THE ORIGINS AND HISTORY OF THE IRISH NATIONAL STUD

AND ITS INFLUENCE ON

BRITISH AND IRISH POLITICS FROM 1900 TO 2021

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Appendices

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Abbreviations

ACOT	National farmers advisory and training organization
BNA	British National Archives
BNS	British National Stud
CA	Carlisle Archives
CRAC	Central Racing Advisory Committee
EEC	European Economic Community
EU	European Union
ESB	Electricity Supply Board
EISB	Electronic Irish Statute Book
FOI	Freedom of Information
GNHC	Grand National Hunt Committee
IBEC	Irish Business and Employers Confederation
ICA	Irish Citizen Army
IHRB	Irish Horse Racing Regulatory Board
INHCA	Irish National Hunt Steeplechase Committee
INS	Irish National Stud
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IRB	Irish Republican Brotherhood
ITBA	Irish Thoroughbred Breeders Association
MP	Member of Parliament
NS	National Stud
NAI	National Archives Ireland
TBA	Thoroughbred Breeders Association
TD	Teachta Dála

TCD	Trinity College Dublin
UCD	University College Dublin

Introduction

Horse racing in Ireland dates to the pre-Christian era when it caught the attention of clan leaders and the public at fairs and markets. These fairs were a hive of activity in which marriages were celebrated, deaths mourned, and laws and governance issues were discussed.[1] Horse racing was part and parcel of the fairs, but violence often marred these occasions. From here, racing developed, with prize money on offer and wagers placed.[2] Over time, racing became intertwined with Ireland's political and religious circumstances. In the seventeen-century, horse racing in Ireland was briefly banned by Oliver Cromwell, who viewed it as an affront to the principles of puritanism. But the Irish racing fraternity was resourceful. And they continued to hold informal events under a cloak of secrecy. After Cromwell's demise and the restoration of the British monarchy, King Charles II established Newmarket as the headquarters for racing in England. In 1666, he introduced the Kings Plate Races in Ireland. These races were run each September, with the winning horses much in demand by breeders.[3] And in 1675, a stud book was created under the Down Royal Corporation of Horse Breeders to promote the breeding of racehorses in Ireland.[4] But at this stage, there were no structures, no rules and regulations, and violence remained very much part of the Irish racing scene.

In 1750, the Jockey Club came into existence; the aristocratic class who controlled the race meetings established it to introduce a level of governance over horse racing. They soon became 'recognised as the controlling body' of the sport in England.[5] In Ireland, the Jockey Club had not yet any influence, but the King's Plate races were 'loosely' governed by a set of articles.[6] The Curragh racecourse was becoming recognised as the headquarters of racing in Ireland. Much more social interaction throughout Ireland influenced by European and British culture meant that

[1] John Welcome, *Irish horse-racing: an illustrated history* (London and Basingstoke, 1982), p. 1.
[2] Paul Rouse, *Sport and Ireland, a history* (Oxford, 2015), p. 63.
[3] Nicholas Clee, *Eclipse* (New York, 2012), p. 98.
[4] Rouse, *Sport and Ireland*, p. 65.
[5] Welcome, *Irish horse-racing*, p. 11.
[6] Ibid.

sports organisations had a greater role. As Rouse elaborates, the formation of the Curragh Coffee House in Kildare reflects this influence in the late 1750s.[7]

Sponsorship of races in Ireland usually came from the local gentry, town councils, and tavern owners, and as the eighteenth century progressed, race meetings sprung up across the country.[8] By 1750, Ireland's English racing calendar listed at least seventy-one official race meetings.[9] In 1790, the Curragh Coffee House became the headquarters of the Irish Turf Club. This was the newly established governing body of horse racing in Ireland.

But it should be noted that the creation of the Irish Turf Club did not mean an instant transformation. The impact of the change was a gradual process. Richardson argues that horse breeding at the beginning of the nineteenth century was carried on in a 'somewhat haphazard fashion' with it not regarded as a 'specialised industry', but gradually, a change occurred with the creation of large stud farms by owners of extensive landed estates.[10]

In 1790, the Irish Turf Club published the first edition of the *Irish Racing Calendar*, which provided all details of Irish race meetings. Between 1751 and the present, there are documented records of race meetings in 409 separate locations throughout Ireland.[11] Other dignitaries gave racing in Ireland a timely boost. In 1821, King George IV visited the Curragh. He was a keen racing enthusiast, having won several races, including the prestigious English Derby. And in the years that followed, racing in Ireland began to thrive and prosper, which has been attributed to the endorsement of racing in Ireland through the King's visit.[12] Even the onset of the Famine in Ireland in the 1840s did not interrupt racing altogether, as the wealthy landed class remained unaffected. It was only in regions of destitution, such as the west of Ireland, where

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[7] Rouse, *Sport and Ireland*, p. 62.
[8] Ibid., p. 66.
[9] Welcome, *Irish horse-racing*, p. 11.
[10] Charles Richardson, *British Steeplechasing* (London, 1927), p. 279.
[11] 'Racing, the Irish way: a guide to Irish racing', Horse Racing Ireland, available at https://www.goracing.ie/pics/hri/racing_the_irish_way.pdf (5 Sept. 2022).
[12] Welcome, *Irish horse-racing*, p. 19.

racing was impeded. And in the decade preceding the Famine, flat and steeplechasing in Ireland grew significantly.[13] There was some Irish success with *Abd-el-Kader* travelling to Britain and winning the Aintree Grand National in successive years from 1850 to 1851. When he won in 1850, Irish-bred horses filled the first three places. And in 1855, the Irish-bred *Wanderer* became the first stallion to win the Grand National. In 1848, the Punchestown meeting began with its legacy resonating in the present day. In 1870, the inaugural Irish Grand National was run at Fairyhouse, and it was won by a horse called *Sir Robert Peel,* which is ironic given its historical legacies. A quarter of a century earlier, in 1845, as prime minister, Sir Robert Peel implemented the much-maligned famine relief schemes in Ireland. Some of the relief measures included a supplementary foodstuff, 'Peels Brimstone', also known as 'Indian corn', but as O'Keefe notes: 'The hard, unpalatable grain was far removed from the diet of potatoes to which the rural poor had become accustomed and, if not boiled for long enough, the alien foodstuff could cause painful indigestion and, in some cases, dysentery'.[14] Cast alongside the poor relief work schemes, these events lived long in the memory of the destitute Irish population.

But the classes which dominated the racing industry remained largely unaffected by the above events, with other problems remaining and deepening within steeplechasing in Ireland and England, with widespread malpractice hindering the sport. Initially, the Irish Turf Club and the Jockey Club initially refused to recognise steeplechasing. In 1866, the Grand National Hunt Committee (GNHC) was established to control meetings and inflict sanctions where necessary. Following this, the Jockey Club and Irish Club then accepted steeplechasing.[15] This was much to do with the perseverance of Lord Drogheda, Henry Francis Seymour Moore (1825–92), who became senior steward of the Irish Turf Club in 1867. Two years later, he set up the Irish National Hunt Steeplechase Committee (INHCA). As McCabe notes: 'His vigilance and impartiality as

[13] Welcome, *Irish horse-racing*, p. 35.
[14] Helen O'Keefe, 'Peel's brimstone: the Temporary Relief Commission', available at [Peel's brimstone: the Temporary Relief Commission (rte.ie)]() (17 Dec. 2022).
[15] Ibid., p. 35.

steward, together with his natural hauteur and habitual glare, made a powerful impact on the conduct of Irish racing in the later nineteenth century'.[16] And towards the latter end of the nineteenth century, there was a significant change in racing viewing. Up to this point, those going to races paid no entrance fee, but with the considerable development of racecourses with enclosures and grandstands standard practice, entrance fees were introduced.[17] In Britain, in 1875, Sandown Park was the first to open a paid entry-enclosed course. As Vamplew notes, this new development was very successful, and within two or three decades, 'racing was taking place at enclosed courses all over the country'.[18]

These new developments resulted in the rise of prominent figures in Irish horse racing. C. J. Blake from the Heath stables in Portlaoise, a member of the Irish Turf Club since 1866, became a Steward in 1876. He introduced another position, Clerk of the Course, the following year.[19] After Lord Drogheda died, Blake, a close friend and said to be Drogheda's 'right-hand man', filled the void at the Irish Turf Club and remained there for thirty years.[20] In the mid-1940s, his son A. J. Blake became the trainer of the Irish President's horses under a leasing arrangement with the Irish National Stud.

Other prominent figures included Henry Eyre Linde (1835-1897), a hugely successful jockey in Ireland and Great Britain. He trained horses at Eyrefield Lodge in Kildare and John Hubert Moore (1819-1904) at Jockey Hall on the Curragh. Moore has the distinction of being the first trainer the Irish gentry sent their horses to be trained, which was a move away from the usual practice of the gentry using their own training grooms for training purposes.[21] Moore's two sons, jockeys Garret, and Willie Moore, later dominated British and Irish horse racing. Meanwhile,

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[16] Desmond McCabe, 'Henry Francis Seymour Moore', *Dictionary of Irish Bibliography* available at https://www.dib.ie/biography/moore-henry-francis-seymour-a5935 (5 Sept. 2022).
[17] Tony & Anne Sweeney, *The Sweeney guide to the Irish Turf from 1501 to 2001* (Dublin, 2002), p. 21.
[18] Wray Vamplew, *The Turf: A social and economic history of horse racing* (Sussex, 1976 & 2016), p. 38.
[19] Welcome, *Irish horse-racing*, p. 56.
[20] Ibid., p. 86.
[21] Ibid., p. 58.

Lynde used the skilful services of the four Beasley brothers from Kildare. The most successful of the brothers were Tommy and Harry Beasley. In 1889, Harry won the Irish Derby on *Tragedy* for Henry Greer at Brownstown House on the Curragh. Greer would later become the first chief executive of the National Stud in Ireland. Linde demonstrated such foresight that he had replicas fences of courses in Britain, including the Aintree Grand National fences Becher's Brook and the Chair, and 'he put his animals through daily sessions' to familiarise them.[22] And this policy proved worthwhile. He won the Grand National with *Empress* in 1880 and dominated National Hunt racing in Britain and Ireland. After Lynde died in 1897, Eyrefield Lodge was taken over by Major Eustace Loder (1867-1914), who employed Nobel Johnson as manager. Johnson would become manager of the National Stud in 1934. There were some horse breeding schemes in place in Ireland at this stage.

In 1887, the Royal Dublin Society (RDS) introduced Premium Stallion Schemes. These were the first of their kind, and as Lewis elaborates, the next five years in Ireland, these schemes 'may therefore be regarded as years of investigation and experiment.[23] The schemes were designed to stimulate the industry, and on that score, they certainly worked. But the problem was that they could not meet the demand, with the nominations for the services of the premium stallions far exceeding the actual availability. In 1892, the Premium Schemes were replaced by new schemes for registering all thoroughbred stallions. Lewis argues that this paved the way for new laws introduced in the twentieth century, whereby all stallions had to be licensed.[24] The RDS also created a *Register for Thoroughbred Stallions.* This reassured potential breeders of the pedigree of thoroughbred bloodstock. Yet, the RDS's schemes lacked adequate financial resources and were constantly under pressure. For example, there was only £3,200 per year available in Ireland, whereas European countries like Hungary were allocated State assistance to

[22] S. J. Watson, *Between the flags: a history of Irish steeplechasing* (Dublin, 1969), p. 108.
[23] Colin A. Lewis, *Horse breeding in Ireland and the role of The Royal Dublin Society's horse breeding schemes 1886-1903* (London, and New York, 1980), p. 158.
[24] Ibid., p. 159.

the equivalent of £233,333, Germany £190,000 and Austria £170,000.[25] In 1901, Ireland's Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction began its horse breeding schemes. The Department of Agriculture schemes were significantly better financed than the RDS schemes. They also catered for heavier horses such as Clydesdale. The difference was that the RDS concentrated on producing Irish horses for export. In contrast, the Department of Agriculture were mindful of the welfare of the breeders, farmers, and businesses in Ireland.[26]

Also, in the nineteenth century, Ireland began to breed lighter horses, classed as Irish hunters (known in the present day as half-breeds). These hunters were in heavy demand for the military in Britain and other European countries until after the First World War.[27] At this time, Ireland also produced draught horses, commonly known as the Irish Draught Horse, for labour purposes. Other factors also determined the horse breeding policy in Ireland.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century and into the early decades of the twentieth-century political relations between Ireland and Britain became increasingly strained. Demand for land reform in Ireland intensified, with the British government granting a succession of land acts which transformed the Irish landscape by the early 1900s. This created a new class of Irish landowners. Moreover, the land issue became interwoven with the political demand for Home Rule and later with extreme Irish Nationalists' demand for complete Irish independence from the United Kingdom. These circumstances occurred simultaneously as Colonel William Hall-Walker established his stud farm at Tully in Kildare.

Hall-Walker was already making his mark on the industry. In 1896, he won the Aintree Grand National with *The Soarer*. Four years later, he purchased 1000 acres at Tully Stud Farm on the fringes of the Curragh in Kildare. Hall-Walker was influenced by the significant success of Irish jockeys and trainers in Ireland and Britain. Horse racing in Britain was under the stifling

[25] Lewis, *Horse breeding in Ireland*, p. 161.
[26] Ibid., p. 164.
[27] Ibid., p. 11.

control of the Jockey Club, of which he was a member. Therefore, setting up in Ireland offered him more flexibility. The Jockey Club was renowned for its conservative nature, dominated by the aristocratic and landed gentry.[28] Trainers and owners in Ireland did not face the same degree of repressive control as in Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Another factor clouding horse racing in Ireland and Britain was the stigma associated with gambling. This was a legacy of the Victorian era. It became a significant issue when Hall-Walker offered his stud farms to the British government. Members of parliament castigated the government for its association with the sport. Moreover, this stigma has lasted, creating a myth that gamblers lack work ethic, a myth discussed further in research conducted by Beckert and Lutter in 2013.[29]

Nevertheless, gambling has remained integral to the horse racing and breeding industry. And gambling attracts all classes. This is one of the most interesting aspects of gambling. Despite the contempt the higher classes displayed towards gambling, they remained involved. There is a wealth of academic research and political discourse around class-based gambling. Research by Ross McKibbin examines class relations, concluding that betting was adapted to conditions unique to the working classes and poor moral behaviour.[30] And McKibbin further argues that the relationship between class and gambling was ambiguous and obscure and that 'attitudes to gambling were not entirely independent of class, but they nearly were, and the significance of religious affiliation suggests they could be entirely so'.[31] Emma Casey notes that the research on gambling is predominantly focused on the working-class poor with 'very little focus within the academic literature' on the gambling practices of higher-income people.[32] Hence, the research in

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[28] Mike Huggins, *Horse racing and the British 1919-1939* (Manchester, and New York), p. 30.
[29] J. Beckert and M. Lutter, 'Why the poor play the Lottery: Sociological approaches to explaining class-based Lottery' in *Sociology*, XLVII, (2013), pp 1152-1170.
[30] Ross McKibbin, 'Working-class gambling in Britain 1880-1939' in *Past & Present*, lxxxii, (1979), p. 177.
[31] McKibbin, 'Working-class gambling in Britain', p. 176.
[32] Emma Casey, 'Gambling, status, anxiety and inter-generational social mobility: Findings from the Mass Observation Archive' in *Sociology*, LIV, (2020), p. 381.

this thesis offers insight into the gambling characteristics of the elite owners/breeders of the horse breeding industry in modern times. For example, one of Ireland's most renowned professional gamblers, J. P. McManus. He has a close business association with John Magnier of Coolmore Stud. Other elite owners include the Maktoum family from the Middle East, who dominate the industry in Great Britain and, to an extent, Ireland. By the very nature of the speculative nature of the thoroughbred industry, these elite owners are gambling each time they purchase a horse. The industry is notorious for the failure of thoroughbreds to meet racing and breeding expectations. Losses often come at a high financial cost to the owners. Despite the risks, the elite owners continue to invest enormous financial resources, and this research examines this in more detail. Through stakes in their respective national studs, the Irish and British governments are also speculating in the industry. And as will be noted in this research, this speculation often occurred in recessionary periods in Ireland, and this will be discussed further.

In 1917, with the First World War raging, the Thoroughbred Breeders Association (TBA) was established initially as a reaction to the British government's restrictions on racing.[33] And following this development, the Irish Thoroughbred Breeders Association (ITBA) was established in 1926. Both organisations are still in existence, playing an important role in the industry.

As the twentieth century progressed, the political circumstances in Ireland changed with the establishment of the Irish Free State. The National Stud (NS from here on) became isolated as it was essentially a British-run establishment in Ireland. And it took over two decades for the Irish and British governments to agree on its ownership. Also, there were some important governance changes in the industry during these decades. In 1926 off-course betting shops were legalised with a five per cent tax revenue attached as a new source for the Irish Free State

[33] Tony Morris, *The Thoroughbred Breeders Association, 100 years, 1917-2017* (London, 2017), p. 1.

government. In 1929, this tax yielded £198,000, which was far greater than expected.[34] And a year later, the Tote betting system was introduced in Ireland. To put the matter into perspective, betting shops were illegal in Britain until 1961. Betting tax in Ireland reached a high of twenty per cent in the 1970s but by the late 1980s was reduced to ten per cent, in the 2000s to five per cent, and it stands at two per cent today.[35]

The onset of the Second World War saw restrictions on racing in Ireland but not on the scale imposed in Great Britain. The years following the war witnessed a significant upsurge in attendance at race meetings in Ireland and Britain.[36] In 1945 the Racing Board was established to improve the financial aspects of racing in Ireland, and as the decades passed, the prize money at race meetings increased. The Racing Board transformed the industry with a significant increase in prize money in Ireland. The Board also introduced standardised admission charges and provided funding for improving racecourses and the free transport of horses.[37] In the 1990s, the Racing Board was reconstructed as Horse Racing Ireland. And in 2001, the Horse and Greyhound Racing Act changed the regulation of horse racing. O'Sullivan elaborates: '…it ensured a significantly increased and guaranteed amount to the sector each year. It also enabled the establishment of HRI as a single governing body for the horse racing sector'.[38]

In the mid-1940s, the Irish National Stud (INS) was established following Dáil Éireann legislation introduced through the 1945 National Stud Act. Several Irish governments were elected in the following decades. And they had varying ideas on best policy practices for the INS. Further, Dáil legislation saw several National Stud Acts passed to increase the capital at the INS to allow it to compete at the highest level. The prevailing economic circumstances in Ireland

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[34] Sweeney, Tony & Anne, *The Sweeney guide to the Irish* Turf, p. 21.
[35] Colm McCarthy And Associates, 'The taxation of betting in Ireland: submission to the Tax Strategy Group on behalf of the Alliance for Horse Breeding and Racing', available at https://assets.gov.ie/25570/56e3b53d2c8f4078bac8a60222062dd1.pdf (8 Sept. 2022).
[36] Welcome, *Irish horse-racing,* p. 170.
[37] Sweeney, Tony & Anne, *The Sweeney guide to the Irish Turf,* p. 22.
[38] Niamh O'Sullivan, 'Odds on: A short history of bookmaking in Ireland' 30 July 2018, RTE Brainstorm, available at https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2018/0312/946748-odds-on-a-short-history-of-bookmaking-in-ireland/ (8 Sept. 2022).

were a crucial factor. It determined government policies and the level of State assistance the INS received. This often resulted in tension between government departments and the INS board of directors. Some INS managers and CEOs brought new ideas and policies, usually influenced by an evolving industry.

Moreover, the CEOs and INS board's political, economic, and cultural allegiances were important in determining INS policy. Occasionally, their personality traits caused problems for the INS. Governance issues and business conflicts of interest brought controversies, as will be revealed throughout this research. There were many advances in the horse breeding industry, including significant changes in how mares were covered and the structure of the ownership of thoroughbreds through syndication. Stallions In Ireland were sent abroad in the off-season to cover mares in Australia, among other regions. And there were other important advances in the industry as the decades elapsed.

In 1969, the Minister for Finance, Charles Haughey TD (Fianna Fáil), introduced tax revenue legislation, which meant stallion stud fees were exempt from tax. The exemption lasted almost three decades but was abolished following a European Union (EU) ruling in 2008. During this time, elite breeders began to dominate the industry in Great Britain and Ireland. Coolmore Stud and Sheikh Mohammad's Maktoum family rose to the forefront in Ireland. In direct competition was the INS, which will be comprehensively discussed and analysed in this research. Since its inception, the INS battled to become an integral part of the Irish horse breeding scene, but the domination of the elite breeders made it a challenging task.

According to a survey on the Irish horse breeding industry by the ITBA (2016), ninety-three per cent of breeders have five broodmares because of a lack of profitability in the sector; this is a drop of forty per cent on previous years.[39] In 2019, pre-covid 19, there were twenty-six

[39] Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food, and the Marine, 'The Irish horse industry', January 2016, House of the Oireachtas. (AFM 012), available at https://opac.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Sept. 2022).

racecourses in Ireland, 363 racing fixtures, with 8549 horses and 4061 owners (sole owners, syndicates, and clubs).[40] They competed for a prize fund of £68 million with 1.3 million people attending race meetings.[41] There were 6000 registered horse breeders, but the most dominant were Coolmore Stud, the Maktoum family, the Aga Khan, Prince Khalid Abdullah and the Haefner family, who own Moygalre Stud Farm.[42] This brief overview provides the historical context for this thesis. Its structure will be discussed below, but firstly a literature review and critique of the primary sources used to unravel how the INS developed from the twentieth century is necessary.

Sources

To begin with, the idea for this research topic began following the completion of a second-year undergraduate module on the Land Question in Ireland delivered by Professor Terence Dooley at Maynooth University in 2015. When summing up the module, Professor Dooley said that shortly after the Irish Free State was created, the transfer of the remaining land to Irish farmers came through the terms implemented in the 1923 Land Act. Compulsory purchase orders were activated on estates. Consequently, these estates were subdivided and redistributed by the Land Commission to farmers who secured financial loans to purchase the holdings. These loans were known as land annuities paid annually to the British government. Dooley stated that horse breeders who owned stud farms in Ireland were excluded from the compulsory purchase orders. This raised the question if the INS was affected by these developments.

Further questions were raised on where the INS currently fits in Irish historiography. And as it happens, it has received scant scholarly attention to date. Hence, this thesis aims to address this issue and offer the INS a relevant place in the Irish historical record. It is interesting to note that none of Irish history's most popular survey texts makes significant reference to the National

[40] *Horse Racing Ireland Factbook* (Kildare, 2019)
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid.

Stud. For instance, the following publications as a brief example, *Ireland 1798-1998* by Alvin Jackson. *Ireland 1912-1985* (Cambridge, 1989) by J.J Lee; *Modern Ireland 1600-1972* (London, 1988) by Roy Foster; *The transformation of Ireland 1900-2000* (London, 2005) by Diarmaid Ferriter; *Twentieth century Ireland* (Dublin, 1994, 2005) by Dermot Keogh and *A rocky road: the Irish economy since the 1920s* (Manchester, 1997) by Cormac Ó Gráda. Suppose one considers the National Stud's close relationship with the Irish government. In that case, the wealth of existing archival material offers ideal circumstances for researchers to gauge how government institutions operate alongside State-sponsored bodies. Indeed, this research provides an illuminating and occasionally flabbergasting insight into how various government departments and the National Stud conducted their business. As this thesis progresses, the stark reality of Irish politics and its policies becomes apparent with extremely negative connotations. And the results of the research are an accurate reflection of the murky and volatile political climate throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. At times, it paints a rather bleak picture. Issues like poor governance, the lack of transparency, business conflict of interests, and staff/management relations are very much to the forefront.

The following secondary source material has limited information on the INS. There is some information in *Between the flags, a history of Irish steeplechasing* (1969) by S. J. Watson;[43] *Irish horse racing, an illustrated history* (1982) by John Welcome;[44] and, *Horses, lords and racing men, the turf club 1790-1990* (1991) by Fergus A. D'Arcy.[45] These publications contain brief details on when the INS was established but offer nothing substantial on its history. Other mildly informative publications include *Horse Breeding in Ireland and the role of the Royal Dublin Society's Horse Breeding Schemes 1886-1903* (1980) by Colin A. Lewis;[46] *The Sweeney*

[43] S. J. Watson, *Between the flags, a history of Irish steeplechasing* (Kildare,1969).
[44] John Welcome, *Irish horse-racing: an illustrated history* (London and Basingstoke, 1982).
[45] Fergus A. D'Arcy, *Horses, lords and racing men, the turf club 1790-1990* (Kildare, 1991).
[46] Colin A. Lewis, *Horse breeding in Ireland and the role of The Royal Dublin Society's horse breeding schemes 1886-1903* (London, and New York).

Guide to the Irish Turf from 1501 to 2001 (2002) by Tony & Anne Sweeney;[47] and *The Cambridge companion to horseracing* (2013) by Rebecca Cassidy.[48] Paul Rouse's, *Sport and Ireland, a history* (2015) [49] and Tony Morris's *The Thoroughbred Breeders Association, 100 years 1917-2017* (2017) [50] were essential; reading because they provided wider context to how horse racing and breeding developed over the centuries in Ireland. They provide a solid foundation to create the narrative by covering the political, economic, cultural, and social background to Irish horse racing. In 1980, the INS produced an in-house publication, *The Irish National Stud,* which briefly covers the Stud's history.[51] This publication was a guide for interested readers and not a work of academia and was of limited use to this research.

The most comprehensive publication on the INS is *Stallions and power, the scandals of the Irish National Stud*, by Conor Ryan, published in 2011.[52] Ryan's book includes a brief history of the INS. It does not trace the INS's origins, progress, or policies up to 1944 but instead heavily concentrates on controversial incidents at the INS after it came under the control of the Irish government. Unfortunately, the book does not include footnotes or a bibliography. Ryan was an investigative journalist with the *Irish Examiner.* He was not working in the field of academia. His book was helpful in providing research leads, and other sources were used to validate the authenticity of Ryan's conclusions.

With Ireland and the Great Britain intricately linked through horse racing, the following were essential reading: *The turf, a social and economic history of horse racing* (1976) by Wray Vamplew;[53] *Horse racing and the British 1919-1939* (2003) by Mike Huggins;[54] The *Encyclopaedia of British horseracing* (2005) by Vamplew & Joyce Kay;[55] and *International*

[47] Tony & Anne Sweeney, *The Sweeney guide to the Irish Turf from 1501 to 2001* (Dublin, 2002).
[48] Rebecca Cassidy, *The Cambridge companion to horseracing* (New York, 2013).
[49] Paul Rouse, *Sport and Ireland, a history* (Oxford, 2015).
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[53] Wray Vamplew. *The turf, a social and economic history of horse racing* (Sussex,1976 & 2016).
[54] Mike Huggins, *Horse racing and the British 1919-1939* (Manchester, and New York).
[55] Wray Vamplew & Joyce Kay, *Encyclopaedia of British* horseracing (New York, 2005).

stallions and studs: The founder of the modern world (1974) by Michael Seth-Smith.[56] For the researcher, the *Encyclopaedia of British horseracing* is an excellent starting point. It contains a fulsome A to Z of information with sources attached covering most aspects of the industry. Vampley's and Huggins's publications are comprehensive. They cover topics from the stigma associated with gambling to the life of jockeys, owners, breeders, and racing officials, while Seth-Smith adds an international context to the subject, especially covering the political, social, and cultural aspects of racing.

Another relevant publication is Charles Leicester's *Bloodstock breeding*, revised by Howard Wright in 1989.[57] This book provided valuable information on the pedigree line of thoroughbreds, racing careers and progeny results. This was important in giving an insight into the value of various thoroughbreds associated with the INS. These works were supplemented by biographical works on leading jockeys, owners, and racing statistics compiled for the racing enthusiast.

Contemporary publications were, of course, important in shaping this research. They provided information on how the bloodstock industry developed and was managed over time. For instance, *The Bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*,[58] published annually throughout the first half of the twentieth century, provided a wealth of information. This included information on Ireland during the independence struggle, 1920-23, and how this affected not just racing but also the relationship between the British and Irish governments. It provided statistical information that contributed to compiling several charts and tables of data relating to the INS. *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, provided similar statistical information

[56] Michael Seth-Smith, *International stallions, and studs: The founder of the modern world* (New York, 1974).
[57] Charles Leicester, *Bloodstock breeding* (revised by Howard Wright) (London, 1983).
[58] *The Bloodstock breeders' review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred* (London, 1916-1981).

covering the second half of the twentieth century.[59] Another publication, *British Steeplechasing* (1927) by Charles Richardson, provided a political and social context from the eighteenth to the twentieth century and covered Ireland's most influential racing figures.[60] For the statistical and comparative data in this thesis, the *International Thoroughbred* (2010-2021), the *Thoroughbred Owner & Breeder* (2008-2010), and the *Horse Racing Ireland Factbook* were invaluable.

Contemporary government publications such as the *Survey of thoroughbred stud farms in Ireland* (1975) by D.D. McCarthy, *The Irish racing and bloodstock industry, an economic analysis* (1976) by Michael MacCormac, and the *first report of the Joint Committee on State-Sponsored bodies: the Irish National Stud Company Limited*, (1978) contain valuable quantitative and qualitative information which suggested to the author many different avenues of exploration.

Contemporary memoirs were useful including *Memoirs of a racing journalist* (1934) by Sydney Galtrey which provided significant information on Colonel William Hall-Walker.[61] *Old sportsmen never die* (1993), by Peter Eustace Burrell, the manager of the INS in the early 1940s, offered contrasting pieces of evidence.[62] As did *The memoirs of Aga Khan: world enough and time* (1954),[63] Georg Lange's, *75 years, the Aga Khan's racing and breeding studs, 1922-1997 (*1998),[64] and *The yellow earl, almost an emperor, not quite a gentleman, the life Hugh Lowther, 5th Earl of Lonsdale*, *1857-1944* (1965) by Douglas Sutherland.[65] Although biased because of Sutherland's family connection to Lonsdale, the latter offered useful insights into the life of the man who leased the INS horses for almost two decades.

[59] *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland* (Dublin, 1951-1965).
[60] Charles Richardson, *British Steeplechasing* (London, 1927).
[61] Sidney Galtray, *Memoirs of a racing journalist* (London, 1934).
[62] Peter Eustace Burrell, *Old sportsmen never die* (Newmarket, 1993).
[63] Aga Khan, *The memoirs of Aga Khan*: *world enough and time* (New York, 1954).
[64] Georg Lange, *75 years, the Aga Khan's racing, and breeding studs, 1922-1997 (*Dortmund, 1998).
[65] Douglas Sutherland, *The yellow earl, almost an emperor, not quite a gentleman, the life of Hugh Lowther, 5th Earl of Lonsdale*, 1857-1944 (Ludlow, 1965).

But, overall, this thesis relies primarily on primary source material. A rich vein of primary material is available at the National Archives in Britain (BNA) at Kew in London. For example, files from various British government departments, including the War Office, the Prime Minister's Office, the Dominions Office, the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, and the Treasury Department. At the National Archives in Ireland (NAI), a broad range of government files were sourced from the Department of the Taoiseach, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Finance, the Department of Foreign Affairs, and the Office of the President.

In 1916, when Hall-Walker offered his stud farm in Ireland to the British government, there was initial hesitation. And in the 1920s, when the Irish Free State was established, the ownership of the bloodstock at the NS became a contentious issue lasting over two decades. When this issue was finally concluded and the INS was created, many other problems surfaced over the decades at the INS. The primary source material offers a fascinating insight into the Irish and British government's policies. They reveal the tensions between the governments and the strategies they used to gain the upper hand. And there were also internal issues within the various departments of each government. It was not unusual for the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries in Britain to clash with the Treasury Department on policy or for the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Finance in Ireland to be at loggerheads over INS policy. This is where the primary sources breathe life into the thesis. They give the researcher a profound sense of the challenges faced by the INS and the government departments, and how different personalities shaped these policies. There has been an overall total of nine managers and/or chief executives at the National Stud in Ireland since its establishment, all of whom shaped strategies on how the INS should be run. Hence, the National Archives Ireland (NAI) and the British National Archives (BNA) primary sources were crucial in understanding how they teased out their policies and the structures they put in place.

Other primary sources such as those held at Carlisle Archives (CA) cast further light on the INS racing lease with Lord Lonsdale. These sources are essential for the quantitative aspect of the thesis. Sources from the British House of Commons and the Irish House of the Oireachtas provided qualitative and quantitative data and evidence, including the Stud's trading accounts. British parliamentary papers, Dáil Éireann debates, and various committee inquiries with the INS as subject provide much important detail, ranging from political policies concerning horse breeding to financial, economic, cultural, and social factors. Newspapers were pivotal. National newspapers offer various opinions on horse breeding policies and other related factors. Regional and local newspapers often provide a much more personal layer of evidence.

It is important to note that this thesis is the first extensive research study on the origins and development of the NS and, later, the INS in Ireland. To place this research study in its proper historical context, it begins at the turn of the nineteenth century, tracing the Stud's progress throughout the twentieth century into the twenty-first century. This thesis adopts a chronological, thematic approach covering the political, cultural, and social aspects of horse breeding and the role of the NS in Ireland and Great Britain. It covers three specific eras. The first timeframe covers the origins of the NS from 1900 to 1916. During this time, Colonel William Hall-Walker offered the Tully stud farm to the British government. The second covers the period from 1916 to 1944, as the ownership of the NS remained contentious and subject to much debate between the Irish and British governments until an agreement was concluded. And the third phase examines the progress of the INS in Ireland from its creation in 1944 to the present day. The themes covered include the political interaction between the Irish and British governments and the National Stud. From the primary source material, the research reveals the political policies implemented during this complex time in Ireland. For instance, the National Stud remained under British control from 1916 to 1944. This research examines the challenges these highly unusual circumstances presented to the Irish and British governments. And from the sources, it is evident that the National Stud was an important institution for both the Irish and British governments. Until the stud came under the control of the Irish government, it reflected old British authority. The first two sections (1900-1944) of the thesis reveal the challenges this presented. In the third section, from 1944 to the present day, the thesis follows the Irish National Stud as a semi-State institution run as it attempted to compete with the elite owners/breeders of horse breeding. The evidence presented in this thesis offers an intriguing insight into how the most privileged in society live and how they have used the horse breeding industry to advance political agendas. As mentioned earlier, this research provides a fascinating insight into how the Irish political class operated from the 1940s to recent times.

Chapter one traces the origins of the NS in Ireland. The central focus of this chapter is on Colonel William Hall-Walker, his background, and how and why he established Tully Stud farm to become a significant player in horse breeding and racing in the United Kingdom. It also discusses why Hall-Walker offered Tully Stud farm and his racing interests in England to the British government. The political reaction to these developments and the agreement reached with the British government for the procurement of the Tully Stud farm are also discussed.

Chapter two traces the progress of the newly established NS in Ireland under its new manager, Captain Henry Greer. Greer faced challenges as the political circumstances in Ireland became extremely volatile. Irish nationalists demanded independence from the British Crown which resulted in the establishment of the Irish Free State and a new Irish government. These events impacted the NS, and this chapter discusses these matters up to 1933, when there was a change of manager at the Stud following the retirement of Greer.

Chapter three discusses the brief tenure of the new manager at the NS, Nobel Bullen Johnson, from 1933 to 1937. The ownership issue of the NS remained contentious. There was a notable change of political governance in Ireland following the rise of Fianna Fáil, led by Éamon de Valera. This led to a conference in London between the British and Irish government representatives to consider the future of the NS.

Chapter five explores the progress at the INS from 1944 to 1969. This period witnessed two new managers of the INS, Major Cyril Hall, from 1947 to 1954 and then chief executive David Hyde from 1954 to 1969. This chapter examines policies at the INS relating to stallion fees and the sale of the INS Stud's most prestigious stallions. It delves further to discover if the sales were justified. And crucially, it examines the INS's relationship with the private sector.

Chapter six examines the INS from 1969 to 1982 under Michael Osborne as Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The horse breeding industry underwent a significant transformation with the emergence of powerful syndicates. This had a knock-on effect on policy at the INS. The period also witnessed new National Stud Acts legislated for in Dáil Éireann. The influence of Charles J. Haughey will be considered as will the findings of two academic reports on horse breeding.

Chapter seven focuses on the period under John Clarke as CEO. He was the longest-serving CEO in INS history, serving from 1982 to 2009. This chapter covers the fifteen years from 1982 to 1997. In the early 1980s, the INS purchased *Ahonoora*. He had a profound impact on horse breeding. But the INS sold the stallion, and the consequences of this sale are assessed. Also examined are government-commissioned reports, including the *First report of the Irish National Stud Company Limited Sixth Joint Committee on Commercial State-Sponsored Bodies*. This chapter also covers the dominance of the elite breeders like the Maktoum family and Coolmore Stud.

The domination of elite owners/breeders like Coolmore Stud and Sheikh Mohammad's Maktoum family was of particular significance from the 1970s until the present day. The horse breeding industry in Ireland and Great Britain has been dominated by these two elite breeders, with policies strategically implemented alongside unlimited financial resources to ensure they secured the vast majority of race prize money. And the elites also controlled the stallion cover market, vastly superior to the rest in the overall financial earnings. The quantitative analysis provided in this chapter will outline the negative impact of this domination. It will also examine the controversial backgrounds of the elite owners/breeders. For example, from the Maktoum family, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. He is the vice president, prime minister, and minister of defense of the United Arab Emirates, as well as the ruler of Dubai. Regions like these and Saudi Arabia (the home of several other elite breeders) have appalling human rights records. Hence, this raises ethical questions about why they have been allowed to dominate the industry in Great Britain and Ireland without significant scrutiny. This chapter will discuss these issues with conclusions drawn.

Controversy is not only restricted to the elite owners/breeders in the Middle East. The owners/breeders of Coolmore Stud, Michael Tabor, John Magnier, and their associates have profoundly impacted the industry in Ireland and Great Britain. Quantitative data provided in this chapter will highlight the negative impact this has had on the industry. In addition, Magnier is connected to Ireland's wealthiest businesspeople and politicians. These individuals have been embroiled in some of the most controversial aspects of Irish political affairs in recent history. Therefore, this chapter will examine these issues further. Also discussed is Coolmore Stud's rise to prominence, on which there is currently sparse academic information.

Chapter eight covers the period from 1997 to 2021. Clake resigned as INS CEO in 2009 and was replaced by John Osborne. Osborne remained CEO for eight years until Cathal Beale replaced him in 2017. This chapter examines the controversies and governance issues at the INS over this period, including issues concerning Clarke's INS expenses account, civil court actions, and conflicts of interests with the INS board of directors, the management and the company secretary, John McStay.

Chapter 1

William Hall-Walker and the origins of the National Stud 1900-1916.

1.1. Introduction

In 2019, Conway Auctioneers in Kildare advertised newly constructed detached properties in 'Wavertree' on Tully Road near the National Stud.[66] The name of the development was in tribute to the National Stud's founder, William Hall-Walker, also known as Baron Wavertree. Some houses were named after successful horses bred by Hall-Walker, like *Minoru*, the Epsom Derby winner. Hall-Walker left an impression on the local region but also at a national level. In 2015, to commemorate the one-hundredth anniversary of the National Stud, President Michael D. Higgins unveiled a statue of Hall-Walker and made the following comments:

> It is a great pleasure to be here today and to unveil this statue of Colonel William Hall Walker, the founder of the National Stud and a man who has played a pivotal role in the development of horse breeding in Ireland. We owe a great debt of gratitude to Colonel Walker. Through his vision and hard work, what was once a farm here at Tully quickly became one of the best studs at the time in Europe, and his collection of foundation mares had a remarkable effect on racing. Even more significant was his introduction of the Aga Khan to English horseracing which was to make such a significant contribution to the upgrading of the thoroughbred. Colonel Hall Walker was, indeed, a man unafraid to imagine and to turn his imaginings into realities to be enjoyed and shared by all, leaving the people of Ireland the legacy that is the Irish National Stud, a legacy which has ensured Ireland's role as a major player in the horse industry.[67]

Hall-Walker was a significant figure, yet his contribution to horse breeding and racing has attracted little scholarly attention. For example, there are no entries in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* or the *Dictionary of Irish Biography*. Occasionally, the researcher will find information that offers insights. For example, in the *Racing Post*, Tony Morris described Hall-Walker as 'dogmatic, cantankerous and perverse, but there is no denying he bred high-

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[66] *Irish Independent*, 8 Nov. 2019.

[67] President Higgins unveils a statue of Colonel William Hall-Walker founder of the National Stud, 29 Mar. 2015, President of Ireland available at https://president.ie/en (24 Apr. 2021).

class stock'.[68] Indeed, horses bred at Tully Stud significantly impacted racing and breeding in Ireland and abroad. This chapter examines the significance of Tully Stud and how Hall-Walker strategically laid the foundations for which the National Stud subsequently developed. First, Hall-Walker's family background will be briefly outlined to establish how he became interested in horse racing. Next, it will explore the development of Tully Stud, the significant horses bred there, and the business associations he made until he offered his stud farms to the British government. Initially, there was opposition in the British Parliament which will be assessed with conclusions drawn.

1.2. Hall-Walker's family background

William Hall-Walker's father was Andrew Barclay Walker. Andrew ran a successful brewery business in Warrington and Burton in England. Andrew served on Liverpool City Council and was elected mayor twice during the 1880s. For his services to the city of Liverpool, he received a knighthood in 1877. Andrew married Eliza Reid of Limekilns Fifeshire, and they had eight children: May, Ethel, Peter, John, William, Arthur, Andrew, and Joe. Andrew died in 1893. In his final will, he left a personal estate valued at £2,876,781.[69] In today's terms, this is worth approximately £236,000,000.[70] William inherited the estate at Gateacre Grange in Liverpool, with Andrew's eldest son Peter Carlaw Walker inheriting the family business. Peter operated a stud farm at Osmaston Manor, where he was renowned for the high quality of his hurdle and steeplechasers.[71] Peter's younger brothers, John Reid Walker, and Andrew Barclay Walker, were also involved in horse racing. However, Andrew (senior) disapproved, and it was reported

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[68] *Racing Post*, 30 Apr. 2012.
[69] *Aberdeen Evening Express*, 30 Mar. 1893.
[70] Currency Converter 1270-2017, The (British) National Archives, available at https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency-converter/ (10 Jan. 2023).
[71] *Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal*, 22 Oct. 1915.

that he 'had no taste for or sympathy with the sport' because of the stigma associated with gambling.[72]

John Reid Walker was an accomplished amateur jockey who ran a stud farm at Ruckley Grange in Staffordshire. His most notable success was *Invershin* winning consecutive Ascot Gold Cups in 1928-29. Reid-Walker opposed the mistreatment of horses and was an early advocate against the overuse of the whip in horse racing.[73] In 1908, Andrew (junior) began racing; the most significant success was with *Santorb* winning the 1925 Ascot Gold Cup. An intense sporting rivalry manifested between the brothers; the Press reported: 'Good friends as these brothers are, there is nothing they revel in more than beating each other in a race'.[74]

William Hall-Walker was born on Christmas Day, 1856, the third son of Andrew and Eliza. Educated at Harrow School, he thrived at sports, including cricket, swimming, and fencing. He served in the British Army and was the honorary colonel of the 55th Division of the Royal Engineers. Hall-Walker was a keen politician serving on Liverpool City Council for nineteen years and as a member of Parliament for the Widnes constituency for twenty years. In business, he was the managing director of Warrington Brewery. The mixing of politics with commercial interests drew criticism in some quarters. For example, the temperance movement argued that there was a conflict of interest and lamented these developments.[75]

Hall-Walker was also a member of the British Jockey Club. This was an exclusive organisation of aristocrats, and upper-class landed and military gentry who held significant control of racing in Britain. Indeed, Huggins argues that the acceptance of the Jockey Club's authority in Britain reflected the 'tradition and conservatism of British society'.[76] Other members

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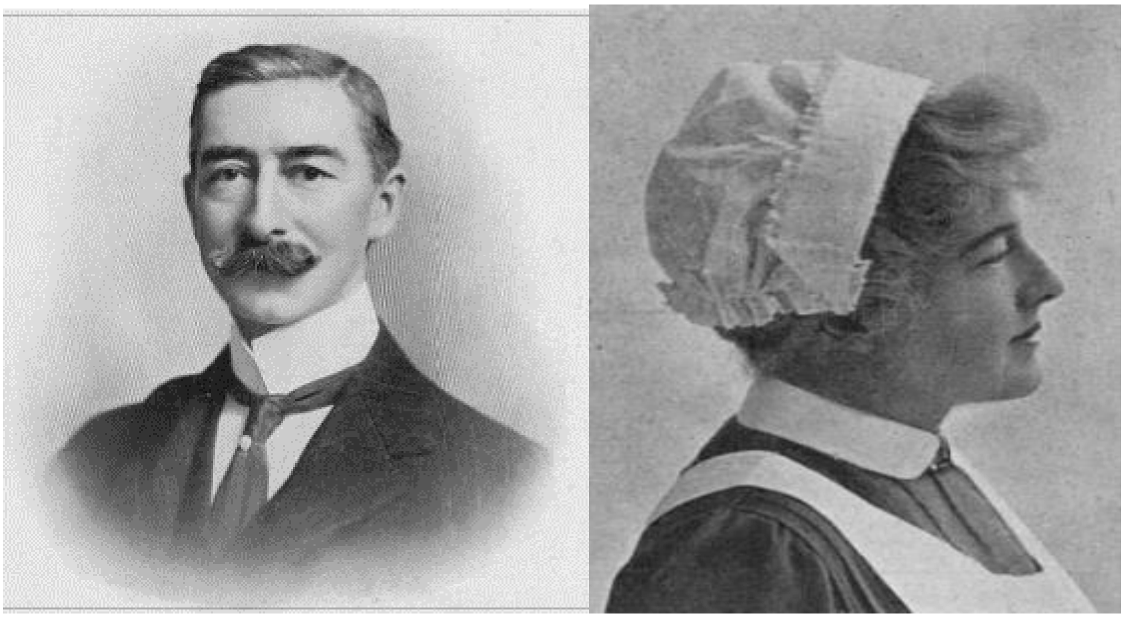
[72] *Pall Mail Gazette*, 2 Sept. 1907.
[73] *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, 10 Mar. 1934.
[74] *Rugby Advertiser*, 7 May 1910.
[75] Alistair Mutch, 'Magistrates and Public Houses Managers, 1840-1914: Another case of Liverpool exceptionalism', *Northern History*, XL, (2003), p. 335.
[76] Huggins, *Horse racing and the British*, p. 8.

included renowned racing figures like Edward George Villiers Stanley, the 17th Earl of Derby (1865-1948). He won nineteen Classics races as a breeder and twenty as an owner between 1910 and 1945.

In 1896, William married Sophie Sheridan, whose father, Algernon Brinsley Sheridan, was the grandson of the Irish playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan. Sophie regularly attended race meetings, often entertaining people at Gateacre in Liverpool during important racing festivals like the Grand National meeting at Aintree. They had one adopted daughter, Rosemary Hall-Walker.

Figure 1 (a) William and Sophie Hall-Walker.



Source: *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 18 Dec. 1918 and *The Tatler*, 27 Aug. 1919.

The Hall-Walkers had close connections with the aristocracy. In Autumn 1908, they hosted a party for King Edward; he described the occasion as one of 'his most enjoyable afternoons'.[77] These events enhanced Sophie's reputation. The Press noted: 'Mrs Hall-Walker is no novice at entertaining, herself, very pretty, she delights to gather around her quite a battalion of beauties, and her parties are much sought'.[78] Despite the lofty connections, the Hall-Walkers remained

[77] *The Bystander*, 2 Sept. 1908.
[78] Ibid.

grounded and were heavily involved in various charity organisations. Annual tennis exhibition matches were held at their London residence to support children with disabilities. In 1914, they transformed their home into a sixteen bed (later increased to twenty-seven) hospital to support wounded soldiers returning from the First World War, which remained open for five years.[79] In 1919, Hall-Walker was honoured by the King with the title 'Baron Wavertree of Delamare'. Horse racing brought the most satisfaction of all his interests, and his brother's involvement was quite influential.

Racing was in his blood from the early days of his life. As a boy, he began pony racing without his father's consent.[80] From 1877 to 1890, he competed in 311 races, winning 127 races over flat, hurdles and fences.[81] In 1895, as an owner, Hall-Walker registered wearing blue and white check and cerise cap racing colours. Success quickly followed; he won the Grand National with *The Soarer,* ridden by David Campbell, defying long odds of 40/1. The *Sporting Life* reported: '*The Soarer* had a bit in hand and, without being much bustled, gained a most unexpected triumph by one and a half lengths'.[82] Hall-Walker's racing successes were built upon some very unusual practices.

He was interested in astrology and used it to select horses. Hall-Walker explained: 'I am not an astrologer in the sense of being able to read the future in the planets, but I have a deep belief in the powers of others to do so. For many years, I have been provided with a weekly horoscope, and I have proved the forecasts to be of value'.[83] Plans for horses were influenced by whether they were born under a lucky horoscope; these practices earned him the nickname *Whimsical Walker*.[84] In recent times, the INS described the methods as 'inspired, preposterous

[79] Hall-Walker's hospital for officers during the Great War, The Wartime Memories Project, available at Hall-Walker Hospital for Officers in the Great War - The Wartime Memories Project – (17 Apr. 2022).
[80] John Mansell Richardson and Finch Mason, *Gentlemen riders past and present* (London, 1909), p. 304, available at https://archive.org/details/gentlemenridersp00rich/page/n1/mode/2up (23 Dec. 2022).
[81] Richardson and Mason, *Gentlemen riders past and present*, p. 304.
[82] *Sporting Life*, 28 Mar. 1896.
[83] *Ballymena Weekly Telegraph*, 11 Feb. 1933.
[84] Watson, *Between the flags*, p. 130.

and eccentric' with foals born under an unfavourable horoscope sold, irrespective of pedigree.[85] These practices brought mixed results, with critics often pinpointing examples of failure. For instance, Hall-Walker sold *Prince Palatine,* who afterwards won the St Leger. Horse breeding expert Charles Leicester was critical: 'One wonders if horses deemed born under an unlucky star were given a fair chance'.[86] Nevertheless, Hall-Walker was among the top four breeders in the British Isles in eleven of fifteen seasons.[87] Scientific research concerning horse breeding was relatively new and gathered more pace throughout the following decades. Vamplew elaborates: 'During the inter-war years…work on heredity and chromosomes did much to convince breeders that a scientific approach to breeding, considering the potential contributions of both male and female, made sense'.[88]

Despite the success in England, he decided to continue his racing and breeding establishments in Ireland. Racing thrived in Ireland from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century. Fergus A. D'Arcy elaborates: 'The period from the late 1880s to the 1900s constituted a minor golden age' in the overall development of Irish racing.[89] Trainers like Henry Greer at Brownstown House, J.J Parkinson at Maddenstown Lodge, Richard Dawson at Rathbride Manor, Charles Blake in Portlaoise and Henry Linde were very much at the forefront of the industry. From 1906 to 1925, Dawson was champion trainer ten times and Parkinson five, and runner-up nine times. These stud farms depended on the reputation of the racehorses they bred. Stallions like *Gallinule,* one of the most significant sires of the era, and horses like the English Derby winners *Tragedy* and *Orby* were some of the most notable.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, Hall Walker extended his business interests into Ireland. He set up in the heartlands of Irish racing purchasing the Tully Estate in Kildare from

[85] *Irish National Stud* (Kildare, 1980), available at The National Library Ireland, (9A 1501), p. 4.
[86] Leicester, *Bloodstock breeding*, p. 70.
[87] *Irish National Stud* (Kildare, 1980), available at The National Library Ireland. p. 4.
[88] Vamplew, *The Turf*, p. 187.
[89] Fergus A. D'Arcy, *Horses, lords and racing men, the turf club 1790-1990* (Kildare, 1991), p. 229.

James Fay for £2800.[90] Tully Stud farm was located one mile south of Kildare town, with approximately 1600 population standing on the periphery of the Curragh.[91] The first manager of Tully Stud was Robert Francis Gordon of Thornton Lodge near Jockey Hall in the Curragh region.[92] There are relatively sparse details available on Gordon. For many years, he served on the board of directors of Drogheda Memorial Hospital, which was a 'position he took great interest in'.[93] He also had shares in the Great Western Railway.[94] At the time of his death in 1911, he left effects to the value of £498. 9s. 8d.[95] But he was a controversial character. In 1906, an incident of horse cruelty resulted in a court conviction. As Gordon was leaving the Royal Dublin Horse Show in Ballsbridge, he became embroiled in an argument with a taxi operator. Gordon then proceeded to strike the taxi operator's horse 'lashing it so violently it galloped off'.[96] Consequently, the horse was left with nine marks and was unfit to work.[97] In court, Gerald Byrne, Gordon's defense solicitor, claimed Gordon was rushing to meet a train, which led to the uncharacteristic behaviour. However, the judge found Gordon guilty and fined him £10. 5*s*. 3*d*.[98] Despite this incident, Hall-Walker remained loyal to his manager. And in the Press, he was well-supported. For instance, the Press described him as a 'gentleman whose knowledge of bloodstock management is unrivalled, who is an authority in the affairs of racing in Ireland, and who enjoys the full confidence of Colonel Hall-Walker'.[99]

Hall-Walker faced immediate challenges. Tully Stud Farm was in a dilapidated state and required significant financial investment, but within five years, the estate was transformed.

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[90] Capital expenditure on Tully Estate & Russley Estate to 14 Dec. 1915 by Wallace Smith & Sons, 18 Cock Street, Liverpool, 20 Dec. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF, 52/12.
[91] Mogen's valuation of Russley Park, 10 Nov. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11993 (26619).
[92] *Kildare Observer and Eastern Counties Advertiser*, 13 May 1911.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Robert Francis Gordon, Find my past available at https://www.findmypast.com/ (18 Dec. 2018).
[95] Robert Francis Gordon, Esquire, Tully House, Kildare, Calendars of Wills and Administrations, 1853-1922, The National Archives, Ireland available at Calendars of Wills and Administrations, 1858 - 1922 (nationalarchives.ie) (18 Dec. 2018).
[96] *Kildare Observer and Eastern Counties Advertiser*, 22 Sept. 1906.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.
[99] *Daily Telegraph & Courier* (London), 22 Sept. 1908.

And the Press noted the changes: 'As if by a wave of a magician's wand, it has been transformed into as perfect of a breeding nursery for bloodstock the world over'.[100] Previously, a decrepit house stood on the property, but now it had been converted into a 'comfortable residence' with several paintings on the walls of past owners, jockeys, and racehorses.[101] Hall-Walker invested approximately £54,000, including newly constructed buildings and stables costing £14,745.[102] (See Appendix 1(a) for a complete list of capital expenditures during Hall-Walker's term from 1899-1915).

A 1915 valuation conducted for the British Treasury Department by an individual only known as 'Mogen' in the records revealed the following details of the structure of Tully estate. There was impressive infrastructure surrounding the estate, serviced well by road networks and rail transport provided by the Great Southern and Western Railway. The Kildare Army Barracks adjoined the estate on the north side, and on the northeast, a section of the Curragh lands formed part of the property.[103] Morgen's valuation included details on the listed holdings, including the following outbuildings and farms. The first recorded was Tully Home Farm. This property, a three-storeyed stone cemented house, was listed as in an excellent state of repair.[104] It consisted of a drawing room, dining room, study, seven bedrooms, and a bathroom. Also listed on the property included a new stone building with a corrugated iron roof which provided space for the boiler house and other sheds. Hot and cold water services and provisions existed throughout, and the property was illuminated through a gas connection. Directly adjacent to the house were 'pleasure gardens of reasonable size'.[105]

[100] *Irish Independent*, 15 Aug. 1904.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Capital expenditure on Tully Estate & Russley Estate to 14 Dec. 1915 by Wallace Smith & Sons, 18 Cock Street, Liverpool, 20 Dec. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF, 52/12.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Mogen's valuation of Russley Park, 10 Nov. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11993 (26619), p. 2.

Tully Nursery was a recently constructed red brick and tiled building consisting of eight rooms with a greenhouse approximately sixty-five by sixteen feet. The vegetable garden areas were under the care of an expert Japanese gardener. They included a French-themed garden area with hand lights comprising rock-work, artificial streams, a rustic bridge, and tea houses surrounded by rare plants and shrubs.[106] Over £10,000 was spent on the rock garden, with Mogen noting that this sum was not included in Hall-Walker's estimate of expenditure, and it was also left out of his valuation; the rock-garden's overall value to the property was included in Mogen's valuation.[107]

There was also a main yard and stallion yard. In addition, several buildings included a riding school, lunging yard, foreign mares yard, four Dutch barns, a corn store, and a groom harness room. The lunging yard was circular in structure, eighty yards in circumference, with a corrugated iron fence.[108] Horze Magazine online elaborates: 'Lunging is a popular method from the field of groundwork and is used for moving and training your horse from the ground. Lunging has therefore become a firmly established alternative to classical riding in many horse owners' weekly training'.[109] The riding school comprised a circular corrugated iron building with a circumference of 100 yards, a fourteen-foot outer enclosure and an inner seven-foot fence.[110] Thirty-seven stone-built stable areas (loose boxes) and two foaling areas existed in this complex. The foreign mares yard comprised thirty-five loose boxes, a harness room, a Dutch iron barn with a capacity to hold thirty tons, and a concrete cottage with five rooms. Other farm buildings included a bungalow with seven rooms, a large dairy, a cart-horse stable, a cart shed and nine calving boxes.[111]

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[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid., p. 4.
[109] Horse lunging – working with a lunge line, Horze Magazine online, available at https://www.horze.co.uk/magazine/horse-lunging.html# (2 Dec. 2022).
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.

Another area was known as Mill House Farm. This comprised Old Mill House, a brick and stone building with a slate roof. It was redesigned to allow for a carpenter's shop, forge, and a chaff house (a subsidiary building often used to store fodder) with granary overhead, four horsepower oil engine with roof pulper, chaff cutter, crusher, etc., and pump.[112] Mill House Farm had two brick and slate roofed bungalow cottages containing living rooms and two bedrooms. Both were described as 'badly built and without a damp course'.[113] A corn mill was in operational use; this structure was re-roofed and redesigned to accommodate nine yearling boxes for stud stock.[114] An old stone slate building housed bullocks, and a newly constructed covered yard eighty by fifty feet in diameter with a Yorkshire boarded roof was also on this farm.[115]

Other significant regions were the 'Hundred Acre' Farm and the Curragh Farm. The former comprised a covered yard similar in structure to the yard listed previously. In addition, there was a stone, corrugated iron cattle shed and stone, slated stock shed and a herdsman's stone and slated cottage consisting of five rooms and a cart shed.[116] The latter was an old stone slated dwelling with accommodation for seven rooms, outbuildings, a covered yard with creosoted timber, and a Yorkshire boarded roof with ten wood and tiled loose boxes.

In the East Offaly Land region, there was a range of nine small timber and corrugated roof cattle boxes with a fodder store. In addition, there were several outbuildings across the property. For instance, eighteen large timber corrugated iron shelter sheds served the surrounding fields. Also, in the border paddocks, an old stone and thatched building and twelve loose boxes (timber built with mastic roofing).[117] Further details on these properties and regions can be found

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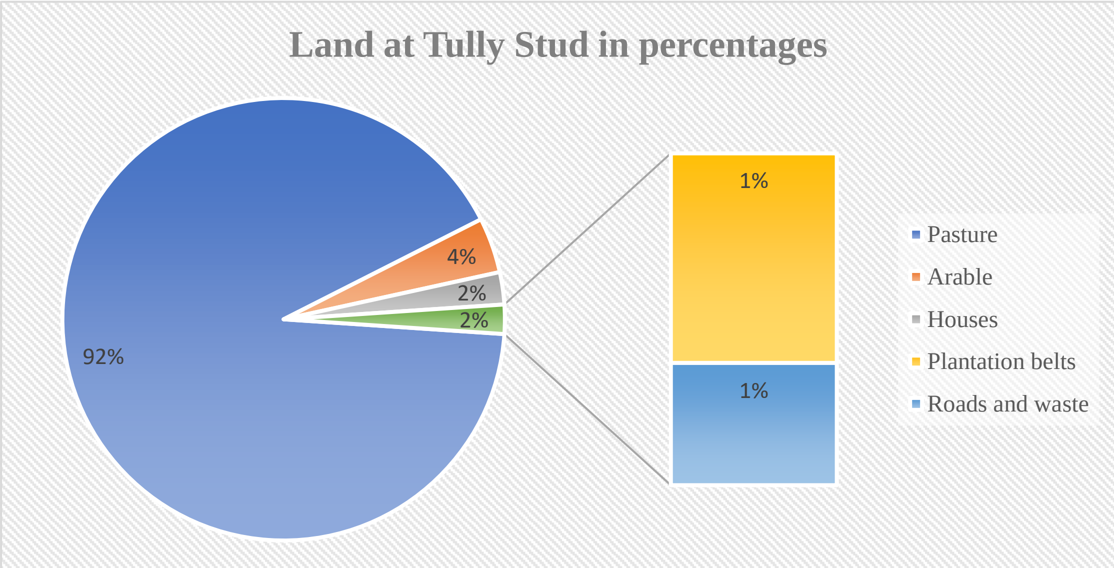
[112] Mogen's valuation of Russley Park, 10 Nov. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11993 (26619), p.4.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid., p. 5.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid.

in the Appendix (Chapter one). The land at Tully was described as perfect for livestock with deep and fertile soil, with its composition outlined in the following.[118]

Figure 1 (b): Chart shows land use on Tully Stud Farm.



Source: Mogen's Tully Stud valuation, 10 Nov. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11939 (26619).

Ninety-two per cent of the land on the estate was primarily utilised for grazing horses, cattle and sheep. Overall, the grasslands were in good condition and described as 'providing excellent healthy grazing'.[119] Hall-Walker insisted that yearlings and broodmares were turned out in groups of three and moved regularly for fresh ground as good grazing land was essential to their development.[120] Crops were grown on four per cent, with the remaining acreage covered by buildings and infrastructure. In 1905, Hall-Walker extended the Tully Estate to purchase neighbouring farms (See Appendix 1(b) for a complete list of properties and value). He leased sections of the estate to Hans Hendrick Aylmer (See Appendix 1(c)). Of 698 acres, 675 were under a lease, and Aylmer operated five sub-leases on the estate (See Appendix 1(d)). In 1916, following Hall-Walker's deal with the British government, Aylmer relinquished his interests.[121]

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[118] Mogen's valuation of Tully Stud, 10 Nov. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11939 (26619), p. 6.
[119] Mogen's valuation of Tully Stud, 10 Nov. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11939 (26619), p. 6.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Correspondence between Brown & McCann Solicitors and Henry Greer, 5 Feb. 1916, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/287.

The remaining twenty-three acres were under the control of Hall-Walker. For a detailed map of the layout of Tully Estate, please see Appendix 1(e).

In 1907, Hall-Walker purchased 115 acres at Russley Park, near Swindon in Wiltshire. He significantly improved Russley Park estate, transforming it into a high-class horse racing establishment.[122] He held the leasing rights to numerous gallops on the Downs region as it was known. It consisted of the following rental regions, Bishopstone and Idstone Downs, Hill Farm Downs, Swinley Plain Downs, Manor Downs, Four Barrows and Upham Downs and Starveall Gallop. Hall-Walker employed trainer William Thomas Robinson of Foxhill, Wanborough, Swindon, and he held a sub-lease contract on the estate.[123] In addition, Robinson secured training rights and leases on specific downs in the region (See Appendix 1(f)). The sub-lease Robinson held on the estate contained the following conditions, Rent of £250 per annum, a division of rates (if any), and a division of the cost of upkeep of the Downs.[124] Robinson had a close association with Colonel Hall-Walker as he rode his horse *Night Hawk* to Victory in the St. Leger in 1913. There is an interesting story to this victory. Robinson was against running *Night Hawk* due to concerns over the horse's fitness, but Hall-Walker overruled him.[125] Hall Walker argued:

> I informed him [Robinson] that, as I should be there, I wished my horse to run in the St. Leger…I knew the colt needed very little work and expected him to win. In order to have the laugh over Robinson, I put £50 on for him without telling him. To my surprise, I got 50 to 1 to the money.[126]

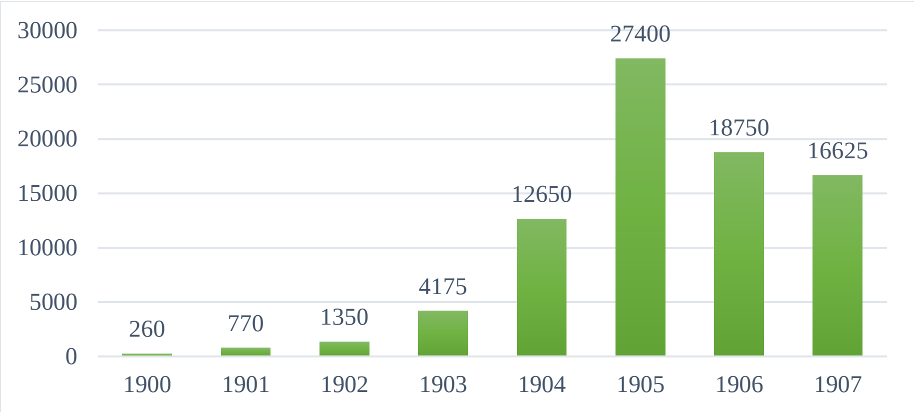
And *Night Hawk* participated and gained an unexpected win, as reflected in the long odds he was returned, which was his only victory on a racecourse.

122 *Cork Examiner*, 31 Aug. 1908.
123 Mogen's valuation of Russley Park, 10 Nov. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11993 (26619).
124 Valuation of bloodstock by Captain Henry Greer, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, 10 Nov. 1915, MAF/286 (43581).
125 *The Bloodstock Breeders Review, An illustrated Annual devoted to the British Thoroughbred*, Vol. XXI (London, 1932), p. 118.
126 Ibid., p. 118.

1.3. Racing and breeding successes at Tully Stud Farm

In the first year of racing, results at Tully Stud were mediocre, with only two winners returning £260.[127] However, within five years, winnings dramatically increased, as outlined in the chart below:

Figure 1 (c): Chart shows Tully Stud's racecourse prize money from 1901 to 1907.



Source: John Welcome, *Irish horseracing: an illustrated history* (London, 1982), p. 115.

From 1901 to 1907, Tully Stud had significant success on the racecourse, with Hall-Walker at the head of the owner's lists.[128] Winning prize money totalled £81,980 at an average of £10,980 per annum.[129] At Royal Ascot in 1905, he stamped his authority when winning five races with *Black Arrow*, *Sandboy*, *Golden Table*, *Colonia*, and *Cherry Lass.* Indeed, *Cherry Lass* won the Epsom Oaks and the One Thousand Guineas that same year. At horse racing's annual Gimcrack Club dinner in York, Hall-Walker called for government intervention to supplement the horse breeding industry:

> This experience of twenty-five years is my apology for offering an opinion on the state of the Turf regarding its future prospects. I would not have ventured to give expression to my views for the fact I am in a privileged position. The Jockey Club does not guard the interests of the breeder but rules the Turf alone, and my objective tonight is to prove the necessity of the authority of the Jockey Club being extended by powers from the State in return for the organisation of Government Studs and the general encouragement of the breeding of the thoroughbred horse. As Great Britain is recognised as the nursery of all pure-bred stock, including the thoroughbred horse, from which of necessity the whole world must replenish its supplies, it must be admitted that the breeding of pure-bred stallions of all animals is an

[127] *Irish National Stud*, p. 4.
[128] Welcome, *Irish horseracing*, p. 115.
[129] Alfred E. T. Watson, *Sportsmen of mark: Colonel William Hall-Walker* (London, 1907), p. 14.

> object worthy of development. Encouragement, therefore, should be given to those engaged in such enterprise, and the State be asked to recognise them as important national industries.[130]

Hall-Walker argued that the Jockey Club did not promote breeders' interests, nor was it in their remit. Instead, it was determined to address legacy issues like widespread corruption that blighted racing. Established in 1750, the Jockey Club was an insular male organisation with self-elected aristocratic and landed gentry members. Vamplew elaborates: 'to become a member…you have [to be] a relative of God – and a close one at that!'.[131]

Hall-Walker's call for intervention came at a time when the emergence of modern sport in Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was becoming an important fabric of society. For instance, football was built upon the foundations created within English public schools. In 1863, this led to the creation of the Football Association, where a group of London football clubs met to establish rules and regulations. Within two decades, football became so widespread and popular that it evolved from its amateur status to being professionally governed. Harvey elaborates: 'In the 1880s, profound administrative changes were introduced within association football, notably the legalisation of professionalism by the F.A, [and] in 1885 and the creation of a league structure in 1888'.[132] Other sports, like rugby union and cricket, were also experiencing change. In 1885, for example, Rugby split into two codes known as league and union, with class divisions apparent. However, Rugby union remained a distinct middle-class organisation, whereas Rugby league was closely associated with working-class identity.[133] With cricket, there was often a mix of professionals and amateurs in the same team, but as Johnes notes, 'Social distinction was preserved through the use of different changing rooms, [and]

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[130] *Sporting Life*, 6 Dec. 1905.
[131] Vamplew, *The turf,* a *social and economic history of horse racing*, p. 77.
[132] Adrian Harvey, 'The emergence of football in nineteenth century England: The historiographic debate, in *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, xxx (2013), p. 2159.
[133] M. Johnes, 'United Kingdom' in David Levinson and Karen Christensen (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of World Sport (*Great Barrington, 2005), p. 3, available at https://www-tandfonline-com.may.idm.oclc.org/ (23 Dec. 2022).

different ways of writing names'.[134] But in the twentieth century, various sports became more linked to national identity, with horse racing playing a role.

In the early 1900s, racing also went through revolutionary change. American owners and jockeys arrived in Britain, bringing a new modern style of race riding that the British and Irish adopted and changed to suit their style. The Americans were considerably successful in Britain, which perplexed the Jockey Club. They reacted by restricting the granting of licences. Another counteractive measure introduced was the 1913 Jersey Act stipulating that horses could not be entered into the *Stud Book* (Stud books recorded the bloodlines of the most influential horses) unless their pedigree could be traced 'without flaw' to horses previously listed on the books' records.[135] Ultimately, they were designed to protect and preserve national interests. And these new measures by the Jockey Club worked. They ended American dominance and reshaped the industry. Contemporary racing journalist Sydney Galtrey argues that they did 'wonders' for racing, and by the mid-1900s, it was transformed through new regulations.[136] Galtrey was a lifelong critic of the Jockey Club. Therefore, his praise is noteworthy. Hall-Walker was a member of the Jockey Club and understood its mechanisms. Thus, he was in a prime position to analyse the industry's future. The American influx caused concern. Hall-Walker's Gimcrack speech was a rallying call to the government to invest in the industry's future by creating State stud farms. This was ten years before he offered his stud farms to the government; hence, the speech revealed Hall-Walker's long-term intentions and foresight for the industry and his awareness of the significance of sport in the national identity.

In 1907, Hall-Walker's success on the racecourse continued winning £17,910 and topping the owner's list; the year's highlight was *Witch Elm* winning the One Thousand

[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid., p. 60.
[136] Galtrey, *Memoirs of a racing journalist*, p. 26.

Guineas.[137] In 1908, he won £10,446, but his earnings decreased in the following years.[138] The next season witnessed recognition for Tully Stud. At King Edward's Sandringham Stud farm, there was a severe scarcity of yearlings, so they leased six horses from Hall-Walker. One included *Minoru*, who went on to win four grade-one races, including the Derby and the One Thousand Guineas, in 1909.[139] The Press argued that the achievement marked 'a red-letter day in the annals of the Turf'.[140] Hall-Walker exclaimed: 'I was the first man and the only man he [the King] shook hands with on his way down to lead in the winner'.[141] But it would be several years before a British monarch again experienced similar racing success. In any event, this lease set a precedent for future arrangements between the Royal Stud and what would later be the National Stud at Tully Stud. While at Tully, *Minoru* sired a filly called *Serenissima*. She produced several high-class horses. In fact, Tully Stud Farm bred several important horses that significantly impacted racing and breeding.

In 1915, at the time of Hall-Walker's offer of his racing establishments to the British government, the leading sires at Tully Stud Farm were *White Eagle* (son of *Gallinule*) and *Royal Realm* (See Appendix 1(g) for *White Eagle* and *Royal Realm's* progeny lists). Of the two stallions, the more successful was *White Eagle.* He raced twenty-seven times, winning twelve races and accumulating £66,256 in prize money.[142] *Royal Realm* ran forty-four times, winning twelve races and winning £23,264.[143] Hall-Walker stressed: '*White Eagle* can get winners of the highest class, and he doesn't seem to get any losers'.[144] But as a sire, *White Eagle* produced no stallions of any note. But he was a leading sire of broodmares appearing in the top twenty lists

137 *The Bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, vol. xxi (London, 1932), p. 118.
138 Ibid.
139 Ibid.
140 *Daily Telegraph & Courier* (London), 27 May 1909.
141 Galtrey, *Memoirs of a racing journalist*, p. 145.
142 Pedigree Online Thoroughbred Database, *White Eagle* available at https://www.pedigreequery.com/white+eagle (11 Dec. 2018).
143 Ibid.
144 Galtrey, *Memoirs of a racing journalist*, p. 143.

ten times; the highest achievement was third place in 1922 and 1932.[145] His most famous broodmare was *Blanche*, and she produced one of the most significant horses in racing history, *Blandford*. Leicester elaborates: '*Blandford* was almost a faultless specimen of his breed…to cover fully the worldwide influence of this great sire would require a book in itself'.[146] In the 1930s, *Blandford* was the top sire in Britain and Ireland three times and the top sire in France in 1935. He sired eleven British Classic Race winners, including four who won the Epsom Derby. Among his offspring was *Bahram,* who won the British Triple Crown of the Two Thousand Guineas, St. Leger, and the Derby in 1935. These horses' role in enhancing the National Stud's reputation should not be underestimated. But it was not only the thoroughbreds at Tully Stud Farm that made an impression. In business, Hall-Walker built connections and friendships that had a long-term impact on the industry.

In the early 1900s, he developed a close friendship with Prince Aga Sultan Sir Mahomed Shaix, widely known as the Aga Khan III. The Aga Khan family has a long legacy with horses dating back to sixth-century Arabia. In the early nineteenth century, Aga Khan created stud farms in India. And in 1904, he visited Tully Stud and, following discussions with Hall-Walker, realised the potential of setting up stud farms in Europe. In the following decades, he established stud farms throughout Ireland, England, and France. John Welcome credits this development to Hall-Walker: 'He constantly impressed upon him [Aga Khan] the advisability of diverting some of his huge fortunes into bloodstock'.[147] He further argues: 'It is nevertheless to Hall-Walker that the credit must go of awakening and kindling the Aga Khan's interest in the breeding of racehorses which has led to the creation of one of racing's greatest and most successful empires'.[148] Aga Khan adds further clarification:

> It was entirely due to Lord Wavertree and my personal friendship with him that I started to race on the English Turf. I would probably never have been known as an owner west of

[145] Leicester, *Bloodstock breeding*, p. 214.
[146] Ibid., p. 213.
[147] Welcome, *Irish horseracing*, p. 115.
[148] Ibid.

> Suez had he not, during and after my visit to Tully in 1904, urged me to take up racing in England…[149]

Hall-Walker's passion for racing made a lasting impression on Aga Khan. It planted the seeds for an establishment that impacted racing worldwide. It also left a legacy on the National Stud with Aga Khan and his descendants creating a close relationship that will be scrutinised further throughout this research. In 1915, with the world distracted by the ongoing war, Hall-Walker decided to offer his racing establishments to the British government to advance the horse breeding industry in the long term.

1.4. Hall-Walker offers his stud farms

The First World War significantly impacted horse racing in England, with racing disrupted on a far greater scale than in Ireland.[150] This placed pressure upon trainers in England as horses lay idle. In 1916, the British government introduced conscription, which led to an influx of racing professionals arriving in Ireland.[151] A notable arrival was William Robinson, a long-time friend of Hall-Walker and leaseholder at Russley Park. The Turf Club granted Robinson a licence to train a limited number of horses at the Curragh.[152] The impact of the war influenced Hall-Walker to offer his stud farms to the government. His establishment at Russley Park in Swindon was to be utilised as a horse depot for the British Army. But in Ireland, Tully Stud was to continue as a leading contributor to horse breeding. Hall-Walker's offer stipulated that the bloodstock at the stud was free of charge, including stallions, broodmares, yearlings, foals, horses in training, and livestock such as cattle and utensils.[153] (See appendix 1(j), 1(h) and 1(k) for a complete list of the bloodstock). But there was to be negotiation on the price paid for his properties at Tully Stud

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[149] Galtrey, *Memoirs of a racing journalist*, p. 138.
[150] D'Arcy, *Horses, lords and racing men*, p. 244.
[151] Ibid.
[152] *Irish Times*, 27 May 1915,
[153] Correspondence between William Hall-Walker and Henry Chaplin, 1 Oct. 1915, p. 2, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/286.

Farm and Russley Park. In correspondence with Henry Chaplin MP (Conservative), Hall-Walker outlined the reasons for the offer:

> It has taken fifteen years to build up my stud by careful selection and purchases, and, during this time, I have bred 150 horses that have won races – of a total value of 250,000 – including the Derby and every other classic race…in the scheme for light horse breeding which is now being considered, I would suggest that the government should purchase form me the whole of my stud as a going concern, as well as the Training Stables at Russley Park, Baydon, Wilts, and the horses in training. I wish the price based on a low valuation, such as would enable me to consider that I was rendering the State service, rather than I should be receiving even its proper value and thereby be under an obligation to my country.[154]

The bloodstock totalled sixty horses, including thirty broodmares, ten yearlings, twenty foals and the Stud's two sires, *White Eagle* and *Royal Realm*. After a valuation, he was willing to accept approximately £40,000 for the property at Tully Stud.[155] At Russley Park, Hall-Walker anticipated the property would realise £35,000, and it included twenty horses. He was anxious that the offer be accepted quickly and was fearful the progression over fifteen years would be lost if the government refused the opportunity.[156] He revealed he would take £75,000 for Tully Stud Farm and Russley Park. By accepting this offer, Hall-Walker argued:

> The Board of Agriculture would then be in a position to produce from its own Stud, the highest-class stallions, as I have done, every year by the possession of Tully Stud, which is Scheme No. 1. It [the government] would possess, at once, a leasehold and freehold property of approximately 1000 acres of the finest grassland in Ireland, with all buildings complete…scheme no. 2 would be the acquisition of Russley Park for a Stallion Depot.[157]

There was speculation on the future purpose of the Stud, with the *Bloodstock Breeders Review* claiming: 'The avowed purpose of the proposed gift was to enable the government to breed stallions that could be used to increase the supply of horses suitable for the army'.[158] However,

[154] Ibid., p. 1.
[155] Ibid., p. 2.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Correspondence between William Hall-Walker and Henry Chaplin, 1 Oct. 1915, pp 3-4, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/286.
[158] *The Bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, vol. xxi (London, 1932), p. 119.

this viewpoint is narrow. It fails to recognise or appreciate Hall-Walker's focus on improving the industry's long-term interests through State intervention. Although Hall-Walker supported the idea of supplying the army in times of necessity, reflecting on events a short time later, he explained:

> One of my principal reasons for making this gift was that by the government becoming interested in the industry, they would be more easily influenced in seeing the necessity of racing being continued in the interests of light horse breeding for the country. And I was able, in my private capacity, as a member of Parliament in touch with these matters, to use a certain amount of persuasion, which had the desired result.[159]

At the time, the army was running short on horses. In April 1914, the War Office appealed to the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries to replenish its stock.[160] The War Office calculated that 300,000 horses and mules were purchased from August 1914 to March 1915, and 410,000 were imported until October 1915 in the United Kingdom.[161] (See Appendix 1(l) and 1(m). The *Stoke Sentinel* elaborates: 'There weren't enough horses in Britain to meet demands of the army, so more than 1,000 horses a week were shipped from North America, where there was a plentiful supply of half-wild horses on the open plains'.[162] Hence, the War Office called for an overhaul of light horse breeding and supported Hall-Walker's offer:

> The Council [Army] is of the opinion that nothing should be allowed to stand in the way of the acceptance of Colonel Hall Walker's generous and patriotic offer, which goes far towards the accomplishment of the wider measures necessary to place horse breeding on a proper basis.[163]

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[159] Galtrey, *Memoirs of a racing journalist*, p. 144.
[160] Correspondence between the War Office and the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, 20 July 1914, Treasury Department, T1/11929.
[161] Letter from the War Office to the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, 27 Apr. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11929.
[162] *Stoke Sentinal*, 2 May 2015.
[163] Correspondence between the War Office and the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, 29 Oct. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/286 (A).

This was not the first occasion the War Office supported establishing an equine-related military operation in Ireland. In 1855, they established an army camp at the Curragh during the Crimean War, housing 10,000 troops supported by horses.[164]

1.5. Opposition to Hall-Walker's offer

In Parliament, there was support and opposition to Hall-Walker's offer. More than any other individual, the financial secretary of the Treasury Department, Edwin Montagu MP (Liberal), opposed the proposal and never missed the opportunity to be critical. The following comments highlight the level of animosity:

> There is nobody at the Board of Agriculture, with the exception of Selborne [President] himself, who has a good word to say for it. I am further informed that there is an allegation that Hall Walker, who is posing as so many other money grubbers do as a patriot, is, in reality, offering to sell his horses to Holland at the same price to the British government. You will also see on this file that our legal advisors are of the opinion that this transaction cannot be carried because Hall Walker is a member of Parliament.[165]

No evidence supports Montagu's claim that Hall-Walker attempted to sell his bloodstock in Holland. But Montagu raised a valid point on the conflict of interest regarding Hall-Walker's political position. A short time later, Hall-Walker retired from politics to avoid confusion or perceived irregularity, but this did not appease Montagu. Instead, he mocked the president of the Board of Agriculture, Lord Selborne. He suggested Selborne should 'purchase pigs and fish and start farming on a large scale himself', and he cautioned that the Treasury Department had 'more than enough of Hall-Walker's antics'.[166] Given Montagu's high government profile, this opposition led to the government stalling.

Rumours began that the government were going to decline the offer, which led to Hall-Walker contacting Selborne expressing concerns: 'The delay in this matter has been the cause of

[164] D'Arcy, *Horses, lords and racing men*, p. 157.
[165] Correspondence between Edwin Montagu, the financial secretary to the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, 18 Nov. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11939
[166] Correspondence between Edwin Montagu, the financial secretary to the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, 18 Nov. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11939.

much anxiety to myself, I am in a very precarious position as to the disposal of my stud at the annual sales on the 1st of December, my horses have been placed in the last days sale'.[167] To compound matters further, he did not receive an immediate response from Selborne and, within days, withdrew the offer because of the delay. In a statement to *The Times*, he explained:

> The comprehensive scheme of a national stud suggested by my offer to the government was met with some difficulties in departmental etiquette, and the long delay in deliberating upon it has caused me to assume that it was impossible to carry it through in time. The offer is therefore withdrawn.[168]

Hall-Walker could not understand the delay because he believed the offer 'had been received very favourably' by the Board of Agriculture and War Office representatives.[169] The evidence in the correspondence supports Hall-Walker. But Montagu was in the background piling on the pressure within the various government departments.

The Press added pressure by speculating on the government's hesitation: 'Colonel Hall-Walker's offer to the country was refused because the horses concerned were RACE-HORSES, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer fears to sully his soul by contact to do with that 'unclean thing' [racing]'.[170] This was a reference to the stigma of gambling, a legacy of the Victorian era. Jockey Club historian Robert Black illuminates: 'So long as it [gambling] was between nobles, it was a comparatively harmless pastime', but it was sordid for an aristocrat to bet with a commoner'.[171] This is evidence of the divisive deep-rooted class divisions at the time.

