

# The Life and Times of the 'Maddens of Park Lock'

## Introduction

Well-known boatman, folklorist and 'knowledgeable dog man', Gus Doyle, once described a familiar scene from his youth to 'The Tower Magazine' (1982).

*"I once saw Mike Madden break the ice on the Canal with a sledgehammer, so that he could take his boat up the canal, as he did for many years. Mike was an outstanding Cloughaun hurler, as was his brother, John who captained the 1914 exiles team in New York. Mike was the friend of everyone boating or walking. His little cottage opposite Troy's Lock was an open house to everyone alike."*

Who were the 'Maddens of Park Lock' and why does the name 'Mike Madden' still come to our lips as automatically now, as it did in days of yore? The following account brings together the amazing life and times of this canal bank family. For in the history of Limerick's Harbour Canal the name of 'Madden' has become inextricably linked with the timeless nature of place.

by John Rainsford

his wife Kate took over as 'Superintendents of the Lock' and remained in that capacity until 1905.

Annaghbeg, the third such lock on the Limerick/Killaloe canal, was constructed more than 20 years before David Madden saw the first barge pass through its gates. It was known down the years as Ryan's Lock and named after the family occupying the Lock House there since the beginning

## Keepers of the Locks

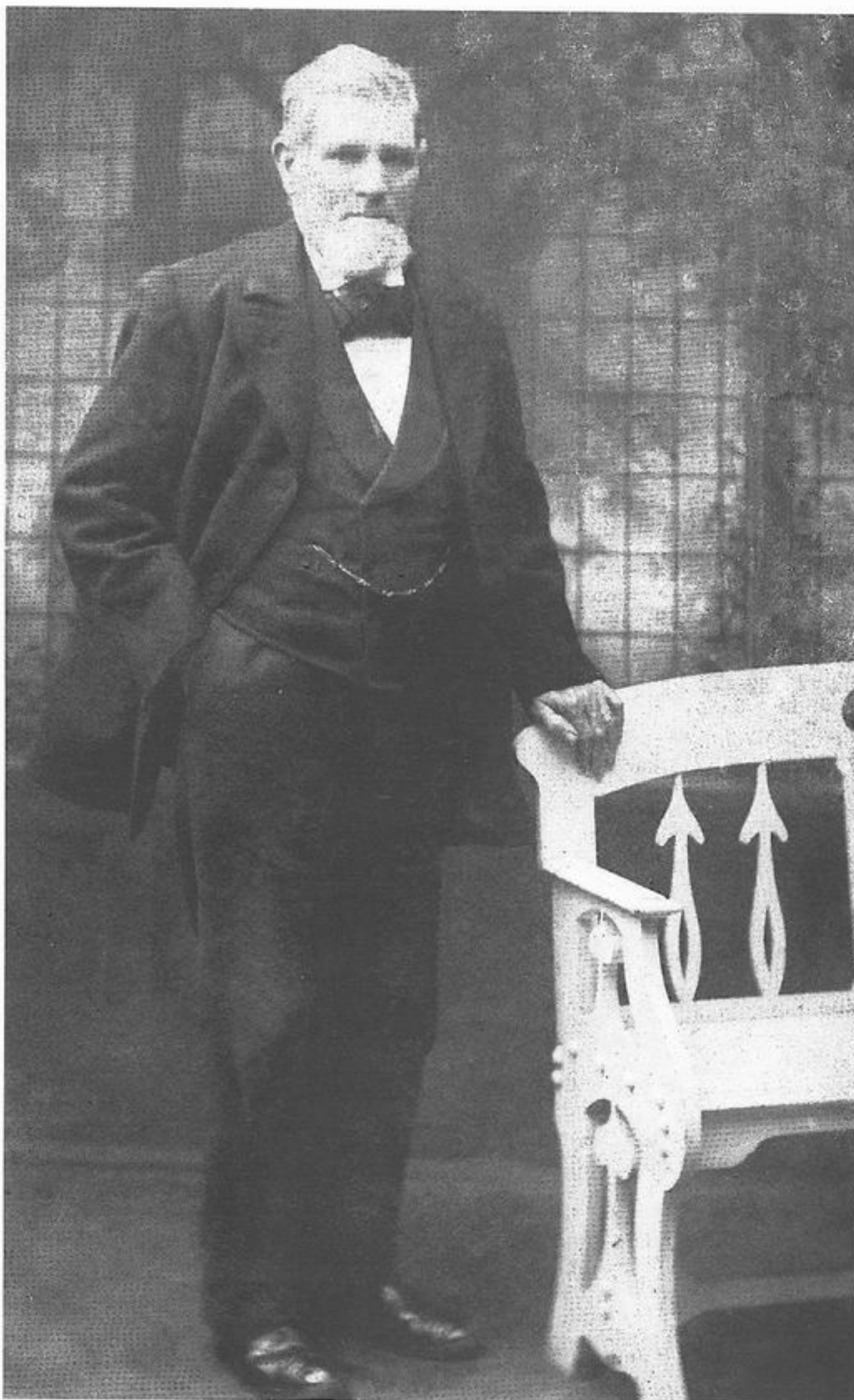
**K**evin Hannan, the late President of the 'Old Limerick Society', wrote in April 1983 that a copy of Griffith's Valuations (1850/1853) confirmed one David Madden as head of a household at Park Lock as early as 1850.

