

Dialectal features in Co. Clare place-names: the vocalization of the fricatives *-bh-* and *-mh-*

*Including a discussion on lexical items
in Irish place-names*



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Photo on title page: View of Tony Garrihy, The Donkey Tycoon, Ballyvaughan, Co. Clare.
 Creator: Liam Blake. Source: digital postcard collection of Clare County Library.

1 Introduction: aims and methodology

Place-names constitute a bridge between the present and the past, and this makes studying them so fascinating. Not only for the historian, but also for the historical linguist and dialectologist, place-names are a valuable source. The aim of the present work is the reconstruction of features of the Irish language by using place-name evidence. Place-name evidence fruitfully contributes to our knowledge about linguistic developments, as recent studies have shown.¹ Ó Maolalaigh stated that ‘place-names can provide a window on the past which conventional literary sources frequently cannot’.² Many Irish place-names have existed for a long time and appear in medieval sources.³

The language which was spoken in a given area tends to survive partly in the place-names, due to the linguistically conservative character of the latter. This makes place-name study particularly relevant in areas where a language became extinct. The present work focuses on the Irish in Co. Clare in Ireland where until quite recently different Irish dialects were spoken, especially in the northern and western parts of the county. Place-names from Co. Clare might thus shed light on—and might contribute to our knowledge of—the dialects formerly spoken in the county.

Co. Clare was not only chosen because of the present *status* of the Irish language there, but also because of the *nature* of the language spoken in the area, which is inextricably bound up with the geographical circumstances of the county. Clare is the only county in Munster lying west of the Shannon river and it is geographically attached to Connacht. It may justifiably be called a peripheral county as it is surrounded on three sides by water. It was sometimes annexed to Connacht, sometimes to Munster.⁴ The Irish formerly spoken in Co. Clare, as we would expect, reflects this ambivalent position. An overview of the Co. Clare dialects is given in chapter 3.

The present work has been divided into two parts. The original intention was to focus on two or three dialectal features which are reflected in Co. Clare place-names, comparing the evidence, if possible, with the existing literature on the Co. Clare Irish dialects. It was felt,

¹ Recent contributions to this topic are Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh, ‘Place-names as a Resource for the Historical Linguist’, in *The Uses of Place-names* (ed. Simon Taylor, Edinburgh 1998) 12-53 and Carole A. Hough, ‘The role of onomastics in historical linguistics’, *Journal of Scottish Name Studies* 3 (2009) 29-46.

² Ó Maolalaigh ‘Place-names as a Resource’, 15.

³ Kevin Murray has researched whether dialectal features can be discerned in medieval Irish toponymic material. Cf. ‘Dialect in Medieval Irish? Evidence from Placenames’, *Studia Celtica Fennica* 2 (2005) 97-109.

⁴ Michael Mac Mahon, ‘The Bardic Tradition in Clare’, in *Clare’s Gaelic Bardic Tradition*. Cf. <http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/literature/bardic/bardic.htm>.

however, that getting meaningful results was highly dependent on the availability of material, especially on local pronunciation of place-names. This material was scarce. It turned out to be a disadvantage sometimes not being able to visit the places of which the names have been researched in the present work. At some stage, therefore, it was decided to take a somewhat broader approach. A twofold division naturally arose; the first part of the present work, *Lexical items in Irish place-names*, deals with lexical elements that are found in Irish place-names (chapter 4 and 5); the second part, *The vocalization of -bh- and -mh- and Co. Clare place-names*, is devoted to the original approach, i.e. extracting dialectal features from Co. Clare place-names (chapter 6, 7 and 8). The dialectal feature chosen was the vocalization of word-internal *bh* and *mh* and specific vowel changes in the Co. Clare dialects.

In the first part, in chapter 4, I will classify lexical items in place-names using a threefold classification. Particular attention is paid to medieval secular dwellings or fortifications in Ireland (ring-forts). I will also explain the process known as lexical fossilization. The word *baile*, ubiquitous in Irish place-names and also commonly found in parts of Scotland, has been dealt with in chapter 5. In the second part I will look at the vocalization of word-internal palatal and non-palatal *bh* and *mh* and place-names containing words with these elements. In Chapter 6 I will explore the conditions for the vocalization of *-bh-* and *-mh-* as well as the treatment of the fricatives in various dialects. Obviously, the Co. Clare Irish dialects receive most attention. Chapter 7 and 8 are case-studies; I researched place-names that contain the words *dumhach* and *dabhach* (chapter 7) and *abhall*, *ubhall* and *umhall* (chapter 8), mainly in Co. Clare. Sometimes these words seem to be used interchangeably, which could point to a merger of *-bh-* and *-mh-*. On the basis of this observation, the following research question arose:

Have *-bh-* and *-mh-* merged in Co. Clare Irish, based on place-name evidence?

At the end an appendix is found containing additional information on place-names that are illustrative of the most important phenomena that have been dealt with in this work. Place-names or place-name elements that are included in the appendix have been marked ***bold and italic*** when occurring in the main text. I will start with an overview of the most important sources for my study, including a discussion on place-name material collected during the first Ordnance Survey in Ireland.

2 Sources

For the study of Irish place-names, the material produced during the nineteenth-century Ordnance Survey is invaluable. Therefore, a brief discussion on the origin of the Ordnance Survey in Ireland has been included; the potential, as well as the disadvantages, are dealt with when the material is used for dialect study.

The Irish Ordnance Survey Ireland was established in Dublin in 1824. Its main purpose was defining the boundaries of townlands to facilitate the equalization of local taxation. Maps were drawn on a scale of 6 inches to one mile and published between 1833 and 1846, to become later revised on a county-by-county basis. The Ordnance Survey established four local headquarters in Dublin, Cork, Ennis and Belfast. Apart from mapping the country a topographical analysis was made for every townland of which the anglicized forms have been in general use ever since.⁵

We owe much to the famous nineteenth-century scholar John O'Donovan, who was responsible for establishing the official Irish and English forms of place-names during the first Ordnance Survey of Ireland (first half of the nineteenth century). Another great scholar at the time was Eugene Curry, a native from Kilbaha, Co. Clare, who assisted O'Donovan during his research. Visiting parish after parish, O'Donovan recorded the names of various field monuments, connected oral traditions, and assisted in the authentication of local place-names. In the Ordnance Survey Name Books (*OSNB*), in Irish *Ainmleabhair*, townland names were noted down both in Irish and in English, accompanied by their translation and a variety of other information.⁶ O'Donovan provided the forms of place-names that were to be published on the maps. The Ordnance Survey Letters (*OSL*)⁷ contain information about the antiquities in each county.

O'Donovan did his fieldwork at a time when Irish was spoken in large parts of the country. Only because of this fact we cannot ignore the notes resulting from the fieldwork done by O'Donovan during the Ordnance Survey. For the historical linguist and dialectologist, however, interpreting the evidence can be a real challenge. The work was done

⁵ Michael Mac Mahon, 'Townlands', in *Old Territorial Divisions & Land Measures*. Cf. http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/history/territorial_divisions/territorial_divisions_index.htm.

⁶ 'About the 1842 OS 6-Inch Maps', in *1842 Ordnance Survey 6-Inch Maps of County Clare*. Cf. http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/maps/index_OS.htm.

⁷ The Ordnance Survey Letters dealing with Co. Clare by John O'Donovan and Eugene Curry have been made available on the website of Clare County Library, cf. <http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/history/osl/index.htm>.

on a national scale which involved standardization processes in establishing the official version of place-names, both in English and in Irish.

Although the information on the form and meaning of Irish place-names as contained in the *OSNB* is invaluable still for the place-name scholar, there are some things one has to be aware of. Due to the fact that O'Donovan mainly relied on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century written forms of place-names, according to A. J. Hughes, 'a significant number of the 'original' Irish language forms proposed by him in the *OSNB* ... have unfortunately proven inaccurate'.⁸ Moreover, O'Donovan's principal task was to normalize the spelling of anglicized place-names. Consequently, dialectal features were generally neglected. O'Donovan regularized the spelling of *knock* for *cnoc* 'hill', for example, which camouflages the different dialectal realizations of the word throughout Ireland.⁹ These aspects can be a disadvantage for the historical linguist and dialectologist. Yet the results of the *OS* are invaluable since they reflect the situation of pre-Famine Ireland when Irish was still a living language in most parts of Ireland.

The *OSNB* are available on microfilm but have never been published, due to the fact that the books 'contain many inaccuracies and, as a work on place-names, they fail to meet the standard of today's scholarship.'¹⁰ Despite these shortcomings the work is a good starting point. In this context it is worth mentioning the Placenames Database of Ireland (*PNDI*),¹¹ a collaboration of Fiontar (Dublin City University, *DCU*) and The Placenames Branch (Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs), on which information is found for a majority of the Irish place-names. When available, archival records have been digitalized, containing notes on historical forms, pronunciation etc. In many cases the archive documents contain notes copied from the *OSNB*. In the appendix to this work offprints of these archival documents have been included.

Material dealing with the pronunciation of place-names in Co. Clare is scarce. For some counties sound recordings of place-names are included on the *PNDI*. Unfortunately, sound files for Co. Clare are not available yet. Only for one barony in Co. Clare the local

⁸ A. J. Hughes, 'Irish Place-names: Some Perspectives, Pitfalls, Procedures and Potential', *Seanchas Ardmhacha: Journal of the Armagh Diocesan Historical Society* 14 (2) (1991), 116-48, cf. p. 125.

⁹ Anglicized *knock* is pronounced with silent initial *k*-. However, Irish *cnoc* is pronounced with initial /k/; invariably /knuk/ or /kənuk/ (predominantly in Munster), /kruk/ (predominantly in Connacht and Ulster). Cf. Heinrich Wagner, *Linguistic Atlas and Survey of Irish Dialects (LASID)* vol. I (maps), 245. Co. Clare is clearly a border area in this respect. Cf. *LASID* I, point 22 (Kilbaha, Loop Head) /kruk/ (p. 245). O'Rahilly stated that 'one may hear *r* for *n* in parts of N. Clare'. Cf. Thomas F. O'Rahilly, *Irish Dialects Past and Present* (Dublin 1972), 22; also Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* I, 74 § 142.

¹⁰ Hughes, 'Irish place-names', 122.

¹¹ The project started in 2007 and the website, accessible via <http://www.placename.ie/> or <http://www.logainm.ie/>, was launched in 2008.

pronunciation of place-names was systematically collected and published. This was done by Breandán Ó Cíobháin, who gathered the local pronunciation of administrative names and minor features in the barony of Moyarta between 1966 en 1970.¹²

While evidence on the local pronunciation of Co. Clare place-names is limited, the Irish dialects formerly spoken in the county are well documented. In 1946 the Swedish scholar Nils M. Holmer visited the county and analyzed features of the dialects. Holmer's work was published by the Royal Irish Academy between 1962 and 1965 as *The Dialects of Co. Clare* (two parts). In part 1 (1962), apart from an overview of the subdialects and the sociolinguistic situation, the phonology and the grammar of the two major dialects are discussed. The recorded stories, proverbs, riddles, songs etc. and the accompanying phonetic transcription of the collected material appeared in part 2 (1965). Irish is not spoken anymore in Co. Clare and Holmer's results illustrate the dialectal situation as it was in the middle of the twentieth century. Another work which proved helpful was Heinrich Wagner's four-volume *Linguistic Atlas and Survey of Irish Dialects (LASID)*, first published by the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies between 1958 and 1964, especially the volume with maps (I) and the volume on the dialects of Munster (II).

Finally, much information was obtained from the Clare County Library website (<http://www.clarelibrary.ie/>), a rich source containing, for example, digitalized maps, articles, information regarding the 1839 Ordnance Survey in Ireland and various contributions by Clare Local Studies Project (*CLASP*) and the Clare Placenames Committee (*Coiste Logainmneacha an Chláir*).

¹² Breandán Ó Cíobháin, 'Logainmneacha ó Bharúntacht Mhaigh Fhearta, Co. an Chláir' I-V, *Dinnseanchas* 3 and 4 (1968-9; 1970-1). Ó Cíobháin collected the local pronunciation of townland names and minor features in the parishes of Moyarta, Kilballyowen, Kilfearagh and on Scattery Island. I am grateful to Pádraig Ó Cearbhaill, Senior Placenames Officer at The Placenames Branch, for bringing these series of articles to my attention. Ó Cearbhaill has collected the local pronunciation of the administrative place-names of Co. Clare. I was informed that the results have not been prepared in electronic format yet. The historical references have been collected, however, and will be available this year on the Placenames Database of Ireland.

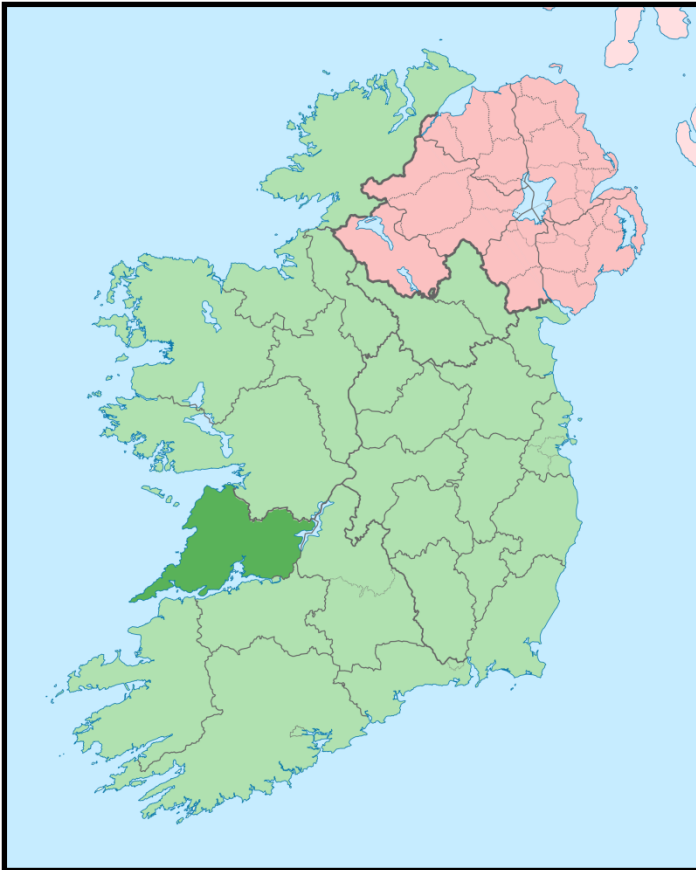


Figure 1 Co. Clare highlighted on the map of Ireland.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, a freely licensed media file repository.

Source, including the authors of the work: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Island_of_Ireland_location_map_Clare.svg#filehistory. This file is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/deed.en>.



Figure 2 Co. Clare baronies

Source: <http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/places/baronies.htm>. Courtesy Clare County Library.

3 Irish and Irish dialects in Co. Clare

In his introduction to the first volume of *The Dialects of Co. Clare* Holmer briefly talks about the linguistic situation in the county. He observed that the Irish language was most strong in Clare's western and northern areas. Irish was commonly spoken on the Loop Head peninsula (parish of Kilballyowen) and in the area between Hag's Head and Black Head (parishes of Killilagh, Killonaghan, and Gleninagh); east of this area existed a compact Irish-speaking zone.¹³ In very few households Irish was spoken by all the members of the household. The children had little knowledge of the language beyond what they got at school and practically everybody was bilingual.¹⁴ Consequently, there was hardly any transmission.

The Irish language spoken in Co. Clare was by no means uniform, according to Holmer. He observed that several subdialects were spoken in Co. Clare.¹⁵ East of the parishes of Killilagh, Killonaghan, and Gleninagh the Irish was preponderantly of the Galway type, i.e. western type. One of the most distinct dialectal features of Galway Irish, as opposed to the Irish spoken in Clare, is initial stress. The latter was found in the Irish spoken on the Finavarra peninsula and Aughrim. In adjacent parts the language was of a mixed form and the varieties spoken there were labeled *The Co. Galway border dialects* by Holmer.

Owing to the fact that the differences between dialects were gradual and that in a large part of the county only English was spoken, it was impossible, in Holmer's view, to draw any definite dialectal boundary lines.¹⁶ Holmer observed similarities between the Co. Waterford and Co. Clare dialects, for example in regard to the evolution of certain diphthongs. We will see that there are also similarities between the vowel changes in the case of vocalized stressed *-mh-* (/w/) in those dialects. These dialectal features are probably peripheral developments within Southern Irish.

¹³ Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* I, 5 § 1.

¹⁴ Ibid. 5-6 § 3.

¹⁵ Ibid 5 § 1 & 8-10 §§ 7-11.

¹⁶ Ibid 5 § 2, 8 § 7. As for the stress patterns found in certain words, there are three rough divisions, according to Holmer (§ 8, p. 8-9). See also the map showing the boundary lines on the last page of part I.

4 Lexical items and fossilization

Various kinds of place-names are found throughout Ireland. They can be classified not only by the natural or cultural features they refer to, but also by the language they originate from, dependent on historical and social conditions in a given time period. In this chapter I will give an overview of the meaning and provenance of the various elements which make up Irish place-names, using the following threefold division: 1) topographically descriptive elements, 2) elements originally referring to bodily features and 3) items indicative of settlement or use of land. A case-study of the name of the island *Oileán Caorach* in Co. Clare may illustrate the phenomenon known as lexical fossilization in place-names.

4.1 Topographically descriptive items, lexical shift and fossilization

4.1.1 Topographically descriptive items

The following topographically descriptive elements occur very frequently in Clare townland names: *cnoc* ‘hill’, *cluain* ‘riverside meadow’, *coill* ‘wood’, *inis/oileán* ‘inlet, waterside location, island’, *gort* ‘field’, *maigh* ‘plain’, *tullach* ‘elevated space, small hill’, *poll* ‘a hole, depression, pool or low-lying place’, *gleann* ‘valley, glen’, *carrraig* ‘rock’. The Irish word *cnoc* (earlier *cnocc*) is the topographically descriptive item which is most frequently found in Irish place-names. The word usually appears as anglicized ‘Knock-’, as in Knockaderry (*Cnoc an Doire* ‘Hill of the Oakwood’).¹⁷ The English equivalent of *Cnoc na nÚll* is Applefort, which is not a mere translation of the Irish name, since *cnoc* is usually translated as ‘hill’.¹⁸ These names are almost without exception seen to be ‘native’ words.

