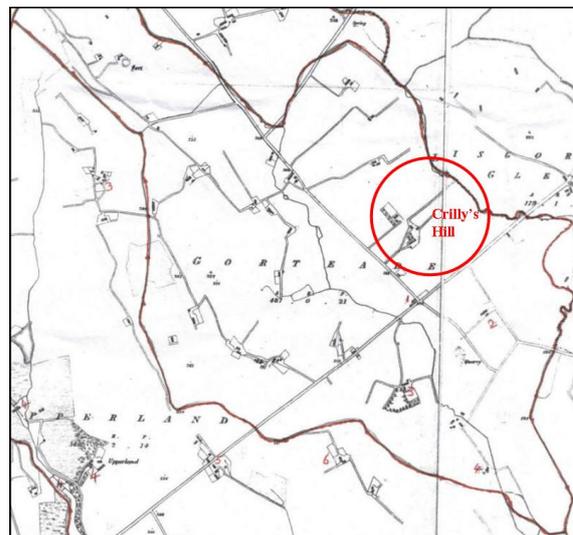
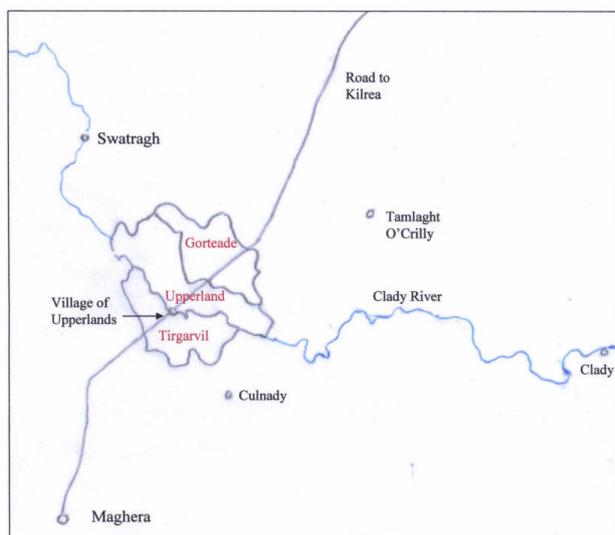


## The Family of John Crilly of Gorteade, Upperlands

Within the townland of Gorteade, which is near the village of Upperlands in South Derry, there were a number of Crilly families, most of whom lived on or near a hill in the townland known locally as Crilly's Hill. The map on the left shows the general location of Gorteade within the Maghera/Kilrea area. The other map is a copy of the First Edition of the Ordnance Survey Map [PRONI: OS/6/5/32/1 & OS/6/5/33/1] on which I have marked the general area of Crilly's Hill within the townland.



In 1831 there were nine families of Crilly living in the townland, By the time of the Griffith's Valuation in 1859 there were five. In 1901 there were four families. Today there are no Crilly families living in the townland.

I have chosen one of these Crilly families because of the fact that Joe Doherty of Gorteade, whose family is the subject of a separate case study, is related to one of them. Joe's mother was Mary Crilly who was the daughter of a William Crilly who was the son of John Crilly who was one of the Crilly families listed in the 1831 Census Returns. John Crilly had two other sons, Daniel and John. The three sons became policeman and therefore spent a substantial part of their lives in other parts of Ireland. Two of them William and Daniel returned to the townland and, although both dead by 1901, their families are listed in both the 1901 and the 1911 Census.

### John Crilly

The early history of the family is, not surprisingly, a bit sketchy. Joe Doherty thought that William, Daniel and John were born between c.1826 and 1831. This information allowed me to identify this John from another John in the 1831 Enumerators' Returns [PRONI: MIC/5A/8].

