

Madrigal & Co., Manila (1913-2003)

(Vicente Madrigal, 1880-1972)

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Vicente Madrigal (1880-1972) has good claim, certainly by the tonnage of his fleet and its worldwide trading, to have been the leading and best known of 20th century Philippine shipowners. With interests extending into coal, cement, sugar, coconut oil, textiles and real estate, he became one of the richest men in the Philippines and also served as a Senator for two terms.



Vicente Madrigal (Geni.com)

He was born on 5 April 1880 in the province of Tayabas but grew up in Albay in the shadow of the towering cone of Mayon volcano under the christened name of Vicente María Epifanio Madrigal y López. According to Wikipedia, his father José María Madrigal was a Catalan soldier who had emigrated from Barcelona, and his mother, Macaria López y Pardo de Tavera, a Castilian mestiza, was one of two unacknowledged natural daughters of Joaquín Pardo de Tavera, then a Spanish bachelor living in Albay before moving to Manila and marrying respectably to a wealthy Spanish heiress.

Madrigal's only advantage of birth was that his father was able to secure his entry to the prestigious Colegio de San Juan de Letran run by the Dominican Order in the heart of the old city of Manila (Intramuros). There Madrigal gained an excellent practical education that equipped him well for a career in business. Fortuitously, two of his classmates were future Presidents Manuel Quezon (1878-1944) and Sergio Osmena (1878-1961), both two years older. These relationships would mutually prosper, though in starting out Madrigal had to rely upon his own abilities and very considerable determination.

Madrigal was also fortunate in his wife, Susana Paterno y Ramos, who like him grew up in the provinces with little advantage of family but proved to be a resourceful businesswoman. She started out as a dressmaker selling clothing and jewelry but soon discovered a more profitable talent in acquiring real estate. Together they had seven children, five girls and two sons: Macaria, Paz (Pacita), Josefina, Antonio, Jose, Consuelo and Maria Luisa. Their names, as also that of Susana, would be often repeated in the Madrigal fleet.

Madrigal & Co. claimed to have commenced business in 1903, when Vicente would have been just 23 or 24. Its early activities are not documented but Rosenstock's Manila City Directory of 1913 (pub. late 1912) lists Madrigal & Co. as 'Coal Merchants' with the apt cable address of 'Carbon' and having offices at 1059 Muelle de la Industria plus a coal yard at 244 Aviles in San Miguel. Madrigal & Co. was not yet, however, listed among the 22 firms in the business category of 'Coal Dealers', which included producers Kailan Mining, Mitsu Bishi (sic) and Mitsui Bussan. It was a very competitive field but somehow Madrigal was able to find customers and increase the scale of his operations.

Shipowner

By mid-1913, now aged 33, Madrigal was established as a merchant and had enough resources and confidence to buy his first ship, the 3384-grt US Navy fleet collier *USS Alexander* (1898), which was decommissioned at Cavite in August 1913. It was an astute purchase and a good size for shipping coal from Japan. On 7 August 1914, three days after Britain had declared war on Germany, *Rio Pasig* departed Manila bound with a full load of coal for Guam, from where she slipped away to Yap to bunker German ships. Two months later the British Navy seized her off Sandakan. After being returned as a neutral American vessel, on 23 December 1914 she resumed normal commercial service with a first transpacific voyage with a full complement of Filipino officers and crew to Seattle with a cargo of hemp, thence general to Japan and coal back to Manila. On 3 January 1916 in mid-winter she departed Seattle bound for Vladivostok, never to arrive. No trace was ever found and six months later she was posted missing with all hands.

Because Madrigal had wisely taken out good insurance on the ship, the proceeds enabled him in the course of 1916 to buy in quick succession two good replacement tramps of similar size and age, from Japanese owners the formerly Norwegian-flag, 3613-grt turret steamer *Susana ex Titania* (1897) and

the 3627 former Alfred Holt & Co. cargo-liner *Pyrrhus* (1892), renamed *Macaria*. Both would be sold the following year at a good profit. Madrigal kept the smaller 2256-grt German-built *Panay* ex *Hanametal* ex *Germania* (1895) that had been acquired in January 1916.

