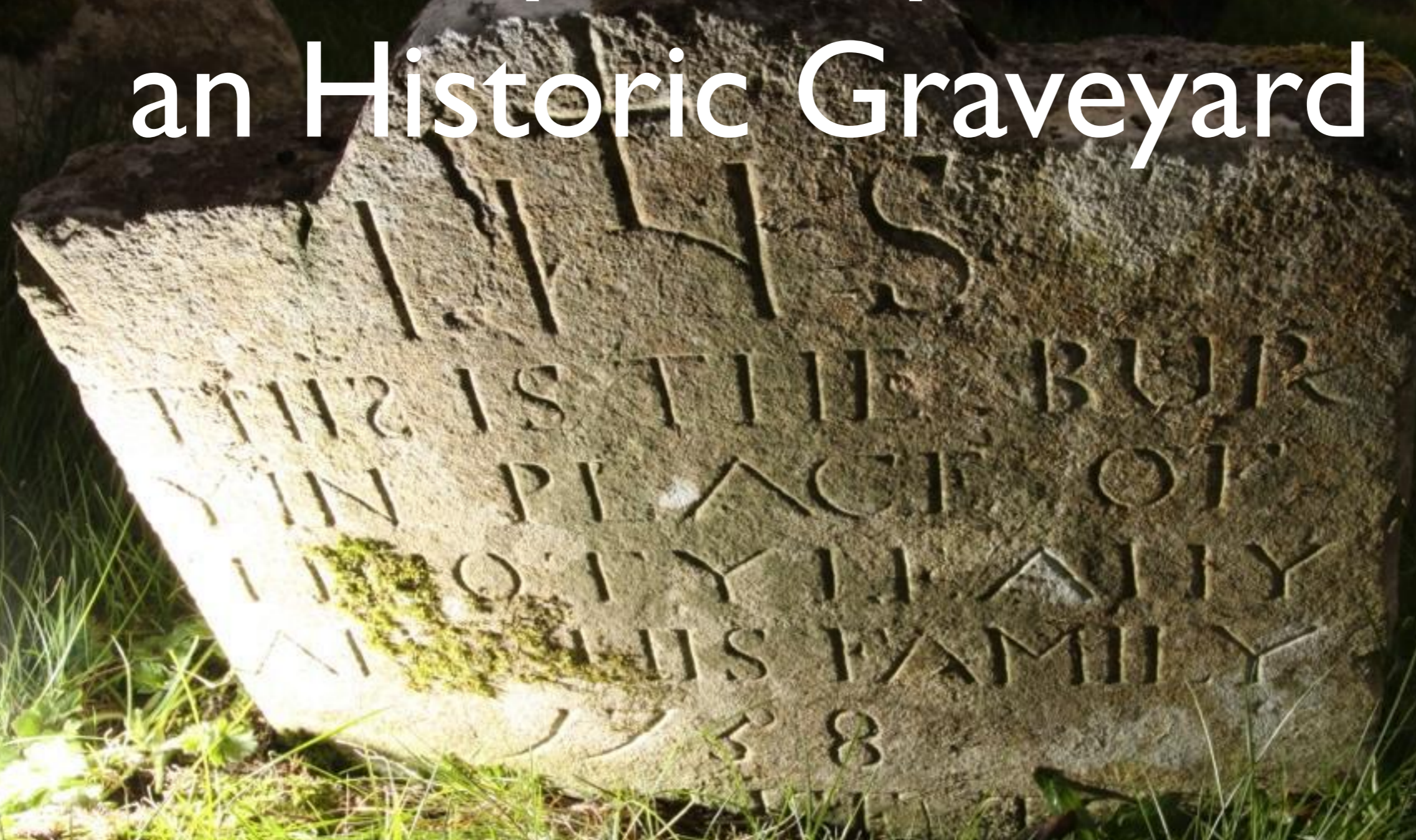


Three Simple Steps to Survey an Historic Graveyard



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- Publishing the data

Three Simple Steps to Survey an Historic Graveyard

STEP 1

- A. Number the memorials and
- B. take 1 photograph per numbered memorial

STEP 2

- A. Record each numbered memorial

STEP 3

- A. Draw a relative location sketch plan of all numbered memorials on A4 sheet and
- B. combine all records in a Graveyard Folder

Introduction

Based on archaeological methods, a simple system for historic graveyard survey has been developed by the **Historic Graves Project team** in collaboration with local community groups. The core system was established in 2011 and minor but significant improvements have been made ever since. In the last eleven years, over 500 community groups have surveyed over 900 graveyards and published more than 120,000 gravestones to the internet using this simple system.