¹⁷ For the pronunciation of the element *knock* cf. p. 6 n9 of the present work. Knockaderry, townland in Templemaley parish, barony of Bunratty upper, cf. <http://www.logainm.ie/6260.aspx>.

¹⁸ In chapter 8 the word *úll* (or *ubhall*) has been discussed.

4.1.2 Lexical shift: *inis* and *oileán*

Liam Mac Mathúna has investigated the diachronic meaning change of topographical items. He examined the contextual and collocational information in order to identify patterns of transitional usage.¹⁹ He discusses the words *inis* and *ailén* (Mod. Ir. *oileán*) ‘island’. He has pointed out that the significant lexical shift took place from about the year 1000 after which some topographical items were gradually replaced by others. The word *ailén* is first attested in the Middle Irish period. Both terms are used in Middle Irish, as well as in Early Modern Irish, where they are seen to be used together frequently. This indicates, according to Mac Mathúna, ‘either complete interchangeability or a felt need to retain the literary associations of *inis* as a perceived support for the neologism, *ailén*’.²⁰

Oileán (< *ailén*) is the only word for ‘island’ in Modern Irish, while *inis* is only found in place-names now. The replacement of *inis* by *ailén* (*oileán*) is a terminological development within Irish. There are other tendencies, such as the development ‘part of the human body’ > ‘physical feature’, the example discussed by Mac Mathúna being the opposition between *tullach* and *cnocc* (the latter originally ‘protuberance’, later ‘hill’).²¹ Place-name elements deriving from bodily features are briefly discussed in section 4.2.

4.1.3 Lexical fossilization: the case of *Oileán Caorach*

A lexical shift such as the gradual replacement of *inis* by *oileán* is closely related to the emergence of fossilizations in place-names. Fossilizations develop when words become *names*. A. J. Hughes deals with the opposition between a *word* and a *name* at the very beginning of his article about various aspects of place-name study:

When a word ceases to have an active meaning it normally no longer retains its place in the living vocabulary, or the *lexicon*, and as a result it passes out of use. The principal distinction between a *name* and a *word* is that although the *name* is first and foremost a *word* or *words*, the meaning of a *name* is not crucial to its survival, due to the fact that *names* need not be understood as lexical items—although they sometimes are—and when they enter into the *onomasticon*, or store of *names*, their survival is not subject to the same pressure to which members of the lexicon are

¹⁹ Liam, Mac Mathúna, ‘Assessing diachronic change in the topographical vocabulary of Early Irish’, in *Euralex 1994. Proceedings* (ed. W. Martin, W. Meijs, M. Moerland, E. ten Pas, P. van Sterkenburg and P. Vossen, Papers submitted to the 6th EURALEX International Congress on Lexicography, Amsterdam 1994) 542–547.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 544.

²¹ *Ibid.* 546.

exposed, or, broadly speaking, *names* survive irrespective of whether they are understood or not, whereas *words* must be understood.²²

As Ó Maolalaigh has pointed out, ‘words may develop other meanings in the normal lexicon or perhaps even become obsolete, thus leaving fossils embedded in the onomastic lexicon.’²³ These fossils, according to Ó Maolalaigh, ‘reflect earlier stages or developments in a particular language, whether in terms of grammar, phonology or semantics. Another category, lexical fossilization, is illustrated by the use of the words *inis* and *oileán* in a place-name from Co. Clare, ***Oileán Caorach***, Mutton Island in English (lit. ‘sheep island’). The island was until recently known as *Inis Caorach*. The majority of the sources between the fifteenth and eighteenth century have *Inis Caorach*, and this was still a common name for the island in the nineteenth century (alternatively Enniskerry, its anglicized form). The only pre-nineteenth century source which contains a version of the place-name with the element *oileán* is *Annals of the four masters (FM)*, compiled in the first half of the seventeenth century.²⁴ Although the place-name occurs in an entry for the year A.D. 799, we probably deal with a seventeenth-century fabrication here. The occurrence of the word *oileán* in *FM* is significant, as it shows that *inis* had become obsolete. Nevertheless, *Inis Caorach* was the usual name until recently. The element *inis* is frequently found in place-names, due to fossilization.

4.2 Items derived from bodily features

The lexical shift whereby words for body parts develop a topographically descriptive meaning was already illustrated by *cnocc*, originally ‘protuberance’ but later ‘hill’. These words are believed to be of very ancient origin. Other examples are *droim* ‘back’, *béal* ‘mouth’ and *ceann* ‘head’, but when applied to the landscape resp. ‘ridge’, ‘river mouth’ and ‘head, end, end-point’.

²² Hughes, ‘Irish Place-names’, 116.

²³ Ó Maolalaigh ‘Place-names as a Resource’, 15.

²⁴ The island is called *oilen Fithae* (see appendix, s.v. ***Oileán Caorach***). John O’Donovan (ed. and tr.), *Annála ríoghachta Éireann: annals of the kingdom of Ireland by the four masters, from the earliest period to the year 1616*. i-vii (Dublin 1848–51). Cf. i 410-1.

4.3 Elements indicative of settlement: ring-forts²⁵

In this section particular attention is paid to settlement terms that point to human habitation. We can divide the various lexical items in two groups: land units and items of settlement. The following words are associated with the use of land: *baile*,²⁶ ‘place, land, farm, town’, *gort* ‘field’, *ceathramha* ‘quarter’, *achadh* ‘field’, *páirc* ‘field, demesne’, *ceapach* ‘tillage, plot’, *garrdha* ‘garden, cultivated plot’. The second category contain settlement-terms. Some are ecclesiastical terms borrowed from Latin, such as the various words for ‘church’, i.e. *cill* (Old Ir. *cell* < *cella* ‘cell, hermitage’), *domhnach* (Old Ir. *domnach* < *dominicus*) and *teampall* (Old Ir. *tempul* < *templum*),²⁷ while others, at least originally, denote secular dwellings, i.e. *lios* ‘enclosure, ring-fort’, *ráth* ‘fort’, *dún* and *cathair*, *caiseal* ‘stone ring-fort’; these latter five form the topic of this section.

The early medieval Irish settlement form *par excellence* is the ring-fort, a defended homestead enclosed by banks of earth or stone. As Deirdre Flanagan pointed out, five settlement terms, which may all be translated as ‘fort’, dominate the Irish townland names: *dún*, *ráth*, *lios*, *cathair* and *caiseal*. In place-name composition *ráth* and *lios* refer to earthen-banked ring-fort, *cathair* and *caiseal* to stone ring-forts, while *dún* may apply to either. The subject of settlement terms within Ireland (based on townland names), Flanagan has argued, may be seen as a problem of three dimensions: meaning and classification, significance of the distribution of these terms, chronology and time-span.

4.3.1 *Ráth, dún, lios*

Dún, *ráth* (or *ráith*) and *lios*, when they are used in place-names, usually refer to earthen-banked forts; they all refer to the settlement-unit *in toto*. The distribution pattern of *ráth* and *lios* is significant. When denoting a ring-fort the element *ráth* is predominantly found in Leinster, being rare in Ulster, whereas *lios*-names are predominantly found in Ulster, and to a somewhat lesser degree, in the rest of Ireland (only a few occur in Leinster). The settlement

²⁵ The following is based on Deirdre Flanagan, ‘Settlement terms in Irish place-names’, *Onoma* 17 (1972-3) 157-72 where she deals with ring-forts and their nomenclature based on Early Irish literature and observation in the field. For the sake of readability, references to pages are not included. For historical and archaeological aspects of the Irish ring-fort cf. Matthew Stout, *The Irish Ringfort* (Dublin 1997).

²⁶ In chapter 5 of the present work I will deal with the element *baile*.

²⁷ Cf. E. G. Quin (gen. ed.), *Dictionary of the Irish Language: Based Mainly on Old and Middle Irish Materials* (Dublin 1978) s.vv. *cell*, *domnach*, *tempul*. This source is henceforth referred to as *DIL*. Cf. also the online version *electronic dictionary of the Irish language (eDIL)*, ed. Gregory Toner, Maxim Fomin, Thomas Torma and Grigory Bondarenko at <http://www.dil.ie>.

terms *dún*, *ráth* and *lios* may be used in an ecclesiastical context, i.e. appear in connection to monasteries.

Dún, and to a lesser extent *ráth*, refer to settlements of the elite, and both terms, although *ráth* somewhat less frequently, are found in early sources and in heroic saga. *Dún* is the most multilateral settlement term in Ireland as the element appears in place-names connected with a ring-fort, hillfort, promontory fort (often coastal), ecclesiastical settlement as well as a Norman *motte* (a castle situated on a raised earthwork).²⁸ The use of the term *ráth* is similar to *dún*, except for the fact that *ráth* never denotes a promontory fort; it was still in use in the Norman period, as illustrated by the numerous examples of *ráth* followed by a Norman surname, although it is often unclear whether townland names with the element *ráth* take their name from a ring-fort, a *motte*, or ‘town’ (rather than the common *baile*).²⁹

The original meaning of *lios*, Old Ir. *les*, is ‘the space about a dwelling-house or dwelling houses enclosed by a bank or rampart’.³⁰ The word *lios* seems to refer to a courtyard rather than the actual dwelling or its *vallum*. The word is used in place-names for an enclosure or ring-fort, and *les*-names occur in connection to monastic settlements. There are several examples of the word *lios* followed by a Norman surname, showing that the term was still in use in the Norman period. Occasionally, the term refers to a *motte*, but it may very well be the case that it was generally used to denote the *bailey* (protective fence) alongside the *motte*. The settlement terms *dún* and *ráth* are used in the context of high-ranking persons and denote the royal strongholds in Early Irish literature. We also find *les* in the early sagas but it invariably serves a descriptive purpose (i.e. it is never used as a place-name).³¹

4.3.2 *Cathair, caiseal*

Cathair is translated in *DIL* as (a) stone enclosure, fortress, castle, dwelling; (b) monastic settlement, enclosure; monastery. *Caiseal*, Old Ir. *caisel* as ‘stone wall, rampart, stone fort’.³²

²⁸ This word goes back to Low Latin *móta* originally meaning ‘mound’, which gave Irish *móta* and English *moat*. Cf. *DIL* s.v. *móta*. The word *móta* is the underlying Irish word in *Moate* in Co. Westmeath, and was anglicized as *mote* in *Baile an Mhóta* (Ballymote) in Co. Sligo.

²⁹ The element *baile*, which, as a settlement term, seems to post-date the Early Irish period, has been discussed elsewhere by Flanagan, cf. ‘Common elements in Irish place-names: *baile*’. *Bulletin of the Ulster Place-Name Society*, 2nd series, vol. 1 (1978) 8-13.

³⁰ Cf. *DIL* s.v. *les* (2).

³¹ Cf. for example Cecile O’Rahilly, *Táin bó Cúailnge: recension I* (Dublin 1978), l. 530, p. 17 & 140 *for in n-iarless* ‘into our backcourt’, l. 531, p. 17 & 140 *isind liss* ‘in the fort’, l. 574, p. 18 & 141 *dúntar in less* ‘let the fort be shut’, l. 588-9, p. 19 & 141 *araill dib for les, araill for dorus liss* ‘some leaping over the wall of the court, others going out by the gate’, l. 2374, p.72 & 190 *im lissu* ‘around the courts’, etc.

³² *DIL* s.v. resp. *cathair* and *caisel*.

Both are considered to be Latin loanwords, *cathair* < *castra* (but problematic) and *caisel* < *castellum*. *Cathair* and *caiseal* usually refer to a stone ring-fort. As Flanagan points out, one meaning of *cathair*, especially in hagiography, is ‘monastic settlement, monastery’. The term *caiseal* often denotes the wall of the stone ring-fort. The change of Latin *st* to Irish *s* marks out *caisel* as an early loan (c. A.D. 500 or earlier) and may point to early contacts between the Romans or Romanized Britons and the early Irish.³³ The word *caisel* is very exceptional as an early place-name. An exception is *Caisel Muman* (Cashel, Co. Tipperary), an early secular centre and seat of the *Éoganacht* dynasties in Munster, later also becoming the seat of a bishop.³⁴

Flanagan remarked that ‘one factor which has a bearing on the concentration of *caiseal* and *cathair* in the West of Ireland is the plentiful, even overplentiful, supply of stone’ and that the terms ‘have a complimentary and almost mutually exclusive distribution’, i.e. place-names containing the element *caiseal* are predominantly found in the north-west while *cathair* is characteristic for the south-west. While the term *cathair* is well attested in Irish writing, *caiseal* is not, apart from a few examples such as *Caiseal Mumhan* (the ‘Rock of Cashel’ in Co. Tipperary, see above), *An Caiseal* (Cashel) in Co. Galway and *An Caiseal Mór* (Cashelmore) in Co. Donegal. Flanagan further noticed that ‘the terms are generally unqualified on the fringe of their distribution, indicating that the site in question was *the caiseal* or *the cathair* in its local area’. The instances of *An Caiseal* in Co. Galway quoted by Flanagan support this, as well as the many results (24) that we get when we search for *An Caiseal* on the *PNDI*. *Cathair* occurs often unspecified in Co. Donegal. Significantly, one instance occurs in Co. Cork.

In some cases *An Caiseal* is the name of a town or townland (obviously derived from a stone enclosure within its borders), later becoming the name of a parish or even electoral district. This process, however, is seen to have happened more in the case of *An Chathair*, which is the underlying element in *Caher* (or *Cahir*), a town, parish and electoral district in Co. Tipperary. *PNDI* produced 39 instances of *An Chathair*, mainly in Counties Galway, Cork, Kerry and Clare. In Co. Clare four instances are found, one in Ogonnelloe parish (barony of Tulla Lower) and one in Inchicronan parish (barony of Bunratty Upper), the other two being adjacent townlands which are specified by resp. ‘Rice’ and ‘Power’. There is a *caher* on the border of these townlands which, presumably, lend its name to both townlands.

³³ John Koch, ‘Caisel Muman’, in John Koch (ed.), *Celtic Culture: a historical encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara / Denver / Oxford (England) 2006) 327-8.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

4.3.3 Composition of Clare townland names with the generic *dún*, *lios* and *cathair*

Of the above-mentioned names for a ring-fort, *lios* and *cathair* occur most frequently in Clare townland names. The lower frequency of the element *ráth* can be explained by its associations with Leinster. In most cases—and this holds for all the settlement-terms discussed in this subsection—the ‘fort’ name is specified by an Irish (sur)name. The number of instances in which *cathair* is followed by a surname make up more than fifty percent of all *cathair*-townland names. In the case of *lios*, a lower proportion is found.

Only two examples were found of Norman family names in combination with an element meaning ‘fort’ as a name for a townland. *Dún Liam* or Fortwilliam (Kilfinaghta/Kilfintinan parish, barony of Bunratty Lower)³⁵ is clearly one. Another example might be Lismorris, in Irish *Lios Mhuiris* (parish of Clondagad, barony of Islands).³⁶ The surname Morris could be from *de Marisco* or *de Marreis*, who were early Anglo-Norman settlers; it may also point to the presence of later settlers from England or Wales. However, the name may just as well be from the Irish *Ó Muirghis* which itself derives from *Ó Murgheasa* (Morrissey).³⁷ An example of the same name in combination with the element *baile* in Co. Clare is Ballymorris, i.e. *Baile Mhuiris* (Kilfintinan parish, barony of Bunratty Lower). In Edward MacLysaght’s *More Irish Families* maps of the four Irish provinces are found with the common family names inserted in the counties (names of Norman origin shown in red).³⁸ In Co. Clare, however, no Norman names appear. This evidence seems in line with the few examples of Norman names specifying a townland name with the generic *ráth*, *dún*, *lios*, *cathair* or *caiseal* in Co. Clare.³⁹

4.4 Summing up

In this chapter we looked at various lexical items that can be found in Irish place-names, illustrated by Co. Clare place-names. A threefold classification was used to study the lexical items, i.e. topographically descriptive terms, items deriving from bodily parts and settlement-terms. Lexical shift was illustrated using the words *inis* and *oileán* as an example. The term *inis*, although occurring in Early Modern sources and in place-names, was gradually replaced

³⁵ Cf. *PNDI*, <http://www.logainm.ie/7528.aspx>.

³⁶ Cf. *PNDI*, <http://www.logainm.ie/6895.aspx>.

³⁷ Brian de Breffny, *Irish family names: arms, origins and locations* (Dublin 1982) 135-6.

³⁸ Edward MacLysaght, *More Irish Families* (Dublin 1982) 238.

³⁹ The element *ráth*, as well as *town*, is seen to be compounded with Norman names occasionally in Leinster. Cf. T. Jones Hughes, ‘Town and baile in Irish place-names’, in *Irish geographical studies in honour of E. Estyn Evans* (ed. Nicholas Stephens and Robin E. Glasscock, Belfast 1970) 244-58, cf. p. 249.

by the word *oileán*. The place-name ***Oileán Caorach*** or Mutton Island, which was more usually referred to as *Inis Caorach* (angl. Enniskerry) throughout the Middle Ages and the (early) modern period, may illustrate the emergence of lexical fossils in place-names. The emergence of linguistic fossils in place-names has been connected to the distinction between *words* and *names*.

Much attention has been paid to the early Irish earthen-banked ring-fort (*dún, ráth, lios*), as well as the words which are more commonly used to denote a stone ring-fort (*cathair, caisel*). *Dún* is the most multilateral settlement term, which occurs together with *ráth* in names of the royal centres in Early Medieval Ireland. The distribution patterns of *ráth* and *lios* were mentioned, which reveal that *ráth* has close associations with Leinster. *Dún, ráth* and *cathair*, although they belong to the earliest stratum of settlement-terms, are seen to be productive in the formation of place-names in the Norman period. The townland names in Co. Clare do not support this: if a ‘fort-name’ is followed by a surname, this is almost without exception an Irish one. The elements *lios* and *cathair* occur most frequently in Clare townland names.

