Billie Carroll

by Michael O'Dwyer

Billie Carroll was born on 1 February 1873 at Lisvernane, County Tipperary. He was the fifth son of John Carroll, a schoolmaster, and Bridget Carroll (née McGrath). His parents got married in the parish of Galbally and Aherlow on 21 April 1858. Billie was the seventh of nine children in the family. His elder brother, Mickie, was twice runner-up in the mile at the Irish athletics championships in 1885 and 1887, and another brother, Tim, won seven national 3 mile walking titles, winning his first title in 1888. At the GAA's national athletics championships held on 26 September 1897 in Tipperary town, taking first place in the 880 yd was Dave Christopher (Waterford), second was Gerald Irvine (Dublin), and third was Billie Carroll (Aherlow). In the junior national championship of the Cross-Country Association of Ireland held at Elm Park, Merrion, Dublin, on 7 February 1903 Billie was a scoring member for the Galtymore Harriers team which finished second to Clonliffe Harriers. The six scorers for Galtymore Harriers were Mick Kirby (Kilross), Pake O'Brien (Donohill), Watt Myers (Solohead), Jack Howard (Dundrum), Billie Carroll (Aherlow) and Ned Mansfield (Mullinahone). The last-named athlete was at the time principal of Cullen National School, County Tipperary, and at the age of thirty-three was elected president of the Irish National Teachers Organisation in 1910. Billie Carroll died on 12 May 1955 at his residence, Lisvernane, aged eighty-two, and is interred in Clonbeg cemetery, Aherlow.