Archaeological Survey, Aglish Graveyard, Minard, Co. Kerry.



September 2010

Client: The Heritage Office,

Kerry County Council, County Buildings,

Ratass, Tralee,

Co. Kerry.

RMP No.: KE054-032-graveyard

Surveyors: Daire Dunne

Tighearnach Dunne

Written by: Laurence Dunne

Contact details:

3 Lios na Lohart, Ballyvelly, Tralee, Co. Kerry.

Tel.: 0667120706 E-mail: lar@ldarch.ie Web Site: www.ldarch.ie

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Townland: Aglish Parish: Minard Barony: Corca Dhuibhne Local name of graveyard: Aglish XY Co-ords: E453668, N600401 RMP No.: KE054-32-Ecclesiastical Remains, KE054-03201-Church, KE054-03202-graveyard, KE054-03203-ogham stone No. of named tombs: 29 No. of unnamed tombs: 47 No. of named headstones: 4 No. of unnamed headstones: 36 No. of plaques: 0 No. of architectural fragments: 0 No. of cross slabs: 1 No. of ogham stones 1

1. Introduction

Aglish graveyard was surveyed using a Magellan ProMark 3 Rover and Base station and presented in Irish Transverse Mercator (ITM). The GPS graveyard survey datasets were exported using Hangle software from GPS Ireland and then exported into AutoCad and finished using Adobe Illustrator. Reference numbers mentioned in the main body of the report relate to the ID point given when the survey was undertaken (see A3 plan, Figure 4). A digital photographic record and surname database was also compiled to complement the cartographic survey (Appendix 1). Digital photographs of the features within the graveyard are referenced in the appendix and all photographs are provided on the attached disc.

The survey was undertaken with due regard to:

- Conservation principles as produced by ICOMOS in the Venice and Burra Charters
- The publication in 2004 of the Architectural Heritage Protection-Guidelines for Planners by the DoEHLG
- The heritage objectives as outlined and adopted in the current Kerry County Council Development Plan 2009-2015, Built Heritage (Chapter 10).

The Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe was signed at the Granada Convention in 1985 and ratified by Ireland in 1997. The conservation aims as stated in the Burra Charter are for the retention or restoration of historical significance with the minimum of physical intervention and that such intervention work be reversible, maintain the structure's character and setting and that all conservation works should be undertaken following comprehensive research.

An information booklet on care and maintenance for tombs should be compiled and supplied to the relevant parish church.

All of these graveyards are recorded monuments protected under the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 and under the jurisdiction of Kerry County Council. All proposed works should be carried out by experience competent personnel under expert archaeological / architectural guidance and supervision. As these sites are recorded monuments conservation and restoration works can only be carried out under licence from the National Monuments Service of the Dept. of Environment, Heritage and Local Gov.

2. Site Location & Description

Aglish-eaglais-church is a small grass covered graveyard (Plate 1) situated on sharply sloping south facing hillside at 100mOD near Minard, 8km west of Anascaul and 11.5km east of Dingle on a minor third class road off the N86 (Figure 1). Aglish on its south facing sloping site has spectacular views of Dingle Bay and the Iveragh Peninsula although somewhat restricted by mature sycamore trees along its southern and eastern limits (Plate 2).

The graveyard is significantly raised above the roadside creating a more gently sloping interior. The graveyard is maintained by Mr. David Galvin whose home and farmyard abuts the southern boundary.

Aglish graveyard is a protected site, recorded in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and classified as: Ecclesiastical Remains KE054-032; Church KE054-03201; graveyard KE054-03202 and ogham stone KE054-03203 (Figure 2). No vestige of the church survives above ground today and it is not denoted on the 1st or 2nd Edition of the Ordnance Survey 6"map, sheet 54 of 1841 and 1896 (Figures 3 and 4).

Aglish graveyard was also recorded in the Dingle Archaeological Survey ... The parish church of Minard is mentioned in the Papal Taxation List (1302-1307) for the diocese of Ardfert and in 1633 was under the patronage of the Earl of Orrery. The foundations of a church were formerly visible in the rectangular graveyard at Aglish but local tradition maintains that the church was of mid-17th century date and had previously been located elsewhere. It is possible that Kilmurry was the original parish church and that it was removed to Aglish subsequent to the destruction of nearby Minard castle in 1650. However, Hickson suggests the opposite, that the 13th century parish church stood at Aglish and that Kilmurry was erected after 1307 when Aglish had fallen to decay or became too small for the district (Cuppage et al 1986, 258-9).