In the next chapter the word *baile*, present in Irish *baile fearainn* ‘town-land’, will be investigated. It seems that the word was originally associated with settlements rather than land-units.

5 Some notes on the development of the word *baile*

5.1 Meaning and development of the term

The element *baile* in means ‘place, piece of land’, ‘town, city’ or ‘a specific measure of land, a townland’.⁴⁰ Gregory Toner remarked that archaeologists have not been successful in showing a relation between *baile*-names and archaeological remains. He has, however, called attention to an article by Charles Doherty, who ‘has recently linked the emergence of *baile*-names to the demise of the ringfort, the appearance of settlement and rectangular houses c. 1000 A.D., and the emergence of unenclosed agricultural clusters organized in townships working an infield-outfield system and ploughing in common’.⁴¹

The word *baile*, anglicized ‘Bally-’ or ‘Balli-’,⁴² is the most frequent element found in the place-names of Ireland and Scotland. As a prefix, it is found in ten percent of all Irish townland names.⁴³ In an article on *town* and *baile* in Irish place-names, T. Jones Hughes has pointed out that:

In the absence of separate names for individual homesteads in the countryside, other than the names of families that lived in them, the townland units became the sole means of distinguishing between small areas locally, and as such their layouts have been familiar to the country man over many centuries ... the townland net is in fact the only surviving administrative framework in Ireland with a continuous history of development going back to medieval times if not earlier.⁴⁴

We have little sources before the late sixteenth century that inform us about land divisions. However, some medieval documentation exists, and some of the denominations listed in the sources can be identified with modern townlands or small units. The Book of Kells (c. 800)

⁴⁰ Cf. *DIL* s.v. *baile*.

⁴¹ Gregory Toner, ‘*Baile*: settlement and landholding in medieval Ireland’, *Éigse* 34 (2004) 25-43, cf. p. 25. Toner refers to Charles Doherty, ‘The Vikings in Ireland: a review’, in *Ireland and Scandinavia in the early Viking Age* (ed. H. B. Clarke, Máire Ní Mhaonaigh and Raghnaill Ó Floinn, Dublin 1998).

⁴² Some ‘Bally-’ and ‘Ballin-’ names derive from *Béal* ((*an*) *Átha*) ‘Mouth or Approach to the Ford’ or *Bealach* ‘pass’. Cf. Pádraig Ó Riain, Diarmuid Ó Murchadha and Kevin Murray, *Historical Dictionary of Gaelic Placenames / Foclóir Stairiúil Áitainmneacha na Gaeilge*, Fascicle 2 [Names in B-] / Fascúl 2 [Ainmneacha i B-] (London 2005) 4.

⁴³ Patrick J. O’Connor, *An Atlas of Irish Place-names* (Newcastle West 2001) 5. In Clare, according to Michael Mac Mahon, the element *bally* appears in upwards of 260 townland names (11 percent). Cf. ‘Topographical and Settlement Features; Land Measures’, in *Naming the Land: ‘Reflections on Co. Clare Place-names*, http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/places/naming_land/naming_land.htm.

⁴⁴ Jones Hughes, ‘Town and baile’, 244.

and the Book of Armagh (9th century), for example, contain charters mentioning land which, according to Thomas McErlean, reveal an already existing division into townlands or small units at the end of the Early Christian period.⁴⁵ He adds, however, that

the evidence is admittedly scant and in need of proper collation. However, it strongly suggests that much of the townland matrix may have been complete by the 12th century. This implies that [the] Irish medieval landscape inherited many of its divisions from the Early Christian Period.⁴⁶

Whether the townlands, of which the majority contain the element *baile*, refer to the same extent of land in the twelfth century has not been examined yet, as Terence B. Barry remarked.

Even were present-day townlands the same area as their pre-Norman predecessors there would still be a major problem in attempting to explain the precise meaning of the word *baile*, as it could mean either a piece of land, a homestead or a cluster of houses.⁴⁷

In the earliest textual sources the original meaning of the word *baile* is simply ‘place’, whether specified or unspecified.⁴⁸ The most recent contribution to the discussion about the Irish word *baile* is by Gregory Toner, who in a 2004 article ventured the statement that the emergence of the word *baile* in townland names is intimately linked to changing settlement patterns in the twelfth century, when farms and larger landholdings emerged.⁴⁹ Depending on the context *baile* may refer to a monastic settlement, a walled town or a small number of dwellings of related families, i.e. a nucleated settlement, of which we have already instances in eleventh century-texts.⁵⁰

Toner provides textual evidence that the word *baile* was being applied to land units as from the twelfth century onwards.⁵¹ According to Toner, ‘the connection between *baile*-

⁴⁵ Thomas McErlean, ‘The Irish townland system of landscape organisation’, in *Landscape archaeology in Ireland* (ed. Terence Reeves-Smith and Fred Hamond, Oxford 1983) 315-39, cf. 332-3. For the Book of Armagh cf. E. J. Gwynn (ed.), *Liber Ardmachanus: the Book of Armagh* (Dublin 1913).

⁴⁶ McErlean, ‘The Irish townland system’, 333.

⁴⁷ Terence B. Barry, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland* (London 1988) 22.

⁴⁸ Deirdre Flanagan and Laurence Flanagan, *Irish Place-names* (Dublin 1994) 22. Gregory Toner observed that the word occurs without a specifying element in the eleventh-century version of *Táin Bó Cúailnge* in Lebor na hUidre. Cf. Toner, ‘*Baile*: settlement and landholding’, 27.

⁴⁹ Toner, ‘*Baile*: settlement and landholding’, 26. According to Toner (p. 27), ‘a number of eleventh- or early twelfth-century texts contain references to *baile*-settlements’.

⁵⁰ *Ibid* 27-30. The earliest precisely dateable occurrence, as Toner points out, is found in the *Annals of Ulster* for the year 1011, where *baile* is used in conjunction with *dún* ‘fort’ (cf. p. 31).

⁵¹ *Ibid*. 32-8.

names and townlands may have been considerably overemphasized'.⁵² Due to the fact it became one of the most common settlement-term in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, he argues, the term *baile* 'farm, homestead' was transferred to the emerging townlands.⁵³ The predominance of *baile* in townland names must be viewed in this context.

5.2 *Baile* in place-names

The word *baile* is extremely rare in place-names before the twelfth century. From around 1150 it first appears in monastic grants, probably referring to landholdings of family groups, and its emergence is closely connected to the new class of document which begins at this time.⁵⁴ According to Flanagan and Flanagan, 'it seems [...] that *baile* in medieval place-name usage could have primarily reference to a homestead, or to the lands of a kin-group, to a nuclear settlement, i.e. a cluster of homesteads or dwellings, or a 'street town', or simply to a delimited land-unit'.⁵⁵ The word occurs in the context of Anglo-Norman settlement, as well as in areas reoccupied by the Irish in the later Middle Ages. Jones Hughes observed that 'the Irish *baile* and the English *town* appear to be employed in very similar circumstances and that in the broad transitional areas of influence of the town cultures the elements are interchangeable.'⁵⁶

Irish *baile* is not only the most numerous element in Irish place-names, it is also combines with the greatest range of elements.⁵⁷ It was attached as a prefix to old place-names such as *Fobhar* (*Baile Fobhair*) or *Boirneach* (*Baile Boirne*), and in particular to ford names, i.e. *Baile Átha Cliath* [Dublin], *Baile Átha Truim* [*Baile Átha Troim*, Trim, Co. Meath]. Further developments can be illustrated by place-names such as *Baile Mór*, an adjective specifying the generic *baile*, and *Baile an Ghleanna* 'baile of the glen, valley', where a noun occurs as a second element.⁵⁸

⁵² Ibid. 39. Flanagan held the opinion that *baile* could mean 'townland', giving examples of Co. Donegal townlands such as *An Baile Beag*, which is indeed small. Cf. 'Common elements in Irish place-names: *baile*', 11 and Flanagan and Flanagan, *Irish Place-names*, 25. Liam Price, on the other hand, stated that *baile* never meant townland in the modern sense. Cf. 'A note on the use of the word *baile* in place-names', *Celtica* 6 (1963) 119-26 (122-3).

⁵³ Toner, 'Baile', 39.

⁵⁴ Ó Riain *et al.*, *Historical Dictionary of Gaelic Placenames*, 4. Also Toner, 'Baile: settlement and landholding', 27.

⁵⁵ Flanagan and Flanagan, *Irish Place-names*, 25-6.

⁵⁶ Jones Hughes, 'Town and baile', 253 & 255.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 253.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ó Riain *et al.*, *Historical Dictionary of Gaelic Placenames*, 4.

5.3 *Baile* in Scotland

According to W.F.H. Nicolaisen, the distribution of the element *baile*, together with the element *achadh* ‘field’, is an indicator of the presence of the Gaelic language in Scotland as *baile* refers to a permanent type of settlement and, therefore, a well-settled Gaelic population.⁵⁹ Ian Fraser stated that it originally denoted a farm or extended farm settlement but later developed the meaning ‘village, town’, and in the case of *baile mór*, ‘city’. He tentatively suggested that the more permanent—and therefore important—settlements that are associated with *baile* were established by Gaelic speakers from the tenth century onwards. According to Fraser, ‘*baile* continued to be used as an active place-name element well into the Medieval period and beyond’.⁶⁰ The element is commonly found in East Central Scotland north of the Forth, and the Moray Firth Basin, where it replaced the Pictish element *pit* ‘share, portion’; furthermore, larger concentrations of *baile*-names are found in South Ayrshire and Western Galloway, and in Argyll and Bute.⁶¹

5.4 Summing up

According to some scholars, the townland system has its origins in pre-medieval times, or at least precedes the twelfth century. Toner emphasized that instances of *baile* in medieval texts are extremely rare before the eleventh century and that its meaning cannot be detached from changing settlement patterns in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. He argues that townlands emerged after the establishment of large farms and landholdings. It is equally likely, however, that the division into townlands predates the emergence of the element *baile*, the latter being applied to large nucleated settlements in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. These settlements could have been established in an already existing framework of townlands, and gave their name to the area in which they were located. Toner, in my opinion, is right when he argues that the modern meaning ‘townland’ is a secondary application. In the later medieval period, *baile* is frequently associated with Anglo-Norman settlement.

Archaeological evidence points to new settlement-forms around 1000 A.D. Perhaps we must see the emergence of *baile* in the eleventh and twelfth century in this perspective. On the

⁵⁹ W. F. H. Nicolaisen, ‘place-names, Gaelic, in Scotland’, in *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* (ed. Derrick S. Thomson, Glasgow 1994) 231-3 and W. F. H. Nicolaisen, *Scottish Place-names* (Edinburgh 2001) 159.

⁶⁰ Ian Fraser, *Baile* in Scots Gaelic, *Bulletin of the Ulster Place-Name Society*, 2nd series, vol. 1 (1978) 14-5. Fraser (p. 14) adds: ‘the word *baile* is still used in Scottish Gaelic to describe a farm especially in the form *baile-fearainn*.’ Note that *baile fearainn* in Ireland denotes a townland.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

other hand, early Irish words for ring-forts, as we have seen, are to some extent productive in the formation of place-names in the later medieval period and occur in combination with a Norman family name.⁶² The absence of *baile* in the sense of ‘settlement’ in our early sources would suggest that *baile* belongs to a different chronological stage than the settlement-terms which we associate with ring-forts (which do occur in Early Irish literature, see above, subsection 4.3.1).

In Scotland the distribution of *baile* in place-names is indicative of Gaelic settlement. It does not, however, belong to the earliest stratum of Gaelic place-names, the term becoming productive, perhaps, as from the tenth century. The rise of *baile* in place-names is connected to permanent and important settlements, and may reflect changing settlement-terms around the year 1000. This changing settlement pattern is comparable to the situation in Ireland and may be a pan-Gaelic development.

⁶² See subsection 4.3.3 above for examples in Co. Clare.

6 Vocalization of *-bh-* and *-mh-*

In Munster Irish, these fricatives are generally vocalized when not followed by a long vowel. In section 6.1 the vocalization of palatal *-bh-* and *-mh-* is dealt with. Most attention is paid to developments regarding non-palatal *-bh-* and *-mh-* as these are found in the place-names which have been analyzed in chapter 7 and 8.

6.1 Palatal *-bh-* and *-mh-* in Munster Irish

According to O’Rahilly, palatal *bh* and *mh* developed differently in Northern and Southern Irish. The fricatives are preserved as a bilabial *v* in Northern Irish, while in Southern Irish, followed by a short vowel or consonant, they are vocalized in the middle of a word, i.e. *deimhin* [d’*ein*’] in Southern Irish, [d’*iv*’*in*’] in Northern Irish.⁶³ As Holmer pointed out, both in the Clare dialects proper and in the Galway border dialects the diphthong *əi* developed in the case of a vocalized *-bh-* if preceded by the digraphs *ai*, *ei* and *oi*, i.e. *geibhim* [’g’*əim*’] (this form is typical for the Clare Irish dialects proper). When *i*, *io*, *u* or *ui* precede, or if the fricative is the nasal *mh*, no diphthong arises; in this case the preceding vowel is lengthened instead.⁶⁴ In this respect the Co. Clare Irish is not substantially different from Munster Irish; compare, for example, Munster Irish forms in which the preceding vowel is lengthened: *duibhe* > *duí*, *cuimhne* > *cuíne*, *deimheas* (> **dimheas*) > *díos*, but *deimheas* > /d’*əis*/ in the Decies (Co. Waterford), *teimheal* (> **timheal*) > *tíol*, but *teimheal* > /t’*əil*/ in the Decies, *deimhin* > /d’*əin*/.⁶⁵ Nicholas Williams has pointed out that, while in Munster Irish slender *bh*, *mh* have usually disappeared internally, both fricatives were retained in the greater part of Connacht.⁶⁶ The latter is also true for the Irish spoken in those parts of Co. Clare that are close to the border with Galway. Holmer recorded *geimhreadh* [’g’*i:vr’ə*], for example, in North

⁶³ T. F. O’Rahilly, *Irish Dialects Past and Present*, 24.

⁶⁴ Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* I, 55 § 107 and 111 § 209. This holds for stressed syllables. In unstressed syllables diphthongs are reduced to monophthongs; cf. Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* I, 60 § 115.

⁶⁵ Seán Ua Súilleabháin, ‘Gaeilge na Mumhan’, in *Stair na Gaeilge in Ómós do Phádraig Ó Fiannachta* (eag. Kim McCone, Damian McManus, Cathal Ó Háinle, Nicholas Williams agus Liam Breatnach, Maigh Nuad 1994) 479-538, cf. p. 487 § 2.23.

⁶⁶ Nicholas Williams, ‘Na Canúintí a theacht chun solais’, in *Stair na Gaeilge* (eag. Kim McCone *et al.*, Maigh Nuad 1994) 447-78, cf. p. 475 § 11.8.

Clare (otherwise ['g'ĩ:r'ə]).⁶⁷ This form also shows that vowels preceding palatal *-mh-* are never diphthongized in the dialects of Co. Clare.

The following pronunciations from informants in Co. Clare were recorded, according to *LASID* II (Munster): [b̥a:r ə t'ɫ'ɛ:] (point 22, 22a, p. 252), [b̥a:r ə t'ɫ'ɛ:] (point 23, p. 282) and [b̥a:r ə t'ɫ'è:ʰ] (point 24, p. 290), for *barr an tsléibhe*, 'the top of the mountain'.⁶⁸ *LASID* shows that *bh* was occasionally pronounced in the gen. sg. form *sléibhe* even in the southern regions of Munster: both [ə 't'ɫ'e:v'] and [ən t'ɫ'e:] (*an tsléibhe*) were recorded in Ballymacoda in East Cork.⁶⁹ The normal evolution is reflected by the latter pronunciation, which is evident in the Clare place-name Ballintlea (South/North) from *Baile an tSléibhe* (*Theas/Thuaidh*), parish of Kilfintinan, barony of Bunratty Lower, Co. Clare and in other place-names in Munster, i.e. Gortatlea for *Gort an tSléibhe*,⁷⁰ parish of Ballymacelligott, near Tralee, and Ballinclay and Ballintlea (both for *baile an tsléibhe*) in Co. Waterford.⁷¹

As for the silencing of palatal *-bh-*, the Co. Clare dialects thus seem to have followed the Munster Irish sound shift. In Brian Merriman's *Cúirt an Mheán Oíche* 'the Midnight Court', written in 1780,⁷² we find *i gcoim an tslé* (: ...*lae*),⁷³ *slé* being a dialectal form of *sléibhe*, gen. sg. of *sliabh* 'mountain'. The example shows that the silencing of palatal *-bh-* was already common practice in late eighteenth-century poetry from Co. Clare. O'Rahilly found evidence for the silencing of palatal *bh* in a MS. of 1503 and he further stated that

many examples illustrating a similar silencing of palatal *bh* and *mh* could be quoted from sixteenth-century English forms of place and personal names connected with Laighin and Munster ... none the less Munster verse not infrequently retains the older pronunciation for metrical purposes, down the end of the eighteenth century or even later.⁷⁴

Williams has provided some examples of place-names containing Irish *baile an tsléibhe* in Leinster, pointing to the fact that the east of Leinster generally follows the Munster Irish dialects, while the Irish formerly spoken in the west of the province tends to be of the

⁶⁷ Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* I, 55 § 107 and 111 § 209.

⁶⁸ Cf. item no. 957 in the questionnaire (the paradigm of *sliabh* 'mountain'). The regions covered in southern Clare were Kilbaha (point 22) and Corbally (near Kilkee, point 22a); in northern Clare recordings were made at Doolin and Fisherstreet (point 23) and Fanore, west of Ballyvaughan (point 24).

⁶⁹ Point 7. Cf. *LASID* II, 73.

⁷⁰ [gortə't'ɫ'e:] according to *Ainmneacha Gaeilge na mBailte Poist* (Dublin 1969) 63.

⁷¹ Williams, 'Na Canúintí', 475 § 11.8. Note that the prefix *t-* in the Irish form is rendered by *c* /*k*/ in Ballinclay.

