



Burial Ground Recording Projects Guidance for YAC Leaders

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Guidance for YAC Leaders

Graveyard recording is a great group activity, which allows even one visit to result in a sample of data. Children can be extremely observant, but may not have the concentration spans of adults (though that varies!). You may wish to have a quick orientation and run-through of the forms, do a few records, look at something specific, such as the nature of the burial ground boundaries, gates, or any buildings, then have another recording stint. The location and nature of paths and vegetation can be another break and aspect to think about.



Full guidance on the adult system is available at <http://www.debs.ac.uk/>. Much of this is also relevant for YAC groups, especially on the setting up, permissions, risk assessments (which you will have to adjust). There is also useful advice on how to read difficult inscriptions and some of the terminology you might come across in the inscriptions.

You may wish to point out in any advance notice, and at the start of the session, that you will be finding out about people – including children – who have died. Some may have lost family members recently, but as long as you are recording memorials before the 1950s (which is recommended anyway, keeping away from modern burial areas) there is historical distance and you can emphasise how the study is about understanding the past.

This guidance, in order to be brief and easy to consult in the field, concentrates on the YAC recording form and the code sheet, considering issues that are particularly relevant for YAC activities. These comments are to help you plan activities within your own context.

Preparation

Doing a reconnoitre with the activity in mind is essential. You can look round, see the range of monuments, legibility etc., and decide where it would be easiest to start. Choose easy to read monuments that are not too complicated (or preferably without too much text) to start on. Make a sketch plan (perhaps partly constructed ahead of a visit from Google Earth) that



will indicate how many stones there are, and number them. This helps plan how you might work through the site. There is useful advice on DEBS about how to create a sketch plan and what it should have on it to work well. Some burial grounds already have a map – find that out early on in your getting permissions. If the burial ground is big, see how sections (e.g. marked by paths) create sensibly sized samples (though each section might be limited chronologically or if in a cemetery, by denomination). You should just map and number one section to start with, and then you can see how it goes. The YAC website also had guidance on how to plan a graveyard here (see pages 51-2): [Plan a graveyard](#)

Logistics to consider are: where to shelter if you have heavy showers, toilet facilities, and how parking might work if you arrive in a lot of cars (there may be facilities for the congregation, though). The main logistical element is that if you are doing weekday activity (e.g. in a school holiday time) check with the relevant person that no funeral/burial is due – they obviously only crop up at short notice!). If you plan Sunday recording, find out when services might take place and how the congregation would like to manage that. The only kit you need is hand tapes, clip boards, forms and code sheets, pencils, rubbers and pencil sharpeners. I also recommend clear plastic bags so that you can fill in forms in the rain with the whole clip board and forms inside; they need to be large enough for the pencils to be used inside the bag. Golfing umbrellas are brilliant for protecting a person and clipboard etc., so do see if parents can bring these too.

Online Session Practice

Prior to taking your YAC branch to the graveyard, you may wish to introduce them to the concept of memorial recording and provide examples for them to do before-hand, either by themselves or as a group activity. We have provided five different gravestones examples with different attributes, some easier than others. We suggest asking them to have a go at each and then talking through the answers to at least a couple (completed examples and

assigning new stones; then you start having lots of people standing around waiting for you – and that leads to drift and messing about (with adults too!). You may wish to have certain parents with roles to help on aspects e.g. measurements, then they can each get confident about the bit they are helping you with, without having to understand everything.

Filling in the form

The form is a simplified version of the adult form, and it uses codes that are derived from the adult ones. Thus, the monument types are here 2 digits, but they can be multiplied up to the full coding *en bloc* as 42 is 4200; 4200 can be subdivided in the adult version to give finer-grained classification but that is not essential even for adult recorders, and it is easy for editors to adapt the spread sheet data to reflect the more complex recording at a later date. So, you can tell your YAC groups that they are collecting data that can contribute to the wider programme of recording. That is why using the standardised coding is important. We are providing some data sets (ones that are simplified to YAC format) and data analyses in a separate set of resources to help you and give you some comparative data.



The important thing about the form is that what is put down must be legible. Numbers must be easy to read and to type up into the spreadsheet, names and places must be clear and all words are spelled as they inscribed on the

monument. They have to be completed in dark enough pencil to be scannable to make a pdf (great for security, archiving, distributing). Pencil is best because mistakes can be rubbed out and corrected.

The forms need checking. Watch out for both letters and numbers (e.g. 1 or 7, 3 or 5 or S etc.), missing bits of the form, and any miscoding. Does the sketch show the shape and do the comments make sense?