The origins of the ecclesiastic site at Aglish however, are much earlier and date to the Early Medieval period as two ogham stones are recorded from there. Today only one is *in situ* (Plates 3-4 & Figure 5) while the second 5th- 6th century cross-inscribed ogham stone was removed for some unknown reason to the National Museum of Ireland where it is currently on display (Plate 5 and Figure 6). In the course of this survey a cross-slab was also recorded (Plate 6 & Figure 5 and see below).

3. Aglish Graveyard

3.1 General

Aglish Graveyard is little used today and has only three modern formalised grave settings (287, 373, 389, Figure 5). The majority of interments are placed in above ground tombs, seventy six of which were recorded in the course of this survey. Through time many of them have become grassed over and neglected and often lack any named memorial plaque (Plates 2, 3, 7 & 8). There are a few different forms of tomb of which are low 'strong-box' type as well as rectangular, square and house-shaped.

Preferential burial in above ground tombs is a common feature in several graveyards in West Kerry and while this appears to be a tradition the more practical reason for it is that the burial ground is stony and rocky and often impossible to dig.

Apart from tombs there are thirty six unnamed graves at Aglish denoted by simple unhewn headstones disposed about the centre of the graveyard in particular (Plate 9 & Figure 5).

In general the interior of the graveyard is covered bumpy and irregular and difficult to traverse (Plate 10). Indeed one area of ground has collapsed while tomb (105) has partially collapsed (Figure 5).

4. Boundaries

Aglish graveyard is bounded on three sides (north, east and south) by a low dry stone wall. Mature sycamore trees also run along and beside the interior of the east and south boundary walls (Plate 2, 10, 11 & 12 & Figure 5). In general the low drystone boundary wall is in good order, however, maintenance repairs are required at three areas which have possibly suffered from root action associated with nearby mature sycamore trees (Figure 5 and Plates 10, 11 & 12). The western limits of the graveyard is raised over the roadway that runs north south beside it. This western boundary is protected by a modern galvanised iron fence (Plates 8 & 13).

5. Entrance

The roadway approach to the graveyard from Anascaul or Dingle is straight and sharply inclined with very little space to park (Plate 14). However, funerals are few and parking is accommodated by the open space around the neighbouring farm complex.

The entrance to Aglish is through a pair of modern galvanised gates that are set between two square, capped and rendered piers (Plate 15). The right or western pier is tilting and part of its render has fallen. There is no stile access into the graveyard.

No water tap or waste collection bins are provided.

6. Pathways

There is a single gravelled path in good condition that extends around the entire internal perimeter of the graveyard (Figure 5 & Plates 2 & 11).

7. Desire Lines

The existing formal pathway services this small graveyard adequately and coupled with the tidy nature of the grounds in general, there is no requirement for additional pathways. However, the grass in the interior should be kept short especially between May and October when the growth is strong and visitor numbers increase.

8. Named Tombs

Twenty nine named tombs were recorded in varying states of preservation some of which are now manifest as grass covered mounds (Plates 3 & 10, Appendix 1 & Figure 5). None of the tombs are of ashlar masonry. The majority are built with local sandstone, brick and concrete blocks, rendered and painted (Plate 8). While many of the tombs have memorial plaques several others are surmounted by modern headstones or crosses, sometimes at both gables (Appendix 1). The render on several tombs is cracked broken or missing. While on others grass has established itself and if neglected will eventually become grass

covered mounds like several others in the graveyard. None of the tombs are built with ashlar masonry.

Tomb (323), situated at the western limits of the graveyard, is the burial place of Muiris Mac Gearailt who lived locally and who died during fighting against British soldiers in March 1921 at Lispole. However, it is also possible that he may have died accidentally the evening before the action with the Crown forces at Lispole, while cleaning his gun (Plate 16). Two tombs (55 & 388) are of two local men Timothy T Galvin and Bartholomew Galvin, who served with the American armed forces in WW1 and Korea respectively. Both their tombs are surmounted by plain simple white headstones provided for American soldiers in Ireland. Bartholomew Galvin died during the Korean war on September 1st 1950, while Timothy Galvin survived WW1 and died on March 12th 1963 aged 72 (Plates 17 and 18).