⁷² Patrick C. Power, *The Midnight Court* (Cork 1971) 6.

⁷³ Daithí Ó hUaithne (ed.), *Cúirt an Mheán Oíche* (Dublin 1968) 17 (line 3-4).

⁷⁴ T. F. O'Rahilly, *Irish Dialects Past and Present*, 25-6.

Connacht-type (i.e. Western Irish).⁷⁵ Silencing of *-bh-* is found as far north as Co. Laois where two instances of Ballintlea occur, one in the barony of Ballyadams and one in the barony of Cullenagh. In the west of Leinster, however, silencing of *-bh-/mh-* did not occur, as anglicized place-names such as Ballintlevy in Westmeath show. Co. Kildare is seen to be the border area; Ballinlea (< *baile an tsléibhe*), in the east of the county, shows the silencing of *bh* while in the west we find Monasterevin < *mainistir Eimhin*, where *mh* has been retained as *v*.

6.2 Non-palatal *-bh-* and *-mh-* in stressed syllables in Munster Irish

The vowels *a* (written *a* or *ea*) and *o*, when stressed, turned into an *u*-diphthong in Munster Irish before *-bh-*, for example *labhair* [lɔu^hɾ] ‘(to) speak’, *abha* [əu] ‘river’ and *leabhar* [l’əuɾ] ‘book’.⁷⁶ Similarly, *a* changed into [əu] before *-mh-* in Munster Irish. Ua Súilleabháin remarked that when the vowel is a long *a*, the outcome is often the same.⁷⁷ In the Decies (Co. Waterford) and in Clare, however, long *a* changed in some cases into long *o* or *u*, according to Ua Súilleabháin.

In the Decies as well as *nəu^hd* you hear *núid* < *námhaid*, which was originally changed into *nómhaid*, *ú* developing regularly from *ó* as a result of the nasal consonant. Likewise there is evidence for *rún* < *rámhann*, *snúire* < *snámhaire* and *lúch* < *lámhach* from Co. Clare.⁷⁸

The word *lámhach* ‘spade’, according to Holmer, ‘is variously pronounced *lúch*, *lóch*, or *lách* (all with a nasal vowel) in various parts of the county’.⁷⁹ This development is not found in the Galway border dialects, where *-amh-* becomes [əu] or [əũ] instead of [u:], as in *samhradh* [səũrə] ‘summer’.⁸⁰ Often with the variant [lu:x] for *lámhach*, nasalization is not forthcoming in the Clare Irish dialects proper. Holmer has pointed out that people substitute the pure vowel /u:/ in this word, unable to pronounce nasalized vowels.⁸¹ As Pádraig Ó Cearbhaill has shown,

⁷⁵ Williams, ‘Na Canúintí’, 475 § 11.8.

⁷⁶ Ua Súilleabháin, ‘Gaeilge na Mumhan’, 487 § 2.23 and Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* I, 55 § 107.

⁷⁷ Ua Súilleabháin, ‘Gaeilge na Mumhan’, 487-8 § 2.24.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 488 § 2.24. The article by Ua Súilleabháin is in Irish. The English translation provided here is mine.

⁷⁹ Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* I, 10 § 11. Cf. also Ua Súilleabháin, ‘Gaeilge na Mumhan’, 488 § 2.24.

⁸⁰ Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* I, 111 § 209.

⁸¹ *Ibid.* 30 § 36.

place-name evidence is valuable for the dating of the loss of non-palatal *-mh-*.⁸² He refers to *Clonroad*, from *Cluain Rámhada* (see appendix).

6.3 Non-palatal *-bh-* and *-mh-* in unstressed syllables in Irish

Holmer has pointed to the development *əu > u:* (i.e. reduction of the diphthong) in post-tonic position, found in practically all Irish dialects. An example is the Irish version of the Clare place-name Kilfenora, *Cill Fhionnabhrach*, in modern spelling *Cill Fhionnúrach*.⁸³ Holmer noticed that the diphthong *əu* was reduced in pre-tonic position in *gabhlán* ‘martin’ (in Dutch ‘huiszwaluw’), which was pronounced [gu:'la:n] by one of his informants.⁸⁴ Two pronunciations for *gabhlán* were heard, viz. [gual] and [gə'va:l]. The words *dubhán* ‘small ox’ and the phrase *damhán allaidh* ‘spider’ were recorded as resp. [duan] and [duan'alə].⁸⁵ These few examples show that in unstressed position *-bh-* and *-mh-* are treated similarly, often becoming /u(:)/. In the case of *lánamha > lánú* (now *lanúin*) ‘couple’, *-mh-* was vocalized in an unstressed syllable, the preceding vowel being lengthened to *ú* instead of diphthongized; in the case of *fir mharbha* ‘killing men’ (> *fir *mharabha*) > *fir mhar'ú*, a ‘helping vowel’ has been inserted and, subsequently, lengthened.⁸⁶ The vocalization of *-abh(a)* and *-amh(a)* in unstressed position, becoming *u:*, occurred in all Irish dialects.

Mícheál Ó Siadhail, in his *Modern Irish: Grammatical Structure and Dialectal Variation*, has explained the vocalization of word-internal fricatives *bh/mh* and *dh/gh* by assuming an intermediary stage in which the fricatives developed into semi-vowels and merged with neighbouring vowels. The result of the merger is that *gh* and *dh* has become /j/ and subsequently /i:/, and that *bh* and *mh* have become /w/ or /ĩ/ and, subsequently, /u:/.⁸⁷ His

⁸² Pádraig Ó Cearbhaill, ‘Researching the placenames of Co. Clare: methodology, sources, restoration’. Originally a paper delivered at a placenames conference at Ballyvaughan, 11-13 April 2003. A digitalized version is found on the website of Clare County Library, cf. http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/places/researching_placenames.htm. The section ‘Clare Placenames in the Irish Language’ is relevant for our purposes. The article was also published in *Changing Names: The dynamic world of Irish placenames and their meanings* (ed. L. d’Auria and E. O’Flaherty, Clare Placenames Committee / *Coiste Logainmneacha an Chláir* (2005) 53-74.

⁸³ Recorded as [k'əl'nū:rəx] and [k'əl'ũrəx] by Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* I, 60 § 115.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid. 27 § 32. *dubhán* is a variant of *damhán*. Cf. Niall Ó Dónaill, *Foclóir Gaeilge-Béarla* (Baile Átha Cliath 1977), s.v. *dubhán*.

⁸⁶ Ó Súilleabháin, ‘Gaeilge na Mumhan’, 487. This development is not confined to *-bh-* and *-mh-* in this position; *-dh-* and *-gh-* /y/ are vocalized as well, i.e. Ó Murchadha *o mərəxu:*. Cf. Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* I, 64-5 § 122 for more examples.

⁸⁷ Mícheál Ó Siadhail, *Modern Irish: Grammatical Structure and Dialectal Variation* (Cambridge 1989) 72-3. In his introductory section on adaptations of I.P.A. for Irish, Ó Siadhail states that ‘the convention among Irish scholars has been, particularly in the case of Munster dialects, to transcribe the broad *bh/mh* as /v/ and the

examples include *talamhan*, gen. of *talamh* ‘ground’.⁸⁸ He formulated two general rules (while giving several exceptions) to account for the conditions under which semi-vowels generally merge with neighbouring vowels in most Irish dialects. The main criteria are the quality of the neighbouring vowels (i.e. long/short, low/mid/high) and the position of the semi-vowel in the word.⁸⁹ Words such as *talamhan* fall under the second rule which covers instances in which a short vowel precedes the semi-vowel (in the case of *talamhan* /w/ or /w̃/).⁹⁰ To account for the existence of a preceding vowel in *talamhan* Ó Siadhail suggests a phonological form /taləwən/, i.e. with insertion of an epenthetic vowel, adding that ‘the conventional spelling ... would now be *talún* ... but the retention of an underlying /w/ ... is demanded by the morphology’.⁹¹

The word *cosmhalacht* ‘similarity’, written *cosúlacht* in modern spelling, goes back to Old Irish *cosmailecht* (< **com-samail-acht*).⁹² An epenthetic vowel has arisen before *mh* in the syncopated form, i.e. *cosamailecht* /cosəwal’əxt/. This is exactly what Ó Siadhail suggests for words such as *tal(a)mhan*, of which the pronunciation /talɹ:n/ derives from /taləwən/. Thus the unstressed vowel preceding *bh* or *mh* may be the epenthetic vowel, giving rise to the development of the semivowel /w/ or /w̃/ and, subsequently, /u:/. When *mh* is vocalized in originally unstressed syllables the nasalization seldom occurs in Co. Clare, according to Holmer. He recorded [ko’su:ləxt] for *cosmhalacht*, [ko’su:ləs] for *cosmhalas*.⁹³

The development of *-bh-* becoming a semi-vowel /w/ and merging with a preceding unstressed vowel can be seen in the Clare place-name *Muiríúch Cille, Tuaithe* (Murroghkilly, -Toohy), the generic being a dialectal version of the close compound

slender *bh/mh* as /v’/, while for other dialects the opposition is often transcribed as broad *bh/mh* /w/ and slender *bh/mh* /v’/. Ó Siadhail has followed the latter procedure (cf. pp. 8-9).

⁸⁸ Ibid. 74. The form *talamhan* is a variant of *talmhan*, Old Irish *talman*. According to Ó Siadhail, /ta:Lu:n/ is the standard pronunciation in Connemara, while /talɹ:nə/ is heard in Mayo, which suggests underlying *talamhana* (cf. p. 73).

⁸⁹ Ibid. 73-5.

⁹⁰ The vowel is unstressed here. When the vowel is in stressed position, a diphthong usually developed, at least in Connacht and Munster, i.e. *leabhar* /L’aur/ < /L’awər/. Cf. Ó Siadhail, *Modern Irish*, 75. In Clare *au* is heard in this position. Cf. previous section (6.2).

⁹¹ Ó Siadhail, *Modern Irish*, 74. *Talmhan* was sometimes recorded /talɹ:n/ in Clare due to hypercorrection, according to Holmer. He states: ‘since the change of *o:* to *u:* in contact with a nasal represents one of the most important distinctions of Clare Irish as against the dialects of Kerry or Galway as well as the language studied in the schools in general, there exists a very marked tendency to restore the original *o*-sound.’ The sound *o:* often occurs in the wrong place, according to Holmer, since ‘the average native speaker has a very imperfect idea of the original distribution of the two vowel sounds’. Cf. Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* I, 73 § 140.

⁹² The phonological changes being 1) *cos-* < **com-s-*, 2) vowel raising after palatal *l*: *-acht* > *-echt* and 3) syncope. For the abstract/collective suffix *-acht* and its variant *-echt* in Old Irish, see Rudolf Thurneysen, *A Grammar of Old Irish*. Translated from the German by D. A. Binchy and Osborn Bergin (Dublin 1946; reprint 1993) 167-8 § 260. The work is henceforth referred to as *GOI*. According to *DIL*, forms with broad *l* and the suffix *-acht* are attested: *cosmalacht*, *cosamlacht* (s.v. *cosmailecht*).

⁹³ Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* I, 63 § 119.

Muirbheach.⁹⁴ The word is often found in place-names and goes back to Old Irish *murbach* or *muirbech*, ‘breakwater, a level strip of land along the sea-coast’. The word *muir* ‘sea’ becomes *mur-* in compounds in Middle Irish when the second element begins with a non-palatal consonant.⁹⁵ The insertion of an epenthetic vowel might have caused the vocalization of lenited *b*, preceded by an intermediary stage in which a semivowel developed. In the appendix other instances of **Muirbheach** in Ireland are provided. The place-names demonstrate that the development whereby *bh* preceded by an (originally) unstressed vowel becomes vocalized is not confined to place-names in Co. Clare. The townland names *Muiríúch Cille, Tuaithe* (with underlying Irish *muirbheach*) show that *bh* was vocalized and merged with an epenthetic vowel, giving /u:/ (possibly < w), which in other dialects only occurred with *-mh-* (as in *talmhan*, see above).⁹⁶

6.4 Summing up

The fricatives dealt with in this chapter are seen to have disappeared in word-internal position. Anglicized versions of place-names show that the vocalization of word-internal *bh/mh* already occurred in the sixteenth century. The diphthong /əi/ developed in the case of a vocalized *-bh-* if preceded by the digraphs *ai, ei* and *oi*. When *i, io, u* or *ui* precede, however, or if the fricative is the nasal *mh*, the preceding vowel is lengthened. In the latter case we thus expect similar vocalization patterns. When *-bh-* is preceded by *a, ea* or *o*, the diphthong /əu/ emerged. The latter development is important for the next chapters on dialectal features and place-name evidence. As for the vocalization of the fricatives, the Clare Irish dialects have parallels with their neighbouring dialect areas, especially Munster Irish. The treatment of the non-palatal nasal fricative *-mh-* in the Co. Clare dialects proper, however, is different from that in Munster Irish and the Co. Galway border dialects (and Western Irish for that matter). The preceding vowel *á* is raised to *ó* and even to *ú* under the influence of the lost nasal sound, whereas in most Irish dialects a diphthong arises in this context (compare *samhradh* [su:rə] in the Co. Clare dialects proper and [səũrə] in the Galway border dialects).

⁹⁴ Ó Cearbhaill, ‘Clare Placenames in the Irish Language’. http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/places/researching_placenames.htm

⁹⁵ *DIL* s.vv. *muir* and *murbach*.

⁹⁶ Compare, however, the townland name Murrough in Oranmore parish, Co. Galway, within the territory of Galway City (suburb and electoral district). The English form goes back to Irish *Muirbheach*, cf. <http://www.logainm.ie/18664.aspx> and <http://www.logainm.ie/1373067.aspx>. In the same county the variant Murrough also occurs, at least as the name of a street; cf. <http://www.logainm.ie/1385345.aspx>.

In unstressed position, in case of a lost non-palatal *-bh-*, /əu/ became /u(:)/ in Co. Clare Irish, in which case the vocalization patterns of *-bh-* and *-mh-* are very similar. This is a typical trait of the Irish dialects formerly spoken in Clare. The place-name *Muiríúch Cille, Tuaithe* illustrates that unstressed *-bh-* was vocalized and merged with the preceding vowel in *u*. A similar evolution is only seen in (originally) unstressed syllables containing *-mh-*, as in the case of *talún* (< *talmhan*).

Also in stressed position *-bh-* and *-mh-* are seen to be treated similarly sometimes. I will illustrate this by researching place-names which contain the elements *dumhhach* ‘sand hill’ and *dabhach* ‘vat, tub, holy well’ (chapter 7), as well as providing a discussion on the words *abhall*, *ubhall* and *umhall* in place-names (chapter 8). Specific attention is paid to Co. Clare place-names.

7 *Dabhach* vs. *dumhach*

In this chapter, as well as the next one, place-names that contain word-internal *bh* and *mh* will be put under close scrutiny. Historical forms as well as recent pronunciations of place-names were used to find out how both fricatives have developed in the different dialects of Ireland, and more specifically, in the Co. Clare dialects. To which degree did the vocalization of *-bh-* and *-mh-* contribute to the confusion between words in Co. Clare place-names?

7.1 Dough: *dabhach* or *dumhach*?

The Irish word *dabhach*, according to Ó Dónaill, can mean ‘vat, tub’, ‘deep water-hole, pool or pond’ or ‘holy well’ (obviously derived from the meaning water-hole etc.).⁹⁷ In Scottish Gaelic the term also exists, but here it was used as a land measurement and developed the meaning ‘ploughland’, anglicized *davach*, *davoch*. The term may refer to the area of land which can be sown from a vat full of seed-corn.⁹⁸ According to *DIL*, *dabach* may also refer to ‘a collection of sand hills on the shore or near the coast’, and a very similar definition is given in the Irish-English dictionary by Dinneen.⁹⁹ Another word for a sand hill or dune is *dumhach*, which, according to *DIL*, is a variant of *duma* (Modern Irish *dumha*), ‘mound’.¹⁰⁰ Ó Dónaill equals *dumhach* with *dabhach*, but, as the place-names discussed below will show, the reverse does not seem to be possible, i.e. *dumhach* can only mean ‘sand hill’ and is never used to denote a holy well.¹⁰¹

It might be the case that the ambiguity inherent in the word *dabhach* was caused by similar vocalization patterns (*dabhach* and *dumhach* were pronounced similarly). This development might be reflected in anglicized place-names which contain the words *dabhach* and *dumhach*. Significantly, either word may be the underlying element in *Dough*, which appears thrice as the name of a townland in Co. Clare and is commonly found as an element in names of minor features.

⁹⁷ Ó Dónaill, *Foclóir*, s.v. *dabhach*. Old Irish *dabach*, ā, fem., gs. *dabcha*, *daibche*. There are instances of *daibche* being acc. sg., in which case the word is modeled on ī-stem.

⁹⁸ Fergus Kelly, *Early Irish Farming* (Dublin 2000) 573 n13.

⁹⁹ Cf. *DIL* s.v. *dabach* and Patrick S. Dinneen, *Foclóir Gaedhilge agus Béarla* (Dublin 1904) s.v. *dabhach*.

¹⁰⁰ Just as *dabach* ā, fem. By extension ‘heap, pile’ in general (*DIL* s.v. *dumach*). Old Irish *duma* ‘mound, tumulus’ is found in the name of the megalithic passage tomb *Dum(h)a na nGiall* ‘Mound of the Hostages’, located in the Tara-Skryne Valley in County Meath, Leinster, Ireland.

¹⁰¹ Ó Dónaill, *Foclóir*, s.v. *dumhach*.

