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# **INTRODUCTION**

# **LENOX-CONYNGHAM PAPERS**

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# Lenox-Conyngham Papers (D1449, D501, T3161 and T406)

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## Summary

The Lenox-Conyngham papers comprise c.2,350 documents and volumes, 1630-1953, relating to the Lenox family of Londonderry City, the Conyngham, later Lenox-Conyngham, family of Springhill, Moneymore, Co. Londonderry, the Butle family of Belfast and elsewhere in Co. Antrim (a merchant family whose heir inherited Springhill in 1721 and changed his name to Conyngham), and other less closely connected families, such as the Hamiltons of Castlefinn, Co. Donegal, the Lowrys of Rockdale, Pomeroy, Co. Tyrone, the Richardsons of Richhill, Co. Armagh, and Rossfad, Co. Fermanagh, etc, etc.



*Illustration of Dominican church and convent, Fish Lane, Limerick*

The papers include: title deeds, leases and legal papers relating to the Springhill estate of the Lenox-Conyngham family situated between Coagh, Co. Tyrone, and Moneymore, Co. Londonderry, 1630-1906; a volume of estate maps, 1722; a leasebook for the manor of Castlefinn, Co. Donegal, 1763-1776; Springhill rentals, accounts and account books, 1786, 1803 and 1830-1953; correspondence about the affairs of Derry corporation, 1691-1731; a letter book of David Butle, the Belfast merchant, 1696-1703, and a successor volume kept by his fellow Belfast merchant, Isaac Macartney, 1704-1707; some 18th century Co. Londonderry militia

papers; the originals of the Fottrell Papers which describe the organisation of the Dominicans in Ireland, 1721-1739; the Seven Years' War correspondence of Colonel William Conyngham of Springhill, 1760-1762; the Boer and First World War correspondence of Colonel William Arbuthnot Lenox-Conyngham; photographs of soldiers, members of the Lenox-Conyngham family, etc, c.1870-c.1926, including a photograph of King George V presenting colours to the Irish battalion, Connaught Rangers, at Phoenix Park, Dublin, in 1911; a typescript history of the Richardson family of Richhill, Co. Armagh, and Rossfad, Co. Fermanagh, from the 17th century, compiled by J.C. Richardson, 1920; etc, etc.

## Family history

The following account is taken from the National Trust *Guidebook* to Springhill, which is perhaps the most characteristically and charmingly Ulster house in the care of the NT's Northern Ireland Region:

'The Conyngham family, of Ayrshire origin, arrived in Ulster shortly after the Plantation of James I. Where it first settled is not clear from existing records but on the eve of the 1641 rebellion it owned properties in the cities of Derry and Armagh, as well as lands in those counties and in Tyrone. In 1672 the lease of the Tyrone estate, at Mullanahoe [near Coagh] in the manor of Castle Stewart, was renewed, the original title deeds "having been lost or destroyed in the recent rebellion". The recipient was Colonel William Conyngham, a strong supporter of Cromwell and one of his Commissioners for Co. Armagh during and immediately after the rebellion. An indenture dated April 23rd, 1658, refers to him as a resident of Armagh in Co. Armagh.



## Springhill

The Springhill property was the last to be acquired by the family. The indenture referred to above was between Colonel Conyngham and Henry Finch, Alderman of Derry, and it arranged for the sale by Finch of "the town, village, hamlet, place, baliboe or parcel of land called Ballydrum [Springhill] in the parish of Ardtra [Ardtrea]" - 350 acres in all, for the sum of œ200. If a dwelling house was included in the transaction no mention of it is made in the deed and we learn from the marriage articles drawn up in 1680 between Miss Anne Upton of Castle Upton [Templepatrick] Co. Antrim, and the Colonel's son, William Conyngham II, that one of his obligations was "to build a convenient house of lime and stone, two stories high ... with necessary office houses" for his bride. Though the Springhill estate comprised a modest 350 acres, when it was combined with those in Tyrone, Armagh, Derry and Co. Antrim (this last in the barony of Kilconway), the total amounted to well over 1,500.

Springhill (which derives its name from a nearby spring) is situated on a long ridge running roughly north-east and south-west from the old Plantation town of Moneymore in Co. Derry. The name "Moneymore" signifies in Irish "The Great Shrubbery" and there still remains evidence of the ancient forest which once reached along the western shore of Lough Neagh a distance of twenty miles, from Mountjoy in Tyrone to Maghera in Derry. The house, which lies about a mile from Moneymore, was once surrounded by defensive barriers and fencework. These were swept away in about 1765 when the third William Conyngham inherited the property and today an uninterrupted view of the house is obtained from the drive gates.

With slate roof and roughcast walls it impresses chiefly by its balanced proportions and the simplicity of its design. The house is flanked on either side by long, low outbuildings which were used by servants, the senior staff occupying the building on the left and the junior staff the building on the right, where also the stables were situated. The original house was without its present wings, and the front door, as a 1722 sketch shows, was not in a central position, three ground floor windows lying to the right and only one to the left. The rooms beyond this, together with the present drawing room in the west wing, originally a dining room, were added in 1765 by the third William Conyngham, though the 1722 sketch seems to suggest that the east wing was earlier. The present dining room is of still later date, about 1850.

Springhill, or its nucleus, must therefore date from the last quarter of the 17th century and (if completed) must have been quite new at the outbreak of the Williamite War.



## **The Williamite War**

In this, William Conyngham II, like his father, supported the Williamite cause. He commanded a regiment, raised locally, and marched with it to Derry where, with ten other leaders, including his friend James Lenox, he disputed the Earl of Antrim's demand for his force to be allowed entry to the city in the name of King James II. Later he became a member of King William's Council of Six and was attainted for his trouble by the Jacobite Parliament in Dublin. Nor was he the only Conyngham to earn a reputation at this time. Two of the Apprentice Boys were kinsmen, as was Sir Albert who raised for William a regiment, the Inniskilling Dragoons, which in the course of its history was to win many laurels, the first at the Boyne in 1690. ...

[The already-mentioned James Lenox (d.1723) is of great subsequent importance in family history, because his great-grandson was eventually (1789) to inherit Springhill via his mother, Ann, who had become the Conyngham heiress. Lenox himself was a merchant and ship owner of Derry, Mayor of Derry, 1693 and 1697, and MP for the city, 1693-1703, and his papers in these and other capacities are present in the archive.]