8.1 Recommendations

The growth of grass on the tombs should only be fully removed as the primary element of an agreed inclusive strategy of repairs and other conservation and restoration works. The growth should first be cut back short so that a more critical evaluation on the steps necessary to undertake the repairs can be ascertained. Repairs to render should be undertaken under expert archaeological advice and supervision.

It is possible that some of the tomb incorporate medieval masonry from the church that once occupied the site as well as other archaeological artefacts. Consequently, any tombs requiring more substantial repairs should only be undertaken in association with an experienced archaeologist.

It is likely that local information would furnish the names associated with tombs whose name plaques are illegible. This information should be collected and entered into the database.

9. Unnamed tombs

Forty-seven unnamed tombs (Appendix 2 & Figure 5) were recorded in various states of preservation. Many are constructed with rubble sandstone, brick and concrete blocks and are generally rendered or capped with rectangular flag stones. However, there are many more tombs that are partially covered by grass or indeed survive as grass covered mounds (Appendix 2 & Plates 7 & 9-10).

9.1 Recommendations

The grass partially covering some of the tombs should only be fully removed as the primary element of an agreed inclusive strategy of repairs and other conservation and restoration works. Tombs that are fully covered in grass should be cut back for further evaluation to determine the nature and extent of further conservation / restoration works. This work should be undertaken with expert archaeological advice and guidance.

It is also likely that local information would furnish some of the names associated with these unnamed tombs. This information should be collected and entered into the database.

10. Named Headstones

Only four 20th century inscribed headstones (HN, Nos. 287, 373, 389 and 390, Appendix 3) were recorded in Aglish graveyard associated with formal grave settings (Figure 5 & Plates 19-22).

All of the headstones are in good condition.

10.1 Recommendations

No recommendations necessary

11. Unnamed Headstones

There were thirty-six unnamed headstones (HWN & Appendix 4) in total recorded in the course of this survey. All of the unnamed headstones are simple grave markers of unhewn local sandstone (Plate 9). These unhewn headstones are disposed around the centre of the graveyard (Figure 5) and are impossible to date without excavation.

11.1 Recommendations

No recommendations necessary

12. Cross-slab

A previously unrecorded cross inscribed grave stone was recorded in Aglish Grave yard (Plate 6 and Figure 5). The small, white lichen covered rectangular grave marker is lightly incised with an equal armed cross.

12.1 Recommendations

The location of the cross slab should be made known to the caretaker of Aglish Graveyard as a point of information and for safety considerations during grass cutting etc.

13. Ogham stones

An ogham stone (391) is situated beside tomb 202 (Plates 3, 4 & Figure 5). The ogham stone, one of two originally from Aglish is also recorded in the Dingle Archaeological Survey...measures .9m in height x .25m in width. The ogham inscription...was read by Macalister in 1945 as CELI AVI VU... (Cuppage 1986, 258-9).

A second 5th - 6th century Maltese cross inscribed ogham stone was removed from Aglish Graveyard to the NMI (Plate5 & Figures 5 & 6). This very fine stone is also incised with two swastikas and a spear or arrow motif. The ogham inscription, read by Macalister in

1945, reads: MAQI MAQ(I....O)GGODIKA (ibid).

13.1 Recommendations

A copy of the cross inscribed ogham stone now on display in the NMI should replace the original at Aglish cemetery.

14. Summary of recommendations for future management/conservation of Aglish graveyard

- Focused archaeological / historic architectural conservation and repairs should be undertaken on the damaged, partially covered and grass covered named and unnamed tombs.
- All vegetation on the tombs should be cut back and removed. The tombs should then be repaired re-pointed, re-rendered and restored sensitive to their original construction. This work should be done under the supervision of an archaeologist qualified in this area or a conservation architect experienced in this field and may require Ministerial Consent.
- Repairs to the dry stone boundary wall should be undertaken by people with a proven track record in repairing dry stone walls.
- The mature sycamore trees should be trimmed or coppiced by a professional tree surgeon.
- The location of the cross slab should be made known to the caretaker for safety reasons.
- A copy of the cross inscribed ogham stone, now in the NMI, should be erected in Aglish Graveyard.
- An information booklet on care and maintenance for tombs should be compiled and supplied to the relevant parish church.
- It is likely that local information would furnish the names associated with unnamed tombs. This information should be collected.
- An information board similar to one already existing at Killury graveyard, in Lissycurrig townland near Causeway, should be established at a suitable location at

the graveyard, most likely beside the entrance gate on its interior.

