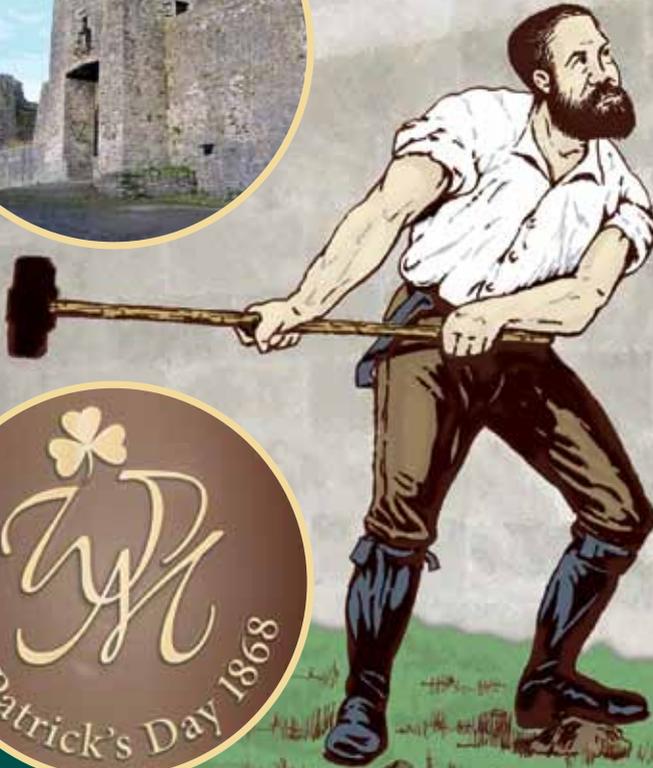
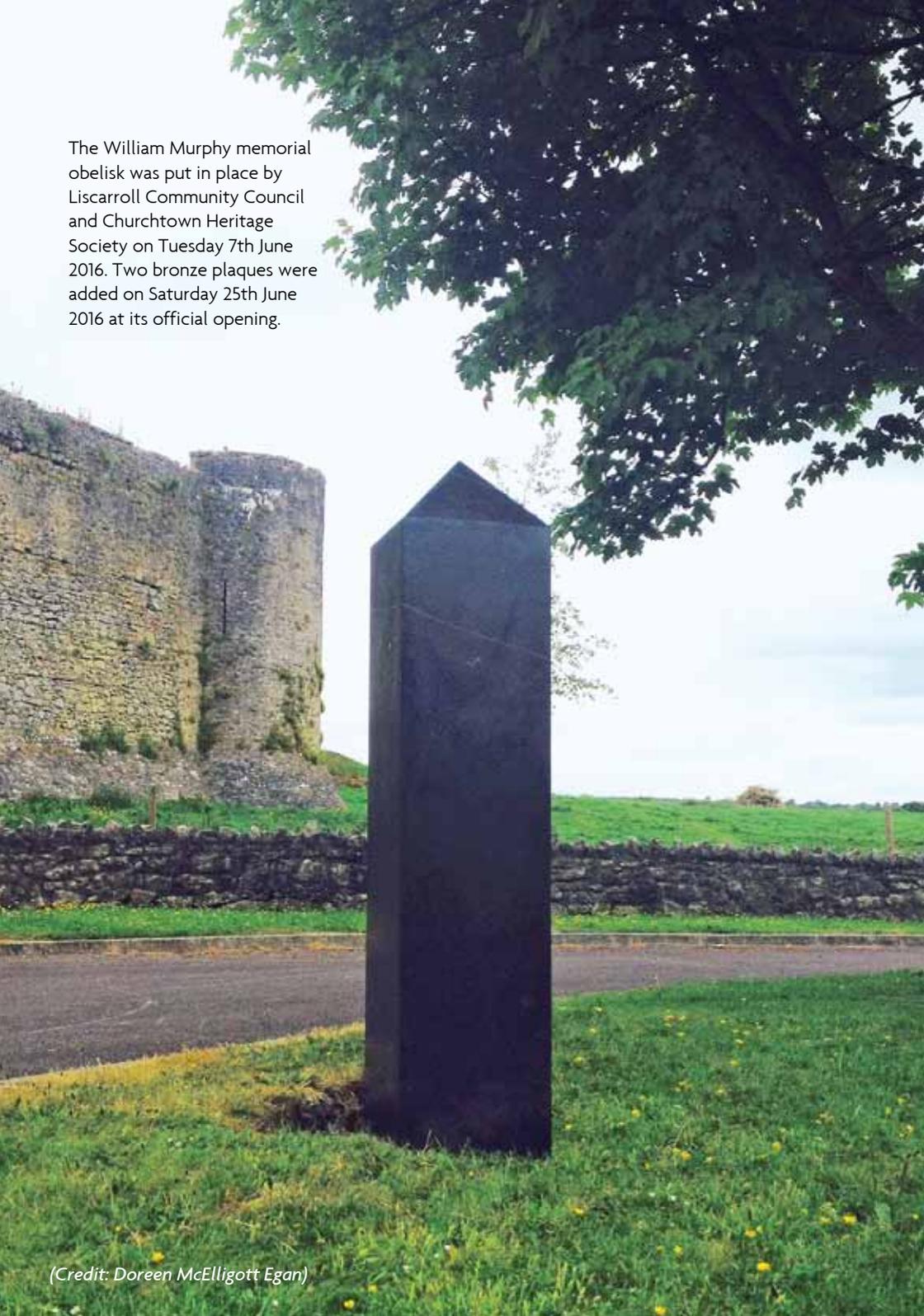


*William Murphy 1819-1902*

# The Weight Thrower



The William Murphy memorial obelisk was put in place by Liscarroll Community Council and Churchtown Heritage Society on Tuesday 7th June 2016. Two bronze plaques were added on Saturday 25th June 2016 at its official opening.



(Credit: Doreen McElligott Egan)

## Liscarroll Community Council

25th June 2016

Liscarroll Community Council in association with Churchtown Heritage Society are delighted to be associated with the official unveiling of the William Murphy memorial obelisk at the foot of the walls of Liscarroll Castle.

On Saint Patrick's Day 1868, it is recorded that William threw a 12lb sledge over the walls of Liscarroll Castle. His physical strength was heralded beyond the surrounding valleys of Liscarroll, through the rolling countryside of North Cork and was the subject of many a fireside conversation near and far. His feat inspired poet Con O'Brien (The Bard of Ballyhea) to compose a poem in honour of his outstanding achievement. We will allow the rest of the history to be delivered by his descendants, the Murphy Family, who we would especially like to welcome to Liscarroll today.

William's great great grandnephews Gerry and John Murphy have been instrumental in the sourcing of archive material for this commemorative booklet which we regard as a very welcome addition to Liscarroll's recorded history.

Liscarroll is steeped in local history and heritage and it is imperative that we nurture this by remembering people like William Murphy. Today we feel we are honouring him in a fitting manner by erecting this obelisk.



Picture: Susan Daly



*Doreen McElligott Egan*

Doreen McElligott Egan, PRO

# Why do we still remember?

Why is William Murphy's achievement on St Patrick's Day 1868 still remembered? Why did Con O'Brien feel inspired to write his poem about the event 75 years after it happened? Why was there so much press comment about it at the time? Why was what happened on St Patrick's Day 1868 in Liscarroll significant? It's all about context.

In 1868 the British still ruled Ireland and were seen as an unwelcome force by the people. The Fenians had been defeated in their uprising in 1867 and so a sporting 'battle' between local hero William Murphy, aged at this time 49, and a representative of the British Army (named McCarthy) took on a very special significance.

The contest was far more than a local event; it was a surrogate battle between Ireland and England – them and us – and a glorious Irish victory in front of Colonel Gough who was in charge of the huge garrison in nearby Buttevant Barracks was very sweet indeed for the local population.



(Credit: Doreen McElligott Egan)

The fact that Colonel Gough would have been accompanied by a large detachment of troops who would all have witnessed the British 'defeat' meant what happened on St Patrick's Day in Liscarroll in 1868 was forever etched in memory and folklore throughout north Cork.

Thankfully the recent history between Britain and Ireland is one of mutual respect as President of Ireland Michael D Higgins\* explained so eloquently in his historic address to the Houses of Parliament in London on 8th April 2014:

*"I stand here at a time when the relationship between our two islands has, as I have said, achieved a closeness and warmth that once seemed unachievable. The people of Ireland greatly cherish the political independence that was secured in 1922 – an independence which was fought for by my father and many of his generation. We acknowledge that past but, even more, we wholeheartedly welcome the considerable achievement of today's reality – the mutual respect, friendship and cooperation which exists between our two countries."*

Ar aghaidh libh Lios Uí Cearbhaill agus Brugh Thuinne.

President Michael D Higgins' mother Alice Canty was from Liscarroll. See Page 35.

Clár - 25th June 2016

## William Murphy Commemoration

Master of Ceremonies: Ger Healy, Secretary,  
Liscarroll Community Council

- 15.00 Introductory remarks by Fergus Egan, Chairman, Liscarroll Community Council;
- 15.05 William Murphy, The Weight Thrower, a short biography by John Murphy;
- 15.10 A link to Knocknagow, a short address by Denis J Hickey, Churchtown Historical & Heritage Society;
- 15.20 William Murphy, The Weight Thrower, Con O'Brien's poem read by Deirdre Murphy and Mark Smyth;
- 15.25 Folklore Commission 1937 extract, read by Noel Lenihan;
- 15.35 William Murphy, The Hurler, read by Timmy Morrissey, Granard Gaels GAA Club;
- 15.45 The Walls of Liscarroll, Callaghan Hartstonge Gayner's poem read by Philip Egan;
- 15.50 The Boss Murphy Musical Legacy, a short address by Dr Colette Moloney;
- 16.00 William Murphy's Obituary from the Cork Examiner, read by Dr Brian Murphy;
- 16.05 Conor Bouveron (1996-2015) Tribute, read by Dr Niamh Murphy;
- 16.10 Leaving a Legacy, a short address by Gerry Murphy, Churchtown Historical & Heritage Society;
- 16.15 The Bould Thady Quill, sung by Willie Relihan;
- 16.20 Unveiling the Ground Marker and Obelisk by Gerry & John Murphy;
- 16.30 Concluding Remarks by Fergus Egan, Chairperson, Liscarroll Community Council;
- 16.35 The Walls of Liscarroll, played by Dr Colette Moloney.
- 16.45 12lb Sledge Throwing Competition;
- 16.45 Refreshments courtesy of Liscarroll Community Council.

Conor Bouveron (1996-2015) is a great great great grandnephew of William Murphy. William Murphy (1819-1902) is the great great great granduncle of Niamh and Deirdre Murphy and Mark Smyth. William is the great great granduncle of Gerry, John and Brian Murphy.

Official Video: Pat O'Hara 086 852 8904.

Official Photography: Jim McSweeney 087 639 8075.



# William Murphy

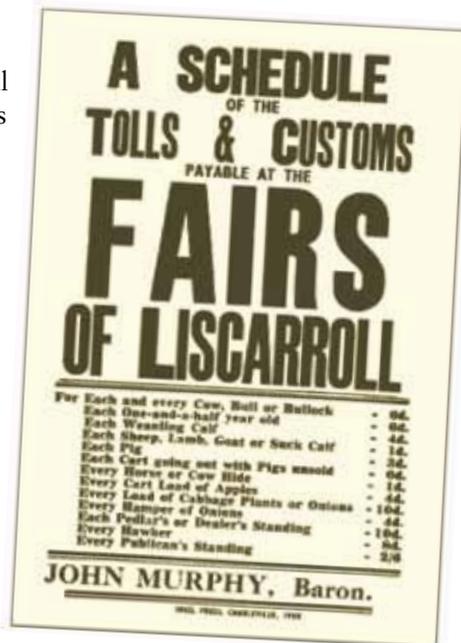
1819-1902

William Murphy (1819-1902) was the second son of Daniel Murphy, a farmer from the townland of Egmont whose land was situated half way between the villages of Churchtown and Liscarroll in North County Cork in Ireland.