## **George Butle Conyngham (succ. 1721: d.1765)**

William Conyngham II died in 1721 and was succeeded at Springhill by his nephew, George Butle [son of David Butle, the Belfast merchant, and Anne Conyngham. Following his inheritance, George Butle assumed the additional name of Conyngham. His principal claim to fame is that he arrested Fr Fottrell, the Provincial of the Dominicans in Ireland, in 1739 and added the Fottrell papers to the archive. His] ... wife was Anne Peacocke, daughter of Mary, another of the Upton sisters, and a celebrated beauty. She figured as Corinna in Addison's Spectator and was a friend and counsellor of Dean Swift who paid frequent visits to the neighbouring Lindsays of Loughry [Co. Tyrone]. Her husband carried on the family military tradition. His name appears in a list of the Londonderry Militia dated 1726 and in 1744 he received his commission as captain in the Tyrone Militia as well. He also built the modern village of Coagh, calling its main street Hanover Square in honour of King George II, and obtaining for it a market charter. He died in 1765.



*George B. Conyngham*



## **Colonel William Conyngham (1723-1784)**

His successor was his son, William, who, during his father's last years, had been serving with distinction in the Seven Years' War as Colonel of the Black Horse, a regiment officered largely by Irishmen. After 1765 he retired from active service and returned to Springhill, to be created Deputy Governor of Co. Londonderry. He also, within a short time, entered political life and sat as MP for Dundalk. In 1775 he married Mrs Jean Hamilton, a widow whose first husband had been John Hamilton of Castlefinn, Co. Donegal. It was to him that Springhill House owed its first major renovations and additions. He died in 1784.



## **George Lenox-Conyngham (1752-1816)**

After an interval of four years, during which his brother David ... [owned] the family properties, his nephew George Lenox-Conyngham succeeded. He had already (since 1784) taken a prominent part in public life as Colonel of "The Springhill Union" Volunteer unit, which represented a combination of "The Moneymore or Drapers' Volunteers" (known later as "The Moneymore Independents") and "The Coagh Volunteers" raised by his uncle in 1779. These regiments had played their part at the Dungannon meeting in 1782 from which the historic demand for a free Irish Parliament had been sent down to Grattan in Dublin. George was the first in the family to use the hyphenated name ... . He married, first, Jane Hamilton of Castlefinn, a daughter of Colonel William Conyngham's wife, Jean, by her first marriage, and afterwards Olivia Irvine of Castle Irvine [Co. Fermanagh].

In 1793 he became a Major in the Co. Londonderry Militia, re-formed in that year in consequence of the outbreak of war with France. His Colonel was Thomas Conolly of Castletown [Co. Kildare] and his Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Stewart of Mountstewart, Co. Down, later known as Lord Castlereagh. Besides letters from these colleagues there is voluminous correspondence from his friend and neighbour Lord Castle Stewart [the ground landlord of Coagh], from Thomas Knox of Dungannon, and from Henry Pelham, Chief Secretary for Ireland, on the subject of how best to restrain the activities of the United Irishmen who were preparing for the rebellion which broke out in 1798. Afterwards he was consulted by Sir Richard Musgrave when writing his history of that event and, though he never actually entered Parliament, he was one of those who opposed the Act of Union in 1800. He died in 1816.



## **William Lenox-Conyngham (1792-1858)**

His successor was William, only child of his first wife, Jane Hamilton. Educated at Glasgow University and called to the English Bar, William abandoned his plans for a legal career in the year of his father's death and came to live at Springhill. In 1819 he married Charlotte Melosina Staples, third daughter of the Rt Hon. John Staples, MP, of nearby Lissan, and his wife Harriet Molesworth, whose father, the 3rd Viscount Molesworth, had been ADC to the Duke of Marlborough. He became Deputy Lieutenant and High Sheriff of both Cos Londonderry and Tyrone and served in his father's old regiment, the Londonderry Militia.



## **Colonel Sir William Fitzwilliam Lenox-Conyngham (1824-1906)**

After his death in 1858 his son William Fitzgerald continued this tradition and indeed established a record of service by commanding the regiment for a period of thirty-five years. When he retired he was rewarded with a knighthood and a KCB. He also, after 1882, accepted the Agency of the Drapers' Company of Londonderry and in this capacity lived in the Manor House, Moneymore. When, after the passing of the Ashbourne Act, the lands of the Drapers' Company were sold, Sir William and his family went for a short time to live in England, [where Sir William died in 1906].



## **Colonel William Arbuthnot Lenox-Conyngham (1857-1938)**

In 1899 Sir William's son, William Arbuthnot, married Mina Lowry, daughter of Colonel James Lowry of Rockdale, Co. Tyrone (d.1897), and, after service in the Boer War, returned with his wife to live at Springhill. ... [In spite of the erosion of the estate following the Wyndham Land Act of 1903], he continued to take a prominent part in local and public affairs.

During the Ulster Volunteer Force period, 1912-1914, he threw in his lot with Sir Edward Carson and enrolled the South Derry Regiment, while his wife organised a Nursing Corps and eleven hospital centres in South Derry, in anticipation of civil war over the Home Rule Bill. Springhill became a centre of UVF activity, including the distribution of arms on the night of the celebrated Larne gun-running. When the Great War broke out in 1914, Colonel Lenox-Conyngham rejoined his old Regiment, the Worcestershires. Though one of his three soldier brothers, John, was killed, he himself lived to return to Springhill and receive the OBE for his services ... . He died in 1938.



## **'An old Ulster house'**

His widow, Mina, ne Lowry, researched, wrote and published the valuable family history *An old Ulster House and the people who lived in it* (Dundalk, 1946), which gives much information about ... [the Lenox-Conyngham archive (and her working papers for which are now part of it)]. She died in 1961 at the age of 94. Their son, William [Lowry] Lenox-Conyngham, served in the Second World War, and [from 1940] was HML for Co. Londonderry. He died in 1957, shortly after arrangements had been made by him for the acquisition of Springhill by the National Trust.



## **Title deeds, deeds of settlement, mortgages, legal case papers, etc**

These documents of title run from 1630 to 1906 and relate to Lenox property in Londonderry City, Conyngham and Lenox-Conyngham property in or near Londonderry City and in Cos Londonderry, Tyrone and (briefly) Donegal, Butle property in Belfast and Co. Antrim, etc, etc, and to the very frequent legal disputes which raged over those properties and over family settlements and testamentary dispositions.

The earliest original document is a perpetuity lease of 1630 from Sir Andrew Stewart, Bt, of Castle Stewart, Co. Tyrone (ancestor of the Earl of that name) to Anne Boyse, widow, of the lands of Coagh, Mullaghtironey and other premises, which were subsequently, in 1664, conveyed by Nathaniel Boyse to the Conynghams and thereafter formed a major part of the Springhill estate. Also present is the very important settlement of 1680 made on the marriage of William Conyngham II and Ann Upton, as a result of which Springhill was built. There is an interesting case paper of c.1680 relating to a jurisdictional dispute between the Irish Society and the corporation of Londonderry and, more unexpectedly, a conveyance of 1685 to Major Archibald Cockran of Antigua of land, buildings and Negroes on that island. An important deed of 1691 relates to the mechanism whereby the Mayor, Commonalty and Citizens of Londonderry were to obtain compensation, by petition to William and Mary, for public and private losses suffered during the siege.



