Archaeological Survey, Rattoo Graveyard, Ballyduff, Co. Kerry.



March 2012

Client: The Heritage Office,

Kerry County Council,

County Buildings,

Ratass, Tralee, Co. Kerry.

RMP No.: KE009-056

National Mon. No.: 55

Archaeological

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Townland: Rattoo Parish: Rattoo **Barony:** Clanmaurice Local name of graveyard: Rattoo ITM Co-ords: E487832, N633607 **RMP No.:** KE009-056 No. of tombs: 29 No. of named headstones: 16 No. of unnamed headstones: 45 No. of plaques: 2 No. of architectural fragments: 3 (however see Description below)

1. Introduction

Rattoo church and graveyard were 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 2 below). A digital photographic record and surname database was also compiled to complement the cartographic survey (see Appendices). Digital photographs of all the features within the graveyard are referenced in the appendix and all photographs are included 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, (now DAHG)
- 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 license from the National Monuments Service of the Dept. of Environment, Heritage and Local Gov.

2. Site Location

The site of Rattoo church and graveyard is situated in Rattoo townland approximately 3.5km south-east of the village Ballyduff and *circa* 21 km north of Tralee (Figure 2). The site is located on flat ground with expansive views in all directions and *circa* 0.77km west of the River Brick that issues into the Cashen River at Dysert Marshes abutting Rattoo, (Plate 1).

3. General

The early medieval ecclesiastical complex of Rattoo, (*An Ráth Thuaidh- the northern fort*), is a National Monument in State Ownership, (Nat. Mon. No. 55). The site is also recorded in the Record of Mouments & Places, (RMP), KE009-056.

Rattoo parish church and graveyard are an integral part of a wider monastic and developed ecclesiastical complex that dates from the early medieval period that is best exemplified monumentally by the presence of one of the finest Round Towers in Ireland (Plate 2).

In the adjoining demesne lands of Rattoo House is the site of a Hospital of St. John the Baptist, (Fratres Cruciferi), founded in AD1200. It later changed to the rule of the canons regular of St. Augustine of Arroaise and dedicated to SS. Peter & Paul (Plates 1 & 3 & Bradley 1984, 87; Tarrant & O'Connell 1990, 145).

In the high medieval period Rattoo was also a medieval borough but was later deserted.

4. Description

The small ruined parish church of Rattoo is centrally disposed within a small rectangular, well maintained, open, and uncluttered graveyard virtually devoid of trees or bushes (Plates 2, 4 & 5). The graveyard is enclosed by a high stone wall in good order, (see Boundaries below). It contains a twenty nine tombs and sixteen named headstones the earliest of which dates to 1770, (see Appendices below for images of all tombs and named headstones). Dispersed around the S, Se & E limits of the graveyard are forty five unhewn gravemarkers (Figure 2 & Plate 6).

In the recent past, (since 2007), the graveyard and church has been cleaned and repaired with much of the work undertaken by the OPW who are currently working on the Round Tower that abuts the enclosing wall at the NW corner of the site (Plate 2 & Figure 2).

The rectangular parish church is small, 10.2m x 5.5m internally and constructed with uncoursed rubble masonry of local sandstone bedded in lime mortar. Up to 2007 the church was in poor order with the west gable propped as there was a concern that it could collapse. The east end of the interior church is raised up by two large tombs, (Plate 7).

A broken octagonal font found during the conservations works has also been repaired and positioned in the embrasure of the south window (Plates 7 & 8 x & Figure 2).

A new central mullion has been inserted in the 15th century twin light, ogee headed east window, (Plate5 & 9).

An architectural sandstone fragment is also visible in a reused context in the upper limits of the north side of the east window in the interior.

A 1666 memorial plaque, set on its side in a reused context, forms part of the S angle of the interior of the door jamb in the W gable. The Dingin slab as it is known is well documented and is not discussed here (Plate x & Figure 2).

