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CONTENTS

THE CONOLLYS OF CASTLETOWN	1
A family history by Lena Boylan	

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Cover: The sphinx gates at Castletown, Celbridge, Co. Kildare, headquarters of the Irish Georgian Society, from Sir William Chambers' "Treatise on Civil Architecture" (1759). The gates were the work of John Coates, stonemason, Maynooth—the 'two sphynkes . . . £16 18 6.'—his bill is preserved in the house. Castletown was Open to the Public on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays from April 1st to September 30th 1968, 2-6 p.m. (Telephone: Celbridge 288252).

Full details of the various membership rates are available from the Irish Georgian Society, Castletown, Celbridge, Co. Kildare. All members receive the Quarterly Bulletin, and are entitled to attend lectures, join expeditions, etc.

Donations qualify as Tax Deductible in the U.S.A. if cheques are made payable to the Irish Georgian Society, Inc. They may be sent direct to the Society's headquarters at Castletown.

PRICE FIVE SHILLINGS

THE CONOLLYS OF CASTLETOWN

A Family History

by

Lena Boylan

William Conolly was born in 1662 in the town of Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal. His father Patrick Conolly was attainted in King James' Dublin Parliament of 1689, otherwise little is known of Patrick Conolly and his wife Jane, except that they owned an inn or ale house and must have conformed to the Established Church sometime before William's birth. Old Irish Christian names predominate among his relatives. His only brother was called Patrick, a cousin Hugh witnessed the deed of purchase of Castletown in 1709; other relatives were Terence and Phelim Conolly, and Thady and Terence Coan.

Like most innkeepers in the North of Ireland in the 17th century, the Conollys prospered. Settlers were constantly coming from England to the new Plantation in Ulster and accommodation was a necessity. William appears to have been the oldest of the Conolly family and was early apprenticed to the Law in Dublin. In 1685 when his sister Jane was but one year old, he was already qualified as an Attorney and attached to His Majesty's Court of Common Pleas. At the same time his friends were making representation to Capt. James Hamilton to employ him as agent. Capt. Hamilton married Elizabeth, only daughter and heir apparent of Sir Robert Reading and succeeded Sir Robert in many appointments and duties, more especially Master of the Kings Alnage and Keeper of Irish Lighthouses.¹ John Cowan who applied to Capt. Hamilton on behalf of Mr. Conolly informs him that the vacancy was already filled and writes on 27th September 1687—"had he (Capt. Hamilton) been as well informed of you as he now is, he should have readily employed you." Mr. Conolly secured the position worth £10 a year in 1692 and continued in Capt. Hamilton's employment until 1700.

On 2nd May 1698, he got his first public appointment, when King William III constituted and ordained him to be Collector and Receiver of Revenue for Londonderry and Coleraine. In those years he was practising as an Attorney on the North West circuit of Ulster and building up a reputation for industry shrewdness and ability.

In 1692 he represented his brother-in-law Thomas Atkinson in the case *Folliott v. Caldwell*. The Folliotts, Barons of Ballyshannon were in control of all the fishing rights of Lough Erne. Sir James Caldwell, whose estates also bordered Lough Erne, claimed certain fishing rights on the waters close by his land. Thomas Atkinson had a lease of the fisheries from Lord Thomas Folliott and sued Sir James Caldwell for trespass. In a letter from London dated 2nd June. 1692 Sir James Caldwell writes to Lord Folliott:

"I received a letter out of Irland wherein I understand your Lordshipp hath employed sum person to cummonce a sute against mee, for the fishings



Speaker Conolly by Jervas, with the mace of his office; Castletown, diningroom.

of Drumanoller Ealwere and my other small fishings on the river of Lough Earne. I assure your Lordshipp itt is nott worth your Lordshipp's trouble, neither the charge of a sute. I know there are maney hungarey layers now in Irland that wan to practtise and would nott care to putt your Lordshipp and my selfe in the Lawe to get moneys to themselves, which is a little scarce in Irland. Butt rather than they should prevaile in their designs, I am resolved to sattisfie Yr. Lordshipp in sum respects."

The dispute between the Folliotics and Caldwells over the fisheries was resumed at intervals until 1702, when by an amicable agreement they were leased to Sir James Caldwell for a certain term of years at the yearly rent of £500. When Mr. Conolly purchased the Ballyshannon estate from Lord Follriott's decendants in 1720 the Caldwells were still (by virtue of their lease) in possession of the Lough Erne fisheries and continued to pay Mr. Conolly the annual rent of £500.

In the intervening years, however, Mr. Conolly's power and influence had so advanced that even the Caldwells were prepared to forego any claims which they had to the fisheries. Sir Henry Caldwell, son and heir of Sir James, was in possession of the fisheries on October 21st 1723 when Robert McCausland writes to Mr. Conolly:

"Saturday last I went to wait on Sir Henry Caldwell. And after some discourse of the fishing of Ballyshannon, Sir Henry desired me to write to Yr. Honr. and give his humble service to you. And that he woud give you up his lease of the fishing immediately, without any consideration, 'tho he said he woud not part with it some years ago for less than one thousand pounds. But as his circumstances stands, he is not so active or fit to look after the waters as he was, and servants are not so just to him as they ought, and besides he was so free with me, to tell me if any thing happened him that your rent might be in hazard."

For some reason negotiations between Sir Henry Caldwell and Mr. Conolly did not take place at this particular period and when Sir Henry died in 1726 his son John entered into a fresh dispute with Mr. Conolly. Mr. Conolly's advantages in dealing with his new opponent may best be judged by two letters of Sir John Caldwell written in 1728. Writing to Frederick Trench on July 6th 1728 he says "I assure you I have no appetite to a law suit, especially with my Ld Justice Conolly, for whom I have the greatest regard." Again on 29th August following he writes to Mr. Darby Clarke, Mr. Conolly's solicitor: "By what I can understand my Ld Justice Conolly has a mind to rent my salmon fishery, there is no man I shud desire to be at pace with sooner, and I am shure I shall be always as good a neighbor as I can. I have a cosn germain, if Mr. Conolly will be so kind as to bestow some favour on him, he shall have the salmon fishery for a pepper corn a year."

The prejudiced attitude of Sir James Caldwell to the young ambitious attorney from his own neighbourhood in 1692, and the subsequent recognition of his son Sir Henry, and grandson Sir John, was typical of how Mr. Conolly overcame and won many critics in his own lifetime. His success in so doing was attributable to many things, not the least being his facility to amass riches.

Having a considerable income from the extensive lands leased to him in the North and his various agencies and employments he emerged as a substantial purchaser of forfeited estates following the 1690 Rebellion. In the Calendar of State Papers dated August 21st 1691, he is described as agent for the Mayor, Commonalty and Citizens of Londonderry holding divers lands, part of the forfeited estates of the Earl of Antrim, lately leased to him by the Commissioners of Revenue of Ireland. He early established himself as a capable developer and administrator of his estates and was able to secure the financial backing of Sir Alexander Cairnes, the London banker. This was no mean achievement. Swift in his *Journal to Stella* in June 1711, describes Cairnes as "a scrupulous puppy", "a shuffling scoundrel" and adds "What can one expect from a Scot and a fanatic."

In 1694 William Conolly married Katherine Conyngham, daughter of Sir Albert Conyngham, a Williamite General of Ordnance and sister of Henry Coffyngham of Mount Charles, Co. Donegal. She brought him a marriage portion of £2,300 for which he settled on her the first estates purchased by him in Ireland. They were the lands of Rodanstown, Dollanstown, and Batterstown, the townlands of Colgagh contg. 218A.; in Pagestown 174A.; Hardresstown contg. 81A.; Bannocks and Little Killany contg. 110A.; Killgrange als Killgregg contg. 207A.; Butlerstown contg. 14A.; Porterstown contg. 31A.; Pagestown contg. 22A. and 570A. in Moylhussey and Milltown, in the Barony of Deece, Co. Meath.

His marriage to Katherine Conyngham allied William Conolly to some of the most influential Protestant families of the North; the Leslies, Montgomerys, Hamiltons, Gores, Currys and Knoxes, and to some useful friends in high places. James Bonnell who married JaUe Conyngham, Katherine's sister, was appointed secretary or Registrar to the Commissioners of Inquiry into forfeitures in 1693, he was later Comptroller and Accountant General of all His Majesty's Revenue of Ireland.²

Rodanstown, Kilcock, was the first home of William Conolly. Prior to its purchase in 1691, he had been in lodgings at Cork Hill, Dublin. It continued to be his country residence until he came to live at Castletown. Around him, in Co. Meath, his relatives established themselves. Brigadier Henry Conyngham (his wife's brother) purchased the manor, capital messuage and castle of Slane, the town and lands and Hill of Slane, and other adjacent lands forfeited by Christopher Fleming Lord Slane, and King James II. Richard Jones of Dollanstown, who married Mary Conyngham (his wife's sister) in 1697, was also a purchaser of the estate of King James II. Edmond Stafford, a near relative of the Conyngham family purchased Brownstown near Navan, and other lands forfeited by Henry Dowdall." Jane Conolly, William's sister, married in 1707 Thomas Pearson, only son of Aid. John Pearson of Dublin and they lived on an estate of 500 acres at Beamore near Drogheda.

In 1703, the year his relatives purchased the above lands, his own purchases were extensive. The forfeited lands of the Nugents, in Meath, Westmeath and Roscommon; the lands of Thomas Plunkett in Co. Meath; the * forfeited, lands of John Itchingham and James Gilligan in Co. Wexford, were all purchased by him and totalled approximately ten thousand acres. The price paid was often less than £1 per acre, and in some cases Mr. Conolly paid only one-third of the purchase money and the rest in debentures.*

At this particular period, Mr. Conolly appears to have been completely occupied with the acquisition of forfeited lands and their disposal to suitable Protestant purchasers. His knowledge of the law did, however, occasionally tempt him to circumvent it, as is recorded in one of the most singular cases listed among the Copies and Draughts of Petitions to the House of Commons, respecting the sale of forfeited estates in Ireland 1701-2. Listed as the Petition of John Little:

"It is stated that one Boiton Nutley, esq. claimed to have a mortgage to the extent of £12,000 for principal and interest on the estate of the late Earl of Tyrconnell. John Parker, esq. as a near relative of Nutleys proposed to Little,

a man of over 80 years of age, and very infirm, that he should personate Nutley and come forward in his character, to assign the mortgage to Parker. Little refused the proposal as 'unjust and villanous', whereupon John Parker who had taken into his assistance one Wm. Conolly esq. 'a cunning intreiguing spark' pretends that his near kinsman Boiton Nutley was arrived in Ireland from England to make his claim to the mortgage. But having a tempestuous crossing, he died before he could do more than made a will leaving the mortgage to Parker. The necessary deeds were perfected. Parker being supported with money by the said Wm. Conolly was about to succeed when Little intervened. A funeral of the alleged testator had taken place in due form; but Little having reason to suspect the proceeding, made enquiry and found that the country people had taken up the coffin (possibly at the instance of body snatchers) and found nothing in it, but 'rubbish stones and dirt; and no corps.' Parker and Conolly having intimation of the inquiry and its result paid some indigent persons to take up a newly buried corpse in a neighbouring graveyard. They put this corpse into the former coffin with very rich burial ornaments and exposed it next day at Nutleys in order to confute sinister reports. It happened, however, that the substituted corpse was identified. The family to which it belonged came and claimed the body and thereby all the sham was blown.'

"Parker made all the facts known to the Trustees at Chichester House and on 22nd June 1703, the Trustees made an order 'That twenty pounds be paid Mr. Little for his services on his discovery and detecting the fraudulent claim of John Parker esq. But the penalty imposed by law on fraudulent claims was double the amount of the claim and Little as he was advised, petitioned Parliament for his forfeiture against Parker and Conally.' ""*

The lands acquired by Mr. Conolly were not limited to those declared forfeit as a result of the 1690 rebellion. In Ulster the decendants of many of those who received grants or made purchases after the forfeitures of O'Neill and O'Donnell in 1608 were gradually finding themselves in financial difficulties, and were anxious to sell their estates and return to England, and so approached Mr. Conolly to purchase.

The estate of Limavady containing 1,000 acres granted to Sir Thomas Phillips, surveyor of the forfeited estates in 1608 was sold by his descendants to Conolly in 1697. The estate of John Kingsmale in the manor of Castlefin contg. 1443 acres was sold by his descendants in 1711, and in 1720 Mr. Conolly purchased for £52,000 the profitable estate of Lord Folliott in Ballyshannon containing over one thousand acres with the fisheries of Lough Erne, the yearly income from this estate was £2,000 and £450 from the fisheries.

From Philip Duke of Wharton^Mr. Conolly purchased the estate of his grandfather Adam Loftus in the manor of Rathfarnham Co. Dublin for £62,000 in 1723, and from Matthew Plunkett Lord Louth the estate of Killadoon, Celbridge, in 1725. In June 1728 Mr. Conolly purchased from Mr. John White, for £11,883, the manor town and lands of Leixlip, Newtown, Stacomney and the chief rent belonging to the said manor. This was to be Mr. Conolly's last purchase. Excepted from it were "the castle, garden, and outhouses belonging and all that part of the

lands of Leixlip lying on the left side of the road leading from the town of Leixlip to Newbridge and also a garden or spot of ground on the right hand side of the said road joining the holding of one Christopher Roe." These latter portions of the estate were purchased on 7th August 1731 by William Conolly's nephew, who came to live at Leixlip after the death of his uncle in 1729.

It was generally acknowledged that Wm. Conolly was the richest man in Ireland. He became a legend in his own lifetime; one petitioner wrote "whatsoever you undertake God prospers." His name became the silver spoon with which parents bestowed wealth and prosperity on their sons, and so we had Wm. Conolly Conyngham, Wm. Conolly Coan and Wm. Conolly McCausland. Making sure of the two-fold patronage of Mr. and Mrs. Conolly, George Finey of Celbridge (agent to Wm. Conolly) called his daughter Williamina Katherina. In his Drapier's Letters Swift wrote that if Wood's halfpence became current, Mr. Conolly would have required 240 horses to bring his half-year's rent from Dublin to Castletown, and two or three great cellars in his house for storage.