## Wills

This section devoted to documents of title and legal papers includes a number of pre-1858 wills, as follows: the will of William Conyngham of Springhill, 1720; the will of Josias Fleming of 'Larrycormick', Co. Londonderry, 1724; a copy of the will of Arthur Butle of Toome, Co. Antrim (brother of George Butle Conyngham of Springhill), 1739; the will of Thomas Neve of Ballyneill, Co. Londonderry, 1739; the will of Anne Conyngham, widow of William Conyngham II of Springhill, 1744; a copy of the will of the Rev. George Gowan, Rector of Inver, Co. Donegal, 1759; a copy of the will of George Butle Conyngham of Springhill (leaving everything he can away from his eldest son, Colonel William Conyngham), 1765; a draft of Mrs Catherine Saunders's will, 1773; the probate of the will of John Hamilton of Castlefinn, Co. Donegal, 1774; the will of Capt. John Conyngham, 1775; the probate of the will of Ann Lennox, nee Conyngham, wife of Clotworthy Lennox, 1778; a copy of the will of Colonel William Conyngham of Springhill, 1784; copy letters of administration to the goods of the Hon. Harriet Staples (presumably the widow of the Rt Hon. John Staples of Lissan), 1835; and a copy of the will of William Winning of Fort Gibson, Louisiana, North America, 1843.



## Leases

The leases in the archive which, insofar as this can be ascertained, comprise leases granted by the Conyngham, Lenox-Conyngham, etc, families (because leases granted to them, eg by Lord Castle Stewart, constitute title deeds), date from 1732-1838 and 1891. There are 30 leases of premises in the town of Coagh, barony of Dungannon, Co. Tyrone, 1732-1848; c.12 leases of Drumconway, in the same barony, 1778-1835; 6 leases of Mullaghtironey, in the same barony, 1778 and 1812-1829; 40 leases of Ballindrum, barony of Loughinsholin, Co. Londonderry, 1781-1838 and 1891; 20 leases of Crosspatrick, in the same barony, 1814-1829, 10 leases of Urbal, barony of Dungannon, Co. Tyrone, 1787-1830; a couple of leases of Sessiagh and Mullaninahoe, in the same barony, 1821 and 1824; one lease of Ballynargan, in the same barony, 1817; one lease of Doluskey, in the Salters' Proportion, barony of Loughinsholin, Co. Londonderry; and another singleton lease of an unnamed farm in the Salters' Proportion, 1832. In addition, there is a leasebook, 1763-1777, for the manor of Castlefinn, Co. Donegal, which had belonged to the late John Hamilton of Castlefinn, whose widow married Colonel William Conyngham of Springhill in 1775.



## **Rentals, maps and other estate papers**

There is a considerable run of rentals, estate accounts, bog rentals, etc, mainly for the Springhill estate, 1786, 1803, 1831-1913 and 1935. A series of 9 account books, 1836-1953, detail household expenditure and labourers' wages. Manuscript and printed maps of the Springhill estate are dated 1722, 1817, 1830 and c.1850-1890. Of these, the most significant is 'A book of maps of the estates of George Conyngham of Springhill, Esq., [in the] counties of Londonderry and Tyrone, surveyed anno 1722 ... [by] John Maclanachan'.

Among a considerable volume of 19th-century estate correspondence, there are: letters and bills of cost to William Lenox-Conyngham of Springhill, 1833-1852; letters and circulars from the Office of Public Works, Dublin, about drainage and river widening on the Springhill estate, 1847-1868; letters and bills of cost to Colonel William Fitzwilliam Lenox-Conyngham, 1856-1867 (ie before and after his succession to Springhill); very miscellaneous estate and business correspondence of Colonel Sir William Fitzwilliam Lenox-Conyngham and others (one of whom is a family member who warns in 1894 against sending any money to Sir William in England because of Sir William's extravagance, failure to keep account of anything, etc), 1873-1910; three copy out-letter books, one memorandum book and one index to correspondents (the last relating to the Drapers' estate) of Colonel Sir William Fitzwilliam Lenox-Conyngham, 1882-1890; a large quantity of letters and papers of Sir William, many of them letters from Henry R. Kelly of the firm of solicitors which later became Longfield, Kelly & Armstrong, Northland Row, Dungannon, about a loan required by Sir William, Land Court cases, Land Purchase, etc, 1874-1899; very miscellaneous letters, accounts, receipts, Land Purchase papers, 1880-1922; and an original bundle of business letters to Sir William, 1890-1893.



## Militia and other military papers

Because the Conynghams and Lenox-Conynghams were for several generations soldiers in the militia and/or the regular army, the papers deriving from these military roles have been set apart. They comprise: militia commissions and militia lists, 1726-1852, relating to Cos Londonderry and Tyrone; other military commissions (mainly in the regular army), appointments to county offices, and miscellaneous formal documents, 1702-1953; and correspondence of George Butle Conyngham, Colonel William Conyngham and George Lenox-Conyngham, 1745, 1760, 1767, 1783, 1785, 1789, and 1793-1800, about the Co. Londonderry Militia, in which they all served as either colonels or majors, and in the 1780s about local Volunteer corps in which they also served.



*Henry Herbert,  
10<sup>th</sup> Earl of Pembroke*

There is also some Seven Years' War (and other) military correspondence of Colonel William Conyngham, mainly 1760-1762. Conyngham, who appears to have been a capable soldier, was captain, major and acting colonel or colonel of the 4th Regiment of Horse (known as 'The Black Horse'). His correspondents and brother-officers include the Count of Schaumbourg-Lippe, the Count de Waldeck and Henry Herbert, 10th Earl of Pembroke, Major-General commanding the Cavalry Brigade in Germany. Lord Pembroke's letters mainly relate, not to military affairs, but to his complicated love-life and liaison with Miss Kitty Hunter. Colonel William Conyngham continued in the regular army until he succeeded to Springhill in 1765.



## **The David Butle and Isaac Macartney merchants' letter-books, 1696-1703 and 1704-1706 respectively (D1449/13 and D501)**

The following information is taken from Jean Agnew, *Belfast Merchant Families in the 17th Century* (Dublin, 1996).

