



# Sweet William: The Life of Billy Conn (Sport and Society)

*Andrew O'Toole*

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An Irish working-class hero of Pittsburgh, Billy Conn captured the hearts of his contemporaries through his ebullient personality, stellar boxing record, and good looks. A light-heavyweight boxing champion, Conn had defeated nine current or former champions in three weight divisions by the time he was twenty one. Best remembered for his sensational near-defeat of heavyweight champion Joe Louis in 1941, Conn is still regarded as one of the greatest fighters of all time.

Inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 1965, Billy Conn was one of the most popular athletes of his era. "The Pittsburgh Kid" captured the public's imagination with his boxing, Hollywood, and army careers, which Andrew O'Toole chronicles by drawing from fascinating interviews with Conn's family, newspaper accounts, and Billy's personal scrapbooks. Presenting an intimate look inside the champion's relationship with his girlfriend, manager, and rivals, O'Toole captures the personal life of a public icon and the pageantry of sports during the 1930s and '40s.

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