In public life Mr. Conolly's advancement was equally spectacular. In 1692 he succeeded in getting elected to William the Third's first Parliament as a member for the Borough of Donegal. No man understood when to take advantage of the tide in political affairs better than William Conolly, and when the corrupt, profligate, Thomas Lord Wharton was sent to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant in April 1709, Conolly by a bribe of £3,000 secured for himself the post of Commissioner of the Revenue, thus becoming positioned for subsequent public promotions.

Swift's hatred of Lord Wharton was well known, but from the following we find that he saw little to admire or recommend in Conolly's accomplished bargaining. On 28th September 1710 he writes in his Journal to Stella—"Conolly is out and Roberts in his place, who loses a better here but was formerly a commissioner in Ireland. That employment cost Conolly three thousand pounds to Lord Wharton so he had made one ill bargain in his life." Changes made in the British ministry in 1710 resulted with advantage to the Tory party, and when the new Parliament met in November of that year, only two Whig members had retained office. Lord Wharton was removed from the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland in July 1711.

When George I ascended the throne in 1714 Mr. Conolly's unswerving loyalty to the crown and his devotion to Parliament was becoming evident to many who had previously regarded him with suspicion. In the troublesome year of 1715, when the Pretender or James III returned to join his followers in Scotland Wm. Conolly, through the influence of his friends and the expediency of the times was unanimously chosen Speaker of the Irish House of Commons.

In 1717 he was named one of the three Lords Justice chosen to administer the Government of the country, in the absence of the Lord Lieutenant. The nomination of an Irishman of such humble origin was greatly resented by the new settlers and adventurers' descendants who had come to regard themselves as Ireland's gentry. Their opposition to Mr. Conolly is revealed in a letter from Sir John St. Leger, Baron of the Exchequer in Ireland (1715-1741) to Lord



Mrs. Conolly by Jervas; Katherine, daughter of Sir Albert Conyngham, with a niece';
Castletown, diningroom.

Chief Justice Parker, afterwards Lord Chancellor of England and Earl of Macclesfield, dated Dublin, February 21st 1717:'

"We expect daily a letter for swearing the new intended justices, that is the Archbishop of Dublin, the Chancellor and Mr. Conolly; many people here, especially our quality and old gentry, are much offended at Mr. Conolly's being one of them; this gentleman was lately an attorney, his father keeping an ale-house in the north of Ireland, this being too notorious to be stifled, but by making long bills and good bargains, he is now reported to be worth eight thousand a year, and by a generous way of living and adhering to the honest cause in the bad times, was chosen Speaker of the House of Commons this Parliament, but has shown himself very unequal to that part, but has still a considerable interest in the House, and gave his assistance to the late Justices in this last Session.

"This is a true report of him which I write to your Lordship under caution, and only for your information and shall add further that Colonel Bladen our late secretary and who I hear is again to be Secretary to my Lord Townshend, was very intimate with Mr. Conolly, and it's supposed may have recommended Mr. Conolly to his Lordship, as a person very capable to make his government easy.

"But it's not unlikely that this promotion of Mr. Conolly will make him be so envied that instead of increasing, it may lessen his interest, and that he'd now find opposition everywhere as an ambitious man, and a creature of the Government, who before was popular, always appearing at the head of the country's interest.

"I hope it will relish better, when it's done than while it's doing, for abundance of people are disgusted at it and others condemn it with silence 'tho visible enough in their faces."

Despite "this true report of him" William Conolly continued to hold the post of Speaker until October 1729 when ill-health forced him to resign, he was also sworn one of the Lords Justice for nine further times and continued to remain "at the head of his country's interest." And this must remain Mr. Conolly's greatest contribution to his years in Parliament.

He steadfastly opposed the appointment of British officials to posts in the Irish administration and recommended those qualified who were of Irish birth to successive Lords Lieutenant. In a letter to the Duke of Bolton on 29th August 1720 he states—

"I am a very unfitt undertaker But I dare say there is not any that your Grace will use your good offices for to put into ye vacancys that will putt themselves into any hands that will lead them out of ye way But on ye contrary use their utmost endavours and interest to make all things go easy in both houses of Parliament, or I assure Yr. Grace I had never mentioned them and particularly Mr. Justice Gore for whom I had all ye assurances imaginable before I wrote in his favour to Yr. Grace."

"Who is the proper person to recommend to bishopricks here, an Irish Speaker or an English Primate" wrote Primate Boulter to the Bishop of London on April 25th 1727.⁷ The reference was to Speaker Conolly whose influence in the Irish House of Commons, the Primate greatly resented. The letter was an outburst of the Primate's jealousy of Mr. Conolly who was actively engaged in seeking the appointment of his friend Theophilus Bolton, Bishop of Elphin, to the vacant see of Cashel, and reads—

'It is reported here that our Speaker has wrote that the House of Commons will be very much disoblighed if the Bishop of Elphin has not Cashel. I am on the contrary assured that among the whigs of that house, setting aside the Speaker's creatures and dependants, there is hardly one who will not be better pleased to have the Bishop of Kilmore made Archbishop, than the Bishop of Elphin.

I must likewise inform you, that I have discoursed with every Englishman of consequence in this town, whether clergy or laity and can assure you that

there is not one who is not of opinion that the giving the archbishoprick to Bishop Bolton will be a great blow to the English interest in this kingdom. I would beg of your Lordship, if the affair be not over to represent this to the ministry.

I shall likewise write a letter to the Duke of Newcastle to desire the ministry to consider who is the proper person to recommend to bishopricks here, an Irish Speaker or an English Primate.'

Theophilus Bolton was a man of great learning and vast ability and so enterprising that according to Boulter would, if appointed to the Archbishopric of Cashel, "soon set himself at the head of the Irish interest here." Speaker Conolly's influence on his behalf almost outweighed the opposition of the Primate. On May 23rd 1727, the latter found it necessary to write to the Archbishop of Canterbury "I am sorry that my Ld. Lieutenant should insist so much for one who is much a junior and as dangerous an Irishman as any on the bench." Bishop Bolton was not however appointed at this juncture. Later the necessity of affairs warranted his appointment to the Archbishopric of Cashel, but the Government had reason to regret their submission in this affair, for Archbishop Bolton by his subsequent actions in the interests of his country justified Primate Boulter's original opposition to him.

Bishop Bolton was only one of the Irish set which had formed and grown in strength under the leadership of Speaker Conolly. Others there were, like the Attorney General Thomas Marlay (grandfather of Henry Grattan) who came into Parliament, as a member of one of Speaker Conolly's Boroughs and was conspicuous for his rudeness to England and her people.⁸ Of another of the Speaker's friends, Sir Marmaduke Coghill, Primate Boulter wrote "He is a person of abilities and a fair character, but as determined a supporter of the Irish against the English interest here as anybody, though with more prudence than many others" (Letter to the Duke of Newcastle, Feb. 20, 1728).

Both those men attained high office, Thomas Marlay became chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer in 1730 and Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench in 1741. Coghill succeeded Speaker Conolly as Commissioner of Revenue in 1729 and was advanced to the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1735."

Speaker Conolly's health had not been good since the summer of 1728. He had, according to his friends, overtaxed his strength. The constant demands of his public and private affairs had been considerably increased by his interests in the building of the new Parliament House and his own great mansion house at Castletown, both erected under his direction in the latter years of his life. In October 1729 when he resigned as Speaker of the House of Commons, his friend Sir Ralph Gore was chosen in his place. His illness and forced resignation had softened the heart of his old enemy the Primate, who only then conceded the merit and worth of Mr. Conolly's administration. Writing to the Duke of Newcastle on October 23rd 1729, he states that "There is no doubt but Mr. Conolly's illness and impossibility of ever acting again has made things worse than usual, as it must be some time before the several clans that united under him can settle under a new director." Later, on 22nd November, he added "Dr. Coghill's being



The monument to Speaker Conolly (d. 1729) in the death house at Celbridge.
The work of Thomas Carter the Elder.

made a Commissioner in the room of Mr. Conolly is very acceptable here. I hope he and Sir Ralph Gore will by degrees get together the friends of Mr. Conolly and others well disposed to join heartily in his Majesty's service, but this is more than they will be able to effect this session."

Mr. Conolly died at his house in Capel Street on October 30th 1729. On November 1st the Old Dublin Intelligence or Weekly Digest contained the notice of his death:

"The same day died at his house in Caple Street of the Appoplexy, the Right Hon. Wm. Conolly, Esq.; one of the Head Commissioners of His Majesty's Revenue, late Speaker of the Hon. House of Commons, Ten Times Sworn one of their Excellencies the Lords Justices and one of His Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council of the Kingdom of Ireland. His corps will be interred with great Solemnity at Cel-bridge near Castle-Town on Tuesday next, be-ing to be attended by the House of Commons and their Speaker in fine Irish Linen Scarves and the Coaches and Servants of all the Nobility and Gentry in the City."

A week later on November 8th, The Dublin Weekly Journal reports the funeral:

Last Thursday the Hon. William Conolly Esq. was carried along the Keys from his late House in Capel Street to be interr'd at Cell-bridge in the following manner.

William Conolly, Esq., Nephew and Heir and Chief Mourner.

The High Constable with a Shrfc, and

Six of the Lord Mayor's Constables with Hatbands and Gloves to clear the way.

Poor men in Black Cloth Sarge Gowns, in number 67 according to his age, each carrying in his hand a Penuencil with the letters of his name and year of His Age.

Three persuivant messengers in their livery's.

Surgeon and Apothecary Physicians.

Lord Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen and Sheriffs in their formalities.

Edward Dearing Esquire Clerk of the Council.

The Helmet and Crest carried by Athlone Pursivant in his Coat.

Messengers and Door Keepers to the House of Commons bare headed.

Serjeant at Arms and his Deputy to assist him with servants.

The Coat of the Defunct's Armes carried by Ulster King of Arms in His Majesty's Coat.

His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant's Coach, with his Gentlemen Ushers and Bedchamber.

Six Privy Councelors supporters of the Pall.

Members of the House of Commons, two and two.

Nobility and Gentry, two and two, etc. All with linen scarves of Irish manufacture.

Speaker Conolly had no children, but to his own and, his wife's relatives, he was a generous benefactor. As early as 1692* he was paying his brother Patrick and his sisters an allowance out of the College lands of Tirhugh, which he then had on lease. When Brig. Gen. Henry Conyngham was killed in action in Spain

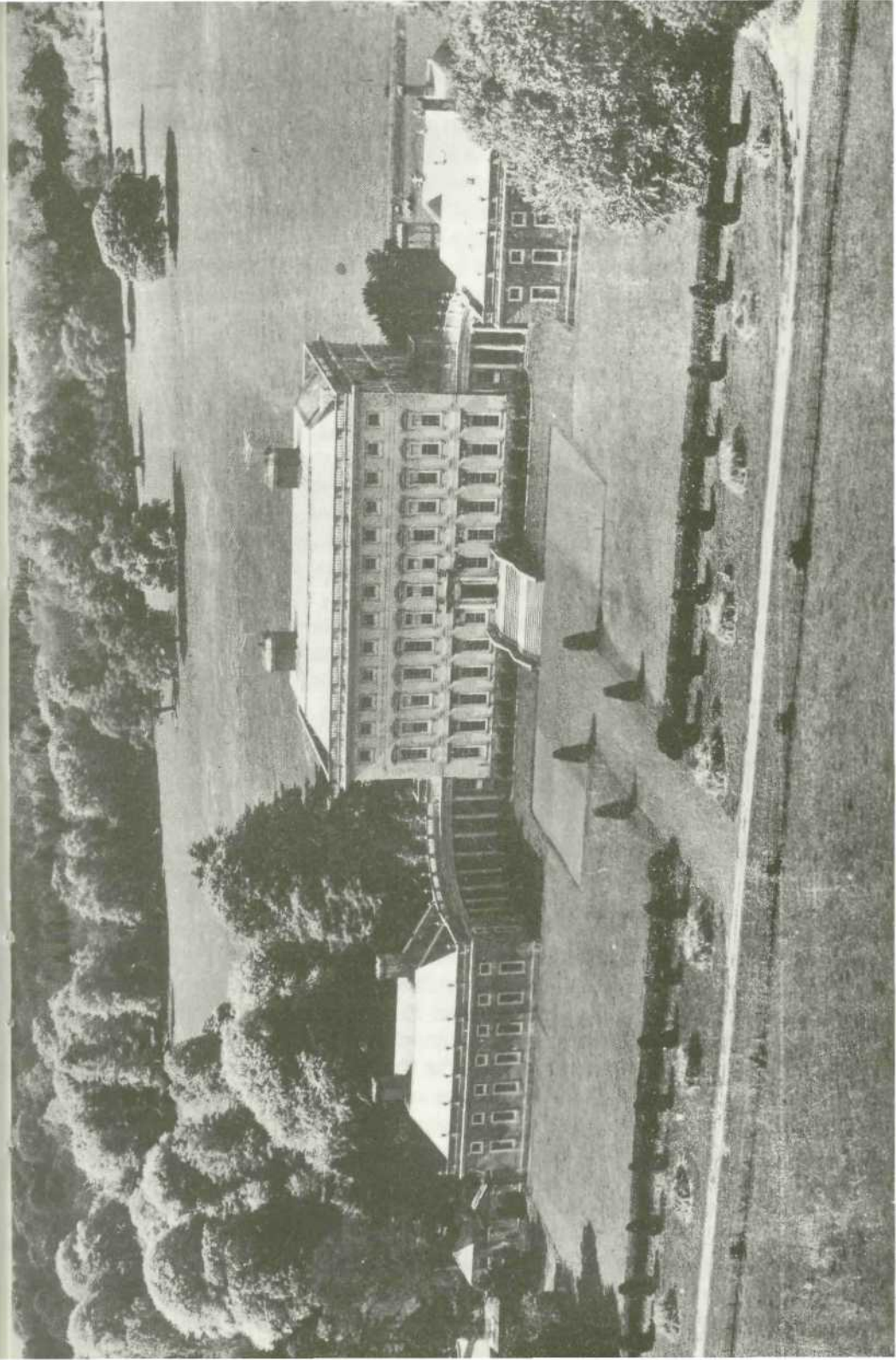
in 1705/6 and his widow Lady Shelburne re-married, Wm. Conolly acted as guardian to his wife's two nephews and niece Mary Conyngham. On his nephews he settled his estate of Newtown Limavaddy after his own death, and on his niece he settled £5,000 on her marriage to Francis Burton in 1720. On his brother he settled £2,000 in 1705 and on his sister Jane, £3,700 on her marriage to Thomas Pearson in 1707.

