



## FAMOUS GUESTS

The hotel is also the first choice of any VIPs coming to Belfast - politicians, pop stars and sporting heroes! Former guests include, Tony Blair, Tom Jones, Dolly Parton, Sir Cliff Richard, Lenny Henry, John McEnroe, Bjorn Borg, Pat Cash, Sir James Galway, Sir Richard Attenborough, Shirley McClaine, Christopher Plummer, Bono from U2, Westlife, Ronan Keating, Robbie Williams, Ainsley Harriot, Michael Ball, Chris Rea, Kenneth Brannagh, Alan Whicker, John Major, Lionel Ritchie, The Corrs, Lloyd Grossman, Ben Elton, Howard Keel, the English Football team captained by David Beckham, the French Football team and the Irish Rugby Team!



## 5 STAR LUXURY

Over the past one hundred years, the Culloden has proved to be one of the finest and most luxurious hotels in Ireland. In 1996, the Culloden became the first hotel in Northern Ireland to be granted 5 star status. Over the course of the years, many additions and developments have been undertaken at the hotel and in more recent years, a fabulous Health Club and Spa have been added, which includes a pool, a range of leisure and fitness activities and 8 Spa treatment rooms offering a wide range of body, beauty and relaxation treatments using the famous ESPA range of products.

After several major renovations and extensions, the hotel now boasts 105 deluxe bedroom suites, 11 luxurious self-catering apartments, 6 private banqueting suites and a luxurious Spa!

