Guidance Document: PART 1 – RECORDING THE MEMORIALS

To be used in conjunction with our Memorial Recording Form and Code Sheets.

Introduction

Recording memorials can be a very enjoyable, rewarding experience. Even very worn and difficult gravestones often retain more than anticipated at first glance and will repay the effort taken to decipher them. In this chapter, advice is given on how to record, using the recording form, and each of the elements it contains - the inscription, the photograph, and many other features of the memorial.

The recording form suggested is quite a complex one. However, it is perfectly reasonable to use a simpler version, or to only fill in those parts with which the recorders feel happy. It may be that different members of a team can fill in particular sections of the form, depending on their knowledge, interests and aptitudes. For example, someone with a particular interest in flowers may wish to develop a more detailed pattern of identification of the flowers and leaves carved on the memorials.

In each section there is some discussion of the reasons for including a particular record, and the range of choices with regard to its format. Practical suggestions are given to overcome some of the difficulties commonly encountered by recorders once in the field. Examples are also given of completed sections of forms beside photographs of actual stones.

1 The recording form

To make an effective record of all the memorials in a burial ground, it is necessary to be systematic in the way in which information is collected and stored. Whilst it is becoming increasingly easy to record directly onto computer in the field, there are many advantages with the use of paper records, even if data is to be transferred to computer at a later stage.

Previous forms

In the first handbook on recording, a method was suggested which attempted to deal with the problems of complex monuments by using a form for each component. This was rather cumbersome, and could make subsequent analysis difficult. A more flexible method of recording was suggested in the following version which took the monument as the unit, but it allows each recording project to develop its own priorities in recording. This version develops this, based on the experience of dozens more surveys across Britain and Ireland from various forms of burial grounds.

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the specimen form and to discuss the various elements that can be recorded. A blank form is available as a download. The guide and form can be used completely as presented here, in a simplified form, or as a base record to which additional extra interests can also be record. For example, the form has limited attention to masons, lettering styles or geology, but reflects what most recorders can manage from their general knowledge and the guidance sheets. Selective, more detailed, recording of particular aspects can be added

to the project archive and used for analysis, but will depend on local knowledge and experience, such as a local geologist considering in detail the sources for the older memorials.

A separate set of guidance on the interpretation of graveyards and their monuments gives many suggestions on how the collected data can be used to good effect, illustrated with case studies. The new CBA Handbook also synthesises the known burial ground monument information and shows how any local study can be placed within regional, nationals and indeed international trends. Discussion of forms for use with schools and young people (for example Scout or Guide groups, or Young Archaeologists clubs) can be found in a separate download.

The new style of form

The form has been designed with five components: the burial ground and its code, the memorial recorder and memorial numbering, the site location. The rest of the form is largely divided into two columns, the inscription (left), and coded information about the memorial, with space for comments and a sketch below (right), the bottom of the form allows checking that photography and checking of the form has taken place. In this way, a very great deal of information about each memorial is collected together on one A4 page; this can be used as a basis for much interesting and important subsequent analysis.

The codes used here are almost all numeric because many of the computerised statistical packages can use data in this form rather than in letter codes; it is relatively easy, though time-consuming, to convert letter codes to numbers. Whilst letters appear to give the advantage of 26 options for each box, multiple-letter categories such as AB, AC, etc, are very difficult to grasp. Larger numbers in a hierarchical numbering system, as described below, are easier to comprehend (though at first the coding can seem overwhelming in its array of choices). This method also provides more flexibility in adapting recording systems whilst a project is under way. In any one burial ground, only parts of the coding system will be relevant because styles are limited both in space and time, and recorders will soon become familiar with the codes for the common features they repeatedly come across. Using the standardised coding across many projects means that the similarities and differences can be discovered, and the local story placed in its wider context.

The record sheets can be left in box files, or hole punched and placed in ring binders. The latter is preferable in most cases as the order of records is more easily preserved. Forms should either be punched in advance of being filled in, or recorders must be made aware of where the hole punch will affect the sheets, otherwise part of the inscription can be lost during filing. When hole punching, ensure that the holes are in the same place for each batch of forms, as this produces a neater archive. When there are a lot of records from a burial ground, it is important not to place too many in any one file or ring binder, and forms can be damaged and come loose. If the forms are in a ring binder outside, be aware that if very windy they can rip. For security purposes, forms should be scanned as pdf files, then several members of the recording group can have a copy in case anything happens to the original set. Advice on creating an archive is given in another chapter.

Key information to record

The form offers the essentials of recording, there are several aspects worth recording, however much of the form is filled in detail. Each memorial needs to be given a unique number. Besides the inscription, the dimensions of the monument, its material, orientation, its shape and

decoration should be noted, however simply. The form is intended to deal with what can be gathered in the field. In subsequent analysis, the information about the stone and what can be gathered from the text of the inscription can be either considered separately or combined with documentary sources to reveal many patterns and trends. All these options are explored in another chapter. Sketches placed in the bottom right of the form can be very useful. Rubbings may be found to be not only enjoyable to make but also a valuable record, though they should be cross referenced with the forms, and their storage is a challenge.

The location of the monument within the burial ground also needs to be recorded, but this is most easily achieved on a plan of all the memorials (annotated with their number) and other features such as boundaries, structures, paths and trees.

The form covers many different features of memorials, but many will not have all these. For those fields that are irrelevant – such as those with no additional elements or no marginal motifs, for example – draw a horizontal line through the boxes. This shows that the recorder has considered this part of the form and noted its absence. It is easy to miss filling in a box, intending to return to it later after doing the rest of the form. The line though shows to checkers and others later that the aspect has been considered.

2 Filling in the top part of the form

The section in the top left-hand comer of the form provides standard information about the site being recorded.

Burial ground name

The top left should be used to write in the place and dedication or description, such as St Mary's, Sutton; Sutton cemetery; or Hebron Baptist, Henllys.