In his will made on October 18th 1729," he left further large sums to the Conynghams, Pearsons and Burtons. Other relations to benefit were his sister Mrs. Dixon of Ballyshannon and her children, his sister Mrs. Ball and her children, his wife's sister Mrs. Jane Bonnell. The disposal of £400 to any poor relation he left to his wife's discretion and was no doubt intended for her sister Mary Jones of Dollanstown, a woman "as strong in her spirits as in her body." (to quote Penelope Cashel, Mrs. Conolly's companion). Her relations with the ConoUys were often strained due to an early difference over the price of land in Kilcock which her husband sold to Mr. Conolly and a later feud that concerned Mr. Jones' voting against Conolly's friend, the Duke of Wharton.

To his wife Katherine, Mr. Conolly left all his estate in North and South Wales, his mansion house in Dublin, his mansion house and manor of Castletown and all his manors lands and tenements in Counties Kildare, Meath, Westmeath and Roscommon. After the death of his wife, they were to pass to his nephew William, to whom he bequeathed direct his estates in Donegal, Dublin, Fermanagh, Wexford and Waterford. To his wife he gave the use of his plate and household goods during her life and after her death to their nephew William. He also left her his coaches, chariott and all his horses and cattle.

His executors were his wife Katherine, his nephew William, Arthur Price Lord Bishop of Clonfert, Dr. Coghill and Thomas Marlay.

Katherine Conolly was 67 years of age when her husband died. She wis to survive him for 23 years, living at Castletown or in the great house in Capel Street, which Wm. Conolly purchased from a Mr. Barry in 1707. A description of the Capel Street house is contained in an indented deed of lease and release dated 16th and 17th day of January 1771, made between the Rt. Hon. Thomas Conolly and Ralph Ward Esq. Surveyor General of His Majesty's Ordnance in Ireland." By which deed of release Thomas Conolly "did demise, grant, set and to farm let unto the said Ralph Ward—All that and those—a piece of ground situated in the street called Capel Street in the suburbs of the city of Dublin know and described as follows, that is to say, one plot or parcel of ground situated in the Green commonly called the Abbey Green in Oxmantown and on the Eastside of the ground formerly set unto Mr. Baron Hartstonge containing on the west side from the ground then granted to Sir Richard Ryves Knt. formerly recorder of the said city, on the north soutward to the highway the number of 218 feet, leaving 28 ft. in "the west side and 40 ft. on the southside for streets and mentioned to contain along the south side 280 ft. and at the East end 150 ft. and on the north side next to the ground formerly the ground of Sir Richard Ryves 224 ft. on which plot of ground lately stood a dwelling in which the said Thomas Conolly lived, and stables, Coach Houses and offices, which said ground



is situated on the west side of the street now called Capel Street and bounded on the East by the said street, on the south by the street now called Little Britain St. and on the west by the pavement of the street called the little Green, and on the north by the house and ground now in the tenure and occupation of John Leigh Esq."

The Capel Street house was the centre of Speaker Conolly's political activities. There he lived in commanding elegance, his brilliant vermilion and gold State coach for 14 years adding distinction to the neighbourhood.

Mrs. Conolly had always shared her husband's political interests and after his death people continued to flock to the Capel Street house to enlist her support. Writing from Capel Street on November 27th 1735, Lady Anne Conolly informs her father, the Earl of Strafford:¹²

"There is one of our Irish Bishops dead this morning, he was an English man and a man of great merit and regretted. I conclude by dinner I shall find at least a dozen parsons below, for upon such an occasion they flock round Mrs. Conolly for her interest, which 'tho not as great as in her husband's lifetime, yet her recommendation is often of great service, for her knowledge of the world makes her never recommending any one unworthy of it and her zeal for the government makes her choice those that are of the same way of thinking."

Katherine Conolly was a very remarkable woman. The Rev. Sam. Shepherd who was Vicar of Kildrough for 50 years was a constant visitor to Castletown, and in the period of his ministry became acquainted with three generations of its owners. In one of his poems dedicated to Mrs. Conolly he describes her thus:

"Blest with superior sense a mind that scorns
Pride's gaudy dress, yet yields to decent forms"

and again

"The steady heart thro' every change the same
Firm to his friends and faithfull to his fame
Cheerful to spread the hospitable store
Ease to the rich and plenty to the poor."

In the long years after her husband's death, she continued to perpetuate his memory. She had the beautiful monument with its sculptured masterpiece by Thomas Carter erected in the old church of Kildrough. Together with William Conolly the Speaker's nephew, she completed the purchase of the land set aside by her husband for the erection of the Charity School in Celbridge. In his will Speaker Conolly left £500 for the erection of this school and endowed it with £250 p.a. out of the rents of his Rathfarnham estate. The school was commenced shortly after 1733 and is reputed to have been completely planned by Speaker Conolly in conjunction with the Kildare architect and Surveyor General of Ireland, Colonel Thomas de Burgh, before the Speaker's death in 1729.

In March 1740 Mary Jones wrote "my sister is building an obelisk to answer a view from the back of Castletown House, it will cost her three or four hundred pounds at least, but I believe more. I really wonder how she can do so much and live as she does." The erection of the obelisk at this particular time was due

to Mrs. Conolly's concern for the hardships imposed on the people of the neighbourhood during a winter of great frost when all their crops perished.

Generous to her many relatives and friends and much imposed upon, Mrs. Conolly once complained to Lady Anne Conolly that she was often begged. To her nephew and his wife she showed the greatest kindness, indeed the marriage of the younger William Conolly to Lady Anne Wentworth in 1733 was the cause of great happiness to Mrs. Conolly. For many months, she shared Castletown, and her Capel Street House with them, until Leixlip Castle was ready for their reception. William Conolly wrote to his father-in-law on September 12th 1733 from Castletown—

"Lady Anne and I have continued here with the good old Lady, ever since we landed and I can with pleasure say that your daughter has quite got the length of her foot."

The good old lady wrote too, on February 28th 1733/34 telling Lord Strafford of her affection and esteem for his daughter:

"She is so good and valluable a young lady that she merrets the love and esteem of all that knows her and for my own part I assure yr Ldship that I have the same love and regard for her, as if she wear my one daughter, for as I ever looked on her husband as my one child yu may be assured that his wife wod be very dear to me and espechely wan he was soe hapy to chouse soe well."

William Conolly junior was the son of Speaker Conolly's only brother Patrick. Circa 1693 Patrick Conolly appears to have been assisting William in the collection of his rents, but later removed to London, where he was living in 1705 when Wm. Conolly settled £2,000 on him "in consideration of the love and affection which he hath for him and his wife Francis." In 1720 Speaker Conolly applied to the Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Bolton for some employment for his nephew. On October 24th of that year he writes to Mr. Walpole—

"I am extremely pleased at ye greate friend my Lord Lieutenant is like to gain in a Chancellor. I cannot express my obligations to my Ld. Lieutenant for ye favour he has conferred on my nephew and ye very oblidging manner he has granted it and at ye same time I cannot omit my humble thanks for ye parte and ye further trouble ye are to have in that matter. I applied to My Ld Lieutenant only for my nephew's life tho' ye former Patent was for two lives and I believe it will be ye same trouble to add another life in ye present patent. If there be ye least difficulty in this I beg . . . if otherwise not troublesome the other life that I would be desirous to add to my nephew Wm. Conolly is to Henry Conyngham gent, or ye longest liver of them. I can assure you that upon enquiry I find ye office is not worth above £200 P.A. tho' I represented it at £300 P.A. But the kindness done me is ye same as if it were much more than this value."

In 1727 Wm. Conolly the younger was elected M.P. for Ballyshannon and continued to represent this Borough until his death in 1754.

On November 29th 1732 The Hon. Mrs. Donellan writes to her brother Lord Strafford—

"I hear Mr. Conolly has proposed for one of your daughters. I sincerely

wish ye report may be agreeable and a sensible gentleman and all ye world knows he has a very good fortune and what is above all a sober man, he has a very good caricktor, how happy should I be to see one of the young ladys in ys. kingdom before I dye, he has a fine house to bring her too, you have three daughters in my opinion you can't disspose of one of em better yen to him."

And so Lady Anne Wentworth eldest daughter of ThomaS Wentworth Earl of Strafford was well married to the wealthy William Conolly, for so she considered herself, when she reminds her father on March 2nd 1733/34, that "Mr. Conolly is so good to me that I am sure I ought to reward anyone that had a hand in the match."

The Conollys arrived in Ireland in August 1733 and on 20th September William writes to Lord Strafford—"Our Lord Lieutenant is arrived and the gaetys of Dublin will soon commence how they will pleas Lady Anne I know not for my part I have long since been surfeited with crowds." The gaieties of Dublin were immensely exciting to Lady Anne, in a letter to her brother dated 31st October she gives a full account of her impressions of the "Sham Court" at Dublin Castle.

"I am just up and dressed after the fatigues of yesterday's show, tho I was so well entertained I was not at all tired, but have begun as soon as possible to keep my word and give ydu an account of it. We went to court in the morning about one o'clock and there was a song in honour of his Majesty, the morning Drawing was over about three and at seven we went to the Castle again and all the Ladys of Quality was led into the Drawingroom to wait till the Duchess [of Dorset] came out to attend her to the Ball room when there was the best seats kept for them, accordingly about 8 we went into the ballroom which was the prettiest thing I ever saw, for it was hung with gilt leather and fit'd up like the redotto room only prettyer for the seats was raised and at the uper end arcks light'd something like the stage at the orattorias and everybody had room to sitt down. About 12 we went to super, which was finer than any thing I ever saw, in my life. I dont well know how to discribe it but the super was mighty well disposed and lighted and in the middle there was a large basan with three seahorses and three serpents that was twisted round a pilar and at the top out of their mouths play'd a fountain of Burgandy, which lasted three hours. The Duke and Duchess was excessive civil to every body, the Duchess went out off the super room a little before one and I came away when she did, but I believe most of the company staid extrem late, but when I had seen all that was to be seen, I was glad to come home quietly for the Duke gave 16 hogsheads of wine to the guards and servants, by which as they grow drunk there was mischief done. My servants was very sober and Col. Cornwallis sent a guard home with me, so I came off charmingly tho I had the comfort to see one of the soldiers run my Ld. Mountcashel's footman thro' the body with his Bayonett just by my chair and he was taken up for dead, but they tell me this morning he is alive, but they believe the wound is mortal and the soldier will be hanged. As to all the finery I have write you a list 'tho I am afraid



Lady Anne Conolly, unknown artist; daughter of Thomas Wentworth,
3rd Earl of Strafford.

you'll laugh at our sham court that has a real one but for my part I never was so little tired of a Birthday in England nor so well taken care off and I own I like Queen Dorset much better than Queen Caroline."

Three months later on January 31st 1734 Katherine Conolly writes from the Capel Street house to Lady Strafford—"It is with the utmost pleasure I have the honner to acquaint Yr. Ladyship that yesterday at 4 o'clock in the afternoon Lady Anne Conolly was saffely delivered of a very fine girl." Old Mrs. Conolly was delighted with the little girl and begged to be made her sponsor and so she was named Katherine.

In the Spring Mr. Conolly was busy inspecting his Irish estates, visiting and entertaining his tenants. Lady Anne, in apologising to her father for William's neglect in writing, explains that—

"He has been so busy entertaining his tenants at Rathfarnham and the gentlemen here about that his head has not been enough settled to do anything for drinking you know does not agree with him 'tho he must practise it a little at his first coming into the country or he wou'd not please."

The Conollys with their young daughter were now settled in Leixlip, but Lady Anne's parents were importuning her not to reside permanently in Ireland. She explains to her father—"My being absent from my friends is to be ever not what I should choose but as I know 'tis Mr. Conolly's affair not his inclination that keeps him here 'twoud be monstrous in me to be dissatisfied at it." To further his wishes in this regard Lord Strafford proposed that Mr. Conolly should sit in the English Parliament and helped to have him elected to the vacant seat of Aldborough in 1734. (He sat for Aldborough 1734-47; for Petersfield 1747-54.)

In May 1734 Lady Anne tells her father that she intends to ride to Naas to see the house of his granduncle Thomas Wentworth Earl of Strafford, and adds that she has been told that it is quite ruinous. On December 5th of that year, when her first and only son was born in Leixlip, she had him christened Thomas. Announcing his birth, Wm. Conolly writes "As it came sometime before we expected it, it cannot be a chopping son, but it eats and cryes enough to make us believe that it will continue with us."

Having a son was so much to Mr. Conolly's and all his friends satisfaction that it was a joy to Lady Anne. Yet, so much afraid was she of his not doing well that she had set herself against growing fond of him. But the little fellow grew apace, and rivalled his sister in beauty and wit, according to his proud father. On December 6th 1739 he writes to Lord Strafford "the girl hopes to aske blessing of you and Lady Strafford next Autumn, but the boy must continue an Irishman sometime longer and we are at bed and board with my Aunt to whom we are much obliged."