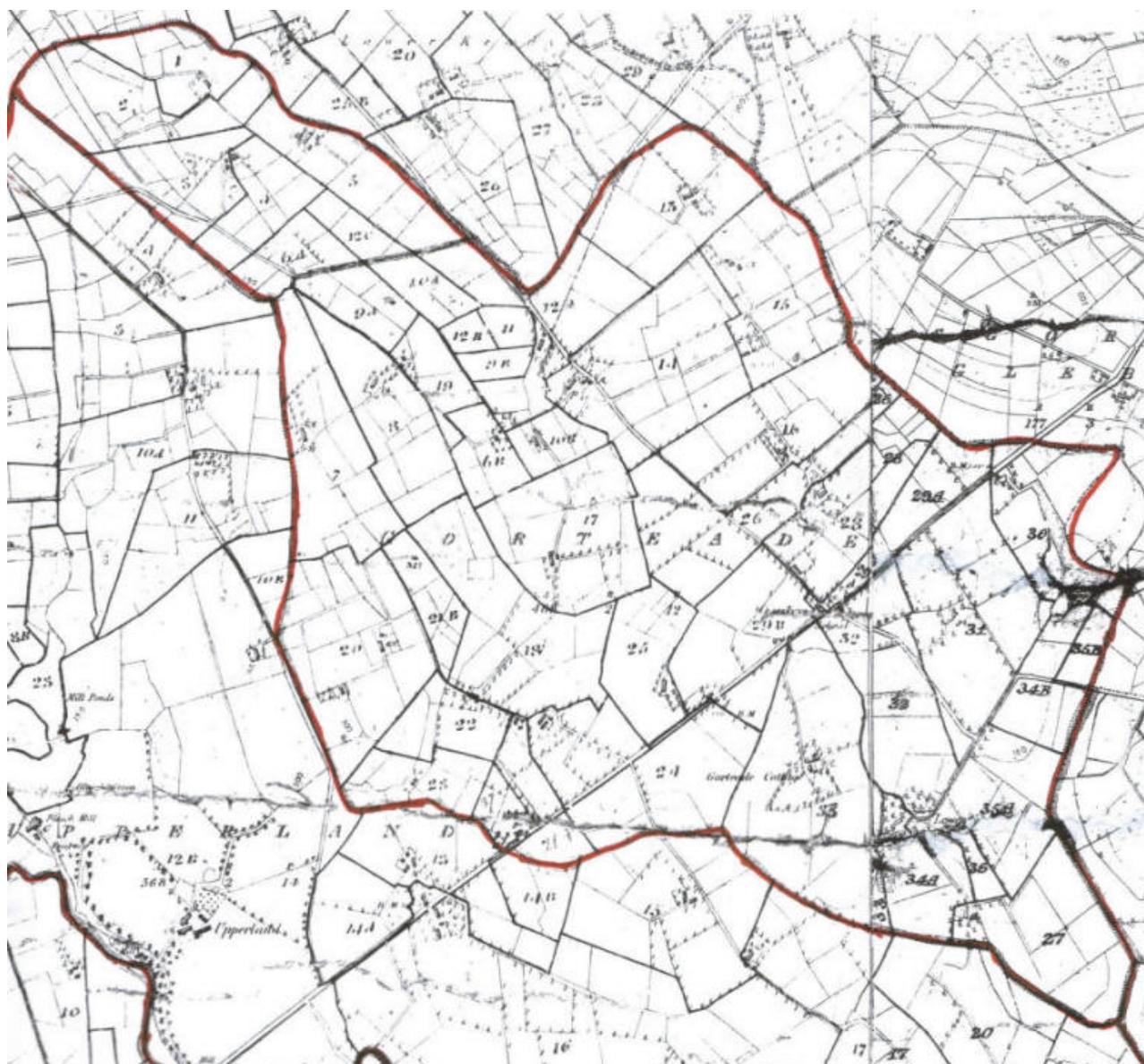
House No.	Forename	Surname	No. of Families	Males in Family	Females in Family	Total in House
22	David	Crilly	1	4	6	10
30	Rose	Crilly	1	2	3	5
31	Daniel	Crilly	1	2	2	4
32	John	Crilly	1	4	1	5
33	Margaret	Crilly	1		4	4
34	Patrick	Crilly	1	5	3	8
35	James	Crilly	1	1	1	2
51	Lawrence	Crilly	1	2	3	5
52	John	Crilly	1	1	3	4

One of the Johns [house no. 52 in the census] had 1 male and 3 females in the family and the other [house no. 32 in the census] had 4 males and 1 female in the family. I am fairly sure that the latter was the John who was the father of William, Daniel and John.

According to Joe, John Crilly was married to a Catherine McCrannell (McReynolds) from the adjoining townland of Keady. They had another son, Dominic, who was drowned when very young.