Meanwhile, in November 1915 Madrigal had gone on a business trip to Japan, met with suppliers Mitsui Bussan and Mitsubishi and, according to Quirino, signed forward delivery contracts at 'bottom prices' that accelerating wartime inflation would soon make even more favourable. These contracts also gave exclusive representation in the Philippines to his business partner John J. Russell, who was then able to bid separately from Madrigal & Co. for the big railway, gas and bunker contracts. This deal rather than shipowning per se would be the breakthrough in Madrigal's subsequently relentless accumulation of capital. That said, Madrigal, like other successful shipowners, seemed to be fascinated by ships and what they could do, sought to master their intricacies, and soon became an astute buyer. Quirino attests to head for figures. He also was the first to insist upon Filipino masters, officers and crews, even in deepsea trades, and involved himself personally in the key appointments of masters and chief engineers, thereby not only monitoring performance but also earning personal loyalty.

After the United States had declared war on Germany in April 1917, in mid-1917 Madrigal seized the opportunity to add two small ex-German coasters to his fleet. *Clara Jebesen* (1735/02) and *Mathilde* (1372/06) had sought refuge in neutral Manila at the outbreak of World War I. Subsequently they were registered in Manila to the Don S.S. Co., nominally owned by Macleod and associated local interests and operated in interisland trade. The U.S. Government was not satisfied that the sale by the German owner Jebesen & Co. was genuine and on entry to the war in April 1917 moved to seize the ships. According to Quirino, Madrigal agreed to buy them for P2 million with a down-payment of P559,000 and the balance in three further payments over eighteen months at 6% interest. Once paid off, *Don Neil* ex *Clara Jebesen* became *Paz* and *Don Zoilo* ex *Mathilde* became *Macaria* (II).

By 1918 Germany's unrestricted U-boat warfare in the Atlantic had led to serious shortage of tonnage, not least in the Pacific. One consequence was difficulty in shipping Philippine sugar. In September 1918 Madrigal bought from Japanese owners the 4,007-ton former Union-Castle liner *Doune Castle* (1890), renamed *Susana* (II), and chartered four more vessels, three being German seizures, the US-flag *Iosco* (ex *Johanne*, 1531/03) and *Quinnebaug* (1631/03 ex *Pongtong*) and the Thai-flag *Laen Samud* (ex *Lodret Schiff*, 1640/06) and the fourth the Japanese-flag *Fukuichi Maru* (2095/82). All were employed carrying sugar from Iloilo to China and Japan, returning with coal.

By local acquisition Madrigal added two more ex-German steamers, the 844-ton coaster *Euzkadi* (1884) and the 1758-ton *Don Jose* (1879), both iron-hulled. In 1920 Madrigal acquired from the U.S. Government, the 2168-ton (1902) *Nipsic*, formerly the German NDL's regional trader *Borneo*, and from the Green Island Cement Co. of Hong Kong the old 1917-ton coaster *Chingchow* (1902), renamed *Josefina*. The biggest purchase was the 4,190-ton formerly Danish-flag passenger/cargo liner *Siam* (1898) but latterly collier, now renamed *Antonio*. With a good carrying capacity as well as passenger spaces, *Antonio* was said to be intended to join *Don Jose* and *Panay* in a line to Europe but by April 1920 had been placed in the coal trade from Newcastle (NSW).

Thus by 1920, after multiple purchases and sales, Madrigal controlled an assorted fleet of some eight vessels ranging in size from 844 to over 4,000 gross tons and in age from 14 to 43 years, altogether some 18,000 tons. The staple business was still the import of coal from Japan, China and Australia but Madrigal ships tramped around the Pacific and well as trading within the Philippines. This was an

impressive accumulation over just seven years but the timing was somewhat awry. Most of the ships had been acquired at high wartime prices that were not sustained after the world economy collapsed in the second quarter of 1920. It would be a struggle to keep trading at a profit and, as opportunity presented, they would be sold off. It would be the mid-1920s before Madrigal once more became a buyer.