The memorial obelisk erected in the shadows of the ancient walls of Liscarroll Castle on 25th June 2016 commemorates William Murphy whose feat as a weight thrower and athlete culminated in the victorious lofting of a 12lb sledge over the wall of the Castle on St Patrick's Day 1868. William's physical strength was legendary both as a weight thrower and a hurler for Liscarroll in the days before the game was codified by the Gaelic Athletic Association. William Murphy's athletic achievements is part of the folklore of North Cork. Some say William's achievement inspired Charles J Kickham to create the character Mat the Thrasher\* in his book Knocknagow which was published in 1870 two years after William's achievement.

In William Murphy's time and up to the 1930s weight throwing was a major sport in Ireland which led to Irish born athletes known as 'The Whales' winning an incredible 23 medals in five Olympic Games for the USA and Canada long before Knockanroe, Kanturk born weight thrower Dr Pat O'Callaghan won Olympic gold in 1928 and 1932 for Ireland.

Aged 19, in 1838 William married Olympia Wigmore, daughter of John Wigmore of Liscarroll. The Wigmore family were Catholic gentry who traced their lineage back to the Plantagenet Kings of England. William acquired property and land in Liscarroll, including the village green where the obelisk stands, which bestowed on the owner the title Baron of Liscarroll Fair.



An image from 2015 of the house in Liscarroll village where William Murphy lived at the time of the 1901 Census. (Credit: Google Street View)

William and Olympia, had eight children, six sons and two daughters. All of their offspring took the middle name Wigmore. Four of their sons went to the United States as missionaries – Monsignor Daniel Murphy (Dover, NH), Rev John Murphy (Vicar General of Maine), Rev Stephen Murphy (Dover, New Hampshire) and Rev James Murphy (Macon, Georgia). His other children were Mary, Anne, Michael and William. As far as we can ascertain William and Olympia's children left no living direct descendants.



From Cork Examiner 20th October 1900.

William is an uncle of farmers and fiddle players William 'Boss' Murphy (1831-1911) and his son John 'Boss' Murphy (1875-1955) of Leap, Churchtown about whom the book 'The Boss Murphy Musical Legacy' was published in 2003.

William was also a schoolfellow and friend of Archbishop Thomas

William Croke (1824-1902) who was born in nearby Kilbrin and after which Croke Park in Dublin is named.

The direct descendants of The Weight Thrower's father Daniel run to over 600 and they live at Egmont and Leap in Churchtown and at Ballinagrath in Ballyhea as well as being scattered throughout the globe mainly in Illinois, USA and New Zealand. William is buried in Kilbrin cemetery.

\* 'Mat the Thrasher' was how Kickham spelt the name.

# William's Scoubeen Career

According to the Ballyhea GAA records William Murphy of Liscarroll was a noted player in the days before the GAA was founded in 1884 and a precursor of Hurling called Scoubeen was popular. The Ballyhea Club history describes William's exploits as follows:

"The late Con Walshe of Castledod told Jim Meagher that he remembered seeing Murphy play. He told of an incident in a "scoubeen" match between Ballyhea and Liscarroll parishes. In the course of play Murphy was unfairly tackled by a Ballyhea player. Murphy, a man of great build and physique, dropped his hurley and catching the Ballyhea man by the neck of the coat and seat of the pants, he heaved him over the ditch. The Ballyhea man concerned was an employee of Walshes' of Castledod and had to suffer the jeers and jokes of his fellow-workers for many a day.

"Another Ballyhea player who dared to tackle Murphy was William Burke of Cooline. Burke, by all accounts, was a hurler of exceptional skill. He was small in stature, and had a very clever knack of upending opposing players with a tackle which certainly would not be permitted under the present-day rules of the GAA. Hurling was not as fast then as it is nowadays. Very often, in a scoubeen match, the ball remained practically on the same spot whilst players endeavoured to hurl it backwards and forwards.

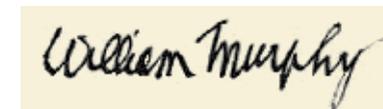


Image: Sue Gifford

"Outside this battling group, there was a circle of players in half-crouching positions, with hurleys at the ready, yelling and shouting, and hoping that a chance stroke would send the ball their way. Burke usually manoeuvred on the outside, and when the ball was likely to move in a certain direction to a dangerous player, Burke came from behind, ran his head between the legs of the crouching opponent and upended him on the spot.

"When Burke tried this trick on William Murphy of Liscarroll, he found himself locked in a vice-like grip between the knees of the Liscarroll giant. The yells of the Cooline man failed to soften the heart of Murphy, who did not release his grip until Burke was completely exhausted. Men took great pride in marking or receiving a wound from a great player such as Murphy, and it was their custom to move conspicuously around the parish, during the week following a match, displaying their cuts and bruises."

Credit: [www.ballyheagaa.com](http://www.ballyheagaa.com)



William Murphy's signature on the 1901 Census form.

These film clips are taken from an October 1985 video of Jack Murphy (1920-2000) who was showing the stone that marked the spot where his great granduncle William stood when he lofted the 12lb sledge over the wall of Liscarroll castle on St Patrick's Day 1868. The wall in the background was removed afterwards and the same spot is now marked with a plaque on the pathway as you enter the Village Green.



# The Weight Thrower



'Twas back long ago, in the year '68,  
When the landlord and agent were running the State,  
And the tenant implored, with his hat in his hand,  
That their 'Honours' might let him hold on to the land.  
And the Fenians were scattered, and chased day and night,  
But what matter, although they went down in the fight,  
They left us the spirit that laughed at all fear,  
And inspired them to die for the cause they held dear.

'Twas then you might find a 'great' boy, here and there,  
Who 'Lepped' a big river, with five feet to spare,  
With a gun in his hand, and a bag on his back.  
While he laughed at the game-keeper hard on his track,  
Or who hammered the Peelers in Buttevant Square,  
When they tried to arrest him, the day of the fair.

Now big William Murphy, well known far and wide,  
A fine able man, without swagger or pride,  
Was famous for throwing the sledge, and the weight,  
About his friends sent a challenge, for miles all around,  
Declaring his master, could nowhere be found.

But at length and at last, a bold rival was got,  
To challenge Big Bill, on his own native spot,  
On next Patrick's Day, at the sledge and the weight,  
And the County all round took a note of the date.  
From Buttevant, Churchtown, Kanturk, and Greenhall,  
From Charleville, Mallow, and Freemount and all.  
Such Crowds in Liscarroll were never since seen,  
When the Rivals peeled off, and stood out on the green.

And the Colonel from Buttevant, said half aloud,  
That he never saw men with more cause to be proud,  
McCarthy the Challenger, gave a big throw,  
And Murphy was beaten a half yard or so.

Then at it again, and McCarthy still won,  
Till somebody shouted that William was done,  
Then he caught up the sledge in a temper, and threw,  
And said 'Hand me my coat, I think that ought to do'.

And McCarthy remarked 'twas as well for him go,  
For the Devil himself couldn't 'bate' that same throw.  
Then Murphy looked up at the Castle hard by,  
And he gazed at the wall that stands sixty feet high,



And he called for a sledge, for his temper was hot,  
And he asked if they thought him a crawler, or what?  
So they brought him a sledge, that was twelve pounds in weight,  
And he rolled up his sleeves, for he couldn't be 'bate'.

And he paced sixty feet from the foot of the wall,  
While a silence came over the soldiers and all.  
And the muscles, like whipcord stood out on him there,  
As he stood to his mark, for he judged it with care.

Then he balanced, and swung, with his terrible might,  
His sledge sailed aloft, like a bird in its flight,  
Clean over the wall, that stands sixty feet high,  
While the crowd stood around, and 'tis small wonder why.

Then the big fellow smiled, and said, 'Now get a man,  
To throw it half way, after that, if you can'.  
Such shouting, and cheering were never since known,  
As William walked off, with some friends of his own,  
And his record still stands, as the years come and go,  
And a stone marks the spot where he stood for that throw.

*This poem was written by Con O'Brien, the Bard of Ballyhea, and published in The Cork Weekly Examiner in the 1940s.*

Two rectangular bronze plaques are located on the commemorative obelisk at the Village Green in Liscarroll. The first plaque is about William and his family and the second plaque includes Ballyhea born Con O'Brien's poem about the event. Nearby a round bronze plaque marks the spot where William stood. The Village Green in olden days was the Fair Field and was named on the 1841 Ordnance Map as Skievoge (Well).



# Just William!

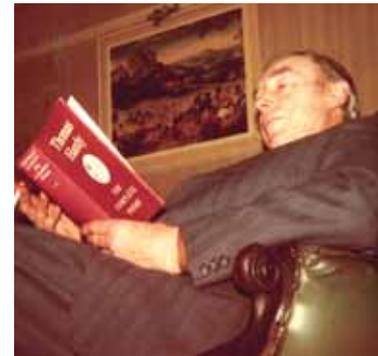
William is a very popular name in the Murphy Family of Egmont with twelve named William Murphy in the online family tree. It's easy to get confused between them all. The first thing to understand is that William the Weight Thrower who was born in 1819 is an uncle of William 'Boss' Murphy who was born 12 years later in 1831. The public house in Churchtown is called after William 1831.

William 1819 was born in Egmont and moved to Liscarroll when he married Olympia Wigmore. William 1831 was also born in Egmont and he moved to Leap in the 1850s where he rented a farm from the Earl of Egmont which he later purchased under the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act 1885 ('Ashbourne Act'). His brother Daniel who inherited the land rights at Egmont also purchased the lands at Egmont under the same act. It was William and Daniel who jointly erected the headstone to their mother Ellen Duane in Kilbrin graveyard.

Both William 1819 and William 1831 had sons called William. William 1831's son John also had a son William (1916-1984). Daniel (1838-1905) of Egmont had a son Fr William (1880-1944), Parish Priest in Avoca, Co Wicklow. Fr William's brother Jack called his son Liam (1944-2008) who went on to call his son William who became the twelfth William Murphy in the family tree.



Jack (1888-1970) of Egmont's brother Michael L (1882-1964) emigrated to Chicago in 1903 and his third child William Francis 'Fa' Murphy (1914-1994) married Agnes Mueller (1914-2000) which created the Murphy Mueller lineage which was further solidified when William's sister Elizabeth 'Betty' (1919-2009) married John Mueller (1917-1994) and created two families of double cousins. William 'Fa' Murphy went on to call his son William Francis (b.1943) who served as Mayor of Woodridge – a suburb of Chicago – for a record 30 years from 1981 to 2012. William Francis also (b.1943) called his son William Francis (b.1973) and he became the eleventh William Murphy in the Tree.



William (1916-1984) and William Murphy (b 1943) Mayor of Woodridge 1981-2012.

William Murphy 1819 was born in Glenview Cottage, Egmont. This picture was taken in May 2012 and shows Glenview to the right of the farm buildings.  
*(Credit: Gerry Murphy)*

## Online Resources

[www.liscarroll.ie](http://www.liscarroll.ie)

[www.churchtown.net](http://www.churchtown.net)

[www.bossmurphy.myheritage.com](http://www.bossmurphy.myheritage.com)

[www.bruhennytv.com](http://www.bruhennytv.com)

# The Wigmore Family

William Murphy was married to Olympia Wigmore. The Wigmore family was a long established family in Liscarroll who trace their beginnings to Norman baron, Ranulph de Mortimer, Lord of Wigmore in Herefordshire.

