



# Master of the hounds and 'Father of the Turf': Tom Conolly and his equine exploits

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THREE YEARS AFTER HIS MARRIAGE TO LADY LOUISA LENNOX, THIRD DAUGHTER OF the 2nd Duke of Richmond in 1758, Thomas Conolly, the wealthy twenty-three-year-old owner of Castletown, county Kildare, took a lease on a house in Kildare town from a local carpenter, Richard Hetherington, to use as a base for his racing interests at the Curragh racecourse in that county.<sup>1</sup> In addition to this house, Conolly maintained stables for his racehorses ('Connollys Stables'), on the perimeter of the Curragh racecourse, which can be seen on an 1807 'Map of the Curragh of Kildare showing The Race Courses Gentlemens Seats &c, surveyed by H. Walker' (Plate 2), a short distance from the town. Close to the stables he rented a couple of fields, together with houses or cottages to accommodate his large staff there, some of whom came from Castletown, others from Kildare town.<sup>2</sup> Also on this map is a straight course called 'Conolly's Mile' (so-called after him), running east to the winning post opposite the stand house.

Described as 'the greatest figure in the history of horse-racing and breeding in eighteenth-century Ireland', Conolly had a passion for horses for both racing and hunting.<sup>3</sup> The caption beneath a framed portrait that hangs in the headquarters of Horse Racing Ireland tells how he 'became the mainstay of the Curragh Jockey Club', leading to the founding of the Turf Club in 1790, which earned him the soubriquet 'Father of the Turf Club'. It goes on to say that he 'raced extensively, donated cups and prizes, paid for the promotion of racing and for a school master and textbooks for jockeys and stable lads' at his Curragh stables.

While Louisa's great attachment to Castletown as a house, a home and a place of hospitality and entertainment has been well documented, this essay will look at Conolly's devotion to the equine activities that took up a great deal of his time and money. Despite

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*1 – Vaulted stables at Ardraccon, county Meath, designed by Richard Castle, c.1735  
(courtesy Irish Architectural Archive)*



2 – ‘Map of the Curragh of Kildare showing The Race Courses Gentlemens Seats &c’, surveyed by H. Walker, 1807, showing Kildare town (bottom left) and Conolly’s stables on the racecourse  
(Courtesy James Adam & Sons)

the suggestion of his ‘miserly instincts’, it would appear that Louisa had a free rein (no pun intended) at Castletown, where the house became her passion, while her husband pursued his outdoor interests in tandem.<sup>4</sup>

The newly acquired house in Kildare town was described as ‘a good dwelling house, pleasure and kitchen garden of 1R[ood], 5P[erches]’, and referred to as ‘Kildare Lodge’. Louisa lost no time in staying there; on 2nd July 1761 she wrote, ‘I was at Kildare for one night with Mrs Clements, she had never been there before. We played at Loo the whole day, I won, she lost’, and on 23rd January 1763 she went out hunting with Fanny (Conolly’s sister)

while we were at Kildare, the Curragh is such a charming place for riding that it’s mighty pleasant and there is not the least danger, we never attempt leaping. Mr Conolly has a great deal to do there generally for he has now a great many running horses. We had a very pleasant party there...<sup>5</sup>

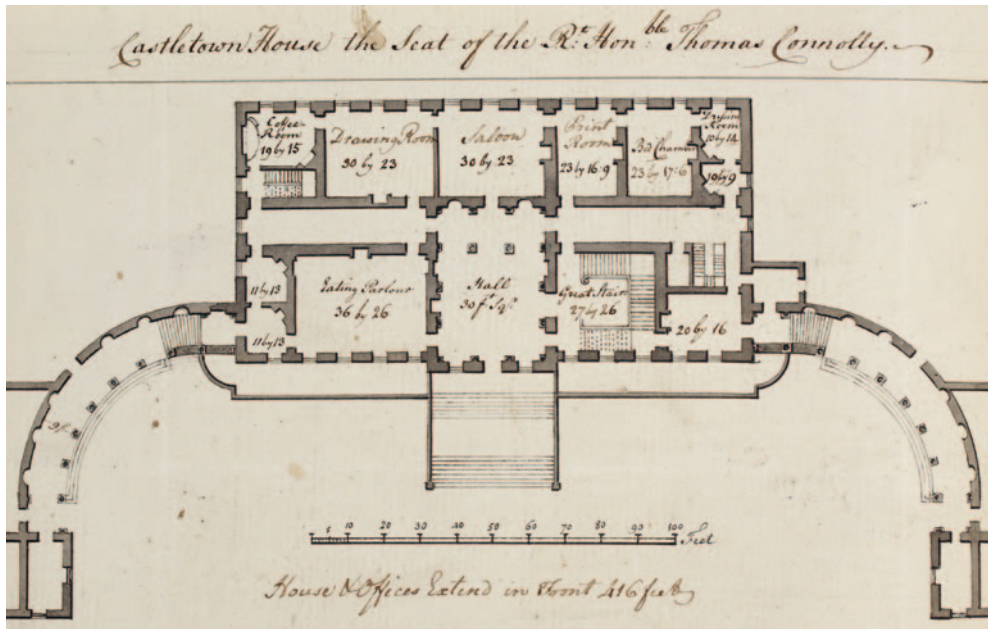
Another visitor to Kildare town in 1761 was Lord Chief Baron Edward Willes: ‘I lay at Kildare wh[ic]h is made a very pretty town by means of the gentle[me]n belonging to the Kildare Hunt. Their number is 61 and most have built for themselves little pretty lodges in the town for the convenience of hunting’.<sup>6</sup> The Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Rutland (1784-87), was a frequent visitor to Castletown and to Kildare Lodge during his term of office.<sup>7</sup>



