

Aughrim



Derrybrien RIC station

When Michael (Jnr.) married Marianne Gately he was in barracks in Derrybrien which is right in the south of County Galway and some 30 miles away, Marianne was living in Ballinasloe.



Marianne trained as a teacher at Our Lady of Mercy Training College, Carysfort Park, Blackrock, Dublin. She trained, according to the certificate for one year from July 1891 to July 1892. Then served a probationary at a *Public Elementary School* she received the following Teaching Diploma in July 1898.

100 16 4 98



NATIONAL EDUCATION IRELAND

GETTING COLLEGE OF OUR LAW OF GREET

DIPLOMA

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
Miss Marianne Sately

HAVING BEEN IN RESIDENCE AS A TEACHER 5 YEARS IN
THE TEACHING COLLEGE OF OUR LAW OF GREET FOR A PERIOD OF 5 YEARS
FROM JULY 1897
AND HAVING FULFILLED THE PREScribed CONDITIONS
INCLUDING THAT OF SATISFACTORY PRODUCTION AS TEACHER
IN A PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, IS AWARDED THIS
TEACHING DIPLOMA OF THE SECOND GRADE
BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSIONER OF NATIONAL EDUCATION IRELAND

Dated 30th July 1898

Quite how they met is not known but there might have been some arranged contact between them for them to have met at all as he was working so far from her home. Perhaps they met in church in Ballinasloe when he came back to see his parents in Bealnamulla.

After marriage I think they settled in Aughrim; an RIC constable was not allowed to serve in his county of birth (Westmeath), nor in that of his wife (Roscommon) and Aughrim is in Co. Galway. Aughrim is few miles south west from Ballinasloe and on the road to Loughrea. Certainly this is where we find them on the night of the 1901 census. The return shows the following present in the house: Note that Gerald, the eldest's, county of birth is given as Galway.

Mary A.	Fitzgerald	Wife	Roman Catholic	Read & write	38	3	Teacher (National Board)	Married	Co. Roscommon
Gerald M.	Fitzgerald	Son	Roman Catholic	Cannot read	2	4	-	-	Co. Galway
Kathleen R.	Fitzgerald	Daughter	Roman Catholic	Cannot read	1	3	-	-	Co. Galway
Delia	Whyte	Servant	Roman Catholic	Read & write	20	3	General servant (Unskilled)	Not married	Co. Galway

Mary Anne, Teacher with her first two children. Gerald & Kathleen. There is also a domestic servant, Delia Whyte and the return is signed by Michael (Jnr.).

Michael Fitzgerald

He was in the RIC barrack a few houses away that night but was present to sign the return. The barrack is no longer standing and I can find no photograph of it. But the photograph below taken in the early 20th century in Aughrim shows the correct end of town and the gentleman in the middle appears to be a policeman. Perhaps the building on the right with the black front is the police station?



Aughrim Police Station ?

Interesting that Michael Jnr. signs the return with his full name but in the return for the barrack he is listed as M F with no occupation listed. Most of the RIC seem to have used initials for the census. (NB Initials are also used by those in hospital and lunatic asylums).

The address given is 25.2 in Clonamerigaun portion of Aughrim. The “.2” because they only lived

in half of the house. Aughrim, Like a lot of Irish towns, lay on the margin of a few townlands. Clonamerigaun is the NW corner of the town. No 25 lies between the Church and Methodist Chapel and the Orphanage. Therefore I think they lived right on the junction in the centre of the village.



Marian Wurr outside the house where she was born.

Marian was born later in 1901. She was baptised Mary Anne though as the priest refused to believe Marian was a suitable Christian name. A story she tells is of being taken to see her grandparents in Dysart when she was very young and was wrapped in a shawl and carried in her mother's arms on horseback. When they were on the road somewhere they came upon a sow with her litter of banabhs (piglets in English). As they approached the sow she grunted and the horse shied, Marian was thrown from Marianne's arms and the sow made off with her. Uncle John Gately rescued his niece from providing the Sow with lunch.



Fitzgerald House, The School and corner of the cemetery Aughrim

By the end of 1901 Fitzgeralds had moved to the house they would live in until 1918. This was a house built for the village schoolteacher. In the 1911 census they are shown living there.

On the night of the 1911 census the return looks a little fuller:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.
1	Mary Anne	Fitzgerald	Wife	Roman Catholic	Read & Write		41	Normal School Teacher	Married	14	7	7	66	Irish & English
2	Gerard M.	Fitzgerald	Son	Roman Catholic	Read & Write	12		Scholar	Single				66	Irish & English
3	Kathleen B.	Fitzgerald	Daughter	Roman Catholic	Read & Write	21	3	11	20				20	English
4	Marian B.	Fitzgerald	Daughter	Roman Catholic	Read & Write		9		20				20	Irish
5	Bridget Ann	Fitzgerald	Daughter	Roman Catholic	Read & Write		7		20				20	
6	John Peter	Fitzgerald	Son	Roman Catholic	Read & Write	5	3		20				20	
7	Michael C.	Fitzgerald	Son	Roman Catholic	Can't Read	4	2		20				20	
8	Eveline Anna	Fitzgerald	Daughter	Roman Catholic	Cannot Read		1						20	
9														

Now we have had the births of Marian, Bridget, John, Michael and Eveline. The family was now complete.

