

**AUSTRALIAN JOINT COPYING PROJECT**

**ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY**

**Papers of Robert Madden, 1829-55**

**Reels M945-46**

**Royal Irish Academy  
19 Dawson Steet  
Dublin 2 Ireland**

**National Library of Australia  
State Library of New South Wales**

**Filmed: 1976**

## HISTORICAL NOTE

The Royal Irish Academy was founded in 1785 and granted a royal charter in the following year. Its aims were the promotion and investigation of the sciences, polite literature and antiquities and the encouragement of discussion and debate between scholars of diverse backgrounds. Its council was composed of eleven members representing the sciences and ten members representing the humanities. It was originally based in a house in Grafton Street, but in 1851 it moved to an eighteenth century house at 19 Dawson Street. In 1890 its collection of museum objects and antiquities were moved to the Dublin Science and Art Museum (now the National Museum of Ireland).

From its earliest years the library of the Academy was a major centre for research in many disciplines, especially Irish history, archaeology, language and culture, and natural history. It is famous for its collection of medieval manuscripts and in addition holds a comprehensive collection of Irish publications, several outstanding formed collections, and a wide range of journals. The *Transactions* of the Academy were first published in 1787, followed by its *Proceedings* in 1836, and it has published various journals, the *Dictionary of the Irish language*, and many monographs. It is also actively involved in cooperative projects, such as the *Dictionary of Irish biography* and *Documents on Irish foreign policy*.

## RICHARD ROBERT MADDEN

Richard Robert Madden (1798-1886), the son of a silk manufacturer, was born in Dublin. He was educated in a private school and studied medicine at Paris, Naples and London. As a young man, he travelled widely in the Middle East and he published an account of his travels in 1829. He practised as a surgeon in London from 1828 to 1833 and then went to Jamaica as a special magistrate. In 1836 he was appointed superintendent of the liberated Africans and judge arbitrator in Cuba and published a number of works on slavery. In 1841 he was sent to West Africa to inquire into the administration of British coastal settlements and from 1843 until 1846 he was the Lisbon correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle*.

In 1847 Madden was appointed Colonial Secretary of Western Australia and he arrived in Perth in March 1848. The colony, which at that time had a European population of 3706, was ruled by an oligarchy, led by the military commandant and acting governor, F.C. Irwin. Madden had a strong interest in the welfare of the indigenous people and supported Bishop Brady's plans for a Catholic mission. He urged the new governor, Captain Charles Fitzgerald, to disallow Irwin's draft ordinance that authorised the summary flogging of Aboriginal labourers. He also initiated a census and the public auction of Crown lands. However, his stay in the colony was a short one. In December 1848 he learned that his son had drowned in the Shannon River and in the following month he took leave and returned to Ireland. He resigned his office in March 1850.

Madden was secretary of the Loan Fund Board at Dublin Castle from 1850 until 1880. Most of his time in his later years was spent on research on modern Irish history. He was the author of *The United Irishmen, their lives and times* (1842-60), *The literary life and correspondence of the Countess of Blessington* (1855), *A history of Irish periodical literature from the end of the seventeenth to the middle of the nineteenth century* (1867) and *Literary remains of the United Irishmen of 1798* (1887).

His memoirs were published posthumously in 1892. He was a member of the Royal Irish Academy and the Society of Medical Science.

Reference: Bob Reece. The colonial career of Richard Robert Madden, *Australian Journal of Irish Studies*, vol. 4, 2002, pp. 18-28.

Other papers of Madden, held at Trinity College Library in Dublin, were filmed by the Australian Joint Copying Project on reel M854.

## ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY

### Reel M945

#### MS 12

P9 Notes for the biography of Thomas F. Meagher.

Thomas Meagher (1823-1867) was one of the Irish political convicts transported to Van Diemen's Land in 1849. The notes, interspersed with several newspaper cuttings, are pasted into a copy of the 1877-78 report of the Victorian Railways. They are headed 'Meagher's politics' (79pp) and are followed by two pages headed 'Meagher's disposition and character' and copies, in another hand, of two undated letters written by Meagher in Richmond Gaol to John Dillon and Doherty (?).

#### MS 24

06 Newspaper cuttings and unpublished essays by Madden

Select page:

311 Meagher to William German, 28 Oct. 1851: construction of a boat in Hobart that he now uses to communicate with his Kilkenny man on the island. (extract)

07 Newspaper cuttings and unpublished essays by Madden.

Select page:

285 Madden (Fremantle) to acting governor Colonel Frederick Irwin, 21 March 1848: arrival on barque *Orient*; his appointment as Colonial Secretary.