- The Care and Conservation of Graveyards, a publication from The Office of Public Works (OPW) is recommended reading for future maintenance of the church and graveyard.
- An informative booklet on Aglish graveyard should be compiled by Kerry County Council and supplied to the relevant parish church. It should include helpful tips for parishioners on caring for the graveyard, and the individual plots, as well as giving advice about works which may professional services such as the cleaning of old headstones etc.

Note on Recommendations

All recommendations as set out above are recommendations only based on visual site fieldwork undertaken by the writer. No invasive or other intervention work was undertaken in the course of producing this report. Access into the surviving church tower was not possible as the entrance was boarded up. Ultimately, no responsibility will be accepted by the writer with regard to the undertaking of the conservation work as recommended in this report and based only on visual inspection. The ultimate decision on recommendations etc rests with Kerry County Council and the National Monuments Service of the Dept. of Environment Heritage and Local Government.

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16. Figures



Figure 1: Site location map. Extract from OS Discovery series 1: 50,000, sheet 70.



Figure 2: Ortho-image extract from National Monuments Service online database of recorded monuments.

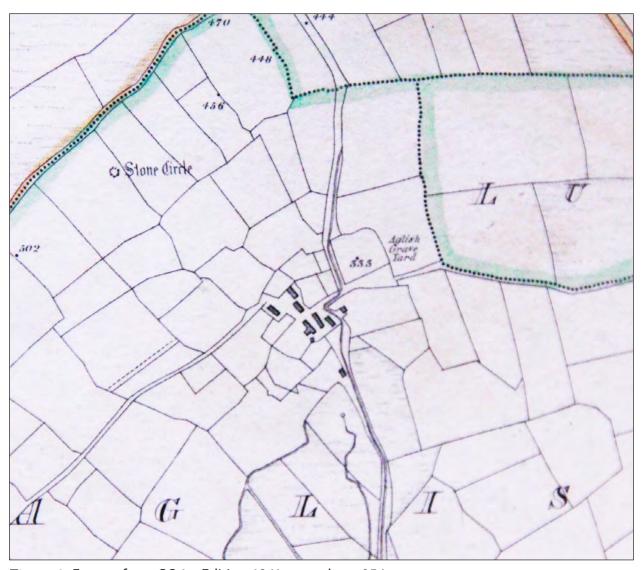


Figure 3: Extract from OS 1st Edition 1841 map, sheet 054.



Figure 4: Extract from OS 2nd Edition 25" 1896, sheet 054.



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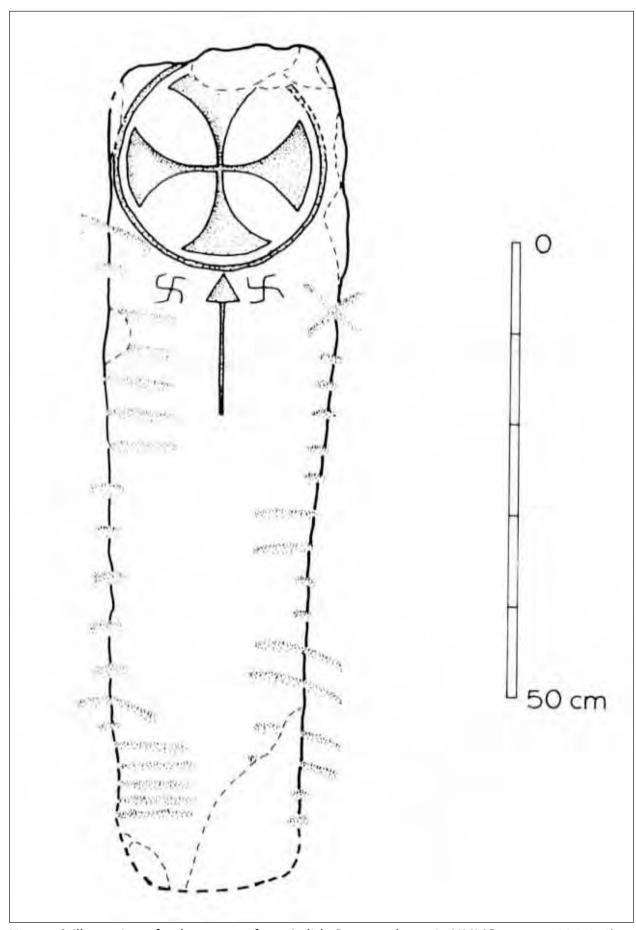


Figure 6: Illustration of ogham stone from Aglish Graveyard now in NMI (Cuppage 1986, 258).