It is clear that Conolly's hunters were stabled at Castletown; there are references to that effect in his accounts.<sup>8</sup> From the accounts too, it is evident that the stables at the Curragh were thatched, but little else is known of them.<sup>9</sup> This was a far cry from the stables at Castletown where, in the 1720s, the architect Edward Lovett Pearce designed a range of stables in the east wing as part of the Palladian layout of the house. Here, his seven-bay stable pavilion introduced something that was completely new in stable architecture in Ireland – a vaulted ceiling, supported by Tuscan columns that acted as heelposts for the stalls (Plate 1). This innovative feature, which became a leitmotif for Pearce's assistant, Richard Castle, after Pearce's early death in 1733, was subsequently used at Carton and many other houses.<sup>10</sup> Though they became relatively common in Ireland, vaulting in stables was exceptional even in aristocratic stables in Britain, where it was considered to be too expensive for most owners.<sup>11</sup> But by the beginning of the eighteenth century, stables were becoming important status symbols in Ireland among the nobility and gentry. They were somewhere to take one's guests to view not just the building, but the horses within, which, like works of art, required a deal of connoisseurship in order to appreciate them. There was a difference too in stables that accommodated farm horses and those that accommodated riding and carriage horses, racehorses and hunters. The latter were located closer to the house for the convenience of the family, and were usually of some architectural interest.<sup>12</sup>

The ground-floor plan of Castletown featured in Finola O'Kane's recent essay in

3 – 'Castletown House the Seat of the Rt. Honble Thomas Conolly'  
(from the single-volume quarto first edition of Arthur Young's *A TOUR IN IRELAND 1776-1779*)





4 – A mounting block in the stable yard at Ardraccan, Co Meath (photo: the author)

this journal on Arthur Young's 'A Tour of Ireland, 1776-1779' shows how convenient the Palladian plan was for Conolly (Plate 3).<sup>13</sup> His study was located to the front of the house in the two-bay space (20ftx16ft) from where he could gain access via the colonnade to the stables in the east pavilion.<sup>14</sup> At Ardraccan, county Meath, where the Palladian layout is similar but smaller in scale than at Castletown, a mounting block was erected at the bottom of a flight of steps from the side of the house. There the Bishop of Meath, the house's builder, could mount his horse (Plate 4).

## HORSE RACING

THE TITLE 'FATHER OF THE TURF' WAS ONE THAT CONOLLY EARNED. HE WAS A MEMBER of the Jockey Club from at least 1761, when a receipt for his subscription to the club, a forerunner of the Turf Club, was issued to him.<sup>15</sup> Their clubhouse was the purpose-built (in 1759) Coffee House in Kildare town. With stables at the Curragh and a house leased in the town, as well as Castletown a short distance away, it was no surprise that Conolly played a major part in the Jockey (later Turf) Club.<sup>16</sup> By 1777 it was evident that all was not well within the club: rules were being broken, and in a letter to Conolly in March of that year, the Curragh ranger remarked that 'sporting seems to decline at the Curragh', suggesting that a meeting be called 'for choosing Stewards for the Stand House

and Course'.<sup>17</sup> Conolly stepped up to the mark, and under his direction a new code of regulations was drawn up regarding the conduct of races, aimed at improving the regulation of horse racing in Ireland under the auspices of the Jockey Club. At the time his reforms were not successful as the members tended to prioritise the social aspects of membership rather than the regulatory ones, and the club ceased to function in the early 1780s. However, the Turf Club, which came into existence in the 1780s, adopted Conolly's regulations and established itself as the regulating authority of Irish horse-racing.<sup>18</sup>