Recording Form – field by field

Use the code sheet to help complete these sections (Appendix B)

<i>Burial Ground Name</i>	e.g. St Mary's m
<i>Place</i>	e.g. Warwick
<i>Memorial number</i>	start with 001
<i>Site Code</i>	First 3 digits code, last 2 year e.g. SMW20
<i>Recorder name</i>	e.g. Harold Mytum
<i>Condition of monument</i>	See code sheet; more details of condition can go in comments
<i>Date of recording</i>	e.g. 15/06/2020
<i>Inscription</i>	Text of inscription. Try to do line by line, do not attempt letter styles but do copy punctuation, upper and lower case, abbreviations, superscripts. Carry on using the back of the form is a long inscription, noting PTO at the bottom
<i>Height</i>	Include any base; use mm. Adults may need to help
<i>Width</i>	Exclude any base; use mm
<i>Thickness/length</i>	Exclude any base; use mm. A headstone has a small thickness measurement, but length of a ledger slab, for example, will be the largest measurement (its height will be negligible)
<i>Main material of monument</i>	This is a 2-digit code. Other materials can go in comments and can be with codes there, too. There may be other materials not with codes here – just list. Material of inlaid letters is normally lead, so unless anything else do not note
<i>Main technique of inscription</i>	This is a 1-digit code. Other techniques can go in comments and can be with codes there, too. Use this box for the one most text is in
<i>Decorative designs in the top middle</i>	There is room for 2 2-digit codes. Some stones have lots of different decorations. Put the rest in Comments
<i>Decorative designs down the sides</i>	There is room for 2 2-digit codes. Stones rarely have more, but just put in Comments

Date of monument

Just use the date of the first named death. This might not always be the case (read the DEBS advice) but this is the easiest to do. The full coding indicates how the date has been decided, but that is all too complicated for YAC (and many community groups!)

Check

Initial and date when the form has been checked against the monument. You might also want to indicate whether you have a photo as well.

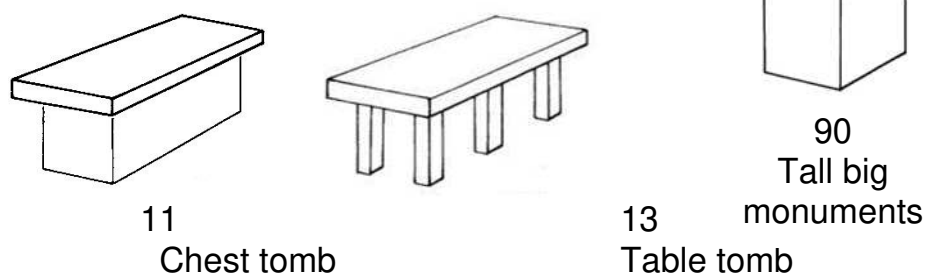
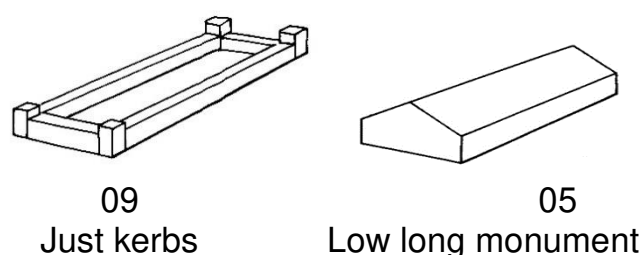
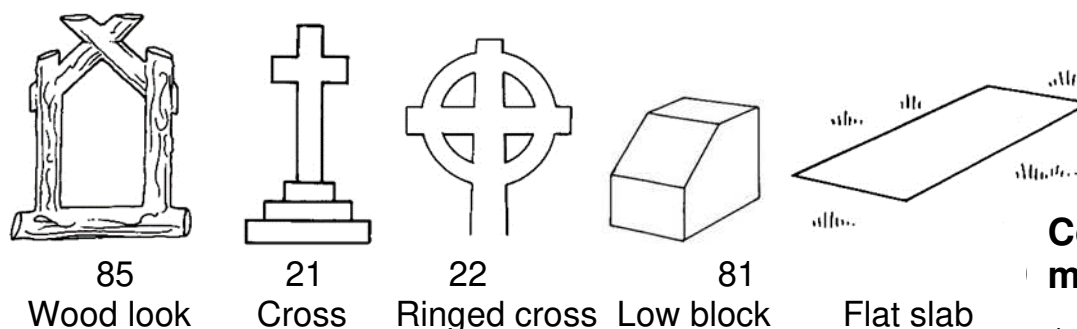
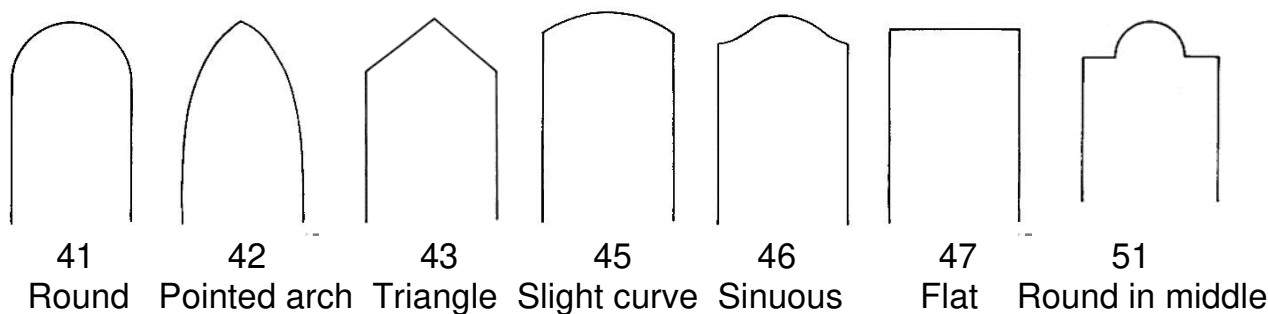
Appendix A