17. Plates



Plate 1: Interior view of Aglish Graveyard from south-east



Plate 2: Interior view of Aglish Graveyard from north-west



Plate 3: View of ogham stone (391) beside grass covered tomb (202) in Aglish Graveyard



Plate 4: Close-up view of ogham stone (391)



Plate 5: View of cross inscribed ogham stone originally from Aglish and now on display in the NMI



Plate 6: View of cross slab (339) recorded in the course of this archaeological survey



Plate 7: View of partially covered unnamed tomb (382) in south-eastern limits of Aglish Graveyard



Plate 8: View of western limits of Aglish Graveyard from north. Note Dingle Bay and Iveragh Peninsula in background



Plate 9: View of uninscribed unhewn headstones at centre of Aglish Graveyard



Plate 10: View of the interior of Aglish Graveyard from north-west. Note the very irregular, bumpy ground and grass covered tombs and graves



Plate 11: View of eastern boundary wall and interior graveled pathway of Aglish Graveyard. Note the mature sycamore tress abutting the boundary wall



Plate 12: Detail view of damaged and partially breached section of eastern boundary wall



Plate 13: View of western limits of Aglish Graveyard from north. Note gravelled pathway and modern metal protective fence



Plate 14: View from south of downhill roadway approach to Aglish Graveyard



Plate 15: External view of entrance gates to Aglish Graveyard



Plate 16: View of burial tomb (323) of Muiris Mac Gearailt who died in 1921



Plate 17: View of headstone on tomb (55) of Bartholomew Galvin who was killed in the Korean war in 1950



Plate 18: View of headstone on tomb (388) of Timothy T Galvin who had been an American soldier in WW1 and who died in 1963



Plate 19: View of headstone (287) of Michael James Fitzgerald



Plate 20: View of Patrick O'Sullivan headstone (389)