From the early decades of the eighteenth century, horse-racing was hugely popular in Ireland. An interesting aspect of the sport at that time was the proliferation of the 'my horse against yours' type of race, a match where just two horses were pitted against each other in a test of speed and strength and on which bets were placed.<sup>19</sup> Examples include a four-mile race at the Curragh on 26th April 1763, where Conolly bet 1,000 guineas on his horse, Surly, beating 'Mr Rowley's bay horse Scandenberg', to become 'Horse of the Year', and in 1775 he bet 2,000 guineas that his horse Shoemaker would beat Lord Drogheda's Chestnut Pope, which was the largest eighteenth-century Irish race purse and one that set a record for almost forty years.<sup>20</sup> In the final Jockey Club purse held in April 1781 (before it became the Turf Club purse), Conolly's Smuggler was the winner.<sup>21</sup>

Louisa was justly proud of her husband's successes in horse-racing, and kept her sisters up to date on his prowess. Perhaps she was aware that they did not have the highest opinion of Conolly, describing him as 'immensely silly' and 'tiresome' among other disparaging adjectives.<sup>22</sup> But her pride in this aspect of his life was not misplaced. In 1768 Conolly had nine winners in seventeen races, with winnings amounting to £2,790. His most lucrative winnings were in 1774 and 1775 when he netted £4,823 and £4,928 respectively.<sup>23</sup> According to Tony Sweeney, Conolly set an ownership record 'that stands to this day, namely that he raced nine "Horses of the Year", the best being Tennis-ball'.<sup>24</sup> Another of his horses, The Friar, had a particularly successful 1777 season at the Curragh, and the following year Louisa had the pleasure of seeing her mare Tigress beat The Friar on the same racecourse.<sup>25</sup> From Yorkshire, John Coghill wrote to Conolly in October 1778: 'I sincerely congratulate you on the goodness of your Horses. Your Stable has done more last meeting at the Curragh than any Stable I ever heard of.'<sup>26</sup> This was well-deserved praise for Conolly whose record, according to Sweeney, gives him a career total of 265 winners between 1760 and 1796, and a total of £37,598 in winnings.<sup>27</sup>

Despite his winnings, Conolly's success at the Curragh and elsewhere with his horses, came at a price. There was his predilection for gambling, which will be looked at later. His accounts show that from the 1760s onwards a great deal of money was expended on maintaining his equine interests. He had a large staff at the Curragh stables, as well as his hunting pack, their kennels, and his stables and staff at Castletown. He provided medical care, a schoolmaster, books, board and clothes for the stable boys at the Curragh, who were paid £6 per annum. That the boys were well looked after is evident from the accounts, with regular payments for clothes and shoes, such as, in June 1778, a tailor's bill 'for Clothing 9 boys at the Curragh completely white liveries, fustian frocks &

surtouts £52. 18s 11d' and another 'for 20 pr breeches' for them for £20 8s 4d. In 1784 Henry Lee sent an invoice 'for the making of shoes for the little boys about the stables £2. 8s 7d', and the following year '20 felt hats' were provided for them for £2 14s 2d.<sup>28</sup> John Scott, who was responsible 'for dieting and dressing the stable boys', had another responsibility as 'Feeder in the Stables' (presumably for the horses) and was paid £68 5s per annum. Conolly also personally paid the bill for advertising racing fixtures in Faulkner's *Dublin Journal*. In addition to these expenses he sponsored numerous horse races: he presented a Gold Cup, valued at 200 guineas, for a race to be run at the Curragh. As an extensive landowner in the north-west of Ireland, he also presented a silver cup, valued at £40, and inscribed 'The Right Honorable Thomas Conolly to the City of Derry', for a race between horses owned by the freeholders of Derry.<sup>29</sup> This did him no harm as the Member of Parliament for Londonderry. He also enjoyed and took part in racing with his own horses at Down Royal's fixtures. Before horseboxes, horses were walked to and from race venues. A letter to Conolly in 1779 from his friend Francis Savage, who was looking after his stable arrangements in Down, illustrates this:

I have this instant been looking at your horses brushed over and am happy in being able to inform you that they are both extremely well after having travelled twenty miles this day, of bad road from Castlewellan hither. Filch is extremely sound and well, his race of yesterday all considered. Early tomorrow they will set forward and reach Enniskillen sooner than Wednesday.<sup>30</sup>

Filch is distinguished in Irish record books as the horse with twenty consecutive victories between 1778 and 1780.<sup>31</sup>