Industrialist

In 1917 Madrigal had been appointed Chairman of the newly established National Coal Company set up to investigate local coal resources. By 1920 he had taken his first steps towards becoming an industrialist as well as coal merchant and shipowner. Early in 1918 he had bought an oil mill in Cebu City that became Madrigal Oil Mills. Quirino relates that at a time of high international demand and pending the delivery of new equipment ordered from the United States, Madrigal bought up a large stock of copra that in late 1919 he sold for P1.5 million to the American-owned Philippine Vegetable Oil Co. After the market failed in early 1920, that company went bankrupt and Madrigal was unable to receive payment. As part of the legal settlement, he was appointed one of the two trustees to the private estate of the principal, Philip Whittaker and in due course became owner in his own right of the Mandaluyong Estate, then on the northeastern fringe of Manila but by the late 1930s with the development of Quezon City becoming very valuable indeed. The Madrigal Oil Mill that had begun the process opened in 1920 and duly became profitable. In 1938 Madrigal would increase his stake in the coconut oil industry by taking over the bankrupt Christobal Oil Mills at Pandacan on the Pasig River.

A second venture was the Rizal Cement Co., which had been formed in 1912 to open a Portland cement plant at Binangonan on the northern shore of Laguna de Bay. After installation of Krupp equipment, the plant opened in 1914 but struggled to achieve full production, then halted in 1917 after the German technicians were interned. Ynchausti & Co. were appointed liquidators. According to Quirino, in 1925 when a court order required the assets to be auctioned in settlement of the mortgage, Ynchausti & Co. became the owner with a low bid of P75,000, then negotiated with Madrigal to take over the company in settlement of bills owed by Ynchausti for coal bunkers. Ownership was transferred in July 1928 and the plant reopened in November. In 1929 the company was incorporated with a capital of P2.5 million and thereafter steadily improved and expanded up to 1941.

Another corporate rescue around 1930 was a cotton textile mill on Calle Dagupan in the Tondo district of Manila. After the Philippine National Bank had foreclosed on a mortgage taken out by the English owners, Madrigal was persuaded to take it over at a low price. As Philippine Cotton Mills it was managed by Susana and her brother Dr. Paterno to produce 'Madrigal' textiles and 'Nepa' cloth. According to Quirino, it did not earn a profit but Madrigal was prepared to carry the losses through the Depression of the 1930s as an employment and national development project.

During the 1920s Madrigal also loaned funds to John Russell and two American associates who as the Port Lamon Lumber Company were developing a forest concession in Surigao del Sur province on the northeast coast of Mindanao. It may be assumed that Madrigal also provided shipping as required. When the Depression caused the American owners to struggle with repayments, Madrigal took over the firm and with better management and labour practices, according to Quirino, set it on a sound footing.

Expanding the fleet

In the mid-1920s Madrigal's attention returned to shipping, buying around 18 vessels between 1925 and 1930 with at least three strands to the business. Since 1919, as previously mentioned, he had owned the former British passenger liner *Doune Castle*, now *Susana II*. Although she seems to have been used mainly as a collier, in 1925 Madrigal sought to enter the busy deck passenger trade between Amoy and Manila and as a second ship purchased the former U.S. collier *Ajax*, which has been built for Henderson's Anchor Line with space for cabin and tween-deck passengers. Each ship could now carry around 600 passengers on the short voyage from Amoy to Manila and the Visayas, probably as an adjunct to coal shipments. Under U.S. manning scales and the various passenger and port regulations as well as the need to deal with passage brokers, the trade turned out to be more trouble than it was worth and the two ships were sold Fernando Go Chioco's An Kee S.S. Co. under arrangement whereby they would still ship coal for Madrigal. Thus on 29 July 1931 Go Chioco's *Hua Tong* ex *Consuelo* arrived at Manila with coal from Dairen prior to departing five days later with passengers for Amoy.

Madrigal was on more familiar ground in purchasing newer and larger tonnage for international tramping and the coal trade in particular. These included the 8,300-dwt *Don Jose* ex *Stentor* (1899) in 1926 and the similar *Macaria* ex *Yangtze* (1899) in 1927, both well-built 13-knotters from Alfred Holt & Co. of Liverpool. There were other deepsea colliers of lesser size, including the former USN collier *Abarenda* (1892), renamed *Antonio*.

The third strand was interisland tonnage. Since World War I Madrigal had on inducement run ships as tramps in interisland trade but not sought to compete with established firm such as Maritima, Ynchausti and Tabacalera. As the Philippine economy grew and the Administration sought to encourage retonnaging, Madrigal saw better opportunity. His industrial ventures meant that he now commanded staple cargoes not only of coal but also cement, copra and timber, so there was much the same logic as his initial foray into the international coal trade. Accordingly, he now bought a number of small coasters of around 1000-1500 tons suitable for interisland trading as well as some larger vessels such as two 'Lakers' that could be used interchangeably for interisland or shortsea trading, especially with timber.

