

John Madden

Born: 1649
President: 1694-1695, 1697-1698, 1700-1701
Died: 1703

John Madden was born at Enfield in Middlesex, where he was baptised on 29 March 1649. In the 1630s his paternal grandfather Thomas, from Bloxham in Oxfordshire, had settled in Dublin, where he served as comptroller to Lord Deputy Wentworth and leased property at Baggotsrath near the city. The family's connection to Ireland had been cemented by the 1635 marriage of Thomas's eldest son John (1598-1661), a lawyer, to Elizabeth Waterhouse (d.1671), heiress to a plantation estate at Manor Waterhouse in County Fermanagh. During the upheaval of the 1640s the Maddens lived at Enfield and John became involved in administering the sequestration of English Royalist and Catholic estates on behalf of the Westminster parliament. It is not clear precisely when the family returned to Ireland, but John was elected to represent Belturbet in the Convention that met at Dublin early in 1660.

John and Elizabeth had seven children, three of whom survived to adulthood. Anne married Josias, Baron Castle Stuart, in London in 1662, while Thomas (1646-1676) entered Trinity College Dublin in 1663 before relocating to London to practice law.

Their son, John, was educated in Dublin and entered Trinity College Dublin on 23 March 1670, and graduated MB in 1674 and MD in 1682. The death of his elder brother meant that John inherited Manor Waterhouse in the late 1670s, while his marriage in 1680 to Mary Molyneux (d.1695), sister of Thomas Molyneux (qv), further boosted his prospects. Madden was admitted a Fellow of the College of Physicians in Dublin in 1684 and he joined the Dublin Philosophical Society, founded in 1683 by his brother-in-law William Molyneux. He had also developed a taste for antiquarianism and collecting and copying manuscripts. These pursuits were interrupted by the onset of fresh conflict, and Madden was among the many Protestants attainted by the Jacobite parliament in Dublin in 1689. He had relocated for a time to Chester with his wife and two sons, where he reported the loss of his landed income of £500 per annum. A surviving survey of Manor Waterhouse dated 1688 indicates that Madden had laid out formal gardens and tree-lined avenues on the estate. He also acquired property in Counties Carlow, Galway, Roscommon and Donegal.

Following the war, Madden's status as one of the leading physicians in Dublin was confirmed when he was named a Fellow in the 1692 Charter of the reconstituted College of Physicians. In January 1693 he was elected Vice-President, and thereafter he was elected President on three occasions in 1694, 1697 and 1700. As this record suggests, Madden was fully engaged with the life of the College. He was involved, for example, in the unsuccessful effort to secure an Act of



Parliament to enhance the College's authority over the practice of medicine in Dublin. He was also one of the Fellows entrusted with designing the College seal. He attended his final meeting on 2 October 1703 and died seventeen days later.

Little detail survives of Madden's medical practice. In 1695, he was among the physicians who supervised the surgeon Thomas Proby in removing an ivory hair pin from the bladder of Dorcas Blake; she had accidentally swallowed it nine weeks earlier. In 1700 John Stearne's (qv) widow Dorothy bequeathed Madden and Ralph Howard (qv) five pounds each 'as tokens of the mind I have of their kind care of me'.¹ The only manuscript concerning medicine in Madden's collection was apparently a quarto copy of *Christianus Medicus*, an unpublished tract written by the English physician Simon Trippe around 1572.

It is perhaps as a collector of manuscripts, plants and paintings, that John Madden deserves chiefly to be remembered. He had a keen interest in genealogy and in building on Sir James Ware's researches into the history of religious houses in Ireland. A listing published by Edward Bernard in 1697 as part of his *Catalogi Librorum Manuscriptorum Angliae et Hiberniae* shows that Madden had amassed numerous important volumes, including the documents now known as the '1641 Depositions'.

Three of Madden's sons from his first marriage pursued successful careers, Samuel and John in the Church, and Thomas in medicine. Madden remarried in 1697 and at his death left behind his second wife Frances, née Bolton (d. 1721), and two further young sons Nicholas and Bolton. Frances quickly disposed of some of her late husband's property. Archbishop William King purchased two lots of books from her in 1704, while the College of Physicians sought to acquire Madden's 'screw' (printing press) in the same year. The manuscripts were sold to John Stearne, dean of St Patrick's, and are now preserved at Trinity College Dublin. The same library holds the earliest surviving Irish herbarium, and the specimens it contains appear to have been collected by Madden at Manor Waterhouse.

JC

¹ Copy of the will of Dorothy Stearne, RCPI, TPCK/5/3/1, i, 14.