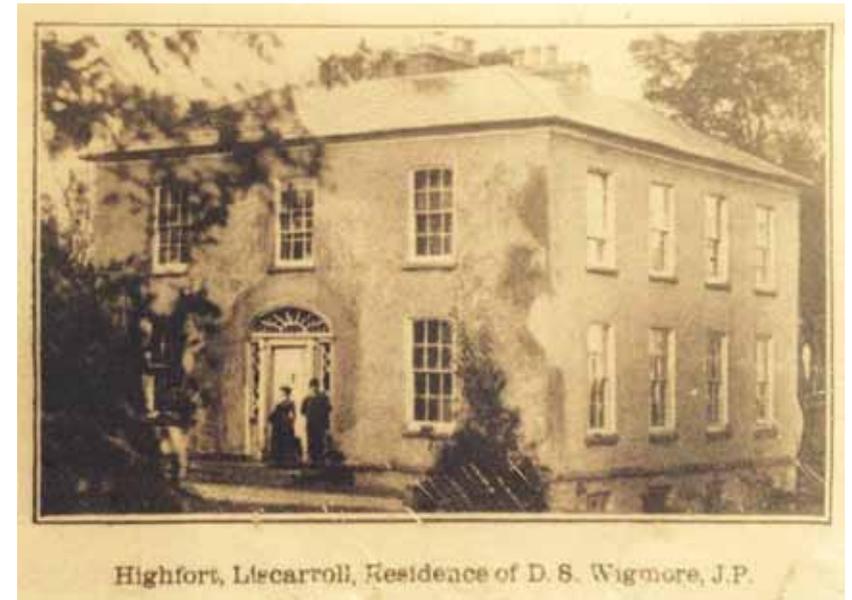
Anne Mortimer of Wigmore married Richard Plantagenet, Duke of Cambridge a great grandson of Edward III. Their son Richard, Duke of York was to base his claim to the throne of England on direct descent from Edward III. Richard also claimed descent from Edward III through the Mortimer line. While Richard died at the Battle of Wakefield, two of his sons ascended the throne as Edward IV and Richard III. Cardinal Beaufort, who famously interrogated Joan of Arc was another member of the Wigmore family.

Sir William Wigmore (born c.1565) was the founder of the Irish branch of the Wigmore family. William while nominally Protestant, his wife Anne Throgmorton remained strongly Catholic during post reformation times. They had 12 children, three sons becoming Jesuits and five daughters becoming nuns. One of those daughters was Winifred Wigmore, a founder of the Loreto order of nuns.



The Wigmore Chalice which can be found in St Joseph's Church in Liscarroll.

*(Credits: Chalice by Fr Tom McDermott CC and Church by Susan Daly)*



Highfort, Liscarroll, Residence of D. S. Wigmore, J.P.

Highfort House, Liscarroll c.1900 reproduced from *Historical and Topographical Notes etc on Buttevant, Castletownroche, Doneraile, Mallow and places in their vicinity*, by Colonel James Grove White published by Guy and Company, Cork 1906-1915. D S Wigmore was Stephen Wigmore's son and brother of Canon Wigmore of Mallow, a later generation of Wigmore clergy.

The Irish family settled in north and east Cork ultimately slotting into Catholic and Protestant branches in Liscarroll and Midleton respectively. Local historian Dónal Ó Cáinte recalls parish folklore which suggested that a Wigmore son injured in a hunting accident married a local girl who nursed him back to health. He was disinherited by his family for marrying an Irish Catholic.



The main Wigmore monument in Liscarroll graveyard.

*(Credit: Doreen McElligott Egan)*

Many of the Wigmore family are buried in Liscarroll cemetery in the townland of Coolbane on the edge of the village, where monuments bear dates from 1766 to 1909. In this ancient place also lies the ruins of an old church which is in all probability that mentioned in the Church census of 1091 as 'Kyle Carroll' or the church of Carroll.

# William & Olympia's children

William and Olympia had eight children born and raised in Liscarroll. All of their offspring were given the middle name Wigmore. Four of their sons went to the United States as missionaries – Monsignor Daniel Murphy (Dover, New Hampshire), Rev John Murphy (Vicar General of Maine), Rev Stephen Murphy (Dover, New Hampshire) and Rev James Murphy (Macon, Georgia). Their other children were Mary, Anne, Michael and William about which we know little apart from the fact that Michael and his father were living together in Liscarroll – across from the Handball Alley – at the time of the 1901 Census.

In the 1901 census William declared his age as 85 - but our records suggest he was 82 - and his son Michael, who was living with him was 50. William described himself as a farmer and Michael as a farmer's son.

Michael emigrated to the USA in 1867, married Kate Melody in Boston on 8th September 1892 where he was working as a Porter. They had a daughter called Olympia born on January 10th 1898 in Manchester, New Hampshire but Michael was back in Liscarroll living with his father three years later for the 1901 Census. He was not in Liscarroll for the 1911 census but we know Michael died in Cork in 1926 and his and Kate's daughter Olympia died in Santa Clara, California on 20th March 1937. Olympia was not married and appears to have been the only child born to William and Olympia's eight children and so the last in the Murphy-Wigmore family line.

**CENSUS OF IRELAND, 1901.**  
(The Examples of the mode of filling up this Table are given on the other side.)

**FORM A.** No. on Form B

RETURN of the MEMBERS of this FAMILY and their VISITORS, BOARDERS, SERVANTS, &c., who slept or abode in this House on the night of SUNDAY, the 31st of 1901.

No.	NAME and SURNAME.	RELATION to Head of Family.	RELIGIOUS PROFESSION.	EDUCATION.	AGE.	SEX.	DATE, PROFESSION, OR OCCUPATION.	MARRIAGE.	BIRTH DATE.	BIRTH PLACE.	BIRTH LANGUAGE.
1	William Murphy	Head	Roman Catholic	None	85	M	Farmer	Married		Liscarroll	Irish
2	Michael Murphy	Son	Roman Catholic	None	50	M	Farmer's Son	Married		Liscarroll	Irish
3											
4											
5											
6											
7											
8											
9											

## Very Rev John Wigmore Murphy Vicar General of Maine (1841-1892)



John trained for the priesthood initially at All Hallows in Dublin and finishing up in the newly opened seminary in Troy, NY. In 1867 John had the distinction of becoming the first Catholic priest ordained in the state of New Hampshire. Initially based in Portland ME (Maine and New Hampshire at that time were the same diocese) and then sent on missionary work into northern New Hampshire and Maine where the Catholic church was rapidly expanding post the Great Famine in Ireland. John established parishes in Laconia NH, Bangor ME and Hallowell, ME.

Raised to the position of Vicar General of Maine by Bishop Healy in 1884 John returned to Portland where he set about rebuilding the landmark St Dominic's Church. At this time there was an outbreak of anti-Irish and Catholic feelings so the church was guarded by Irish longshoremen (dockers) armed with baseball bats for fear of it being burned down. The anti-immigrant Know-Nothing party was prevalent in parts of Maine during the latter half of the 1800s and was responsible for burning down a number of Catholic churches and even tarred and feathered one particular priest. John unfortunately died suddenly in 1892 before St Dominic's was completed. St Dominic's became locally known as 'Father John's Church' and is now the home of the Maine Irish Heritage Center.



## Monsignor Daniel Wigmore Murphy (1838-1911)

Daniel was educated at the classical school of Charleville and at the college in Middleton before entering All Hallows in Dublin. He finished his studies for the priesthood in the Grand Seminary of Montreal. Daniel was ordained in Portland, Maine in 1861 by Bishop Bacon. After a short stay in Portland as assistant at the Portland cathedral Daniel took up his first parochial position in Houlton, ME on the Canadian border where he built a school. Daniel subsequently ministered in Bath and Augusta, Maine and Keene, New Hampshire where he built or expanded seven churches.



In 1881 Daniel became pastor of St. Mary's in Dover, New Hampshire where he would spend the remaining 30 years of his life. While in Dover his zeal for church expansion continued, he restored and expanded St. Mary's, brought the Sisters of Mercy and the Christian Brothers to Dover to open schools and founded an orphanage, while still finding time to warn of the moral dangers of both Fenianism and couples ice skating. In 1901 Daniel was elevated to the position of Monsignor.

### Rev James Wigmore Murphy (1848-1877)

Like his two elder brothers James was initially educated for the priesthood at All Hallows and then went to the United States where he finished out his training at St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore where he was ordained on January 14th, 1877. Six months into his first ministry in Macon, Georgia James died during the great yellow fever outbreak of that year. James is buried in Dover, NH where his body was re-interred in 1885.



The grave marker for Rev James W Murphy in New Saint Mary's cemetery, Dover, New Hampshire. (Credit: John Murphy, Boston)



The memorial to Monsignor Daniel Wigmore Murphy in Dover, New Hampshire with Luke and Owen Murphy, Boston who are great great grandnephews of the Monsignor. (Credit: John Murphy, Boston)



### Rev Stephen Wigmore Murphy (1854-1883)

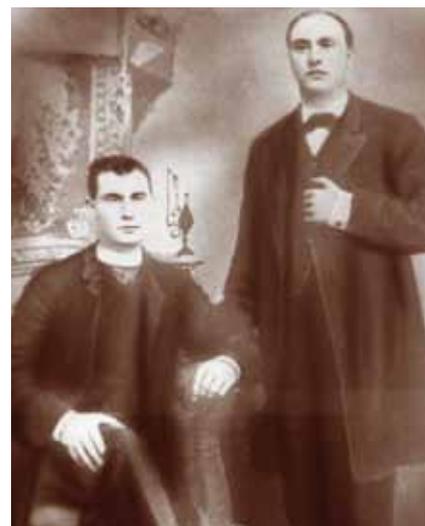
Stephen travelled to the United States at a young age and resided with his brother Daniel and sister Anne in Keene, NH. Stephen entered the 'family business' and upon ordination was assigned to an assistant clergy position in Bangor, ME. Stephen closely followed older brother Daniel and was assigned to two of Daniel's parishes. Stephen died young at the age of 29 from consumption in Dover, NH. His sister Anne who acted as Daniel's housekeeper also died of consumption in the same year. We assume Fr Stephen is also buried in New Saint Mary's cemetery in Dover, New Hampshire.

## Rev Daniel and Matthew Murphy

William 1831 and his wife Margaret Ryan also had two sons ministering in Iowa in the 1880s – Daniel and Matthew Murphy.

### Fr Daniel A Murphy

Fr Daniel was born most likely at Leap in 1855 the first child of William 1831 and Margaret Ryan. He would have received his primary education in the old school in Churchtown. Fr Daniel died in Dubuque,



Fr Matthew (seated) and Fr Daniel. (Credit: original picture from Murphy family Leap)

Iowa in 1883 aged 28 and his early death and burial in Iowa led William to travel to visit Daniel's grave and bring home a matchbox of soil from it which he put in the family grave at Kilbrin. In fact, William 1831 went to the US at least twice and probably three times in the 1890s to visit Fr Matthew and his daughter Ellen who went to Iowa to act as a housekeeper for her brother and married Dennis Delay in Castle Grove, Iowa at 9.00am on 7th November 1888 and created the Murphy Delay (Sheets) family line. Ellen and Dennis' wedding ceremony was conducted by Ellen's brother Fr Matthew.

Fr Matthew arranged for Fr Daniel's body to be exhumed and reinterred in Mount Calgary Cemetery, Ryan, Iowa where they both now rest.

### Rev Matthew S Murphy

Rev Matthew S Murphy was born on 25th July 1859 at Leap. He went to school in Churchtown and to the Classical School in Charleville and St Colman's College, Fermoy before entering Mount Melleray Abbey, a community of Cistercian monks situated on the slopes of the Knockmealdown mountains in County Waterford. Mathew entered the USA via New York in early 1882 and completed his Theology studies at Dubuque in Iowa where he was ordained for the Iowa Diocese on 21st October 1882 by Right Rev John Hennessy. He was first posted to Nevada and Colo parishes in Iowa. In 1887 he was appointed to Castle Grove Parish and later to Ryan. Fr Matthew had retired to California and when he died in Pasadena on 4th November 1926 he was buried in Calgary Cemetery, Ryan.



Fr Matthew and his sister Ellen Murphy Delay (1860-1938) taken in Iowa in the early 1920s. (Credit: Virginia Delay Sheets)



According to Jack Murphy (1920-2000) his father recounted to him that at least five priests visited the Leap on one occasion in their prime and were so athletic they didn't bother opening the gate (on the right of the picture), they just 'lepped' over it. That must have been some sight on the lawn in front of William 1831's house at Leap.

## The Hartstonge Link

William 1819's niece Mary Murphy (1833-1928) of Egmont married James Flynn Hartstonge (1832-1902) from Sunfort, Liscarroll. They had eight children in Sunfort before the entire family emigrated to Macraes Flat in Central Otago, South Island, New Zealand where they continued on as farmers and gold prospectors. One of their youngest children to make the voyage which took three months was called Callaghan Hartstonge (1862-1870). It is interesting that the author of the poem 'The Walls of Liscarroll' reproduced in this booklet is called Callaghan Hartstonge Gayner.