'David Butle, or Buttle, was a late 17th century merchant and shipowner of Belfast. He served his apprenticeship in Belfast and became a freeman in 1680. He was a refugee during the Jacobite wars; was probably collector at Coleraine 1690; freeman of Carrickfergus; merchant in Belfast in the 1690s; burgess, 1700; sovereign, 1702-1703 and 1703-1704; resigned 29 July 1704 after the passing of the Test Act; removed as burgess 29 November 1707; buried 25 December 1714. He was a Presbyterian in religion. His family was of Scottish origin, settled in Antrim since 1615. He had property at Ballysillan, Ballymurphy and Ballygarry, and extensive property in the barony of Glenarm, Co. Antrim, some inherited from his brother, and some leased from the Commissioners of the Forfeited Estates (and part of the estate of the Earl of Antrim). He married Anne, daughter of William Conyngham II of Springhill. She died 6 September 1712. Their children included George Butle Conyngham, an attorney, who inherited Springhill from his uncle, William Conyngham, and died 1765. ...

Isaac Macartney, merchant and shipowner of Belfast, was the son of another merchant and shipowner, "Black" George Macartney (d.1702?). Isaac Macartney was born c.1670, was elected a burgess of Belfast 1701, and resigned April 1707. He built George and Hanover Quays, Belfast, at his own expense. He was ruined by his brother-in-law's debts, his own "inattention to business", and the inefficiency of trustees appointed to manage his estates. He died April 1738. He was a Presbyterian and a leading elder of First Belfast Presbyterian Church, 1709 and 1716. He had an income of £400 p.a. from leasehold properties in Belfast and inherited through his wife estates in Cos Down and Armagh. His wife was Anne Haltridge, who died 20 February 1748. ...



## **The series of Belfast merchants' letterbooks**

The David Butle and Isaac Macartney letter-books are two of a series of four merchant letter books which provide an abundance of information, unique in Ireland, about the trading methods and contacts of the Belfast merchant community.

The two out-letter books of "Black" George Macartney, 1661-1668, and 1679-1681, in the Linenhall Library, Belfast, are well known to economic historians and have been widely used to illustrate economic trends, but the similar out-letter book of Isaac Macartney, covering the years 1704-1706, has been surprisingly little used. The first two Macartney letter books were previously thought to have been written by another Macartney. However, internal evidence identifies their author as "Black" George Macartney, the father of Isaac Macartney, which makes it possible to study the trade and business methods of a Belfast merchant family over a period of forty-five years. In addition, these letter books illustrate the pattern of trade from Belfast, merchant life, business practice and commercial morality and document the daily life of the Belfast merchant families. ...



## **From Scots to Irishmen**

The Belfast merchant community was made up of immigrants with different places of origin and different religious affiliations. ... Belfast was seen as a largely Scots town but ... [over time] regional accents and dialects, particularly lowland Scots, became less pronounced. The Scottish immigrants' perception of their own nationality and identity was also modified. Some indication of this is visible in the Macartney letter books. In 1665 in a letter to James Cunningham, a Scottish factor at Cadiz, Black George subscribed himself as his "friend and countryman". Forty years later, Macartney's son Isaac displayed faint stirrings of colonial nationalism when he wrote to a correspondent in Devon offering to supply him with linen "when the Parliament of England is pleased to let poor Ireland export directly linen to the English plantation[s]". ...



## Religion

Although it is possible to determine the religious affiliation of all the leading merchant families, there is no source which throws much light on the part played by religion in their everyday lives. ... Virtually all the merchant letters which have survived are business letters. Black George Macartney's ... remarks about religion were confined to pious hopes that ships would arrive safely and that cargoes would find a good market. Similarly, the letter book of David Butle throws no light on his spiritual life, and neither does that of Isaac Macartney. ...



## **The gentry in trade**

Although gentry wealth and status were based on land, trade was seen as an excellent investment. David Butle's letter book reveals that in 1701 Lord Donegall [the ground landlord of Belfast] was taking two-fifths of a cargo of wines with Butle and other Belfast merchants, and the letters suggest involvement in other cargoes. Not only did the gentry invest; active gentry participation in trade makes this period unique in British history [and also promoted marriage connections such as that between the mercantile Butles and the gentry Conynghams]. ...



## The changing merchant network

Apart from the emergence of the linen trade, Belfast's trade was much the same in the early 18th century as it had been fifty years earlier. It had increased in volume rather than in essentials. However, there had been one notable change in this period. By the early 18th century most of Belfast's trade at foreign ports was handled by a network of merchants from Belfast or Ulster who had settled abroad. This fundamental change can be illustrated by contrasting the correspondents of Black George Macartney with those of his son, Isaac. ... Between 1681, when Black George's second letter book ends, and 1704, when that of Isaac Macartney begins, a significant change had taken place. Virtually all the correspondents of the latter were Scots Presbyterians, a high proportion were from Ulster.

There appears to be very little overlap in Isaac Macartney's letter-books with the correspondents in the two earlier Macartney letter books. There are two letters to Daniel Arthur, who was by then in his eighties, two to Henry Lavie of Bordeaux, although this may not have been the same man who was active in the 1660s-1680s, and two to Edmund Harrison of London, with whom Black George had been in partnership on numerous occasions, including the supplying of the Duke of Schomberg's artillery train. The largest group of letters to one of Black George's former correspondents is to Elnathan Lumm of Dublin and comprises eighteen letters relating to Lumm's banking activities. Some change was inevitable since many of Black George's correspondents would have been dead or in retirement by 1704, but their replacements indicate that this change was fundamental. Isaac's major correspondents were Alexander and Henry Cairnes at London, William Cromie, James Stevenson, and William Cairnes at Dublin, James Eccles at Waterford, Hugh Mitchell at Cork, William Galbraith and James Hillhouse at Bristol, John Cunningham at Liverpool, Alexander Carstaires at Rotterdam, George Boyd and Robert Gordon at Bordeaux, and the Moore brothers in Barbados. Apart from Carstaires and Gordon, who were Scots from Scotland, all the rest were Scots from Ulster.

David Butle's letter book covers a longer period (1696-1703) but contains far fewer letters, addressed to a total of only twenty-seven correspondents. Twelve of these also appear in Isaac Macartney's letter book and letters to several of the remainder do not relate to trade. Like Macartney he was dealing with Alexander Cairnes at London, Cromie at Dublin, Eccles at Waterford, Carstaires at Rotterdam, Boyd at Bordeaux, Moore at Barbados, and with William Blackburn and Andrew Lees in Glasgow. Moreover, not only were Macartney's and Butle's trading networks almost identical, but Macartney's letters contain frequent references to other Belfast merchants consigning goods to these same factors. ... Their ... network consisted of their own connections and countrymen rather than those of their employers in Dublin, and the Dublin merchants with whom they did the most business were themselves expatriate Ulstermen, and so part of this same network. ... [Indeed] Isaac Macartney's and Butle's letter books suggest that by the early 18th century most of their trade was in partnership with other Belfast merchants.