As I said they have moved to the house by the school in the lane at the back of the high street. Well the family are there, Mary Anne has had to sign the return this time as Michael (Jnr.) is not in Aughrim. As can be seen she has a very beautiful hand, much better than her husbands in 1901 (see above).

Mary Anne Fitzgerald Signature of Head of Family.

Michael was 20 miles away in Kilreekill on the road to Loughrea. Again this village lies on a few townlands and the barrack was in the portion called Lecarrownagappoge.



Kilreekill RIC station

Michael (Jnr.) is now a sergeant and so since 1908 when he was promoted we can assume that he was not at home in Aughrim very often.



Sergeant Michael Fitzgerald

Marian Wurr remembers her parents being very much in love. She recalled seeing them walking arm in arm along the Fairfield road and she thought it the most beautiful sight. But the harmony of their life was broken in 1915 with the death of Bridget.

Death of Bridget

She was born on the 16th October 1903 and was known by al as Birdie. She had golden hair and the complexion to go with it. When small she had had rheumatic fever, which had left her with a heart condition. Though two years younger she and Marian were best of pals and spent much time in each others company. At the age of thirteen, when she seemed to have overcome her health problems of earlier years, she contracted Infantile Paralysis (Polio).

Marian (known in the family as Poll) spent a lot of time sitting with her. On the day before she died, Birdie said to Marian, 'You know Poll, it will be awful when I get up again, I'll be taller than you'. The following day she was unconscious. Her mother, Marianne, had asked an Aunt to come over and was downstairs with her, leaving Marian to sit with Birdie, when she started to be restless. Marianne heard and came upstairs and she and Marian were with her when she died. She was buried in Aughrim Churchyard, she was only 13.

The picture on the right shows Kathleen and Marian in Ballinasloe. What ages are they? Perhaps Marian is 15 so Kathleen would have been 17. Perhaps both a little older. It places this photograph some time around 1914 or a little later.



Bridget Fitzgerald Memorial Card

It was around this time that Marian Wurr recalled an interesting trip that she and Kathleen took by bicycle on Easter Sunday. Their maternal grandmother, Gately must have died by this time as she tells that they were going by bike to Dysart (Garrynagran) to visit their uncle John Gately. A journey of 15 miles that it seems they expected to complete, there and back, in the day.



John Gately



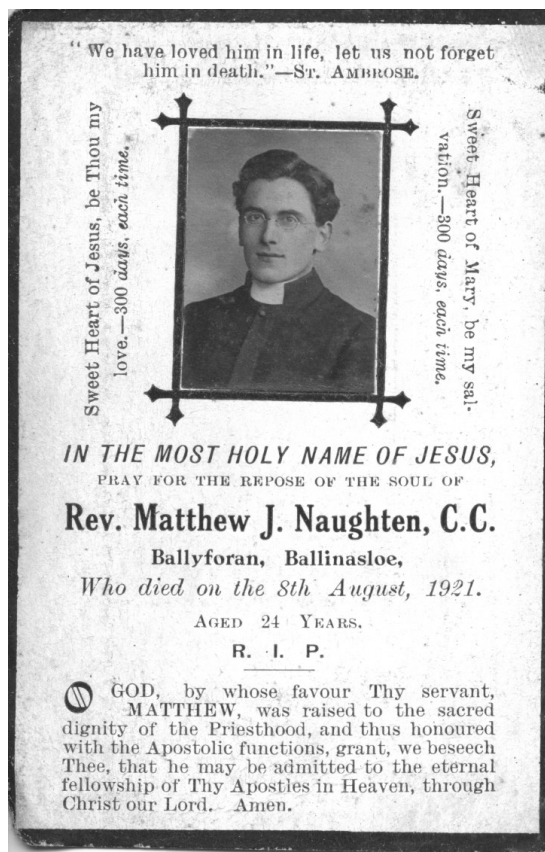
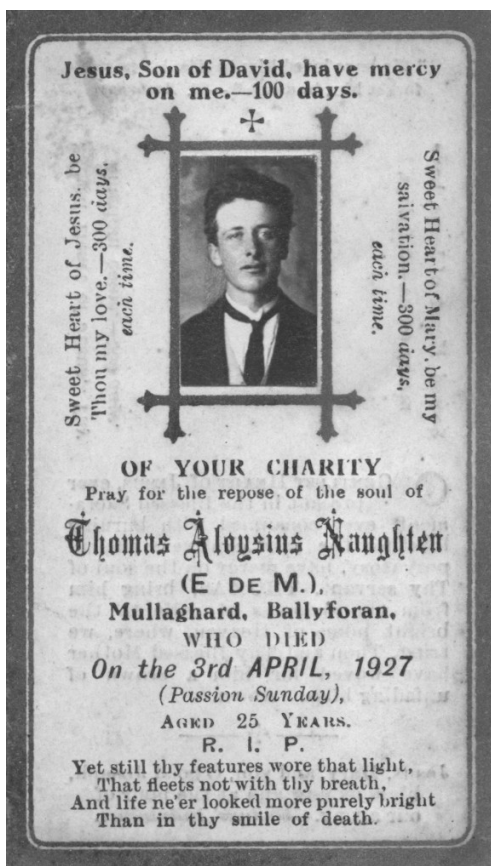
Marian and Kathleen in Ballinasloe