Mary Murphy and her husband James Flynn Hartstonge. Taken in New Zealand.

Mary's sisters Margaret and Eliza and their brother Dr. Michael also followed their sister to New Zealand. There is now a very large number of descendants of the Murphy's of Egmont in New Zealand and Australia. One of the descendants John Hartstonge returned to visit his ancestral home in the 1960s during his tenure working in the New Zealand High Commission in London heading up their tourist division.

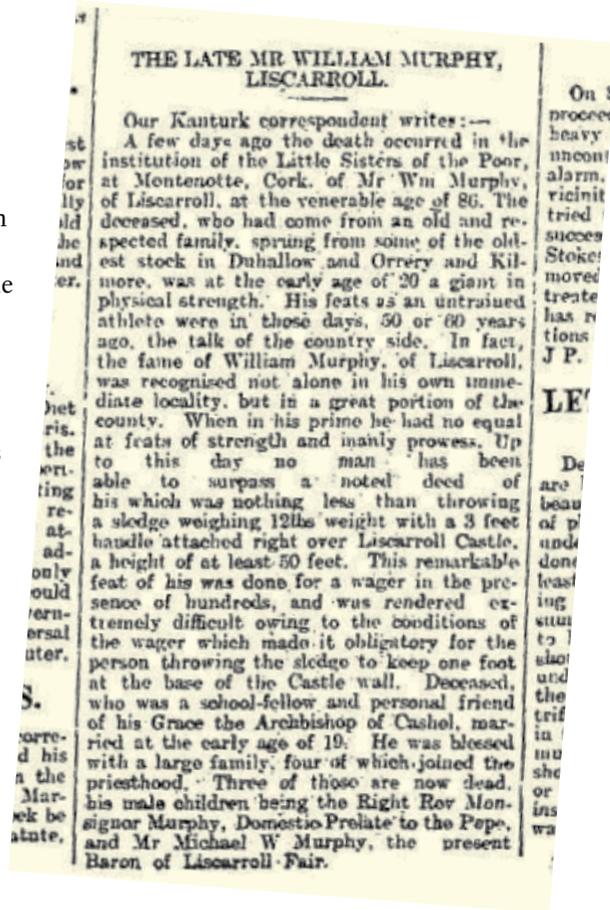
John also visited Kilmagoura, Newtownshandrum to visit the Hickey farm which the Hartstonge family farmed in earlier days. John then visited Liscarroll to view Sunfort and meet Daniel Hickey. In an amazing coincidence Jack Murphy's (1920-2000) wife Nora Hickey was born in 1923 on the same farm at Kilmagoura.

William 1831's great great grandnephew Dan Murphy (Ballinagrath) recalls another coincidence in the 1980s when he addressed a query about milk readers to Golden Vale and they referred him to an expert from New Zealand who worked for the company that made the equipment and just happened to be visiting Charleville. When Dan met the expert he discovered his name was Hartstonge and a descendant of Mary Murphy Hartstonge (1833-1928).

# Obituary

William Murphy's died on 12th February 1902 in a nursing home in Cork City operated by the Little Sisters of the Poor and his obituary appeared in the Cork Examiner a few days later. The nursing home still operates and is now called Care Choice Montenotte.

Three of William Murphy's ordained sons predeceased him – James died in 1877, Stephen died in 1883 and John died in 1892.



# Irish Folklore Commission Scéim na Scoile 1937

In 1937 the Pupils of St Mary's National School, Churchtown, commence recording parish folklore on behalf of the Irish Folklore Commission's *Scéim na Scoile*. This was a story written by Matthew Coghlan interviewing John Coghlan:

“William Murphy had in his old age the job of collecting the ‘Customs’ at Lisscarroll Fair. One farmer, seeing he was crippled, thought he would escape without paying. Murphy appeared satisfied and extended his hand. ‘Well, we’ll be friends anyhow’. The buyer foolishly enough took it. As soon as William caught his hand, he held it and said, ‘Now, unless you pay the Customs, you will not stir out of this’. Thus the cattle dealer had to pay to escape the clutches of William Murphy”.

# The Musical Murphys

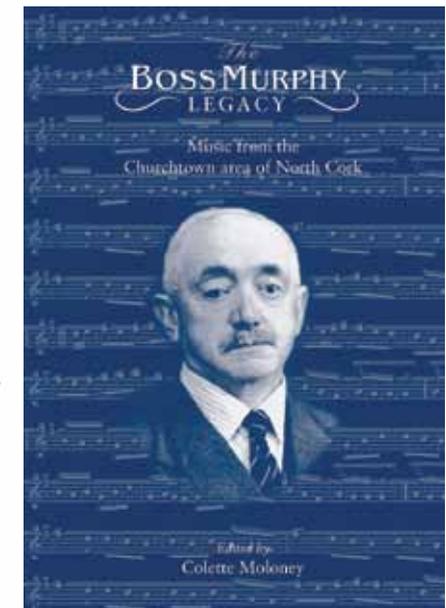
William 1819's nephew William 1831 and his son John (1875-1955) are the two ‘Boss’ Murphy musicians who played the fiddle and farmed at Leap, Churchtown. William 1831 made his own fiddle and his son John collected and wrote down the music for over 306 local tunes and there were published in 2003 as *The Boss Murphy Musical Legacy* (ISBN 0-952-4931-2-8) by Dr Colette Moloney which was dedicated to ‘the memory of John Murphy (1875-1955) and his sons, Bill (1916-1984) who loved music and would have heartily endorsed this publication, and Jack (1920-2000) who provided much of the biographical detail; to John’s daughters Peggy (1917-1971) and Birdie (1918-1991); to their nephew Bill O’Keeffe (1935-1986) who dearly loved his native village; and to all who continue to lift the human spirit in Churchtown with live music and entertainment’.



William Murphy (1831-1911)



John F Murphy (1875-1955)



# Murphy Family Tree

## *Our Family Tree is our legacy to future generations*

We are the webmasters on the online Murphy Family Tree which is located at [www.bossmurphy.myheritage.com](http://www.bossmurphy.myheritage.com). We have invested hundreds of hours into developing and populating the online resource. There are nearly 4,000 names catalogued and almost 1,000 family photographs and other memorabilia exhibited. The Family Tree includes all known marriage links and goes back to William the Conqueror.

The 'Boss Murphy' family tree project was inspired to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the death of William 'Boss' Murphy on 11th December 2011. A special 100th Anniversary event was held in the Booney House in Churchtown on 29th December 2011 and over 45 'Murphys' attended. Initially information for the Tree was gathered from various family members and *The Murphy Circles* family tree booklet created by John Mueller (1917-1994) in 1977. The late John Mueller did a brilliant job and in many ways is the 'father of our family tree'.

Thanks to online search engine resources in 2012 Sean O'Connell in New Zealand discovered his family link to the Murphy's of Egmont and we were able to add the Hartstonge-Murphy New Zealand family tree to ours. When Sean made contact it was like finding 'the missing link' in that almost all our family history folklore was about those who

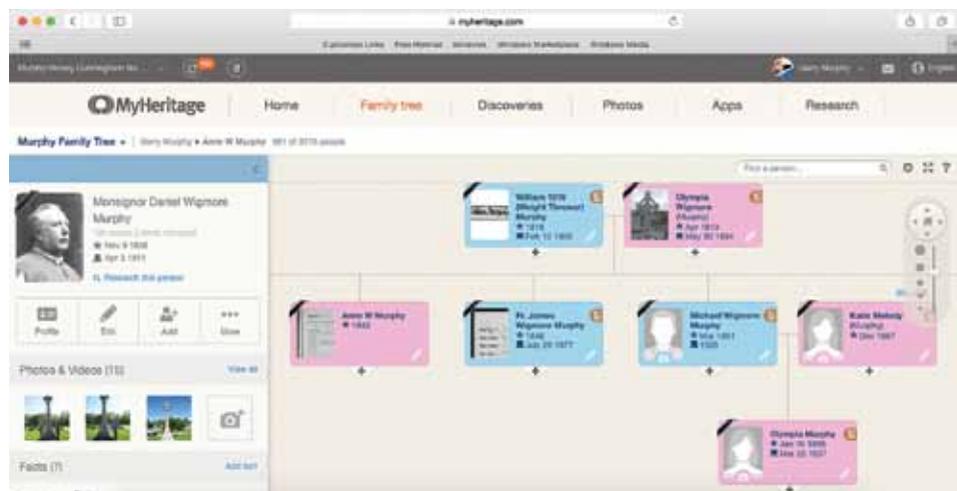
went west to the USA and yet there were almost as many second and third cousins in the antipodes in New Zealand and Australia.

Our family tree is a living organism that is constantly expanding. Only this month a new member – Jess Robb – joined from Washington DC and she has a treasure trove of photos and other stories about the Murphy Delay family in Castle Grove and Ryan, Iowa.

In the interest of privacy the web site is only visible to registered family members of which there are 179. It's easy to log on and become a member and create a legacy for future generations.

*Gerry and John Murphy*

*Joint Family Tree Webmasters*



## Conor Bouveron 1996-2015

Conor Bouveron (1996-2015), Centreville, Virginia, USA was a great great great grandnephew of William Murphy 1819 and also a very promising athlete. Unfortunately, Conor aged just 19, died suddenly of an unexplained heart condition on 24th November 2015. Conor's parents are Martin Bouveron and Martha Mueller, who is a daughter of Betty Murphy (1919-2009) whose father was Michael L Murphy (1882-1964). Michael emigrated from Egmont for Illinois in 1903 where he settled in Elmhurst.



*(Credit: www.maxpreps.com)*

Conor's incredible athletic talent was observed on the soccer pitch, lacrosse field and the football turf. Conor played soccer for two Southwestern Youth Association teams: the Wolfpack and Ajax Red. While attending Westfield High School, Conor played for the school's lacrosse and football teams for all four years. A varsity player in each sport for three years, Conor achieved the distinction of 1st Team All-Conference SSM in lacrosse and as the Westfield Football place kicker was named VA Preps 1st Team All-State (Virginia) and Washington Post 1st Team All-Met in 2014.

In his family, Conor will be remembered as a precious son and brother who embraced and created – and continued – family athletic traditions.

# Knocknagow?

*Was Knocknagow's 'Mat the Thrasher' modelled on William Murphy?*

*Knocknagow* sub-titled *The Homes of Tipperary*, by Charles J Kickham, is certainly the most successful book of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and has been published in over thirty editions. By far its most enduring and popular chapter is the one featuring the sledge-throwing champion Mat Donovan, known as 'Mat the Thrasher'. The suggestion that Kickham employed William Murphy's prodigious feat at Liscarroll on which to base his 'Thrasher' model is certainly worth exploring. Let us, therefore, examine some compelling similarities.

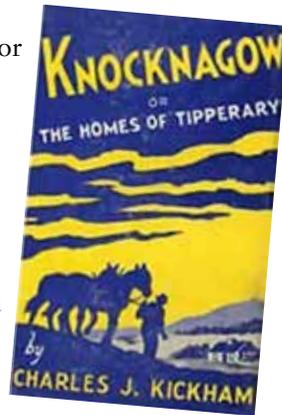
- the weapon of choice, a sledge, solely to decide a contest of strength, is exceptional;
- both contests were between a local man renowned for his strength and an Irishman in the British army;
- both locals to the chagrin of their supporters, lost their opening and subsequent throws before ultimate triumph;
- neither William Murphy nor 'The Thrasher' engaged in triumphalism following their success;
- the victories, barely twenty years post-Famine, and in the face of oppressive Police tactics in response to widespread Fenian activity, boosted a people's morale.

William Murphy's Liscarroll victory was reported widely in the press and Charles J Kickham, being a journalist, is likely to have observed a report that supplied his fertile mind with the genesis of an idea that was ideally suited to the timbre of his work and easily encompassed within the 650 pages and over 60 chapters of *Knocknagow*. Charles J Kickham also wrote the Tipperary anthem *Slievenamon*.