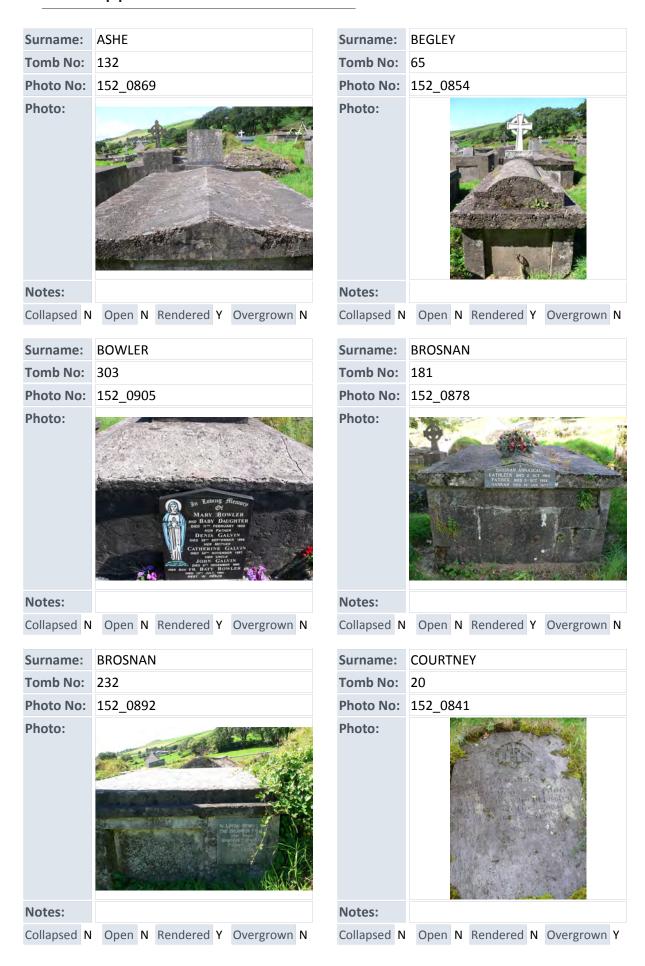


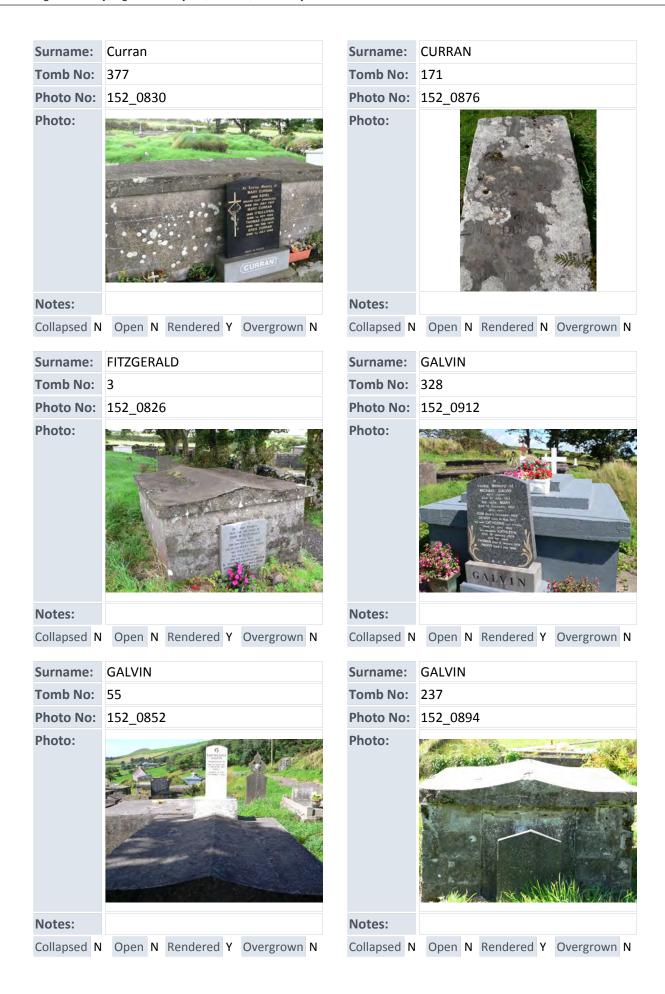
Plate 21: View of headstone of Patrick Begley (373)