Burial Ground name	Site Code					
Place	Memorial number					
Recorder name	Condition of monument					
Date of recording	Height (including any base) mm					
Inscription	Width (excluding any base) mm					
	Thickness/length (excluding any base)					
	Main material of monument					
	Monument type					
	Main technique of inscription					
	Decorative designs in the top middle					
	Decorative designs down the sides					
	Date of monument (year of top death)					
	Comments/sketch					
						Check

Appendix B

Memorial shapes

Any other headstone shape not like any of these – use 40



Condition of monument

- 1 Complete
- 2 Moved, complete
- 3 Shape unknown
- 5 Overgrown

Materials

- 10 Slate
- 20 Marble
- 31 Pink granite
- 32 Grey granite
- 33 Black granite
- 40 Sandstone
- 50 Pottery
- 60 Iron
- 80 Limestone
- 95 Wood
- 90 Other

Decorative designs in the top middle

- 10 Death symbols – skull, long bones, hour-glass (egg timer), coffin, digging tools
- 20 Cherub or angel
- 30 Flowers or leaves
- 37 Wreath
- 40 Cross
- 50 Any non-angel person
- 55 Anchor
- 61 Book 80 Hand
- 63 Crown 85 Bird
- 67 IHS 87 Scrolls
- 73 Urn 92 Shield

Decorative designs down the sides

- 20 Columns
- 40 Leaves
- 50 Scrolls
- 60 Rope
- 61 Dog-tooth (zig-zag)
- 90 Other

Main technique of inscription

- 1 Incised (cut in)
- 2 Inlaid (filled with black/grey metal)
- 3 Relief (sticks out)
- 4 Painted on
- 9 Other

Practice Memorials and Example Sheets

Memorial 1



Memorial 2



ERECTED
BY
JANE BRUCE
IN LOVING MEMORY OF
HER HUSBAND
ALEXANDER CLARK
FARMER MILTON
WHO DIED 16TH MAY 1928
AGED 60 YEARS.
ALSO THE ABOVE
JANE BRUCE
WHO DIED 24TH JULY 1957
AGED 77 YEARS.

Memorial 3



Memorial 4



Memorial 5



Practice Memorial Worksheets

Memorial 1

Burial Ground name <i>ALL SAINTS</i>	Site Code	<i>T</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>
Place <i>TESTING</i>	Memorial number					<i>1</i>
Recorder name <i>Harold Mytum</i>	Condition of monument					<i>1</i>
Date of recording <i>14/09/2020</i>	Height (including any base) mm		<i>3</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>0</i>	} Nos for cast photo
Inscription	Width (excluding any base) mm		<i>5</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	
	Thickness/length (excluding any base)		<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>5</i>	
<i>Here</i> <i>Lieth y^e Body of Tho^s</i> <i>The Son of Tho^s U--</i>	Main material of monument		<i>8</i>	<i>0</i>		
	Monument type		<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>		
	Main technique of inscription					<i>1</i>
	Decorative designs in the top middle			<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	
	Decorative designs down the sides					
	Date of monument (year of top death)					
	Comments/sketch					
	 <i>Stone partly buried</i> <i>Trumpets behind cherub</i>					
	Check					

