



South door of St Nicholas' Church



St Nicholas' Graveyard | Reilig San Niocláis

St. Nicholas' church, the second largest medieval parish church in Ireland is essentially a cruciform structure with a long nave flanked by exceptionally wide aisles. This gives it a unique triple-gabled facade at the western end. As with many buildings that have been continuous use for almost seven-hundred years it has undergone numerous modifications and alterations. Most of the fabric of the building dates from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries.

There are numerous memorials in the interior of the church. Most are not in their original locations but were moved to their present positions in the course of the extensive refurbishments of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The earliest (375) dates to the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century. The south transept known as Lynch's transept contains three magnificent tombs (383, 385 & 386). A remarkable collection of memorials has been assembled as paving slabs in the north aisle and a number of these include occupational symbols of the deceased's trade or guild. One bears a shears with a gloved hand holding a dog on a leash – perhaps a shepherd or leather worker; another has the trowel and square of a mason, and a third bears three hammers surmounted by crowns – supposed to be the emblems of a goldsmith. Also in this aisle is the free-standing holy-water stoup decorated with vine-leaves and which probably dates to the fifteenth century. Many of the fourteen Tribes of Galway have a long tradition of burial at St. Nicholas' as do the various members of Galway Corporation.

Approximately 450 memorial stones have been recorded within the interior of the church and in the graveyard. 1-279 are located in the graveyard, 280-424 within the church and 425-444 in the area of the graveyard adjoining the south transept and choir. The monuments provide a wealth of information on a variety of topics including palaeography, calligraphy, archaeology, history, symbolism, iconography, social history, art history, design, sculpture, stone masonry, heraldry and genealogy.

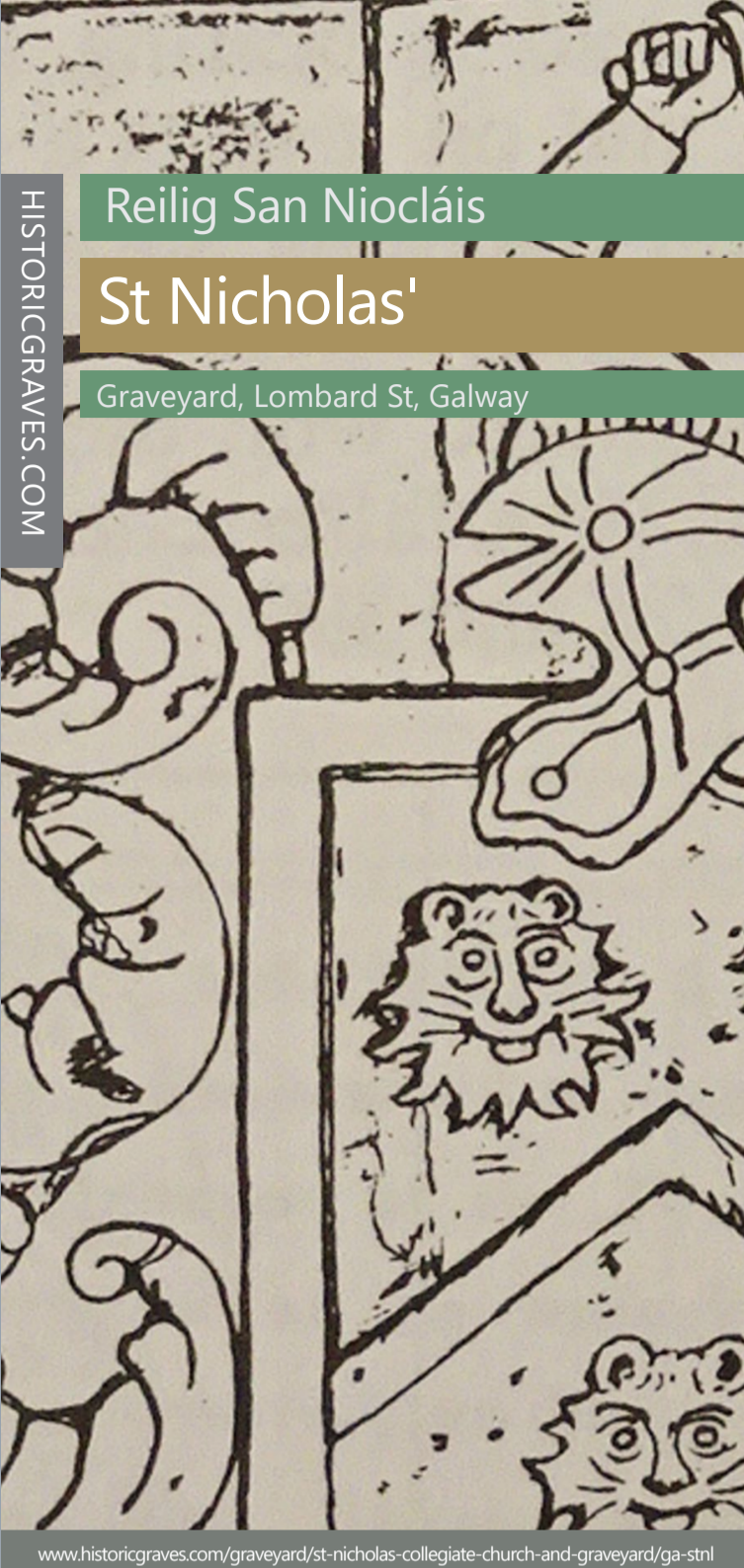
Dr. Jim Higgins, Heritage Officer, Galway City Council.