A primary school register subsequently revealed that a grandson, John J. Madden, was later born into the same household. Indeed, the documentation confirmed that the Maddens were 'Lock Keepers' at Park Lock since 1830 being the second custodians of that illustrious role.

The idea of a canal for Limerick was floated in 1697 by the then Lord Deputy of Ireland. In 1715 an Act was passed by the Irish Parliament to drain certain bogs and carry out public works in order to facilitate transport along the canal.

In 1757 the cutting began in earnest and in 1799 David Madden supervised the passage of the first canal barge to Killaloe. From then onwards the Madden family were intimately associated with life on the city's canals.

Indeed, in 1860 David's son Thomas and



Thomas Madden Lock Keeper circa 1860



of the last century. One surviving member, Jenny Ryan, is amazingly, still in residence.

This remarkable historic continuity is made complete with the daughter of John J. Madden, Ms Gouldie Madden, still living at Park Lock further down river.

### Historic Lineage

The son of David Madden, the first Lock Keeper at Park Lock was Thomas Madden. Together with his wife Kate they produced eight children in all-seven boys and one girl.

The seven sons of Thomas Madden were John J. Madden who worked with the Board of Works and lived near the Black Bridge for a time. Thomas Madden, who sadly drowned near the Black Bridge in 1930, Pa Madden who worked with the Irish Shell company and Mike Madden who also worked with the same firm.

In addition, Augustine (Gus) Madden was a harness maker. David Madden became a Lock Keeper at 'Errina Lock' further up the Shannon River and Denis Madden worked for Krupps Armament Works in Essen in Germany. He trained as an engineer there in 1910 before coming back to Ireland to form a haulage company in Dublin called 'Garryowen Transport' in 1926.

He previously invented a device for lifting submarines from the sea bed- an invention which the British admiralty later



John J. Madden (1888-1970) with sheep dog 'Bowlie' on the old canal

purchased. When the Germans bombed the North Strand in Dublin during World War II Denis provided several trucks to Dublin Corporation free of charge to help in the clearance operation. As a result Judge P. Shannon of Dublin commended him highly for his generosity.

In the 1960s Denis Madden was elected President of the 'Irish Road Haulage Association'. He was also a champion boxer who defeated 'Yank Kenney' in Ennis for the Irish Welterweight Championship. He had three sons and one daughter.

