



Fitzgerald Family

In the late 1960's my father Paul Guerin (1927- 1981), sat down and drew up the family tree as much as he could. He interview some older members of the family and created a family tree. What I am attempting to present here is the information he recorded at the time plus new information that is available via the internet, in particular the records of the Irish Family History Foundation and the Irish National Archives 1901 and 1911 census. The former lacks the full co-operation of all counties but has the birth, death and marriage records of most of the 32 counties.



There were census records taken every ten years in Ireland from 1821, all but a few fragments are lost. The 1821-61 records were lost in the Customs House fire in the civil war, 1922, those of 1871-91 were systematically pulped in 1911 in a mistake at the General Record Office, Dublin. Whatever the causes for the destruction, the result is the same. We can only, therefore, rely on the 1901 and 1911 census returns for any details of the family history.

Another thing to bear in mind is that; in 1850 the country was just emerging from several years of famine. It is reckoned that as many as 10% of all births, deaths and marriages were not recorded. With this in mind I began to examine the various possibilities of where the family might have originated.

My thanks also go to various family members who have provided their records and recollections.

There were many on-line sources I interrogated including Ancestry.co.uk , Irish Origins.net and the

Mormon Family Records.

The maps have, by and large come from the Ordinance Survey of Ireland website. There is an on-line map record there where modern maps and aerial photographs are super-imposable on historical maps from 1850's and circa 1900. Using these I was able to better trace the changing names of places, and roads. Also the location of buildings that no longer exist but play an important part in our story.

I have tried to keep the narrative as chronological as possible and to keep using names rather than 'his' and 'hers' which can be difficult to follow. I hope this makes the story easier to follow but I apologise if it is not easy to follow at all times.

If when you read the text you think of additions or corrections then please let me know. This is a working document and should merely form a framework. As more records come on-line and as I receive more information in the course of my investigations then I shall re-edit the text.

Contents

1. Fitzgerald Roots	Page 3
2. The Fitzgeralds of Mountmellick	Page 5
3. Michael Fitzgerald Senior	Page 8
4. Begley	Page 12
5. Michael Fitzgerald (Jnr.) and Marianne Gately	Page 16
6. Gately	Page 18
7. Aughrim	Page 21
8. Delia and Belnamulla	Page 31
9. Irish War of Independence	Page 33
10. Arrival in Baldock August 1922	Page 36
11. Arrival of Wurrs in Baldock January 1925	Page 39

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

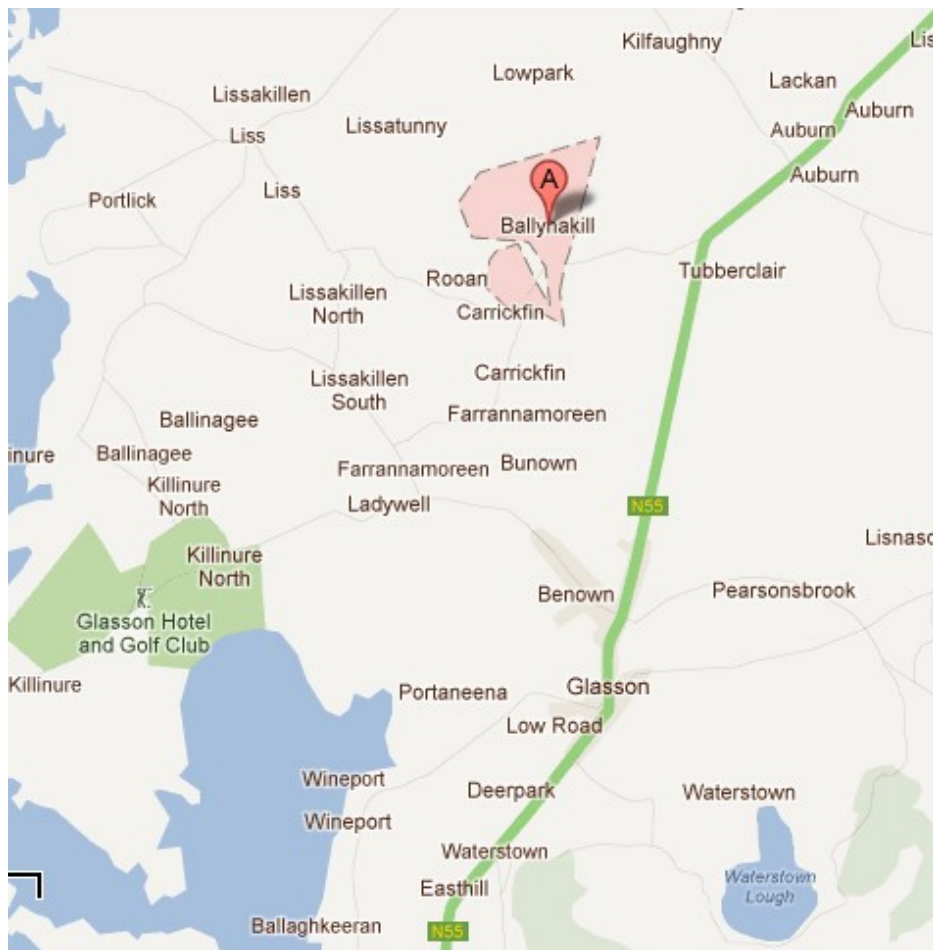
Catherine was born as far as I can tell in Tubbercaire near Glasson, Westmeath on 21/9/1832. Her Father was Michael Carty and her mother was Mary Igo (or Igoe – spelling unsure). She had three sisters, Bridget, Rose and Mary. If you recall her father's occupation was given as Bootmaker in 1865, I could 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



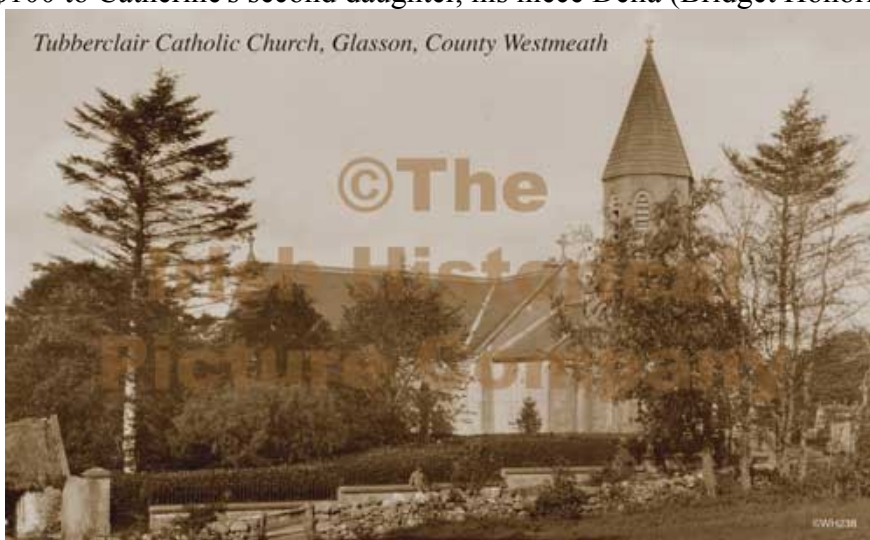
Catherine (Carty) and Michael Snr. with Kathleen Begley circa 1896

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).



The Fitzgeralds of Mountmellick



St. Joseph's Church, Mountmellick

As I stated earlier Michael Snr. declares in the census returns that he was born in Queens county (Laois) and was born around 1828/1829 according to his recorded age in the census. So I examined the on-line records for Michael (Snr.)'s birth and discovered that there is a record of a Michael Fitzgerald born to a James Fitzgerald in Mountmellick on 1/Jan/1829. If this is the correct record, he was the third of six children born to James Fitzgerald and Eliza Westmond. His parents James and Eliza were married in the same church in Mountmellick on 1/11/1823. NB Note that all the entries in the records from this church in this period are all dated the first of the month. I think this means that the actual date is not recorded so the first of the month is given to all records.

This town developed as a Quaker settlement when the group arrived in 1657. under the leadership of William Edmundson. It features the first Quaker School in Ireland. The town grew under the industrious influence of the Quakers and turned into a thriving market town with 27 industries including breweries, a distillery, woollen mills and a sugar beet factory, which gave the town the name of "The Manchester of Ireland".



From a Catholic point of view Mountmellick was formed into a distinct Parish in 1770 and includes portions of Rosenallis, Castlebrack and Coolbanagher. The original church, St. Peter's, served the community in Mountmellick until the present Church of St. Joseph was built in Mountmellick Town in 1878. St. Peter's then, housed a boys school until 1910. The foundations of the chapel are still visible today. Birth records this far back get very sparse due to the penal laws and after the repeal of the penal laws after 1771 there were initially very few parishes.

Unfortunately in the marriage record of James and Eliza no address is given for either spouse so we must investigate the possibilities available on-line.

There are two possibilities in the 1850 Griffith survey for James Fitzgeralds that seem feasible. One in the centre of Mountmellick town 11 Main Street and one to the east in Kilmanman about 7km away. The other possibilities, and there are some, are too far away in the county.

One piece of evidence I found recently online gives more details of the birth of the youngest, Elizabeth. She was born 20th August 1838. The sponsors names are given as Garrett Keating and Cath Conroy. I looked for a Garrett Keating and found only one. He was a farmer in a place called Sronagh just to the south of the town where there is now a housing estate. The other sponsor was one Ellen Conroy and there are Conroys living in 33 Main Street just down from James Fitzgerald.