In 2007 the writer noted a number of architectural fragments strewn about the interior, including the limestone sill of a twin light window. The S window lacks its sillstone and it is likely that the ex situ sill was originally from here. A couple of limestone gutter stones were also noted as well as a fine sandstone fragment with roll moulding that lay beside the exterior of the church in the grass (Plates 10-12). The current habitat of the architectural fragments noted by the writer in 2007 are unknown but were most likely taken into the possession of the OPW.

5. Approach and parking

Rattoo is approached from a third class road exit from the R551. There is a wide ample carpark provided (Plate 13 & Figure 2).

6. Entrance

Entrance into graveyard is through an iron gate in poor neglected state. The gate is set beneath a fine stone arch. Beside the gate is a modern galvanised swing-stile in good order. A new entrance to access the Round Tower has also been recently constructed by the OPW (Plate 14).

6.1 Recommendations

The iron gate should be cleaned conserved and repainted.

7. Services & Signage

There are no public toilets, water or waste collection services provided.

There is no all weather information signage proved.

7.1 Recommendations

At a minimum water and waste collection / refuse bins should be provided. Furthermore, as the site is a landmark National Monument public toilets and an all weather information sign / panel should also be provided.

8. Boundaries

The graveyard and church are enclosed by a high uncoursed rubble stone wall along its W, N and E as well as *circa* 50% of its S boundary where the height of the wall achieves a maximum height of 1.4m. Apart from some ivy on the high section of the S boundary, the walls have, little or no growth or breaches and are in good order, (Plates 15 & 16).

8.1 Recommendations

The ivy should be kept in check otherwise no further recommendations necessary.

9. Pathways

There is a short formal well maintained gravelled path extending E from the entrance along the interior of the N boundary. The path then makes a 90° turn to the S to link with the parish church where it extends around its N, W and part of the S limits of the structure, (Figure 2 & Plates 15).

There are no other paths or desire lines in the interior of the graveyard which is well maintained.

9.1 Recommendations

The graveyard is little used as there is a modern graveyard servicing the parish on the R551 near Ballyduff. Consequently, provided the grass is kept low. the existing paths adequately serve the needs of the graveyard.

10. Tombs

There are twenty nine, (29), tombs within the graveyard including the two in the church (Figure 2 & Plates 2, 6 & 7). Most of the tombs are the haunched 'strong-box' or gabled type. The tombs have all been generally repaired, repointed and in one case completely re-rendered. Another tomb at the NE area of the graveyard is currently under repair.

10.1 Recommendations

No recommendations are necessary

The dense overgrowth around the un-surveyed tombs should be removed and archaeologically re-surveyed and re-assessed.

11. Named Headstones

A total of sixteen, (16) named and generally modern headstones (HN) were recorded (Figure 2). The vast majority are in good order. The earliest date recorded was 1770. None of the headstones were inscribed in Irish.

11.1 Recommendations

The headstones are in a general good state of preservation although white lichen is present and pervasive on some that obscures the memorial inscription. These are few and should be properly cleaned under expert advice only. They should not be cleaned with a power sander or wire brush.

12. Unnamed Headstones

There were forty-five, (45), unnamed headstones (HWN) in total recorded in the course of this survey. The majority of the unnamed graves mainly comprise unhewn stones (Plate 6). The unnamed headstones are denoted on the plan of the graveyard as blue triangles (Figure 2). It is evident from the spatial patterning of the unnamed headstones across the graveyard that they in effect reflect an informal grave-setting in that the ground around them is usually just grass, most likely indicating that the memory of the interred person is lost.

12.1 Recommendations

The unnamed headstones and their associated informal grass covered graves should be retained and protected without further intrusion from nearby formalised grave settings. No burials should take place in these informal burial areas unless proof of ownership can be established.

13. Summary of recommendations for future management/conservation of Rattoo church & graveyard

- Services, including water, provision for refuse and considering that the site is a landmark National Monument, public toilets should also be provided.
- An all weather 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 Rattoo should be compiled by Kerry County Council / NMS / OPW and available locally. 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.

Apart from observations noted above in the recording of burials within the upstanding relict remains of Rattoo, no formal recommendations were deemed necessary to Kerry County Council as the site is a National Monument in State ownership and care.