The early twentieth century saw a sharp increase in betting, with sporting and religious organisations vocal in their opposition. For instance, Reverend R.F.A. Spenser in Buckinghamshire complained that 'owing to the state of gambling...he had to give up one game

[167] Correspondence between Colonel Hall-Walker and Lord Selborne at Department of Agriculture & Fisheries, 17 Nov. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11939.
[168] *The Times*, 25 Nov. 1915.
[169] Ibid.
[170] *The Sportsman*, 26 Nov. 1915.
[171] Rebecca Cassidy, *The sport of kings: kingship, class, and thoroughbred breeding in Newmarket (*Cambridge, 2004), p. 72.

[football] in which he used to indulge'.[172] Church opposition was widespread throughout Britain. Mckibben notes that Protestant clerics drew upon a 'powerful puritan tradition that had always loathed gambling'.[173] But gambling remained widespread, with betting occurring amongst the working-class population, and from the 1880s to the mid-1930s, betting volumes rose depending on disposable income.[174]

Influential organisations like the English Football Association also condemned gambling. In response, the government introduced various acts. The Betting Houses Act of 1853 banned betting shops, and the 1906 Streets Betting Act ruled off-course betting illegal. Regardless, the betting industry thrived with bets placed unlawfully in public houses, where the bar staff acted on behalf of the local bookmakers. Gambling went underground, and it was not until May 1961 that betting shops returned to British High Streets. Throughout the decades, McKibbin notes that the State had an ambiguous attitude towards clamping down on gambling. It was only after complaints were made that the police acted accordingly. Even then, the efforts were 'half-hearted' with a similar attitude towards other illegal activities like prostitution and pornography.[175] Moreover, the attempts to stamp out gambling were futile, as Mike Huggins explains: 'Morality, respectability and reformist belief was unable to make a negative impact on gambling despite the apparent power of such beliefs through its rhetorical volume in pulpit, press and parts of Parliament'.[176]

It was not all negativity, though, as some MPs supported Hall-Walker's offer but still feared the links to gambling. For instance, Francis Acland MP (Liberal) argued: 'It would provide a greatly needed stimulus to the light horse breeding industry and a valuable source of supply of

[172] *Bucks Herald*, 21 Feb. 1903.
[173] McKibbin, 'Working-class gambling, p. 158.
[174] Ibid., p. 157.
[175] McKibbin, 'Working-class gambling', p. 178.
[176] Mike Huggins, 'Betting, sport and the British', 1918-1939, *Journal of Social History*, XLI (2007), p. 301 pp. 283-306.

the class of stallions required for the production of military horses'.[177] But the gambling aspect caused angst: 'In regard to persons who value racing simply from the point of view of betting, I submit that this is not to regard it as a sport at all but something which is entirely useless to the country'.[178] These developments caused further concern for Hall-Walker.

He criticised the Treasury Department claiming they did not understand the horse-breeding industry, which caused the delay, and he had no intention of 'wasting more time on the matter'.[179] Montagu denied that the War Office or the Board of Agriculture were receptive to the offer.[180] And shortly afterwards, he prepared a draft submission for the Cabinet, using the opportunity to reinforce his opposition:

> I cannot express myself too strongly with regard to the attempt to "rush through" this amazing proposal. I am quite clear that at the present stage, the Treasury has been supplied with no argument whatsoever in favour of the scheme, and they have a number of arguments against it.[181]

He claimed the Board of Agriculture had written to the Treasury Department stating that Hall-Walker's stallions were not suitable for their required purposes, and they suggested it was an unprofitable proposal.[182] But the Board of Agriculture were interested in the offer.

In late 1915, they requested an inspection of Hall-Walker's Russley Park establishment. Mortimer Stopford Adye was tasked with the responsibility. Adye was on Dorset's committee for light horse breeding, and government departments regularly used his services as he had extensive knowledge.[183] Following the inspection, Adye concluded that the horses at Russley

[177] *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 10 Dec. 1915.
[178] *The parliamentary debates, fifth series, House of Commons,* 1909-42 (vols ixxx, London, 1909-42), p. 1092 available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (29 Mar. 2019).
[179] *The Times*, 25 Nov. 1915.
[180] Correspondence between Edwin Montagu, the financial secretary to the Treasury, to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, 5 Nov. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11939.
[181] Draft proposal by Edwin Montagu, financial secretary to the Treasury for the Cabinet (Exact date missing) Dec. 1915.
[182] Correspondence between Edwin Montagu, the financial secretary to the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, 5 Nov. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11939.
[183] *Western Gazette*, 26 Feb. 1926.

were unsuitable for crossbreeding to supply the army but were 'well-bred racehorses'.[184] Adye was complimentary of Russley Park as a stallion depot. He claimed 'it could not be improved upon'.[185] Following Adye's inspection, Montagu argued that Hall-Walker's horses were 'too valuable for mating with half-bred mares' for light horse breeding.[186] Walter Roch MP (Liberal) agreed with Montagu, claiming it was ludicrous to breed 'some of the best horses in the world for racing' to produce army horses.[187] But others like William Burdett-Coutts MP argued that cross-breeding was indeed worthwhile, but he cautioned that achieving successful bloodlines was time-consuming and required patience and substantial financial investment. [188] Montagu's argument against using high-class thoroughbreds for army purposes was reasonable. But it must be noted that Hall-Walker was more concerned with creating a State-sponsored industry that benefited racing and breeding interests, not serving army purposes in the long term.

Undeterred, Montagu remained relentless in his condemnation, even going as far as to question if the 'patriotic' offer was an act of deception:

> Hall-Walker greatly deceived [crossed out in the original draft] the government in his first account of the position [value of stud & horses], and there appears to have been less patriotism than good bargaining in his 'offer'. No private person would give him £75,000 now. Anyhow the horses are not wanted by the government, and <u>the whole purchase is merely the prelude to enormous expenditure hereafter</u> on the upkeep of the estates and the purchase of many other horses of a more suitable kind…except in very limited number racehorses are now unsaleable.[189]

The deception allegation was unfounded as Hall-Walker was transparent with the government. Montagu argued that horses were worth significantly more before the war, but they were now

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[184] Correspondence between Captain M. S. Adye, Compton Stud, Gillingham, Dorset and E. B Shine, Board of Agriculture, 18 Dec. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/287.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Draft submission by Edwin Montagu, financial secretary to the Treasury, 3 Dec. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11939, p. 4.
[187] *The parliamentary debates, fifth series, House of Commons,* 1909-42 (vols ixxx, London, 1909-42), p. 1109, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (29 Mar. 2019).
[188] *The parliamentary debates, fifth series, House of Commons,* 1909-42 (vols ixxx, London, 1909-42), p. 1110, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (29 Mar. 2019).
[189] Draft submission by Edwin Montagu, financial secretary to the Treasury, 3 Dec. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11939, p. 6.

‘practically unsaleable’.[190] Although horse racing was interrupted in England, it was thriving in Ireland. Owners and breeders were well-positioned to purchase Hall-Walker’s bloodstock. This argument by Montagu was weak and showed his lack of knowledge of the industry.

Other MPs in Parliament speculated on the reasons for Hall-Walker’s offer, with James Myles Hogge MP (Liberal) arguing that other hidden factors were at play. He claimed the war was economically detrimental to Hall-Walker, and it was in his interests to sell his stud farms.[191] Indeed, it was in his interests to offload the stud farms, but Hall-Walker had spent over a decade campaigning for State intervention long before the outbreak of war. Hogge criticised the government’s support of the offer when children were prosecuted for ‘street betting’ at the time, and he queried if the House of Commons were in coalition with the Jockey Club.[192] In sarcastic tones, he inquired if a horse paddock would be fitted at Parliament so horses could be inspected before deciding on this ‘extraordinary bargain’.[193]

Henry Chaplin MP (Conservative) argued that the offer was coming at the right time due to the country’s poor condition of horse supply.[194] And Chaplin cautioned: ‘If a stud like Colonel Hall-Walker’s is to be lost…it will be, in my judgement, little short of disastrous’.[195] Hall-Walker received support from Irish Nationalist MPs. Patrick Meehan stressed that the deal was a ‘very good bargain’ and that all members should be grateful to Hall-Walker for ‘such a generous gift and anything otherwise was disrespectful’.[196] John O’Connor MP (Irish Parliamentary Party)

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[190] Ibid.
[191] *The parliamentary debates, fifth series, House of Commons,* 1909-42 (vols ixxx, London, 1909-42), p. 1119, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (29 Mar. 2019).
[192] *The parliamentary debates, fifth series, House of Commons,* 1909-42 (vols ixxx, London, 1909-42), pp 1119-20, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (29 Mar. 2019).
[193] *The parliamentary debates, fifth series, House of Commons,* 1909-42 (vols ixxx, London, 1909-42), p. 1120, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (29 Mar. 2019).
[194] Report by Henry Chaplin for the attention of the Cabinet, 28 Nov. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11929.
[195] Ibid.
[196] *The parliamentary debates, fifth series, House of Commons,* 1909-42 (vols ixxx, London, 1909-42), p. 1120, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (29 Mar. 2019).

commended the 'splendid animals' and the studs 'beautiful location' in Kildare.[197] He highlighted the Dublin Horse Show, which attracted a worldwide audience and noted the prominence of government members of every European country at horse markets in Ireland. Hence, O'Connor argued that the purchase of Tully Stud Farm was good business.[198]

With the Treasury Department unable or unwilling to decide on the offer, they advised the Board of Agriculture to seek Cabinet approval.[199] In the meantime, Selborne was concerned that Hall-Walker would not rekindle the offer.[200] Crucially for Hall-Walker, he had Selborne's support, and the Cabinet approved the offer, which caused angst with Montagu. Consequently, all future correspondence on the deal with Hall-Walker was conducted through Thomas Little-Heath, assistant secretary to the Treasury. The level of acrimony by Montagu was unusual. Perhaps it stemmed from personal issues attached to gambling. In the *Asquith Diaries,* Margot Asquith offered a barbed insight: 'If Mr Montagu would eat less [and] lower his gambling stakes…he would be a much richer man'.[201] Montagu had a nervous breakdown a few years later, suggesting serious health concerns.

1.6. Offer accepted

In any case, Selborne contacted Hall-Walker advising that they accepted the 'generous gift' of bloodstock and agreed to purchase the properties at Russley Park and Tully Stud Farm, pending an independent valuation.[202] The next day the *Irish Independent* reported that the government

[197] *The parliamentary debates, fifth series, House of Commons,* 1909-42 (vols ixxx, London, 1909-42), p. 1097, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (29 Mar. 2019).
[198] *The parliamentary debates, fifth series, House of Commons,* 1909-42 (vols ixxx, London, 1909-42), pp 1097-1100, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (29 Mar. 2019).
[199] Correspondence between the Treasury Department and the secretary of the Board of Agriculture, 27 Nov. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52 286 (27693-15).
[200] Correspondence between Lord Selborne at the Department of Agriculture & Fisheries and the War Office, 29 Nov. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52 286.
[201] Naomi B. Levine, *Politics, religion, and love: the story of H. H. Asquith, Venetia Stanley, and Edwin Montagu, based on the life and letters of Edwin Samuel Montagu* (London and New York), p. 488.
[202] Telegram from Lord Selborne at the Department of Agriculture & Fisheries to William Hall-Walker, 2 Dec. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11939.

had accepted the offer.[203] Hall-Walker quickly responded to Selborne, and it was evident he was irked at the delay:

> Received your telegram accepting my offer of horses and independent valuation of properties which I must now agree to in face of shortness of time. The horses have been withdrawn from the sale, and as there are many details of administration requiring immediate attention, I am giving my own supervision and will continue to do so until you take over the administration on the first of January or any earlier date you wish.[204]

Hall-Walker was concerned with the finer details of the deal. There was some concern over the appointment of an independent valuer, with all eventually agreeing on Conservative politician and chartered surveyor Herbert Trustram Eve.[205] Eve's valuation was one of three made on Hall-Walker's property; the other two were from Henry Greer and a gentleman called Mogen (first name not listed in the London archives). Hall-Walker employed London solicitors Watson Rutherford & Co to act on his behalf.[206] Rutherford & Co also had offices in Liverpool; senior partner William Watson Rutherford MP (Conservative) served in Parliament for twenty years from 1903 to 1923. The legal advisor representing the British government was Frank A. Jones. Rutherford outlined that Hall-Walker intended his 'gift' to the nation to be free from 'any initial expenses towards the estate's maintenance'.[207] He also stated that the offer included cattle, feed, saddlery, utensils, appliances or other items of a similar description on the premises on the day of possession.[208] Regarding the furniture, Rutherford noted that valuable pictures, antique furniture and personalised linen (with initials) to which Hall-Walker was personally attached would be removed before the closure date, and the premises would be sufficiently furnished for the handover so that 'no capital outlay would be required'.[209]

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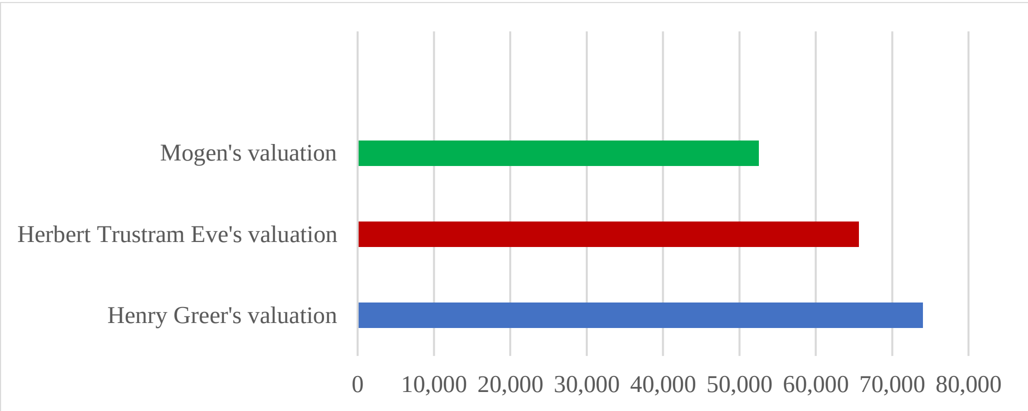
[203] *Irish Independent*, 3 Dec. 1915.
[204] Telegram from William Hall-Walker to Lord Selborne at the Department of Agriculture & Fisheries, 3 Dec. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11939.
[205] *Biggleswade Chronicle*, 1 Jan. 1936.
[206] *Liverpool Echo*, 7 Apr. 1913.
[207] Correspondence between Rutherford & Co Solicitors and the private secretary of Lord Selborne, Board of Agriculture, 14 Dec. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12, p. 2.
[208] Ibid.
[209] Ibid., p. 3.

On 7 February, Eve completed his valuation of Hall-Walker's properties. The Japanese Gardens and the nursery at Tully were omitted.[210] The valuation was based on 918 acres at Tully and 114 acres at Russley Park. Eve declared:

> I AM OF THE OPINION, after visiting the Estates and interviewing the parties or their representatives, that the value of the Estate and the interest of the said Colonel W. H. Walker as owner of the said properties is SIXTY-FIVE THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE POUNDS (£65,625: 0: 0), and I declare this sum to be the purchase price the agreement dated 30 December 1915.[211]

Two other evaluations were provided by Mogen and Greer, as outlined in the following table.

Figure 1 (d): Chart showing valuations of Colonel William Hall-Walker's property.



Source: Valuations of Colonel Hall-Walker's property, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, 7 Feb. 1916, MAF 52/287.

Greer valued the properties significantly higher than Eve at £74,000, perhaps influenced by his close friendship with Hall-Walker. Mogen's valuation was well below both at £52,519. In any event, Eve's valuation fell between the other two, and it was accepted. On 30 December 1915, the relevant parties signed the agreement. The contract agreed was between Colonel William Hall-Walker of Sussex Lodge Regents Park in the County of London and the right honourable

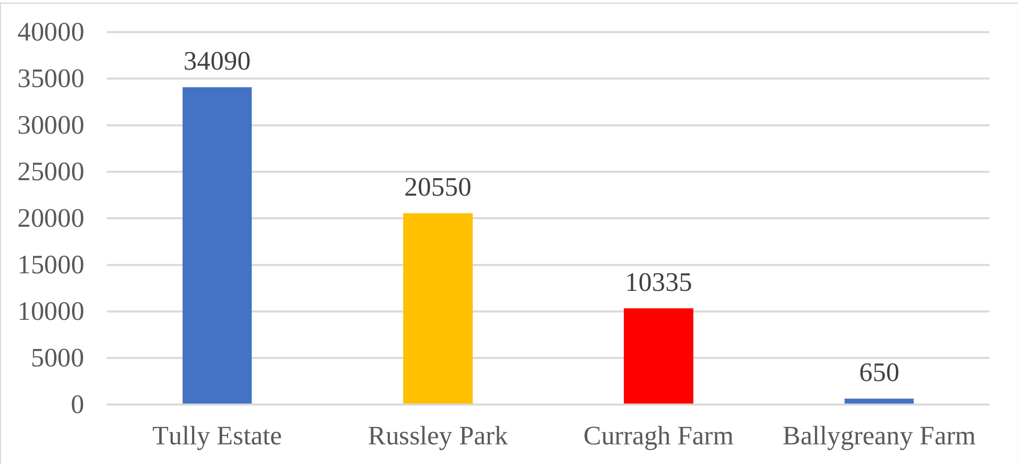
[210] Herbert Trustram Eve's valuation of Hall-Walker's property, 7 Feb. 1916, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/287 (44272/1915).
[211] Ibid.

William Waldegrave Earl of Selborne (as agent on behalf of His Majesty's government).[212] The first section of the agreement stipulated:

> Hall-Walker has agreed to make a free gift to the nation of all his horses and mares at Tully in Ireland and Russley Park in England back together with all the cattle and provender and stores and also the saddlery and utensils, furniture and other effects for the dwelling houses and such gift is to take effect as on the 1st day of January 1916.[213]

The British government outlined their intention to purchase the properties attached to the estates. Hall-Walker was responsible for any outgoings, taxes, rents, or rates on the estates before and including 31 December 1915. Current fire insurance policies were the government's responsibility, with a portion of the premium reimbursed. Hall-Walker was obliged to furnish the government's legal advisors with documents and evidence of the title of the properties sold to show 'the nature and extent of his estate and interests'.[214] The purchase prices paid for Hall-Walker's property were as follows.

Figure 1 (e) Chart shows the government's purchase costs paid to Hall-Walker for his property in Ireland and England.



Source: Land Registry of Ireland Transfer Details, 31 Mar. 1916, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/287.

[212] Tully Stud and Russley Park Agreement, 30 Dec. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/287.
[213] Ibid.
[214] Tully Stud and Russley Park Agreement, 30 Dec. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/287.

The total of £65,575 was subject to five per cent interest from 1 January 1916 to 31 March 1916, bringing the total sale price to £66,395.[215]

On 31 March 1916, legislation was passed in the British Parliament for the purchase of the property. Complaints concerning the lack of senior government members in Parliament. Hogge, in a sarcastic tone, remarked: 'I regret that the front Treasury bench is occupied entirely by the government foals and that no responsible members of government are present'.[216] Hogge was quick to apologise after noticing Montagu was actually in attendance, but Montagu passed no comments on these developments. Hall-Walker's solicitor, Watson Rutherford, praised the offer: 'It [Hall-Walker's gift] was one of the most splendid gifts has ever been made to the nation, for the horses and mares had a worldwide reputation'.[217] The *Bloodstock Breeders Review* argued that a National State Stud provided the platform for 'premium stallions' to be at farmers' disposal, which was critical in developing the light horse breeding industry.[218]

The British government's investment was not unusual as other European governments invested in [light horse] breeding. For example, in France, the government invested £840,000 in maintaining twenty-two studs; in Italy, state-supported stallion depots were increasing, and the Russian government invested approximately £200,000.[219]

1.7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has discussed the many influences that shaped William Hall-Walker. Indeed, he inherited his parents' principles, ambition, and entrepreneurial skills. Hall-Walker's brothers' shared love of horse racing left a significant impression and drove his later ventures. Hall-Walker set himself high targets on the racecourse. From being a successful jockey to a

[215] Land Registry of Ireland Transfer Details, 31 Mar. 1916, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/287, (Folio no's, 13000, 2719, 690).
[216] *The parliamentary debates, fifth series, House of Commons,* 1909-42 (vols ixxx, London, 1909-42), p. 1116, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (29 Mar. 2019).
[217] *Kildare Observer*, 11 Mar. 1916.
[218] *The Bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British Thoroughbred*, vol. v (London, 1916), p 2.
[219] Ibid., pp 4-5.

Grand National-winning owner. The purchase of Tully farm in Ireland sparked a chain of events that had long-term ramifications for the industry. Tully Stud farm was structured upon Hall-Walker's vision. From very little, he created a stud farm competing with the best in the business, a considerable achievement in the circumstances. More importantly, the success at Tully Stud laid a solid platform for Hall-Walker to argue for state intervention in the industry. This was his long-term goal, and his offer to the government was not primarily to supply army horses; suggesting otherwise does not do justice to his desires. Locating the Stud in Ireland was fortunate especially given the uncertainty in England with the American dominance and other issues stifling racing. It proved to be a wise decision. Some of the horses bred at Tully had a remarkable impact and launched Hall-Walker into racing's top tier. His offer was significant as it inextricably linked both sectors, a positive development for the industry's future.

Hall-Walkers' close association with Aga Khan was significant; he became one of the most influential owner-breeders in horse racing history. His advice to Aga Khan was invaluable and sparked a new era in the industry. During this era, the stigma associated with gambling divided families, as witnessed by William's father, Andrew, and his disdain for horse racing. It also highlighted social class division but gambling still played a critical role within the industry. Again, the stigma of gambling played a leading role during the parliamentary debate, with some politicians castigating and denouncing Hall-Walker's offer. Edwin Montagu's scorn for Hall-Walker was relentless. There was some hostility within the Treasury Department and the Board of Agriculture, but Montagu had more difficulties than anyone else. One can only speculate on his mindset, but he did raise some important issues. For instance, using high-class racing horses to supply the army was a questionable policy. Despite this, the highest echelons of the British government supported Hall-Walker, eventually accepting the offer, and how the National Stud developed will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 2:

Henry Greer, the Irish Free State, Lord Lonsdale, and the National Stud policy from 1916 to 1933.

2.1. Introduction

In April 1916, the National Stud (NS) was established at Colonel William Hall-Walker's former Tully Stud at County Kildare in Ireland. Its first manager was Sir Joseph Henry Greer, a soldier, politician, and renowned horse breeder/owner. At the same time, Irish separatists, led by the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) and the Irish Citizen Army (ICA), rose out in rebellion. Its brutal suppression, the arrest and internment of thousands who had no active part, coinciding with other factors, including British attempts to introduce conscription in Ireland, changed the political landscape. By 1919, separatist Sinn Féin had taken control of Irish politics and established an independent Dáil Éireann. This latter development coincided with the outbreak of a War of Independence (1919-21), followed by a bitter and devastating Civil War (1922-23). When the country settled down, the first Irish Free State government led by Cumann naGaedheal attempted to provide political safeguards for minorities by nominating former unionists to the Seanad, Ireland's upper house of governance. These included members of the equine industry, such as Greer of the National Stud. Greer was a loyalist with a solid attachment to Britain but remained in Ireland after the establishment of the Irish Free State. This was not unusual, with ninety-eight per cent of the old administration in the civil service transferred to positions within the new Free State civil service.[220] In Greer's case, he remained employed by the British administration as there was no agreement with the Irish Free State government over

[220] Alvin Jackson, *Ireland 1798-1998, war, peace and beyond* (Oxford, 2010), p. 273.

the ownership of the bloodstock and administration of the NS, which was now essentially a British institution in Ireland. As Alvin Jackson has noted:

> The limited nature of the Irish revolution and the curious mixture of intimacy and antipathy which characterised the relationship between the new rulers and the departing British meant the Irish Free State emerged with an unusual number of relics from the *ancien regime.*[221]

The NS fits the profile mentioned by Jackson; it was a relic of the past regime and symbolic of the future. Both the Irish and British governments appreciated its value as a state institution. Therefore, the ownership of the NS remained contentious, and it was not evident in legal terms if it was an Irish or British-owned institution. By the end of Greer's time at the NS, the political circumstances changed in Ireland. The Cumann naGaedheal government lost the 1932 general election to be replaced by Fianna Fáil, who adopted different political policies, some of which affected the NS. This chapter examines how the NS evolved under Greer amidst the changing political and social circumstances stretching from the 1916 Rebellion to the accession of Fianna Fáil to power. At the NS, leasing arrangements for the thoroughbreds were negotiated with the fifth earl of Lonsdale, Hugh Cecil Lowther, and King George V. These arrangements will be explored in further detail. Greer's complex relationship with the Irish Free State government, the British government, and the Aga Khan will also be discussed, with conclusions drawn.

2.2. Greer and horse breeding policy

Sir Joseph Henry Greer (1855-1933) was born on 9 February 1855. His father was Henry Harpur Greer, Moy, Co. Tyrone, an officer in the British army. The family lived in several places in early childhood, depending on where their father was stationed.[222] Greer was educated at Wellington and Sandhurst. In 1874, he joined the Highland Light Infantry and served in India

[221] Jackson, *Ireland 1798-1998*, p. 273.
[222] Greer, Sir Joseph Henry, KCVO, 30 Sept. 1934, Inland Revenue, IR 59/855 (111910).

for seventeen years. Here, his interest in horse racing developed, and he began racing horses. While not racing, he played polo and was the honorary secretary of Umbella Polo Club in India. In 1886, he married Olivia Mary Beresford; they had two sons and one daughter; their two sons were killed in the First World War. From 1922 to 1929, Greer was a member of the Irish Free State Senate. He was also the high sheriff for County Kildare. In 1889, Greer bought Brownstown House on the Curragh in Kildare to establish a stud farm.[223] Success quickly followed when he won the Irish Derby with *Tragedy* that same year.[224] The following year, he retired from the British army to 'devote his life to racing and breeding'.[225] From 1892 to 1914, Greer developed a successful racing partnership with British trainer Sam Darling on the Turf in England. In 1901, he was elected to the Jockey Club, where he served as senior steward from 1908 to 1910, and he was elected for a second term in 1914. He was also a member of the Irish Turf Club, which governed flat racing in Ireland. In 1925, Greer received a knighthood for services to bloodstock breeding.

Figure 2 (a) Sir Joseph Henry Greer (1855-1934).

Source: John Welcome, *Irish horseracing, an illustrated history* (London, 1982), p. 80.

[223] D'Arcy, *Horses, lords and racing men*, p. 49.
[224] *Irish Society* (Dublin), 6 July 1889.
[225] Welcome, *Irish horse-racing*, p. 80.

In the summer of 1916, Greer became the NS's first manager, with Nobel Bullen Johnson appointed as his assistant. Both offered their services 'without remuneration' during the First World War.[226] And these positions were made permanent when the war ended, with Greer and Bullen Johnson holding them for seventeen and twenty-one years, respectively. Greer's salary was £1000 per year, which was a significant sum at the time. In addition, he was entitled to travelling and subsistence allowances and had free rent at Tully House.[227] However, Greer did not use the housing subsidy. Instead, he sub-let Tully House and availed of this income while he lived at Curragh Grange.[228] In 1933, following Greer's resignation, the rental income from Tully House was paid to the Ministry of Agriculture in Britain. Noble Bullen Johnson's salary was listed at £350 per annum.[229]

With seventeen years of experience running Brownstown Stud in Ireland and years of racing experience in England, Greer was the ideal candidate for the position of manager of the NS. The Press were generous in support of the appointment; the *Irish Independent* noted: 'He is certainly the most suitable man for the new post, and in his hands, the work of helping to form a National Stud is assured of success'.[230] Racing publications like the *Bloodstock Breeders Review* also endorsed Greer's selection: 'It was universally recognised that Captain Greer was the man above all others worthy to be entrusted with the difficult task assigned to him. His qualifications were such that he could both speak and act with authority'.[231] Widely regarded as an excellent

[226] Correspondence from the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries to the Treasury Department, 30 Dec. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11939 (44182/1915).
[227] Correspondence with the Treasury Department and the secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries, 7 July 1919, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF/52/184.
[228] Correspondence with the Treasury Department and the secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries, 4 Apr. 1934, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF/52/184.
[229] Correspondence with Treasury Department to the secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries, 7 July 1919, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF/52/184.
[230] *Irish Independent*, 21 Dec. 1915.
[231] *The Bloodstock breeders' review: an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, vol. xxiii (London, 1934), p. 116.

judge of thoroughbreds, Greer acquired bloodstock that significantly impacted the equine industry in Ireland and abroad. An example was the purchase of *Gallinule*.

In 1889, in his early racing career, *Gallinule* showed promise but was blighted by injury. Its owner George Baird became disillusioned and offered *Gallinule* to Greer for £1000.[232] After hard bargaining, both parties agreed on £900; Baird left little doubt that he was relieved to sell, stressing that 'no one but a mad bloody Irishman would have bought that horse'.[233]But Greer's foresight proved otherwise; *Gallinule's* hereditary links to *Isonomy* triggered his interest in the horse. *Isonomy* sired two horses who had won the British Triple Crown of the 2000 Guineas, the Derby and St. Leger.[234] Greer appreciated the potential, and by the end of the 1904 season, *Gallinule's* stature as a sire was unrivalled across the United Kingdom.[235] Greer was acclaimed for purchasing *Gallinule* as the stallion contributed to enhancing the National Stud's reputation.

Greer was an advocate for the creation of a State-sponsored Stud Farm. He remarked on the government's decision to accept Hall-Walker's offer: 'It may be asserted that the failure, through prejudice or aught else, to accept such a chance of establishing a National Stud would have been regrettable, to use no stronger a term'.[236] Hall-Walker was always optimistic about the Stud's future, as evident in the following comments:

> The National Stud is the first institution of its kind in the world and an example to every other Stud. The land is of great range – 1000 acres dived into 100 paddocks. Labour is not stinted. Every mare sent to the Stud is all the better for her three months later. The wonderful sweet fresh grass enables the mare to produce the finest milk, which is the essence of life to the suckling foal produced there and at her foot. Think what that means, and then remember, in eighteen years since its foundation, it has produced the winners of every race of importance in England and Ireland, winners of something like £250,000 in stakes to be on the safe side. Think of the advantage of any owner sending up his mare to any stallion located there. That alone is a great asset. Now look around and ask yourself are you sending a mare to any other stallion where you are safe in this respect. What Stud has the same number of men employed to lead the mares? Where is the Stud that has even

[232] Ibid., p. 113.
[233] *The Bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, vol. xxiii (London, 1934), p. 113.
[234] Welcome, *Irish horseracing, an illustrated history*, p. 81.
[235] D'Arcy, *Horses, lords and racing men*, p. 231.
[236] *Irish Independent*, 3 Dec. 1915.

> decent accommodation? … if you were to visit the Stud and then visit every other Stud of importance, you would be able to compare notes.[237]

Hall-Walker was somewhat misleading in his analysis; the NS was not the first institution of its kind in the world. In France, in the early eighteenth century, King Louis XIV established a national stud to facilitate stallion breeding for agriculture and military purposes, serving the Court at Versailles. In Germany, its state stud farms date back to the eighteenth century, again serving the purpose of providing horses for the military.

Nevertheless, the success achieved by Hall-Walker at Tully Stud laid a robust platform for Greer to build upon; all that remained was to see if Greer could live up to the expectations. In 1916, the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries in Britain summarised the functions of the NS. For the war period, they took over the Stud on behalf of the War Office with a 'view to improving the breeding of horses'.[238] They recommended that Russley Park be used for military purposes.[239] In addition, they encouraged the NS in Ireland to continue operating on similar policy lines as those practised by Hall-Walker. Greer cast anxiety on the financial circumstances after analysing the final three months of the fiscal year in 1915. From early 1916, the Treasury Department was also concerned about the lack of income generated by the Stud.[240] Greer cautioned that expenditure for the next year would exceed the estimated income 'unless favourable circumstances…assist in re-establishing the blood-stock prices that prevailed before the war'.[241] With no end to the war in sight, bloodstock prices remained stagnant, and the Stud's future appeared pessimistic. When the war finally ended in 1918, the Treasury Department lobbied for the closure of the NS. The Treasury Department argued it should be abolished as it served its

[237] Galtrey, *Memoirs of a racing journalist*, p. 144.
[238] Letter of instruction for Ireland from the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries, 10 Jan. 1916, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF/52/184.
[239] Letter from the Board of Agriculture, 8 Dec. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF/52/184.
[240] Correspondence between Henry Greer and the Board of Agriculture, 26 Dec. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11939.
[241] Ibid.

purpose, but the Board of Agriculture disagreed and advised the Stud to continue trading.[242] The Board of Agriculture argued that the NS was fulfilling its purpose in supporting the horse breeding industry and had done so in challenging times; therefore, supporting its abolition was 'difficult to defend'.[243] For instance, despite the challenging circumstances and Greer's pessimistic forecasts, from 1916 to 1918, the NS posted trading profits of £2,426.[244]

Before Irish independence was achieved in 1922, the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction in Ireland fell under the remit of the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries in Britain. Horse breeding regulations in Ireland were governed by the 1918 United Kingdom Horse Breeding Act. This Act stated that owners of stallions for stud purposes in Ireland had to be licensed; if not, fines of up to £20 were issued. The Department of Agriculture also had the power to inspect and examine stallions they believed had been offered illegally in locations throughout the country or operating without a licence. Excluded from the terms of the 1918 Act were all stallions that were used exclusively by one individual for 'the services of mares belonging exclusively to that individual'.[245] Also excluded were stallions and mares used for stud purposes listed in the *General Studbook* and any mares approved by the Department of Agriculture. John James (J.J) Parkinson, one of Ireland's leading horse trainers at the time, made revealing comments about the 1918 Act: 'If the 1918 Act had been administrated in the legal sense, it would have done an infinite amount of harm to horse breeding in Ireland'.[246] In fact, Parkinson indicated that the terms of the 1918 Act were not strictly enforced across the country.[247] This lack of enforcement can be partly attributed to the change in governance in Ireland in the 1920s.

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[242] Board of Agriculture statement on the National Stud, 17 Mar. 1919, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF/52/184.
[243] Ibid.
[244] *Trading accounts and balance sheets*, 1928-9, H.C. xxxii, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie/ (28 July 2021), pp 47 to 53.
[245] Horse Breeding Act 1918, Legislation.gov.uk available at https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ (4 Oct. 2021).
[246] Seanad Eireann debate, 13 Dec. 1933, vol. 17, no.28, Horse Breeding Bill, 1933, Committee Stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (4 Oct. 2021).
[247] Seanad Eireann debate, 13 Dec. 1933, vol. 27, no.28, Horse Breeding Bill, 1933, Committee Stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (4 Oct. 2021).

And in 1934, a new Horse Breeding Act superseded the 1918 Act and was passed through the Irish Parliament.[248]

In the early decades of the twentieth century, the Department of Agriculture provided schemes for horse breeding in various counties throughout Ireland, mainly for hunters. It was departmental policy to purposely avoid breeding thoroughbreds believing this practice was best left to the private sector breeders.[249] Hence, the Department of Agriculture purchased minimal thoroughbreds annually, just enough to cover the various schemes in place.[250] Additionally, it was policy to buy stallions when their racing careers were over, as they argued it was far more economical than maintaining thoroughbreds from an early age.[251]

Under the first Cumann na nGaedheal government, these horse breeding schemes were improved and continued. Stallions selected from a departmental *Register* were provided in each district where there was a demand for their services. A committee within the district assessed the requests for covers and then reported to the Board of Agriculture. Accordingly, each district was provided with sires sold to the 'approved applicant at reasonable prices'.[252] Farmers' horses were covered by thoroughbred, half-bred, or Irish draught stallions on the *District Register* on pre-booked appointments. These horse breeding schemes were only available to those living on farming income. The purpose of this rule was to eliminate those with other primary sources of income. In 1924, the typical charge for a nomination to a stallion was £2, and the preference was given to mares under six years old and those 'likely to produce good class hunters from thoroughbred stallions'.[253] Each farmer who met the criteria was entitled to nominate one mare

[248] Horse Breeding Act 1934, Eisb, available athttps://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1934/act/3/enacted/en/print (4 Oct. 2021).
[249] Memorandum by the Department of Agriculture on the National Stud, 31 Aug. 1935, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A.
[250] Memorandum by the Department of Agriculture on the National Stud, 31 Aug. 1935, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A.
[251] Ibid.
[252] Memorandum on horse breeding in Ireland, 1 Sept. 1925, Department of the Taoiseach, S45539.
[253] Applications for stallions and mare nominations, 8 Mar. 1924, Department of Agriculture, 92/2/2122.

only. Flaunting these regulations could result in prosecution. There were also policies in place for governance at the National Stud.

For the first twelve years, it was NS policy not to sell horses at public auctions, concentrating instead on private sales. In 1928, this strategy was reversed, with private sales no longer contemplated and all horses offered at public auction.[254] This was a progressive policy change as it offered more transparency. Another policy was to sell most yearlings born at the NS. But these yearlings from Ireland could not be exported without the Board of Agriculture's consent.[255] The Board of Agriculture explained the rationale behind selling the yearlings:

> The exhibition and sale annually of a number of National Stud yearlings of fine physique and confirmation would indicate the type of thoroughbred that the government considered most desirable, and if that type proved successful on the racecourse, breeders would endeavor to produce it.[256]

The Board of Agriculture argued that this policy would uniquely define the NS. However, they cautioned that time was needed before results would be realised or appreciated, as the Stud was at the experimental stage in its development.[257] The Board of Agriculture hoped that breeders in Ireland would utilise the services of the valuable sires held at the Stud.[258] And there were ample opportunities with two high-class stallions and thirty broodmares available for breeding. But the economic circumstances were challenging. Some of the most significant expense was relieved when the NS leased the Stud's thoroughbreds to the fifth earl of Lonsdale and to King George V.

[254] *Irish Examiner*, 13 Apr. 1928.
[255] Board of Agriculture statement on the National Stud, 17 Mar. 1919, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF/52/184.
[256] Ibid.
[257] Ibid.
[258] Letter of instruction for Ireland from the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries, 10 Jan. 1916, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF/52/184.

2.3. The *Yellow Earl*

Leasing agreements were arranged by the NS with the fifth earl of Lonsdale, Hugh Cecil Lowther (1857-1944), and King George V (1865-1936). Hugh was born in London, the second son of Henry Lowther (1818-1876), the third earl of Lonsdale. He is widely remembered by his nickname, the *Yellow Earl*, which was a reference to his flamboyance. In 1882, the eldest Lowther son, the fourth earl of Lonsdale, St. George, died unexpectedly, leaving no heir, having held the title for six years. Therefore, Hugh inherited the Lowther estate in Cumbria and all other business interests, including highly profitable coal mines. Instantly, Lonsdale became one of the wealthiest individuals in England, but neither fame nor fortune was wisely managed or invested. Indeed, Lonsdale was renowned for leading a high life, and after decades of bad business investments and extravagant spending, he was declared bankrupt. And by his death in 1944, his family inheritance was exhausted. Historian Jane Ridley elaborates: 'Lonsdale was a fantasist, and he invented so many stories about himself that it is hard to know the truth…he was an aristocratic showman and celebrity. He was also a wastrel, entirely lacking in a social conscience, and a spoilt child who never grew up'.[259]

For all Lonsdale's apparent flaws, he mixed in influential circles. Like the Hall-Walkers in Liverpool, Lonsdale enjoyed a close relationship with the aristocracy and the royal family, often entertaining King George, and Queen Mary at his Newmarket property at Clifton House. Before the leasing arrangement with the NS, Lonsdale owned a few horses but nothing on a significant scale. When the opportunity presented to lease the NS horses, he seized it with the energy and vigour so much characteristic of his extravagant personality.[260]

According to his biographer, the British government approached Lonsdale, who was 'captivated by the idea' of leasing the horses as it elevated him into one of the UK's most

[259] Jane Ridley, 'Douglas Sutherland: The yellow earl: almost an emperor, not quite a gentleman' in *Times Literary Supplement*, no. 5883, (2016), p. 27.
[260] Douglas Sutherland, *The yellow earl, almost an emperor, not quite a gentleman, the life of Hugh Lowther, 5th Earl of Lonsdale*, 1857-1944, (Ludlow, 1965), p. 172.

important positions.[261] Other factors were at play. Considering Britain's involvement in the First World War, it was unsurprising that they sought a private sponsor for the Stud. Moreover, given the wealth at Lonsdale's disposal, he was well-positioned to maintain thoroughbred horses. It was the perfect scenario for Lonsdale; he rose from relative obscurity in horse racing to sitting at the top table with the most influential racing figures.

The new leasing agreement with the NS and Lonsdale was discussed in Parliament, with members expressing dissatisfaction. The Ministry of Agriculture's secretary, Francis Acland MP (Liberal), defended it, claiming that the terms were advantageous to the British government and 'few persons except a good sportsman like Lord Lonsdale would care to accept them'.[262] Offering reassurance to the objectors, Acland suggested the lease term was only for one year, and it was limited to leasing seven two-year-old horses with a fifty per cent share in profits to be divided between the NS and Lonsdale.[263] But Acland's information was misleading. In fact, the leasing arrangement would last for over twenty years, with Lonsdale's access to the Stud's horses far more significant than initially reported.

The lease terms between the NS and Lonsdale are challenging to assess. There are no comprehensive or definitive records of its exact terms or conditions. There is also confusion over how race prizemoney was divided between both parties. Carlisle Archives hold significant material for the Lonsdale family estate, including information on the leasing agreement with the NS. This material covers the period from 1916 to 1933, coinciding with Henry Greer's time as director at the NS. The records show that Lonsdale and the NS shared all winning race profits at fifty per cent each throughout its duration.[264] But the accounts for the NS available through the House of Commons parliamentary papers list the profits split at one-third for the NS and two-

[261] Ibid.
[262] *Leeds Mercury*, 2 Mar. 1916.
[263] *Leeds Mercury*, 2 Mar. 1916.
[264] Lord Lonsdale's horses leased from the National Stud 1916-33, Weatherby & Sons statement, Carlisle Archives, DLONS/L9/2/71.

thirds in favour of leaseholders for the duration of all existing leases.[265] Records from the Dominions Office confirm that for the first four years of Lonsdale's lease with the NS, all winning racing stakes and expenses were divided at fifty per cent.[266] And a memorandum from the Dominions office confirms that these terms with the NS were reviewed after 1920. From then on, the NS received one-third of the winning stakes, and Lonsdale two-thirds with relevant expenses deemed Lonsdale's responsibility.[267] The records at Carlisle Archives also list the expenses as Lonsdale's liability. From 1916 to 1933, these expenses included race entry fees of £16,777, with jockey's wages and training fees costing £6,359 with associated expenses of £23,136.[268] Lonsdale leased thirty-eight horses (see Appendix 2(a) for a list of the horses leased and winning racing stakes). Twenty-two won prize money, with the remaining sixteen horses contributing nothing. In total, Lonsdale won £41,569, of which £22,005 was paid to the NS.[269] The leasing arrangement was not profitable for Lonsdale, with a trading deficit of £3,572 for its term.[270]

Given Lonsdale's carefree attitude to his finances, he accepted the trading losses, and of course, the advantages of mixing in influential circles superseded all else, with the horses providing and maintaining the prestige he craved.[271] Although, it should be noted that the lease with the NS was not without its problems. In 1926, an incident tempered Lonsdale's enthusiasm. A difference of opinion arose following the NS's decision to sell two horses, *Feridoon* and *Cobra*, to the Aga Khan. Lonsdale believed he had the legal rights to all of the NS's horses, and this contravened the terms; he argued: 'The arrangement to lease the yearlings was not merely a

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[265] *Trading accounts and balance sheets, 1921-22*, p. 369, H.C. 1923, xcii, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie/ (28 July 2021), pp 120-123.
[266] Memorandum by the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, 1 Oct. 1935, Dominions Office, DO/35/474 (20875/19), p. 4.
[267] Ibid.
[268] Lord Lonsdale's horses leased from the National Stud 1916-33, Weatherby's & Sons statement, Carlisle Archives, DLONS/L9/2/71.
[269] Lord Lonsdale's horses leased from the National Stud 1916-33, Weatherby's & Sons statement, Carlisle Archives, DLONS/L9/2/71.
[270] Ibid.
[271] Sutherland, *The yellow earl*, p. 172.

tacit understanding but a substantial one on business lines, for I agreed to pay all the heavy expenses in connection with the horses and making them suitable for stud purpose'.[272] Under the lease, all horses returned to the NS after their racing career. The confusion arose because shortly before the two yearlings were sold to the Aga Khan, Lonsdale's horse trainer, Fred Darling, visited the NS, and he left the Stud convinced one of the yearlings, *Freidoon*, would be leased to Lonsdale.[273] The Press reported on the controversy speculating Lonsdale was about to launch legal action against the NS, but within a short time, relations between all concerned appeared conciliatory. Greer and Lonsdale moved quickly to downplay the seriousness of the incident claiming it was 'much ado about nothing' and stressed any rumours about legal action were unfounded.[274] Greer explained that the Stud's two yearlings were sold to the Aga Khan to generate resources to purchase mares.[275] And this proved to be an accurate assessment as the NS trading accounts show that the income generated from the sale of the yearlings was indeed reinvested in the replenishment of bloodstock at the NS.[276] Lonsdale was also critical of the NS policy of selling top-class bloodstock to private breeders, which meant that the horses would not return for stud purposes. He believed this was detrimental to the NS in the long term.[277] In any event, Greer had a history of financial dealings and an association with private breeders such as Aga Khan.

Greer had sold Brownstown Stud at the Curragh three years previously to Aga Khan, who had significant plans to breed in Ireland, England, and France.[278] And, in 1931, the Aga Khan offered Greer an opportunity to manage Sheshoon Stud on the Curragh while maintaining his

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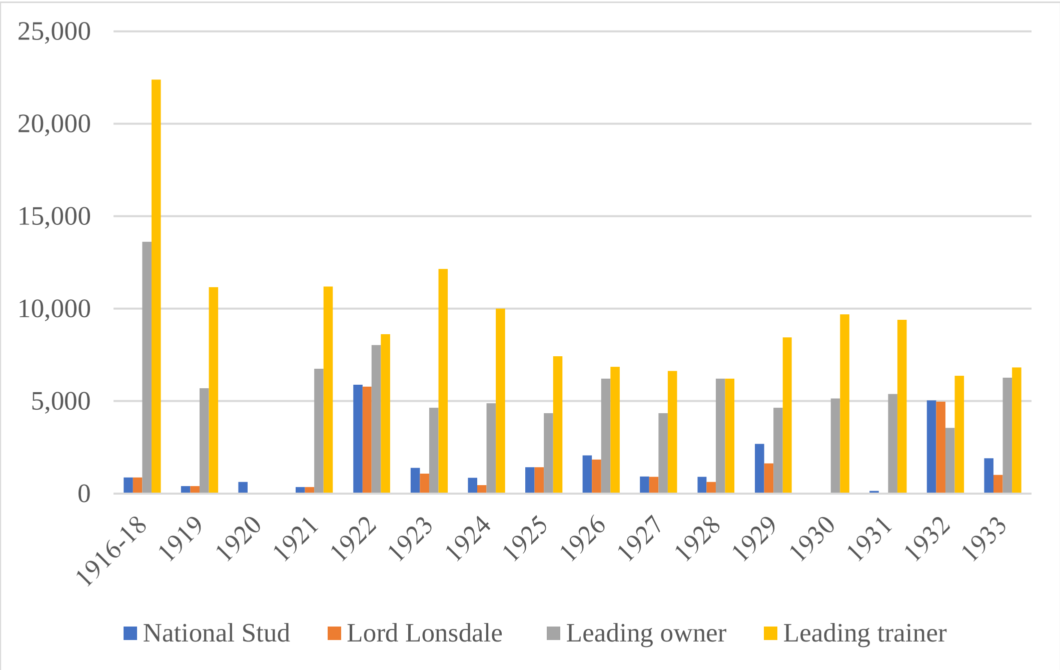
272 *Evening Herald*, 30 Sept. 1926.
273 Ibid.
274 *The Irish Times*, 2 Oct. 1926.
275 Ibid.
276 *Trading accounts and balance sheets, 1926*, p. 371, H.C. 1927, xvi, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie/ (8 Aug. 2021), pp 66-71.
276 *Evening Herald*, 30 Sept. 1926.
277 Ibid.
278 *Freemans Journal*, 18 Dec. 1923.

role at the NS.[279] Greer accepted the offer, but there was an apparent conflict of interest. It was not appropriate for the manager of the NS to be employed by the private sector as it infringed upon the interests and professional practice expected of a State-run stud farm. In any event, Greer retired from the NS the following year. This was the beginning of a long pattern over the decades of private sector interests overlapping the interests of the NS.

The lease with Lonsdale performed reasonably well, as reflected in the following data. Listed below are the details of winning race stakes in Ireland from 1916 to 1933. (No statistics are available in the records for the leading Owner and Trainer for 1920). The data includes leading trainers/owners such as Lord Lonsdale, Phillip Behan, J.J Parkinson, Michael Dawson, A.J Blake, and the Aga Khan, amongst others.

Figure 2 (b) Winning stakes for the National Stud, Lord Lonsdale, the leading Owner, and Trainer in Ireland from 1916 to 1933.



Source: *Trading accounts and balance sheets,* p. 437, H.C. 1936 xxix, and Lord Lonsdale's horses lease 1916-33, Weatherby & Sons statement, Carlisle Archives, DLONS/L9/2/71.

[279] *Leinster Leader*, 1 Sept.1934.

Horses through Lonsdale's lease accumulated £21,475 in prize money, at an average of £1432 per annum, which was eighty-six per cent of the overall total of £25,550 earned at the NS.[280] The NS's earnings of £25,550 were approximately seventy-one per cent lower than the leading Owner's totals of £89,755 and eighty-two per cent lower than the leading Trainer's totals of £143,413.[281] J.J Parkinson was the most prolific owner on the winning lists. He topped the lists from 1917 to 1918 and again in 1923 and 1925. In 1922, Lonsdale and the NS had one of their most significant successes when *Royal Lancer* won the English and Irish St. Legers. *Diligence* won Goodwood's Sussex Stakes the following year, but he retired due to injury shortly afterwards. At stud, *Diligence* sired *Daumont,* who won the 1929 Coronation Stakes at Ascot. Other notable winners included *Warden of the Marches*. He won three races in 1926, including the Champion Stakes at Newmarket. *Endowment* won a grade three race at Newmarket and dead-heated for second place in the English One Thousand Guineas in 1927. *Nuns Veil* won three races worth £2,297, including one at a listed level in 1932.[282] The most successful for Lonsdale and the NS was the broodmare *Myrobella.* She was trained by Fred Darling and won seven races, including four at graded level. When retired to the NS, *Myrobella* foaled *Big Game*, a significant stallion in the mid-1940s.

The racing arrangement with King George V and the NS was much less significant in terms of the number of horses than the lease with Lonsdale. In the 1920s, thoroughbreds at the King's Sandringham Stud performed poorly on the racecourse, and connections hoped that the lease with the NS would improve the fortunes of the Royal Stud.[283] A limited number of horses (no details available on the exact amount) were leased from the NS. According to Press reports,

[280] *Trading accounts and balance sheets,* p. 437, H.C. 1936 xxix, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (4 July 2021), pp. 51-58, and Lord Lonsdale's horses leased from the National Stud 1916-33, Weatherby & Sons statement, Carlisle Archives, DLONS/L9/2/71.
[281] *The Bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, vol. v to vol. xxii (London, 1916 to 1934).
[282] Leicester, *Bloodstock breeding*, p. 395.
[283] *Western Mail*, 8 July 1927.

the number of horses leased by the NS were at the 'discretion' of Henry Greer.[284] But the Royal Stud's hopes for the lease were not fulfilled as it brought few successes. One high point arrived when *Lyme Regis* won the Prince of Wales Stakes at Royal Ascot in 1929; otherwise, no significant wins were achieved. Nonetheless, in the 1920s, it was events away from the racecourse which was to have an impact on the NS in Ireland.

2.4. Battle over ownership

In February 1922, given the uncertainty of the political climate in Ireland, Greer, in a 'private capacity', informed the Ministry of Agriculture in Britain that he had concerns that warranted 'grave consideration'.[285] Remarking on circumstances in Ireland, which was heading towards civil war, Greer claimed there was little more than 'an even money chance' of establishing an Irish Free State.[286] But in the event of the Free State coming into existence, he foresaw four possible outcomes for the future of the NS. Firstly, it could be sold; secondly, it could be transferred to the Free State government; thirdly, the bloodstock could be relocated to England with the property at Tully sold; and lastly, the Stud could be retained as in its present existence. The prospect of transferring the NS to the Irish government was the most contentious for Greer.[287]

Greer cautioned the Board of Agriculture that the British public would disapprove of any decision to permanently locate the NS in Ireland. Moreover, he argued that it would be 'very unpopular' for Ireland to benefit from an industry that remained financially resourced by funds from the British Exchequer.[288] Therefore, Greer urged the Board of Agriculture to retain control of the NS. If the Irish government objected, the Board of Agriculture had a contingency plan.

[284] *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 2 Oct. 1926.
[285] Private correspondence from Captain Henry Greer to the secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries, 12 Feb. 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.
[286] Ibid.
[287] Private correspondence from Captain Henry Greer to the Secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries, 12 Feb. 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.
[288] Ibid.

This involved the NS being placed under the control of a Trust Commission, which would be composed of representatives of the British Jockey Club and representatives of the Irish Turf Club.[289] Greer was a prominent member of both organisations; therefore, his influence would have been significant in any future commission.

Greer believed it was Hall-Walker's wish to maintain the NS in Ireland under British control. Therefore, he may have been surprised when the Ministry of Agriculture revealed that Hall-Walker indicated that he supported handing it over to the Free State government.[290] The Ministry also advised that Hall-Walker was against relocating or selling the NS.[291] As outlined earlier, Hall-Walker advocated for the equine industry's long-term interests and understood the risk if the NS was not located in Ireland. The NS had a solid track record amidst years of instability in Ireland. It was built on strong foundations and held in high regard, and Hall-Walker appreciated these factors. Greer cautioned the British government that transferring the Stud to England was not viable. He argued that finding a location compared to Tully would be extremely difficult and attempting to re-create a replica in England would be expensive.[292]

In any event, the Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed in London on 6 December 1922 and ratified in Dáil Eireann a month later. The new governing party was Cumann naGaedheal, led by William T. Cosgrave. Fergus A. D'Arcy notes: 'the old, and still, ruling class of Irish racing were fortunate in having W.T. Cosgrave as leader of the Irish Free State. He was and remained a good friend of breeding and racing'.[293] An example of Cosgrave's appreciation of the industry was apparent in his nominations to the Irish Free State's upper house, the Seanad. Sixteen of thirty

[289] Private correspondence from Captain Henry Greer to the Secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries, 10 Mar. 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.
[290] Correspondence from the Secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries to Sir George Barstow at the Treasury Department, 13 Apr. 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.
[291] Ibid.
[292] Private correspondence from Captain Henry Greer to the Secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries, 12 Feb. 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.
[293] D'Arcy, *Horses, lords and racing men*, p. 270.

Senate members were 'of the class formerly known as Southern Unionists.'[294] Amongst the nominations were prominent Irish racing figures Henry Greer, Lord Mayo, J.J Parkinson, Sir Horace Plunkett, and the former commander-in-chief of the British army, General Bryan Mahon. He was a senior steward of the National Hunt Steeplechase Committee and a member of the Irish Turf Club. He trained horses at Greer's former Stud at Brownstown House.

Greer's loyalties lay firmly with the British establishment, but his nomination to the Irish Seanad positively impacted his relationship with the Irish Free State government. Tony Varley argues that those with 'unionist sympathies' who remained in Ireland following the creation of the Free State adopted 'a ghetto mentality that desired to have nothing whatever to do with the new regime'.[295] But in Greer's case, he displayed pragmatism; he knew he had to quickly adapt to the new political surroundings as the Stud's future depended on his cooperation with the new Irish government. The following incident is evidence of how Greer embraced the unique circumstances.

In July 1927, during an international show jumping event in Greece, the Irish Free State Army team competed and lost against their British counterparts. After the event, the Irish team were accused of tardiness entering the competition unprepared.[296] An accusation which enraged Greer. And as a result, he wrote a letter to the *Irish Times* launching a defense of the Free State Army team: 'It must have been absolutely impossible for the Irish Free State army, in the time at their disposal, to have selected and trained horses to compete on equal terms with these highly specialised competitors'.[297] Greer argued that experience-wise, the Free State army was in its infancy compared to the British; therefore, the criticism was unjust.[298] It could be argued that this

[294] Donal O'Sullivan, *The Irish Free State and its Senate, a study in contemporary politics* (London, 1940), pp 90-1.
[295] Tony Varley, 'Gentry inclusion via class politics? Negotiating class transition politically in the Irish Free State' in Ian d' Alton & Ida Milne (eds.), *Protestant and Irish, the minority search for a place in independent Ireland* (Cork, 2019), pp 99-121 at p. 100.
[296] *The Irish Times*, 7 July 1927.
[297] Ibid.
[298] Ibid.

was evidence of a shift in Greer's mindset towards representatives of the Irish Free State. Ian d'Alton argues: 'Southern Protestants' identity was a constant battle between experience and imagination,' and they came to terms with their newly formed identity through 'acceptance, obedience and participation'.[299] Indeed, Greer had much more to achieve through participation, and his willingness to do so allowed the NS to prosper in the long term.

Despite the hostile political atmosphere throughout Ireland in the early 1920s, racing was not significantly affected. On the contrary, the industry's value was appreciated, which explains the protection it was afforded. The following report in the *Bloodstock Breeders Review* was instructive in this respect:

> Throughout this troublous time, no harm was done to any thoroughbred. A story is told which illustrates the solicitude of the desperados for the interests of the horse breeding industry. The leader of one of the roving bands of irregulars [anti-treaty IRA] one day accosted a studmaster, and in a commanding tone, asked him where his mares were. "They have all been brought in," was the answer. "That's all right," came the rejoinder, "because I received orders they were not to be disturbed if I could avoid it…in Ireland, political unrest is a sort of recurrent fever, but there is always hope for a nation that is so passionately devoted to sport and the instruments of sport.[300]

There may be an element of exaggeration and romanticism to the above recollection of events. But, throughout this volatile period, stud farms and their estates remained largely unaffected by violence. Meanwhile, the 'Big Houses' (British-owned landed estates) were regularly targeted, with many the victims of arson attacks. This is a fascinating anomaly, and it is evident that the equine industry acted as a shield against the prevailing circumstances.

The British Board of Agriculture were acutely aware of the value of the NS, and to protect their interests they were secretive in their plans for its future, as evident in Greer's early correspondence with the War Office: 'We should be glad if it [National Stud] was kept off any

[299] Ian d' Alton, 'No country: Protestant' belongings' in independent Ireland, 1922-49' in Ian d' Alton & Ida Milne (eds.), *Protestant and Irish, the minority search for a place in independent Ireland* (Cork, 2019), pp 19-33 at p. 20.
[300] *The Bloodstock breeders' review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, vol. Xi (London, 1922), p. 2.

list that goes to the representatives of the Irish Government. We don't want to suggest to them that here is something they might claim'.[301] The list Greer referred to was for property in Ireland formerly under British control that may now be under the remit of the Irish Free State government. This property was now subject to negotiations with the British government over rightful ownership following the establishment of the Free State. Here we get a sense of the value of the NS to the British Board of Agriculture. They were determined to omit it from future negotiations, which is a measure of its success. It was only six years in official operation, and to be regarded so highly reflected its management and business structure.

But the British Board of Agriculture's tactics of secrecy failed, and within a brief time, the Irish government laid claim to the ownership of the Stud. Senator Maurice Moore, an Irish Free State government representative, contacted Greer, demanding that Tully Stud Farm be 'passed over to the Irish government'.[302] Moore advised that an agreement on the ownership of the bloodstock at the Stud should be reached to ensure Ireland 'would have her fair share of everything that formerly belonged to the United Kingdom'.[303] Greer, acting in the interests of the British government, claimed the Stud in Free State control would be a 'white elephant' and cause nothing except 'hardship and expense'.[304] He warned that the transfer of the NS would result in several influential figures refusing to invest money in the establishment.[305] There is no evidence to support this claim. And likely, he may have been scaremongering to ensure the British government retained its control of the NS. In any event, this did not deter the Irish government. They were unwavering in their stance, with the Minister for Agriculture, Patrick Hogan, demanding that the Colonial Office hand over the land and the bloodstock at the NS at 'their

[301] Private correspondence from Captain Henry Greer to the secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries, 18 Feb. 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.
[302] Private correspondence from Captain Henry Greer to the secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries, 24 Feb. 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.
[303] Ibid.
[304] Private correspondence from Captain Henry Greer to the secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries, 20 Mar. 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.
[305] Minutes of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries, 10 Mar. 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.

earliest possible convenience'.[306] Mary E. Daly has argued that Hogan was a shrewd politician utilising to 'the maximum the physical and geographical resources' of Ireland over the first decade of the Irish Free State government.[307]

The Board of Agriculture refused the Irish government's demand to hand over the Stud. Instead, they established a sub-committee to examine the circumstances. The sub-committee produced a memorandum stating the Stud was a gift from Hall-Walker to the British nation in the national interest. Furthermore, they argued it was gifted before the emergence of the Free State, thus rendering the Anglo-Irish Treaty terms invalid.[308] Therefore, they were not prepared to hand over the NS. Propaganda stemming from both governments played a role in the battle for ownership of the NS, with each using it as a bargaining tool. Greer, incensed at the Irish Free State government's claims to the NS, suggested that several Irish government officials had close ties to owners and trainers in Ireland and that they were not acting in the best interests of the Stud but instead preserving 'jobs for their friends'.[309] Again, this was speculation by Greer, but it was clear that he was extremely uncomfortable with the circumstances. The British Ministry of Agriculture enflamed matters further. They claimed the Irish government cared little for the NS and were prepared to let it pass over to the British government, only for their fear of a nationalist backlash.[310]

The significant profits and the increasing value of the bloodstock at the NS played a crucial role in the British government's attempt to maintain control of the Stud.[311] In December 1923, the accomplishments of the NS were commented upon in Parliament and greeted with loud

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[306] Correspondence from the Ministry of Agriculture in the Free State and Winston Churchill at the Colonial Office, 3 Mar. 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.
[307] Mary E. Daly, *The first department, a history of the department of agriculture* (Dublin, 2002), p. 153.
[308] Memorandum of the Sub-Committee, 17 Mar. 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.
[309] Correspondence from Captain Henry Greer and the secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries, 20 Mar. 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.
[310] Correspondence from the secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries and Sir George Barstow at the Treasury Department, 7 Apr. 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.
[311] Correspondence from the secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries and the Minister of Economic Affairs, 2 May 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.

cheers when Robert Sanders MP revealed that the NS was 'doing wonders' competing with leading private breeders.[312] Civil servants from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries attributed this success to Greer's solid business and management skills.[313] But the secretary of the Board of Agriculture was concerned that Greer could leave the NS. He cautioned George Barstow at the Treasury that a change of control would result in Greer's resignation and a severe decline in the Stud's fortunes.[314] The British Board of Agriculture proposed to the Irish Free State government that until a satisfactory conclusion, the NS remain under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture in Britain, with a share of the profits divided between governments.[315]

In May 1923, Hogan left little doubt about the government's regard for the Stud and the Irish government's intention to retain and promote it as a valuable Irish state asset:

> I hope the Dáil is not under the impression that the National Stud is not an extremely useful institution…all I want to impress on the Dáil is that the National Stud is a most useful and valuable acquisition, and we do not propose to allow it to be interfered with or its usefulness impaired in any way.[316]

Hogan claimed the NS was 'probably the most valuable stud in the world' with mares 'that money could hardly buy'.[317] He also argued that the Irish State legally owned the land at Tully, even if there was disagreement between the governments over the ownership of the bloodstock (in legal terms recognised as moveable assets).[318] Therefore, the issue remained contentious.

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[312] *Western Daily Press*, 21 Dec. 1923.
[313] Correspondence from the secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries and the Minister of Economic Affairs, 2 May 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.
[314] Correspondence from the secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries and Sir George Barstow at the Treasury Department, 7 Apr. 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.
[315] Correspondence from the Secretary of the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries and the Minister of Economic Affairs, 13 Apr. 1922, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.
[316] Dáil Éireann debate, 29 May 1923, vol. 3, no. 18, Estimates for public service, Minister for Agriculture Patrick Hogan to Deputy Johnson, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (13 May 2019).
[317] Dáil Éireann debate, 10 July 1924, vol. 8, no. 9, Committee on Finance, Estimates for public service, Minister for Agriculture Patrick Hogan to Deputy McKenna, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (13 May 2019).
[318] Dáil Éireann debate, 10 July 1924, vol. 8, no. 9, Committee on Finance, Estimates for public service, Minister for Agriculture Patrick Hogan to Deputy McKenna, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/(13 May 2019).

2.5. Stalemate sets in

Meanwhile, the NS continued to operate with Greer as its manager and was financed by the British government. It was not until 1926 that the British and Irish governments concluded the final financial settlement according to the terms of the Anglo-Irish Treaty. Included in the *Heads of the Ultimate Financial Settlement* was clause six, stating:

> Subject to the provisions of this Agreement, the British government undertake to make no further claims in respect of any portion of the value of property taken over by the Irish Free State belonging to British government departments whose administration and powers were under Article 9 of the Provisional Government (Transfer of Functions) Order in Council of 1 April 1922, excluded from transfer to the Irish Free State Government.[319]

Excluded from this provision were three properties in Ireland: Kilmainham Hospital in Dublin, the Royal Hibernian School in Dublin, and the Tully Stud Farm in Kildare (the National Stud). This was a critical clause as it allowed the British government to maintain their claim to the NS. The Royal Dublin Hibernian Military School had a long association with British military history. Located at Phoenix Park in Dublin, it was founded in 1769 to educate orphaned children of members of the regular British army.[320] By the mid-nineteenth century, it functioned as a feeder to the British military, with children as young as twelve enlisting. In 1880, the school had 410 male students studying various subjects, from maths, British history, music, carpentry, and religion (Protestant), amongst other subjects.[321] When the Irish Free State came into existence in 1922, the school was moved to Somerset Barracks in Kent. The buildings in Phoenix Park were then occupied for a short time by two battalions of British forces serving in Ireland.[322] Kilmainham Hospital also had a long association with Britain. It was built in the 1680s by the surveyor general of Ireland, Sir William Robinson (1670-1700), under the influence of the lord

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[319] *Heads of the ultimate financial settlement between the British government and the government of the Irish Free State*, 19 Mar. 1926, available at Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/332/194

[320] Michael Quane, 'The Royal Hibernian Military School Phoenix Park, Dublin: part II' in *Dublin Historical Record*, xviii (1963), p. 45.

[321] Ibid., p. 54.

[322] Ibid.

lieutenant of Ireland, James Butler (1677-1685). For over two centuries, it served as a retirement home for Irish soldiers that served in the British army. In 1927, it closed as a hospital and was used by the Garda Siochana and the National Museum of Ireland. In the present day, it serves as the home of the Irish Museum of Modern Arts. All these institutions had a particular resonance with the British government, hence, the protectionism policies in place. In the Dáil, the Minister for Finance, Ernest Blythe, responded to questions concerning the three excluded institutions; he advised: 'These particular places are held by bodies of trustees under charters'.[323]

In November 1927, the British government attempted to force the issue by threatening to withhold the Stud's profits pending a settlement.[324] But the Irish government counter-argued that they were entitled to its share of the profits regardless of any future settlement as the Stud was operating within the Free State.[325] Once again, the issue caught the Press's attention in Britain. *The Sportsman* demanded an immediate resolution cautioning that:

> There was no reason whatsoever why the golden link which connects Ireland with England…for bloodstock and hunters should be broken…be our differences with people of Ireland what they may be, let us agree on this one point…that horse breeding of which the National Stud is a magnificent emblem and [it] should be maintained far above all clouds of controversy and bitterness.[326]

These pleas for an immediate solution were ignored. Hence, the issue remained in a stalemate throughout the 1920s.

In 1930, there was a considerable shift in the Irish government's stance on the way forward regarding the NS. The Irish Department of Finance presented an internal memorandum summarising its position. The Irish Department of Agriculture was willing to take over the NS

[323] Dáil Eireann debate, 8 Dec 1926, vol. 17, no.8, Debate on the adjournment – ultimate financial settlement between the British and Irish governments, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (4 Oct. 2021).
[324] Dail Eireann debate, 24 Nov. 1927, vol. 21, no. 18, Questions, oral answers, the National Sud, Ernest Blythe to Deputy T. Derrig, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (13 May 2019).
[325] Ibid.
[326] Press clippings from *The Sportsman* newspaper, April 1926, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/12.

on the condition that Henry Greer retained the directorship.[327] At the same time, they did not regard a State-owned Stud as 'being necessary or of any value' with the Department's work to develop horse breeding in Ireland.[328] In the ideal circumstances, they favoured leasing the Stud to private breeders because of the extremely high costs of maintaining thoroughbreds.[329] Moreover, this policy shift was influenced by the worldwide economic circumstances stemming from the 1929 depression, with the NS suffering trading losses. Also, there was a reluctance within the Department of Agriculture because of the rather speculative nature of the thoroughbred industry. Very often, thoroughbreds with the most renowned quality bloodlines failed to live up to expectations.

In February 1932, the British government cautioned that the NS could be closed within a few years as it was challenging for the British to control because it was in Ireland.[330] Also, in Ireland, there was a notable change in the political circumstances. The 1932 Irish general election resulted in W.T. Cosgrave's Cumann na nGaedheal being defeated by Fianna Fáil, led by none other than Éamon de Valera. Alvin Jackson argues that Cosgrave's government was heavily focused on establishing the 'credibility of the new Irish state within the international community and setting financial policy on terms that the British government appreciated'.[331] But Jackson elaborates: 'These strategies ignored the needs of a disillusioned Irish electorate under significant pressure from the worldwide recession and the significant budgetary cuts' introduced by the Cumann na nGaedheal government in the early 1930s.[332] And in 1933, De Valera consolidated his power in Dáil Éireann by calling a snap election and thus, Fianna Fáil gained a significant majority. The *Northern Whig* speculated that this political change was 'likely to be less helpful

[327] Memorandum relative to Tully Stud Farm, 23 July 1930, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A.
[328] Ibid.
[329] Ibid.
[330] *Northern Whig*, 23 Feb. 1932.
[331] Jackson, *Ireland 1798-1998*, pp 282-3.
[332] Ibid., p. 283.

than it has been in the past'.[333] *The Bloodstock Breeders Review* were even more horrified at these developments, arguing that the new Irish regime consisted of a group of 'visionaries, animated by a hatred of Great Britain determined to sever all association with the Crown'.[334] These political developments impacted the NS and policy going forward.

2.6. Economic depression

In 1932, an economic trade war erupted between Ireland and Britain, which lasted until 1938. Jackson notes that the cause of this impasse was Fianna Fáil's 'dream of an Ireland untrammeled by what it perceived as degrading links with the former imperial power'.[335] With the Economic War occupying the mindset of the British government, De Valera began to implement policies designed to unravel the terms of the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty. For instance, he abolished the oath of allegiance to the king and terminated the Seanad, denying the loyalist minority a political voice within the Irish Parliament. Jackson argues with some justification that abolishing the Seanad diminished the equine industry's influence within government circles.[336] And to further achieve his aims, the following policies were implemented.

De Valera implemented trade tariffs and quotas and, and withheld the land annuities while at the same time promoting a self-sufficient nation.[337] Cronin illuminates further: 'This ideal would apply to both the agriculture and industrial sphere and would, it was believed, produce a reasonable level of prosperity, secure jobs for the future and separate Ireland from its dependence on the British market'.[338] But the reality of the policies painted a rather bleak picture. Under various British Land Acts in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, farmers in Ireland were indebted to the British government for loans called annuities advanced to purchase

[333] *Northern Whig*, 23 Feb 1932.
[334] *The Bloodstock breeders' review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, vol. xxii (London, 1933), p. 104.
[335] Jackson, *Ireland, 1798-1998*, pp 288-89.
[336] Ibid., p. 292.
[337] Mike Cronin, 'Golden dreams, harsh realities: economics and informal empire in the Irish Free State' in Mike Cronin and John M. Regan, (eds.), *Ireland: the politics of independence, 1922-49* (London, 2000), pp 144-63 at p. 154.
[338] Ibid.

their holdings. These land annuities were withheld as part of De Valera's economic war strategy. The British government reacted by introducing a twenty per cent import levy on livestock from Ireland, which was later raised to forty per cent. These developments had ramifications for the equine industry. Bloodstock sales at the Dublin Horse Show slumped from 482 lots aggregating 45,936 guineas in 1931 to 355 lots aggregating 27,163 guineas in 1932.[339] At the time, the managing director of the Anglo-Irish Bloodstock Agency, More O'Farrell, cautioned that the tax duties would 'force a complete deadlock' in relations, and the increase to forty per cent would 'finish' the market altogether.[340]

And the British government introduced further measures. Taxes were levied on Irish racehorses entering Britain, which had a devastating impact. Welcome illuminates: 'Bloodstock dealing virtually ceased to be a profitable enterprise…many of the better horses were quickly shipped off to England during the negotiations before the newly imposed duties had time to take effect'.[341] This had a knock-on effect with low attendance at race meetings, other meetings curtailed, with some courses closed altogether. However, when questioned, Greer claimed the tax would not affect 'to any great extent the high-class horses with which he dealt'.[342] Considering the prevailing economic circumstances, Greer was less pressurised because the NS horses were exempt from importation duty. Horses at the NS were exempt because there was no clear determination on the ownership of the Stud. Therefore, it was impossible to clearly define who was responsible for the duty tax. But, despite Greer's optimism, the Stud depended on a thriving industry in Ireland and the United Kingdom for the NS to flourish and in 1931, the Stud reported a trading loss of approximately £21,000.[343] Greer relied on the reputation of the Stud's bloodstock and livestock in countering the losses. The Studs' leading stallions *Diligence* and

339 *Western Mail,* 10 Nov. 1932.
340 Ibid.
341 Welcome, *Irish horseracing*, p. 149.
342 *Western Mail,* 10 Nov. 1932.
343 *Lichfield Mercury*, 11 Mar. 1932.

Royal Lancer were still in demand, while pedigree cattle on the stud's farm produced steady cash flow.[344] But, as the 1930s advanced, the trading losses continued, with stallion fees declining, fueling further speculation on the Stud's future. In July 1932, *The Field* published an article in Britain speculating that it was verging on closure.[345] The editors blamed these developments on the Irish Free State government because they reduced investments in light horse breeding in Ireland 'to an entirely inadequate level'.[346] In addition, they speculated that mares and foals at the NS were to be sold in the Newmarket Autumn Sales.[347] When this was put to Greer, he offered no conclusive answer as 'he was not in a position to confirm or deny these claims'.[348] At the same time, he cautioned that 'everything at the NS was uncertain…and it was not possible to tell what could happen'.[349] The local press in County Kildare reacted by launching a staunch defense of the Stud, warning that its closure would be a 'national calamity'.[350] The *Leinster Leader* speculated that 'The ill effects on an important and ever-increasing industry that the closure…would bring about would be incalculable, as it is rightly looked upon as the cradle of the bloodstock industry and has served as a worldwide advertisement for the merits of the Irish bred stock'.[351] Offering a contingency strategy, the *Sunday Independent* speculated that Aga Khan could be persuaded to take over the Stud as 'any breakup would be an astounding calamity to the whole country'.[352] But the external factors had a devastating impact.

The industry depended on the fluidity of the Irish and British thoroughbred markets, but these were in deep turmoil. The following comments from an unknown Irish horse breeder in Ireland summarised the circumstances:

> What are we going to do with our surplus horses? Give them away? No. Produce more? No. Stop production? Yes. But think of the cost such a course will be to Ireland, the Ireland

[344] *Leinster Leader*, 20 Aug. 1932.
[345] *The Field, The Country Newspaper*, 30 July 1932.
[346] *The Field, The Country Newspaper*, 30 July 1932.
[347] Ibid.
[348] *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, 19 July. 1932.
[349] Ibid.
[350] *Kildare Observer*, 6 Aug. 1932.
[351] *Leinster Leader*, 30 July 1932.
[352] *Sunday Independent*, 28 Feb. 1932.

> of the future. It is so easy to destroy and so difficult to rebuild. It is galling to the average Irishman interested in horse breeding to see the industry frittered away. Are we in Ireland progressing? If I say we are not, I will be told that I am taking politically; but if I say we are going ahead, I feel I am a time-serving fool. What, therefore, and I to say? This-that in not acting now, and bravely, the reality of the crisis in our horse industry, the people of Ireland are laying up a store of sorrow and trouble for themselves.[353]

The disillusionment and frustration were evident. Some leading Irish breeders took measures to counteract the turmoil by moving their stud farms to England. For example, Lord Furness, a British shipping magnate who owned Gilltown Stud in Kildare, relocated to Dorset. A measure of the impact of the downturn on his business is revealed through the following figures. In 1931, Gilltown Stud stabled sixty horses and employed thirty people, but by the autumn of 1932, only fourteen staff remained, and the stud was forced to cease trading.[354] In 1935, Hubert Hartigan trained horses on the Curragh, but he moved his operations to Penrith in Cumberland. A report in the *Laois Nationalist* claimed Hartigan was 'utterly disillusioned by de Valera's ruinous economic war'.[355] But, in the late 1930s, after the end of the economic war, Hartigan returned to the Curragh to resume training horses. Even the legendary *Blandford* was moved from Cloghran Stud in Dublin to another stud farm in England. *The Bloodstock Breeders Review* cautioned that the outlook was 'very dark and obscure,' and they demanded that a 'common sense must surely prevail in the end' as the Irish population would not tolerate the prevailing economic circumstances.[356] Yet, there was no quick fix, and the economic trade war continued into the late 1930s.

In February 1933, the NS mourned the death of William Hall-Walker; he had been ill for some time. Hall-Walker passed away in London at the age of seventy-six. Tributes flowed from far and wide; the most appropriate accolade came from his local area, where the *Liverpool Echo*

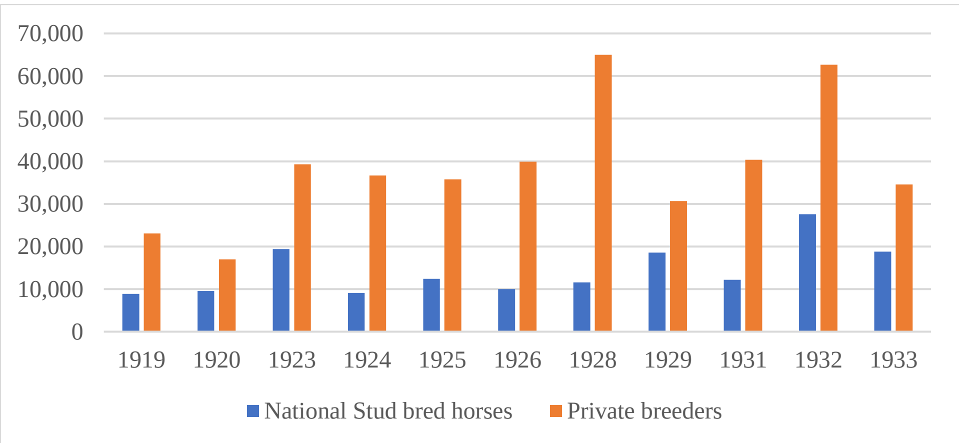
[353] *The Bloodstock breeders' review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British* thoroughbred, vol. xxii (London, 1933), p. 104.
[354] *Leinster Leader*, 10 Sept. 1932.
[355] *Laois Nationalist*, 11 Sept. 2012.
[356] *The Bloodstock breeders' review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, vol. xxii (London, 1933), p. 105

described him as ‘a great judge and lover of horses…a man of remarkably wide and varied activities, a brewer, a politician, a patron of the arts, a member of the Jockey Club, a daring steeplechase rider and fond of coaching, fencing, polo hunting, riding, and yachting’.[357] Also, that year, Henry Greer retired from the NS due to illness. The *Kildare Observer* published a glowing tribute stating he was: ‘One of the outstanding figures of his generation on the turf. As a breeder, owner, Turf legislator and highly successful stud manager, he has written his name large in the annals of racing, both in England and Ireland’.[358] Greer left a considerable impression on Irish racing, and his presence at the NS would be missed both on a practical and professional level. In August 1934, he died at seventy-nine years of age in Kildare. The following section will explore Greer’s financial record, including racecourse prizemoney, annual profits and losses, and yearling sales. As Greer was also employed by the Aga Khan, horses bred at the NS will be compared with horses bred by the Aga Khan.

2.7. Greer’s financial record of the National Stud

During Greer’s tenure, the NS performed consistently well in the breeder’s list of winners in Great Britain and Ireland, as outlined below:

Figure 2 (c) Prizemoney won by horses bred at the National Stud from 1919 to 1933.



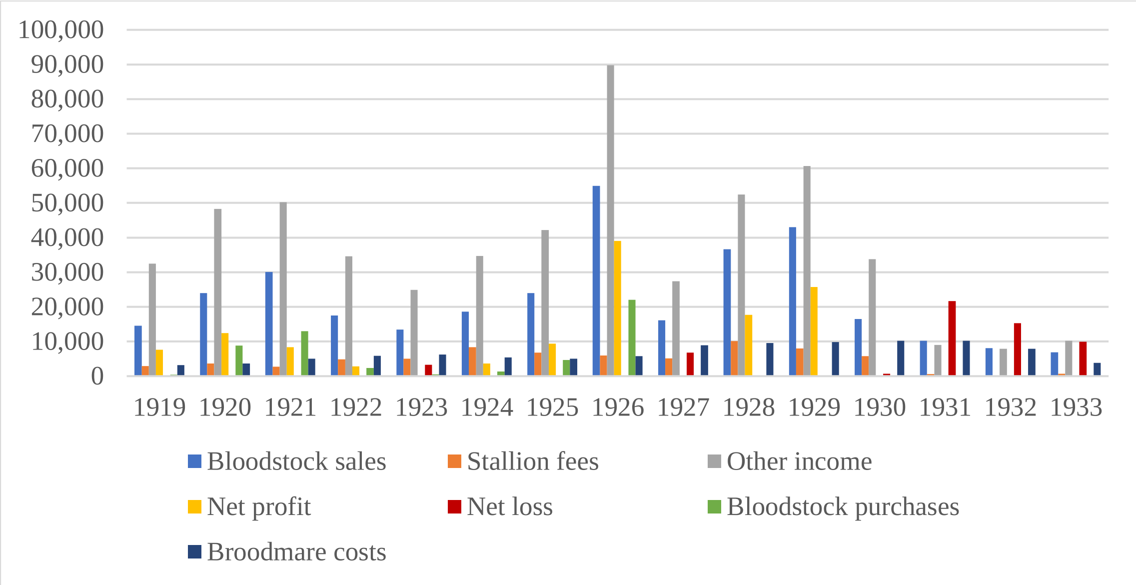
Source: *The bloodstock breeders review*, 1919-33.

[357] *Liverpool Echo*, 2 Feb. 1933.
[358] *Kildare Observer*, 3 Feb. 1934.