Late in 1744 the Conollys removed to London where they remained until 1748, returning to Leixlip at intervals or to Mr. Conolly's country house, Stretton Hall in Staffordshire.

In the meantime, old Mrs. Conolly, still very actively interested in Irish affairs, continued to live at Castletown or in Capel Street where failing health often confined her to the care of her good friend Doctor Grattan. Aware of her great age and the loss of many friends whom she outlived, she records—

"I have enjoyed a long share of health and happiness for many years but like all things in this world it has had its changes, some black, some white; neither beauty, birth nor grandeur can give us any constancy of this life."

But she was often at Castletown where she was always happy writing to Lady Anne and telling her that twenty people dined with her and that she was still well enough to enjoy what she describes as her trade of gossip. To her interest we are indebted for her letter of July 2nd 1747:

"I have not seen ether Ld. or young Lady Killdear I hear they intend being

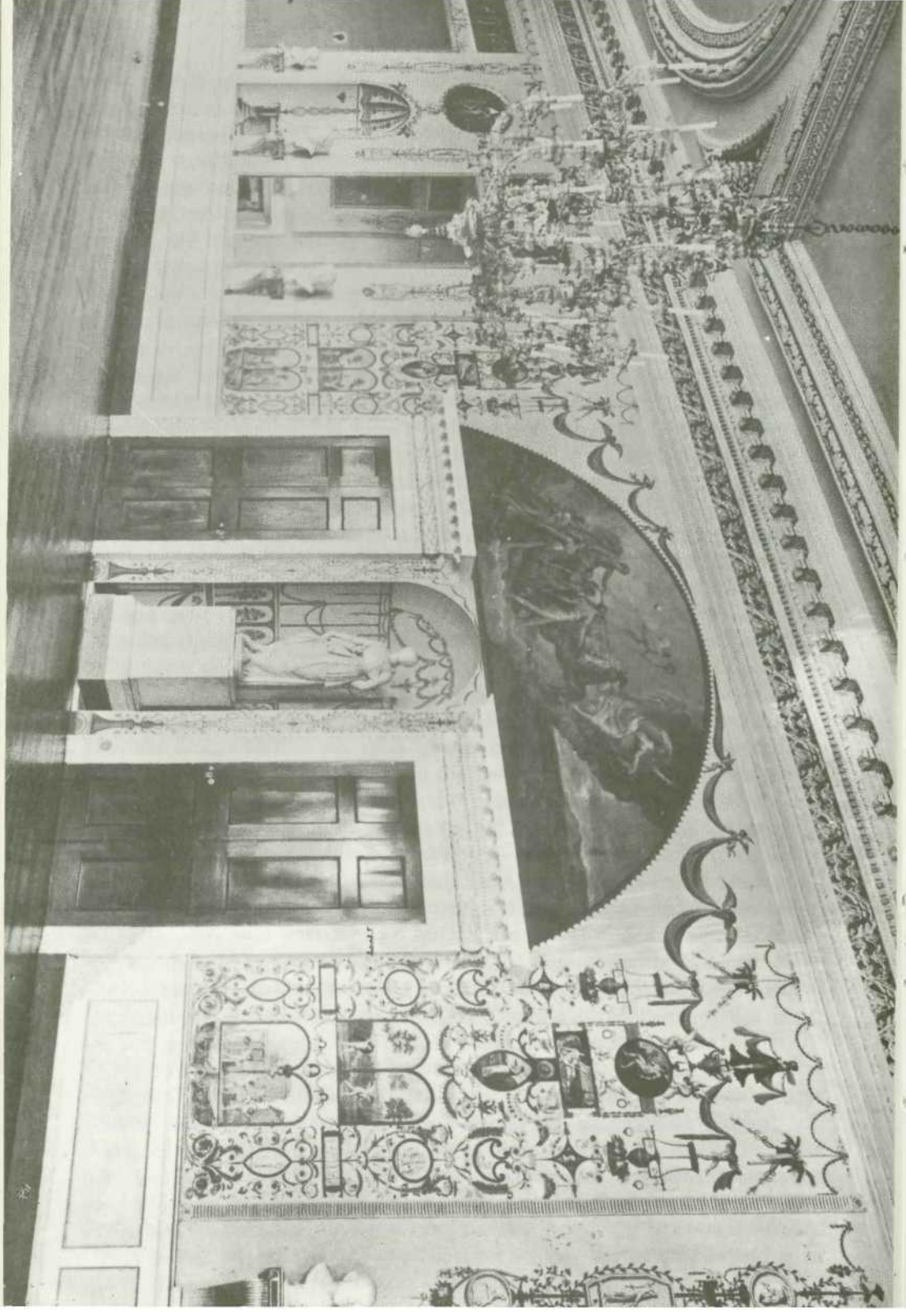
at Cartown, they have bine at Dollerstown, a hunting house abt 20 miles from this and Lady Dowager is with them, for they tell me Cartown is not yet ready for them—and I am told it has cost the old Lady above 20,000 ponds and that she makes them a present of it, she is now furnishing it—and must now halt her hand for the great sume of money the old Ld. left is near an end and yesterday his Ldship was in the 4 Corts passing fines and recoverys, that he may have it in his power to sell, he has purchased Kellystown from Mr. Maxwell and he had difficulty in reasing the money, he has spent a vast sume, and it's say'd got no fortune."

Mrs. Conolly died at Castletown in 1752, Mrs. Delany reporting her loss writes—

"We have lost our great Mrs. Conolly. She died last Friday and is a general loss. Her table was open to all her friends of all ranks, and her purse to the poor. She was I think in her ninetieth year. She had been dropping for some years, but never so ill as to shut out company. She rose constantly at eight, and by eleven was seated in her drawing-room and received visits 'till three o'clock; at which hour she punctually dined, and generally had two tables of eight or ten people each. Her own table was served with seven courses and seven and a dessert, and two substantial dishes on the sidetable, and if the greatest person in the kingdom dined with her, she never altered her bill-of-fare. As soon as dinner was over, she took the ladies to the drawing-room and left the gentlemen to finish as they pleased. She sat down in her grey cloth great chair and took a nap, whilst the company chatted to one another, which lulled her to sleep. Tea and coffee came exactly at half an hour after five. She then waked, and as soon as tea was over a party of whist was made for her 'till ten. Then everybody retired. She had prayers every day at twelve, and when the weather was good took the air, but has never made a visit since Mr. Conolly died. She was clever at business, wrote all her **own** letters, and could read a newspaper by candle-light without spectacles. She was a plain and vulgar woman in her manner; but had very valuable qualities. For about a month past she had frequent fainting fits that alarmed those about her. On Friday morning her nephew Mr. Conolly (and heir to her great fortune) breakfasted with her and she was as well or better than she had been for some time. After breakfast she said she 'wished to lie down' which she did; in half an hour she desired they would turn her without making any complaint, and in turning her from one side to the other she died as quietly as if she had only fallen asleep. What a blessed ending to a well spent life!"

Later Mrs. Delany was to report: "I am afraid Mrs. Conolly has not shewn such justice and judgement in the disposition of her fortune as could be wished. She has left Mr. Conolly (her husband's nephew and heir to a vast fortune) £10,000; to Coll. Cunningham a small estate of her's in Wales, but to her sister, servant and poor very inconsiderable legacies, but Mr. Conolly, who, is a very generous, good man, will they say make up her deficiencies."

After Mrs. Conolly's death, William and Lady Anne and their seven children moved into Castletown. Two years later, William Conolly died. He was succeeded



at Castletown by his only son Thomas, but as he was then under age, Lady Anne removed to Stretton Hall with her family and Castletown was deserted. "A huge house, now empty and forlorn, that used to be crowded with guests of all sorts when last I saw it", wrote Mrs. Delany. It was not, however, neglected, in his wisdom William Conolly had charged his executors—the Rt. Hon. William Earl of Strafford, his wife Lady Anne Conolly, Nathaniel Clements, Henry Mitchell and Michael Clarke—to keep in good and sufficient repair the house, gardens and improvements at Castletown, and to lay out such sums as their discretion deemed necessary for that purpose until such time as his son Thomas should attain the age of 21 years.

On 30th December 1758 when he was 24 years of age, Thomas Conolly married the Lady Louisa Augusta Lennox, third daughter of the second Duke of Richmond. Lady Louisa's older sister Lady Emily had married James Earl of Kildare in 1747, and was living at Carton, while her eldest sister Caroline had eloped with and married Henry Fox, later Lord Holland. The Lennox daughters were remarkable for their beauty and intelligence, but a younger sister Lady Sarah, considered by all her family to have had the greatest share of beauty, had not an equal amount of common sense, and was the cause of much anxiety to her family. Her succession of suitor's and admirers included Robert Clements, later Earl of Leitrim, The Prince of Wales, Sir Charles Bunbury (to whom she was married for seven years), Lord William Gordon, and the Hon. George Napier whom she finally married in 1781 when she was 36 years of age. After this marriage, she joined her two sisters in Co. Kildare, coming to live at Oakley Park, Celbridge.

Lady Louisa and Lady Sarah Lennox had been living at Carton with their sister Emily, Lady Kildare, since 1751. Under the influence of her husband James Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare, later Duke of Leinster, they had developed a real affection and sympathy for the country of their adoption. Thirty years later Louisa could recall the events of December 1753, when Lord Kildare, so enraged by the high handed measures of the Duke of Dorset, his son Lord George Sackville and Primate Stone, went to London and presented an address of Remonstrance from himself, against the Irish Administration. She remembered too the excitement when the people of Dublin crowded into the courtyard at Leinster House to show their appreciation of Lord Kildare's action, which had the happy effect of having the government of Ireland quickly remodelled.

Lord and Lady Kildare always held the opinion that Irish landlords should live in Ireland, and when it was rumoured that Thomas and Lady Louisa Conolly were contemplating living in England, Lady Emily became anxious, begging her husband to advise Conolly against it. After spending seven months in England, during which time Lady Louisa was presented at Court and made her debut in London society, the Conollys settled down at Castletown in October 1759.

Lady Louisa Conolly loved Castletown. Under her direction the great house came to represent all that was comfortable, pleasant and agreeable in Irish country life; for she was a lady of many fine qualities and it was generally agreed that



Tom Conolly, aged 20, painted in Rome by Mengs; Saloon, Castletown.

she was the kindest, wisest and most generous of all creatures, having by comparison with her husband a goodly share of many virtues.

By the unanimous opinion of Lady Louisa's sisters, Thomas Conolly was a silly tiresome boy and a toad-eater, his only redeeming qualities they agreed were his love for Louisa and his unquestioned generosity. "I can but think how miserable I should have been at Louisa's age to have had such a husband. I hope and believe she won't find it out ever", wrote Caroline Lady Holland. Emily Lady Kildare assures her husband "I should never think of comparing you to poor Conolly in anything. Do you think I have come to my years without distinguishing between the real and settled wish of spending one's life together and

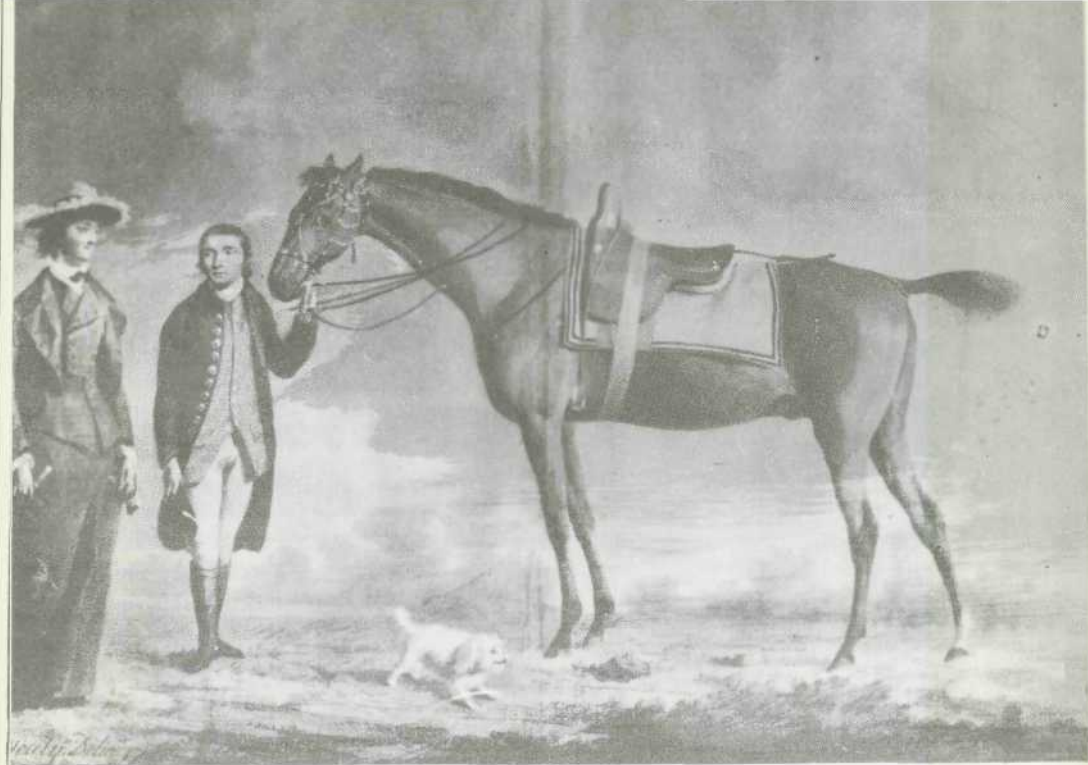
the hurry of a boy to come to what he will leave the next half hour for a new hound or horse."

