

# Who'd A 'Thowt It ?

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## CORRESPONDENCE

I have received some really nice interesting letters since sending out the last edition of the newsletter.

I heard from Lorraine English (nee McKeown) in August. Lorraine and husband Gordon were busy preparing for the visit of Lorraines sister Anita and her children in September. Anita lives in South Africa but was born in Liverpool as was Lorraine. We still believe that our two families were related back in the 1800's in Co.Dublin, but goodness knows whether we will ever be able to prove it. We will certainly keep trying to discover our respective families.

In September, a letter arrived from my niece Vivienne with lots of good news. Her son Dean who has put in a lot of hard work and study has finally landed a job with the Civil Service in Blackpool. Congratulations Dean. Don't forget to buy a new teapot! Do they still have rolled umbrellas and bowler hats?. (Only kidding.) Dean started his new job on 20th September, so he will be an old hand by the time this newsletter is published.

Vivienne is also working hard on a B.Sc (hons) degree in quantity surveying. She is attending the University of Central Lancashire with a number of other young women that graduated from the same course. The group have become firm friends.

Viv's younger son Chris is a football fan (soccer to you North American types), who has the good sense to support Manchester United as well as his local team of Blackpool.

The letter contained news of my sister Renee who is keeping well, and niece Janice and her children Damian and Ashley who are also keeping well. Damian works on a farm and apparently loves every minute of it.

Also in September, cousin Olive Quinn wrote to tell us that she has been in touch with cousin Jessie Harlow, daughter of my Dad's sister Mag. Jessie, Olive and my sister Renee are all about the same age. My wife Chris and I, took Renee and visited Olive and her husband Charlie at their Wilmslow home a few years ago on one of our visits to England. I have not seen Jessie since I was a small boy, and unfortunately that's a few years ago now.

Olive mentioned that she has kept in touch with Marge a daughter of the former Jennie Barnard, a cousin of our parents. Olive didn't mention Marge's

surname but I know her mother was the daughter of Great Uncle Tom who was a tobacco pipe maker like his father and younger brother Samuel George (my granddad).



another just before the war and we used to visit regularly.

*Pat Fitzgerald (c. 1936-1992)  
Shown in Central Park, New  
York in her early days in the  
United States*

Also in September I received a letter from cousin Kevin Fitzgerald in Middleton. It contained the very sad news that his sister Patricia had died in New York. He received the news as a great shock early in January 1993. He didn't even know that she was sick because she didn't want to worry him. I do not know how old Pat was exactly, but I remember her as a very pretty little girl probably about seven years younger than me, so born in the mid-thirties. Our two families lived fairly close to one

Apart from that sad news, we enjoyed the rest of Kevin's letter immensely.

It seems that Kevin's wife Diana has got herself involved in doing a bit of family research and as Kevin puts it, "She is quite a Miss Marples". We are really looking forward to exchanging notes when we meet up with Diana and Kevin next summer.

**Please direct all correspondence to:**

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Last but not least, in October I heard from Joan Barnard in Stockport telling me the additional sad news of Edgar Barnard's death in September 1992. Edgar was born in April 1907 and was the youngest son of William Henry Barnard (1862-1937) who in turn was the youngest son of Thomas Barnard (1821-1866), my Gt.Granddad.



*Edgar Barnard (c. 1907-1992)  
Shown on the occasion of our visit to Stockport, July 1979*

Joan, who is the wife of Eric Barnard nephew of Edgar, also told us of a branch of the family living in Japan. It seems that David Barnard who is my second cousin once removed, married a Japanese girl and lives in Japan with his wife and children. David is a teacher of English over there.

With the help of Eric, Chris and I met Edgar some years ago and enjoyed the tales of the family he was able to tell us. Edgar as far as we know is the last of my father's generation of the Barnard family, and we are really sorry to hear of his passing.

## THE FITZGERALD'S - Part 1

Our knowledge of our own particular branch of the proud Fitzgerald clan is fairly limited. A great deal is known however of the Fitzgerald family in general, and it will probably be of interest to those many family members who have Fitzgerald ancestors if I start with a brief background of the long history of this great family.

Many years ago, my Aunt Winnie (Fitzgerald) McVey loaned me a book titled "The Geraldines". I would love to obtain a copy of the book, and I intend to try to get hold of a copy when we visit England and Ireland next year.

The book traces the Gerhaldini family from Naples before 1000 A.D. to Normandy where they became powerful supporters of William, Duke of Normandy.

In 1066 they were on the winning side at the Battle of Hastings and along with the rest of the Norman aristocracy took part in the subjugation of Saxon Britain until they became in time a part of Anglo-Norman society. They seemed to be a restless lot and something of a thorn in the side of successive English kings, and at some time, presumably to get them out of the way, one Gerald was appointed Constable of Pembroke and dispatched to Wales to sort out the equally troublesome Welsh.

Gerald married Nesta, daughter of Rhys Ap Tewdwy the king of South Wales. This was in the early part of the 12th century. His son Maurice Fitzgerald (Fitz means son of) accompanied Strongbow to Ireland in 1170 to help subdue the rebellious Irish. Maurice Fitzgerald is regarded as the direct ancestor of all the Fitzgerald's of Ireland.

There were two main Irish branches of the family, the Leinster branch headed by the Earls of Kildare later Dukes of Leinster, and the Munster branch headed by the Earls of Desmond.

It didn't take long before the Anglo-Norman Fitzgerald's became more Irish than the Irish themselves and they became virtual rulers of Southern Ireland holding great tracts of land until fairly recent times. Along with many others of the Irish nobility, many Fitzgerald families lost their possessions and became impoverished because of their later opposition to English rule.

As previously noted, we know very little about our direct branch of the family, and what little we do know has taken many years to ferret out. My maternal grand-parents were John Fitzgerald and Margaret McKeown. When my parents visited us in 1968 we were living in Kitimat, in Northern British Columbia. I already had made my mind up to do some research on the family tree, and I took the opportunity to quiz my parents about their respective families.

My mother told me that her mother had been born in Elizabeth St. Ancoats in 1864, but her father had been brought from Ireland "as a babe in arms". She did not know where in Ireland her father was born, but she said that her mother had told her that her maternal grandmother was a Dublin woman.