The data only lists prize money totals over £8,000, which accounts for four missing years where NS-bred horses fell below the £8000 threshold. Compared to the private breeders, the NS performed consistently in the top ten breeding establishments. Compared to the private studs in Britain and Ireland, who won £424,690, the NS-bred horses won £157,956, approximately thirty-seven per cent of the total.[359] Stud-bred horses averaged £14,260 per annum compared to the private breeder's totals of £38,608.[360] The year 1932 was the most successful, with Stud-bred horses winning £27,558, finishing second to Aga Khan, who won £62,644.[361] In 1933, the Stud finished third in the records, with Stud-bred horses earning £18,754.[362] Under Greer, the Stud did not solely depend on racecourse earnings. Bloodstock sales, stallion cover fees, the sales of cattle and sheep and agricultural produce all contributed to making the Stud successful. The following chart shows the breakdown.

[359] *Trading accounts and balance sheets 1934*, p. 437, H.C. 1936 xxix, 51, at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (4 July 2021), pp 51-58, & Wray Vamplew, *A social and economic history of horse racing* (Sussex, 1976), p. 52.
[360] Ibid.
[361] *The bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, vol xxi (London, 1932), p. 248.
[362] *The bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, vol xxii (London, 1933), p. 284.

Figure 2 (d) The National Stud Financial record from 1919 to 1933.



Source: *Trading accounts and balance sheets 1934*, p. 437, H.C. 1936, xxix, 51, & Wray Vamplew, *A social and economic history of horse racing* (Sussex, 1976).

Greer's tenure at the NS was financially sound, apart from the early 1930s when the worldwide economic depression and the economic trade war with Britain began. Throughout the 1920s, the NS performed well. Starting in 1921 and every five years after that, an independent valuer estimated the bloodstock. In 1921, the NS bloodstock value was £94,400, £146,250 in 1926 and £129,600 by 1931.[363] Bloodstock sales significantly contributed to profits contributing £334,543 with an average profit of £22,303 per annum.[364] Other income, which included racing stakes and cattle and sheep sales, accounted for £558,673, at an average profit of £37,245 per annum.[365]

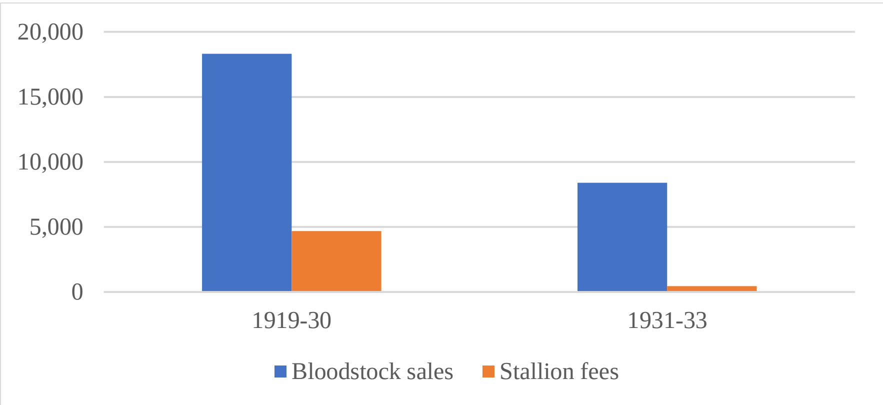
Stallion cover fees contributed £70,640 at £4,709 per annum, and bloodstock purchases totaled £53,159.[366] The highest investment in bloodstock was in 1926, with £22,008 invested;

[363] *Trading accounts and balance sheets, 1921, 1926 and 1931*, p. 369, p. 371, p. 377, H.C. 1923, 1928, 1933, xvi, xvii, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie/ (8 Aug. 2021), pp 120-123, pp 66-71, pp 51-57.
[364] *Trading accounts and balance sheets 1934*, p. 437, H.C. 1936, xxix, 51, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (4 July 2021, pp 51-58, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (4 July 2021) & Vamplew, *A social and economic history of horse racing*, p. 52.
[365] *Trading accounts and balance sheets 1934*, p. 437, H.C. 1936, xxix, 51, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (4 July 2021, pp 51-58, & Wray Vamplew, *A social and economic history of horse racing* (Sussex, 1976), p. 52.
[366] Ibid.

this was a significant increase from the previous highest of £13,000 in 1921.[367] No additional amounts were invested in bloodstock during the remainder of Greer's tenure at the Stud. The upkeep of broodmares, including the service fees paid to private breeders, cost £100,915, at an average of £6,727 per annum.[368] In 1926, there was a significant spike in net profits of £39,055; this was due to the sales of *Warden of the Marches* for £20,000 and two yearlings to Aga Khan for £21,600, and the Stud's net average profit over the period was £14,087 per annum.[369]

In 1927, the NS recorded a trading loss of £6,816, and from 1930 to 1933, the average losses were £11,854 per annum; these losses can be attributed to the 1929 American Wall Street stock exchange collapse and the economic war.[370] The following chart shows the downturn:

Figure 2 (e) Downturn in the horse breeding industry from 1931 to 1933.



Source: *Trading accounts and balance sheets 1934*, p. 437, H.C. 1936, xxix, 51, (4 July 2021).

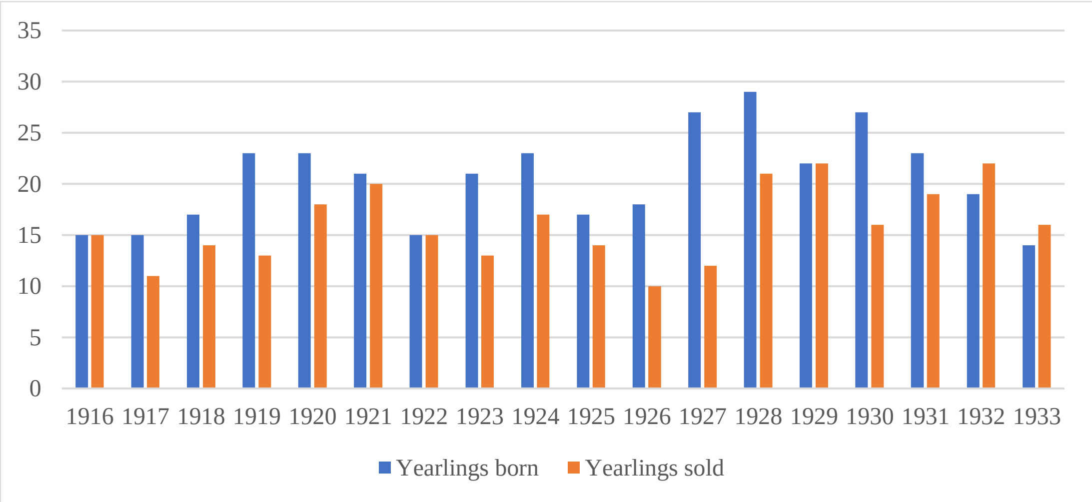
From 1931 to 1933, bloodstock sales dramatically slumped by over fifty per cent, from a pre-depression average of £18,301 to £8,392 per annum. For instance, the average price paid for twenty-four horses in 1931 was only £426 compared with £867 for nineteen horses in 1930 and

[367] *Trading accounts and balance sheets, 1926*, p. 371, H.C. 1928, xvi, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie/ (8 Aug. 2021), pp 66-71.
[368] *Trading accounts and balance sheets 1934*, p. 437, H.C. 1936, xxix, 51, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (4 July 2021), pp 51-58, & Wray Vamplew, *A social and economic history of horse racing* (Sussex, 1976), p. 52.
[369] Ibid.
[370] *Trading accounts and balance sheets 1934*, p. 437, H.C. 1936, xxix, 51, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (4 July 2021), pp 51-58, & Vamplew, *A social and economic history of horse racing*, p. 52.

£1,593 for twenty-seven horses in 1929.[371] In addition, cover fees from stallions declined by over ninety per cent from £4,678 to £442 per annum.[372] Throughout the 1930s, stallion fees remained stagnant due to the economic war. The most significant trading loss of £21,644 at the Stud was recorded in 1931; the deaths of four horses and the other circumstances mentioned were contributory factors.[373] But yearling sales offered some positive figures.

In 1926, the yearlings *Feridoon and Cobra* were sold to Aga Khan for £21,600.[374] All yearlings born and sold at the NS are represented in the following chart:

Figure 2 (f) Yearlings born and sold at the National Stud from 1916 to 1933.

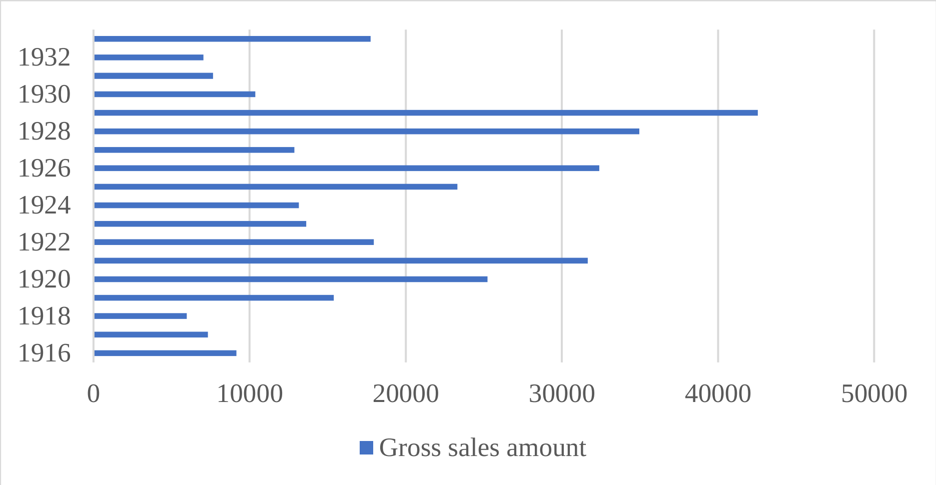


Source: 1934 National Stud accounts and reports, Dominions Office, DO/35/474.

There were 369 yearlings born at the Stud at an average of twenty per annum. Approximately seventy-eight per cent of yearlings were sold at an average of sixteen per year.[375] The following chart highlights the gross amount realised through yearling sales:

[371] *Trading accounts and balance sheets, 1931*, p. 377, H.C. 1933, xxxii, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie/ (8 Aug. 2021), pp 51-57.
[372] Ibid.
[373] Ibid.
[374] National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec.1934, Dominions Office, DO/35/474.
[375] Ibid.

Figure 2 (g) Gross sales of yearlings at the National Stud from 1916 to 1933



Source: 1934 National Stud accounts and reports, Dominions Office, DO/35/474.

From 1916 to 1933, the gross sales of yearlings totaled £328,363, an average of £18,242 per annum.[376] Yearlings sold to Aga Khan proved big earners for the NS. Between 1926 and 1931, yearlings' prices at the NS fluctuated from an average of £1,620 in 1926 to £2,513 in 1929, decreasing to £638 in 1931.[377] The £17,000 paid by Aga Khan was significantly above the regular market levels. Indeed, the amount for *Feridoon* set a record, but it was a disastrous investment, with the colt blighted by problems and never even competing on the racecourse. He was sold to France for £17 guineas, a paltry one per cent of the massive initial outlay.[378] The colt *Cobra* was also sold after proving to be another dismal failure. In 1925, Aga Khan paid £6500 for *Blanchailles*, and in 1922, £1550 for *Blanc Mange*; they achieved reasonable success, winning six races between them. [379] The Aga Khan continued to enjoy a close relationship with the NS but was the more successful breeder in the records. The following chart shows the prizemoney of horses bred at the NS compared to Aga Khan's Sheshoon Stud.

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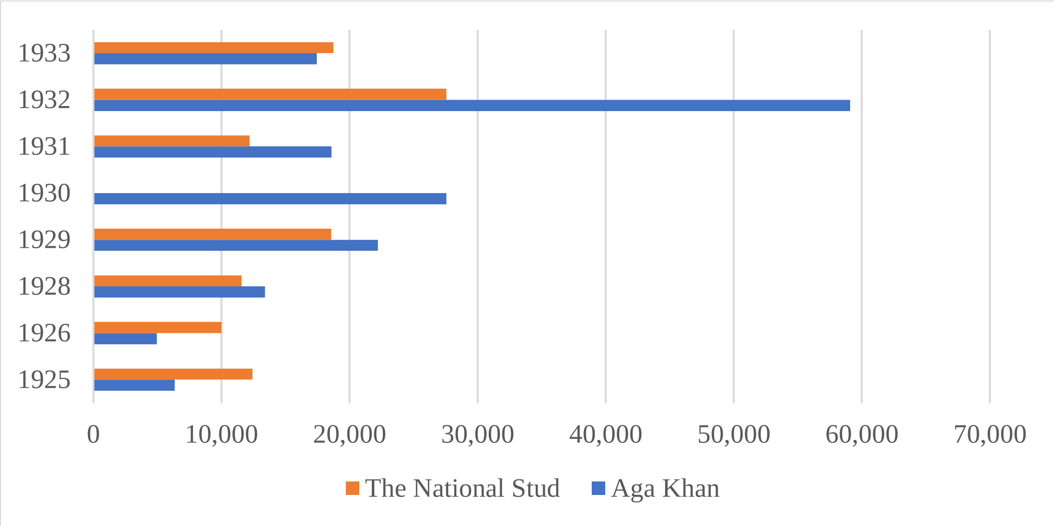
376 Ibid.
377 *Yorkshire Post*, 6 July 1931.
378 *Shields Daily News*, 13 Sept. 1950.
379 Georg Lange, *75 years, the Aga Khan's racing, and breeding studs, 1922-1997* (Dortmund, 1998), pp 313-15.

Table 2 (h) Earnings of horses bred at the National Stud and the Aga Khan's Sheshoon Stud.



Source: *The bloodstock breeders review*, 1919-33 & Georg Lange, *75 years, the Aga Khan's racing, and breeding studs, 1922-1997* (Dortmund, 1998).

Between 1925 and 1933, the NS and Sheshoon Stud competed competitively. The difference was that Aga Khan had significantly more financial resources to invest in top-class bloodstock, one of the most critical aspects of achieving significant success. NS bred horses accumulated £111,052 at an average of £21,199 per annum compared to the Aga Khan's £169,594 at an average of £15,856.[380]

In the late 1920s, the NS bloodstock was held in very high regard, with the *Irish Examiner* publishing a glowing tribute:

> There is a galaxy of potential bright stars…all the mares are dams of winners or else are young mares of high lineage, while the sires are of the big fee order…what a rare national industry horse-breeding is can be readily understood by a visit to the Tully paddocks just now.[381]

It was not only the NS horses that were attracting attention. The high reputation of Irish stud farms gained the attention of other governments. In 1929, the French Ministry of Agriculture proposed to send a delegation of experts to study stud farms in Ireland for three months. *The*

[380] *The bloodstock breeders review*, 1919-33, & Georg Lange, *75 years, the Aga Khan's racing, and breeding studs*, 1922-1997 (Dortmund, 1998), p. 426.
[381] *Irish Examiner*, 13 Apr. 1928.

Bloodstock Breeders Review noted the significance of this development: 'This proposal pays a high compliment to Irish horses whose successes in the past few years have evoked worldwide commendation'.[382] But the economic circumstances continued to have a stifling effect on the industry in Ireland.

2.8. Conclusion

Henry Greer's tenure at the NS was successful. Greer's judgement of horses was exceptional; he proved himself a master of his trade, with his skills contributing hugely to the Stud's success. Of course, it must be noted that none of this success would have been possible without the legacy left by William Hall-Walker at Tully Stud, which Greer exploited further. Initially, the NS was under intense financial pressure, and the British government sought a fast, efficient solution to ease the burden. This arrived through leasing arrangements with Lord Lonsdale and King George V. Lonsdale was propped up by a vast fortune that sustained the high financial cost of maintaining thoroughbred horses. With the British government heavily invested in the First World War, the leasing arrangement with Lonsdale relieved some of the pressure. The agreement with the King was disappointing and brought little success. In the 1920s, the political circumstances in Ireland were difficult for Greer to comprehend as he was an Irish Protestant loyalist staunchly attached to the British establishment whose direct rule of Ireland ended. Initially, the British government was pessimistic about the NS's future in Ireland. With the establishment of the Irish Free State, the Stud did not pass into Irish control but remained under British control. Greer was suspicious of the Free State's intentions for the Stud. But his nomination to the Irish Seanad relieved concerns, and he showed pragmatism as the prospects for the Stud depended on cooperation with the new Irish regime. In the 1920s, the NS enhanced its reputation with growing profits and high-class bloodstock. Both governments realised its potential and laid legal claims. After that,

[382] *The bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, vol 1 (London, 1929), p. 163.

however, relations soured as both sides became embroiled in a standoff. In the early 1930s, worldwide economic difficulties ramped up the pressure at the NS, and rumours circulated that the Stud was verging on closure. The Cumann na nGaedheal government of the early 1930s were keen to lease the Stud to a private horse breeder if an agreement were arrived at with the British government but matters remained contentious. The change of political governance in Ireland impacted policies at the NS. De Valera's aggressive economic policy with Britain increased problems, resulting in trading losses at the NS.

Despite these circumstances, Greer's financial record at the NS was reasonably impressive. The NS did not solely depend on its racecourse and breeding results; it was also a successful business through farm livestock sales and agricultural produce. The NS's influence on horse breeding was impressive, with various bloodlines at the Stud exceptional. But Greer's dual management roles at the NS and for Aga Khan caused difficulties. For instance, Aga Khan appeared to have the first choice of some of the bloodstock at the NS. This arrangement left other breeders and owners feeling aggrieved by the nature of the Aga Khan's relationship with the Stud. These breeders complained that this policy weakened their opportunities to avail of the bloodstock. It could also be argued that Greer's inside knowledge of the quality of horses bred at the NS was a distinct advantage to Aga Khan, which was not appropriate. While everything may have remained legitimate, working for a private breeder while also employed by a State-run Stud Farm left the NS open to questions on transparency and to whom exactly Greer was accountable. Nevertheless, it should be noted Greer's dual role at both Studs was brief, lasting approximately a year. Following his retirement from the NS in 1933, he was replaced by his life-long friend, Cork native Noble Bullen Johnson, the assistant manager at the NS. Johnson and the Irish government faced considerable challenges in brokering a deal with the British government on the NS, which will be assessed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

A new director at the National Stud, but fresh negotiations fail to break the stalemate on the ownership of the Stud (1933-1938)

3.1. Introduction

In late 1933, Cork born Noble Bullen Johnson, assistant director at the NS, replaced Henry Greer as manager. In 1916, the NS had originally employed Johnson on Greer's recommendation as he 'highly valued' his opinion and experience.[383] Johnson's tenure as manager of the NS was brief but eventful, with significant developments over the four-year term he held office. Johnson continued the successful practices and policies implemented during Greer's tenure, but the NS's bloodstock ownership policy remained contentious. And as noted in the previous chapter, the change in political circumstances in Ireland shortly before Johnson's promotion to manager raised further questions about the NS's future. Central to the new administration's policies was the development of Irish identity; J.J. Lee elaborates: 'De Valera yearned for a self-sufficient, bucolic, Gaelic utopia'.[384] De Valera was attempting to reconstruct a new version of Irish nationalism.[385] Meanwhile, in the background was the NS, a symbol of former imperial rule and still linked to the British government. Therefore, the de Valera administration was anxious to conclude matters with the British government on the Stud's future because, despite any political reservations, they also appreciated its value to the Irish economy. In 1935, a Commission of Inquiry was established to investigate and develop the role of horse breeding in Ireland. The results of the Commission impacted government policies regarding the NS. Also, that year, Irish and British government representatives attended a London conference to discuss the NS's future.

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[383] Correspondence between Henry Greer and the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, 10 Dec. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/287.
[384] J. J. Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985 politics and society* (Cambridge, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne, Sydney, 1989), p. 187.
[385] J. P. O'Carroll, 'Eamon de Valera, charisma and political development' in John P. O'Carroll & John A. Murphy (eds.), *De Valera and his times* (Cork, 1983), pp 17-34 at p. 29.

It is essentially these developments, coincident with the short tenure of Nobel Bullen Johnson as manager of the NS from 1933 to 1937, which are the subject of this chapter.

3.2. Defining Free State policy

Before his appointment in 1916, Noble Bullen Johnson managed Eustace Loder's stud farm in Kildare for many years; it was most famous for producing *Pretty Polly*, the British fillies Triple Crown winner. In addition, Johnson formed a successful racing partnership with Henry Greer in the early days of his racing career.[386] Apart from what was involved in the physical tasks of running the NS, clerical administration was also Johnson's responsibility, including the Stud's financial accounts.[387] His salary was £750 per annum, and Peter Burrell was employed as assistant director for £300 per annum. In 1935, Burrell's salary was increased to £500 as he took on more responsibility as Johnson was approaching his late seventies.[388]

In 1934, when Noble Johnson became manager of the NS, the Irish government began preparing for the possibility of the NS coming under Irish control. With the recent change in government, there was a greater focus on finding a solution to the ownership issue. To begin with, the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs contacted various Departments of Agriculture within European Governments seeking information on how they implemented horse breeding policies. Most of the respondents offered limited details, which may have reflected the lack of infrastructure in place. Of the respondents, the Hungarian government offered comprehensive details. In Hungary, the Ministry of Agriculture divided the territory in Hungary into horse breeding districts, with the climate a factor in determining which horses were bred in each district.[389] Ten State stallion stations were established within the districts. These stations held

[386] *Leinster Leader*, 13 Mar. 1937.
[387] Correspondence between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Treasury Department, 14 Jan. 1919, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/184.
[388] Minutes of the Ministry of Agriculture, 24 Nov. 1938, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/184.
[389] Correspondence between the High Commissioner for the Irish Free State in London and the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs, 27 Sept. 1934, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/2/32/296.

1,477 stallions which were made available to all horse breeders.[390] This system had some similarities to those implemented in Ireland. But there was a critical difference. The Hungarian government insisted that the State Stud Farms and private breeders work closely together through the following regulations. The private breeders were expected to provide the thoroughbreds to cover mares in the districts. A strict condition was that all three-year colts produced from the covering sessions were sold to the State with a fixed price paid to the private breeders. In addition, the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture examined horses and sterilised those deemed unfit for breeding. All financial assistance to horse breeding was provided through Hungary's state Budget and from income generated from the gambling industry.[391] Unlike the Irish system, the Hungarian government's horse breeding policies limited the scope of the private sector, whereas, in Ireland, the private sector controlled the thoroughbred market. But it could be argued that the policies implemented in Hungary were too oppressive. Moreover, it was critical for officials at the Irish Department of Agriculture to find a template that provided a reasonable platform for all in the industry.

The Dutch government's Consul General provided some details as to how the Department of Agriculture in the Netherlands provided horse breeding grants regulated by the 1918 Horse Act. In 1918, these grants totaled 227,406 Dutch guilders, but there was a decline in government investment to 42,225 guilders by 1934.[392] And consultants with expertise in horse breeding were also employed to support breeders. There was a key difference between policies in Ireland and other European countries. For example, governments in Europe operated several State Stud Farms across many areas, while in Ireland, there was only one regional State Stud Farm. France and Germany are prime examples. They established a different template whereby

[390] Ibid.
[391] Correspondence between the Consult General for the Netherlands and the Irish Department of External Affairs, 30 Aug. 1934, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/2/32/396.
[392] Correspondence between the Consult General for the Netherlands and the Irish Department of External Affairs, 30 Aug. 1934, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/2/32/396.

they established several stud farms spread across the country. It could be argued that this policy was more beneficial in the long term for small breeders as if offered more opportunities than those available through the Irish system. Therefore, the information provided from abroad left the Irish Department of Agriculture with plenty to consider for the future development of State assisted stud farms in Ireland.

In 1934, the Irish government introduced a new Horse Breeding Act to update the 1918 Act. The main aspects of the new Act deemed it compulsory for the owners of every class of stallion to obtain an annual government-approved license.[393] Unlike the terms of the previous Act, the new act covered all thoroughbreds used exclusively for bloodstock purposes and all horses, whether used for stud purposes or otherwise, including horses used for sporting events. The Department of Agriculture was also obliged to publish an annual *Register* of high-class stallions located in Ireland.

3.3. Commission of Inquiry (1935)

In 1935, the Irish government established a Commission of Inquiry to inquire about the Irish horse breeding industry.[394] The Commission was a significant development for the industry and had implications for the NS. Commission members included prominent figures within the industry, including J.J. Parkinson. The most significant findings from the Commission revealed that there was 'little diminution in the number of thoroughbreds bred in Ireland' over the recent decades but that there was a distinct decline in their quality.[395] The Commission recommended that Irish breeders adopt a strategy where stallions cover mares with 'promising' racing and breeding careers only.[396] They hoped that this would assist in reversing the decline and improve

[393] 1934 Horse Breeding Act available at www.Irishstatutebook.ie (4 Oct. 2021).
[394] Report of Commission of Inquiry into the horse breeding industry in Ireland, 7 Aug. 1935, Department of the Taoiseach, S7960.
[395] Report of Commission of Inquiry into the horse breeding industry in Ireland, 7 Aug. 1935, Department of the Taoiseach, S7960.
[396] Ibid.

the thoroughbred bloodlines.[397] Other significant problems noted were the lack of high-class sires available to smaller horse breeders and the high cover fee costs associated with the few available stallions. Thus, the Commission recommended that the government purchase ten stallions and make them available to all classes of horse breeders. They recommended that three stallions should be first-class pedigree valued at between £20,000 to £30,000 each, with the other seven second-class stallions valued between £2,000 and £10,000.[398] They also advised that access to first-class stallions was only available to breeders' resident in the Irish Free State. If stallion bookings exceed availability, a balloting system decided who got a preference, with breeders who sold yearlings at sales in Ireland offered the first preference. These policies were designed to restrict the access of breeders in Britain. But this was a regressive recommendation considering the quality of bloodstock in Britain, but not surprising given the ill-feeling between the British and Irish governments during the ongoing economic war.

The Commission also recommended that the government establish a Central State Stud Farm where all State-owned thoroughbreds would be housed.[399] At this Central Stud, the first-class stallions would remain during the peak season, offering covering services to all breeders. The second-class stallions would be sent to selected sub-section stud farm centres throughout the country and available to all breeders. This was like the policies in operation in other European countries. Another recommendation from the Commission focused on the income tax charges associated with thoroughbred breeding. At this time, the tax on thoroughbreds in Ireland was far higher than the amount charged in Britain, resulting in trainers removing their horses abroad. The Commission advised the government to address this matter as it negatively impacted the industry in Ireland.

[397] Ibid.
[398] Ibid.
[399] Ibid.

Shortly after the Commission submitted its findings, the Department of Agriculture produced an updated memorandum on the NS. In this memorandum, there was no reference to the recommendation to establish a Central Stud Farm. Instead, the Department of Agriculture argued that the NS, currently under the control of the British government in Ireland, was of no 'direct practical value' to the horse breeding schemes run in Ireland.[400] This was a reasonable argument as any British government policies on horse breeding suited the narrative of British breeders in Britain and excluded the Irish breeder's interests. The British government were not going to nor could be expected to develop or contribute to horse breeding schemes administered by the Irish Free State government. Therefore, finding a solution to the matter was immediate, but difficulties remained.

The Department of Agriculture further argued that thoroughbreds at the NS were 'too costly and high class for ordinary use' compared to the sires they used for hunter breeding.[401] A similar point was made several years previously when Hall-Walker offered his stud farms to the British government. In ideal circumstances, the Department of Agriculture reiterated that they would prefer if the Stud were leased long-term to a private breeder on the condition that the NS's standards were maintained.[402] At the same time, the Department noted that the leasing option was improbable due to the poor economic circumstances. It seemed that the Department of Agriculture wanted the best of both worlds. They did not want to be financially responsible for the NS. But on the other hand, they tried to dictate policies to whoever leased the NS in the future.

In any event, the most immediate issue was the British government's involvement in the NS in Ireland, with neither government comfortable with the circumstances. These factors forced the Department of Agriculture to commit to the NS. They noted its worldwide reputation and

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[400] Memorandum by the Department of Agriculture on the National Stud, 31 Aug. 1935, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A.
[401] Ibid.
[402] Ibid.

admitted it was in the country's best interests to see it under Irish control.[403] The Department revealed that they were willing to take over the NS if they could appoint a manager who had total control, and they stressed that financial investment of £30,000 to £40,000 was required to replenish the NS bloodstock.[404] This replenishment figure would be determined by agreement with the British government on the ownership and the value of the bloodstock. They also advised that an essential strategy be adopted to showcase the Stud to all international interests. But with no agreement with the British government on the NS's future, the Irish government sought legal counsel on the matter.

3.4. Legal matters and the London Conference

In the 1930s, the Irish and British governments remained locked in a stubborn battle over the ownership of the NS. The Irish government sought the legal opinion of senior counsel, George Gavan Duffy. He advised that the land and buildings were 'indisputable' because the property automatically passed to the Free State government under the terms of the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty.[405] But, Duffy advised that the bloodstock at the NS was an entirely different matter:

> The position of the movables [bloodstock] is not so clear, and I have no doubt that a case and an apparently strong case can be put for considering the moveable property also to have passed under the Treaty to the Free State, but in my opinion, that case depends on arguments in the nature of special pleading, which would not stand the test of examination before a legal tribunal set up to decide the question.[406]

Duffy advised there was no justification through law 'in claiming that the stud, inclusive of the bloodstock, likewise belongs to the Irish Free State.[407] In all likelihood, Duffy's legal advice did not sit comfortably with Éamon de Valera. G.M. Godling has argued that de Valera and Duffy had a rather curious relationship; although 'close personally, they were divided on many

[403] Memorandum by the Department of Agriculture on the National Stud, 31 Aug. 1935, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A.
[404] Ibid.
[405] The legal opinion of George Gavan Duffy, 9 Jun. 1934, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A.
[406] The legal opinion of George Gavan Duffy, 9 Jun. 1934, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A.
[407] Ibid.

issues'.[408] For instance, Duffy's was always 'deep-rooted in the letter of the law', whereas de Valera argued that legal language should always be 'comprehensible to the ordinary man'.[409] Following the consultation with Duffy, the Irish Department of Finance contacted the British government advising that the land and buildings at Tully were the property of the Free State and notified the British government that they were seeking a share of the bloodstock dating back to 6 December 1921.

Furthermore, they requested that the British Ministry of Agriculture clarify their plans for the stud farm in Ireland'.[410] In correspondence with the Dominions Office, de Valera seemed optimistic that an agreement could be reached over the Stud.[411] The Dominions Office was also hopeful but were cautious.[412] In an attempt to resolve matters, the British government arranged a conference in London with representatives of the Irish and British governments to explore issues further.

On 13 November 1935, representatives of the British and the Irish Free State governments met in Whitehall Place, London, to discuss the future of the NS. The British delegation comprised civil servants from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, including H. L. French, C. Nathan, and M. G. Kendall. Representing the Treasury Department, H. Britain and G. G. Barnes, and the Dominions Office, J. E. Stephenson. The Irish delegation included civil servants from the Department of Finance, the secretary of the Department of Agriculture Daniel Twomey, from the Department of Foreign Affairs, Arthur Codling, and J. E. Hanna, legal advisor John Joseph Hearne and the secretary to the High Commissioner, John O'Donovan.

[408] G.M Golding, *George Gavan Duffy 1882-1951, a legal biography* (Kildare, 1982), p. 21.
[409] Golding, *George Gavan Duffy*, p. 21.
[410] The legal opinion of George Gavan Duffy,' 9 Jun. 1934, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A.
[411] Correspondence between Eamon de Valera, Minister for External Affairs and the British Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, 10 Jul. 1935, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/232/194.
[412] Correspondence between the British Secretary of State for Dominions Office and Eamon de Valera, Minister for External Affairs, 17 Aug. 1935, British Dominions Office, DO 35/474/3 (20875/14).

French chaired the meeting, and both delegations agreed that there would be no press statement following the meeting and that the discussions should remain confidential.[413] French argued the British government had 'no desire' or 'particular reason' to continue running the Stud in Ireland, and they hoped 'to retire from the enterprise at a convenient opportunity'.[414] The British government wanted to end their interests in the NS while it was located in Ireland. But it is important to note that this statement did not mean they wished to relinquish their rights to the bloodstock, as they had plans to continue with a new NS in Britain. Both sides agreed that a valuation of the land and buildings was necessary because prices had changed since the last valuation years previously.[415] The British delegation was cautious in its approach, with French stressing that agreement with the Irish government must not 'give the impression of a forced sale'.[416] This request was understandable given the prevailing circumstances of ill-feeling surrounding the economic war.

Twomey clarified the Irish government's position: 'I think our government would like to keep the Stud going…the Stud does not lend itself to being run as a joint concern'.[417] Twomey argued that if it were not for the circumstances surrounding Hall-Walker's gifting of the Stud to the British government, Tully Stud would have passed over to the Free State similar to all other agricultural properties following the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty.[418] He reinforced that the land and buildings at Tully Stud were the property of the Irish Free State. He also claimed that the Irish were entitled to a rent payment from the British government for the Stud covering the duration of time spent operating the Stud since the Irish Free State was established.[419] But Twomey ignored the contentious issue of the ownership of the bloodstock.

[413] Tully Stud Farm: Report of the London Discussions, 13 Nov. 1935, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A, pp 1-19 at p. 2.
[414] Ibid.
[415] Ibid., p. 6.
[416] Ibid., pp 4-5.
[417] Ibid., p. 5.
[418] Ibid., p. 3.
[419] Negotiations between the United Kingdom and the Irish Free State regarding the National Stud, 12 Nov. 1935, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/332/194, pp 1-6 at p. 2.

French argued that the bloodstock was the 'absolute property of the United Kingdom'.[420] He contended that Tully Stud Farm did not transfer to the Irish Free State under 1921 Treaty terms because it was not included in the property under the *Heads of Working Arrangements.* As noted earlier, a clause in the 1926 financial settlement excluded the National Stud, amongst other properties, from any resolution. French also argued that article 2 of the 1921 Irish Free State Constitution was limited to lands and did not cover moveable assets such as bloodstock.[421]

The legal advisor to the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs, Hearne, outlined the Irish government's position in complex terms. Hearne was a close associate of de Valera and was hugely influential in framing the 1937 Irish Constitution. It is interesting to note that Hearne adopted a different approach to the advice of his colleague George Gavan Duffy. Hearne argued on the following rule of law, which stated that the ownership of 'all the property in the former state which was situated in a territory subjected to the jurisdiction of the new state passed over to the new state'.[422] He argued that this rule of law covered both moveable and immovable state property, and there was no distinction. If this was accepted as law, he argued that the bloodstock was the property of the Irish Free State.

Additionally, he claimed that the rule of law stated that Crown property in any dominion should benefit that new dominion.[423] In 1921, Ireland was granted dominion status by the British government. This allowed the Irish administration to form an autonomous government while retaining links to the British Crown. In 1926, the Balfour Declaration declared that dominions were 'autonomous communities within the British empire, equal in status, and in no way subordinate to each other in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs'.[424] And in further

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[420] Ibid., p. 3.
[421] Tully Stud Farm: Report of the London Discussions, 13 Nov. 1935, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A, pp 1-22 at p. 10.
[422] Ibid., p. 11.
[423] Ibid.
[424] 1926 Balfour Declaration', DFAT *100*, Department of Agriculture available at www.dfa.ie (24 Sept. 2021).

developments, the 1931 Statute of Westminster updated the status of dominions by granting legislative independence to the autonomous dominion governments.

Hearne based the Irish government's arguments on past court precedents. He referred to *the Attorney General v The Great Southern Railway Co. of Ireland, Ltd* (1925). The railway company provided a widespread network throughout Ireland. Following the terms of the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty, the *Great Southern Railway Co. of Ireland* passed over to the Irish Free State and the British government's rights to the company, including property, ceased. In his ruling, the Judge stated: 'The property of the Crown in the dominion is held for the purposes of that Dominion [accordingly] its benefits accrue to the dominion exchequer, and liabilities in connection with it must be discharged out of the same exchequer'.[425] Hearne reminded those at the Conference that this was not the first time this principle was established in law, the case he was using was the most recent, but many other examples existed.

Hearn argued that the *Heads of Working Arrangements* from the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty did not constitute an agreement or set a precedent.[426] Instead, he claimed that the *Heads* 'merely recorded the lines along which the terms should be implemented in certain respects'.[427] He also cautioned that when the ultimate financial settlement was agreed on all aspects of the Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1926, matters concerning the NS were 'postponed without prejudice to the present discussions'.[428] Addressing French's argument on article 2 of the Constitution, Hearne argued that the lands and buildings at Tully Stud Farm did not solely depend on this article, and the matter was complex, with varying interpretations.[429] But the British delegation did not agree with these arguments.

[425] Tully Stud Farm: Report of the London Discussions, 13 Nov. 1935, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A, pp 1-22 at pp 11-12.
[426] Ibid.
[427] Ibid.
[428] Ibid.
[429] Ibid.

For instance, the request for backdated rent from the British government for the use of Tully Stud received a negative response. French argued:

> On principle, they could not accept that any rent was payable in respect of the property handed over to the Free State between the time the property became the property of the Irish Free State and the date when the Irish Free State government entered into possession of the property.[430]

Because they had not anticipated the Irish rent claim, French advised that they needed legal clarification on the matter.[431] He queried Twomey on how the Irish government proposed calculating the rent. Twomey responded that the government had not yet formulated a method, and he was unlikely to 'venture on a figure now'.[432] In any event, French argued the rent was 'occupational rent' and 'it would not be a staggering amount'.[433] French indicated that if there was agreement on all other matters, the British government might accept the rent issue as they would prefer to reach a final settlement.[434] In the end, the Conference brought no agreement on the contentious issue of the ownership of the NS's bloodstock. There was a willingness on both sides to conclude most matters, but the controversial issue of the bloodstock hindered the progress. Both delegations left to reassess legal advice agreeing to check back later through written correspondence.

Within a week of the Conference, details of the conference were leaked to the Press in Ireland. A London correspondent for the *Irish Press* speculated that the NS was offered to the Irish government by the British government representatives and that they indicated that they would accept this offer.[435] The Press speculation infuriated the Irish and British governments.

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[430] Negotiations between the United Kingdom and the Irish Free State regarding the National Stud, 13 Nov. 1935, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/332/194, pp 1-6 at p. 3.
[431] Tully Stud Farm: Report of the London Discussions, 13 Nov. 1935, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A, pp 1-19 at p. 8.
[432] Negotiations between the United Kingdom and the Irish Free State regarding the National Stud, 13 Nov. 1935, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/332/194, pp 1-6 at p. 4.
[433] Tully Stud Farm: Report of the London Discussions, 13 Nov. 1935, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A, pp 1-19 at p. 14.
[434] Negotiations between the United Kingdom and The Irish Free State regarding the National Stud, 13 Nov. 1935, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/332/194, pp 1-6 at p. 5.
[435] *Irish Press*, 23 Nov. 1935.

Twomey advised the high commissioner for the Irish Free State in London that they understood that the negotiations were to be kept strictly confidential and 'that no information whatsoever would be given to the press' until both sides were in a position to release an agreed statement'.[436] Twomey reaffirmed that the Irish delegation had not broken the confidentiality clause and that they were searching relentlessly to find the Press leak.[437] The high commissioner reinforced the importance of 'preserving absolute secrecy' in future.[438] To counteract, Twomey accused the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries of the leak, but the high commissioner stressed that it 'was extremely doubtful' that the leak came from them.[439] And he pleaded with Twomey to 'make a special effort' to discover the press leakage as it threatened future negotiations.[440] In any case, the source of the leakage remained undetected, and it was not until a few months later that the matter of the NS was revisited.

In the spring of 1936, the British and Irish governments reassessed their legal positions. Quickly, the complex nature of the legal arguments presented by both governments became evident. Central to the Irish delegation's arguments at the conference was that the rule of law stated that Crown property in any dominion should benefit that new dominion.[441] Therefore, if applying this rule of law to the NS, it should become the property of the Irish Free State as it was a new dominion within the British Empire.

However, the British government did not accept this argument. Instead, French referred to the legal case of the *Attorney General of British Columbia v. the Attorney General of Canada*

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[436] Correspondence between Daniel Twomey, Secretary to the Department of Agriculture of the Irish Free State and J. W. Dulanty, High Commissioner for the Irish Free State, London, 18 Nov. 1935, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/332/194.
[437] Ibid.
[438] Correspondence between J. W. Dulanty, High Commissioner for the Irish Free State, London and Daniel Twomey, Secretary to the Department of Agriculture of the Irish Free State, 20 Nov. 1935, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/332/194.
[439] Ibid.
[440] Correspondence between J. W. Dulanty, High Commissioner for the Irish Free State, London and Daniel Twomey, Secretary to the Department of Agriculture of the Irish Free State, 20 Nov. 1935, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/332/194.
[441] Tully Stud Farm: Report of the London Discussions, 13 Nov. 1935, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A, pp 1-22 at p. 11.

(1906).[442] Canada became a dominion of the British Empire following the 1867 British North American Act. One region, Deadman's Island in Vancouver, Nova Scotia, was not transferred to Canada but instead remained classed as a British government property military reserve.[443] In 1906 the Attorney General of Canada appealed this decision. But it was unsuccessful, with the three magistrates ruling in favour of the Attorney General of British Columbia. They stated: 'Viewed as a question of fact, their Lordships have come to the conclusion, without difficulty, that the land in question, was originally, and was subsequently maintained as a military reserve; that accordingly, it remained imperial property at the time of the British North America Act.[444] Therefore, French argued that this court ruling was 'entirely inconsistent' with the rule of law that the Irish government used to bolster their legal arguments on dominion status.[445]

The Irish government countered by arguing that the example of Deadman's Island was 'entirely out of context' to the then circumstances.[446] They claimed this was a unique situation because Deadman's Island was classified as a British military reserve. Crucially, this excluded it from the property clauses outlined in the 1867 British North America Act.[447] This complex legal debate highlighted the challenging circumstances, and thus it was hardly surprising that a stalemate followed, with both governments unwilling to compromise.

3.5. Private sector influence

In 1937, the Irish Department of Agriculture finally responded to the Commission of Inquiry's recommendations. Regarding the Commission's recommendation to establish a Central Stud, the

[442] The Attorney General for the province of British Colombia vs the Attorney General for the dominion of Canada, 2 Aug. 1906, available at https://www.casemine.com/judgement/uk/5b4dc22e2c94e07cccd228d4 (1 Aug. 2022).
[443] Correspondence between the Dominions Office and the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries regarding the Irish Free State memorandum, 26 Feb. 1936, Dominion Office, DO 35/474 (20875/23) pp 1-6 at p. 5.
[444] The Attorney General for the province of British Colombia vs the Attorney General for the dominion of Canada, 2 Aug. 1906, available at https://www.casemine.com/judgement/uk/5b4dc22e2c94e07cccd228d4 (1 Aug. 2022).
[445] Correspondence between the Dominions Office and the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries regarding the Irish Free State memorandum, 26 Feb. 1936, Dominion Office, DO 35/474 (20875/23) pp 1-6 at p. 5.
[446] Correspondence between J. J. Hearne, Department of External Affairs and D. Twomey, Department of Agriculture, 8 Sept. 1937, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/332/194, pp 1-8 at p. 2.
[447] Ibid., p. 3.

Department stressed that it would be 'enormously expensive' and 'be open to so many other objections that the proposal was unrealistic'.[448] The Department did not elaborate on the nature of these objections. It would be reasonable to assume that other private sector owners/breeders may have been concerned with the prospects of a Central Stud. On the other hand, the evidence from the Commission shows that the recommendation of a central stud farm had the support of one private owners/breeder on the Commission, J.J. Parkinson.

The Department of Agriculture suggested more interaction with private breeders as an alternative to the Central Stud. They proposed that state stallions be leased out and strategically placed within selected private stud farms.[449] These stallions would be available to all breeders. Small breeders would be entitled to reduced service fees with a stipulation that they get at least eighty per cent of all the nominations. In return, the private breeder received a retaining fee suggested at £300 per annum alongside two free nominations for mares with all stallion service income paid to the Free State Exchequer.[450] In theory, these were progressive and inclusive recommendations that offered fairness and balance across the industry if implemented. Yet, in practice, they could upset the more influential breeders who were not on the Commission. In any case, it was significant to note the new policies that the Department of Agriculture were willing to explore for the long-term benefits of the industry.

The Department of Agriculture also supported the Commission's recommendations on purchasing three first-class stallions but did not initially support the purchase of second-class stallions because they argued there was adequate bloodstock to facilitate this purpose.[451] And after some negotiations, the Department of Agriculture got the Department of Finance's limited approval to purchase one first-class stallion for £20,000 and three second-class stallions for

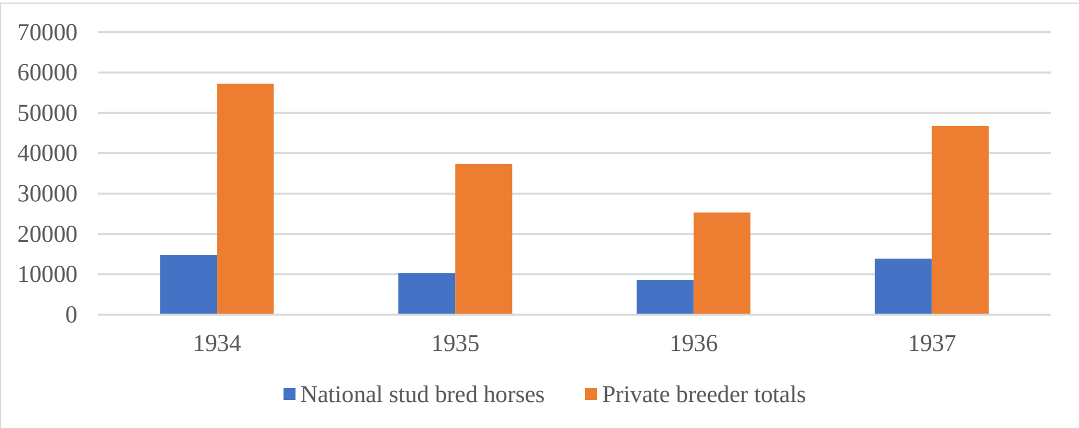
[448] Memorandum by the Department of Agriculture on the recommendations made in the report of the Commission of Inquiry into the horse breeding industry, 25 Jan. 1937, Department of the Taoiseach, S7960.
[449] Ibid.
[450] Ibid.
[451] Ibid.

£15,000.[452] These figures were lower than initially recommended by the Commission of Inquiry. They advised three first-class stallions and seven of second-class status.[453] Notwithstanding this, these developments were irrelevant unless a resolution could be reached on the NS.

3.6. Johnson's financial record

In the mid-1930s, the NS employed approximately thirty-five people with a weekly wage bill of £80.[454] The NS held about twenty broodmares and thirteen yearlings.[455] Under different economic circumstances, there might have been thirty broodmares, but the economic climate resulted in inadequate investment, and several NS broodmares had become aged. Only one high-class stallion, *Diligence,* remained at the Stud.[456] Again in prosperous circumstances, the NS would retain at least two or three high-class stallions for stud duties. Johnson continued the NS's practice of leasing horses to Lord Lonsdale. The following data outlines the winning race stakes by the horses bred at the NS compared to the winning stakes of the leading private breeders.

Figure 3 (a) Racing stakes won by National Stud bred horses and private breeder's horses from 1934 to 1937.

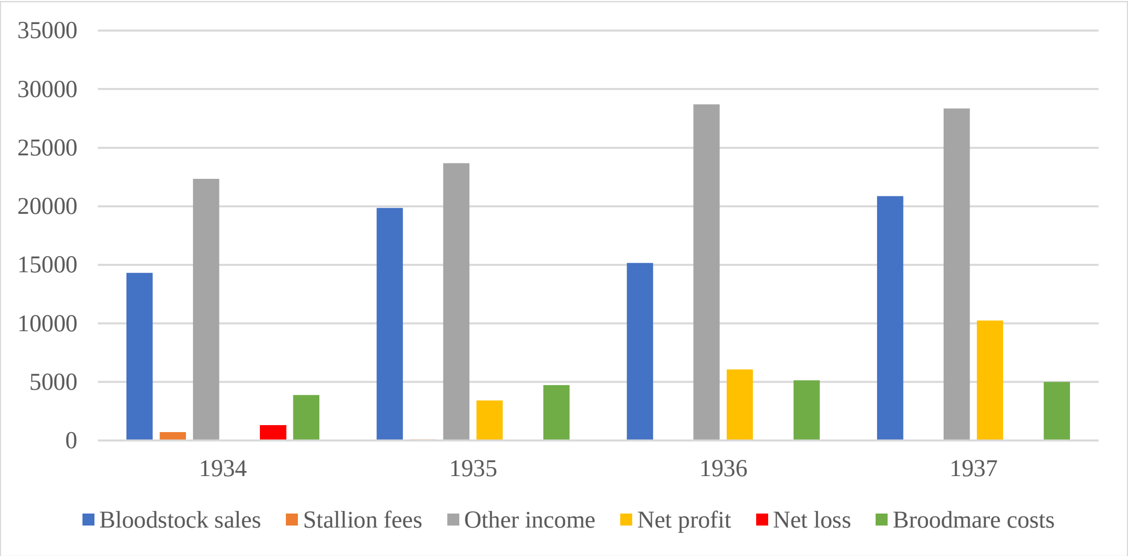


Source: *The bloodstock breeders review*, 1934-37.

[452] Department of Agriculture memorandum for the Executive Council on the horse breeding industry, 31 Jan. 1937, Department of the Taoiseach, S7960.
[453] Report of Commission of Inquiry into the horse breeding industry in Ireland, 7 Aug. 1935, Department of the Taoiseach, S7960.
[454] Memorandum by the Department of Agriculture on the National Stud, 31 Aug. 1935, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A.
[455] Directors' valuation of bloodstock (1935), Dominions Office DO/35/474 (20875/18).
[456] Memorandum by the Department of Agriculture on the National Stud, 31 Aug. 1935, Department of the Taoiseach, S6057A.

Compared to the private breeder totals, the NS performed consistently in the top ten breeding establishments. NS-bred horses accumulated £47,613 in winning race prize money which was approximately twenty-nine per cent of the private breeder's £166,532.[457] In 1934, the NS finished in third place with Stud-bred horses accumulating £14,819, with the lowest return of £8,617 recorded in 1936.[458] The Aga Khan was the leading breeder for three of four years, reflecting his dominance. From 1934 to 1937, Lonsdale's lease accumulated £3,295 in race prize money at an average of £823 per annum.[459] Bloodstock sales, other livestock such as cattle and sheep and agricultural products ensured the NS showed trading profits. The following chart shows these contributions:

Figure 3 (b) The National Stud Financial record from 1934 to 1937.



Source: *Trading accounts and balance sheets, 1934-1937*, H.C. 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, xxvi, xxix, xxxii, & Wray Vamplew, *A social and economic history of horse racing* (Sussex, 1976).

[457] *The bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, vol xxiii, (London, 1934), p. 292.
[458] *The bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred,* vol xxv, (London, 1936), p. 105.
[459] *The bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred,* vol xxiii to xxvi, (London, 1934 to 1936) pp 292 to 297.

Bloodstock sales realised £70,205 with an average of £17,551 per annum, including the sale of fifty-one horses at an average price of £1376 per horse.[460] When comparing Johnson's annual bloodstock sales averages of £17,551 to Henry Greer's, there is a significant difference, with Greer accumulating £22,303 per annum.[461] Stallion cover fees remained stagnant at £790 at an average of £197 per annum. This was in stark contrast to Greer's average of £4,709.[462] These figures reflected the downward trend in stallion cover fees, with the economic war having a considerable impact. Other income, including racing winning stakes, and livestock sales, totaled £103,050, at an average of £25,762 per annum. Greer's average of £37,245 per annum in other income was forty-six per cent higher than Johnson's totals. The upkeep of broodmares at the NS includes fees paid to private breeders at £18,747, an average of £4,686 per annum.[463] In Johnson's first year, the NS recorded financial losses of £1,287, but in the other three years, it returned a net profit of £19,721, at an average of £4930 per annum. Johnson's average annual profit per annum was sixty-five per cent less than the average of £14,087 per annum achieved during Greer's directorship.[464] But he did manage to return the NS to profit following the losses incurred in the first half of the 1930s.

3.7. Conclusion

Noble Johnson's lengthy period as an assistant to Henry Greer was invaluable in ensuring the transition in 1934 ran smoothly, and he was the ideal candidate to replace Greer. His tenure as manager of the NS was brief, but the NS returned to profit for the first time in several years. Considering the ongoing trade war with Britain, this was a significant achievement. The change of political circumstances in Ireland significantly impacted the NS. Throughout the 1930s, Fianna

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[460] *Trading accounts and balance sheets, 1934-1937*, p. 437, p. 475, p. 505, 507, H.C. 1936, 1937, 1939, 1939, xxvi, xxix, xxxii, 51, 47, 45, 45, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (4 July 2021), pp 51-58, pp 47-53, pp 45-51, pp 45-51.
[461] *Trading accounts and balance sheets 1919-37*, 1934, p. 507, H.C. 1939, xxxii, 45, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (4 July 2021), pp 45-51.
[462] Ibid.
[463] Ibid.
[464] Ibid.

Fáil's policies were shaped around full independence. As the NS was a British-run organisation in Ireland, this made matters challenging. The NS's bloodstock's reputation ensured that both governments remained divided on its ownership. But the legal issues around the ownership were complex. At the London Conference, both governments strongly argued on the terms of property clauses in the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty, but due to their ambiguous nature, it was challenging to predict how a court might rule in legal proceedings between the governments. The reality was that neither government wanted the NS to continue operating under the present circumstances. The Irish government did not want a British-run establishment operating in the Irish Free State. And the British government wanted to relocate the NS to Britain, but the bloodstock issue remained contentious.

In the meantime, in March 1937, Johnson died unexpectedly at his Kildare residence. Warm tributes followed with the local Press stating: 'The deceased was widely respected while his sound judgement and expert knowledge of all prevailing to the thoroughbred horse was recognised by every authority on the subject'.[465] Replacing Johnson was the assistant director at the NS, Peter Eustace Burrell, and his progress and that of the NS will be the focus of the next chapter.

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[465] *Leinster Leader*, 13 Mar. 1937.

Chapter Four:

External factors break decades of stalemate

at the National Stud under Peter Burrell (1938-1944)

4.1. Introduction

Shortly after Peter Burrell took over as manager of the NS, the Second World War began. Burrell was born in Sussex in 1905, the youngest son of a horse breeder, Merrik Burrell. His great-uncle was Major Eustace Loder (famous for *Pretty Polly*), who owned stud farms in Ireland. Burrell completed a degree at Cirencester Agriculture College. In 1926, he moved to Ireland to work as an assistant to Nobel Johnson at Major Loder's Studs. When Johnson became director of the NS, Burrell became manager of Loder's stud.[466] In 1934, following Johnson's death, Burrell became CEO of the NS. Like Henry Greer, Burrell's allegiances lay firmly with the British establishment. In the early 1940s, Burrell temporarily left the NS enlisting in the British Royal Air Force as a senior intelligence officer in Northern Ireland. During his absence, the NS was managed by Irish breeders Ernest Bellaney and Hubert M. Hartigan until Burrell returned in 1943.[467] In the meantime, the Second World War had a negative impact on the equine industry, with the British government suspending jumps racing and placing restrictions on flat racing. But, at the same time, the British government appreciated the significance of sporting events in lifting public morale. Hence, national events like the Epsom Derby were allowed to take place. Matthew Taylor elaborates: '…the British saw themselves as a sporting nation, and thus images of the people at play were important in projecting the idea of a unified national community'.[468] In Ireland, emergency powers were also introduced by the government, which restricted horse racing. An

[466] *The bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred,* 1937, vol xxvi (London, 1937), p. 151.
[467] In the mid-1940s, following the Irish and British government's agreement on the Stud's future, Burrell returned to England to become director of the new British National Stud at Gillingham, where he remained until his retirement in 1971.
[468] Matthew Taylor, 'Sport and civilian morale in World War Two Britain' in *Journal of Contemporary History*, LIII (2018), pp. 315-338 at p. 337.

Advisory Committee was established to 'control meetings' and provide financial assistance to racecourses experiencing difficulties. Regarding the NS, the British government was deeply unhappy with Lord Lonsdale's extravagant lifestyle and sought to terminate the racing lease. More importantly, after over two decades of disagreement between the Irish and British governments on the Stud's bloodstock ownership, matters seemed likely to conclude with external factors playing a leading role in forcing an agreement. These were the background circumstances Peter Burrell faced as he began the directorship role at the NS. And the following chapter examines the events that led to an agreement between the Irish and British governments on the NS's future.

4.2. The Aga Khan's offer

In the early 1940s, the uncertainty surrounding the future of the horse racing industry refocused the British government's intention of creating a State Stud Farm in Britain. Several high-class stallions were due to be retired to stud duties at the NS in Ireland. These developments concerned the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries. They recognised the quality of these thoroughbreds and were steadfast in attempting to ensure that they remained in Britain for the benefit of British horse breeding. However, this plan could only be achieved if there was an agreement with the Irish government on the ownership of the bloodstock at the Stud. But other developments had an impact on how the British government formulated their policies.

In late 1939, an extraordinary set of circumstances in Britain had implications for the NS. Leading horse breeder, the Aga Khan, was in financial debt with banking institutions, and to address these difficulties, he offered to sell his racing enterprise to the British government.[469] The British government was interested in the offer as they planned to incorporate Aga Khan's Stud

[469] Correspondence from the Aga Khan III and the Secretary of State of India, 24 Oct. 1939, Dominions Office, DO/35/898/9, (X132/3).

farm with the NS in Ireland. But other factors were at play. For example, the reaction of the Irish government and the racing lease with Lord Lonsdale, which was underperforming.

The secretary of State in India contacted the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries in Britain, advising that Aga Khan proposed selling his entire racing establishment and hoped the British government would be keenly interested.[470] This was a significant offer as the Aga Khan owned some of the highest class of thoroughbreds in Britain and Ireland.[471] At this time, he owned two stud farms in Ireland, Sheshoon Stud and Ballymany Stud at the Curragh in County Kildare and other stud farms in France. Enticing the British government, Aga Khan claimed: 'Personally, I think it is the best business proposition they will have during the war'.[472] He hoped to fetch £129,000 for his racing establishments.[473] In pre-war times, the bloodstock was worth considerably more than the price it was offered, with the *Northern Whig* speculating as much as £300,000.[474] In correspondence with the India Office, the Aga Khan outlined the reasons for selling: 'It was a wonderful concern, [his Stud] the best gilt-edged investment possible until Mr Hitler upset the apple cart – like those of many others. Now my position is one of great and serious difficulty…I am very sorry to inform you that I am in serious financial trouble'.[475] Writing in *Old Sportsmen Never Die*, Burrell also suggests that Aga Khan decided to sell his stud farms because he presumed that Germany would emerge victorious from the war, and he was troubled that this would result in the collapse of his racing empire.[476]

[470] Correspondence between the Dominions Office and the Ministry of Agriculture, 15 Nov. 1939, Dominions Office, DO/35/898/9, (X132/3).
[471] Correspondence between the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries and the Treasury Department, 16 Nov. 1939, Treasury Department, T161/998/7.
[472] Correspondence between the Aga Khan III and the Secretary of State of India, 24 Oct. 1939, Dominions Office, DO/35/898/9, (X132/3).
[473] Correspondence between the Dominions Office and the Ministry of Agriculture, 15 Nov. 1939, Dominions Office, DO/35/898/9, (X132/3).
[474] *Northern Whig*, 20 Oct. 1939.
[475] Correspondence between the Aga Khan III and the Secretary of State of India, 24 Oct. 1929, Dominions Office, DO/35/898/9, (X132/3).
[476] Peter Eustace Burrell, *Old sportsmen never die* (Newmarket, 1993), p. 30.

Nevertheless, the gravity of his financial circumstances should not be underestimated, with debts of £275,000 to Coutts and Lloyds Bank.[477] And the upkeep of his thoroughbreds was also expensive. Stanley Jackson argues that he spent a 'conservative estimate of £250,000 per year on racing'.[478] He also led a lavish lifestyle which could have been a contributory factor to his financial predicament. The Aga Khan argued that the British government's initial outlay to purchase the Stud could be returned within four years through stallion cover fees. This was a reasonable argument due to the quality of his thoroughbreds, such as *Bahram*, *Mahmoud*, *Dastur*, *Felicitation* and *Umidwar*. In 1935, *Bahram* won the British Triple Crown of the Two Thousand Guineas, the Derby, and St. Leger and *Mahmoud* won the Epsom Derby in 1936. Pre-war, the cover fees for *Bahram* were 500 guineas and 400 guineas for *Mahmoud*.[479] Aga Khan advised the British government to reduce these fees to 400 and 250 guineas, respectively, so that the demand for their services would increase, potentially returning £25,000 per annum.[480] To meet these targets, both stallions would need to cover approximately eighty mares (*Bahram* thirty and *Mahmoud* fifty) which in the circumstances was a very reasonable expectation. He also speculated that *Datsur*, *Felicitation* and *Umidwar* would add £15,000 in stallion fees, with additional income from broodmares and foals estimated at between £20,000 to £30,000.[481]

Aga Khan was in favour of the British government's plans to integrate his stud farms in Ireland with the NS as running costs would be reduced.[482] Both studs were located close to each other, and their managers had a good business relationship. Aga Khan suggested another option to the British government. They could rent his stud farms for the duration of the war at a nominal

[477] Correspondence between the Aga Khan III and the Secretary of State of India, 24 Oct. 1939, Dominions Office, DO/35/898/9, (X132/3).
[478] Stanley Jackson, *The Aga Khan, prince, prophet, and sportsman* (London, 1952), p. 22.
[479] Correspondence between the Aga Khan III and the Secretary of State of India, 24 Oct. 1939 (Dominions Office, DO/35/898/9, (X132/3)).
[480] Ibid.
[481] Ibid.
[482] Ibid.

price provided rates and taxes were paid, and after the war, a lease could be arranged.[483] He also claimed that he made the offer on patriotic grounds but, at the same time, cautioned:

> I must tell you frankly that I am already in communication with possible buyers in America and Italy, to whom I have been quoted entirely different – and very much higher prices…if this could all be settled before the end of the year, it would be a great, great, great boon to me. I could then go East without these terrible financial worries.[484]

It was rumoured in the Press that an American syndicate were willing to pay £250,000 for his stud farms.[485] A spokesperson for Aga Khan, quoted in the *Evening Despatch*, inflamed matters further by indicating that: '…Aga Khan would like any person or syndicate who wants any bloodstock belonging to His Highness, whether at Stud or in any training establishment, to approach His Highness direct at the Ritz Hotel Paris or the British Bloodstock Agency in London'.[486] Such was the widespread interest in acquiring the Aga Khan's stud farms, the Italian Foreign Minister, Galeazzo Ciano, lobbied for the Italian government to purchase, but his father-in-law, Prime Minister Benito Mussolini, rejected the proposal out of hand.[487]

There was apprehension within the British Treasury Department about the Aga Khan's offer. They were concerned that the Irish government could present 'formidable opposition' to plans they had to purchase the stud farms.[488] The Ministry of Agriculture also expressed concerns: 'It would be foolish to buy the Aga Khan's stud if there is a danger that Eire might establish a [legal] claim to the whole National Stud'.[489] These concerns were valid as the Irish Free State government would not relinquish any rights they had to the NS easily. The Ministry of Agriculture cautioned that purchasing Aga Khan's Stud would be 'exceedingly speculative'

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483 Correspondence between the Aga Khan III and the Secretary of State of India, 24 Oct. 1939, Dominions Office, DO/35/898/9, (X132/3).
484 Ibid.
485 *The Yorkshire Post*, 8 Nov. 1939.
486 *Evening Despatch*, 25 Oct. 1939.
487 Aga Khan, *The memoirs of Aga Khan*: *world enough and time* (New York, 1954), p. 197.
488 Notes on the offer of His Highness the Aga Khan to sell his breeding stud to the British government, 8 Nov. 1939, Treasury Department, T161/998/7.
489 Correspondence between the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries and the Treasury Department, 16 Nov. 1939, Treasury Department, T161/998/7.

because of the war and that serious financial investment would be necessary to expand the Stud to integrate the Aga Khan's livestock.[490] Therefore, the Ministry of Agriculture advised the British government to refuse the offer. In the meantime, the Treasury Department sought Burrell's opinion on the proposal and a valuation of the bloodstock.

Burrell valued the stallions based on their potential price if sold on the American market because their value on the English market at the time was much less due to the war.[491] The bloodstock consisted of five stallions, thirty-two mares, twelve colts and twelve fillies. He valued the Aga Khan's five stallions at £100,000; *Bahram* at £50,000, *Mahmoud* at £25,000, *Dastur at* £15,000, *Felicitation* at £5,000 and *Umidwar* at £5,000.[492] He advised that the Aga Khan's broodmares and foals in normal circumstances were worth approximately £100,000, but because of the war, the market price was significantly lower at £35,000. And the Aga Khan's foals were valued at £15,500.[493] Burrell estimated the potential earnings from cover fees as follows:

Table 4 (a) Burrell's estimation of Aga Khan's stallion cover fees for 1940.

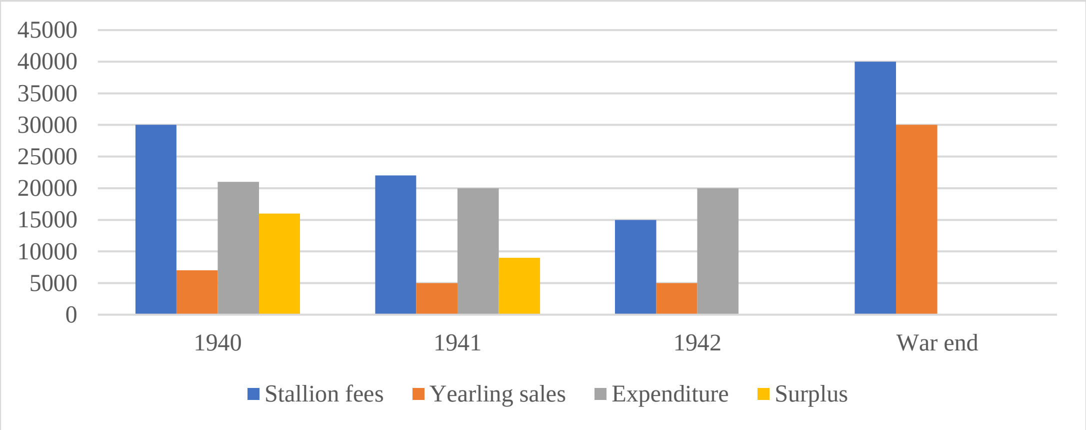
Stallions	**Covers**	**Value**
Bahram	40 mares at £400	£16,000
Mahmoud	40 Mares at 250	10,000
Dastur	40 mares at 100	4,000
Felicitation	30 mares at 50	1500
Umidwar	30 mares at 50	1500
Total		**£33,000**

Source: Memorandum from Peter Burrell, 6 Nov. 1939, Dominions Office, DO/35/898, (X132/3).

[490] Minute sheets of the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, 10 Nov. 1939, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF121/148.
[491] Memorandum from Peter Burrell for the attention of the British government, 6 Nov. 1939, Treasury Department, T161/998/7.
[492] Ibid.
[493] Ibid.

These figures were in line with what the Aga Khan had advised the cover fees could potentially achieve. Burrell also estimated the gross income likely to be achieved.

Figure 4 (b) Burrell's estimation of gross income for the Aga Khan's stud from 1940 to 1942.



Source: Peter Burrell's estimate of expenditure and income at Aga Khan's Stud, 12 Dec. 1939, Treasury Department, T161/998/7.

Burrell calculated an annual expenditure of £7,850 to maintain Aga Khan's Stud. These costs included £600 for wages, £1,750 for agriculture products, £2,000 for external stallion fees, transport costs of £500, insurance cover for *Bahram* at £2,000, and net expenditure on the Stud's leading stallions of £1000.[494] In addition, Burrell recommended that £12,000 be set aside for a 'sinking fund' which covered losses if the NS's stallions underperformed. Concerning stallion fees, he estimated £67,000 could be realised and yearling sales of £17,000 but advised that this figure could increase considering that the Aga Khan's yearlings fetched £36,000 at the recent Doncaster Sales.[495]

There was concern amongst horse breeders throughout the UK about the prospect of the Aga Khan selling his bloodstock to America.[496] Burrell repeated these concerns cautioning the

[494] Peter Burrell's estimate of expenditure and income at Aga Khan's Stud, 12 Dec. 1939, Treasury Department, T161/998/7.
[495] Ibid.
[496] Memorandum from Peter Burrell for the attention of the British government, 6 Nov. 1939, Dominions Office, DO/35/898, (X132/3).

British government of the 'incalculable loss' to the equine industry if 'great stallions' like *Bahram* were sold abroad: 'I consider that the Aga Khan's offer is extremely advantageous to the government in spite of the somewhat speculative nature of the undertaking and of the uncertainty as to the future conditions generally'.[497] But the Ministry of Agriculture argued that if the horses were sold abroad, they would provide specific relief measures designed to alleviate the prevailing circumstances and make them available to all breeders throughout the country.[498] At the same time, the Ministry did not elaborate on the details of these relief measures. And they did not appreciate the importance of implementing a policy designed to safeguard the best thoroughbreds in the UK.

In November 1939, members of the British government met to discuss the Aga Khan's offer. In attendance was the secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, Donald Fergusson; Findlater Stewart of the India Office; Eric Machtig of the Dominions Office; and from the Treasury Department, Alan Barlow. There was a notable change in overall attitudes towards the offer. Barlow advised that the Treasury Department now regarded Aga Khan's offer as 'a very favourable bargain for the government'.[499] Fergusson boldly claimed the Irish government was 'not particularly anxious to take over the National Stud.'[500] And Machtig took a similar line claiming that the Irish government might make an initial claim to the bloodstock but 'would not press the matter or take drastic action' like seizing the NS's bloodstock.[501] But both Fergusson and Machtig misinterpreted the circumstances. The Irish government wanted to retain the NS in the interests of the Irish Free State, and they would not relinquish their claims easily.

[497] Memorandum from Peter Burrell for the attention of the British government, 6 Nov. 1939, Dominions Office, DO/35/898, (X132/3).
[498] Correspondence between the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries and the Treasury Department, 4 Dec. 1939, Treasury Department, T161/998/7.
[499] Meeting to consider the Aga Khan's offer to sell his breeding stud to the British government, 28 Nov. 1939, Dominions Office, DO/35/898, (X132/3).
[500] Ibid.
[501] Ibid.

Following further discussion, it was agreed by all in attendance that there were risks involved in the purchase but that these risks did not pose such ‘a serious threat as to prejudice the British government's acceptance of the offer on purely commercial and business grounds’.[502] The British government agreed to inform the Irish government of their plans to purchase the Aga Khan’s bloodstock but stressed there was ‘no need whatsoever’ to consult them.[503] A month later, circumstances dramatically changed when the India Office contacted the Ministry of Agriculture, advising that the Aga Khan had decided to withdraw his offer to sell the Stud to the British government. At the same time, Aga Khan sold several yearlings at the Newmarket Sales.[504] The Ministry of Agriculture, perhaps annoyed with the cancellation, claimed it was ‘no doubt due to the fact’ that he fetched £43,000 for his yearlings at the sales.[505] Burrell considered the price for the yearlings ‘surprisingly high’, which he attributed to the influx of foreign money into the market.[506]

Writing several years later in his *Memoirs,* Aga Khan offered an entirely different reason for the collapse of the sale. He indicated it was the Ministry of Agriculture that rejected the offer:

> The Ministry of Agriculture, however, for reasons best known to themselves, rejected an offer which I believe to have been unique and one which would also have been of enormous benefit to agriculture, one of Britain's most vital industries in peace and in war. To this day, I have never understood this decision. They did not even bother to look in the gift horse's mouth.[507]

In any event, in August 1940, Aga Khan sold *Bahram* to American investors in Maryland for £40,000 and *Mahmoud* for £25,000.[508] This was in stark contrast to five years earlier when *Bahram* retired to stud duties, he refused an offer of £80,000, claiming: ‘I will not sell *Bahram*

[502] Meeting to consider the Aga Khan’s offer to sell his breeding stud to the British government, 28 Nov. 1939, Dominions Office, DO/35/898, (X132/3).
[503] Correspondence between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Dominions Office and Dominions Office, 21 Nov. 1939, Dominions Office, DO/35/898, (X132/3).
[504] *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News,* 19 July 1940.
[505] Correspondence with the India Office and the Ministry of Agriculture, 12 Dec. 1939, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF121/148.
[506] Ibid.
[507] Aga Khan, *The memoirs of Aga Khan*: *world enough and time* (New York, 1954), p. 197.
[508] Leicester, *Bloodstock breeding*, p. 241.

as long as I live!'.[509] Moreover, this is evidence of the extreme financial pressure he was under. The consequences of selling high-class thoroughbreds to foreign shores damaged Aga Khan's reputation across the United Kingdom, with one of the leading breeders, Lord Derby, vocal in condemnation.[510] The British Press were also critical, with the *Nottingham Journal* cautioning that 'the great national industry of training and breeding of thoroughbred bloodstock is in serious danger of being extinguished unless something is done in the near future to encourage owners, trainers and breeders to hold on to their interests'.[511] These concerns were valid as selling quality thoroughbreds to foreign shores certainly weakened the best pedigree lines. And there was also trouble brewing at the NS with the lease with Lord Lonsdale under scrutiny for all the wrong reasons.

4.3. End of the lease with the *Yellow Earl*

In February 1940, the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries sought approval from the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, to terminate the racing lease between the NS and the *Yellow Earl*. They explained to Chamberlain that 'in recent years this association with Lord Lonsdale has, for reasons with which I need not trouble you, not been too satisfactory for us and for some time we have been considering the possibility of making other arrangements'.[512] Burrell offered insight by revealing that Lonsdale's extravagant lifestyle meant that he 'seldom paid his training bills' and owed his horse trainer Fred Darling a significant amount of money, and it was rumoured that Lonsdale verged on bankruptcy.[513] Locating a new leaseholder for the National Stud's horses presented a difficulty for The Ministry of Agriculture. Most of the top breeders were interested, but to choose one randomly would leave the government open to criticism. Therefore, the Ministry of Agriculture hoped King George V1 would take over the lease, but the Ministry still

[509] *Birmingham Daily Post*, 9 Aug. 1940.
[510] Georg Lange, *75 Years, The Aga Khan, and his breeding studs 1922-1997* (Dortmund, 1998), p. xxxiii.
[511] *Nottingham Journal*, 25 June 1940.
[512] Correspondence with the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries and the British Prime Minister, 27 Feb. 1940, Prime Minister's Office, PREM 1/396.
[513] Burrell, *Old sportsmen never die*, p. 26.

faced a dilemma over how to cancel the lease with Lonsdale in a tactful manner.[514] They decided to shoulder the responsibility of informing Lonsdale with Burrell. Burrell explained to Lonsdale that King George wanted to lease all the NS's horses because his own horses were underperforming, and the King's request presented a 'terrible quandary' for him.[515] This cleverly shifted the onus onto Lonsdale, and not wishing to offend the King, he accepted Burrell's version of events and surrendered the lease without complaint, allegedly remarking: 'Oh, dear boy, of course, I will stand aside if His Majesty wishes to lease the horses, don't worry about me for one moment'.[516] Therefore, the twenty-four-year lease between the National Stud and Lonsdale ended. For the most part, the lease with Lonsdale was successful, as reflected in the trading accounts from 1916 to 1933.[517] It was only in the final few years that earnings dropped significantly, partly due to the economic war.

The first batch of horses leased by the NS to King George included two of the most successful racehorses in British history, *Big Game* and *Sun Chariot*. *Big Game* was a colt out of *Myrobella* sired by *Bahram*. *Big Game* won the Two Thousand Guineas in 1942, the first Royal Classic success since King Edward's *Minoru* won the 1909 English Derby. Also, that year, the filly *Sun Chariot* won the British Triple Crown of the One Thousand Guineas, the Oaks, and St. Leger. Moreover, the value of the NS's thoroughbreds refocused the British government's policy. But these events did not go unnoticed, with the Irish government having its own plans for the NS's future.

4.4. High-value thoroughbreds

In November 1940, J. E. Stephenson from the Dominions Office contacted the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, advising that the Irish government, after 'maintaining silence' for years,

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[514] Correspondence with the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries and the British Prime Minister, 27 Feb. 1940, Prime Minister's Office, PREM 1/396.
[515] Burrell, *Old sportsmen never die*, p. 27.
[516] Ibid., pp 27-28.
[517] Trading accounts and balance sheets of the National Stud, House of Commons, 1916-33 (vol xxix, London, 1909-42), available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (4 July 2021).

had decided they wanted to take over the NS.[518] The Ministry of Agriculture speculated that the Irish government were heavily influenced by the reputation of the NS's thoroughbreds; they advised Stephenson to inform the Irish government that they were not 'willing to contemplate' their enquiry.[519] The prevailing level of hostility between the British and Irish governments was evident through the closing comments from the Ministry of Agriculture to Stephenson: 'In view of the present state of relations between the two governments, you may feel it is unnecessary to reply at all'.[520]

Two years elapsed with no significant developments until the future of *Big Game* became an issue of contention. *Big Game* was expected to be retired to stud duties later that year, and there were concerns about who would benefit from its earnings at Stud. The Ministry of Agriculture opposed the stallion going to NS in Ireland and was adamant 'that the proper course of action' was to maintain *Big Game* in Britain.[521] They cautioned: 'It might be repugnant to the feelings of many citizens…to allow horses to pass into possession of that government [Irish] especially given the recent outstanding successes of *Sun Chariot* and *Big Game'*.[522] The British Press added more pressure by speculating that *Big Game* would be retired to Ireland.[523] This forced the Ministry of Agriculture's hand, and by the end of September, they ensured *Big Game* was retired to stud at Newmarket in Britain.[524]

To protect the interests of breeders in Britain, the Ministry of Agriculture introduced changes making it difficult for Irish breeders to avail of the *Big Game's* covering services. They

518 Correspondence between the Dominions Office and the Ministry of Agriculture, 21 Nov. 1940, Dominions Office, DO/35/898, (X132/3).
519 Ibid.
520 Correspondence between the Dominions Office and the Ministry of Agriculture, 14 Dec. 1940, Dominions Office, DO/35/898, (X132/3).
521 Correspondence between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Dominions Office, 15 June 1942, Dominions Office, DO/35/898, (X132/4).
522 War Cabinet committee on economic policy towards Eire: Future of the National Stud, 'Memorandum by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, 19 Mar. 1943, Dominions Office, DO/35/1158, (0.516/1).
523 *Daily Herald,* 21 Sept. 1942.
524 War Cabinet committee on economic policy towards Eire: Future of the National Stud, 'Memorandum by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, 19 Mar. 1943, Dominions Office, DO/35/1158, (0.516/1).

cautioned that he would be available to a select number of mares.[525] In another divisive policy designed to exclude Irish breeders, they argued that owners 'that are not taxpayers' in Britain should be excluded' because the NS was the property of British income taxpayers, and it would not be politically astute to include owners from Ireland.[526] The Dominions Office agreed but advised against making any public statement; instead, they advised the Ministry of Agriculture that 'it should merely happen that such owners are not favoured'.[527]

Following these developments, the Ministry of Agriculture, with the support of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, refocused on transferring the NS's bloodstock from Ireland to Britain.[528] The Dominions Office noted that most of the NS's bloodstock was in Britain from February for the racing season.[529] Therefore, this presented an opportunity for the Ministry of Agriculture to hold on to the bloodstock and not return it to Ireland. The Dominions Office argued that this would seriously impede the Irish government's bargaining power in future negotiations.[530] But the Irish government was aware of the matter's seriousness and responded accordingly.

In February 1943, the Taoiseach, Éamon de Valera, advised John Maffey (1877-1969) of his wish to have the NS transferred to the Irish government as a matter of urgency.[531] Maffey was a British civil servant and diplomat who served in several roles in the political department of the government in India from 1899 to 1924.[532] He was the Governor of Sudan in Africa from

525 Correspondence between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Dominions Office, 16 Oct. 1944, Dominions Office, D0/35/1158, (0.516/1).
526 Ibid.
527 Correspondence between the Dominions Office and the Ministry of Agriculture, 17 Oct. 1944, Dominions Office, D0/35/1158, (0.516/1).
528 Future of the National Stud, Memorandum by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 6 Feb. 1943, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, MAF/121/93.
529 Tully Stud Farm – Éire, re: the question of the National Stud, 21 Jan. 1943, Dominions Office, DO/35/1158, (0.516/1).
530 Ibid.
531 Correspondence between Éamon De Valera and Sir John Maffey, 3 Feb. 1943, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/332/194.
532 Bridget Hourican & Niall Keogh, 'John Maffey', *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (1877-1969), available at https://www.dib.ie/biography/maffey-john-loader-a5323 (1 Aug. 2022).

1926 to 1934. In 1934, he was under-secretary of state for the colonies until 1937. And in 1939, he was appointed 'British Representative in Ireland', a position he held until he retired in 1949. But the Dominions Office were suspicious of Maffey's loyalties, as evident in correspondence with the Ministry of Agriculture, where they cautioned 'nothing be said to him' about their intentions for the NS, especially around the bloodstock issue.[533] Perhaps, this mistrust was due to Maffey's relationship with de Valera, which has been described by Ronan Fanning as 'warm if sometimes inevitably fraught'.[534] Nevertheless, as time passed, their relationship flourished.[535]

Maffey appreciated the levels of tension between both governments on the bloodstock issue. He suggested to the Dominions Office that it would be advantageous for the British government to employ him as a moderator.[536] After some reluctance, the Dominions Office agreed to this request, but they advised Maffey to 'tread carefully so as not to inflame matters further'.[537] They cautioned:

> A decision in this sense will clearly be a great disappointment to the Eire government, who have all along been hoping eventually to obtain the Stud for themselves, but we cannot oppose the proposed policy on this account. The only question is how it can be best presented to the Eire Government in order that they will acquiesce and not attempt to place obstacles in the way, e.g., by refusing to allow the United Kingdom government to bring away the animals that remained in Eire.[538]

Maffey cautioned the Irish government that the British government had solid legal claims to the bloodstock.[539] And De Valera indicated he would like a 'clean table' approach that resigned past

[533] Tully Stud Farm – Éire, re: the question of the National Stud, 3 Feb. 1943, Dominions Office, DO/35/1158, (0.516/1).
[534] Ronan Fanning, *Éamon de Valera: a will to power* (London, 2015), p. 191.
[535] Diarmuid Ferriter, *Judging dev, a reassessment of the life and legacy of Éamon de Valera* (Dublin, 2007), p. 155.
[536] Correspondence between the Dominions Office and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 10 Mar. 1943, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, MAF/121/93.
[537] War Cabinet committee on economic policy towards Eire: Future of the National Stud, Memorandum by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, 19 Mar. 1943, Dominions Office, DO/35/1158, (0.516/1).
[538] Correspondence between the Dominions Office and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 16 Mar. 1943, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, MAF/121/93.
[539] Correspondence between Sir John Maffey and the Department of Foreign Affairs, 4 Apr. 1943, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/332/194.

arguments, but the British government remained concerned over the bloodstock.[540] After further negotiations, the Irish government revealed that they were optimistic that there was 'concrete, practical proposals' on the table, and the transfer of the land at the Tully Stud Farm from British to Irish ownership seemed 'likely at last'.[541]

4.5. Agreement at last

In May 1943, the Irish government held a conference with civil servants from the Departments of Finance, the Department of Agriculture, the Land Commission, and the Valuation Office. The conference's primary purpose was to calculate the rent payments charged to the British government for using the land at Tully Stud Farm. Charles. L. Kettle, an inspector of the Land Commission and George Barlee, a district valuer, agreed to supply a detailed report estimating the rent from 1922 to 1943. Within three months, Kettle and Barlee presented their report to the Irish and British governments. And in May 1944, the issue of the payment of rent was concluded. It covered the period from December 1922 to December 1943. Both governments agreed on Kettle and Barlee's calculation of £28,263.[542] A total of £6,960 was subtracted from the figure to cover live and dead stock and farm machinery taken over by the Irish Department of Agriculture on 31 December 1943.[543] Therefore, the final settlement figure was £21,300, which was paid to the Irish government without interest charges.[544] (See appendix for full details of how the valuations were calculated).