The first instance of *Dough* is found in Kilmacrehy parish in the barony of Corcomroe, at Lahinch. Judged from the minor features and their names in the area, we are dealing with underlying *dumhach* here, although the latter has not been validated by The Placenames Branch. According to the Ordnance Survey maps sand hills are found in the western part, as well as a feature called ‘Sand hill lodge’.¹⁰² Moreover, a feature in the area named Dough Castle was locally known as Cuslaunnadeeagh or Cuslaun a deea, the first element being an anglicization of *caisleán* ‘castle’, the second element a phonetic rendering of a word related to *dumhach*.¹⁰³ As for the townland name, T. J. Westropp, according to T. F. O’Rahilly, noted down *Dúch I Conchúir*, which points to *dumhach* with lost *-mh-* and nasalized *u*.¹⁰⁴ Evidence from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century sources, however, is not conclusive as to the underlying Irish word. In 1589 Doughiconnoghor (*Dúmhach Uí Chonchúbhair*, according to John O’Donovan) was recorded, the digraph *ou* pointing to *dabhach*, rather than *dumhach*. The anglicization Dowgh(e), occurring in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century sources, is less revealing as *-ow-* may either be a written variant of *-ou-* or a reflection of the development of the semivowel *w*, which may be from *-bh-* or *-mh-* (cf. section 6.3).¹⁰⁵



Figure 3 View of Lahinch Golf Course, Lahinch, Co. Clare. Creator: H. B. Cross.

Source: digital postcard collection of Clare County Library.

¹⁰² The Clare County Library website contains an integrated maps system to browse the 1842 Ordnance Survey 6-Inch Maps and other historical maps of Co. Clare. This device is called MapBrowser and was developed by Rainer Kosbi. Cf. <http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/maps/mapbrowser/mapbrowser.html#>.

¹⁰³ Recorded in the *OSNB* (cf. appendix, s.v. Dough (1)). These forms are discussed in section 7.2.

¹⁰⁴ Thomas F. O’Rahilly (ed.), ‘Deasgan Tuanach: selections from modern Clare poets. V’, *The Irish Monthly*, Vol. 53, No. 623 (May 1925) 257-63, cf. p. 260.

¹⁰⁵ For the historical forms cf. appendix, s.v. Dough (1).

Another **Dough** is found in Kilfarboy parish in the barony of Ibrickan at Spanish Point, south-west of Milltown Malbay. *Dumhach* is the Irish form, but the name has not been validated by The Placenames Branch. The Annagh river separates the townlands of Dough and Annagh, and in the latter a well is found dedicated to St Joseph. The well, in the very north-east of the townland, is close to the border with Dough townland and appears as Tubberlaughteen (*Tobar Laichtín*) on the *OS* maps.¹⁰⁶ Patricia Lysaght, in an article about the traditions connected to St Joseph's Well, suggested that Dough townland included the well site formerly, since people refer to it as St Joseph's Well, Dough. She argues that the townland may have taken its name from the Irish word *dabhach*. Alternatively, she states, 'Dough townland might have taken its name from the shape of the well-site and the adjoining area, through which the river Annagh flows in its way to the sea at Bealaclogga (*Béal an chladaigh*, 'Mouth of the rocky shore')'.¹⁰⁷

The word *dumhach* probably is the underlying word here since in the western part of the townland sand hills are found. Moreover, according to the Description of the Remains in the *OSNB*, there is a fort in Dough townland which was locally known as Lisnadiha and a fort called Sandhill Fort.¹⁰⁸ O'Donovan also suggested *Dumhach* 'a sand bank' in 1839. The nineteenth-century forms *Doogh* and *Dooagh* point to a long *u* rather than a diphthong, i.e. *dumhach* instead of *dabhach*. The form *Dowgh* recorded in 1656, however, does not rule out the possibility that *dabhach* is the underlying form, or at least once was.¹⁰⁹

The third instance of **Dough** is at Kilkee in Kilfearagh parish in the barony of Moyarta. The Irish version of the townland name is to be confirmed by The Placenames Branch, but O'Donovan suggested underlying *dúmhach*, 'sandbanks' in 1839.¹¹⁰ This is highly likely as we are again dealing with a coastal townland here which has sand hills near the sea. Moreover, the *OS* maps¹¹¹ do not mention a well in the area. Two pronunciations were recorded by Ó Cíobháin taken from one informant in 1965: [dəux] and [du:x].¹¹² The diphthong in [dəux] points to an underlying form *dabhach* in Dough (see section 6.2), while

¹⁰⁶ Published online, cf. p. 31 n102 of the present work.

¹⁰⁷ Patricia Lysaght, 'St Joseph's Well, Dough/Annagh, Parish of Kilmurry Ibrickane, County Clare: A Photographic and Oral Documentation', *Béaloideas* 69 (2001) 83-106, cf. p. 84, esp. n4. I assume *dumhach* is the word Lysaght has in mind here.

¹⁰⁸ O'Donovan (*OSNB*) has Lisnadiha and suggested *Lios na Dúimche*. Cf. appendix, s.v. Dough (2) and section 7.2.

¹⁰⁹ For the early and more recent forms of this (townland) name see appendix, s.v. Dough (2). If *Dowgh* is a variant of *Dough*, *-ow-* being a rendering of the diphthong *əu* in *dabhach*. As stated above, *w* in the anglicized form may also reflect the development of the semivowel (< *-bh-* or *-mh-*).

¹¹⁰ Cf. appendix, s.v. Dough (3). Perhaps O'Donovan was thinking of *dabhach* here, which indeed can have a plural sense (i.e. 'a collection of sand hills'). Cf. the beginning of this section, p. 30.

¹¹¹ Published online, cf. p. 31 n102 of the present work.

¹¹² Ó Cíobháin, 'Logainmneacha', IV (Paróiste Chill Fhéarach), *Dinnsheanchas* 4, 39.

[du:x] reflects *dumhach*,¹¹³ which, again, seems to underlie the anglicized forms more recently provided; the form given by Samuel Lewis¹¹⁴ is Doogh and during the Ordnance Survey in 1839 Dooagh was recorded. As with the former examples, the orthography employed in early anglicized forms camouflages the underlying Irish word. The anglicized version Dowagh occurs thrice in early seventeenth-century sources and reveals that the vocalization of *-bh-* and *-mh-* was far from established at that time, at least in written forms; only by the second half of the seventeenth century the current name Dough appears, which points vocalization of *-bh-* or *-mh-*.¹¹⁵ This is rather late as we already find evidence for the vocalization of *-mh-* in place-names a century earlier (cf. *Clonroad* in the appendix).¹¹⁶ Perhaps the underlying word in the seventeenth-century forms is *dabhach* instead of *dumhach*, *-ow-* reflecting the diphthong *au*; if so, this rises further questions as to the dating of the vocalization of *-bh-*.

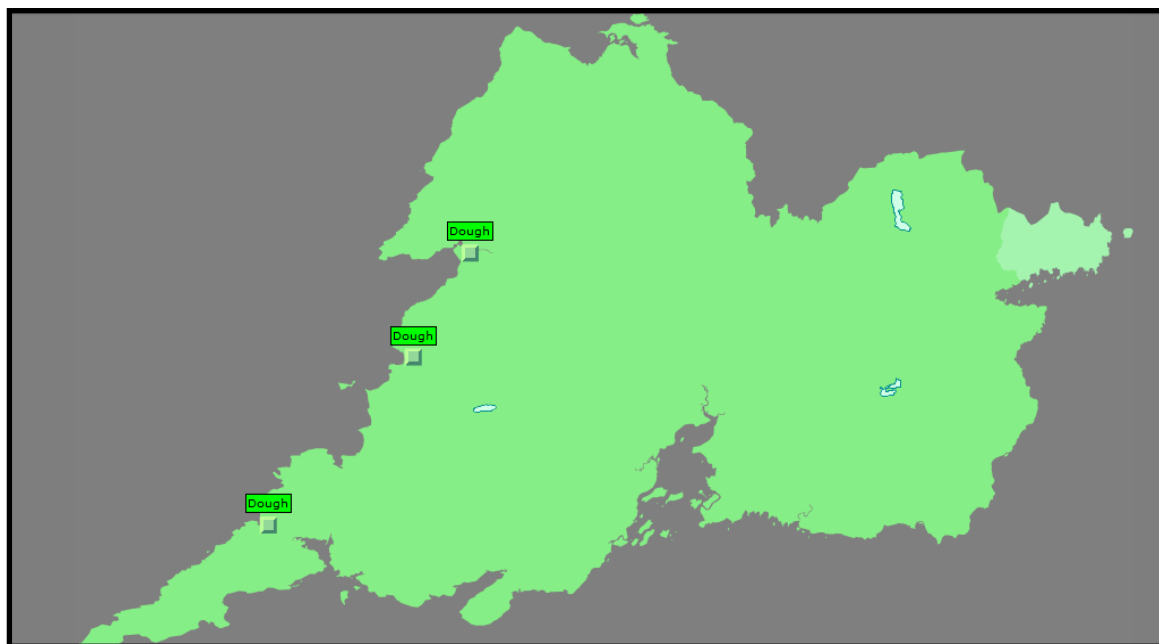


Figure 4 The three townlands in Co. Clare known as Dough. The upper one is Dough at Lahinch (Kilmacrehy parish), the middle one is Dough at Spanish Point (Kilfarboy parish) and the lower one is Dough at Kilkee (Kilfearagh parish).

Source: MapBrowser, <http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/maps/mapbrowser/mapbrowser.html#>. An integrated maps system on the Clare County Library website developed by Rainer Kosbi. Courtesy Clare County Library.

¹¹³ In the pronunciation of the word *dumhach* we find compensatory lengthened *u* before vocalized *-mh-*.

¹¹⁴ Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*. 2 vols (London 1837). Cf. vol. II, 100. The part on Co. Clare was republished by the Clare Local Studies Project under the title *County Clare: A History and Topography* (Ennis 1995), which is also available online (with the preface to the original edition by Lewis), cf. http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/history/lewis_mainpage.htm.

¹¹⁵ For the early and more recent forms of this townland name see appendix, s.v. Dough (3).

¹¹⁶ Ó Cearbhaill stated that the consonant *-mh-* was no longer pronounced by the latter half of the sixteenth century at the latest, judged from the historical forms of the place-name *Clonroad*. Cf. 'Clare Placenames in the Irish Language' at http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/places/researching_placenames.htm.

For the sand hills named Doughmore (Killard parish, barony of Ibrickan) the Irish form *An Dumhach Mhór* was suggested, but this form has not been validated by The Placenames Branch.¹¹⁷ This place-name is mentioned in a story contained in the second volume of Holmer's dialect study. The phonetic transcription *go d'i:n 'dəux 'mu:r* equals, according to Holmer, *go dtí an dabhach mór*¹¹⁸ 'up to Doughmore'. Holmer was right when he took *dabhach* to be the form used by his informant as *əu* indicates that we are dealing with vocalized *-bh-* instead of *-mh-*. Again *dabhach* denotes a sand hill. Earlier evidence, however, points to underlying *dumhach*; Eugene O'Curry stated that the sand hills were popularly known as Doogh More (*Dúch Mhór*).¹¹⁹

In the following example, *dabhach* is used to denote a 'heap, pile', generally *dumha* or *dumhach* in Irish (see above). In the townland of Murrooghkilly, in the Burren, in the very north-west of the county, a cairn named *Dabhach Bhrainín*, anglicized Dough Branneen, is found. According to the archival records on the *PNDI*, *Dobhach Brainín* was noted down during the *OSNB*, and in the *OSL* O'Donovan recorded the name *Dobhach Bhrainín*. The word *dabhach* / *dobhach* refers to a heap of stones here. O'Donovan suggested *Dumhach Brain fhinn* 'sandbank of fair Bran' in the *OSNB* while stating in the *OSL* that 'the true name seems to be Dumhach Bhrainin [*sic.*] i.e. the Heap of Little Bran (nom. viri)'.¹²⁰

A quick search on the *PNDI* shows that *dough* is the anglicized form of *dabhach* now and then in Galway place-names, i.e. in Western Irish. Place-name evidence reveals that *dabhach* is usually anglicized *davagh* in Ulster, however, i.e. without vocalization of *bh*. See for example the townland *Dabhach* / *Davagh* in Co. Monaghan and *Dabhach Phádraig* / *Hollywell*, Co. Tyrone, which is called *Davagh Padric* in McKenna's *History of the Parishes of Clogher*.¹²¹ As John O'Donovan pointed out, *dumhach* appears as anglicized *doagh* in Ulster.¹²² In Ulster there is no confusion between *dabhach* and *dumhach*, as we find no vocalization with *bh* in Northern Irish. Consequently, anglicized forms of place-names unequivocally point to either *dabhach* or *dumhach*.

¹¹⁷ Cf. *PNDI*, <http://www.logainm.ie/104108.aspx>. Anglicized *more* points to Irish *mór*, but we expect the initial consonant of the latter to be lenited since *dumhach* is a fem. word. As the place-name evidence shows, it was common practice to render Irish *mhór* as *more* in English. Compare the many instances of *An Choill Mhór* ('the big wood') throughout Ireland of which the majority has been anglicized as *Kilmore* (one can search for *An Choill Mhór* on the *PNDI*).

¹¹⁸ Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* II, 38-9 (e). *Dabhach* is object of the preposition *go dtí* and must appear in the nominative. This is not supported by the phrase recorded by Holmer, where the lenition of *mór* is not forthcoming (*dabhach* is fem. and we would expect the initial consonant of *mór* to be lenited).

¹¹⁹ T. F. O'Rahilly, 'Deasgan Tuanach', 260.

¹²⁰ This information can be found on the *PNDI*, cf. archival records at <http://www.logainm.ie/104109.aspx>.

¹²¹ James E. McKenna, *History of the Parishes of Clogher*. 2 vols (Enniskillen 1920). Cf. vol II, 299.

¹²² This note appears in the *OSNB* under **Dough** in Kilmacreehy parish, bar. of Corcomroe, Co. Clare (cf. archival records (text records) on the *PNDI* at <http://www.logainm.ie/6669.aspx>).

7.2 *Duimhich and daibhich*

This section is devoted to alternative forms of *dabhach* and *dumhach* and their pronunciation, partly based on the evidence from anglicized versions of place-names. A variant of *dumhach* is *duimhich*, gen. *duimhche*, with the palatal consonant cluster *-mh-*. The *PNDI* gives three instances of *An Duimhich* in Corkaguiny;¹²³ the word *duimhich* refers to sand hills here. Diarmuid Ó Sé recorded the words *duimhich* /di:/, gen. *duimhche* /di:hi/ in his study of the Irish of Corkaguiny (*Corca Dhuibhne*, barony and Irish-speaking district on the Dingle peninsula, Co. Kerry).¹²⁴ The pronunciation /di:/ and /di:hi/ for resp. *duimhich* and *duimhche* in Corkaguiny show that vowels preceding vocalized palatal *-mh-* are not diphthongized; this is also the case in Co. Clare (cf. section 6.1).

The pronunciation of the gen. sg. *duimhche* /di:hi/ in Corkaguiny is similar to the pronunciation of the word in Co. Clare, as the following evidence shows. Consider the elements *deeagh*, *deea* in the local name Cuslaunnadeeagh or Cuslaun a deea¹²⁵ (a fort in **Dough**, Kilmacrehy parish), according to O'Donovan *Caisleán na Dúimche* or *Dúimchi*; also 'diha' in Lisnadiha (a fort in **Dough**, Kilfarboy parish), in Irish *Lios na dúimche* (again O'Donovan).¹²⁶ The pronunciation of *duimhche* in Corkaguiny and the local names of the forts given above show that internal *ch* in *duimhche* has been weakened. Ua Súilleabháin explains that historical *ch* [x'] is only heard in the beginning of a word in Munster. It becomes *h* in the middle of a word, while it is either pronounced *h* or disappears when in final position.¹²⁷ In *duimhich* /di:/ final *h* (< *ch*) was lost. In gen. sg. *duimhche*, /di:hi/ in Corkaguiny, internal *ch* has developed into *h*.

The forms *duimhich* and *duimhche* might have originated from non-nominative forms which were originally part of the paradigm of *dumhach* (Old Ir. *dumach*). *Duimhche*, which is the standard gen. sg. of *dumhach* now, might be from earlier gen. *dumhaighe* or *dumhaí* (Old Ir. *dumaige*). Perhaps nom. sg. *duimhich* is a written variant of *dumhaigh* (Old Ir. *dumaig*), a petrified dat. or acc. sg. of Early Irish *dumach*. A petrified dat. or acc. form of *dumhach* may

¹²³ One can search for *An Duimhich* on the *PNDI*. Two of them are known by the English name Sand Hills, the other one is called The Warren. In all three cases the Irish version *An Duimhich* has not been validated by The Placenames Branch.

¹²⁴ Diarmuid Ó Sé, *Gaeilge Chorca Dhuibhne* (Dublin 2000) 109 § 11.

¹²⁵ The element *a* reflects the gen. sg. article *na* (fem.) of which the *n* has been assimilated to the final *n* of *cuslaun* (*caisleán*).

¹²⁶ The Irish forms were recorded in the *OSNB* (resp. Kilmacrehy and Kilfarboy parish). Cf. Dough (1) and (2) in the appendix. To me it is unclear why O'Donovan put a length mark on the *u* in *duimhche* and *duimhchi*; also the ending *-i* in the latter form is strange, as fem. words of the sec. declension (< *ā*-stem) have an ending in *-e* in the gen. sg.

¹²⁷ Ua Súilleabháin, 'Gaeilge na Mumhan', 487 § 2.22. This is similar to the situation in the Clare Irish dialects. Cf. Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* II, 70 § 134.

underlie the name of a minor feature in the townland of Lettermullan Island (*Leitir Mealláin* in Irish), parish of Moycullen in Conamara (Co. Galway). At the northern end of the village *Foirnis* there is a white sandy beach of which the name is pronounced /du:i:/ (disyllabic). This must go back to either a gen. sg. *dumhaí* (*dumhaighe*, Old Ir. *dumaige*) or dat./acc. sg. *dumhaigh* (Old Ir. *dumaig*). Presumably it is from the latter.¹²⁸ When one talks about being in, going to or departing from a certain place, the place-name is in the dative or accusative case. This ‘version’ of the place-name is the one most frequently heard and may therefore become the ‘standard’ form. Consequently, nominative forms of place-names are often petrified accusatives or datives.