His sons worked in 'Garryowen Transport' while Lillien, his daughter, graduated from Bristol University, Trinity College Dublin and also University College Dublin. She worked as a University lecturer for many years before dying in 2009 aged 86 years. She was a personal friend of Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Denis Madden died 1973. He was just five months short of his 100th birthday.

Mary Madden, the only girl of the family, married Jim Close and lived for most of her life in Dooradoyle. Gouldie Madden, the daughter of John J. Madden, had a brother James who was born in America and is sadly now buried in Kilmurry Graveyard. His son and Gouldie's nephew was Paddy Madden twice elected Mayor of Limerick.

Each morning Gouldie's brother, Jimmy and her sister Kathleen, then living near the 'Black Bridge', heard the horn from



The Limerick All Ireland Hurling Team (1910):

J. Mackey (Captain), J. Burke (Goalkeeper), M. Mangan, M. Fehilly, T. Mangan, C. Scanlon, M. Harrington, E. Clancy, E. Treacy, T. O'Brien, T. Hayes, J. Madden (Inset), P. Flaherty, M. Danagher, J. Carroll, D. Conway, M. Sweeney





**Team badge worn by John J. Madden when he captained the exiles side that won the Championships of New York and Pennsylvania at Gaelic Park in 1914**

Annaghbeg Lock House give warning that the gates were opening for an approaching barge.

They would then run over the 'Black Bridge' to hitch a lift down to 'Madden's Slip' at Park Lock and then to school at what is now St. Patrick's Girls Primary School. If the teacher berated them for being late local Priest Fr. Creed stood up for them saying 'don't you know what mud these children had to come through to get here'?

Gouldie's father, John J. Madden, was forced to leave the Lock House together with his mother and siblings after the death of his father Thomas Madden. This was because the 'Navigation Authorities' would not allow a woman and children to pass boats along the canal.

Bill O'Mara from Newport was then appointed Superintendent and rebuilt the rambling old house but he died in the 'Black Flu' soon after as did his housekeeper. Thereafter, Jack and Dan Troy, his two nephews took charge of the lock from their late uncle.

Dan became the superintendent of the canal and subsequently married Limerick girl Nora Mullins. In a strange case of multiple misfortunes both died of heart attacks as did their children Paddy and Marieta. Jack Troy moved away and from 1930 barges no longer came through Troy's Lock as most commercial traffic now came down the Abbey River.

### **A Famous Hurling Encounter**

Having departed from Park Lock and with employment opportunities in short supply John J. Madden and his fiancé Christina McMahon planned to sail for America. For John, however, the All Ireland Hurling Final against Wexford was one burning ambition he had yet to fulfil in Ireland.

The resulting game was perhaps the most controversial in All-Ireland Hurling history. It was played at Jones' Road in Dublin on November 20th, 1910. Considerable changes were made to the rules that

season including the removal of the old side point posts and the introduction of the 'Parallelogram' for the first time. Together with the novelty of 'side line' seats also being introduced for the first time Limerick and Wexford were both surprise finalists that day.

Limerick had beaten Clare in the opening round of the Munster Championship 3-10 to 4-5 at the Markets Field on May 22nd. With the semi-final at the same venue on October 2nd Limerick then went on to beat Kerry 6-2 to 2-0. A fortnight later, on October 16th, Limerick met the hot favourites Cork in the Munster Final in Tralee. Limerick set such a scorching pace that they emerged victorious 5-1 to 4-2 for Cork.

The All-Ireland Hurling Final of 1910 was described by one commentator as being 'one of the most closely contested All-Ireland finals which the G.A.A. men have seen for many years.' The crowd was representative of every corner of the country gathered together in the winter

gloom. Indeed, the fading winter light itself was later blamed for many talking points that followed on the field of play.

The Wexford men that day wore blue jerseys with yellow shoulders while the Limerick team took to the field in the green and gold bars of Castleconnell.