The geography of an Historic Graveyard

Historic Graveyards tend to have a common geography

1. Church buildings usually have an east-west orientation
2. Headstones usually face east (representing Jerusalem)
3. Reuse of grave plots results in burial rows.
4. In many graveyards the densest concentration of headstones is south of the church. The northern part of the graveyard is often sparsely occupied.



Step 1a

Number



1. Work in Pairs
2. Number the memorials - using masking tape and a marker
3. We usually affix the number to the back of the headstone or top side shoulder - we aim to be consistent in this. We rarely affix the number to the front face.
4. **Separate memorials get separate numbers** ie. we do not use sub-numbers eg 20a, 20b. We do not number grave ornaments.
5. If we make a mistake and miss a grave memorial we can number it at the end of a sequence. In our system it does not matter too much that 101 is between 55 and 56 for example.
6. We usually start in the southwest corner but this varies depending on individual site factors
7. We number in rows, from left to right and sometimes use 'half rows'. We do not however number the rows themselves.
8. Numbering improves with experience - the main thing is to make a decision and 'drive on'
9. At the end of an unclear row we will mark an arrow on the number showing which direction to go
10. Other times we stick the number into ground behind/alongside the memorial (stir sticks are useful for this purpose)
11. The numbers are best left affixed/in place for the duration of the survey - anything from 2 weeks to 2 months in duration. Discuss this with your group.

Step 1b

Photograph



Fill the frame and centre the image

1. Using a GPS Camera we take **ONE PHOTOGRAPH PER NUMBERED MEMORIAL** - work in pairs
2. The Sony HXV range of cameras renumbers their photographs on a daily basis so that, each day, our first memorial will be 1/1 in the camera and the 100th memorial , for example, will be 100/100.
3. The camera is set to 5MP per photo which results in each image being approx 2.5 MB in size.
4. We check the photograph number **AFTER EVERY PHOTOGRAPH**
5. If we have 100 grave memorials and 101 photographs then we have a problem. If you discover a problem delete backwards til the numbers conform.
6. The Numbered Photographs are renamed in our computer operating system (using the OS or programs like Namechanger/Bulk Rename Utility) using a consecutive number system eg. GLA-Necr-0001
7. We upload the renamed survey photographs to www.historicgraves.com and this creates the database record to which the epitaph & related genealogical information is subsequently added.
8. Even if you are not uploading to historicgraves.com this system works.
9. We can take up to 4 extra photographs of each grave memorial but only **AFTER** the survey photographs are online.
10. The survey photographs are uploaded as a batch by the HistoricGraves team while the extra memorial photographs are 'manually' uploaded by the community group
11. We make a Contact Sheet of the thumbnail photographs of each numbered grave memorial and this is put online and also into the front of the Graveyard Folder.

Step 2

Record the memorial/monument

Record Sheet
Historic Graves Memorial Recording Form

Graveyard Name		Memorial Number	
Townland		County	
Recorded By		Date	

Memorial Type	Number of People Commemorated	Stonemason or Undertaker		
Name	Address	Birth	Death	Age