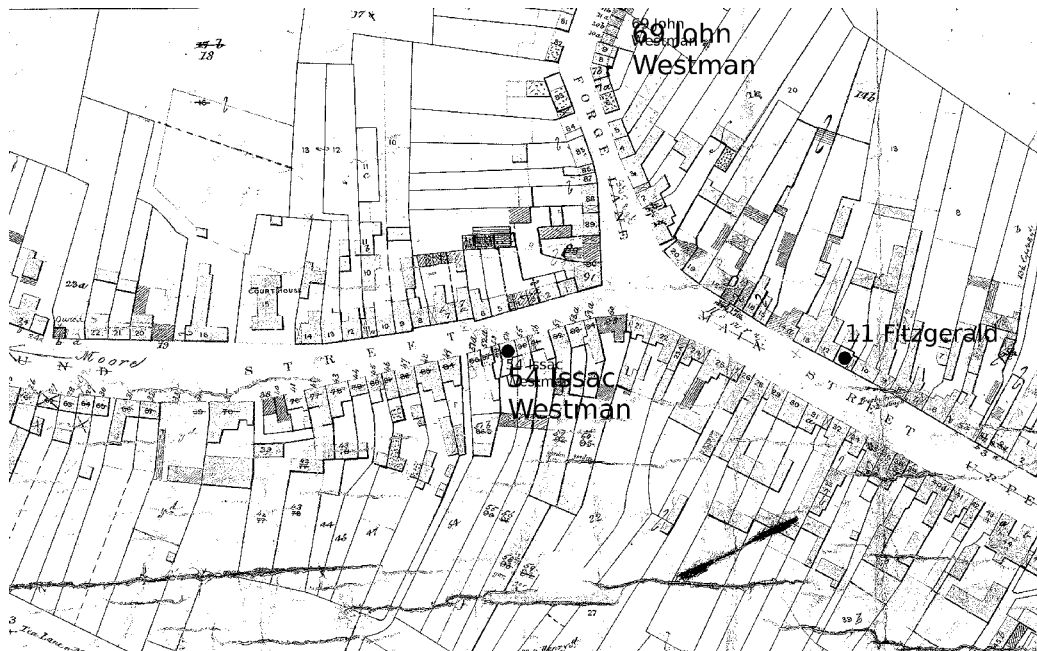
Main St. Mountmellick No 4 is W. Chambers so No 11 is down the street

Slater's directories of the country detailed who lived in towns all over Ireland in the 19th century. His guide of Mountmellick in 1846 lists James Fitzgerald as running a Linen Drapers & Haberdashers shop with woollen goods as an addition in the Market Square. There is also a listing for him as "Clerk of petty sessions" whatever that might be. So if his first born son is Michael then he should appear in the later editions of *Slater's Directory* as the new owner of the business when he succeeded his father. There are directories in 1870 and 1881 and 1894. But in the 1870 directory, although the address is different there is a James Fitzgerald. He is a *Grocer and Dealer in Sundries* in Bridge St. In 1881 and 1894 there are no records for Fitzgeralds in any similar position. So I therefore suggest that this is our James Fitzgerald in 1846 and that as Michael had joined the RIC he passed on the business to his second son James. It's a little of a long shot but would explain why the first born did not inherit.

However, James Fitzgerald is not shown living in Mountmellick in any of the tithe applotment (~1823) records I could find. I was never likely to find one as the Tithes only applied to those on the land. James as a town dweller would never appear. So we get no more clues as to his origins. The parish records for Mountmellick are very good and extend well back into the 18th century so I would have expected James's birth to have figured in the baptismal records. However he does not. Perhaps he was from outside the county. One possibility is that he was from the nearby county of Kings Co., now County Offaly. The Tithe applotments gives us a possible James Fitzgerald in Ballynakill in 1826. But I think this is unlikely. We shall never know for definite unless some other record comes to light.

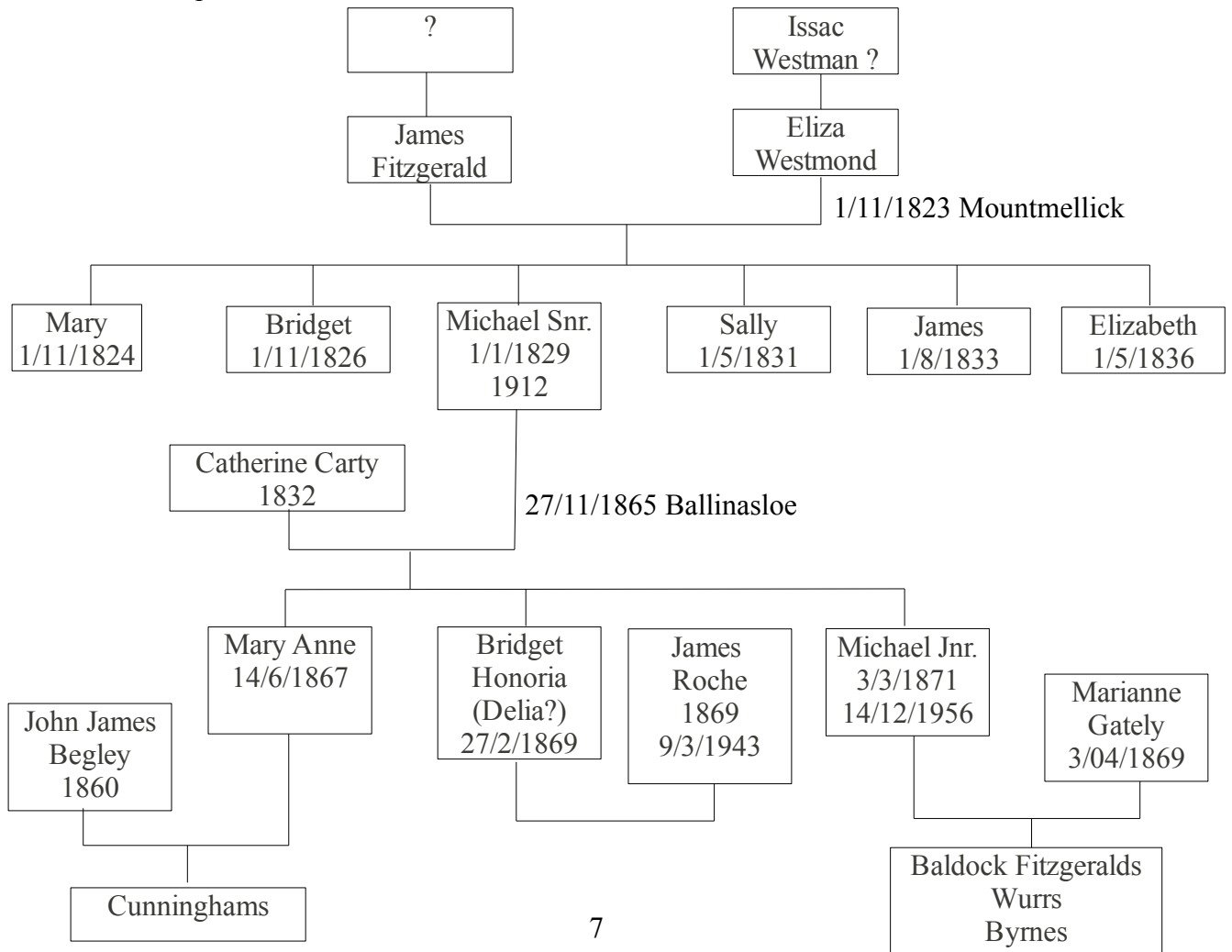
The Westmonds too have possibilities in Mountmellick and Kilmanman. The Griffith Survey gives

either Issac or John Westman living in Pound Street or Forge lane respectively. The tithe applotments date from around 1823 and these suggest that Eliza's father might have been William who is shown in Mountmellick in 1823 but this William Westman would have been a farmer. Perhaps Issac is the correct father after all.



Centre of Mountmellick 1854

Therefore the top of our tree looks like this:



Michael Fitzgerald Snr.

The next solid record we have for Michael (Snr.) is his date of joining the Royal Irish Constabulary. There is a record in 1848 for one Michael Fitzgerald in Queens Co. It records his age as 20 which fits very well with the birth date of Jan 1828. I have yet to see the details of the record but I feel this is our Michael. I know from other records that it will give no clues as to addresses and family links but it should give the dates and places of his postings, his date of marriage and the county of origin of his wife. Not a lot but I shall endeavour to get to see this record at the National Archive in Kew at some time.

Royal Irish Constabulary

The minimum age on entry was 19 and the minimum height was 5' 9", but these were lowered to 18 and 5' 8" for sons of policemen. There was also a minimum chest measurement of 36", which was increased to 37" if the applicant was 5' 11" or taller.

Members could not serve in their native counties and had to have at least 7 years service before getting married. The intended wife had to be vetted by the superior officers before getting married. If permission to marry was obtained, the couple were transferred to a county where neither had relatives.

The highest ranks down to and including District Inspector constituted the officers. Head Constables and Sergeants were non-commissioned officers (NCOs). Those of Constable rank were below this and were known as "the men". The ranks for the men and NCOs changed slightly in 1883. Prior to 1883, the starting rank was Sub Constable Second Class. The first promotion was to Sub Constable First Class, then Acting Constable, then Constable, then Head Constable, and then Sub Inspector Third Class. After 1883, the starting rank was changed to Constable, progressing to Acting Sergeant, Sergeant, Head Constable, and then Sub Inspector Third Class.