The Limerick players were described as 'well and fit' with Wexford being 'of mighty strength and speed'. Together, they formed 'the finest athletic combination which a country, famed the world over for its athletes, could produce.'

Wexford scored their first goal, from a goalmouth fumble, in the opening minute after the match was started by referee Crowe. This was to be only the first of many pieces of good fortune to follow them that day, when John J. Madden marked Wexford's Mick Neville. Suddenly, Clancy a Limerick player lay injured on the ground. Play was stopped but with Limerick players still gathered around their fallen comrade the referee re-started play allowing the Wexford men to goal.



**Christina and John J. Madden in New Jersey circa 1915**





Denis Madden (not in picture) founded 'Garryowen Transport' circa 1926. They were long and short distance carriers, machinery removers and hirers of mobile cranes. Here, one of his 'Charabanc' vehicles is used to take Dublin orphanage children out for the day. The girls are pictured with their 'minders' in North William Street, Dublin, in 1926

The injured Clancy was duly replaced by B. O'Connor and at half time the score was Wexford 6-0 to Limerick 4-1.

John J. Madden was the only city player on the Limerick hurling team and was a member of 'Commercials' which was a city drapers' club. In the second half he was credited with the finest goal of the day cutting Wexford's lead to just four points. This was then cut still further to just one point after a second goal by him.

The winning goal for Limerick, however, was disallowed with overly strict adherence to the new rules impeding them badly. The final score of that most infamous All Ireland Final was Wexford 7-0 as against Limerick's 6-2.

'Tyler' Mackey, captain of the Limerick team in 1910, lodged a complaint immediately afterwards about those dubious refereeing decisions. His sons, Mick and John, went on to become hurling legends in the mid-1930s.

Three days later at a meeting of Limerick County Board the decision was taken to appeal the verdict to the Central Council. Wexford had scored a goal while a Limerick player lay injured on the field of play and a perfectly good Limerick goal was disallowed for no reason at all it was stated.

Tragically, the application was not submitted in duplicate as required by the organisation's rules. At a meeting on December 4th 1910 the Central Council of the GAA refused to entertain it.

### The Fateful Voyage

With that infamous All Ireland Hurling Final still to be played Christina McMahon

left for New York on board the SS Teutonic which she boarded at Queenstown on April 28, 1910. She, subsequently, arrived in New York, after paying a First Class Passage, on May 5 1910. Then aged just 19 years old, Christina, was registered as being from Rhebogue (Rhebogue) in 'County Clare'.

A cursory examination of the 'Townlands Index' (1851) published by 'Her Majesty's (HM) Stationary Office' in 1861, however, reveals that 'Rebogue', as it was then called, lay clearly within the confines of Limerick. The location is confirmed in the Census of 1911 when it is referred to as 'Rebogue' and in the 1923 Census where it is called 'Rhebogue'. The cost of a sea voyage to America was then seven pounds for a seven day voyage. Christina McMahon and John Madden later married on April 25, 1915 in Montclair, New Jersey.

In those times with war looming all male immigrants had to enlist or be conscripted into the American armed forces. When John J. Madden arrived in America, after Christina, he enlisted, but luckily, was never called up to fight.

It was during that ocean voyage that Christina met the ill-fated Jack Phillips who was later made famous as the wireless telegraph operator on board the doomed liner Titanic. It was he who sent the famous S.O.S code which replaced the C.Q.D warning telling of the liner's imminent demise.

He was the son of Mr and Mrs G.A. Phillips of Farncombe, Godalming and was just 25 years old. After working in the Godalming Post Office he completed a course in the Marconi School in Liver-

pool. He served his time on board such illustrious ships as the SS Teutonic, the Mauretania, the Lusitania and the Oceanic. He was destined to be lost on the ill-fated Titanic's maiden voyage, however, after telling Christina McMahon that he expected the huge ship to be built inside two years.

The information about Christina's voyage came from the 'Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation Inc.' - an agency that holds archives of passengers who made transatlantic crossings between 1892 and 1924.