## **Wider trading contacts**

The Belfast merchant letter books also show increasing contact with Irish ports other than Dublin. In the 1660s, Black George Macartney had dealings with merchants in Londonderry and Coleraine, especially the latter, when he needed extra butter to make up cargoes or had goods for which there was no sale at Belfast. From the late 1670s, however, he extended his operations to Ballyshannon in Co. Donegal ... . The letter books of Isaac Macartney and David Butle show that, from the late 1690s, Belfast merchants were in regular contact, not only with Ballyshannon, but also with correspondents at Cork and Waterford. ...



## **Merchants and bankers**

The term "banker" was not in common use in the 17th century and many who were operating as bankers continued to call themselves merchants, seeing banking as one activity among many. ... Although, in the 1690s, Butle was in regular correspondence with Alexander Cairnes of London and paid for his goods with bills there is no indication that he dealt in bills beyond what was necessary to finance his trading operations. The Macartneys, on the other hand, were from the 1660s continuously engaged in the supply, exchange and presentment of bills, principally on behalf of a number of leading Dublin merchants and bankers; indeed Isaac Macartney's letter book contains more letters about bills than about trade. Since a commission of 1.5% was paid on the bills they handled, this represented a regular and not inconsiderable addition to their income. ... Isaac Macartney did not call himself a banker although the title was later claimed for him by his son. Although he was active in the discounting and transmitting of bills of exchange, he never issued bank notes. Nevertheless, considering his activities as agent of the Cairnes brothers, he has some claim to be considered as another "branch" of their bank, which operated in London, Dublin and Limerick. ...'



## **The Fottrell papers**

The following account is taken from the introduction to *The Fottrell papers: An edition of the papers found on the person of Fr John Fottrell, Provincial of the Dominicans in Ireland, at his arrest in 1739*; by Rev. Hugh Fenning, OP (PRONI, 1980).

'The Fottrell papers owe both their name and their unity as a collection to an event which occurred on 6 June 1739. On that day Fr John Fottrell, Provincial or Major Superior of the Irish Dominican friars, and Dr Michael MacDonogh, Bishop of Kilmore, were arrested by George Butle Conyngham ... near the north-western shore of Lough Neagh. The two clergymen soon escaped from their imprisonment, but their papers remained in the hands of the magistrates.



## Fr John Fottrell

Fr John Fottrell was born in the Dublin area about 1701, joined the Dominican Order ... about 1720, began his ecclesiastical studies at Lisbon, and on 7 April 1726 (the first definite date in his career) was assigned as a student of theology to the convent of Santa Maria Novella in Florence. Fottrell soon qualified as a teacher or lector, for in July 1727 the Master General (the supreme authority within the Order) appointed him to teach philosophy at Lisbon. Instead of returning to Lisbon, however, Fottrell eventually went back to Dublin where he began his ministry in the Bridge Street chapel in 1729. One finds that he was sub prior there in 1732, 1733 and 1737, and prior of the convent from March of that latter year. On 22 April 1738 he was unexpectedly elected Provincial, an office which placed him in charge of all Dominican convents, both of nuns and friars, in Ireland. As has been said above, he was arrested a year later while engaged in the formal visitation of the houses under his charge.

After regaining his liberty "with the connivance of friends", the Provincial beat a hasty retreat back to Dublin, but after a short interval began his visitation again. From the report he later submitted to Rome it appears that the Dominican province then comprised thirty-eight convents, one hundred and eighty-two priests, ten novices, five lay brothers and four monasteries of nuns. During that same autumn of 1738, Fottrell left Ireland for Flanders to visit a house newly founded by Irish nuns at Brussels and the college of Holy Cross, Louvain. Both establishments were under his jurisdiction. On closing his visitation at Louvain in March 1740, the Provincial returned to Ireland and finished out his term of office (on 8 May 1742) without further disturbance. The rest of his long life was spent at Dublin [where he died in 1785 aged about 84]. ...



## **Bishop Michael MacDonogh**

Dr Michael MacDonogh, himself a Dominican and (from 1728) Bishop of Kilmore, was born at the very beginning of the 18th century and took the Dominican habit at Coleraine about the year 1716. It was, in fact, the Bishop's interest in that convent which threw him into the Provincial's company on the day of his arrest. Occupied in the work of visitation, Fr Fottrell was making his way towards Coleraine. The Bishop accompanied him in order to regroup the members of his native convent and provide them with proper means of support. We are indebted to Dr MacDonogh for the information that those who arrested Fr Fottrell and himself believed him to be the Archbishop of Armagh, and Fr Fottrell the Bishop of Derry.

Dr MacDonogh's papers (grouped in D1449/14/8) form only a small part of the collection. Few though they were in number, the documents left no doubt of his identity. They comprised indulgences and faculties granted to him *nominatim* by the Pope, two letters from the Bishop of Ossory and another confrŠre in Livorno, as well as the manuscript of a satirical pamphlet he had just written to ridicule pretended converts to Protestantism. The Bishop lost on the same occasion his Episcopal ring and pectoral cross.

After the two ecclesiastics escaped from their brief imprisonment, a reward of £200 was offered in Dublin to whomsoever would capture Dr MacDonogh again. Judging it to be more prudent to leave the country for a while, the Bishop spent the whole of 1740 in Rome. He returned to Dublin (his usual place of residence) in 1741, but during the disturbances of 1744 he was again pursued and had to change house twelve times in two months in order to escape arrest. Rheumatism, from which he had long suffered, forced him abroad again in 1746. He died at Lisbon in November of that year, a few weeks after his arrival.



## **The content and value of the Fottrell papers**

For one who was liable on discovery to imprisonment and transportation, Fr Fottrell was carrying quite a collection of documents. The bulk of these was formed by the acts or proceedings of five Dominican provincial chapters held between 1721 and 1738. Such chapters legislated not only for the Irish Dominican establishments at home, but also for those at Louvain, Lisbon and Rome. An elective chapter was held every four years to choose a provincial or major superior. Another type of chapter, termed intermediate, met half-way through each provincial's term of office. The legislation or "acts" produced by these gatherings was subject to the correction and confirmation of the master general of the Order (resident at the convent of the Minerva in Rome), a fact which explains why Fr Fottrell was also carrying the general's comments on the various chapter acts in his possession.