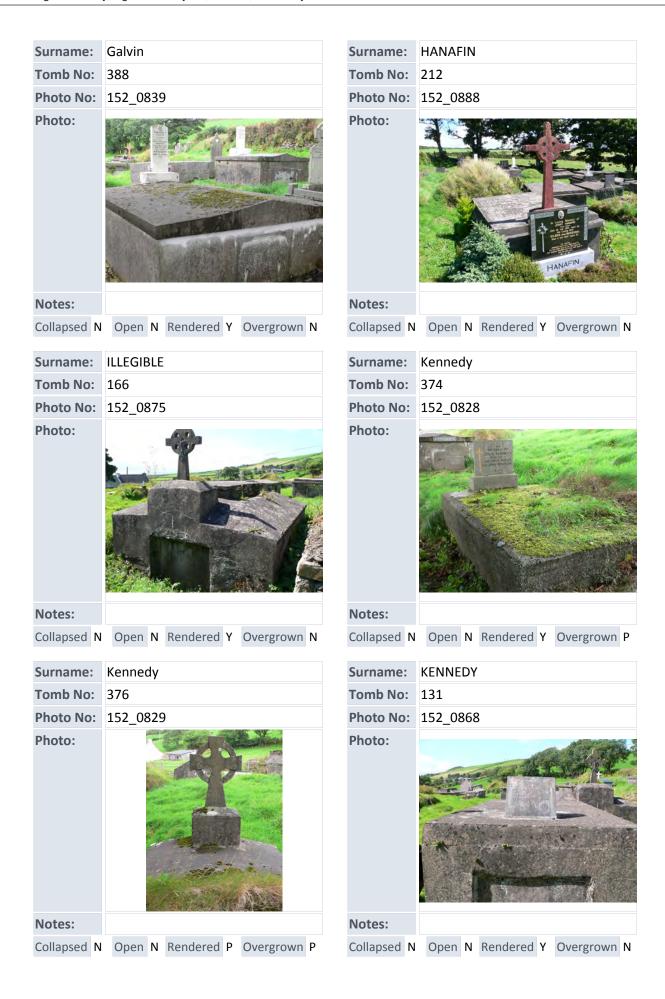


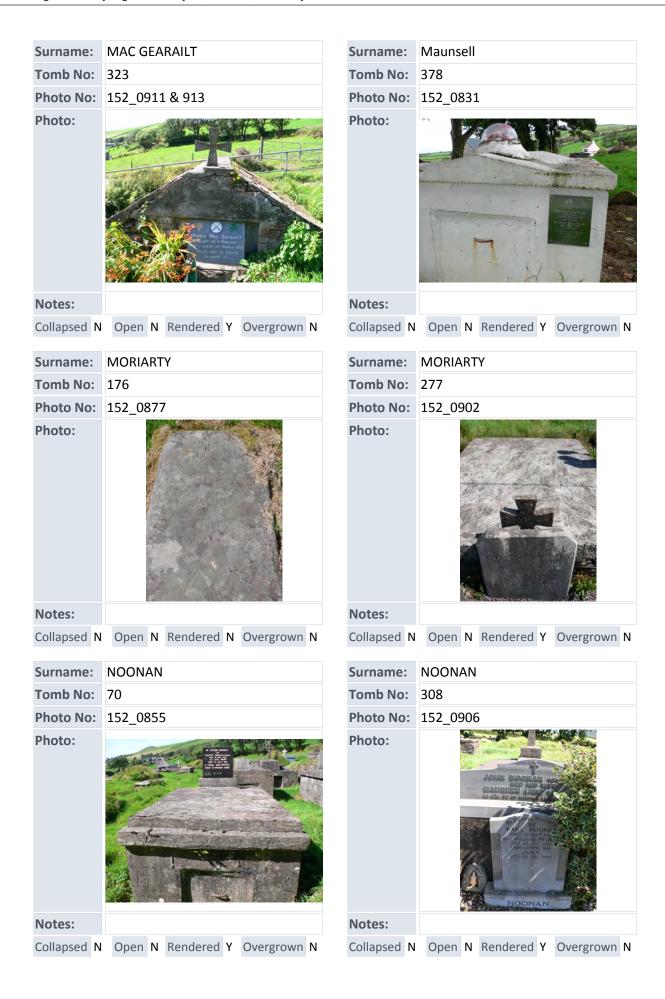
Plate 22: View of Bowler headstone (390)