## HUNTING

A WRITER IN 1719 OBSERVED OF THE IRISH THAT THEIR 'NOBILITY ARE MUCH GIVEN TO recreations and pastimes as hunting, hawking, riding, drinking, feasting and banqueting with one another'.<sup>32</sup> Fifty years later, not much had changed apart, probably, from 'hawking'. The painting *The Kilruddery Hunt* (1740s) is one of the earliest paintings of a fox-hunt where the Earl of Meath's seat in county Wicklow is the background to cut-outs of hounds, huntsmen, horses and stags that have been pasted onto the surface of the picture. 'The Kilruddery Hunt' is also a song celebrating a hunt in 1744 with the hounds of the 6th Earl of Meath that describes the exploits of leading sportsmen of the area. It was still being sung in playhouses at the end of the century.<sup>33</sup> In the 1820s the 7th earl showed exemplary commitment to the chase by managing to hunt in Kildare during the season while staying at Kilruddery:

[He kept] his hunters in county Kildare, and having two hacks, one in Dublin and one at Kilruddery, riding into town, changing there, & going to wherever the meet

took place, where his hunter awaited him. The return journey made in the same way and a hard gallop the entire distance. On one occasion they killed near the Hill of Allen, n.e. of the Curragh, and he returned that night in time for dinner as [his parents] were very particular about punctuality.<sup>34</sup>

The Ponsonby family at Bishopscourt, county Kildare, kept a substantial racing establishment, where the frenetic pace of the hunting fraternity was illustrated in a 1726 guest's letter describing his day's activities:

I went to bed last night at one of ye clock, was on horseback this morning at four, rid eight miles before daybreak, hunted a fox afterwards, came back afterwards here to dinner, and rid a coursing this afternoon till nightfall, and I thank God I cannot say I am much the worse for it.<sup>35</sup>

It was not only the men who had such stamina. Lady Hester Westenra kept her own pack of hounds in county Laois and managed to strike a bargain for her purse when approached by a highwayman during a hunt in the 1740s. Together they raced after the hounds which had just broken covert; after a long run which Hester won with ease, she offered him her purse but the highwayman bowed and graciously refused to take it.<sup>36</sup> Another enthusiast, Hayes St Leger, the 4th Viscount Doneraile kept a hunting journal in which he kept an account of those in which he took part in both Ireland and England. He recorded the route taken, the numbers killed and what horse he rode.<sup>37</sup> He kept a pet fox from which he caught rabies, resulting in his death in France where he had gone in search of a cure from Louis Pasteur.<sup>38</sup>

By 1764 Conolly had acquired his own pack of foxhounds.<sup>39</sup> Breeding of both hounds and horses was important, and strains were imported from England and continental Europe to improve the breeds used. This reflected well on the owner,<sup>40</sup> as hounds were considered heirlooms that were bred carefully for generations.<sup>41</sup> By 1777 Conolly had established a relationship with the Duke of Rutland's Belvoir pack, said to be among the best in England, through which he improved Castletown's. In June of that year, the Duke's agent wrote from Belvoir Castle asking Conolly to 'send your Huntsman to us as soon as possible, as ... one of the best brood bitches, which is allotted for you, will very soon be too big with whelp to travel, and her whelps I am sure will be very valuable'.<sup>42</sup> Later in June, the Duke's agent sent him, 'eleven couple of hounds that I hope will please you', in addition to 'four Bitches from whom we have bred excellent hounds, and also six young Bitches that I daresay will breed you as good'. For Lady Louisa 'with my best respects', he sent a couple of small bitches called Isabell and Lady – 'They will run up with your Hounds and they will breed Large Hounds, being Dwarf Hounds of a Large sort'.<sup>43</sup> A couple of weeks later, in a letter to Conolly, James Agar, Baron Clifden, from Gowran, county Kilkenny, offered 'ten or twelve couples of good running hounds as possibly you can get anywhere'. He had heard that Conolly was 'very low in hounds and that many of your whelps had died', and that as he (Agar) is not in the country much dur-





ing the hunting season, it is not worth his while keeping them ‘and I know you will keep them up well’.<sup>44</sup>

In an account of his estate since coming of age, Conolly listed the building of dog kennels at Castletown at some time prior to 1773.<sup>45</sup> These were located in the Kennel Field at the Celbridge Gate (Plate 5). Triangular in shape, the field measured over twenty-one acres and was bound by the Liffey to the south and by the main avenue to the north. No image has come to light of the kennels, but from information among the accounts, the exterior walls were pebble-dashed with stone detail, and it had an archway and a pediment to which was attached a pole with the figure of a ‘gilded fox’ on the top.<sup>46</sup> As a pack of foxhounds was highly bred and expensive to keep, their lodgings required as much thought as those for their equine partners. Built at a height for drainage purposes, they were built of brick, timber or stone with a thatched roof to keep the kennels warm in winter and cool in summer. A drawing by Edward Lovett Pearce shows a ‘Dog house’ with