The British government agreed to hand over the land and buildings at Tully Stud Farm to the Irish government, and they arranged to transfer the bloodstock at Tully to the United Kingdom. The Ministry of Agriculture purchased Sandley Estate at Gillingham in Dorset as the

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540 Correspondence between Sir John Maffey and the Ministry of Agriculture, 22 Mar. 1943, Dominions Office, DO/35/1158.
541 Transfer of Tully Stud Farm – British proposals, 13 Apr. 1943, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/332/194, pp 1-9 at p. 1.
542 Correspondence between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Dominions Office, 11 May 1944, Dominions Office, DO/1158, (0.516/1/).
543 Correspondence between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Dominions Office, 11 May 1944, Dominions Office, DO/1158, (0.516/1/).
544 Transfer of the National Stud from Éire to England, 8 Mar. 1944, Dominions Office, DO/35/1158, (0.516/1).

location for the British National Stud.[545] On 21 September 1943, the following statement was released to the Press:

> By agreement between the Irish and British governments, the National Stud, hitherto conducted by the British government at Tully, County Kildare, shall in future be carried on in Great Britain, to which the bloodstock has been transferred. Arrangements are being made to hand over the land and buildings at Tully to the Irish government. Various matters of detail arising out of these arrangements are still under discussion between the two governments.[546]

In the end, the Irish government surrendered their claims to the bloodstock, more than likely influenced by the fact that they did not have a solid legal claim. And due to the necessity to end the impracticality of a British-run establishment operating within the confines of the Irish Free State, especially if one considers De Valera's relentless determination towards full Irish independence. In any event, plans began to create a new Irish National Stud (INS). The Department of Agriculture stated:

> The Minister of Agriculture is satisfied that there is a necessity for a State-owned stud farm so far as the Department's existing schemes for developing light horse breeding are concerned. Although the schemes for the improvement of hunters and other light horses are based largely on the use of thoroughbred sires, it has been found more economically and satisfactory to select and purchase animals after they have finished racing than to breed them, especially for the purpose of the schemes. Horses raced at an establishment like Tully Stud would be too costly for ordinary country use in the sense that sires equally useful for hunter-breeding, but not belonging to the very best lines of blood can be acquired at a much lower cost.[547]

There was support within the Irish government for including private breeders in the future State Stud Farm in Ireland. For instance, the Minister of Finance, Seán T. O'Kelly, argued that to compete directly with the private breeders would be hugely detrimental; O'Kelly claimed: 'If the State now intervenes and charges cover fees at rates 'lower than would be charged in ordinary commercial circumstances' the result in the long-term will be not merely the discouragement of

[545] *Daily Telegraph*, 16 Sept. 1943.
[546] *Irish Press*, 21 Sept. 1943.
[547] Memorandum by the Department of Agriculture on the National Stud, 8 Dec. 1943, Department of the Taoiseach, TSCH/S6057A.

private enterprise but the virtual socialisation of the industry'.[548] He also cautioned that income tax revenue would decrease, and in times of economic hardship, the State would be expected to provide grants to supplement the NS, and this prospect warranted consideration in any future government plans.[549] O'Kelly argued that these issues could be overcome if the government leased the NS to private breeders under 'safeguarding conditions' implemented by the Department of Agriculture.[550] Some years earlier, in 1937, the Department of Agriculture proposed that state stallions be leased out to private breeders and strategically placed within selected private stud farms.[551] Yet, seven years later, there was a significant shift in departmental policy, which did not include this type of interaction with the private breeders. Addressing O'Kelly's suggestion to lease to private individuals, the Department of Agriculture argued that the Stud would be run for individuals' profits, which would have a negative impact on small breeders and the horse breeding industry.[552] Another factor determining departmental policy was that the cover fees of top-class sires were enormous in the 1940s. The Department of Agriculture stressed that 'this renders it impossible for the small breeders to mate their mares with such stallions and, as a result, numbers of good mares which, if suitably mated, would produce high-class stock, are [instead]covered by mediocre sires'.[553] The Department of Agriculture proposed rectifying this problem by providing top-class sires at reasonable fees to small horse breeders, and this would be a 'distinct advantage' to the industry'.[554]

The Department Of Agriculture recommended that the new INS be placed under the management of a 'non-profit earning company or board, working within the framework' of

[548] Observations by the Minister of Finance on the memorandum of the Minister of Agriculture, 8 Dec. 1943, Department of the Taoiseach, TSCH/S6057A.
[549] Ibid.
[550] Ibid.
[551] Memorandum by the Department of Agriculture on the recommendations made in the report of the Commission of Inquiry into the horse breeding industry, 25 Jan. 1937, Department of the Taoiseach, S7960.
[552] Memorandum by the Department of Agriculture on the National Stud, 8 Dec. 1943, Department of the Taoiseach, TSCH/S6057A.
[553] Memorandum by the Department of Agriculture on the National Stud, 8 Dec. 1943, Department of the Taoiseach, TSCH/S6057A.
[554] Ibid.

policy laid down by the Minister for Agriculture.[555] They estimated the cost for establishing the State Stud would include £200,000 for bloodstock, with an annual expenditure of £8,650 covering wages, general expenses, rent, and rates.[556] And the Department advised that acquiring the first foundation bloodstock at the Stud would take two or three years.

The Press in Ireland reported that 'a glorious chapter in the history of Irish horse breeding has just closed with the taking over by the government of the world-famous National Stud'.[557] On taking over the Stud, the Irish government moved quickly to reassure its twenty-five employees that their jobs were safeguarded. However, not all the employees were willing to continue at the Stud. Head-Groom William Henry Almack left for a new position at the Aga Khan's Stud. Almack had forty-three years' service at the Stud. Shortly before his departure, he expressed sadness at leaving but was comforted by memories of legendary horses such as *Blandford, White Eagle*, *Minoru, Sun Chariot* and *Big Game*.[558]

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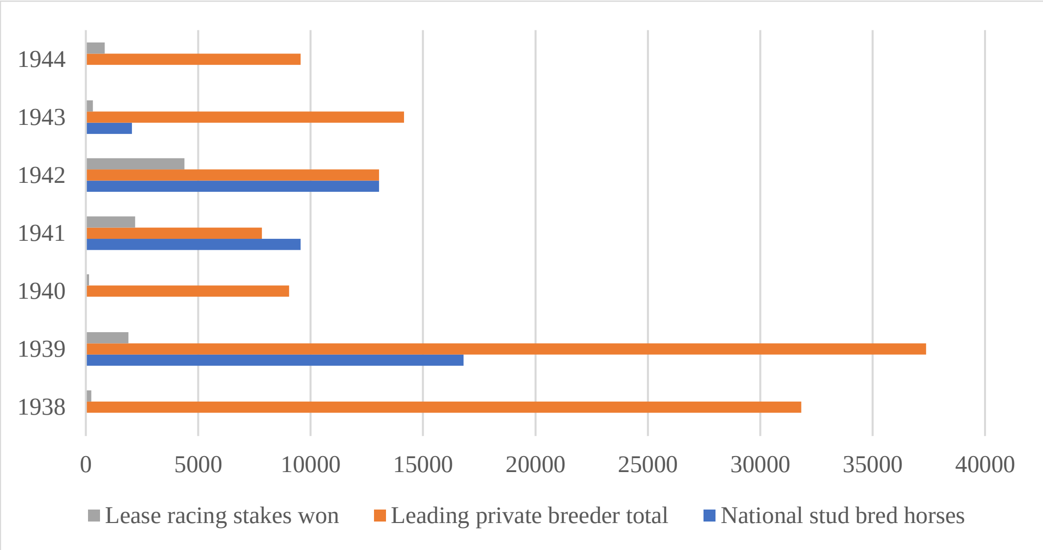
[555] Ibid.
[556] Ibid.
[557] *Irish Independent*, 8 Jan. 1944.
[558] Ibid.

4.6. Burrell's financial record

Listed below are the racing stakes won at NS under Burrell as CEO. The data for the winning stakes includes breeders in the top-ten lists who earned above £2,000 per annum in prize money.

Figure 4 (c) Racing stakes won from 1938 to 1944.

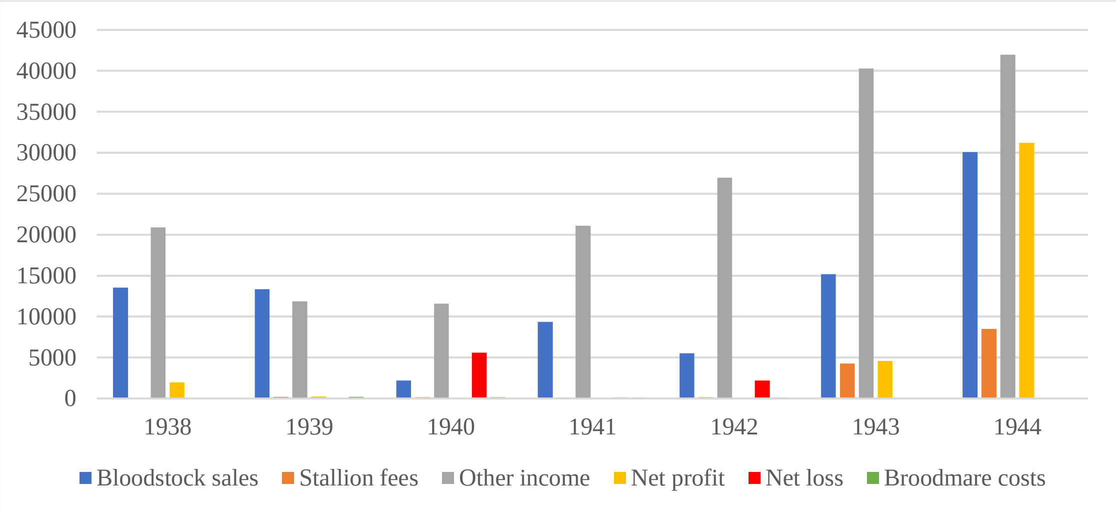


Source: *The bloodstock breeders review*, 1938-44.

Compared to leading private breeder totals, NS-bred horses performed consistently. They accumulated £41,455 in prize money, which was sixty-six per cent less than the leading breeder's total of £122,818.[559] In 1942, horses bred at the NS topped the records with £13,041.[560] This success can be attributed to the achievements of *Big Game* and *Sun Chariot*. Racing prizemoney won under Lord Lonsdale's lease declined. From 1938 to 1940, winnings returned just £2,286.[561] From 1941 to 1942, the lease with King George and the National Stud witnessed an increase in prizemoney from £2,191 to £4,382, but for the final two years, prizemoney declined to £314 and £838.[562] Other forms of income at the NS are reflected in the following data:

[559] *The bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, 1938-1942, vol xxvii to xxviii, (London, 1942).
[560] *The bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, 1942, vol xxxi, (London, 1942), p; 306.
[561] *The bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, 1938-1940, vol xxxi, (London, 1942).
[562] *The bloodstock breeders review, an illustrated annual devoted to the British thoroughbred*, 1941-1944, vol xxx to xxxiii, (London, 1942).

Table 4 (d) The financial record of the National Stud from 1938 to 1944.



Source: *Trading accounts and balance sheets 1938-1944*, H.C. 1938-1946, xli to xxiii, and Wray Vamplew, *A social and economic history of horse racing* (Sussex, 1976).

Bloodstock sales realised £89,188 with an average of £12,741 per annum, with seventy-nine horses sold at an average price of £1,128.[563] Burrell's bloodstock sales totals were twenty-seven per cent higher (£89,188 compared to £70,205) than the sales figures achieved during Nobel Johnson's term. From 1939 to 1942, stallion cover fees were stagnant, with little activity in the market. But from 1943, there was a significant increase in the demand with cover fees of £4280, doubling to £8500 in 1944. The confidence in the market can be attributed to the better prospects of the second world war ending favourable to the British Allied forces. Other income, including livestock sales, accounted for £174,623, an average of £24,946 per annum. The upkeep of broodmares at the NS cost £594, an average of £84 per annum. Under Burrell, the Stud accumulated trading profits of £37,984 at an average of £9,496 per annum in three of the seven years. Burrell's trading profits per annum were seventeen per cent less than Johnson's average

[563] *Trading accounts and balance sheets 1938-1944,* p. 405, p. 385, p. 303, p. 241, p. 231, p. 205, p. 355, H.C. 1938-1946 xli to xxiii, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie/ (8 Aug. 2021), and Wray Vamplew, *A social and economic history of horse racing* (Sussex, 1976), p. 195.

annual trading profits of £6573.[564] And, under Burrell, the NS operated at consecutive average yearly losses of £2629 from 1940 to 1942.

4.7. Conclusion

After almost three decades of stalemate between the British and Irish governments on the ownership of the NS, an agreement was finally concluded. However, it was external factors which forced the matter. For instance, the success of significant racehorses like *Big Game* and *Bahram* was crucial in determining and refocusing the British government's future policy on the NS. They were determined to keep as much top-class bloodstock in Britain and were relentless in their pursuit of ensuring that Irish breeders and owners had as little access as possible. Moreover, a legacy of ill-feeling lasted from the economic trade war which dominated the 1930s. The British government's audacious plan to purchase the Aga Khan's Stud farms and integrate them with the NS in Ireland could have had severe ramifications. Apart from the location in Ireland, which was deeply problematic, the Irish government and breeders in Ireland would have found this development uncomfortable, to say the least. At the time, the Irish government pursued policies that severed all previous links to its imperial past. Under no circumstances were they likely to appreciate what was essentially the British National Stud operating within the confines of the Irish Free State. Given the circumstances, concluding a deal was imperative for the Irish government. When the deal with the Aga Khan collapsed, the Ministry of Agriculture was driven by a burning desire to retain renowned horses like *Big Game* in the UK. This was understandable given the loss of the Aga Khan's bloodstock to America. In the end, the Irish government had little choice but to concede on the bloodstock issue as, legally, they were in a weak position. In any event, the rent payment for the use of Stud by the British government somewhat eased the pain of the Irish government's loss of the bloodstock. One common denominator found with the

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[564] *Trading accounts and balance sheets 1934-1937*, p. 437, p. 457, p. 505, p. 507, H.C. 1936, 1937, 1939, 1939, xxix to xxxii 51, 47, 45, 45, at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (4 July 2021), pp 51-58, pp 47-53, pp 45-51, pp 45-51, available at https://parlipapers-proquest-com.jproxy.nuim.ie (4 July 2021).

governments was their appreciation for the value of supporting and developing a State Stud Farm. Over its twenty-eight-year history, the British National Stud in Ireland had several positive aspects to its development. Born amid Ireland's revolutionary period, it survived tough times with various governments and thrived due to the sound management skills of its directors. Repeatedly, the NS competed at the top of the winning breeder's lists with some of the industry's most renowned horses like *Blandford* produced. In the 1940s, the time was appropriate for a resolution between both governments. It was now the responsibility of the Irish government to create a new Irish National Stud, and the next chapter will follow how this developed.

Chapter Five:

Conflict and a lack of transparency at the Irish National Stud. The policies of the INS under Cyril Hall and David Hyde from 1944 to 1969

5.1. Introduction

After the Second World War ended, European countries had to begin a massive rebuilding process. The horse racing industry bucked this trend by experiencing an upsurge in fortunes within a brief time. In Ireland, parliamentary legislation was required before the new Irish National Stud could be established. During the political debate on the 1945 National Stud Bill, Fine Gael's John A. Costello asked the following question: 'By this Bill, we are now turning that national trust into a private business and on whose behalf is that business to be run?'.[565] In addition, concerns were expressed about the large horse breeders' significant hold on the industry, with politicians arguing it was detrimental to the small breeders. Another difficulty was the considerable shortage of high-class bloodstock. This presented difficulties for the new INS. Eventually, the directors sourced suitable top-class stallions. But within a short time, some of these thoroughbreds were sold, raising further questions about the policies at the Stud. President Seán T. O'Kelly was appointed as the leaseholder of the NS horses, but private sector trainers became very influential within. Moreover, these issues are the central themes of the following chapter, which examines what, if anything, uniquely defined the National Stud from the private sector stud farms.

[565] Dáil Éireann debate, 27 June 1945, vol. 97, no.16, Committee on Finance – National Stud Bill, 1945, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (1 Feb. 2021).

5.2. The National Stud Act (1945)

In late 1944, government preparations began on a National Stud Act, and framing the regulations to create a State Stud Farm at Tully in Co. Kildare. The framework for the Act followed the same template as others including the 1935 Sugar Manufacturing Act and the 1938 Industrial Alcohol Act.[566] The Minister for Agriculture, James Ryan, created a public liability company, the Irish National Stud (hereafter INS). Share capital in the INS was limited to £250,000, and bank borrowing could not exceed £100,000, with the Exchequer receiving dividends or any other bonus payments earned by the INS.[567]

Scathing criticism followed in the Press, with the *Irish Independent* speculating that the INS was 'another fictitious company' with directors appointed from the civil service or within Fianna Fáil party ranks.[568] The Press quoted a Vocational Organisation Commission Report. This Report recommended that public limited companies should not be incorporated with politics because it could be perceived as unethical policy.[569] For instance, the Commission cautioned it could lead to bias in employment opportunities rather than on a competitive and transparent basis.[570] Furthermore, those public limited companies were vulnerable to manipulation if a government had an 'unscrupulous' agenda, which could threaten the 'prestige and integrity' of democracy.[571] Therefore, the government were left with plenty of food for thought ahead of the Dáil Éireann debates on the National Stud Act.

Throughout the summer of 1945, there was a robust debate in Dáil Éireann on the National Stud Act. One of the most important functions of a state stud farm was perceived to be the necessity to provide small horse breeders with an opportunity to access the services of high-

566 General Scheme of Bill for the establishment of a state stud farm at Tully, Co. Kildare, 6 Nov. 1944, Department of the Taoiseach, TSCH/S6057B.
567 Ibid.
568 *Irish Independent,* 25 June 1945.
569 Ibid.
570 Ibid.
571 Ibid.

class stallions and mares at affordable prices. Minister Ryan outlined that some within the horse breeding industry (most likely the larger breeders) preferred if Tully Stud Farm was leased to a private breeder or even a syndicate of breeders.[572] In 1943, Minister for Finance, Seán T. O'Kelly, strongly proposed to include private breeders within plans for a National Stud.[573] Once again, in these debates, he expressed his desire for private breeders to be included even though he admitted to being 'probably the most ignorant member of government' on horse racing.[574] Liam Cosgrave TD (Fine Gael) outlined the concerns of stud farm owners, particularly those living in Kildare, who considered the government's lack of consultation on the National Stud insulting and unacceptable.[575] Despite the criticism, Ryan maintained the Department of Agriculture's line against including private breeders. He argued that if these breeders were included, the INS would operate for personal profit leading to the marginalisation of the small breeders.[576]

Senator William Quirke (Fianna Fáil) from the Irish Bloodstock Breeders' and Horse-owners' Association (IBBHA) made several contributions to the debates on the National Stud Act. He had participated in the *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Horse Breeding Industry* in 1935. Quirke advocated for stallions being boarded out in regions of scarcity as a measure to counteract the expenses small breeders faced. But he opposed a suggestion that the large breeders in Kildare should offer small breeders access to their bloodstock which he dismissed out of hand, citing it deeply inappropriate to interfere with the large breeders' operations.[577] Quirke's response and subsequent argument were examples of the protection the

[572] Dáil Éireann debate, 27 June 1945, vol. 97, no. 6, Committee on Finance – National Stud Bill, 1945, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (19 Jan. 2021).
[573] Observations by the Minister of Finance on the memorandum of the Minister of Agriculture, 8 Dec. 1943, Department of the Taoiseach, TSCH/S6057A.
[574] Seanad Éireann debate, 18 April 1945, vol. 29, no. 24, Racing Board and Racecourses Bill, 1945-second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie (6 Feb. 2021).
[575] Dáil Éireann debate, 27 June 1945, vol. 97, no. 6, Committee on Finance – National Stud Bill, 1945, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (19 Jan. 2021).
[576] Ibid.
[577] Seanad Éireann debate, 19 July 1945, vol. 30, no. 5, National Stud Bill, 1945, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (6 Feb. 2021).

large breeders were afforded. They were a close-knit group, and they did not welcome the prospect of a State Stud Farm intruding on territory they had controlled for decades. As we shall see, they gradually gained a stronghold over the INS.

Senator Gerald Sweetman (Fine Gael) proposed an amendment to the National Stud Act to counter any risk of corruption within the INS. He also cautioned the Department of Agriculture on the difficulties in purchasing high-class stallions given that extremely influential syndicates monopolised the market.[578] Sweetman was a progressive, insightful individual, later serving as Minister for Finance in Fine Gael's coalition government from 1951 to 1954. Indeed, Tom Garvin describes him, amongst others, as a moderniser within the Irish State.[579] Concerns were voiced because there was a perception that unscrupulous behaviour tainted the industry. Fine Gael's James Hughes, quoted in the *Irish Press*, elaborated: '…the horse business was very often associated with corruption, and if the Minister stuck to his proposal [for the stud's establishment], he was leaving the door wide open to the worst type of corruption'.[580] Sweetman proposed adding a sub-section to the National Stud Act to alleviate concerns, to provide details on (a) the name of every mare served by any sire under the INS's ownership, the full details of the owners of every mare, and the fees received, (b) the name of every sire which served a mare under INS ownership, the full details of the owners of every mare and the fees received (c) the name of each sire or mare purchased (for breeding by the Company) the full details of the seller, the amount paid, method of purchase and the Commission paid (if any) (d) the name of each horse sold by the INS, the full details of the purchaser, the amount received, method of sale, and commission received (if any).[581] These were detailed measures, but if implemented, they offered full transparency and accountability at the INS.

[578] Seanad Éireann debate, 19 July 1945, vol. 30, no. 5, National Stud Bill, 1945, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (6 Feb. 2021).
[579] Tom Garvin, *News from a new republic* (Dublin, 2010), p. 14.
[580] *Irish Press*, 13 July 1945.
[581] Seanad Éireann debate, 27 July 1945, vol. 30, no. 8, National Stud Bill, 1945, committee and final stages, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (6 Feb. 2021).

However, Ryan disagreed arguing he did not want the INS under absolute government control because if it were, the manager's position at the Stud would be compromised. He cautioned: 'I think it is asking too much from the company to submit all details regarding every visiting mare, the amount charged…and so on'.[582] He further argued that the INS was entitled to a 'great deal of freedom' to work under the government's 'general direction'.[583] He claimed that a private firm's shareholders would not expect or receive the demands made by Sweetman. However, the proposed new National Stud Company was not a private operation. It was a State-sponsored enterprise with a significant £250,000 investment from the public purse. Therefore, absolute transparency and accountability were crucial. Ryan rejected Sweetman's amendments. This policy decision set the tone for future developments at the INS, with the ambiguous relationship between the Stud and the government becoming a significant problem.

On 17 July 1945, the National Stud Act passed through Dáil Éireann with fifty-three votes in favour to twenty-four against. The next task for the government was to appoint the board of directors and chief executive officer at the INS.

5.3. Structure of the State Stud Farm

Two months previously, the Irish Racing Board had been set up to maintain and advance the economic interests of Irish racecourses. The Racing Board, an innovation of Joseph McGrath, consisted of several Turf Club members including W. T. Cosgrave and Patrick J. Ruttledge. In August 1945, the government announced the INS board of directors. Members included former nationalist republicans, such as Liam Hayes and P.J. Ruttledge, which was unsurprising with de Valera's Fianna Fáil party in government. But there was an eclectic mix on the board, including Oliver James Plunkett (the earl of Fingal), Frank Cannon, and Charles Moore. The first chairman

[582] Seanad Éireann debate, 27 July 1945, vol. 30, no. 8, National Stud Bill, 1945, committee and final stages, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (7 Feb. 2021).
[583] Ibid.

was Liam Hayes, and he was paid a salary of £300, with the other directors on £150 per annum.[584] Considering the board members' backgrounds and political allegiances, the appointments were unusual. Hall was a prominent British horse breeder, Plunkett from a Unionist background and Cosgrave deep-rooted in Fine Gael traditions. Therefore, these appointments suggest that old adversarial political allegiances were side-lined in the interests of the racing industry. Nevertheless, as time elapsed, cracks appeared in relations between the INS management and the INS directors, which may in part have been attributed to their political allegiances.

All the new appointments had previous links to the equine industry. Liam Hayes (1893-1959) was a native of Limerick, ex-army, ex-politician and ran the School of Equitation in Co. Kildare. He was a renowned figure in horse breeding and ‘regarded as an excellent judge of a horse’.[585] Hayes was involved with the Irish Volunteers in Limerick and led an Irish Republican Army (IRA) flying column in the War for Independence. He joined the army in 1922 and spent twenty-six years in Limerick and at the Curragh Military College, where he was responsible for the acquisition of horses. In February 1959, he was killed in a traffic collision on Grafton Street, Dublin.

Patrick Joseph Ruttledge (1892-1952) was born in Ballina, County Mayo. He was a prominent racehorse owner/breeder, a solicitor, and a politician. He was a high-profile minister in Fianna Fáil governments, holding numerous portfolios, including Health (1939-41), Justice (1933-39), and Land and Fisheries (1932-33). Ruttledge was also an active member of the I.R.A. during the Irish independence struggle. From 1923 to 1926, he was vice-president of Sinn Féin. Ruttledge opposed the terms of the Anglo-Irish Treaty. During the Irish civil war, he was shot, which had a detrimental long-term effect on his health, eventually forcing his resignation from political life in 1941. Marie Coleman elaborates on Ruttledge’s political legacy: ‘…one of de

[584] Statement outlining the annual salaries of the board of directors at the Irish National Stud, 2 Aug. 1945, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/S/6057.
[585] *Irish Press*, 10 Sept. 1945.

Valera's closest allies; he was considered the third most important member of the government after de Valera and Sėan T. O'Kelly.'[586] In the 1920s, he was the chairman of the Irish Betting Commission and in the 1940s of the Central Racing Advisory Committee (CRAC). Ruttledge was one of four politicians and civil servants elected to the Irish Turf Club. Fergus A. D'Arcy notes: '…their election was nonetheless a wonder to behold' as it was the first time that the Turf Club allowed government politicians or civil servants to join.[587]

Oliver James Plunkett (1896-1985), the 12th Earl of Fingal, Killeen Castle, County Meath, was a prominent racehorse owner/breeder. Plunkett was a member of the Irish Turf Club, the Irish National Hunt and Steeplechase Committee and President of the Bloodstock Breeders and Racecourse Association of Ireland. In his early career, he was an accomplished amateur rider winning the 1930 Cheltenham National Hunt Steeplechase with Sir Lindsay. In 1959, as an owner/breeder, Plunkett won the Cheltenham Gold Cup with *Roddy Owen*. Frank Cannon from County Meath was the official starter to the Irish Turf Club and the honorary secretary of the Bloodstock Breeders Association. Cannon owned an extensive stud and dairy farm and was regularly at the Dublin Bloodstock Sales.[588] Cannon died two years later and was replaced by Walter Tyrell, an ex-amateur jockey from Lucan in Dublin. Captain Charles Moore (1881-1965) from Co. Tipperary came from a family with a long and distinguished connection to horse breeding. He was a member of the Irish Turf Club and the Irish National Hunt Steeplechase Committee. He was also the racing manager of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth II until his retirement in 1963. At the Royal Stud, he was responsible for leading racehorses *Big Game* and *Sun Chariot*, who prospered under his care.[589] Both these horses were owned by King George and then were retired to the British National Stud in the 1940s.

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[586] Marie Coleman, Ruttledge, *Patrick, Joseph ('Paddy', P. J.')*, *Dictionary of Irish Biography* Online http://dib.cambridge.org (10 Feb. 2020).
[587] D'Arcy, *Horses, lords and racing men*, p. 302.
[588] *Irish Press*, 10 Sept. 1945.
[589] *Irish Times*, 26 Apr. 1965.

In February 1947, the INS appointed its first manager, Major Cyril Hall, a graduate of Oxford University. He was a former amateur jockey and 'one of the most prominent horse breeders in England'.[590] Hall ran Windsor Forest Stud in partnership with Sir William Waldron at Ascot for approximately ten years. He was familiar with Irish horse breeding being a regular attendee at Ballsbridge Bloodstock Sales.[591] The INS's first secretary was Michael Cosgrave, the son of the former President of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State, W. T. Cosgrave. Cosgrave worked with the bloodstock agents R. J. Goff. His association with the INS was a testament to his father's legacy, who, as D'Arcy notes, 'did not spare himself to promote Irish bloodstock internationally'.[592]

In 1947, the most pressing issue facing the INS directors was to find a suitable stallion for stud purposes. In May, they purchased *Royal Charger* for £52,000 from British trainer Sir John Jarvis. *Royal Charger* was a three-part brother to the English champion colt *Nasrullah.* He was slow to develop, winning no races as a two-year-old. However, as a four-year-old, he won the Challenge Stakes, the Queen Anne Stakes, and the Ayr Gold Cup. He raced twenty times, winning six races with seven placed efforts accumulating £5,057 in prize money.[593] In 1947, he retired to the INS, where he spent six years building a significant reputation with the Stud setting his stallion cover fees at £250 per cover.[594] Three years later, the *Sunday Independent* published a glowing tribute: 'This sire has outdone his racing record by his early stud achievements and has in every way vindicated those who ventured forth to purchase him'.[595] In 1948, the INS purchased three more stallions: French-bred *Black Rock* for £8,465, *Whitehall* for £6,890 and *Preciptic* for £15,131.[596] From 1951 to 1954, *Preciptic's* stud fees were £100 and for the

[590] *Leinster Leader*, 15 Feb. 1947.
[591] Ibid.
[592] D'Arcy, Horses, lords, and racing men, p. 270.
[593] Ken Mclean, *Designing speed in the racehorse* (Wisconsin, 2006), p. 148.
[594] Leicester, *Bloodstock breeding*, p. 352.
[595] *Sunday Independent*, 13 Aug. 1950.
[596] Conor Ryan, *Stallion & power, the scandals of the Irish National Stud* (Meath, 2011), p. 5.

remaining years until he died in 1964, at £150. *Black Rocks* stud fees were £50 and *Whitehall* £49 for the first two years and were reduced to £27 afterwards.[597] The following year the INS introduced new horse breeding and management training courses, which had a legacy to the present day.

For instance, the INS offered a course for stud grooms, which consisted of lectures and demonstrations given by Veterinary College professors and other equine experts. Twenty-four stud grooms attended this course from all over Ireland.[598] Also, in conjunction with the Dublin Veterinary College, the INS introduced a stud management breeding course, the first of its kind in Europe. It consisted of a week of thoroughbred stud management lectures. Thirty-two stud managers and owners attended the course; the *Irish Independent* highlighted that six women participated in an indication of societal circumstances during this era.[599] These courses became an annual event and were so well developed that they remain some of the most sought-after and prestigious courses on offer in Europe. A testament to their legacy is that the current CEO of the INS, Cathal Beale is a graduate. Commenting recently in the *Irish Field* about the INS courses, Beale remarked:

> I somehow managed to sneak my way onto the course. I must say I did so with a very limited amount of experience compared to the students we have coming to the place now… The friendships on the course, the enjoyment of the horses, the craic and the nature of the industry had all hooked me… Everyone sees the Mullins and the O'Brien families and thinks that the only way forward. That is one way of doing it, but there are several other ways of getting wherever you want…Now there are many other courses too, and more than enough opportunities for people to get involved.[600]

Beale also argued that the courses provided a platform for students to build upon, creating a significant network within the industry, which was invaluable going forward.[601]

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[597] *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, vols xix to xxxiii (Dublin, 1951-1964)
[598] Director's report and statement of accounts for the period 1 Jan. 1949 to 31 Dec. 1950, The National Library Ireland, IR, 60013.
[599] *Irish Independent*, 21 Jan. 1950.
[600] *The Irish Field*, 2 Apr. 2021.
[601] Ibid.

Also, in 1949, the INS raced its horses for the first time under a new racing lease with President Seán T. O'Kelly.

5.4. The President's lease and conflict at the INS

The Irish Turf Club introduced a new rule to facilitate the leasing agreement between the INS and the President of Ireland. Rule seventy-nine states: 'Horses the property of the Irish National Stud Company Limited may be raced under these rules in the name of the President of Ireland who shall be deemed to be the lessee of such horses'.[602] Under the lease terms, the INS was responsible for all expenses, including stabling, veterinary fees, training fees, race entry fees, jockey fees and all other liabilities such as insurance costs.[603] Any winning race stakes were paid to the INS. The President's racing colours were St. Patrick's blue, gold sleeves and a blue cap with a gold tassel, and all the names of new racehorses under his name ran in the Irish language. Cyril Hall was the president's racing manager, and the trainer was Arthur J. Blake, of the Heath, Portlaoise. The INS decided the leasing option offered the most transparency because if they leased the horses individually to private breeders, 'such a course [of action] might be liable to misuse if the stock were raced by such owners or their trainers for their own ends and profit motives'.[604] The INS directors seemed determined to begin business at the Stud with the best possible intentions, but events soon turned for the worse.

Relations between the directors at the INS and its manager soon became strained, as reflected in the following examples. In March 1950, the President hosted a meeting with Hall, Hayes, and Ruttledge at the Arás, where a provisional arrangement was made for the President to visit the INS and Arthur Blake's stables in Portlaoise. Shortly after the meeting, Hall contacted

[602] Correspondence with the secretary of the Turf Club and the secretary of the President, M. McDunphy, 24 May 1949, Office of the Secretary to the President, PREM/2009/115/31

[603] Analysis of correspondence with the Irish National Stud, 10-16 Dec. 1948, Office of the Secretary to the President, PREM/2009/115/31.

[604] Correspondence between Cyril Hall and the secretary to the president, M. McDunphy, 29 Nov. 1948, Office of the Secretary of the President, PRES/2009/115/31.

the President's secretary, Michael McDunphy, to finalise the visit.[605] Around the same time, Liam Hayes called in person to the Arás seeking confirmation of the visit, and while there, he undermined Hall's authority. Hayes cautioned McDunphy that Hall's approach to finalise the visit was 'entirely improper' and it did not have his approval.[606] Hayes reassured McDunphy that he 'would take steps to see this type of thing would not occur again'.[607] McDunphy then reported back to the President that Hall' completely disregarded the INS's directors at every opportunity' and that he intended to overshadow the forthcoming visit to the Stud.[608] McDunphy argued that Hall was 'merely an employee' of the INS, and he was acting beyond his authority.[609]

Later that year, another instance of Hall being undermined occurred. McDunphy had questions about the President's horses, but instead of following the normal procedure and communicating his inquiry with the Stud's manager Hall, he contacted Hayes and Ruttledge.[610] This move was out of character for McDunphy as he had a renowned reputation as a strict disciplinarian who followed proper procedure. Ferriter has described him as 'adept, aggressive and relentless…generating respect for the status of the Office of the President'.[611]

The above circumstances revealed an unhealthy atmosphere at the INS, which may have arisen from adversarial issues related to the past. Patrick Lynch has argued that when historians assess the decades preceding the Irish civil war, they must consider the 'strong feelings aroused' by the war.[612] Hayes, Ruttledge and Sėan T O'Kelly fit Lynch's profile as they were at the forefront of the struggle for Irish independence. Hayes and Ruttledge were working alongside

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605 Correspondence between Cyril Hall and the secretary to the president, M. McDunphy, 20 Mar. 1950, Office of the Secretary of the President, PRES/2009/115/31.
606 Visit of Liam Hayes to the Aras, 6 Apr. 1950, Office of the Secretary to the President, PRES/2009/115/31.
607 Ibid.
608 Proposed visit to the National Stud by the President on 11 April 1950, 22 Mar. 1950, Office of the Secretary to the President, PRES/2009/115/31.
609 Ibid.
610 Correspondence between the secretary of the president M. McDunphy, and P.J. Ruttledge, 7 Oct. 1950, Office of the Secretary to the President, PREM/2009/115/31.
611 *The Irish Times*, 4 Feb. 2017.
612 Patrick Lynch, 'The Irish Free State and the Republic of Ireland: 1921-66', in T.W. Moody and F.X. Martin (eds.), *The course of Irish history* (Cork, 2011), pp 283-98 at p. 291.

Hall, a prominent British breeder, which may have caused antagonism. Their actions suggest that they were not prepared to allow Hall to have a prominent role in the visit of the President to the Stud. There certainly was a personal tone to Hayes' accusations. But Hall was within his rights as the INS manager and the President's racing manager to finalise the visit. In any event, within three years, in February 1954, Hall resigned as manager to assume a role working for the Aga Khan as stud manager of his operations in Ireland. Hall later stated his regret at leaving the INS, but he explained that the financial advantages of Aga Khan's offer outweighed sentiments, especially considering he had a young family.[613] Hall's successor was David Hyde, a thirty-nine-year-old veterinary inspector from the Department of Agriculture. Hyde had lofty ambitions to see an INS horse win the English Derby.[614]

In the early 1950s, private horse trainers/breeders' influence within the INS became more apparent. Augustus P. Reynolds replaced P.J Ruttledge on the INS board of directors. Reynolds was one of Ireland's top private breeders. In the 1950s, he accumulated £82,718 in prize money.[615] In anticipation of improving their racing fortunes, the INS directors advised the President to send two fillies, *Finn Calma* and *Tir-An-Oir*, to be trained by breeders Hubert Hartigan and P.J. Prendergast at the Curragh instead of Arthur Blake at the Heath. The INS directors insisted that the gallops on the Curragh were much more suitable for the horses.[616] Later that year, another Curragh trainer John Oxx began training some of the President's horses. Therefore, four trainers were recruited from the private sector instead of one principal trainer. There was opposition to the appointments. An unidentified source from the Taoiseach's Office launched an attack on Hartigan and Prendergast's character. The source cautioned McDunphy

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[613] Correspondence between Cyril Hall to the secretary of the President, M. McDunphy, 2 Oct. 1953, Office of the Secretary to the President, PRES/2009/115/31.
[614] *Irish Press*, 2 Mar. 1954.
[615] *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, vols xix to xxvii (Dublin, 1951 to 1959).
[616] Correspondence between Cyril Hall to the secretary of the President, M. McDunphy, 26 Sept. 1953, Office of the Secretary to the President, PRES/2009/115/31.

that their involvement in the INS warranted consideration because of their private lives, 'one being a divorcee and the 'other believed to be living with another man's wife'.[617] The President did not regard these details as relevant to the training of his horses but still sought reassurance from de Valera, who stated that both Hartigan and Prendergast were competent for the roles.[618]

The President's horses had mixed fortunes on the racecourse. Because of their notable pedigrees, there were lofty expectations for the first two horses, *Cnoc Gorm* and *Ceol Srulla*. *Cnoc Gorm* was a filly by the English Derby winner *Blue Peter* and *Ceol Srulla* by *Nasrullah. Nasrullah* was the leading sire in Great Britain in 1951 and the leading sire four times in America from 1955 to 1960. Neither horse met their expectations. *Cnoc Gorm* raced ten times, winning once, and *Ceol Srulla* only won one out of four races. However, some success followed when the broodmare *Banri an Oir* (by *Royal Charger*) won the 1953 grade three Athasi Stakes at the Curragh. The INS initially planned to retire *Banri an Oir* to stud after her racing career.[619] But instead, the horse was sold to A.B. Hancock in America without explanation.[620] Another *Royal Charger,* filly *Banri Calma* trained by Prendergast, won the 1952 Curragh Foal Plate; she ran ten times, winning on three occasions. Another notable success for the same connections was the filly, *Gorm Anna.* In 1953, she won three consecutive races, the most significant being the Curragh Foal Plate, and she was runner-up in the Molecomb Stakes at Goodwood.

Also, another private sector trainer became involved in the INS that year. The INS leased *Whitehall* to Kildare trainer Charles Bourke.[621] Bourke won forty-four races from 1959 to 1965, accumulating £13,396 in prize money.[622] Jack Fagan in the *Irish Times* elaborates: 'The Bourke

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[617] Correspondence between the Department of the Taoiseach to the secretary of the President, M. McDunphy, 8 Oct. 1951, Office of the Secretary to the President, PREM/2009/115/31.
[618] Correspondence between the Department of the Taoiseach to the secretary of the President, M. McDunphy, 13 Oct. 1951, Office of the Secretary to the President, PREM/2009/115/31.
[619] Directors' report and statement of accounts for the period 1 Jan. to 31 Dec. 1951, the National Library Ireland IR60013.
[620] *Irish Press*, 3 Jan. 1957.
[621] Directors' report and statement of accounts for the period 1 Jan. to 31 Dec. 1953, the National Library Ireland IR60013.
[622] *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, vols xxvii to xxxiii (Dublin, 1959-1965).

family name is linked to many great horses they bred over the years'.[623] Bourke had close ties with the INS. He bred the broodmare *Panaview,* who produced *Linacre,* bought by the INS in the 1960s. *Panaview* was the daughter of *Panaslipper,* an important but controversial stallion at the INS in the 1960s. This arrangement with Bourke for *Whitehall* was unusual as the INS's horses were leased to the President. The INS's lease with Bourke was criticised in Dáil Éireann by Fianna Fáil T.D Donagh O'Malley. He argued that there was 'something was wrong with policy' at the INS.[624] In the two previous years at stud, *Whitehall* covered sixty-one mares resulting in a fertility rate of eighty-one per cent.[625] These were impressive percentages compared to the INS's other stallions over the same period. *Royal Charger's* fertility rate was seventy-five per cent, and *Preceptic* and *Blackrock* at seventy-eight per cent.[626] At Bourke's stud, *Whitehall's* fertility rate dramatically declined to sixty-three per cent and from 1954 to 1955, he covered thirty-seven mares which dropped to below fifteen each year thereafter.[627] And O'Malley was not the only alone in directing complaints toward the INS.

5.5. Stallion fees and a lack of transparency

In the early 1950s, commentators criticised the lack of transparency at the INS. For example, horse breeding expert Charles Leicester contacted the Department of Agriculture, questioning the INS's purpose and stallion fees. Leicester was researching *Bloodstock Breeding* which was first published in 1957. He argued that the stallion cover fees charged by the INS were like those set at private stud farms. Leicester argued that the INS was established to 'supply good class sires for breeders at low fees', but the Stud defeated these principles because the stallion fees were

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[623] *Irish Times*, 28 June 2001.
[624] Dáil Éireann debate, 19 Apr. 1956, vol. 156, no. 5, Committee on Finance, vote 27, Agriculture, 1956, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (16 Mar. 2021).
[625] *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, vols xix to xx (Dublin, 1951-1952).
[626] Ibid.
[627] *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, vols xxii to xxiv (Dublin, 1954-1956).

comparative to market prices.[628] He also questioned the INS's policy regarding broodmares. In response, the Department of Agriculture advised:

> It is the aim of the Company to make available the highest-class sires at reasonable fees for mating with high-class mares with a view to upgrading the level of sires standing in Ireland, and by breeding high-class horses at Tully, to be in the position of leasing or selling sires of the best class, conformation, breeding, and performance, to selected Irish breeders. The purpose for which broodmares are maintained at Tully is to produce colts of sufficient standard to eventually take up stud duty in Ireland and fillies of sufficient standard to be retained in the Irish National Stud as broodmares and thus carry on the foundation lines of their dams when mated with suitable sires.[629]

Uncomfortable with Leicester's line of questioning, the Department advised him to direct any future inquiries to the INS's manager. It was notable from the Department of Agriculture's response to Leicester that there was no reference to the small horse breeders. In the political debates on the 1945 National Stud Act, the government constantly referred to the small breeders and the plans to enhance opportunities within the industry. But in their correspondence with Leicester, the Department of Agriculture used the term 'selected Irish breeders' to describe the breeders availing of the INS's services. This was a selective use of terminology by the Department. It raises questions on who these selected breeders were and who decided preference for those availing of breeding services at the INS.

In any case, Leicester was unsatisfied with the response from the Department of Agriculture, and he sought clarification from the Department of External Affairs. He queried External Affairs about the Stud's history and the relationship between the Irish and British governments. Other queries included the British government's claim to the bloodstock, income tax issues, and what brought the matter to a conclusion between the governments in the mid-1940s.[630] But Leicester did not receive a satisfactory response. External Affairs adopted a similar

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628 Correspondence between Sir Charles Leicester and the Department of Agriculture, 20 Feb. 1953, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/332/194.
629 Correspondence between the Department of Agriculture and Sir Charles Leicester, 5 Mar. 1953, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/332/194.
630 Correspondence between Sir Charles Leicester and the Department of External Affairs, 27 June 1953, Department of Foreign Affairs, DFA/5/332/194.

line to that of the Department of Agriculture. They were dismissive, deeming the line of questioning inappropriate, and they sent him a copy of the press announcement concerning the INS from September 1943. The Departments of Agriculture and External Affairs appeared uncomfortable with Leicester's questions, but his questions were not inappropriate. The INS was a state-sponsored establishment, and members of the public were entitled to question how it operated, and they certainly deserved to receive a meaningful response. It is worth examining Leicester's claim that the INS's fees were like those charged at private stud farms.

An analysis of the stallion cover fees charged at private stud farms compared with the INS throughout the 1950s vindicates Leicester's claim, as evident from the following data.[631] In the data, the INS's stallions are *Royal Charger*, *Preceptic*, *Black Rock*, *Whitehall*, *Tulyar*, *Vimy* and *Panaslippe*r. The other stallions are from privately run stud farms throughout Ireland.

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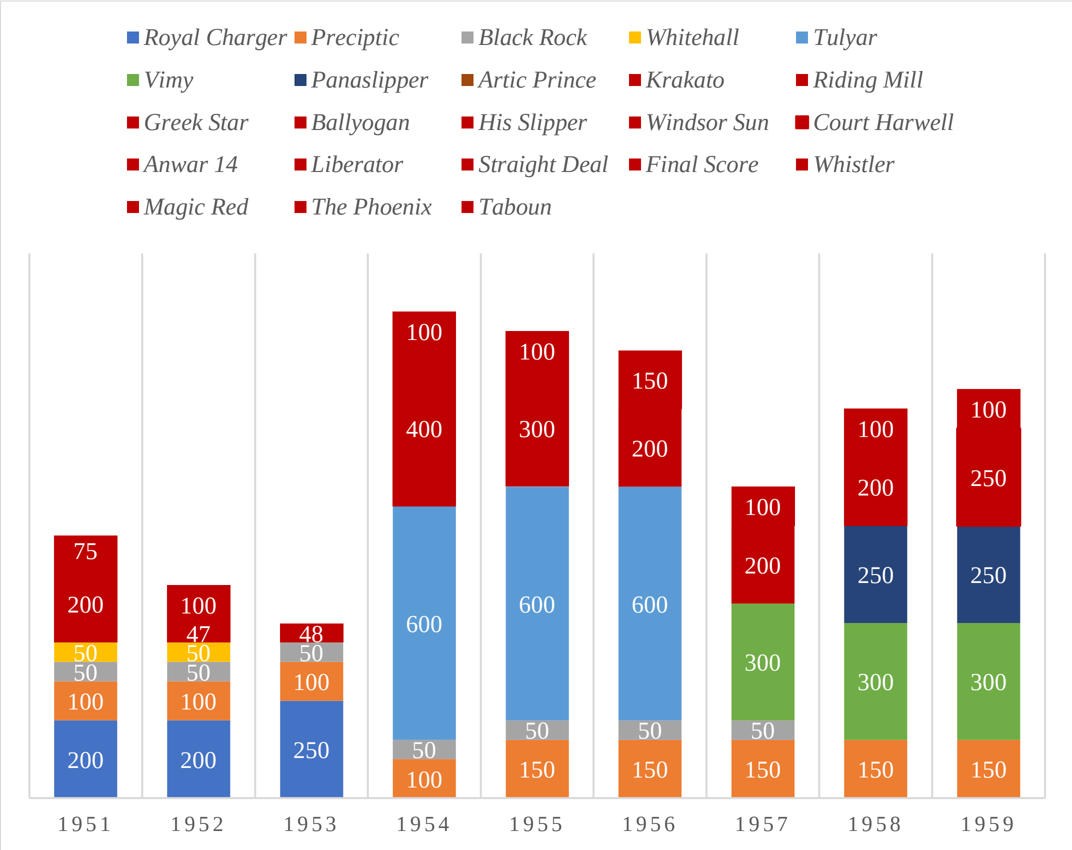
[631] *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, vols xix to xxviii (Dublin, 1951-1959)

Figure 5 (a): Stallion cover fees in Ireland in the 1950s.



Source: ***The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*****, vols xix to xxviii (Dublin, 1951-1959**).

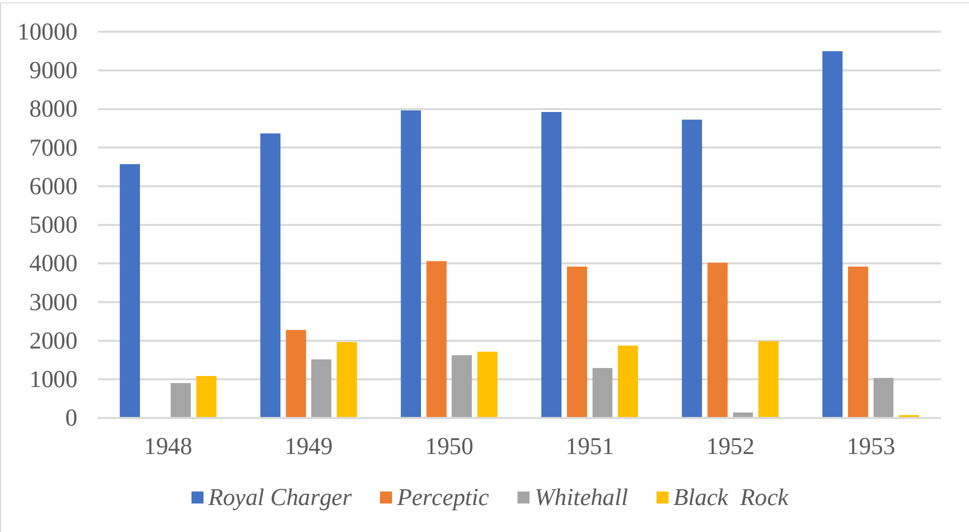
The private breeder's fees are highlighted in red, and the INS fees are in the other colours. Apart from *Tulyar* (whom we will return to later in this thesis), the fees across the board were similar. *Royal Charger's* fees were £200, compared with the £200 charged by Old Connell Stud in Kildare for *Krakato*. Other examples include Brownstown House Stud, where *Arctic Prince's* fee was £400 and *Windsor Slipper* £200, whereas the INS charged £300 for *Vimy* and £250 for *Panaslipper*. Concerning the INS's less renowned stallions, such as *Preciptic* (£100), *Black Rock* (£50) and *Whitehall* (£50), their fees were comparable to *Liberator 111* (£100) at Burage Stud in Carlow, *Taboun* (£100) at Aga Khan's Stud, *Riding Mill* (£47) at Kildangan Stud in Kildare and *Greek Star* (£48) at Airlie Stud in Lucan. All the stallion fees listed in the table were public knowledge, with the INS and private breeders placing advertisements in *The Irish Horse* throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Therefore, as Leicester argued, the INS was not following its founding principles: to provide stallions at lower fees to small breeders to encourage development within the industry.

Moreover, nothing was unique to entice small breeders into the INS, which could not be availed of in most other significant stud farms in Ireland. Another difficulty was that the directors and horse trainers at the INS had close links with the private sector. This was problematic because of a conflict of interest, especially when defining INS's policy. At the outset, Leicester highlighted the lack of transparency at the INS. And this issue would plunge the INS into its most challenging and disastrous period since its inception in later years.

5.6. Selling policy

In 1953, the INS sent shockwaves across the entire industry by selling *Royal Charger* to the American breeder George D. Widener who paid £106,000 for the stallion to stand stud duties at Old Kenney Farm in Kentucky.[632] Was the sale justified?

Figure 2 (b): Stallion stud cover fees at the National Stud from 1951 to 1955.



Source: Irish National Stud accounts and reports from 1948 to 1953, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).

[632] *Leinster Leader*, 5 Sept. 1953.

Royal Charger accumulated £47,040 in cover fees at an average of £7840 per annum, 158 per cent higher than his nearest competitor at the Stud, *Perceptic*, at £18,220.[633] Comparing *Royal Charger's* stud record with that of *Arctic Prince*, one of the top sires of this era, reveals that Royal Charger covered 125 mares with a fertility rate of seventy-nine per cent from 1951 to 1953.[634] In comparison, *Arctic Prince* covered 120 mares with a fertility rate of seventy-four per cent from 1953 to 1956.[635] The popularity of *Royal Charger's* offspring was evident. In 1953 at the Ballsbridge yearling sales, one of his colts topped the sales figures at £7,300.[636] In America, Widener recognised the potential of exploiting *Royal Charger's* earning power when he charged £3,570 per cover on a private contract basis shattering all previous records.[637] The difference in the fees charged by Widener was fourteen times higher than the INS charged and further highlights the lack of business acumen by those running the Stud. Horse breeders in Britain criticised the sale. Bradford trainer Fred Ellison lamented the loss because it denied breeders an opportunity to use the stallion.[638] Therefore, the sale of *Royal Charger* was unwarranted and poor business by the INS. The stallion should have remained at the INS with his earning potential exploited.

In Dáil Éireann, the government defended the sale arguing that the horse was thirteen years old and a short-distance horse, whereas the INS focused on sourcing a 'staying sire of the highest class to guarantee future profits'.[639] But the government's claim to guarantying profits was not credible due to the speculative nature of the industry. In *Stallions and Power*, Ryan

[633] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1948 to 31 Dec. 1953, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[634] *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, vols xix to xxiv (Dublin, 1951-1953).
[635] *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, vols xix to xxiv (Dublin, 1953-1956).
[636] *Irish Independent*, 21 Sept. 1953.
[637] Leicester, *Bloodstock Breeding*, p. 352.
[638] *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Mercury*, 1 Dec. 1954.
[639] Dáil Éireann debate, 19 Mar. 1953, vol. 41, no. 10, National Stud Bill, 1953, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (16 Mar. 2021).

argues that the government sold *Royal Charger* due to economic necessity.[640] Within a brief time, the government increased the INS's capital to facilitate the purchase of Aga Khan's *Tulyar*, spending a world-record fee as a replacement.

Tulyar (1952) was a late foal born in May, which Leicester argues can be problematic: 'late foaling is far more common amongst mares of doubtful antecedents than amongst better-class ones' plus their physical development does not match those three of four months older, and at yearling sales, late foals can appear underdeveloped.[641] *Tulyar* fitted Leicester's profile and, as a yearling, was known as 'the runt of the bunch'.[642] As a two-year-old, he showed little promise on the racecourse, leading to speculation that Aga Khan attempted to offload him to America but received no interest.[643] However, within twelve months, there was a dramatic upturn in the horse's form, with potential buyers' falling over themselves to purchase' the stallion.[644] As a three-year-old, *Tulyar* shattered several records winning seven races, including the English Derby, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Stakes, the Eclipse Stakes and St. Leger, bringing total career winnings to £76,417.[645] This was the most significant amount earned by any horse in English Turf history, beating the record of £57,455 held by *Islington* since the late 1800s.[646] These achievements earned *Tulyar* the title of English Champion three-year-old. Nonetheless, it was events away from the Turf where the horse was about to cause a sensation.

In January 1953, there were conflicting Press reports on *Tulyar's* future. In Britain, the Press speculated that he was to be sold to American breeders for $350,000, with its owner Aga Khan fueling matters further by claiming: 'I would be glad to sell *Tulyar* for a fortune, but nobody has ever made me such an offer'.[647] At the same time, Prince Aly Khan contradicted his father's

[640] Ryan, *Stallions and power*, p. 7.
[641] Leicester, *Bloodstock breeding*, p.332.
[642] *Tuam Herald*, 23 June 1956.
[643] *Sunday Independent*, 13 May 1962.
[644] Ibid.
[645] Leicester, *Bloodstock breeding*, p. 331-4 at p.332.
[646] Ibid.
[647] *Daily News*, 23 Jan. 1953.

claims; he revealed that his father received three offers for *Tulyar*, one for £200,000 from an Irish breeder and two others from unidentified sources.[648] The Aga Khan denied all these claims when approached by the press in Ireland.[649] Speculation spread that the INS bid £200,000 for the horse, but Cyril Hall denied that they bid that actual amount; he refused to reveal their offer but confirmed that they had a separate bid for the horse but awaited a response from Aga Khan.[650] A week later, Aga Khan claimed he was negotiating the sale of *Tulyar* with both the INS and the British National Stud. He claimed an American syndicate offered him £331,000, but he claimed he refused their offer, preferring to see *Tulyar* remaining in Ireland or Britain for the long-term benefit of horse breeding.[651] Perhaps, Aga Khan was mindful of the adverse reaction from horse breeders the last time he sold high-class thoroughbreds to America in the early 1940s. In any event, Burrell, the CEO of the National Stud in Britain, denied that they were negotiating for *Tulyar* deeming it not economically viable for them.[652]

Within two days, matters concluded with *Tulyar* sold to the INS for £250,000; the tactics employed by the Aga Khan worked successfully as the INS increased their original bid by £50,000, paying a world-record fee.[653] The news drew a mixed response in the Press, with the *Irish Examiner* remarking: '*Tulyar*, being as Irish as Brian Boru…has been brought back to Ireland'.[654] The historical reference by the *Irish Examiner* is interesting as horses in Ireland have occasionally become symbols of cultural importance. An excellent example of this symbolism was when *Orby* became the first Irish-trained winner of the 1907 English Derby. Hind's notes: '*Orby* was famously toasted by the Protestant students at Trinity College, but also anointed hero of Irish Catholicism, running with a rosary tied onto his bridle'.[655] *Tulyar* exuded a similar aura

648 *Evening Herald*, 23 Jan. 1953.
649 Ibid.
650 *Irish Examiner*, 24 Jan. 1953.
651 *The Yorkshire Post,* 3 Feb. 1953.
652 Ibid.
653 Ryan*, Stallions, and power*, p. 6.
654 *Irish Examiner*, 6 Feb. 1953.
655 Michael Hinds, 'Irish racing's peaceable kingdoms', in Rebecca Cassidy (ed) *The Cambridge companion to horseracing* (Cambridge, 2013), p. 107.

appealing to all sections of the population. But there was some negativity around the horse, with the *Irish Press* claiming that *Tulyar* had 'a reputation of laziness…[and] his chief interests in life are eating and sleeping…he has been known to doze off while being groomed'.[656] Connections of *Tulyar* moved quickly to vehemently deny these claims stressing that the horse does nothing but 'radiate power' due to its illustrious status.[657]

The most pressing issue for the INS was deciding upon the future for *Tulyar*. One of the board's directors, the earl of Fingal, advised:

> There are many things we still have to discuss when he goes to stud. I think that you can take it for granted that he will be available to very few mares from English stables. Our policy is to allow breeders in the Republic of Ireland to ballot for the privilege of using stallions at the stud.[658]

The policy adopted by the INS of reserving *Tulyar* for Irish breeders was like the stance of the British National Stud in the 1940s over *Big Game's* services which denied Irish breeders opportunities. Racing commentators in the *Country Life* in Britain described the sale of *Tulyar* as a 'severe blow' to British breeding, but they understood the INS's policy of maintaining the horse for the interests of breeders in Ireland.[659]

5.7. The National Stud Act (1953)

To facilitate the purchase of *Tulyar,* the Irish government introduced another National Stud Act in Dáil Éireann to increase the working capital at the stud from £250,000 to £500,000. Like the 1945 National Stud Act debate, exchanges in the Dáil were tense and sensationalist, but some valid points were made. For example, James Blowick TD (Clann na Talmhan) argued: 'No government department should indulge in anything in the nature of gambling, and the people should not be asked to act as guarantors for anything that carries an element of gambling'.[660]

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[656] *Irish Press*, 6 Feb. 1953.
[657] *The Sketch*, 19 Oct. 1955.
[658] *Irish Press*, 6 Feb. 1953.
[659] *Country Life*, 13 Feb. 1953.
[660] Dáil Éireann debate, 25 Feb. 1953, vol. 136, no.11, National Stud Bill, 1953, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (18 Mar. 2021).

Indeed, the industry was highly speculative, as Ryan elaborates: ‘Stallions and mares have no concrete value. Their worth is based on breeders’ and speculators’ belief that past successes may repeat themselves’.[661] Therefore, government investment in the INS comes under significant scrutiny compared to other state-sponsored bodies like the Electricity Supply Board (E.S.B).

For instance, if the government invested £250,000 of public funds in the E.S.B., the return was relatively assured. But an investment in the INS depended on their thoroughbreds’ performance level, which was far from assured. In defence of the government, they were in a precarious position. If they decided against investing in top-class bloodstock, the INS could come under financial pressure and underperform in the long term. Another critical factor was Ireland's poor economic circumstances; therefore, investing in thoroughbreds currently was always likely to draw criticism.

Sean Dunne TD (Labour) argued that the government’s proposal to increase the INS’s capital was ‘wild extravagance considering 87,000 people were on the live register.[662] In the 1950s, the Irish economy grew dismally with widespread mass unemployment.[663] Cormac Ó Gráda elaborates: ‘The national accounts revealed a bleak tale in both absolute and real terms’ with national income stagnating between 1950 and 1958.[664] The 1952 Budget raised income tax by a shilling and price increases on all essential commodities.[665] Therefore, Hind argues: ‘It is remarkable that the Irish government should have attempted to raise revenue for the state in a prior economic depression after World War II with the purchase of a stallion for the National Stud’.[666] Due to the speculative nature of the industry, Hinds, on the surface, presents a solid argument as the industry was often accused of elitism.

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[661] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 32.
[662] ‘Press clippings’, 11 Feb. 1953, Office of the secretary to the President, PRES/2009/115/31.
[663] Brian Girvin, *Between two worlds, politics, and economy in independent Ireland* (Dublin, 1989), p. 197.
[664] Cormac Ó Gráda *A rocky road: the Irish economy since the 1920s* (Manchester, 1997), p. 27.
[665] J. J. Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985, politics, and society* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 322.
[666] Michael Hinds, ‘Irish racing’s peaceable kingdoms’, in Rebecca Cassidy (ed) *The Cambridge companion to horseracing* (Cambridge, 2013), pp 107-119 at p. 118.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that horse breeding had benefits for all classes through employment or otherwise. Following the Second World War, industries slowly recovered, but horse racing thrived with an 'upsurge in Ireland and Britain'.[667] From 1945 to 1955, the number of Irish races increased from 1,615 to 2,033.[668] Race meetings increased by sixty-two per cent, with prize money rising from £110,404 to £265,578.[669]

In the debates, references were made to past historical antagonism with Britain and its links to the horse breeding industry in Ireland. For example, Thomas O'Hara TD (Fine Gael) argued that the Irish Free State government prioritised an industry whose foundations were contrary to the principles of Nationalist Ireland.[670] In somewhat exaggerated and explicit terms, O'Hara claimed the industry was made up of former 'openly declared enemies' and that they got preference over the descendants of the Land League movement, many of them forced to emigrate due to the dire economic circumstances.[671] O'Hara's colleague, Bernard Commons TD (Fine Gael), reinforced this view arguing that thoroughbred racehorse owners and breeders were 'enemies of the Irish nation' and that there should be no tolerance for large stud farms in Ireland.[672] Both these viewpoints were extreme and not a balanced reflection of the horse racing industry in Ireland. Garrett Fitzgerald writing in *The Guardian,* described the type of attitude by O'Hara and Commons as 'exclusive nationalism'.[673] Horse racing in Ireland was not divided into the political lines suggested above. It employed all classes and religious denominations, and those attending race meetings came from a diverse range of backgrounds who mingled together without the prejudice indicated above.

[667] Welcome, *Irish horse racing*, p. 170.
[668] D'Arcy, *Horses, lords and racing men*, p. 344.
[669] Ibid.
[670] Dáil Éireann debate, 25 Feb. 1953, vol. 136, no.11, National Stud Bill, 1953, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (18 Mar. 2021).
[671] Ibid.
[672] Ibid.
[673] *The Guardian*, 5 Nov. 1993.

The Minister of Agriculture, Thomas Walsh, defended the proposed legislation. Ryan advised that the request to increase the INS's capital was not only for the purchase of *Tulyar* but to purchase other mares and renovations at the INS. He advised that preparations to introduce a Bill to increase the INS's capital began even before the purchase of *Tulyar* was considered.[674] Walsh explained that the INS's directors searched Europe for a suitable long-distance horse without success. Therefore, when the opportunity arose to purchase *Tulyar,* who fitted this profile, the Stud's directors advised the government it was too good to refuse as the horse's earning potential was between £16,000 and £20,000 per year.[675] In March 1953, the second National Stud Act passed into legislation by sixty-three to thirty-one votes.

5.8. Selling policy continues

The following month *Tulyar* arrived at his new home at the INS from Marcus Marsh stables at Newmarket. Within hours, he settled in well with Hall revealing: 'He is as quiet as a lamb, absolutely no trouble. You could do anything with that horse, and nothing upsets him'.[676] Meanwhile, the INS directors decided to retire *Tulyar* to stud cover duties. Hall explained that with the INS's capital increased, there was no need to send *Tulyar* back to the racetrack.[677] This development infuriated *Tulyar's* ex-trainer, Marcus Marsh: 'I told them [National Stud] that he [*Tulyar*] should run, but when politics get mixed up with sport, it is a bad show'.[678] Marsh was not alone in his disappointment with the Press speculating that the decision to retire *Tulyar* was a 'victory for business over sport'.[679] This is too simplistic of an assessment as it does not consider other important factors in the director's decision. If *Tulyar* raced again, there was the possibility of an injury that might have catastrophic consequences, or even a race defeat would

[674] Dáil Éireann debate, 25 Feb. 1953, vol. 136, no.11, National Stud Bill, 1953, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (18 Mar. 2021).
[675] *Irish Independent*, 26 Feb. 1953.
[676] *Tulyar*, Office of the Secretary to the President, PRES/2009/115/31.
[677] *Irish Press*, 16 Apr. 1953.
[678] *Evening Echo*, 16 Apr. 1953.
[679] Ibid.

devalue his worth. Considering the horses' high profile, Duggan Insurance Brokers in Dublin ensured *Tulyar* for £250,000.[680] Within a brief time of *Tulyar* being retired to stud, there was controversy over nominations.

The INS set *Tulyar's* cover charges at six hundred guineas, stipulating that half the fee would be reimbursed to Irish breeders if the cover failed.[681] Conor Ryan insinuated that the National Stud's selection process for the nominations to *Tulyar* was a 'botched job' with 'widespread allegations of corruption involved in the supposed random selection of breeders' and 'lucrative rights were passed off under a shadow of suspicion'.[682] In Dáil Éireann, Donagh O'Malley TD Fianna Fáil, made the following damming comments on the nominations process:

> The National Stud made a complete farce of the syndication of *Tulyar*. We all know who got the nominations. We all know in the first year, there were very few nominations given to the people *Tulyar* was intended to benefit, namely the small breeder…can the government explain to us the extraordinary coincidence of one individual coming out of the hat three times?'[683]

The nominations referred to by O'Malley and allegations by Ryan cannot be substantiated. In any event, in 1955, after only two years at the INS, *Tulyar* was sold to an American syndicate of breeders. This drew widespread criticism, including from the former Minister of Agriculture, Thomas Walsh:

> I do take exception to the method by which Tulyar was sold. He was sold for less than he was purchased for. Why was he sold? There was no difficulty about it when he was being purchased before ever, he was purchased, this House knew about it…We had it paraded from every bench in this House…it is the method of his disposal, I am critical. He was sold without being advertised…all the good bloodstock in this country and in England will have been sold to the Americans, and we will be bringing horses back here and to England in order to compete with the Americans. We had our money spinners, and we refused to keep them. Bad policy. I think I have said all I should have said.[684]

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680 *Irish Press*, 16 Apr. 1953.
681 Leicester, *Bloodstock breeding*, p. 333.
682 Ryan, *Stallions and power*, p. 9.
683 Dáil Éireann debate, 19 Apr. 1956, vol. 156, no. 5, Committee on Finance, vote 27, Agriculture, 1956, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (16 Mar. 2021).
684 Dáil Éireann debate, 14 Mar. 1956, vol. 155, no. 4, Motion by the Minister of Finance, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (20 Mar. 2021).

Walsh's questions initially remained unanswered. In the Dáil, the Minister for Finance Gerald Sweetman advised that matters connected to the sale of bloodstock at the INS were the Stud's business and that the INS had no obligation to seek the government's opinion.[685] In 1945, from the opposition benches during the debate on the National Stud Act, Sweetman was one of the most vocal advocates for transparency and accountability. But his response to the sale of *Tulyar* was quite the opposite and questionable. Moreover, the government had little difficulty voicing an opinion on the purchase of *Tulyar*, but there was now silence in the Dáil chamber when clarification on the sale was needed.

Members of the opposition branded the sale 'criminal' and cautioned that nothing was learned by the INS or the government from the foolish decision of selling *Royal Charger*.[686] The Minister for Agriculture, James Dillon, argued that the INS accumulated £266,400 income (including the sale price) from *Tulyar* with expenditure totaling £263,570; therefore, they profited from the sale.[687] Hyde explained that the deal was completed within seven days of the offer from America. He claimed that the INS board of directors sold the horse because it was 'extremely good business' to get three seasons out of it and then recoup almost the exact figure they initially paid.[688] The racing publication *Country Life* claimed it was justified because 'the cost of maintaining and insuring such a high-class horse was considerable. Given that the INS had *Tulyar* for three years, they exploited the breeding services' going over and beyond the initial outlay'.[689] The *Irish Press* argued that the sale was 'one of the biggest bombshells in European racing circles', claiming it was a significant blow to the horse breeding industry.[690] Marsh highlighted the damaging policy of selling high-class thoroughbreds to America.[691]

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685 *Irish Press*, 12 Nov. 1955.
686 Dáil Éireann, 9 Nov. 1955, vol. 153, no. 4, Sale of *Tulyar*; purchase of *Vimy*, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (22 Mar. 2021).
687 Dáil Éireann debate, 12 Dec. 1956, vol. 160, no. 15, *Tulyar* income and expenditure, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (22 Mar. 2021).
688 *Irish Press*, 29 Oct. 1955.
689 *Country Life*, 3 Nov. 1955.
690 *Irish Press*, 28 Oct. 1955.
691 *Country Life*, 3 Nov. 1955.

At a local level, the *Tuam Herald* bemoaned the sale of *Tulyar*. From the report, one can appreciate the horse's reputation and the affection he was held: '*Tulyar* has become part of the Irish scene, part of our witticisms and our arguments and part of our world-famous bloodstock traditions. When he leaves in July, it will be an almost human farewell'.[692] The reaction to the sale of *Tulyar* by Irish horse breeders was revealing. The owner of Mount Juliet Stud, Dermot McCalmont, argued that the INS were indeed 'Jolly lucky to get such a price'.[693] Roderic More O'Ferrall of Kildangan Stud in Kildare claimed it was a 'good stroke of business' for the INS[694] O'Ferrall was far more concerned with the sale of *Royal Charger,* deeming it a 'deplorable' decision by the INS as he was a proven stallion.[695]

Arthur B. Hancock, of Clairborne Stud in Kentucky, representing the thirty-two member syndicate that purchased *Tulyar,* was thrilled: '*Tulyar,* in my opinion, is the greatest horse in the world, and I am the happiest man in the bloodstock business…he will be a great asset to America and a big loss to Ireland'.[696] And the Press in America quoted Frank Tuthill, a leading Irish breeder and Steward of The Jockey Club, who argued: 'There are, nonetheless, many Irish breeders who deplore the horse's sale and departure for America'.[697] The new owners set his stud cover fee at $10,000 per cover.[698]

There was much differing opinion on the sale of *Tulyar*. Therefore, the following data must be assessed to examine if the INS's sale was justified. For this research, *Tulyar's* stud record will be analysed and compared to all stallions at the INS at the time.

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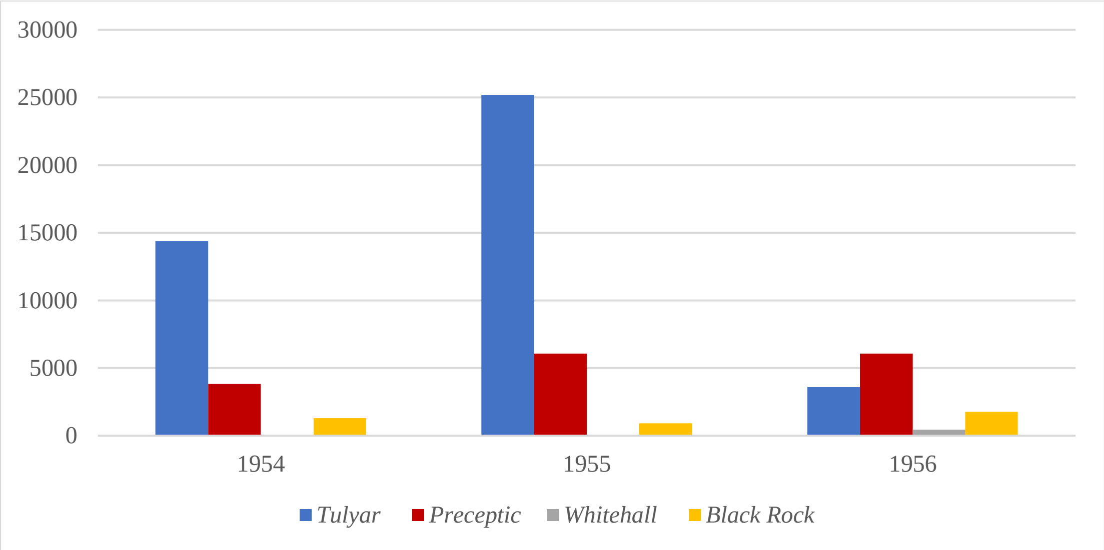
[692] *Tuam Herald,* 23 June 1956.
[693] *Irish Press,* 28 Oct. 1955.
[694] Ibid.
[695] Ibid.
[696] Ibid.
[697] *Weekly Sports Illustrated*, 30 July 1956.
[698] Ibid.

Figure 5 (c): Stud fees earned by the National Stud stallions from 1956 to 1957.



Source: Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1954 to 31 Dec. 1957, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).

Tulyar brought in £43,200 in cover fees; this was 111 per cent higher than the combined total of £20,442 earned by the INS's other stallions, *Preceptic*, *Whitehall*, and *Black Rock.*[699] Also, *Tulyar's* yearlings achieved high prices on the market. In 1956, twelve yearlings were sold for £6750 each and ten for £5071 in 1957.[700] Compared to a top-performing stallion such as *Hyperion*, whose yearlings achieved market prices of £7500 each in 1956 and £6500 in 1957, *Tulyar's* yearling prices were more than satisfactory.[701] The average yearling price was usually between £100 to £3000, which demonstrates the earning power of stallions like *Tulyar*.[702] When *Tulyar* was sold, there was a dramatic decrease in the INS profits from £10,406 in 1955 to £82

[699] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1954 to 31 Dec. 1957, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[700] *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, vols xxiv to xxv (Dublin, 1956-1957).
[701] Ibid.
[702] Ibid.

in 1957.[703] In the annual accounts, Chairman Hayes attributed the decline to the sale, but he offered no reason why the horse was sold.[704]

There remains an open debate on *Tulyar's* record as a sire, with arguments for and against his breeding success. Leicester has described *Tulyar* 'as a disappointing sire producing fewer than the average number of foals', but on the other hand, he argues that his broodmares won classic races throughout Europe, with their offspring winning graded races in America.[705] In 1972, the *Evening Herald* speculated that there was a 'mistaken impression' that *Tulyar* failed because only twelve out of every 10,000 stallions become top-class sires. In contrast, Tulyar had sired nineteen American stakes winners.[706]

But returning to his achievements at the INS, it was evident that *Tulyar* was a significant earner. His stallion cover fee of £600 was the highest in Ireland and Britain, and his yearlings were fetching significant prices at the sales. Therefore, a solid argument can be presented that selling *Tulyar* was a poor business decision, especially considering it was so close to the sale of *Royal Charger*. Making this sale even more peculiar was the concentrated efforts made by the Stud and the government to secure the purchase of *Tulyar* three years earlier. The INS was not long in existence. It needed to build solid foundations by utilising its star-quality stallions. But instead, it adopted a selling policy regarding its top-class bloodstock. And no satisfactory official explanation has been forthcoming on exactly why the horse was sold.

In any event, the INS lined up a replacement for *Tulyar* in the French-bred colt *Vimy* (1952), costing £105,000 from Pierre Wertheimer.[707] *Vimy* won Ascot's King George VI & Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes in 1955 but suffered an injury curtailing his racing career. But

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[703] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1954 to 31 Dec. 1957, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[704] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1956, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[705] Leicester, *Bloodstock breeding*, p. 333.
[706] *Evening Herald*, 7 Dec. 1972.
[707] *Irish Press*, 29 Oct. 1955.

the INS bought *Vimy* for stud proposes only. In his first year at stud, *Vimy* accumulated £7,875 in cover fees which were significantly lower than *Tulyar's* total of £14,000 his first year.[708] But this was not the last controversy concerning high-class stallions, with the purchase of *Panaslipper* raising further questions on how the INS was being run.

5.9. *Panaslipper* causes conflict

In June 1955, the Minister of Finance increased the INS's share capital by £45,000 to purchase *Panaslipper* from private breeder Joseph McGrath. This legislation passed through the Dáil without any significant opposition. *Panaslipper*, trained by P. J. Prendergast, won the 1955 Irish Derby and was second in the English Derby. The Press praised the INS's 'shrewd judgment', noting the horse would now join the 'great *Tulyar*' at the Stud.[709] But the optimism did not last long with *Tulyar* sold four months later and *Panaslipper* failing to live up to the hype. There were enormous racecourse expectations at the INS for *Panaslipper*, but he failed to live up to the hype running poorly. *Panaslipper's* final race was in America at Laurel Park, Maryland. In the build-up to the race, there was controversy. British jockey, Tommy Gosling, was booked by the INS to ride *Panaslipper*, which drew criticism in Ireland. At a Dublin County Committee Agriculture meeting, complaints were voiced that it 'was a sad reflection on the professional riders' in Ireland that a 'foreign jockey' was booked.[710] The Irish Jockey's Association protested to the Minister of Agriculture, James Dillion stating there was nothing personal against Gosling but that the INS's snub of not using an Irish jockey was unjustified and unacceptable.[711] Irish jockey T. P. Burns replaced Gosling, and this move drew further criticism. In a letter published in the *Irish Field*, Michael Hall, the manager of Goff's Bloodstock, was furious at 'how small-

[708] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1954 to 31 Dec. 1957, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[709] *Sunday Independent*, 26 June 1955.
[710] Engagement of foreign jockey, 6 Sept. 1955, PREM/Office of the Secretary to the President, 2009/115/31.
[711] *Irish Independent*, 23 Aug. 1955.

minded' Irish jockeys influenced the decision to change jockeys.[712] The above is an example of the legacy of bitterness that still existed in some quarters towards Britain.

There was confidence behind *Panaslipper* going into the race, with Burns expecting the horse to win.[713] The Press added further pressure claiming that a 'victory was imperative' to regain prestige as *Panaslipper* lost his previous race in unfortunate circumstances, having been denied a clear run.[714] An Irish horse running in the INS colours captured the imagination of Irish Americans who flocked to the racecourse. But *Panaslipper* finished a well-beaten fourth, with his trainer offering no excuses for the defeat.[715] Shortly afterwards, American breeder Neil McCarthy declared: 'I want *Panaslipper* because I believe the horse is the greatest animal in the world up to a mile and a quarter. I also think he would be a successful sire'.[716] It was rumoured that McCarthy offered approximately £71,000 for *Panaslipper,* but according to Hyde, the horse was not for sale under any circumstances.[717] McCarthy claimed the INS would give him the first option on the horse if the circumstances changed.[718] McCarthy and P.J. Prendergast had a close friendship. Indeed, McCarthy was no stranger when it came to purchasing Ireland's thoroughbreds. In 1956, he bought *Arctic Prince* and *Solar Slipper* from Joseph McGrath.[719]

Within months, circumstances changed with Prendergast removed as the trainer of the INS horses. Prendergast was embroiled in a legal battle between the estranged Anne-Bullitt More O'Ferall and Roderic More O'Ferall of Kildangan Stud.[720] Prendergast trained horses for the O'Ferralls. Following widespread press coverage of the court case, the President withdrew *Panaslipper* and four other horses from Prendergast's stable and transferred them to Arthur Blake's Heath stables. The INS directors advised the President to send one of the horses *Sail*

[712] *Irish Field*, 28 Aug. 2015 (instance recalled from 1955 in this edition of the paper).
[713] *Irish Examiner*, 31 Oct. 1955.
[714] *Irish Independent*, 18 Oct. 1955.
[715] *Irish Independent*, 12 Nov. 1955.
[716] *Evening Echo*, 15 Nov. 1955.
[717] *Irish Independent*, 12 Nov. 1955.
[718] *Evening Echo*, 15. Nov. 1955.
[719] Leicester, *Bloodstock breeding*, p. 322.
[720] *Irish Times*, 13 Dec. 1955.

Riona to John Oxx, but he preferred if it was sent to Blake's stable.[721] In any event, the INS did not finalise matters with the President, and it was only through an article in the *Sunday Independent* that he discovered *Sail Riona* was going to Blake's yard and not Oxx.[722] Infuriated by what he perceived was a distinct lack of courtesy, he cautioned the INS to ensure he was informed of future developments before they appeared in the national press.[723] Whatever the cause, this was further evidence of the lack of etiquette at the INS and was a symptom of what was to follow. When questioned on the recent events, Prendergast offered little clarity on the circumstances: 'I am not free to make any comment as the why the President withdrew the National Stud horses from my stable, although I am sure I know the reason'.[724] When Hyde was questioned on the matter, he refused to explain why the horses were removed from Prendergast.[725] The following month, events took another twist over *Panaslipper*.

On 5 March, the INS board of directors called a meeting where they agreed to sell *Panalipper* to Neil McCarthy, but they did not inform the government. The next day, Hyde sent a telegram to McCarthy offering' him first preference' on the horse for £80,000.[726] Sometime afterwards, Dillon claimed: 'Neither I nor any member of the government had any reason to apprehend that the sale of *Panaslipper* was contemplated by the board, until the 15 March, when we learned of the matter, not from the board or the manager, but in the Press'.[727] Ryan in *Stallions and Power* contradicts Dillion's version of the events. He argues that Dillion agreed to sell *Panaslipper* before the INS board meeting but changed his mind after the Minister for Finance Sweetman prohibited the sale.[728] The *Irish Press* claimed that they were 'reliably informed' that

[721] Correspondence between the Irish National Stud to the secretary of the President, M. McDunphy, 10 Apr. 1956, Office of the Secretary to the President, PREM/2009/115/31.
[722] *Sunday Independent*, 29, Apr. 1956.
[723] Correspondence between the secretary of the President, M. McDunphy and the Irish National Stud, 16 May 1956, Office of the Secretary to the President, PREM/2009/115/31.
[724] *Daily Express*, 22 Mar. 1956.
[725] *Irish Examiner*, 27 Feb. 1956.
[726] Dáil Éireann debate, 25 Apr. 1956, vol. 136, no.7, Oral answers – proposed sale of *Panaslipper*, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (3 Apr. 2021)
[727] Ibid.
[728] Ryan, *Stallions and power*, p. 11.