I am certain, from the evidence of the 1831 Census Returns, the Tithe Applotment Book of 1828 and the Griffith's Valuation of 1859 that John Crilly of house no. 32 in the census lived with a group of five other Crilly families in a part of the townland known as Crilly's Hill

By the time of Griffith's Valuation of 1859 there were three Crilly families living on Crilly's Hill - Catherine [no. 16], Daniel [no. 26] and Matthew [no. 28]. The farms were contiguous and their location can be seen on the valuation map below. You will probably have to increase the zoom in the PDF file to 200% to be able to pick out these numbers clearly. According to Joe Doherty, farm No. 28 occupied by Matthew Crilly was the farm where the three boys were born. Joe had no knowledge of the relationship of Matthew to William, Daniel and John.



PRONI:VAL/12/D/5/32B [c.1860-c.1883] & VAL/12/D/5/33C [c.1860-c.1878]

Overleaf is a copy of the page from the printed Griffith's Valuation for the townland. Here you will be able to see the size of each farm and the valuation of the land and buildings on each holding.

VALUATION OF TENEMENTS.

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PARISH OF MAGHERA.

No. and Letters of Reference to Map.	Names.		Description of Tenement.	Area.	Rateable Annual Valuation.		Total Annual Valuation of Rateable Property.
	Townlands and Occupiers.	Immediate Lessors.			Land.	Buildings.	
GORTFEADE— (Ord. S. 32 & 33)				A. R. P.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1	Michael M'Gowan.	Worshipful Company of Mercers.	House and land.	7 2 15	3 10 0	0 5 0	3 15 0
2	Thomas M'Grew.	Same.	House and land.	13 2 25	2 15 0	0 5 0	3 0 0
3	James Linn.	Same.	House and land.	9 1 20	2 5 0	0 10 0	2 15 0
4	Thomas Mellon.	Same.	House and land.	7 1 15	3 0 0	0 10 0	3 10 0
5	Francis M'Conaick.	Same.	House and land.	10 3 15	5 0 0	1 0 0	6 0 0
6 A	Hugh Laferty.	Same.	House and land.	5 1 0	2 0 0	—	4 15 0
- B				4 2 25	2 5 0	0 10 0	
7	Patk. M'Master, sen.	Same.	House and land.	16 2 10	3 0 0	0 10 0	3 10 0
	Patk. M'Master, jun.		House and land.				
8	Archibald Kane, jun.	Same.	Land.	12 2 30	6 0 0	—	6 0 0
	William Hannay.		House.				
9 A	Patrick Kane.	Worshipful Company of Mercers.	Land.	5 1 30	2 0 0	—	3 0 0
- B				1 3 0	1 0 0	—	
10 A	Patrick Kane.	Same.	House and land.	3 2 30	0 15 0	1 5 0	2 15 0
- B							
11	Bernard Kane.	Same.	Land.	3 3 30	2 5 0	—	1 0 0
12 A	John Kane.	Same.	House, offices, & land.	14 3 0	8 15 0	1 10 0	12 5 0
- B				1 1 25	0 15 0	—	
- C				3 0 0	1 5 0	—	
13	Daniel Crilley, sen.	Same.	House, office, and land.	15 3 20	9 5 0	1 0 0	10 5 0
14	Archibald Kane, sen.	Same.	House, offices, and land.	22 0 20	14 5 0	1 10 0	15 15 0
	Unoccupied.	Same.	House.	—	—	0 5 0	0 5 0
15	Anthony Kane.	Same.	House, office, and land.	15 2 25	9 5 0	1 0 0	10 5 0
16	Catherine Crilley.	Same.	House, office, and land.	15 2 10	9 5 0	0 15 0	10 0 0
17	James Houston.	Same.	House, office, and land.	17 1 0	11 0 0	0 10 0	11 10 0
18	John Kissock.	Worshipful Company of Mercers.	House, office, and land.	19 1 30	10 5 0	2 0 0	12 5 0
19	John Laferty.	Same.	House, and land.	4 2 15	2 5 0	0 10 0	2 15 0
20	Laurence Dimond.	Same.	House, office, and land.	21 3 0	9 5 0	0 15 0	10 0 0
21 A	Samuel Arbuthnot.	Same.	House, office, & land.	8 1 15	5 15 0	1 0 0	8 0 0
- B				4 3 10	1 5 0	—	
22	John Bradley.	Same.	House and land.	6 1 20	3 5 0	0 10 0	3 15 0
23	Patrick Mellon.	Same.	House and land.	6 2 20	3 0 0	0 10 0	3 10 0
24	Anne Ballagh.	Same.	House, office, and land.	21 1 10	14 15 0	2 0 0	16 15 0
25	James Crilley.	Same.	House and land.	9 1 25	6 5 0	0 15 0	7 0 0
26	Daniel Crilley.	Same.	House, office, and land.	15 3 10	10 5 0	0 15 0	11 0 0
27	Thomas Smith.	Same.	House, office, and land.	16 0 20	11 15 0	1 10 0	13 5 0
28	Matthew Crilley.	Same.	House and land.	13 1 25	9 9 0	0 15 0	9 15 0
29 A	Andrew Ballagh.	Same.	House, offices, & land.	7 1 25	4 15 0	3 15 0	18 5 0
- B				14 0 10	9 15 0	—	
30	Unoccupied.	Andrew Ballagh.	House.	—	—	0 10 0	0 10 0
	Bridget Dolerty.	Worshipful Company of Mercers.	House and land.	13 0 0	6 0 0	0 10 0	6 10 0
31	John Tighe.	Same.	House, offices, and land.	21 1 10	13 10 0	2 0 0	15 10 0
32	Henry Houston.	Same.	House, offices, and land.	16 0 5	11 10 0	1 15 0	13 5 0
33	Rev. Robert Torrens.	Same.	House, offices, and land.	27 3 27	19 10 0	10 0 0	29 10 0
	School-house.	(See Exemptions.)					
34 A	Alexander Mitchell.	Worshipful Company of Mercers.	House, offices, & land.	7 3 35	7 5 0	1 5 0	12 15 0
- B				6 3 10	4 5 0	—	
35 A	John Mitchell.	Same.	House, offices, & land.	12 0 35	10 0 0	1 10 0	13 0 0
- B				2 0 10	1 10 0	—	
36	Alexander Mitchell.	Same.	Land.	1 2 20	0 15 0	—	0 15 0
	John Mitchell.			0 15 0	—	0 15 0	
Total of Rateable Property.				488 2 12	280 0 0	44 15 0	324 15 0
EXEMPTIONS:							
33		Worshipful Company of Mercers.	School-house.	—	—	1 0 0	1 0 0
Total, including Exemptions.				488 2 12	280 0 0	45 15 0	325 15 0