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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15. Figures



Figure 1: Site location map. Extract from OS online mapping, Rattoo graveyard encircled.

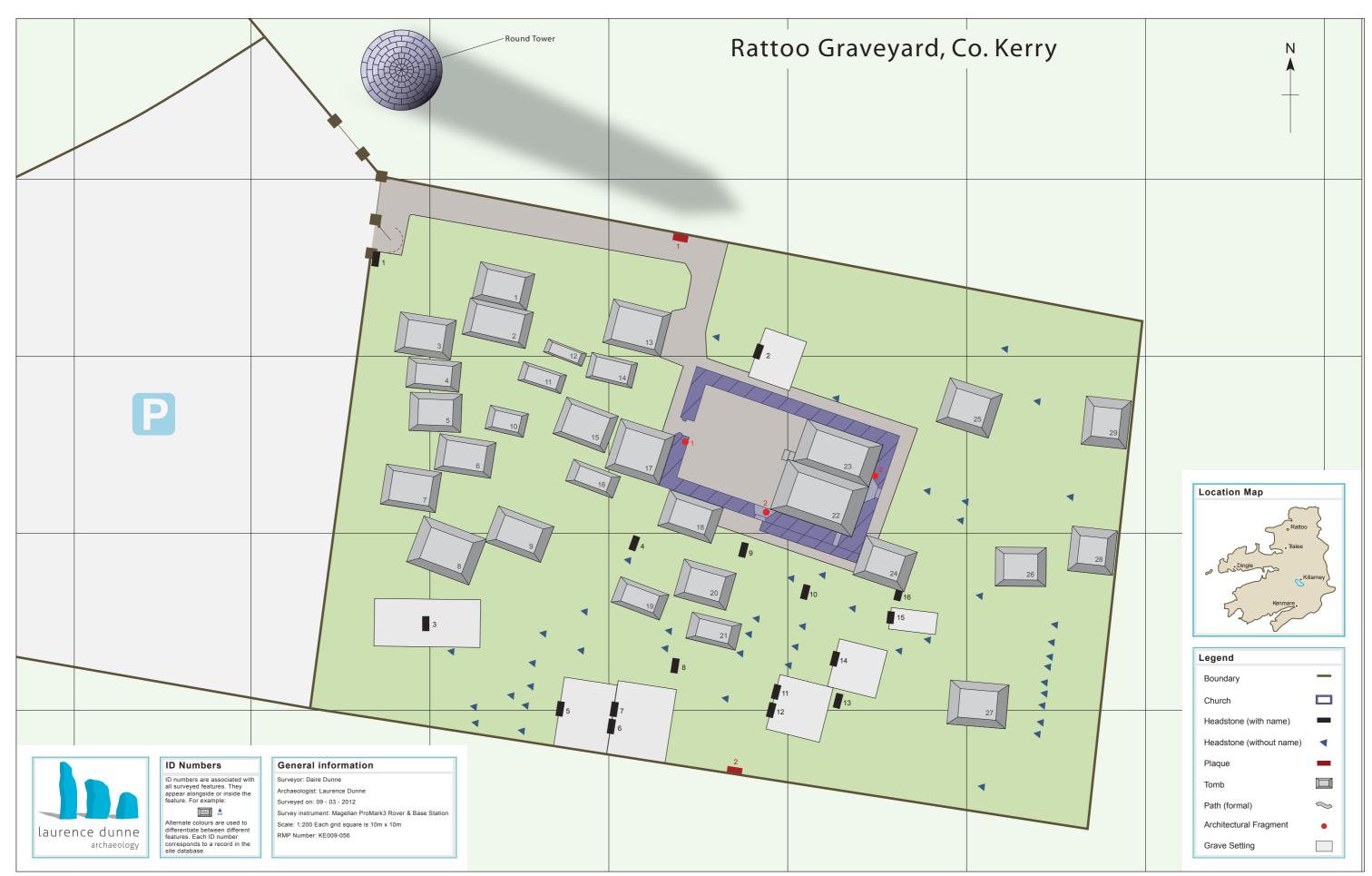


Figure 2: Archaeological survey plan of Rattoo Church and Graveyard

16. Plates



Plate 1: Google Earth aerial image of Rattoo ecclesiastical complex. Note meander of River Brick on right.