Top right is the place for the code for the burial ground. Up to eight characters are available, but it is usually easier to keep the code short. The first part is for the place, the second for the year of recording. If there is more than one burial ground in the same place, for example St. Mary's churchyard and a separate cemetery in Sutton, this should be allowed for in the code even if it has not yet been recorded. So, in the case of these two burial grounds, the codes could be SUTM and SUTCM. It is the site code that will be used on identifying boards used in photography (and then on renamed the digital photos), and on any other record such as rubbings (see below). Thus, the full codes of a site recorded in 2019 would be SUTM19 and SUTCM19. If work continues over more years, the year element should be changed (continued recording in 2020 would be SUTM20 and SUTCM20). This means that if another recording of the same burial ground takes place years later (for example, to ascertain any degradation of the memorials) it can be linked but also differentiated.

If there is a very large number of memorials, for example in a municipal cemetery, different zones may be given distinctive sub codes so that they can be compared and contrasted in the analysis. So, for example, Sutton cemetery could be labelled SUTCM, leaving room for sub codes for all the areas, giving SUTCMA, SUTCMB, etc. and full codes in 2019 of SUTCMA19, SUTCMB19, using the full eight characters on the form.

Grid reference

A site grid reference is useful to confirm the location of the burial ground. Material from a range of recording projects can then be assembled for regional or national studies, and for this the position in the national grid would be most helpful. This grid reference can also be a check if two independent surveys have both used the same place code. It is easy to calculate a national grid reference from an Ordnance Survey map.

Memorial number

It is essential that each memorial has a separate, individual number, and that this is placed in the top right-hand corner of the form so it is easy to find the relevant form when they are all stored in a binder. By using the burial ground code and the monument number, it is possible to give every monument a unique identifier. Do not use additional letters (e.g. 89A, 89B) for separate elements on a grave. If there is a plot with various separate monuments, give each monument a number, and another in the same sequence of numbers for the plot as a whole. Then the various elements of the complex plot can be identified, but can also be studies separately. This is likely to be only used rarely, and not at all in most burial grounds. The most likely examples are kerbed plots that might have a headstone but also additional commemorative plaques set within the kerbs.

Where the burial ground is split into sections, it is confusing if the memorial numbers start from 1 in each section, as analysis of the whole cemetery would require the sections to be combined and the duplicate numbering would be confusing. If teams are to work in different areas at the same time, each can be given a substantial block of numbers to use. It does not matter if every number is not allocated. Displaced elements such as foot stones that may have been removed to ease grass cutting and placed against a boundary wall should be separately numbered. It may be possible later to suggest with the headstones to which they may have belonged, but as this cannot now be proven, suggested associations should be placed in the comments section of the form. In any subsequent analysis it is then possible to combine or keep separate these records.

Recorder name and date

A space has been designed for entering the name of the recorder or recording team for that monument, and the date the record was made is entered below. This can be important, as subsequent visitors to the graveyard may find the memorial has become more eroded and less detail is visible, and dated records allow assessment of the erosion rate. Alternatively, an overgrown and inaccessible inscription may be visible after a programme of clearance. Also, if checking reveals that certain recorders are confused by some of the coding, or find differentiating between, for example 3 and 5 on 18th-century inscriptions, these can be checked an extra time.

Memorial number used in an existing system

There may already have been a survey of the graveyard in the past – such as one that collected the inscriptions – or the burial ground may have a management system by which all grave plots are identified. For example, many cemeteries have plots identified, usually with a combination of letters and numbers. Place the relevant identifier, if known, in this space so that the new survey can be cross-referenced with any existing documentation. Do use a new set of numbers for the new survey even if there is an existing set – more memorials may be identified, and

some of the coding systems used elsewhere may not be compatible when entered into analytical programmes for later analysis.

Denomination of burial area

Denomination is an important factor in the selection of some memorials and for assessing the historical context of the burials. A code for each denomination is available, including for other religions than Christianity. Cemeteries may have zones for different denominations, so care needs to be taken to use the appropriate code for this as recording proceeds. Non-denominational burial grounds can be coded 0. Individual stones, even where the denomination of the deceased is known, for example where a Methodist minister is buried in an Anglican burial ground, should be coded as Anglican as this code refers to the burial area, not the individual (the same memorial may commemorate members of the same family who belonged to different denominations, largely unknown from only the memorial inscription).

Memorial number of plot if part of a complex

Some monuments sit within a defined area, which may be marked by kerbs, corner stones, or a more visible fence, hedge or wall. This is often a high status family in a graveyard, or may be a large family plot in a cemetery. Occasionally such plots were designed for members of an institution such as convent or a burial club. The plot as a whole is given a number first, and its features recorded, including dimensions. The memorials within are then each numbered and have separate forms, but to show that they are all part of the complex the number given for the plot as a whole is written in this box. In most graveyards this box will not be required at all; in some cemeteries it will be frequently requited. If a plot number is assigned with numbers for individual memorials within it, write a list of the memorial numbers in the Comments box on the form for the plot as a whole.

Printing standard information on the form

Some of the information listed above (e.g. Burial Ground name and code, Grid reference) would be the same on all the forms for one burial ground, and could be filled in on the form before it was reproduced. This can ensure that the standard sections are already completed accurately, which saves time and avoids unnecessary errors. Denomination may also be printed but would need to be left blank if a cemetery with distinct denomination zones is being recorded.

3 The inscription

It is the inscription of memorials that has traditionally attracted most interest and there is no doubt that much of value can be extracted from the inscriptions of a graveyard. The space on the form for the inscription is placed on the left hand side, and is usually sufficient, but if necessary a second form or the reverse of the original sheet can be used, with PTO at the bottom to indicate that there is more than is immediately visible. If the back of the form is used, this much also be scanned in any backup or archive version, so it may be logistically easier to use a second form and not this on both forms and not fill in most of the coded data again on the second form, just the top section.

Transcribing the inscription onto the form

The text should be transcribed line by line. Upper and lower case lettering should both be used exactly as on the stone, but attempts to copy the styles of lettering are inadvisable as this takes too long and rarely captures the quality of workmanship. Use the form to display centring and relative size, though this will also be visible on the photograph and any rubbing. Be very careful to use punctuation as it is indicated on the stone, and abbreviations and superscripts should be written as seen on the memorial. Annotate to show any corrections, and do not change anything that might today be seen as spelling mistakes. When there are any dividing lines or decoration between blocks of text, these should be sketched in the relevant places on the inscription box on the form, as with any line fillers such as spirals. If there are dots or small shapes between letters or words, and any lines between text (as part of the design or just marking out before inscribing) these should be marked and annotated.

