

Fitzgerald roots

When the family tree was drawn up in the 1960s the earliest known members of the Fitzgerald family were born around the 1830s. These were Michael Fitzgerald and his wife Catherine (nee Carty). They were the grandparents of my grandmother, Marian (Mary Anne) Wurr (1901-1995). NB. From now on I shall refer to this Michael Fitzgerald as Michael Fitzgerald (Snr.). Grandma Marian knew them as living and working at the Post Office at Bealnamulla in Co. Roscommon in the townland of Clonakilla. In fact in Marian's recollections which were recorded by her niece, Bridget Jackson, she states that her Grandmother came from Clonakilty, Co. Cork. This was an easy confusion with Clonakilla.

Michael (Snr.) and Catherine were alive for the 1901 and 1911 census, Michael gives his county of birth as "Queens" county, modern day Laois. Catherine gives hers as Westmeath.

In the record of their marriage on 27/11/1865 the fathers' names are given. So this pushes our knowledge back a further generation. Michael Snr.'s father was James - Farmer. Catherine's was Michael Carty – Bootmaker. The sponsors were a Christopher and Anne Berry. No address is given for either spouse.

The Carty's of Westmeath

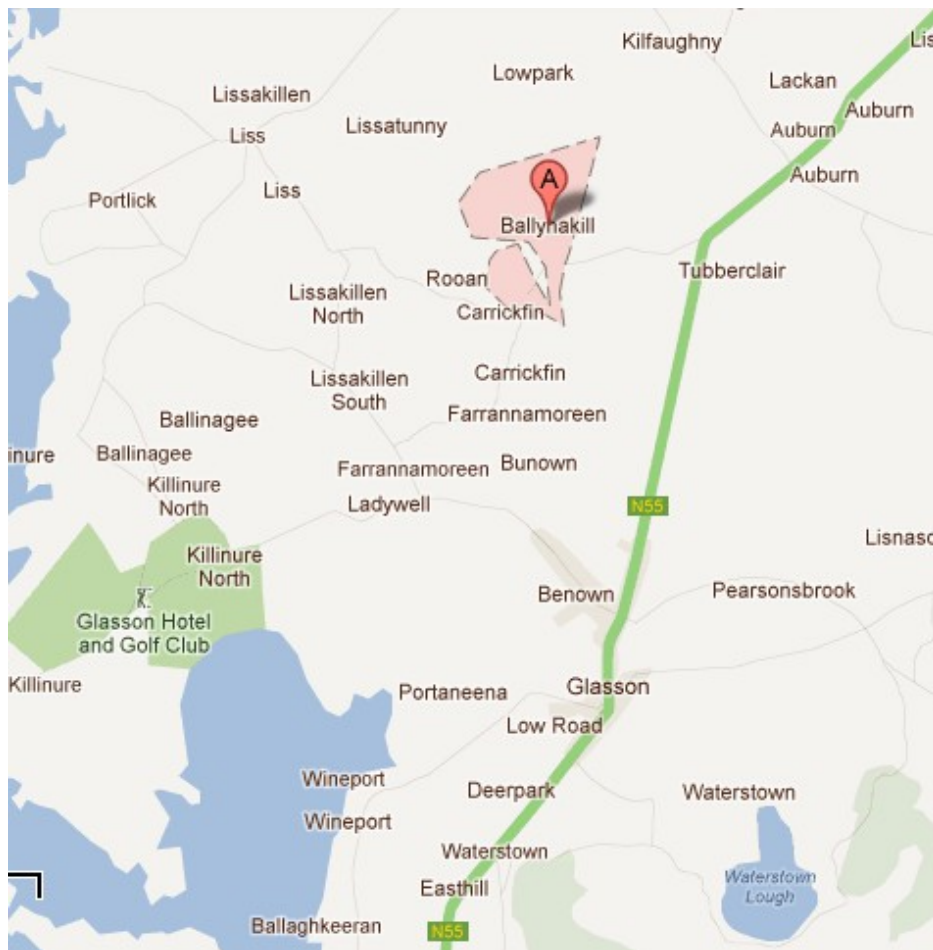
Catherine was born as far as I can tell in Tubbercaire near Glasson, Westmeath on 21/9/1832. Her Father was Michael Carty and her mother was Mary Igo (or Igoe – spelling unsure). She had three sisters, Bridget, Rose and Mary. If you recall her father's occupation was given as Bootmaker in 1865, I could find no record of a Bootmaker called Michael Carty but there was a farmer of that name near Tubberclaire. The record is from the Tithe Applotments 1832. It records a Michael Carty farming in Carrickfin, Kilkenny West, Westmeath.

In 1856 and 1857 there are other records of a Michael Carty in Carrickfin in *The Landed Estates Court Records*. In 1857 A Michael Carty is shown farming with his brothers Patrick & Bernard – representatives for their widowed mother (no name given). They are farming 19 acres, tenants in common. As with the Tithe Applotments the address is Carrickfin. That same year and the previous year (1856) one Michael Carty and a Thomas Brien were farming nearby. Further evidence that this might be the correct address is given by the *Griffith's Valuation (1854)* entry for Carrickfin. Its lists one Michael Carty farming there with Thomas Brien, just as in the court record. Also for Michael Carty and Bernard Carty in the adjoining property. The next door neighbour is one Christopher Berry. Just the same name as in Catherine's Baptismal Record. So I feel sure this is the correct Michael Carty and that for some reason he left the land some time after



Catherine (Carty) and Michael Snr. with Kathleen Begley circa 1896

1857 and before 1865 to train as a Bootmaker. That he would learn a trade such as Boot making during his married life seems unlikely but perhaps he did. Glasson will return to our story later. On the following map I have highlighted the townland of Carrickfin, Tubberclaire is just to the East and Glasson just to the south.



Glasson, Westmeath (Just north of Athlone)

In the 1901 census there were 148 Cartys in Westmeath but only one in Glasson. There are stories of siblings of Catherine's in particular a brother Patrick (Patsy) who went to America and made pots of money. Is this the Patrick listed in Carrickfin? I have a note in my father's original of the family tree that Patsy sent \$100 to Catherine's second daughter, his niece Delia (Bridget Honoria Fitzgerald).