The English questionnaire used in *LASID* (vol. II-IV) contains ‘a sandbank’ (item no. 1066). In many cases a two-word composition was given in Irish, the gen. sg. *gainimh* (from *gaineamh*) ‘sand’ generally following a word meaning ‘hill’ or ‘bank’.¹²⁹ In Co. Clare the words used were *bannc gainimh* (point 22, 22a, p. 253), *tullán gainimh* (point 23, p. 283) and *cuisle ghainimh* (point 24, p. 291). At Dunquin in Corkaguiny [dɪ:] was recorded and this is the only place in Munster where people used a variant of the word *dumhach* when referring to a sand hill.¹³⁰ At Ballycastle, Co. Mayo, a sand hill was commonly referred to as *muc ghainimh*, according to the phonetic transcription in *LASID*, the alternative being [du:ˈxˈə].¹³¹ The latter apparently only occurred in place-names and probably reflects *duimhche*, which can only be gen. sg. Perhaps the word only occurs in non-initial position in local place-names, i.e. in the construction ‘X na *duimhche*’ (‘X of/at the sand hill’). This restricted use of the word might have resulted in the fact that the gen. sg. became the default form, which is, therefore, a fossilization on a grammatical level (compare the above-mentioned dat./acc. sg. *dumhaigh*).

On the Curraun Peninsula, Co. Mayo, a sand hill was referred to as [du:i], which was also recorded at some points in Ulster.¹³² The pronunciation [du:i] points to vocalization of *-mh-* and compensatory lengthening of the preceding vowel. The *u* might be nasalized under the

¹²⁸ I owe this example to my supervisor. He also pointed out that *Leitir Móir* (townland, anglicized Lettermore) and *Trá Bháin* (minor feature) in Killannin parish, barony of Moycullen, Galway, may be petrified datives (or accusatives). Nom. forms would be *Trá Bhán* and *Leitir Mhór*. *Leitir* ‘hillside, slope of a hill’ consists of *leth-* ‘side, half’ and *tír* ‘land, country’; *tír* is neuter in Early Irish but feminine now. Similar place-names are found throughout the country: *Leitir Mór*, *Leitir Mhór* and *Leitir Móir*. If the latter is a petrified dative form we would expect lenited *m*. The absence of lenition here can be explained as a merging of acc. and dat. sg. in acc. sg.; it may also be the case that forms without lenition after *leitir* are fluctuations between masculine and feminine (< original neuter).

¹²⁹ The item was left blank now and then in the questionnaire. It seems that the word was more recorded in coastal than in inland areas. Evidence from Man (point 88) and Scotland, both in *LASID* IV, is excluded.

¹³⁰ Point 20 in *LASID*. cf. vol. II, 233.

¹³¹ Point 59 in *LASID*. cf. vol. III, 325.

¹³² Curraun peninsula = point 53 in *LASID*. Cf. vol. III, 252. For Ulster cf. *LASID* IV, point 74 = Gortahork (p. 77), point 74a = Meenacladdy (p. 86) and point 75 = Tory Island (recorded under item no. 1076 (‘sand’), p. 92). At Meenacladdy (point 74a), north of Gweedore in Co. Donegal, [du:hi] was recorded, to which was added ‘sg.’.

influence of the lost nasal fricative, as is the case in the form recorded at point 75, Tory Island (Co. Donegal), i.e. [dũ:i].¹³³ The word which is pronounced [du:i] or [dũ:i] is probably *dumhaigh*, a petrified case form (dat./acc.) of *dumhach*. Recall that the sandy beach called [du:i:] (with long *i*) in Lettermullan Island in Conamara probably reflects the same underlying petrified case form of *dumhach* (i.e. *dumhaigh*). In Northern Irish vowels in unstressed syllables are shortened, which accounts for the fact that *dumhaigh* becomes [du:i] (with short *i*).¹³⁴

The word *dabhach* also occurs with palatal *-bh-* and this form is also found in various parts of Munster. Diarmuid Ó Sé recorded *daibhich* /dai/, gen. *daibhche* /daihi/.¹³⁵ Alan Ward recorded /dæih/ for *daibhich* ‘vat’ from an informant in Cape Clear, Co. Cork in 1973.¹³⁶ One can see that *-bh-* was vocalized which triggered the development of an *i*-diphthong, a normal development in Co. Clare when *ai* precedes the vocalized fricative *-bh-* (see section 6.1). The element *daibhich* occurs in *Daibhich Bhríde* ‘Bridget’s Vat’, officially established as St. Bridget’s Well in English,¹³⁷ in Ballysteen townland near Liscannor, Co. Clare. Reference to the well is made in a couple of stories recorded from the mouth of Stiofán Ó hEalaoire, who invariably referred to the spot as *Tobar Dhaigh Bhríde*.¹³⁸ Note the peculiar form *daigh* here. According to Ó Dónaill, *daigh* is a variant of *dabhach*.¹³⁹ Ó hÓgáin states that when final *dh* and *gh* (broad and slender) were pronounced [g], they appear as *g* in the orthography.¹⁴⁰ This means that *dh* and *gh* symbolize something else than *g*; no information, however, is given on this specific transcribing practice. From a grammatical point of view we would expect the part that follows *Tobar* to be in the genitive case. This means that *daigh* reflects a genitive form. However, the word *Tobar* ‘spring, well’ might be a later addition, by analogy with *Tobar Naomh Bríde*,¹⁴¹ a variant name of the well. On the basis of this evidence *daigh* is likely to be

¹³³ Point 75. Cf. *LASID* IV, 92 (recorded under item no. 1076 (‘sand’)).

¹³⁴ Art Hughes, ‘Gaeilge Uladh’, in *Stair na Gaeilge* (ed. Kim McCone *et al.*, Maigh Nuad 1994) 610-60, cf. p. 625 § 4.1.

¹³⁵ Ó Sé, *Gaeilge Chorca Dhuibhne*, 109 § 11. Tomás de Bhaldraithe, in his study of the Irish spoken in *Cois Fhairrge*, heard one informant pronounce gen. sg. *daibhche* as /daif’i:/, proving the existence of the devoiced palatal fricative (/f/ < /v/ + /h/). By other informants the gen. sg. was the same as nom. sg. /daux/. Tomás de Bhaldraithe, *Gaeilge Chois Fhairrge: an deilbhíocht* (Dublin 1953) 36 n10.

¹³⁶ Alan Ward, *The Grammatical Structure of Munster Irish*, University of Dublin, 1974 (unpubl. Ph.D. thesis). Cf. § 34.

¹³⁷ The Irish version of the name has not been validated by The Placenames Branch. Cf. *PNDI*, <http://www.logainm.ie/104040.aspx> and <http://www.logainm.ie/1410665.aspx>.

¹³⁸ Séamus Ó Duilearga (eag.), Dáithí Ó hÓgáin (a chóirigh), *Leabhar Stiofáin Uí Ealaoire* (Baile Átha Cliath 1981) 244-5, 279. the well was referred to as *Tobar Naomh Bríde* [ˈtoːbər ne: br’i:d’ə] by three informants from Liscannor; cf. Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* II, 280-3.

¹³⁹ Ó Dónaill, *Foclóir*, s.v. *daigh*.

¹⁴⁰ Ó Duilearga and Ó hÓgáin, *Leabhar Stiofáin Uí Ealaoire*, 335. Ó hÓgáin states that he has followed the conventions laid out by Ó Duilearga, who used a semi-phonetic writing system (cf. p. 333).

¹⁴¹ Holmer, *Dialects of Co. Clare* II, 280-3.

a nom. sg. form. I assume *daigh* reflects the pronunciation of *daibhich*, which is, just as *duimhich*, a petrified case form.

There is evidence that *daibhich* is a variant of *duimhich*, just as *dabhach* is a variant of *dumhach*. I will revert to the sand hills named Doughmore in Killard parish (cf. p. 33 above). Aindrias Mac Cruitín, a Clare poet born in Moyglass (parish of Kilmurry, barony of Ibrickan), probably had this place in mind when he wrote the poem beginning *Beannú doimhin duit, a Dhuinn na Duíche!* (thus appearing in an edition of the poem by T. F. O’Rahilly).¹⁴² Mac Cruitín addresses the local mythological figure *Donn na Duimhche* (‘Donn of the Sand hills’), who might be equated with *Donn Dumha*, one of the princes of the *Tuatha Dé Danann* (a mythological tribe); in Clare he was popularly known by the name Donn Doogh, according to Eugene O’Curry.¹⁴³ Doogh is unmistakably the anglicized form of *dumhach*. Compare the alternative form *Donn na Daibhche*, from an edition of the poem by Liam Ó Luaighnigh.¹⁴⁴ The word *daibhche* is pronounced [ˈdi:hˠə] as the metre shows (:oíche, :dhíogras etc.). This example does not only prove that *daibhich*, which is seen to be used for a well in the place-name *Daibhich Bhríde*, may refer to a sand hill, but also that the pronunciation is extremely close to *duimhich*, which caused the words to be used interchangeably, at least in Co. Clare.

7.3 Summing up

Few sources are available that deal with the local pronunciations of the words *dabhach* and *dumhach* in Co. Clare place-names. The only source that I had at my disposal was the study done by Ó Cíobháin in the 1960s. The townland name **Dough** near Kilkee in Kilfearagh parish (barony of Moyarta) was pronounced [dəux] and [du:x] by the same informant, which means that *dabhach* and *dumhach* are treated as the same word, i.e. ‘sand hill’ or ‘sand hills’.

The ambiguity inherent in the word *dabhach* may have been caused by similar vocalization patterns and. Consequently, *dabhach* and *dumhach* were treated as the same word. The orthography employed in early anglicized forms such as *Dowagh* or *Dough*—the latter seems to replace the former in the seventeenth century—camouflage the underlying

¹⁴² Thomas F. O’Rahilly (ed.), ‘Deasgan Tuanach: selections from modern Clare poets. V’, *The Irish Monthly*, Vol. 53, No. 623 (May 1925) 257-63, cf. p. 257. The poem was composed around 1735. Cf. ‘Aindrias Mac Cruitín’, in *Clare’s Gaelic Bardic Tradition*, <http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/literature/bardic/bardic.htm>

¹⁴³ Cf. T. F. O’Rahilly, ‘Deasgan Tuanach’, 260-1.

¹⁴⁴ Liam Ó Luaighnigh (ed.), *Dánta Aindréis Mhic Cruitín* (Ennis 1935). This incomplete edition appeared as a series in the *Clare Champion* commencing on 5 January, 1935. Cf. Mac Mahon, ‘Aindrias Mac Cruitín’.

Irish word. The digraph *ou* would suggest a diphthong, i.e. *dabhach* /dəux/, but later, in the nineteenth century, we also find anglicized forms which are more likely to reflect *dumhach*, i.e. *Dooagh* or *Doogh* (the forms often recorded during the early nineteenth-century Ordnance Survey). The form *dabhach* (which gave *Dough*) is perhaps a dialectal form of *dumhach*, and underlies the early attested *Dough*. The convergence of the words was enforced by similar vocalization patterns of the resp. fricatives.

We have seen that the alternative forms *daibhich* and *duimhich*, with resp. palatal *-bh-* and *-mh-*, are both used in the sense of ‘sand hill’. Again similar vocalization patterns seem to have facilitated the convergence of both words. Also in Connacht and Ulster words are used for ‘sand hill’ related to *dumhach*. The pronunciation /du:i:/ (Conamara) and /du:i/ (north-west Connacht and Ulster) probably reflect a petrified dat. or acc. sg. *dumhaigh*. The word in Corkaguiny for a sand hill is /di:/, written *duimhich*. The establishment of *duimhich* as a new nominative might have paved the way for a new inflection pattern. It remains unclear whether nom. sg. *duimhich* is a written by-form of *dumhach*, or is a petrified case-form of the latter, perhaps closely associated with place-names. The exact same development may be seen for the word *dabhach* ‘vat, tub, holy well’ which is alternatively *daibhich* /dai/, such as in *Daibhich Bhríde*, a minor feature near Liscannor, Co. Clare.

8 *Uball, abhall, umhall*¹⁴⁵

8.1 *Abhall and ubhall: etymology*

Úll is the word for ‘apple’ in Modern Irish. The word was formerly written *ubhall*, going back to Old Irish *uball* or *ubull*, m. or n., ‘the fruit of the apple-tree, an apple’.¹⁴⁶ According to *DIL* and *Lexique Étymologique de L’Irlandais Ancien (LEIA)*,¹⁴⁷ *uball* or *ubull* can also refer to any round object in general. However, there is also a word *abhail* in Modern Irish, a fem. word meaning ‘apple-tree’, from Old Irish *aball* with the same meaning and gender.¹⁴⁸ Vendryes points to a similar distinction in Welsh, and states that the difference in vocalism might be explained on the grounds of a different stem, i.e. **ablu-* for the name of the apple and **abal-n-* for the name of the apple-tree.¹⁴⁹ The change of *a > u* in *ubull* can be explained by vowel harmony. The distinction between *ab(h)all* and *ub(h)all* is, however, far from clear. Dinneen (*Foclóir Gaedhilge-Béarla*) gives *ubhail* ‘apple-tree’ and *abhall-ghort, ubhall-gort* ‘applefield’. Other recent sources (i.e. in Modern Irish) use *abhall* in the sense of ‘apple’, which is usually *ubhall*.¹⁵⁰ The question is whether the interchangeability of *ubhall, umhall, abhall* etc. was influenced by similar pronunciation patterns or enforced by the lost distinction between *ubhall* and *abhall*, i.e. ‘apple’ and ‘apple-tree’ become the same word.

8.2 *Gortnanool*

T. S. Ó Máille has researched Irish place-names which contain the element *úll*, which he thinks derives from *ubhall*. He points to the alternative meaning of *úll*, i.e. ‘round object’ etc. and assumes that *úll* in topography denotes a round hill. His observations in the field indeed showed that an *úllchnoc* ‘round hillock’ was present in all the places under discussion. He

¹⁴⁵ The main source used in this chapter is T. S. Ó Máille, *Uball* in *áitainmneacha, Galvia* 2 (1955), 59-65.

¹⁴⁶ Ó Dónaill refers to *úll* under *ubhall*. For the Old Irish form cf. *DIL* s.v. *uball*. In Old Irish the word was neuter, much later becoming masculine.

¹⁴⁷ J. Vendryes, *Lexique Étymologique de L’Irlandais Ancien: lettre A* (Dublin and Paris 1959; repr. 1981) A-6.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Ó Dónaill s.v. *abhail*. Modern *abhail* (with palatal *-ll*) is probably originally the form of the dat. sg. long *a*-stems. It has a gen. sg. *abhla* now, replacing the older *abl(a)e*. The consonant group *-bl-* arising from syncope (*abl-e*) assumes a uniform quality, which as a rule, according to *GOI* (p. 98 § 158), is determined by that of the first consonant (which is non-palatal *-b-*). In a later stage of the language the gen. sg. ending *-(a)e* became *-a*, possibly because of confusion between the different noun stems. The word *abhail* belongs to the third declension in Modern Irish (masc. and fem. words).

¹⁴⁹ Vendryes, *Lexique Étymologique (A)*, A-6.

¹⁵⁰ Ó Máille, *Uball*, 61.

argues, therefore, that it is *úll* which underlies the various instances of anglicized *-ool*, *-owl*, *-owel* etc. in his examples.¹⁵¹ Ó Máille's examples include Gortnanool, a townland in the parish of Kilfintanan, barony of Bunratty Lower, Co. Clare, for which he suggests the underlying Irish form *Gort an Úill* or *Gort na n-Úill*.¹⁵² The latter is the official version now.¹⁵³

Earlier forms of Gortnanool do not unambiguously point to *ubhall* etc. meaning 'round hillock'. Ó Máille gives the earlier forms *Gort na n-abhall* (*na n-obhall*), *Gort na n-ubhall*, field of the apples, Gortnanool, Gurtnanool, Gurtnanoul.¹⁵⁴ Also the local pronunciations were recorded, i.e. [gortnə'nu:l', gortnə'nauwəl', gortə'nauwəl']. As can be seen, two variants have the diphthong [au] which point to underlying *abha(i)ll* 'apple-tree', which may be reflected in anglicized *-oul* in Gurtnanoul.¹⁵⁵ The variant with [u:] might point to *úll* (*ubhall*) 'apple', which could account for the forms Gortnanool, Gurtnanool, with *-ool*. Ó Máille admits that he has no explanation for this; he only observes that confusion exists between *ubhall* and *abhall*, and that a clear distinction is lacking in the later language. No evidence was available on the pronunciation of *abhaill* in Co. Clare, but judged from the pronunciation of words with internal *bh* such as *gabhar* [gəur] and *abha* [əu], *abhain* [əun'], *abhaill* > *úll* seems highly unlikely.

Note that all three local pronunciations of Gortnanool have palatal *l*, which points to a genitive form or *úill* (*ubhaill*). However, both the local pronunciation and the anglicized forms point to the article *na*, which, when gen. sg., rules out the possibility that *ubhall* or *úll* (which is masc.) is the underlying Irish word. *Abhaill* (Old Ir. < *aball*) is feminine and the gen. sg. is *abhla* now (< Old Ir. *abl(a)e*).¹⁵⁶ Combined with the gen. sg. fem. article we get *na hAbhla*, but it is highly unlikely that *Gort na hAbhla* would give anglicized Gortnanool (or Gortnanoul). It is more likely that the anglicized elements *-oul* and *-ool* reflect a gen. pl.,

¹⁵¹ Ibid. 60-1.

¹⁵² Ó Máille, *Ubhall*, 61. Another instance given by Ó Máille is the place-name *Úlla* (*Oola* in *Ainmneacha Gaeilge na mBailte Poist*, p. 84) in Co. Limerick, which might be translated as 'round hillocks'.

¹⁵³ Cf. PNDI, <http://www.logainm.ie/7546.aspx>.

¹⁵⁴ Ó Máille, *Ubhall*, 60. Ó Máille has used the *OSNB*, Co. Clare, parish of *Fionachta*. The townland of Gortnanool, however, is in the parish of Kilfintanan, which is south of a parish known as Kilfinaghta (*Cill Fhionachta*), which is probably the parish mentioned in the *OSNB* (i.e. *Fionachta*). Perhaps the parish of Kilfinaghta included the parish of Kilfintanan formerly, or extended as far as the townland of *Gortnanool* in the 1830s.