Denis J Hickey  
Churchtown Historical & Heritage Society



Charles J Kickham (1828-1882)  
(Credit: Wikipedia)



# Smile!

Unfortunately there is no picture of William 1819 or his wife Olympia Wigmore in this special booklet commemorating William's achievements despite the fact there is little doubt his image was captured in his later years. As Olympia died in 1884 her photo may not have been captured. Gerry Murphy remembers his father Jack (1920-2000) many years ago showing him what looked more like a negative than a black and white photograph of a man he said was The Weight Thrower. From memory Gerry recalls the negative showed a man in his 70s with a beard and a face not too unlike William 1831 which is not surprising as they were uncle and nephew. There is still the possibility that a negative/photograph of William 1819 may be recovered.



The 1840 Irish 6 Inch Ordnance Map showing Glenview Cottage and Egmont.

# An Athletic Tradition

Liscarroll has a proud athletics tradition going back several hundred years, for instance, in June 1869 we know William Murphy was

**M**R. WILLIAM MURPHY, of Liscarroll, Secretary and Treasurer of the Liscarroll Athletic Sports, begs to return thanks to Sir HENRY BROWNE, Bart., £3; WM. W. BROWNE, and D. F. LEAHY, Esqrs., each £1; as their Subscriptions to the above Sports.  
June 16th, 1869. (3479)

‘Secretary & Treasurer of Liscarroll Athletic Sports’. Liscarroll would also have participated in inter-parish scoubeen (early hurling) competitions as evidenced by the story on pages 6 and 7 in this souvenir programme.

From Cork Examiner 16th June 1869.

## Gaelic Athletic Association

At 3.00pm on Saturday 1st November 1884 a small group of people met in Miss Hayes’ Commercial Hotel in Thurles and founded the Gaelic Athletic Association for the ‘Preservation and Cultivation of National Pastimes’. By December 1884 the GAA had invited Archbishop Thomas Croke of Cashel to become the Patron of the GAA. Archbishop Croke, who was born a few miles from Liscarroll in Kilbrin Parish was according to William’s obituary in the Cork Examiner in February 1902 ‘a school-fellow and personal friend of His Grace the Archbishop of Cashel’. Croke Park in Dublin – with



Granard Gaels U12 football team which had the honour to represent Cork at half time of the National Football League Final Cork v Dublin in Croke Park on 26th April 2015. (Credit: Halla100 Opening Programme 3rd April 2016)

a capacity for 82,000 spectators – is now the fourth largest sports stadium in Europe and named in honour of a Kilbrin man.

In his acceptance letter\* on 18th December 1884 Archbishop Croke referred to sledge throwing when he wrote:

*“But, for my part, I should vastly prefer to behold, or think of, the youthful athletes whom I used to see in my early days at fair and pattern, bereft of shoes and coat, and thus prepared to play at hand-ball, to fly over any number of horses, to throw the ‘sledge’ or ‘winding-stone’, and to test each other’s mettle and activity by the trying ordeal of ‘three leaps’, or a ‘hop, step, and a jump’.”*

The word Athletic in the GAA’s name is there for a reason as in 1884 when the Gaelic Athletic Association was founded it was dedicated to athletics in general with weight throwing being a very important component in the early years of the Association.

## Local GAA Clubs

There are five local GAA clubs – Liscarroll GAA, Liscarroll Handball Club, Churchtown GAA, St Mary’s Ladies Football Club and, of course, Granard Gaels



William Murphy played Handball in Liscarroll; a sporting tradition that goes back to at least 1850. William’s sledge throwing achievement is honoured on the Club’s signage. (Credit: Doreen McElligott Egan)

Juvenile Club. Both Churchtown and Liscarroll GAA clubs were founded shortly after the GAA was founded and have long and proud traditions. In recent years Liscarroll and Churchtown GAA clubs have combined at juvenile level as Granard Gaels and at adult level playing hurling as Churchtown GAA and football as Liscarroll GAA. St Mary’s Ladies Gaelic Football currently field players from Liscarroll, Churchtown, Dromina, Kilbrin, Freemount, Buttevant and Ballyhea.

## Liscarroll Athletic Club

The modern Liscarroll Athletic Club was founded in 1990 and is a very successful organisation. In 1992 the Club hosted an International Cross Country event at which athletes from the Ukraine, Portugal, Belgium, France and Kenya as well as top Irish Athletes competed. This was the first time that Kenyan athletes competed in an International event in Ireland.

\* Source: Archbishop Croke’s letter appeared under the heading ‘The Gaelic Athletic Association’ in the *Freeman’s Journal*, 24 December 1884.

# Getting Technical...

## The DNA of the Murphy Family

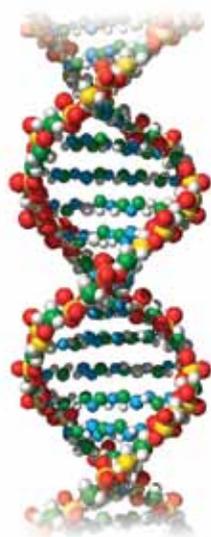
No stone has been left unturned! As part of the Murphy family genealogical research Gerry Murphy had his DNA tested in 2006 and again in 2015.

Only men have a Y-Chromosome, which they have inherited from their fathers and will pass on to their sons. A man's paternal ancestry can be traced by DNA on the Y-chromosome or yDNA for short. Therefore, every man in the Murphy family tree will share Gerry's Y chromosome genetic signature and so Gerry's findings are valid for all male Murphy family line members.

In June 2006 Oxford Ancestors compared Gerry's DNA with thousands of Y-chromosome signatures from Britain, Ireland, continental Europe and Scandinavia. Not surprising Gerry's yDNA showed the Murphy family are of Celtic origin which is prevalent in Ireland and Northern and Western Britain and it is likely he inherited this from one of the earliest inhabitants of the Isles perhaps even from one of the first settlers who arrived 9,000 years ago. This would indicate that the Murphy family has been in Ireland for thousands of years.

Oxford Ancestry also stated that: 'there are intriguing genetic connections between Gerry's yDNA and those found in the Iberian Peninsula, especially amongst the Basques. This hints at the existence of vigorous connections between Ireland and the Atlantic seaboard of France and Spain that archeologists have long suspected. This connection began with the pre-farming hunters and fishermen and continued with the peoples who built the megaliths which link these western sites from Spain to Scotland'. Oxford Ancestry also suggested that it is unlikely that the Murphy family is directly connected to the ancestors associated with Niall of the Nine Hostages.

In May 2015 Gerry updated his DNA with *23andme.com* which is an organisation offering scientific genealogical research services. *23andme.com* use the new term haplogroup to classify people's genetic lineage. Paternal haplogroups are families of Y chromosomes that all trace back to a single mutation at a specific place and time. By looking at



Credit: <http://twistedphysics.typepad.com>

## Y-chromosome Signature:

DT15 1F	DT15 1A8	DT15 1B0	DT15 1B1	DT15 1B2	DT15 1B3	DT15 1B4	DT15 1B6/4	DT15 4E3	DT15 4E6
15	12	25	11	13	13	10	16	12	12

The Murphy Family of Egmont male Y Chromosome signature which the founder of Oxford Ancestry, Bryan Sykes MA PhD DSc, classifies as being from the Clan of Óisín.

the geographic distribution of these related lineages, we learn how our ancient male ancestors migrated throughout the world. All members of a haplogroup trace their ancestry back to the single individual in which that defining mutation arose.

Gerry's paternal haplogroup was defined as R1b1b2a1a2f\* which is a subgroup of R1b1b2. His maternal (Hickey) haplogroup was defined as J2A1A1B and this will need to be the subject of another event!

### Success

It is quite a mind blowing reality that for you to be here today your ancestors – thousands of generations of human beings – had to successfully have children who went on to have more children and successfully passed on their genes.

Haplogroup R is a widespread and diverse branch of the Y-chromosome tree that is extremely common in Europe, where it spread after the end of the Ice Age about 12,000 years ago and its branches are clustered in various national populations. R1b1b2a1a2b is characteristic of the Basque, while R1b1b2a1a2f2 reaches its peak in Ireland and R1b1b2a1a1 is most

commonly found on the fringes of the North Sea.

### Not forgetting the Neanderthals...

Neanderthals were a group of humans who lived in Europe and Western Asia. They are the closest evolutionary relatives of modern humans, but they became extinct about 40,000 years ago. The first Neanderthals arrived in Europe about 200,000 years ago. Neanderthals or *homo neanderthalensis* and modern humans or *homo sapiens* lived along side each other for thousands of years. Genetic evidence suggest that they interbred and although Neanderthals disappeared about 40,000 years ago, traces of their DNA – between 1 percent and 4 percent – are found in all modern humans. *23andme* estimated that 2.4% of the Murphy DNA is Neanderthal which is somewhat less than the average European who is genetically on average 2.7% Neanderthal.

\* Bibliographical Reference: The Blood of the Isles. Bryan Sykes. Bantam Press. Published 2006. 400pp. ISBN 0-593056523.

# Kilbrin Graveyard

William Murphy's wife Olympia died on May 30th 1884 and is buried in Kilbrin graveyard which is more correctly called Castlecor Demesne graveyard. A Celtic cross headstone was erected in her memory by her son Monsignor Daniel. There is little doubt that her husband William 1819 was also buried in the same grave when he died on 12th February 1902. The Celtic cross headstone broke in two and fell into disrepair over the years but it was restored in preparation for the celebration of William's life on 25 June 2016. The epitaph on the headstone reads:

*Erected by Rev D.W. Murphy Of Dover N.H. USA To the memory of his mother Mrs William Murphy Of Liscarroll Who died May 1884 Aged 71 years May her soul rest in peace Amen*

Jack Murphy (1920-2000) often repeated a saying he heard from his father that 'there are acres of Murphys buried in Kilbrin'. Adjoining William and Olympia's resting place is the plot and headstones remembering the family of Daniel Murphy of Egmont. This is also the plot where the Murphy family of Leap have been buried.



The carefully restored headstone to Olympia Wigmore Murphy at Kilbrin.

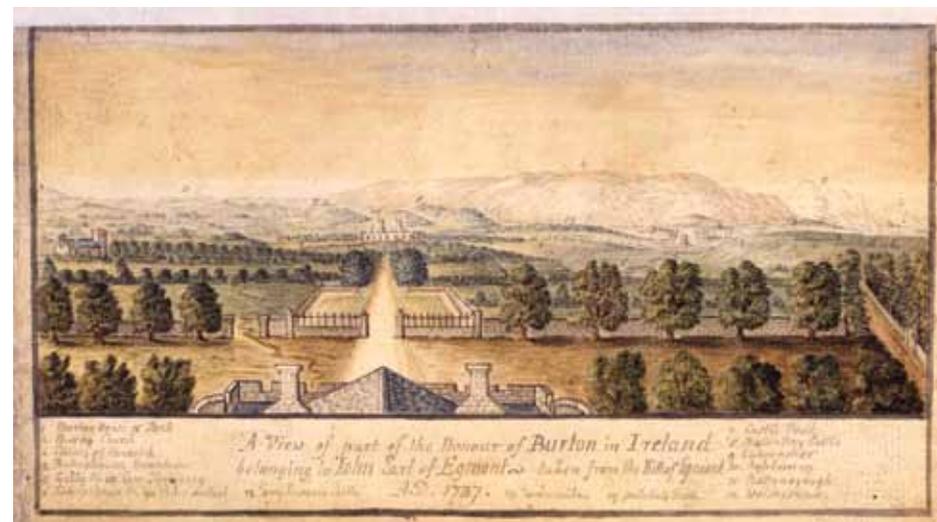
The bronze plaque which has been added to the rear of the restored headstone to Olympia Wigmore at Kilbrin.



The headstone to Olympia Wigmore Murphy before its restoration in May 2016. (Credit: Doreen McElligott Egan)



# Egmont Townland



The View from Egmont House as painted in 1737, Egmont House was one of the many homes of the Perceval family. (Credit: © British Museum, London)

**Egmont: Baile Mhic Cua, 'homestead (place) of the sons of Cua'. Area 615 acres, 0 roods and 39 perches.**

William Murphy was born in Egmont on 1819. Egmont is the largest of thirty townlands in the parish of Churchtown. The more ancient name of the townland was Ballymacow and it was re-named by the Perceval Family who took the title Earl of Egmont in 1733. The Perceval family claimed descent from the Egmond or Egmont family from the Dutch town of Egmond, in the province of Noord Holland.