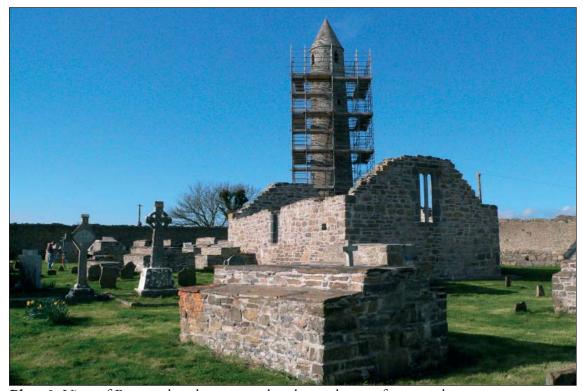


Plate 2: View of Rattoo church, graveyard and round tower from south east.



Plate 3: View of Arrosian abbey of SS Peter and Paul from south east.

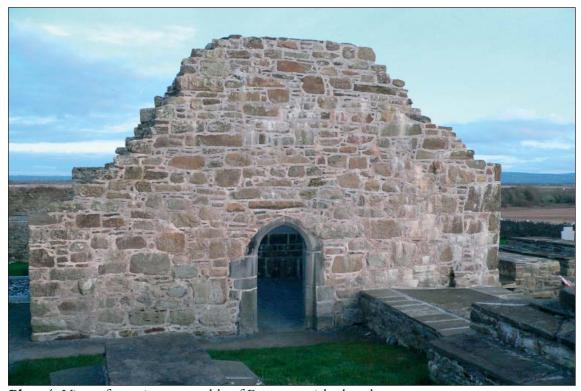


Plate 4: View of exterior west gable of Rattoo parish church.

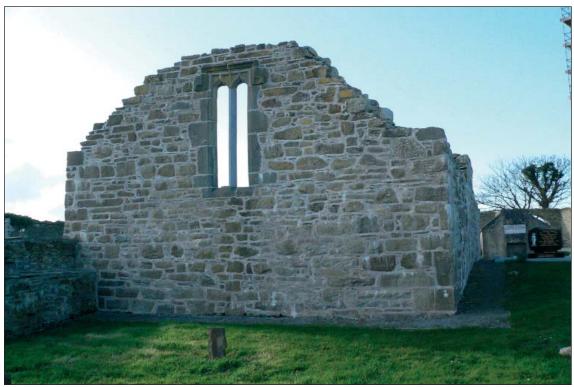


Plate 5: View of exterior east gable of Rattoo parish church.



Plate 6: View from south east corner of Rattoo graveyard. Note row of uninscribed gravemarkers in foreground.



Plate 7: View of interior eastern limits of Rattoo parish church. Note large tombs occupying the complete area. Further note refurbished font on south window.



Plate 8: Close up image of refurbished octagonal font on sill of south window.

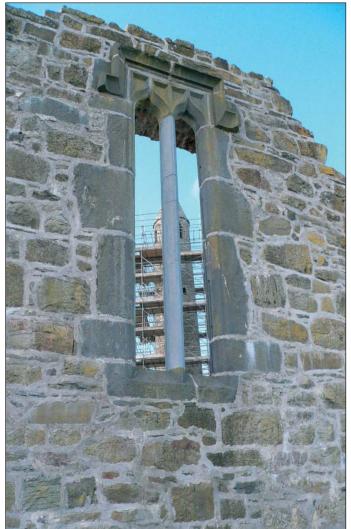


Plate 9: Exterior view of east twin light window. Note recent replaced central mullion.



Plate 10: Image of group of achitectural fragments including possible 15th Century limestone sill of twin light window recorded in interior of Rattoo church in 2007 by the writer.



Plate 11: Image of two limestone gutters in interior of Rattoo parish church recorded by the writer in 2007.