Several ships had significant cabin as well as deck passenger space. The 2126-ton, 14-knot *Sirius* ex *Suva* (1906), a former Australian liner built for the Sydney-Fiji trade, was sold to Maritima after only a year in Madrigal service but the German-built Asian coaster *Lepus* ex *Ming Sang* ex *Kwong Eng* (1902) remained in the fleet until the Japanese occupation. *Argus* ex *Yeoman* (1901), *Cetus* ex *Inga* (1904) and *Taurus* ex *Josefina* ex *Kokiri* (1911) were all bought as plain coasters but rebuilt amidships and aft with passenger accommodation and extra boats. We have not sighted a photograph of *Regulus* ex *Ihumata* (1907) but it probably underwent similar treatment. With an eye to nostalgia and perhaps as a challenge to the Fernandez Brothers running Maritima, for some of these ships Madrigal adopted the style of the former Spanish-flag Maritima in naming them after stars and constellations with '-us' suffixes.

Madrigal joined with Compañía General de Tabacos de Filipinas (La Tabacalera)'s on its service from Manila to Pandan, Currimao and Aparri. This was Tabacalera's old-established line to the Cagayan River so it seems that Madrigal was making up the latter's shortfall of tonnage – as a 'foreign' (Spanish) firm Tabacalera was not able to place new ships in interisland trade. Initially in 1924 Madrigal's *H.S. Everett*

(later renamed *Union*) became the third ship in a service run every five days by Tabacalera. With the contribution of more vessels by Madrigal (from 1927) this became a twice-weekly schedule, using the brand name 'North of Luzon Line'. Madrigal variously contributed *Taurus*, *Regulus*, *Argus*, *Union* and *Lepus* while Tabacalera contributed *Compañía de Filipinas*, *Isidoro Pons* and *Mauban*, the latter two also both refitted with extra accommodation. As the mid-1931 'Manila Times' advertisement shows below, only the brand name was used initially, but by 1937 the 'North of Luzon Line' had been reduced to a weekly service using *Lepus* and *Mauban* with Tabacalera as the advertised agents. Madrigal's passenger steamers berthed like those of Tabacalera's just downstream of Jones Bridge near the Magellan Monument on the Intramuros side.

NORTH OF LUZON LINE

Freight and Passenger Service
**MANILA-PANDAN, CURRIMAO
 AND APPARI**
 by the following steamers
**"ARGUS", "YSIDORO PONS", "MAU-
 BAN", "TAURUS" and "UNION"**
 Leave Manila 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, 21, 24,
 27 and 30 of the month.

For full particulars apply

210)		(4-96-18
211)	Juan Luna	Phones (2-19-46

By mid-1938 Madrigal ranked second only to Maritima by the number of ships in interisland service. Whereas Maritima operated 13 ships and Elizalde (formerly Ynchausti) 5, Madrigal had 6, in order of size being *Lepus*, *Argus*, *Cetus*, *Regulus*, *Taurus* and *Aeolus*, together almost 7,000 tons, to which were being added the American coastwise steamers *Marion* (1906) and, reportedly, *Batiscan*, though for some reason the latter was never delivered ('Morning Tribune', 8/6/38). The same report mentioned that Madrigal was now operating a regular line from Manila to Leyte, Samar and Masbate and also serving Bicol but that its ships were most active in the lumber trade from Mindanao.

Besides this interisland fleet, Madrigal also owned four deepsea freighters, the big 15,150-dwt *Don Jose* ex *Chief Capilano* ex *Kurland* (1920), the 5,929-grt *Susana* ex *Stanley Dollar* ex *Erny* (1914), the 7,250-dwt former Australian collier *Pax* ex *Iron Monarch* ex *Koolonga* (1914) and the 5,334-grt ex Swedish *Sagoland*, a fine quartette totalling around 26,400 gross tons (around 35,000 carrying capacity) and bringing the aggregate Madrigal fleet to 10 ships of over 30,000 tons, by far the largest under Philippine registry. They tramped widely. From September 1935 *Sagoland* was loading coal from Newcastle for Manila, in January 1936 iron ore from Whyalla (South Australia) to Japan, then another coal loading in April; by July 1936 she was at Calcutta; in April 1937 she loaded out of Philadelphia, in August took on phosphate at Nauru for NSW and Western Australia, thence in September wheat for

Basra in the Persian Gulf. *Susana* was also in the Newcastle-Manila coal trade from May 1936 to January 1937.

