

The Hispanic-Anglosphere from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Century

An Introduction

**Edited by
Graciela Iglesias-Rogers**

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The Office and Residence of Thomas Conroy

JOSÉ BROWNRIGG-GLEESON MARTÍNEZ



Figure SH.5 Thomas Conroy's residence in Callao, Peru, as it stood in 2012 (image kindly provided by Juan Manuel Dávila Herrera, founder of the 'Callao Centro Histórico' blog, <http://www.callaocentrohistorico.com/2012/06/>).

Still standing in the heart of Callao (Lima, Peru), this key location of the Hispanic-Anglosphere is currently under threat (Figure SII.5). It was the office and residence of the Irish merchant Thomas Conroy (c.1806–85, see his biography earlier in this section) from its construction in 1855 until his death three decades later. Not much is known about Conroy's early years: born in Wexford in 1806 or 1807 to a father originally from Rathdowny, it seems that he arrived in Lima around 1820 after a short stint in the United States. In December 1827, he married Petronila Enderica Talamantes (d. 1862) with whom he would go on to father fourteen children. Not only Conroy was involved in numerous mercantile activities in Peru but also his presence in Callao prompted the arrival in Peru of two of his younger brothers: Peter, 'Pedro' – later a partner of the Lima firm of *Naylors, Conroy & Co.* – and George, who committed suicide in 1846. Additionally, Thomas Conroy is credited with having been one of the main promoters of the horse races at Bellavista, near Callao. He died at his home on 17 August 1885. For many years, his home and office (current address Daniel Nieto Nr. 137) served as headquarters for the local chamber of commerce. The two-floor building with a viewing turret and long balcony acted as an elegant urban landmark and was used to promote the city in postcards printed by Luis Sablich Solera from 1905 to 1930. The estate was declared a national monument in 1972 (Resolución Suprema N° 2900-72-ED, 28 December 1972) and its restoration forms part of a project drawn up in 2007 by the regional government to improve the historic centre of Callao (Resolución Directoral Nacional N° 1590/INC, 26 de noviembre de 2007). Alas, sadly, the building seems to be at present unoccupied, in a bad state of preservation, covered in graffiti and has become the target of occasional acts of vandalism.

Sources and Suggested Reading: Ulrich Mücke, ed., *The Diary of Heinrich Witt* (10 vols., Leiden & Boston, MA: Brill, 2016), esp. vols. 2, 3, 5; [Manuel Ortiz de Zavallos], *Memoria de los Ramos de Hacienda y Comercio que presenta el ministro encargado de su despacho al Congreso Oficial, convocado extraordinariamente para el mes de octubre de 1858* (Lima: Imprenta de J. M. Masias, 1858), xviii; *El Comercio*, 17 August 1885; Teodoro Hampe Martínez, 'Apuntes documentales sobre inmigrantes europeos y norteamericanos en Lima (Siglo XIX)', *Revista de Indias*, 53: 198 (1993): 459–91; 'Normas Legales: Resolución Directoral Nacional N° 1590/INC', *El Peruano: Diario Oficial*, 3 December 2007, 359003-4, Retrieved from <https://busquedas.elperuano.pe/download/full/29MK-CjIGaGC98e8dpY8z45>, accessed 20 August 2020; Juan Manuel Dávila Herrera, 'Jirón Daniel Nieto – inmueble histórico en riesgo', *Callao Centro Histórico* blog, [<http://www.callaocentrohistorico.com/2012/06/>], accessed 3 March 2019; Gabriela McEvoy, *La experiencia invisible. Inmigrantes irlandeses en el Perú* (Lima: Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 2018).