Impetuous and impatient Lady Sarah could suffer poor Conolly the least of her family, his self pity and constant groanings she found extremely annoying. How Louisa could suffer him, she knew not. Was she blind, deaf, or benignly dutiful? She writes to Emily on 8th March 1791 from Celbridge—

"If Louisa has written at all, I am sure she has given you an idea of his having been very ill, which you must not say; I deny, for it is really so odd a fancy of his and so rooted, so much adopted by her, that I'm convinced both of them would think me very unfeeling, if they hear how lightly it is treated by every soul. He had a House of Commons influenza with some fever; James's powders met with so little to act upon that they insensibly carried off the fever, and contributed to a violent spitting. I grant that without care, it might have been dangerous, but with it, it was not the least so. However, he says he had a violent fever, lost his appetite entirely, did not shut his eyes for nine nights, and is so reduced by the immense spitting that nothing but so strong a man as him could have outlived it, and still talks of his feebleness in consequence of it. The fever was a quick pulse two days, the sleep was interrupted for four nights by coughing, the appetite stopped four days; his weakness admits of three hours ride and two of walking every morning, and the spitting increased by what he terms want of appetite—viz. two plates of soup, three pork steaks, half a chicken and tart. Dearest Louisa is deaf; but why she should be blind I cannot guess, but so it is."

Thomas Conolly represented Malmesbury (1759-1768), Chichester (1768-1784) in the English House of Commons, and in the Irish Parliament he sat for Londonderry. In neither house did he distinguish himself, but through his wealth and connections, he possessed very great influence in Ireland where he held various offices, such as Lord of the Treasury, Commissioner of Trade and Lieutenant of the County of Londonderry." He was sworn of the Privy Council of Ireland in 1762.

Thomas Conolly had a great appetite for Irish politics, but a very poor digestion; full of ideas and opinions, he pursued a will of the wisp policy which at times aggravated his friends on both sides of the house, but never himself for it was his greatest boast that he was always strictly independent. On his ultimate use of this independence has his place in Irish history been judged. Sir Jonah Barrington, in "The Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation", states that Thomas Conolly appeared to have had the largest personal connexion of any individual in the Commons House of Parliament." He took a principal lead amongst the country gentlemen because he spoke more than any of them, though probably his influence would have been greater, if he had remained totally silent. He was a man of very high family, ample fortune, powerful connexions and splendid establishments; friendly, sincere, honourable and munificent in disposition; but whimsical, wrongheaded and positive, his ideas of politics were limited and confused. He mistook obstinacy for independence and singularity for patriotism and fancied he was a Whig, because he was not professed a Tory. Full of aristocracy,



Lady Louisa Conolly, daughter of the 2nd Duke of Richmond, with groom and horse
by Robert Healy, 1768.

he was used by the patriots, when they could catch him, to give weight to their resolutions, and courted by the Government to take advantage of his whimsicality and embarrass the opposition. He was bad as a statesman, worse as an orator. In Parliament he gave his opinions at the close of a debate, without having listened to its progress, and attacked measures with a sort of blunt point which generally bruised both his friends and his opponents. His qualities were curiously mixed, and his principles as singularly blended; and if he had not been distinguished by birth and fortune he certainly would have remained all his life in obscurity. This gentleman had an extensive circle of adherents. On some questions he was led away by their persuasions, on others they submitted to his prejudices, as a bait to fix him on more important occasions; and some times he differed unexpectedly from all of them. He was nearly allied to the Irish Minister at the discussion of the Union, and he followed his lordship's fortunes, surrendered his country, lost his own importance and died in comparative obscurity."

For the part he played in helping to gain support for the Union, Thomas Conolly lost the favour of his truest friends in the Patriotic Party, having finally allied himself with those "who sold their land for gold" he was obliged to share their consequent odium. But Thomas Conolly had always been in favour of a Union between England and Ireland. In relation to the Navigation Act, Lady Louisa writes on 9th March 1787:

"Mr. Conolly understands that it is intended as a resumption of the power over Ireland that England had, and which she gave up in the Duke of Portland's time. Mr. Grattan has never had, but one opinion about it, and the change of constitution, being a child of his own, will never give it up. Mr. Conolly, you know, never wished for it, but maintains (as he did in the business of the propositions) that since we have got it, we are not to give it up again for nothing; that he would barter it for some very essential good, but not at the pleasure or threat of England."

His inclination to barter led Thomas Conolly originally to accept the Volunteer movement in 1779. Heartily sick of Lord North's administration and its total neglect of Irish affairs, he backed the Volunteers in their demands for Free Trade. He moved a vote of thanks to them in the House of Commons and entrusted the Duke of Leinster to do the same in the House of Lords. In securing unanimity for the votes in both houses, he hoped to alarm the English administration and compel them to take heed of his warnings with regard to the discontent in Ireland. However, when the Independence movement so originated culminated in concessions which in Mr. Conolly's opinion "No Irish person then living ever expected to see", he began to have misgivings, he saw the situation to be full of dangers for both countries.

In a letter to the Earl of Buckinghamshire on November 23rd 1782," he likens England's indulgence of the Irish demands to the spoiling attitude of a nurse towards neglected children:

"Great Britain our nurse spoilt us by first withholding what we had a right to and then giving us a Free Trade and Constitution in a manner and at moments that convinced her giddy children, that it was only ask and you shall have whatsoever your own humour and fancy lead you at any time without consideration to demand."

Thomas Conolly was the only delegate who did not attend the second Duncannon Convention held on September 8th 1783.¹⁰ In commending his action Richard Woodward, Bishop of Cloyne, states:

"It would be well for this country that there were more men of equal decision. Had the moderate men of property and character absented themselves, the few violent men of rank would have been ashamed of their shabby companions and the meeting would have become ridiculous. Their presence gave it dignity and made it formidable."

In the subsequent conflict between the Volunteers and Parliament Mr. Conolly denounced the Volunteers, proclaimed his allegiance to "his Majesty's auspicious Government" and made obvious his inconsistency with regard to the Volunteers.

"Conolly is all grand about opposition now but methinks I would lay an even wager that he and his brother-in-law are great friends before the end of the year and Conolly will moderate his patriotism." This was Lady Sarah Lennox's comment on Thomas Conolly's protestations that he would maintain his independent patriotism during the Lord Lieutenancy of his brother-in-law, the Earl of Buckinghamshire (1777-1780). "Conolly is the same as usual both ways; but determined not to support government" wrote Lord Edward Fitzgerald in 1794.



Tom Conolly, aged 40, in hunting coat; pastel by Hamilton, pastel room, Castletown.

When he did support the government in The Riot Bill in 1787 both Lady Sarah and Lord Edward agreed that he acted under the influence of his friend, the Bishop of Cloyne; describing his uncle's attitude on this occasion, Lord Edward jaid "he behaved shabbily".

In one respect alone was Mr. Conolly's political thinking consistent. He steadfastly opposed the practice of successive Lords Lieutenant in maintaining power by resorting to bribes and corruption. During the Ministry of the profligate Duke of Rutland (1784-1787) public expenditure had so strained the taxpayers, that there was mounting opposition to Government. Mr. Conolly and others of

the landed gentry joined Grattan and Curran in a concerted attack on the Administration, and according to Dr. Barnard of St. Wolstan's Celbridge "there was none more often on his legs nor more in earnest than our friend Conolly, who has been with them (the Patriots) only since the latter end of last session."¹⁰

Except for his deviation in the interests of his friend the Bishop of Cloyne in 1787, already referred to, Mr. Conolly continued to support the Patriotic Party, in their demands for reform. He took advantage of the Police Bill in 1786 to recover the good will of the Volunteers and in his speech paid tribute to the way they accepted the authority and direction of Parliament by their peaceful withdrawal from public affairs.

In 1788 King George III lost his mind, and when a Regency seemed inevitable a dispute arose in the British Parliament as to the extent of the powers to which the Prince of Wales would be entitled. The Government—Pitt and the Tories favoured granting the Regency on restricted terms; Fox and the Whigs were for a Regency with full powers. The Irish Parliament supported the Whigs and in February 1789, Henry Grattan in the House of Commons moved that the Irish Parliament should vote an immediate address to the Prince, inviting him to an unrestricted Regency of Ireland. Thomas Conolly spoke in favour of Grattan's motion, and it was carried without a division. In the house of Lords, the Address was moved by the Earl of Chariemont and carried by a majority of nineteen. The Viceroy refused to transmit the Address to His Royal Highness, whereupon, Mr. Conolly and five other gentlemen were selected as a deputation to wait personally on the Prince. On 25th February they presented their Address and were most graciously received, but two days before the King had recovered from his malady. Nevertheless, the Prince thanked them for their solicitous concern on his behalf and assured them of the gratitude and affection to the loyal and generous people of Ireland which he felt indelibly imprinted on his heart.

Writing of this period and the consolidated independence shown by Mr., Conolly and his friends in the Irish Parliament, John Mitchell, in his History of Ireland, states:

"The same powerful assimilating influence Which had formerly made the Norman settlers, Geraldines and De Burghs 'more Irish than the Irish' after two or three generations had now also acted more or less upon the very Cromwellians and Williamites, and there was recognisable in the whole character and bearing even of the Protestants a certain dash of that generosity, levity, impetuosity and recklessness which have marked the Celtic race. The formation of this modern composite Irish character is of course attributable to the gradual amalgamation of the privileged Protestant colonists with the converted Irish, who had from time to time conformed to the established church, to save their estates or to possess themselves of the property of non-conforming neighbours. This was a large and increasing element in the Protestant colony, ever since the time of Elizabeth, and of such families came the Currans, Dalys, Conollys, as well as the higher names O'Nril. O'Brien, Burke, Roche, Fitzpatrick. The ancestors of these families in abandoning their Catholic faith could not let out their Celtic blood."

Following the King's recovery there were repercussions in both countries; the enemies of government were punished and its friends elevated. In Ireland the Attorney-General Mr. Fitzgibbon (later Lord Clare) became Lord Chancellor and was responsible for the most odious of proscriptions. It mattered not that in an attack against his coercions the famous "Round Robin" was signed by the leading peers and commoners of Ireland, numbered among the latter were Grattan, Curran, Conolly, Ponsonby, O'Neil and Daly. Mr. Conolly lost his seat on the Board of Trade but gained considerably in influence and favour with, the Patriots, now newly consolidated in the "Whig Club". This club elected Mr. Conolly its secretary, and its members were committed to promote administrative reform and maintain the Constitution of 1782.

Aware of the growing unrest, especially among the Catholics and their sympathisers, Thomas Conolly in March 1793 outlines in a letter to his brother-in-law the Duke of Richmond, the various dangers that threaten the country and that may lead to anarchy and civil war. "If we are to go to blows with our fellow creatures, at least let us start in the right", he proclaims. The dangers as they appeared to him were—the increase of every expense mostly incurred by corruption which had not procured a quiet peaceable respectable Government but the reverse. It was a Government working everything by force and coercion and maintaining support by bribes and appointments. That opposition to Government had increased in proportion to its own extravagance and that he would rather pay soldiers than members of Parliament "for such a Parliament can never commend respect, but a militia may defend our properties and our lives." The excess of expenditure over income in the previous year (1792) being by the Chancellor's own calculation £153,000. Finally he ventures to attest that none of those with whom he is politically connected would undertake any situation of responsibility under such conditions.

In October 1794 Mr. Forbes writes to assure Mr. Conolly, that everything with regard to Ireland at last wears a favourable aspect. Lord Fitzwilliam is to be Viceroy and is to deal a "Brain-blow" to the ruinous system of expense and further that he (Mr. Forbes) does not apprehend that any interference through any branch of the English cabinet could prevent Lord Fitzwilliam from effectuating his good intentions as to measures or men. Lord Fitzwilliam was a Whig and it was universally understood that he had not undertaken the Government of Ireland save on the express terms that complete Catholic Emancipation would be made a Government measure. Before consenting to come to Ireland, he had induced Mr. Grattan to go to London and confer with him on the policy to be pursued in Ireland.

From the date of his arrival January 4th 1795, Lord Fitzwilliam proceeded to make drastic changes; there were dismissals from certain offices that dismayed the Castle circle, but pleased the people. Mr. Grattan was offered the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer but declined, Mr. Ponsonby and Mr. Curran were to be made Attorney and Solicitor General. These appointments showed a marked change in the Irish policy. But nothing struck the country with such surprise as the removal of Mr. Beresford from the Revenue Board. The new Viceroy

was showing such courage that many wondered if he could possibly succeed. The Beresfords were the most powerful of the aristocracy in Ireland, the family had the two peerages of Waterford and Tyrone and had also been successful in its constant efforts to create for itself a controlling influence by means of patronage and boroughmongering. In a letter addressed to Lord Carlisle, Lord Fitzwilliam explains the action taken by him with regard to Mr. Beresford's dismissal:

"In a letter of mine to Mr. Pitt on this subject I reminded him of a conversation in which I had expressed to him (in answer to the question put to him by me) my apprehensions that it would be necessary to remove that gentleman and that he did not offer the slightest objections, or say a single word in favour of Mr. Beresford. This alone would have made me suppose that I should be exempt from every imputation of breach of agreement if I determined to remove him; but when on my arrival here, I found all those apprehensions of his dangerous power, which Mr. Pitt admits I had often represented to him were fully justified, when he was filling a situation greater than that of the Lord Lieutenant; and I clearly saw, that if I had connected myself with him, it would have been connecting myself with a person, under universal heavy suspicions and subjecting my government to all the opprobrium and unpopularity attendant upon his maladministration."

Mr. Beresford went to England and laid his complaints before Mr. Pitt. On March 25th 1795 he had his revenge, Lord Fitzwilliam was removed from office. There was now no hope for relief for the Catholics, and Government corruption was self-evident. Sir Jonah Barrington states: "The day Lord Fitzwilliam arrived peace was proclaimed throughout all Ireland. The day he quitted it, she prepared for insurrection." And so it was intended. Historians of the period are agreed that, had Lord Fitzwilliam's policy for the peaceful settlement of Irish affairs been carried to fruition, the rebellion of 1798 would have been avoided. They are also agreed that the rebellion was precipitated by England so that the Union of the two countries could take place. "The treason of the Minister against the liberties of the people", said Grattan, "was infinitely worse than the rebellion of the people against the Minister."