Certainly by 1859 all of John's sons had left the townland. William, when aged 21,<sup>1</sup> had joined the Revenue Police on the 20th February 1847 and the Constabulary of Ireland [Royal Irish Constabulary after 1867] on the 1st October 1857. The year he joined the Revenue Police was one of the worst winters during the Famine years.

<sup>1</sup> If he was 52 when he retired in 1880, then this suggests that he was only 19 in 1847, yet the official record gives his age at entry as 21. Because he was the oldest of the three boys I think he was born in 1826 which would make him 54 when he retired. Daniel seems to have been born in 1827 and John in 1831.

According to contemporary reports February 1847 was a month of snow and gales and starvation and fever was widespread. The Rev. John P. Hewitt, Rector of Moneymore, writing to W. Stanley on 3rd February 1847 said: "The distress is increasing every day ..... Although such fearful distress does not prevail as in other places, yet the destitution is great and our need urgent ..... The soup kitchen dispenses 100 gallons of soup daily and we supply 228 families, consisting of upwards of 1100 individuals. The workhouse at Magherafelt has more than it was constructed to receive."

Below is a copy of a letter from the Rt. Hon. George Robert Dawson, Castledawson, Co. Londonderry to Sir Thomas F. Freemantle, Chairman of the Board of Customs, London, 17 January 1847, describing the distress in south Derry in the winter of 1846-47.