This project was funded by the Heritage Council and Galway City Council as an action of the Galway City Heritage Plan. The full results of the survey are available on www.historicgraves.com/graveyard/st-nicholas-collegiate-church-and-graveyard/ga-stnl



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St Nicholas'

Graveyard, Lombard St, Galway

Eolas | Information

St Nicholas' Collegiate Church and Graveyard is located on Lombard Street in the townland of Townparks in the heart of medieval Galway. This leaflet is derived from the publication *Monuments of St. Nicholas' Collegiate Church, Galway. A Historical, Genealogical and Archaeological Record* edited by Jim Higgins and Susanne Heringklee. Copies of this publication are available from the office at St Nicholas' Church.

Cover Image: Detail of Blakeney Tomb GA-STNL-0350 drawn by Alberto Sanchez published in Higgins and Heringklee, 1992. *Monuments of St. Nicholas' Collegiate Church, Galway: A Historical, Genealogical, and Archaeological Record*. Galway, Crows Rock Press.

Some Examples | Cuid de na Leachtaí

64 **HEADSTONE** **Merrick – 1666**

This is one of a group of three small headstones which typify early examples of Irish headstones which became common at the end of the 17th and early 18th centuries. *Edward Merrick and his 3 children* are commemorated on the central stone.

Reference: GA-STNL-0064
GPS: 53° 16' 21.8" N 9° 03' 12.2" W

215 **LEDGER** **DeCarteret – 1843**

This is one of several 19th century recumbent slabs located to the east of the graveyard. George De Carteret aged 22 is also commemorated on a plaque in the church (286) where the story of his drowning on Galway docks *by want of lights* is well articulated.

Reference: GA-STNL-0215
GPS: 53° 16' 23.1" N 9° 03' 12.7" W

356 **PLAQUE** **Connaught Rangers**

There are seven brass plaques (355, 356, 359, & 370-373) commemorating members of the Connaught Rangers on piers at the crossing between the transepts. The Connaught Rangers colours have since been moved to the wall outside the Chapel.

Reference: GA-STNL-0356
GPS: 53° 16' 21.8" N 9° 03' 13.4" W

91 **LEDGER** **Ward – 1749**

Stone was reused for a myriad of purposes including commemoration within the church and graveyard. The stone for Hamnett Ward was originally a spandrel from a 16th/17th century fireplace, it was reused as a gravestone in the mid-18th century.

Reference: GA-STNL-0091
GPS: 53° 16' 21.3" N 9° 03' 10.8" W

287 **CROSS** **Roll of Honour 1914-1918**

The Glorious Dead from this Parish killed in the First World War are commemorated on a large Caen limestone celtic cross, located in the north aisle of the church. Each of their name and families, regiments and place and date of death is listed.

Reference: GA-STNL-0287
GPS: 53° 16' 21.8" N 9° 03' 13.4" W

375 **LEDGER** **Bure The Crusader's Tomb**

This stone commemorating Adam Bure is one of the earliest in St. Nicholas'. It is a coffin-shaped limestone slab of 13th century type and the inscription around its edges translates as *... whoever will pray for his soul will have twenty day's indulgence.*

Reference: GA-STNL-0375
GPS: 53° 16' 21.8" N 9° 03' 13.4" W

94 **MONUMENT** **Thompson Kinkead and Roberts**

This large granite obelisk rests on a plinth which is carved with a skull and crossbones, the Irish harp, the symbol of the Claddagh and the Galway city arms. It was erected by the citizens of Galway to commemorate three men who drowned in Loch Corrib in 1887.