If there is text on more than one face, the inscription box should be broken up into sections for each face, and additional forms or the back of the sheet used also. Use of compass points should allow a note to be made of which inscription belongs where. So, for example, a table tomb could have the top surface, and the long north and south faces inscribed, and even the smaller east and west ends; crosses often have inscriptions on more than one face of the base, and on different steps of that base. It may be helpful to indicate where all the inscriptions occur on a sketch on the bottom right of the form.

Likely wording and letter forms

A little background preparation will help inexperienced recorders make more sense of inscriptions. Some knowledge of the expected layout and terminology of memorials, the forms of lettering, and the ways in which the letters are cut can prevent confusion and wasted time and effort. Reconnaissance of the chosen burial ground and, if necessary, other well-preserved ones in the vicinity, can be very helpful in the preparatory stages of a project. It is advisable for new team members to start recording with the more legible inscriptions, to get their eye attuned to the styles, and then move on to more challenging examples.

The following notes may be helpful:

1. Introductory terms such as 'Here lies', 'Beneath this stone', 'Sacred', 'Erected', 'In loving memory'. These can often have very elaborate first letters or words which can confuse the beginner.

2. Letter forms can be unfamiliar, particularly 18th-century examples, such as the f for s (in which case write f). Some numerals can be difficult to read correctly, and on older monuments they may be in Latin numerals.

3. The way in which letters and numbers were cut with combinations of deep and shallow incised lines. With erosion and weathering, often only the deeper strokes are left but with experience these can be identified.

4. Abbreviations occur in a range of forms, notably with dates and elisions at the end of lines, such as inter'd. Sometimes there are letters placed one above another, or may be as superscripts in abbreviations such as 10th and Decr. Sometimes omissions were corrected by adding text above or below the lines, again often in smaller script. Transcribe all these as seen and, if necessary, add a note to explain them.

5. Words are not now commonly in use, such as ye (the), relict (surviving spouse, normally widow). Phrases such as Anno Domini (AD) and Aet (the Latin Aetatis, meaning age) may also be found on the older memorials.

Where to look for the inscriptions

Text tends to be on one face of the headstone, but sometimes inscriptions can be on both faces, and on more than one side and also the top of larger monuments such as tombs. Mason's marks can occur very low down on headstones, on the back, side or even top of the stone (see below).

Many monuments of the mid-20th century have inscriptions not only on the headstone but also on the kerbs, and indeed some were only ever kerbed and have all the text placed there. This should be remembered when looking for inscriptions, and a scrutiny of kerbs should be routine in the recording process. In the case of very complex monuments, an annotated sketch may be helpful.

Techniques to improve reading of inscriptions

Some inscriptions, even of great antiquity, can be easy to read, but many pose more problems. Oblique light is often necessary, and even relatively well-preserved text can be difficult to see on a dull winter's day. Different parts of the inscription will be easier to see close up, others from further away. Looking straight on is the obvious way to read a gravestone, but if the recorder moves back and forth this can often help with reading particular parts. Often on projects, volunteer recorders are amazed by the perception of the newly arrived supervisor who, by a combination of experience and a different angle, can read an awkward phrase with ease!

Certain times of day will be best for particular groups of stones, depending on their orientation, and it may be necessary to transfer attention to different parts of the graveyard as the day goes on. If most or all memorials face the same way, it may be appropriate to concentrate work over more days utilising the times with the best light. The more difficult inscriptions should certainly be left until there is good light available, or alternative strategies employed (see below). Some memorials, because of their position next to a building or under trees, never have the benefit of direct sunlight. Some tombs have recessed panels which always have shadows across them. In situations like this other methods will have to be used. These are discussed below in the suggested order of application.

1. Careful brushing or cleaning can help reveal an inscription. Brushes must not be so hard that they damage the surface of the stone. It is only desirable to clean enough to be able to read the inscription. Soft hand or toothbrushes work well, us do shaving brushes.

2. Sponging the surface of the stone can be very effective; sponges used for washing cars are ideal. Besides sponging, spraying water onto memorials can make otherwise invisible fine lines appear; a small hand-pump action sprayer such as those used for house plants works well and can be used   on delicate surfaces. Sometimes the text appears immediately after any form of wetting; on other occasions it is during the differential drying that it is possible to read it.

3. Horizontal parts of monuments such as the tops of table tombs can also be made easier to read by the use of water filling in the surviving parts of the inscription. The stone should then be viewed from various sides, including very oblique angles.

4. The application of oblique light emphasises the incised lines of text or decoration. A good quality torch can work very well but only in very dull conditions. The use of a mirror or a board covered with tin foil on sunny days to deflect the sunlight onto the surface of a memorial which is in the shade. Moving the deflected beam back and forth allows attention to concentrate on the problematic parts as their lighting changes.

5. When inscriptions are not visible, they can often still be felt with the tips of the fingers. This is often the case on eroded tops of table or chest tombs.

6. A recently-developed method, (RTI) can be used to tease out difficult text or decoration, but it requires some equipment including a digital camera. By downloading free software to process multiple images, excellent results can be achieved, though in many cases the face of memorials can be too eroded to decipher. The RTI method is described in detail in a download.

Some other methods can be used but are not recommended.

1. Chalk can bring out an inscription, but it is not very effective on the finer parts, and it is easy to highlight the obvious which makes the rest even more difficult to see. The use of chalk on monuments with a soft or unstable surface should always be avoided.

2. Another technique which is the matter of much dispute in North America, but which is probably damaging to many memorials made of permeable rock types, is the use of shaving foam to fill in the letters. This should not be used as the chemicals in the foam cannot be completely removed even with extensive washing immediately after transcription, and they can lead to deterioration of the monument.

3. Rubbing. This is discussed further in Section 7 below, as it also applies to decoration.

Illegible inscriptions

At a certain point it may be necessary to decide to abandon a stone as partially or completely illegible. Depending on research priorities, this might be after attempts with artificial light sources and feeling with fingers has failed, or it might be after much more exhaustive procedures such as RTI. In the report, left with the archive, state to what degree inscriptions were sought; if special efforts were made on a specific stone, mention this in the comments on the form.