The Lost Fitzgerald Inheritance

One story that Michael Fitzgerald (Snr.) told seems to have been of a stolen inheritance. This is what his Granddaughter Marian Wurr (1901-1995) recalled. "*Michael's parents, so the story went, were descended from the Earls of Leinster and had had a large estate, but died during the 1840s Potato Famine, leaving him and his sister in the care of an uncle who took their inheritance*". Its not a verifiable story as far as I can tell but there are some interesting things to consider.

Firstly: Michael Snr. was the first born male of this family and so should have inherited from his father at his death under primogenitor.

Secondly: that if the parents were rich landowners then their death due to the potato famine is not likely unless they succumbed to some disease that occurred at the same time. I can not find any record of a pandemic at this time.

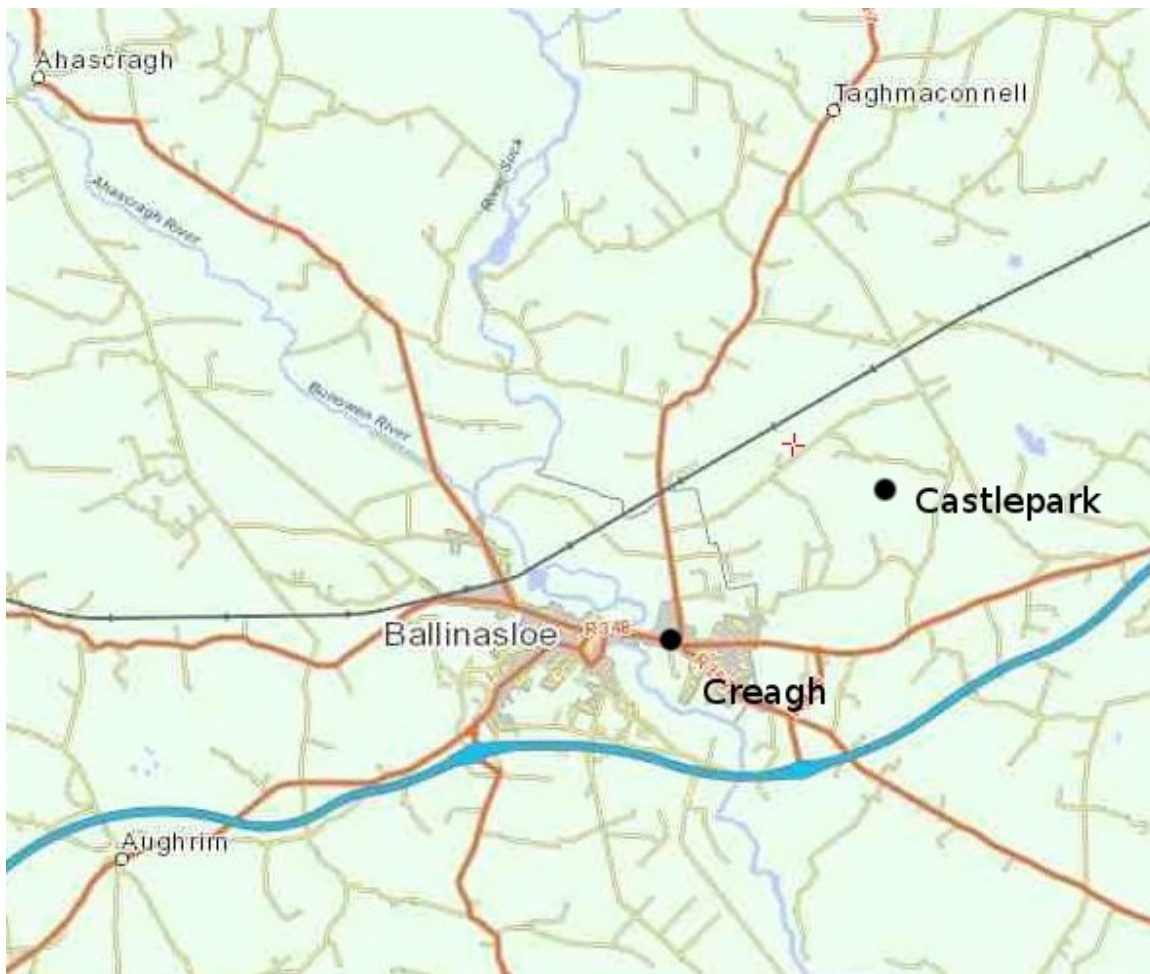
I think it is an interesting story but as it is currently unverifiable we must treat it with a good degree of scepticism. Indeed Marian Wurr said her own father, Michael Jnr., gave the story no credence and no-one ever knew what happened to the 'sister'.

Marriage of Michael Snr. and Catherine Carty



St. Michael's Church - Ballinasloe

When he married Catherine Carty in Ballinasloe (27/11/1865) Michael Snr. was living in Creagh which is just East of the town and she was living in Castlepark 5km to the north east, both in Roscommon. NB Ballinasloe is just on the border of Roscommon and Galway but in on the Galway side.



Her occupation is recorded as Servant and his as Constable. The civil record of their marriage was made in Creagh, Co. Roscommon but they were married in the Catholic church in Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.

The family tradition is that Catherine's had been a Lady's Maid and travelled on the Continent. It is interesting to note that her address is Castlepark and that the townland of Castlepark has no actual settlement except the house, Castlepark house.

Castlepark house was part of the Kelly estate. Six generations of this family lived in the parish of Creagh from the early 18th century. There are records that they had held lands in the area prior to 1641 and continued to hold a portion after the Restoration. The main record I found was of a : *'Major John Talbot D'Arcy of Castlepark, Ballinasloe, county Roscommon, owned 1,961 acres in county Roscommon in the 1870s. Castlepark was formerly a Kelly house. Castlepark and 1,114 acres in the barony of Moycarn with the lands of Turrock in the barony of Athlone were advertised for sale by John D'Arcy in 1878. John Talbot D'Arcy was a son of John D'Arcy of Clifden and Kiltullagh and a younger brother of the Reverend Hyacinth D'Arcy. In 1846 John Talbot D'Arcy married Jane daughter and co heiress of Daniel Kelly of Cargins, county Roscommon.'*

The witnesses at the wedding of Michael and Catherine were Andrew Gallagher and Mary Garvey. Andrew was obviously a good friend as he was also sponsor, six years later, at the birth of Michael (Jnr.) in 1871.

I wondered who this Andrew Gallagher might be. If he is old enough to be a sponsor at the wedding then he must have been at least 21 so born no later than 1844. This would make him 57 in 1901. I looked on the 1901 census for an Andrew Gallagher in a suitable place and found one in Ballybrittas near Mountmellick. But none either in Athlone or Roscommon, Westmeath or Galway who fit the age limit. He was baptised in Mountmellick in 1836. There are records of other Andrew Gallaghers born in Roscommon and Westmeath but which one could be more likely? Who knows but could it be that this proves the link to Mountmellick?

The couple were blessed with a family. In the 1911 census Catherine recorded that she gave birth to 4 children, three of whom are alive in 1911. We have records and family knowledge of three of them but not of the fourth. Perhaps the baby was still born and so never baptised. Of the children we have records for; the first born was Mary Anne (later Begley) baptised 14/6/1867 in Athlone (NB no address is given for her in the Baptismal record). Then Bridget Honoria (Delia?) 27/2/1869 (this is the civil registration in Creagh not the baptism) her address is given as Creagh and Michael is given as "Sub Constable". Finally Michael 3/3/1871. Michael (jnr.)'s baptismal record gives his address as Irishtown, Athlone. Irishtown is on the east end of the town and near St. Mary's Church. So they appear to have lived in Creagh when first married and come to Irishtown, Athlone between 1869 and 1871. Perhaps his RIC record in KEW would shed more light on this.



Delia Fitzgerald with?



St. Mary's Church, Athlone

Some time between 1871 and 1889 Michael (Snr.) and Catherine moved to the post office in a place called Bealnamulla outside Athlone to the west, on the road to Ballinasloe. The two surviving census returns from 1901 and 1911 show them living here. By 1901 Michael (Snr.) has retired from the RIC as he states this in the 1901 return. I have, however, no date for his retirement, perhaps his service record will contain that information.

Christian Name	Surname	Rank	Religion	Profession	Age	Sex	Occupation	Marital Status	County
1	Michael Fitzgerald	Head of Family	Roman Catholic	Read & write	72	M	R.I.C. Pensioner & Sub. Post Master	Married	Queens County
2	Catherine Fitzgerald	Wife	"	"	68	F	"	"	Westmeath
3	Delia Fitzgerald	Daughter	"	"	30	F	Dressmaker	Not Married	Roscommon
4	Kathleen Begley	Grand daughter	"	"	9	F	Scholar	"	Galway
5									

1901 Census return at Bealnamulla

He records that he is an R.I.C. Pensioner but also a sub post master. Delia is living with them as is their granddaughter Kathleen Begley. She is the little girl shown with them in the photograph seen previously. Kathleen was one of the four children born to the eldest, Mary Anne.

Begley



Mary Anne Begley (1927)

Mary Anne was the first of Michael (Snr.) and Catherine's children to marry. Marian Wurr, who was her first cousin, recalled that Mary Anne was training as a teacher when she met an RIC policeman, one John James Begley. They married on 13/11/1889 at St. Peter's Church, Athlone. The sponsors were her sister Delia and one William Creaven (possibly another RIC policeman).

