

Early Gaelic Printing: 1676-1707

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UILLIAM BEDEL,

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The BOOKS of the
OLD TESTAMENT

Translated into IRISH by the Care and Diligence of

Doctor WILLIAM BEDEL,

Late Bishop of *Kilmore* in *IRELAND*,

A N D,

For the publick good of that Nation,

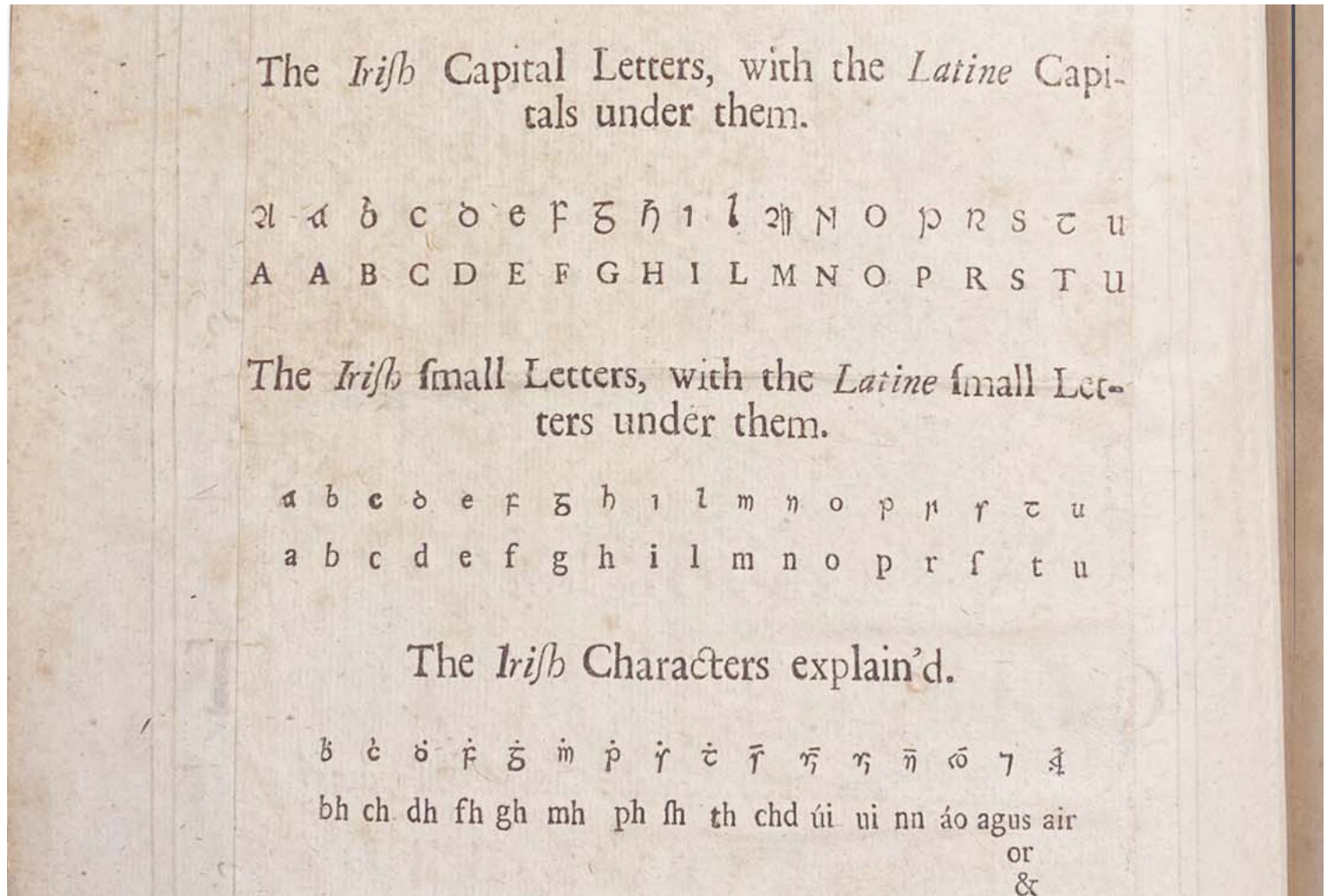
Printed at *London*, Anno Dom. MDC LXXXV.

