

Guidelines for citing Royal Irish Academy manuscripts

Shelf-marks

The call-numbers / shelf-marks assigned to RIA manuscripts are normally in three parts – a number, a letter, and a number. For example: 3 B 21; 4 A 55; 12 T 2; 23 O 21; 24 P 33. Please note that in this style of shelf-mark the middle character is a letter. Thus in the example 23 O 21, the middle character is the letter 'O' and not the number zero '0'. (This is relevant if searching by shelf-mark on our online catalogue of manuscripts.)

It is necessary to use this 3-part shelf-mark when requesting original manuscripts for consultation in the RIA Library. For this reason, this shelf-mark should always be given when citing an RIA manuscript in the text or notes of a book or article for publication. The 3-part shelf-mark should be cited with space between each element but without internal punctuation. The correct form of a citation is **RIA, MS 24 P 33**.

Shelf-marks of Stowe manuscripts

Stowe collection manuscripts in the RIA have a distinctive numbering sequence, also in three parts. These shelf-marks begin with a letter, followed by a roman numeral (lower case), and then a number. For example: A iv 2; B ii 2; C iv 1; H v 1. For these manuscripts the correct form of a citation is **RIA, MS C iv 1**.

Major medieval manuscripts

It is now conventional to cite major medieval manuscripts from the RIA collection, such as the Cathach (RIA, MS 12 R 33), the Stowe Missal (RIA, MS D ii 3), the Book of Lecan (RIA, MS 23 P 2), etc., by name only, without the shelf-mark. In any given publication, the manuscript number should be cited once for reference purposes.

Manuscripts in Irish

Most, but not all, RIA manuscripts in the Irish language have been described in the *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the Royal Irish Academy*, Fasc. 1-28, 1926-70, with indices. The compilers assigned a series of running numbers to entries in the catalogue. These Arabic catalogue numbers should not be used in place of shelf-marks when RIA manuscripts are being cited.

Why cite by shelf-mark?

The Academy's collection of Irish manuscripts is arranged by shelf-mark. These shelf-marks are needed to request manuscripts for consultation in the Reading Room, to identify RIA manuscripts on microfilm, to locate RIA manuscripts on Irish Script on Screen (ISOS), or to find references to secondary literature on RIA manuscripts in the *Bibliography of Irish Linguistics and Literature* (BILL).

Modern collections of papers

Collections of papers acquired by the Academy library in the twentieth century are generally cited by collection name rather than by shelf-mark: e.g. Marquess MacSwiney papers, R.A. Phillips papers, Upton papers, etc.

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