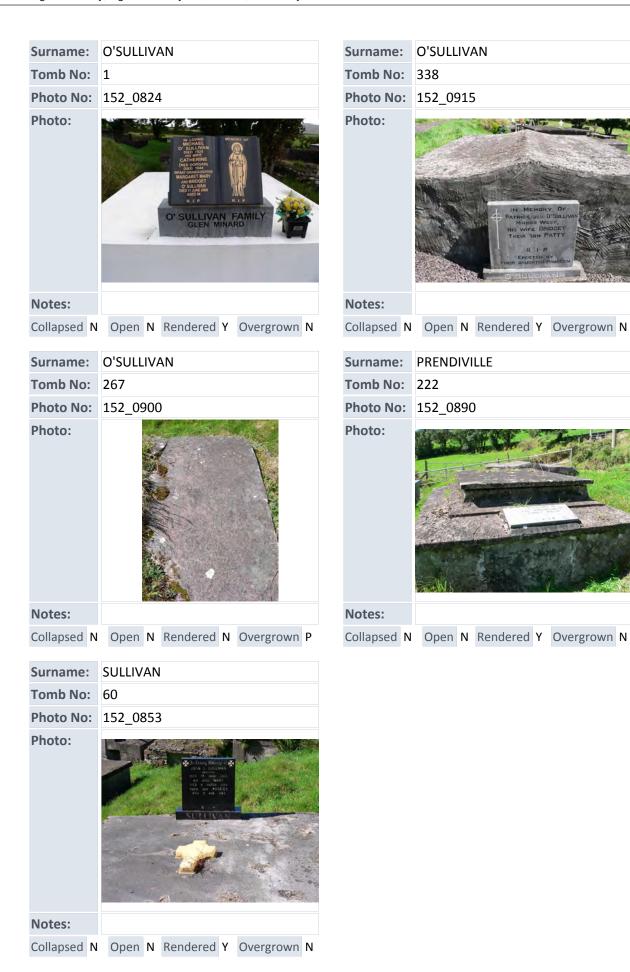
18. Appendix 1 Named Tombs





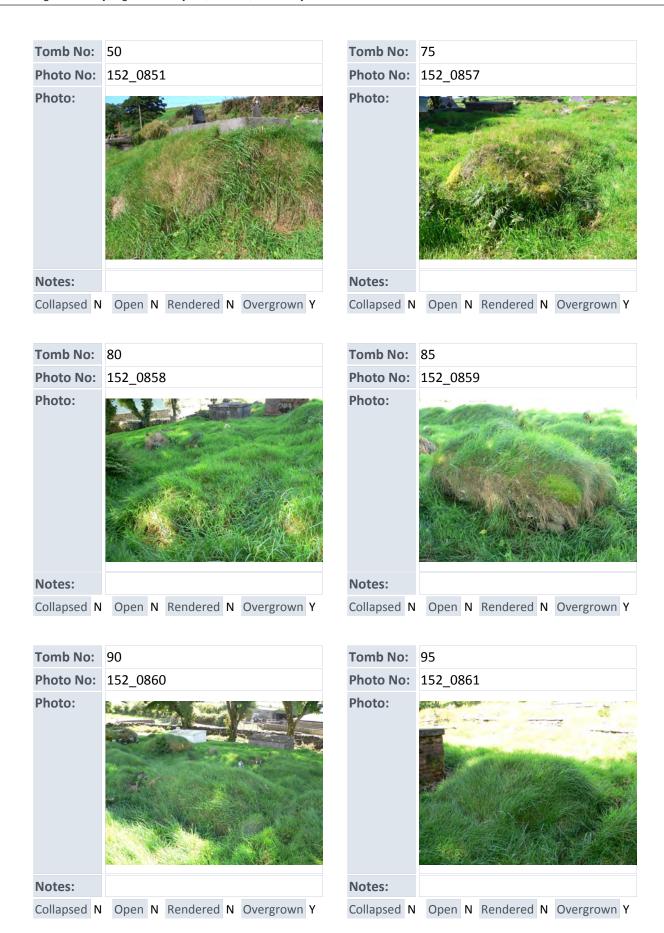






19. Appendix 2 Unnamed Tombs

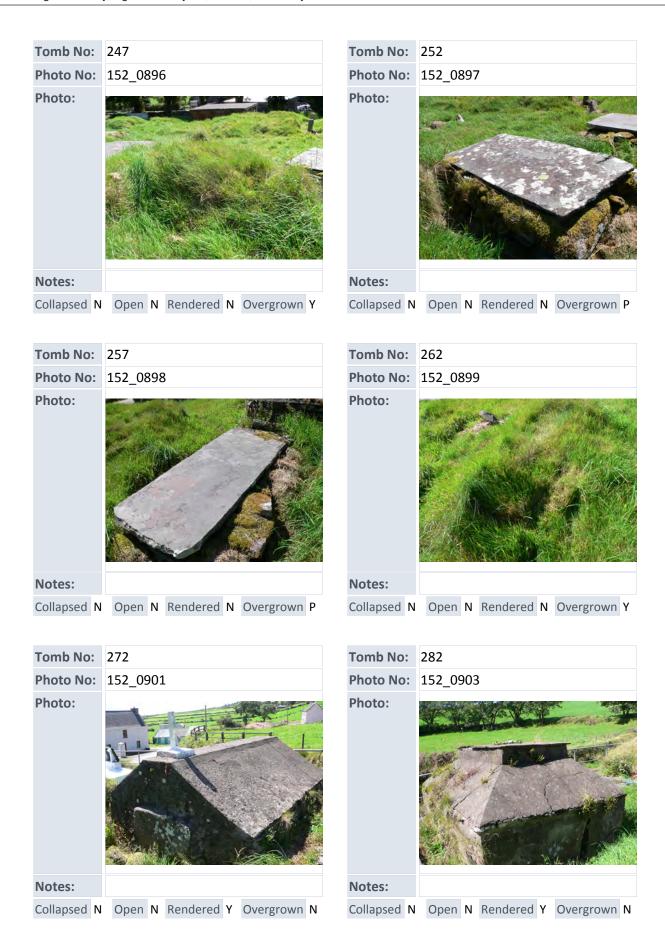
















20. Appendix 3 Named Headstones

Surname:	Begley	Surname:	Bowler	Surname:	FITZGERALD
Grave No:	373	Grave No:	390	Grave No:	287
Photo No:	152_0827	Photo No:	152_0917	Photo No:	152_0908
Photo:		Photo:	The state of the s	Photo:	
Surname:	O'Sullivan				
Grave No:	389				
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21. Appendix 4 Unnamed Headstones

Grave No Notes
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22. Appendix 5 Cross Slabs



23. Appendix 6 Ogham Stone