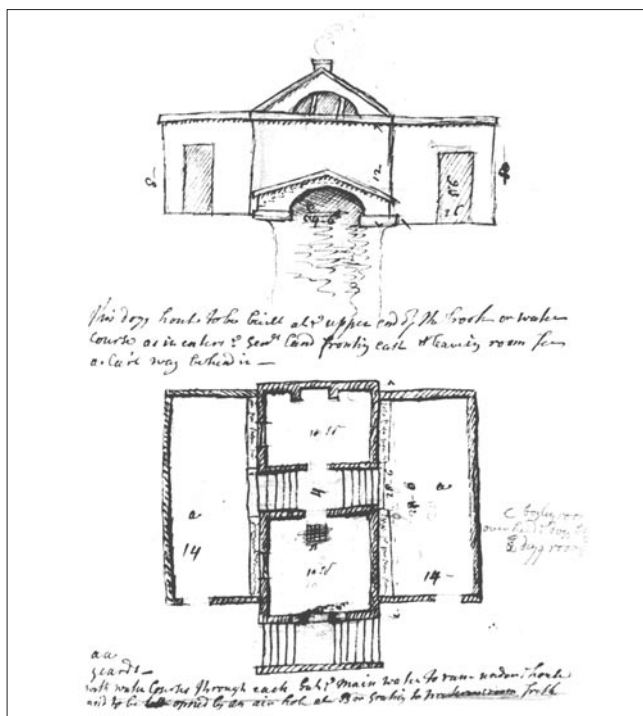
a stream of water issuing from an opening in the centre, in which are two lodging rooms (c.28ft x 14ft) with benches on which the dogs slept, two other rooms, one perhaps a feeding room, and a boiler house for preparing their food. There is a pitched roof over the centre of the building and a Diocletian window in the gable (Plate 6). Designs for kennels are comparatively rare, and it is doubtful that many would be as extravagant as a design commissioned from John Soane by Frederick Hervey, the Earl Bishop of Derry, in 1779, for Downhill, his house in county Derry, in which three arms extend from a central domed rotunda (where the male dogs were lodged). One arm lodged a keeper, another a heated sick-bay and the third accommodated the bitches. The decoration on the attic of the drum was a canine version of a classical frieze, with heads of dogs replacing ox-heads.<sup>47</sup>

Maintaining a pack of hounds was expensive. Many were purchased in England and someone paid to accompany them to Dublin, and together with board, food, medical expenses, dog collars with engraved brass plates, John Britton was paid £106 7s 6d in August 1780 ‘for keeping the hounds, the Dog Bog, Firing for the kennels and my own wages [for one year] up to 1 July 1780’.<sup>48</sup> It appears that when there was a shortage or a potential shortage of foxes to hunt, Conolly ‘imported’ them.<sup>49</sup> In 1778, when there was such a shortage in Kildare, the Conollys took a lodge in Nenagh, county Tipperary, for a month.<sup>50</sup> By the middle of the nineteenth century, private packs, such as his, were replaced by ‘subscription packs’ that were maintained at communal expense.<sup>51</sup> A 1770s letter, written by Louisa to her husband from her family home at Goodwood in West Sussex,

6 – Edward Lovett Pearce  
(attrib.), elevation and plan of  
a ‘Dogg House’  
(courtesy Irish Architectural Archive)

opposite

5 – Detail of demesne plan of  
Castletown, c.1768, showing  
the Kennel Field (bottom left),  
bounded to the south by the  
river Liffey, to the north by the  
Maynooth avenue to the house,  
and to the east by a pond  
(courtesy National Library of  
Ireland)



betrayed the couple's second thoughts on maintaining the Castletown pack:

I do think as you do, that your keeping hounds in Ireland does not answer, and yet as you have so much pleasure in them, 'twould be a 1,000 pities to have you give them up, and that makes me so eager for your having a hunting lodge here, which would answer so well in every respect. It would be an additional expence, but still I think not more than you can well afford, I don't imagine it could be more the differences of 200 a year at most...<sup>52</sup>

Nothing seems to have come of her suggestion, and by the late 1780s, after a bad winter and a bad hunting season, the hounds had to go.<sup>53</sup> In 1814 Louisa (a widow since 1803), was concerned about mending the roof on 'the old Kennels at the Slip near Castletown Gate', and it was on that site that she set up Ireland's first industrial school for boys, where they were taught carpentry, tailoring, shoe-making and basket-making.<sup>54</sup> No trace of Castletown's kennels remains.