When they were some distance from Aughrim (not sure of the route) and having passed through a good sized village (Can't make out the name on the

tape) it came on to snow. A short time later Marian lost one of her pedals and they stopped to find it. They did find it but by this time two smart lads stopped and offered to help. They declared they were fine, thank you, but the lads insisted and took them a short distance to their mother's house. She welcomed them and a meal and tea was bought. The mother was most intrigued to find out who they were but, following Kathleen lead, the girls kept the conversation very minimal until they felt more sure. Eventually Kathleen felt she did not need to be so canny and informed her that they were from Aughrim and going to Ballyforan. Immediately the woman said "You must be Marianne Gately's daughters going to see John". This the girls confirmed. The woman said that she expected that they would go and see Mrs Naughton too and that she and her boys were cousins of the Naughtens

Kathleen and Marian left after a while and headed out into the snow, continuing to Dysart. When they arrived their uncle John Gately said they could not go home in the snow and because he was alone in the house he took them across the fields to stay over with "Grannie Naughten". These Naughtens lived in Mullaghardagh, Taghboy 3 miles north as the crow flies. The father was Patrick and the mother Maria in the census returns. They had a large family but Marian Wurr only recalled the boys' names. *Marian Wurr spoke of "Pat Naughten had died by this time and their sons were Paddy, Matt (An Irish speaker and was a Priest in Connemara) and Tom."* Also that the old woman they had met on the way had foretold that the three sons would all die before inheriting the farm. Marian she recalled that this was exactly what happened. I examined the Griffith Evaluation record for this townland (1850) and the position of the house is clear to see. About a few hundred yards from the main road. There is, however, no building in this position later on, including 1901 and 1911. So they must have moved elsewhere in the townland. There are only four properties listed in 1901 and 1911 but it is impossible to know which house was theirs. If however I compare the 1900 map with the 1850 map; while the house is gone there is a new house on the land. But this house too is now gone and only the land remains.

Below are the mass cards for Matthew, the priest, and Tom.



It was the Saturday after Easter before the girls made it back to Aughrim. Marianne was happy to see them but had apparently not been unduly worried for their safety. I think this adventure took place at Easter 1917 (Easter day was 8th April in 1917). I have found reports of “the worst Easter weather for 100 years”. There were reports of bad show drifting in Ireland.

Their uncle John Gately would eventually sell the farm and follow them to London. He is shown in photographs around Christmas 1927 with the family in England. It was on a whim; he was something of a dreamer. He wrote poems, he fell in love with lots of girls and wrote poems in their honour. Some he set to music. Ultimately he returned to Ireland and went to live with his sister, Rosanna, and her three sons. She had married an American returnee who was a bit bombastic and John had never got on with him but when this American husband left her, John returned to help her and ultimately died in Ireland.

Death of Marianne Fitzgerald

The next recollection of Marian Wurr is of the tragic death of her mother. She recalled that all through 1918 her mother was under increasing strain as there were moves afoot to amalgamate the boys and girls schools and that the combined school would be under a male head. She put great energy into resisting this move at a time when the health of so many was bad. It seems she never wavered from her commitments at school. Even when she contracted 'flu she continued to teach as she was “not too bad”. Gerald was returning on leave to Aughrim during the Christmas holidays in 1918, the first world war having finished the previous month. It was on Saturday 21st of December that Marian Wurr recalled that the family went shopping into Ballinasloe. Marianne was well known in the town, she had started her teaching career in Creagh which as we know is the eastern suburb of the town and so all her old pupils knew her well. Comments were passed that Marianne looked very well and better than her daughters.