08 Newspaper cuttings and unpublished essays by Madden.

Select page:

269 Note on a gold cup presented to William Smith O'Brien by his friends in Victoria after his release, 22 July 1854.

09 Correspondence

Select pages:

481-95 Copy of a letter of Madden on education of the poor of all religious denominations in Ireland, with a reference to instruction in New South Wales, n.d.

013 Literary, historical, political and travel notes

Select pages:

161-67 South Pole discoveries, n.d.

N1 Papers relating to Western Australia, 1828-49. Section 1.

The papers include the proposed prospectus for the settlement of the colony of Victoria in Western Australia (n.d.), an extract from the report of Charles Fraser on the botany, geology and general character of the country bordering the Swan River, Geographe Bay and Cape Naturaliste, notes on the settlement of Western Australia taken from J.L. Stokes. *Discoveries in Australia* (1846), a list of the first settlers who were passengers on the *Parmelia* (1829), correspondence about the formation of the settlement (1828-29), a journal of events connected with the Public Service (1829), extracts from despatches of Capt. James Stirling (1829-38), an extract from the Royal Instructions to Capt. Stirling (28 April 1831), a letter to Stirling from the Western Australian Institution requesting a library and reading room (1831), notes on the origin of the colony (1833), a despatch from Sir Richard Bourke (Sydney) to Lord Stanley about education (1833), an extract from a report of Capt. F.C. Irwin on Aborigines (1835), letters about expeditions to the interior of the colony, a letter of Edward J. Eyre on a survey of Albany (1841), correspondence of Capt. J. Lort Stokes of HMS Beagle (1841) and copies of the *Western Australian Almanac* (1842, 1844).

## MS 12

P19 Thomas Meagher to Charles Gavan Duffy, n.d.: his escape from Van Diemen's Land in Jan. 1852. (38pp + 6pp postscript)

## MS 24

N1 Papers relating to Western Australia, 1828-49. Section 3.

The papers include a draft of a letter from Madden to Lord Grey (1848), papers on communication with England via Batavia and Singapore, Post Office revenue and expenditure, expenditure on military and civil administration (1847), a letter by Madden on the management of convicts from Parkhurst and Pentonville prisons (11 April 1848), a circular concerning violence towards Aborigines (12 July 1848), papers regarding the sale of the brig *Thistle*, a report on the Rottneest Island establishment (25 Sept. 1848), correspondence on mineral resources of Western Australia, a geological map of Western Australia by Ferdinand von Sommer, a letter from A. O'Grady Lefroy on the prospects of sheep farmers (1 Jan. 1849), claims by James Stokes for compensation for the loss of his distillery, the draft of Madden's letter resigning as Colonial Secretary (12 Jan. 1850), the draft of a submission to Lord Grey for a pension, and addresses to Madden published in *The Inquirer*.

N1 Papers relating to Western Australia, 1828-49. Section 4.

Papers relating to the Roman Catholic Mission in Western Australia, 1847-50, including many letters and memoranda by Bishop John Brady. The subjects of the correspondence include State assistance for Catholic education, the need for a separate Catholic burial ground, relations between Bishops Brady and Serra and between Brady and the acting governor, Col. Frederick Irwin, a proposal for a school for Aboriginal girls under the direction of the Sisters of Mercy, a petition to Queen Victoria from Catholic residents seeking an inquiry into public administration of Western Australia, complaints by Catholics of excommunication by Bishop Brady, and a disputed grant of land adjoin the mission station at Victoria Plains. In addition to Madden and Brady, the correspondents include Terence Farrelly, Archbishop J.B. Polding (Sydney), Rev. Thomas Heptonstall (London), Capt. Charles Fitzgerald, Sister Ursula Frayne, Bishop Joseph Serra and Rev. John Joostens.

## **Reel M946**

### **MS 24**

N1 Papers relating to Western Australia, 1828-49, Section 5.

Papers relating to Western Australian Aborigines, 1832-49, including lists of Aborigines, vocabularies, instructions to the Protector of Aborigines (1840), publications, memoranda, despatches and correspondence. The subjects of correspondence include the legal status of Aborigines, Madden's opposition to 'the flogging ordinance' proposed by the acting governor, Colonel Irwin (1847), the Wesleyan Mission and education of Aboriginal children, the treatment of Aborigines in other Australian colonies, protection and the civil rights of Aborigines, a plan for civilising the Aborigines drawn up by Bishop Augustus Short (1848), burial customs of Aborigines, an ordinance for the summary trial and punishment of offending Aborigines (1849), and a report by Madden on the condition of the Aborigines of Western Australia. The correspondents include Madden, John Hutt, Peter Brown, Col. Frederick Irwin, Lord Grey (London), Rev. John Smithies, Rev. George King, Charles Symmons, John Bussell (Bunbury) and J.R. Phillips (Albany).