In copies of documents, the originals of which are held in museums, libraries, national archives and private collections and through the 'American Family Immigration History Centre' her daughter Gouldie Madden was able to retrace her mother's steps.

The SS Teutonic was built by Harland and Wolff in Belfast in 1889. It weighed 9,686 gross tonnes. It was 582 ft long and 57 ft wide. It could travel at 20 knots with 1490 passengers divided into 300 first class, 190 second class and 1000 third class. The List or Manifest of Alien Passengers reveals that Christina Madden travelled on board on April 28, 1910.

It was built by the White Star and Dominion Lines in 1889 specifically for the Liverpool to New York passage. It was finally scrapped in Germany in 1921 after being awarded the Blue Ribbon for the fastest crossing in 1891. Christina's ticket number was 009.

The 'Daily Sketch' newspaper published on April 20, 1912 under the heading 'Where the British Captain Stood Till Death' reproduced the accounts of three eye witnesses





John J. Madden with Aer Lingus hostess Miss Sheila Doyle prior to his departure for New York in 1962 where he presented medals to the Limerick/New York hurling team who were New York champions in 1961. He is pictured here holding the trophy which he won in 1914 as Captain of the last Limerick team to win the New York Championship. The trophy was being presented to the Limerick club in New York

to the sinking of the Titanic. They were Mr. G.A. Braden of the Union Trust Building in Los Angeles, Mr. Robert Daniel of Philadelphia and Mr. Laurence Beesley of London.

All bore testimony to the gallantry of Captain Smith describing him as 'standing on the deck all alone' being 'swept down by a wave but [managing] to get to his feet again.' 'The biggest hero I ever saw.'

Indeed, the paper's editorial stated: "The captain stood on the bridge and con-

tinued directing his men right up to the moment when the bridge on which he stood became level with the water. He then calmly climbed over the rail and dropped into the sea."

However, modern research into the sinking has raised many unanswered questions about Captain Smith's handling of the crisis suggesting that he may have had a mental breakdown at the time. As the ship sank he allegedly left his officers without clear commands on how to handle

the growing calamity. This lack of decision making cost many lives.

In particular, most of the ship's lifeboats were lowered almost empty because of his insistence that only women and children could leave even if a boat was underutilised. Warning flares were also not sent up in the correct sequence negating the ability of any ship seeing them to view the situation as being critical.

In its April 16, 1912 issue the same paper chronicled the life of Christina's friend Jack Phillips who remained at his post until the freezing ocean brine inundated his radio room.

### Emigration and Exile

After the fateful All Ireland defeat John J. Madden followed Christina to New York in 1911. He later described himself as being homesick for months until he happened upon two Galway men carrying hurleys to Celtic Park.

Having seen where they were headed he fetched his own and so began his new career as a hurling exile. Alongside famous names like the Daverns, the Carters, the Ryans, Mick Kett, Tom Bresnihan and Denny Dillon in March 1914 John Madden was elected Captain of the New York-Limerick hurling selection. Based at the Irish Counties Hall they won the Hurling Championship of New York and Pennsylvania a feat which remained unequalled for another 47 years. The Limerick Hurling and Football Club of New York won two such championships.

John J. Madden later said of his experience of emigration: If [the] travel [to New York] was slow, the game was fast and very



'Mackey's Greyhounds': Mick Mackey next to Irish Americans Mr and Mrs O'Donoghue who were honouring achievements in hurling at the Gresham Hotel in Dublin. John J. Madden is in the back row next to Ralph Prendergast, standing on the left. Others in the photo include Jackie Power (1916-1994), Paddy Scanlon (1906-1977), Paddy Clohessy (1910-1971), one of his three brothers (Andy, Jack and Dave), and 'the singing bank manager' Dermot Kelly, author of the famous ballad 'Limerick My Home' and star of the 1955 Limerick hurling team





Still keeping the old traditions alive: Ms Gouldie Madden, 2010  
(Courtesy Limerick Leader)



Kate Madden wife of Lock Keeper Thomas Madden. She died on August 15, 1947 just a few months short of her 100th birthday

often furious. "It was so tough that six Limerick players were taken away together in an ambulance one Sunday. It was rough and no doubt about it." The game was always played in a sporting way though. Hard knocks were given and taken "and after the match there was not a word about it."