In May 1938 Madrigal announced that in mid-year it would open a new Madrigal Line from the Philippines to the West Coast of the U.S. (Seattle, Portland, San Francisco and Los Angeles), returning via Japan and China to load coal. Its own four ships would be supplemented by the 5,948-grt Norwegian-flag *Binna ex Bessa* (1917) and 5,134-grt Swedish-flag *Sydland* (1920). A few months later it was reported that the Philippine National Bank had loaned Madrigal funds to build three freighters in Italy for the new transpacific line as well as a passenger ship in Germany. The announcement was premature because those contracts backed by \$3.5 million in loans were taken up by De la Rama S.S. Co., perhaps influenced by the fact that Vice President Osmena's son Sergio would marry Esteban De la Rama's daughter Lourdes Aguilar and subsequently become head of that firm. The freighters were delivered in 1939/40 as *Dona Aurora*, *Dona Nati* and *Dona Aniceta*, the passenger vessel as *Don Isidro* (1939) [see De La Rama post accessible on SEA page of olchinaships.com]. The Madrigal Line therefore did not eventuate.

The extent of Madrigal's empire around the end of 1937 is summarized by the advertisement in the Philippine-Japan Yearbook and Directory 1938:

MADRIGAL AND COMPANY

Founded in 1903

<p>OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF—</p> <p>Ocean-Going Steamers (freighters): "DON JOSE" "SAGOLAND" "SUSANA" "PAZ"</p> <p>Inter-island Steamers: "LEPUS" "REGULUS" "TAURUS" "AEOLUS" "CETUS" "ARGUS" "MAWATTA" Telephone 2-19-60</p> <p>COAL MERCHANTS Telephones 2-19-61 & 5-49-62</p> <p>LAUNCHES AND LIGHTERS Lighterage and Towing Services Telephone 2-19-61</p> <p>MINE OWNERS AND OPERATORS Coal Mines Iron Mines Gypsum Rocks Telephone 2-19-64</p> <p>REAL ESTATE DEPARTMENT Telephone 2-19-64</p>	<p>Managing Agents for</p> <p>RIZAL CEMENT CO., INC. Manufacturers of "R I Z A L" Portland Cement "The Builder's Choice" Factory in Binangonan, Rizal Telephone 2-19-62</p> <p>PHILIPPINE COTTON MILLS Manufacturers of Cotton Goods "MADRIGAL" textiles "NEPA" cloth Factory at Dagupan St., Manila Telephones 2-19-62 & 4-99-78</p> <p>PORT LAMON LUMBER CO. Dealers in all kinds of "Philippine Hardwoods" Sawmills at Port Lamon, East Mindanao Telephone 2-19-64</p> <p>MADRIGAL OIL MILLS Manufacturers of Coconut Oil and Copra Cake Mills in the City of Cebu Telephone 2-19-64</p>
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CENTRAL OFFICE
Telephone 2-18-26
No. 8 Muelle del Banco Nacional, Manila
Cable Address "Carbon" and "Madrigal"

The advertisement distinguishes those activities that were specifically Madrigal on the left from the manufacturing companies on the right for which Madrigal were Managing Agents. Despite some minority interests, however, Madrigal was the substantial majority party in every case. In short, the one-time coal merchant had become the head of a big national conglomerate and was probably the richest man in the Philippines. Quirino cites his estimated net worth in 1940 as \$850,000, almost a millionaire. In mid-1941, for a price of \$2,750,000 he would acquire the Calamba Sugar Estate in fertile Laguna province, Central Luzon.