The period following Lord Fitzwilliam's removal was one of torture and oppression. A succession of coercive measures introduced by Government inflamed the people and drove them into the ranks of the United Irishmen. In February 1797 Thomas Conolly makes a personal appeal to the Prince of Wales to grant relief to the Catholics "his fellow subjects".

"The Catholic instead of being rewarded with the completion of his Treaty made in London in April 1792, he has been suspected insulted—Orangemen patronised by government like in the last century arraying against him and in many instances firing on him."

Mr. Grattan referring to the same injustices states "The poor were stricken out of the protection of the law, and the rich out of its penalties."

In his letter of February 1797 Thomas Conolly suggests to the Prince of Wales that he should come for a short while to Ireland, it being the only hope of securing the kingdom to his Royal family, and if his visit should not deter the

French from another attempt upon it, it would at least render that attempt abortive.

Following the receipt of Mr. Conolly's letter, the Prince of Wales commanded Sir Michael Cromie to consult with Mr. Conolly, William Duke of Leinster, Lord Charlemont and William Ponsonby and acquaint them that he was willing to come to Ireland as Chief Governor for a short time. In a reply signed by the four of them, they state:

"While we exult in the idea, we cannot be so selfish as not to take the liberty of mentioning to your Royal Highness, the dread which sad experience has taught us to conceive, lest those benign intentions, which could alone induce you to be our Chief Governor, should be disappointed and frustrated by your acceptance of that office under the present Administration."

In Reply on 17th July, the Prince of Wales wrote to Mr. Conolly, the Duke of Leinster, Lord Charlemont and William Ponsonby stating that:

"Deeply interested as I feel for the fate of Ireland from affection and gratitude, and sensible how immediately the safety of the Empire depends on the happiness, prosperity and attachment of that Kingdom. I have repeatedly recommended conciliatory measures as best suited to the generous temper of the Irish nation, most consonant to the British Constitution, and best calculated to regain the confidence and affection of all ranks of people. In every point of view I have to lament the adoption of an opposite system, which while persisted in, precludes the prospect of my being permitted to indulge the hope of meeting your wishes and gratifying my own."

Despite all the efforts of Thomas Conolly and his friends to avert rebellion, they could not arrest the coercions of Lords Clare and Castlereagh or prevent the enraged people from joining the ranks of the United Irishmen. Thomas Conolly and other prominent Irishmen began to form yeomanry corps. He wrote to Lord Camden the Viceroy "I am ready to go north or south and to obey any orders given to me for the safety of the kingdom, for although I have never asked or received a place and have served in Parliament thirty years, though I was against the American War and am against diis, there is not a subject in His Majesty's dominion more resolved to uphold monarchy with his life and fortune." The yeomanry was to act as a volunteer home guard, while the regular troops were posted along the coast to thwart any attempt at invasion by the French.

The rebellion of 1798 cast a gloom over Castletown. The Conollys had relatives on both sides. Leading the oppression was Lord Castlereagh, the chief Secretary of Ireland, whose wife Lady Amelia Hobart was a niece of Thomas Conolly's. Among the leaders of the United Irishmen was Lord Edward Fitzgerald, nephew of Lady Louisa Conolly and much loved by her and by Lady Sarah Napier, who was living at Celbridge during those very troublesome years.

Caught between their obligation to uphold law and order and their sympathy for the oppressed peasantry, the Conollys were in sad confusion. Not so the Napiers; Lady Sarah was a committed rebel, and when news reached Castletown that some Kildare rebels were released at Naas, she rejoiced with her children over their liberation, much to the annoyance of Lady Louisa. Col. Napier had

been very active in the Celbridge area in trying to prevent trouble and had, as he wrote to Wm. Ogilvie on May 21st 1798, "the satisfaction of thinking that neither party could accuse him of having abbetted them in thought word or deed." To Col. Napier's credit it must also be said that on being offered the appointment of Comptroller of Army Accounts by Lord Cornwallis; he declined saying that he had such an abhorrence of the character and conduct of the Irish Administration that he dreaded the appearance of having any connection whatever with them."

The Napier's footman and twelve Castletown servants and workmen were arrested as house breakers and United men. It was the start of trouble in the area. On May 21st 1798 Lady Louisa wrote to Wm. Ogilvie:

"This last week has been a most painful one to us. Maynooth, Kilcock, Leixlip and Celbridge, have had part of a Scotch regiment quartered at each place, living upon free quarters, and every day threatening to burn the towns. I have spent days in entreaties and threats, to give up the horrid pikes. Some houses burnt at Kilcock yesterday produced the effect. Maynooth held out yesterday, though some houses were burnt and some people punished. This morning the people of Leixlip are bringing in their arms. Celbridge as yet holds out, though five houses are now burning. Whether obstinacy, or that they have them not, I cannot say, but you may imagine what Mr. Conolly and I suffer. He goes about entreating to the last—spent all day yesterday out among them, and to-day is gone again. He goes from Maynooth to Leixlip and Celbridge, and begins again and again to go round them. We have fortunately two most humane officers, that do not do more than is absolutely necessary from their orders. At present I feel most prodigiously sunk with all the surrounding distress, but I am determined to exert myself, for the little use I may be of. It would grieve you to see Mr. Conolly's good heart so wounded as it is."

On June 1st following Lady Louisa again writes to Ogilvie:

"There have been skirmishes in this neighbourhood; two hundred of them forced through our gates and passed across our front lawn at three o'clock on Saturday morning last the 26th when I saw them—but they went through quietly. However, it is thought prudent to put our house into a state of defence; we are about it now and we shall remain in it . . . We are happy in having been able to preserve Celbridge, and the poor people, I trust, will find that we are their best friends at last."

When a company of Derry Militia arrived to pioiect Castletown, Lady Sarah and the Napier children went to live there, as their own house in the village was in danger of attack from rebels coming from the direction of Timahoe. She writes from Castletown to her brother the Duke of Richmond on June 27th 1798:

"My husband gains strength in proportion to fatigue and thinness, I think. I hope it will not essentially hurt him; he made me come here with my children, to clear our house for action, as it is the first to fall on, if they come this way; and we expect them every day. My dear Sister is as usual much the better for the constant employment of doing good, and much has she now to exert

that talent on. Mr. Conolly is at home well guarded, and wishing to do good, but knows not how."

On July 10th 1798 Lady Louisa tells Mr. Ogilvie:

"Our house is a perfect garrison, eighteen soldiers sleep in our saloon and we are all blocked up and shut up except by the hall door and one door to the kitchen-yard, and are frequently ordered all into the house upon the alarm being given of the rebels being near Cdbridge. Thank God, they have never been in a body since the military company came into it, or else there must have been some battle, which is the thing I dread. Lord Cornwallis would have a Proclamation inviting them to come in; and although it has not been as decided as I am sure he wished it to be, yet many are daily coming in to Mr. Conolly, begging protection which you may imagine he gives with the greatest pleasure. I have opportunities of conversing with these poor people from whom I find that many are forced into the rebellion, and of course are grievously to be pitied."

Thus, insofar as the rebellion affected Celbridge or Castletown, there were no horrors or violence, but within the house of Castletown there was great tragedy. The United Irishmen appointed Lord Edward Fitzgerald, leader of the Insurgents in Leinster. He was on the run since March 1798 and Government had offered £1,000 reward for his apprehension. On 19th May when he was staying in Murphy's house in Thomas Street, Dublin, his whereabouts became known to Francis Magan of Usher's Island who betrayed him to the Castle authorities. The details of his arrest were conveyed by Lady Louisa to his step-father Mr. Ogilvie. On May 21st she writes from Castletown:

"I was too ill yesterday to write, but as there sailed no packet, I have an opportunity of letting my letter go now among the first, with the sad narrative of Saturday night's proceedings. Which of poor Edward's bad friends betrayed him, or whether, through the vigilance of the town magistrates, he was apprehended at nine o'clock that night, I know not. But at a house in Thomas Street, Mr. Sirr, the town major, Mr. Ryan (printer of Faulkner's Journal), and Mr. Swan (a magistrate), got information of him, and had a small party of soldiers to surround the house. Mr. Sirr was settling the party, and advised Ryan and Swan not to be in haste. But they hastily ran up stairs, and forced open the door where he was asleep. He instantly fired a pistol at Mr. Ryan, who we have this day hopes will recover. Upon Mr. Swan's approaching him, he stabbed Mr. Swan with a dagger, but that wound is not considered dangerous. Mr. Sirr, upon hearing the resistance, ran upstairs, and thinking that Edward was going to attack him, fired a pistol at him, which wounded Edward in the shoulder, but not dangerously. He was then carried prisoner to the Castle where Mr. Stewart (the surgeon-general) was ordered to attend him. He dressed the wound and pronounced it not to be dangerous. Lord Camden had ordered an apartment for him, but the magistrates claimed him, on account of his having wounded their people. He was therefore carried to Newgate, and after the first burst of feeling was over I hear that he was quite composed . . . It is my intention to entreat for leave to see him (nobody has

been permitted to go since he was carried to Newgate) but I will wait to see Surgeon Stewart and know first the state of his health."

On the same day that Mr. Ogilvie received the above letter, he received another from Col. Napier. From Col. Napier's letter, we learn that when Lord Ross brought the dreadful news of Lord Edward's arrest to Castletown, both Lady Louisa and Lady Sarah were so violently hysterical that Col. Napier feared there would be further tragedy. But the worse news was yet to come; the government had "strong and indubitable proofs" of Lord Edward's participation in the rebellion and nothing could save him from the scaffold but a petition to the King, which Col. Napier urged Mr. Ogilvie to prepare.

Mr. Ogilvie was the Scottish tutor engaged by Emily Duchess of Leinster in 1767. Shortly after the death of her husband James, Duke of Leinster, in 1775, she re-married Mr. Ogilvie. At the time of her second marriage twelve of her nineteen Fitzgerald children were living at home and Mr. Ogilvie conscientiously took it upon himself to be their guide and councillor in all things. By the family's wish he had come to Ireland shortly before Lord Edward's arrest, hoping to influence him to accept the government's offer granting him every facility for leaving the country. He was the last of the family to see Lord Edward before he was taken prisoner, but he could not prevail on him to withdraw from his connections with the United Irishmen.

Emily, Dowager Duchess of Leinster, and Mr. Ogilvie were at this time (1798) living at Harley Street, London. Hoping to spare her sister from greater distress, Lady Louisa Conolly was in constant communication with Mr. Ogilvie.

On June 3rd 1798 Mr. Conolly's niece Louisa Pakeriham requested Lady Louisa to come with all speed to Dublin, as news had been received that Lord Edward had become very ill and was in great fever. Louisa and Col. Napier's daughter Emily set out for the city, where they met Lord Henry Fitzgerald, Edward's brother. He had come from England but was refused permission to see the ill prisoner. Lady Louisa sought an interview with the Viceroy, Lord Camden, but he was adamant that permission to see her nephew could not be granted. "Lady. Louisa Conolly", writes Mr. Grattan, "in vain implored him and stated that while they were talking her nephew might expire; at last she threw herself on her knees and prayed that he would relent; but Lord Camden remained inexorable." When she came to her carriage, she said in a voice of great agitation "I who never before kneeled to ought but my God grovelled at that man's feet in vain."

On the suggestion of her niece Emily Napier, she drove to Ely Place, the home of the Chancellor Lord Clare. This man hated by the people of Ireland, and often attacked on the streets of Dublin, admired Lady Louisa Conolly. Seeing her in such anguish over her beloved nephew, he agreed to accompany her to Newgate prison and personally admit her. On the way they collected Lord Henry Fitzgerald at Leinster House. Their visit was the only consideration shown Lord Edward during the period of his imprisonment; and Lady Louisa was deeply grateful to Lord Clare for the humanity that he had shown towards them in such a difficult situation.

On June 4th Lady Louisa conveyed the sad news of Lord Edward's death to
Mr. Ogilvie:

"At two o'clock this morning, our beloved Edward was at peace; and as the tender and watchful mercy of God is ever over the afflicted, we have reason to suppose this dissolution took place at the moment that it was fitted it should do so. On Friday night, a very great lowness came on that made those about him consider him much in danger. On Saturday, he seemed to have recovered the attack, but on that night was again attacked with spasms that subsided again yesterday morning. But, in the course of the day Mrs. Pakenham (from whom I had my constant accounts) thought it best to send an express for me. I came to town and got leave to go with my poor Henry to see him.

"Thanks to the great God! our visit was timed to the moment that the wretched situation allowed of. His mind had been agitated for two days, and the feeling was enough gone, not to be overcome by the sight of his brother and me. We had the consolation of seeing and feeling that it was a pleasure to him. I first approached his bed; he looked at me, knew me, kissed me, and said (what will never depart from my ears) 'It is heaven to me to see you!' and shortly after turning to the other side of his bed he said 'I can't see you'. I went round, and he soon after kissed my hand, and smiled at me, which I shall never forget, though I saw death in his dear face at the time. I then told him that Henry was come. He said nothing that marked surprise at his being in Ireland, but expressed joy at hearing it, and said, 'Where is he, dear fellow?'

"Henry then took my place, and the two dear brothers frequently embraced each other, to the melting a heart of stone; and yet God enabled Henry and myself to remain quite composed. As every one left the room we told him we only were with him. He said 'That is very pleasant'. However, he remained silent, and I then brought in the subject of Lady Edward, and told him that I had not left her until I saw her on board; and Henry told him of having met her on the road well. He said 'And the children too?—She is a charming woman'; and then became silent again. That expression about Lady Edward proved to me that his senses were much lulled and that he did not feel his situation to be what it was, but thank God! they were enough alive to receive pleasure from seeing his brother and me. Dear Henry, in particular, he looked at continually with an expression of pleasure.