Panaslipper was sold to America, and when they contacted Hyde, he admitted that negotiations with the INS were ongoing.[729] McCarthy was so convinced of the sale and expected to have the horse in America within ten days.[730] But by the following weekend, a report in the *Sunday Independent* announced that the negotiations had 'stopped' and that *Panaslipper* was not yet sold.[731] In fact, the government intervened, cautioning that the sale was unacceptable under any circumstances.[732]

Meanwhile, perplexed by the events, McCarthy arrived in Ireland from America, demanding an explanation. Senior representatives of the Irish government, including James Dillion and Gerald Sweetman, met him. He quickly informed them that a legally binding agreement was in place with the INS on *Panaslipper*, and he was 'anxious' that the agreement be honoured.[733] However, Dillion and Sweetman explained the circumstances, stressing that they increased the INS's share capital to purchase *Panaslipper* to retire him to stud, and they never agreed or knew about the sale.[734] After some consideration, McCarthy decided to waive his claim. In the Press, the government praised the 'goodwill and friendliness towards this country in which Mr McCarthy acted in the whole matter'.[735] One of the INS directors, A.P. Reynolds, infuriated by the circumstances, resigned in protest. In a statement, Reynolds stated: 'Ministers concerned should permit the directors to publish all the facts concerning the purchase and sale of *Panaslipper*'.[736] Reynolds was replaced on the board by Dublin breeder Richard Ball, who won consecutive Grand Nationals with *Reynoldstown* in 1935 and 1936.

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[729] *Irish Press*, 16 Mar. 1956.
[730] *Evening Herald*, 16 Mar. 1956.
[731] *Sunday Independent*, 18 Mar. 1956.
[732] Statement on the sale of *Panaslipper*, 9 Apr. 1956, Office of the Secretary to the President, 2009/115/31.
[733] Dáil Éireann debate, 25 Apr. 1956, vol. 136, no.7, Oral answers – proposed sale of *Panaslipper*, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (3 Apr. 2021).
[734] Ibid.
[735] *Irish Independent*, 26 Apr. 1956.
[736] *Irish Times*, 11 Apr. 1956.

In Dáil Éireann, O'Malley argued: 'Mr. Reynolds resigns now. It was a pity he did not resign before *Tulyar* was sold'.[737] O'Malley questioned the relationship between the INS directors and the government. He highlighted a total lack of communication or strategy and accused the INS of becoming 'cocky and self-satisfied', and he claimed they were not operating according to the principles under which they were established and were in danger of becoming labelled 'tanglers' or 'horse dealers'.[738] The episode surrounding *Panaslipper* was a catalogue of disasters from start to finish. Confidence in the INS was at an all-time low and even more damaging; its public image was tarnished at home and abroad. *Panaslipper* retired to the INS shortly afterwards and was described by the directors as 'a consistent success'.[739] He remained at the INS until 1964 when he was sold to the Japanese National Stud. The late 1950s and the early 1960s saw changes to staff at the INS and some new horse trainers.

In June 1959, Éamon de Valera replaced Seán T. O'Kelly as President of Ireland. Two years later, the President's principal horse trainer Blake retired from racing. Two Curragh trainers Martin Quirke of Mountjoy Lodge and Jimmy Lenehan of Curragh View replaced him. Both were appointed upon Hyde's recommendation.[740] Also, that year, following Hayes's premature death, James P. Frost became the chairman of the INS. Frost was a private breeder who regularly appeared in Ireland's winning breeder's lists. The late 1950s saw the retirement from the board of the earl of Fingal and Sir Charles Moore. In 1965, on the advice of Hyde, two more private sector trainers were appointed to the President's horses. Kevin Prendergast (son of P.J) at Friarstown in Kildare and Michael Hurley of Osbourne Lodge on the Curragh.[741] At the same time, John Oxx was also retained. All three regularly appeared high in the winning lists of

[737] Dáil Éireann debate, 18 Apr. 1956, vol. 156, no.5, Committee on Finance, vote 27, agriculture, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (4 Apr. 2021).
[738] Ibid.
[739] *Irish Press*, 14 Oct. 1964.
[740] Correspondence between David Hyde and the secretary of the President, M. McDunphy, 10 Oct. 1961, Office of the secretary to the President, PRES/96/6/567.
[741] Correspondence between David Hyde and the secretary of the President, M. McDunphy, 9 Nov. 1961, Office of the Secretary to the President, PRES/96/6/567.

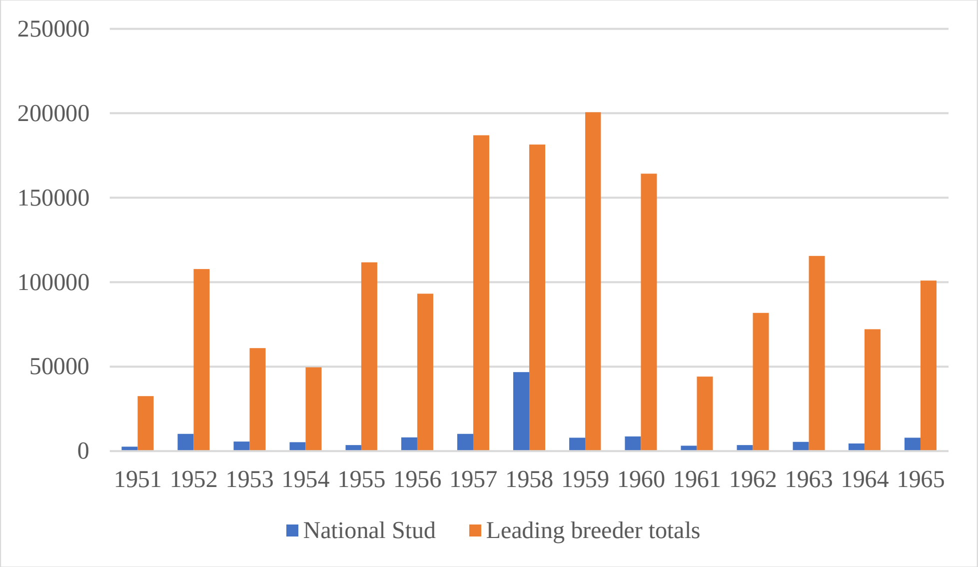
trainers, with Oxx and Prendergast dominating. From 1965 to 1969, Prendergast won 139 races accumulating £62,734, and Oxx won 161 races worth £136,819.[742] Prendergast and Oxx also bred their own horses. In 1969, Oxx was appointed to the INS's board of directors alongside another leading private breeder Stan Cosgrave. Cosgrave co-founded the Irish Thoroughbred Breeders Association (ITBA) and served as its president and chairman. The appointment of Cosgrave to the INS board of directors was a reversal of previous government policy. During the 1945 National Stud Bill debates, opposition politicians requested that the Bloodstock Breeders Association members be elevated to the board. But this request was refused by the Minister of Agriculture, James Ryan. He deemed it unsuitable because he argued that no organisation should be able to influence events or policy at the INS.[743] Cosgrave served on the board for two years before becoming the manager of Moyglare Stud Farm in Kildare, owned by Swiss businessman Walter Haefner. Cosgrave taking up a position within the private sector is reflective of a pattern within the industry. Sir Henry Greer also worked within it, as did Major Cyril Hall, and as we will see later, other executives at the INS were much involved in the private sector. The elite stud farms in Ireland were resourced with significant foreign investment, whereas the National Stud relied on limited government support. And as we will see later, as a national entity, the INS was not a priority within the industry.

5.10. Irish National stud profits and losses

Listed below are the race stakes won by INS-bred horses compared to the leading breeders winning stakes over fifteen years from 1951 to 1965 in Ireland.

[742] *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, vols xxix to xxxiv (Dublin, 1961-1966) and the *Bloodstock Breeders' Annual Review, an illustrated worldwide survey of the British Thoroughbred*, vols lvi to lviii (London, 1967 to 1969).
[743] Dáil Éireann debate, 12 July 1945, vol. 97, no. 21, Committee on Finance – National Stud Bill, 1945, committee stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (4 Jan. 2022).

Figure 5 (d): Winning stakes from 1951 to 1965.

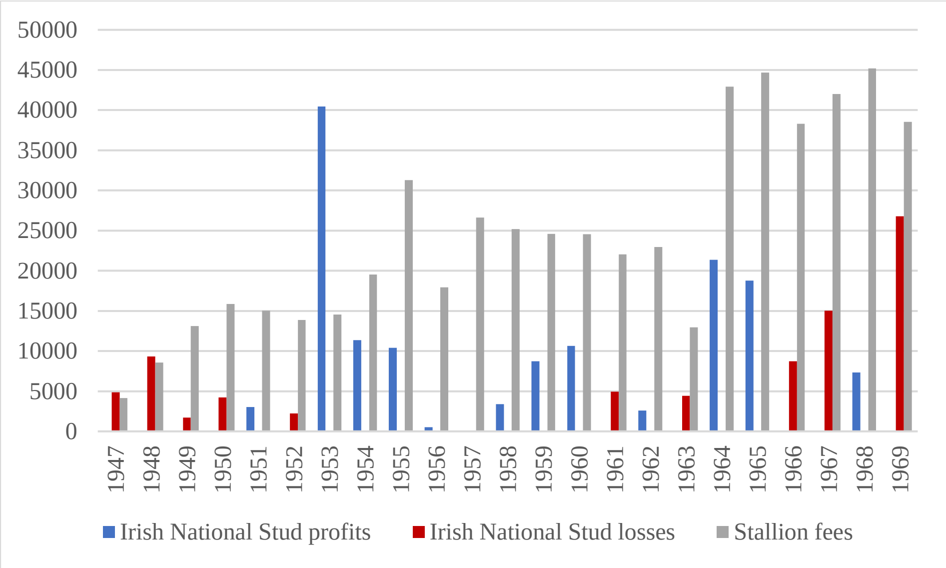


Source: ***The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, vols xix to xxxiii (Dublin, 1951 to 1965).**

INS-bred horses won 199 races accumulating £133,643 at an average of £8,921 per annum.[744] The leading breeders (those who topped the Irish bred winners' records, typically the likes of the Aga Khan) won 709 races earning £1,603,902 in prize money at an average of £106,926 per annum.[745] The overall INS prize money was approximately eight per cent of the winning stakes won by those classed as leading breeders. It is reasonable to compare the INS with these breeders because the INS was operating in the same environment. For instance, in 1958, the INS was placed fourth in the records lists. But, to achieve further success, the INS needed significant investment alongside total government support to have any chance of competing with the private sector in the long term. It is also significant that the leading breeder's totals included valuable graded races that eluded the INS. The INS as a business model was reasonably successful over its first two decades, as reflected in the table below, showing the profits and losses for the INS under the management of Hall from 1947 to 1954 and Hyde from 1954 to 1969.

[744] *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, vols xix to xxxiii (Dublin, 1951 to 1965).
[745] Ibid.

Figure 5 (e): Profits and losses at the National Stud from 1947 to 1969.



Source: Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1947 to 31 Dec. 1969, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).

The INS operated at a trading profit in thirteen of the twenty-two years with average annual profits of €10,622 per annum.[746] The INS showed trading losses in nine years at an average of £8,224 per annum.[747] Under Hall, the INS initially showed trading losses, but it built up its bloodstock and first showed trading profits following solid sales at the yearling auctions in 1951.[748] In 1953, the sale of *Royal Charger* significantly contributed to the spike in profits. Two years later, with Hyde as chief executive, *Tulyar* was sold and replaced by *Vimy*, and over the following two years, profits significantly decreased to £502 and £82 respectively, with only one yearling sold for £1000.[749]

746 Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1947 to 31 Dec.1969, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
747 Ibid.
748 Directors' report and statement of accounts for the period 1 Jan. to 31 Dec. 1951, the National Library Ireland IR60013.
749 Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1953 to Dec.1955, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).

Stallion fees aggregated £564,399 at an average of £24,539 per annum.[750] In 1953, *Blackrock* earned £250 in stud fees but was subsequently sold for £128.[751] *Blackrock* was replaced by *Eudaemon*, a winner of two graded races at Doncaster and York in 1956. His stallion cover fee was initially £98, but it was raised to £148 the following year.[752] In the INS annual accounts, Frost advised that *Eudaemon* was 'popular with breeders, but he has yet to establish himself'.[753] But he did not achieve satisfactory results as a sire and was sold to breeders in Sweden five years later. That year the INS displayed a trading loss of £4,935, which can be attributed to the loss of £1,1962 in yearling sales; the previous year saw profits of £4,412.[754]

In 1962, the INS bought *Whistling Wind*, unbeaten as a two-year-old, his stud fees were £250.[755] Also purchased that year was *Miralgo* for £85,950, whose stud fees were initially £300 per cover, rising to £400.[756] Seven years later, *Miralgo* was sold to breeders in Japan for £80,000.[757] The following year witnessed a trading loss of £4,427, which chairman J. P Frost blamed on the decline in stud fees, down £9,985 on the previous year.[758] In 1964, *Preceptic* died and was replaced by *Linacre*, whose stud fees were £300.[759] And *Khalkis*, a son of *Vimy* and the winner of the Irish Two Thousand Guineas and the Queen Elizabeth II Stakes at Ascot, was purchased, but similar to *Miralgo*, he was sold in 1969.

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[750] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1947 to 31 Dec.1969, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[751] *Irish Examiner*, 7 May 1958.
[752] *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, vols xxvii (Dublin, 1959), p. 307.
[753] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1961, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[754] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1960 to 31 Dec. 1961, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[755] *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, vols xxxi (Dublin, 1963), p. 301.
[756] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1963, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[757] Irish National Stud accounts and reports,31 Dec. 1969, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[758] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1963, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[759] *The Irish horse, the official publication of the Bloodstock Breeders and Horse Owners Association of Ireland*, vols xxxiii (Dublin, 1965), p. 327.

The following year in January 1965, the government set up a Survey Team to inquire into Irish horse breeding, and they reported their findings in 1966. There were sixty-three recommendations, including some concerning the INS.[760] The Survey Team found that the INS provided reasonable service to small breeders but did not elaborate much beyond this point. They concluded that the INS was 'not able to keep up of late with what a national stud might ideally be or even, perhaps, with the standards set by the privately run-owned stud farms at home and abroad'.[761] They recommended that 'there should be at all times at least one prestige stallion standing at the National Stud'.[762] By a 'prestige stallion', the Survey Team meant a horse that had won Classic races. But over the next four years, the INS failed to invest in a horse of this calibre and by the mid to late 1960s they were falling well behind the private breeders. For two consecutive years from 1966, the INS showed a trading loss of £8720, increasing to £15,014, which Frost attributed to a significant increase in the rebate in stallion fees of £7,588 on the no foal, no fee concession in 1966 and of £13,251 the following year.[763] At the end of the decade, the INS finally bought a prestigious stallion.

In 1969, they purchased *Tudor Music* for £120,000, he won three grade one races in 1969 at Ascot, Haydock, and Doncaster, and he was fully booked for the first four years with a cover fee of €700, increasing to €1000 by year four.[764] Also, that year Hyde resigned as the CEO. That year the INS showed a trading loss of £26,763, which Frost credited to Hyde's compensation package of £6000, a downturn in bloodstock trading of £5,500 and an increase in insurance of £2,500.[765]

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[760] *Report of the Survey Team established by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries on the horse breeding industry* (Dublin, 1965) available at the National Library, OPIE A/53/6.
[761] Dáil Éireann debate, 23 July 1969, vol. 241, no.8, National Stud Bill, 1969, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (25 Jan. 2022).
[762] Seanad Éireann debate, 24 July 1969, vol. 66, no.17, National Stud Bill, 1969, second and subsequent stages, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (25 Jan. 2022).
[763] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1966 to 31 Dec.1967, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[764] Ibid.
[765] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1970, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).

5.11. Conclusion

From its inception, the INS faced a challenging task in sourcing high-class stallions given the European shortage after the Second World War, but it was eventually fortunate to source a stallion of the class of *Royal Charger*. He had an exceptional record as a sire. The INS's decision to sell *Royal Charger* was questionable, and the reasons were unsatisfactory. The INS could have retained *Royal Charger* especially given his reputation and the need to maintain the best thoroughbreds in Ireland.

The government's £250,000 increase in the share capital at the INS facilitating the purchase of *Tulyar* came in a period of austerity in Ireland, and it drew a critical response. This criticism was justified because of the speculative nature of the horse breeding industry. But *Tulyar* was an exceptional racehorse. The fact that he was bred in Ireland and subsequently owned by the Irish State caught the public imagination. From a racing perspective, the INS's decision to retire *Tulyar* denied racing fans the opportunity of witnessing greater success. From a breeding perspective, the decision to retire *Tulyar* was justified, but his subsequent sale divided opinion, with some arguing that *Tulyar* was disappointing as a sire and others claiming he was successful. It should be noted that *Tulyar* had one of the highest cover charges in Europe, his services were in high demand, and his yearlings achieved exceedingly high sales figures. Under these circumstances, the reasons for the INS's decision to sell the horse are debatable. A convincing argument can be presented that the INS missed an opportunity to exploit *Tulyar's* reputation. They needed an emblem to advertise as a marketing tool, and *Tulyar* certainly fitted that description. The positive reaction of Irish breeders to the sale was telling. It could be argued that the private sector was acting out of self-interest, with *Tulyar's* presence at the INS sitting uncomfortably with them. At Aga Khan's stud, he was part of the private sector. But at the State stud farm, *Tulyar* gave it credibility and placed the INS in direct competition with the private breeders in Ireland. The Aga Khan had considerable influence on the industry. Not long after the sale of *Tulyar* to the INS, Hall resigned from his position as manager to assume a role at the Aga Khan's Stud. While at the INS, Hall had an uncomfortable relationship with the INS board members. His historical links to British horse racing may have caused angst amongst the directors.

The lease of the INS's horses to the President was disappointing. Several horses with strong pedigree links failed to live up to expectations. The INS's attempted sale of *Panaslipper* revealed a severe lack of communication between the INS and the government. The entire episode raised questions on policy at the Stud. Combined with the sales of *Royal Charger* and *Tulyar*, it seemed the INS was operating a selling policy instead of building solid foundations. Leicester's questions on INS policy were not answered satisfactorily by the government.

The large private breeders had a considerable influence on the INS. Following Hall's departure and during Hyde's term, these breeders began to take a stranglehold. From the 1950s to the 1960s, the INS board of directors and horse trainers was dominated by the private sector. Given these developments, a persuasive argument can be made that the INS was, as Leicester cautioned, no different to any other private establishment. For example, the stallion fees at the Stud were not much different to those charged by the private stud farms.

Moreover, the INS was established in the best interests of the small horse breeders in Ireland. At the outset, the government was relentless in arguing on their behalf. But throughout its first two decades, the INS did not offer the small breeders anything that was not available from private stud farms. Therefore, the INS was not acting in the principles it was established. And in the following decades, these problems became manifest. In 1969, Hyde was replaced by the owner of Baroda Stud, Captain William Whitehead, who temporarily filled the role while the INS sourced a long-term successor. Shortly afterwards, the INS appointed Michael Osborne, and his term at the Stud will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 6:

Tax concessions, politicians, and syndication shapes National Stud policies from 1969 to 1982

6.1. Introduction

In 1969, the Minister for Finance, Charles Haughey, held an informal meeting with the INS board of directors. At this meeting, Haughey stressed the importance of bloodstock breeding to the economy, and he advised the board to ensure that the INS became the 'premier stud' in Ireland and that there was no reason why the Stud 'should not be the best in the world'.[766] At the same time, the INS was seeking to appoint a new CEO following Hyde's resignation, and the most suitable candidate for the role was Michael Osborne. The following chapter discusses Osborne's tenure as CEO. During this period, two new National Stud Acts were introduced, while two comprehensive reports on Irish horse breeding and a government Joint Committee Inquiry had implications for policies at the INS. The industry was changing to suit the needs of the syndication market, and the INS needed to move and adapt to the changes to have any realistic chance of competing at the highest level. Central to this was the need to build a robust roster of thoroughbreds. But towards the end of Osborne's tenure as CEO, the lack of State support became problematic.

6.2. Osborne and stallion tax concessions

In September 1970, from 200 worldwide applicants, Michael Osborne from Naas in County Kildare emerged as CEO of the INS.[767] He graduated from University College Dublin (UCD) in 1957 as a veterinary surgeon and practiced in Kildare for over a decade.[768] In 2005, he received an honorary science doctorate from Maynooth University. He was also the first Irishman made

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[766] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec.1948 to 31 Dec. 1969, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[767] *Nationalist and Leinster Times*, 4 Sept. 1970.
[768] *Sunday Independent*, 25 Dec. 2005.

an honorary member of the Jockey Club.[769] Osborne was the CEO at the INS for twelve years; a posthumous tribute published by the *Sunday Independent* claimed he 'transformed the Stud's fortunes'.[770] He held several important roles within the industry, including senior steward of the Irish Turf Club from 1986 to 1988, and was chairman of Goff's Bloodstock Agents, Punchestown racecourse and the Curragh racecourse up to 2005. In 1982, Osborne left the INS to manage the North Ridge Stud Farm in Kentucky. Four years later, he returned to Ireland to assist Sheik Mohammed in building up Kildangan Stud and the Emirates Racing Association in Dubai. Such was Osborne's influence that he arranged the purchase of Kildangan Stud for Sheikh Mohammed.[771] And he is also credited with establishing the first Dubai World Cup in 1996.[772] Sheikh Mohammed and Osborne developed a close friendship, and a measure of this relationship can be gauged by the fact that Osborne's final resting place is at the graveyard at Kildangan Stud.

In an interview with the *Irish Independent* in October 1970, Osborne outlined his vision for the INS. He planned to increase the number of stallions and reduce their fees to benefit the small breeders.[773] To increase tourist numbers, Osborne made an unusual but clever marketing move by having exhumed the skeletal remains of *Arkle*, the three-time consecutive Cheltenham Gold Cup winner from 1964 to 1966. The skeleton was put on public display at the new INS Museum which was opened in 1977. The museum traced the history of horses in Ireland, with reports in the Press suggesting that this was the first museum of 'its kind' in the world.[774] According to Ryan, it played a crucial role in contributing to the 52,000 visitors to the Stud in 1977.[775] He recognised the appeal of *Arkle* and made the horse the central attraction of the museum. In a 1976 news report, Michael O'Brien explained: '…any horse that wins twenty-

[769] Death of Michael Osborne, Irishracing.com: first past the post, available at https://www.irishracing.com/news?headline=Death-Of-Michael-Osborne&prid=13281 (11 Aug. 2022).
[770] *Sunday Independent*, 25 Dec. 2005.
[771] Ibid.
[772] Ibid.
[773] *Irish Independent*, 31 Oct. 1970.
[774] *Irish Independent*, 10 May 1977.
[775] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1977, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2007/116/217.

seven races' including three Gold Cups 'deserves to have a special place in this country that seeks to trace the story of the Irish horse'.[776] But other events had a far more significant impact on how Osborne's tenure at the INS developed.

In 1969, Charles Haughey (more on Haughey in the next chapter), the Minister for Finance, reformed tax legislation to ensure that nominations or syndicate shares in thoroughbreds were exempt from tax. Previously under the 1939 Finance Act, stallion fees were exempt, but this did not cover syndication, which was unheard of until the mid to late 1960s.[777] Mark Popham argues that this tax change 'enabled the Irish bloodstock industry to thrive and enjoy unparalleled prosperity'.[778] In 1986, it was updated to include stallions sent abroad to cover mares. In 2006, the *Irish Independent* reported the exemption was worth seventeen million in profits to stallion owners.[779] It also led to Coolmore Stud and Sheikh Mohammad Maktoum's family becoming so powerful that they controlled the market and most of the availability of the highest-class thoroughbreds (more on this in the next chapter). And this would have consequences for policy at the INS. In practice, it meant that the INS could enter the syndication market to compete with the private breeders, but they could only do so if they had significant resources and government support. Syndication has advantages and disadvantages. It depends on the quality of the mares sent to be covered. The highest-class stallions usually covered higher-class mares. Therefore, this naturally increases the likelihood of the progeny being successful, which is beneficial to the syndicate members. But syndicate investors must be selective in nominations because the larger the syndicate, the greater chance of lesser quality mares being paired with the stallions, which could, as Ryan notes, produce 'poor quality bloodlines'.[780] And if this happened, the syndicate

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[776] Michael O'Brien, RTE News report, 12 Nov. 1976, available at www.rte.ie (25 Jan. 2022).
[777] Michael MacCormac, *The Irish racing, and bloodstock industry: an economic analysis* (Dublin, 1976), p. 29.
[778] Mark Popham, 'Stallion tax exemption in Ireland is threatened', 18 Nov. 2002, BLOODHORSE FOR MORE THAN 100 YEARS, available at https://www.bloodhorse.com/horse-racing/articles/184940/stallion-tax-exemption-in-ireland-is-threatened (11 Aug. 2022).
[779] *Irish Independent*, 4 Mar. 2006.
[780] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 102.

was devalued, followed by significant financial losses for its members. On the other hand, if the bloodline was successful, the syndicate members stood to make a profit on the investment. Syndicates also allowed breeders outside the small circles of elite breeders to compete. As syndication became popular, small to medium-sized breeders/owners interacted together through the syndication process.

6.3. The National Stud Act (1969)

In 1969, Haughey introduced legislation in Dáil Éireann to increase the share capital at the Stud from £500,000 to £1,000,000. In the debates on this new National Stud Act, Haughey outlined the reasons for the increase:

> The purchase of additional stallions, the construction of new yards for visiting mares and the replacement of out-of-date and economic buildings and installations in conformity with modern standards and specifications would be likely to cost the company some £500,000 to £600,000 in a programme phased over three or four years.[781]

Haughey also referred to the small breeders arguing that the INS provided them with access to the ‘less expensive’ sires at the Stud, and he cautioned that it was ‘essential’ that this be continued; he also noted that INS was in competition with the private studs.[782] He warned that the INS was ‘not measuring up to the standards’ set by the best privately owned studs.[783]

Gerald L’Estrange TD (Fine Gael) made significant contributions regarding policy at the Stud. He questioned why the INS had not adopted a policy to provide a first-class stallion to small breeders at a low cost or a fee subsidised by the State.[784] Like the debate on the National Stud Act in 1945, this was another opportunity for policymakers to address the plight of the small breeders. But Lestrange’s question was ignored by Haughey. Instead, he argued that the INS

[781] Dáil Éireann debate, 23 July 1969, vol. 241, no. 8, National Stud Bill, 1969, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (25 Jan. 2022).
[782] Dáil Éireann debate, 23 July 1969, vol. 241, no. 8, National Stud Bill, 1969, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (25 Jan. 2022).
[783] Dáil Éireann debate, 24 July 1969, vol. 66. No. 17, National Stud Bill, second and subsequent stages available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (25 Jan. 2022).
[784] Dáil Éireann debate, 23 July 1969, vol. 241, no. 8, National Stud Bill, 1969, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (25 Jan. 2022).

must become a 'show place' for Ireland to be proud of.[785] Considering the circumstances, Haughey was presented with an opportunity to change the stallion cover fee policy at the INS and to discuss the possibility of a subsidised government scheme. But his lack of response to L'Estrange suggests he had little appetite for disturbing the large private breeder's interests. A subsidised government scheme for small breeders could have afforded small breeders access to the highest class of bloodstock to enable these stud farms to flourish. A subsidised scheme also guaranteed that the large breeders received reasonable fees for access to their bloodstock. Considering the relentless government rhetoric on supporting the small breeders, this was an opportunity to prove that they were serious about this issue. It is also noteworthy that there was no reference to the conflict of interest at the INS with private breeders on the board of directors or Haughey's direct involvement in the industry. This is a critical point of contention which should have been addressed. In any case, the National Stud Act was passed into law on 24 June 1969.

6.4. The National Stud Act (1976)

In 1976, Fine Gael Minister for Finance Richie Ryan introduced another National Stud Bill in the Dáil to increase the share capital at the INS from £2 million to £5 million and to increase the company's borrowing strength from £200,000 to £500,000.[786] It also recommended that the annual company accounts be submitted to both Houses of the Oireachtas. Another factor was creating a new rule whereby any member nominated or elected to the Dáil, or the Seanad could not be appointed to the INS's board of directors. Announcing the Bill, Ryan declared:

> In promoting this Bill, the Government are showing their confidence in the industry and the magnificent work of the National Stud. Those of us who have visited the Stud are well aware that it has become a very worthy showplace for the Irish horse. We also relish the many tributes which are paid to the Stud by countless visitors from home and abroad. I would like to thank the board of directors and the staff for their excellent work and wish them well for the future.[787]

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[785] *Irish Examiner*, 25 July 1969.
[786] Dáil Éireann Debate, 17 June 1976, vol. 291, no. 9, National Stud Bill, second stage available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (4 Feb. 2022).
[787] Ibid.

In June 1976, Haughey, now sitting on the opposition benches of the Dáil, argued that the initial set-up of the INS board of directors was 'idiotic' and too small and that it should be increased from five members to nine so that it could function adequately.[788] Conor Ryan argues that Haughey wanted the increase in members because when the 'Stud manager brought requests to make big purchasing pitches, a small pool of decision-makers was more likely to stall and split', which would hinder the Stud's prospects of acquiring the best bloodstock.[789] Haughey argued that the board should consist of 'men of standing and status respected for their knowledge and position in the breeding world'.[790] It would be reasonable to assume that this was a reference to the large private breeders. His recommendation of adding more members to the board satisfied their interests and could further alienate the small breeders. The Minister for Finance, Richie Ryan, advised Haughey that he might consider increasing the quota of board members in the future, but for the time being, it remained as previously.[791] In any case, the National Stud Act was passed into legislation on 17 June 1976.

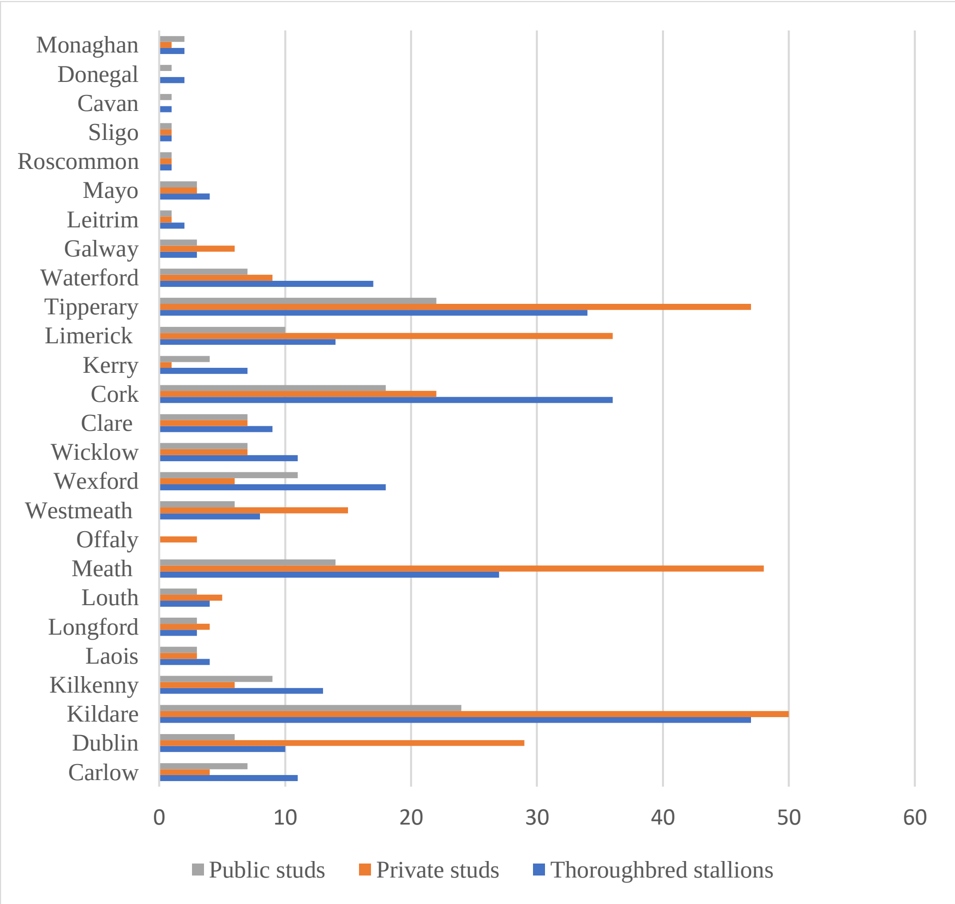
6.5. Stallion fees

In the 1970s, the general feeling in the wider agricultural community in Ireland was that the INS was facilitating the interests of elite thoroughbred breeders.[792] The *Irish Farmers Journal* reported that most farmers knew of the INS's existence, but it was 'not for them' because the Stud had no interest in the owners of half-bred horses who could only afford minimal breeding fees to suit their budget.[793] The overall consensus was summed up by a local farmer: 'What interest have I got in a stud that holds so many high-priced stallions?'[794] In a report in the *Evening*

[788] *Irish Examiner*, 18 June 1976.
[789] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 23.
[790] Dáil Éireann Debate, 17 June 1976, vol. 291, no. 9, National Stud Bill, second stage available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (4 Feb. 2022).
[791] Dáil Éireann debate, 17 June 1976, vol. 291, no. 9, National Stud Bill, committee, and final stages available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (4 Feb. 2022).
[792] *Irish Farmers Journal*, 11 Nov. 1972.
[793] Ibid.
[794] Ibid.

Herald, it was claimed that several instances of stallion fees in Britain were significantly cheaper than those on offer at the INS.[795] They cited *Gold Rod's* £650 stud fee, the winner of almost £90,000 in prize money, as a 'fine instance' of the lower prices in Britain.[796] This was a repeated claim from the previous decades. Therefore, to understand the thoroughbred industry in Ireland, examining the location and distribution of stud farms, thoroughbred stallions, and the cover fees charged is necessary.

Figure 6 (a): Private and public stud farms and thoroughbred stallions in Ireland in 1970.



Source: D. D. McCarthy, *Survey of thoroughbred stud farms in Ireland* (Dublin, 1975), p. 4.

There were two distinct types of stud farms in Ireland, classed as private and public stud farms, with 489 private stud farms and 174 public stud farms holding 289 thoroughbred stallions, and

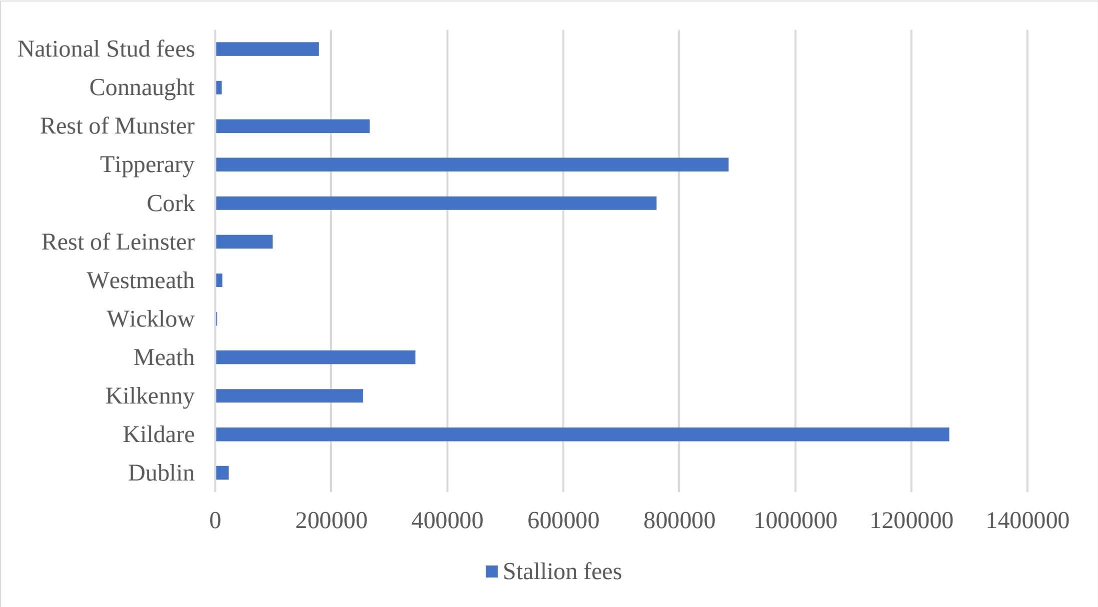
[795] *Evening Herald*, 2 Nov. 1972.
[796] Ibid.

this figure increased to 380 by 1973.[797] The private stud farm's primary objectives were to produce young horses from thoroughbred mares for sale as yearlings.[798] They did not provide a 'standing stallion' available to all members of the racing fraternity.[799] Instead, they offered their 'prestigious' stallions to a select number of breeders that they decided upon and agreed a fee. The public stud farms operated as 'service centres' holding one or two thoroughbred stallions available to all breeders and a number (not defined) of breeding mares.[800] The breeding mares' income was derived from service fees and the sale of the stock they produced. Mares from the private studs interacted with the public studs and studs from abroad during the breeding season.[801]

Counties Dublin, Meath, Kildare, and Westmeath contained thirty-nine per cent of the stud farms and forty-six per cent of the thoroughbreds. Counties Limerick, Cork, and Tipperary housed thirty-two per cent of the stud farms and twenty-seven per cent of the thoroughbreds.[802] In Kildare, the location of the INS, there were fifty privately run stud farms alongside twenty-four public stud farms.[803] The following data shows the accumulative stallion fees per county at stud farms in Ireland.

[797] D. D. McCarthy, *Survey of thoroughbred stud farms in Ireland* (Dublin, 1975), pp 4 to 5.
[798] McCarthy, *Survey of thoroughbred stud farms*, pp 4 to 5.
[799] Michael MacCormac, *The Irish racing and bloodstock industry, an economic analysis* (Dublin, 1976), p. 58.
[800] Ibid., p. 3.
[801] Ibid., p. 3.
[802] Ibid.
[803] Ibid., pp 4 to 5.

Figure 6 (b): Stallions fees in 1976.



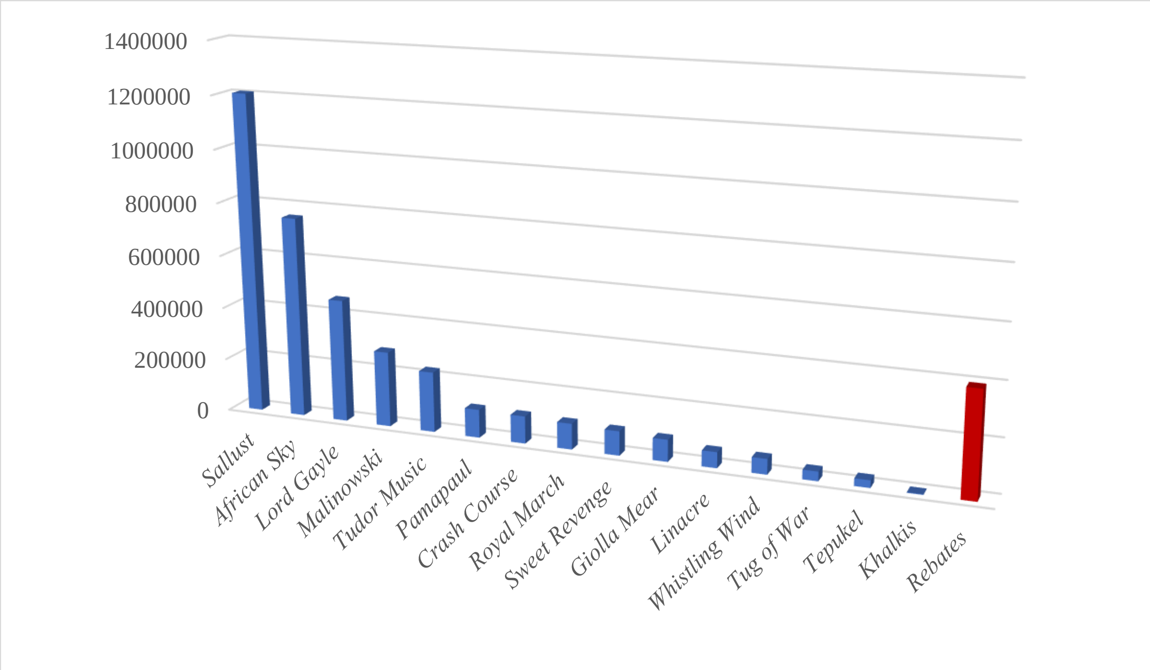
Source: Michael MacCormac, *The Irish racing and bloodstock industry, an economic analysis* (Dublin, 1976), p. 60.

Stallion cover fees totaled £3,925,442, with stud farms in Kildare accounting for £1,265,376, which was approximately thirty-two per cent.[804] The INS earned £179,127 of the fees, which were fourteen per cent of the overall total.[805] MacCormac's findings revealed that approximately forty-nine per cent of studs in Ireland earned less than £1000 in stud service fees, and sixty-seven earned less than £10,000.[806] In other words, their income from stud fees did not justify the investment.[807] MacCormac revealed that sixty-three per cent of stud cover fee payments went to nine stud farms earning over £100,000 and four studs farms earning over £200,000.[808] Therefore, MacCormac concluded that breeding high-class thoroughbreds was for a 'minimal number' of stud farms that received most of the foreign investment.[809] These private stud farms stabled the most prestigious bloodstock, but the government had no defined policy to address the industry's

[804] MacCormac, *The Irish racing and bloodstock industry*, p. 60.
[805] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1976, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2007/116/217.
[806] MacCormac, *The Irish racing and bloodstock industry*, p. 62.
[807] Ibid.
[808] Ibid.
[809] MacCormac, *The Irish racing and bloodstock industry*, p. 62.

obvious imbalance. In the 1970s, the INS significantly replenished its bloodstock, and the following data shows the totals accumulated through their cover fees.

Figure 6 (c): Stallion earnings 1970 to 1981.



Source: Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1970 to 31 Dec. 1981, available at the House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022) & the Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2002/8/296, TAOIS/2003/16//314, TAOIS/2004/21/318.

The INS had fifteen stallions that earned £3,594,582 in cover fees, with *Sallust*, the highest earner at £1,206,059, which was forty-three per cent of the overall stallion income.[810] In 1972, *Sallust* was purchased from Michael Sobell of Ballymacoll Stud in Meath for £200,000.[811] He raced eleven times, winning eight races, including the 1972 Sussex Stakes at Goodwood. The *Irish Farmers Journal* elaborated: 'What a wonderful coup this was for the stud, and a personal triumph for the man who carried through the deal, Michael Osborne. He is certainly the cheapest

[810] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1970 to 31 Dec. 1981, available at the House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022) & the Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2002/8/296, TAOIS/2003/16//314, TAOIS/2004/21/318.
[811] *Irish Examiner*, 5 Oct. 1972.

top-class stallion to come to this country for a long time'.[812] *Sallust's* cover fee was set at £2,200.[813] Considering his stud record, he proved to be a wise investment by the INS.

The next highest-earning stallion was *African Sky,* with £756,072 in cover fees.[814] He raced ten times, winning six races with the INS setting his service fee at £2,000.[815] According to records in the Pedigree Online Thoroughbred Database, in his capacity as a private breeder, the INS chairman Frost purchased *African Sky* from breeders in Newmarket, paying £4,400 in 1970.[816] The following year Frost sold *African Sky* to Kerr & Company of Newmarket for £15,500.[817] It is intriguing that three years later, Kerr & Company acting on behalf of the INS, re-purchased *African Sky* from the renowned French art dealer and thoroughbred breeder Daniel Wildenstein for £331,000.[818] The circumstances of this transaction offer insight into the conflict of interest of the private breeders within the INS. As a private breeder, Frost was perfectly entitled to sell *African Sky,* but as INS chairman, the repurchase of the horse a short time later raises questions about whose interests he was representing, the private sector or the INS? There is no evidence of any irregularity in the sale and re-purchase of *African Sky,* but at the same time, it could be argued that Frost was in a compromising position. The third highest earning stallion was *Lord Gale* earning £461,911, his cover fee was initially set at £1250, but due to demand, it was increased to £2500 by 1981.[819] Other stallions at the INS included *Tudor Music* with a fee of £600 and *Linacre* with a fee of £100 per cover.[820] In 1973, the INS sold *Whistling Wind* for £105,000 to breeders in Japan.[821] Also that year, they purchased *Tepukei* for £25,000 from R. D.

[812] *Irish Farmers Journal*, 11 Nov. 1933.
[813] *Belfast Telegraph,* 20 Oct. 1976.
[814] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1970 to 31 Dec. 1981, available at the House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022) & the Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2002/8/296, TAOIS/2003/16//314, TAOIS/2004/21/318.
[815] *Irish Independent,* 3 Nov. 1973.
[816] Pedigree Online Thoroughbred Database, *African Sky* available at https://www.pedigreequery.com/african+sky (11 Feb. 2022).
[817] Ibid.
[818] Ibid.
[819] *Irish Independent*, 25 Oct. 1981.
[820] *Belfast Telegraph*, 20 Oct. 1976.
[821] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1973, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2004/21/318.

Hollingsworth in Britain; his cover fee was £200, later increased to £300.[822] The INS's concession on 'no cover, no fee' on stallion fees resulted in a refund of £393,353, which was eleven per cent of the stallion fees accumulated from 1970 to 1981.[823] In 1975, due to poor economic circumstances and following pressure from breeders, the INS 'reluctantly' agreed to a concession of fifteen per cent on accounts cleared before 1 December 1975.[824]

Frost was satisfied with the seventy-six per cent fertility rate of the INS stallions, which compared 'favourably' with the national fertility averages in Ireland and Britain.[825] And the following year, the fertility rate increased to eighty-four per cent, which was the highest in recent years.[826] That year, Frost retired from the INS and was replaced by Waterford breeder Michael Curran. Curran was the chairman of the Associated Livestock Marts and was well known in racing circles.[827] In 1933 and 1934, he was the champion apprentice jockey in Ireland. In 1979, Curran was replaced as INS chairman by Lawrence Ryan, the manager of Ballymorris Stud Farms in County Clare. He was one of the founding members and the first chairman of the Irish Thoroughbred Broodmare Owners Association.[828] But questions remained regarding the INS.

6.6. INS policy questioned at the Joint Committee

In November 1978, policies at the INS came under scrutiny in *The First Report of the Joint Committee on State-Sponsored Bodies*. On the Joint Committee were several politicians who questioned and listened to concerns expressed by Osborne, Ryan and INS company secretary, L.J. Mooney. Ryan noted the importance of having a prestigious stallion standing at the INS. He argued that the 'best stallions' were at stud in England; he referenced the immediate action taken

[822] *Irish Independent*, 3 Nov. 1973.
[823] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1973 to 31 Dec. 1976, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2004/21/318, TAOIS/2005/151/216, TAOIS/2006/133/164, TAOIS/2007/116/217.
[824] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1974, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2005/151/216, TAOIS/2007/116/217.
[825] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1974, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2005/151/216.
[826] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1975, available at the House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[827] *Irish Farmers Journal*, 28 June 1975.
[828] *Clare Champion*, 7 July 1978.

by the British National Stud (BNS).[829] They were fully supported by the Horse Racing Levy Board when acquiring stallions.[830] In 1963, the BNS passed from the control of the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries to the Horseracing Levy Board. It was responsible for all aspects of horse racing, including breeding. Income was generated from a tax on gambling, some of which was reinvested in the BNS.

Ryan listed successful racehorses and sires like the American-bred *Mill Reef* and *Grundy* and *Blakeney*, recent acquisitions by the BNS. *Mill Reef* was an exceptional racehorse winning six consecutive grade one races, including the 1971 English Derby. He was valued at two million pounds which the online Thoroughbred Daily News described as 'unheard of this side of the Atlantic in 1972'.[831]

In the early 1970s, there was a dramatic increase in the price of prestigious stallions. *Mill Reef's* American owner Paul Mellon syndicated shares worth fifty per cent of the horse's value to wealthy business owners with twenty private shares costing £50,000 each. According to the TDN, the syndicate owners were wondering if their money was wisely invested at the time'.[832] *Mill Reef's* investors were quickly reassured. For the first two years, *Mill Reef's* service fee was £10,000, increasing to £100,000 thereafter.[833] He was a prolific sire producing 394 foals, with sixty-three of his progenies winning stakes races and eighteen winning grade one races.[834]

For the INS to compete, Ryan argued the INS needed to match the BNS's investments.[835] He further argued that horse breeding had changed over the previous ten years. The 'pattern in breeding' showed that the best bloodlines were found in American strains, as evidenced by the

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[829] *The first report of the Joint Committee on State-Sponsored bodies: The Irish National Stud Company Limited*, 29 Nov. 1978, Department of Finance, FIN/2016/17/1600, p. 28.
[830] Ibid., p. 28.
[831] TDN Thoroughbred Daily News, 'Shared content archive', available at www.thoroughbreddailynews.com (12 Nov. 2022).
[832] Ibid.
[833] Ibid.
[834] Ibid.
[835] *The first report of the Joint Committee on State-Sponsored bodies: The Irish National Stud Company Limited*, 29 Nov. 1978, Department of Finance, FIN/2016/17/1600, p. 28.

number of top races these horses were winning.[836] This was a legacy issue of the short-sighted policy in Ireland and Britain, whereby several top-class thoroughbreds were sold to American breeders. Coolmore Stud based its breeding policy around securing these American bloodlines, successfully launching them to the industry's top rungs.

When the Committee asked Osborne if he thought the INS could compete at the highest level, he concluded that he was ‘getting more despondent. It has all to do with money.[837] Central to Osborne’s argument was that the British Racecourse Levy Board well-financed the BNS, and the BNS received a substantial grant from betting tax income. The BNS was also involved in the syndication of horses, which the INS had not yet explored. Osborne favoured syndication and referenced Coolmore Stud, where the syndication of horses was successful.[838]

It should be noted that the example used by the INS of *Mill Reef* is an exception, as *Mill Reef* was a remarkable success both as a racehorse and as a sire. The BNS’s other two stallions, *Grundy* and *Blakeney,* were successful but should not be contrasted with a stallion of the quality of *Mill Reef*. In 1975, *Grundy* carrying the BNS colours in Ireland won the Irish Two Thousand Guineas and the Irish Derby. This achievement must have caused angst for the INS directors. It should be noted that *Grundy* and *Blakeney* were similar in profile to the INS’s best two horses, *Sallust,* and *African Sky*. *African Sky* and *Sallust* won eleven graded races, including three at grade one level, while *Grundy* and *Blakeney* won nine graded races, including the English Derby. According to Osborne, *African Sky* and *Sallust* were amongst the top fourteen horses in Ireland and Britain.[839] Therefore, despite Osborne and Ryan’s complaints, the INS had at their disposal at least two stallions on par with some of the bloodstock at the BNS.

[836] *The first report of the Joint Committee on State-Sponsored bodies: The Irish National Stud Company Limited*, 29 Nov. 1978, Department of Finance, FIN/2016/17/1600, p. 28.
[837] Ibid, p. 29.
[838] Ibid.
[839] Ibid.

Osborne and Ryan argued that if the INS had a horse of the quality of *Mill Reef*, the demand for its services would be huge. But the Committee questioned who in Ireland would benefit or even afford to pay the cover fees for such a prestigious stallion.[840] In defense, Osborne and Ryan listed examples of stallion cover fees paid in the private sector. For instance, they referred to the American-bred *Habitat*, the winner of four graded races who was standing at Grangewilliam Stud in Kildare. He commanded a service fee of £16,000 per cover and was a hugely successful sire.[841] They also cited another American-bred horse, *Jazzeiro,* the 1978 Irish Two Thousand Guineas winner. He was retired to Ballylinch Stud in Kilkenny, where the stallion fee was £8,000, and Ryan stressed that he was 'pretty well full' concerning bookings.[842] But, in the long term, *Jazzeiro* proved to be an unsuccessful sire and was sold to breeders in Spain. Ryan and Osborne did not inform the Joint Committee as to which class of breeders were availing of these sires at the private studs, but it would be reasonable to assume it certainly was not the small breeders (those outside the elite circle or those who ran small stud farms with only a few thoroughbreds). According to the *First report of the Irish National Stud Company Limited, Sixth Joint Committee on Commercial State-Sponsored Bodies* (1990), thoroughbred breeding in Ireland was a 'small man's' business in Ireland with 3,800 breeders owning about 7,000 mares producing about 4,500 foals per annum.[843] Most of these breeders held one or two mares 'which they maintained as an adjunct to general farming'.[844] At the same time, the industry was important to the Irish economy. It employed about 3900 people, and gross output was valued at approximately eighty-five million by 1984.[845] But in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the influence of elite breeders like Coolmore Stud and Sheikh Mohammad bin Al Maktoum was increasing.

[840] Ibid, p. 32.
[841] Ibid.
[842] Ibid.
[843] *First report of the Irish National Stud Company Limited, Sixth Joint Committee on Commercial State-Sponsored Bodies* (Dublin, 1990), p. 7.
[844] Ibid.
[845] Ibid.

Indeed, the Committee expressed concerns about the stranglehold the elite breeders had on the market. Charlie McCreevy TD (Fianna Fáil) argued that a 'dangerous situation' was developing with two private sector stud farms, Coolmore Stud and Airlie Stud, dominating the market.[846] McCreevy was annoyed that the wealthy owners who supplied these studs were availing of the free tax concession on stallion fees while the smaller breeders had no chance to compete. In reply, Osborne launched a staunch defense of the private sector: 'At least they are helping to keep the flag flying irrespective of what their ambitions are or what their intentions…they do create an international image, and without that, we would be a sad, sorry, looking bunch. It is something to bear in mind'.[847] As CEO of the INS, Osborne's defense of the elite breeders was questionable as their hold on the market stifled the industry. With government support, it was in the remit of the INS directors to launch the Stud on the international stage. Having to rely on elite stud farms backed by foreign owners availing of tax concessions funded by the Irish taxpayer to achieve international recognition was a poor reflection of the industry.

There was some contradictory evidence at the Joint Committee. Osborne argued that the small breeders were the 'base of the Irish breeding industry', and the INS was established to 'maintain those men [small breeders] at all costs because the small man of today could be a big breeder in five years' time'.[848] But, on reflection, MacCormac's research suggests the opposite. He left little doubt about the difficulties of competing in the market. Therefore, the opportunity for the small breeder to rise in status was a challenging, if not impossible, task. Indeed, MacCormac concluded that the 'breeding of high-price yearlings is dependent on a very small number of studs and stallions and thus on a very small number of individuals'.[849] In 1976, for

[846] *The first report of the Joint Committee on State-Sponsored bodies: The Irish National Stud Company Limited*, 29 Nov. 1978, Department of Finance, FIN/2016/17/1600, p. 28.
[847] Ibid., p. 33.
[848] Ibid., p. 33.
[849] MacCormac, *The Irish racing, and bloodstock industry*, p. 62.

example, only nine stud farms in Ireland accumulated over £100,000 in stud fees and four stud farms over £200,000.[850] In any event, the INS announced a change in policy in 1978.

6.7. Syndication and lack of State investment

The INS decided to enter the syndication market and to stand some of their stallions at other stud farms throughout Ireland. Ryan advised that the policy's objective was to reduce breeders' travelling and boarding costs.[851] Seven of the INS's stallions were located at stud farms in Tipperary, Limerick, and Cork. *Sweet Revenge* was relocated to Ballyskitteen Stud and *Linacre* and *Tepukei* to Barretstown Stud and Ballymore Eustace.[852] *Giolla Mear* and *Crash Course* were relocated to Clonunion Stud.[853] The following year *Crash Course* accumulated £30,000 in cover fees, but *Giolla Mear* only earned £500.[854] This represented a significant drop in earnings, down £20,000 from the previous year.[855] Later that year, Old Fairyhouse Stud was sold, and the INS's lease expired. Shortly afterwards, the INS's policy of standing stallions at other locations ended. The closures were attributed to the rising costs in the industry and the lack of finance invested by the government in the INS.[856] Ryan hoped that the policy of standing stallions outside of the INS would be reinitiated in the future because of its popularity amongst breeders.[857] This was an unfortunate development; it had been a progressive policy serving the small breeders. And it should have been retained no matter the circumstances, as it offered a measure of balance within the industry.

In the 1970s, the lack of a prestigious stallion and inadequate financial investment from the State was a constant source of complaint by the INS directors. In 1979, Ryan warned that a

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[850] Ibid.
[851] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1978, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2009/135/145.
[852] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1975, available at the House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[853] *Limerick Leader*, 30 Aug. 1980.
[854] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1981, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2012/90/195.
[855] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1980, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2011/127/175.
[856] *Reports of Joint Committee on State-Sponsored bodies of the National Stud*, 17 Nov. 1983, Department of Finance, FIN/2016/17/1600.
[857] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1981, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2012/90/195.

'dark cloud' emerged with the escalation of the cost of high-class stallions, and for the INS to compete, it needed foreign investment to supplement the State's contribution.[858] Hence, a generous donation by the American horse breeder Jerry Tornsey. He presented the INS with a free annual nomination to *Mac Diarmida*. John Hartigan bred *Mac Diarmida* at Cashel Stud Farm in Florida. He won several graded races in America, accumulating more than €500,000 in prize money.[859] In the first year, the Stud sent their mare *Bru Ri* to Tornsey's Stud, and Ryan hoped Tornsey's generosity would influence other wealthy owners to replicate his actions.[860] But having to depend on offers from the rest of the private sector breeders was not a credible way of running a State Stud Farm. The INS needed a policy change to compete at the highest level. Matters were exasperated further with the death of three stallions at the INS in 1979. *Linacre* died of a heart attack at nineteen years of age, *Tudor Music* fractured a hind leg aged fourteen, and *Pampapaul* died of a strangulated small intestine. Ryan considered the loss of *Pampapaul* the most severe as he 'showed great promise' as reflected through his stallion earnings and the fact he was only five years old.[861]

At this time, the INS investigated the feasibility of purchasing a 'prestigious stallion' in syndication with private breeders. The Department of Finance agreed in principle to this policy change.[862] However, it never came to fruition because of the substantial initial investment needed (in the region of two million pounds). Instead, in 1980, the Department of Finance examined the possibility of selling the INS. Government documents reveal that the Department of Finance were fearful that the poor market conditions at the time would impede any potential sale.[863] Officials at the Department were also concerned that it could take a 'considerable time' to sell because

[858] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1979, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2010/53/182.
[859] *Evening Echo,* 28 Dec. 1979.
[860] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1979, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2010/53/182.
[861] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1979, available at the House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 Aug. 2022).
[862] *Reports of Joint Committee on State-Sponsored bodies of the National Stud,* 17 Nov. 1983, Department of Finance, FIN/2016/17/1600.
[863] The Ministers of Finance's inquiry about the possible sale of the Irish National Stud, 10 Dec. 1980, Department of Finance, FIN/2016/17/1924.

‘the risks involved in any aspect of horseracing were very great’ and that the National Stud was not an attractive business prospect for potential buyers’.[864] Therefore, the government decided against selling the INS. Instead, they set up a committee of inquiry to examine all aspects of Irish horse breeding, including the INS. This inquiry became officially known as the Killanin Report, which concluded in 1986. But fortunes at the INS were about to change dramatically through the acquisition of *Ahonoora,* which will be examined in the next chapter alongside the findings from the Killanin Report.

In the early 1980s, the INS purchased six out of forty-four shares in *Tap on Wood* from a syndicate managed by Kill Bloodstock Agent Tony Watkins, costing £182,000. They also bought a fifty per cent syndicate share in *Indian King* from Stallion Investments Limited for £450,000.[865] *Tap on Wood* won the 1979 Irish St. Leger. Osborne elaborates: ‘We decided to buy shares in *Tap on Wood* as we think he is a very good investment’ and we would have purchased more shares, but the syndicate would not sell.[866] *Indian King* won eight races, including four at the graded level. The *Irish Examiner* speculated that the INS’s fifty per cent share in *Indian King* was purchased ‘because of the current unavailability of exchequer funds for the purchase of stallions’.[867] But the Department of Finance counter-argued that some INS directors were not overly keen on syndication because they could not control the service fees or the number of nominations per stallion.[868] Ryan confirmed this; he argued the ‘diminished returns from part ownership meant they did not favour a similar arrangement in the future.[869] It should be noted that Osborne was very much in favour of the syndication process. Therefore, perhaps there was some conflict on this issue at the INS board level.

[864] Ibid.
[865] *Reports of Joint Committee on State-Sponsored bodies of the National Stud,* 17 Nov. 1983, Department of Finance, FIN/2016/17/1600.
[866] *Irish Examiner*, 12 Dec. 1980.
[867] *Irish Examiner* 10 Aug. 1982.
[868] *Reports of Joint Committee on State-Sponsored bodies of the National Stud,* 17 Nov. 1983, Department of Finance, FIN/2016/17/1600.
[869] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1981, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2012/90/195.

Ryan was much more concerned with the financial circumstances at the INS, which he argued were grave because of reductions in State funding.[870] In 1981, the government reduced the allocation for capital expenditure at the INS from £500,000 to £100,000; the following year, the capital expenditure was reduced to zero.[871] Quoted in the Press, Ryan expressed his concern at these developments:

> The cutting off of Exchequer investment in the company has precluded the acquisition not only of additional stallions but even the replacement of casualties among the sires during the past three years. It has to be emphasised that this situation is indeed a grave one for the company and must inevitably bring about a major decline in the Stud's effectiveness not in the distant future but in the very near future.[872]

6.8. Osborne resigns

In March 1982, the INS was further rocked with the news that Osborne was leaving to take up what he described as 'the job of a lifetime' as vice-president working for one of America's leading stud farms at Franklin Grove's North Ridge Farm in Kentucky.[873] Osborne elaborated: 'It's a new challenge, and I am looking forward to the change, my decision to leave Ireland was purely a career one, and I feel I have taken the National Stud as far as I can'.[874] This news was greeted with shock and dismay across the industry in Ireland. But there were other reasons behind Osborne's decision. He highlighted the 'strangulating control' the civil service had on the INS as a factor in his decision.[875] It should be noted that Osborne had historical legacy issues with the civil service. In 1974, following recommendations made in the *Delvin Report* (1969), officers' salaries in semi-State bodies were downgraded by two grades on the public pay service scale.[876] According to Osborne, this downgrade broke the terms of his employment contract with the State.[877] He also argued that he was 'working seven days a week until all hours of the night', but

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[870] Ibid.
[871] Ibid.
[872] *Irish Independent*, 12 Aug. 1982.
[873] *Irish Independent*, 3 Apr. 1982.
[874] *Irish Press*, 29 Mar. 1982.
[875] *Irish Independent*, 1 May 1982.
[876] *Irish Independent*, 3 Apr. 1982.
[877] Ibid.

the salary did not reflect the commitment.[878] Osborne was mistaken in his belief that the State broke his contract. He began working for the INS in 1970, a year after the *Delvin Report* announced its recommendations. Therefore, the government could argue that the salary downgrade in 1974 was legally sound.

Local Kildare County Councillors were enraged with the news of his departure. Terry Boylan claimed the 'apathetic attitude of successive governments towards the INS was disgraceful' with another councillor lobbying for a protest at the Department of Agriculture because Osborne was forced out of Ireland.[879] The Press lamented Osborne's departure, with the *Evening Echo* speculating: 'Ireland cannot afford to lose this man of many talents, and it's a shame that he was not paid enough nor given sufficient capital with which to maintain the high, worldwide reputation' of the INS'.[880] The *Irish Farmers Journal* launched a scathing attack on the government, leading with the derogatory headline: 'Pay peanuts, get peanuts', a crude reference to the pay scale for the manager's job at the Stud.[881]

When the vacancy for Osborne's job was advertised, a salary of £13,500 was offered for the position.[882] Controversy followed with a revelation in the *Irish Equestrian News* that several candidates withdrew their applications believing the salary was in the region of £19,000 per annum and that they were unaware that this included a probationary period of a year before any offer of a full-time contract.[883] The *Irish Independent* speculated: 'It was nothing short of a public scandal that a situation such as this could be allowed to develop', made worse by the fact that ACOT (the semi-state organisation and national advisory and training organisation for farmers) advertised a similar position for £29,000.[884] Therefore, comparing similar pay scales during this

[878] *Irish Press,* 29 Mar. 1982.
[879] *Nationalist and Leinster Times,* 2 Apr. 1982.
[880] *Evening Echo,* 8 Apr. 1982.
[881] *Irish Farmers Journal*, 19 June 1982.
[882] Ibid.
[883] *Irish Independent*, 12 June 1982.
[884] Ibid.

era is necessary. In the early 1980s, the average salary of a politician (TD) was £13,802 plus expenses; a senior civil servant earned up to £19,178 and a secondary school teacher up to £13,869 after several years of experience.[885] The salary of the INS'S CEO at £13,500 per annum did not reflect the responsibility of the job. After pressure, the government raised the post to grade two status, allowing the INS CEO to be paid £25,000 per annum plus expenses. But the government refused to elevate the position to the highest pay status.[886]

Another factor determining Osborne's decision to leave was the lack of government investment in the INS. This led to his disillusionment, which meant that the INS could not compete with the private breeders. Osborne argued:

> Last year we got £100,000 towards the upkeep of the Stud…it was as good as nothing…it's like asking Aer Lingus to run an airline without giving them money to buy planes. Although we returned a profit every year and the Stud is now recognised as one of the best, there is a lack of appreciation in the government about what we are doing.[887]

These circumstances were inflamed further with the INS's failed attempt to purchase *Runnett.* The *Irish Independent* reported that the INS sought approval from the government to buy the stallion in the summer of 1981, but months of delay in getting approval hindered the Stud.[888] In the meantime, *Runnett* was purchased by another party, and the Press speculated that this was 'the final nail in the coffin as far as Mr Osborne was concerned'.[889] The government denied this version of events. They claimed that when the INS approached them in August to increase the INS's commercial borrowing power, no 'particular stallion' was mentioned.[890] Whatever the reality of the circumstances, the relationship between the INS and the government was strained, no doubt fueled by the recent cuts in capital expenditure at the Stud. Before he left his role at the

[885] Dail Eireann debate, 30 June 1983, vol. 344, no. 5, Salary levels, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (23 Feb. 2022).
[886] *Irish Independent*, 27 July 1982.
[887] *Irish Press*, 29 Mar. 1982.
[888] *Irish Independent*, 1 May 1982.
[889] Ibid.
[890] Dáil Éireann debate, 13 May 1982, vol. 334, no. 6, National Stud, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (23 Feb. 2022).

Stud, Osborne made interesting comments to the Press on the INS's future. He argued that if the government did not want to make funds available, they could let the Stud go into the hands of the private sector and that their support would be forthcoming.[891]

A significant legacy from Osborne's tenure was the further development of education and research facilities that were integral to INS policy. These were an extension of the courses introduced by the INS in the 1960s. The INS also offered six-month stud-management training courses. These attracted students aged 18-25, and the demand for the courses exceeded the supply.[892] Such was the high demand for the courses; additional offices, a lecture room, an assembly hall, and an exhibition area were constructed.[893] A multi-conference centre was built to facilitate the educational courses and made available to organisations connected to the industry and local charity and voluntary bodies. Approximately one-third of the students came from abroad, paying a fee of £1000 to complete the course.[894] Ryan noted that the courses 'attracted worldwide interest with candidates from every horse breeding country in the world seeking admission'.[895] Students from countries New Zealand, Canada, Denmark, South Africa, England, Switzerland, and Japan attended.[896] The students were given theoretical and practical training. During their training, students in the courses were expected to work as stud hands and were paid the 'appropriate agricultural rates'.[897]

The INS also established a new Apprentice Jockey Centre of Education, a training centre for apprentice jockeys. This training centre was open to school leavers with a background in horses and those without industry experience. And the INS also offered shorter refresher courses for stud employees and ran regular seminars and open days for horse breeders. This included

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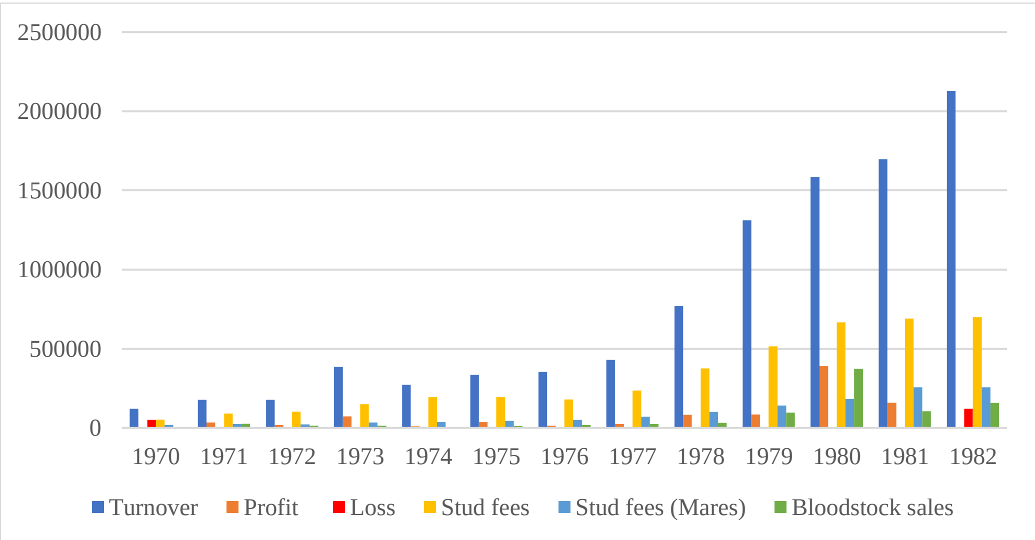
[891] *Irish Independent*, 3 Apr. 1982.
[892] Dail Eireann Debate, 17 June 1976, vol. 291, no. 9, National Stud Bill, second stage available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (4 Feb. 2022).
[893] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1979, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2010/53/182.
[894] *First report of the Irish National Stud Company: Sixth Joint Committee on commercial state-sponsored bodies* (Dublin, 1990), National Library, O.R.90/1, p. 11.
[895] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1979, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2010/53/182.
[896] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1973, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2004/21/318.
[897] *Irish Independent*, 7 Mar. 1970.

courses for Irish breeders and their staff held in limerick and Newbridge where they were attended by approximately 600 people.[898] Ryan reported that they were 'greatly heartened by the interest shown in all these courses.[899] Disease control and many other aspects of equine research were conducted at the Stud. It was also company policy to maintain close relations with other semi-state bodies like the Racing Board and Bord na gCapall, with both organisations at the forefront of promoting horse racing. In 1976, Bord, na gCapall, was established to promote horses other than thoroughbreds in Ireland. Osborne also travelled abroad to America and England to give lectures and informal talks on how to improve the standards in horse racing and breeding management.

6.9. Irish National Stud profits and losses

Osborne was running a highly successful business at the INS, as reflected through the following figures during his reign as manager:

Figure 6 (d): Chart showing profits, losses, stud fees and bloodstock sales at the Irish National Stud from 1970 to 1982.



Source: Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1970 to 31 Dec. 1982, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2003/16/314 to TAOIS/2014/105/118.

[898] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1973, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2004/21/318.
[899] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1977, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2007/116/217.

From 1971 to 1982, the INS showed profits of £930,922, an average of £84,629 per annum. Stud fees were a significant factor contributing £4,148,889. A trading loss of £51,326 occurred in Osborne's first year, but after that the INS remained in profit until 1982, which saw a trading loss of £121,183.[900] Turnover at the INS totaled £9,743,743, at an average of £749,518 per annum.[901] From 1970 to 1977, the average stallion cover fees per annum were £235,576, but from 1978 to 1982, there was a 148% increase to £567,786 per annum.[902] Stud fees for the INS's own mares generated £1,242,121, an average of £95,547.[903] Bloodstock sales generated £888,468 at an average of £68,343.[904] These were impressive numbers during Osborne's term, and these figures justified his demand for further State investment. But other external factors determined government policy.

Throughout the 1960s, Ireland experienced what Ó Gráda describes as a 'golden age' of unprecedented growth, but the 1970s saw a dramatic slowdown in economic prosperity.[905] Ó Gráda elaborates: 'By the early 1980s, amid renewed economic gloom, the 1960s would seem like a glorious interlude'.[906] The director of economics at the Confederation of Irish Industries (IBEC), Con Power, explains that in the 1960s and the early 1970s, economic growth in Ireland was a record 3.5 per cent per annum, with government spending on domestic services increasing at 6.55 per cent.[907] Contrasting these figures to the economic circumstances in the late 1970s into the early 1980s is revealing. For instance, unemployment rose from 7.8 per cent in 1979 to 18.2 per cent in 1985.[908] Inflation almost trebled from 7.6 per cent in 1978 to 20.4 per cent in 1981,

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900 Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1970 to 31 Dec. 1983, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2003/16/314 to TAOIS/2014/105/118.
901 Ibid.
902 Ibid.
903 Ibid.
904 Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1970 to 31 Dec. 1983, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2003/16/314 to TAOIS/2014/105/118.
905 Ó Gráda, *A rocky road*, pp 29 to 30.
906 Ibid.
907 *Sligo Champion*, 29 Oct. 1982.
908 Ó Gráda, *A rocky road*, p. 31.

nearly double the EEC average of 11.6 per cent.[909] In 1977, the national debt was £4.4 million but increased to £10.1 million in 1981.[910] Power elaborated on the effects of these statistics on the population when he noted that: 'Anyone in employment is a privileged member of society'.[911]

To address the circumstances, the government implemented policies to counteract the economic hardships, which had repercussions for the INS. As noted earlier, State investment in the INS was reduced to 100,000 in 1981 and the following year to zero. But the government were in a precarious position. In practice, their first responsibility was to protect the needs of the most vulnerable, with thousands unemployed with few prospects. If they invested fully in the INS (seen by many as elitist) at the expense of those mentioned, there would be widespread condemnation.

In any event, from 1978 to 1982, the INS posted record profits, and as a business, it was thriving, and it would be reasonable to assume that the government would have considered this before cutting the funding. Therefore, the temporary cuts in government funding could be justified in the long-term more outstanding interests of the country. An analysis of the stallion fees accumulated at the INS from 1978 to 1982 casts further light on the circumstances. During this period, the stallion fees hit record levels growing from £376,387 to £689,102.[912] These figures suggest that the recessionary hardships in Ireland were not affecting the breeders of high-class thoroughbreds. And in the early 1980s, the Press highlighted the 'remarkable success story' of the INS against volatile economic circumstances.[913] But Ryan lobbied the Minister for Agriculture, Alan Dukes TD (Fine Gael), to reconsider cutbacks, arguing:

> If the cutbacks are enforced, the board would be left without the means to acquire a suitable additional stallion in 1981. If that position obtains, both the Stud and the breeders will be

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[909] Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985*, p. 489.
[910] Dermot Keogh, *Twentieth century Ireland, revolution, and state building* (Dublin, 1994), p. 338.
[911] *Sligo Champion*, 29 Oct. 1982.
[912] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1978 to 31 Dec. 1983, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2009/135/145 to TAOIS/2014/105/118.
[913] *Nationalist and Leinster Times*, 24 July 1981.

losers, the company through loss of essential earnings and the breeders through curtailments in the services to the bloodstock industry.[914]

Had the Irish economy been thriving, Osborne and Ryan's demand for investment was justified, but the dire circumstances determined government policy, and the INS was not a priority. In 1982, the INS showed a trading loss of £121,183, the first recorded loss since 1970, which was attributed to the instability caused by Osborne's decision to leave.[915] Interestingly, the INS's stallion service fees remained in the same bracket as in previous years, and the following year the Stud returned to a profit of £394,000.[916] This was a dramatic turnaround in fortunes. In the annual accounts, Ryan advised that since the autumn of 1982, the INS Board introduced 'a rigid policy of maximising revenue and controlling expenditure'.[917] This remedial action resulted in the profits on bloodstock sales increasing by £111,000, and revenue from shares and management fees in stallions *Indian King* and *Tap On Wood* contributing an extra £131,000.[918] Gross profit on cattle sales increased by £65,000, and there was a saving on expenditure in all departments at the INS of £196,000.[919] Ryan was critical of the government's lack of capital investment, but he highlighted a steep rise in overheads which increased by seventeen per cent, adding £220,000 to the running costs at the INS, which he argued contributed to the difficulties the previous year.[920]

Another factor was the unprecedented political instability throughout the early 1980s in Ireland. Following the 1977 general election, Fianna Fail returned to power. In 1979, Charles Haughey replaced Jack Lynch as the Taoiseach and leader of Fianna Fáil. From 1981 to 1982, there was extraordinary political volatility with three general elections. In 1981, Haughey's government lost the first general election to a coalition led by Garett FitzGerald's Fine Gael and

914 Ibid.
915 Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1983, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2014/105/118.
916 Ibid.
917 Ibid.
918 Ibid.
919 Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1983, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2014/105/118.
920 *Irish Independent*, 25 July 1983.

the Labour Party. Within a year, this coalition government collapsed after the Minister for Finance John Bruton TD (Fine Gael) attempted to introduce a tax on children's footwear. Haughey's Fianna Fáil won the proceeding general election but failed to gain a majority. Instead, they depended on independent politicians to maintain power. Political scandals caused even more controversy, and the Fianna Fáil government collapsed, lasting only eight months. They were replaced by another coalition government led by Fine Gael and the Labour Party, which brought political stability until 1987.

6.10. Conclusion.

Osborne's tenure as the CEO was successful and revolutionary. It was revolutionary because of the significant improvements in the research and student learning education centres. They became prestigious places of excellence with a reputation that resonates today. This can be attributed to Osborne's drive and ambition. By attracting interest from countries all over the world, the research and training centres brought the INS to a new audience, offering it a platform to build upon. The success of the courses also brought an invaluable degree of credibility to the INS. And this could not have been achieved without Osborne's vast knowledge and experience in the industry. In business, the INS enjoyed success in increasing and maintaining profits even amidst poor economic circumstances in Ireland. Osborne ensured that the INS held a complete set of stallions varying in cover fees. The policy of relocating stallions to stud farms throughout Ireland was progressive and offered the small breeder unique opportunities. Ending it displayed a distinct lack of foresight by the government.

Osborne's departure from the INS was unfortunate and may have been avoided had the government ensured that his salary remuneration reflected the responsibility of such a high-profile position. The strength of the American offer may have been too much for him to resist, but it was evident that he was disillusioned with the government and what he perceived as their lack of commitment to the INS. Osborne and Ryan's demand for the State to provide substantial funds for a prestigious stallion did not reflect the circumstances in Ireland before he announced his departure. In the early 1980s, Ireland's economy was performing poorly. It is telling that these conditions did not affect stallion service fees during this time at the INS.

But there are broader issues at play. Given Ireland's economic and political instability in the early 1980s, with widespread mass unemployment and inflation running at record highs, the interaction of the Irish State with an industry like horse racing is highly questionable. Is it ethically sound practice to invest in this type of industry when the country is under such deep recessionary pressure? To compound matters, the government's investment in the National Stud is a speculative gamble that, by all intents and purposes, offers no guarantees. Therefore, the complaints by the NS directors on the lack of State investment were unjustified. It was also notable that the *First Report of the Joint Committee on State-sponsored bodies: The Irish National Stud Company Limited (1978)* expressed concerns about the domination elite breeders had on the industry. Charles Haughey's tax exemption facilitated this domination, and the fact that these breeders were allowed to avail of this concession in the dark days of Ireland's recession presents further ethical issues.

Osborne's staunch defense of the elite breeders in Ireland was questionable, considering their stranglehold on the industry and the concessions outlined. As will be revealed in the forthcoming chapters, this elite domination worked to the detriment of the small breeders. After Osborne left, the INS directors and the government faced the arduous task of finding a suitable replacement as CEO. Eventually, they selected John Clarke, whose tenure proved to be the most controversial, which will be examined in the next chapter.

Chapter Seven:

Ahonoora, syndicates, politicians, and the profile and domination
of the elite breeders

7.1. Introduction

At a formal dinner event shortly before he departed for his new job with North Ridge Stud Farm in Kentucky, Osborne criticised Irish politicians for their short-sighted approach to the horse breeding industry, accusing them of 'thinking of the next election' instead of 'acting like statesmen concerned with the future of the next generation' in Ireland.[921] Osborne also criticised Irish trainers [unnamed] who had complained about the costs of training horses. Responding sharply, he claimed it cost 'peanuts to train a horse on the Curragh'.[922] Osborne was clearly irritated by the circumstances of his departure from the INS. Finding a CEO with similar credentials was challenging for the INS directors. Following a rigorous interviewing process, they appointed John Clarke. He was an agricultural graduate and former bloodstock manager with Ballsbridge Tattersalls Limited. Clarke's tenure at the INS lasted twenty-seven years, bringing a lot of controversies and some success. During Clarke's tenure as CEO, the INS purchased *Ahonoora*, which became one of the most influential stallions of his generation. For the first time in decades, the INS had a prestigious stallion that offered them the opportunity to compete at the highest level. But surprisingly they soon sold *Ahoonora* to one of the INS's competitors. During Clarke's tenure, the government authorised two comprehensive reports on Irish horse breeding. The Killinan Report was published in 1986, and the *First Report of the Irish National Stud* in 1990. In 1993, the government also amended the 1976 National Stud Bill. This chapter will examine these circumstances further. This period witnessed the domination of elite owners/breeders including Coolmore Stud and the Maktoum family. Hence, this chapter aims to

921 *Irish Independent,* 13 Dec. 1983.
922 Ibid.

provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact of these elite breeders on the industry in Britain and Ireland. The profile of the elite breeders will be examined. In-depth quantitative analysis will be used to assess the domination of these breeders and how this impacted on the INS.

7.2. Interaction with the private sector

In the early 1980s, the Department of Agriculture considered purchasing Kildangan Stud from Roderic More O'Ferrall. If the purchase went ahead, the plan would incorporate Kildangan Stud with the National Stud. More O'Ferrall was anxious for the sale; in his own words, he said he did not want to 'sell to foreigners'.[923] At the time, Arab investors were beginning to invest heavily in stud farms in Ireland, with widespread speculation in the early 1980s that they were going to concentrate their efforts in the Kildare and Dublin regions.[924] This had knock off effects' according to Jim Norton in the *Evening Herald*, 'exceptionally high stallion fees' were being charged for a small number of prestigious stallions owned by elite breeders.[925] These stallions were not available to 'middle-market breeders' who, Norton claimed, were 'rapidly' forced out of the lucrative flat racing market because of the high stallion fees charged by multi-national bloodstock syndicates funded by Arab, British and American investors.[926] The head of the Irish government, Charles Haughey, supported the purchase of More O'Ferrall's Kildangan Stud.[927] But the Minister for Finance, Michael O'Kennedy, was far less enthusiastic, arguing that the purchase could only burden the Irish exchequer and would have no 'obvious benefit' to the horse breeding industry.[928] This, alongside other issues, brought the sale with the government to an abrupt halt. According to the *Irish Times*, the government explored the possibility of the purchase, but legal issues concerning the property title meant that it never materialised.[929]

923 The National Stud – Minister's query about the possible sale of the Stud, 10 Dec. 1980, Department of Finance, FIN/2016/17/1924.
924 *Evening Herald*, 25 July 1983.
925 Ibid.
926 Ibid.
927 *Irish Times*, 30 Dec. 2013.
928 Ibid.
929 *Irish Times*, 30 Dec. 2013.