Egmont House – originally Egmont Hall – is located west of Churchtown GAA's sports grounds and was at one time leased by the Percevals to their cousin Colonel William Taylor who developed Churchtown's cider making industry in the 17th Century. Mount Egmont in New Zealand was named after the second Earl of Egmont by James Cook. Likewise, Cap Egmont on Price Edward Island in Canada, is named after the family.

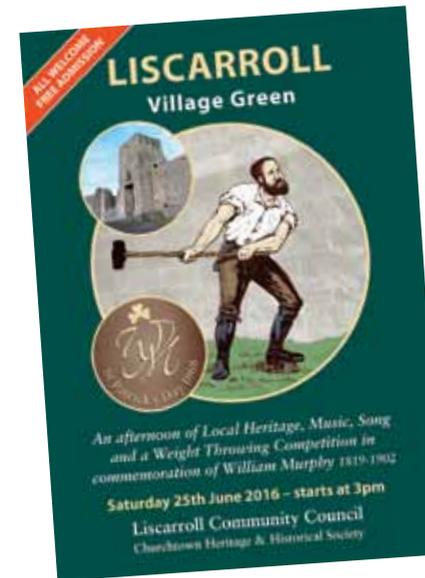
# A Short History of Liscarroll

Situated 9km northwest of Buttevant, approximately 51km to Cork City and 53km to Limerick City, Liscarroll was once considered to be the crossroads of Munster. A military road ran from Cork to Mallow and on to Liscarroll, it then branched off to Kerry through Lismire and on to Limerick through Newcastlewest. With the advent of the new railway line this road division was moved to Mallow. The area is a treasure trove to the archaeologist and historian.

Liscarroll nestles in a valley surrounded by hills and this valley was once part of an ancient lake, which now lies approximately 60ft underground. The name of the district reputedly signifies the residence of a local dignitary named Carroll. In 1091 the church was listed as Kyle Carroll, and if tradition's tale be true he was the founder. The Irish translation of Liscarroll is *Lios Uí Cearbhaill* which means Carroll's Fort.

Liscarroll is perhaps most famous for its huge 13th century castle, the third largest of its kind in Ireland and is only exceeded in area by Trim and Ballintubber. It was built as part of a line of fortified outposts

A Google Earth aerial view of Liscarroll in 2015.



between the Norman held 'Golden Vale' to the north and east, and the Irish held 'Bogs' to the south and west. In the 17th century the castle was the focal point for a number of conflicts and raids, most notably the Battle of Liscarroll in 1642. The castle ceased being a residence towards the end of the 17th century with the last owner/occupant Sir John Perceval taking up residence in Ballymacow (now Egmont) in neighbouring Churchtown.

*Source: Opening Programme, Teach na nÓige, 15th November 2013.*

## Liscarroll Castle

Liscarroll Castle is a 13th-century Hiberno-Norman fortress in County Cork, Ireland. It is an impressive ruined fortress. The Castle is a large rectangular structure about 240 feet by 120 feet in size with large rounded towers at each corner. The surrounding walls were about 30 feet tall, with the main entrance in the south wall guarded by a large square tower. There are reputedly some underground passages near the castle, but the entrances to these are now closed up.

Liscarroll Castle was built most likely by the De Barry family. In 1642, at the start of the Irish Confederate Wars, it was besieged by Irish army forces under the command of Lord Mountgarret. The castle occupants surrendered after a siege of 13 days but the following day the Earl of Inchiquin arrived with reinforcements and defeated the Irish army at the Battle of Liscarroll, which claimed the lives of 1,500 men. The Irish army again captured the Castle in 1646, with an army of 5,000 led by Lord Castlehaven. After the wars the Castle was granted to the Perceval family (Earls of Egmont). The Castle freehold is owned by the O'Brien family and since 1936 is under the guardianship of the Office of Public Works as a National Monument.



Credit: www.liscarroll.ie



Considerable repairs were carried out in 1936 under the direction of H J Leask, MRIA. In his report\* at the time he wrote:

“The wall encloses a quadrangular but not perfectly rectangular area measuring 204 feet from N. to S. and of an average breadth of 201 feet at the center. At the N. side it is some 6 feet wider while along the S. wall it measures 6 feet less than the average dimension. The curtain walls – which now stand to an average internal height of 25 feet – are between 5 feet and 5 feet 6 inches in thickness at the interior ground line but have strong batters below this level at the base, extending at 2 feet outwards from the rock foundation which is exposed in a number of places. Externally the average height of the walls from this rock surface is about 28 feet, but the quarried rock itself has faces from three feet to 8 feet high in several places giving the walls a greater apparent elevation.”

The Castle still towers over the village of Liscarroll and the surrounding countryside.



The Castle of Liscarroll in the County of Corke, in Ireland; belonging to the House of Perceval long defended against a Numerous Army of the Irish by that Family, during the great Rebellion. 1691.

Credit: www.liscarroll.ie

\* H J Leask's full report and illustrations are available at [www.liscarroll.ie](http://www.liscarroll.ie)

## Key Liscarroll Dates

**2013** Liscarroll Community Childcare facility, Teach na nÓige, officially opened by President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins. Árd an Chaisleáin officially opened.

**2010** The new ASD Unit at Liscarroll National School was officially opened by Mary Hanafin, TD and Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport.

**2006** St Joseph's National School underwent a major refurbishment and extension and was officially opened by Micheál Martin, Minister for Trade and Employment.

**2008** The children's playground in the village green was completed and opened to the public.

**1997** 'Living History' festival weekend brought thousands of visitors to Liscarroll. *Sealed Knot Society* from the UK returned to create an exhibition of life in medieval times.

**1996** Re-enactment of the Battle of Liscarroll took place with hundreds of volunteers from the *Sealed Knot Society* recreating the events of the great Battle of 1642. The village green adjacent to Liscarroll Castle was completed providing a picturesque picnic area for locals and visitors to enjoy.

**1994** Liscarroll GAA field was officially opened.

**1992** International Cross Country athletics event took place in Knockardbane with entrants from across Europe and Africa.

**1988** Handball alley rebuilt with new playing surface, dressing rooms and elevated viewing area. Fr Stephen O'Mahony laid first stone on 1st July 1987.

Source: *Opening Programme, Teach na nÓige, 15th November 2013.*

**1987** The Donkey Sanctuary UK links up with Donkey Sanctuary Liscarroll.

**1979** Liscarroll Community Centre was officially opened by Gene Fitzgerald, Minister for Labour.

**1971** St Joseph's National School officially opened its doors replacing the old National School.

**1954** The first Point to Point races organised by the revived Liscarroll Race Committee were on Monday the 26th April 1954.

**1934** Liscarroll won the Cork County Junior Hurling Championship.

**1932** Former President and Taoiseach, Eamon De Valera unveiled monument to Daniel O'Brien.

**1890** Liscarroll Co-Operative Dairy Society officially opened its creamery.

**1885** Liscarroll GAA club was formed.

**1882** The old National School, now the Community Centre, was built.

**1869** The foundation stone for St Joseph's Church Liscarroll was laid.

**1868** William Murphy's lofted a 12lb sledge over the wall of Liscarroll Castle.

**1850** Foundation stone of the first handball alley in the village was laid.

**1809** Earliest record of horse race meetings held in Liscarroll.

**1642** The Battle of Liscarroll was fought between Irish and British forces.

**1091** Year attributed to the founding of Liscarroll village.



President of Ireland Michael D. Higgins has very strong Liscarroll roots. His mother Alice Canty was born and reared in the village. President Higgins is a first cousin of local historian Dónal Ó Cáinte, who runs the shop in Liscarroll. President Higgins' mother Alice nee Canty passed away on November 2nd 1969. President Higgins is pictured here when he visited Liscarroll on 15th November 2013.

# Press Cuttings

## THE IRISH PRIESTHOOD IN AMERICA

WE subjoin a letter to Mr. William Murphy, Liscarroll, from the parishioners of Houlton, in the State of Maine, U.S., on the occasion of his son's (the Rev. Daniel Murphy) removal from that parish. There could be no higher compliment paid the Rev. Mr. Murphy than this congratulatory address being sent to his father, or no stronger proofs so manifestly evinced of the estimation in which he was held, whilst officiating amongst them for a period of three years. It must be doubly gratifying to his father just now, as another son of his left on Thursday by the City of Washington on a similar mission:—

TO WILLIAM MURPHY, ESQ., LISCARROLL.

DEAR SIR,—Owing to the removal of our good Father Murphy, by his Bishop, to another part of the diocese, where owing to his zeal and other qualifications, he is considered to be more needed for the benefit of religion, we, his faithful and obedient parishioners, consider it a duty we owe to him to state to you the good he has done for the faith and the great improvement that has taken place during his stay with us. The mission is a very large one, from east to west 75 miles long, north to south 80 miles, having two churches in it. The people are nearly all from poor old Ireland (Sanctum Saucorum;) and the fidelity of their forefathers to their own *Sogarth* could not be greater than the Catholics of this Mission have for the good Father, who is shortly to leave us. But our consolation is, that he has left behind him an impression with those who differ from us in religion, that there is something sacred in the Priesthood; and that none know the human heart better than the Irish Priest, for two reasons—First, Irish record. Secondly, the true allegiance to the only true Faith by the persecuted children of Saint Patrick, and their descendants as exiles in Columbia. And while we his flock feel so proud of our shepherd, what must be the feelings of his parents and relations in the good old land on reading this humble statement of our love and gratitude to him, for the spiritual and temporal favours he has conferred on us. It is now nearly three years since he came to us. We were then in a sad state, without a Priest. Apathy, indifference, disunion, intemperance, slander reigned among us. We were losing our position in society, but thanks to the Most High the scene has changed. There are about 1,200 Communicants in the mission; there were not twenty out of that number but performed their Easter duty. While we part with our Pastor in obedience to the order of his Bishop, we will pray for him, and our children and grandchildren will ever hold sacred the impressions he made on them—

"To hold the Faith  
Their Fathers held to God."

Therefore, we congratulate you on the honour you conferred on religion, and the dear old land famed for similar acts of the kind, in giving to the world a missionary so worthy of the vocation. Trusting that you, his mother, and all the family, will long enjoy the rewards you merit for such zeal.—We remain, dear Sir, your affectionate countrymen,

JAMES HENRY HACKETT.  
PATRICK BENSON,  
CORNELIUS MULLINEN, and  
THOMAS MILMORE.

Houlton, State of Maine, Arrostook Co.,  
June 13th, 1864.

## FATHER MURPHY AT HOME.

The Cork (Ireland) Examiner of Monday, Jan. 24th ult., contains the following account of the arrival of Rev. Father Murphy of Portland, in his native town of Liscarroll on Jan. 21st:

On last Friday evening the Rev. Father Murphy of Portland arrived in his native town after 17 years of missionary labors in the great Republic of the West. The good and patriotic people of the town, together with his numerous boyhood acquaintances, were not forgetful of the respect due to the reverend gentleman. The people headed by their band, after parading the streets, proceeded to the residence of his father, Mr. William Murphy, and there discoursed some choice national airs, the people cheering loudly for Father John. The reverend gentleman on coming forward, thanked the people for their reception. He referred to the growing independence and intelligence of the people. He spoke of the freedom his fellow-countrymen enjoyed in the great Western Republic, and how the great liberty and independence, which all enjoyed there, were spreading throughout Europe, and taught rulers that subjects were not slaves. The Land League agitation, he thought, was the best that ever the people took hold of. He praised the men who were prominent in this agitation, and referred in name to Archbishop Croke and Charles S. Parnell. He spoke of the sympathy which filled every heart over the waters for poor suffering Ireland, and concluded by telling them not to be craven or cowardly in spirit, but to be united, "keep within the pale of law and order, but at the same time offer all the passive resistance in your power. The cause, in which you are engaged, is a sacred one, and one that must moot the approbation of heaven."