Another large bundle of papers concerned the work of visitation in which Fr Fottrell was engaged at the time of his arrest. Each provincial was obliged annually to visit every convent under his jurisdiction, to correct such breaches of the rule as fell under his notice, to impose "charges" or "ordinations" of a disciplinary nature, and to report on his findings to the master general. These visitations opened with the imposition of a "formal precept" on the community to speak openly to the visitor. Breaches of the vow of obedience are not necessarily grave sins. The formal precept, however, which is given solemnly, obliges the subject under pain of grave sin to obey a particular just command. Some such formal precepts, ordinations and exhortations in this collection were given to the nuns of Dublin and the priests and nuns of Drogheda. Since the rest lack any indication of those to whom they were addressed, one feels that Fr Fottrell had scarcely begun his visitation at the time of his arrest. Included with these visitation papers is a long address in English (D1449/15/40) made by Fr Fottrell at his profession ceremony in Dublin.

The Provincial was also carrying ten formal assignments - documents ordering individuals to take up certain duties or to move from one convent to another. The remainder of the collection comprises a formulary for official letters in Latin, notes on various Irish convents and their personnel, lists of addresses and of those promoted to honorary degrees within the Order, and some papers recording financial transactions.

After grouping these documents into categories and arranging them chronologically within each section, one is struck by the fact that Fottrell had in his possession so many papers written by his predecessor in office, Fr Bernard MacHenry (1734-1738). If one excepts the documents belonging to Bishop MacDonogh, a good half of the Fottrell papers are in fact those of MacHenry. No problem arises in the case of dated documents, but some caution is needed when dealing with the report on convents, the two lists of addresses, the financial notes, and some of the visitation documents. The two hands are usually quite different, but the scribble of one is not so easily distinguished from the jottings of the other.



## A fortunate confiscation

It is hardly necessary to say that the collection as a whole is a valuable one. The regular clergy of Ireland, who were forced into exile in 1698, had to wait until about 1746 until their presence in Ireland was generally tolerated by the magistrates. That being so, it is hardly likely that the religious orders kept substantial archives in the first half of the 18th century. Even if they did, the decline of the regular clergy and their abandonment of so many convents between 1770 and 1850 involved the loss of most of the documents they had earlier preserved. In these circumstances the preservation of the Fottrell papers was fortunate. Had the magistrates not confiscated them in 1739, they would scarcely have survived until today.

Some of the documents, of course, are less important than others. Copies of the provincial chapter acts are also available in the provincial archives at Tallaght, Co. Dublin, and in Rome. The letters of the master general by which the chapter acts were corrected and confirmed may still be read in the original registers at Santa Sabina in Rome. Nor is the importance of the formulary very great, since there are no documents of doubtful authenticity which it can be called upon to test. The papal indulgences and faculties - most of which belonged to Dr MacDonogh - are only stereotyped formulae, but it may be useful to print (perhaps for the first time in Ireland) the faculties 'formula 6' granted to Irish bishops in the 18th century.

The financial notes provide some useful information on Dominican students in Spain for some years prior to 1736. Seeing that our Irish diocesan archives (on the Catholic side) contain virtually nothing earlier than 1770, the two letters addressed to Bishop MacDonogh may be said to be well-nigh unique. In one, Dr O'Shaughnessy speaks of his problems in the diocese of Ossory. The other throws some light on the Roman career of John Brett, OP, later successively Bishop of Killala and Elphin. The manuscript pamphlet in MacDonogh's untidy hand (D1449/14/48) is almost the only personal document from that Bishop which has come down to us. It too is almost the only representative of its type. The loss of provincials' registers, into which all assignments were entered, has likewise increased the value of the letters allocating fresh work to various members of the province.

Probably the most valuable parts of the collection are the report on convents in Ireland (1734-1735), the addresses of the friars, and Fottrell's English sermons. The report gives us our only list of Irish Dominicans between the notes in the *Liber Provinciae* (1702-1703) and the list for 1756 which may be compiled from the pages of *Hibernia Dominicana*. It also contains precious information of an economic nature. Fottrell's sermons appear to be the only known eighteenth-century sermons given in English by an Irish religious before the 1770s. Since almost all of our documentation is formal and administrative, we are fortunate in this case to have a text which permits one to peer beneath the surface into that purely spiritual world which alone gave meaning to the existence of the Irish Dominican province.



## **The arrangement of the Fottrell papers**

... The first section contains the oldest and largest part of the collection – the acts of provincial chapters and some related papers. The second contains assignations or letters to individual Dominicans. Two of these (D1449/14/20 and D1449/14/21) could with equal justice have been placed in the first section, since the commands they express derived from the decisions of the provincial chapter. The report on convents and the lists of addresses have been allotted sections of their own (3 and 4). Then follow some notes on financial matters (5), the formulary (6), the visitation papers (7), and the personal documents of Dr Michael MacDonogh, Bishop of Kilmore (8) . ...' It should be noted that T406 is an almost entirely superseded transcript of the Fottrell papers: for all practical purposes, D1449/14 and the 1980 edition are now the versions to be consulted.



## General correspondence

Apart from the specialised military, merchants' and Dominican letters and papers, there are well over 750 letters and related papers of a family, personal and business kind. These have been placed in one long run, 1691-1942, but they can be subdivided fairly readily.

They begin with letters, 1691-1731, mainly from William Conolly, MP for Donegal borough and then (from 1703) for Co. Londonderry, who in the period 1691-1709 acted as attorney and agent for the corporation of Londonderry in the hearing of causes concerning it before the Irish Privy Council and the Dublin Courts. Most of the letters and papers of this period relate to corporation affairs, but there are two love-letters, N.D. and 1707, from John Lenox to his young wife, Rebecca, née Upton. The next major item is a letter-book, 1738-1745, of this same John Lenox (father of Clotworthy Lenox, who married Ann Conyngham in 1745 and whose son succeeded to Springhill) about family, business and patronage matters.

George Butle Conyngham and his eldest son and successor, Colonel William Conyngham, are represented by a considerable correspondence, mainly about estate, business and legal matters, the father's displeasure at the son's indebtedness and his (ultimately unsuccessful) attempt to cut him out of as much of the family estate as possible. Included is a letter to George Butle Conyngham from George Stone, Archbishop of Armagh, 1760, pleading the young man's cause, with a copy of Conyngham's stiff reply. This section of the correspondence runs, with gaps, from 1739 to 1784, when Colonel William Conyngham died, and also includes references to the politics of Dundalk borough, Co. Louth, which Conyngham represented in parliament from 1776 to 1784.

Colonel William Conyngham was succeeded, briefly, by his younger brother, David (who does not seem to be represented in the archive, and died in 1789). Therefore, the next family member to be the recipient of letters is their nephew, George Lenox, later Lenox-Conyngham, of Springhill, whose correspondence runs from 1779 to 1812, and relates to family and business affairs, politics and law and order in Cos Londonderry and Tyrone, the United Irishmen, the '98 Rebellion, etc, etc. The correspondence of his son and successor, William Lenox-Conyngham, and the latter's wife, Charlotte, née Staples, runs from 1814 to 1845.