¹⁵⁵ The vowels *a* or *o* preceding *bh* in stressed syllables, as was shown in section 6.2, are generally diphthongized in Munster Irish.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. p. 40 n148 of the present work. Note also the place-name *Cluain Abhla* in Co. Tipperary, of which historical forms have been collected by Pádraig Ó Cearbhaill, cf. 'Abhalta nó Olltaigh srl. i Logainmneacha', *Studia Hibernica* (1995-97) 205-215. *Cluain Abhla* is first attested as Clonaule (c.1280). The anglicized element *aule* could very well reflect the older genitive *abhlae* (Old Ir. *abl(a)e*). Other early anglicized forms of the place-name show that the underlying element was probably gen. pl. *abhall*., Clonhawil (c. 1281), Clonaul (1327), Clonawyll (1349), Clonawell (1486), Clonol (1492).

which is either *abhall*¹⁵⁷ or *úll* (*ubhall*), and this is supported by the historical forms of the place-name. Note that the nasalization caused by the gen. pl. article is forthcoming in the local pronunciation. Probably palatal *l* in local pronunciation is the result of the mixing up of the words *úll* and *abhail* due to the fact that the original meaning of the place-name has been lost.

Ó Máille believes that we are dealing with the word *úll* in Gortnanool. There is a very round hill of considerable height in this townland, as well as two minor hills. Ó Máille argues that it is the major one which is referred to here and is in favour of *Gort an Úill* (*úill* being gen. sg.), *úll* thus being interpreted as *úllchnoc*.¹⁵⁸ The English variant *field of the apples* does not support this, but this name may very well be based on a false etymology (i.e., a folk etymology).

8.3 *Ubhall and umhall*

Edmund Hogan, in his *Onomasticon Goedelicum*,¹⁵⁹ gives numerous instances of *ab(h)all* in early place-names, while the word *ub(h)all* is absent; *um(h)all* or *umhull*, however, is represented.¹⁶⁰ Ó Máille believed that the word *umhall* is comparable to *ubhall* and developed from the same root, the development *ubhall* > *umhall* being due to the confusion between *-bh-* and *-mh-*, occurring in Middle Irish and probably even earlier.¹⁶¹ Evidence from Hogan's *Onomasticon Goedelicum* speaks against this, as *um(h)all* is found but never *u(b)hall*. There seems no compelling evidence, therefore, to assume that *umhall* developed from *ubhall*. Moreover, we do not find **amall* for *aball* in place-names; if the forms were interchangeable we would expect to encounter *ab(h)all* together with **am(h)all* and *ub(h)all* together with *um(h)all*. This would suggest that *-bh-* and *-mh-* did not merge, at least not in Middle Irish, and that *ab(h)all* and *um(h)all* in early place-names are unrelated. The evidence in *Irish*

¹⁵⁷ Now *abhla*, but this is a late form.

¹⁵⁸ Ó Máille, *Ubhall*, 61.

¹⁵⁹ Edmund Hogan, SJ, *Onomasticon Goedelicum et locorum Hiberniae et Scotiae* (Dublin 1910). Cf. also the online version at <http://publish.ucc.ie/doi/locus>, an initiative of the Locus project, Department of Early and Medieval Irish, University College, Cork. The aim of the project is to produce a new Historical Dictionary of Irish Place- and Tribal Names to replace Hogan's *Onomasticon*. Three fascicles, resp. names in A-, B- and C-, have already been published by the Irish Texts Society, cf. Pádraig Ó Riain, Diarmuid Ó Murchadha and Kevin Murray, *Historical Dictionary of Gaelic Placenames / Foclóir Stairiúil Áitainmneacha na Gaeilge* (London 2003-...).

¹⁶⁰ *Ab(h)all* often occurs in conjunction with *gort* or *achad(h)* in which case it is likely that reference is made to an orchard (Hogan, *Onomasticon*, s.v. *aball* and *achad*).

¹⁶¹ Ó Máille, *Ubhall*, 62-3. Cf. also *GOI*, 85 § 134. Ó Máille (p. 63) shows that the alternation between lenited *b* and *m* is found in forms from eighth century entries in the *Annals of Ulster* and in Latin loanwords such as *promhadh* < *probatio* and *mebuir* < *memoria* (cf. *GOI* 573-4 § 924).

Grammatical Tracts reveals that the plural *umhaill* is not too much associated with the word *úll*.¹⁶²

A significant proportion of the references to *Umall* or *Umhall* in Hogan refer to *Umhall* in Co. Mayo. The name *Um(h)all* occurs in eighth-century entries in the Annals of Ulster. The area comprised *Umhall Íochtarach* and *Umhall Uachtarach*, resp. present baronies of Murrisk and Burrishoole (*Buiríos Umhaill* < *Buirgheis Umhaill*). The districts together were known as *Umall Uí Mháille* or *An Dá Umhall*.¹⁶³ Ó Máille collected anglicized versions of the name recorded between the fourteenth and sixteenth century such as Owle Imale, Ouleymaley, Owyl and The Owles. In 1515 the name *O'Mayll de Pomo* appears in state papers, which suggests that the word *Umhall* is interpreted 'apple-shaped object' or the like and that it is, consequently, still connected to the word *ubhall*.¹⁶⁴ Ó Máille is not convinced that people remembered the true meaning of the name, i.e. 'round hillock', but in an *addendum* to his article appearing a few years later, he refers to a eighteenth-century source which contains a passage that seems to prove that the old sense of the word was remembered.¹⁶⁵ He adds, however, that there are hardly any round hills in the area, and that it is not clear to which one *Umhall* refers. The word may as well have been subject to folk etymology. If it is a particular *úllchnoc* that is referred to in the eighteenth-century document, Ó Máille has stated, his theory that *Umhall* is from *ubhall* is correct.

8.4 Summing up

The sources which Ó Máille has used to prove the relationship between *umhall* and *ubhall* are quite late. Ó Máille does not account for the absence of the word *uball* in early attested place-names. Perhaps the word *um(h)all* is not related to *ab(h)all* and *ub(h)all* and was confused with the latter only because of a similar spelling and, in a later stage, a similar pronunciation due to the vocalization of the internal fricatives. By the Middle Irish period, it had become an equivalent of *ubhall*.

It seems clear, however, that the orthographical variation in historical forms of place-names, such as in the case of Gortnanool in Co. Clare, illustrate the confusion between *abhall*

¹⁶² The tracts were edited and published by Osborn Bergin as a supplement to *Ériu* between 1916 and 1955. Cf. § 94, line 1646. (Ó Máille, *Ubhall*, 64).

¹⁶³ Ó Máille, *Ubhall*, 62-3. Cf. Hogan, *Onomasticon* s.v. *umall* and also *FM* iii 198, 326-8.

¹⁶⁴ Ó Máille, *Ubhall*, 63.

¹⁶⁵ 'Buresula, anglicè *Burishool*, hibernicè *Buresuail*, id est, *Locus Territorij Pomorum*, sic dicti quia Territorij illius Montes sunt Figurae Pomalis.' Cited from *Hibernica Dominicana* by Dr. Thomas Burke (1705-1776), who was Dominican Bishop of Ossory. Cf. *Athnótaí* in *Galvia* 4 (1957), 66-7.

and *ubhall* (or *umhall*). As we have seen, the modern pronunciation of the place-name does not prove useful in determining whether *úll* or *abhall* is the underlying element. On the other hand, anglicized versions such as Gortnanool and Gortnanoul suggest that either *úll* or *abha(i)ll* is the underlying form. Judged from the evidence on vocalization patterns regarding word-internal *bh* it is highly unlikely that *abhall* became *úll* (*ubhall*); the former is pronounced with a diphthong [əu], the latter with [u:]. However, Modern Irish sources reveal that the words were mixed up. This was probably also due to the similar meanings, that is, ‘apple, fruit of the apple-tree’ (*ubhall*, *úll*) is very similar to ‘apple-tree’ (*abha(i)ll*).

Written evidence from the eighteenth century as well as fieldwork done by Ó Máille shows that it is plausible that the word *úll*, originally ‘apple’, at some stage developed topographical connotations. I am not sure whether the semantic development apple > ‘round object’ > ‘round hillock’ has anything to do with the confusion between *abhaill*, *ubhall* and *umhall*.

Unfortunately, many Irish place-names are not attested before the nineteenth century, when the place-names were first recorded. By the time that words such as *ubhall* and *abhall* (and perhaps *umhall*) were used interchangeably, their original meaning was lost. Generally, place-names had never been written down and people had to rely on the pronunciation (which may have changed over time); a place-name was, consequently, often subject to folk-etymology.

9 Conclusions

Part I. Lexical items and in Irish place-names

In part I of the present work lexical items have been discussed using a threefold classification, i.e. topographically descriptive terms, items deriving from bodily parts and settlement-terms. Attention was paid to fossilization of lexical items in place-names. This is but one aspect when dealing with conservatism in place-names; fossilizations in place-names also occur on a phonological, grammatical and semantic level. Settlement-terms that denote early Irish ring-forts were discussed, as well as the element *baile*. Instances of *baile* in medieval texts are extremely rare before the eleventh century and that its meaning cannot be detached from changing settlement patterns in the eleventh and twelfth centuries when nucleated settlements arose, i.e. larger farms and landholdings. In Scotland the term also originally referred to larger settlements (of a Gaelic speaking population) and their emergence is probably roughly contemporary with the establishment of *baile* in Ireland. The meaning ‘town’ or ‘townland’ (*baile fearainn*, in Ireland) is a secondary application. As a settlement-term *baile* belongs to a different chronological stage than the settlement-terms that we associate with ring-forts. However, the early Irish words for ring-forts are productive in the formation of place-names in the later Middle Ages.

Part II. The vocalization of -bh- and -mh- and Co. Clare place-names

The second part has been devoted to Irish dialects in Co. Clare and one dialectal feature, i.e. the vocalization of palatal and non-palatal *-mh-* and *-bh-*. The research question formulated in the first chapter is recalled:

Have *-bh-* and *-mh-* merged in Co. Clare Irish, based on place-name evidence?

The conditions were given for the evolution of either a diphthong or a long vowel before *-bh-* and *-mh-* in Co. Clare Irish. The most distinctive trait of Clare Irish in the context of the vocalized fricatives dealt with in the present work is the emergence of a monophthong *ó* or *ú* in case of a (stressed) *á* followed by a lost *-mh-*. In the case of *-bh-* a long vowel only occurs when the preceding vowel is *i*, *io*, *u* or *ui*, while vowels preceding lost *mh* are always

lengthened in the Clare Irish dialects proper. The vowels *a*, *ea* and *o* developed into a diphthong before lost *-bh-* in the Co. Clare dialects. From a purely grammatical point of view, complete merger of the *bh* and *mh* is impossible, at least from a grammatical (phonetic) point of view. A language is not only a set of rules, however. Semantics play a significant role as well, as the linguistic developments in the analyzed place-names show.

In some instances, however, when they appear in pre- or post-tonic position, *-bh-* and *-mh-* are vocalized in an almost identical manner (becoming /u/ or /u:/), as Holmer's examples show. The Clare place-name *Muiríúch Cille, Tuaithe*, the generic being a dialectal form of *muirbheach*, shows the merger of *-bh-* with a preceding epenthetic vowel to give /u:/ (possibly < /w/). Other instances of ***Muirbheach*** in place-names throughout the country do not show such a development. A similar development can only be seen with words such as *talmhan* /taləwən/, now commonly written *talún* in Irish, reflecting the pronunciation of the word, where *mh* has been vocalized. On the basis of the fact that a long *u* also developed after the loss of *-bh-* in ***Muirbheach*** we may conclude that *-bh-* and *-mh-* in unstressed syllables have merged in Co. Clare.

The discussion on the merger of *-bh-* and *-mh-* has, however, centered around the place-names containing *dabhach* and *dumhach*, and *abhall*, *ubhall* and *umhall*. Unlike *muirbheach*, these words have *-bh-* and *-mh-* in stressed syllables. In accordance with the dialectal evidence (in this case Clare Irish, and Munster Irish generally), *bh* was lost and the diphthong /əu/ emerged in the case of *dabhach* and *abhall*. In the other three words /u:/ emerged; this development is widespread in the Gaelic dialects (compare the modern spelling *úll* for earlier *ubhall*).

In the place-names known containing the element *Dough* the underlying element was seen to be either *dumhach* or *dabhach*. The latter generally means 'vat, tub, holy well', but it was never used in this sense in the Clare townlands which were put under close scrutiny (the variant *daibhich*, however, was seen to be used for 'holy well' in one place-name). It was argued suggested that the ambiguity inherent in the word *dabhach* was caused by similar vocalization patterns and convergence of the words *dabhach* and *dumhach*. The main problem in the case of the underlying element in ***Dough*** is the pluriform character of the historical spellings. Early attested anglicized forms (sixteenth-eighteenth century) point to *dabhach*, while nineteenth-century sources point to *dumhach*. I do not want to go as far as to say that a complete merger of *-bh-* and *-mh-* is the case, as both [dəux] and [du:x] were recorded by Ó Cíobháin in Moyarta.

Some cursory remarks have been made on the origin of the words *duimhich* and *daibhich* and their occurrence in (Clare) place-names. There was no time to provide a comprehensive and thorough discussion on the matter. Some observations, however, are worth mentioning here. I have mentioned the possibility that *duimhich* and *daibhich* are petrified case-forms which developed a new inflectional paradigm. The word *daibhich* may be used to denote a sand hill which points to a partial interchangeability of the terms. Of particular significance is the occurrence of *daibhche* in an edition of an early eighteenth-century poem by the Clare poet Aindrias Mac Cruitín, where *duimhche* would have been more suitable in terms of rhyme. In absence of other examples, however, I am hesitant to conclude that both words are pronounced exactly the same. Again I would not suggest that *-bh-* and *-mh-* have merged. Further research, however, will definitely yield more fruitful results.

The place-names with *ubhall* or *abha(i)ll* are equally problematic. Here the similar treatment of both words might have been due to convergence on a semantic level, even more than with *dabhach* and *dumhach*; the latter were perhaps only associated with each other due to similar vocalization patterns, at least originally. Historical spellings as well as modern pronunciation of the place-name Gortnanool in Co. Clare, with the established Irish version *Gort na n-Úll*, as have been shown, reveal that the words *ubhall* (*úll*) and *abhaill* were mixed up, perhaps because of the fact that the meaning of the place-name was lost. On the basis of early place-name evidence it was argued that the word *umhall* is unrelated to the above-mentioned forms. Ó Máille's attempted to prove the early convergence of *ubhall* and *umhall* by referring to the confusion of *bh* and *mh* in Middle Irish (or even earlier). I am not convinced by his theory and would rather suggest that this confusion is a more recent phenomenon. At the same time the variation in local pronunciation of the place-name Gortnanool suggest that local people consider different Irish words to be the underlying element in the place-name, as is the case with the evidence from the pronunciation of one the instances of **Dough**. There is no compelling reason to suggest a merger of *-bh-* and *-mh-*.

Taking the evidence together, *-bh-* and *-mh-* have not merged in the Co. Clare Irish dialects, at least not in stressed position. In the case of unstressed syllables containing *-bh* and *-mh-*, there is evidence that the fricatives merged.

Orthographic, phonetic and semantic information was used to answer the question whether *-bh-* and *-mh-* have merged. I am aware of the limitations of the sources which contain this information. In the case of written evidence, i.e. historical forms of Irish place names, we often rely on English sources. The anglicized version of a place name in such a source often camouflages underlying form. Although phonetic evidence (pronunciation) is

usually more helpful in establishing the genuine underlying Irish form, one again should consider the possibility that there is influence from English (the phonological system of one language (i.e. English) affects the system of the other (i.e. Irish)). Finally, we must be aware of the fact that the literal meaning of words in place-names is irrelevant and therefore often unknown. This can give rise to speculation about the significance of a place name (the emergence of a folk-etymology) and may have an effect on the way the place-name is pronounced.

Appendix

This appendix contains additional information on the place-names discussed in the main text. Documentation from the archives of The Placenames Branch has been made available online on the Placenames Database of Ireland (<http://www.placename.ie> or <http://www.logainm.ie>). The documentation includes scans of archival records and digitalized text records. These are very useful as they contain material copied from the Ordnance Survey Note Books (in Irish *Ainmleabhair*, abbreviated *AL*) which have, as already mentioned, never been published. Regarding the documentation, the website states that

it indicates the range of research contributions undertaken by the Branch ... over the years, but it does not constitute a complete record, and evidence is not sequenced on the basis of validity. It is on this basis that this material is made available to the public.

Much information on place-names in the present work derives from these digitalized archival records. This chapter contains offprints of these records. Grateful acknowledgment is made to Fiontar (*DCU*) and The Placenames Branch for permission to reprint the material.

Clonroad

Irish *Cluain Rámhada*, usually taken to be the ‘Meadow of the Long Rowing’ (*rámh-fhada*) or, alternatively, ‘Pasture of the Clearing’.¹⁶⁶ In the latter case *rámhada* is gen. sg. of *rámhad* ‘clearing’. It was the name of the stronghold of the O’Briens which was built in the early thirteenth century which gave its name to the later town of Ennis, *Inis Cluain Rámhada*. This name relates to an island formed between two courses of the River Fergus on which the Franciscan Abbey was built. As Ó Cearbhaill has pointed out, *Clonrawde* appears in a list of castles compiled about 1580. The anglicized form points to the silencing of *-mh-* in the second half of the sixteenth century. The metrical assonance in poems composed by or attributed to the eighteenth century poet Seon Ó hUaithnín suggests that *á* was pronounced as *ó* or *ú*. The

¹⁶⁶ The latter is the explanation given on the *PNDI* for the townlands of *Clonroad Beg* and *Clonroad Mór* (cf. resp. <http://www.logainm.ie/6270.aspx> and <http://www.logainm.ie/6271.aspx>). The first meaning was already suggested by P. W. Joyce in *The origin and history of Irish names*. 2 vols (Dublin 1901), cf. vol. 1, 442. The term *rámhad* occurs in the early Irish law-texts, meaning ‘a cleared area in front of a king’s fortress’, or ‘a road’, Cf. Fergus Kelly, *A Guide to Early Irish Law* (Dublin 1997) 543-4.

local Irish form of the place-name was recorded as *Cluain Romhad* in the Ordnance Survey namebook of 1839 (Drumcliff Parish).¹⁶⁷

Dough

Dough (1), townland in Kilmacreehy parish, barony of Corcomroe (Irish form *Dumhach* not validated by The Placenames Branch).