Reference: GA-STNL-0094
GPS: 53° 16' 52.0" N, 9° 02' 17.6" W

296 **LEDGER** **Anon - 1641**

A number of slabs, (290-311) have been reused as paving slabs around the baptismal font in the north aisle of the church. Only the top part of this large slab has survived. It is decorated with three crowned hammers, the traditional mark of a goldsmith.

Reference: GA-STNL-0296
GPS: 53° 16' 22.2" N 9° 03' 13.7" W

380 **LEDGER** **O'Tiernagh and Gonohiu**

This trapezoidal slab would originally have been recumbent. It is decorated with a mix of Gaelic interlace and Renaissance plant forms. Similar decoration is found on several pieces of Galway sculpture including the Athy doorway of 1577 now located at Spanish Arch.

Reference: GA-STNL-0380
GPS: 53° 16' 21.8" N 9° 03' 13.4" W

122 **MONUMENT** **Mitchell – 1832**

A total of nine members of the Mitchell/Miller/Chadwick Dickson families are commemorated on this prominent monument which is located in the SE portion of the graveyard.

Reference: GA-STNL-0122
GPS: 53° 16' 21.3" N 9° 03' 11.7" W

310 **LEDGER** **Mvhahan or Mvngghan**

This slab bears a large cross on a moulded base similar to that on 308. The vocational marks of a cooper or carpenter flank the lower part of the cross shaft. These include a wide-bladed adze or axe, multiple chisels a T-square and a set square.

Reference: GA-STNL-0310
GPS: 53° 16' 21.5" N 9° 03' 13.6" W

385 **TOMB** **Lynch**

Set against the wall of the south transept is a large flamboyant-style wall tomb. It is uninscribed but is traditionally associated with the Lynch family. Most of these date from the late 15th century. Their tracery is closely paralleled in Irish window tracery.

Reference: GA-STNL-0385
GPS: 53° 16' 21.8" N 9° 03' 13.4" W

179 **HEADSTONE** **Ard – 1688**

This slab commemorates Stephen and Mary Ard in low false relief and is set within a frame in a blocked arch. It was originally set in the wall of the graveyard further north. The top of the frame is a reused windowsill probably late medieval in date.

Reference: GA-STNL-0179
GPS: 53° 16' 22.4" N 9° 03' 11.9" W

350 **TOMB** **Blakeney – 1731**

The Blakeney tomb is located in the North Transept in the church. It is a fine armorial wall plaque bearing the achievement of arms of Blakeney. Robert Blakeney held the office of sheriff in 1700 & 1701 and was mayor in 1713.

Reference: GA-STNL-0350
GPS: 53° 16' 54.0" N, 9° 02' 18.8" W

386 **TOMB** **Lynch and Athy**

Only the underworks of this elaborate tomb now survive. The Lynch and Athy heraldry and merchants' marks decorate some of the spandrels which separate the side-panels. These can be linked to the empty frame of 387 which is located above it.

Reference: GA-STNL-0386
GPS: 53° 16' 21.8" N 9° 03' 13.4" W

Reilig San Niocláis

St Nicholas' Graveyard

LOWBARD STREET

CHURCH LANE

CHURCHYARD STREET

HIGH STREET



Eolas | Information

As part of Galway City Council's policy of making information on heritage freely available, a summary brochure like this one, with a map of each of Galway City graveyards is being prepared. These are being printed along with a clear, easy to use map as a guide for those who visit our graveyards. The Monuments on the maps are numbered and are linked to the www.historicgraves.com and Galway City Council (www.galwaycity.ie) websites. This allows anyone anywhere to research their ancestry and kinship with those buried in Galway without charge. This is a public service. Copies of the following leaflets; Ballybrit, Bohermore, Bushypark, Carrowbrowne, Castlegar, Castletown/Terryland, Convent of Mercy Forster St. and Francis St., Franciscan Friary, Forthill, Magdalen Laundry Forster St., Menlo, Old Rahoon, Poor Clare Monastery, Presentation Sisters Convent, Rahoon, Roscam, St. Columba's, St. Mary's Dominican, St. Patrick's, Salthill Upper and United Methodist-Presbyterian Churches are available from the Heritage Office, Galway City Council, City Hall, College Road, Galway (Tel: 091 536547/536516) and from city library branches free of charge. They can also be downloaded from www.historicgraves.com.

| Key | |
|----------------------|----|
| Headstone | 29 |
| Kerbed Grave | 34 |
| Cross or Pedestal | 08 |
| Ledger or Chest tomb | 56 |
| Vault or Mausoleum | 50 |