In 1940-41 Madrigal invested in further fleet expansion. The 5,000-ton 'Hog Islander' *Manatawny* (1920) was added to the deepsea fleet while foreign and local purchases increased the interisland fleet was increased by another nine vessels to 16 vessels of more than 20,000 tons, now surpassing the Maritima fleet in both number and tonnage. It was quite an assortment with all but three of these ships were built before the First World War, the exceptions being the 2600-ton 'Laker' and timber carrier *Florence D* (1919), the 560-ton motorship (first in the fleet) *Palawan* (1927) and, most notably, the express interisland passenger steamer *Mayon* (1930), which was taken over from Elizalde (formerly Ynchausti) & Co. along with the old steamer *Vizcaya* (1890). The steam-turbine, 22-knot *Mayon* was an expensive ship to operate and probably unprofitable but it meant that Madrigal now had the most impressive and prestigious ship in interisland service, though closely challenged by De la Rama's new 3,200-grt, German-built motorship *Don Esteban* (1939). Every Monday morning these two ships raced from Manila for the Visayas in the company of De la Rama's smaller 1,600-ton *Don Isidro* (1936) and Maritima's older but fast former Channel steamer *Corregidor* (1911), all returning the following Sunday. Adding in the ocean-going fleet of 5 ships of around 30,000 tons, Madrigal's combined fleet now reached around 50,000 gross tons with the 2,300-grt Great Lakes freighter *Tristan* (1911) and the former royal yacht *Hirondelle* (1911) on delivery. It was a remarkable achievement for a self-made shipowner in a foreign colony.

Politics

Even in the 1900s, business in the Philippines was entwined with politics. The Letran triumvirate of Madrigal, Quezon and Osmena epitomized it. After graduating in law from Santo Tomas University in 1903 and entering government service, in 1906 Quezon was elected Governor of the Luzon province of Tayabas, which just one year later became the springboard to the first Philippine Assembly in which he, under Assembly President Osmena, became Majority Leader of the Nacionalista Party. In 1909 he was appointed simultaneously one of two Resident Commissioners to U.S. Congress and then in 1916, on its inauguration, Senator and first President of the Philippine Senate, serving in this capacity until elected President of the now self-governing Commonwealth of the Philippines in November 1935.

Osmena likewise graduated in law from Santo Tomas in 1903 and his rise was even more meteoric, becoming governor of Cebu in the following year, then by the same pathway becoming a member of the inaugural Philippine Assembly and also its Speaker until in 1922 becoming an inaugural member of the Senate until elected Vice-President to Quezon in November 1935.

From the mid-1900s, Madrigal was therefore a close associate of the two most powerful Philippine politicians. He helped to fund their political campaigns and they no doubt lobbied the American administration on his behalf. Madrigal's greatest political contribution, however, may have been his role in the establishment in August 1920 of the 'Philippines Herald' as an English-language voice of Philippine national interests. Other wealthy Filipino businessmen contributed capital but Quirino

maintains that Madrigal became the controlling figure, though scrupulous in regard to editorial independence. From mid-1923 Madrigal was also Vice Chairman of the newly created Board Trade. He sold the newspaper in 1933 to avoid having to take sides in a dispute between Quezon and Osmena, then helped to reconcile them and set up their joint ticket for the 1935 presidential election.

Madrigal himself stood successfully as a Nacionalista candidate for the Senate under in the general election of 11 November 1941, just four weeks before Pearl Harbor. It may be noted that other successful Nacionalista candidates included fellow shipowners Rafael and Ramon Fernandez and Esteban De la Rama, thus four shipowners out of 24 senators.

By the end of 1941 at age 61 Madrigal had therefore in the space of 40 years risen from being an illegitimate son of the provinces to a national business tycoon, an internationally recognised shipowner and a politician at the highest level of government. Yet the same year brought tragedy with the death in mid-1941 of his wife and business partner Susana.

Then in December the Japanese attacked the Philippines. Manila surrendered on 1 January 1942. While Quezon and Osmena escaped to the United States, where Madrigal's daughters were also safe, he himself continued to serve under the Japanese administration and carried on what business he could while most of the fleet, being under the U.S. flag, was scuttled, sunk or seized. Only the two most recent purchases, *Tristan* and *Hirondelle*, were able to return to service at the end of the War. The factories were damaged or destroyed. Madrigal himself was arrested and accused of having been a collaborator.