It is important to record on the form where an inscription is illegible. If possible, give some indication of how much might have been present. Often it may be possible to at least identify the number of letters. This may be within a block of text that can be read. In such cases, mark each missing letter with a short line. Where letters have gone but can be inferred, put the inferred text in square brackets with ? in front of the first letter. It may be possible to identify lines of text which can be marked on the form, even if all letters are not legible enough to be transcribed. More experienced gravestone recorders can often recover a great deal from even very worn inscriptions because of the format of the text, and the letter forms and the way they are cut, and this may allow even fragmentary evidence to be interpreted. Whether recorders are experienced or not, it is best if illegible inscriptions are revisited after the rest of the graveyard recording is completed, and in the best possible lighting conditions.

Monumental masons often did not put their names on their work, but some did. Some modern memorials even have full addresses, telephone numbers or even web sites on small plaques! Information on masons can be very valuable, but it is often in relatively small letters tucked

away at the bottom (often bottom right) of the face of the stone, on the base at the front or rear, or even along the side of the stone. It may be in abbreviated form, and however written it should be copied down exactly as part of the inscription. It may also state the address or place. Sometimes one part of the mason's details is on the left of the front of the memorial, with the rest on the right. Recorders should be encouraged to look for this information, but not spend too long excavating at the base of every stone in the hope of finding a name. Masons who only put initials or abbreviations on the stones may be identified through subsequent documentary research.

Other aspects of the inscription can be recorded by a photograph, rubbing, or classified and recorded in the coded data section (see sections below).

4 Measurements and orientation

This next section of the form contains a code indicating what state the memorial is in, and a group of measurements which define the size of the monument and which way it faces.

Condition of monument

For monument condition, sound, in situ means that the monument has not been moved and it is complete, though it does not matter how far it is leaning or overgrown as long as it can be fully recorded. Issues regarding the state of the memorial can be expanded in the Comments box. If the monument is damaged but can still be fully recorded, it would be coded 3, but if that cannot be done (or only in a very generalised way) then it would be coded 4 or 5. Coding 2 indicates that a monument is complete, but has been moved; this is often used where an area has been cleared of memorials to make grass cutting easier, but the monuments may be placed around the boundary of the burial ground.

Condition of inscription

For inscription condition, code 1 means that it is as new, but most memorials will be coded 2. However difficult the inscription was to read, if all was eventually deciphered then the inscription is 'all legible' – if extremely difficult this can be noted in Comments. Mainly legible indicates some useful text can be certainly read, whilst 4 indicates that nothing of value is known, even if a few letters or words are recoverable. Memorials may be illegible because all the text has eroded away, it is completely overgrown, or lying face-down. In the last two cases in due course a text may become visible, and this should be noted in comments. Some monuments were placed on graves but never inscribed, and these are coded 9.

Many combinations of these two condition elements can occur. At one extreme is an in situ monument in fine condition but where the inscription has been lost through surface erosion of the text (which can occur through surface spalling of stone, or if a monument is made of more than one stone, and a soft variety was used for the portion with the text); this would be coded 15. At the other extreme is a dismantled stone of which only the part with the text has been saved, but which has a pristine inscription, which would merit the code 41.

The purpose of these codes is to exclude monuments which cannot be used for certain kinds of analysis. For example, if part of a graveyard had been cleared, they would still be marked on the graveyard plan. However, if a study was undertaken of where stones were erected at various

periods, these would have to be excluded as their current position was not where they were first placed and so does not show the spatial development of the graveyard burial pattern over time. In this case, all those labelled 2 in condition of monument would be excluded from this analysis. Likewise, if one wished to examine all memorials with epitaphs, and see how common they were at various times, it would be necessary to exclude at least those classed 4 and above in condition of inscription from that study.

Monument dimensions

The next group of coded entries refer to the dimensions of the monument - its height, width and thickness or length. They are all given in millimetres, not because the exact millimetre is normally vital but because it can be critical in thickness (with headstones for example) and so uniformity for all the measurements avoids errors. It is also better than using centimetres and parts of centimetres e.g. 7.5 cm is 75 mm, so using millimetres is so much easier when it comes to analysis. Even so, it is very easy for recorders to inadvertently use centimetres or inches - with apparently tiny monuments being thus recorded! This is an example of where checking is important.

Measurement needs to be consistent for the whole study, and guidance needs to be given to all recorders. Height should be from the ground surface, even if there is a base, as the overall height – and so visibility – of the monument is a critical measurement. The stepped portions of crosses (usually white marble) should also be counted in the height of the memorial, but the sketch can be annotated with the measurements for each step. Some 19th-century and later headstones have a wider more prominent base element, and these now have their own separate measurements for height, width and thickness, which should also be used for all the steps combined for crosses. The main part of the monument, even set in a base, has width and thickness excluding the base. Width is the easiest measurement to decide upon, and the widest point should be taken, so this would be at the base of an obelisk, but it could be well above the ground and across the arms in the case of a cross.

Sunken memorials can be problematic. As many monuments may have sunk a little, it is easiest to merely take the above ground height for all of them, though it would be necessary to mention this in comments, and valuable to note the depth to which the inscription was found if it was followed beneath the surface. Where stones are leaning, it is easy enough to measure along the side of the memorial and so obtain an accurate original height. Fallen memorials may have broken at ground level, so the whole length of the recumbent stone would represent its original height; if the monument has been lifted, the differential erosion or lichen growth may indicate the amount originally above the ground. Note any decisions in Comments.

Thickness / length of monument is a strange category, often with many low readings under 100mm (headstones), and another group at about 2200mm (ledgers and table or chest tombs). However, there is no need to have separate categories since there can never be any confusion. Kerbstones as additional features need to be noted, but do not deserve separate measurements; their arrangement around the grave should be clear from the plan, However, where a monument only consists of kerbstones then a full set of measurements should be recorded. Large plots, such as a kerb or railings enclosing more than one memorial, now has its own number and can be measured, with each monument within it given a separate form.

