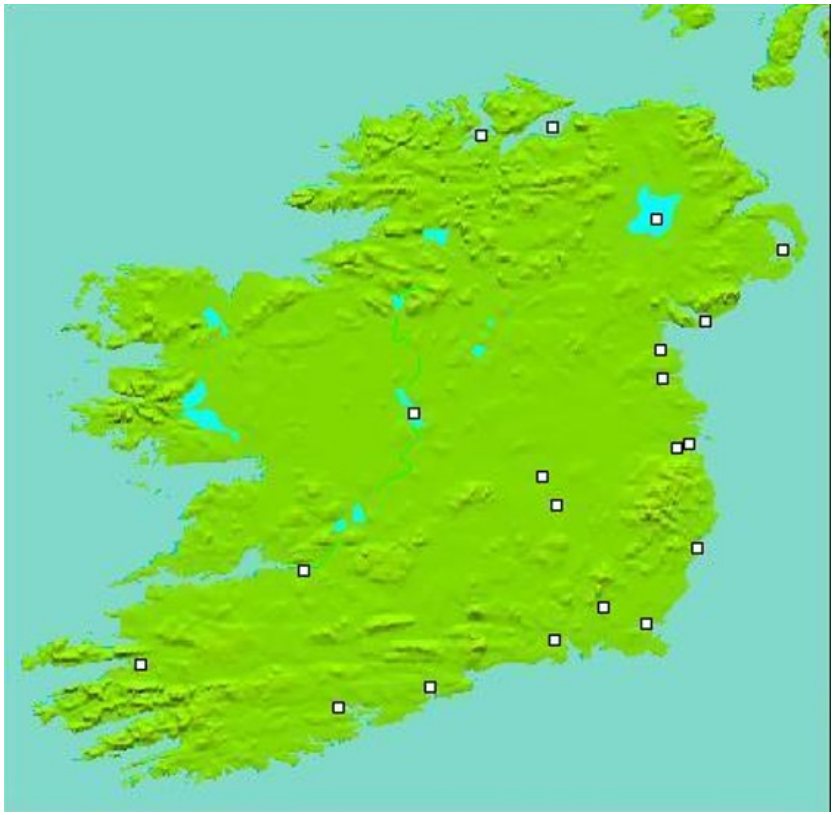

Fig . 1. Ninth-century chronicle references to viking-camps in Ireland

Arklow (Co. Wicklow) 836
Carlingford Lough? (Co. Down/ Louth) 852
Clondalkin (Co. Dublin) 867
Cluain Andobair (Co. Offaly) 845
Cork (Co. Cork) 848, 867
Dublin (Co. Dublin) 837, 841, multiple references
Dún Mainne (Co. Kerry) 867
Dunrally (Co. Laois) 862
Limerick (Co Limerick) 845, multiple references
Rosnaree (Co. Meath) 842
Linns, nr. Annagasson (Co. Louth) 841, 842, 851, 852

Lough Foyle (Co. Derry) 898
Lough Neagh (Co. Antrim/ Armagh/ Derry/ Tyrone) 839, 840, 841
Lough Ree (Co. Longford/ Roscommon/ W'meath) 844, 845
Lough Swilly? (Co. Donegal) 842
St Mullins (Co. Carlow) 892
Strangford Lough (Co. Down) 879
Waterford (Co. Waterford) 860, 892
Wexford (Co. Wexford) 892
Youghal (Co. Cork) 866
Sites of uncertain location
Cael Uisce 842
Port Manann 866
sites between Cénel nEogain and Dál nAraide 866
site destroyed by king of Uí Bairrche tíre 868
Fig . 2. Tenth-century chronicle references to viking-camps in Ireland
Athcrathin (Co. Down) 926
Carlingford Lough (Co. Down/Louth) 923
Clonmacnoise (Co. Offaly) 926
Dublin (Co. Dublin) 917, multiple references
Emly (Co. Tipperary) 968
Glynn, nr. St Mullins (Co. Carlow) 917
Limerick (Co. Limerick) 922, multiple references
Linns, nr. Annagasson (Co. Louth) 926, 927
Lough Corrib (Co. Galway) 929, 930
Lough Erne (Co. Fermanagh) 924, 933, 936
Lough Foyle (Co. Derry) 943
Lough Gur (Co. Limerick) 926
Lough Neagh (Co. Antrim/ Armagh/ Derry/ Tyrone) 930, 933, 945
Lough Ree (Co. Longford/ Roscommon/ W'meath) 931, 936, 937
Mag Raigne (Co. Kilkenny) 930, 931
Strangford Lough (Co. Down) 924, 926, 933, 943
Waterford (Co. Waterford) 914, multiple references
Wexford (Co. Wexford) 935

Sites of uncertain location

Loch Bethrach in Ossory (= Mag Raigne?) 930

Notes

1 The content of this paper is drawn from the second chapter of my unpublished doctoral dissertation. I would like to thank David Dumville for his comments and corrections. In this paper I have used Old Norse forms for Scandinavian names and Medieval Irish forms for Irish personal and population-group names. However place-names are given in their modern English form wherever possible.