Conolly was the first Master of the Castletown Hunt, whose silver buttons were specially made by the goldsmith Jeremiah D'Olier in Dublin, while a Mr Finegan made up the hunt's riding habits. A series of studies painted by Robert Healy in February 1768 records the Conollys and their friends as they hunted and occupied themselves with other outdoor activities at Castletown.<sup>55</sup> All who hunted with Conolly during the day were automatically invited to have supper at Castletown.<sup>56</sup> There he provided a large room in the stables at the east pavilion reserved for his 'guests in boots' – those gentlemen who arrived on horseback too late for supper and who required a meal before an early start the next day.<sup>57</sup> He was the richest commoner in Ireland in the 1750s and his generosity and hospitality were unbounded. In 1778 he sent a present of a horse to his brother-in-law in England, who responded, 'The grey mare came safe and well and is the admiration of the whole country – she has great speed and power to carry my fat wife and I together if occasion.'<sup>58</sup> It may have been a peace offering as, the same brother-in-law, General Sir William Howe, had written to Conolly on his gambling pursuits earlier in the year: 'How goes horses and hounds? I hope with the same success as Almack's from whence I hear you waddled off with £8,000, and I hope never to return where you may be subject to the frowns of Madam Fortune who was so propitious last winter.'<sup>59</sup> His gambling was excessive, and while it worried some, Louisa remained unperturbed. In a letter quoted in Sweeney's book she wrote:

The dear soul was so often called to Almack's Club in London by bets upon his horses that it drew him into a little gambling. The money he lost won't really hurt him ... It was reported he had ruined himself but I am sure his losses altogether were under £10,000.<sup>60</sup>

Perhaps if his marriage had not been childless he may not have been so incompetent with money. He remarked in 1773 that he had 'no occasion to save money, having no children, and I flatter myself that the money I have spent annually was rationally employed

by living, not extravagantly, but like a gentleman.’<sup>61</sup>

Though possessing many good qualities, he had, as Malcomson puts it, serious defects as both a public figure and a business man. He was ‘pleasure loving and inattentive to affairs, procrastinating, easily-led and at the same time stubborn, impulsive and not particularly bright’, and fundamentally ‘ill-suited to manage so great an inheritance and live up to the role that fortune had assigned him’.<sup>62</sup>

## EPILOGUE

IN DIFFERENT WAYS TOM AND LOUISA CONOLLY MADE THEIR INDIVIDUAL MARKS ON HISTORY – hers in the improvements of both the house and demesne of Castletown, his in his special place as ‘Father of the Turf’ in Ireland. When Louisa needed advice on matters of architecture and décor, she turned not to her husband, but to her brother-in-law, the Duke of Leinster.<sup>63</sup> Conolly’s ‘meek’ response when she asked his advice on décor in the 1770s was, as she related to her sister Sarah, that ‘he thought [she] knew best’, which was probably correct.<sup>64</sup> A remark by Louisa’s sister Emily, Lady Kildare is telling: ‘Do you think that I have come to my years without distinguishing between the real and settled wish of spending one’s life together, and the hurry of a boy [Conolly?] to come to what he will leave the next half hour for a new hound or horse?’<sup>65</sup> Whatever his shortcomings, there was still, at the turn of the eighteenth century, ‘no figure who repeatedly dominated the sport in Ireland in terms of unbroken victories’,<sup>66</sup> and no one can take from Tom Conolly his achievements in horse racing, breeding and hunting, nor his generosity in sponsorship and in hospitality.

## ENDNOTES

The following abbreviations are used:

IAA	Irish Architectural Archive	NAI	National Archives Ireland
JKAS	Journal of the Kildare Archaeological Society	NLI	National Library of Ireland
		TCD	Trinity College Dublin

<sup>1</sup> Lena Boylan, ‘Kildare Lodge, Lord Edward Fitzgerald’s House’, *JKAS*, XVI, no. 1, 1977-78, 26-35. Hetherington had purchased a lease of thirty-four acres in Kildare town from the Earl of Kildare in 1746. In a ‘Statement of his Affairs’ since coming of age, Conolly records that he ‘bought two lodges, one at the Black Rock, for bathing in the sea, the other at Kildare’, for the sum of £1,000. TCD, Conolly Papers, MSS 380-81.

<sup>2</sup> Boylan, ‘Kildare Lodge’.