Plate 12: Image of sandstone architectural fragment with roll moulding recorded by writer outside Rattoo church in 2007.



Plate 13: View from east of carpark and approach road to Rattoo round tower, church and graveyard.



Plate 14: Exterior view of entrance into Rattoo church and graveyard. Note newly constructed entrance into round tower area.



Plate 15: View from east of north west area of graveyard. Note entrance, high boundary wall and gravel path.



Plate 16: View of south east corner of Rattoo graveyard. Note lower boundary wall.

17. Appendix 1 Tombs

Surname: Boyle Costelloe Surname: Tomb No: 2 Tomb No: Photo No: 163-0333 0334 0335 **Photo No:** 163-0317 Notes: **Notes:** Collapsed N Open N Rendered Y Overgrown N Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N Surname: Fitzgerald Illegible Surname: Tomb No: 1 Tomb No: 10 **Photo No:** 163-0316 Photo No: 163-0330 **Notes: Notes:** Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N Surname: Lawlor & Cregan Surname: Leehy Tomb No: 28 Tomb No: Photo No: 163-0363 0364 **Photo No:** 163-0323 0324 **Notes: Notes:**

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Collapsed N Open N Rendered Y Overgrown N

Collapsed N Open N Rendered Y Overgrown N

Surname: O'Donnell

Tomb No: 6

Photo No: 163-0321 0322



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Pierse

Tomb No: 15

Photo No: 163-0337 0338



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 4

Photo No: 163-0319



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: O'Donoghue

Tomb No: 25

Photo No: 163-0367 0368



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Slatery

Tomb No: 29

Photo No: 163-0365 0366



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 3

Photo No: 163-0318



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 8

Photo No: 163-0325



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 11

Photo No: 163-0331



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 5

Photo No: 163-0320



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 9

Photo No: 163-0329



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 12

Photo No: 163-0332



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 16

Photo No: 163-0339



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 23

Photo No: 163-0372



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 19

Photo No: 163-0346



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 20

Photo No: 163-0350



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 17

Photo No: 163-0340



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 18

Photo No: 163-0348



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 21

Photo No: 163-0351



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 24

Photo No: 163-0358



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 26

Photo No: 163-0362



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 14

Photo No: 163-0336



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 27

Photo No: 163-0361



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

Surname: Unknown

Tomb No: 22

Photo No: 163-0371



Notes:

Collapsed N Open N Rendered N Overgrown N

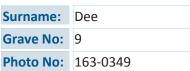
Appendix 2 Named Headstones 18.

Surname: Brosnan **Grave No: 10 Photo No:** 163-0353



Surname:	Casey
Grave No:	12
Photo No:	163-0356





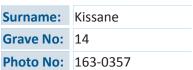


Surname:	Garvey
Grave No:	7
Photo No:	163-0344



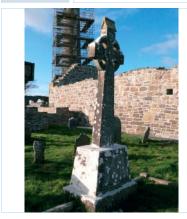
Keane

Surname:

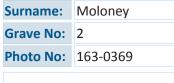








Surname:	Leahy
Grave No:	15
Photo No:	163-0360











Surname: O'Connor Grave No: 16

Photo No: 163-0359



Surname:	Regan
Grave No:	4
Photo No:	163-0347



Surname:	Slattery	
Grave No:	11	
Photo No:	163-0354	



Surname: Unknown
Grave No: 13

Photo No: 163-0355

Surname: Unknown
Grave No: 1
Photo No: 163-0376

Surname: Walsh
Grave No: 6
Photo No: 163-0343







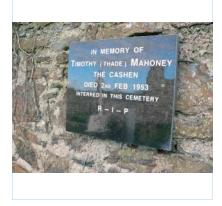
Surname: Wynne
Grave No: 8
Photo No: 163-0345



19. Appendix 3 Plaques

Surname: Mahoney
Grave No: 2
Photo No: 163-0352

Surname: Whelan
Grave No: 1
Photo No: 163-0370





20. Appendix 4 Architectural Fragments