In addition, as a result of the Staples connection, there are present in the Lenox-Conyngham archive a number of 'strays', 1766-1767, c.1782, 1797-1820 and 1839, from the archive of the Staples family of Lissan, Cookstown, Co. Tyrone (now in PRONI, D1567). These letters mainly relate to military affairs, politics and law and order in Cos Londonderry and Tyrone, the Union, the Napoleonic War, etc, and mainly derive from the Rt Hon. John Staples of Lissan and Colonel Thomas Staples (a younger brother of his, unrecorded in *Burke's Peerage and Baronage*, who died in 1825). They include a run of letters, 1798-1803, to both brothers from Colonel the Hon. George Napier of Celbridge, Co. Kildare, Comptroller of Army Accounts in Ireland ([Illustration of Colonel George Napier](#)). Though 'strays', these Staples papers are complementary to the Lenox-Conyngham archive proper.

The next generation of the Lenox-Conyngham family, William, later Sir William, Fitzwilliam Lenox-Conyngham and his wife, Laura, née Arbuthnot, are represented by personal, family and business correspondence, 1856 and 1877-1899, including letters home to them from their eldest son, William Arbuthnot Lenox-Conyngham, then a serving soldier at Poona and elsewhere in India. William Arbuthnot Lenox-Conyngham married, in 1899, Mina Lowry of Rockdale, Pomeroy, Co. Tyrone. As a result of this connection, there is some family and business correspondence of the Lowrys of Rockdale, 1861-1885, and c.175 letters of condolence to Mina Lowry, 1897-1898, on the death of her father, Colonel James Corry Lowry of Rockdale, in the former year. The Lenox-Conynghams' own correspondence is dated 1899-1926 and 1942, and has as its most significant component his letters home to her from the Boer and the First World Wars.



## Election material

Some letters about electioneering in Londonderry City and Cos Londonderry and Tyrone occur in the general correspondence. Printed matter (and in one instance a formal document) on these subjects has been formed into one section of the archive.

The formal document concerned is an indenture of the return of Sir John Stewart, Bt, of Greenhill, Co. Tyrone, as MP for that county, 1 July 1818 (possibly present in the archive because a Lenox-Conyngham was sheriff and returning officer in that year). There is a petition of c.1727 against the return of George Tomkins and Thomas Upton for Londonderry City at the general election of 1727 (which does not appear to have presented to parliament, and may therefore survive only in this form). However, virtually all the printed election material consists of a confection of the election squibs which were published during the Co. Londonderry general election of 1806.

On 30 October 1806 William Ponsonby sent off a printed address to the freeholders of Derry. On 1 November Samuel Lyle followed suit, and proclaimed a junction between Ponsonby and himself. Their opponents, Lord George Beresford and General the Hon. Charles Stewart issued a joint address on 10 November.

Ponsonby and Lyle made great capital out of a meeting held on 29 October among the linen merchants of the city and county of Londonderry where support was pledged to them as candidates in the forthcoming election. This meeting aroused great indignation among the supporters of the other candidates. One anonymous writer maintained that the linen merchants who pledged support to Ponsonby and Lyle were far from representative of the whole body of linen merchants of Co. Londonderry. '... It is notorious and has become a subject of universal observation, that of the 79 signatures to the address, there are not more (certainly) than 25 which belong to persons who are freeholders of the county of Londonderry, and who buy and bleach cloth. The remaining 54 are composed either of persons who were not present, or whose names were put down without their consent, or of young men who are actually serving their apprenticeships to the trade, or who are mere buying clerks to regular cloth merchants, or persons who have not freeholds in the county, and of course, who have no right to meddle in its representation. ...' The same writer appended a list of cloth merchants and freeholders of the county who were ardent in support of Beresford and Stewart.

Another topic with which much play was made in the election literature, was the claims of the various candidates to descend from ancient families. There were frequent remainders that the Beresford pedigree was '... not lost in its remoteness; our knowledge of it begins with Old Tristram who was an inkleweaver in the town of Coleraine; he became under-agent to an estate; in time was advanced to be head agent; and at length got so rich, that when the title of baronet, at that time costing about œ300, was put up at auction, he was a purchaser - his descendants have advanced still higher, and are come to be called Most Noble [ie the Marquess of Waterford]. Newer still is the family of Hill, their great-grandfather unknown. Their grandfather having made his escape from his apprenticeship in the county of Down,

settled in a cabin in Ballykelly, became woodranger, next under-agent, and afterwards head-agent to that estate; would seem to have been bred a basket-maker from a memorandum on the corporation books of Newtownlimavady. ...' This particular writer was of course in no doubt about the antiquity of the Ponsonby family.

Robert Ogilby of Dungiven, a supporter of Ponsonby and Lyle, was furiously lampooned on account of his humble origins, and writers of the opposite party when pretending to quote from letters or speeches of his take care to misspell everything and use nothing but the worst grammar. In one such letter Robert Ogilby is made to say, apropos of a handbill he has seen: '... Me and my brother is in it I see, but their all mistaken, for I never went to any Sunday scool, nor him neether, but we both got our scoolin gin the Charter-Scool at Bally Kally, as I can make appear by my Indantures. But what is it to them to anebody where we learned? Arnt we gentlemen now, with good estates at our backs, and what else is wanting to make any man a gentleman? ... They call me upstart in one place, and ugly boy in another; and Sam Lile, that's very little better than myself, he comes in ... over my sholders, and I may say; and the Curnel himself (tho' him and me used to be quite greasious) I think I cot him lauffing at me the other day. ...'

Ogilby had little cause for complaint, since the most scurrilous attack of all came from an anonymous writer on his own side. The vehicle for this abuse was a supposed sale of horses, or, as the writer calls them, old hacks. General Stewart is described as '... a very famous Hack called General, own brother to that notorious Hack, Downshire Lad [Lord Castlereagh], who was so easy-paced, that he was purchased by every Prime Minister for ten years past ...'. Lord George Beresford was characterised as '... that Hack of all Hacks, Brown George, who is well known for carrying custom-house officers; he was rode many years by the first Commissioner of the Revenue, who kept him for breeding, but unfortunately he never was known to have got a foal. ...' The Marquess of Waterford and Sir George Fitzgerald Hill were abused in the same vein.