2 Fell, "Modern English Viking"; Byock, Viking Age Iceland, 11-13; Mac Shamhráin, The Vikings,

3 Hadley, "Viking and Native", 46
.

4 Ó Riain, "Saint Patrick in Munster", lecture delivered to the Cambridge Group for Irish Studies, 6 March 2001, also cited by Dumville, "Old Dubliners", 83, n. 24.

5 Simpson, "Viking warrior burials".

6 In 798 a tribute of cattle was exacted by raiders at Holmpatrick: Annals of Clonmacnoise s.a. 795 [=798] (ed. Murphy, 128); Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 793[=798] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, I, 396-97); Downham, "Historical Importance", 75.

7 Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 829 [=831]; 832 [=833]; 836 [=837] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, I, 444-45); Annals of Ulster, s.a. 830 [=831].6; 832 [=833].12 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, 286-91); Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. [831] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 138-39). This practice continued throughout the Viking Age. For a later example see Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 937 [=939] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, II, 636-37); Annals of Ulster, s.a. 938 [=939].3 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt

and Mac Niocaill, 386-87); Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. 938 [=939] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 202-03).

8 Annals of Ulster, s.a. 841 [=842].5, 845 [=846].4, and 844 [=845].1, 845 [=846].9 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, 300-05); Hogan, Onomasticon, 151. Forannán"s eventful career can be traced in "The Annals of Ulster": he was captured by Feidlimid mac Crimthainn, overking of Munster ,in 836, then exiled and captured by vikings in 845. He died in 852.

9 "Vita Sancti Findani", ed. Holder-Egger, 502-06; Löwe, "Findan"; Christiansen, "People", 148-64; Omand, "Life"; Kenney, The Sources, 602-3.

10 Christiansen, "People", 148-49, 156.

11 Sheehan "Viking Age Hoards", 158.

12 Aside from the ransoms, might one compare Vikings with dodgy car-boot salesmen who sell off their stolen goods in one area and then mysteriously disappear to another location to set up business again?

13 Political alliances are attested from 842: Annals of Ulster, s.a. 841 [=842].10 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and
Mac Niocaill, 300-01). Twenty-three examples of cross-cultural alliances can be identified in ninth-century annalistic accounts. I have suggested elsewhere that the viking base at Linn Rois (Co. Meath) was founded as a result of such an alliance: Downham, "Vikings in Southern Uí Néill", 236.

14 Dictionary, gen. ed. Quin, 440, col. 201, lines 60-86; Valante, "Urbanization", 77; Doherty, "Vikings in Ireland", 324.

15 In 836, vikings based at Inber Dée plundered Kildare, and they may have been responsible for the sacking of Glendalough and Clonmore in the same year: Annals of Clonmacnoise, s.a. 833 [=836] (ed. Murphy, 136); Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 835 [=836], 835 [=836] (ed. and

trans. O"Donovan, I, 452-53); Annals of Ulster, s.a. 835 [=836].5 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, 294-95); Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. [836], [836] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 140-41); In 837, Áth Cliath was taken by Vikings: however a longphort is first mentioned there in 841: Annals of Roscrea, §235 (ed. Gleeson and Mac Airt, 167); Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. [837] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 142-43); Clarke, "Proto-towns", 346.

16 Roughly a third of the sites identified as Viking-encampments are specifically labelled as longphuirt in Irish chronicles.

17 Ó Floinn, "Archaeology", 164.

18 Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, trans. Whitelock et al.. 42-63.

19 For example Annals of Ulster, s.a. 844 [=845].3 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, 302-03); Doherty, "Vikings in Ireland", 326; Bhreathnach, "Saint Patrick", 37 – while my discussion here is limited to the annalistic use of the term, Edel Bhreathnach provides a useful survey of the word"s usage in non-annalistic contexts.

20 For example Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. [848] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 148-49).