Ironically, More O'Ferrall eventually sold Kildangan Stud to Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum in 1986.

In 1983, the INS returned to a trading profit of £394,000.[930] That year *African Sky* and *Royal Match* were sold and replaced by *Kafu* (1980), the winner of Doncaster's 1982 Flying Childers Stakes and *Krayyan* (1980), the winner of Sandown's 1982 Listed National Stakes. This was Clarke's first year as CEO, and it was impressive, as Ryan elaborates: 'The achievements surpassed all expectations and the wisdom of the board in the selection they made has been fully justified'.[931] The following year saw profits rising to £472,000.[932] For the first time in its history, the INS paid a dividend to the government, with the *Sunday Press* speculating it totalled £75,000.[933] But the INS decided to reduce it to £32,000 after the government increased their licence fee by £43,000.[934] This was further evidence of the strained relationship between the government and the INS.

In March 1985, the INS directors reminded the government of the 'important role which the INS must play in future years to assist the bloodstock industry' in Ireland.[935] The INS announced annual profits of £354,000, down £118,000 from the previous year, which the INS directors blamed on decreased bloodstock sales.[936] To halt the decline, the INS directors advised the government that they needed 'immediate replacements' for ageing sires *Sallust* and *Lord Gayle,* now sixteen and twenty years old, respectively.[937] Morris argues: '*Lord Gayle* was a grand servant to both his stud and his adopted nation's breeders; he did a lot of people a good turn in his time'.[938]

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[930] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1983, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2014/105/118.
[931] Ibid.
[932] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1984, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2015/88/90.
[933] *Sunday Press*, 22 July 1984.
[934] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1984, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2015/88/90.
[935] Correspondence between Lawrence Ryan, chairman of the National Stud and the secretary of the Department of Finance, 22 Mar. 1985, Department of Finance, 2016/17/1924.
[936] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1985, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2016/51/382.
[937] Correspondence between Lawrence Ryan, chairman of the National Stud and the secretary of the Department of Finance, 22 Mar. 1985, Department of Finance, 2016/17/1924.
[938] Tony Morris, *Thoroughbred stallions* (Swindon, 1990), p. 125.

Also, in 1985, Kildangan Stud sold *Tap-on-Wood* to breeders in Japan and a short time later, they purchased Aga Khan's *Yashgan* (1981), the winner of four graded races in America and France, with the Press speculating it cost them over £1.2 million.[939] *Yashgan* was described as 'a Group one winner of the highest class', and his services were fully booked within a week.[940] Tom McCormack reported in the *Irish Independent* that *Yashgan's* fee was 'very reasonable' at £7500 per cover.[941] After a successful spell at the INS, *Yashgan* was sent to Clongeel Stud in County Cork, where he took up stud duties as a National Hunt stallion in 1994. The INS retained its interests in the horse, but they sent various stallions to third-party national hunt locations throughout Ireland, and *Yashgan* fitted the profile for this policy.

In a new development, the syndicate owners of stallions at Coolmore Stud offered the INS free nominations to some of their bloodstock, for example the syndicate that owned the 1983 French Derby winner, *Caerleon*, the leading sire in Britain and Ireland in 1988 and 1991.[942] The INS nominated their mare *Manfilia* (1968), which produced *Cuileann* (1985). In 1988, *Cuileann* won two races, and his Curragh trainer Liam Browne remarked that 'it would be marvellous if *Cuileann* proved good enough to return to Tully as a stallion'.[943] There were ambitious plans for the horse's future; he even competed in the 1988 Irish Derby but was a rank outsider, finishing last at odds of 100/1. The following year he was sold to a breeder in Britain, with the INS offering no explanation for the sale and Browne's hopes for *Cuileann's* return to Tully were ended. Other free nominations included *Salmon Leap* (1980), owned by Coolmore's Robert Sangster; Salmon *Leap* had a renowned reputation as a three-time graded winner in Britain.[944] Again, the INS sent the mare *Manfilia* to be covered by *Salmon Leap* which subsequently produced *Dul Amu* (1986). In 1987, the owners of *Law Society* (1982) offered a nomination which produced *Tir-An-Oir*

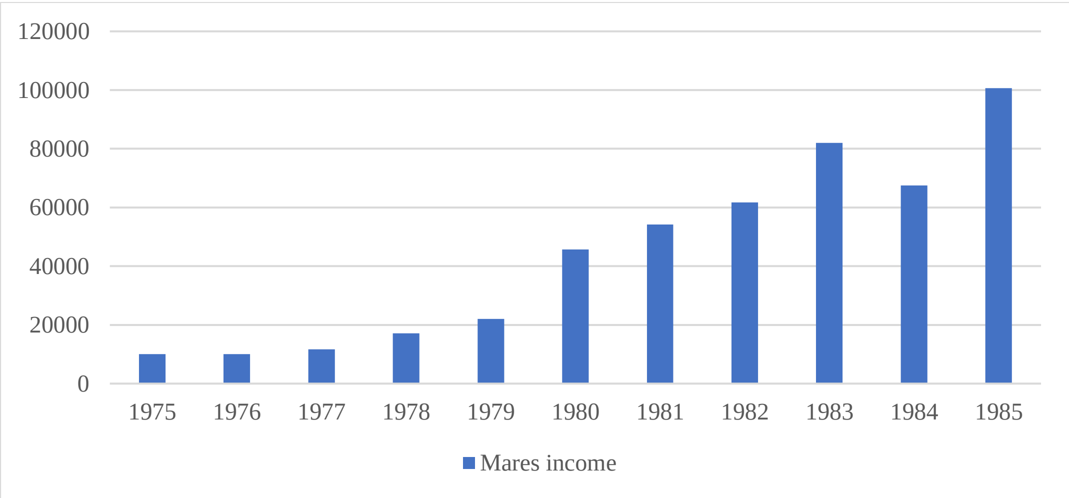
[939] *Irish Farmers Journal*, 22 Feb. 1986.
[940] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1985, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2016/51/382.
[941] *Irish Independent*, 29 July 1986.
[942] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1985, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2016/51/382.
[943] *Evening Herald*, 26 May 1988.
[944] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1984, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2016/51/282.

(1988). Dermot O'Rourke, an INS board director, claimed that the free nominations were 'a demonstration of the goodwill that exists between breeders and the Stud'.[945] But this goodwill did not last long, with attempts to end the free nominations through recommendations included in the Killanin Report.

7.3. Lord Killanin's Report (1986)

Lord Killanin's government-commissioned report inquired into horse breeding in Ireland and included several recommendations for the INS. The inquiry's chairman was a former president of the Olympic Council, Michael Morris, better known as Lord Killanin. The Killanin Inquiry produced a comprehensive 200-page report with 123 recommendations. One of the inquiry's thirteen members was one of Coolmore Stud's co-owners, John Magnier. Killanin recommended that the INS end its policy of facilitating mares at the Stud. If this was implemented, it would end the free nominations by owners of stallions in private studs. This was a peculiar request as the mares at the INS were a financial asset to the Stud, as reflected in the following data:

Figure 7 (a): Income from mares at the Irish National Stud from 1975 to 1985.



Source: Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 December 1975 to 31 December 1985, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2006/133/164, 2007/116/217, 2008/148/172, 2009/135/145, 2010/53/182, 2011/127/175. 2012/90/195, 2013/100/195, 2014/105/118, 2015/88/90, 2016/51/32.

945 *Sunday Press*, 22 July 1984.

The use of mares at the INS provided a significant income of £482,571.[946] This income averaged £43,870 per annum, approximately three per cent of the annual turnover at the INS.[947] From 1975 to 1985, the INS accumulated over £15 million in turnover. Therefore, the request in the Killanin Report to end this practice is difficult to explain. It came a year after syndicate owners offered the first free nominations to the INS from Coolmore Stud. In any event, the INS did not implement this recommendation. But these circumstances provide an insight into how the industry operated at an elite level.[948] For example, any mares available at the INS with renowned reputations offered direct competition within the industry. Hence, a reasonable argument could be made that a private breeder attempting to end this practice was a deliberate ploy to protect the elite breeder's interests.

Killanin recommended a 'continuing need' for the INS as a subsidiary company of the Thoroughbred Industry Board.[949] Also, it recommended that the INS's borrowing capacity be increased to five million pounds but that the share capital at the INS should not be increased.[950] The recommendation to limit the share capital might be interpreted as counter-productive to the Stud's development. For the INS to compete at the highest level, it needed a flexible approach to increasing the share capital when required. Killanin also recommended that if the INS invested in 'sizeable purchases' of bloodstock in the future, they should seek private capital investment in these ventures.[951] Also, Killanin recommended that all INS stud fees reflect the prevailing market circumstances, and the INS board of directors 'should have flexibility in setting the salary of its CEO.[952]

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[946] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1975 to 31 Dec. 1985, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2006/133/164, 2007/116/217, 2008/148/172, 2009/135/145, 2010/53/182, 2011/127/175. 2012/90/195, 2013/100/195, 2014/105/118, 2015/88/90, 2016/51/32.
[947] Ibid.
[948] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1986, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2017/11/101.
[949] The Killanin Report, a summary of recommendations, 11 June 1986, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2016/51/770.
[950] Ibid.
[951] Ibid.
[952] Ibid.

Interestingly, when the Killanin inquiry was first mooted years earlier, the then Minister for Finance Ray MacSharry TD (Fianna Fáil) vehemently opposed its establishment. However, Haughey and MacSharry were close associates. In 1979, MacSharry nominated Haughey for the leadership of Fianna Fáil against Jack Lynch. For his loyalty, Haughey offered MacSharry the Minister for Agriculture's portfolio. And from March to December 1982, MacSharry served as Tánaiste and Minister for Finance under Haughey. In correspondence with the Department of Agriculture, McSharry argued:

> The Minister for Finance is opposed to the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry into the thoroughbred industry as proposed by the Minister for Agriculture. Such a Commission would certainly be used as a platform by the interest groups represented on it from which to milk the Exchequer further, whether by way of reduced taxes or increased State expenditure for the thoroughbred horse sector. In present circumstances, only the most pressing social and economic priorities can be afforded extra aid. This sector cannot be considered as such a priority in any sense, given its wealth relative to other sectors…the establishment of the Commission would inevitably be perceived by the general public as foreshadowing more "goodies" for this sheltered sector, could be an unfortunate adverse effect on the morale of ordinary workers (to say nothing of the unemployed) and on the willingness of the citizens to surmount the serious difficulties pressing upon it.[953]

MacSharry's opposition to the Killinan Inquiry is questionable. For instance, he did not publicly voice these 'sheltered sector' concerns. Instead, the above correspondence was written in a private capacity between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Finance. It should be noted that a comprehensive examination of the Irish horse breeding industry in 1982 may have sat uncomfortably with Haughey especially given his unexplained financial means to finance his own thoroughbred horses, which will be discussed later in this chapter. Despite MacSharry's deep disdain of the 'sheltered sector,' he became a racehorse owner with *Sergeant Mularkey,* a winner in the 1990s in Ireland. And despite the recommendations in the Killanin Report, the INS were about to receive a timely boost with the impact of one of its stallions.

[953] Memorandum for the government, 17 June 1982, Department of Finance, FIN/2012/90/841.

7.4. The impact of *Ahoonora*

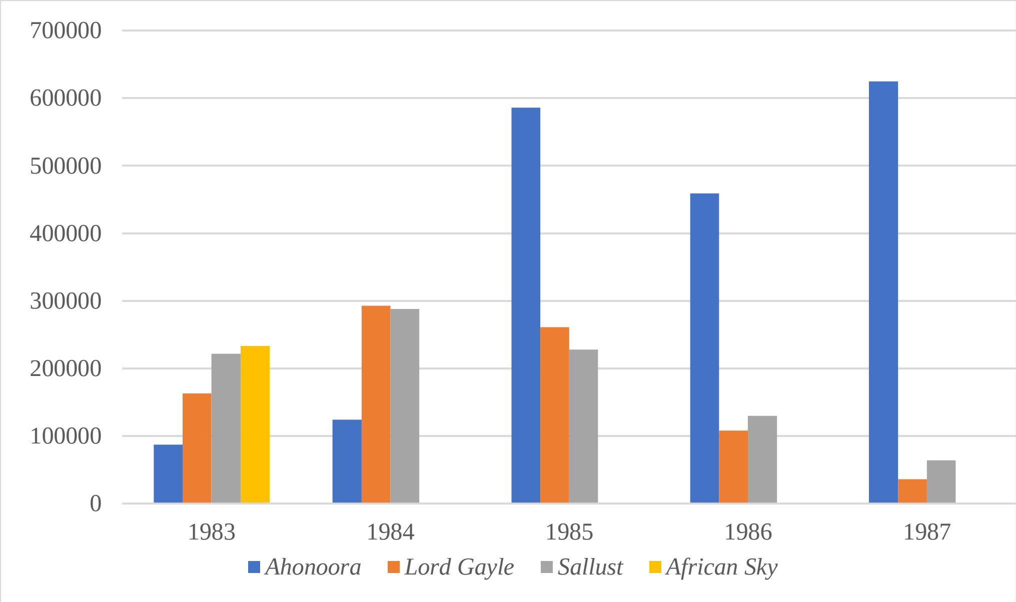
In the 1980s, *Ahonoora* (1975) became one of the most successful sires in horse breeding history, profoundly impacting the Stud's fortunes. *Ahonoora* sired the likes of *Don't Forget Me* (1984), the winner of both the 1987 Irish and English Two-Thousand Guineas and *Dr Devious* (1989), the 1992 English Derby winner. *Ahonoora* was first noticed by the INS's chairman Ryan after he watched him at York races in 1979. Ryan claimed: 'When I laid eyes on him, something clicked about this chestnut horse'.[954] Ryan approached the other INS board members about purchasing the horse, but at the time, they were not interested, but Ryan remained determined. Later that year, while at the Newmarket Sales, he contacted *Ahonoora's* American owner Bill Gerkussar and, following John Oxx's intervention, convinced the INS's directors to approve the purchase for £250,000.[955] It proved to be an astute decision. Years later, Ryan claimed: 'Without *Ahonoora,* I don't think the National Stud would be there today. The well-being of any stud is dependent on the stallions that are bought to stand there'.[956] Morris argued:

> There can be no doubt that *Ahonoora* was fortunate to find a home at the Irish National Stud, an establishment which traditionally has concentrated on good physical types likely to attract a wide range of commercial breeders rather than high-priced horses who might get classic-quality stock but could only be afforded by a limited clientele.[957]

Ahonoora's proved to be a huge earner for the INS, as reflected in the following data:

[954] *Limerick Leader*, 3 Feb. 1990.
[955] Ibid.
[956] Ibid.
[957] Morris, *Thoroughbred stallions*, p. 12.

Figure 7 (b): *Ahonoora's* stallion fees compared to *African Sky*, *Lord Gayle*, and *Sallust.*



Source: Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1983 to 31 Dec. 1987, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2014/105/118, 2015/88/90, 2016/51/382, 2017/11/101, and 2018/69/68.

From 1983 to 1987, *Ahonoora* brought in £1,881,182 in stallion cover fees. To put this into perspective, the combined cover fees from the INS's other top stallions - *Lord Gayle*, *Sallust*, and *African Sky* - totalled £2,024,250. In 1980, the INS set *Ahonoora's* stud fee at £2,250 per cover.[958] In 1985, the cover fee increased to £12,000, and the following year to £20,000.[959] Ryan enthusiastically reported that the INS was showing 'substantial improvement in profitability' due to the success of *Ahonoora's* progeny on the racecourse.[960] This did not go unnoticed by the Minister for Finance, Alan Dukes. He welcomed the news but at the same time he used the opportunity to inform the INS that the government planned to increase the rent at the stud from £12,000 to £55,000 per annum.[961] The Department of Finance argued that the increase was justified because an estimate by the Valuation Office showed INS profits after tax of £394,000

[958] *Irish Independent*, 25 Oct. 1980.
[959] *Irish Press*, 9 July 1987.
[960] Correspondence between Lawrence Ryan, chairman of the National Stud and the Minister of Finance, Alan Dukes, 1 Apr. 1985, Department of Finance, 2016/17/1924.
[961] Ibid.

in 1983 and £470,000 in 1984.[962] Initially, this increase enraged the INS board of directors, but they reluctantly accepted the rent increase.[963] At this time, the government was under pressure because of its perceived management of public finances. They faced many challenges, including significant inadequacies in the public health system. These external pressures were evident when Doctor Brian Lemass argued that horses at the INS were 'better treated than patients' at Nenagh hospital.[964]

In 1986, the INS claimed that there was a bid of £4 million from America for *Ahonoora,* and to 'fend off' these types of offers, they decided to syndicate shares in the horse.[965] A former chairman of the INS, Michael Curran, did not welcome this development. He argued 'that the syndication would price out of the market breeders who had patronised *Ahonoora* in the last few years' and that this went against the founding principles of the INS.[966] He cautioned that syndication meant *Ahonoora's* service fee would significantly increase, and 'the small breeders were finding it difficult enough to survive'.[967] But Clarke counter-argued that it would be 'extremely difficult if not impossible to give priority' to the small breeders because *Ahonoora* was at stud for seven years, and deciding who got priority would present too many challenges.[968] In any event, the INS never had to make that decision.

Later that year, in a development that shocked the industry, the INS sold *Ahonoora* to one of its biggest competitors, Coolmore Stud, for £5.7 million. The INS initially maintained one share value in the horse.[969] But this shared interest was sold in 1987.[970] Clarke claimed that they were 'sorry to lose' *Ahonoora* but that the price was far too good to refuse, and the money from

[962] Notes on meeting with the Irish National Stud, 29 Mar. 1985, Department of Finance, 2016/17/1924.
[963] Correspondence between Lawrence Ryan, chairman of the Irish National Stud and the Minister of Finance, Alan Dukes, 27 May. 1985, Department of Finance, 2016/17/1924.
[964] *Nenagh Guardian,* 18 Jan. 1986.
[965] *Irish Independent,* 14 Oct. 1986.
[966] Ibid.
[967] Ibid.
[968] Ibid.
[969] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1986, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2017/11/101.
[970] *First report of the Irish National Stud Company Limited, Sixth Joint Committee on Commercial State-Sponsored Bodies* (Dublin, 1990).

the sale would be used to replenish the bloodstock at the INS.[971] One of the INS directors, John Oxx, said that it was a 'most difficult' choice for the INS board to sell, but argued that if they retained the horse, his stallion fees would increase to a 'level where few Irish breeders could afford'.[972] But it had been within the remit of the INS to decide on the cover fees charged and who could avail of the horse's services. *Ahonoora* belonged to the Irish State. The argument that the small breeders could not afford the cover fee associated with *Ahonoora* reflected the INS's inaction (and the government's) failure to initiate a subsidised scheme to ensure reasonable opportunities across all levels of the industry. This could have stimulated the market and provided the smaller breeders with a platform to build upon.

The ramifications of INS policy, including the sale of stallions such as *Ahonoora*, had the inevitable consequence that the industry would be dominated by elite breeders who hoovered up the top-quality bloodlines with the financial backing of wealthy owners. Selling the likes of *Ahonoora* raised questions about the INS's commitments to all sectors of the breeding industry. The argument that *Ahonoora* was sold to replenish stock at the INS does not stand scrutiny. The INS had been expected to replenish its stock on an ongoing basis long before the arrival of *Ahonoora*. Having the likes of the quality of *Ahonoora* at the INS guaranteed significant income and prestige, which would boost the financial resources to invest in bloodstock, thus the sale could be deemed counterproductive. From the 1960s to the 1980s, the INS directors had constantly complained about the lack of a 'prestigious stallion' standing at the Stud. *Ahonoora* was a prestigious stallion of the calibre beyond expectations. In the year after his sale, *Ahonoora's* offspring sold 'like hotcakes' at the bloodstock market in Kildare.[973] One of his colts sold for 120,000 guineas, and a filly sold for 115,000.[974]

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[971] *Irish Press*, 9 July 1987.
[972] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1986, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2017/11/101.
[973] *Irish Independent*, 8 Oct 1987.
[974] *Irish Examiner*, 8 Oct. 1987.

John Magnier rotated *Ahonoora* between Segenhoe Stud in Australia during their cover season and Ireland. This rotation policy was a unique development for the industry at the time. It became widespread in the following decades, with most influential breeders adopting it as standard breeding practice. In October 1989, while in Australia, *Ahonoora* injured his hind leg and was subsequently put down. The horse breeding industry instantly lost one of its crown jewels. Curran's argument that selling *Ahonoora* defeated the guiding principles of the INS became news once again.[975]

7.5. *First report of the Irish National Stud Company Limited* (1990)

In 1990, the *First report of the Irish National Stud Company Limited, Sixth Joint Committee on Commercial State-Sponsored Bodies*, was published. One of its recommendations was that the INS should invest in a 'prestigious stallion' through syndication.[976] They acknowledged that the purchase of a prestigious stallion went against the policy of catering to small breeders but that the potential revenue from a stallion of this class needed to be exploited.[977] The Committee also advised that the INS should provide the 'largest possible compliment of stallions' but that the stallion nomination fees should not be beyond the means of the small breeders.[978] This was disingenuous by the Committee because it required government support through a subsidised scheme for the INS to operate this policy, as the small breeders could not afford the cover fees associated with elite stallions. Notably, the Committee did not advocate for a subsidised government policy. The Committee called for the protection of the small breeder's interest but offered no recommendations to provide such protection. The following data offer an insight into the potential revenue from stallion fees and their progeny at Irish and British studs during this period:

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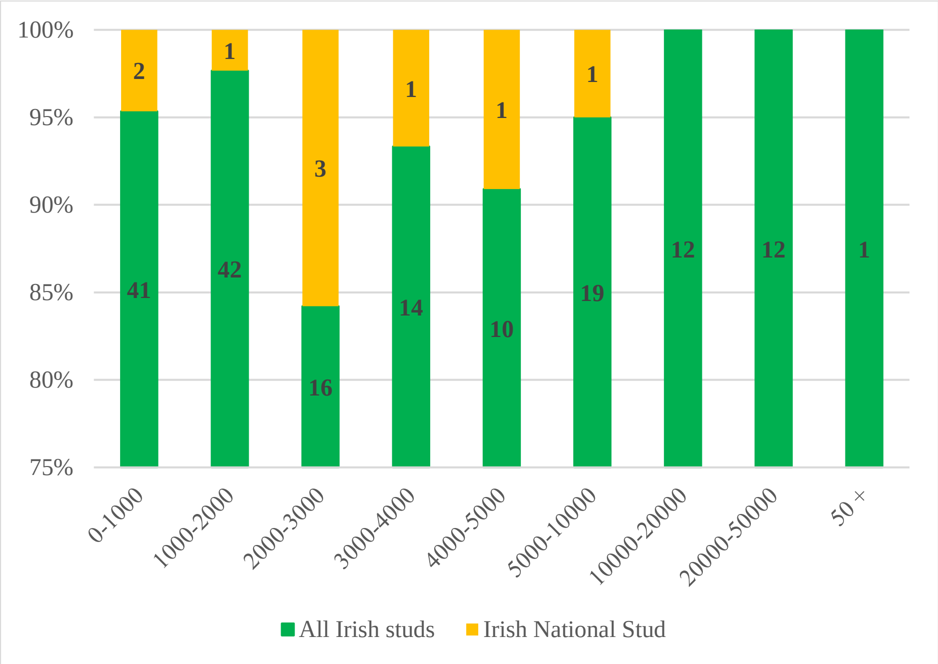
[975] *Irish Independent*, 14 Oct. 1986.
[976] *First report of the Irish National Stud Company Limited, Sixth Joint Committee on Commercial State-Sponsored Bodies* (Dublin, 1990), p. 38.
[977] Ibid.
[978] Ibid.

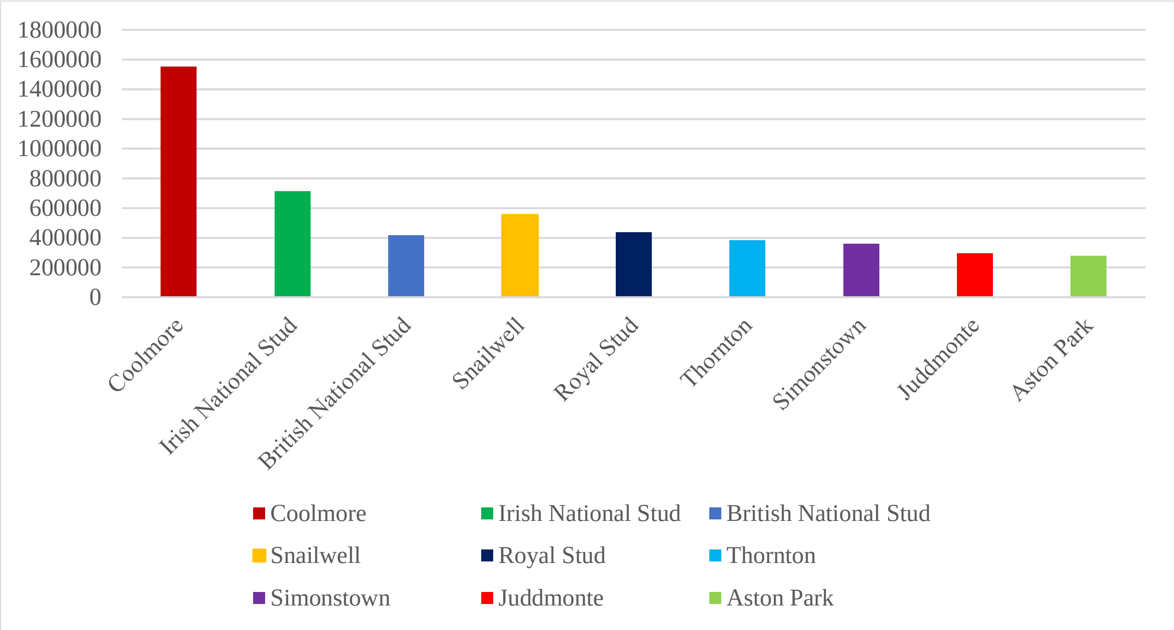
Figure 7 (c): Nomination fees of stallions standing at Irish stud farms in 1990.



Source: Oireachtas, *First report of the Irish National Stud Company Limited, Sixth Joint Committee on Commercial State-Sponsored Bodies* (Dublin, 1990).

The Joint Committee compiled this data from information published in the *Racing Post* in 1990. The data made no allowance for concessions such as "no foal, no fee" or that nomination fees should be subject to negotiation. The data showed that the INS was not competing at the highest level. They had no stallions in the fees bracket from £10,000 to £50,000 and above, which was a stark reminder of the loss of *Ahonoora*. The data provided damning evidence of poor policy and management at the INS and the lack of government support in ensuring that the stud operated in a manner unreflective of a successful state-stud farm. The following data shows the earnings of the progeny of stallions at stud in Ireland and Great Britain.

Figure 7 (d): Earnings of the progeny of stallions standing at stud farms in Ireland and Britain in 1987.



Source: *First report of the Irish National Stud Company Limited, Sixth Joint Committee on Commercial State-Sponsored Bodies* (Dublin, 1990).

It should be noted that the INS was second in the table with progeny earnings of £713,000, but most of this came from the progeny of *Ahonoora's* exceptional successes.[979] Therefore, the data created an artificial impression of the reality of the circumstances. The stallions purchased to replace *Ahonoora* were nowhere near the same quality, nor did they have the same earning power. Meanwhile, Coolmore Stud dominated with their stallion's progeny earnings aggregating £1,551,000, double that of the INS. If we leave aside the Irish National Stud for the moment, Coolmore's nearest rivals were Snailwell Stud in Newmarket. They took in £554,000 compared with Coolmore Stud's £1,551,000. The BNS earned £417,000, the Royal Stud £437,000, and Juddmonte Stud £295,000.[980]

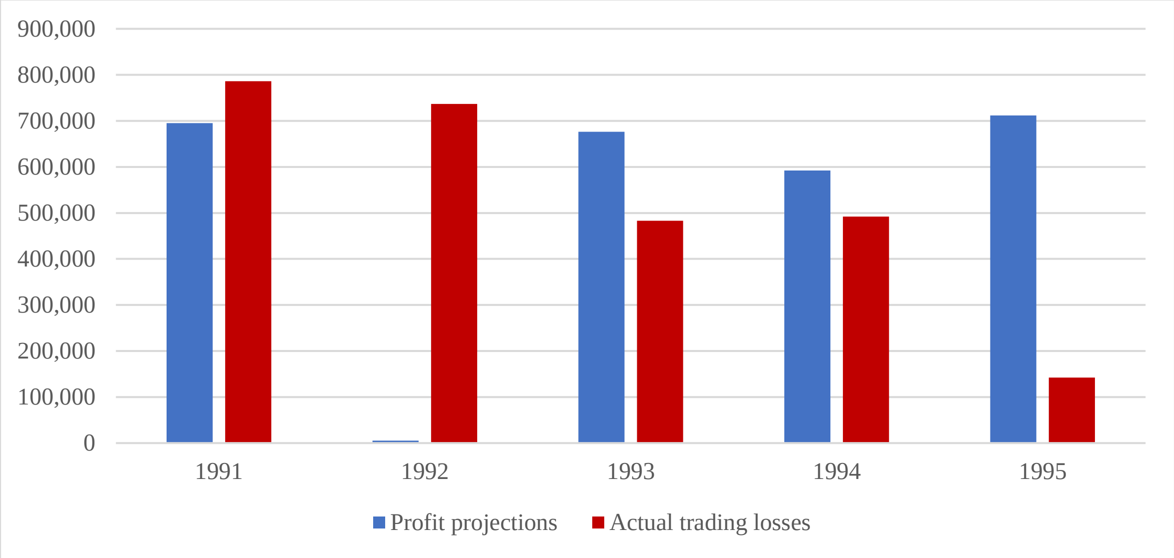
[979] *First report of the Irish National Stud Company Limited, Sixth Joint Committee on Commercial State-Sponsored Bodies* (Dublin, 1990), p. 34.
[980] Ibid.

7.6. Financial pressures and board changes

The Joint Committee expressed alarm that the INS offered no financial projections and recommended that this be addressed as 'a matter of urgency' through a five-year plan that would set out economic forecasts and operating strategies.[981] But, the INS management counter-argued that it was challenging to make any 'meaningful forecasts because of the industry's volatility.[982] Nevertheless, following government pressure, the INS produced a five-year plan with financial projections for 1991 to 1995. In July 1991, the forty-seven-page corporate plan was published with the assistance of Irish economists Con Power, Colm McCarthy, and Eamon McCann. The INS directors attributed the financial difficulties to the worldwide bloodstock recession, which impacted the market since the mid-1980s resulting in an oversupply of horses at the bloodstock sales.[983] The downturn in fortunes at the INS can also be attributed to the loss of *Ahonoora*, whose earning power was not replaced. They further argued that with government investment 'under the corporate plan, the financial performance of the Stud could be rapidly turned around' and that a 'surplus' could be achieved by 1993.[984] However, these financial projections proved to be highly optimistic, as evident in the following figures:

[981] *First report of the Irish National Stud Company Limited, Sixth Joint Committee on Commercial State-Sponsored Bodies* (Dublin, 1990), p. 36.
[982] *Irish National Stud five-year plan* (Dublin, 1991), House of the Oireachtas Library, 11964, available at https://opac.oireachtas.ie/ (25 May 2022).
[983] Ibid.
[984] Ibid.

Figure 7 (e): Financial projections of the National Stud's five-year-plan versus actual trading losses from 1991 to 1995:



Source: Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 1991 to 1995, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://opac.oireachtas.ie/ (25 May 2022).

The INS directors predicted a trading loss of £695,000 for 1991, but the losses were slightly higher at £786,182.[985] The directors also predicted a return to trading profits at the Stud in 1992 of £5,000, but this did not happen, instead, the INS incurred trading losses of £737,139.[986] Also, from 1993 to 1995, the INS directors predicted profits of £676,000 in 1993, £592,000 in 1994 and £712,000 in 1995.[987] None of these projections were accurate with the INS showing trading losses of £482,706 in 1993, £492,136 in 1994, and £142,132 in 1995.[988] In December 1991, INS chairman Collins cautioned the government that without adequate State investment and the 'continuance of such a state of affairs', it would lead to the closure of the INS.[989] Considering Collin's statement on the possible closure of the INS, the profit projections offered by the

[985] Irish National Stud five-year plan (Dublin, 1991), House of the Oireachtas Library, available at https://opac.oireachtas.ie/ (25 May 2022), p. 22.
[986] Ibid.
[987] Ibid.
[988] Ibid.
[989] Irish National Stud Company accounts, 31 December 1991, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://opac.oireachtas.ie/ (25 May 2022).

directors seem all the more remarkable and out of sync with the reality of the circumstances. Moreover, this reflected the chaotic way the INS was being governed.

To avoid the closure scenario, the Joint Committee recommended that the government invest further in the Stud. They advised that the INS's borrowing capacity should be increased and that the statutory limit and the need for legislation to grant approval be abolished.[990] The Committee disagreed with Killinan that the INS should become a subsidiary of the Thoroughbred Industry Board. Instead, they recommended that the Stud should remain 'answerable' to the Minister for Finance.[991] The Joint Committee were also against privatisation, arguing that the INS was the fulcrum upon which horse breeding developed 'without being subjected to the influences of sectional interests'.[992]

However, in the early 1990s, economic circumstances worsened at the INS. It was losing, on average, £750,000 per annum.[993] And as a consequence, in November 1993, the INS directors announced it was seeking voluntary redundancies.[994] They argued it was a situation that was unavoidable if they were to ensure the Stud's 'survival' and protect the interests of the remaining workforce.[995] Twenty employees took voluntary redundancy, and they received compensation totaling £352,889.[996] The Minister for Agriculture, Joe Walsh TD (Fianna Fáil), attributed these measures to the severe downturn in the bloodstock industry worldwide.[997] But Walsh's blame on a global downturn was not entirely accurate. Poor management was a factor as the INS failed to submit annual accounts from 1989 to 1992. In the Dáil in 1993, Ivan Yates TD (Fine Gael) commented on these developments:

[990] *First report of the Irish National Stud Company Limited, Sixth Joint Committee on Commercial State-Sponsored Bodies* (Dublin, 1990), p. 39.
[991] Ibid.
[992] *First report of the Irish National Stud Company Limited, Sixth Joint Committee on Commercial State-Sponsored Bodies* (Dublin, 1990), p. 39.
[993] *Irish Press*, 11 Nov. 1993.
[994] *Irish Independent*, 10 Nov. 1993.
[995] Ibid.
[996] Ryan, *Stallions and power*, p. 43.
[997] *Irish Independent*, 13 Feb. 1993.

> My first criticism – and this not just of the stud but of the Department – is that when I went to the library to get the updated financial picture of the stud, I was given the last three published accounts, those for the years 1987, 1988 and 1989. The latter runs to the end of the financial year, December 1989, and is three years out of date. I know of no investor, equity fund manager or pension fund manager who would think of giving increasing borrowing powers, increased injection of equity to a company that had not published accounts for three years up to December 1992. As a practice, I have to say that that is wholly undesirable and, quite frankly, unacceptable, and the taxpayer deserves better.[998]

Yates was not alone in his criticism of the Stud. Des O'Malley TD (Progressive Democratic Party) remarked: '…it is an absolute disgrace…the fact it is three years and two months out of date, and that is accepted as the norm by the National Stud, and possibly by the Department of Agriculture, is symptomatic of many things that are wrong with the National Stud'.[999] The Minister for Agriculture agreed that the INS was operating chaotically, advised that he had the annual accounts for 1990 and 1991 to hand, but admitted, 'it was not good enough for any State body to say to a Minister that they are in serious financial trouble when no report is produced by them for three years'.[1000] He announced sweeping changes to the INS board of directors, including the election of a new chairman, David Shubotham.

Shubotham went on to serve two terms as chairman until June 1998. He graduated as an accountant from University College Dublin in 1970. After working with Aer Lingus, he joined Davy Stockbrokers in 1973 and became a partner at the Bond Desk of the company. In 1985, he was voted Ireland's leading stockbroker. In 1988, the Bank of Ireland paid £30m for a ninety per cent shared interest of Davy stockbrokers, which the *Irish Independent* speculated made Shubotham and his business partner's multimillionaires.[1001] Shortly after his appointment to the INS, Shubotham argued:

> The Stud is a barometer of the Irish bloodstock industry and reflects the prosperity of breeders in general and Irish breeders in particular…in the face of the worst bloodstock

[998] Dáil Éireann debate, 12 Feb 1993, vol. 425, no. 9, National Stud (Amendment) Bill, 1993, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (13 Apr. 2022).
[999] Ibid.
[1000] Dáil Éireann debate, 12 Feb 1993, vol. 425, no. 9, National Stud (Amendment) Bill, 1993, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (13 Apr. 2022).
[1001] *Irish Independent*, 11 Sept. 2011.

> recession in living memory; the results for 1992 reflect the difficulties breeders have had for the past five years.[1002]

Shubotham was careful in his comments, but it was notable that there was no criticism of how the Stud was previously managed. Other new INS board members included Dermot Weld. He had a long and successful association as a trainer with Moyglare Stud, owned by Swiss billionaire Walter Haefner. Moyglare Stud had a reputation for winning graded races in several countries. Another new board member was Jim Beecher, a long-serving member of the civil service. Ryan elaborates: 'He was familiar with the ins and outs of the industry's politics' and the National Stud's complex relationship with the government.[1003] Another private breeder, Patricia O'Kelly, who ran Kilcarn Stud Farm, was elevated to the board as she showed 'a consistent ability for producing exceptional horses'.[1004] The INS appointed a new company secretary, John McStay, an accountant replacing Lorcan Mooney. McStay was a close friend of INS CEO John Clarke, who ran Oaklawn Stud on the Curragh in Kildare. As will be revealed later, McStay had a profound impact on the INS.

7.7. The National Stud Act (1993)

In 1993, the INS sought an amendment to the 1976 National Stud Bill to increase its borrowing power from £0.5 million to £5 million and increase the share capital at the Stud from £5 million to £10 million.[1005] In the Dáil debates that followed, there was much criticism of the INS. For instance, Ivan Yates (Fine Gael) was appalled by the quality of the stallions at the INS, describing them as sub-standard replacements for the likes of *Ahonoora* and *Lord Gayle*. He complained that they were nowhere near the class of stallions held by Coolmore Stud. He placed this

[1002] Ryan, *Stallions and power*, p. 41.
[1003] Ibid., p. 47.
[1004] Ryan, *Stallions and power*, p. 49.
[1005] Dáil Éireann debate, 12 Feb 1993, vol. 425, no. 9, National Stud (Amendment) Bill, 1993, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (13 Apr. 2022).

responsibility with the previous INS board of directors and welcomed the government's recent overhaul.[1006] Yates argued:

> The National Stud is undercapitalised, it is no longer the flagship, and the question arises as to what should be done. A new and more imaginative policy is required. Purely in the context of horse-breeding, the National Stud should be open to joint ventures with other top-class studs – for example, with Moyglare Stud. I know some board members have links with a number of studs. I am not exclusively picking on Moyglare, and there should be a joint venture with an Irish stud because it would have huge mutual benefits in terms of cross entitlements to nomination shares and rights. If you fail to go down this route, you will continue to be undercapitalised, to have mediocre stallions, a reducing stallion income and sustained losses. The shareholder is entitled to better.[1007]

Yates's suggestion of a joint venture warranted consideration. It had the potential to improve the INS's fortunes and the long-term interests of the industry. A joint venture with a leading private stud would ensure the INS had access to the top-class stallions owned by the wealthy and influential. Considering stallion fees at the INS declined from £1.2 million in 1987 to £234,000 in 1991, any innovative ideas or policies were worth considering.[1008] Indeed, a joint venture could negate the controversial aspect of private breeders on the INS board of directors.

7.8. Syndicated stallions 1986 to 1997

To compete with the elite breeders of the industry, the INS purchased shares in syndicated stallions. In late 1986, the INS purchased a fifty per cent share in *Hatim* (1981) from Juddmonte Farms; he was a grade one winner in America and was fully booked for the following season.[1009] The INS sold their shares in the horse in 1991 with no reason offered for the sale. They also purchased shares in *Flash of Steel* (1983) from Dermot Weld. Following *Flash of Steel's* 1986 Irish Two Thousand Guineas win, Weld remarked: 'He is the most honest horse I ever

[1006] Ibid.
[1007] Ibid.
[1008] Seanad Éireann debate, 25 Feb 1993, vol. 135, no. 3, National Stud (Amendment) Bill, 1993, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (13 Apr. 2022).
[1009] Irish National Stud accounts and reports 31 Dec. 1986, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2017/11/101.

trained'.[1010] The INS paid approximately £1.7 million for its shares in the horse, and the directors set his cover fee at £11,000.[1011]

However, this purchase drew criticism from the Press, with the *Irish Independent* speculating that the INS directors deliberately kept the purchase quiet from public knowledge and in doing so, they 'dented the image' of the Stud.[1012] They further argued that because the INS used taxpayers' money to operate, they had the responsibility to announce all purchases for transparency and accountability.[1013] Whatever the truth, these circumstances were highly unusual and a further example of the chaotic nature of how the INS operated. After spending the off-season in Jim O'Connor's Adelaide Stud in Australia, the INS sold *Flash of Steel* to the Japanese Racing Association within two years.[1014] In the annual accounts and reports, they offered no reason for the sale. In his three years at the Stud, *Flash of Steel* brought in £908,263 in stallion cover fees.[1015] Therefore, this sale was questionable but not unusual given the INS's selling policy.

Also, in 1986, the INS purchased Maddenstown Stud from trainer Michael O'Toole for £500,000.[1016] According to Department of Finance records, the owner of Maddenstown Stud was in 'financial difficulty'.[1017] Maddenstown Stud was located one mile from the INS and covered 122 acres. At the time, the INS board of directors was concerned with the likelihood of the proposed Kildare bypass intruding on the Stud's land. They purchased Maddenstown to cover any lost ground through compulsory land purchase orders. Commenting on the purchase,

[1010] *Sunday Tribune*, 1 June 1986.
[1011] *Irish Independent*, 15 Oct. 1986.
[1012] *Irish Independent*, 23 Sept. 1986.
[1013] Ibid.
[1014] *Sunday Independent*, 15 May 1988.
[1015] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1989, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2019/30/100.
[1016] Correspondence between the Minister for Finance John Bruton and the Minister for Agriculture, Austin Deasy, 4 Nov. 1986, Department of Finance, FIN/2016/17/1924.
[1017] National Stud – proposed acquisition of land, 3 Nov. 1986, Department of Finance, FIN/2016/17/1924.

chairman John Oxx argued that the acquisition would give ‘the Company the stabling necessary to stand extra stallions in the coming years’.[1018]

However, further press speculation revealed more uncertainty at the INS. For example, in September 1986, a report appeared in the *Irish Independent* speculating that the then Minister for Agriculture, Austin Deasy TD (Fine Gael), offered the CEO role at the INS to Michael Osborne, who was returning from America, but the Press speculated that he refused it due to other commitments.[1019] Osborne returned to Ireland four months later to manage Sheikh Mohammed’s stud farms in Kildare. There was a degree of irony in this development as Osborne was the INS’s most successful CEO and he was now returning to compete in the private sector against the organisation where he had played such a significant role.

Conor Ryan argues that shortly after Sheik Mohammed arrived in Ireland, it started a ‘frenzied buying war’ with Coolmore Stud, which ‘pumped up’ the price of thoroughbreds and made breeders take stock of their financial position within the industry.[1020] It was difficult for the INS to compete at this level. It announced trading losses of £18,000 in 1987.[1021] But the industry’s unpredictable nature was apparent; the following year, it returned a profit of £135,000.[1022] And the following year, the ramifications of *Ahonoora’s* sale were evident, with stallion cover fees plummeting, resulting in trading losses at the Stud of £429,000; to put it into perspective, stallion fees at the INS dropped from £1.2 million in 1987 to £0.76 million in 1988.[1023]

In 1988, the INS introduced a new policy whereby any new stallions purchased would be partially syndicated to cover costs. The syndication process meant that the INS aimed to ‘own between 25% and 50% of the horse, thereby spreading the risk’ with the remaining stake in the

[1018] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1986, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2017/11/101.
[1019] *Irish Independent*, 23 Sept. 1986.
[1020] Ryan, *Stallions and power*, p. 33.
[1021] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1986, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2017/11/101.
[1022] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1987, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2018/69/68.
[1023] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1988, Department of the Taoiseach, TAOIS/2019/30/100.

horse retained by the original owner, who could also decide to syndicate the remaining shares to other investors.[1024]

The following year, the INS bought Sheik Mohammed's *Dancing Dissident* through this process; he was a grade two winner and the son of leading sire *Nureyev.*[1025] He was fully booked for his first four seasons until he was leased to breeders in Italy in 1996.[1026] Between 1990 and 1993, *Dancing Dissident* was the highest-earning stallion at the INS, accumulating an average of £102,304 per annum, fifty per cent higher than any other stallion at the INS.[1027] After 1993, it is impossible to determine what fees *Dancing Dissident* or any other INS stallion took in because the INS changed the format of its accounts. All stallion fee totals were combined and included in one overall figure. There is no explanation from the INS directors as to why this change in format was made.

In 1992, *Dancing Dissident's* first yearlings sold at 35,000 guineas. In 1994, he sired twenty-first crop winners of thirty-four races, and so the INS could argue that this ensured his offspring continued to be 'very popular at the sales'.[1028] In 1995, he sired the Irish Champion two-year-old *Almaty*. In 1996, the INS leased *Dancing Dissident* to breeders in Italy where he was in high demand in Italy.[1029] Two years later, the INS sold *Dancing Dissident* but as usual no satisfactory explanation for the decision was given.

A much more positive development occurred when Michael Smurfit's *Vintage Crop,* trained by Dermot Weld, achieved international fame by becoming the first European horse to win Australia's Melbourne Cup in 1993. *Vintage Crop* (1987-2014) was a gelding (a castrated

[1024] Dáil Éireann debate, 9 June 2010, Joint committee on agriculture, fisheries and food, Irish bloodstock industry: discussion with Irish National Stud, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (25 May. 2022).
[1025] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec 1996, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://opac.oireachtas.ie/ (25 May 2022).
[1026] Ibid.
[1027] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1990 to 1992, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://opac.oireachtas.ie/ (25 May 2022).
[1028] Ibid.
[1029] Ibid.

stallion) who won graded races, including the Irish St. Leger, in 1993 to 1994. *Vintage Crop's* victory in Australia launched Weld to the forefront of training excellence, which had ramifications for the INS. In 1995, *Vintage Crop* was retired to the Stud and, according to Ryan, 'the rest of the fledgling directors, began to develop a sense of ownership over their new roles'.[1030] This may have been the case for the INS directors, but it should be noted that *Vintage Crop's* appearance at the INS was nothing more than a tourist attraction. Yes, this was a positive development, but a much more immediate issue was the need for the INS to source top-class sires to compete at the highest level.

In 1994, the INS attempted to address this issue when they purchased a fifty per cent share in *Catrail* for £1.5 million from Sheikh Mohammed. But the following year, they sold a significant majority share in the stallion to Arrowfield Stud in New South Wales, where he spent the off-season. Shubotham argued that these 'international relationships' and interactions were important to the bloodstock industry'.[1031] He also argued that *Catrail* was the 'hottest young sire in America from a renowned family of champion sires' with a 'truly international pedigree'.[1032] Indeed, the *Irish Farmers Journal* dubbed *Catrail* 'the most exciting acquisition in many years'.[1033] *Catrail's* lofty reputation as the European Champion three-year-old meant his stallion fee was set at £10,000 per cover.[1034] Despite its reputation, *Catrail* did not live up to the expectations. Throughout the late 1990s, O'Reilly constantly defended the horse. She claimed that 'he has the potential to fulfil at stud the hopes that were naturally held for such a high-class racehorse'.[1035] These predictions seemed rather hollow when two years later, the INS sold *Catrail*

[1030] Ryan, *Stallions and power*, p. 50.
[1031] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1995, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (25 May. 2022).
[1032] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1994, House of the Oireachtas Library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (25 May. 2022).
[1033] *Irish Farmers Journal*, 22 Oct. 1994.
[1034] Ibid.
[1035] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1999, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (25 May. 2022).

to breeders in America.[1036] Ryan argued that the stallion cover fee charged by the INS was too high, and consequently, breeders turned 'their back on the horse'.[1037] In any event, O'Reilly had a personal interest in *Catrail's* development. According to the 1994 INS financial accounts, business 'parties connected' to O'Reilly purchased one share in *Catrail* costing £55,000.[1038] However, the identity of the business 'parties' remained anonymous and the exact nature of the business connection to O'Reilly undisclosed. It is this lack of transparency which is problematic as there may have been a conflict of interest through O'Reilly's business dealings with *Catrail* and her role at the INS.

Nonetheless, the INS had phenomenal success with *Indian Ridge* (sired by *Ahonoora* in 1985), which they purchased in 1993. *Indian Ridge* sired numerous winners, including ten at grade one level.[1039] Stevens argues in the *Racing Post* that *Indian Ridge* has 'done most to keep the *Ahonoora* flame burning'.[1040] In the first five months of 1994, *Indian Ridge* covered over 100 mares accumulating approximately £600,000 in stallion cover fees.[1041] The following year Shubotham lavished praise on the horse: '*Indian Ridge* has emerged as possibly the greatest sire ever to stand at the Stud in our fifty-year history'.[1042] It seems the INS learnt from the sale of *Ahonoora* when they refused a substantial offer from America of $50 million in 1999.[1043] But disaster struck in 2006 when *Indian Ridge* suffered a fatal heart attack; at the time, he was commanding a massive £75,000 cover fee.[1044] Clarke paid the following tribute, '*Indian Ridge*

[1036] Pedigree Online Thoroughbred Database, available at https://www.pedigreequery.com/catrail (15 Apr. 2022).
[1037] Ryan, *Stallions and power*, p. 50.
[1038] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1994, House of the Oireachtas, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (29 May. 2022).
[1039] Pedigree Online Thoroughbred Database, available at https://www.pedigreequery.com/indianridge (15 Apr. 2022).
[1040] *Racing Post*, 23 Sept. 2005.
[1041] *Sunday Independent*, 14 Aug. 1994.
[1042] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1995, House of Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (29 May. 2022).
[1043] Ryan, *Stallions and power*, p. 53.
[1044] Bloodhorse for more than 100 years available at https://www.bloodhorse.com/horse-racing/articles/162989/prominent-irish-stallion-indian-ridge-dead (15 Apr. 2022).

has left a wonderful legacy. He was one of our greatest stallions here at the Irish National Stud, and he was a real old friend to everyone here.'[1045] In the mid-1990s, other stallions at the INS included *Broken Hearted*, *Magical Strike*, and *Magical Wonder,* but they did not prove to be successful sires of any great note.

At the end of the 1995 season, Shubotham was optimistic about the INS's future. He argued that the 'financial revitalisation of the company has been a difficult process' and that 'the groundwork has been done' and the following season would be successful.[1046] In 1996, the INS purchased *Ashkalani,* the winner of two grade one races in France, from Aga Khan, with Aga Khan retaining a 'significant minority share'.[1047] The remaining shares in *Ashkalani* were 'placed' with several leading breeders whom Shubotham did not identify.[1048] In any event, *Ashkalani* was fully booked for the following season. In the off-season, like *Catrail,* he was sent to Arrowfield Stud in Australia. Minister Walsh was lavish in praise of the deal: 'It says much for the professionalism of the Stud that the Aga Khan is cooperating with the Stud by standing one of his outstanding stallions there'.[1049]

As Ryan describes, the latter end of the 1990s was a 'bit chaotic at the Stud'.[1050] In June 1996, 'cattle rustlers' stole stock worth approximately £55,000.[1051] The following month the INS was late submitting two months of its tax returns to the Revenue Commissioners which resulted in the Sheriff of Kildare and Carlow issuing a warrant to collect £2,430 in unpaid taxes and in 1999 they failed to pay their annual tax bill on time resulting in late penalty fees of £16,672 plus expenses. [1052] Also in 1996 and again in 1997, the INS was late submitting its mandatory annual

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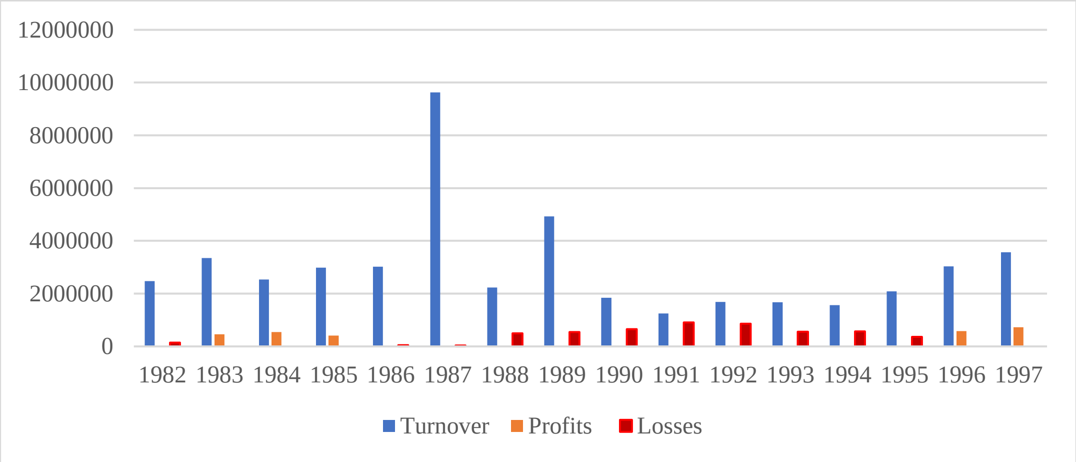
[1045] Ibid.
[1046] Ryan, *Stallions and power,* p. 53.
[1047] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 1996, House of the Oireachtas, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (29 May. 2022).
[1048] Ibid.
[1049] Seanad Éireann debate, 14 Dec. 2000, vol. 164, no. 21, National Stud (Amendment Bill) 2000, second stage, available at the House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (25 May. 2022).
[1050] Ryan, *Stallions and power,* p. 57.
[1051] *Irish Independent*, 16 Jan. 1996.
[1052] Ryan, *Stallions and power,* p. 57.

reports with the Companies Registration Office.[1053] At the same time, a dispute over VAT lingered until it was finally settled in 2001. The INS directors did not explain the cause of these delays. The following data shows the financial position of the INS from 1982 to 1997:

Figure 7 (f): Turnover, profits, and losses at the Irish National Stud.



Source: Irish National Stud accounts and reports 1982 to 1997, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://opac.oireachtas.ie/ (17 June 2022).

In 1997, Shubotham retired as the chairman of the INS. Commenting in the *Irish Field* on his contribution to the INS, the Minister for Agriculture, Joe Walsh, argued that he 'did a very good job and set up structures.'[1054] Shubotham's six-year term at the INS witnessed the Stud return to profits for the first time in almost ten years. His first four years saw a reduction in trading losses at the INS from a peak of £786,182 in 1992 to a trading profit of £496,221 in 1996 and £657,571 the following year.[1055] The turnover at the INS also increased by eighty-three per cent from £1,682,404 in 1992 to £3,080,766 in 1997, with stud fees improving by over 482% from £353,662 to £2,059,166.[1056]

[1053] Ibid., p. 57.
[1054] *Irish Field*, 9 Nov. 2014.
[1055] Irish National Stud accounts and reports 31 Dec. 1992 to 31 Dec.1997, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (29 May. 2022).
[1056] Ibid.

7.9. The profile of elite owners/breeders

In the last five decades, in Ireland and the United Kingdom, the domination of one sector in the horse racing industry is evident. This research will categorise this sector as elite owners/breeders. These elite businesspeople provide colossal financial resources to a small select number of racing stables, and the results have been outstanding, as reflected in the accompanying data. But this has been achieved at a prohibitive cost to the remaining breeders outside the elite circle. The majority cannot compete at this level and, in effect, exist on the periphery. The elite owners are from Middle Eastern regions or, in Ireland's case, an array of Europe's most successful business entrepreneurs. For example, included in this research are the following. From the Middle East, the most prominent is the Maktoum family. They rule Dubai, one of the seven emirates of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Some of the descendants of Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum (1912-1990), the prime minister of the UAE from 1979 to 1990 and the ruler of Dubai from 1958 until he died in 1990, have a keen interest in horse racing. The first son, Maktoum bin Al Maktoum (1943-2006), succeeded his father in 1990 but died of cardiac arrest in 2006. The second son Hamden bin Rashid Al Maktoum (1945-2021) was the deputy ruler of Dubai and the Minister for Finance in the UAE. He owned Shadwell Racing which has six stud farms in the Suffolk region in Britain. Shadwell also owns Derrinstown Stud in Maynooth, County Kildare in Ireland. The third son is the most prominent figure in horse racing. Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum was born in 1949 (better known as Sheikh Mohammed). He amassed a fortune through real estate development, and it is speculated that Sheikh Mohammed's net worth is worth approximately fourteen billion American dollars today. In 1981, he established Darley Stud at Dalham Hall in Newmarket. In 1992, he established Godolphin Racing, its headquarters in Dubai with stables in Newmarket, Sydney, and Melbourne. Both institutions massively impacted racing worldwide. Sheikh Mohammed has horses in training in several countries, including Ireland, Great Britain, France, the United States, United Arab Emirates, and Japan. He owns over 6000 acres in Ireland spread across counties Kildare, Meath, and Tipperary. Sheikh Mohammed's ex-wife also has a keen interest in horses. Princess Haya bint Al Hussein. She is the daughter of King Hussein of Jordan. She had racing interests in Ireland as the owner of the 2008 Epsom Derby winner *New Approach* trained by Jim Bolger. She also owned *Raven's Pass*, the 2008 Breeders' Cup Classic in Santa Anita.

Other businesspeople classed as elite owners/breeders include Khalid bin Abdullah (1937-2021), a member of the House of Saud, the absolute ruling family of Saudi Arabia under Islamic laws. In 1977, Abdullah established Juddmonte, a renowned international thoroughbred racing and breeding enterprise. Four stud farms are in Great Britain, with two others in the United States. Juddmonte is best known for *Frankel*, the fourteen-race unbeaten stallion; nine of these races were at the highest level. Such has been Juddmonte's success; they have been British Flat Champion owners on three occasions in 2003, 2010 and 2011. Another elite owner was Prince Fahd Salman (1955-2001). He was a Saudi royal, the eldest son of the King of Saudi Arabia, Prince Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Said. In the 1980s, he began racing, and his father-in-law was Juddmonte's owner, Khalid bin Abdullah.

Also in the 1980s, Saeed Suhail, a Dubai businessman and close friend of Maktoum Al Maktoum, began racing horses in Great Britain. He won the Epsom Derby twice with *Kris Kin* in 2003 and more recently with *Desert Crown* in 2022. Another significant elite owner is the Dubai businessman Jaber Abdullah. He had horses in training with John Oxx in Ireland in the 2010s. Another prominent figure is Wafic Rida Saïd, a Syrian Saudi Canadian businessman who made his fortune in the Saudi Arabian construction industry. He is most famous for owning the Henry Cecil-trained *Bosra Sham* and *Lady Carla*. Two other elite racing companies are Qatar Racing and Al Shaqab. Qatar Racing is a subsidiary of Qatar Investments & Project Development Holding Company (QIPCO). It was established in 1999 as a private investment company with a portfolio of business interests. QIPCO is owned by six brothers of the House of Thani, the royal family, and absolute rulers under Islamic law in Qatar. Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamed Al Thani owns Al Shaqab Racing, they established in Great Britain in 2013. He is a senior member of the House of Thani. Quoted in 2015, the general manager of Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club, Nasser Al Kaabi, expressed its intentions for British racing:

> Promoting Qatar as a country is very important to us, and a race meeting like the Qatar Goodwood Festival will help this… It is all about promoting Qatar the country. Taking the Qatar flag around the world and promoting our country all over the world is very important for us.

Moreover, this idealistic portrayal by Al Kaabi masks the harsh reality of life for the masses of vulnerable people in countries like Qatar and Saudi Arabia. There are many disturbing human rights issues within these regions.

7.10. Elite breeders in Ireland

For this research, the owners/breeders of Coolmore Stud are also classed as elite breeders. These include the following. Robert Edmund Sangster (1936-2004) was a British businessman, the only child of Vernon Sangster (1899-1986), the founder of the multi-million Vernon Football Pools Company in the 1930s, which Robert inherited. In 1968, he established Swettenham Stud in Cheshire, and four years later, he was elected to the Jockey Club, becoming its youngest member. As an owner, Sangster topped the British flat Owners' Championship five times between 1977 and 1984. In 1975, Sangster, alongside John Magnier, established Coolmore Stud in County Tipperary, Ireland. John Magnier was born in County Cork in 1948. He is married to Susan O'Brien, the daughter of Coolmore's trainer Vincent O'Brien and they have five children. Conway elaborates on the establishment of Coolmore Stud: 'They [Sangster and Magnier] came together with a plan to source the finest bloodstock in the world's leading yearling sales, train them at Ballydoyle [Coolmore] and then stand them at stud for huge sums of money as an ongoing business venture'. Thus, Coolmore Stud developed into one of the world's most potent stud farms, often described as one of Ireland's brightest diamonds' shining on the world stage.

The breeding empire is spread across several countries, including Great Britain, Ireland, France, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. Some of the most famous horses, like *Caerleon, Sadlers Wells,* and the *Minstrel*. have been bred at Coolmore Stud. An example of the success of Coolmore's policy is evident with the *Minstrel*. In 1977, Coolmore bought the horse for $200,000 and then syndicated it for nine million dollars a short time later. There was an intense rivalry between Coolmore and the Maktoum family, as reflected on the racecourses but also in the sales rings.

In the mid-1980s, Coolmore became embroiled in a ferocious bidding war with the Maktoum's for thoroughbreds, pushing yearling prices to unprecedented levels with both institutions vying for market control. In 1983, Sheikh Mohammed paid $10.2 million for *Snaafi Dancer*, and two years later, Sangster and associates paid $13.1 million for *Seattle Dancer*. Interestingly, these developments resulted in a meeting between the Maktoum family, Sangster and Magnier. The details of this meeting remain secret, but as Vamplew notes, it resulted in a 'truce in the sales ring'. Here, we can gain an early insight into the power and hold these two owners had on the market. And this manifested into even more dominance throughout the following decades.

In the 1990s, Michael Tabor joined Coolmore Stud as a partner in the business. He was born in 1941 and is a British bookmaker and gambler. In 1968, he borrowed £30,000 to purchase two Arthur Prince bankrupt betting shops in London. He developed Arthur Prince into a chain of 114 betting shops which he sold to Coral Bookmakers for £28 million in 1995. But he was a controversial character. In the 1970s, an investigation revealed that he paid three jockeys for tips on racehorses, which resulted in him being banned from bookmaking. But three years after the ban, he successfully appealed against the ruling. In 2014, after owning a part stake in the company for several years, Tabor assumed complete control of Victor Chandler International, an online gambling company in Gibraltar. And in 2019, according to the *Sunday Times Rich List*, his net worth was estimated at £629 million.

Also involved in the Coolmore Stud partnership is Derrick Smith, a close associate of Tabor and Magnier. In 1988, Smith worked as a Ladbroke trading investor but left the firm to become a property developer. A resident of Barbados, Smith co-owns with Tabor the five-star luxurious Sandy Lane Hotel in Barbados. According to the 2019 *Sunday Times Rich List*, Smith's net worth was £629 million.

Other very close associates of Tabor, Smith and Magnier are Dermot Desmond and J.P. McManus. Dermot Desmond is an Irish businessman. In 1981, he founded the investment bank National City Brokers in Dublin, which he sold to Ulster Bank in the 1990s for a reported £45 million. In 2014, he netted €180 million from the sale of the online payments and transfer group Optimal Payments, which was an eightfold return on his initial investment. In 2020, the *Irish Independent's 2020 Rich List* estimated Magnier's net worth at €2.56 billion, McManus at €2.2 billion and Desmond at €2 billion.

J.P. McManus is from County Limerick, Ireland. In his early life, he worked in the family plant hire business before becoming an online bookmaker at his local greyhound track. McManus is a tax resident in Switzerland, operating on the currency and bond markets from Geneva. Since 1995, he has not been registered for income tax or capital gains tax in Ireland. In 1982, he and his wife Noreen purchased Martinstown Stud in Limerick and thus began his association with horses. McManus became one of the most influential National Hunt owners in Ireland and Great Britain, relentlessly winning at the highest level. The level of his interest in the industry is reflected in the 2017/18 season when 379 horses ran in his famous yellow and green striped colours. And at the Galway festival in Ireland that season, he had nine of the twenty runners in the Guinness Galway Hurdle but still did not win the race. Indeed, figures like this are a regular occurrence in Irish racing. McManus, Willie Mullins, and Gordon Elliot dominate National Hunt race field entries. However, in the long term, the sheer scale of this type of practice leaves the owners/breeders of small-sized operations very much on the industry's periphery as they cannot compete. Another controversial political figure involved in horse racing was Charles Haughey.

7.11. Charles Haughey, tribunals, and repercussions

Charles Haughey (1925-2006) served as Taoiseach of Ireland on three occasions from 1979 to 1981, from March to December 1982, and from 1987 to 1992. He was the leader of the Fianna Fail party from 1979 to 1992. In the 1960s, Haughey purchased a 135-acre stud farm in County Meath while serving as the Minister for Finance in a government led by Jack Lynch. Shortly afterwards, Haughey sent his mares to be covered by Tim Rogers' stallions at Airlie Stud in Lucan, Dublin. Rogers was one of Ireland's most significant breeders and the former aide-de-camp to Winston Churchill. Rogers and Haughey developed a strong business relationship, with Haughey investing in some of Rogers' stallions and one of his stud farms. In 1967, Rogers was elevated to the INS board of directors, where he served for two years. According to Lee Powell, the managing director of the *Irish Field*, Haughey's decision to update the infamous 1969 stallion fee exemption was 'made following strong lobbying' from Rogers. In 1976, Haughey purchased Abbeville Stud in Dublin, run by his daughter Eimear. It has been reported that she had bloodstock business links with Magnier. She functioned as chairperson of the Irish Thoroughbred Association in the late 1990s. And in the 1970s, Haughey served on the board of Ballsbridge International Bloodstock Sales L.T.D alongside Michael Osborne of the Irish National Stud.

Haughey was also closely associated with Coolmore Stud. From 1985, Coolmore Stud's stallions serviced Haughey's mares, but it remains unknown what costs, if any, were involved for the services. In 1987, Haughey's close association with Magnier resulted in his nomination to the Irish Senate, where he served for three years as an independent. According to a report in

The Observer, Magnier's nomination was 'greeted with considerable surprise' by some of the Irish political class.

In the late 1990s, the exact source of Haughey's unexplained wealth came under intense scrutiny. The Press speculated that the Revenue Commissioners were probing how he acquired his stud farm in Ratoath in the 1960s while earning a modest income of £6000 per annum as a politician. And matters were inflamed further because there was no financial borrowing record for the details of the purchase of the stud farm. As a result, in 1997, the Moriarty Tribunal (officially known as the *Report of the Tribunal of Inquiry into payments to politicians and related matters*) was established. Chaired by Justice Michael Moriarty, it thoroughly investigated the financial affairs of Haughey, amongst other politicians. Moriarty's final report was made in 2011 (following lengthy legal challenges and delays), which cost the State €39 million to that date, with final costs estimated at up to €100 million. When the tribunal began, it was not long before the controversy intensified further.

In Dáil Éireann, Pat Rabbitte TD (Labour) questioned the nature of Haughey's relationship with Magnier. He demanded an investigation into the 'decisions surrounding the manner in which the Irish bloodstock industry' evolved in the previous thirty years. Rabbitte argued Haughey was a 'key player' in facilitating Magnier's monopoly of Irish horse breeding through Haughey's hugely advantageous' tax breaks. And in return, the Press speculated that Magnier made regular financial contributions to the Fianna Fáil Party in the previous twenty years. An allegation that was strenuously denied by Magnier when he appeared before the Tribunal, but he did admit to an anonymous donation of £20,000 to Fianna Fail TD, Brian Lenihan's liver transplant fund. In any event, the Moriarty Tribunal concluded that:

> Apart from the almost invariably secretive nature of payments from senior members of the business community, their very incidence and scale, particularly during economic difficult economic times nationally and when governments led by Mr Haughey were championing austerity, can only be said to have devalued the quality of a modern democracy.

The Tribunal concluded that Haughey accumulated over nine million pounds in payments from businesspeople. They also concluded that Haughey was paid £50,000 by the Saudi Arabian racehorse owner Sheikh Khalid bin Mahfouz (1949-2009) to support eleven passport applications for the Sheikh's relatives in 1990. He was married to the sister of the militant Osama bin Laden. The Press speculated that Haughey tried to cover up the transaction with Sheikh Mahfouz by suggesting that the money was given for purchasing a horse. In any event, Haughey presented the passports to Sheikh Mahfouz over lunch at Haughey's home in Kinsealy. Still, because the official certificates 'had yet to be signed by the responsible Minister, the handover was in breach of regulations'. In return, it was speculated that the Sheikh promised to invest £20 million in Irish 'job created schemes'. And true to his word, he invested £20 million in various schemes in Ireland, including the development of Kerry airport. But *The Observer* has speculated that only £17 million of this money can be traced 'as having been invested as planned'. And to inflame matters further, there are reports that four of the £17 million invested was set aside for a chain of tennis clubs in Britain whose largest shareholder was John Magnier.

There was also controversy surrounding Dermot Desmond and J.P McManus. In 1991, the Irish government appointed John Glackin, a solicitor, to investigate Desmond's business dealings. Glackin investigated a site sold in Ballsbridge, Dublin, by the baker's Johnson Mooney O'Brien to Telecom Eireann (an Irish state-owned telecommunications company that operated from 1983 to 1999), and he presented his findings in the *Glackin Report*. The *Irish Independent* reported that:

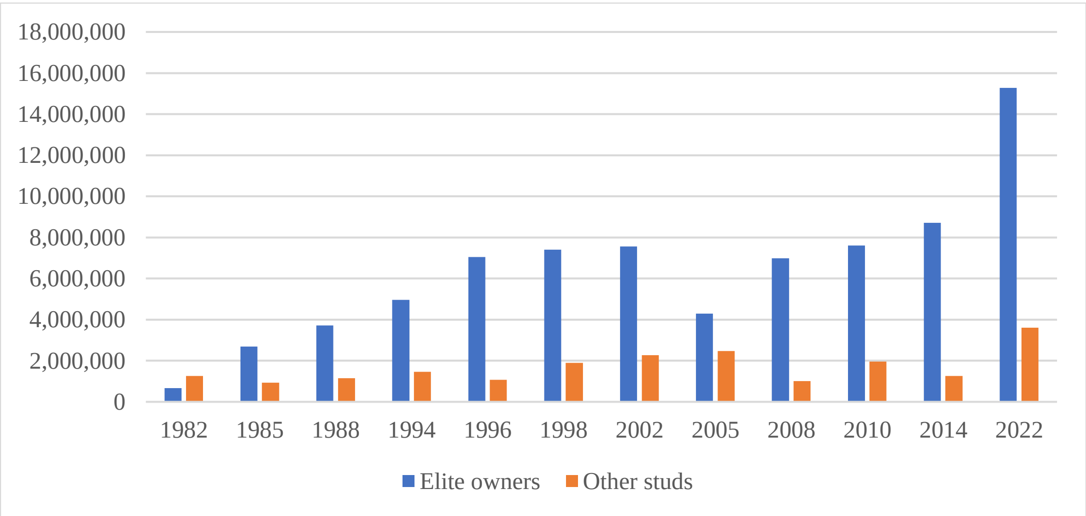
> According to Glackin, Mr Desmond was secretly behind the company that sold the site to Telecom Eireann and was at the same time acting as an adviser to Telecom chairman Michael Smurfit, who was buying the site on behalf of the semi-state company. Glackin concluded that Mr Smurfit was unaware of Mr Desmond's involvement.

In any case, Desmond strenuously denied the claims. Glackin also concluded that J.P. McManus was heavily involved in the transaction, but McManus denied any involvement. Other controversies followed, with the Moriarty Tribunal concluding that Desmond made substantial payments of between £25,000 sterling and 100,000 Irish pounds to Chares Haughey in the 1990s. And it was revealed that Desmond contributed £75,546 for renovations to Haughey's Yacht. Desmond contended that these were loans to Haughey, but the Tribunal did not accept this explanation. Moreover, it is important to outline these details before assessing the impact these elites have had on horse racing in Ireland and Great Britain.

7.12. The domination of the elite owners/breeders

The impact of elite breeders like the Maktoum family and Coolmore Stud has been profound. To begin with, the following data assesses the effects of the Maktoum family and the other Middle Eastern owners/breeders on horse racing in Great Britain:

Figure 7 (g) Winning race prize money of elite owners/breeders versus all other studs in Great Britain.



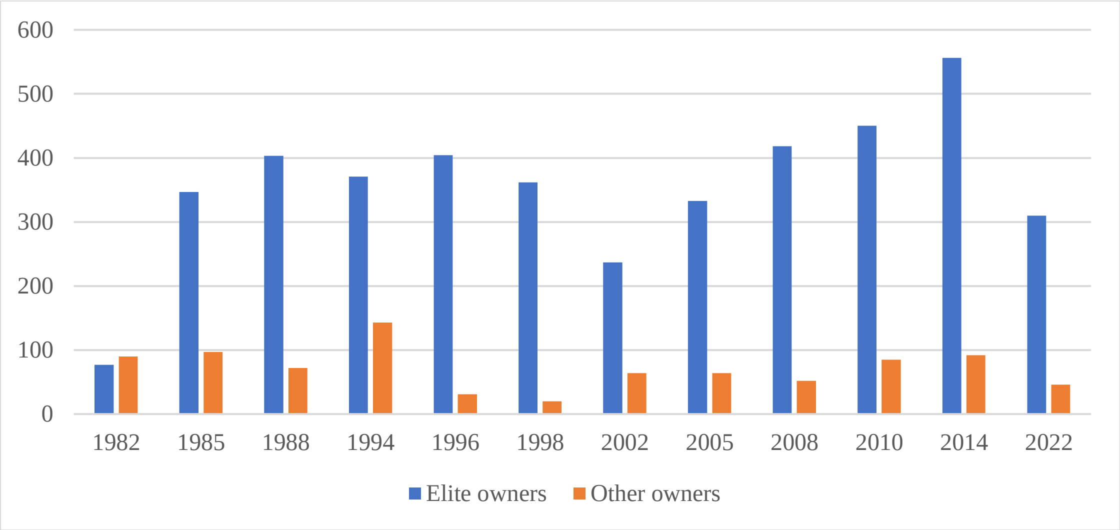
Source: *Raceform flat annual: the official form book* 1982 to 2022.

The data was compiled from the top ten owners winning race prize money (first placing only) in Britain recorded in the *Raceform Flat Annual*. Across four decades, from the 1980s to 2022, three sample years have been displayed for each decade or thereabouts. It should be noted that in the years not listed in the above data, a similar pattern emerges. The results of the above data offer insight into the domination of the elite owners/breeders in Britain, and the results are absolute. For instance, 1982 was the last time other owners in the top ten earned more on the racecourse than the elite breeders.

However, the elite owner's domination rises every year after that. The combined total of the elite owner's earnings is £76,901,243 at an average of £6,408,463 per annum.[1057] All other owners/breeders from the top ten lists earned £20,356,222 at an average of £1,696,351 per annum.[1058] The difference between the elite's earnings and all other owners is staggering, at 377 per cent higher than the other owners' totals. Last year displayed the most apparent difference in winnings, with six elite owners in the top ten winning £15,275,458 compared to four owners who won £3,615,017 in prize money.[1059] Notably, the elite owners had an average of 6.4 owners per annum in the top ten compared to 3.6 per annum of all other owners.[1060] Four times (1996, 2002, 2008 and 2022), the elite owners filled eight places in the top ten lists. For instance, in 1996, eight elite owners won £7,045,723 compared to the two other owners at £1,065,239.[1061] In 2002, eight elite owners won £7,562,894 compared to £2,263,831; in 2008, eight elite owners won £6,984,399 compared to £1,005,942, and in 2014, eight elite owners won £8,707,395 compared to £1,263,631 for all other owners.[1062] Another significant factor is the number of races which were won to achieve these figures, as reflected in the following data:

1057 *Raceform flat annual: the official form book* 1982 to 2022.
1058 Ibid.
1059 Ibid.
1060 Ibid.
1061 Ibid.
1062 Ibid.

Figure 7 (g) Elite owners versus other owners winning race numbers:



Source: *Raceform flat annual: the official form book* 1982 to 2022.

The data was compiled from the number of races won at British racecourses by elite owners and all other owners from the results recorded in the top ten in the *Raceform Flat Annual*. The elite owners won 4,268 races at an average of 355 per annum, whereas all other owners won 856 races at an average of seventy-one per annum.[1063] Again the elite owners' total race wins are a staggering 398 per cent higher than other owners in the top ten lists. Breaking the figures down even further highlights that the elite owners won an average of 6.8 races per week compared to 1.3 races per week by all the other owners. Moreover, these figures are the stark reality of the dominance of the elite owners. If these trends continue (which is likely), owners not classed as elite will face a bleak future in the industry as their opportunities to win significant prize money will become even more remote.

In May 1996, the domination of Coolmore Stud became a matter of discussion and debate in Ireland. John Lynam, Dublin economist and a research expert in bloodstock breeding argued that Coolmore held seventy-three per cent of the breeding industry in Ireland and forty-two per

[1063] Ibid.

cent of the £50 million in stallion nominations in Britain and Ireland.'[1064] Lynam argued that this dominance was achieved due to the government's stallion tax exemption and the resources of wealthy horse owners.[1065] Lynam argued that Coolmore's leading stallions, *Sadler's Wells* and *Caerleon* generated huge incomes, providing considerable sums available for reinvestment. Consequently, Coolmore outbid medium to large-sized stud farms in Ireland.[1066]

Another factor in the domination was the deliberate strategy by wealthy owner/breeders who priced their stallions beyond the reach of other breeders because, the *Irish Independent* argued, they were not 'interested in allowing horses outside their own farms to be serviced', which Lynam argued forced breeders 'to beat a track to Coolmore'.[1067] The *Sunday Independent* reported that several attempts were made by sources (unrevealed) to convince the Minister of Finance, Ruairi Quinn TD (Labour), to amend the Finance Bill to counter the domination of Coolmore.[1068] These developments irked the owners of Coolmore Stud, who were also profoundly concerned with the possibility of the government introducing a tax on stallion fees. They reacted by commissioning economist Paul Tansey to produce a report on Irish horse breeding; Tansey reported:

> In a highly competitive international breeding market, the ability of Irish stud farms to bid for the top-class stallions of the future depends on their ongoing and anticipated profit levels…the improvement in the profitability of stallion syndicates is crucial to the future of the industry.[1069]

In the early 1990s, horse breeding expert Tony Morris offered a rather different opinion. Morris was scathing of Coolmore Stud, arguing their strategy with stallions was 'badly flawed' and that the management was 'all about accountancy' and the regular turnover of stallions did not 'lend

[1064] *Sunday Independent*, 5 May 1996.
[1065] Ibid.
[1066] Jennifer Stynes, The Financial Review available at https://www.afr.com/companies/hot-property-gets-cool-reception-19960626-k6ykd (13 Apr. 2022).
[1067] *Sunday Independent*, 5 May 1996.
[1068] *Sunday Independent*, 5 May 1996.
[1069] *Irish Independent*, 17 Aug. 1996.

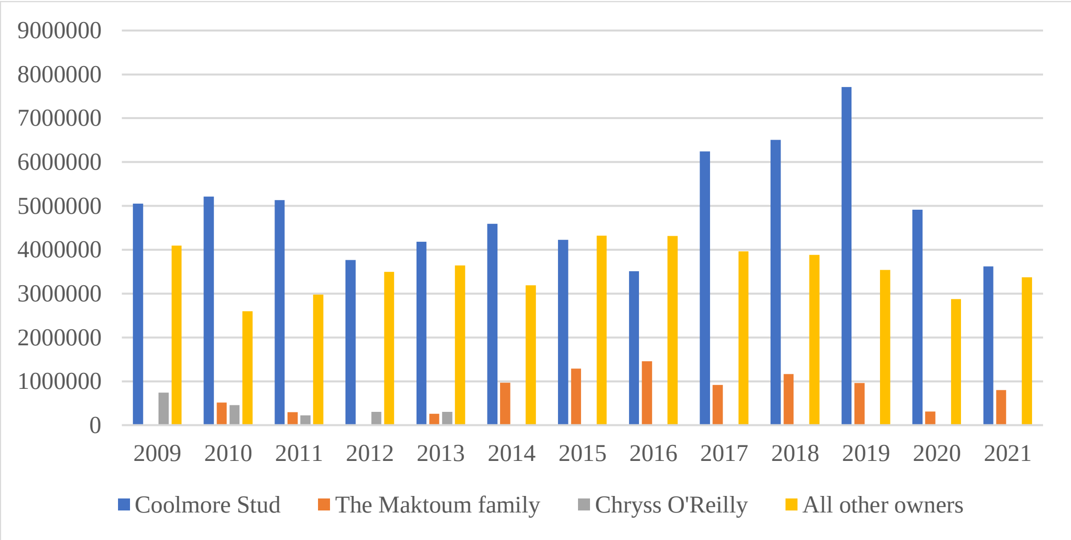
itself to the development of top-class stallions.[1070] Central to Morris's argument was that stallions were either 'overused' at Coolmore Stud or not given an opportunity to thrive in their environment by being replaced rapidly if not meeting immediate high expectations. Morris further argued that Coolmore was 'too big for its environment' and that the stallion fees were excessive…with breeders footing the bill for a policy that did not suit their interests'.[1071] He also argued that several of the stallions at Coolmore in the past decade would have 'compiled impressive, consistent records as the only, or chief, stallion' on a smaller stud farm.[1072] This is the crux of the issue; the industry was deeply elitist, with opportunities not spread evenly across the sector. But criticism was not limited to Coolmore Stud.

In May 1997, the *Irish Farmers' Journal* reported that thirteen [unnamed] private sector breeders had complained that the INS was offering 'subsidised deals' whereby breeders using INS stallions paid no 'keep, veterinary, or foaling charges while their mares were at the Stud'.[1073] These breeders claimed this had a 'catastrophic effect' on business and argued against stallions standing at the INS being owned by 'foreign nationals'.[1074] Throughout the 1990s and into the late years of the 2000s, there was further criticism of the domination of the elite owner/breeders. Hardly surprisingly, newspaper journalists such as Gerald Flynn in the *Sunday Independent* complained that 'a small circle of racing enthusiasts cornered much of the top-quality stallions and secured a vice-like grip on some of the more desirable breeding horses'.[1075] Flynn argued that the likes of Coolmore had a significant advantage as it used its 'large tax-free cashflow' to buy stallions. In contrast, the less wealthy horse breeders had to 'pool funds' through syndication to purchase stallions.[1076] Such was Coolmore's domination that they had seventeen horses in the

[1070] Morris, *Thoroughbred stallions*, p. 186.
[1071] Ibid.
[1072] Ibid.
[1073] *Irish Farmers Journal*, 10 May 1997.
[1074] Ibid.
[1075] *Sunday Independent*, 16 May 1999.
[1076] Ibid.

top twenty-two-year-olds for 2000; they were also responsible for two of the top three three-year-olds.[1077] But, it was not all adverse Press reporting. For instance, Damien McElroy launched a defense of Coolmore Stud, claiming that the negative publicity was from a ‘few begrudgers’, which should be ignored.[1078] But there was a particular hollowness to McElroy’s defense considering the stark reality of the circumstances as reflected in the following statistics.