Inscription	Sketch

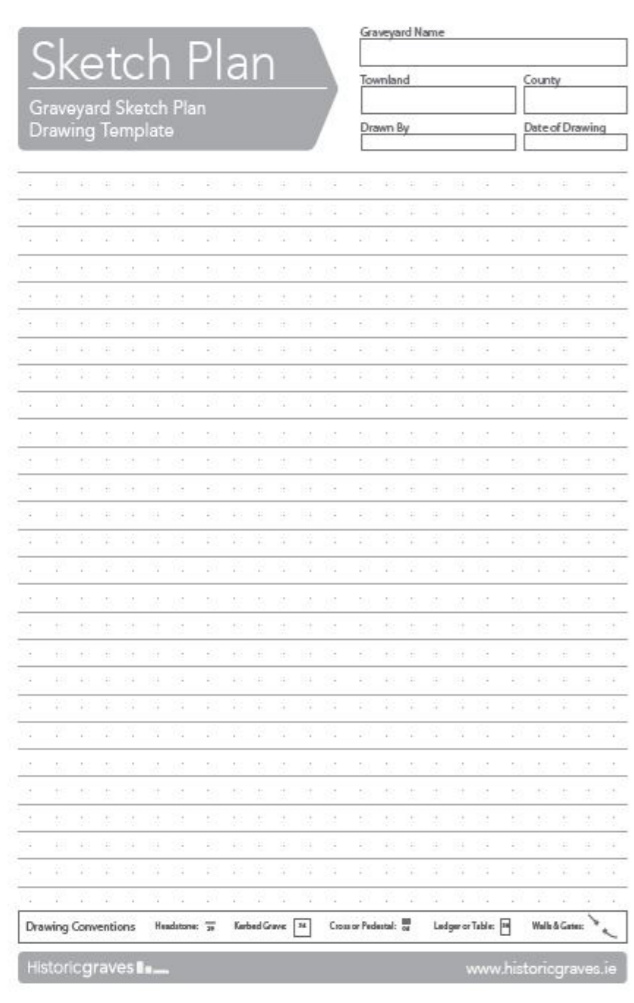
Historicgraves.ie www.historicgraves.ie



1. We fill out a record sheet for every numbered grave memorial - again, **work in pairs**
2. Fill out the Number and Sitename/Parish first
3. Then do the memorial elevation sketch (matchstick-men type drawing is sufficient as each memorial is also being photographed)
4. Transcribe the epitaph. Word for word, line by line.
5. We use a P7 lenser torch to read most headstones or a mirror to cast shadows and ease reading
6. Remember this is teamwork - it is not about any individual being right but the team getting it right!
7. Once the epitaph is read we then extract the biographical information to register the people listed
8. It is best to do this onsite as it results in higher quality record
9. We list people in order of appearance.
10. Do not calculate age unless you both DOB and DOD.
11. If recording a complex memorial use right hand/left hand side to differentiate
12. If recording multi-face memorial - use E face, S face, W face, N face.
13. If the epitaph is very long just use multiple sheets 1/3, etc.
14. Once the record sheet is complete mark the masking tape NUMBER with an X to avoid repeat recordings
15. In batches of 5 give your completed record sheets to the 'keeper of the folder'
16. **Sort** all sheets numerically, **tick** them off on the REGISTER, then **file** numerically
17. The editorial team decide on quality control issues and double checking is indicated by a 'cross check' in the number box.

Step 3a

Draw a sketch plan of the numbered memorials



The image shows a 'Sketch Plan' template for a graveyard. It features a header section with a title 'Sketch Plan' and subtitle 'Graveyard Sketch Plan Drawing Template'. Below this are fields for 'Graveyard Name', 'Townland', 'County', 'Drawn By', and 'Date of Drawing'. The main body of the template is a large grid of horizontal lines, each preceded by a small square box for numbering. At the bottom, there is a footer section with icons and labels for 'Drawing Conventions', 'Headstone', 'Kerbed Grave', 'Cross or Pedestal', 'Lodger or Tablet', and 'Wall & Gate'. The footer also includes the 'Historicgraves' logo and the website 'www.historicgraves.ie'.

1. We always aim to draw the site sketch plan **on the same day** numbering is completed for a graveyard or cemetery section.
2. Failing to get the sketch plan done on day 1 can be a major mistake especially if the survey is disrupted by weather or some other issue.
3. We use a 'gravediggers pace' to measure our site ie **3 feet** - a standard grave plot measures 3ft x 6 ft and rows are commonly formed by repeated use of a grave plot.
4. We try to fit each graveyard or cemetery section onto a single A4 ruled page.
5. We are not overly concerned about scale - this is a plan of relative location only.
6. We tend to fit each row between each pair of solid lines on the page.
7. We put the Sketch Plan into the front of the Graveyard Folder
8. If a highly accurate survey is required then get the appropriate team on the job.
9. We scan each sketch plan and this is uploaded to each graveyard record in www.historicgraves.com.