1. [BIBLE; BEDELL, William, ed.]. *Leabhuir na Seintiomna...*

London, [n.p.], 1685.

£8,500

FIRST EDITION thus. 4to. pp. [2], 1142. Gaelic letter, double column, title in Roman. Decorated initials and ornaments. Light age yellowing, first 6 or 7 ll. a bit dust-soiled and spotted, minor marginal foxing, title strengthened at blank gutter. A good, clean copy in modern natural morocco. Publisher's printed paper slip with transliteration of Gaelic into Latin pasted to title verso.



A good copy of the first edition of the Old Testament in Gaelic. William Bedell (1571-1642) was an Anglican bishop, and 5th Provost of Trinity College Dublin in the 1620s. As Bishop of Kilmore, he commissioned the first translation of the whole bible into Gaelic (New Testament 1681) for evangelisation purposes. The translator was Muircheartach Ó Cionga (1562-1639), member of an Irish family of bards and scribes, and teacher of Irish to Bedell and students at Trinity College. The work was only published in 500 copies 40 years after Bedell's death, at the behest of the Anglo-Irish scientist Robert Boyle (1627-91), using the Irish type cast, at Boyle's expense, by Moxon in London, and based on that used by the Franciscans in Louvain in the 1610s.

This copy includes a very rare added paper slip – employing the same type as the rest of the book – explaining the transliteration of 'Irish characters' into Latin script; we have traced only one other, in one of three copies in Archbishop Marsh's Library. This was likely conceived for the Scottish market. In 1688, 207 copies of Bedall's Gaelic bible were shipped to Scotland at the request of an Episcopalian clergyman. The project was not successful due to the opposition of the Church of Scotland, and because 'the use [...] of Gaelic type which preserved scribal contractions further diminished the accessibility in Scotland where the use of roman script for Gaelic in print [was more common]' (Caball, p.347). Indeed, Boyle later funded a transliteration of the Gaelic bible for the Scottish market in 1690. This paper slip is probably witness to an intermediate step.

Wing B2759A; Darlow & Moule 5534; ESTC R23375; Cassedy 26. Not in Lynam or Best. M. Cabell, 'The Bible in Early Modern Gaelic Ireland', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Bible in Early Modern England, c.1530-1700* (2015), pp. 332-49.

L4504

naif ðeirðmaiz a þfjaðnaifi þear nro-
man ne luf a nðevnta, tðgarð alvif
na mblñof, *¶ Mart. 25.*

D. Un þfvljo gne oyle ððgoibneavðh añ.

M. U tajo a tmi, tnoðrvð ðeirnc 7 vñ-
najðte; aip an labnaman thuar ceana.

D. Cnevð jað na hoif mblñajðte?

M. Doine vq ðeall cñiofo an bñarð fiop-
ðarðe 4 fon ððgojbñðo fpeñalta.

D. Uðq jað fin ðam.

M. bñajðte naboif ó Sbionaro, oip
buð leo nifðfñ nime, bñajðte na cññra-
jðte, oip bu leo ðo feilb an talam.
bñajðte na vobronaiz, oip bjað
folaf aca. bñajðte na hjozaðaið a-
gvñ na hocnaiz an fon an ceipz, oip
biað fapavðh o ðja aca. bñajðhthe na
znocajñiz, oip ðo ðeubajo znocajñe
o ðia. bñajðte na glancñoiððiz, oip
ðo ðeubajo naðanc ðe. bñajðte na fio-
ðcanta, oip gojñfjðñ clañ ðe ðioð.
bñajðte na hñzñmñta an fon an ceipz,

2. **MOLLOY, Francis.** *Lucerna fidelium.*

Rome, Typis Sacrae Congreg. de Propaganda Fide, 1676.

£15,000

FIRST EDITION. 8vo, pp. [4], 391, [9]. Gaelic letter, little Roman. Woodcut printer's device to A2, decorated initials and ornaments. Occasional very minor foxing, couple of minute worm holes at lower blank gutter of title. An excellent copy in contemporary vellum, ms title to spine, upper hinge starting (but firm), few tiny scattered worm holes to upper board. C19 armorial bookplate of Sir John Leslie, Bart, Glaslough House, to front pastedown.