Above: Portland Daily Press (Portland, Maine) Saturday, February 12, 1881 relating to Fr John's return visit to Liscarroll on Friday 21st January 1881 as originally reported in the Cork Examiner on 24th January 1881.

Left: Irish American Weekly relating to Fr Stephen departing Boston.

## A MAN OF MIGHT. (Cork Examiner.)

Has one of the many great physical feats of the late William Murphy (R. I. P.) Liscarroll, been utterly forgotten, or, in this boastful age, has no one been found to equal it? The feat was performed many long years ago in Liscarroll, when Colonel Gough had charge of the military in Butevant Barracks, and when nobody dare pass by without dutiful recognition, under pains and penalties of the severest kind. It consisted in throwing a sledge, 9 pounds weight, over the northern wall of the Castle, fully 60 feet high. A great deal of money was staked on the issue, and the military, under Colonel Gough, the terror of Munster, came to witness the performance. Thousands of people from the surrounding districts also assembled to see the athlete, and to cheer him on his triumph. Samsonlike, and arranged in fantastic costume, the great athlete took his stand at the goal appointed him, and after a tremendous cheer from the assembled multitude and a dexterous movement of body and sledge towards the Castle, he flung it with all the resolution of a giant and the dexterity of an athlete, right towards the Castle wall, fully 60 feet high, but, unfortunately, missed its triumphant passage by scarcely six inches. All admired the splendid effort of the man, and after renewed encouraging cheering, bade him try a second time. The applause of the multitude, the noises that were at stake, the consciousness of greater latent strength and courage, revived him tremendously for the second effort. The sledge was replaced in his hands and the shout, "Bravo, William, God bless you; remember Brian the brave" was raised. When it had subsided, he flung the sledge again, right over the Castle wall and far beyond it, into the adjoining courtyard, reddened, of yore, by the brave blood of its brave defenders. There are few, if any, in Liscarroll today, who remember the triumphant spectacle, but its memory ought not fade.

Ireland, Volumes 1-2 – 1916.

## CORK ATHLETES AND CORK HISTORY

(By Carbery.)

Among the athletes of the past whom one meets here and there in one's occasional wanderings through the hills and valleys of Munster there are some very fine characters. In the earlier portion of the coming season, at one of the meetings in the Duhallow country, I met Jerry Mahony, of Liscarroll, a fine type. Followers of Irish athletics during that extraordinarily brilliant period toward the close of the century will well remember the great sprinter, hurdler and jumper, who hails from near "the Walls." O'Mahony has a fine record behind him. He was Paddy Leahy's most dreaded opponent in the Charleville man's heyday, and was capable of covering over twenty-four feet on level ground in any day of his prime. A sojourn in the States hasn't changed the athlete in the least. He is the same calm, interesting personality; he takes a real live interest in healthy sport, yet, like many a good man, it is only a personal friend can recognize the handsome, clean-cut features, the square shoulders and well-set limbs of the fine old athlete where he mingles with the rank and file at some Duhallow sporting gathering. Jerry Mahony was at his best a magnificent athlete, and it is good to know that he is settled down and doing well at Kanturk, that interesting town of the borderland where the Allow and Dallow mingles before the joint waters meander down to meet the young Blackwater below Banteer.

Speaking of the old walls of Liscarroll reminds me that an athletic feat of the past has been given revived interest by a letter in the "Examiner" some short time ago. Liscarroll is an interesting place. The historic ivied walls are in themselves sufficient to attract the visitor's attention. One day—perhaps ten years ago—I was pushing my bike up the hill on the Churchtown road past "the walls" and dallied a moment at the top to look westwards where the evening sun was kissing the North Cork hills. The spot where William Murphy accomplished his great feat was at my feet. I knew the story well, but wondered

how much the matter had gripped the local mind, and whether it was yet spoken of or remembered.

I hailed a passing gorseon.

"What place is that?" I asked him, pointing to the ruins in the hollow beneath.

"That's the walls of Liscarroll," he said. The lad was barefoot and not more than nine years old. His manner of reply was brave, carrying a certain note of subtle askance in it as if he guessed what question of mine asked such a foolish question. I'm sure the gorseon thought everyone in the whole world knew the walls of Liscarroll.

"What were they built for?" was my next question. It was a vain one.

"Tell me who lived there?" I asked him.

"I doh know," he said, appearing as if he'd like to end this senseless conversation. He was never taught the history of the great structure nor the momentous fortunes of the O'Carroll Clan, who once peopled the place. I might have known this of course. Yet he had his fireside education, and here it sounded him once more.

"Did anything ever happen down there?" I asked. He needed further helping.

"Dig anyone ever throw anything over the walls?" I suggested. Ah! His face brightened at once.

"There did," he said, and looked at me as to discover how much I knew.

"What was it?" I ventured.

"A smith's sledge," he said. "William Murphy threw it."

His fireside lesson was well taught, for without further questioning he there and then stood up on the fence, pointed to the very place of the happening, and told me a little of the big man who accomplished the feat. It appears this William Murphy was a huge man of great strength, and, though I have never been able to discover the weight of the missile, the height of the wall suggests that it was an athlete of unusual powers who sent a sledge over and beyond, no matter how light the sledge be. In a casual and, perhaps, unreliable estimate, I should place the height of the wall at the spot at 70 feet. I have reason to know that the "Walls" may be the scene of more than one attempt to equal William Murphy's throw during the coming summer, and that that hint I leave the matter.

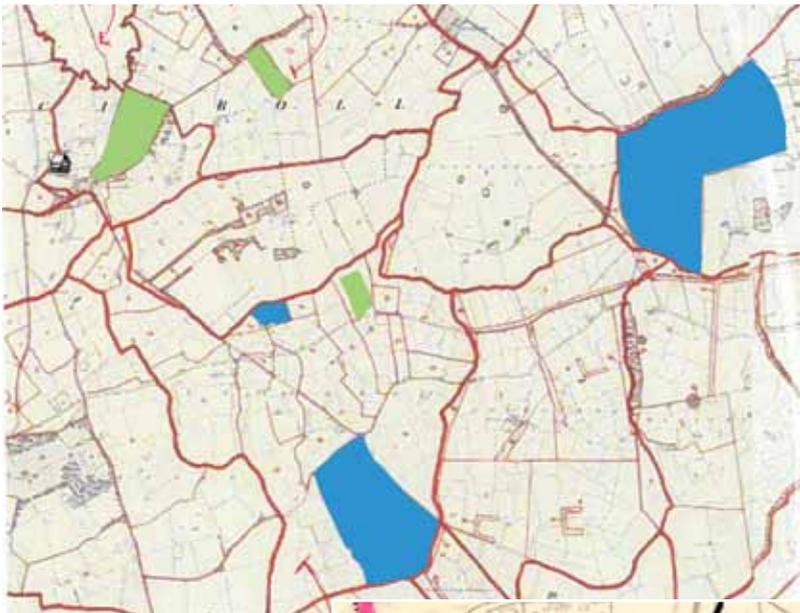
Irish American Advocate (New York) 3 March 1917

Patrick D Mehigan (1884-1965) was one of the leading Gaelic games' journalists from the 1920s until the 1940s. He wrote several histories of the Gaelic Athletic Association and was correspondent for the *Cork Examiner* under the pseudonym *Carbery*. (Source: Wikipedia)

Left: Saturday, 13 September 1879, Irish American Weekly, New York

# Griffith Valuation Maps

Griffith's Valuation was a boundary and land valuation survey of Ireland that was carried out between 1853 and 1865. County Cork was surveyed in 1854. Griffith's valuations identified land occupiers and their direct landlords. William Murphy 1819's leased farmlands which are etched in green and include the Fair Green and rights to the Baron of the Fair moniker These lands and rights were leased from Arthur Gethin Creagh of Carrahan, Quin, County Clare. William's father and brothers leased the lands etched in blue.



Stephen Wigmore, William's brother-in-law also leased land adjacent to Liscarroll from Arthur Gethin Creagh. At the time the Castle and surrounding land was leased by John Purcell of Burton Park. All these lands would have been acquired by William and Stephen under the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act 1885 ('Ashbourne Act').



# St. Joseph's Church

William Murphy would have seen St Joseph's Church built as the foundation stone was laid 1869 and would have attended Mass once the Church opened. No doubt some of his four sons who became priests would have celebrated Mass in St Joseph's. Of course, places of worship existed in Liscarroll for over 1,000 years.

In 1091 Liscarroll was described as Kyle Carroll or Cill Ui Cearruill. It was generally accepted that Carroll was a Chieftain or a Church dignitary residing at Hug Ard, the mound north of the castle, and that he gave his name to the district. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that a monastery existed on the grounds on the edge of the village in the townland of Coolbane where Liscarroll cemetery is located.



Very Rev William Twomey, Parish Priest from 1859 to 1872, decided that a new Church should be erected in Liscarroll. The Church was designed in Neo-Gothic style as promoted in Ireland at that time by Augustus Pugin. The Architect was J Thornton.

The foundation stone for the Church was laid in 1869 and is embedded in the north wall of the chancel. Excellent co-operation and voluntary help was available from the locals and stones were quarried from Stephen's Rock where The Donkey Sanctuary is now located. St Joseph's is built on the site of an earlier church.

The lancet openings to the church retain cast iron windows fitted in a timber frame. Several of these windows, to the sanctuary end of the church, have coloured glass to the side panes. There is a gallery at the rear of the church over the main entrance. There are mural stone lavabos, or hand basins, set into the walls, adjacent to each entrance to the church.

The church is a protected building and is one of the few Catholic churches in Ireland to retain its altar rails. The Parish Priest in 2016 is Fr Robin Morrissey and the Parish Priest Emeritus is Fr Stephen O'Mahony.

Source: Opening Programme, Teach na nÓige, 15th November 2013.

Booney House  
5 Kerry Lane  
Churchtown  
Mallow  
County Cork P51 TCC6



Churchtown Historical & Heritage Society would like to thank Churchtown Heritage Society would like to thank all who helped with the proceedings surrounding the unveiling of an Obelisk commemorating William Murphy (1819-1902) in the shadow of the great wall of Liscarroll Castle on the 25th June 2016.

Churchtown Heritage Society is especially grateful to Liscarroll Community Council and Doreen McElligott Egan for suggesting that William Murphy's athletic achievement on St Patrick's Day 1868 should be acknowledged with a plaque and for actually making it all happen. We are also most grateful to the speakers and musicians all named in the *Clár* most especially Dr Colette Moloney who wrote *The Boss Murphy Musical Legacy* and our singer Willie Relihan.

As always I am also most thankful to Denis Hickey and Noel Linehan my long standing colleagues in the Churchtown Heritage Society. I am also grateful for the input into the drafting of this booklet by my brother Pat Murphy and the proof reading skills of my wife Dorothy who joined the Murphy family tree on 6th July 1979.

