

Harris and McCourt: chance for a change

By IAIN DEMPSEY

Martin Byrnes is on vacation

IT is great to see how much Frank McCourt and Richard Harris love Limerick—even if they are not “hitting it off” together at the moment.

The fact that Frank McCourt admitted in an interview, in Friday's Limerick Leader, to striking Richard Harris in a New York pub, ended up making international headlines.

And not surprisingly it was in a row over Limerick.

Now surely this is a great opportunity for May-



Frank McCourt: much to say about Limerick



Mayor Jack Bourke and wife Monica: Jack could have a role to play in the Harris/McCourt rapprochement

(LL)

or Jack Bourke to invite both McCourt and Harris to Limerick to kiss and make up.

What a publicity coup that would be.

They could meet down by the Treaty Stone or at King John's Castle.

CNN, CBS, BBC and other media giants from around the world would converge on the city for the new Treaty of Limerick.

Of course, Mayor Bourke would have to pick a dry day to knock the

myth of Angela's Ashes the film—that it always rains in Limerick.

And maybe other famous Limerick sons like Terry Wogan and Dolores O'Riordan, of the Cranberries, could also be invited along.

Richard Harris made the telling point that there is tribal rivalry in the rugby world in Limerick—but when outside teams come top lay all come together in unison to support their own.

It is, said Harris, for the very reason that Limerick is unique.

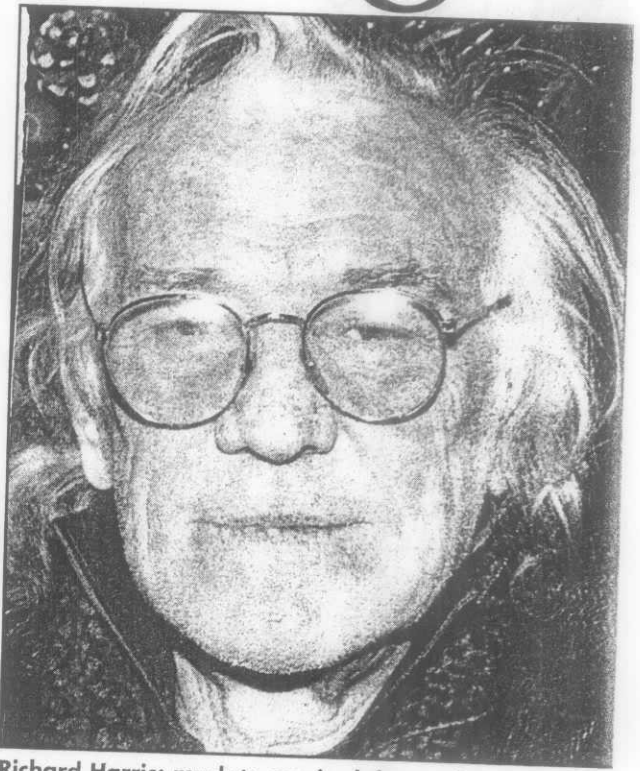
“The loyalty is absolutely astonishing and I believe that that element of Limerick totally by passed the McCourts,” says Harris.

It is hard to believe Frank McCourt hates Limerick. He denies this and points to projects he is involved in at UL, to help bring talented people from socially deprived areas into third level education.

The Limerick author has hurt some people by his depiction of his childhood and the city in his book.

The reality is that everyone knows Limerick has changed and that McCourt has put Shannonside on the world map.

People who have never heard of the place now



Richard Harris: much to say in defence of Limerick

want to see McCourt's Limerick.

It would be great to see McCourt and Harris reconcile in Limerick—not just from a publicity point of view.

Both love the city of

their birth, and let's hope that people like Jack Bourke can use his own talents to ensure that these world-wide celebrities can keep Limerick's name in lights in the year 2000.

And an ever greater case for change