Measurements are important indicators of size, one the key variables in any analysis. If there is any doubt, such as with a badly sunk headstone, it is better not to enter measurements in the main part of the form but annotate the sketch and indicate the issue there.

Orientation

The orientation of the stone indicates which way it faces. Most headstones, for example, are at the head of the grave and face towards the east, but this is far from universal. Also, most headstones do not exactly face east, and within a graveyard different blocks of graves may deviate one way or another from east. The reasons for this can be an interesting avenue of research. Sometimes graves are aligned parallel to a feature such as a wall or path (perhaps now no longer visible), or the slope of the ground may have encouraged a different alignment. Some stones may face west, so that they can be easily read, say from a path. Cemeteries can have many different alignments of memorials, which only make sense when located on the plan.

All monuments, including tombs, have an orientation. This is based on the side with the most important primary inscription. Even horizontal slabs have an orientation - one considers which way they would face if they were set up on end. Stones that have clearly been moved should be not measured for orientation, as this creates false data for analysis.

To measure orientation, a compass of a type used by walkers, which has a sliding ring with 360 degrees marked on it, may be used, but many mobile phones now can have a compass app. The compass is set on the top or side of the stone, the fixed arrow pointing outwards from the inscription. The sliding ring is then turned until north on the ring (0 or 360 degrees) lines up with the compass point which is pointing to magnetic north. It is then very easy to read off the angle for the memorial by seeing the number on the sliding ring which is lined up with the fixed arrow pointing out from the memorial. The only time that placing the compass on the stone can present difficulties is if the rock from which the monument is made is itself magnetic. This can be the case with some granites, so the recorder must be careful to swivel the compass about and see if the needle adjusts back to the expected general direction or just floats about aimlessly. With such stones, orientation needs to be calculated against the base or kerbs, as the magnetic field does not extend any distance from the stone. It is easy to use a phone app as this just gives the reading in degrees. A stone facing directly east would have a reading of 90 degrees.

This completes the part of the form recording numerical information – measurements in millimetres or orientation in degree. The rest of the form is designed for numerical codes, but these are codes assigned to particular features such as monument shape, materials or decorative motifs.

5 Coding other information

Background

Though at first sight this part of the form may appear intimidating and confusing, it provides an effective way of encapsulating information about many different aspects of the monument. For manual sorting and searching, the use of code numbers in the boxes along the right-hand side of the sheets makes reference easy, and the form can be easily used for transcription into a computer. Using the codes in the field is also a much faster way of recording the information. Having the code sheet with categories and drawings of shapes on one side of the clipboard, and the form currently being filled in opposite, the recorder can rapidly consult across and find the right codes. After a while, many of the common codes, such as local materials for headstones, is soon remembered by recorders.

The recording form presented here is the result of work on more than 50 burial grounds in England, Wales, Isle of Man and Ireland, and the form itself has evolved since the 2000 edition of the Handbook. This form has been designed to provide choice for the recorders, but some elements are essential, and these will be highlighted.

It is highly desirable that a preliminary visit to the burial ground identifies the common features of the coding, and any local features which will be given codes not listed here. If additional codes are identified during the survey, it is essential that all copies of the code sheet guidance be modified at once, so that all recorders have this information, and these additional code numbers must be set out and explained in the burial ground archive. For much of the information contained in the inscription, such as the genealogical details, can be recorded in a separate digital database. a second form can be used which is filled in at a later date and away from the burial ground, and this is discussed further in the next chapter.

Materials

The materials from which monuments have been made vary according to region, but from the later 19th century the same range of materials is usually found anywhere in the country, and so the suggested list should form a suitable basis from which to work. The codes for materials have been given two digits; the first giving the general type, the second to be used if this is to be subdivided. For example, on the sample code sheet granite in general has been given the code 30. But if greater detail in recording is desired, then the various colours have all been given numbers in the 30s. This allows anyone interested in granite memorials, irrespective of colour, to find them all easily. If only black granite was required, then 33 would be searched for.

In particular areas, there may be various forms of, say, sandstone which it would be helpful to differentiate; here codes for yellow or red sandstone have been assigned. Just as the granites have all been given numbers beginning with 3, so the sandstones have numbers beginning with 4, so instead of just using 40 for all sandstones, one might choose to use 41 for yellow sandstone, 42 for red sandstone. However, if these or other sandstones can be differentiated and would be worth recording, other numbers in the 40s could be used, and noted in the supporting archive documentation. There are also plenty of additional numbers to use as required. Up to four materials can be recorded on the form for the single monument, but if a monument had more than four materials, the four most visible ones should be listed in the coding, and the others noted in Comments. If lead is used for inlaying letters it should not be

coded here as it would be identified under technique of inscription; likewise, fittings used in the construction of monuments or in repairs should just listed under comments.

The first material to be listed on the form should be the dominant one. For example a sandstone headstone with a white marble inset of a cross would be coded 40 21. A surprising number of memorials are made of more than one material; many chest tombs have a brick base with a stone slab, and Gothic revival monuments may be polychrome by using a variety of materials. Many monuments from the early and middle part of the 20th century have chippings of coloured stone or glass within the kerbs. Notice that the material of the base should not be listed in the Materials of monument section, but in the box designated Material of base, directly below the base measurements.

Many people are concerned about correctly identifying stone types, and the services of a geologist may be helpful in the first instance. Whilst a monumental mason will know the rock types used in contemporary memorials (and many of them now come from as far afield as South Africa, India and Chine), he may be less certain of the older stones. A geologist from a local school, college or museum should be able to help and, once the key features are known for each rock type, it is not too difficult for the recorders to determine the material for most, if not all, memorials. If there is still doubt, a geologist may be prepared to work on the team recording this feature for all stones, or they could be persuaded to check and deal with any problematic examples. A useful guide to common gravestone rocks is available as a download, but for local stones – and even the identification of particular quarries or bedding within these – requires local knowledge.