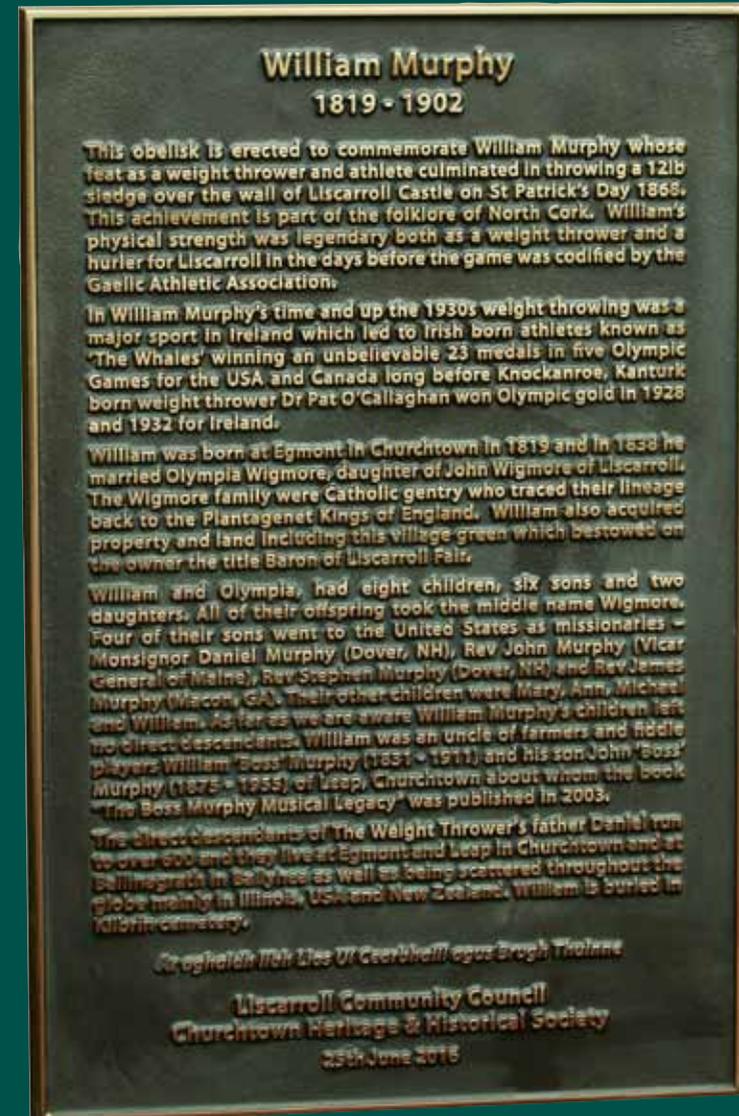
Finally, I would especially like to thank Eddie and Kathryn Murphy's son John who thankfully takes as great an interest in the Murphy family tree as myself even though he is living in Boston in the USA for the last 20 years.

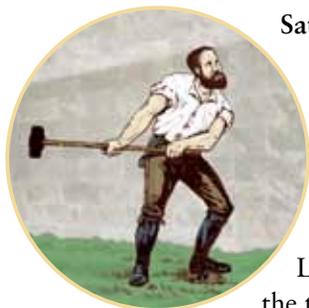
*Ar aghaidh libh Brugh Thuinne agus Lios Uí Cearbhaill.*

Gerry Murphy  
Churchtown Historical & Heritage Society

[www.churchtown.net](http://www.churchtown.net)

## A Photographic Record of the Official Opening on the William Murphy Obelisk at Liscarroll Castle on Saturday 25th June 2016





**Saturday 25th June 2016** was an historic day in Liscarroll when an obelisk was unveiled in front of a large attendance to commemorate local hero William Murphy (1819-1902) and his weight throwing feat on St Patrick's Day 1868 when he lofted a 12 pound sledge over the wall of Liscarroll Castle. The spectacular setting was the lovely village green in Liscarroll which sits in the shadow of Liscarroll Castle; the third largest Norman Castle in Ireland.

The weather was kind and the stage was set for the commemoration which started at 3.00pm. The event was organised by Liscarroll Community Council in association with Churchtown Historical & Heritage Society. Ger Healy, secretary of Liscarroll Community Council was the master of ceremonies for the day. The event was organised by LCC's PRO Doreen McElligott Egan.

Fergus Egan, chairman of Liscarroll Community Council welcomed everybody. A short biography of William Murphy was then presented by his great great great grandnephew John Murphy who came especially for the event from Boston in the USA. Denis J Hickey from the Churchtown Historical & Heritage Society then gave a short presentation on the similarities between William's achievement and the story of Matt the Thrasher in Charles J Kickham's book *Knocknagow*. Con O'Brien's poem about William was read by his great great great grandnephew and niece, Mark Smyth and Deirdre Murphy.

Noel Linehan read an excerpt from the Irish Folklore collection about William. Young Timmy Morrissey from Granard Gaels GAA Club read a story from the Ballyhea GAA History about William's exploits on the Scoubeen (early Hurling) fields. Local poet Philip Egan followed with a recital of Callaghan Hartstonge Gaynor's poem *The Walls of Liscarroll*. Charleville woman, Dr Colette Moloney presented a paper based on her book entitled *The Boss Murphy Musical Legacy* published in 2003. Great great great grandnephew Brian Murphy then read William's obituary

from the Cork Examiner in February 1902. Brian and his brother John are sons of Eddie Murphy from Egmont who played on the victorious Liscarroll Hurling team in 1959.

Niamh Murphy paid a tribute to William's great great great grand nephew Conor Bouveron (1996-2015), a very promising athlete who sadly died from an unexplained heart condition last year. Niamh and Deirdre Murphy are daughters of Gerry and Dorothy Murphy. Dorothy Murphy presented a bouquet of flowers to Doreen McElligott Egan to recognise all her work on the commemoration.

Gerry Murphy, presented a short paper entitled *Leaving a Legacy* in which he explained: "I like to think that the fact that William Murphy was born in Churchtown and made his name and lived in Liscarroll can be a unifying figure for both villages".

Willie Relihan from Churchtown sang a rousing version of *The Bould Thady Quill* before the Obelisk was unveiled by Gerry and John Murphy. Fergus Egan, chairman of Liscarroll Community Council then presented a souvenir 12lb sledge to Gerry Murphy. Colette Moloney concluded the formal commemoration playing *The Walls of Liscarroll* on her violin which was a wonderful finale under the wall of the Castle. A 12lb sledge throwing competition then took place and this was won by Tim Brosnan, Liscarroll. Finally, refreshments were served with the compliments of Liscarroll Community Council. A special 44 page souvenir booklet was produced for the event and copies are available free to download online at [www.liscarroll.ie](http://www.liscarroll.ie) and [www.churchtown.net/merchandise/](http://www.churchtown.net/merchandise/).

History was also made as the event was live streamed worldwide on the Facebook page of Churchtown & Liscarroll Reaching Out. Over 100 people watched the event live online and since then over 10,000 people have viewed the 68 minute video.

*Picture credits: with thanks to Christopher Bourke for almost all pictures in this souvenir photographic record of the event. Pictures also by Eamonn Collins, John Murphy and Gerry Murphy.*



Above: Denis J Hickey speaking to the attendance.  
Left: Ger Healy, Secretary, Liscarroll Community Council.



Fergus Egan presents a memorial sledge to Gerry Murphy.  
Below: the inscribed memorial sledge.



John Murphy lofts the 12lb sledge high in the air but alas not over the Castle Wall on this occasion.



Niamh and Deirdre Murphy reading the Conor Bouveron Tribute.



Dan Murphy and Denis J Hickey.



Noel Linehan.



Pat O'Brien and Ella Brosnan.



Gerry and Dorothy Murphy, Ger Healy, Master of Ceremonies and Doreen McElligot Egan, PRO and Fergus Egan, Chairman of Liscarroll Community Council.





Tim Brosnan's winning throw.



Right: Noel Smyth

Below: Ray Smyth and Ger Healy



Back Row: Owen and Caroline Smyth, Noel and Elizabeth Smyth.  
Front Row: Kate, Laura and Ronan Smyth.



Denis J Hickey.



Colette Moloney.



Willie Relihan signing *The Bould Thady Quill*.





Murphy Family Group.



Johnny Keane.

Niamh and Valerie Murphy.



Doreen McElligott Egan and Eibhlís Brosnan Raftery.

Gerry Murphy setting up the live streaming of the event on Facebook.



Brian Murphy.



Fergus Egan.



Mark Smyth.



Caroline Smyth McCarthy and her son Owen.



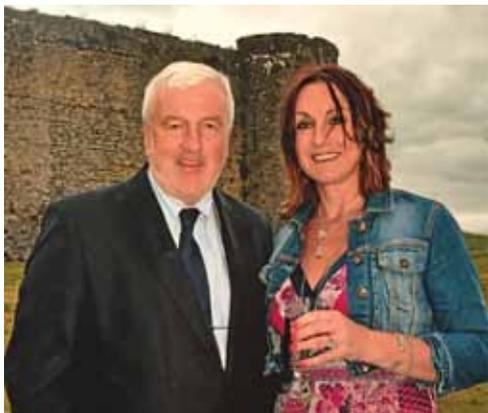
Ann, Karen and Ray Smyth.



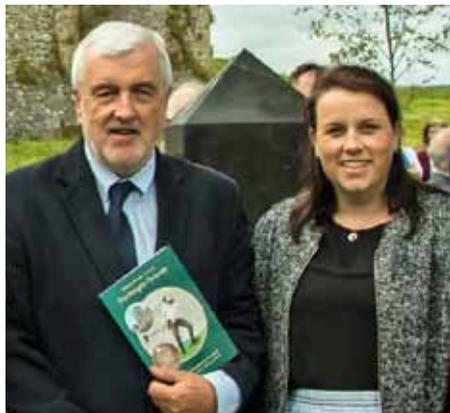
Timmy Morrissey.

Tony O'Flaherty, Chairman, Churchtown GAA.





Gerry Murphy and Doreen McElligott Egan.



Gerry and Deirdre Murphy.



John Murphy at The Old Walls in Liscarroll.

# The Walls of Liscarroll

by Callaghan Hartstonge Gayner, 1854

Those ruined Old Walls, those grand Old Walls in stately splendour stand,  
Their Name, historic ranks among the proudest in the land,  
For there it was that heroes fought, and fall in freedoms cause,  
In bygone days when Erin groaned 'neath cruel English laws.

When despots came with fire and sword to desecrate our land,  
The Celtic race to extirpate with dark and fiendish hand,  
How nobly our forefathers returned the onslaught then,  
With daring might and chivalry like the heroic gallant men.

Yes! Carroll fort defiantly o'er looks the plain with pride,  
Lifting its grand battlements above the green hillside,  
As towards devious Allow's banks it peers oe'r Killinanine,  
It seems an Irish Wracken fell beside an Irish Rhine.

How nobly then that bulwark rears giant like on the rock,  
That castle in centuries past withstood the battle shock,  
From Sunfort hill I see them still in glory and in pride,  
Those near-to-be forgotten walls where our forefathers died.

Those ruined old walls, those grand old walls bespeak a mournful tale,  
How nobly our forefathers died for dear old Ireland's sake,  
How in life's morn, with hearts of oak the invader to defy,  
They stood within those grand old walls prepared to do or die.

Oh manfully, Oh mournfully they fought and nobly died,  
But evermore their memory dear, shall in our hearts abide,  
Six hundred gallant warriors with ardour foiled the fray,  
But 'ere the close of night alas, in mangled corpses lay.

The men who formed the Penal code are in the dust today,  
Liscarroll's banner proudly floats awaiting Freedom's ray,  
Emblazoned on it still behold the wolf-hound watching fast,  
Beside that ruined castle, that relic of the past.

Beneath its folds assemble now, and fight with might and main,  
That grand old fight to make our land 'A nation once again',  
And falter not till alien rule in dark oblivion falls,  
We'll stand as freemen yet, beneath those old Liscarroll walls.



A view of Liscarroll Castle taken from The Donkey Sanctuary. (Credit: Susan Daly)

## St Patrick's Day 1868

Exactly 54,156 days passed since St Patrick's Day 1868 when William Murphy lofted a 12lb sledge over the wall of Liscarroll Castle and Saturday June 25th 2016 when Liscarroll Community Council unveiled an obelisk to mark his achievement. That's 148 years, 3 months, and 8 days and not far short of the 150th anniversary of the event which will be on 17th March 2018.

The year 1868 was a Leap Year and St Patrick's Day fell on a Tuesday. Easter Sunday 1868 fell on April 12th. In 1868 Andrew Jackson was the American President and William Gladstone was Prime Minister of Great Britain and Ireland. There was a General Election in 1868 and McCarthy Downing, Liberal and William Shaw, Independent Liberal were elected for Cork County constituency. There was a monster meeting in Liscarroll on 8th November 1868 organised by Stephen Wigmore which helped deliver North Cork to McCarthy Downing.

The Great Famine raged less than 20 years previously and no doubt was still fresh in the memory of the people. The Fenian Rising of 1867 was only a year earlier. Though the Rising of 1867 was unsuccessful, the Fenians proclaimed an Irish Republic, almost 50 years before the Proclamation of the Irish Republic at Easter 1916.

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With thanks to [www.churchtown.net](http://www.churchtown.net) and [www.liscarroll.ie](http://www.liscarroll.ie)

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