The Rev. George Vaughan Sampson, Rector of Aghanloo and author of *A Statistical Survey of the County of Londonderry*, was a supporter of Ponsonby and Lyle, and was too prominent a figure to escape abuse. However, the abuse meted out to him was decidedly more restrained and amusing than the efforts of his own side:

'Many wonderful tales in the Scriptures we're told  
Of the valorous deeds of great Sampson of old;  
How he minded a lion no more than a mouse,  
And pulled down the Philistines' Parliament House.

Old Sampson when robbed of his wig and his vision,  
Was brought out for Philistine mirth and derision;  
But so roughly he handled two lusty stone pillars,  
That they reeled like a pig coming from the distillers.

But our modern Sampson, far higher his aim,  
Though blinded by frenzy, more daring's his game;  
Who, unawed by the horrors of French Revolution,  
Would shake the firm pillars of our Constitution! ...

In vain through old chronicles all we may look,  
To find that old Sampson indited a book;  
A county's affairs he ne'er turned topsy-turvy,  
By scribbling of Gath a "Statistical Survey".

While our modern, most learnedly, gives us to know,  
That mountains are high, and that valleys are low;  
That meadows are green, and oh! wonderful fellow!  
That fields of rip oats, for the most part, are yellow.

How ganders will cackle when rain is at hand;  
How (gooselike) the farmers the note understand;  
How the poor dine at one, when the rich are at lunch;  
How the rectors drink port, and the curates drink punch.

Ye curious in monsters who wish to behold,  
This wonder of wonderful wights, new or old;  
The journey is short, and you quickly may view  
The foul-venomed snake in this den – Aghanloo.'



## **Family history, photographs, printed matter, etc**

This section includes: printed Grand Jury presentment material relating to Cos Londonderry and Tyrone, 1814-1824; a book of daily bible texts kept by the Rev. William Bushe, Rector of Templeport parish, Co. Cavan, 1826; school and college note books of J.S.M. Lenox-Conyngham, c.1850; photographs of the Lenox-Conyngham family, 1896-c.1926, together with a photograph of King George V presenting colours to the Irish battalion, Connaught Rangers, at Phoenix Park, Dublin, in 1911; a typescript history of the Richardson family of Richhill and Rossfad, Cos Armagh and Fermanagh, from the 17th century, compiled by J.C. Richardson, 1920; and pedigrees, transcriptions of documents, correspondence, working papers, etc, of Mina Lenox-Conyngham, 1899-c.1940, all in connection with *An old Ulster House*.



## **Additional material**

In addition to the Lenox-Conyngham papers from Springhill (D1449 and D501), PRONI holds photocopies (T3161) of c.250 letters and papers, the originals of which are in the possession of another branch of the family.

The first 30 of these are simply 'more of the same', as follows: an account of goods and possessions belonging to James Lenox which were made use of by the garrison of Derry at the time of the siege, 1688-1689; letters to James Lenox, mainly as Mayor of Derry, from William Conolly, 1692-1693 and 1711/1712; testamentary papers, 1765-1784, including a copy of the will of George Conyngham, 1765, and of William Conyngham, 1784, both of Springhill; marriage settlements of Clotworthy Lenox and Anne Conyngham, 1745, and of George Conyngham, 1761; and genealogical notes, 18th and early 19th centuries.



## **George Lenox-Conyngham of the Foreign Office**

The remainder are almost entirely letters and papers of George Lenox-Conyngham II (1796-1887), the younger half-brother of William Lenox-Conyngham of Springhill. This George was for many years First Clerk in the Foreign Office.

His papers include: information compiled by him about the genealogy of the Lenox and Conyngham families, with letters to him on the subject from other members of the family and from Sir Bernard Burke, c.1810s-1840s; 6 letters from Joseph Planta Junior, private secretary to Lord Castlereagh as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1813 and 1816; and letters of autographic interest, written not only to George Lenox-Conyngham but to his wife, Elizabeth, her father, Robert Holmes of Dublin, a barrister, and others, 1822-1836, from Thomas Reynolds (the United Irishman who betrayed Lord Edward Fitzgerald), Jeremy Bentham, Tom Moore, Baron Sir William Smith and Maria Edgeworth. The Reynolds and Bentham letters are of Foreign Office provenance, Reynolds having held a post in the consulate in Iceland, and Bentham having written to Canning to arrange for Bentham to go to France on a health trip; the others relate to Mrs Lenox-Conyngham's poetry.

Next follow letters, with associated papers, 1830-1832 and 1835-1837, relating more directly to Foreign Office business. These include a run of letters from George Lenox-Conyngham's fellow-Foreign Office official, Thomas Staveley, the first batch written in 1830-1832 while Lenox-Conyngham was on enforced leave of absence because of his wife's illness, the second while he was on a mission to Pisa; the letters relate to the inner workings of the Foreign Office, particularly the leave of absence rules and the system whereby officials like Staveley and Lenox-Conyngham were permitted to make money on the side by running private agencies; there are also some references to higher politics - the fall of Wellington in 1830, the Whig cabinet's anxiety to keep Lord D[urham] away from England at all costs, etc; among those most frequently mentioned are Lord Palmerston, the Foreign Secretary, and Sir George Shee.

Then follow 8 letters, and associated papers, 1825-1836, from Henry Veitch, apparently the British consul at Madeira, about Lenox-Conyngham's orders for wine, Veitch's grievances against Lord Howard de Walden (formerly Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and now British Minister to Portugal), and Lord Howard's unpopularity among the Madeira merchants; with a copy of Lenox-Conyngham's lengthy defence of Lord Howard. Finally there are 5 letters, and associated papers, 1836, from John Hatt Noble, apparently British consul at Oporto, about more wine for Lenox-Conyngham and about Anglo-Portuguese relations.

One small bundle contains three curiosities. The first is a memorandum of 1835 annotated by the Duke of Wellington, and the other two are letters of 1846 and 1852 from the Duke's 'reverend secretary', Algernon Greville. Clearly, they were kept together by George Lenox-Conyngham to show how indistinguishable Greville's handwriting was from the Duke's. This was presumably the result of deliberate training.

Finally, there is a large bundle of letters of 1860 to George Conyngham Junior ('Gino'), son and namesake of the foregoing (who died young and under a cloud in 1866, but at this stage was winning golden opinions as an *attaché* at the British embassy in Naples). Many of the letters are undergraduate-type effusions from fellow-*attaché* at other embassies, many are in Italian and from Italian noblemen of varying shades of authenticity, and some contain political and military comment of some significance, including several references to Garibaldi. One major preoccupation of the correspondence is with an *opera buffa* quarrel between a friend of Lenox-Conyngham's called French and an Italian noble called the Duke of St Arpino, which was prevented by Lenox-Conyngham from going the length of a duel, and which attracted the attention of and favourable comments from Lord John Russell, the Foreign Secretary.