LVCERNA
FIDELIVM,
S E V
FASCICVLVS DECERPTVS
ab Authoribus magis versatis,
qui tractarunt
D E
DOCTRINA CHRISTIANA:
DIVISVS IN TRES PARTES,

Excellent copy of the first edition of this important Irish catechism – the first book printed with Gaelic type by the Propaganda Fide, especially commissioned in 1675 and in use until 1707 (Lynam, p.11). The Irish Franciscan Francis Molloy (Froinsias Ó Maolmhaidh, d.1684) taught theology at the Roman College of St Isidore and in Vienna. In 1676, Molloy published the first Irish grammar in print. The genesis of 'Lucerna fidelium' lies in a 1670 petition to the Propaganda Fide for the urgent release of a new Irish catechism for the use of missionaries; evidence suggests copies of this book were sent directly to Ireland. 'Lucerna' is divided, following the genre of catechisms, into sections on the Articles of the Catholic faith, their meaning according to the Roman Church, and an overview of errors and false arguments against orthodox faith. The work ends with a poem in Irish, 'Soruid a dhithreabhach Ruama go clar Coinn', dedicated to the Irish scholars and missionaries in exile, who would be its chief readers. This kind of catechism 'assisted Irish Catholics in maintaining their faith and exposed them to aspects of the spirituality of their Catholic counterparts in Europe. This exposure prevented the Irish from being completely isolated in spiritual matters and enabled them to have a better understanding of the Catholic world' (Mac Murchaidh, p.90). It was still owned and cherished by Irish Catholic families in the C18 and C19.

Sir John Leslie, 1st Baronet (1822-1916), was Conservative MP for Monaghan county, and a painter.

4 copies recorded in the US. ESTC R41480; USTC 1744302. E.W. Lynam, *The Irish Character in Print 1571 to 1923* (1968); C. Mac Murchaidh, 'The Use of the Bible in the Sermons of Bishop James Gallagher', in *Ireland and the Reception of the Bible*, ed. B. Anderston et al. (2019), pp.79-92.

L4505

ANTEZAS
CNIOSOMIHE

añ. 70,

Alina cūma do Bonabentura obo-
dara bráczq boř voro San
Próinřar accolair de
S. Anřoin a Lobain.

SECUNDA ÆEDITIO.



R O M Æ,

Typis Sacrae Congreg. de Propag. Fide.

Anno M. DCC. VII.

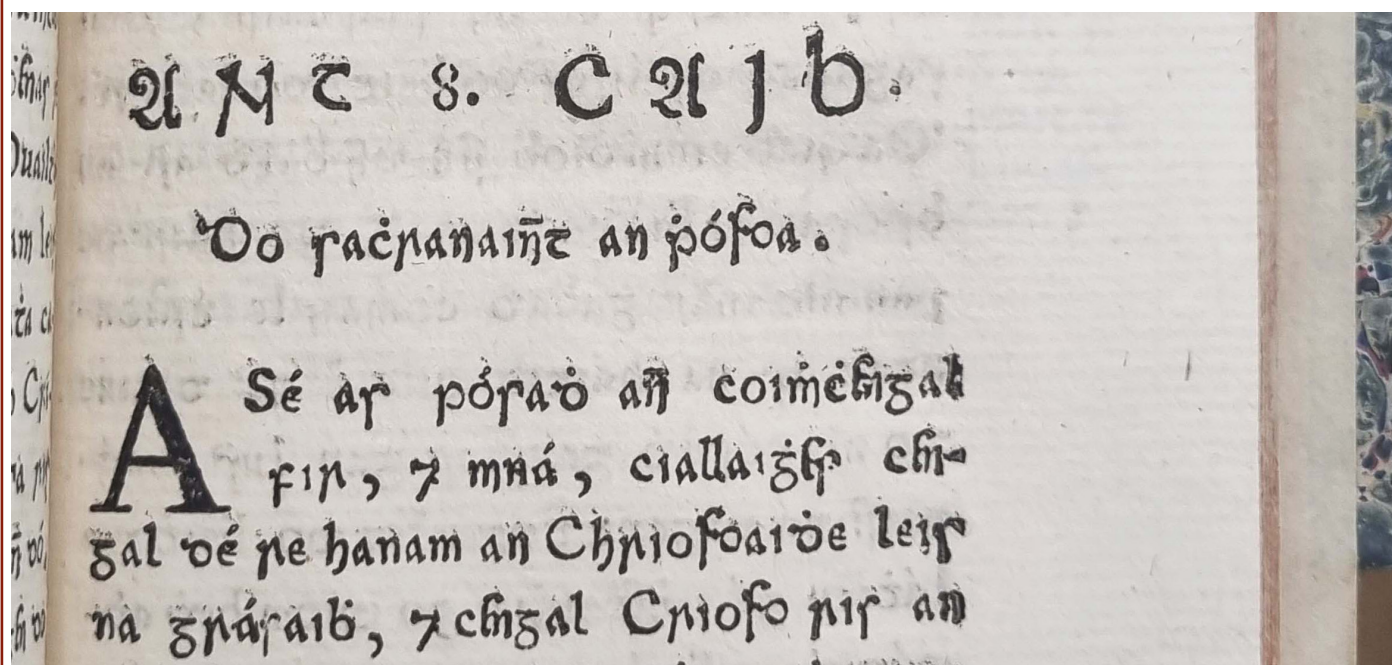
Superiorum permissu.