Monument type

Monument type is one of the most crucial categories on the form, as different types are often analysed in different ways; they also have varying rates of survival and the use language and decoration is often related to monument type. So, it is often necessary for analysis to select out all the headstones for study as a group, for example, as opposed to tombs. The monuments have been broken down into the following categories, indicated by the first digit in their code numbers: flat slabs, grave-rails and -boards, low monuments and kerbs (0000); chest and table tombs (1000); crosses (2000); sculpture (3000); headstones (4000, 5000, 6000, 7000, 8000), pedestal tombs, mausolea (9000). Those who do not want to record greater detail will help many other researchers if they use these broad categories, and for any monument they feel uncertain about, using a broad category will avoid confusion. However, more detailed recording provides much more fine-grained information about any burial ground, and if data from several sites is put together, can reveal exciting and important information, even if the numbers of more detailed categories are too small for a single-site analysis. Also, the detailed recording indicates local popular forms, sometimes unique to a small area and perhaps produced by a single mason.

The four-digit numbering system allows for recording and analysis at different levels of detail, and so is very flexible, and works on the same principle as that for materials. The first digit indicates the type of monument (e.g. headstone, tomb), the second a subset of this (e.g. round-topped, table), and the third can be used for further subdivision, depending on the type of monument. These are self-explanatory when accompanied by sketch drawings.

Where possible the categories suggested here should be used, but the many local variants which may be encountered can be given additional numbers (the headstone categories have

some unused 5000 numbers, and many 7000 numbers have not been allocated). By using this system one can either split into detail (all 8120 monuments, desk with open book) or lump together (all monuments beginning 81 (desks), or even all beginning 8). The working classification should be developed after a preliminary visit to survey the range of forms; if only a few types are present, a short checklist might be provided to each recorder, with just some full sets of code sheets available if required.

As this is one of the most important elements of the form, and also potentially the most problematic, each category will be briefly discussed, and in some cases illustrated.

Ledgers

Ledgers, flat slabs level with or just protruding from the ground, can be coded 0100. Care has to be taken to make sure they are not really parts of dismantled table or chest tombs, where only the top slabs remain, and have been set on the ground. Many tombs which were considered dangerous may have been dismantled. If there is any doubt, it is worth noting this in the comments section. Small slabs which are often used to mark modern cremations come in several forms and have their own numbers (0600, 0700). Ledgers can be raised up on a base which is not substantial enough to make it a chest tomb, but it is often just one course of blocks; this can be recorded by using 5 at the end, so a simple ledger on a base would be 0105. Some ledgers are coffin-shaped (0200). Body stones with a headstone are similar to a rectangular or coffin-shaped ledger, but the inscription is on the headstone, so they are recorded under Additional elements (see below).

Grave-rails and grave-boards

In a few areas of Britain grave-rails with a shallow horizontal (0310) and grave-boards with a deeper horizontal plank (0330) survive, and they are well worth recording; further subdivision may be worthwhile in those few areas where they are numerous. The grave-boards may have carved lettering, though in many cases this was painted. Grave rails and boards were originally in timber, but they can also be found in stone and cast iron. They have the same codes for their form, but the materials codes would be different.

Low monuments

If no differentiation within other low monuments is attempted, all can be coded 0500. However, low monuments come in a range of shapes, and some of the most common have been given sub codes. The top may be flat (0510) or have a convex curve (0520) to let the water run off the surface and allow any decoration to be better viewed from a distance. Many low monuments come to a ridge, either gabled (0530) or hipped (0540). Some of the most elaborate take a gabled cross form, looking rather like a miniature church (0550). As with ledgers, low monuments are often raised up on a base or step, which can be indicated by the final digit in the code (***5), thus making a gabled low monument on a base 0535.

Kerbs

When kerbs form the monument itself, they are given a code 0900. If they form an additional element, to, for example, a headstone or tomb, they should be recorded as Additional elements (see below). However, many 20th-century kerbs comprise the only feature of the monument and deserve to be recorded in this section of the form as a discrete type.

Simple kerbs should be given 0920, those with raised posts at the comers 0940, and those with three posts on each side 0960. In some cases, the kerbs have railings (0970), even when there is no additional element inside, or chains (0980). The last digit can be used for any filling within the kerbs, for example green (***1), white (***2) or grey (***3) chippings. These same codes are used for kerbs that are Additional elements, so many variations have been assigned numbers.

Chest and table tombs

If you do not want to divide up these tombs, or there is only the top slab and it is not possible to tell what type of monument it originally formed a part of, use 1000.
Chest tombs are rectangular box-like monuments with flat slabs on top and closed-in sides, and all have 1100 numbers. They are subdivided on the basis of the decoration on the sides. Those with plain sides (eg those in brick or stone ashlar) are 1110, those with rectangular panelled sides 1120. Further categorisations could take into account vertical elements that may be fluted or plain, or the nature of the mouldings defining the panels. This degree of coding would only be worthwhile if there were enough monuments to subdivide in this way. Some tombs have console ends which are worthwhile coding separately (1130).

Table tombs (1300) also have flat slabs but these are raised up on legs. There can be four legs, in a variety of shapes, of which the most common are straight (1410), baluster or column (1420), with slightly curved animal legs (1430), or those which expand in the centre (1440). Often the rectangular top slab is supported by six legs, which likewise frequently come in the same forms (1610, 1620, 1630, and 1640 respectively).

In some parts of the country, the table top is supported not on legs, but on end panels with a central panel joining them providing support for the horizontal slab (1700); again, in areas where these are numerous they could be further subdivided.

The last digit of the four-digit code for memorials can be used to indicate the type of top on the tomb. The slab on top may be a simple square block (***1), have bevelled (***2) or coped edges (***3) or may have a more complex moulding (***4). There may be additional elements mounted on top of the slab. The Gloucestershire bale tombs, for example, can occur with single or double half-column shapes (or bales) on their tops (***5, ***6). Some cemetery tombs can have a low monument on top of the tomb (***7). If there are common regional types in the area being recorded, these can be differentiated if required using the last digit.

Crosses

Crosses as a whole can be numbered 2000, but it is easy to differentiate the main types and give them separate codes. The simple Latin cross (2100) is the most common, but others frequently found include the ringed cross (2200), often with Celtic or other revival interlace, crosses with expanded terminals (2300), and those with Gothic revival finials at the terminals (2400). Each of these categories has room for further elaboration in codes (eg 2210, 2220, 2230 etc for different forms of ringed cross), and all numbers from 2500 are available for further categories. Crosses on top of headstones, even though they are sometimes the dominant feature, should be recorded as parts of headstones (see below).