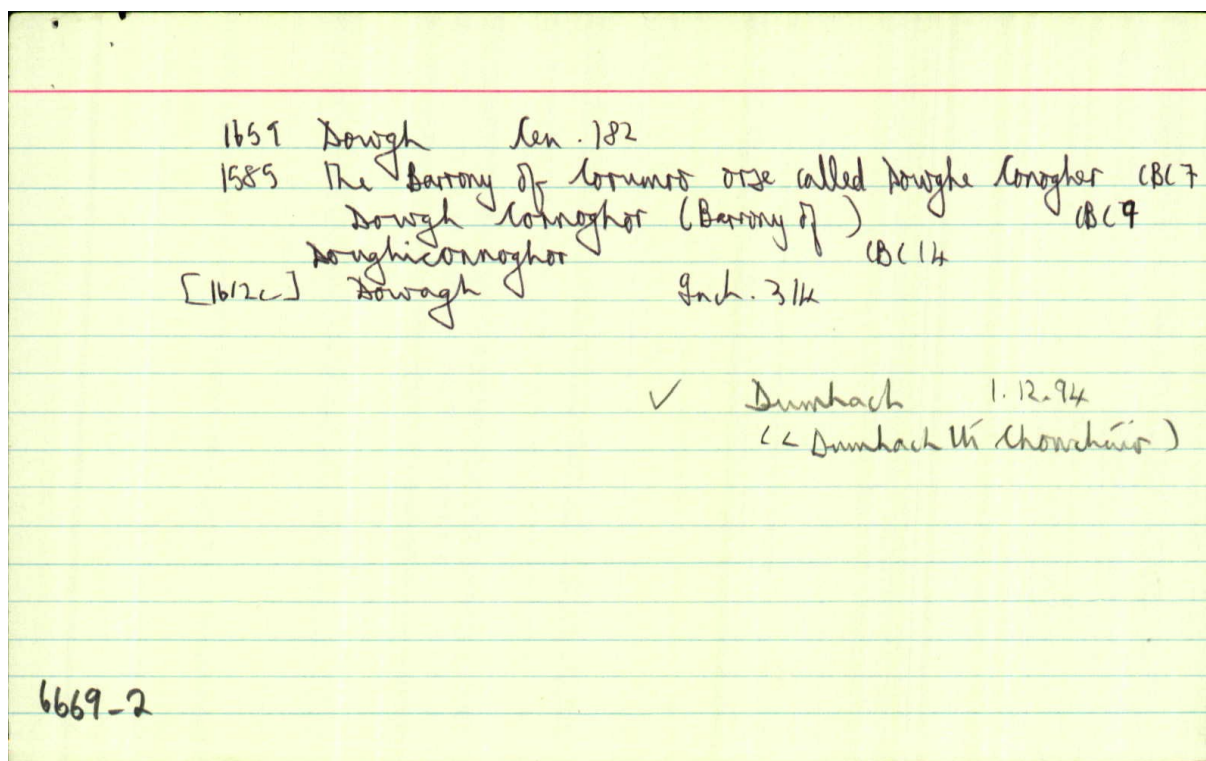
Source: <http://www.logainm.ie/6669.aspx>.

Scanned record 1/2

Dough	Cl 15, 23	to Corcomroe, Kilmacreehy
At Doogagh BS		
Dough O Connor Cr. Maj		
Dumhach pl, OD		
Dumhach and Dumhach thí Chonchúthair OD		
Cuilaunnadeogh Local name		
cuileán na dúimhche pl		
cuileán na dúimhche OD		
Cuileán na a deha Local		
1660c. Cloghanemulwora al. Dough O Connor BS 238		
1787 Dough Cas. Pelham		
1685 Cloghane mulwora Hib. Del		
6669-1 1655 c. Sandyhills, Lorkis, Cloghanemulwora BS		

¹⁶⁷ Ó Cearbhaill, 'Clare Placenames in the Irish Language'.
http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/places/researching_placenames.htm.

Scanned record 2/2



Ad scanned record 1/2.

Cuslaunnadeeagh and Cuslaun a deea are local forms of *Caisleán na Dúimhche/Dúimhchi*, according to O'Donovan's notes in the *OSNB*. In *FM* (iv 852) in an entry for the year 1422 we encounter the phrase *hi cCaislén na Dumhcha*, which, according to O'Donovan, 'is now called in Irish *Caisleán na Dúimhche*, i.e. the castle of the sandbank'. Note that *dumhcha* is gen. pl., i.e. 'castle of the sandhills', while in the more recent local forms a singular is used.

Dough (2), townland in Kilfarboy parish, barony of Ibrickan (Irish form *Dumhach* not validated by The Placenames Branch).

Source: <http://www.logainm.ie/6826.aspx>.

Scanned record

DOUGH	01	B. IERICKAN P. KIIFARBOY O.S. 30
OSNB Dooagh B/S Dumhach O'D , dum-- pl (glanta)		
Onomasticon:		
1.374	Dumach mór Doughmore... nr Dunbeg c.Clare At.vii.139	
1.373	Dumacha LL 8a; Dond mac Miled and 24 servants were lost at the Dumachaib in the W. of Ireland; called Teach nDuind Lec.567,Lg.74,Cps.126	
} At Lisnadaha Local (Lit: in t.t. of Dooagh) Lios na dúimhebe pl, 00		
1660c	Dough	BSO 417
1621	Dough	CFR 493
[1656]	Dough	Genh. 539
		✓ Dumhach
6826		

Text record

1839	[Dough]	Situation:AL <i>Cl047,15</i>	<i>"In the western part of the parish, bounded on the west by the sea, on the south by Kilmurry Parish, on the east by Pullawilleen, and on the north by Liggard North and Liggard South" [Situation];</i>
1839	Dough	JOD:AL <i>Cl047,15</i>	
1839	Dumhach, 'a sand bank'	OD:AL <i>Cl047,15</i>	
1839	Dough	Census List 1831:AL <i>Cl047,15</i>	
1839	Dough	Seneschal List:AL <i>Cl047,15</i>	
1839	[Dough]	Desc. Rem.:AL <i>Cl047,15</i>	<i>"There is a fort in this townland called Lissnadiha, a bridge of 1 arch called Bealachugga on the boundaries of this townland and Annagh & on Annagh River...a mill on same river...A hill in this townland called Knockaludder, a fort called Lissanoor, a fort called Sandhill Fort, a field called Thoorapillabeen" [Desc. Rem.];</i>
1839	Dough	Crowe Map:AL <i>Cl047,15</i>	
1839	Doogh	Co. Bk:AL <i>Cl047,15</i>	
1839	Dooagh	BS:AL <i>Cl047,15</i>	
1839	Dough	List (Davoran, Rev. A.):A <i>Cl047,15</i>	
1839	Dough	Crowe Map:AL <i>Cl047,15</i>	

1839	Dough	Co. Bk:AL C1047,15	
1839	Dough	List (Davoran, Rev. A.):A C1047,15	
1839	Dooagh	BS:AL C1047,15	
1839	[Dough]	Desc. Rem.:AL C1047,15	<i>"There is a fort in this townland called Lissnadiha, a bridge of 1 arch called Beaclugga on the boundaries of this townland and Annagh & on Annagh River...a mill on same river...A hill in this townland called Knockaludder, a fort called Lissanoor, a fort called Sandhill Fort, a field called Thoorapillabeen" [Desc. Rem.];</i>
1839	[Dough]	Situation:AL C1047,15	<i>"In the western part of the parish, bounded on the west by the sea, on the south by Kilmurry Parish, on the east by Pullawilleen, and on the north by Liggard North and Liggard South" [Situation];</i>
1839	Dough	JOD:AL C1047,15	
1839	Dumhach, 'a sand bank'	OD:AL C1047,15	
1839	Dough	Census List 1831:AL C1047,15	
1839	Dough	Seneschal List:AL C1047,15	

Dough (3), townland in Kilfearagh parish, barony of Moyarta (Irish name to be confirmed by The Placenames Branch).

Source: <http://www.logainm.ie/7139.aspx>

Scanned record

bar. Moyarta		cl
p. Kilfearagh		
Dough 56		
1604	Dowagh	CPR 52
1623	Dowagh	CPR 553
1627	Dowagh	Inq. Car. 1 194
1666	Devagh or Dwagh	ASE 87
1660c.	Dough	BSD 387
1703	Dough	Trustees 353
1683	Dwagh	Hib. Del.
1787	Dough	Pelham
1694	Dough	Inq. Gul. et Mar. 230
1839	Doogh	AL: BS
7139	dūmhach, sandbanks	: OD
1837	Doogh	Lewis II 100
1970(1965)	Doux, Duix	Dinnseanchas IV 39

Muirbheach

1. *Muiríúch Cille* and *Muiríúch Tuaithe* (*Thuaidh, Theas*) (Murrooghkilly and Murrooghtoohey, North and South), townlands in Gleninagh parish near Blackhead, barony of Burren, Co. Clare. The names have not been validated by The Placenames Branch.¹⁶⁸ According to Ó Cearbhaill, *Muiríúch* is a dialectal version of *Muirbheach*.¹⁶⁹ In 1985 /an m'ə'r'u:x/ was recorded (see *PNDI*, scanned records), which points to palatal *m*. It is further to be noted that the second syllable is stressed.
2. In Rahan parish, Co. Offaly, we also find a *Muirbheach*, anglicized *Murragh*. The Irish form has been validated by The Placenames Branch (<http://www.logainm.ie/5776.aspx>). Archival notes (scanned records) on the same website contain some useful information. Early forms point to Irish *Murbhach* but in 1828 the anglicized form *Murriogh* was written down, suggesting that *Muirbheach*, with palatal *bh*, was the underlying Irish form. John O'Donovan suggested *Muirbheach* in 1837, although the townland was referred to as *Murrough* and *Murragh* in the same period, which may reflect Irish *Murbhach*, rather than *Muirbheach*. A note on the pronunciation of the place-name on the *PNDI* shows that *Murbhach* as well as *Muirbheach* may be the underlying forms: both /mu'ru:/ and /mu'r'u:/ were recorded. Note that the second syllable is stressed, as is the case with *Muiríúch Cille* in Clare, and that *bh* was lost.
3. The pronunciation of *Muirbheach* in the townland of *Leitir Mealláin* or Lettermullan Island (Kilcummin parish, barony of Moycullen) in Conamara is /mir'əv'əx/.¹⁷⁰ Note also the name of one of the eastern suburbs of Galway city called in English Mervue (also electoral district), pronounced /mervu:/ with stress invariably on the second syllable. In Irish this is *Muirbheach*.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ Cf. resp. <http://www.logainm.ie/5776.aspx>, <http://www.logainm.ie/5777.aspx> and <http://www.logainm.ie/5778.aspx>.

¹⁶⁹ Ó Cearbhaill, 'Clare Placenames in the Irish Language'. http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/places/researching_placenames.htm.

¹⁷⁰ Vocalization in this context seems to be less common in Connacht. The phonetic transcription of the place-name was provided by my supervisor, who is a native of the area.

¹⁷¹ This information was, again, obtained from my supervisor. The name Mervue, however, is the official form of the place-name also in Irish, according to the information provided on the *PNDI*; the possible origin of English Mervue is not commented on. Cf. <http://www.logainm.ie/1373056.aspx>.

Oileán Caorach

Alternatively Mutton Island. The island lies opposite the townland Kilmurry in the barony of Ibrickan. John O'Donovan noted down *inis caorach* 'sheep island' in the *OSNB*. Also noted down were 'Mutton Island' and forms with the generic *oileán* (the latter being, however, either erased or deleted). Material recorded during the nineteenth-century Ordnance Survey is found on scanned record 1/2, while the historical forms appear on scanned record 2/2.

Source: <http://www.logainm.ie/7180.aspx>

Scanned record 1/2

Mutton Is.	Cl	p. Kilmurry t. Ibrickan S.O. 38
inis caorach	Onom. 642 a (al. oileán Fithis, ex pta, Top. poems, O'Brien, Acta Sanct., Kilmurry)	
✓ Oileán Caorach - téarscáil 9 m.		R/A. 22.12.77 GF
AL: Mutton Island BS		
Oileán caorach	dúich (scriosta)	
inis caorach	(dúich), 'sheep island'	
oileán caorach	pl. (glanta)	
OSL I. (1839)	: 'the Island of Inis Caorach or Mutton Island, on which... St. Sannus founded an Oratory' (<ASB.)	
7180-1		

Scanned record 2/2

CL. IBRICKAN, KILMURRY, 38

1645	Inis-caorach	ASH 534 a
1600	Inis Fieri	Bonzio: Lisc-
1660 c.	Island of Enesteree (tqr.)	
1685	Eniskerry	Hib. Isl.
1787	Mutton Isl., Enesteree; Eniskerry Islands (buailte leis)	CJM
1608 c.	Enas Kerry	Hardiman's MSS: Irish maps in TCD
} ??	1571	Iniskerah F. 1775
2 ??	1577	Iniskedragh Mon. Hib. 49
?	1755	go Inise na gCaorach Barantas 121 d. 147

Inis Caorach X

7180-2

According to *FM*, the island was divided into three parts after a thunderstorm the day before St. Patrick's Day in A. D. 799.¹⁷² Although the name is officially known in Irish as *Oileán Caorach*, O'Donovan added in a footnote that the island is known in Irish as *Inis-caerach*, while it was recorded by Samuel Lewis, also in the early nineteenth century, as Enniskerry or *Inniscaorach* (the latter being the 'ancient' name, according to him).¹⁷³ In John Colgan's *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniae* (1645) we are informed that St. Senanus (Ir. *Senán*) built an oratory on an island called *Inis Caorach*. In his accompanying topographical index the Latin equivalent *insula ovis in Momonia*¹⁷⁴ is given (*insula ovis* 'island of sheep').¹⁷⁵ In Whitley Stokes's edition and translation of *the Life of Senán* from the *Book of Lismore* (fifteenth century)¹⁷⁶ we

¹⁷² *FM* i 410-1. In a footnote O'Donovan states that the present barony of Ibrickan belonged in ancient times to the territory of the Corca-Bhaiscinn.

¹⁷³ 'Mutton Island or Enniskerry', published on the Clare County Library website, cf. http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/places/mutton_island.htm.

¹⁷⁴ *Momonia* is Latin for (the province of) 'Munster'.

¹⁷⁵ Mentioned in the 1839 Ordnance Survey Letters (Co. Clare), available on the Clare County library website (<http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/history/osl/index.htm>); cf. 'Kilmurry Ibrickan (b)' http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/history/osl/kilmurry_ibrickan2_holy_well.htm.

¹⁷⁶ Caoimhín Breatnach, 'Lismore, Book of', in *Medieval Ireland: An Encyclopedia* (ed. Seán Duffy, New York and London 2005) 270-80.

read: *et doluidh Senán cor'ghabh a n-Inis Cæirech [Céoil,] 'And Senán went and set up in Inis Caerach Céoil ...'*.¹⁷⁷

There is more to say about the island's name, for which I will revert to *FM*. Strangely enough, the name for the island used in this document does not contain the word for 'sheep' at all; instead it is called *oilen Fithae*, translated by O'Donovan as 'Island of Fitha'.¹⁷⁸ What is *fithae* here? *DIL* gives the headword *figthe* 'woven, intertwined, pleached, plaited', participle of the verb *figid* 'weaves' etc.; also *fithe* 'woven', participle of *fen-*. The word is used in the sense of 'sheep' or 'fleece' in *A Story about Hercules*,¹⁷⁹ although the editor, Eleanor Knott, stated that *fithe* usually seems to refer to wicker work.¹⁸⁰ The occurrence of *fithe* in the context of a sheep-island is interesting. *Oileán Caorach* may have been alternatively called *Oilen Fithae* since there were many islands with the same name.¹⁸¹ It is to be remembered that the entries in *FM* for the twelfth century and before are sourced from earlier medieval monastic annals, which often had a local bias. The ultimate goal of *FM*, however, was to combine these entries to create a history of the whole country. To avoid ambiguity, the scribes of *FM* may have altered some place-names. To my knowledge *Oilen Fithae* does not occur in other sources.

¹⁷⁷ Whitley Stokes, *Lives of Saints from the Book of Lismore* (Oxford, 1890) 66 and 212. It is not clear to me why Stokes put *Céoil* between brackets. He did not translate the place-name in English, probably since the meaning is unclear: *sheep-island of music?*

¹⁷⁸ *FM* i 410-1.

¹⁷⁹ 'A story about Hercules', in *An introduction to Irish syllabic poetry of the period 1200-1600: with selections, notes and glossary* (Dublin 1974) 62-66. The long *i* in *fithe* is guaranteed by the metre (cf. p. 63): */: chrích /: bhfíthe /: síthe /* (par. 6), */: ríogh, : ríoghbhuille /: fire /: fhíthe /: chríche /* (par. 9).

¹⁸⁰ teach f. *a woven house*, i.e. *of interwoven rods*. Cf. Knott, *An Introduction to Irish syllabic poetry*, 121.

¹⁸¹ *Inis Caorach*/Mutton Island in Galway bay, *Inis Caorach*/Inishkeeragh Rocks, parish of Ballindoon & Islands, Co. Galway, *Inis Caorach*/Inishkeeragh in Co. Donegal, *Inis Caorach*/Inishkeeragh (1 & 2) in Co. Mayo, *Oileán Caorach*/Illaunkearagh in south-west Cork, *Inishkeeragh*, 6 acre island on the shores of Lower Lough Erne, Co. Fermanagh, *Oileáin na gCaorach*/Keeragh Islands, Co. Wexford.

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