### A Hero Returns

In 1920 John and Christina Madden returned home to Limerick with John immediately involved in hurling once again at a local level. Indeed, he was pulled from the stand to play Tipperary marking the great 'Monkey' Power in the Munster Final at Rathkeale in 1922. Sadly, however, Limerick was fated to lose again.

He then tried to unite Claughaun and St. Patricks Hurling Clubs in the county 'to make a team that could beat anything'. In later life, seeing the many changes taking place in the game, he lambasted the number of advisers involved with hurling teams. As Captain of Commercials and Limerick at home and in New York his directions were simple: "I gave the lads their orders and they went out with fighting spirit. Today's team has youth, spirit and the ability to hurl what more do they want?"

On December 15, 1962 John J. Madden was invited back to present 'Schaefer medals' to the winning team of the Championships of New York and Pennsylvania at Gaelic Park- nearly 50 years after he had won the same event as captain in 1914. It

was the 'Limerick Hurling and Football Club of New York' with a headquarters at the Irish Institute (326 West 48th Street in New York) which extended the invitation.

Liam Nash was secretary of the testimonial dinner-dance committee which duly honoured the Limerick Senior Hurling team crowned as 1961 champions at a Dinner and Dance at Gaelic Park Casino (240th Street and Broadway). In one brief statement to those in attendance John J. Madden summed-up his life with a famous quip: 'I am not an orator - I am a hurler.'

There were just two such championships held at that point in 1914 and 1961. John J. Madden presented the medals as captain of the 1914 Team and subsequently as county team captain after he returned to his native Limerick. The New York G.A.A club was founded on July 15, 1915 at W. Snow's Hall between 118th Street and 8th Avenue, New York. Its first President was T. Reilly from Cavan.

John J. Madden had been previously given a farewell dinner (the Monster Testimonial Entertainment and Dance) in New York before returning to Limerick from New York with wife Christina. This was part of a presentation to the Cork and Limerick Hurling and Football teams on Saturday evening March 23, 1929.

He was described then as a 'Veteran Garryowen Gael' at a dinner in Duffy's Hall on Third Avenue between 113th and 114th streets, with tickets costing 50c each. Music was jointly by the 'Emerald

Isle Band' and what was euphemistically described as 'American Music' by the 'Hollywood Ramblers'.

### Tragedy At The Black Bridge

Ironically, considering Christina's connection with the Titanic disaster another tragedy was to follow her return to Ireland. On February 2, 1930 three anglers were drowned after their boat was smashed against a pier of the Black Bridge. They were Thomas Madden (aged 42) (John J. Madden's brother) from the Canal Bank, a decorated Carnegie Lifesaving hero and Thomas Anslow (aged 35) and John O'Connell (aged 40) both from Pennywell.

Another man John Joe Airey was rescued by Jim and Paddy McMahon downstream and taken to Barrington's Hospital where he subsequently recovered. The fishermen, who wore heavy coats and boots, crammed into a small boat already overloaded with fishing equipment.

The 'Black Bridge' also known as 'Plassey Bridge' was built in 1840 marking the end of the old ferry system and milestones showing the distance to Killaloe were erected in 1814. The bridge replaced the old system of having to winch the horses across on the river on barges. At that time the animals would have to be fed and given rest having come from up the river. The tired horses were exchanged for rested ones at the Livery House which stood near the ruins of the old mill.