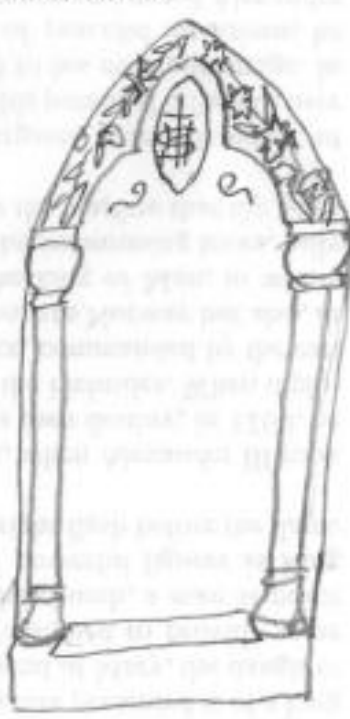
Memorial 2

Burial Ground name	ALL SAINTS		Site Code	T	S	T	2	0
Place	TESTING		Memorial number				2	
Recorder name	HAROLD MYTUM		Condition of monument					1
Date of recording	14/09/2020		Height (including any base) mm	1	6	2	0	} NOT LOSS FROM AREA
Inscription			Width (excluding any base) mm		7	4	0	
			Thickness/length (excluding any base)		1	5	0	
	ERECTED		Main material of monument					3 2
	BY		Monument type					8 5
	JANE BRUCE		Main technique of inscription					2
	IN LOVING MEMORY OF		Decorative designs in the top middle					
	HER HUSBAND		Decorative designs down the sides					
	ALEXANDER CLARK		Date of monument (year of top death)	1	9	2	8	
	FARMER MILTON		Comments/sketch 					
	WHO DIED 16 TH MAY 1928							
	AGED 60 YEARS							
	ALSO THE ABOVE							
	JANE BRUCE							
	WHO DIED 24 TH JULY 1957							
	AGED 77 YEARS							

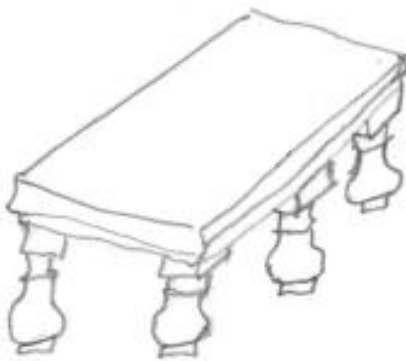
Memorial 3

Burial Ground name ALL SAINTS		Site Code		T	S	T	2	0
Place TESTING		Memorial number					3	
Recorder name Harold Mytum		Condition of monument					1	
Date of recording 14/09/2020		Height (including any base) mm		1	7	2	0	} NOT Post From Photo
Inscription		Width (excluding any base) mm			7	6	5	
		Thickness/length (excluding any base)			7	0	0	
TOP STEP	IN		Main material of monument		3	1		
	LOVING MEMORY		Monument type		2	1		
MID STEP	OF		Main technique of inscription				1	
	GEORGE WAKEFIELD		Decorative designs in the top middle				—	
	DIED JANUARY 22ND 1915		Decorative designs down the sides				—	
	AGED 72 YEARS		Date of monument (year of top death)		1	9	1	5
BOTTOM STEP	ALSO ALICE, HIS BELOVED WIFE		Comments/sketch					
	DIED AUGUST 12TH 1923							
	AGED 75 YEARS							
	PEACE PERFECT PEACE							

Memorial 4

Burial Ground name	ALL SAINTS		Site Code	T	S	T	2	0
Place	TESTING		Memorial number				4	
Recorder name	HAROLD MYTUN		Condition of monument					1
Date of recording	14/09/2020		Height (including any base) mm	1	4	7	5	} Not possible from photo
Inscription			Width (excluding any base) mm		7	3	0	
			Thickness/length (excluding any base)			4	8	
In Loving Memory of			Main material of monument					2 0
GRACE			Monument type					4 2
THE BELOVED WIFE OF			Main technique of inscription					2
A. W. SYMES			Decorative designs in the top middle	3	0	6	7	
WHO PASSED AWAY 24 TH MAY 1909			Decorative designs down the sides			2	0	
AGED 43 YEARS			Date of monument (year of top death)					
A LOVING WIFE AND FOND MOTHER			Comments/sketch 					
TRUE TILL DEATH								

Memorial 5

Burial Ground name <i>ALL SAINTS</i>	Site Code	<i>T</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>
Place <i>TESTING</i>	Memorial number				<i>5</i>	
Recorder name <i>HAROLD MYTUM</i>	Condition of monument				<i>1</i>	
Date of recording <i>14/09/2020</i>	Height (including any base) mm		<i>7</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>0</i>	
Inscription	Width (excluding any base) mm		<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>5</i>	
<i>TEXT CANNOT BE READ</i>	Thickness/length (excluding any base)	<i>1</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>0</i>	
<i>- TOO WEATHERED</i>	Main material of monument		<i>4</i>	<i>0</i>		
<i>BUT INCISED ON TOP</i>	Monument type		<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>		
	Main technique of inscription				<i>1</i>	
	Decorative designs in the top middle					
	Decorative designs down the sides					
	Date of monument (year of top death)					
	Comments/sketch					

NOT
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PHOT