John James Begley was the son of another in the force, one Alexander Begley (from Derry) and Margaret Walsh. John and Margaret Begley had a large family of 10 children and John James was the eldest. He was born in 1860 in Birr, Co. Offaly where his parents had married the previous year. Two years later the next child, Elizabeth, was born in Co. Tipperary. It was then they moved to Mayo where all the rest were born and it was in Belmullet in that county they seem to have settled. In the 1901 census Alexander Begley was still alive and is shown living in Belmullet, Co. Mayo with his sons Thomas and Henry and his granddaughter Maggie Reilly. These two sons say they were born in Mayo. They were born 1881 and 1883.

John James enlisted into the RIC in 1882 in Kings Co., when he was 22 years old. His father Alex had enlisted in 1849 in Derry when he was 20 years old. Quite why John James was back in Kings County (Offaly) at the time he enlisted is unknown. Perhaps he was with his mother's, Walsh, family.

The marriage record of Mary Anne Fitzgerald and John James Begley shows that both the fathers had retired from the RIC by this time. Michael Fitzgerald (Snr.) as Ex Constable of Police and Alexander Begley as Ex Head Constable of Police. The record shows too that the bride and groom were both living in

Bealnamulla So perhaps John James was stationed at the RIC station in Bealnamulla and had met Mary Anne. It was the custom for RIC officers to be placed outside their county of birth.

They had four children.

Catherine (Kathleen)

Josephine 1891 (later married to Martin Cunningham and mother to Angie and Nora),

Michael Alexander 1892,

Henry 1897 and Mary Frances

(Babe) 1902. Kathleen was

born in Galway City but

Michael was born in Athlone (Co. Roscommon side). Then

the youngest two were born in

Co. Galway. Perhaps in

Headford 50 miles due west

of Bealnamulla where he was stationed at the time of the 1901 census.



Bealnamulla RIC station today

In the return, John James is shown in barracks in Bridge street, Headford (still a police station to this day) and Mary Anne was with her young sons, Michael and Henry, at 47 High Street. Remember the eldest Catherine (Kathleen) is living with her grandparents in Bealnamulla Mary gives her occupation as "Housekeeper".

The youngest, Mary Frances (Baby), was born the following year, 1902. Marian Wurr recalled that John James died of TB the

following year (1903) and so it seems Mary moved back nearer her family by the time of the 1911 census. She is shown living in Glasson, Westmeath. I think this is close to where her mother (Catherine Carty) came from. Ultimately Michael would join the RIC and Henry served in the British Army in first world war. I think Henry married a Mary Boyle in Wexford in 1936 and they



Headford, Co. Galway

had four daughters.

1	Mary	Beigley	Wife of Widr	Roman Catholic	Read and Write	-	41	District Nurse	Widow	-	-	Co. Roscommon	
2	Michael	Beigley	Son	Roman Catholic	Read and Write	18	-	Scholar	Single	-	-	Co. Roscommon	Irish & English
3	Henry	Beigley	Son	Roman Catholic	Read and Write	14	-	Scholar	Single	-	-	Co. Galway	Irish & English
4	Delia	Willy Beigley	Wife of	Roman Catholic	Read and Write	-	36	-	Single	-	-	Co. Galway	

Glasson 1911 return

The 1911 census shows that Mary's sister Delia is with her in Glasson, presumably she left Bealnamulla to help her rear the two boys. The house they lived in was in Glasson high street and had been unoccupied in the 1901 census so no clues there as to family connections. The girls, Kathleen and Baby though were living with their grandparents in Bealnamulla. Mary has trained as



Glasson (Glasson)

a nurse since the 1901 census and gives her occupation as “District Nurse”.

She worked in the district hospital according to Marian Wurr, and serving the whole community as midwife, even to 'tinkers by the wayside' on occasion. Interesting to note that the two boys, Michael and Henry, are fluent in Irish as well as English. The young generation fluent in a tongue strange to their parents.

1	Michael	Willy Beigley	Wife	Roman Catholic	Read and Write	32	-	R. I. C. Dispenser	Married	-	-	Co. Wick	
2	Kathleen	Willy Beigley	Wife	Roman Catholic	Read and Write	-	30	-	Married	44	4	Co. Wick	
3	Delia	Willy Beigley	Wife of Widr	Roman Catholic	Read and Write	-	19	-	Single	-	-	Co. Galway	Irish & English
4	Mary Louise	Willy Beigley	Wife of Widr	Roman Catholic	Read and Write	-	9	Scholar	Single	-	-	Co. Galway	Irish & English

Bealnamulla 1911 census return

Quite why the family were broken up with the girls living with their grandparents and the boys with their mother seems strange. We can but imagine the reason. We know the Kathleen had been living with her grandparents for some time so perhaps this was seen as the best option.

The cottage at Bealnamulla was described thus by Marian Wurr; *There was an Iron Gate and the cottage was set back behind them with flower beds in between. The door was in the middle with a room on each side as you entered.* When Marian Wurr visited Bealnamulla in the 1980's only the

back wall and the gable ends remained. Google maps shows that only the gate and front garden wall now exist.

'Off each of these rooms was, in turn, a bedroom. In time, when Delia needed an to supplement her income converted the right hand room into a shop. Until that time the post brought in some income. The post was sorted and the post man, "Derry", would do the round for them. There were three windows to the front.



Post Office at Bealnamulla

Michael(Snr.) and Catherine both died around 1912. Towards the end of her life Catherine was crippled with sponsorships, bent up almost double. Marian Wurr recalled that while they respected their grandfather and liked him they did not love him. He was too autocratic but Catherine, their grandmother was charming. Michael (Snr.) stood as though he had *a rod in his back* and acted as though *King of all he surveyed*.

Marian Wurr recalled that her father Michael (Jnr.) would hire a horse and cart and that after attending the early mass in Aughrim they would go out to Bealnamulla arriving in time for lunch. All the children were expected to go and kiss their grandfather when they arrived. He was always delighted to see them all. Delia would have prepared the lunch, *Lunch in style – just so* is how Marian Wurr recalled it. They would eat in the dining room at the front but her crippled grandmother would stay on the couch to eat on a low table in the sitting room. There was always much praise of Delia's work by Michael Snr. which greatly embarrassed her.

There is an on-line record of Michael (Snr.)'s death in the second quarter of 1912 in Athlone but I can not find a similar record for Catherine. Perhaps this is when Delia returned to Bealnamulla from Glasson and ran the post office and store. Delia raised Kathleen Begley. Marian Wurr remembers that she was not a natural mother. Kathleen Begley's education was, according to Marian Wurr, paid for by her Grandfather Begley, Alex in Belmullett. As Marian Wurr recalled everything had to be paid for at that time.

Baby, the youngest Begley was Marian's good friend. Baby was born in September 1901 and

Marian in December and they would go for bike rides together. Often with no pedals or brakes. Baby married an American returnee but I have no record of his name.



Post Office Bealnamulla

Michael Fitzgerald (Jnr.) and Marianne Gately



Marianne Fitzgerald

We have no further record of Michael (Jnr.) until we see his Royal Irish Constabulary record. He joined his father in the force on 16th May 1889 in Athlone. He was recommended by one D. J. Purdon (I can find no record of this gentleman). His first allocated duty must have been Westmeath as there is an entry for his transfer to Roscommon on 9/11/1889. His next transfer was to the eastern region of Co. Galway on 1 May 1895.

The other details in his RIC record are:

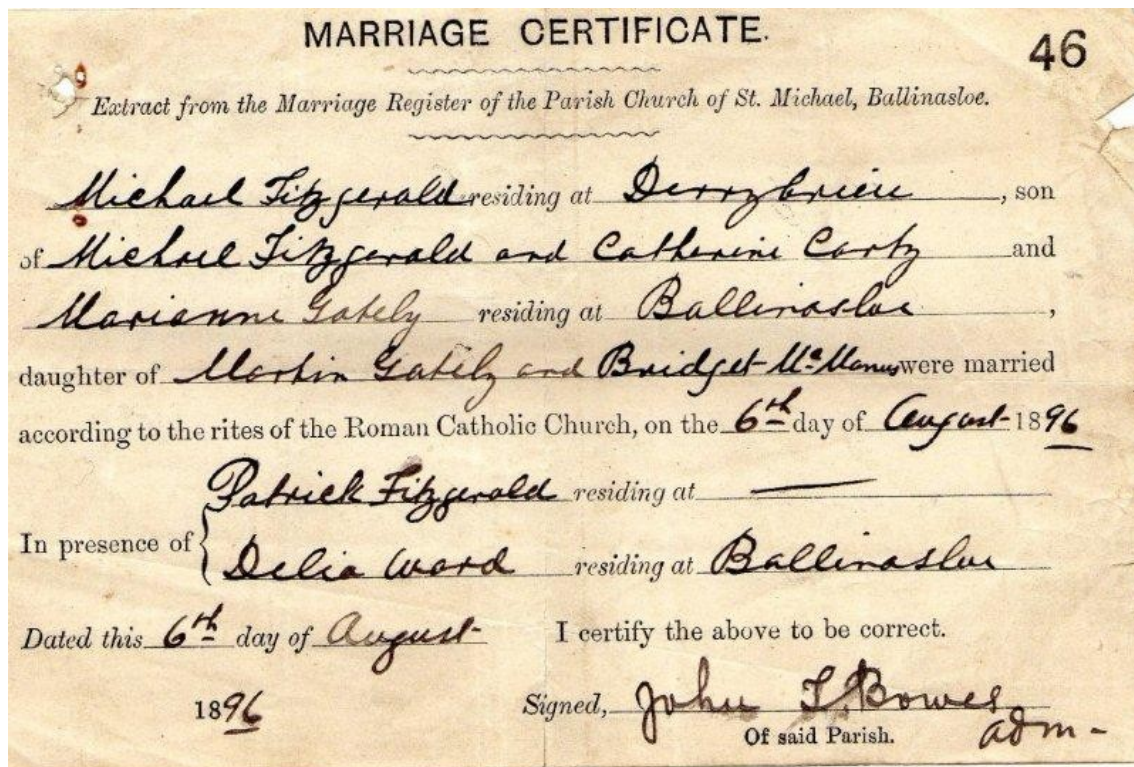
P. A. Sergeant	1.4.1908	(Promoted Acting Sergeant?)
Promoted Sergeant	Date unclear	(must be before 1911 – see census detail in text)
G. r. (?)	31.12.1895	
ar. (?)	20.12.1898	
His height is given as	5' 8"	

To complete the record there are three citations of rewards etc.. and one punishment (12.3.1890). The handwriting is too small for me to read clearly but the reference numbers refer to documents that did not survive the Four courts fire in 1922.