Figure 7 (h): Leading flat horse owners winning prize money in Ireland from 2009 to 2021.



Source: *Horse Racing Ireland Factbook* (Kildare, 2009 to 2021), available at https://www.hri.ie/ (30 June 2022).

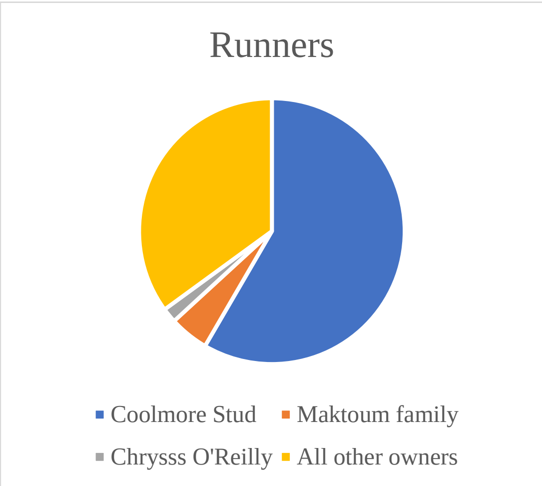
The data was compiled from the top ten leading flat horse owners according to the prize money they accumulated on all Irish racecourses. In the *Horse Racing Ireland Factbooks*, each owner is listed individually in the lists; for this research, each owner’s totals have been combined. Coolmore Stud’s owners include Michael Tabor, Derrick Smith, and Mrs John Magnier. The Maktoum family business includes Sheikh Mohammad, Godolphin and Hamdan Al Maktoum.

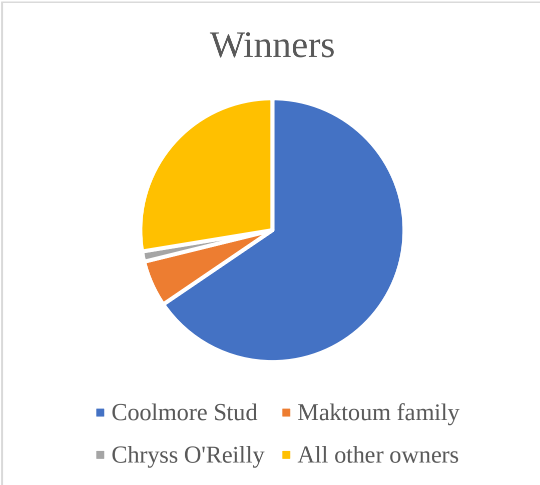
Unlike in Britain, where the Maktoum family dominated the owners’ lists, in Ireland the owners of Coolmore Stud were by far the most dominant. From 2009 to 2021, the owners of Coolmore Stud won €64,668,648 in prize money, which was thirty-nine per cent more than all

[1077] *Irish Independent*, 19 Jan. 2000.
[1078] *Irish Independent*, 16 Dec. 2002.

the other owners combined at €46,264,719.[1079] Coolmore Stud averaged €4,974,511 per annum compared to all other owners who averaged €3,558,825 per annum. The Maktoum family won €8,938,451, an average of €687,573 per annum.[1080] The reality of the dominance of the elite breeders is reflected if combining Coolmore stud's and the Maktoum's winnings which were approximately sixty per cent greater than the aggregated winnings of all other stud owners.[1081]

Figure 7 (i): Runners to winners' ratio from Ireland's top ten flat owner classifications from 2009 to 2021.





Source: *Horse Racing Ireland factbook* 2009 to 2021 available at https://www.hri.ie/ (30 June 2022).

In 2009, Coolmore was criticised for having six runners in the English Derby, which was almost half the field. John Magnier countered that they ran as many horses as possible because it was a race where all the 'qualities of a colt are tested' and 'we run those we feel are entitled to run. It's a chance for them to prove themselves'.[1082] But it was not only the prestigious races Coolmore Stud dominated. For instance, Coolmore entered 17,989 runners in races, at an average of 1,383 per annum or 26.59 per week. In contrast, all other owners (excluding the Maktoum's) combined

[1079] *Horse Racing Ireland Factbook* (Kildare, 2009 to 2021).
[1080] Ibid.
[1081] Ibid.
[1082] *Irish Independent*, 1 June 2009.

totals were 10,790 entries at an average of 827 runners per annum or 15.90 per week.[1083] Coolmore Stud ran approximately sixty-seven per cent more runners than any other stud owner in Ireland every week. The Maktoum's entered 1472 per annum or 0.70 runners per week. O'Reilly ran 553 horses at an average of forty-two per annum or 0.80 per week.[1084] All other owners (including O'Reilly) entered 10,790 runners with 827 per annum or 15.90 per week, which was thirty-eight per cent fewer runners per week than Coolmore Stud.[1085]

These elite owner breeders also dominated Britain and Ireland's stallion and mare markets. This was despite a significant change in Ireland's tax regulations regarding stallion fees in 2008. Andrew Bushe elaborated in the *Irish Examiner*, explaining that this concession in 2006 cost the Exchequer €21.5 million in terms of income tax 'foregone'.[1086] For years influential European politicians lobbied the Irish government to adjust in order to address what was perceived as an unfair advantage held by Irish breeders.[1087] The Irish government resisted but eventually an EU ruling forced them to introduce a new tax regime whereby:

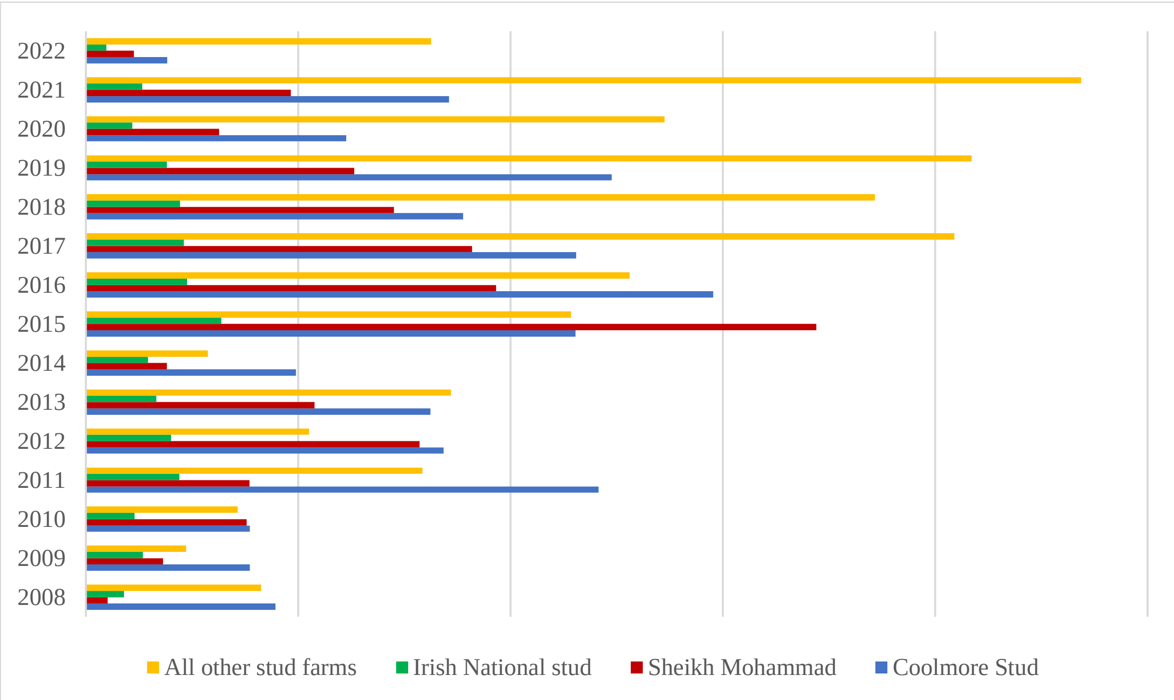
> Stallions are to be treated as stock in trade. This means income from stud fees and profits or gains from the sale of stallions are fully taxable. Corporate owners of stallions will be taxable at 12.5%. Individual owners will be taxed at their marginal income tax rate, whether that is 20% or 40%. A full write-off over 4 years of the initial market value of the stallion is allowed for tax purposes. This write-off arrangement will be available to both stallion owners actively involved in bloodstock breeding as well as syndicate members, although in the latter case, losses from this business will be ring-fenced so that they may only be carried forward against future stallion stud fee income. Transitional arrangements provide for the valuation on 1 August 2008 of the existing stock of stallions at stud. The 4-year write-off is based on this valuation going forward for these stallions.[1088]

Commenting on this change, the Taoiseach Brian Cowen TD (Fianna Fáil) remarked: 'The same broad business principles that apply to any enterprise will apply here. We've come up with a

[1083] *Horse Racing Ireland Factbook* (Kildare, 2009 to 2021).
[1084] Ibid.
[1085] Ibid.
[1086] *Irish Examiner*, 23 May 2008.
[1087] *Irish Independent*, 2 Sept. 2005.
[1088] Revenue Tax and Customs, Taxation of stallion profits and gains - new regime, available at https://www.revenue.ie/en/tax-professionals/tdm/income-tax-capital-gains-tax-corporation-tax/part-07/07-03-05b.pdf (30 June 2022).

scheme that we believe is in line with those proposals'.[1089] Chairman of the Irish Thoroughbred Breeders' Association (ITBA), Joe Hernon, stressed that 'it was unfortunate to lose the exemption, which allowed the industry to grow without having to depend on large grants or other forms of aid'.[1090] However, he did welcome the new proposals arguing that they indicated 'that the Government is trying to help us compete in an exceptionally competitive, high risk and volatile industry, which is rural-based and very labour intensive'.[1091] Despite this change, the elite owner/breeders continued to have a stranglehold on the industry. The following data shows this domination.

Figure 7 (j): Stud farms stallion earnings in Europe from 2008 to 2022.



Source: *Thoroughbred Owner & Breeder* (2008-2010) available at https://issuu.com (22 June 2022), *International Thoroughbred* (2011-2014) https://issuu.com/ (22 June 2022), BLOODSTOCK FOR MORE THAN 100 YEARS https://www.bloodhorse.com/ (22 June 2022).

[1089] *Irish Times*, 2 Feb. 2007.
[1090] Ibid.
[1091] Ibid.

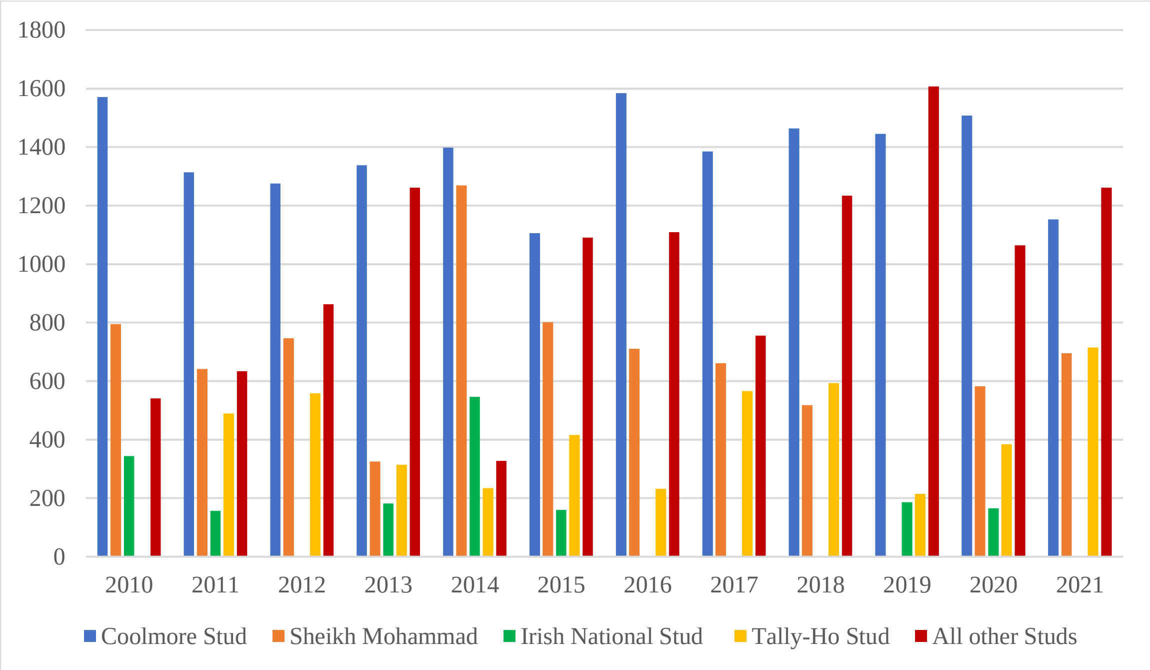
The data was compiled from earnings accumulated by the top fifteen European sires from 2008 to mid-2022. It concentrates on the combined earnings accumulated by stallions in Ireland and Britain at Coolmore Stud and Sheik Mohammad's stud farms, compared to the stallion earnings at the INS and all other stud farms in Ireland and Britain. The combined stallion income of Coolmore Stud was €242,890,574, which was seventy-four per cent of the overall total of all other stud farms, which stood at €328,050,814.[1092] Sheikh Mohammad's stallions earned €156,093,246, which was forty-eight per cent of all other stud farms' earnings.[1093] The data provides indisputable evidence of the domination of elite breeders such as Coolmore Stud and Sheikh Mohammad. From 2008 to 2022, Coolmore had the leading sire in Europe, *Galileo,* on thirteen occasions, and they had the second-placed sire five times with either *Montjeu*, *Danehill Dancer* or *Sadlers Wells.*[1094] In the two years that Coolmore Stud did not top the lists, Sheikh Mohammad provided the leading sire, *Dubawi*, who was also runner-up seven times to *Galileo*. Sheikh Mohammad had forty-six stallions in the top fifteen list from 225 placings. If one combines Coolmore Stud and Sheik Mohammad's totals, they provided forty-six per cent of the stallions in the top fifteen lists. It should also be noted that this domination went beyond the top fifteen spreading down through the top fifty stallions in the records, which are not covered in this research.[1095]

Given its limited resources, it might be contended that the INS performed well with impressive figures of €51,242,727, which was sixteen per cent of all other stud farms' totals. These figures were achieved due to the success of the INS's sire *Invincible Spirit*. In 2014, the pinnacle of this success came when he finished runner-up to Coolmore's prolific sire *Galileo*. *Invincible Spirit* appeared in the top fifteen classifications twelve times in fifteen years. In 2013,

[1092] *Thoroughbred Owner & Breeder* (2008-2010) available at https://issuu.com (22 June 2022), *International Thoroughbred (2011-2014)* https://issuu.com/ (22 June 2022), BLOODSTOCK FOR MORE THAN 100 YEARS https://www.bloodhorse.com/ (22 June 2022).
[1093] Ibid.
[1094] Ibid.
[1095] Ibid.

the INS's *Indian Ridge* finished in sixth place, accumulating €2,823,411; in 2008 and 2009, *Verglas* finished in fifteenth place. Yet, these figures could have been more significant had the INS and the government concentrated on ensuring it was run efficiently. The following statistics from several charts reveal that the INS was not reaching its full potential.

Figure 7 (k): Most in-demand stallions per stud farms in Britain and Ireland.



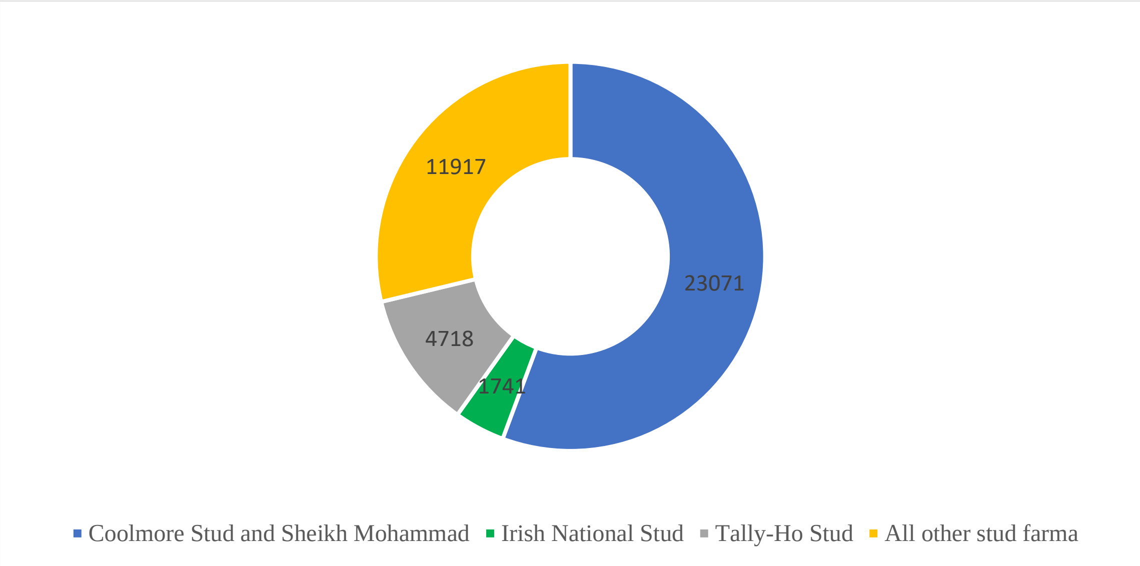
Source: *International Thoroughbred* (2010-2021), available at https://issuu.com/ (22 June 2022).

The data was compiled from Britain's top twenty classifications from 2010 to 2021. Stallions from the elite breeders such as Coolmore Stud and Sheikh Mohammad (including Derrinstown Stud owned by his brother Sheikh Hamdan) dominated. Coolmore Stud covered 15,491 mares, with Sheikh Mohammad's stallions covering 7,748, resulting in a combined total of 23,239. The INS stallions covered 1,741, Tally-Ho Stud's stallions covered 4,718, and all other stud farms covered 11,917 mares.[1096] Coolmore provided ninety-four of the most popular sires; Sheikh Mohammad provided forty-four sires, Tally-Ho Stud twenty-one sires, the INS ten sires and all

[1096] *International Thoroughbred* (2010-2012), available at https://issuu.com/ (22 June 2022).

other studs provided seventy-one of the most popular. The combined totals of Coolmore Stud's and Sheikh Mohammad's stallions were twenty-five per cent higher than the combined totals of the INS, Tally-Ho Stud, and all other stud farms at 18,148.[1097] Only three times in twelve years did the combined totals of the INS, Tally-Ho and all other studs exceed the combined totals of Coolmore Stud and Sheikh Mohammad. This was in 2013 (1,663 mares covered compared to 1757); in 2019 (1,445 mares compared to 2,008), and in 2021 (1,848 mares compared to 1,976). The following data shows the dominations of the elite breeders compared to the other stud farms listed in the top twenty classifications:

Figure 7 (l): Mares covered per stud farms from 2010 to 2020.



Source: *International Thoroughbred* (2010-2021), available at https://issuu.com/ (22 June 2022).

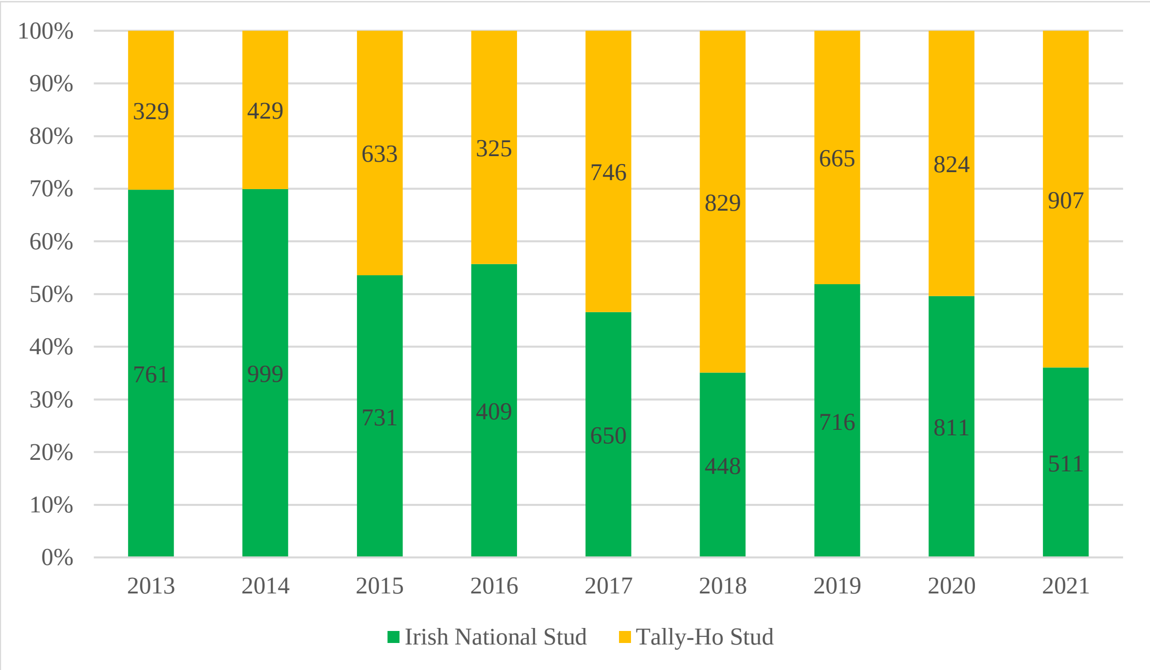
It is interesting to note the performance of Tally-Ho Stud in Mullingar County Westmeath. It was established in the 1970s by Tony and Anne O'Callaghan (a sister of John Magnier). Alayna Cullen tells us that Tally-Ho Stud has 'established itself as one of the leading operators in Europe'.[1098] In 2022, the O'Callaghan's were inducted into the ITBA'S Hall of Fame. The *Westmeath Examiner* hailed this achievement as 'an honour reserved for the giants of the equine

[1097] Ibid.
[1098] Thoroughbred Daily News Europe (TDN) available at https://www.thoroughbreddailynews.com/europe/ (23 June 2022).

industry in this country'.[1099] Coolmore Stud has a close relationship with Tally-Ho Stud. *Bushranger*, owned by Coolmore, retired to stud there in 2008 before moving to Turkey in 2016.[1100] And in 2021, Coolmore purchased the ten-year-old *Vadamos* from Tally-Ho Stud, and he subsequently took up duties as a National Hunt stallion.[1101]

The data shows that Tally-Ho Stud achieved impressive figures with 4,718 mares covered, 171% higher than the figures achieved by stallions in the top twenty classifications from the INS.[1102] The following chart compares mares covered at the INS and Tally-Ho Stud.

Figure 7 (n): All mares covered by the Irish National Stud and Tally-Ho Stud



Source: *International Thoroughbred* (2013 to 2021), available at https://issuu.com/ (22 June 2022).

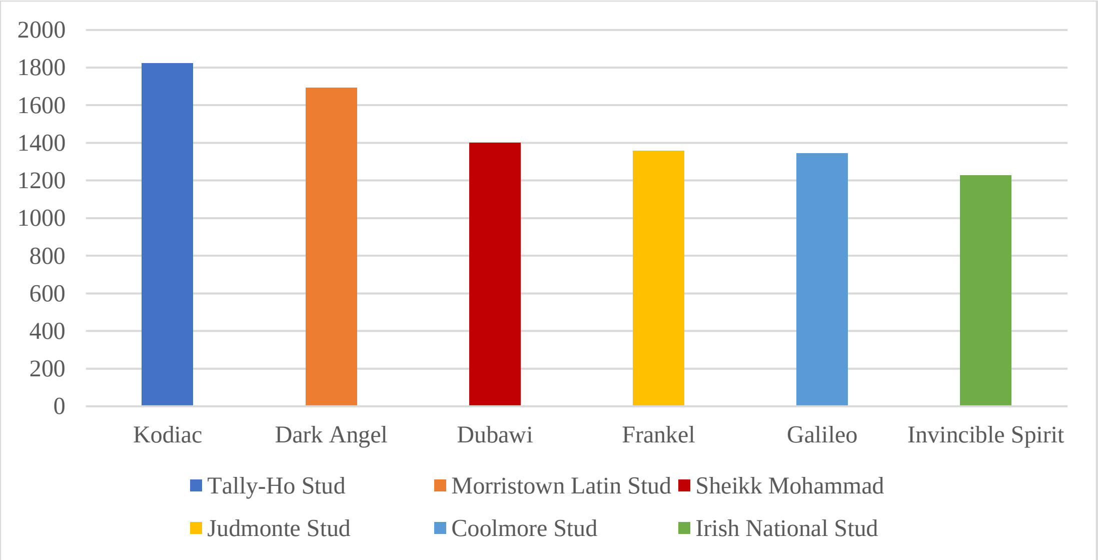
Unlike the previous charts, this was compiled from stallions (including those outside the top twenty lists) standing at the INS and Tally-Ho Stud from 2013 to 2021. Seventy-three INS stallions covered 5,496 mares compared to forty-nine Tally-Ho stallions covering 5,054

[1099] *Westmeath Examiner*, 28 Feb. 2022.
[1100] *Racing Post*, 25 May 2016.
[1101] *Racing Post*, 14 Jan. 2021.
[1102] *International Thoroughbred* (2010-2021), available at https://issuu.com/ (22 June 2022).

mares.[1103] Significantly, Tally-Ho Stud achieved these figures with thirty-three per cent fewer stallions than the INS. Tally-Ho Stud stallions sired more mares in four of the nine years listed, but the overall number of mares covered by Tally-Ho Stud stallions was eight per cent lower than the INS. The highest-performing stallions were *Invincible Spirit* covering 1,228 mares, and *Kodiac* with 1,824 mares.[1104] Significantly, *Kodiac's* covering statistics were forty-eight per cent higher than *Invincible Spirit's*. *Kodia*c covered an average of sixty-six mares more per annum than *Invincible Spirit*. In fact, *Kodiac's* covering statistics were significantly ahead of all other sires. For example, he was seventeen per cent higher than his nearest rival, *Dubawi*.[1105]

The stallion cover fee for *Kodiac* and *Invincible Spirit* was also notably different, with *Kodiac* forty-six per cent lower at an average of €57,000 per cover compared to *Invincible Spirit* at an average of €106,000 per cover.[1106] Concerning stallion fees for the remaining sires, the INS and Tally-Ho charged similar cover fees from €1,000 to €25,000 per cover.[1107] It is revealing to see how *Invincible Spirit* performed compared to elite stallions including Yeomanstown Stud's *Dark Angel* and Godolphin's *Dubawi*.

Figure 7 (o): *Invincible Spirit's* covering statistics compared to other leading sires from 2013 to 2021.



[1103] *International Thoroughbred* (Dec. 2013 to Dec. 2021), available at https://issuu.com/ (22 June 2022).
[1104] Ibid.
[1105] *International Thoroughbred* (Dec. 2013 to Dec. 2021), available at https://issuucom/ (22 June 2022).
[1106] Ibid.
[1107] Ibid.

Source: *International Thoroughbred* (2013 to 2021), available at https://issuu.com/ (22 June 2022).

This data was compiled from the highest performing stallions in the classifications at the leading stud farms in Britain and Ireland. It was evident that the INS's top sire *Invincible Spirt* was not as in-demand as the other highest-performing sires. *Invincible Spirit* covered twenty-seven per cent fewer mares than *Dark Angel* and twelve per cent less than *Dubawi* per annum.

7.13. Conclusion

The period covered in this chapter was characterised by the often-chaotic nature of how the INS operated. The INS directors spent years painstakingly attempting to source a prestigious stallion, and they were extremely fortunate to unearth a stallion of the calibre of *Ahonoor*a. No sooner was the horse in the fields at Tully when the INS decided to cash in and sell their prized asset. No excuses justified this sale. *Ahonoora* was everything a breeding business could wish for, a very successful sire and a ready-made cash machine. The stallion should have been kept at the INS to develop its business and for the greater good of Irish horse breeding. To sell *Ahoonora* to one of its biggest competitors, Coolmore Stud, defeated the purpose of the INS and strengthened the elite breeders who had already suffocated the market, which was ironic given that the *First Report of the Irish National Stud* (1990) recommended that the INS should acquire a prestigious stallion to improve its fortunes.

From the late 1980s, there was a dramatic rise in the domination of elite breeders like Coolmore Stud and the Maktoum family. This raised concerns for experts like Michael MacCormac, Tony Morris, and John Lynam. All individuals with the foresight to realise that these developments negatively impacted the long term. And over the next two decades, their fears were confirmed. As noted earlier, by the late 1990s, Coolmore Stud held seventy-three per cent of the breeding industry and forty-two per cent of the £50 million in stallion nominations.[1108]

[1108] *Sunday Independent*, 5 May 1996.

And by the turn of the century, Coolmore Stud had seventeen of the top twenty-two-year-olds in Europe.[1109] Since 2009, Coolmore and the Maktoum family's combined winning race prize money was sixty per cent higher than the winnings of all other stud farms in the UK and Ireland in the top ten list recorded in the *Horse Racing Ireland Factbook*.[1110]

Additionally, since 2008, the combined income of stallion earnings at Coolmore Stud and the Maktoum's from the top fifteen lists in Ireland and the United Kingdom stands at €398 million compared to €328 million of the other stud farms combined.[1111] This €70 million difference in stallion earnings is a disturbing reflection of where the industry stands today. And it must be noted that these figures are only from the top fifteen in the list. Therefore, it would be reasonable to assume that this pattern of domination is reflected across the rest of the records. In Ireland, Coolmore dominates the number of daily runners sent to racecourses standing at sixty-seven per cent more than any other stud farm.[1112] In other words, the horse racing industry has been commandeered by elite breeders for their own demands without considering any other sectional interests. This complete domination was achieved by a ruthless strategy whereby horse breeding has become akin to the mass production witnessed on industrial factory lines. But we do not know very much detail on the day-to-day inner workings of these organisations. In 2016, Alan Conway published *Coolmore Stud: Ireland's greatest sporting success* (Cork, 2016). This publication is not a critical assessment of the history of Coolmore Stud and its owners. It is a carefully crafted publication for the racing enthusiast rather than an academic audience. And this is problematic; private business ventures are entitled to some levels of privacy, but with Horse Racing Ireland allocating €72.8 million from the Irish government's Budget for 2023, transparency from those within the industry is expected.

[1109] *Irish Independent*, 19 Jan. 2000.
[1110] *Horse Racing Ireland Factbook* (Kildare, 2009 to 2021).
[1111] *Thoroughbred Owner & Breeder* (2008-2010) available at https://issuu.com (22 June 2022), *International Thoroughbred (2011-2014)* https://issuu.com/ (22 June 2022), BLOODSTOCK FOR MORE THAN 100 YEARS https://www.bloodhorse.com/ (22 June 2022).
[1112] *Horse Racing Ireland Factbook* (Kildare, 2009 to 2021).

What is evident is that benefactors with limitless resources support those at an elite level. As Morris argued earlier, the elites treat thoroughbreds like commodities whose shelf life solely depends on instant success. Thoroughbreds failing to meet the standards in super-fast time faced an uncertain future as their replacement loomed large in the shadows. Meanwhile, most in the industry can never realistically hope to compete at this level as they need access to unlimited resources to implement similar policies. Furthermore, if this domination continues, the industry will become so exclusive that there will be no opportunities for those outside the elite breeders to compete. And this will result in more and more breeders leaving and becoming obsolete. But if remedial action is taken and policies are implemented, the industry can become far more balanced through much broader interaction and cooperation from the elite breeders.

An example of what could be achieved through a more balanced industry was evident through the example of the Tally-Ho Stud. Initially, this stud farm was a small business, like many other farms nationwide. But the support of Coolmore Stud launched Tally-Ho Stud into a different stratosphere. They are now a much larger and more competitive business model, one that is renowned throughout Europe. Ironically, this was achieved because of the close family relationship between John Magnier and Tally-Ho owner Anne O'Callaghan. However, for this to happen outside of this sphere, it would take a concerted effort on behalf of those who resource the elite breeders in the industry. In any event, the elites would no doubt argue that it is not their responsibility to ensure a level playing field within the industry. However, this is where government intervention is needed. A set of rules and regulations are required to encourage and compel more interaction between the elite investors and the breeders operating on the periphery. One cannot deny the free reign the elites have in the industry.

For decades the Irish government appeased the racing industries elites through tax concessions on stallion fees. And repeatedly, these elites, alongside prominent Irish politicians, have become embroiled in controversial incidents. Tribunals and inquiries at a horrendous cost to the taxpayer in Ireland revealed the unsavoury characteristics of these individuals. Tax avoidance, questionable business dealings, and in some cases especially pertinent to Charles Haughey, political corruption was the order of the day. Unfortunately, as revealed in the following chapter, the National Stud did not escape the contagion of this behaviour.

Chapter Eight:

Another National Stud Act but governance issues and conflicts of interest place the INS at the risk of closure (1997-2021)

8.1. Introduction

Following on from the troubling legacies discussed in the last chapter, the twenty-first century's first decade proved turbulent for the INS. Contentious incidents raised critical questions about transparency, and accountability, at the semi-state company. Repeatedly, the Department of Agriculture expressed concerns about how the INS was being run and cautioned the INS board of directors and management on rigidly following governance rules and regulations. Matters were compounded by very controversial incidents involving INS staff expenses, allegations of workplace bullying, and conflicts of interest which cast the INS in a highly negative light. This chapter examines these incidents in detail, with conclusions drawn.

8.2. The National Stud Act (2000)

In 1998, David Shubotham's successor at the INS was serving board member, Chryss O'Reilly. O'Reilly ran Castlemartin Stud farm in County Kildare with Anthony O'Reilly, the owner of *Independent Newspapers*. They also owned Petra Bloodstock agency, one of France's leading horse breeding firms. In 2007, the O'Reilly's set a record for the price paid for agricultural land, paying €7.4 million for Hollyhill Stud farm in Naas in County Kildare.[1113] But from 2008, their business interests were severely hit by the financial downturn, with the Press speculating they lost over €400 million in the porcelain and glass company Waterford Wedgewood. As a result of the downturn, they were forced to sell *Independent Newspapers* to media mogul Denis O'Brien.[1114] O'Reilly was born in America, the daughter of a wealthy Greek shipping merchant, John Goulandris, and according to Conor Ryan, she 'proved to have a wonderful talent for

[1113] *Irish Independent*, 10 Oct. 2007.
[1114] *Financial Times*, 14 July. 2014.

selecting and breeding horses'.[1115] A testament to their commitment to the industry is that they owned 230 thoroughbreds on several stud farms in Ireland, Britain, France, Australia, South Africa, and the United States.[1116]

To compete at the highest level, O'Reilly and the INS directors lobbied the government to increase the share capital at the Stud. And in late 2000, the government debated legislation to increase it from £10 to £25 million and to increase the INS borrowing capacity from £5 to £30 million. During the Seanad Éireann debate on the National Stud Act, Minister Joe Walsh lavished praise on O'Reilly:

> [she] has an encyclopaedic knowledge of pedigrees and bloodlines worldwide, and she has used her excellent contacts to acquire valuable animals for the stud. She is a unique asset to the horseracing industry and to the stud, and we are fortunate that she gives of her time as chairperson of the board of the stud.[1117]

Walsh was also complimentary of the INS board of directors, the manager of the INS, Clarke, and his staff, arguing that they were doing an 'outstanding job'.[1118] These comments were in stark contrast to some of the arguments made by Walsh's political colleagues who were critical of the INS stallion fees. For instance, Paul Bradford TD (Fine Gael) argued that the small breeders in Ireland could not afford the main stallion cover fees charged by the INS.[1119] At the time, the INS had seven main stallions ranging in prices from top-priced *Indian Ridge* at £30,000 per cover to the lowest at £2,500 for *Ridgewood Ben*.[1120] Bradford argued that the lowest stallion fee of £2,500 was too much for the small breeders and that the government should 'look more sympathetically' at the circumstances because the small breeders were the 'mainstay of the

[1115] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 51.
[1116] *Irish Independent*, 10 Oct. 2007.
[1117] Seanad Éireann debate, 14 Dec. 2000, vol. 164, no. 21, National Stud (Amendment) Bill, 2000: second stage, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2000-12-14/6 (16 Apr. 2022).
[1118] Dáil Éireann debate, 1 Oct. 1998, vol. 494, no. 21, State Property Bill, second stage, available at at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (3. May 2022).
[1119] Ibid.
[1120] *Irish Independent*, 19 Jan. 1999.

industry' and deserved proper support structures.[1121] He complained that they were given no adequate state assistance, whereas other agricultural sectors received considerable support. Bradford reminisced that the INS was once 'the beacon of the Irish racing industry,' but it was no longer the case, and the government needed to address this issue.[1122] He stressed that the industry did not regard the INS on the same level as other private stud farms in Ireland. And he also highlighted the elite aspect of flat horse racing, whereby the extremely wealthy owners were winning most of the prize money, and so argued for an overhaul of the industry to afford more opportunities to the small breeders.[1123]

Other TDs voiced similar concerns. Jack Wall TD (Labour) from Kildare argued that the small breeders felt excluded, and the Thoroughbred Breeders Association did not represent their interests.[1124] Brendan McGahan TD (Fine Gael) stressed that the domination of Coolmore Stud in the market resulted in little manoeuvre for these breeders to compete.[1125] Senator John Dardis (Progressive Democrats) argued:

> The National Stud Farm has a duty to serve the smaller people within the industry, the vast majority of whom have only one or two mares or a stallion or a few mares. Anyone with one or two mares should have access to horses at the National Stud Farm for a reasonable price. It should serve a national function, recognise that fact and serve the industry.[1126]

And Senator Mary E.F Henry (Independent), lamented the high cost of stallion cover fees which she claimed was causing a 'great crisis' for the small breeders, and she questioned if the INS had a policy which would stop these breeders from being 'squeezed out' of the market.[1127]

[1121] Dáil Éireann debate, I Oct. 1998, vol. 494, no. 3, State Property Bill, second stage, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (3. May 2022).
[1122] Dáil Éireann debate, 23 Nov. 2000, vol. 526, no. 5, National Stud (Amendment) Bill, second stage (resumed), available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (5 May 2022).
[1123] Ibid.
[1124] Ibid.
[1125] Ibid.
[1126] Seanad Éireann debate, 1 Dec. 1998, vol. 157, no. 9, State Property Bill, second and subsequent stages, available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (3. May 2022).
[1127] Seanad Éireann debate, 14 Dec. 2022, vol. 164, no. 21, National Stud Bill (Amendment) Bill, second stage, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (6 May 2022).

Walsh did not adequately respond to these concerns, which in part reflected the poor attitude of consecutive governments towards the small breeders. Instead, he lavished praise on the quality of the bloodstock at stud farms in Ireland such as Coolmore, Kildangan, and the INS, which he argued were the 'envy of virtually every country worldwide'.[1128] Yet, the top-quality bloodstock was realistically only within the financial reach of the elite breeders. Moreover, the issue of the lack of interaction with the small breeders is a repeated problem reflected across several decades since the establishment of the INS. Despite different governments and the various changes in directors at the INS, the small breeders did not play a significant role, with several different administrations not addressing this issue sufficiently.

During the debates, there were accusations of cronyism in the selection of whom gained access to the thoroughbred breeding course at the INS. The chairman of Sligo racetrack, John Perry, claimed:

> This course was effectively a closed shop as there were only twenty-three places available on it. If one wants to secure a place on the course, it depends on who one knows. If one is friendly with a well-known trainer or one of the inner circle, then one is guaranteed a place on the course. This is wrong. The course should be opened up so that people from disadvantaged areas who have an ability are given an opportunity to secure a place.[1129]

Walsh did not directly respond to Perry's comments, but he did promise to seek better standards of education and training for the industry in the future.[1130] This was not the last of the allegations of questionable governance at the INS. In the following decade, accusations of staff bullying led to court actions, conflict of interests, and controversial management expenses dominating headlines in the Press. All of which damaged the INS's reputation.

[1128] Dáil Éireann debate, I Oct. 1998, vol. 494, no. 3, State Property Bill, second stage available at House of the Oireachtas, https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (3. May 2022).
[1129] Dáil Éireann debate, 23 Nov. 2000, vol. 526, no. 5, National Stud (Amendment) Bill, second stage (resumed) available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (6 May 2022).
[1130] Ibid.

8.3. Governance issues, expenses, and bullying allegations

Throughout the 2000s, various Ministers for Agriculture and representatives of the Department of Agriculture constantly reminded the INS of its responsibilities to ensure that all governance procedures were being carried out at the INS as per the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. The Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies covers financial aspects, audits, procurement, management structures, budgeting system, capital expenditure, employee wages and salary policies, and the Code of Business Conduct for Directors and Employees.[1131] The Department of Agriculture was concerned about mismanagement issues and possible business conflicts of interest at the INS. In several correspondences with the then Minister for Agriculture Mary Coughlan TD (Fianna Fáil), O'Reilly confirmed that they strictly followed procedures under the Code of Practice.[1132] But as time passed, the Department of Agriculture's concerns deepened.

On 28 May 2008, Emer McGeough emailed Clarke: 'I am reminding you once again of the continuing need to ensure adherence to these guidelines. I attach a copy of the Guidelines for your attention'.[1133] Three days later, Clarke confirmed that he had read the guidelines and that they would be followed.[1134] A month later, at the INS Annual General Meeting, Minister Brendan Smith TD (Fianna Fáil) cautioned the INS board:

> I would like to draw your attention to a number of "housekeeping issues" which may appear mundane but are nevertheless important to the ongoing successful functioning and public reputation of the Stud. These issues are encapsulated under the term Corporate Governance. I know that the Board is very conscious of the relevant Guidelines, and I

1131 Correspondence between Chryss O'Reilly and the Minister for Agriculture, Mary Coughlan, 19 Dec. 2005, Conor Ryan (Political correspondent with the *Irish Examiner*), Freedom of Information Request, 26 Aug. 2010, FOI/10/095.
1132 Ibid.
1133 Email from Emer McKeogh, the Department of Agriculture to John Clarke, 28 May 2008, 15:53 pm, Conor Ryan (Political correspondent with the *Irish Examiner*), Freedom of Information Request, 26 Aug. 2010, FOI/10/095.
1134 Email from John Clarke to Emer McKeogh, the Department of Agriculture, 1 June 2008, 10:04 pm, Conor Ryan (Political correspondent with the *Irish Examiner*), Freedom of Information Request, 26 Aug. 2010, FOI/10/095.

> would urge you to continue to pay attention to the application of the Guidelines for the Corporate Governance of State Bodies.[1135]

Fuelling these concerns were the following events at the INS. In December 2008, independent auditors investigated the INS expense accounts. They conducted their investigations under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI, 1997). They found that between January and November 2008, Clarke, as CEO, claimed expenses of €46,927 for hotels and meals and €21,713 for flights, travel, and parking.[1136] Ryan illuminates: 'Twenty-three per cent of these expenses were not accompanied by receipts, and of the seventy-seven per cent which had receipts, thirty-two per cent did not have a detailed breakdown as the credit card slip was the receipt'.[1137] When Clarke's expenses became public knowledge, the pressure intensified. In May 2009, *The Irish Examiner* led with the following front-page headline: 'Minister needs to get tough with stud board'.[1138] And making matters worse, this happened when the financial circumstances at the INS were precarious.

In July 2009, such were the extreme financial circumstances at the INS that at a meeting with the Department of Agriculture, questions were raised on its viability in the long term and whether an injection of new capital would change the company's fortunes.[1139] Following the INS Annual General Meeting later that month, Smith left the board in no doubt about where it stood:

> In the current general financial climate, I must advise you that the Stud cannot look to the stakeholder (i.e., the State) to make funds available from the Exchequer. Accordingly, the Company will have to rely on its own resources into the future. Clearly, the current level of losses will have to be curtailed, and I urge the Board to take all possible steps to ensure that this happens.[1140]

1135 Statement from the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Brendan Smith at the Annual General Meeting of the Irish National Stud, 27 June 2008, Conor Ryan (Political correspondent with the *Irish Examiner*), Freedom of Information Request, 26 Aug. 2010, FOI/10/095.
1136 *Irish Examiner,* 4 Oct. 2012.
1137 Ryan, *Stallion, and power,* p. 208.
1138 *Irish Examiner,* 21 May 2009.
1139 Meeting with representatives of the Department of Agriculture and the Irish National Stud, 2 July 2009, Agriculture House, Conor Ryan (Political correspondent with the Irish Examiner), Freedom of Information Request, 26 Aug. 2010, FOI/10/095.
1140 Statement from the Minister for Agriculture at the Annual General Meeting of the Irish National Stud Company Ltd, 14 July 2009, Conor Ryan (Political correspondent with the Irish Examiner), Freedom of Information Request, 26 Aug. 2010, FOI/10/095.

At the time, a worldwide economic downturn severely affected the bloodstock industry. With the value of thoroughbreds falling sharply and the costs associated with maintaining stud farms dramatically increasing, this impacted the INS. From 2004 to 2009 (excluding 2007), it showed trading losses, with its most severe loss of over €4 million recorded in 2009. O'Reilly explained that the losses were partly due to a new system of how mares were covered at stud farms. Previously, mares spent six to eight weeks at a stud farm, but the industry now operated 'walk in coverings' where the mares were covered immediately on arrival and left immediately afterwards, which eliminated the income from their boarding and keep.[1141] A measure of the impacts of this change is that walk-in covers rose from ten per cent to seventy per cent of business by 2010.[1142] But O'Reilly attributed most of the trading loss to the 'depreciation and impairment of stallion shares and breeding stock in line with the downward market trend'.[1143] Bad debts at the INS also increased because some of the INS debtors were in precarious financial positions. At the end of 2008, the INS was owed €6 million in outstanding stallion cover fees.[1144] But O'Reilly contended that they could be trusted to pay.[1145] And despite this optimism, the following year, the INS engaged a legal firm to collect outstanding debts, which did result in collections being up on 2008 totals.[1146] But the difficulties remained; Osborne stressed: 'We are trying to work with people on this issue as many are in a difficult position. In certain places, the money is simply not available, and we must assist the individuals in question to get their animals to market

[1141] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 December 2009, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (6 July 2022).
[1142] Joint Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food debate, 9 June 2010, Irish Bloodstock Industry: Discussion with the Irish National Stud available at House of the Oireachtas https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (9 July 2022).
[1143] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 December 2009, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (6 July 2022).
[1144] Meeting with representatives of the Department of Agriculture and the Irish National Stud, Agriculture House, 2 July 2009, Conor Ryan (Political correspondent with the *Irish Examiner*), Freedom of Information Request, 26 Aug. 2010, FOI/10/095.
[1145] Meeting with Minister Brendan Smith and representatives of the Irish National Stud, 22 Apr. 2009, Conor Ryan (Political correspondent with the Irish Examiner), Freedom of Information Request, 26 Aug. 2010, FOI/10/095.
[1146] Meeting with representatives of the Department of Finance and the Department of Agriculture and the Irish National Stud, Agriculture House, 29 Apr. 2010, Conor Ryan (Political correspondent with the *Irish Examiner*), Freedom of Information Request, 26 Aug. 2010, FOI/10/095.

and do the best we can to generate money again'.[1147] But apart from the financial difficulties, further Press revelations on Clarke's expenses increased the pressure on the directors at the INS.

In September 2009, another article in the *Irish Times* focused on Clarke's expenses over two years from June 2002 to October 2004, which totalled €85,000.[1148] Expenses including flights and several chauffeur trips for Clarke and his wife, Monica, were called into question. These trips included a trip from Chicago to Lexington costing €1800 in 2002 while Clarke was on INS business.[1149] Also, over three weeks in Ireland, expenses were claimed for personal trips for his wife Monica to Humewood Castle in County Wicklow, a trip to the K-Club in County Kildare and Dublin Airport costing a combined total of €950.[1150] And some months later, in May 2010, the *Irish Times* revealed that over eight years from 2002, Clarke's expenses totalled €800,000, which covered flights, accommodation, and car hire.[1151]

Clarke defended the expenses arguing that no first-class flights were used and that he had the full approval of the INS board of directors. This was substantiated by the INS secretary, John McStay, who confirmed that 'the board was happy to stand over all the expenses'.[1152] But the Minister for Agriculture, Brendan Smith, had quite a different reaction. On the same day the article appeared in the *Irish Times*, Smith wrote to O'Reilly demanding 'a full report on the matters therein as a matter of urgency'.[1153] A month later, Smith again wrote to O'Reilly, this time to remind the INS of the importance that all State bodies operate 'in an efficient manner to make the most of constrained resources' and that it was of vital importance that the INS

[1147] Joint Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food debate, 9 June 2010, Irish Bloodstock Industry: Discussion with the Irish National Stud, available at House of the Oireachtas https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (9 July 2022).
[1148] *Irish Times*, 18 Sept. 2009.
[1149] Ibid.
[1150] Ibid.
[1151] *Irish Times*, 21 May 2010.
[1152] *Irish Times*, 18 Sept. 2009.
[1153] Correspondence between the Minister for Agriculture Brendan Smith and Chryss O'Reilly 18 Sept. 2009, (Ref: 12/60/70), Conor Ryan (Political correspondent with the *Irish Examiner*), Freedom of Information Request, 26 Aug. 2010, FOI/10/095.

'complied fully with all the requirements of the revised Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies'.[1154]

In handwritten correspondence with Smith, O'Reilly defended Clarke arguing that the expenses may seem 'strange' or 'unusual' to people unfamiliar with the horse breeding industry, but they were not 'unduly large considering the nature and scale of the business conducted as a result of the trips'.[1155] In an attempt to play down the seriousness of the matter, she argued that one season of *Indian Ridge's* cover earnings would pay for seventy-five per cent of a full year's expenses for Clarke and his wife.[1156] Concerning the chauffeur services, she argued that this was the 'sensible' option as it meant that Clarke could 'participate in events without distraction'.[1157] On his wife's expense bill, she argued that her approval was '…one of my better decisions as chairman. This is an international business, and, in this context, we must regard ourselves as an international company'.[1158] She also accused the Press of sensationalism and that they had 'no understanding of the nature of the INS' business', which she claimed was always 'conducted in a transparent and honourable way, and compliant with governance guidelines.'[1159] But Clarke's expenses remained contentious, to the extent that in September 2009 he announced his intention to retire as the CEO taking effect from January 2010. He claimed that he informed O'Reilly of his decision to retire weeks previously and that the Press revelations had very little to do with his decision: 'For some time, I have been considering going out on my own as a bloodstock

[1154] Correspondence between the Minister for Agriculture Brendan Smith and Chryss O'Reilly, 15. Oct. 2009, Conor Ryan (Political correspondent with the *Irish Examiner*), Freedom of Information Request, 26 Aug. 2010, FOI/10/095.
[1155] *Irish Examiner*, 4 Oct. 2012; Correspondence between Chryss O'Reilly and the Minister for Agriculture Brendan Smith, 18 May 2010, Conor Ryan (Political correspondent with the *Irish Examiner*), Freedom of Information Request, 26 Aug. 2010, FOI/10/095.
[1156] Correspondence between Chryss O'Reilly and the Minister for Agriculture Brendan Smith, 18 May 2010, Conor Ryan (Political correspondent with the *Irish Examiner*), Freedom of Information Request, 26 Aug. 2010, FOI/10/095
[1157] *Irish Examiner*, 4 Oct. 2012.
[1158] Ibid.
[1159] Correspondence between Chryss O'Reilly and the Minister for Agriculture Brendan Smith, 18 May 2010, Conor Ryan (Political correspondent with the *Irish Examiner*), Freedom of Information Request, 26 Aug. 2010, FOI/10/095

consultant, and I feel the time is right now as the Stud has had many successes in the last few years'.[1160] Clarke was offered a financial retirement package from the INS, and he accepted it. Shortly afterwards, he began his new role as an independent bloodstock consultant.

Other factors may have been at play in determining Clarke's decision to retire. During his time at the INS, he was involved in civil actions with former staff following allegations of bullying in the workplace. Throughout 2009 and 2010, a legal action involving an employee received widespread Press coverage. Julie Lynch, a stallion nominations manager at the INS, accused him of harassment and bullying.[1161] In 2006, Lynch joined the INS, having previously worked for Coolmore Stud. Lynch claimed that from September 2007, Clarke began a 'campaign of victimisation, bullying harassment and humiliation'.[1162] Clarke strenuously denied the allegations, and he claimed it was her who was 'argumentative and difficult to manage'.[1163] In any event, matters were finally settled on 24 May 2010 when Lynch settled her case in the High Court. Ryan notes that this agreement 'was amicable', but the terms remained confidential; the INS publicly announced that it 'regretted any injuries caused to Ms Lynch' and praised her work ethic and contribution over the years.[1164] And they released the following statement:

> The parties have come to an amicable agreement in full and final settlement of all issues between them on confidential terms. Ms Lynch has elected to leave the position of stallion's nominations manager with the Irish National Stud to pursue interests of her own. The parties will not be making any further comment in relation to the matter.[1165]

In March 2010, Justine McCarthy reported in the *Sunday Times* that Lynch's case was not an isolated incident and that there were five other complaints over seven years where workers were paid compensation after allegations of bullying by a senior employee (unidentified) at the

[1160] *Irish Times*, 18 Sept. 2009.
[1161] *Sunday Tribune*, 23 May 2010.
[1162] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 137.
[1163] *Irish Examiner*, 15 Jan. 2010.
[1164] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 249.
[1165] *Racing Post*, 25 May 2011.

Stud.[1166] And in further developments, the *Sunday Tribune* speculated the INS paid €700,000 in legal fees and compensation for employee claims from 2005 to 2010.[1167] Indeed, three months later, at an INS board meeting, concerns were expressed at the 'level of professional fees' associated with legal matters arising from the Clarke/Lynch case.[1168] There were other historical legacies of court proceedings against Clarke.

In 2004, the INS's tourism and farm manager, Pat Mullarkey, took a High Court action against him. While waiting for the court case to be heard, the INS cut Mullarkey's illness pay. He reacted by taking a case to the Labour Court, where Justice Peter Kelly ruled that the INS pay him for a minimum of six months or until the legal action for damages against the Stud was heard in court. Kelly was 'astonished' that the INS did 'not appear to have conditions relating to sick pay entitlement documented clearly and concisely' as per the standards of a public company.[1169] On the issue of the damages case, he ruled that Mullarkey had grounds for a full hearing: 'I am satisfied there is a serious issue for trial in that regard'.[1170] The INS took note and settled the case. In December 2004, they paid Mullarkey €142,109 compensation, with the legal bills totalling €220,741.[1171] And in 2008, a compensation claim was awarded to Andrew Lacey, an agricultural horticulturist at the INS. He received €120,000 in an out-of-court settlement, and the legal fees for the case cost €220,000.[1172] There is no record of what INS staff member this action was against. When questioned by the Press, McStay confirmed that 'there have been bullying complaints…some of them have been resolved, and there are confidentiality clauses attached to all of them. That's not an attempt to silence people but the normal procedure in the legal process'.[1173]

[1166] *Sunday Times* (London), 28 Mar. 2010.
[1167] *Sunday Tribune*, 23 May 2010.
[1168] Minutes of the board meeting of the Irish National Stud, 3 August 2010 at Tully, County Kildare.
[1169] *Irish Independent*, 1 July 2004.
[1170] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 81.
[1171] Ibid., pp 81 to 82.
[1172] *Sunday Tribune*, 23 May 2010.
[1173] *Sunday Times*, 28 Mar. 2010.

As a result of these incidents, the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, Bernard Allen TD (Fine Gael), argued that the INS needed to consist of a 'strong boardroom' to ensure that it adhered to the practice expected of State Bodies on governance issues.[1174] Michael Creed TD (Fine Gael) added even more pressure when he called for the resignations of the entire board (apart from O'Reilly) because of the 'magnitude of the failures of corporate governance' regulations.[1175] The Minister for Agriculture Smith took action by appointing new members to the INS board of directors. This included horse trainer Jessica Harrington, Dr Sean Brady, the former CEO of the Irish Dairy Board and PJ Fitzpatrick, an executive business coach with Praesta Ireland. Harrington replaced Patricia O'Kelly, who had retired in December 2009. Kelly cited the failure of the INS to acquire *Sea the Stars* as the reason for her decision to retire from the Board (more on this later).[1176] Brady filled the post on the board vacated by Osborne. Fitzpatrick replaced Mick Leavy, who had been suffering from ill health.[1177] Smith stressed that the new appointments of Brady and Harrington 'brought a wealth of business and bloodstock experience', and he was confident that the new directors would be 'of considerable benefit to the Stud' in order to 'maintain a clear focus on governance issues'.[1178]

Clarke was replaced as the INS CEO by another board member John Osborne who was the son of former CEO, Michael. In 1987, Osborne had graduated from Veterinary College at University College Dublin and had years of experience working in equine hospitals in Kentucky, Wiltshire, and the Curragh. In 1996, he was appointed to the board of directors of Doncaster Bloodstock Sales. The following year he was appointed to the INS board, and on his elevation to the CEO. he stated:

> It is just like going home since our family lived there when I was a teenager, and I went to school in Kildare town…The INS has a huge role to play in introducing people to the world

[1174] *Irish Examiner*, 21 May 2010.
[1175] *Irish Times*, 27 May 2010.
[1176] *Irish Examiner*, 31 May 2010.
[1177] Minutes of the board meeting of the Irish National Stud, 24 June 2010 at Tully, County Kildare.
[1178] *Irish Independent*, 10 June 2010.

> of bloodstock breeding, an industry for which Ireland is rightly famous. The Germans produce Porsche, the Italians produce Ferrari, while we produce racehorses.[1179]

O'Reilly welcomed Osborne as CEO, and she looked forward to continuing 'growth under his leadership' because he 'brought a unique sense of personal involvement' and stressed his 'innovative ideas for the future will take the stud forward and build on its successes during this challenging period'.[1180] One of Osborne's first tasks was to address governance issues and explain recent controversies at the INS.

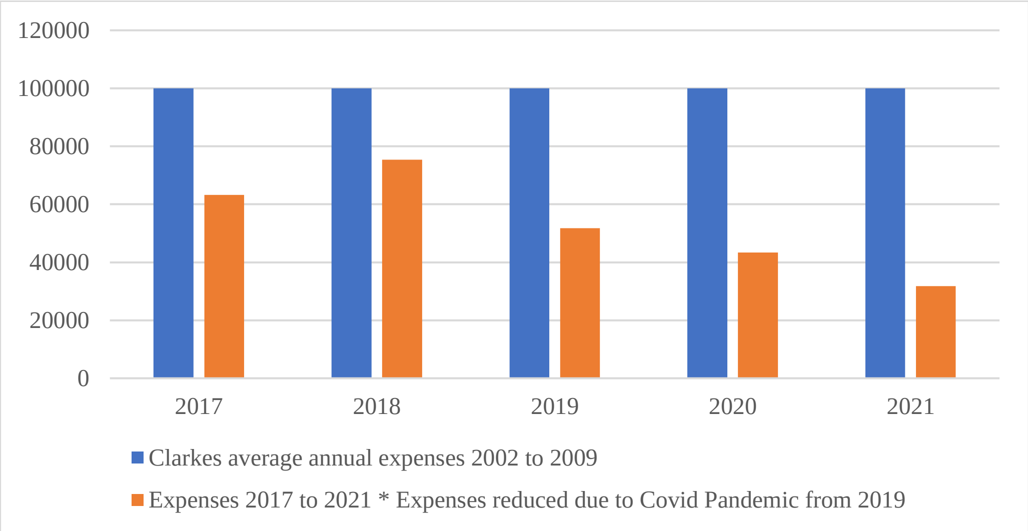
In January 2010, Smith met with the INS and their accountants, Deloitte & Touche. This was the first meeting with Osborne as the new CEO; others in attendance included McStay and O'Reilly. Smith advised that human resources matters should be dealt with by the INS board of directors, and only if the matter was affecting the reputation, administrative or financial stability of the INS should it be brought to his attention'.[1181] Smith was also concerned that there 'was no clarity of roles and authority of the senior staff', and he hoped the new CEO, would address these issues.[1182] In June, Osborne appeared before a Joint Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, where they discussed the INS. Creed argued:

> If we are to have a clean slate, it is time for a full, comprehensive and independent analysis of all the issues in the public arena, those being corporate governance, bullying and harassment, management practices and conflicts of interests…As a new CEO, Mr Osborne has a singular opportunity to present that clean slate, to come out with his hands up in respect of prior events and to say that such activities, some of which the Chairman has referenced in respect of expenses, will not be the norm. Concerning travel expenses, I accept that Mr Osborne's industry is a global one. Any CEO in it worth his or her salt must travel. No one expects Mr Osborne to take the bus, but considerable expenses have come to light. The Committee would like to be assured that gross excess is a thing of the past.[1183]

[1179] *Racing Post*, 20 Jan. 2010.
[1180] Ibid.
[1181] Meeting between Minister Brendan Smith, representatives of the Irish National Stud and Deloitte & Touches Chartered Accountants, 24 Feb. 2010, Conor Ryan (Political correspondent with the *Irish Examiner*), Freedom of Information Request, 26 Aug. 2010, FOI/10/095.
[1182] Ibid.
[1183] Joint Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food debate, 9 June 2010, Irish Bloodstock Industry: Discussion with the Irish National Stud, available at House of the Oireachtas https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (19 June 2022).

Osborne took a similar line to that of O'Reilly by defending Clarke's expenses on the grounds that a CEO of the INS was expected to travel extensively to places like Royal Ascot and the Keenland Horse Sales or Newmarket Sales. Osborne argued that these events were considered 'unmissable by the industry' because the maximum number of people are present in the same place at the same time' which offered significant business opportunities.[1184] Smith accepted Osborne's explanation and reassurances that the INS was being run 'in line with the Code of Practice for Public Bodies'.[1185]

Figure 8 (a): Clarke's expenses compared to the expenses at the Irish National Stud from 2017 to 2020:



Source: Irish National Stud accounts and reports 2002-2021 available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (23 June 2022).

Clarke's expenses totalled €800,000 over eight years at an average of €100,000 per annum.[1186] Expenses from 2017 to 2021 covered an average of fifty-five employees per annum (including the CEO and the board of directors). These expenses totalled €265,471, an average of €53,094

[1184] Joint Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food debate, 9 June 2010, Irish Bloodstock Industry: Discussion with the Irish National Stud, available at House of the Oireachtas https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (19 June 2022).
[1185] *Irish Examiner*, 27 May 2010.
[1186] Irish National Stud accounts and reports 2002-2021, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (23 June 2022).

per annum.[1187] In contrast, Clarke's total expenses were two hundred per cent higher (€800,000 to €265,471). It is perhaps revealing that fifty-five INS employees accumulated expenses significantly lower than those submitted by Clarke. Moreover, Clarke's expenses came during one of the worst trading periods for the INS as it operated significant trading losses in six years of the eight years listed. Osborne and O'Reilly defended Clarke's expenses because the trips were part of INS business, but that the average cost was €2000 per week raised issues, and as these levels did not occur at the INS in later years suggests internal policies were revised if not made public. Aside from the expenses issue, business conflicts of interest at the INS caused further concern.

8.4. Conflict of interests

In January 2012, while launching Conor Ryan's book, *Stallions and power: the scandals of the Irish National Stud*, former Minister for Finance Alan Dukes argued: 'If you are going to have a State-owned entity with high-profile people on the [INS] board who are involved in the business, you need special rules of governance to deal with the complications that can arise from that.[1188] Early in this thesis, one of the central arguments focused on the conflict of interests in business between management and the INS board of directors. Several invested in shares in INS stallion syndicates. In June 2022, this researcher made an FOI request to the INS seeking comprehensive details of the INS stallion syndicates. This included details on shares in the stallions at the INS and those sold by the INS. Also, the 'individuals/groups who purchased the shares, the costs involved and how stallion cover nominations were distributed'[1189] In July, the financial controller of the INS, Anne Lawlor granted limited information on the request and advised that all details

[1187] Irish National Stud accounts and reports 2002-2021, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (23 June 2022).
[1188] *Meath Chronicle*, 7 Jan. 2012.
[1189] Freedom of Information Request at the Irish National Stud, 16 June 2022, 15;45 pm, available at Declan Monaghan, PhD researcher, Maynooth University, County Kildare.

of non-personal FOI requests would be recorded on an FOI disclosure log published on the INS website in due course; Lawlor advised:

> No records currently exist containing precisely the information which you have sought…further, the Act does not require FOI [Freedom of Information] bodies to create records if none exist, apart from a specific requirement in certain circumstances, to extract records of existing information held on electronic search/extraction facilities ordinarily used by the FOI body…However, notwithstanding the above, to respond to Item 1 of your request, INS [Irish National Stud] has manually collected the requested information, access to which is part granted. In summary, I have no difficulty in providing you with details of the stallions purchased and also the stallions sold by the INS…however, I am of the view that details of the individuals/groups who purchased shares and the amounts paid constitute exempt personal information and/or confidential and/or commercially sensitive information.[1190]

Lawlor referred to sections 21, 26, 27 and 28 of the Freedom of Information Act 1997. Section 27 of the Act requires an FOI body to refuse access to a record that, in the opinion of the head, contains:

(a) *financial, commercial, scientific, or technical or other information whose disclosure could reasonably be expected to result in a material financial loss or gain to the person to whom the information relates or could prejudice the competitive position of that person in the conduct of his or her profession or business or otherwise in his or her occupation, or* (c) *information whose disclosure could prejudice the conduct or outcome of contractual or other negotiations of the person to whom the information relates.*[1191]

Lawlor argued that the release of this information would allow private stud farms not subjected to FOI regulations to gain an unfair advantage whereby they could 'target these individuals and companies armed with the knowledge of the amount' they paid and what they would be willing to pay in the future which she argued could prejudice 'future contractual negotiations in respect of the purchase of stallions from other studs or sale of shares in stallions syndicated by the Irish

[1190] Email from the Financial Controller of the Irish National Stud, Anne Lawlor, to Declan Monaghan, PhD researcher at Maynooth University, outlining the details and scope of a Freedom of Information request, 14 July 2002.
[1191] Freedom of Information Act 1997, available at Electronic Irish Statute book (Eisb) https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1997/act/13/enacted/en/pdf (23 July 2022).

National Stud.[1192] Lawlor also quoted Section 21 of the Act, which states that a head may refuse to grant a request if access to the record concerned could, in the opinion of the head, reasonably be expected to:

have a significant, adverse effect on the performance by the body of any of its functions relating to management (including industrial relations and management of its staff), or (c) disclose positions taken, or to be taken, or plans, procedures, criteria or instructions used or followed, or to be used or followed, for the purpose of any negotiations carried on or being, or to be, carried on by or on behalf of the Government or a public body.[1193]

If the information of syndicate shares was released, Lawlor argued that the performance of the National Stud would be significantly and adversely affected in relation to the 'purchase of and sale of shares in stallions.'[1194] Lawlor also argued that individuals and/or companies involved in the syndicates were protected under the rules of Section 28 of the Act, which covered personal information and any disclosure without consent could compromise their position.[1195] She further argued that Section 26 (b) outlined that *any disclosure of the data concerned would constitute a breach of a duty of confidence provided for by a provision of an agreement or enactment or otherwise by law*.[1196] In her final summary, Lawlor cautioned, 'In all of the circumstances, I do not believe that the balance of legitimate public interests weighs in favour of disclosing the information requested in full' and that the public interests were best served by denying the full access requested on the following grounds:

• the public interest in protecting the efficient and effective operation of INS, as reflected generally in the National Stud Act 1945.

[1192] Email from the Financial Controller of the Irish National Stud, Anne Lawlor, to Declan Monaghan, PhD researcher at Maynooth University, outlining the details and scope of a Freedom of Information request, 14 July 2002.
[1193] Freedom of Information Act 1997, available at Electronic Irish Statute book (Eisb) https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1997/act/13/enacted/en/pdf (23 July 2022).
[1194] Email from the Financial Controller of the Irish National Stud, Anne Lawlor, to Declan Monaghan, PhD researcher at Maynooth University, outlining the details and scope of a Freedom of Information request, 14 July 2002.
[1195] Ibid.
[1196] Freedom of Information Act 1997, available at Electronic Irish Statute book (Eisb) https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1997/act/13/enacted/en/pdf (23 July 2022).

• the public interest in preserving the confidentiality of information obtained by bodies in confidence, as reflected in the relevant section of the Act.

• the public interest in persons being able to conduct commercial transactions with public bodies without fear of suffering commercially as a result.

• the strong public interest in preserving the right to privacy of individuals as guaranteed by the Irish Constitution, the European Convention on Human Rights and the GDPR, as reflected by the relevant section of the Act and acknowledged by the Information Commissioner.

• the public interest in protecting the financial and economic interests of the State; and

• the fact that the release of a record under FOI is deemed to be released to the world at large, and the Act places no restrictions on the subsequent uses to which a record may be put. The Information Commissioner and the High Court have consistently confirmed that this is a relevant consideration when balancing the public interest factors at issue.[1197]

Lawlor listed the following factors in favour of the release of the limited information provided:

• the public interest in individuals being able to exercise their rights under the Act to the greatest extent possible.

• the public interest in members of the public knowing how a public body performs its functions and being able to form an opinion as to whether those functions are being properly discharged, thereby promoting adherence by public bodies to the principle of transparency in government and public affairs; and

• the public interest in increasing the openness and transparency of decisions taken by public bodies, thereby enhancing understanding of the reasons for courses of action taken by a public body and strengthening the accountability and improving the quality of decision-making of public bodies.

[1197] Email from the Financial Controller of the Irish National Stud, Anne Lawlor, to Declan Monaghan, PhD researcher at Maynooth University, outlining the details and scope of a Freedom of Information request, 14 July 2002.

The details part-released by the INS provide useful information, but there are limited in scope. Whether Lawlor is justified in only granting part access is open to question because several questions from this period still need to be answered on the syndicates. Lawlor claimed that no records exist concerning precisely the information requested. This seems unusual as information on who received and paid for nominations to the INS stallions would surely be recorded for accountancy purposes. This lack of clarity leaves the INS open to further scrutiny.

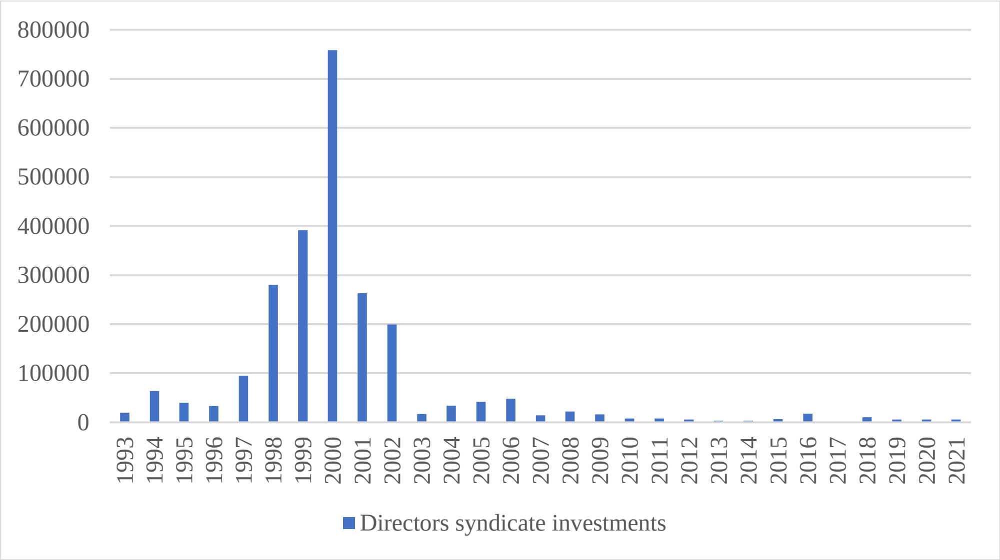
In any event, another factor worthy of consideration is that under the rules of the Code of Practice for State Bodies (2016), it states that all industry board members must:

> Ensure continued integrity and transparency and to avoid public concern or loss of confidence, the board should ensure that appropriate policies are in place so that members and staff take decisions objectively and steps are taken to avoid or deal with any potential conflicts of interest, whether actual or perceived.[1198]

It is notable that starting from 2009, the INS annual accounts offered more transparency. Ryan notes that they were 'very different' to the INS accounts produced in its sixty-five-year history because they provided much 'more thorough insight into the INS director's involvement' and business interests with the INS.[1199] This raises questions as to why the same level of transparency does not exist in relation to the INS accounts for the years before 2009. The following contains the information granted through the FOI request. (Please note: The FOI information on stallion syndicates lists that stallions were often 'disposed of'. Where this occurs, it means that the INS percentage interest was sold or that the stallion in question died).[1200] Listed below are the amounts invested in INS stallion syndicates at the INS by those in a management capacity, an advisory role or as an INS board member.

[1198] Code of Practice for State Bodies (2016), available at https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/05/Code-of-Practice-for-Governance-of-State-Bodies-2016.pdf (23 July 2022).
[1199] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 238.
[1200] List of Syndicated stallions at the Irish National Stud 1992 to 2021, Freedom of Information Request, 14 July 2022, available at Declan Monaghan, PhD researcher, Maynooth University, County Kildare.

Figure 8 (b): Investments in stallion syndicate from 1993 to 2021:



Source: Irish National Stud accounts and reports 1993-2021 available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (23 June 2022).

Since 1992, members of the INS board of directors have been encouraged to trade with the Company and the INS syndicates. In 1999, the INS had a fifty per cent share in *Croco Rouge*, and they syndicated eleven of their forty-five shares, which they disposed of in 2000.[1201] Also, that year, there was a significant increase in INS syndicate investments by its board members. This coincided with the INS 'major shareholding' in *Indian Danehill*, and he began stud duties the following year.[1202] The INS had a fifty per cent shared interest, and they syndicated ten and a half of forty-five shares which they disposed of six years later.[1203] But it is unfortunate that comprehensive syndication details on *Indian Danehill* are unavailable. What can be revealed is that in 2000, INS board members invested €758,815 in syndicates at the Stud.[1204] But again, there

[1201] List of Syndicated stallions at the Irish National Stud 1992 to 2021, Freedom of Information Request, 14 July 2022, available at Declan Monaghan, PhD researcher, Maynooth University, County Kildare.
[1202] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 2000, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (6 July 2022).
[1203] List of Syndicated stallions at the Irish National Stud 1992 to 2021, Freedom of Information Request, 14 July 2022, available at Declan Monaghan, PhD researcher, Maynooth University, County Kildare.
[1204] Irish National Stud accounts and reports 1993-2021 available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (23 June 2022).

is no breakdown available of how many stallions or mares this included or how the nomination process was formulated.

Also, in the early 2000s, the INS had fifty per cent interest in three stallions, *Medicis*, which they disposed of in 2008; *Pilsudski*, disposed of in 2016; and *Touch of the Blues*, owned by the Maktoum family, which they disposed of in 2010.[1205] In 2006, the INS acquired a fifty per cent stake in *Amadeus Wolf* in partnership with Dermot Farrington Bloodstock; he won three graded races, including the group one Middle Park Stakes at Newmarket.[1206] When he retired in 2008, the INS had a reduced thirty-three per cent share which they disposed of in 2014.[1207] Again, full details of these syndicates are unavailable.

In 2005, the INS invested in *Verglas*. They had an eighteen per cent share in the stallion. He died following an accident in 2011.[1208] O'Reilly invested in *Verglas,* and in his first season at the INS he covered 121 mares, with twelve of these mares originating from various stud farms owned by O'Reilly.[1209] Also, that year, the INS purchased shares in the Epsom Derby winner *Motivator*. This was arranged through a syndicate managed by leading bloodstock consultant John Warren of Highclere Stud, with the shares in *Motivator* costing €120,000 each.[1210] The fifty-member syndicate included Queen Elizabeth's Royal Stud, Coolmore Stud, Sheikh Mohammad, and O'Reilly's brother, Peter Goulandris.

Over eight years to 2008, through his investigations, Ryan revealed that six INS board directors and Clodagh McStay, the wife of the INS company secretary, spent the following on their mares to be covered at the INS. Tony Smurfit spent €57,535, Clodagh McStay €55,196, Patricia O'Kelly €44,144, Chryss O'Reilly €39,798 and John Osborne spent €30,620.[1211] It was

[1205] List of Syndicated stallions at the Irish National Stud 1992 to 2021, Freedom of Information Request, 14 July 2022, available at Declan Monaghan, PhD researcher, Maynooth University, County Kildare.
[1206] Ryan, *Stallions, and power,* p. 103.
[1207] List of Syndicated stallions at the Irish National Stud 1992 to 2021, Freedom of Information Request, 14 July 2022, available at Declan Monaghan, PhD researcher, Maynooth University, County Kildare.
[1208] Ibid.
[1209] Ryan, *Stallions, and power,* p. 98.
[1210] Ibid., p. 101.
[1211] Ibid., p. 100.

of immeasurable benefit for the INS to have the calibre of O'Reilly as its chairman as it needed influential people within its business to have any chance of success. And this included encouraging business entrepreneurs to invest in the bloodstock and syndicates at the Stud. But the lack of transparency in relation to the syndicates created a problem because the INS was a State-owned company with accountability and clarity of extreme importance. The following example of the syndication of *Invincible Spirit* highlights further difficulties on this issue.

8.5. *Invincible Spirt* and *Sea the Stars*

Invincible Spirit won four graded races, the most prestigious being the 2002 Haydock Sprint Cup. In 2003, he retired to stud at €10,000 per cover at the INS, and according to John Berry in the *TDN Australia/New Zealand* magazine:

> Most breeders would have regarded him merely as a potential source of commercial "cheap speed", now sixteen years later, he commands a fee of €120,000, with breeders justifiably hoping that their mares might produce not only black-type winners, but sons and daughters could leave a long-term mark on the breed.[1212]

On his arrival at the INS, Clarke, Stewart, McStay, and O'Reilly invested in shares in *Invincible Spirit*, which proved to be an investment beyond all their expectations. But this is not always a positive outcome as an investment in any stallion comes with risks, and a sire is always judged on its progeny.

In 2004, after *Invincible Spirit's* first crop of yearlings, O'Reilly explained: 'They have been very well received by breeders, and this is reflected in the high levels of bookings in 2004, including return visits from specific mares, which reflects the satisfaction of breeders'.[1213] And Ryan claimed that by the end of 2004, early investors included 'nearly the entire boardroom' of the INS, who were involved in 'some way, shape or form' in the *Invincible Spirit* syndicate.[1214]

[1212] *TDN Australia/New Zealand*, 29 Apr. 2019, available at https://www.tdnausnz.com.au/edition/2019-04-25/the-invincible-sireline (7 July 2022).
[1213] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 2003, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (6 July 2022).
[1214] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 110.

It should be noted at this stage, the INS board could not have foreseen how successful this syndicate became. But within three years, *Invincible Spirit's* progeny were hugely successful. For example, since his first crop of yearlings, he has been listed in the top twenty sires in Britain numerous times, finishing second in 2014. And in 2007, such was the lure of the stallion, Queen Elizabeth II sent some of her mares to be covered.[1215] Also that year, according to Ryan, O'Reilly sent at least ten mares to be covered, which made her the 'single biggest client' of the stallion, with nine foals produced.[1216] Therefore, the *Irish Examiner* speculated that *Invincible Spirit's* value sky-rocketed from €1 million in 2002 to €43.5 million in 2010.[1217]

Invincible Spirit's success did not go unnoticed, with American investors aggressively pursuing purchasing the stallion with a 'very substantial offer' in 2007.[1218] Osborne elaborates:

> Every day the telephone would ring, and another few million would be offered. The answer always was, "He is not for sale". The independent shareholders then began to feel we had made them prisoners, that they had a huge asset, but because of our controlling share, we did not want to cash in. We were preventing them from cashing it in because it was an outright purchase situation…while we were saying "No," the individual shareholders were feeling cheated on their investment. They were like the guy with the €1 million cheque. They were worth a great deal of money, but they could not cash it in. to an extent, that was unfair to them.[1219]

The INS board refused the American offers. Instead, they accepted Sheikh Mohammad as a 'strategic partner for the horse'.[1220] Sheikh Mohammad had previously sent 'multiple mares' to be covered by *Invincible Spirit*.[1221] Ryan argues that Sheikh Mohammad did not usually become involved in stallion syndicates, but such was the reputation of *Invincible Spirit* and the fact that Coolmore Stud did not own him was enough to see a change in policy.[1222] It also demonstrated

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[1215] *Ryan, Stallions, and power*, p. 110 and p. 121.
[1216] Ibid., p. 115.
[1217] *Irish Examiner*, 8 Feb. 2010.
[1218] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 2007, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (6 July 2022).
[1219] Joint Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food debate, 9 June 2010, Irish Bloodstock Industry: Discussion with the Irish National Stud available at House of the Oireachtas https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (11 July 2022).
[1220] *Irish Examiner*, 8 Feb. 2010.
[1221] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 116.
[1222] Ibid.

the dominance of the elite breeders in ensuring that they hoovered up the opposition. According to Clarke, the reason for this deal was because 'a lot of money was available to the shareholders. And we felt some might want to sell their shares, and it was wrong to keep saying "No".'[1223]

Sheikh Mohammad negotiated the purchase of twelve shares in *Invincible Spirit*; the re-syndication was valued at €42 million, which resulted in the INS shareholding reducing from forty-six to thirty-six per cent with private share member's shares now increased from a forty-five-share syndicate to a ninety-share pool which was a thirty-nine per cent shared interest.[1224] The re-syndication gave individual shareholders three options. Firstly, they could opt to stay in the INS syndicate. Secondly, they could cash in half their shareholding and hold onto the other half, which would have yielded a 'six-figure dividend' for the investment. Thirdly, they could sell their entire investment, which would yield a 'seven-figure dividend'.[1225] Osborne argued that the re-syndication was a 'dream result from the INS perspective as we did not want to share any of our shares, and we stayed roughly where we had been' share-wise.[1226] And he argued that re-syndication introduced 'capital that the cash-hungry shareholders needed' with a number selling their shares out entirely, others taking the half in option and the rest remaining in one hundred per cent.[1227]

These developments resulted in a €15 million bonus for the INS syndicate members, of which the board members and company secretary received €2.9 million.[1228] The *Irish Examiner* speculated that McStay had the most shares in *Invincible Spirit* with four and Stewart the least (undisclosed amount).[1229] Osborne argued that the re-syndication was an example of what can be achieved with the Stud's investment in *Invincible Spirit,* now worth €10 million for an initial

[1223] ThoroughbredNews, 22 Aug. 2007, available at https://www.thoroughbrednews.com.au/ (7 July 2022).
[1224] *Irish Examiner*, 8 Feb. 2010.
[1225] Joint Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food debate, 9 June 2010, Irish Bloodstock Industry: Discussion with the Irish National Stud available at House of the Oireachtas https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (11 July 2022).
[1226] Ibid.
[1227] Ibid.
[1228] Ryan, *Stallions, and power,* p. 123.
[1229] *Irish Examiner,* 8 Feb. 2010.

outlay of approximately €700,000 and that 'this type of uplift is available when one gets its right. When one gets it wrong, it is a pretty brutal business'.[1230]

In Dáil Éireann, while addressing the Joint Committee, Creed argued that there was a 'clear conflict of interest' because, with the INS directors involved in the shareholding, it meant that they 'stood to gain by increasing their shareholding', and this course of action meant they were 'locking out business which could have been brought to the Stud'.[1231] Furthermore, he argued that the €2.9 million windfall for the directors and management was 'quite staggering' when these earnings were tax-free, which he described as an 'extraordinarily privileged and dominant position' and a clear conflict in the 'primary responsibility of the directors' of the State Company.[1232] In the INS annual accounts, O'Reilly defended the re-syndication:

> I cannot emphasise strongly enough the importance the Board placed on the retention of this great stallion in Ireland for the use of Irish and European breeders, and, as a testament to this, the individual shareholders in Invincible Spirit, when presented with an offer bringing them each significant potential profits, almost all said they would follow the lead of the Irish National Stud. Their loyalty was eventually significantly rewarded, and most retained a new share in the stallion.[1233]

In fairness to O'Reilly, this was a plausible argument as retaining *Invincible Spirit* on European shores hugely benefited the industry's long-term interests. Following the re-syndication, Ryan argues that in 2008 there was a 'big change in *Invincible Spirit's* business and the identity of the mares' sent to be covered.[1234] Sheikh Mohammad's Maktoum family connections sent at least twelve mares to be covered. O'Reilly 'paired her interests back to seven', McStay, Weld, O'Kelly, and Stewart each sent one mare, and Queen Elizabeth 'remained involved'.[1235] When questioned on the INS board members' involvement with the syndicates, Osborne argued:

[1230] Joint Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food debate, 9 June 2010, Irish Bloodstock Industry: Discussion with the Irish National Stud, available at House of the Oireachtas https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (11 July 2022).
[1231] Ibid.
[1232] Ibid.
[1233] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 2007, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (6 July 2022).
[1234] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 121.
[1235] Ibid.