Castledawson,  
Sunday, 17th January, 1847

My Dear Freemantle,

I really have not had heart to write to you before for I had nothing to communicate except the heart rending scenes of misery which I daily witness. I wish I had never come here, if I had known what I was to encounter in this hitherto happy district, I should have spared myself the pain of witnessing a misery, which, with every feeling of compassion, and every expenditure within my means, I can do no more than most inadequately and feebly relieve. I can think of nothing else than the wretched condition of this wretched people. We are comparatively well off in this neighbourhood, there is no want of food, but it is at such a price, as to make it totally impossible for a poor man to support his family with the wages he receives. I do not exaggerate when I tell you that from the moment I open my hall door in the morning until dark, I have a crowd of women and children crying out for something to save them from starving. The men, except the old and infirm stay away, and show the greatest patience and resignation.

I have been obliged to turn my kitchen into a Bakery and Soup shop to enable me to feed the miserable children and mothers that cannot be sent away empty. So great is their distress that they actually faint on getting food into their stomachs. The only reply to my question of what do you want, is, I want something to eat, is so simple, so universal, that it tells its own tale and neither rags nor sickness nor worn out faces or emaciated limbs can make their situation more truly pitiable than these few words. The gentry, the shopkeepers, the clergy are making every effort in their power to relieve the people, by subscriptions, and incessant attention, but what can be done when thousands, are daily, applying for one meal a day. We are also visited by hordes of wandering poor who come from the mountains, or other districts less favoured by a resident gentry, and worst of all, Death, is dealing severely and consigning many to an untimely tomb. This week six or seven of the old and infirm have died in my little village, not from want of food, but from the consequences of privation and the total change which has taken place in the habits of the people.

Yours truly,  
George Dawson

Source: PRONI Education Pack on *The Famine*, published in 1970s.

We have no way of knowing how the famine affected John Crilly and his family. Certainly by 1859 the number of Crilly families living on Crilly's Hill had halved. I doubt very much that the Famine had wiped out these families. Instead it probably made family members think about moving further afield. We have no hard evidence, other than the three brothers, on what happened to the Crillys who disappeared. Nor, do we know William's reasons for joining the Revenue Police, and later the Constabulary of Ireland. It probably seemed a better option than staying on the land during the Famine years. Once one brother had joined it is not surprising that the others followed. Daniel followed William in 1848 and finally John joined in 1854.

## William Crilly

After he joined the Constabulary of Ireland in 1857 William was stationed in Donegal, where he rose to the rank of sergeant and then, from 1871, in Fermanagh, where he became a Chief Constable.<sup>2</sup> He retired on the 19th January 1880, aged 52, and received a pension of £91 per annum. Here is a copy of his discharge letter which is now in the possession of his grandson Joe Doherty.

COUNTY INSPECTOR'S OFFICE,  
ENNISKILLEN. 21<sup>st</sup> day of January, 1880.

This is to certify that William Crilly served in the late Revenue Police from the 20<sup>th</sup> Feb 1847 to the 1<sup>st</sup> October 1857 and in the Royal Constabulary from the latter date to the 19<sup>th</sup> of January 1880 when he was discharged on an Annual Pension of £91. the highest rate that could be awarded to a man of his rank (First Class Head Constable). It affords me very much pleasure in stating that during the Head Constable's long service, nearly 33 years, his conduct was most exemplary and that on his discharge he was awarded a special sum from the Constabulary Force Fund for absence of unfavourable records.

W. J. [Signature]  
1<sup>st</sup> County Inspector  
Donegal Constabulary

<sup>2</sup> Note that a Chief Constable of that time would have been the equivalent of the modern rank of Chief Inspector who would have been responsible for a sub-district.

He returned home to Gorteade in 1880 and "bought" the farm of Catherine Crilly (No. 16 in Griffith's Valuation). Incidentally, the word "bought" can be misleading. At this time all farmers in Gorteade were tenants - they did not actually own their farms. All land in the townland was owned by the Mercers' Company and all farmers rented their land from the Company. However there was a custom, known as Tenant Right [sometimes referred to as the Ulster Custom], whereby a tenant, when leaving a farm, had a right to a payment from the incoming tenant. This payment would cover any improvements the outgoing tenant had made to the farm during his period of occupancy, plus the money that he had paid previously as an incoming tenant. This meant that access to a farm in the nineteenth century not only required the consent of the landlord's agent, it also required the payment of a sum of money to the outgoing tenant. For many outgoing tenants who wished to emigrate this was their passage fare and a nest egg towards their life in the New World.