**The Culloden Estate and Spa**

*"Built for a Bishop, fit for a King"*

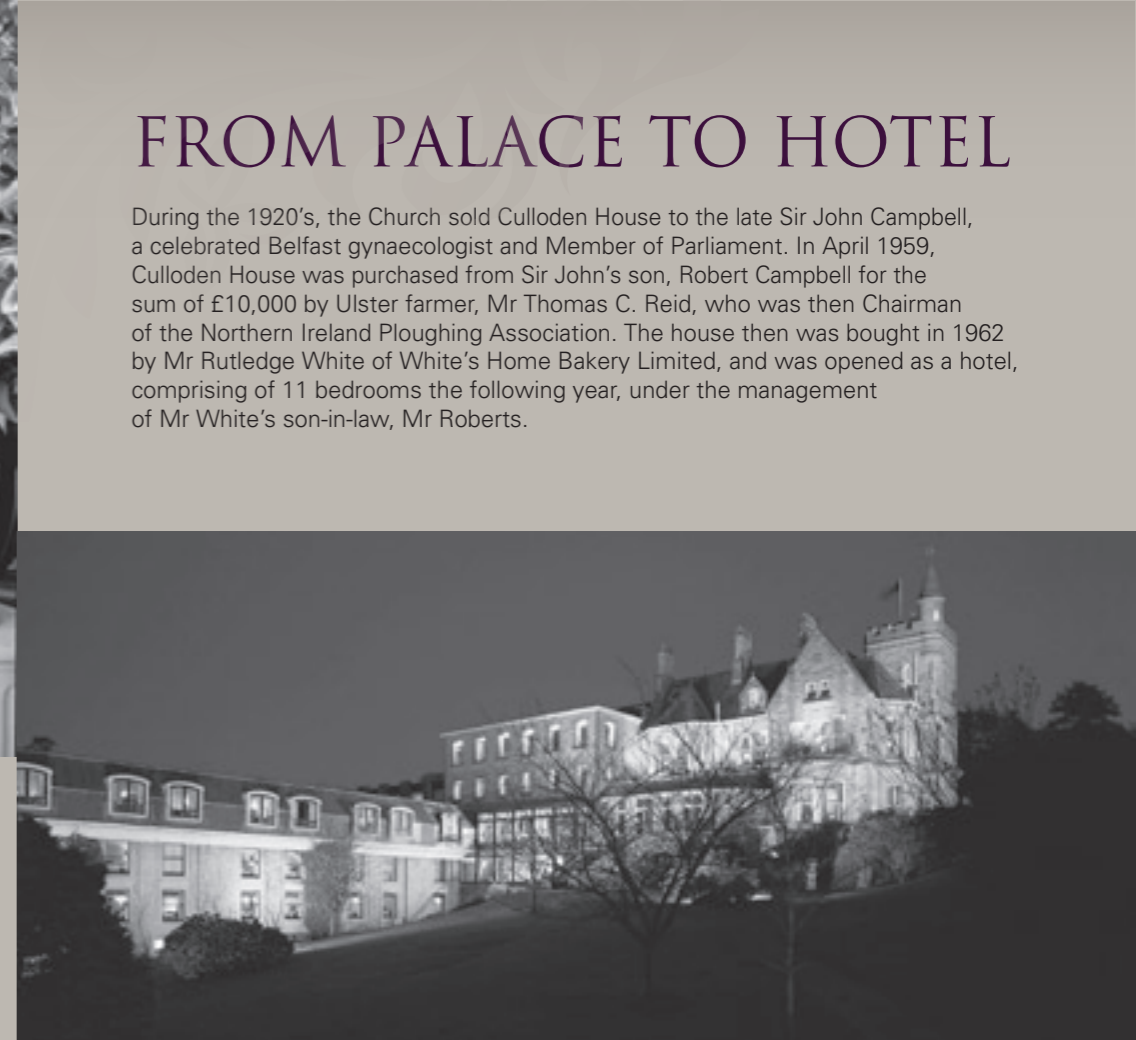


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**CULLODEN**  
 ESTATE AND SPA

# *The History of the* **CULLODEN** **ESTATE AND SPA**



## FROM PALACE TO HOTEL

During the 1920's, the Church sold Culloden House to the late Sir John Campbell, a celebrated Belfast gynaecologist and Member of Parliament. In April 1959, Culloden House was purchased from Sir John's son, Robert Campbell for the sum of £10,000 by Ulster farmer, Mr Thomas C. Reid, who was then Chairman of the Northern Ireland Ploughing Association. The house then was bought in 1962 by Mr Rutledge White of White's Home Bakery Limited, and was opened as a hotel, comprising of 11 bedrooms the following year, under the management of Mr White's son-in-law, Mr Roberts.

## INTRODUCTION

Today, the Hastings Culloden Estate and Spa is one of Northern Ireland's finest and most distinguished hotels, but not everyone is aware that this majestic Gothic mansion is steeped in history!

The Culloden was built in 1876 by a Mr William Auchinleck Robinson, JP and former MP. It took two and a half years to complete, and most of the stone came from Scotland by boat, arriving in the County Down fishing village of Portaferry and being brought to the site by horse and cart.

Mr Robinson carefully chose his site in Cultra within the townland of Craigavad, and only 6 miles from the centre of Belfast. He was conscious of the fact that its situation on the Eastern side of Belfast Lough had certain climatic advantages. The site benefited from the shelter of the Holywood Hills, and the cold North and North-easterly winds seemed to lose their strength as they crossed the expanse of the Lough before reaching Craigavad. Consequently the locality's temperature was about 3 degrees higher than in Belfast!

## A BISHOP'S PALACE

Mr Robinson died in 1884 and the property which he had named "Culloden House", in honour of his wife, was conveyed by his widow, Lady Elizabeth Jane Culloden, to the representative Church Body of the Church of Ireland.

So at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Culloden House came to be the official residence of the Church of Ireland Bishop of the Diocese, and was known as the Bishop's Palace. Previously the Bishops had resided at "Ardtullagh", a residence at Knocknagoney near Holywood, but this property was bought in 1886 by the War Department for use as Barracks. The Barracks are still in use today by the British Army and are known as Palace Barracks.

The Bishop of Down, Dromore and Connor, the Right Reverend Thomas James Willand took up residence in Culloden House in 1898. In subsequent years, three Bishops lived at the Culloden, and possibly four, as it is not clear whether Bishop CTP Grierson ever lived there or not! During the tenure of Bishop John Baptist Crozier, a private chapel, the Jeremy Taylor Memorial Chapel, was dedicated within the house. During the period when Bishop Crozier was Bishop of the Diocese, the famous musician, Percy French often stayed at the Palace. In fact, Bishop Crozier was actually Godfather to Percy French's second daughter!

## THE HASTINGS' CONNECTION

The Hastings Hotels Group purchased the premises in June 1967, and over the course of the years, under the enlightened direction of Dr Billy Hastings, the Culloden has been transformed in size and luxury. It is of course pleasing that the extensions have not detracted from the hand-cut stonework of the original building, and the chapel which was dedicated over a hundred years ago, is today used as the hotel's bar!