The disbandment of the RIC after the Irish Free State came into being saw him disbanded and the

date of this is given as 10/ 4/1922.

There is also the record of his marriage to someone from Roscommon 6.8.1896



Marriage Certificate - Michael Jnr. and Marianne Gately

The someone he married was Marianne Gately and they married on 6th August 1896 in St. Michaels church, Ballinasloe where his parents had married some 31 years earlier. As you can see the certificate is very detailed. It gives not only the fathers' names but also the mothers'. A great improvement on 31 years earlier. The witness Patrick Fitzgerald is recorded with no given address. I have a theory that he might have been one of Michael's RIC colleagues. There are too many Patrick Fitzgeralds listed in the RIC to ever be sure. I think Delia Ward with her brother and sister ran a Public house in Main Street Ballinasloe.

The civil record of the marriage gives Michael (Jnr.)'s occupation as Policeman and his father's too. Marianne's occupation is given as "schoolmistress" living in Creagh. I think the school house is just standing with the roof caving in at one end. (2011 Googlemap image). It might not be where she taught of course though with transport always difficult it is likely she lived close to where she worked.

Gately Family

Marianne's family, Gately, came from Garrynagran in Co. Roscommon. This is 13 miles north of Ballinasloe, right along the border with Co. Galway and near Dysart. Her parents were Martin Gately and Bridget McManus. They had a farm in Garrynagran, Dysart and lived there with Marianne's siblings John (1870) and Rosanna (1876). Her father, Martin, died in the last quarter of 1904. Bridget died after 1911 census but I don't know when. Rosanna too might not have lived long after 1911 as her niece Marian Wurr never mentioned her.

Marianne's (Mary Anne) birth is recorded on 3rd April 1869 and her parents seem to still be living in Drum near Athlone at that stage. They must have moved to Garrynagran some time later. Martin, her father, is recorded as Farmer in the birth record. I could not find a record for any Martin Gately farming in Drum though there were plenty of possibilities in the Garrynagran/Dysart area.

Marianne's parents had married on 14th Sept 1865 in Drum Church in the Athlone district, though the civil registration was made in Brideswell, five miles east of Dysart. Martin's residence in the civil registration was Garrynagran, in the church record as Dysart. Though in reality this is the same place. Martin's father, Patrick, is recorded as a Smith and her father, James McManus as a farmer. It is interesting to note that in 1901 and 1911 there is no record of a smith in Garrynagran or Dysart. But the cottage they lived in had four outbuildings and perhaps this was because it had been a smithy but was no longer by 1901. According to the Estate Records of Sir Charles Compton William Domville Bart in 1864 Martin was a tenant from year to year and paid an annual rent of £7 5/-. He was renting 24 acres.



Possibly the remains of the Gately farm, Garrynagran, Dysart

There is a census record from this part of Ireland called the “Elphin Religious Census” and it was taken in 1749. In this census a record of the head of the household was made and what members of his/her family were under or over 14. The main record, and the entire reason for the census, was to record who was Church of Ireland and who was “Papist”. In the record for “Torpane” which is in Dysart there is a record for a Laurence Gately. His trade is recorded “Smith” and he had 3 children under 14. All are recorded as “Papists”. So perhaps the Gatelys were smiths over several generations though not into the 20th century. The same census records many Naughtens, Gatelys and so on in the Dysart district but none with a trade as specific as that of Smith so we cannot be certain of whether any of them are related though it is likely some are. So we probably are related to Laurence Gately who, if he had three children under 14 in 1749, was probably born around 1710. If we project forward to Martin's father Patrick who was probably born one hundred years later around

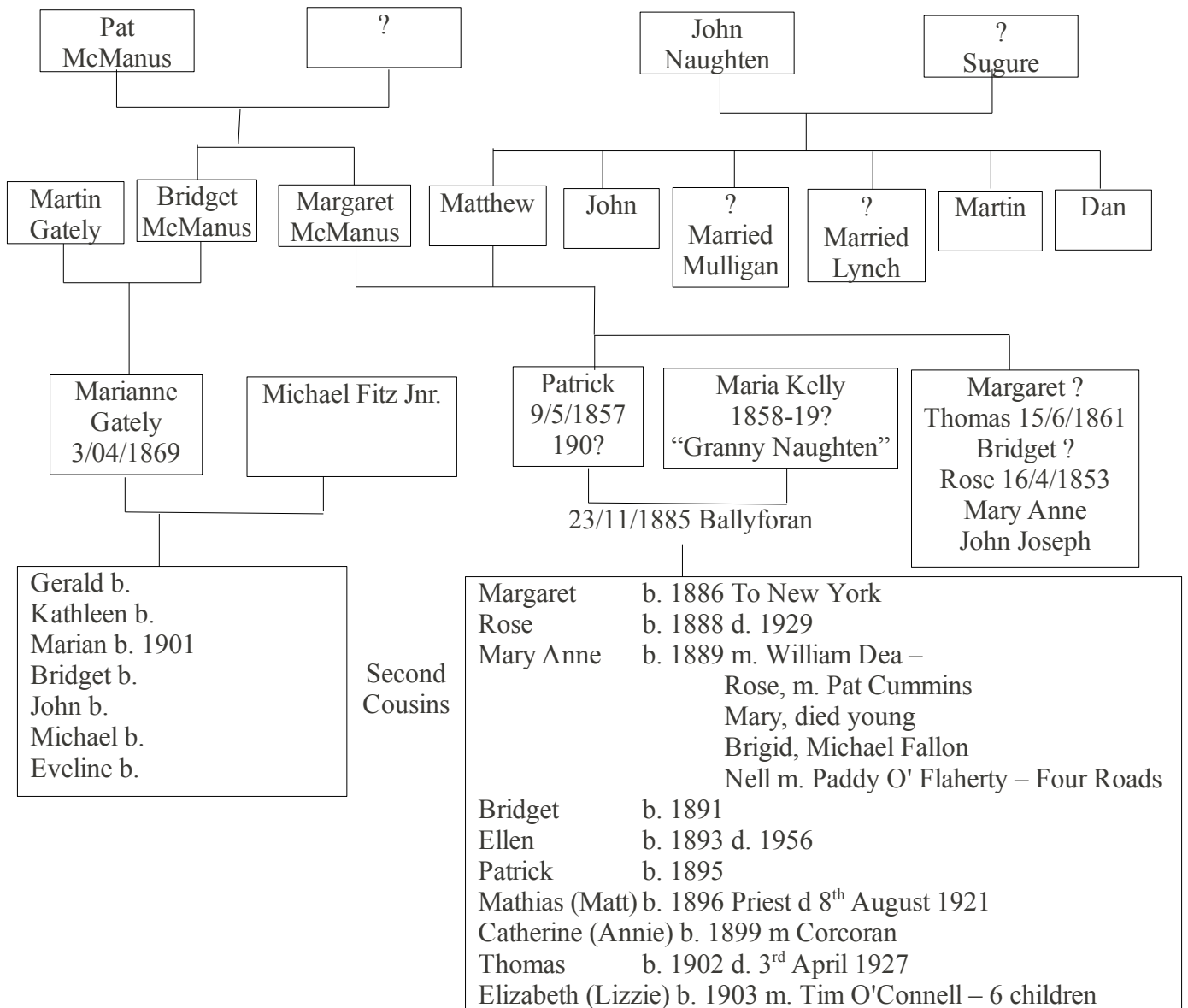
1810, we have about two missing generations, possibly three. I'm not aware of any records that might exist to link the two other than burial records.

Also in Garrynagran in 1901 and 1911 census return there are records in adjoining properties of two John Gatelys. They might have been related. Certainly Marian Wurr recalled that there were Gately relations down the road from her grandparent's house who were related but the two families never spoke due to some big falling out. She spoke of the relations living in a two story house but there is no record in either census of any two story dwelling belonging to a Gately in the district. Her grandfather, Martin Gately's residence was "*a long low building with buildings around and lots of stone paving*".

Martin Gately's spouse, Bridget McManus' address is Nure in both civil and church record. Nure is 18 miles from Dysart and right on the border of Roscommon and Offaly, but only 8 miles from Athlone. The full address is Ardnanure. I discovered that the McManus farm was just over the Shannon from the ruined Clonmacnoise Abbey. Was their marriage arranged. How did someone from Dysart meet someone from 18 miles away in the middle 19C? NB there are still McManus's in Drum to this day almost certainly very distant cousins.