3. O'HUSSEY, Bonaventura. *An teagasg Criosdaidhe...*

Rome, Typis Sacrae Congreg. de Propag. Fide, 1707.

£2,750

8vo. pp. 259 [i.e., 256], [8]. Gaelic letter, occasional Roman. Woodcut printer's device to title, full-page woodcuts of the Crucifixion and the Virgin of Loreto to a1 recto and verso, decorated initials and ornaments. Intermittent light age yellowing. A very good, clean copy in modern half calf over marbled boards, gilt-lettered label.



An excellent copy of the third edition of the Irish Catechism of Giolla Brighde O'Heoghusa (Bonaventura O'Hussey or Eodhusa, 1574-1614) – 'the material incarnation of the complex and fascinating history of Irish character types' (Ferlier). The first and second eds of 1608 and anytime between 1611 and 1616 (undated) – all by the Irish Franciscan Press in Leuven – survive together in less than 10 copies. Whilst the titlepage calls this edition 'the second', this should be considered the third, printed with Irish type commissioned by the Propaganda Fide in 1675, in use until 1707 (Lynam, p.11).

O'Heoghusa was an Irish Franciscan and poet from Ulster, based at the Irish college in Leuven. 'The publication of "An Teagasg Criosdaidhe" in Antwerp [...] marked a watershed in the history of Irish exiles in the seventeenth century. It was not only a catechism in the Tridentine mould but also the work of an individual' (Ryan, p.259). It was also 'the first legitimate printed Irish letter' (Lynam). The 1707 ed. was revised by Philip McGuire, at the Irish College of St Isidore, in Rome. The establishment of European colleges for the training of Irish missionaries after the Council of Trent was intended to circumvent the Protestant hold on Ireland, and led to an increase and honing of Irish printing. Whilst broadly following the Tridentine 'Roman Catechism', 'Teagasg' is not just a translation. It differs 'especially in its tendency to address issues peculiar to the land for which it was composed', thus resembling 'catechisms produced for use in mission territories', such as that for the Hurons in French Canada (Ryan, p.264). The intended audience were Irish priests, soldiers, and the educated laity. O'Hussey's addition of verse summaries of doctrinal principles made his work extremely popular, thanks to his poetic skills; the summaries themselves were widely circulated in ms. The final gathering, introduced by two woodcuts, comprises O'Hussey's Irish poem 'Tosach agus aistriugha miorbhuileach Theampoill Mhuire Loreto', on the miraculous translation of the shrine of Loreto. 'Eodhusa's success in strategically placing bardic scholarship and print at the service of counter-reformation Catholicism positions him to the forefront of Irish cultural history in the early seventeenth century' (Caball, p.272). A most important work, and probably its only obtainable edition.

ESTC T180574. This ed. not in Best, *Bibliography of Irish philology and of printed Irish literature*. L. Ferlier, 'An Teagasg Criosdaidhe (1707)', *Jesus College Libraries* (online, 2015); S. Ryan, 'Bonaventura Ó hEoghusa's An Teagasg Criosdaidhe' (1611/1614)', *Archivium Hibernicum*, 58 (2004), pp.259-67; E.W. Lynam, *The Irish Character in Print 1571 to 1923* (1968); M. Caball, 'Articulating Irish identity in early seventeenth-century Europe', *Archivium Hibernicum*, 62 (2009), pp.271-93.

L4507

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