21 Doherty, "Vikings in Ireland", 326.

22 For example dúnad, dún, and slógad: Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 843 [=845].5 (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, I, 466-67); Annals of Ulster, s.a. 844 [=845].3 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, 302-03); Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. [845] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 144-45). In most chronicles the language of the sources was updated. Hence the original terminology could be lost. Close comparison of the chronicles is necessary to determine the extent of this problem.

23 For example, Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. [839], [840], [841] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 142-43).

24 Doherty, "Vikings in Ireland", 326.

25 Meyer, "Gäl. long-phort", 951-52; Kelly and O"Donovan, "Viking longphort", 13; Sheehan et al. "Viking Age Maritime Haven", 113; Mac Giolla Easpaig, "L"influence", 480. Ire Atlas Townland Database, http://www.seanruad.com/cgi-bin/iresrch.

26 Downham, "Britain", 17; Gibbons, "Athlunkard".

27 This information has been drawn from the Irish-chronicle database which formed part of my doctoral research. For discussion of Dún Mainne, see Ó Corráin, "Vikings III"; for Dunrally, see Kelly and Maas, "Vikings on the Barrow"; and for Port Manann, see Downham, "Tomrar"s death".

28 Dumville, Churches, 27-29.

29 Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 858 [=860] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, I, 492-93), and Fragmentary Annals, §277 (ed. and trans. Radner, xxix-xxx, 108-09). Both accounts were probably drawn from the lost eleventh-century "Osraige Chronicle", which was not entirely reliable.

30 Downham, "Britain", 11; ibid., "Historical Importance", 77.

31 Annals of Ulster, s.a. 865 [=866].4 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, 320-21).

32 Annals of Ulster, s.a. 866 [=867].8 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, 322-23); Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 864 [=866], 865 [=867] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, I, 502-03); Fragmentary Annals, §342 (ed. and trans. Radner, 124-25).

33 Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 866 [=868] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, I, 510-11).

34 Lough Foyle, Lough Neagh, St Mullins, Strangford Lough, Wexford. Another base at Magheraglass (Co. Tyrone) was established by Flann son of Mael Sechnaill with vikings. As the latter was founded under Irish

leadership, I have not included it on my distribution-map. Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 876 [=879], 879 [=882], 888 [=892], 893 [=898], 895 [=900] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, I, 522-23, 528-29, 542-42, 550-53); Hogan, Onomasticon, 520.

35 Annals of Ulster, s.a. 916 [=917].2 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, 366-67); Hogan, Onomasticon, 226.

36 See n. 38 below. Annals of Ulster, s.a. 920 [=921].7, 922 [=923].4, 923 [=924].1, 929 [=930].3, 935 [=936].2 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, 372-77, 380-81, 384-85); Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. [934] [=935] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 200-01). Another possible foundation was at Kinnaweer (Co. Donegal), but chronicles merely mention the presence of a fleet there: Cf. Lacy et al., Archaeological Survey, 66 for a possible viking burial near Kinnaweer.

37 Valante, "Urbanization", 116.

38 Annals of Ulster, s.a. 925 [=926].5, 925 [=926].6 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, 378-79); Hogan, Onomasticon, 490.

39 Annals of Inisfallen, s.a. [926].2, [930].1 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt, 148-51); Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. [928] [=929], [929] [=930], 930 [=931] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 198-99).

40 Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 969 [=971] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, II, 694-95); Annals of Inisfallen, s.a. [968].2 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt, 158-59).

41 Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 969 [=971], 1012 [=1013] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, II, 694-95, 768- 69); Charles-Edwards, "Irish Warfare", 51.

42 Valante, "Urbanization", 98.

43 Sheehan, "Ireland"s Early Viking Age Silver", 62.

44 Clarke, "Proto-towns", 334; Holm, "Viking Dublin", 253-54; Simpson, "Forty Years", 24-34; Walsh, "Dublin"s Southern Town Defences", 106-07.

45 Ó Corráin, "Second Viking Age", 28.

46 Holm, "Viking Dublin", 257.

47 O"Sullivan, "Earliest Irish Coinage"; Dolley, "Some Irish Evidence".

48 Holm, "Viking Dublin", 257.

49 Wallace, "English Presence"; Wallace, "Economy", 215, 227-32; Hudson, "Changing Economy"; Holm, "Viking Dublin", 257. For the economic influence of vikings on Irish society, see Gerriets, "Money"; Sheehan, "Ireland"s Early Viking-Age Silver", 54-55.
50 Wallace, "Economy", 234.