The bases of the crosses vary considerably. Many are stepped, and this can be indicated by the third digit, where **10, **20 and **30 each indicate the number of steps as 1, 2 and 3 respectively. A rocky base (**50) is also found, and many wheeled crosses and some others

have a roughly square base (**60). As the steps can sometimes include one in a diamond shape, this can be indicated using the final digit (***5).

Sculpture

Sculpture occurs rarely in churchyards, but is quite common in cemeteries, especially in areas in use in the first few decades of the 20th century. All sculpture, whatever its scale, is coded 3000.

The most frequent figures found are angels (3100). These can be subdivided into angels standing (3110), sitting (3140) or kneeling (3160). Sculpted cherubs (3200) also occur, especially on child graves. In Catholic areas, the Virgin Mary (3400) is often found. Other Biblical figures and saints can be given additional numbers if this is felt worthwhile, otherwise they can be given the general number 3000. Non-religious figures, often in Classical clothing, are also common (3600, 3700) and sometimes the deceased is depicted, though more often as a bust (3650, 3750) than as a full figure, though these do occur.

Just as crosses appear on bases, so does statuary. It is most often found on a stepped base (***3), rocky base (***5), or a cubed base (***7).

Headstones

Headstones (4000) are by far the most common form of memorial, and they come in a great variety of shapes. Many of these were only popular at certain times and in a few regions, so providing a national design scheme which would encompass *every* possibility would be impossible and horrendously complicated. This system is not the simplest, but it does allow a logical development of types to fit most situations. To give headstones the variety of forms necessary, not only the 4000s but also the 5000s, 6000s and some 7000s and 8000s have been allocated to this type.

For traditional headstones, some of the 4000-6000 numbers have been used, with each digit of the code indicating a particular feature. The first two digits indicate the basic shape of the top: round (4100), Gothic pointed (4200), triangular/gabled (4300), pedimented (4400), slightly curved (4500), sinuous (4600), flat (4700), concave pointed top (4800).

Slightly more complex shapes have been given numbers beginning with 5 or 6, leaving some spare numbers. Headstones with flat tops which then have central elements that are semi-circular (5100), triangular (5200), or slightly curved (5300) are often found. An asymmetrical form of headstone (in a variety of shapes) occurs during the 20th century (5800) which is not easily placed in any of the other categories.

Headstones may also incorporate a cross on top (6000). Where many cross forms occur, the Gothic pointed form with cross (6200), and triangular tops with plain (6300) or ringed crosses (6400) are most common. Other top features such as a finial or fleur-de-lys, may occur but these are less common and have not been given codes here. This would only be worthwhile if they were common in the survey area as it may indicate that they are the work of a particular mason or workshop, and their identification as a specific type would be informative.

The third digit in the code is used to define beyond the main shape. Using **10 indicates that the headstone has indents on the sides; these are particularly common on Gothic revival stones but do occur on some others. **20 indicates that the form is repeated twice on the top of the stone, and **30 shows that it is repeated three times. These repeats occur on some stones

where separate vertical panels are set aside to record individuals, and tend to be found on older stones. Some headstones have an inset – a cusp – at the centre of the top (**7*), and others have a top that is cut away both sides (**8*); ones with a triangular profile (4380) are common, and others with a rounded top – often with raised shoulders (5181) – has been called by some researchers an anthropomorphic shape as it may resemble a person's silhouette.

The last digit of the number indicates the treatment of the shoulders of the stones. Various shapes can extend up from the top of the stone, or the shoulders can be cut away in a variety of shapes. In particular, the concave shape (***7) can be repeated several times on each shoulder, but in this classification such detail cannot be recorded; it should be noted on the sketch and visible on the photographs. A particularly common profile can of course be given one of the spare numbers (such as in the 5000s) which have not been assigned.

Those memorial types developed during the early decades of the 20th century, some of which derive from the headstone form, have been allocated 8000 numbers. They do not require the various subdivisions outlined above for headstones regarding the indents, repeated shapes or treatment of the shoulders, so these subdivisions can be used differently for these more recent memorials. Many are thicker than headstones, are usually relatively small, and have some element of the design specifically set aside for the inscription often positioned at an angle which is neither horizontal nor vertical.

The desk form of memorial (8100) is quite common, perhaps with an open book (8120) or scroll (8150). The memorial may only consist of a slab with a flat sloping surface for the inscription (8200), an open book (8220), or scroll (8250).

Another common style is the roughly shaped rock, which may actually be just a boulder, but is more often carefully carved with crevices and vegetation to give the impression of a craggy rock (8400); it frequently has a scroll for the inscription carved on it (8450). Sometimes a smooth rock is used, either one naturally rounded from water action, or smoothed by the mason, often accompanied by fine lettering and design (8480).

There are again plenty of additional numbers to be used for other forms which are encountered and thought worth classifying separately. If in doubt, place the stone in a general category (such as 5000 for older shapes and 8000 for more recent ones). These can always be reviewed at the end of the survey when all these 'others' can be examined together, and if suitable groups can be recognised they can be recoded either within existing codes or with new ones.

To summarise, the suggested classification utilises 4000 for headstones in general (and would be used, for example, where the top has broken off and been lost and so it cannot be given a typological form). 4000-6000 has been given to traditional headstone forms, and 8000 to more modem forms not otherwise represented; only 70** numbers have been allocated – to external monuments placed on the wall, which were not coded in the previous version. The remaining 7000 numbers are left completely free to be used if required; in some regions distinctive forms occur frequently and deserve to be noted. Thus, there is plenty of flexibility to retain this classification and augment it with local types.