Post-World War II

After the Philippines was granted independence in July 1946 under recently elected President Manuel Roxas, Madrigal was pardoned along with other alleged collaborators. He was restored to the Senate and in the elections of November 1947 ran again for the Senate, this time for the Liberal Party, and was re-elected with the second highest vote. His non-shipping commercial activities were rehabilitated, with their management was now passing to the second generation. The family would never regain its prewar ascendancy but its wealth remained intact and through the property portfolio in fact escalated with the explosion of Manila's population.

Of the prewar shipping fleet, only the two most recent purchases, the bulk cargo carrier *Tristan* and *Hirondelle*, were still available for use. *Hirondelle* had in fact not entered service before the war and was being converted at Hong Kong to an interisland passenger ship when she was captured in 1941. On being reconditioned at Yokohama in 1948 the vessel was renamed *Argus* for the mainline interisland service Manila-Iloilo-Tacloban, which she commenced on 8 September with a 10 am scheduled departure from Manila each Tuesday. The patronage was good.

A further initial emphasis to regaining Madrigal's position in the interisland trade, now under the title of Madrigal Shipping Co. Inc., was the gradual acquisition of six 480-grt 'Y' and 630-grt 'YO' class U.S. Army tankers which were all converted to cargo ships, fitted with derricks, and given steerage passenger accommodation with modestly expanded gross tonnages. A focus was servicing Bicol (where maintained multiple interests) and ports in Northern Luzon, usually with direct sailings from Manila. According to historian Gorio Belen, the route to Bicol would extend as far as Larap port in Jose Panganiban town in Camarines Norte while the Northern Luzon route involved calls at Salomague (in Ilocos Sur), Batanes and Aparri. Madrigal also had a route circumnavigating Luzon, starting from Manila

to Northern Luzon before proceeding to Bicol ports and round the Sorsogon peninsula on the way back to Manila.

By contrast, other companies (apart from Delgado Brothers and tanker operator Luzon Stevedoring Company) shunned the 'Y' and 'YO' types and generally operated the more powerful 750-grt former U.S. Army Transportation Corps 'FS' (Freight & Supply) ships with direct connections. An effort was made for the upkeep of *Argus*, including dockings in Japan, but the ageing hull proved to be an intractable liability and the vessel partially sank at Manila in October 1953. The 1140-grt *Aeolus* was then used as a replacement but did not have the speed or passenger capacity of her predecessor and in 1955, following the loss of converted 'YO' *Cetus*, the 'Y' and 'YO' classes were reportedly sold en bloc to the North Camarines Lumber Company, essentially ending Madrigal's passenger and interisland cargo services until the small mainly cargo *Viria* acquired in 1965 and then the shortlived three-ship passenger revival at the end of the 1980s described below.

The late-1940s had simultaneously seen the revival of deepsea operations with the surviving *Lepus ex Tristan* and an emphasis on newly acquired, generally elderly but serviceable secondhand cargo ships that were used profitably for world-wide tramping as well as for Philippine contracts covering such cargoes as rice and coal imports and timber, copra and sugar exports. Several notable vessels were acquired under the Liberian and Panamanian flag, including *Susana ex Ensley City*, built in the U.S. in 1920 for American owners; *Sula*, originally built in Japan to high standards as *Eastern Merchant*; *Venus*, built in the U.S. in 1920 as *Salatiga* for Rotterdam Lloyd; and the 10,900-grt *Ceres* (1922), which as *Amersfoort* was also designed for Netherlands-Far East service, but is better known as J.C.J.L.'s *Tjibesar*. Also acquired were several smaller but well-maintained Australian coasters and one veteran from New Zealand that proved to be durable additions to the fleet and were useful for regional voyages to or from the Philippines.

The end of the Suez boom in 1958-9 was timely in allowing the old larger cargo tramps to be replaced by seven much newer but now cheaply acquired WW2-built ships and even a couple of early post-war vessels, all of which with their red funnels became familiar sights in major ports worldwide. A few other specialized ships were acquired at this time including the sugar or molasses carriers *Sirius ex Nonsuco* (1938) and *Maria Rosa ex Tambua* (1938), the still quite new 50,000-dwt tanker *V. Madrigal ex Mobil Endeavor* (1961), the 500-grt tug *Salvonja*, ex-Smit's *Ocean*, as well as a few smaller cargo vessels for coastal use.