"When we left him, we told him, that as he appeared inclined to sleep, we would wish him a good night and return in the morning. He said 'Do, do', but did not express any uneasiness at our leaving him. We accordingly tore ourselves away, and very shortly after Mr. Garnett (the surgeon that attended him for the two days upon the departure of Mr. Stone, the officer that had been constantly with him) sent me word that the last convulsions soon came on, and ended at two o'clock, so that we were within two hours and a half, before the sad close to a life we prized so dearly. He sometimes said 'I knew it must come to this and we must all go;' and then rambled a **little** about militia and numbers; but upon my saying to him 'It agitates you to talk upon those subjects', he said, 'Well, I won't'.



The staircase, Castletown.

"I hear that he frequently composed his dear mind with prayer—was vastly devout and as late as yesterday evening got Mr. Garnet, the surgeon, to read in the Bible the death of Christ, the subject picked out by himself and seemed much composed by it. In short, my dear Mr. Ogilvie, we have every reason to think that his mind was made up to his situation, and can look to his present happy state with thanks for his release. Such a heart and such a mind may meet his God! The friends that he was entangled with pushed his destruction forward, screening themselves behind his valuable character."

Mr. Nicholas Murphy, at whose house in Thomas Street Lord Edward was arrested, has left this description of him: "He was about 5 feet 7 inches in height, and a very interesting countenance; beautiful arched eyebrows, fine grey eyes, a beautiful nose and high forehead, thick dark-coloured hair, brown or inclining to black. I think he was very like Lady Louisa Conolly about the nose and eyes. Any person he addressed must admire his manner, it was so candid, so good-natured, and so impregnated with good feeling; as playful and humble as a child, as mild and timid as a lady, and when necessary as brave as a lion. He was altogether a very nice and elegant formed man." And he was Lady Louisa's beloved Edward.

In her letter of 10th July she writes: "My beloved Edward, I may well say for indeed my dear Mr. Ogilvie, the sorrow I feel is beyond what I could well have imagined and I own to you that I do not grow better. The complicated scene of distress that involves our family is perpetually before my eyes and that of my dearest sister, whom I love so much better than myself, grieves my heart." The unique bonds of loyalty and affection that existed between all the members of Lady Louisa's family guided their actions with regard to Lord Edward, his wife and three small children at a time when "Suffering as we all do from various causes, it becomes extremely difficult to steer the little bark of reason, justice and humanity, that yet remains among us, through the ocean of fear, mistrust, treachery, cruelty and revenge" (Lady Louisa Conolly to Wm. Ogilvie, July 10th 1798).

The suddenness of Lord Edward's fatal illness deprived his mother and other members of his family from reaching Ireland before his death. Lady Louisa took charge of all his funeral arrangements, being guided by the feelings which she was persuaded Lord Edward would have had upon the same occasion had he been to direct for her. Two weeks, previously she had arranged for his wife and children to leave Ireland for London, where Lady Louisa's brother, the Duke of Richmond, had assured them there would be ample room for all the Fitzgerald relatives at his residence at Goodwood. In extending a welcome to them, he entreats Mr. Ogilvie: "Don't let my sister fancy that it will be crowding or distressing me. Far otherwise, I assure you; it will give me real pleasure to be of any use to you all on so melancholy an occasion, and it is on such that the affections of near relatives is soothing to grief."

The generosity of the Duke of Richmond on this occasion and that of Col. Napier some weeks previously, who on hearing that there was a warrant for Lord Edward's arrest, extended an invitation to Lady Edward to come to his house



Oakley Park, Celbridge, where Lady Sarah Napier, Louisa's sister lived.

at Celbridge, appear in sharp contrast to the attitude of Thomas Conolly, who opposed Lady Louisa's wish to have her at Castletown in March of that year while she was expecting the birth of her third baby. But no action of Thomas Conolly's could ever diminish the infinite merit and high esteem of his wife, the gentle Lady Louisa. From a letter of Lady Sarah Napier's, written some months after Lord Edward's death, we get an insight into the nobility of mind and purposeful charity that governed her every action during that "Fateful Year".

"I should feel myself the meanest unworthy relation to a large and much beloved family could I stoop to hide the hatred and contempt I feel towards their oppressors. Yet, I blame nobody who acts otherwise, because they have not the same sensations. But everybody ought to speak as they feel. I have felt great relief from the absence of almost all Ministerial persons from Castletown for 6 months. I have seen Lord Castlereagh but once, the rest of that sett but seldom, and always studded my conversation so prudently as to impress them with the dread of my entering into any interesting subject, lest they should

hear truths from me that they are all conscious that they ought not to have deserved. This makes our meetings far from pleasant, but it saves me from what I wish to avoid, paining my dear sister Louisa's feelings. Don't imagine she is not nearly as much *au fait* as me, but she excuses, doubts, pardons, and forces herself to show no sign of displeasure, because she has as usual transferred a wrong thing into unkindness only to her, and therefore she has an opportunity of exerting her self-denial and Christian forgiveness in the Highest Degree, by calling it all want of kindness to her; she hopes to forget as easily as she forgives and she succeeds in both. How wrong therefore would it be for me to counteract her religious exertions by showing plainly I don't blame it only as unkind to her, but as unfeeling in itself. One must therefore, be content to touch their sensibility, by a reserve which they cannot mistake, and indeed I try to make my two daughters follow my example and refrain from going one step further, particularly Emily whose duty calls on her to make one affection fight the other, so as to do right by both. But it is with the utmost difficulty I have persuaded both my affectionate warm-hearted girls to preserve the least appearance of forgiveness when they have such strong anger. They profess themselves Lady Edward's friends, and as such they profess to hate all her oppressors, and those who approve of it. I cannot but love them most affectionately for the sentiment and the boldness to support their just attachment. The only thing I fear is their letting my sister see that their anger falls on What she loves and believes quite guiltless. For she herself is as warm as possible in the cause when she think it is deserved, as for example: The Speaker, one supposes a chief agent, and to Miss Charlotte Burgh, Louisa let out all her anger in ten times stronger words than I ever used. We all congratulated her on having thus publicly said: 'The greatest comfort I have in Castletown is that I may chuse my society and never let those set their foot in it who have leagued against the Duke of Leinster's family to persecute it by false Witnesses for the sake of money, and who are watching in hopes to criminate him to get his estate by the same false unlawful means they have robbed the widow and the orphan. When such men as Reynolds are to be believed as Angels of Truth, I am sure my word would go for nothing, though I can prove him a lyar, and therefore I have done with Dublin Society.' Charlotte Burgh was thunderstruck, and we all hoped Louisa's animated resentment would do honour to the whole family, when behold she repents of having spoken truth, has called herself to task for violence and unchristian sentiments. Of course if chance put the speaker in her way he would believe C. Burgh lied—and she redoubles her kindness to those she fears she was unjust to by being angry. When Religion conquers reason it becomes enthusiasm. Dear angel, she is so attached to the system of Humility, that the world may trample on her without her perceiving it. For every now and then her natural noble spirit rises in its natural beauty and she assumes the advantages which superior goodness and proper independent pride has assigned to its possessor for the purpose of keeping bad people in order—but the enthusiasm ruins all—except her private worth, nothing can tarnish that."

Lady Sarah Napier's love of liberty and justice permeates all her letters of this period. Unable to suffer wrongful treatment as meekly as her sister, the cause of the oppressed Irish concerned her deeply. For those Ministers and agents of Government who directed the policy of persecution she had the greatest contempt, especially Lord Castlereagh, whom she believed to be the chief mover in pressing for the Bill of Attainder against Lord Edward Fitzgerald. Her concern for the Conollys, whose nephew he was, obliged her to refrain from abusing him, but to her brother the Duke of Richmond she opened her mind: "Our near connexions would do very well as kings with viceroys over them,, for that's their foible; they like to be thought the leaders, but both equally dread to be so, because they feel themselves unequal to it and won't own it." One can sense a veiled condemnation of Mr. Conolly here and in a previous letter written before the arrest of Lord Edward, wherein she asks her brother to:

"Plan something, and plan in time. I am sure there are many people willing, and a few able, to try to put it into force, but here all is a chaos of self-interest, spite, distrust, and no plan whatever. Yet a plan might be made use of to strike all parties with its merits. The trial at least would be made, and if it failed, your mind would receive comfort from having attempted the salvation of a whole people by trying to avert a civil war. By a plan I mean you to point out what should be done and undone, and who should do it. I know that a very sensible plan of this sort was written, and sent to the prince; but it is too vague, and, besides, I so well know its author, that one day he is be-chancellor'd, another be-Ponsonby'd, another persuaded to believe every thing by a third party, and so on; from such vacillation what plan can be attended to?"

Lady Sarah's suggestions for such a plan would include the kick of dismissal for several individuals in Government, who were too well "Pitted", but adds with particular effectiveness that "here we have nobody fit to give the kick though plenty fit to take it."

Thomas Conolly's loyalty to the monarchy blinded him to the weakness of its Royal representatives Who submitted themselves to the dictates of Mr. Pitt in England and his emissaries Clare and Castlereagh in Ireland. "What are we to do?" asks Lady Sarah, "are we to fight for a cause the head of which won't support itself?" Mr. Conolly's old leaders in the Patriot Party saw differently, satisfied that the succession of suppressive measures were instigated by Pitt, to further the cause of the Union of the two countries. Grattan and Curran withdrew from the Irish Parliament in March 1797 and declined to be returned in the ensuing election. Conolly, by Ms subsequent activities in the militia and yeomanry, was regarded as unpatriotic, but was not according to Lady Louisa in the secrets of government or its opponents.

Renewing his pledge of 1796 to Lord Camden that he would uphold the monarchy with his life and fortune, he wrote to the new Viceroy Lord Cornwallis in June 1798, begging leave to offer his unconditional service which he had never yet done to any Lord Lieutenant, and added:

"I shall not presume to give you advice, but I can give you much information not tinged with party prejudice or disappointed ambition for I never asked for, nor will I have, even from my best friend, any favour than a conviction that whatever part I have ever politically taken, for I have differed with both sides, was founded upon a firm belief of the rectitude and expediency of the measure at the time.

"I shall take care to be in Dublin for the meeting of Parliament on Wednesday and shall at any time obey any commands you may have for me addressed here, *till I joyn my regiment at Kilcullen, which I hope soon to do, as this neighbourhood is less disturbed from the rebels having either retired to the bog side or towards the Wicklow mountains, or probably to both."

On June 25th 1798 Lord Cornwallis replied from Dublin Castle:

My dear Sir,

I have just received your most kind and friendly letter for which I request that you will accept my warmest acknowledgements.

You will oblige me much by communicating any information that you may think useful, and I am sensible of your kindness in attending Parliament on Wednesday.

I am With great esteem and regard

Most faithfully Yours
Cornwallis.

Always uneasy regarding the wisdom of the measure of independence obtained by Grattan's Parliament in 1782, Thomas Conolly was now after sixteen years, presented with the opportunity to work for its extermination. He became one of the chief agents of the principal exterminators, Cornwallis, Clare and Castlereagh, and he, who was always so loud in his condemnation of bribes, whether in the nature of titles or gratuities, found himself now in a consortium, whose stock in trade they were. John Mitchell states that Robert Stewart, later Lord Castlereagh, sought his election and was returned for County Down in 1790, expressly as an avowed reformer and patriot. "And had an opportunity of studying the modes of buying and selling in that great mart of votes and influences; opportunities which he improved with the zeal of a clerk in a commercial house learning his business." The lessons of his apprenticeship he applied with consummate skill towards perfecting the Act of Union, and succeeded by the power of purchase in converting an opposition majority in the year 1799 into the favourable majority of 1800.

The Union extinguished Thomas Conolly's political career, he handed over his seat in the United Parliament to Col. Charles Stewart, Lord Castlereagh's brother, and retired to Castletown. His health was not good, a persistent cough troubled him and his general depression following the troubles of 1798 was greatly aggravated by a troublesome law suit with his sisters and Lord Howe, the executor of his mother's will (she died in March 1797) over settlements due to them out of his English estates.



The Protestant Church, Celbridge, before it was Victorianised. It was built in 1806 during Louisa's regime, the old church having been burned in 1798.

Essentially generous and kindhearted, Thomas Conolly felt the irritations which emanated from all those events. In Celbridge, along the banks of the Liffey and close to "the groves and bowers of Swift and Vanessa" where Henry Grattan first dedicated himself to the liberation of his country, resentment to Mr. Conolly was daily increasing." "In our neighbourhood, Which I may well entitle the doubtfuls, I can read my neighbour's thoughts in their eyes, in the tone of their voices, and in their gait", wrote Lady Sarah in 1798 and in March 1799, following the first debates on the Union, she wrote: "What vexes me most is the result of all the agitations and schisms on Mr. Conolly's health. He with twentyseven thousand pounds a year, an angel for a wife, many real friends, very tolerable health, a lovely place, many attached servants, power sufficient to keep the neighbourhood quiet (if he knew how), his own Regiment quartered here to help 'him, is hourly in a sort of despair, wishing himself dead, hurting his health, raving of dangers that don't exist, saying he is harrassed to death because he has not a friend on earth. In short, his nerves are gone; it is evident nothing can relieve him from useless agitation and my sister from reasonable fears on account

of his health, but to remove to a different scene for some time. For this purpose, she is preparing to leave Ireland next summer for -a long time."

The Conollys intended settling in Sussex or Devonshire and commissioned Sir Michael Gromie to find them a suitable place. However, the high rate of Income Tax in England at the time seems to have decided them against it and they did not leave Castletown until the summer of 1801 when they spent some time at Brighton; from thence they removed to London, staying at Richmond House in Whitehall or with their many relations in London until 1802.

On 27th April 1803 Thomas Conolly died at Castletown, and on May 1st Col. Napier wrote:

"This once happy house is now the mansion of deep and solid woe. Wednesday last at 5 p.m. terminated the earthly existence of Mr. Conolly and I am just returned from committing to the grave all that remains of an honest m* I speak from thirtyfour years experience, during which long period I nevi knew a human being whose enemies were more transient and whose friendships were more permanent."

