

## **Cork City and County Archives**

### **Descriptive List**

### **Identity Statement Area**

<b>Reference Code:</b>	IE CCCA/U600
<b>Title:</b>	Sick Poor Society (North Parish)
<b>Dates:</b>	1820 – 2000
<b>Level of description:</b>	Fonds / Item
<b>Extent:</b>	7 boxes (48 items)

### **Context**

#### ***Creator***

Sick Poor Society (North Parish), Cork city, (1822-2000)

#### ***Archival History***

The collection was donated to Cork City and County Archives in July 2000 by Dan Cronin, President, and James McIntosh, Hon. Secretary, Sick Poor Society (North Parish).

#### ***Administrative History***

Charitable Catholic lay-religious organisation dedicated to assisting those in poverty who were also living with illness. The Society developed into an important organisation in the North/Cathedral Parish and Shandon area of Cork city and in other parts of the city. Founded by Bartolemew Murphy ('Batt' Murphy), tradesman (b.1789 – d. 4 August 1872). Initially known as the 'Friendly Brothers', an informal group of volunteers later became the Sick Poor Society in 1822. The first patron was Dr. Murphy, Bishop of Cork, and the Society was always closely associated with the Church through the North/ Cathedral Parish. The average membership from 1822 – 1920 was about 35-40 people.

The Society was self financing, concerned with the spiritual and the temporal guidance of members and of those assisted by the members. The principle activity of the Society was in assisting the sick poor materially, thus providing a vital social function during times when State involvement in social welfare was limited or non-existent. Social welfare was often left up to individuals or local charities/groups, and there were high rates of serious illness in the city in the 19th century and in the earlier part of the 20th century, including outbreaks of Cholera in 1832, smallpox in 1872, and influenza in 1918-19. Added to this were day to day hardships of life such as poor diet and housing, and problems caused by alcohol. In 1936, almost £6,000 was distributed to applicants in Cork city and suburbs.

The Society was not only concerned with christian charity, it was also an important social outlet and some of the early minutes of meetings which survive convey to us the character and concerns of members, the closely knit and religious character of the Society mirroring that of the local community.

In 1853, the Sick Poor Society established in St.Finbarr's Parish and in 1924 the Society established in St.Patrick's Parish. John Francis Maguire MP was president of the Society in 1872.

The Society's North Parish group was dissolved in 2000.

## **Content and Structure**

### ***Scope and Content***

The earliest years of the Society are not well documented, apart from a list of members from the 1820s onwards in the first minute book (U600/1), but from the 1860s, the records are quite extensive. Minute books, financial statements, Christmas collection books, personal payments to Sick Poor, members medical scheme book, members weekly collections books, Rules of Society, newsclippings and notes on the history of the Society, certificates of plenary indulgence, accounts and balance sheets, newspaper cuttings, photographs of members, poster and pamphlets. Some of the records also cover St. Patrick's parish. Of interest to the study of religious and charitable organisations in the 19th and 20th centuries and the social history of Cork. The payments registers, containing extensive lists of names and addresses, may also be of particular interest to genealogical researchers.

### ***System of Arrangement***

- A: Minute Books
- B: Financial Statements Books (Receipts and Payments)
- C: Christmas Collections Books
- D: Personal Payments Books to Sick Poor
- E: Members Medical Scheme Record Book
- F: Weekly Collections Record Books
- G: Rule Books
- H: Photographs and Posters
- I: Other Material

## **Allied Materials**

*CCCA:*  
U140, Sick Poor Society, statement 1846

## **Conditions of Access and Use**

U600/

Access: Open by appointment to those holding a current readers ticket. All Personal Payments Books (item nos. 13 to 18 inclusive) are subject to a 100 year closure period.

Language: English

Finding Aid: Descriptive List

## Archivists Note

Brian McGee,  
Archivist,  
Cork City & County Archives  
March 2010

## Contents

A: Minute Books, 1828-2000 (5 items) .....	3
B: Financial Statements Books (receipts and Payments), 1876 - 2000 (5 items).....	4
C: Christmas Collections Books, 1884-1982 (2 items).....	4
D: Personal Payments to Sick Poor Books, 1864 - 2000 (6 items).....	5
E: Members Medical Scheme Record Book, 1936-1946 (1 item) .....	5
F: Weekly Collections Record Books, 1877-1911, 1991- 2000 (3 items) .....	5
G: Rule Books, c.1950's (3 items) .....	5
H: Photographs and Posters, 1880-1970 (4 items).....	5
I: Other Material 1896-2000 (18 Items).....	6

## List of Items

### **A: Minute Books, 1828-2000 (5 items)**

Minutes of meetings of the Society's Council.

- 1 (Jan 1828) Jul 1839 - Oct 1861  
Including index of members (1820's-1861).  
Mainly concerns application of disciplinary  
rules to members, and election of officers.
2. Jan 1862 – Apr 1877  
  
1878 – 1923 (Missing)
3. Oct 1923 – Aug 1951
4. 1951 - 1975
5. 1976 – 2000 (Closed until 2030)

### **B: Financial Statements Books (Receipts and Payments), 1876 - 2000 (5 items)**

6. Sep 1876 – Dec 1952
7. Apr 1909 – 1939 (Dec 1952)
8. 1912 – Sep 1936
9. Jan 1953 – May 2000
10. Jan 1953 – May 2000

### **C: Christmas Collections Books, 1884-1982 (2 items)**

Cathedral Parish (and St Patrick's Parish up to 1929) showing money collected at Christmas time at Church gate collections, etc.