We can only presume that after marriage they moved straight into the smithy in Garrynagran They were blessed with at least three children but I actually found records for four children. Marianne was actually baptised/registered as Mary Anne on 3rd April 1869. Her birth was also registered in Brideswell. She like her 3 brothers (Francis (1866), John (1870) and Thomas (1873)) and one sister (Rose Anna (1876))were baptised in St. Peter's Church, Athlone.

The other interesting thing to note is that Bridget's sister Margaret McManus married one Matthew Naughton around 1853. Matthew and Margaret Naughton had a large family and it is these Naughton cousins who lived in Dysart and other parts of Roscommon that Marian Wurr and others visited.

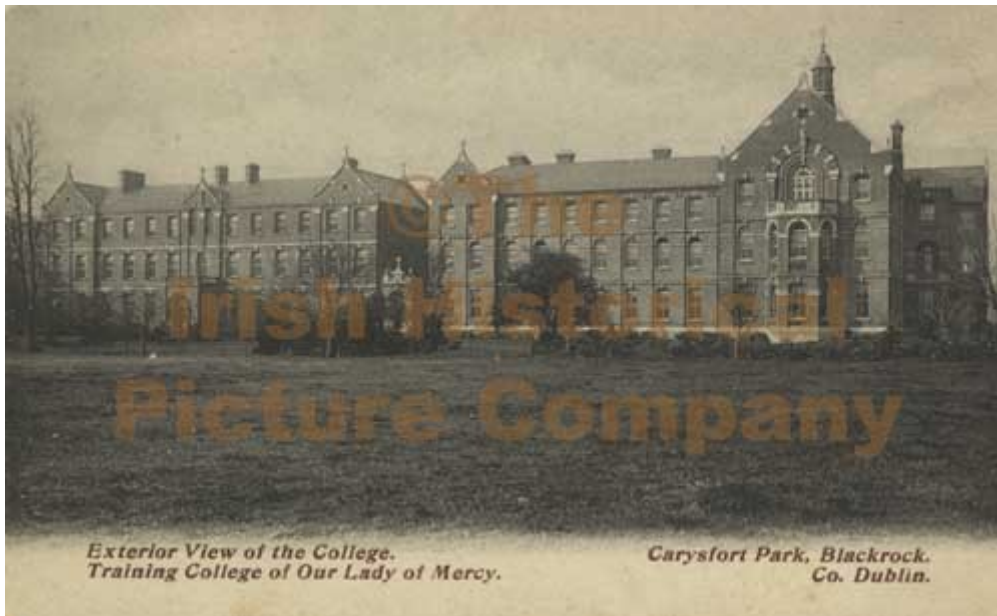


Aughrim



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 COLLORE OF OUR LAW OF DEEDS

DIPLOMA

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
Miss Marianne Sately
 HAVING BEEN IN RESIDENCE AS A TEACHER 2 YEARS IN
 THE TEACHING COLLEGE IN CORK AND IN RESIDENCE
 FOR 2 YEARS IN CORK IN JULY 1898
 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 CLASS
 BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSIONER OF NATIONAL EDUCATION IRELAND

100 16 4 98

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	La Rosanna	Irish & English	
2	Gerard M.	Fitzgerald	Son	Roman Catholic	Read & Write	12		Scholar	Single					66	Galway	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.

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



Bridget Fitzgerald Memorial Card



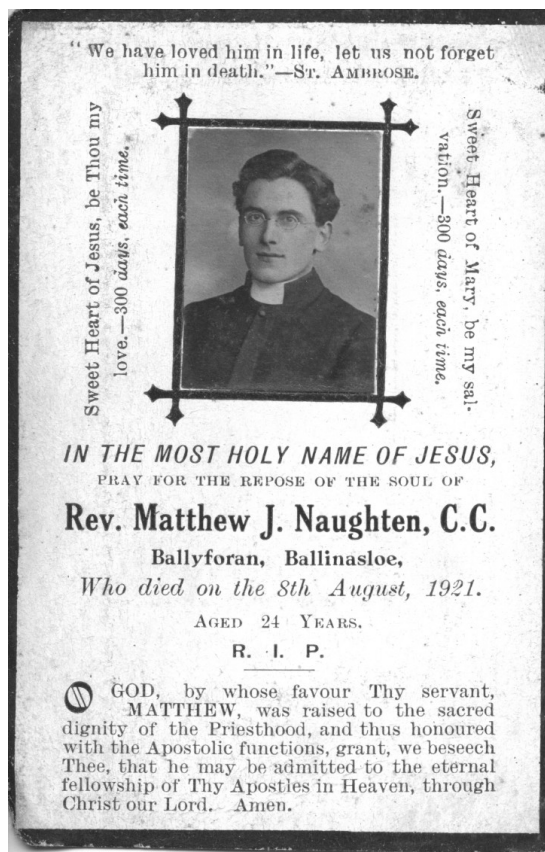
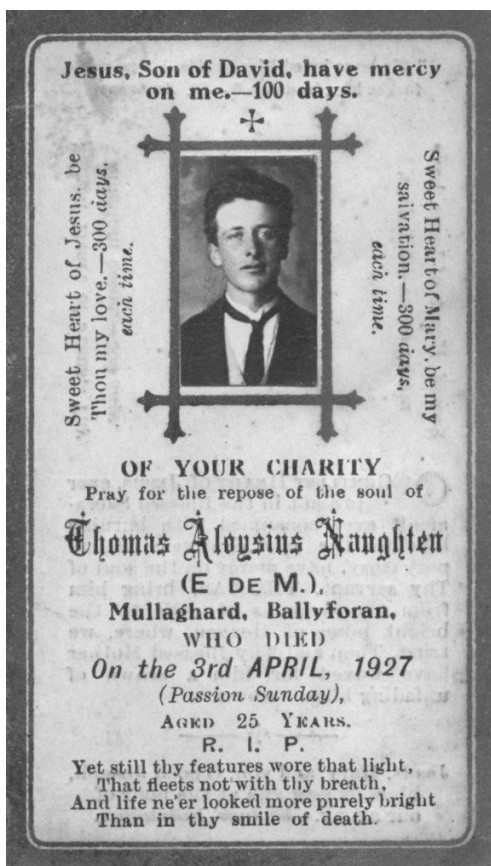
Marian and Kathleen in Ballinasloe

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.

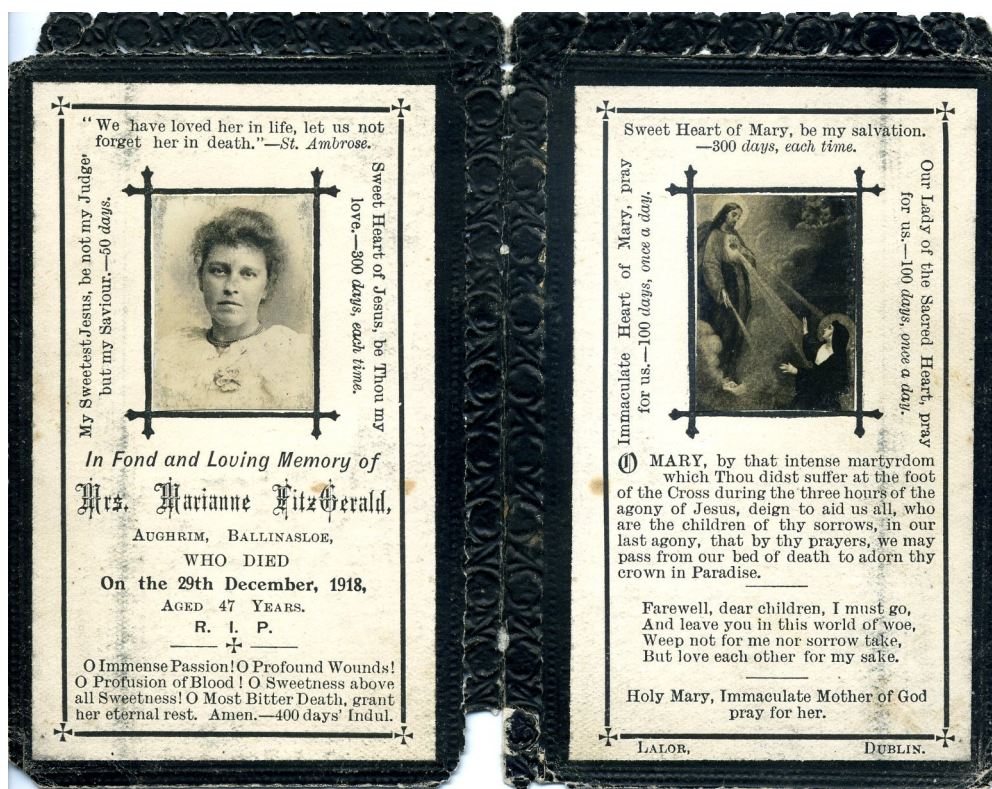
But by the next Friday, the 27th, Marianne developed and cold was very poorly with a cold and the doctor was called. The doctor said that Kathleen and Marian should fetch their father and the priest so bad was her

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

Delia and Belnamulla

Delia Fitzgerald had, by Marian Wurr's recollection, a monotonous life. She had a great love in her life a local man, James Roche. Her father, Michael (Snr.), did not approve of the Roche and forbid her having anything to do with James or any of the rest of his family. James had to marry elsewhere (Mary Anne Gough in 1896 - Athlone) and Delia later fell for a man who was a soldier killed in the first world war. There is somewhere a ring he gave her which he had inscribed on the inside. "To Delia from _____".