Step 3b The Graveyard folder

Every Historic Graveyard Survey builds a Graveyard folder which contains:

1. Grave Memorial Register
2. Sketch Plan
3. Thumbnail Contact Sheets (colour)
4. Numerically filed record sheets



Register

Register

Historic Graves Memorial

Register Sheet

Graveyard Name

Townland

County

No of Memorials

Page # of #

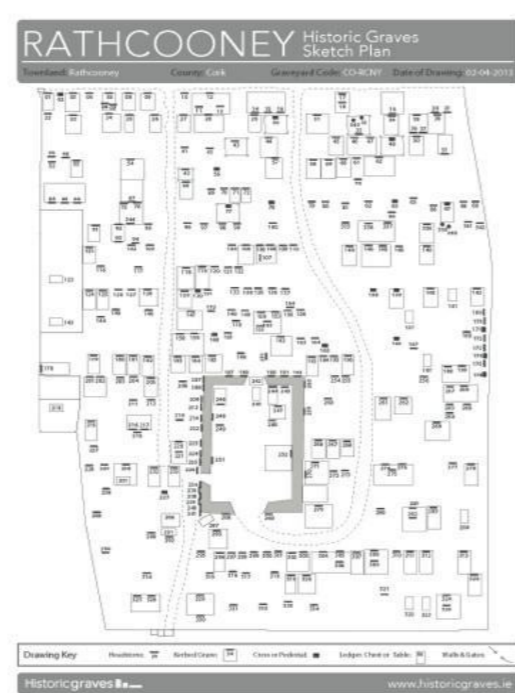
Date

Memorial	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
Memorial	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
Memorial	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
Memorial	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160
Memorial	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200

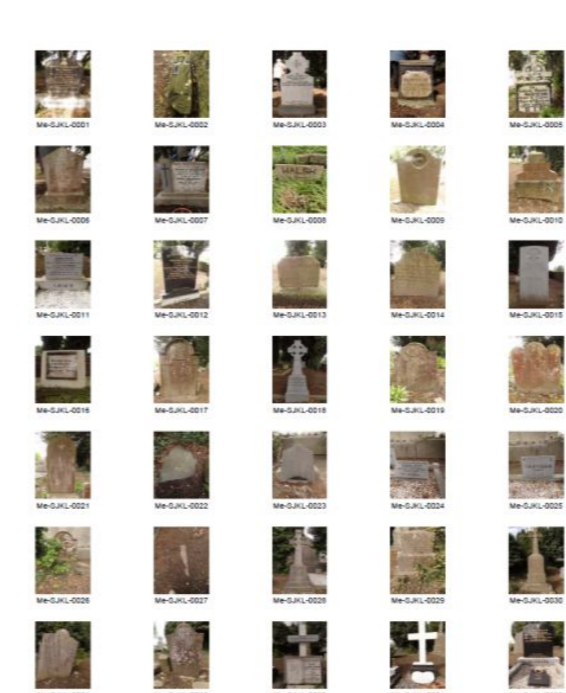
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Sketch Plan



Contact Sheets



Record Sheets

[illegible]

Publishing your survey

f t y Username Password LOG IN Create new account Request new password

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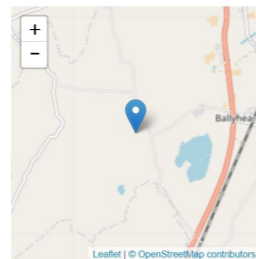
Aglishdrinagh

Cork, Ireland

Coordinates: 52.307475, -8.688631



MAP



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Summary

Graveyard Code:

CO-ABND-

RMP/Site number:

CO007-055002-

Townland:

Ballynadrideen

County:

Cork

Number of Memorials:

16

Description

Surveyed as part of a community training project organised by Ballyhoura Development CLG in the Autumn of 2020. Thanks also to volunteers from Charleville, Charleville Heritage, and further afield in Cork and Limerick.

The Historic Graves Model is to publish our surveys to **www.historicgraves.com**, type the record sheets into the database and fix mistakes as we go along. If you wish to publish a graveyard survey to your own website the system still works - simply use a spreadsheet instead of uploading to our centralised database.

We generally publish each graveyard within 1 week of the survey and the community group then sit down and complete the data entry task.

The publishing sequence is as follows;

- Rename all survey photographs with site code and number
- Resize all images
- Upload as batch thus creating the geolocated database record
- We register each new graveyard and then import the survey photographs into that graveyard thus creating the database record
- Each community team then transcribes their record sheets into the appropriate database record
- Each community team has 1-2 editors who have administration rights for their own graveyard(s).
- The graveyard page also contains a scan of the sketch plan, thumbnail images of all photographs (a contact sheet) and up to 4 photographs of the graveyard itself.
- Once data input is complete the community then have a complete digital record which can be downloaded and published in a variety of formats eg. books, ebooks, brochure, map board.

If you are interested in commissioning training or making a funding application for a training project please contact John Tierney john@historicgraves.com or telephone [+353872312107](tel:+353872312107)