# Monster Testimonial Entertainment and Dance

Under the joint auspices of the

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### HURLING AND FOOTBALL TEAMS

Will be tendered to

JOHN MADDEN, Veteran Garryowen Gael  
At DUFFY'S HALL, 2076 Third Avenue  
Between 113th and 114th Streets

ON SATURDAY EVENING, MARCH 23, 1929

Irish Music by the Emerald Isle Band

American Music by the Hollywood Ramblers

OFFICERS—President, P. F. Walsh; Chairman of Arrangements, M. J. Scanlon, Vice-President, John Kellher; Treasurer, J. B. Ahern; Secretary, Egan Clancy; Sergeant-at-Arms, John Powers; Asst. Sergeant-at-Arms, Jack Ryan; Floor Manager, Paddy Galvin; Asst. Floor Manager, Bill Keane; Master of Ceremonies, Tim Donovan.

COMMITTEE—Denny O'Connell, Pat O'Callaghan, Bart Hayes, Dave Browne, Ned O'Connell, Pat Leahy, M. Ahern, Ed Hynes, Leo Sullivan, Pat Barrow, Bob Talbot, Con Scanlon, Pat McCarthy, M. M. O'Callaghan, J. Shanahan, Walter Sullivan, Jack Dunlop, T. Plunkett, Con Noonan, J. Clancy, Tom Bradley, Jack Kennedy, Bob McDonnell, L. Greaney, Bill Wagner, W. Morrison, P. Ahern, M. O'Connell, L. Higgins, D. O'Brien.

TICKETS

FIFTY CENTS

The ticket issued to John J. Madden who is described as a 'Veteran Garryowen Gael' for the 'Monster Testimonial Entertainment and Dance' at Duffy's Hall, New York, March 23, 1929. The ticket cost all of 50 cents!

Some days before a travelling fortune teller foretold of the tragedy. She told Christina Madden: "gentry and simple will stand on your floor and you will lay the first flowers of spring on a freshly covered grave."

The visitors to Chris Madden included William Wellington Bailey who resided in the White House in Plassey and Sir Vincent and Lady Nash from Castletroy who donated a burial plot. The Mayor of Limerick Alderman Michael J. Keyes organised a city wide collection for the families of the victims.

In February 1930 the water on the Shannon was very high. It was the first day of the Salmon fishing and later in Shanny's

pub John Joe Airey, who could not swim, requested a lift home. No crew wanted to take him but eventually complaining of a sore heel he got into a boat where he made the extra man.

The boat headed towards the 'Black Bridge' in pitch black with a strong flow of water. The men were pulling on the oars with their backs to the bridge. They planned to travel to 'Madden's Slip' near Troy's Lock but suddenly at 7pm the oars hit the supports of the bridge and they capsized. They had no lifejackets in those days and with four men packed into a boat together with fishing gear the result was predictably disastrous. John Joe Airey survived by grabbing part of the broken

boat and going with the flow down to the head of the canal.

There was a house located there called McMahons which was built in the 18th century by the Shannon Navigation Company. The occupier's job was to keep the light burning at night as a guide to all barges coming down the river.

Fortunately, James (Jimmy) McMahon was having a smoke outside just then and heard Airey's cries coming from the river below. He got his two sons to help carry the freezing body to Barrington's Hospital. As there was only one ambulance in Limerick City back then they had to remove a door from the shed to act as a stretcher. John Joe Airey was half dead on arrival but miraculously survived.

Later two Franciscan friars located the bodies of Tom Anslow and Tom Madden by allowing straw from the Christmas Crib of 1929 to float to the scene of the drowning. The bodies were locked in a deathly embrace.

Understandably, the Madden family left the 'Black Bridge' to return to the family plot on the canal bank soon after the 'Plassey drownings'.

Christina and John Madden together with friend Jim Ryan all heard shouting that night but interpreted the desperate cries for help as mere revelry emanating from Shanny's Pub. Indeed, Jim Ryan remarked unknowingly: "I wish to God that I was as happy as them."