As I said James Roche married Mary Anne Gough in Athlone in the first quarter of 1896. They had nine children by 1911 though only six were living by the time of the census. Mary Anne died some time in the next few years and the widower James, who worked on the railways, met with Delia, thought she was almost. They used to meet at a gate somewhere so that they might keep their liaisons private. She feared her family finding out as she knew they would not have approved either. James and Delia married in Dublin in the third quarter of 1920 and honeymooned on the Isle of Man. They announced this to the family in the form of a postcard from there which said she and James (Jim) were on the Isle of Man "for the best of reasons".



James Roche



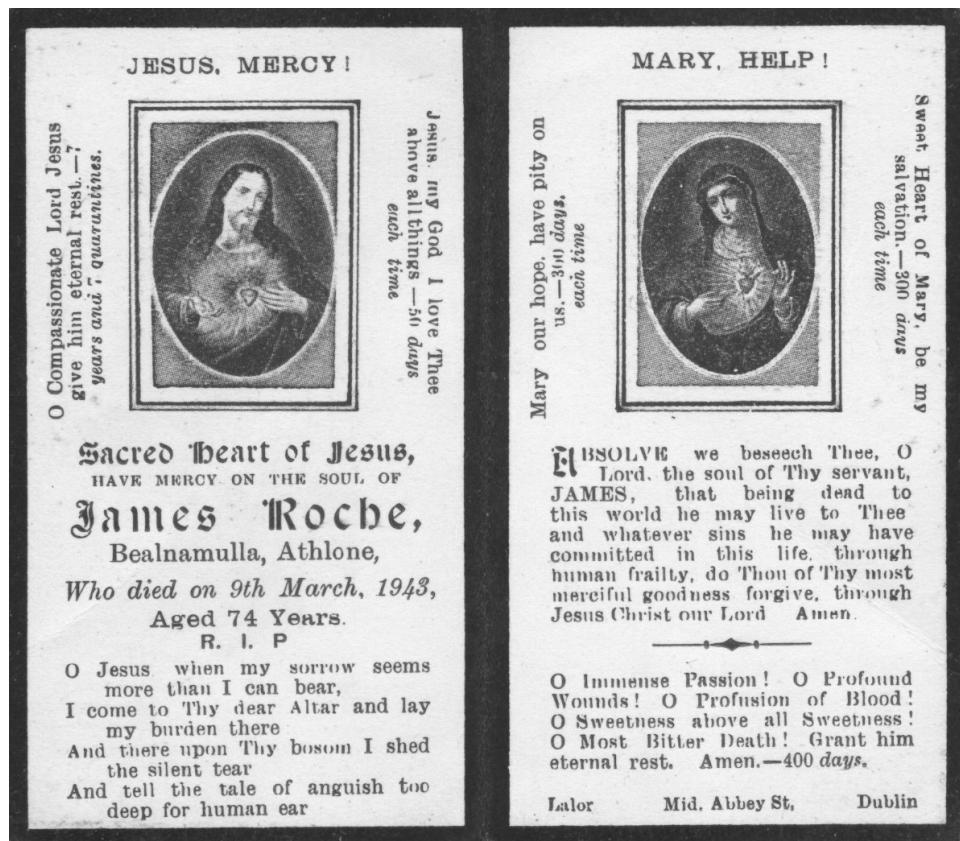
Family at Bealnamulla 1927

Back Row Delia and James Roche, Then Mary Anne Begley (nee Fitzgerald) two others unknown

Front row Baby (Mary Begley) and Jim Roche's son Jim and unknown woman with dog.

Peter Wurr remembers visiting Delia and James at Bealnamulla around 1936 and they were still in the Post Office. During the visit James took them about by pony and trap and attended Mass in Ballinasloe. The post office in Bealnamulla where they lived is now no longer standing. James died on the 9th of March 1943 and his memorial card below gives his address as Bealnamulla, Athlone so they were still there then. There is a death record for a Bridget Roche in 1953 which might be Delia but I have no proof.

As Marian Wurr recalled the cottage would eventually fall into ruin and only the gable end and the one wall were standing by the 1980s. Today it seems from the Googlemap image that any trace of the bungalow was obliterated when the road was straightened.



Site of the post office at Bealnamulla

Irish War of Independence

Ireland was not though a peaceful place to live at this time. The British general election of 1918 saw the Home Rule party obliterated by Sinn Féin. Their rise to prominence was as a direct result of the extreme manner that the British dealt with the Easter Rising of 1916, making martyrs of the leaders. The population at large turned to Sinn Féin to gain independence for Ireland rather than the Home Rule party which wanted a parliament for Ireland but still part of the United Kingdom. The 73 newly elected Sinn Féin MPs refused to go to Westminster and so the 27 who were free (all the others were in Gaol) met in January 1919 and drew up an Irish Declaration of independence and took the title 'Dáil Éireann' for their Dublin parliament. In March the British released all the Sinn Féin prisoners to try and calm the public mood. But the first shots of the war of independence were fired in the early months of 1919. The very day that the Dáil Éireann was set up in Dublin the first casualty of the IRA was killed in Soloheadbeg, Co. Tipperary. The war was a guerilla war with small skirmishes rather than battle lines and trenches.

The war ground on until 1921 until both sides were ready for peace. The British realised they could never win the war, the IRA that while they could never lose, they could never really win either. In July 1921 a truce was agreed. The 1920 Government of Ireland Act had split the country and created Northern Ireland with its own parliament in Belfast. Northern Ireland remained very much a part of the United Kingdom and so the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 was negotiated in London in October 1921 against this background. After two months the Irish leaders under Michael Collins duly signed and the Irish Free State was born. The Irish could have its own parliament, army, police force but would continue to recognise the British King as the head of state and the country would be permanently partitioned.

The treaty split Sinn Féin and the IRA but after Collins had led the debate in the Dáil, the treaty was passed in January 1922 by sixty-four to fifty-seven. The treaty would be honoured.

In March 1922 a group of extreme republicans led by Rory O'Connor took over the Four Courts in Dublin. The first week of the civil war was the bloodiest, as central Dublin was devastated for the second time in ten years. The garrison in the Four Courts were shelled into submission. And as we know many of the historical documents of Ireland were destroyed in the fire that ensued including the census documents from 1821-1861.

After the defeat in Dublin the war moved to the Irish countryside where men who fought shoulder to shoulder a year earlier now turned on each other. The Republican cause was doomed from the start. They had to try the same guerilla tactics as before but now against the Free State Forces who had the support of the majority of the population. Only in Munster (Limerick and Waterford included) could they rely on strong support. In the first Free State election held just before the outbreak of fighting the Republicans only polled 22 percent of the vote. By mid 1923 the Republican leaders realised that further struggle was useless. In May they lay down their guns and the war ended without treaty or talks. The bitterness lingered for many years and former friends and family would never speak again.

Should this Certificate be lost, or mislaid, no duplicate of it can be obtained.

Certificate No. 20521

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

Form $\frac{37}{3}$

Certificate of Character. (*)

On discharge of No. 53771 (Rank) Sergeant
 (Name) Michael Fitzgerald who joined the
 above-named Force on the 16th day of May 1889,
 and was discharged on the 10th day of April 1922,
 in consequence of (†) Demobilization

His general conduct during the period of his service
 was Very Good

DESCRIPTION ON DISCHARGE.

Age, 50 years Height, 5 ft 9 ins
 Colour of Hair, Grey Colour of Eyes, Hazel
 Complexion, Fresh
 Special distinguishing }
 Marks, (if any) } /

Parish and County where born, Athlone, Westmeath
 Single, Married, or Widower, Widower

Given under my hand and seal at Ship St. Barracks this 10th
 day of April 1922.

Signature H. F. Taylor

Rank Co. Inspector of (†) Galway & R.

(*) This Certificate is given without any alteration, or erasure.
 (†) Insert here the circumstances under which the discharge takes place.
 (‡) Insert name of County.

(1916) Wk. S. T. 3204—15. 2. 17, 1916. 1-22. S. T. & Co., Ltd. *

I add this to flavour what life might have been like in Ireland in the period 1919 to 1923. It is of course very relevant to our story as due to the formation of the Irish Free State and the creation of the Garda Siochana, the Royal Irish Constabulary was disbanded. Michael (Jnr.) was discharged from the RIC on the 10th April. Here is the “Certificate of Character” he was given on that occasion.

It is interesting to note that his height on leaving the force is one inch greater than when he signed up as an 18 year old. His daughter Marian Wurr recalled that he went on ahead to England in the June to make arrangements for the family. Gerald seems to have already left for Argentina so Kathleen was left in charge. Michael (Jnr.) was very unhappy to learn, later, that they were set upon by some from the town who were venting their dislike of the RIC. Some came into the house but Kathleen sent them packing. Marian Wurr in her recollections said it was not personal just against the RIC and the system. As far as she was concerned her father had been a good and fair RIC man. He gave them no specific reason to set on the family.