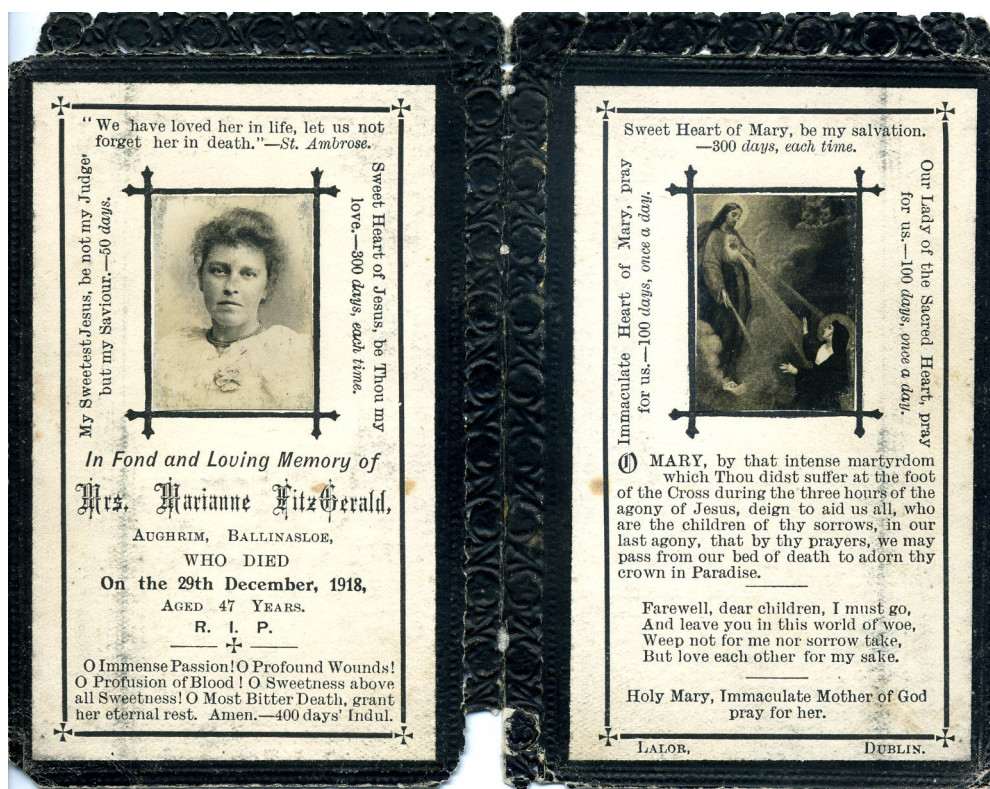
But by the next Friday, the 27th, Marianne developed and cold was very poorly with a cold and the doctor was called. The doctor said that Kathleen and Marian should fetch their father and the priest so bad was her

condition. Michael came as did the priest.

Marianne was propped up in bed and she didn't seem that bad to Marian.

Through Saturday she was in bed and on Saturday night Marian was downstairs tending the fire and so forth, Kathleen having retired with the younger children.

Michael Jnr. was upstairs with Marianne and about 3am he came down to find Marian. He asked her to get a cloth and wet it with warm



water as Marianne had a “very bad pain”. But by the time Marian went up to her parents her father met her on the stairs and said “oh girly your mother is dead”. Marian went into the girls room to Kathleen and Eveline and what she “didn't call God was not worth saying”. She knelt down calling God “cruel and unkind”. Kathleen was very angry not to have been woken and she couldn't cry almost, Marian said, as if “turned to stone”. Their lovely mother was buried beside her daughter on the Monday morning in the graveyard at Aughrim, right next to the house.

The description of how quickly she succumbed to this 'flu fits the anecdotal and medical records of those who died from the “Spanish Flu”. This struck all over the world in the last months of 1918 just as the world was enjoying the end of the First World War and lasted until well into 1919. There were tales of people who were healthy one day dying within 24 hours. Perhaps a little poetic licence here but certainly it was very swift in its action and seemed to be most lethal to those aged 20 to 40, though Marianne was 45. There is plenty of medical description of the effect on the suffers on the internet but I think they are a little too graphic to include here.

Because the house in Aughrim came with the job the family had to move out. I have no details of where they moved to or when, except that it was into Ballinasloe. And they would live in Ballinasloe until after the end of the Irish War Of Independence and the foundation of the Irish Free State at which time they had to emigrate to England.

After Marianne's death Delia took the two youngest Eveline (8 years old) and Michael (11 years old) back with her to Bealnamulla She was never a natural mother but they were well looked after. Michael though was relied on a lot for heavier work and looking after the Donkey. Things came to a head for him when he had a nightmare about the donkey and was found riding a table in the room. So in the end he was not there for very long before he returned to Ballinasloe. All her life Eveline resented not having stayed with the rest of the family.



Fitzgerald Grave, Aughrim



Fitzgerald Grave, Aughrim