<sup>3</sup> Fergus A. D’Arcy, *Horses, Lords and Racing Men: the Turf Club 1790-1990* (The Turf Club, The Curragh, 1991) 6.

<sup>4</sup> See Finola O’Kane, *Landscape Design in Eighteenth-Century Ireland: mixing foreign trees with the*



- natives (Cork University Press, 2004) 118: 'His miserly instincts are suggested in his account books, where Louisa's pin money payments were made consistently late.' TCD MS 3963, Tom Conolly's Personal Account Book, '1766, February 5th, Paid Louisa on account of her Xmas Pin Money: £125.0.0'.
- <sup>5</sup> Boylan, 'Kildare Lodge'.
  - <sup>6</sup> James Kelly (ed.), *The letters of Lord Chief Baron Edward Willes to the Earl of Warwick 1757-62* (Aberystwyth, 1990) 69.
  - <sup>7</sup> Brian FitzGerald, *Lady Louisa Conolly 1743-1821* (London, 1950) 143.
  - <sup>8</sup> TCD, Conolly Papers, MS 3940/79
  - <sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, MS 3974/252.
  - <sup>10</sup> Vaulted stables designed by Richard Castle can be seen at Gill Hall, county Down, Strokestown House, county Roscommon, Bellinter and Ardraccan, both in county Meath, Russborough, county Wicklow, in unexecuted plans for Headfort, county Meath, and in plans for Leinster House, Dublin.
  - <sup>11</sup> Giles Worsley, *The British Stable* (Yale, 2004) 149.
  - <sup>12</sup> Patricia McCarthy, 'Stables and Horses in Ireland c.1630-1840', *The Provost's House Stables: buildings and environs, Trinity College Dublin* (TRIARC, Dublin, 2008) 28-71.
  - <sup>13</sup> Finola O'Kane, 'Arthur Young's published and unpublished illustrations for 'A Tour of Ireland 1776-1779', *Irish Architectural & Decorative Studies*, XIX, 2016, 118-160.
  - <sup>14</sup> *ibid.*, 132.
  - <sup>15</sup> TCD, Conolly Papers, MS 3974/132.
  - <sup>16</sup> Paul Rouse, *Sport and Ireland, A History* (Oxford University Press, 2015) 67.
  - <sup>17</sup> D'Arcy, *Horses, Lords and Racing Men*, 8.
  - <sup>18</sup> James Kelly, 'The pastime of the elite: clubs and societies and the promotion of horse racing' in Martin J. Powell and James Kelly (eds), *Clubs and Societies in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin, 2010) 409-24.
  - <sup>19</sup> James Kelly, *Sport in Ireland 1600-1840* (Dublin, 2014) 70-73.
  - <sup>20</sup> Tony and Annie Sweeney, *The Sweeney Guide to the Irish Turf from 1501 to 2001* (Dublin, 2002) 346-47; Kelly, *Sport in Ireland*, 85, footnote.
  - <sup>21</sup> Sweeney, *The Sweeney Guide*, 17.
  - <sup>22</sup> IAA, Bunbury Letters, 94/84, 1793, from Louisa Conolly to Sarah Bunbury from Castletown, 14th August 1767; Bunbury Letters 94/136, Box 1, from Louisa to same, May 1768; Brian FitzGerald (ed.), *The Correspondence of Emily, Duchess of Leinster, 1731-1814*, 3 vols (Dublin, 1957) III, 141.
  - <sup>23</sup> Sweeney, *The Sweeney Guide*, 39.
  - <sup>24</sup> *ibid.*, 179.
  - <sup>25</sup> FitzGerald, *Lady Louisa Conolly*, 107, 119.
  - <sup>26</sup> NLI, Conolly Papers, MS 41,341/5, letter from J. Coghill, 18th October 1778.
  - <sup>27</sup> Sweeney, *The Sweeney Guide*, 39.
  - <sup>28</sup> TCD, Conolly Papers, MS 3955, MS 3939.
  - <sup>29</sup> D'Arcy, *Horses, Lords and Racing Men*, 14.
  - <sup>30</sup> *ibid.*, 15.
  - <sup>31</sup> Ronan Lynch, *The Kirwans of Castlehacket, Co. Galway: history, folklore and mythology in an Irish horseracing family* (Dublin, 2006) 55.
  - <sup>32</sup> Quoted in P. Livingstone, *The Fermanagh Story* (Enniskillen, 1969) 121.
  - <sup>33</sup> Constantia Maxwell, *Country and Town in Ireland under the Georges* (London 1940; 1949 edn.) 34.
  - <sup>34</sup> NA, Meath Papers, K/1/2 1827-33, 2210.
  - <sup>35</sup> Quoted in Maxwell, *Country and Town in Ireland*, 33.