William an ex-policeman, and now a man of some means, would have been seen as a very suitable tenant by the landlord's agent. There is no record of how much he paid for the farm. However we do know from information in the estate papers of the Mercers' Company that the going rate for Tenant Right payments c.1880 was about £15 an acre. This farm was c.15 acres, so it probably cost William about £230

William married Bridget Henry from Keady on the 3rd January 1882 in Granaghan Roman Catholic Church. Interestingly, Bridget gave Ampertaine as her address at the time of her marriage. Ampertaine is the old name for the townland of Upperland. She may have been in service there at that time. The witnesses were Michael O'Kane and Mary Henry.

He had nine children, eight of whom were still living in 1911 - five sons: John (away from home by 1911), William, Michael, Dominick and Matthew and three daughters – Susan, Mary and Bridget. By the time of the 1901 Census Bridget Crilly was a widow, her husband, having died on the 20th December 1899. Below are the details of the persons living in the house of Bridget Crilly in 1901 and 1911.

#### 1901 Census [Swatragh DED] [PRONI: MIC354/5/37]

House was thatched, had 4 front windows and 4 rooms.

House No. in Census	Forename	Surname	Relationship	Religion	Education	Age	Sex	Profession	Marriage	Where Born
31	Bridget	Crilly	Head of Family	Roman Catholic	Read & write	43	F	Farmer	Widow	Co. Londonderry
31	John	Crilly	Son	Roman Catholic	Read & write	18	M	Farmer's Son	Not married	Co. Londonderry
31	Susan	Crilly	Daughter	Roman Catholic	Read & write	17	F	Farmer's Daughter	Not married	Co. Londonderry
31	Mary	Crilly	Daughter	Roman Catholic	Read & write	15	F	Farmer's Daughter	Not married	Co. Londonderry
31	William	Crilly	Son	Roman Catholic	Read & write	12	M	Farmer's Son	Not married	Co. Londonderry
31	Michael	Crilly	Son	Roman Catholic	Read & write	9	M	Scholar	Not married	Co. Londonderry
31	Dominick	Crilly	Son	Roman Catholic	Read & write	7	M	Scholar	Not married	Co. Londonderry
31	Bridget	Crilly	Daughter	Roman Catholic	Cannot read	5	F	Scholar	Not married	Co. Londonderry
31	Matthew	Crilly	Son	Roman Catholic	Cannot read	2	M	Scholar	Not married	Co. Londonderry

## 1911 Census [Swatragh DED] [NAI: 1911 Online Census].

House was thatched, had 4 front windows and 6 rooms.

House No. in Census	Forename	Surname	Relationship	Religion	Education	Age	Sex	Profession	Marriage	Where Born
31	Bridget	Crilly	Head of Family	Roman Catholic	Read & write	54	F	Farmer	Widow	Co. L Derry
31	Susan	Crilly	Daughter	Roman Catholic	Read & write	27	F	Farmer's Daughter	Single	Co. L Derry
31	Mary	Crilly	Daughter	Roman Catholic	Read & write	24	F	Farmer's Daughter	Single	Co. L Derry
31	William	Crilly	Son	Roman Catholic	Read & write	22	M	Farmer's Son	Single	Co. L Derry
31	Michael	Crilly	Son	Roman Catholic	Read & write	20	M	Farmer's Son	Single	Co. L Derry
31	Dominick	Crilly	Son	Roman Catholic	Read & write	17	M	Farmer's Son	Single	Co. L Derry
31	Bridget	Crilly	Daughter	Roman Catholic	Cannot read	15	F	Milliner	Single	Co. L Derry
31	Matthew	Crilly	Son	Roman Catholic	Cannot read	12	M	Scholar	Single	Co. L Derry

Married 29 years - children born alive 9 – 8 still alive in 1911. [Although a widow, Bridget gave this information and then stroked it out.]

Note that the house in 1911 now had six rooms suggesting some renovations within the house.

At this point in most other case studies I would give the birth details of the children using either church records or the *Derry ~ Londonderry Genealogy: Birth Records for Co. Derry* online database or the *Ireland, Civil Registration Indexes* database on the LDS website. These births, since they date from the 1880s and 1890s, are relatively easy to find. Instead, I am concentrating on what happened to these children after 1911. The information came from Joe Doherty, grandson of William and Bridget Crilly. Mary, their daughter, was his mother. Such information is not easily obtained in documents and serves to illustrate the value of family information as we move into the twentieth century and closer to the present and the more recent past.