Thomas Conolly was the third and last of his name to live at Castletown. He had no children, and in his will made on 27th May 1799, he left Castletown to the use of his wife Lady Louisa for life, and after her death to the use of Edward Pakenham, eldest son of his niece Louisa Pakenham. By direction of his will all the furniture of his dwelling house at Castletown, together with all plate, pictures and utensils of husbandry and garden were to be considered as heirlooms and go along with the dwelling house and be enjoyed so long as the law would allow by the several persons, who should from time to time become entitled to them by virtue of his will.¹⁹

Lady Louisa Conolly was sixty years of age when Thomas died and like her predecessors, Lady Anne and Mrs. Katherine Conolly, she was to outlive her husband by many years. Her niece Emily Louisa Napier, whom she had adopted, was her constant companion. Across the Liffey from Castletown, the Pakenhams lived at Rockfield (Donacomper) which Thomas Conolly had purchased for his niece, Louisa Pakenham in 1801. She was the mother of the future heir of Castletown; her husband Admiral Thomas Pakenham was Master General of the Ordnance. Following the rebellion of Robert Emmet in July 1803, Admiral Pakenham, with a party of North Down Light Company, operated from Celbridge and succeeded in rounding up some of the most active rebels in North Kildare.²⁰

Lady Sarah's removal to London following the death of Col. Napier in 1804 left Lady Louisa very much alone. Her income was greatly reduced, so considerable were the debts, mortgages and judgements, due on her late husband's estates that his executors considered selling Castletown. The sale of some English property helped to relieve the situation and Louisa did not have to part with the only happiness left to her. Her love of Castletown was a very real thing, she now devoted all her time to its upkeep and the welfare of her tenants. Inside the gates of the estate she gave permission to have a new church erected.

An Industrial School, the first of its kind in Ireland, was built where her husband's kennels stood; here boys were taught carpentry, tailoring, shoe-making

and basket-making. The house now owned by the Mulligan family, Lady Louisa had already converted into a training centre for girls, they learned to knit, sew and cook, and under the direction of Mr. William Wadsworth became experts in the manufacture of Straw Hats. In the Hull Advertiser of 1796 it was noted that "The straw bonnets now so much in fashion originated in Ireland and from a praiseworthy motive in Lady Louisa Conolly Who to employ the poor of Celbridge, a little village near Castletown, the seat of her ladyship and Mr. Conolly, instituted a manufacture of straw hats and bonnets." Bowden in his "Tour of Ireland" states that the Queen and Princesses have honoured this particular industry by condescending to wear its produce.

In all those activities Lady Louisa took a personal interest as she did in all developments on the estate. Improvements were carried out under her direction and Mark Kelly, a steward of Castletown, wrote: "I have seen her directing the tradesmen in the erection of a huge press for expressing oil from beechmast, etc. I remember often seeing her pass out of the garden to the house, dressed in her usual long, light-grey cloth pelisse, or surtout, having huge side pockets, and those pockets stuck full of the largest parsnips and carrots, their small ends appearing above; these being doubtless for the poor, who were permitted to come to the house two or three times a week for food."

In 1811 Lady Sarah returned to Castletown and wrote:

"My headquarters are Castletown, which being a deserted palace, would fill me with gloom could I see those places where the happiest years of my life were spent, in a neglected state. But my dear, my perfect sister, who does all that is right and unites prudence with all her actions, spends the money she has allotted for its maintenance in doing all that is necessary rather than showy; so while it looks neglected, the essentials are all well done and as fires are necessary we live entirely on one floor, which makes it more connected and comfortable. But life there is perfect retirement, which is most comfortable to me, but broke into now and then by those we love, who come to dine and sleep at night."

When Emily Dowager Duchess of Leinster died in 1814, the Bill of Attainder passed against Lord Edward in the Irish Parliament of 1798 was still in force. Two years later Lady Louisa as her deputy petitioned the Prince Regent to have it repealed. In her petition, Lady Louisa reminds the Prince that Lord Edward's only son, who had succeeded his father in her sister's affections, lay under the stain of the Act of Attainder, that it was her sister's earnest wish to have it removed, and that "she repeatedly spoke to Mr. Ogilvie and me (should she, not live to see it accomplished) never to lose sight of it." Due to the perseverance of Lady Louisa and Mr. Ogilvie the Attainder was repealed in 1819.

In August 1821, Lady Louisa Conolly died. At the time of her death, she was seated in a tent which she had erected on the lawn in front of Castletown. It was her wish to die looking at the house, which she had loved so much, and which to-day in its unchanged splendour reflects so much of that love and attention which she so generously lavished upon it.

Col. Edward Michael Pakenham, who succeeded Lady Louisa at Castletown, was grandson of Thomas Conolly's sister Harriett, who married the Rt. Hon.

John Staples of Lissan, Co. Tyrone (their daughter, Louisa Anne Staples, married Admiral Thomas Pakenham in 1783). In accordance with the terms of Thomas Conolly's will, Edward M. Pakenham assumed the name and arms of Conolly. In 1819 he married Catherine Jane, daughter of Chambre Brabazon Ponsonby-Barker and Lady Henrietta Taylour, daughter of Thomas Earl of Bective. Edward and Catherine Jane Conolly had six sons and four daughters.

Thomas

Chambre Brabazon

Frederick William Edward

Capt. Arthur Wellesley Conolly, killed at Inkermann on 5th November 1854

Col. John Augustus Conolly, V.C. Coldstream Guards, who was one of the first recipients of the Victoria Cross in the Crimea

Richard, Secretary of the British Legation at Peking

Their daughters were:

Louisa Augusta, who married The Right Honble. Clotworthy Wellington
William Robert, Baron Langford

Henrietta, married Rev. Edward Montgomery Moore

Mary Margaret, married Henry Bruen, M.P. of Oak Park, Carlow

Frances Mary

Edward Michael Conolly died in 1848 and was succeeded at Castletown by his eldest son, Thomas. Tom Conolly, as he was affectionately known, was born on February 23rd 1823. He succeeded his father as M.P. for Co. Donegal in 1849, and also as Deputy Lieutenant and Justice of the Peace for Donegal and Kildare, but his activities for the most part lay in other fields.

Shortly after his father's death he was Obligated to sell off large parts of the family estates to discharge the many debts and mortgages from which it was encumbered. Nevertheless, this second Thomas Conolly of Castletown lived recklessly and exceeded the extravagances of his 18th century namesake in his equipage and entertainments. As a young man he spent much time on the Continent and became an intimate friend of Napoleon III who used to refer to him as "mon ami intime". He was in America during the great American Civil War (1861-1865) and became acquainted with General Lee. Pressed for money he bought a large vessel and having filled her with an expensive cargo, he attempted to run the blockade into the southern part of Charleston. Intercepted by cruisers of the Northern States, and his ship sunk, he found himself cast adrift on an unknown coast, without any resources except his own ingenuity. He hailed a passing sailing vessel and served his passage home as an ordinary sailor. The ship, bound for England, passed close to the coast of Co. Donegal. Tom Conolly jumped overboard, swam ashore and reached Donegal in time to maintain his seat in the election then in progress.²¹

Home in Co. Kildare, at 45 years of age he was captivated by the beauty and encouraged no doubt by the dowry of Miss Sarah Eliza Shaw of Temple House, Celbridge. The wedding took place at Bray at one o'clock on Tuesday, September 1st 1868, and that evening at 6 o'clock "upwards on a hundred of the tenantry of the home estate of Mr. Conolly together with a host of other respectable

inhabitants in the vicinity of Celbridge and its neighbourhood" were guests of Mr. Cooper, Mr. Conolly's agent at Parsonstown House,²² which adjoined Castle-town estate. The dinner, a sumptuous one—"the viands was in profusion and the eatables faultless"—was prepared by Mr. Fleming of Dublin, and The Irish Times representative who reported the event noted that he had seldom seen "a finer well-dressed more warm-hearted tenantry", than those who came to pay their respects and offer their felicitations to the popular couple.

"The chair was occupied by William Cooper, Esq., Agent to Mr. Conolly, on his right the Rev. Mr. McManus P.P. Celbridge, and on his left the Rev. Mr. Harrison. The vice-chair was occupied by Giles Shaw, Esq. Amongst those present were Messrs. F. Kelly, J. Sharman, Judge, Barrett, Byrne, Castletown; Dignam, Lumley, Celbridge; Ross, Danford, Killer, Lumley Broe, Crampton, Gregg, Manning, Brennan, Coley, Ward, Simpson, Gagan, Molloy, Moore, Malone, Byrne, Campbell, Ross, Gardner, Lennon, Carnegie, Belton, etc."

Following the wedding festivities, Tom Conolly took his young bride to Paris and William Young in his "Fighters of Derry" tells us that:

"About the year 1868 Tom Conolly was well known in Paris for both his coach and riding horses. In fact his coach and equipage was second to none. This resulted in a friendly competition between the Emperor and himself one day in the Bois de Boulogne. The judges, it is said, did not like to award the prize to Tom, without ascertaining from both competitors that no detail had escaped their notice. Napoleon having pointed out the plaiting of his horses' manes and the turnout of his grooms, Tom merely drew their attention to the fact that his horses were shod in silver. Tom had the verdict of the judges. The chief of the Paris police subsequently called on him to reduce the splendour of his equipage."

Thomas and Sarah Eliza Conolly's first child, a son, was born on June 8th 1869; he survived only ten days. Three other sons and one daughter were later born to them, they were:

Thomas, born 1st September 1870

William, b. 29th October 1872

Edward Michael, b. 22nd February 1874

Catherine, b. 28th October 1871

On August 10th 1876 Thomas Conolly died. He was only 53 years of age and his early demise was greatly lamented. Lady St. Helier wrote:

"His hospitality was unbounded, and his house was always full. There were horses to ride, there were cars to be driven; there was an excellent cook and plenty of champagne . . . Dear old Tom Conolly! He was the kindest, the brightest, the most delightful of people, perfect as a host, a kind and staunch friend and universally beloved."

Reporting his death on August 11th, The Irish Times stated that "Amongst the entire ranks of the Irish Conservative party no member of the House of Commons was more respected; genial, kindly, generous to a fault, patriotic in senti-

ment, where the best interests of Ireland were concerned and one of the very best of our resident landlords."

Thomas Conolly's eldest son Thomas, Major Scot's Greys, was killed in South Africa in 1900, and was succeeded by his only surviving brother Major Edward Michael Conolly. The latter did not, however, settle down at Castletown until after the first World War, and for many years prior to 1918 Castletown was let. Sarah Eliza Conolly lived in London until her death in 1921—she is buried in Celbridge. On the death of Major Conolly in 1956, Lord Carew inherited Castletown. Lord Carew was the eldest son of Major Conolly's only sister Catherine who married Gerard Shapland, 5th Baron Carew in 1904. In 1965 he sold the house and the 500 acre estate to Major Willson for £166,000. In April 1967 the Hon. Desmond Guinness purchased Castletown House and 120 acres of land for £93,000, so as to save the house for posterity and make it open to the public. The Castletown Trust is particularly anxious to furnish the house with objects associated with the Conolly family, for display there.

1. Calendar of State Papers Jan. 23rd 1692. An alnager was a public sworn officer of the kings. He examined all cloths manufactured in the land, fixed seals upon them and collected the subsidy or aulnage duty granted to the king.
2. Cal. of State Papers 1693 and Draft of Ratification of Arms 1598-1723, Genealogical Office, Dublin Castle.
3. 4. Acts of Settlement and Distribution.
5. MSS 3023-3024 Book of Postings Lothian MSS.
6. ADD. MSS 750-244 British Museum Stowe Papers.
7. Letters of Hugh Boulter, Clarendon Press, 1769-70.
8. Judges in Ireland, Vol. II, F. Elrington Ball.
9. Memorials of the Dead, Vol. VII, No. III, Pt. 1.
10. Copy of Will in the Public Records Office.
11. LIB. 287, page 1, No. 184460, Reg. of Deeds.
12. Letters of William Conolly, his wife formerly Lady Anne Wentworth and Katharine Conolly, ADD. MSS., 22, 228 British Museum.
13. Dictionary of National Biography.
14. Heron Papers MSS 13047-13056, National Library.
15. Historical MSS, Comm. Lothian MSS, 1905.
16. Letter dated April 30th 1786. Thomas Barnard, Bishop of Killaloe to the Earl of Buckinghamshire, Heron Papers, National Library.
17. On receiving the assurance that his position would be "free of all manner of politics" Col. Napier later accepted the appointment.
18. Henry Grattan was the grandson of Chief Justice Thomas Marlay, who purchased Celbridge Abbey after the death of Esther Vanhomrigh—Swift's Vanessa—in 1723. Speaking of his dedication to fight for an independent legislature for Ireland he said "Along the banks of the Liffey amid the groves and bowers of Swift and Vanessa, I grew convinced that I was right. Arguments unanswerable came to my mind and what I then presaged confirmed me in my determination to persevere."
19. Copy of Will in P.R.O.
20. The Pursuit of Robert Emmet, by Helen Landreth.
21. Fighters of Derry, by William Young.
22. This house is now the property of Irish Meat Packers.

Other Sources:

Letters and Documents preserved at Castletown.

Correspondence of Emily, Duchess of Leinster, edited by Brian Fitzgerald.

Lady Louisa Conolly, by Brian Fitzgerald.

Emily, Duchess of Leinster, by Brian Fitzgerald.

Lady Sarah Lennox, by Edith Roelker Curtis.

Edward and Pamela Fitzgerald, by Gerald Campbell.

The Life and Death of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, by Thomas Moore.

The Informers of 1798, by William J. Fitzpatrick.

Memoirs of Henry Grattan.

History of Ireland, by John Mitchell.

The Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation, by Jonah Barrington.