- <sup>36</sup> Quoted in Valerie Pakenham, *The Big House in Ireland* (London, n.d.) 129-30.
- <sup>37</sup> NLI, Doneraile Papers, MS 34,143(1), Hunting Journal of Hayes St Leger, 4th Viscount Doneraile, October 1837 – March 1838.
- <sup>38</sup> *ibid.* Information taken from the abstract to the papers.
- <sup>39</sup> D. Bourke, Earl of Mayo, and W.B. Boulton, *History of the Kildare Hunt* (London, 1913) 11.
- <sup>40</sup> Toby Barnard, *Making the Grand Figure; lives and possessions in Ireland, 1641-1770* (Yale, 2004) 238.
- <sup>41</sup> Bourke and Boulton, *History of the Kildare Hunt*, 11.
- <sup>42</sup> TCD, Conolly Papers, MS 476, letter from Thos Thoroton, 7th June 1777.
- <sup>43</sup> *ibid.*, MS 489, from same, 22 June 1777.
- <sup>44</sup> *ibid.*, MS 496, letter from Lord Clifden, Gowran, 17th July 1777.
- <sup>45</sup> *ibid.*, MS 381, Account of Conolly's estate since his coming of age, 4th March 1773.
- <sup>46</sup> IAA, Conolly Papers, J/9, 97/84, Castletown Accounts Day Book 1784-90; do. 1781-87, F104, 1787; F422, 'Work done at Dog Kennels Nov 1784 to May 1785'.
- <sup>47</sup> Patricia McCarthy, 'Buildings for Animals', *Art and Architecture of Ireland, Volume IV: Architecture 1600-2000* (Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, 2015) 380.
- <sup>48</sup> TCD, Conolly Papers, MS 3939, Tradesmen's Receipt Books 1778, v.1.
- <sup>49</sup> *ibid.*, MSS 3974-84, letter from Chas. Kennedy, Johnstown, 4th July 1780, 'has imported fox cubs from Co. Waterford' for Tom Conolly.
- <sup>50</sup> FitzGerald, *Lady Louisa Conolly*, 151.
- <sup>51</sup> Lynch, *The Kirwans of Castlehacket*, 45.
- <sup>52</sup> IAA, Bunbury Letters, 94/84, from Lady Louisa Conolly to Tom Conolly, 12th April 1772 or 1773.
- <sup>53</sup> FitzGerald, *Lady Louisa Conolly*, 151.
- <sup>54</sup> Lena Boylan, 'Lady Louisa Conolly's Chip Hat Factory', *JKAS*, xv, 1971-76, 468-71.
- <sup>55</sup> McCarthy, 'Stables and Horses in Ireland', 28-71.
- <sup>56</sup> See 'The Devil and Tom Conolly: an eighteenth-century legend of Castletown by "A Broth of a Boy" (Russell)', first published in *Dublin University Magazine*, XXII, 1843, 677. A small section is reproduced in McCarthy, 'Stables and Horses in Ireland', 48.
- <sup>57</sup> FitzGerald, *Lady Louisa Conolly*, 44. This may have been called the 'Huntsmans Room' mentioned in accounts in 1762 in the Castletown Account Book 1762-64, IAA, Conolly Papers, 97/84.
- <sup>58</sup> NLI, Conolly MSS 5/4 1778, letter from Sir Wm Howe to Tom Conolly, 25th October 1778.
- <sup>59</sup> *ibid.*, same to same, 12th July 1778.
- <sup>60</sup> Sweeney, *The Sweeney Guide*, 179.
- <sup>61</sup> A.P.W.Malcomson, 'The fall of the house of Conolly 1758-1803' in Allan Blackstock and Eoin Magennis (eds), *Politics and Political Culture in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1850: essays in tribute to Peter Jupp* (Belfast, 2007) 107-56.
- <sup>62</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>63</sup> David Griffin, 'Castletown, Co. Kildare: the contribution of James, first Duke of Leinster', *Irish Architectural & Decorative Studies*, I, 1998, 120-45.
- <sup>64</sup> Ann Margaret Keller, 'The Long Gallery of Castletown House', *Bulletin of the Irish Georgian Society*, XXII, 1979, 1-54.
- <sup>65</sup> Lena Boylan, 'The Conollys of Castletown House', *Quarterly Bulletin of the Irish Georgian Society*, XI, no. 4, Oct-Dec 1968, 1-46.
- <sup>66</sup> D'Arcy, *Horses, Lords and Racing Men*, 27.