> I have mentioned that directors have been encouraged to do business with the Stud. This includes taking shareholdings in the stallions. The idea of aligning the interests of a company with the interests of those directing it is commonplace in business. When investment decisions of the scale of stallion purchases are being made, it is likely that the interests of the company will be best protected by a decision which an individual would be happy to make for himself. This may be why the board of the Irish National Stud has made so many successful investments in the stallion market over the years. Any transaction involving a director is always subject to full disclosure.[1236]

But this statement from Osborne was not accurate. For instance, the full details of the stallion nominations and costs were undisclosed. As Creed argued, it was the responsibility of the Joint Committee to 'tease out' the matter of the director's involvement in syndicates in much greater detail.[1237] Osborne further defended the director's involvement: 'If the directors are happy to do business with the company, our clients are reassured by that, and it sends out a good signal…that may give rise to a certain element of conflict, but as long as it is transparent, that conflict should be reduced'.[1238] He also stated that if there was a conflict of interest at INS board meetings, the person 'absents' themselves from the discussion and the disclosure was 'spelt out' for all in attendance and to the CEO and company secretary.[1239] And from the minutes of the INS board meetings, this procedure was followed to the letter of the law.[1240]

Osborne also claimed that Jim Beecher investigated 'grumbling about director's dealing at the Stud', and he 'found that being a board member was a hindrance, not a help'.[1241] It should be noted that Beecher was on the INS board and unlikely to find fault with his colleagues. An independent external investigation would have served a far greater purpose in the interests of transparency and full disclosure. Osborne also argued that it would be ridiculous to prevent the INS board members from accessing the INS stallions because they would then have to use a

[1236] Joint Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food debate, 9 June 2010, Irish Bloodstock Industry: Discussion with the Irish National Stud, available at House of the Oireachtas https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (10 July 2022).
[1237] Ibid.
[1238] Ibid.
[1239] Ibid.
[1240] Minutes of the board meeting of the Irish National Stud, 3 August 2010 at Tully, County Kildare.
[1241] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 234.

competing company's services, much too ‘the amusement amongst our competitors’.[1242] This was a valid argument but preventing INS board members access to the INS syndicates was not the overriding issue; it was the lack of transparency on their involvement in the syndicates. In any event, INS board members like O’Reilly were already availing of other breeders covering services. Indeed, it was not unusual for breeders like O’Reilly to visit many different yards with their mares.

With McStay as INS company secretary and members of INS management involved in the INS syndicates, it is reasonable to assume that their position was somewhat compromised if a stallion or mare they had a business interest clashed with the best interests of the INS. Also, there is the issue of how many stallion nominations each INS board member received. As noted earlier, O’Reilly sent ten per cent of the mares covered by the INS stallion *Verglas*.[1243] Another factor worth considering is that the INS was established to serve the interests of all breeders, particularly the small breeders. And as has been revealed, they were marginalised within the industry. But the involvement of INS board members and INS company employees without full disclosure may have limited these breeders’ opportunities or favoured those employed by the INS. In other words, the conflict of interest at the INS created contentious circumstances, and this continued through decisions regarding the future of the stallion *Sea the Stars*.

Since the early 1990s, David and Ling Tsui, a successful business family from Japan have been involved in European horse racing. In the mid-1990s, the Tsui family developed a close business association with Coolmore Stud, where they formed a foal-sharing partnership producing the renowned stallion *Galileo*, but the Tsui family sold their interest in the horse before he became a household name. Towards the end of the decade, relations with Coolmore Stud

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[1242] Joint Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food debate, 9 June 2010, Irish Bloodstock Industry: Discussion with the Irish National Stud, available at House of the Oireachtas https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (10 July 2022).

[1243] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 98.

became strained, but there is no official explanation.[1244] At the time, the Tsui family decided to relocate *Urban Sea*, which became awkward because there were fears it could upset Coolmore Stud.[1245] And to appease all, the INS was chosen as a neutral location for *Urban Sea*, and it was here that the Tsui family struck a very 'close business relationship' with Clarke.[1246]

Sea, the Stars was by *Cape Cross* out of the mare *Urban Sea*. As a three-year-old, *Sea the Stars* won six group one races, including the English Two Thousand Guineas, the Epsom Derby, and the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe in Paris thus securing his legacy as one of the greatest racehorses of all time. Shortly after *Sea the Stars* won the 2009 Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, there was a clamour around where he would retire to. At the time, Christopher Tsui stressed: 'There are many factors to be considered when retiring a horse from racing. It is also a big responsibility as *Sea the Stars* has become so dear to the public'.[1247] The Press speculated that Sheikh Mohammad and the INS were vying for the 'privilege of standing' the stallion at stud.[1248] There was no mention of Aga Khan's chances of recruiting the stallion at this stage.[1249] After *Sea the Star's* victory in Paris, Clarke argued: 'It would be no problem at all to stand a horse of the calibre of *Sea the Stars* at the Irish National Stud…we have the infrastructure, and it would hold no fears for our staff to be dealing with a horse of that quality'.[1250] Osborne claimed that the INS board investigated the possibility of purchasing a shared interest in *Sea the Stars as* a two-year-old, but the Tsui Family 'was not prepared to do business'.[1251] In the end, *Sea the Stars* retired to stud at the Aga Khan's Kildangan Stud with the former INS chairman John Oxx as its trainer. Osborne

[1244] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 175.
[1245] Ibid., p. 178.
[1246] Ibid.
[1247] *Evening Herald*, 17 Oct. 2009.
[1248] *Irish Independent*, 15 Oct. 2009.
[1249] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 201.
[1250] Ibid., p. 199.
[1251] Joint Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food debate, 9 June 2010, Irish Bloodstock Industry: Discussion with the Irish National Stud, available at House of the Oireachtas https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (9 July 2022).

explained that the INS were unable to compete with Aga Khan, and they 'did not know the particulars of the deal but that they 'were very proud the stallion remains in County Kildare'.[1252]

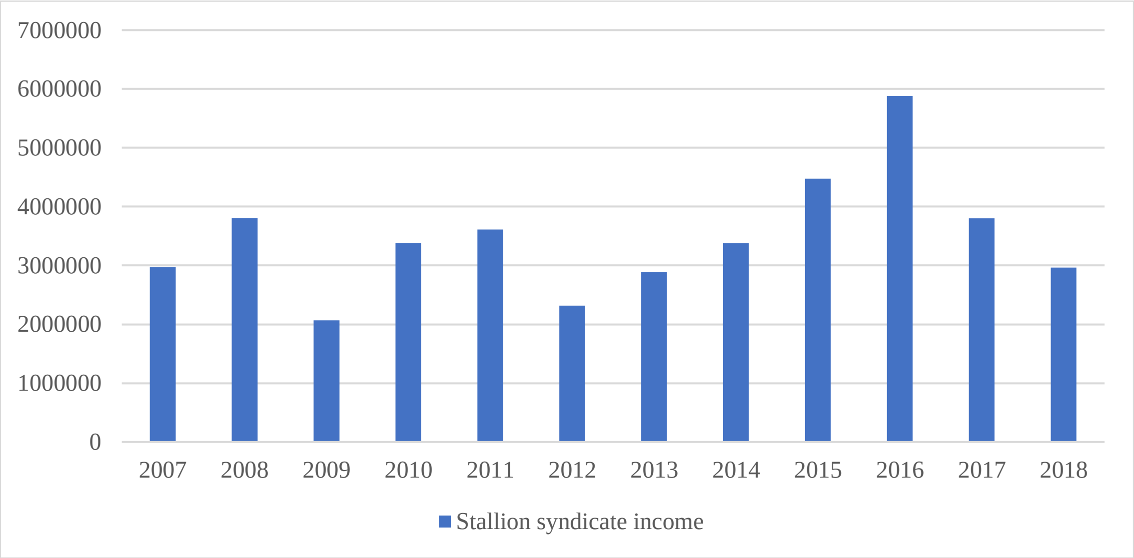
When Clarke announced his retirement in September 2009 (officially leaving the INS in January 2010), he took up a 'more prominent role' as an advisor for the Tsui family and, as Ryan explains, by the following December, he was purchasing bloodstock on behalf of the Tsui family at the Tattersalls Sales while still an employee of the INS.[1253] This presented a conflict of interest as it was unacceptable for Clarke as CEO of the INS to act in a dual business role. When Osborne was questioned at the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Clarke's involvement with the Tsui family and *Sea the Stars*, he was evasive. Bradford asked Osborne if there was a connection between his predecessor Clarke and the management of *Sea the Stars*, to which he replied, 'I am not sure I can answer that question. In light of certain considerations, I would prefer not to go into the matter…the truth is I do not know the answer to the question'.[1254] But Osborne's response did not satisfy Creed, who argued that there was a 'critical corporate governance issue', and he also queried if the INS had taken legal advice with regard to 'Mr Clarke's discharge of his duties?'[1255] Chairman of the Joint Committee Bobby Aylward TD (Fianna Fáil) cautioned Creed to tread carefully as the matter could be considered sub-judice as a court case could be taken.[1256] Given Clarke's close association with the Tsui family and Osborne's unsatisfactory answers concerning the management structure of *Sea the Stars*, there remain outstanding issues on transparency.

[1252] Joint Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food debate, 9 June 2010, Irish Bloodstock Industry: Discussion with the Irish National Stud, available at House of the Oireachtas https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (9 July 2022).
[1253] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 202.
[1254] Joint Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food debate, 9 June 2010, Irish Bloodstock Industry: Discussion with the Irish National Stud, available at House of the Oireachtas https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (9 July 2022).
[1255] Ibid.
[1256] Ibid.

8.6. New syndicate opportunities

In any event, stallion syndicates at the INS generated significant income as can be seen in the following graph.

Figure 8 (c): Income from stallion syndicates from 2007 to 2021:



Source: Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 2007 to 31 Dec. 2018 available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (23 June 2022).

From 2007 to 2021, stallion syndicate income at the INS generated €41,555,762, an average of €3,462,980 per annum.[1257] In the 2009, no individual INS director or secretary had interests in syndicates greater than fifteen per cent'.[1258] This increased to twenty-six per cent two years later but then decreased to four per cent because the INS company secretary was the only individual at the INS with an investment which he retained at four per cent until his retirement in 2018.[1259]

Other INS horses through syndication included *Art Connoisseur*, commanding a fee of €4,500 in 2013.[1260] The INS had a forty per cent syndicate interest.[1261] But the following year,

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[1257] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 2007 to 31 Dec. 2018, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie? (23 June 2022).
[1258] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 2009, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (23 June 2022).
[1259] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 Dec. 2012 to 31 Dec. 2018, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (23 June 2022).
[1260] Minutes of the board meeting of the Irish National Stud, 1 Nov. 2011 at Tully, County Kildare.
[1261] List of syndicated stallions at the Irish National Stud 1992 to 2021, Freedom of Information Request, 14 July 2022, available at Declan Monaghan, PhD researcher, Maynooth University, County Kildare.

the INS disposed of their interest when the horse was sold to Newmarket breeder Oliver St Lawrence.[1262] Also that year, *Jeremy*, who was at the INS for seven years, was sold to stand as a National Hunt sire at Garryrichard Stud in County Wexford, owned by Gerry Hickey, but the stallion died prematurely in 2016.

In 2013, two new stallions were added to the INS roster, *Famous Name*, trained by board member Weld and *Dragon Pulse*, trained by Harrington. Both horses were owned wholly by the INS. In 2016, *Dragon Pulse* had a fifty per cent winners to runner ratio and was among the leading sires with a cover fee of €8000.[1263] From 2014 to 2017, the INS invested in shares in three stallions, *Gale Force Ten*, *Worthadd*, and *Free Eagle*. Dempsey was enthusiastic about *Gale Force Ten's* future, and at €5000 per cover, he argued: 'he is very much what the Irish breeders want'.[1264] *Gale Force Ten* was owned by John Magnier, Derrick Smith, and Michael Tabor of Coolmore Stud. The INS held a forty per cent share which they disposed of in 2019.[1265] Again, no further details on the syndicate's shares are available. Also, that year, the INS purchased thirty-three per cent shares in *Worthadd* owned by Longview Stud in Newmarket. He was a son of the renowned stallion *Dubawi*, but the INS disposed of their shares in 2018 after he failed to live up to the expectations.[1266] *Free Eagle* proved to be more successful. He was owned by Moyglare Stud, where Weld was the trainer. The INS set his stud fee at €20,000 per cover; this was the first new stallion at the INS in this cover fee range since 1999.[1267] The INS retained twenty-seven of forty-eight shares.[1268] In 2018, *Free Eagle's* cover fee was reduced to €15,000,

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[1262] Racing Post Online, available at https://web.archive.org/web/20161022225402 (18 July 2014).
[1263] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 December 2016 to 31 December 2021, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (17 July 2022).
[1264] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 December 2014, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (17 July 2022).
[1265] List of Syndicated stallions at the Irish National Stud 1992 to 2021, Freedom of Information Request, 14 July 2022, available at Declan Monaghan, PhD researcher, Maynooth University, County Kildare.
[1266] Ibid.
[1267] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 December 2015, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (17 July 2022).
[1268] List of Syndicated stallions at the Irish National Stud 1992 to 2021, Freedom of Information Request, 14 July 2022, available at Declan Monaghan, PhD researcher, Maynooth University, County Kildare.

and his first yearlings averaged over €60,000; the following year, one of his progeny *Khalifa Sat*, finished second in the Epsom Derby.[1269] The fact that *Free Eagle* was the first stallion in this cover fee range for almost ten years demonstrates that the INS was not stocked sufficiently with top-class bloodstock to compete at the highest level. A positive development was the interaction with Coolmore Stud; because they dominated the market, it made sound business sense to interact with them.

A new initiative named the INS Breeding and Racing Club was established in 2015. This offered syndicate opportunities to the public in mares at the INS. Beale illuminates: 'What sets it apart from other racing syndicates is the fact that members are involved with a horse from the time it is born, which gives stakeholders an opportunity to be part of any potential success, be it in the sales ring or the racecourse'[1270] And this initiative proved immensely popular. Beale elaborates: 'We've got a great bunch of people from all over the world involved in the syndicate, and that is fundamentally why the Irish National Stud exists – to try and create those opportunities for people to get involved in the bloodstock industry at whatever level they can afford to'.[1271] Investors had the chance to invest in two levels, one at €16000 per share or another more affordable option at €5000 per share.[1272] Another critical factor was that the INS matched the public investment of fifty per cent, and this added reassurance to investors.[1273] In any event, to date, this venture has proved successful. For example, in its first year, at the Goff Foal Sales, a colt by *Worthadd* fetched €38000; the following year, two *Dragon Pulse* colts fetched €25000.[1274] The success continued with approximately 350 members joining the Racing Club in

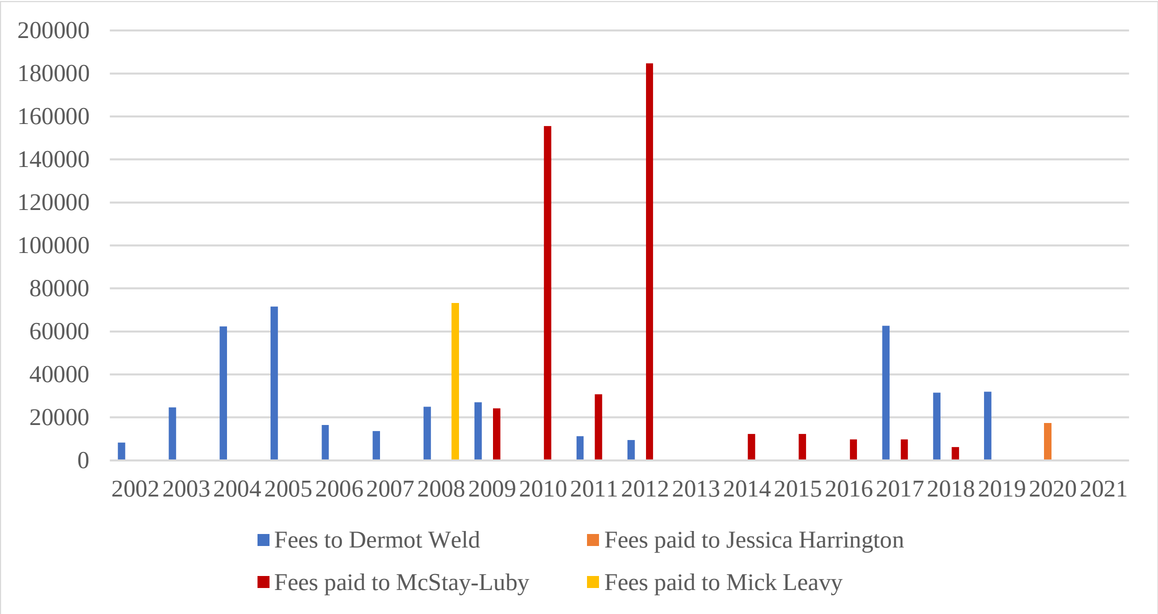
[1269] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 December 2019 to 31 December 2020, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (17 July 2022).
[1270] Irish National Stud website, available at https://irishnationalstud.ie/john-osborne-announced-will-step-role-ceo/ (22 July 2022).
[1271] *International Thoroughbred*, December 2019, available at https://issuu.com/international_thoroughbred/docs/itb_dec2019/s/ (22 July 2022).
[1272] Ibid.
[1273] Ibid.
[1274] Irish National Stud website, available at https://irishnationalstud.ie/john-osborne-announced-will-step-role-ceo/ (22 July 2022).

2019. Such was the demand was that the INS launched a second mares syndicate where an *Invincible Spirit* colt was sold for €330,000 at Goff's November Sales.[1275]

8.7. No tendering processes

From 2002 to 2021, payments were made to INS board members and the company secretary McStay's accountancy firm. The payments covered accountancy services, consultancy advice and horse training fees.

Figure 8 (d): Payments to INS board of directors and McStay-Luby:



Source: Irish National Stud accounts and reports 2002-2021 available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 July 2022).

From 2002 to 2021, training fees of €396,081 at an average of €30,467 per annum were paid to board member Dermot Weld for his services in training the INS horses under the President's name.[1276] And in 2019, Harrington received €17,313 for training services.[1277] There is no suggestion of anything inappropriate here. But in May 2010, the *Irish Examiner* published a story

[1275] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 December 2019, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (17 July 2022).
[1276] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 December 2002 to 31 December 2021, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (6 July 2022).
[1277] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 December 2020, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (6 July 2022).

with the headline 'Jobs for the Boys', which was a crude reference to how they perceived the INS was being run.[1278] Central to the article was material published following a FOI request by the newspaper. The article questioned the tendering process at the INS because a 'sizeable trade' had developed 'between those connected to INS and the commercial semi-state body'.[1279] They revealed that McStay-Luby, the accountancy firm where McStay was a managing partner, benefited from several transactions that did not go through the tendering process. From 2001 to 2008, McStay-Luby were paid €488,140 for professional advice and accountancy fees.[1280] The INS defended this practice because McStay's role as a company secretary was separate from the services his company provided.[1281] These payments to McStay were not listed in the INS annual accounts up to 2008. Other transactions included a one-off payment of €48,400 to McStay's firm for services provided during the Mullarkey bullying case, with the INS claiming there was no tendering process because of the need for 'prompt action' in solving the case.[1282] McStay-Luby were also involved in the negotiations for the re-syndication of *Invincible Spirit.* They were paid €59,895 for services rendered.[1283] Perhaps this is the most obvious conflict of interest as McStay was a shareholder in the stallion. Again, the INS defended this practice by arguing that it was not appropriate to tender for the financial advice because 'this was a multi-million-dollar deal in which time was of the essence. It was a unique situation, and commercial sensitivity was paramount'.[1284] Contrary to advice heard at the 2010 Oireachtas inquiry, the INS retained McStay-Luby until McStay retired as its company secretary in 2018. From 2009 to 2018, the INS

1278 *Irish Examiner*, 20 May 2010.
1279 Ibid.
1280 Irish National Stud accounts and reports 2001-2008, available at House of the Oireachtas library https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (8 July 2022).
1281 *Irish Examiner*, 20 May 2010.
1282 Ibid.
1283 Ibid.
1284 Ibid.

paid McStay-Luby's accountancy firm €279,415 at an average of €31,046 per annum.[1285] And there was another controversial incident which did not go through the tendering process.

In 2008, a one-off payment of €73,213 was made to INS board director Mick Leavy to purchase a Renault Master Platform horse box. Leavy was a director at Burke Brothers garage who sold the horse box to the INS. The INS argued that it did not go to tender because it was a specific customised vehicle of a type new to the market, and it was accessible and serviceable locally.[1286] Osborne explained that they sought quotations for second-hand alternatives in the locality. But none were suitable, so they decided to search abroad for a new model and shortly afterwards, they discovered an agent for this new type of vehicle was in the locality, and they purchased the vehicle. Osborne explained, 'It was a good result, and it was not the underhand arrangement that was alleged'.[1287] He argued that if the INS was subjected to 'that level of micro-management, we will almost close down'.[1288] But the difficulty for Osborne was the prevailing circumstances at the INS with the controversy over Clarke's expenses and the accusations of bullying. Therefore, a strong case could be made that the INS should have been more closely scrutinised. In any event, when these details became public, Leavy resigned 'without fuss' insisting he had been planning to resign long before this incident for health reasons.[1289] All of these circumstances led to serious questions being asked about the future of the INS.

8.8. Risk of closure

In April 2011, the government published details of the Review Group's Report on State Assets and Liabilities. This Report was commissioned to formulate future policy on State asset disposal

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[1285] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 December 2009 to 31 December 2018, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (6 July 2022).
[1286] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 237.
[1287] Joint Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food debate, 9 June 2010, Irish Bloodstock Industry: Discussion with the Irish National Stud, available at House of the Oireachtas https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (11 July 2022).
[1288] Ibid.
[1289] Ryan, *Stallions, and power*, p. 237.

as part of Ireland's economic recovery following the recession.[1290] Section seventeen of the Report recommended that the 'Irish National Stud be disposed of'.[1291] Later that month, an article appeared in the *Racing Post* where Irish economist Colm McCarthy cautioned that the INS 'no longer plays a critical role in providing access for Irish breeders to the best stallion lines and that, while solvent, there is a limit as to how the company can continue to trade at a loss'.[1292] This news sparked widespread outrage. John Tuthill of Ownenstown Stud in Maynooth expressed deep disappointment as he believed that the INS had 'an important role to play' and that the INS stallions were 'good value to the breed as a whole' while also highlighting the world-renowned reputation of the INS management courses.[1293] Goff's CEO Henry Beeby cautioned that closure would be 'catastrophic' and that the INS was a viable business.[1294] In any event, the government did not implement the report's recommendation. The new Minister for Agriculture, Simon Coveney TD (Fine Gael), decided that the INS should remain in public ownership but that a revamp was needed of the INS board of directors.[1295] Nevertheless, the overhaul of the board did not happen immediately, and it would be two years before the changes were made.

The following month there was some positive news for the INS. Queen Elizabeth began a historic four-day visit to Ireland, and this included a visit to the INS, where she viewed *Invincible Spirit*.[1296] And also in 2011, for the first time in three years, the INS returned to a trading profit of €19,030, with O'Reilly attributing this to the 'long running cost reduction programme' under the 'tireless energy and ingenuity' of Osborne, who managed to rebuild staff

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[1290] Summary and recommendations from the review of Irish State assets & liabilities, available at Byrne/Wallace, https://byrnewallace.com/ (17 July 2022).
[1291] Ibid.
[1292] *Racing Post*, 22 Apr. 2011.
[1293] Ibid.
[1294] Ibid.
[1295] *Irish Examiner* 11 Oct. 2011.
[1296] *Irish Independent*, 20 May 2011.

confidence 'with a view to building for the future success'.[1297] In a new departure, Osborne employed a specialist human resources company to advise on all staff issues.[1298]

In October 2013, O'Reilly announced her retirement from the INS at the end of the year.[1299] She was replaced by Matt Dempsey, who took up duties at the INS in February 2013. Dempsey worked as an Agricultural Producer with RTE from 1969 before moving to the *Irish Farmers' Journal* as their European Economic Community correspondent. In February 2013, Dempsey addressed a Joint Oireachtas Committee, which was the standard procedure for all incoming chairmen of State Companies. Immediately, he highlighted the need to source a top-class stallion to eventually replace *Invincible Spirt*. And he hoped to see more equality within the industry:

> While the Coolmore and Maktoum operations grab much of the headlines, I firmly believe that it is very much in the national interest that access to stallions of a range of qualities is available to breeders outside a very restricted grouping of specialist stallion studs. Even from the perception of the industry by the ordinary taxpaying public, a range of participants is highly desirable.[1300]

This was a significant statement by Dempsey as it recognised the stranglehold the elite breeders had on the industry. In April 2017, Osborne announced that he was leaving the INS to take up the role of CEO of Racecourses with Horse Racing Ireland. During his six years at the INS, it showed an average trading profit of €1,379,663 per annum.[1301] On his resignation, Dempsey, added:

> It's difficult to pay adequate tribute to John Osborne and the effect he has had on the Irish National Stud and the wider equestrian world. He has re-established the Irish National Stud as one of the premier studs in the world as well as developing its tourism offering, stud

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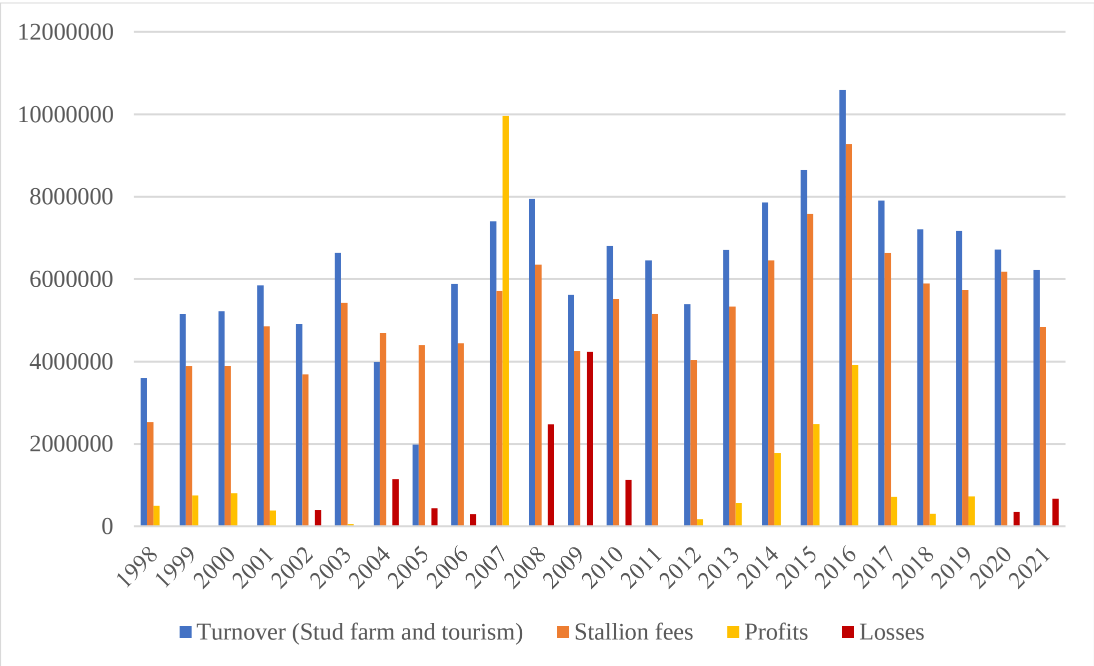
[1297] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 December 2011, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (17 July 2022).
[1298] Minutes of the board meeting of the Irish National Stud, 3 June 2011 at Tully, County Kildare.
[1299] *Irish Examiner*, 10 Oct 2012.
[1300] Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food, and the Marine debate, 14 February 2013, Irish National Stud: Discussion with chairman designate, available at House of the Oireachtas https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (11 July 2022).
[1301] Irish National Stud accounts and reports, 31 December 2011 to 31 December 2017, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://www.oireachtas.ie/ (17 July 2022).

service and stud management course. In over 40 years of dealing with the Irish public service, he encapsulates all that is best in terms of capacity and integrity.[1302]

Osborne's replacement was Cathal Beale. He graduated from the INS Management Programme in 2007. He was previously employed by Paddy Power bookmakers, the *Racing Post,* Tinnakill Bloodstock and Forenaghts Stud Farm. He held a Bachelor of Arts degree from University College Dublin and a Master's degree in management from Smurfit Business School. Over the next years, the INS showed a trading profit until the Covid Pandemic, which had a negative effect with the Stud displaying trading losses of €350,151 in 2020 and €672,352 in 2021.[1303] Listed below is the financial record of the INS from 1998 to 2021.

Figure 8 (e): Turnover, stallion fees, net profits, and losses:



Source: Irish National Stud accounts and reports 1998 to 2021, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://opac.oireachtas.ie/ (17 June 2022).

[1302] *Racing Post*, 2 Feb. 2017.
[1303] Irish National Stud accounts 2017 to 2021, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://opac.oireachtas.ie/ (17 June 2022).

Turnover at the INS totalled €151,829,399 at an average of €6,326,225 per annum.[1304] The INS showed trading profits in fifteen of the twenty-four years listed. Profits totalled €23,116,729 at an average of €1,541,115 per annum.[1305] The INS showed trading losses in the nine years listed. Losses totalled €11,140281 at an average of €1,237,809 per annum.[1306] Stallion and stud farm fees accumulated €126,710,464 at an average of €5,279,602 per annum.[1307] It is notable that following the Press revelations concerning the bullying allegations and governance issues that the stallion cover fees at the INS decreased from €6,349,450 in 2008 to €4,251,981 in 2009.

8.9. Conclusion

The reputation of the INS during the era covered in this chapter came under scrutiny due to internal incidents which overshadowed its existence. Senior staff such as Clarke seemed to court controversy. Beginning with the expenses issue, a strong case can be made that his expenses were a little out of the ordinary. The INS robustly defended Clarke on the grounds that the expenses were in line with what was expected of a CEO. Osborne and O'Reilly argued that one needed to understand and appreciate the nature of the thoroughbred industry before making assumptions about the costs involved. And they presented a reasonable argument until one compares the INS CEO's expenses in later years when more reasonable levels of expenses were incurred. But aside from the expenses, the allegations of bullying against Clarke and the subsequent court actions cast the INS in an extremely negative light. In any event, the INS learned from this turbulent period with Osborne focused on rebuilding staff confidence. The conflicts of interest which dogged the INS since its establishment came to the surface. Nowhere was it more evident than through the INS stallion syndicates. And it was not only the syndicates; the absence of a proper

[1304] Irish National Stud accounts 1998 to 2021, House of the Oireachtas library, available at https://opac.oireachtas.ie/ (17 June 2022).
[1305] Ibid.
[1306] Ibid.
[1307] Ibid.

procedure for the tendering process at the INS was a poor reflection of the standards also expected of a State-sponsored company.

These controversial incidents offer invaluable insight into how the Irish political system and government-sponsored institutions operated in Ireland. The evidence presented in this research shows that some of the elite horse breeders and owners had a close and questionable association with Ireland's most prominent politicians. The apparent lack of transparency on the exact nature of these relationships casts the industry in a negative light. Moreover, several instances of poor governance have plagued Irish politics for decades. Indeed, it reflects an era in Ireland where accountability was null and void. Hence, it is hardly surprising that several tribunals of inquiries investigated Irish politics. And the INS, a semi-state institution, has been caught in the political storm and has not emerged unscathed. The INS has been dogged by controversy. This could have been avoided if strict controls and measures had been implemented. Instead, a lack of government foresight, appreciation or intervention left the INS vulnerable to mismanagement and reflective of an era of poor governance.

Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis has been to fill a void in the historiography of the Irish National Stud. The thesis has been built upon a diverse range of primary sources from several repositories supplemented by contemporary and secondary published material. The main narrative has been framed within the context of the significant political, economic, cultural, and social events and factors of the time.

Colonel William Hall-Walker came from a family steeped in the brewing tradition in Liverpool and beyond. Hall-Walker was born into a life which offered a level of privilege. He was privately educated but was heavily involved in the family business. He inherited a love of horse racing from his brothers. At the beginning of the twentieth century, he established a stud farm at Tully Stud in Ireland because of the flexibility afforded to trainers compared to Britain, where the Jockey Club stifled the sport. He impressively transformed Tully Stud Farm into an establishment which competed at the highest level, producing thoroughbreds that left a legacy. Such was the allure of Hall-Walker's personality that he convinced the Aga Khan of the value of committing to horse breeding in Ireland and Britain. But his foresight for the industry's future was most impressive. Shortly after arriving in Ireland, he recognised the necessity for the British government to support the industry in a meaningful manner. The offer of his stud farms to the government was framed around the industry's best interests in the long term. The sparse information that exists on Hall-Walker suggests that his offer to the British government was to supplement horse supplies for the First World War. This does Hall-Walker a disservice. The War Office utilised his stud farm in Britain, but this thesis has shown that his intention for Tully Stud was for the government to create a State Stud Farm. And this must be recognised because, without this, the creation of a State Stud Farm may not have happened. The opposition to Hall-Walker's offer in the British Parliament offers an intriguing insight into the societal circumstances. The stigma connected to gambling revealed the widespread class divisions and prejudices. Despite this, the insatiable appetite for gambling remained an integral aspect of the industry.

In its early years, the National Stud under Henry Greer was under considerable pressure due to the prevailing economic circumstances. At the end of the First World War, there was conflict within the British government on the future of the NS. The Treasury Department called for the closure of the NS, and the Ministry of Agriculture argued for retaining it. As the decades passed, this type of conflict was a regular occurrence, with departments in both governments at loggerheads over NS policy. It is evident throughout this research that the maintenance of thoroughbreds was enormously expensive. Compounding matters further was the industry's speculative nature. Therefore, it is unsurprising that there were many disagreements on policy matters. The NS's racing lease with Lord Lonsdale relieved pressure on the NS. Lonsdale was a fascinating character. There is room for much broader research on Lonsdale as is evident from the extensive family archives held in Carlisle.

In the first decade of the NS, Henry Greer worked in a dual role for the NS and the Aga Khan. This was the first example of a conflict of interest of a type which would plague the Stud over the following decades. But it was the political circumstances in Ireland which offered the most interesting aspect to the narrative of the Stud. The Irish separatist's demands for independence resulted in the establishment of the Irish Free State. Caught in the middle of these developments was the NS under Greer as CEO, whose allegiances lay firmly with the British establishment. From this point, the issue of the ownership of the NS was contentious. Greer recognised the NS as a British-run establishment and promoted its continuation under British control. But this went against the principles of Hall-Walker, who was receptive to the idea of the NS under the Irish Free State. This is a defining aspect of Hall-Walker's character. He set aside his political allegiances (lest not forget he was a former member of the British Parliament) to ensure the best interests of the horse breeding industry were served in the long term.

The different policies of Cumann na nGaedheal and Fianna Fáil governments have been highlighted in this thesis. In the 1920s, under Cosgrave, the Free State government elevated members of the horse breeding industry, such as Greer, to the Seanad. In contrast, in the 1930s, Fianna Fáil under de Valera abolished the Seanad, denying minority interests a representative voice. This alienated those with unionist backgrounds. In the 1930s, relations between the Irish and British governments deteriorated. The trade war between Ireland and Britain and the impact of the worldwide economic recession plunged the issue of NS ownership into years of stalemate and uncertainty. It became apparent that the Irish Department of Agriculture were pushing an agenda to transfer the NS into the hands of private breeders. The rationale behind this was due to the speculative nature of the business.

In between these developments, the London Conference (1935) revealed the complex legal matters surrounding the ownership of the NS. The Irish and British governments made compelling arguments. But it is challenging, if not impossible, to gauge how the matter may have played out in a court of law. Also, that year a Commission of Inquiry (1935) on horse breeding was established in Ireland. The Commission's recommendation of establishing a State Stud Farm was a timely reminder to the Irish government to address this issue. But they did not heed the advice. Instead, they concentrated efforts on involving the private sector breeders in their plans for the NS.

The impact of the Aga Khan offering his stud farms in Ireland to the British government and the prospect of the retirement of high-class thoroughbreds in the early 1940s should not be underestimated. Had the British government reached an agreement with the Aga Khan, it would have resulted in the British government owning two major stud farms in the Curragh alongside their interest in the NS. At a time when Fianna Fáil leader, Eamon de Valera, was slowly implementing policies designed to sever ties to Britain, this would have presented many challenges for his government. The Ministry of Agriculture in Britain were also aware of the value of renowned thoroughbreds like *Big Game*, who had connections to the NS. And to protect future progeny earnings, they adopted policies to ensure that this thoroughbred class remained under British control. Another significant factor was Peter Burrell as CEO of the NS. He, like Greer, many years before, was loyal to the British establishment. Given the circumstances, it is unsurprising that an agreement on the ownership issue arrived in 1944. Some may argue that the Irish government relinquished their claim to the NS bloodstock too easily. But considering the decades of contention and the fact that the establishment of an Irish Republic was on the horizon, settling this matter was an important factor.

In any event, over its forty-four years in Ireland (sixteen as Tully Stud Farm), the NS played a significant role in the horse breeding industry in Ireland and Britain. For the most part, (with the obvious exception of the 1930s), it returned a trading profit, which was a considerable achievement. As was the success of the NS thoroughbreds. The NS was the home of broodmares of the calibre of *Blanche*, and she produced *Blandford*, one of the most renowned stallions in breeding history.

This research has revealed details of Ireland's complex relationship with Britain through the intertwining of sport and politics. No other sport captured the same level of attention from the British and Irish governments simultaneously as horse racing. The National Stud was a prime example of the many complexities involved. It became a cultural symbol for Britain and a reflection of a thriving Irish horse breeding industry. When an agreement was finally concluded on the NS's future, it is telling that the British and Irish governments moved quickly to establish State stud farms in their countries. This is a testament to what was achieved at the National Stud, which set a template for future governments to follow.

Moreover, this is what makes this research and its findings significant; it finally gives this institution the recognition it long deserves. There is considerable scope for further research on the British National Stud. To date, it has received very little scholarly attention. A rich vein of sources is available at the British National Archives in Kew. European countries, such as Germany, Hungary, and France, have also established State Stud Farms. Thus, there is the potential for further research using a comparative approach.

In the mid-1940s, the creation of the Irish National Stud was a significant development for the horse breeding industry. The political debate on the National Stud Act (1945) was very revealing, where an opportunity was missed to ensure that the INS began trading on terms that provided transparency and accountability. Senator Sweetman's requests for an amendment to serve this purpose and its subsequent refusal by the Minister of Agriculture was a grave error. And it left a legacy that plunged the INS into crisis. The composition of the INS board of directors was an eclectic mix of republicans and unionists. Given the historical legacies, it was unsurprising that tension existed but nevertheless there was a determined unity to progress the equine industry. Further research could be valuable on why horse racing, above all other sports, had the power to unite rather than divide.

A notable development during the early decades of the INS was their policy regarding stallions classified as prestigious. Having acquired high-class stallions such as *Royal Charger* and *Tulyar*, the INS adopted a policy to cash in on their investments within a very short time. Again, this thesis has argued that this policy was flawed. The purchase of *Tulyar* raised other important issues. To facilitate the acquisition, share capital at the INS had to be increased through legislation passed in the National Stud Act (1953). This came during a period of extreme economic hardship, with politicians arguing that the speculative nature of the industry meant the share capital increase was highly questionable. This has been a recurrent argument throughout INS history. And these arguments are valid as investing in a highly speculative sector leaves the government open to legitimate criticism, especially during recessionary periods when matters become even more uncertain.

The relationship between the INS and the government became increasingly strained, particularly evident in the attempted sale of *Panaslipper*. The lack of transparency and accountability at the INS that Leicester had highlighted became manifest. Consequently, the breakdown in relations cast the INS and the government in an extremely negative light, a pattern embroidered across the following decades. As this relationship deteriorated, the private sector breeders controlled the market. It was telling that the Survey Team on Irish Horse Breeding (1965) noted that the INS could not match the standards in the private sector. Ironically, the Survey Team advised the INS of the need to purchase a prestigious stallion.

In 1969, another National Stud Act was introduced to increase the INS share capital. The suggestion of a government subsidised scheme at the INS for the small breeders was mooted, but crucially, it received little support. Once again, this became part of a recurrent pattern throughout the following decades. The 1970s witnessed a transformation in the horse breeding industry. Charles Haughey's tax concession on stallion cover fees contributed to the rise of elite breeders such as Coolmore Stud and the Maktoum family. Haughey's close relationship with the elite breeders called into question his influence on the industry. The INS was charged with not serving the best interests of the small breeders. A critical research study by Michael MacCormac confirmed what the public had suspected that the industry was elitist.

The government commissioned *First Report of the Joint Committee on State Sponsored Bodies* (1978) was concerned with the stranglehold the elite breeders had on the industry. Yet, the government again ignored these concerns, and when questioned by the Joint Committee, the CEO of the INS, Osborne, defended the sector. The lack of state investment remained an issue. But once must consider that the prevailing economic circumstances in Ireland determined government policy, and in times of hardship the INS was not likely to be top of the agenda. The rise of syndication in horse racing profoundly impacted the INS and the industry in general. The INS became even more marginalised because they could not compete at the elite level. These circumstances resulted in Osborne's resignation. During his twelve-year tenure, the INS traded at a profit for ten years. In another deeply ironic twist of fate, he ended up managing Sheikh Mohammad's stud farm enterprise in Ireland.

In the 1980s, the INS were fortunate to find a stallion of the calibre of *Ahoonora*. A once-in-a-lifetime acquisition presented the INS with the opportunity to at last compete at the highest level. But the INS sold its prize asset. This research has shown that *Ahoonora's* earning potential brings into question why he was sold by the INS. To be sure, it was a continuation of the selling policy of the INS management across several decades, but it also suggested the influence of private breeders and trainers on the INS board of directors.

Lord Killanin's Report (1986) raised more questions. For instance, why did the Killanin Report recommend that the INS stop using mares and why was it also against any increase of INS share capital? One could perhaps surmise that this was an attempt to restrict the INS's development. The evidence presented in this research shows that mares were an integral part of the INS. The Killanin committee included influential breeders such as John Magnier, which may have been a factor in these recommendations. Coincidentally, shortly before Killanin released its findings, owners of horses trained at Coolmore Stud offered free nominations to the INS.

In 1990, a government-commissioned report, the *First Report of the Irish National Stud Company Limited*, was published. The committee recommended that the INS purchase a prestigious stallion. This recommendation came four years after the sale of *Ahoonora*, demonstrating the difficulty in finding another stallion of his class. And it reinforced the foolhardy decision to sell *Ahoonora*. Once again, the committee recommended more interaction between the INS and the small breeders. But crucially, they made no recommendations for a State subsidised scheme. And three years later, Ivan Yates TD (Fine Gael) suggested a joint venture between the private sector and the INS, but this received little attention. With the elite breeders and powerful syndicates fast emerging, the best chance for the INS to compete was to merge with a private sector breeder. Instead, the INS expanded its interests in the syndication market, and they encouraged the INS management and board of directors to become involved. This policy was a recipe for controversy. A joint agreement with a private breeder would have offered more transparency. But at the same time, it should be noted that it may have limited the opportunities for those employed by the INS.

Repeatedly, it had been argued that the likes of Coolmore have reinvigorated the industry. But this research has revealed that the relentless domination of elite breeders and reinvigoration is not the apt term to describe their impact. Comprehensive data analysis reveals the sheer scale of this domination. From mares covered to winning stakes prize money, Coolmore Stud, the Maktoum family and other elites from the Middle East were vastly superior in every aspect of their business to other stud farm establishments in Ireland and Great Britain. This was arguably the consequence of the inaction by various government and controlling bodies in the industry. And as outlined earlier, in the long term, this domination is unhealthy for the industry.

And adding more pressure is the fact that Coolmore Stud's trainer Aidan O'Brien's two sons, Joseph and Donnacha, have branched out into stud farming. However, this suggests that the owners of Coolmore now have two more feeder branches to flex their muscles across the industry like that in operation at Tally-Ho. There is scope for much deeper research in this area. For instance, this research only analysed the winning prize money, the stallion earnings, and the coverings from the top ten and the top twenty elite breeders compared to all other breeders. It would be interesting to analyse the data from outside these lists to record the exact impact the elites are having down through the lower rungs of the industry.

Alan Conway paints a pretty but blurred picture of Coolmore Stud in his 2020 publication, *Coolmore Stud: Ireland's greatest sports success story* (2017). Conway claims that Coolmore Stud 'is an Irish success story, one of the greatest to come out of Ireland since the foundation of the State'.[1308] And taken at face value (due to Coolmore's reputation), this is a convincing argument, but unfortunately, within Conway's assessment, there is a distinct lack of details on how Coolmore's meteoric rise was achieved. Moreover, there is an apparent absence of any constructive criticism. Conway's asserts that:

> Coolmore is one of the brightest diamonds that Ireland has, and in the age of the bankers and jokers who brought Ireland to its knees, it's comforting to see people like John Magnier thrive and know that as a nation Ireland can still shine on the world stage.[1309]

Magnier has achieved remarkable success, and for that, praise is warranted. But Magnier and his associates like J.P. McManus, Dermot Desmond, and Charles Haughey, amongst others, have been involved in controversies which painted a very different picture to that outlined by Conway. Indeed, this picture reflects legacies of decades of poor governance culminating in Ireland losing its economic sovereignty in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

As this research has shown, the Irish National Stud is an example of how governance in Ireland has operated since the mid-1940s. Throughout this time, several controversial incidents occurred at the INS. These incidents reflected poor governance and glaring conflicts of interest, followed by a disturbing lack of transparency and accountability. In the broader scheme of Irish politics, tribunals concluded that poor governance was one of the most significant factors and the INS, as a semi-state institution, is reflective of this practice. Therefore, it is unsurprising that reckless political and financial policies culminated in Ireland's economic difficulties in 2007. Moreover, the INS has been swallowed up in this stormy climate of political turbulence and felt the consequences.

This thesis has also touched upon various controversies involving individuals. John Clarke, as CEO, brought the most controversy to the INS. This research has shown that his expenses were excessive despite the defence offered by Clarke's INS colleagues. The several

[1308] Conway, Coolmore Stud, p. 18.
[1309] Ibid., p. 31.

workplace bullying accusations cannot be solely attributed to Clarke, but the cumulative impact of a few controversial issues was detrimental to the high standards expected of a State-sponsored institution. The conflicts of interest at the INS brought further controversy. From the management and INS board's investments in *Invincible Sprit* to Clarke working in a dual role for the INS, there was ample opportunity for the Press to be critical, and with some justification.

A more plausible argument can be made that these events resulted from decades of poor INS governance and policies. From the early days of the INS, when the Minister of Agriculture refused Sweetman's request to amend the National Stud Act (1945) to offer much more accountability and transparency, a rot set in at the INS. This rot festered, leading to the sequence of events in the 2000s For this research, a FOI request was made to the INS on their stallion syndicates, but limited information was released. This researcher argues that as the INS is a State-sponsored company, all the data of syndicates should be recorded for future reference and all information made available to researchers and the public.

The INS is an institution that has never quite captured the public's imagination. It is a place that school children often visit on school tours or with families on day trips. A combination of factors outlined throughout this thesis has ensured that the INS has never reached its potential. Moreover, the INS, under the control of people heavily involved in the private market, has stifled its development. For instance, the selling policy of top-class stallions in operation since its foundation in 1944 and the conflicts of interests raise questions on whose interests the directors represent. The natural tendency of any person with a vested interest is to protect their investments ahead of an institution like the INS, which was in direct competition. The Irish government have also faced challenges dealing with the INS. Government policy is formulated on economic prosperity; supporting the INS was not an issue in prosperous times. But in recessionary times, measures are put in place to protect the vulnerable, and the INS is not in this category.

Additionally, there is the ethical issue of spending public funds on an institution that is highly speculative, with thoroughbreds unpredictable, to put it mildly.

Despite its many challenges, the INS has survived and competed in the industry. A reflection of what could be achieved with proper interaction with the elite breeders can be found in the case of Tally-Ho Stud. Its rise has been rapid in recent years but only because of the cooperation of the elite breeders. The INS faces an uncertain future, given the evidence presented in this thesis. Moreover, it cannot always rely on State assistance because the performance of the Irish economy determines that. Nor can the INS depend on the cooperation of the elite breeders, as it can be confidently predicted that they will revert to type and protect their own interests. Nevertheless, the INS is a well-regarded institution worldwide because of its links to famous racehorses and sires and, of course, its research and training facilities which are second to none. This may be the best way forward for the stud as an institution.

Appendix (Chapter 1)

1(a): CAPITAL EXPENDITURE: LIST OF CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTORS, SUPPLIERS, AND ARCHITECTS INVOLVED IN WORKS CARRIED OUT AT TULLY ESTATE BETWEEN 1899 TO 1915:

Date	**Name of Contractor/Company**	**£**
16 Oct. 1899	A. J. Main & Co contract for hay sheds	416. 10. 0.
20 Nov. 1899	Humphrey's Ltd. Iron houses contract	480. 0. 0.
19 Dec. 1900	Sunlight Gas Company	144. 10. 0
24 June 1901	Sunlight Gas Company pipes etc.	45. 14. 5.
24 June 1901	Doulton & Co. managers for stables	153. 10. 4.
6 Mar. 1901	Waring & Gillow mantlepieces etc.	28. 4. 8.
28 May 1901	J.P. White & Co. gates etc.	138. 7. 5.

Name	**Name of Contractor/Company**	**£**
30 May 1902	James Kiernan. Twelve certificates on the account and a final certificate for completing the contract to construct stud farm buildings. Less cost of water supply and roadmaking	14745. 15. 5. <u>225. 6. 4.</u> 13520. 8. 2.
17 June 1902	James Kiernan a/c bolts, locks etc.	102. 9. 9.
12 Apr. 1902	Rathbons & Beckett fees as architects and quantity surveyors	1388. 12. 1.
30 Nov. 1903	Payne Bros a/c contact for roofing stables	383. 3. 1
14 Jan. 1904	J. P. White gates	36. 1. 1
7 July 1904	Fletcher & Philipson painting outbuildings	74. 17. 10
31 Dec. 1904	Sundry persons for materials and wage to date a/c day work Total from Oct. 1899 to Dec. 1904	<u>434. 8. 4.</u> 17346. 17. 2.
30 Sept. 1905	Payne Bros. a/c steps to the water tower	85. 18. 6.
3 Jan. 1908	A. J Main & Co. new shed	92. 0. 0.

22 Jan. 1908	Booth Bros. gas engine & hoist	117. 1. 5.
9 Nov. 1908	A. J. Main & Co. two iron sheds	169. 10. 0.
31 Dec. 1908	Sundry persons for materials and wage to date a/c day work £3,775. 9. 2 Less received from the Royal Insurance Co. compensation re damage by fire £1,285. 4. 0.	1490. 5. 2.
2 July 1909	Thos. Williams & Son gas.	80. 0. 0.
6 Jan. 1910	Thos. Williams & Son additional gas installation	216. 17. 8.
4 Nov. 1910	A. J. Main & Co. a/c new sheds	159. 10. 10.
31 Dec. 1910	Tully Nursery Building Cottage	775. 0. 0.
3 Mar. 1911	Graves & Co. roof to the stable yard	395. 0. 0.
3 July 1913	D. Carberry & Co. improvements at the old mill	31. 0. 0.
31 Dec. 1913	D. Carberry & Co. improvements at the old mill	338. 10. 0.
26 Dec. 1914	D. Carberry & Co. lodge enlargement	752. 12. 15.
22 Feb. 1915	Prescott & Davies, architects fees	56. 10. 7.
13 Dec. 1915	F. Blake a/c new gasoline engine & house	88. 0. 0.
	Overall Total	**£22,094. 13. 8**

Source: Capital expenditure on Tully Estate to 14 Dec. 1915 by Wallace Smith & Sons, 18 Cock Street, Liverpool, 20 Dec. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF, 52/12.

1 (b) STATEMENT OF THE VALUE OF COLONEL HALL-WALKER'S TULLY ESTATE - LAND:

Land	Sub Total	Total
Tully Stud Farm in Tully East, Kildare, Ireland comprising 215 acres, acquired in June 1899.	2744.3.	
Purchase of claim to room in Tully House made September 1899.	50. 0. 0	2794. 3.0
Purchase of second farm comprising 73 acres made September 1900.		1837. 10. 0
Purchase of William Bergin's land comprising of Twenty-three acres were made in April 1905.		1939. 0. 0
'100 Acre Farm' comprising 161 acres	5000. 0. 0	

October 1905.		
Purchase of charge on this property from H. W. Board of Works, November 1905.	100. 10. 0	5100. 10. 0
The Mill Farm comprising 193 acres purchased In October 1905.		2650. 0. 0.
Francis Bergin's farm comprising 46 acres Purchased October 1905.		1350. 0. 0.
Solicitor's costs on the last three purchases.		156. 8. 3
Ballygreany Lime Quarry was purchased in July 1910.	374. 19. 6	
Purchase of redemption in full of this property from Irish Land Commission in July 1910.	375. 10. 8	550. 10. 2
Curragh Farm, Kildare comprising 186 acres purchased July 1914.		7567. 19. 1
Forward		**23,748. 10*s*.1*d*.**

BUILDINGS:

Buildings	**Total**
Tully House stud farm buildings comprising Tully Lodge, stables and outbuildings such as hospital boxes, foreign mare's buildings, and stud groom's cottage, men's rooms stallion boxes covered cattle and stable yards, gas and turbine houses, hay and straw barns, workpeople's cottages, the new lodge, gas Installation, etc., less compensation received from a fire insurance company, August 1908, as per schedule No. 1	18404. 2. 5
Fencing: estate comprising paddocks with best-creosoted timber Throughout, less depreciation as per schedule No. 2	3105.9. 0
Afforestation with best Scottish firs, hollies, etc., as per schedule 3	1392.11. 6
Drainage scheme as per schedule 4	340. 0. 0
Field drainage excluding labour as per schedule No. 5	448. 13. 9

Removal of Kildare Urban district council's waterworks from the site adjoining Tully House property	1000. 0 .0
Roadmaking excluding labour of employees as per Schedule No. 6	976. 15. 10
Water supply to the estate as per schedule No. 7	1967. 3. 2
Erection of new lodge (1907) as per schedule No. 9	692. 15. 0
Antique furniture, pictures and other personal effects charged in above and deducted below	1221. 16.1
Laying out of the garden, excluding the labour cost	21. 18. 6
Laying of riding track	453. 15. 0
	£54817. 14. 10
Less antique furniture and pictures as above	1221. 16. 1
Total	**£53,596. 18*s*. 9*d*.**

1 (c): TABLE SHOWING TERMS OF LEASES AND FREEHOLDS ON TULLY STUD FARM.

Townland & Description	Owner (Agent)	The area supplied in acres (approx.)	Rent paid	Amount paid for tenants rights
Tully East. Tully Home Farm Tully House & Stud.	A.H Aylmer	215	£272. 1*s*. 6*d*.	£2550
Tully East	A.H Aylmer	72	95. 0. 0	1600
Tully East & West, The Mill Farm, The Hundred Acre Farm	A.H Aylmer A.H Aylmer	193 161	156. 8. 0 250. 0. 0	7650
Tully West	A.H Aylmer	43	69. 18. 6	1350
The Curragh Farm	Irish Land Commission	186	123. 7. 0 (Annual annuity)	7406 (Includes part-

				purchase money then paid)
Offaly East	Colonel W. Hall-Walker	23	------	Purchase price freehold £1,900

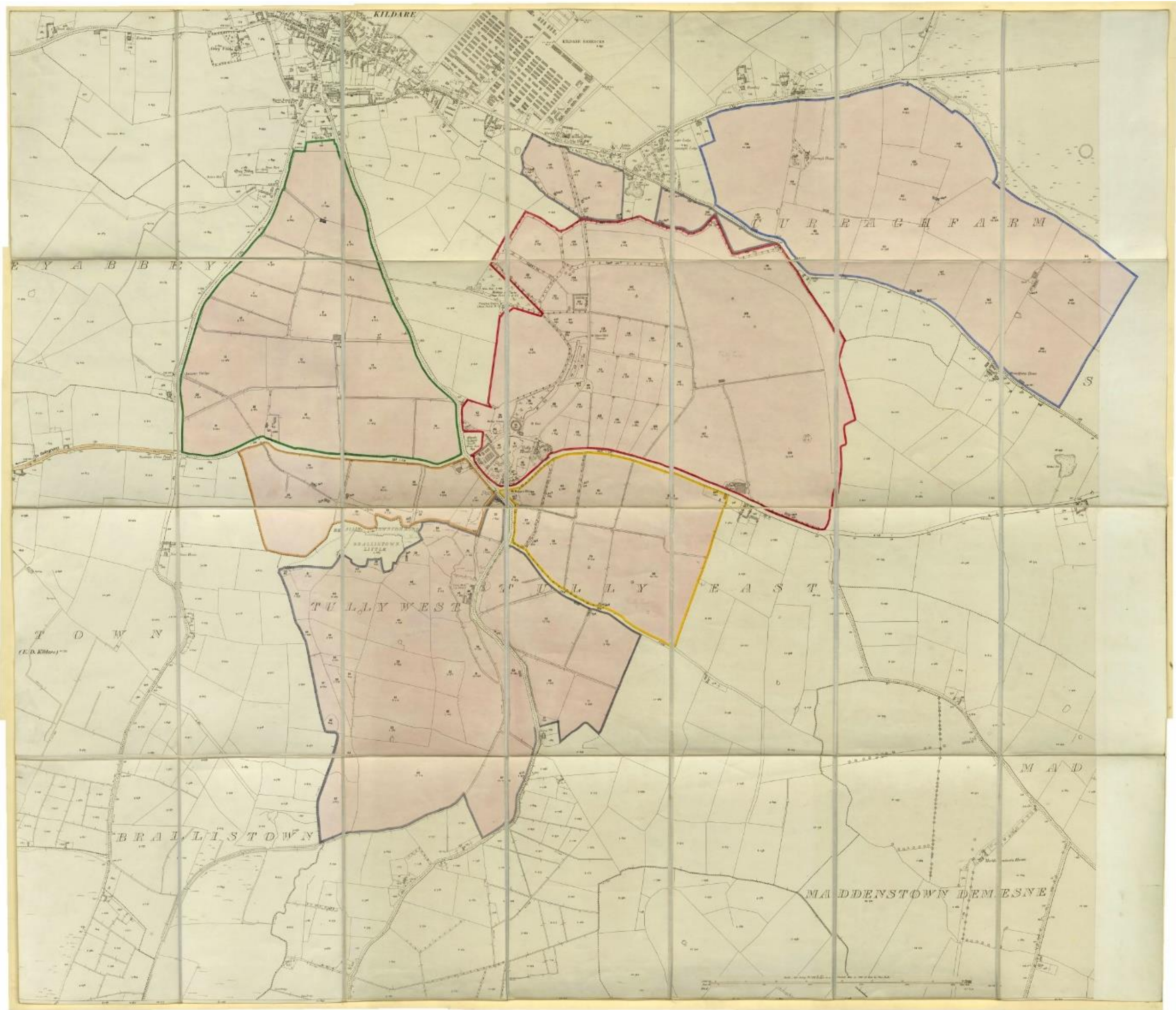
Source: Mogen's valuation of Tully Stud, 10 Nov. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11939 (26619), p. 8.

1 (d) HANS HENDRICK AYLMER'S SUB-LEASES AT TULLY ESTATE

Regions	Acres	Tenure	Rent
Tully East (Demesne lands)	215	Terms of thirty years from 25 March 1899 under-recorded agreement dated 6 June 1899. Aylmer landlord, Fay, and McCormick tenants	272. 1*s.* 6*d.*
Tully East and Tully West (the Mill Farm)	183	Terms of fifteen years from 25 March 1903. Aylmer landlord, Lee tenants	156. 8. 0.
Tully East, The Hundred Acres Farm	161	Terms of fifteen years from 25 March 1903. Aylmer landlord, Lee tenants	250. 0. 0.
Tully East	73	Terms of thirty years from 25 March 1899. Aylmer landlord, Fay, and McCormick tenants	95. 0. 0.
Tully West	46	Terms of fifteen years from 25 March 1903. Aylmer landlord, Lee tenants	69. 18*s.* 6*d.*

Source: Land registry of Ireland transfer details, 31 Mar. 1916, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/287, (13000).

1 (e) MAP OF TULLY ESTATE



Source: Tully Stud land registry map, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/190.

The above is a detailed map of Tully Estate. The colours represent the following farms/regions:

Blue - The Curragh Farm

Red – Tully House & Farm (located in Tully East)

Yellow – Tully East

Green - Tully West

Grey – Mill Farm (located in Tully West)

Brown – Tully West

1 (f) RUSSLEY PARK TRAINING RIGHTS, LEASE TERMS AND ORIGINAL LEASEHOLDERS.

Land over which the rights are exercisable	Terms held	Date of the lease	Name of the original leasers	Remarks
Bishopstone and Idstone Downs	Twenty-one years from 29 Sept. 1903	10 Nov. 1904	Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England	Vendor's right was limited to forty horses at Russley Park
Hill Farm Downs	Seventeen years from 29 Sept. 1907	16 Sept. 1907	William Washington Saunders and Gilbert Alden	
Swinley Plain Downs Ashbury	(Not specified)	4 Nov. 1907	The Earl of Craven and John Henry Lawrence	Under this agreement, the right was vested in William Thomas Robinson and the vendor.
Manor Downs Wanborough	Held over after expiration of a term of six years from 1 Oct. 1905	17 May 1906	Charles William Whatley	
Five acres at extreme end of Wanborough Plain Farm	The same as above	As above	As above	
Four Barrows and Upham Downs Aldbourne	Tenancy determined by six months notice	10 Dec. 1903	William Brown	
Part of Starveall Farm Bishopstone	Tenancy determined by six months notice	23 May 1906	Thomas Hickman	

Source: Land Registry of Ireland Transfer Details, 31 Mar. 1916, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF 52/287, (13000).

1 (g) CHART SHOWS *ROYAL REALM* AND *WHITE EAGLE'S* PROGENY.

WHITE EAGLE

AIGLETTE2 (1912)	*LADY PELEGRINE* (1916)
ALVUELO (1918)	*LET FLY* (1912)
ARCTIC NIGHT (1920)	*LINE OF FIRE2* (1918)
ARTIC NIGHT (1920)	*MACHICHE* (1923)
ARTIC NIGHT2 (1920)	*MIMOSA108* (1922)
AVIARY2 (1921)	*MOUNTAIN EAGLE2* (1911)
BANNIERE (1921)	*ORATAVE* (1927)
BIRD OF PREY (1921)	*PEARL ASHE* (1919)
BLACK EAGLES (1914)	*QUEEN OF FLIGHT2* (1923)
BALANCHE (1912)	*QUICK THOUGHT* (1918)
BRACK BUIE (1918)	*ROMUS* (1912)
CANDESCENT2 (1914)	*ROYAL FALCON4* (1923)
CHILI BOM (1923)	*ROYAL FAVOUR* (1914)
COMPRIMISE (1922)	*ROYAL ORDER* (1911)
DALKEITH (1914)	*SEAPLANE2* (1914)
DING HOW (1912)	*SILVEREAGLE2* (1923)
DOLABELLA (1911)	*SWEET EAGLE* (1925)
EAGLE QUEEEN2 (1913)	*WAY OF AN EAGLE* (1916)
EAGLE SNIPE (1920)	*WHITE ABBEY* (1911)
EAGLES CAGE (1919)	*WHITE ANT* (1918)
EAGLES FLIGHT (1927)	*WHITE BIRD* (1923)
EAGLES REST (1914)	*WHITE BUD* (1927)
EAGLES ROOST (1928)	*WHITE CAT* (1921)
ERNE (1921)	*WHITE GLADE* (1923)
FLYING DINAH (1922)	*WHITE LIE2* (1911)
FLYING FISH 11 (1923)	*WHITE MIXTURE* (1925)
FLYING FISH2 (1923)	*WHITE SATIN* (1919)
GAY GOSHAWK (1913)	*WHITE SQUALL* (1915)
GOLDEN THOUGHTS (-)	*WHITE VEIL 11* (1929)
GOSHAWK2 (1916)	*WHITE VEIL3* (1929)
GREEN CORMORANT (1928)	*WHITE WASH (1914)*
HEATHER MOON (1911)	*WHITE WEAVERLEY* (1915)
HEATHERMOON (-)	*WHITEWASH* (1914)
HEN HARRIER2 (1918)	*WHYDAH2* (1919)
JOCANTA (1922)	*WIDOW BIRD* (1919)
JOYZELLE (1920)	*WINDWARD9* (1921)
LADY CUPID (1914)	

ROYAL REALM

ALBIA2 (1914)	*LIONELLA2* (1914)
ALL ALONE2 (1916)	*LITTLE MAUDIE2* (-)
ALL ROYAL 1915)	*MOUNT ROYAL2* (1917)
BELLE ROYAL (1913)	*MY REALM* (1920)
BHUIDHAONACH (1919)	*PLACE ROYAL2* (1917)
CZARDOM2 (1916)	*Q OF THE BALLET* (1916)
DEMERARA2 (1915)	*QUEEN OF THE BALLET* (1916)
EAGLES EYRIE2 (1918)	*QUEEN OF THE HUNT* (1916)
ELEGANT LASS (1918)	*ROYAL FANCY* (1918)
FASH OF STEEL (1913)	*ROYAL MISSIE* (1921)
GALROY (1917)	*SUPERMARE* (1916)
GOOD GAMES (1916)	*TIOTOE2* (1918)
HELLKS BELLS (1914)	*TWELVE POINTER* (1920)

Source: Progeny of *White Eagle* and *Royal Realm*, available at Pedigree Online Thoroughbred Database, available at https://www.pedigreequery.com/progeny (11 Dec. 2018).

1 (h) BROODMARES AND FOALS AT TULLY STUD AND RUSSLEY PARK

NAME OF HORSE	PARENTAGE	FILLY	COLT	FILLY/COLT VALUE	HORSE VALUE
BELLA ROBA (1907)	*Count Schomberg* out of *Black Cherry*	Out of *Royal Realm*	-	£500	£800
BELLE VALE (1904)	*Isinglass* out of *Meddlesome*	—	Out of *Royal Realm*	350	400
BURNT ALMOND (1908)	*Gallinule* out of *Jean's Folly*	Out of *Royal Realm*	—	200	1500
CANIDIA (1906)	*Count Schomberg* out of *Cannie Lassie*	---	---	—	450
COLONIA (1903)	*Persimmon* out of *Sandblast*	Out of *White Eagle*	---	500	800
COUNTESS ZIA (1903)	*Gallinule* out of *Order of Merit*	Out of *Count Shomberg*	-	50	1200
CRUCIBLE (1908)	*Count Schomberg*	—	---	---	400

	out of *Sandblast*				
DOROTHY COURT (1908)	*Robert Diable* out of *Cherry Lass*	---	—	---	300
ELM TWIG (1905)	*Orme* out of *Lucky Hit*	Out of *White Eagle*	---	500	600
FINE ART (1909)	*Songcraft* out of *Belle Vale*	---	Out of *Royal Realm*	150	300
FLAMING VIXEN (1907)	*Flying Fox* out of *Amphora*	---	Out of *White Eagle*	750	3000
HONEY SWEET (1902)	*Laveno* out of *Honeydew*	---	---	---	200
INFRERATRIX (1904)	*Ladas* out of V.R.	---	---	---	700
FRAN'S FOLLY (1901)	*Ayrshire* out of *Black Sherry*	---	Out of *Royal Realm*	900	400
LADY LIGHTFOOT (1900)	*Isinglass* out of *Clare*	---	Out of *Royal Realm*	1200	700
LILY MORE (1907)	*Wildfowler* out of *Rose Ronald*	---	---	---	300
MEINHART (1904)	*Count Schomberg* out of *Tully Lass*	Out of Royal Realm	---	200	300
MISS CUE (1907)	*Orme* out of *Lucky Mix*	---	Out of *White Eagle*	200	800
NORTH??? (1909)	*St. Aidan* out of *Honey Sweet*	---	Out of *White Eagle*	300	350
ORDER OF MERIT (1904)	*Cellar* out of *Lady Rayleigh*	---	---	---	250
OBCA MARA (1909)	*Songcraft* out of *Colonia*	---	Out of *White Eagle*	400	450
PETROLINE (1910)	*St. Aidan* out of *Lady Lightfoot*	---	---	---	350
QUEEN MOTHER (1904)	*Diamond Jubilee* out of *Barbara*	---	Out of *White Eagle*	300	500

SWEETWATERS (1908)	*Count Schomberg* out of *Benedictine*	---	---	---	200
TULLY LASS (1900)	Isinglass out of *Tullia*	—	---	---	100
VERDAM (1910)	---	---	—	---	600
WITCH ELM (1904)	*Orme* out of *Cannie Lassie*	---	---	---	200
UN-NAMED COLT FOAL	*White Eagle* out of *Meta Burke*	---	300	---	---
UN-NAMED COLT FOAL	*White Eagle* out of *Noble Martha*	---	400	---	---

Source: Henry Greer's bloodstock valuation, 10 Nov. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF/286 (43581).

1 (i) YOUNG MARES

NAME OF HORSE	PARENTAGE	HORSE VALUE
BLANCE (1904)	*White Eagle* out of *Black Cherry*	£400
EMPYREAN (1915)	*White Eagle* out of *Imperatrix*	150
MINDFUL (1913)	*Minoru* out of *Noble Martha*	150
MINE OWN (1913)	*Minoru* out of *Meinhart*	150
MOUNTAIN EAGLE (1911)	*White Eagle* out of *Black Cherry*	250
MOUNTAIN PINE (1911)	*White Eagle* out of *Witch Elm*	250
PURPLE AND GOLD (1913)	*Royal Realm* out of *Dorothy Court*	350

Source: Henry Greer's bloodstock valuation, 10 Nov. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF/286 (43581).

1 (j) HORSES IN TRAINING

NAME OF HORSE	PARENTAGE	HORSE VALUE
ATHEL BLAIR (1912)	Colt by *Minoru* out of *Belle Vale*	£250
BLACK KITE (1912)	Colt by *White Eagle* out of *Imperatrix*	300
CARRICKFERGUS(1911)	Colt by *Count Schomberg* out of *Lady Lightfoot*	800
DOLARELLA (1911)	Filly by *White Eagle* out of *Gondolette*	2000
DUTCH LADY (1911)	Filly by *Count Schomberg* out of *Elm Twig*	800
FLASH OF STEEL (1913)	Filly by *Royal Realm* out of *Flaming Vixen*	600
GREAT SPORT (1910)	Bay horse by *Gallinule* out of *Gondolette*	5000
KING ROBERT (1913)	Colt by *Royal Realm* out of *Burnt Almond*	500
NIGHTHAWK (1910)	Bay horse by *Gallinule* out of *Jeans Folly*	1000
PAGENT (1913)	Colt by *Beppo* out of *Lady Cynosure*	400
RATTLEJACK (1909)	Bay horse by *Count Schomberg* out of *Sandblast*	400
SEA EAGLE (1912)	Filly by *White Eagle* out of *Mother Seige*	500
TILLY WHIM (1913)	Filly by *Minoru* out of *Lily-Rose*	1000
WHITE LIE (1911)	Filly by *White Eagle* out of *Jeans Folly*	900
WHITE PROPHET (1911)	Colt by *White Eagle* out of *Sandblast*	700

Source: Henry Greer bloodstock valuation, 10 Nov. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF/286 (43581).

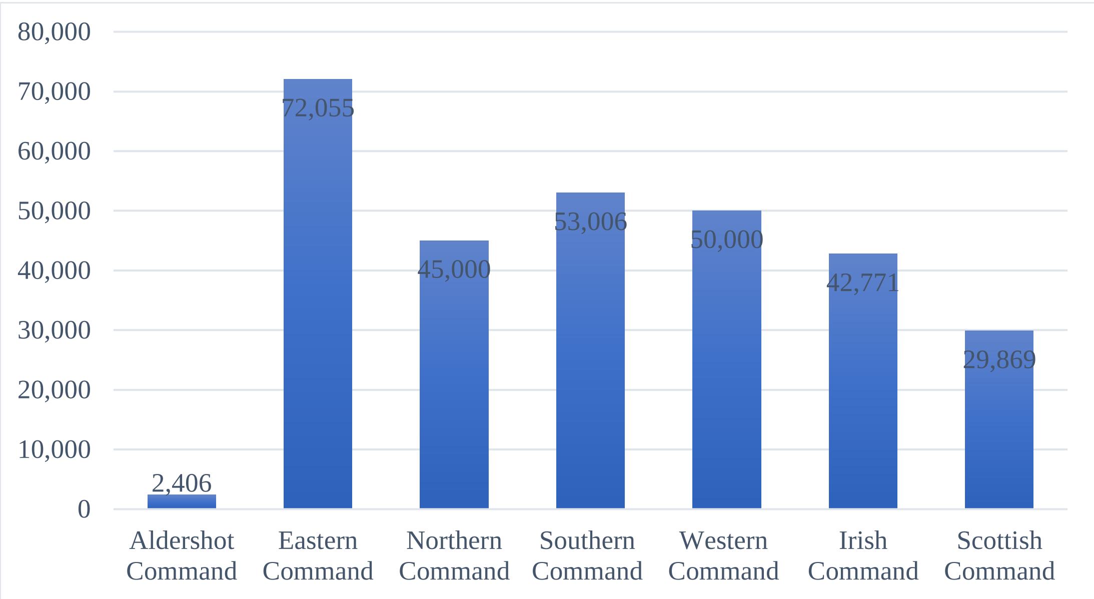
1 (k) YEARLING FILLIES

NAME OF HORSE	PARENTAGE	HORSE VALUE
ALBION	By *Royal Realm* out of *Burnt Almond*	£1500
CALAIS	By *Royal Realm* out of *Meinhart*	300
CANDESCENT	By *White Eagle* out of *Canidia*	1200

EAGLES NEST	By *White Eagle* out of *Miss Cue*	700
HALEWOOD	By *Royal Realm* out of *Witch Elm*	750
HAPPY VALLEY	(Blemished) by *Royal Realm* out of *Belle Vale*	100
LIONELLA	By *Royal Realm* out of *Belaroba*	1500
RICE AND RARE	By *Royal Realm* out of *Fine Art*	800
ROYAL FAVOUR	By *White Eagle* out of *Order of St. Merit*	500
WHITE LODGE	By *White Eagle* out of *Dorothy Court*	400

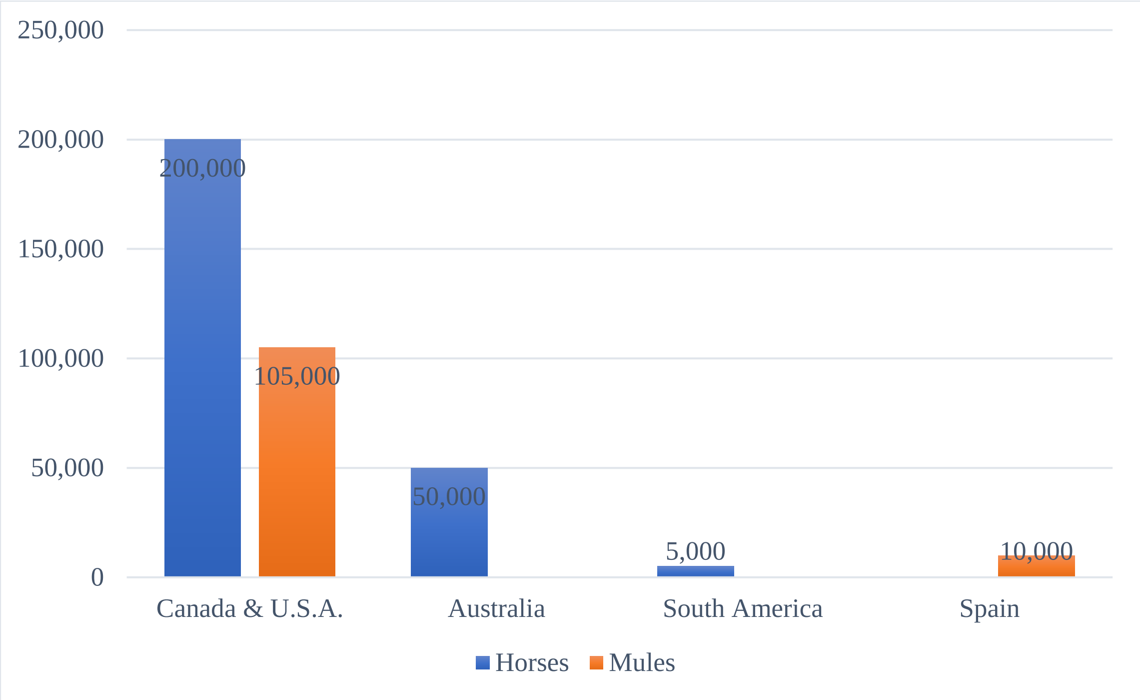
Source: Henry Greer's bloodstock valuation, 10 Nov. 1915, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, MAF/286 (43581).

1 (l): TABLE SHOWS HORSES PURCHASED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM FOR MILITARY SERVICE FROM 1 AUG. 1914 TO 31 MAR. 1915.



Source: Correspondence between the War Office and the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, 27 Apr. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11929.

1 (m) TABLE SHOWS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF HORSES AND MULES IMPORTED INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM BY THE END OF OCTOBER 1915.



Source: Correspondence between the War Office and the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, 27 Apr. 1915, Treasury Department, T1/11929.

APPENDIX (Chapter 2)

2 (a) CHART SHOWING THE HORSES LEASED TO LORD LONSDALE BY THE NATIONAL STUD 1916-33 (ALL WINNINGS SPLIT AT FIFTY PER CENT WITH THE NATIONAL STUD)

Horse	Year	Entrance fees			Jockey Fees			Winnings		
ALBIA	1916	£5	2*s*	6*d*	£7	7*s*	0*d*			
	1917	14	2	6	7	7	0			
CALAIS	1916	1	0	0	7	7	0			
CANDESCENT	1917	9	5	0						
EAGLE'S REST	1917	143	4	6	23	2	0	856	7	0
LIONELLA	1916	9	5	0						
ROYAL FLAVOUR	1916	17	10	0						
	1917	6	5	0						
HALEWOOD	1917	13	5	0						
QUEEN OF THE BALLET	1918	203	12	6	22	1	0	29	0	0
	1919	370	0	6	32	11	0	806	6	0
	1920	20	2	6						

QUEEN OF THE HUNT	1918	173	7	0	18	18	0	9	18	0
	1919	257	13	0	15	15	0			
	1920	26	5	0						
ROYAL OAK	1919	100	0	0						
	1920	149	12	6						
MOUNTAIN CRAG	1921	65	12	6						
	1922	105	0	0						
ENRICHMENT	1921	163	7	6	26	5	0	193	6	8
	1922	154	0	0						
DILIGENCE	1921	129	7	6						
	1922	527	2	6	29	8	0	900	0	0
	1923	335	0	0	10	12	0	1816	13	4
POLEMBERG	1921	175	7	6	21	0	0	333	6	8
	1922	305	0	0	15	0	0	16	13	4
	1923	107	0	0	19	4	0	20	0	0
	1924	45	0	0	26	12	0	516	13	4
	1925	73	0	0	28	16	0	6	13	4
	1926	61	0	0	21	6	0	173	6	8
ROYAL LANCER	1921	194	18	0	21	0	0	173	6	8
	1922	463	7	6	32	6	0	9458	6	8
	1923	127	0	0						
FALSE FRIEND	1923	155	0	0	12	16	0	15	2	3
	1924	69	6	8						
TILIA	1923	101	0	0	23	8	0	327	6	8
WARDEN OF THE MARCHES	1924	284	0	0	14	18	0	256	13	4
	1925	495	0	0	43	12	0	2286	13	4
	1926	135	0	0	27	12	0	2335	6	8
CHEVY CHASE	1924	26	0	0						
	1925	20	0	0						
BALFOUR	1924	289	0	0	12	16	0	33	6	8
	1925	256	0	0	6	8	0	23	6	8
	1926	52	0	0						
PEROGATIVE	1924	99	0	0	19	4	0	6	13	4
COMPROMISE	1924	125	0	0	14	18	0	113	6	8
	1925	160	0	0	14	18	0	142	0	0
	1926	10	0	0						
ANNE CLIFFORD	1925	134	0	0	14	8	0	33	6	0
	1926	395	7	6						
	1927	5	0	0						
PRALINE	1925	144	0	0	9	12	0			
		125	5	0						
MENTENSE	1925	128	0	0						

	1926	399	7	6						
TEAMSTER	1926	11	0	0						
LUCY LONG	1926	161	0	0						
	1927	358	0	0						
	1928	5	0	0						
LIGNESS	1925	292	0	0	24	10	0	120	0	0
	1927	85	0	0						
ENDOWMENT	1926	309	2	6	25	10	0	1235	6	8
	1927	452	5	0	33	0	0	1830	0	0
	1928	160	0	0	18	16	0	50	0	0
UNAMED HORSE	1926	31	2	6						
	1927	30	2	6						
DAUMONT	1928	244	0	0	20	4	0	1017	6	8
	1929	546	0	0	18	2	0	3266	13	4
GREEN CORMORANT	1930	107	0	0	19	4	0	23	6	8
	1931	25	0	0						
YANWATE	1930	83	0	0	18	2	0	83	6	8
	1931	188	2	6						
EMOLUMENT	1930	233	0	0	6	8	0			
	1931	375	2	6	3	4	0			
DENVER	1931	109	0	0	19	4	0	33	6	8
	1932	191	0	0	6	8	0	6	13	4
SAVONA	1931	109	0	0	8	8	0			
	1932	63	0	0						
NUNS VEIL	1932	379	0	0	38	6	0	1771	6	8
	1933	60	0	0						
MYROBELLA	1932	323	0	0	29	14	0	7581	6	8
	1933	275	0	0	19	2	0	2033	3	4

Source: Lord Lonsdale's horses leased from the National Stud 1916-33, Weatherby & Sons statement, Carlisle Archives, DLONS/L9/2/

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