11. 1884 – 1907
12. 1929 – 1982

**D: Personal Payments to Sick Poor Books, 1864 - 2000 (6 items)**

Cathedral Parish (and St Patrick's Parish up to ca. 2000), showing persons receiving aid, address, amounts etc. Note: **Closed for research except for the first 2 volumes.**

13. 1864 – 1897
14. 1895 – 1906
15. 1921 – 1941 (*Closed until 2042*)
16. 1948 – 1955 (*Closed until 2056*)
17. 1955 – 1972 (*Closed until 2073*)
18. 1972 – 2000 (*Closed until 2101*)

**E: Members Medical Scheme Record Book, 1936-1946 (1 item)**

19. 1936-1946

**F: Weekly Collections Record Books, 1877-1911, 1991- 2000 (3 items)**

20. 1877 – 1911
21. 1991 – 1997
22. 1997 – 2000

**G: Rule Books, c.1950's (3 items)**

- |    |   |                     |
|----|---|---------------------|
| 23 | Members rule book for the Cork Sick Poor Society Cathedral Parish | n.d. [?1920s-1950s] |
| 24 | Rule book for the Cork Sick Poor Society (Bound)                  | c.1950              |
| 25 | As item 24.   | ca1950              |

**H: Photographs and Posters, 1880-1970 (4 items)**

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|-----|---|--------|
| 27. | Photograph showing members of the Cork Sick Poor Society at founder Bart. Murphys Graveside | [1880] |
|-----|---|--------|

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- |     |   |           |  |
|-----|---|-----------|--|
| 28. | Large photograph showing members of the Cork Sick Poor Society at North Cathedral for the Centenary, 1820-1920 (with names) | 1920      |  |
| 29. | Photograph showing members of the Cork Sick Poor Society at North Cathedral, Bicentenary                                    | 1970      |  |
| 30  | Poster from the Cork Sick Poor Society "YOU can HELP by becoming a member or a subscriber Contact Your Local Priest".       | ca.1950's |  |

**I: Other Material 1896-2000 (18 Items)**

- |    |  |                        |           |
|----|--|------------------------|-----------|
| 31 | Members Visitation Sheets, for recording individual cases, Cork Sick Poor Society. (Blank)   | ca.?1950's             | 1 item    |
| 32 | File, Historical notes on founder of Cork Sick Poor Society, Bartolemew Murphy (Batt Murphy) Includes birth certificate for Murphy and copy of part of Griffith's Primary Valuation for Parish of St Mary's Shandon, Cork. | 1950-1994              | 11 items  |
| 33 | ' <i>Dublin Gazette</i> ' newsletter with notes of bequests to Sick Poor Society.  | 24 Jan 1896            | 12pp      |
| 34 | Certificates of Dedication to Sick Poor Society with Plenary Indulgence. Blank.  | 24 Jan 1896            | 2 items   |
| 35 | Printed pamphlets of Sick Poor Society including notice of dissolution [October] 1999  | ca1950s-1999           | 4 items   |
| 36 | Printed and TS. quarterly account/balance sheets of Reciepts and Payments of Sick Poor Society North Parish.<br>(Years: 1950, 55, 56, 64, 65, 77, 78, 1981-1989, 1990-1999)  | 1950-1999              | 105 items |
| 37 | Fortnightly balance sheets of Reciepts and Payments of Sick Poor Society North Parish.   | Apr 1999 -<br>May 1999 | 4 items   |
| 38 | Stocks and loan receipts and certificates, Sick Poor Society North Parish.   | Nov 1954<br>– Sep 1972 | 6 Items   |

- 39 Letter and proposal form, Shield Insurance Company, South Mall, to Hon. Sec Sick Poor Society North Parish, regarding Collective Personal Accident Insurance 29 Jan 1953 2pp
- 40 File, Newspaper Cuttings, relating to the Society. Includes report of Bishop Cohalan's Address to the Sick Poor Society's AGM (nd ?1920s-30s); Detailed Evening Echo article marking 150th Anniversary of the Society (2 Oct 1970). Article by Tadhg Lehan, Evening Echo, as above, c.1980s. Photocopies of above newscuttings. 1920s-1980s 4 items
- 41 Notice to member J'O Donoghue from SPS North and St Parick's Parishes vice president D. O'Sullivan regarding weekly collections. 16 May 1918 1pp
- 42 File containing 1. Grant of Plenary Indulgence Numbered N82578. Includes Grant by Pope Pius X for plenary and partial indulgences to the Sick Poor Society attached to the Cathedral. Embossed seal of Vatican [Secretariat]. Signed by Aloisius Veccia Secrius for the attention of Fr. O'Callaghan OP, Cork (2pp). 2. Transcript of 1. 16 May 1918 1pp
- 43 Unsigned copy letter form Hon Sec SPS N. Parish to Hon Sec SPS St. Patrick's & South Parish expressing grave concern at loss of funds due to delay in payment of National Health Insurance benefits to [aid] 'cases on the books'. nd 1pp
- 44 Cathedral Newsletter, including publicity for Sick Poor Society Sept 1985 4pp
- 45 Terms of agreement between [Doctors attending Sick Poor] and Sick Poor Society North Parish, regarding [supply of medicines to cases]. (Fragment) Sept 1885 1pp
- 46 Memorial Card for Bishop Lucey of Cork R.I.P. 24 Sept 1982 1 item

- 47 Letter from Michael Murphy, Bishop of Cork and Ross, Diocesan Office, Good Sheperd Convent, Sunday's Well, Cork to 'Mr. McIntosh' (James McIntosh Hon. Sec.of Society, accepting invitation to become Patron of the Sick Poor Society. 10 Feb 1981 1pp
- 48 Receipt from Denis McCarthy , monumental sculptor, White Street, to Sick Poor Society Cathedral Parish for attention to grave of [founder Bartolemew Murphy] in St. Joseph' s Cemetary, Cork. 13 Nov 1951 1pp

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