Mary married Patrick Doherty of Gortead in 1917 and had two sons and two daughters.

Susan married Bernard Lagan of Beagh Temporal and had three sons and threedaughters.

Bridget married Dennis McCotter of Moneysallin and had three sons.

William emigrated to California about 1920 and died there around 1958.

John, his elder brother, had earlier emigrated to America and not much is known about him. He must have emigrated some time between 1901 and 1911.

Michael emigrated to California around 1920 and came home in 1928 to farm no. 14 in Griffith's.<sup>3</sup> He swapped places with his brother Matt who then emigrated to America, where he died in 1968.

Dominic lived in the home farm No.16 in Griffith's and died in 1958. He is included in a group photograph taken in a flax field in 1938. This photograph can be seen in the case study of the Doherty family of Gortead.

Michael died in 1950.

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<sup>3</sup> His mother Bridget had bought the farm in 1899 from Archy (Tailor) Kane for £300.

## Daniel Crilly

Daniel, aged 21, joined the Constabulary of Ireland on the 7th August 1848 and was stationed in Carlow where he married Helen Kelly on the 19th September 1865. He was posted to Tipperary (South) on the 1st December 1865. He retired on the 1st November 1874 with a pension of £50 per annum.

He returned to the home farm in Gorteade [no. 28 in Griffith's] which had Matthew Crilly as occupier in 1859, John Crilly in 1863, Michael Crilly in 1873 and then Daniel in 1875.

We know that he had a son Daniel and a daughter Mary Anne who, according to the 1901 Census Returns, were born in Tipperary in 1876 and 1878 respectively. Daniel and his wife are dead by the time of the 1901 Census.. The details of their family can be seen below.

### 1901 Census [Swatragh DED] [MIC354/5/37]

House was thatched, had 3 front windows and 3 rooms.

House No. in Census	Forename	Surname	Relationship	Religion	Education	Age	Sex	Profession	Marriage	Where Born
29	Daniel	Crilly	Head of Family	Roman Catholic	Read & write	25	M	Farmer	Not married	Co. Tipperary
29	Mary A.	Crilly	Sister	Roman Catholic	Read & write	23	F	Farmer's Daughter	Not married	Co. Tipperary
29	Mary A.	Crilly	Aunt	Roman Catholic	Read & write	75	F	Retired Farmer	Not married	Co. Londonderry

As you can see Daniel and Mary A. were born in Co. Tipperary where their father Daniel was stationed for a time. There is an aunt, also called Mary A. Crilly, living in the house with Daniel and Mary. I am assuming that she must have been a sister of Daniel Crilly Sen.

By 1911 Daniel was still living in the same house but he was now married. His wife was Martha Diamond from Crossland in the parish of Desertoghill. She was the daughter of Patrick Diamond, who was a farmer. They were married on the 11th February 1909. The witnesses were Patrick Doherty and Bridget McAllister.

Their son Danny Crilly, born after 1911, is included in a group photograph taken in a flax field in 1938. This photograph can be seen in the case study of the Doherty family of Gorteade. I met Danny Crilly when I was researching the townland of Gorteade c.1970 with his cousin Joe Doherty.

## John Crilly

John aged 23, joined the Constabulary of Ireland in 1854. He was in Kildare from January of 1854 to September of 1854. Then he was posted to Carlow on the 1st September 1854 and then to Roscommon on the 1st January 1878. Here, he reached the rank of P2 Head Constable, a rank below his brother William. He received his pension of £58 on 5th May 1879. John died in 1879 – we think. He does not appear to have come back to Gorteade.

## Conclusion

This particular case study illustrates the way one family dealt with the problem that was facing many farming families in the first half of the nineteenth century. Since the second half of the eighteenth century many farmers had been subdividing their farms in order to accommodate their sons on the land. This, eventually, led to the overpopulation of the countryside. By the 1830s it was clear that this process could not continue. Sons still continued to be born and there was still the problem of finding a home and work for them. Even before the Famine, some families solved the problem through emigration. Clearly, in the case of the sons of John Crilly they chose to stay in Ireland and join the police. We will never know why they chose this option. Interestingly, it was an option which allowed two of them to return later to the townland where they had been born.