The family dared not take all their belongings with them beyond a few clothes and personal items. They were sure that the furniture would be destroyed as they waited at the station. Therefore they organised a sale. The piano was much admired

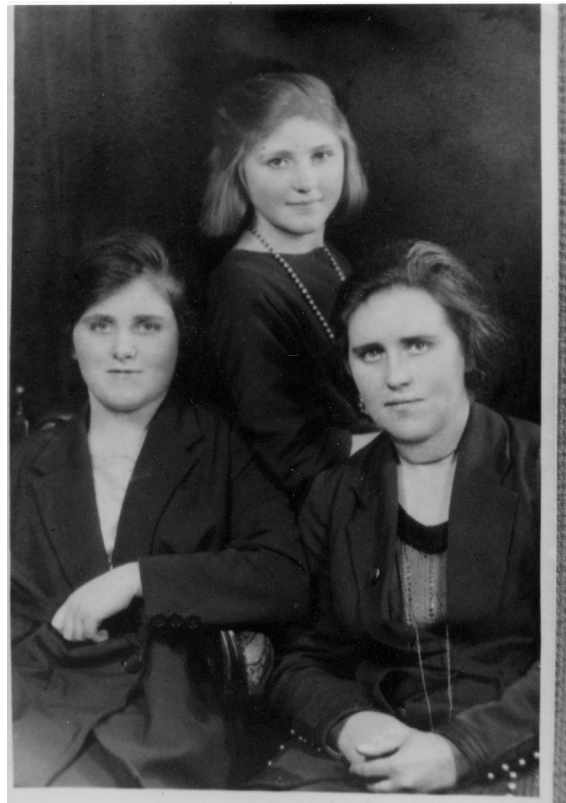


Gerald Fitzgerald Centre

by a friend who used to come and play it, therefore she upped the value they got for that. Other friends came and upped the bidding but even those items that sold well went for a fraction of their value. There were a pair of oil paintings in big gilt frames and a lovely table. All went. Marian remembered her mother had regularly entertained with her lovely china but this too was left. Leaving for England put a stop to John's education. His teachers were keen he stay as he had, it was alleged, got the best results in Ireland in some subjects. But Marian Wurr was sure her brother, who was a real home bird, would have missed them all too much and pined away.



Marian Wurr, October 1921



Marian, Eveline and Kathleen Fitzgerald



Eveline Fitzgerald

Arrival in Baldock August 1922



Baldock 1925

When they left Ballinasloe in the August, Kathleen was in charge as Michael (Jnr.) was already in England. They went first by train to Dublin. They stayed in a 4th or 5th class hotel and looked up a few friends the next day before catching the boat to England. Marian did not record whether they went into Liverpool or Holyhead. They went on by train and changed at Crewe. Someone had suggested it better to change and go cross country to Peterboro' then a local train to Baldock. Marian though in 1985 thought it might have been better to have carried on the Euston and then go back out to Baldock.

Changing at Crewe they had a long wait in the middle of the night. Michael had been very sick on the boat over and was now feeling a lot better. In Peterborough they had to cross the town by taxi to the other station to pick up the Baldock train. They arrived into Baldock at 1pm and Michael (Jnr.) was there to meet them. But he had no cart with him and proceeded to walk the long route to their new house 38 Nightingale Way.



Fitzgeralds outside Nightingale Way

He had kitted out the house as he expected they would like but Marian Wurr, his daughter, said a lot of what he got has not kept long and that while the beds were of course great they, Kathleen and Marian, would have rather had him wait until they could choose. However he had a meal ready for his weary children.

The houses were built on new ground, full of chalk, and the whole estate was overrun with earwigs. This made for a very uncomfortable first night, they later learned to dissuade the creepy crawlies with paraffin wax on window sills, doors and so on. The following day they set off into town to post letters to Ireland to friends, just to let them know how the move had gone. But on reaching the high road they posted the letters into the first letter box they found that looked to fit the part. It turned out to be the bank. Clearly the bank staff made sure the letters were correctly forwarded as they received replies in due course. It was like the post office in Ballinasloe and they made a genuine mistake. Having 'posted' the letters they left the town and set off across the fields and up into the Weston hills. It was at the top of the hill that the weather suddenly changed and they were pelted by an August rain shower. The whole family were shocked how 'fierce' English rain was. Irish rain was a much gentler affair but this rain 'beat their faces'.

In the first days in Baldock Kathleen made curtains and so on to make the house as they wanted. Her sister Marian Wurr recalled her big sister was difficult to help as had to be in charge. Kathleen insisted on doing the cleaning, cooking etc. Someone in the Loyalist Association suggested to Michael Jnr. that Marian should apply to Spirella, the corset makers in the nearby new town of Letchworth Garden City. This she did and was duly taken on at 10 shillings a week. She continued on this salary until she felt brave enough to ask for a raise when she went up by half a crown. (NB half a crown was 2 shillings and sixpence so she got a 25% raise. 10 Shillings is equivalent to 50p in 2012. So half a crown was 12.5p.). Marian Wurr worked at Spirella until she married in 1928.

Michael (Jnr.) never took a full-time job in England, he was 51 when they arrived, but was happy to provide cover for holiday periods and the like. So sometimes he was watchman at 'the Kryn'. 'The Kryn' was short for 'Kryn and Lahy Steel Works' in Letchworth Garden City. Following the invasion of Belgium in August 1914, thousands of Belgians fled to England with local residents offering to board them and help out financially. Three who arrived in Letchworth GC that year were Jacques Kryn, a diamond merchant, his brother, George, and a colleague, Raoul Lahy. They subsequently formed the Kryn and Lahy Metal Works in Dunhams Lane.



An aerial view of the vast Kryn & Lahy steelfoundry site, c. 1940s.
After it closed in 1979, this site became Letchworth's business park and out-of-town shopping area.

His bright son John Fitzgerald too worked at the Kryn as an accountant. But around 1930 when the trading conditions were very bad he was let go, the only unmarried member of the office. John felt this was flannel and that they had just wanted to get rid of him. This left him out of work and John took it very badly. In 1931 after trying endlessly to find work he moved down to North Finchley and stayed with his sister Marian Wurr and her husband so that he might try the north London area. He was very depressed by the fruitless working and so when his sister suggested he apply to Darcy Allen in Hendon who were advertising, John was not inclined. He felt it pointless but to placate his sister he did apply and after interview with the Boss who was Irish, landed the job that he held until he retired. He lived this Marian and her family in North Finchley as it was close to Hendon. He studied accountancy hard but was never formally qualified though it seems he was extremely good at his job.

Early in 1925 a new family arrived in Baldock and the two fine sons of the family, Horace and Arthur Wurr caused quite a stir when they were first seen at mass in Baldock. And now we must tell the story of the Wurrs.

Arrival of Wurrs in Baldock January 1925

On 19th January 1925 Arthur Thomas Wurr (1854-1931) and his wife Margaret Mary (nee Nash 1872-1955) moved with their four children. Agnes was 29, Horace 27, Arthur Richard 25 and Monica Alice 21. They came from the east end of London and came to 34 Mons Avenue.

Telephone 3749 Dalston. January.....1925


Mr Wurr.....

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Five



Receipt for the house move

The family history of the Wurrs is very long. A distant cousin once got in contact in the 1980s and the net result is that there are umpteen generations known to us back to a Stephen Wurr in 1528. This represents a colossal amount of work and is far more than will ever be possible with the Fitzgerald genealogy. For our purposes I shall ignore the very early stuff and go to the Norwich of the late 18thC. Thomas Wurr was born in 1796 and was a shoemaker. He married one Sarah Dowson around 1821 and they had about 8 children. The eldest was Jonathan, born on 19th January 1823 in St. Michael's parish Norwich city. He would live until the first year of the 20th century. The Wurrs were strict and particular baptists. He married Jemima Blake in the first quarter of 1851 and they went on to have seven children of their own. The third born was Arthur Thomas (4/11/1854) and he would prove a disappointment to his baptist parents.



Jonathan and Jemima

Arthur Thomas fell in love with a Catholic and converted. It is thought this happened in Norwich and that as he was cut off by his disapproving family he left for London. The census returns have him in Norwich with his parents in 1871 but by 1881 he is in St. Luke's' district in the East End of London, Leuens Lane. He is a Shoe Warehouseman.

In Norwich in 1871 he was shown as a Baker. I don't know if he went back to Baking but it was a baker's daughter who eventually caught his eye. She was the daughter of Charles Nash, Margaret Mary. Her father was a remarried widower. He had married first around 1870 and Margaret Mary was the first born. Then there was a sister Bertha and a brother George before his first wife died. George too died early, it seems he died a hero trying to save someone from drowning in the river Lee and drowned himself.

I think Charles remarried around 1880 and he and his new wife went on to have four more children. Charles Jnr., Kate, Edith and James (Jim).

They were not Catholics and Margaret Mary would eventually convert but not until after they married. Arthur and Margaret lived in in the East end of London.



Arthur and Margaret with Agnes and Horace C 1900

The online record of the London Electoral register gives their addresses as follows:

1899 – 1900	9 Culford Grove	2 unfurnished rooms on 1 st floor
1901 – 1913	122 Matthias Rd., Hackney North	
1914 – 1915	34 Allen Rd.	
1918 - ?	48 Prince Goerge Rd.	Margaret May also on the register !
1923 – Jan 1925	1 Ardleigh Rd.	Arthur and Horace also on register too.

They had five children. Agnes Ellen 3/10/1896, Horace Charles Blake 2/3/1898 Arthur Richard 25/3/1900, Monica Alice Bertha 20/10/1904 and George Joseph born in 1909 who only lived 24 hours. So it was Mum and dad, Arthur Thomas and Margaret Mary, with Horace, Arthur and Monica who moved to Baldock in Jan 1925. Agnes had left to join a convent as Sr. O'Delia.

Marriage of Horace Charles Blake Wurr and Marian Fitzgerald



Marian Wurr February 1927