The profitability of these vessels enabled further purchases including in 1970-72, eleven conventional cargo ships in the range of 4000-7000 grt from prominent owners who were discarding such vessels in favour of larger ships and newer technologies. Being too small for more lucrative Baltic Exchange cargoes, these would have sought freight contracts in the Philippines and Asian region more generally. Turning in lower profits than the vessels acquired 1959-67, they and the now aged warbuilts were mostly sold for scrapping by the end of 1974 and not replaced. Thus within two years of Vicente's death in 1972 at the age of 92, the fleet had much dwindled to only a handful of rather old ships – the coasters *Breeze*, *Coastal*, *Slidre*, and *Viria*, two 4000-grt French-built cargoliners dating from 1950, and the tanker *V. Madrigal*.

Vicente had split his wealth equally among his seven children so the shipping enterprise (hereinafter 'Madrigal') now was under a collective management. In a period of rapid change in maritime technology and the rise of other Philippine shipowners, Madrigal made no shipping purchases in 1973-

75. A few cautious acquisitions may then have been to test the waters: a 60,000-dwt tanker was sold for scrapping almost immediately and no further such vessels were acquired. The small trans-Tasman cargo ship *Santa Ursula ex Katea* replaced a couple of the coasters, presumably to lift cargoes affiliated with Madrigal enterprises. A new and well-equipped cargoliner *Sainte Alexandrine* was delivered from an East German yard but sold four years later and the experiment with such a capital-intensive craft was not repeated. A few secondhand bulk carriers, most with cargo gear, appear to have been more successful.

In 1989-90 Madrigal re-entered interisland passenger shipping by cheaply acquiring the 2000-grt Hong Kong-Macao ferries *Nam Shan* and *Tai Shan* and Taiwan Navigation's *Tai Peng* which respectively became *Madrigal Surigao*, *Madrigal Tacloban* (later *Madrigal Romblon*) and *Madrigal Masbate*. All three were 17-knot ships built in Japan in the early 1970s but, significantly, without a roll-on/roll-off deck, the absence of which was becoming a disadvantage in the Philippines inter-island trade. The vessels also faced regulatory/political obstacles in the allocation of profitable routes. The initiative turned out to be a failure and the ships were disposed of by the end of 1994. It was only in 2004 that inter-island shipping was deregulated.

In the 1990s several more bulk carriers were purchased and even some secondhand liner types, although the latter were invariably disposed of after a year or two. One vessel, *Madrigal Harmony* (4089/74), remains implausibly listed in the 2022-23 Lloyd's Register for Madrigal Transport Inc., Manila. Madrigal's last three ships were the 13,000-grt bulk carriers *National Dignity*, *National Honor* and *National Pride*, originally built in 1980-81 for a company associated with the National Development Corp. of the Philippines and finally over the period 1997-2003 jointly owned by Madrigal Shipping Co. Inc. and Wan Hai Lines Ltd, a prominent privately-owned Taiwan company and regional containership operator.

In 1953 at age 73, Vicente had suffered a final election defeat, but he had remained active in his enterprises. Many descendants, including a daughter elected to the Senate in 1955 and a granddaughter elected in 2004 (and later an unsuccessful Presidential candidate), have been influential in the business, politics and cultural life of the Philippines. Vicente Madrigal's legacy is therefore broadly spread, and it may also be said that he was the father of the modern Philippine merchant marine, though there is no longer a tangible family connection.

Sources

This account in its first part draws heavily on Carlos Quirino, *Philippine Tycoon: The Biography of an Industrialist* (Madrigal Memorial Foundation, 1967). As a commissioned biography it has limitations, not least in being rather anecdotal, but the author, nephew of former President Quirino, author of biographies of Quezon, Rizal and Magsaysay and also at one time head of the National Library, is a historian and had access to primary sources. Postwar information on the interisland passenger trades draws on the research of Gorio Belen of the Philippine Ship Spotters' Society, such as presented at <https://psssonline.wordpress.com/2016/07/22/the-short-lived-return-of-madrigal-shipping-company-to-passenger-shipping/>. Background information has also been drawn from Wikipedia. Details on the shipping fleet are gleaned from Lloyd's Register, the Schell registers and the Miramar site, also the 'Manila Times', 'Philippines Tribune', 'South China Morning Post', 'Far Eastern Economic Review', the Singapore press at <resources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/> and the Australian press at Trove.