51 For example, Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. [845], [887] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 144-45, 170-71).

52 Wallace, "Archaeology", 127-28; Wallace, "Archaeological Identity", 37.

53 Holm, "Viking Dublin", 257-58.

54 Ibid., 257.

55 Sheehan, "Viking Age Hoards", 158.

56 Ibid., 154.

57 Downham, "Britain", 164.

58 Sheehan, "Viking Age Hoards", 160.

59 Annals of Tigernach, s.a. [976] [=977].2 (ed. and trans. Stokes, II, 231).

60 Mac Giolla Easpaig, "L"influence", 476.

61 Downham, "Historical Importance".

62 Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 858 [=860], 888 [=892] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, I, 492-93, 542-53).

63 Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 910 [=914] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, II, 580-81); Annals of Ulster, s.a. 913 [=914].5 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, 362-63); Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. [913] [=914] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 186-87).

64 Annals of Inisfallen, s.a. [927] (ed. and trans. Mac Airt, 148-49); Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 924 [=926], 937 [=939] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, II, 614-15, 638-39); Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. [925] [=926] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 196-97).

65 Hurley, "Late Viking Age Settlement", 69.

66 Blackburn and Pagan, "Revised Checklist", nos 111, 151b, 170, 195.

67 Hurley, "Late Viking Age Settlement", 70; Gahan et al., "Medieval Pottery", 286-318.

68 Annals of Ulster, s.a. 1035.5 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, 472-73); Annals of Tigernach, s.a. [1037] (ed. and trans. Stokes, II, 268).

69 Mac Giolla Easpaig, "L"influence", 466-68.

70 Annals of Ulster, s.a. 835 [=836].5 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, 294-95); Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 835 [=836], 888 [=892], 933 [=935] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, I, 452-53, 542-43, II, 630-31). For the identification of Inber Dée, see Etchingham, "Evidence", 114 and Bhreathnach, "Saint Patrick", 39, n. 9.

71 Ó Floinn, "Two Viking burials".

72 Etchingham, "Evidence", 132-33; Holm, "Viking Dublin", 255. See Duffy, "Irishmen" for persuasive critique of the theory that Dublin ruled a territory named Ascaill Gaill stretching along the coast of Leinster 94, n. 1

73 Jefferies, "History and Topography", 14.

74 Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 846 [=848], 865 [=867] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, I, 476-77); Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. [848] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 148-49); Fragmentary Annals, §342 (ed. And trans. Radner, 124-25).

75 Byrne, "Heads of Churches", 250-51.

76 Annals of Inisfallen, s.a. [1013].2 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt, 182-83); Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 960
[=962] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, II, 680-81); Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. [914] [=915] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 86-87); Cogadh, §28 (ed. and trans. Todd, 30-31, 234).

77 O"Brien, "Development", 46.

78 Jefferies, "History and Topography", 14; Mac Giolla Easpaig, "L"influence", 460-61.

79 Jefferies, "History and Topography", 16.

80 Ibid., 15; Valante, "Urbanization", 96.

81 I am grateful to David Dumville for suggesting this to me in conversation.

82 Bartlett, The Making, 177-82.

83 Hurley, "Viking Age Towns", 172-74.

84 Connolly et al., Underworld.

85 Ó Corráin, "Vikings III".

86 Annals of Inisfallen, s.a. [873].3 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt, 134-35).

87 Downham, "Britain", 24.

88 Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, s.a. [893] (trans. Whitelock et al., 55).

89 Connolly et al., Underworld, 41-42.

90 Dolley, "1973"; Drew and Huddart, "Dunmore".

91 Annals of Inisfallen, s.a. [930].1 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt, 150-51); Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. 929 [=930] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 198-99); Annals of Ulster, s.a. 929 [=930].1(ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, 380-81).

92 Harrison, "Viking Graves", 66.

93 Sheehan, "Reassessment"; Raftery, "Viking Burial".

94 Mac Giolla Easpaig, "L"influence", 448-49.

95 For example, the size of Fastnet Rock and Tuskar Rock make any other purpose unlikely.

96 Mac Giolla Easpaig, "L"influence", 456-57.

97 Ibid., 457.

98 Dolley, "Lost" Hoard"; Mac Giolla Easpaig, "L"influence", 455-56.

99 Doyle, "Early Medieval Activity", 91-93.

100 Smyth, Scandinavian York, II, 132-33, 240-42; Holm, "Slave Trade", 328.

101 Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 938 [=940] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, II, 638-39); Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. [939] (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 202-03).