This period also marked the end of salmon fishing by rod from boats. The practice was formally banned in 1931 after 'The Guild of Abbey Fishermen', a financially bonded group, bought out the rights to fish for salmon from the 'Arthur Fishery'. With trade increasingly moving away



The remains of Troy's Lock House shortly before its demolition





The legendary Mike Madden (1886-1972) with a 'cut' of bread in hand heading towards his beloved canal circa 1965

from the Old Canal Plassey became a place where barges once roamed and the 'Maddens of Park Lock' guardians of a distinguished history.

### 'The Madden Mayoralty'

In his book on the 'Mayors and the Mayoralty of Limerick' (2007) distinguished historian Dr. Matthew Potter records the following about the 'Madden Mayoralty'.

*"Patrick (always known as Paddy Madden) was born in Limerick on 26 January 1951 and lived for many years in the Canal Bank area of the city. He was educated at St. Patrick's National School and St. Munchin's College, where one of his classmates was Thady Coughlan (mayor in 1975-76). Paddy Madden has spent virtually all of his working life in the engineering department of Cement Limited, Mungret, County Limerick. He has a life long interest in sport and played with Richmond RFC, Caledonians Soccer Club and St. Patrick's GAA Club.*

*"A member of the Fianna Fáil Party, Paddy Madden was first elected to Limerick City Council in 1979 and was successfully returned in 1985. He served as mayor of Limerick from June 1988 to June 1989 and again from June 1990 to June 1991. Thus he is one of only three mayors of Limerick since 1842 to have served two non-consecutive terms of office separated by one year (the others are Kevin Bradshaw in 1950-51 and 1952-53 and Dick Sadlier in 2001-02 and 2003-04)."*

It was Paddy Madden, dressed in full ceremonial robes, who met President Mikhail Gorbachev of the former USSR at Shannon Airport on 2 April, 1989. This was the first visit by a Russian head of state (Tsarist or Communist) ever to visit these shores.

*"As Shannon Airport is in County Clare, protocol would have decreed that Mayor Madden, strictly speaking, was not sup-*

*posed to don the mayoral robe and chain for the arrival ceremony. However, he believed that as mayor of Limerick on such a historic occasion, he should represent the city in as dignified a manner as possible and wore both robe and chain as he welcomed Gorbachev to Ireland. His striking and resplendent appearance made a great impression on the Soviet party, unused to such civic elegance since the days of the Tsars. An apocryphal account of the meeting between the two men represented Gorbachev asking Mayor Madden 'What happened to Young Munster yesterday' in reference to rugby match played the day before!"*

Paddy Madden also welcomed Sir Alex Ferguson together with several members of the Manchester United Football team to Limerick during his first stint in office.

*"Indeed he was the last mayor to serve a full term in the Town Hall in Rutland Street (1988-89) and the first to be elected in the new City Hall on Merchants' Quay in 1990. His second mayoralty was notable for the Treaty 300 Festival held throughout the year 1991 to mark the tercentenary of the Treaty of Limerick. The festivities were launched on 1 January 1991 by President Mary Robinson, who opened Arthur's Quay Park on the same day.*

*"Paddy Madden remained a member of Limerick City Council until 1991 when he lost his seat in the local elections held that year. During his political career, he was also a member of the Limerick City VEC, Harbour Commissioners and the Mid-Western Health Board. While no longer a councillor, Paddy Madden is still a well-known figure in Limerick city."*

### Conclusions

The Canal Bank has been a much loved amenity for Limerick people down the ages and nowhere is better known than the bridge at 'Mike Maddens'. Whether it is a

warm sunny day or a dark mid-winter evening the name and the place have retained their distinctly historic focus down to today.

Each time we pass that landmark we are forever struck by the timeless history of the place and by those souls who have passed through it. None, however, were more famous than the 'Maddens of Park Lock'.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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