102 Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 972 [=974] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, II, 698-99); Annals of Inisfallen, s.a. [995].2 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt, 170-71); Doyle, "Early Medieval Activity", 101; Bhreathnach, "Columban Churches", 12.

103 Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 897 [=902], 942 [=944], 969 [=971] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, I, 556- 57, II, 652-53, 694-95); Annals of Tigernach, s.a.[977].2 (ed. and trans. Stokes, II, 232).

104 Mac Giolla Easpaig has not included hybrid Gaelic and Scandinavian names in his evaluation. As Norse personal names were adopted by Irish families from the tenth century one cannot surmise viking settlement from place-names such as Rathturtle ("Rath of Torcall", Co. Wicklow). Some commentary on place-names is given by Gibbons, "Hiberno-Norse Ringed Pin".

105 As Norse toponyms are often borrowed into English but rarely borrowed into Irish, the current distribution of Scandinavian coastal names may reflect routes frequented by later English ships. The relative lack of names in the north west of Ireland does not mean that Norse names were not coined for features along these coasts, they may simply have been lost.

106 Sheehan et al., "Viking Age Maritime Haven"; cf. Bradley, "Interpretation", 66-67.

107 Gibbons and Kelly, "Viking Age Farmstead".

108 Gibbons, "Hiberno-Norse Ringed Pin".

109 Wallace, "Economy", 201-05; Bradley, "Interpretation", 51-53; Valante, "Dublin"s Economic Relations", 69, 73-74.

110 Bradley, "Interpretation", 63.

111 Valante, "Dublin"s Economic Relations", 71.

112 Annals of Ulster, s.a. 851 [=852].8, 866 [=867].8 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, 312-13,322-23).

113 Downham, "Vikings in Southern Uí Néill", 239-40.

114 Howth and Drinan were located within its boundaries: Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 1012 [=1013] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, II, 768-69); Annals of Inisfallen, s.a. [1013].2 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt, 182-83); Ó Corráin, "Second Viking Age", 27.

115 Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 1052 (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, II, 860-61); Hogan, Onomasticon, 419; Holm, "Viking Dublin", 257. Also north of Dublin was Caill Tomair or "The Wood of Þórir". This seems to have been located near Clontarf: Annals of Inisfallen, s.a. [1000].2 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt, 174-75); Annals of Tigernach, s.a. [974] [=975].4 (ed. and trans. Stokes, II, 230); cf. Chronicum Scotorum, s.a. [973] [=975].5 (ed. and trans. Hennessy, 222-23); Cogadh, §113 (ed. and trans. Todd, 198-99). Hogan"s identification is based on a misinterpretation: Onomasticon, 139.

116 But see Holm, "Viking Dublin", 261, n. 7. Mac Giolla Easpaig has more recently supported the Norse origin of this name: "L"influence", 452.

117 Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 936 [=938] (ed. and trans. O"Donovan, II, 634-35); Annals of Ulster, s.a. 937 [=938].6 (ed. and trans. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill); Hogan, Onomasticon, 71; Bradley, "Interpretation", 56, 58; Ó Corráin, "Second Viking Age", 27.

118 Harrison, "Viking Graves", for comments on graves found in Co. Meath and Co. Westmeath, see Downham, "Vikings in Southern Uí Néill", 237 and n. 27.

119 Lang, "Castledermot hogback"; Ó hÉailidhe, "Rathdown slabs"; Ó hÉailidhe, "Early Christian Grave-slabs".

120 Ó Néill, "Excavation".

121 Bradley, "Killaloe"; Barnes et al., Runic Inscriptions, 53-56.

122 The persistence of Dún Amlaíb, "the fort of Óláfr", at Clondalkin after 867 is suggested by a mediaeval poem. The fort is mentioned as lying on the route to Dublin: "Mitteilungen", ed. Meyer, 229-31. In the late eleventh century the bishop of Dublin had jurisdiction there. It was perhaps an integral part of Dublin"s hinterland: Doherty, "Cluain Dolcáin", 187; Gwynn, "First Bishops", 2.

123 Ó Corráin, "Second Viking Age", 31. The use of mercenaries from abroad is attested in Irish legal tracts before and after the Vikings" arrival: "Di Ércib Fola", ed. and trans. McLeod, 167, n. 149, and 203, n. 288.

124 Ó Cuív, "Personal Names".

125 For example Gibbons, "Hiberno-Norse".

126 Mytum, "Vikings and Ireland", 117.

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