Pedestal tombs

Though far less common than headstones, pedestal monuments are frequently encountered, and are very common in some burial grounds. The pediment may be solid or hollow, but the classification used here is based on the shape of the main block of the monument. If this cannot be assessed, or all are to be placed under a general number, then 9000 should be used. An upright cuboid shape (9400) is the most common, though a squat form that really is a cube (9300) is occasionally seen. Those with oval or circular cross sections, making a columnar form (9100) or multifaceted, polygonal cross sections (9200) are also encountered. Many pedestal tombs are set on a low base, which can be mentioned in comments but should not be considered part of the monument unless this clearly serves as one or more steps (it can be coded and measured as a base). The third digit is used to indicate the second stage of the monument, as there is often more than one; this can be the same shape as the first, or may be of a different form, whether a cube (**10), gable (**20), Gothic structure (**30), obelisk (**40), pyramid (**50), dome (**60), column (**70) or broken column (**80). The fourth digit indicates any feature on top of the pedestal tomb. This can be an urn (***1), draped um (***2), finial (***3), sphere (***4), or neo-classical sarcophagus (***5) goth cross(***6), plain cross (***7) or ringed cross(***8).

Mausolea, partially subterranean vaults and other upstanding structures

All upstanding structures can be just labelled 9500, but some obvious subtypes deserve separate coding. Mausolea occur occasionally in churchyards and more frequently in cemeteries. They have been given the code 9800 as a general heading, but can be further subdivided; some common forms are already allocated codes – simple Classical revival form (9840), an Egyptian style (9850), and a Gothic revival structure reminiscent of a chapel (9860).

More recently upstanding structures (9600) have begun to appear, largely in cemeteries, often associated with immigrant groups who are transferring their commemorative traditions from, for example the Mediterranean. They may have a flat top (9620) but often have additional features which can be given codes: a scroll (9622), open book (9625), vertical headstone on top of the tomb (9630), a cross lying on the top (9640) and upright (9650) or sculpture (9660).

Partially subterranean vaults (9900) occasionally occur, and sometimes only just protruding above the surface (9910), though others have walls visible but with various shapes of roof (9920, 9930). Occasionally, more elaborate end facades create more impressive structures (99*5).

Additional elements

Additional elements of the grave associated with a headstone can be recorded in the next set of boxes. The first box concerns footstones, which are given a general number 1000. Often the footstone mirrors the headstone in miniature, but there are many examples where this is not the case. Footstones need to be sketched and described in Comments; occasionally the same monument will have several footstones, which should each be recorded. If one wished to study footstones in any detail, then 2*** - 9*** could be used for particular shapes. The second box is for the body stone or whatever covers the grave in front of the monument. This can be a slab set flush with the ground (*100), a raised slab or block (*200), a higher block more like a tomb, but with a headstone (*3**), a coffin shape flush with the ground (*4**), a raised coffin shape

(*5**), or a wrapped body shaped stone (*6**). A flower holder built into the base also has a code (*8**).

Kerbs can be recorded in the same way as other information, and as an additional feature they are indicated in the third box. If a kerb is present, **1* can be used. This indicates no particular form, and is very useful when kerbs only partly survive or are largely buried. Subdivision can be achieved, however, with plain kerbs (**2*), posts only at the foot (**3*), at head and foot (**4*), two on each side but none at the head (**5*), with three on each side (**6*), with railings (**7*), or with chains (**8*). In the case of the last two, all evidence may have been removed save where the fittings were inserted into the kerbs; in these cases, chains have fewer, and often slightly larger fittings.

The last digit is for any filling within the kerbs, with green (***1), white (***2), grey (***3) or pink (***4) chippings, but other common infills are peat or soil (***5), gravel or pebbles (***6), or shale fragments (***7). Any other fill can be coded ***9.

Kerbs are not terribly informative typologically in most cases, though they are interesting indicators of territoriality of grave spaces. The surviving record may not be very easy to interpret, and so it is important at the outset to decide whether investment of time and effort in this aspect of the recording project is worthwhile. A decision has also to be made as to whether they are all to feature on the plan. In many burial grounds, numerous kerbs without inscriptions have been cleared away or re-set below the turf to facilitate grounds maintenance. Local knowledge or old photographs might indicate this, but recoding can only concentrate in the first instance on what survives.

The issues of reliability of data and time needed to record is also true of portable features such as flower vases, immortelles (clear domes of glass or plastic with artificial flowers inside, often protected by iron wire covers), or small plaques with messages or devotional texts. Some may carry generalised inscriptions such as 'Mum' or specific details of name and dates, and so be of some interpretive value. Many, however, have become detached from their original grave locations and lost, or used elsewhere, and it is best to record them in the Comments section. If there is an interest in the typology, materials and location of these items then the additional boxes on the form can be used once an appropriate coding system has been developed.

Shape of text panel

Many monuments have text set in a clearly defined panel, though such features are much more common in some regions than others, and many burial grounds will have few or no memorials with text panels. Small mouldings or incised lines round the edge of the monument are not text panels but relate to marginal decoration. Sometimes the inscription can be on a different material (such as marble) to the rest of the monument, but is often still also defined by a moulding or other feature; in most cases, however, the text panel is merely carved out of the same piece as the rest of the memorial.

The text panel may mirror the shape of the stone, but often it is of a different shape. The shapes most often found are square (1000), lozenge (1500), circle (2000), vertical oval (2300), horizontal oval (2500), sarcophagus (3000), shield (4000), cartouche (5000), open book (6000) and rectangles in horizontal (7000) and vertical (8000) form.

Rectangular shapes, mirroring the faces of the monument, may have variants, so squares (1000), horizontal rectangles (7000) and vertical rectangles (8000) are further subdivided by

reference to their tops which, like headstones, can vary. The following may be found: round top (*100), semi-circular central feature (*200), Gothic pointed (*300), triangular (*400), triangular central feature (*500), slightly curved (*600), slightly curved central feature (*700), and sinuous (*800). Rectangular panels can also have the corners cut away, in a concave (**70), angled (**80) or stepped (**90) manner. This may only be at the top, but where the panel does not meet the ground the same shape usually appears in all four corners; for simplicity of coding these have the same numbering as those with two corners cut away.

Each shape can occur more than once on the memorial, so the fourth digit indicates this, with ***2 showing it occurs twice, ***3 three times. As more than one shape of panel can appear on a monument, the form has room for up to three such shapes. If two panels have the same shape, this should be coded twice.

Definition of the text panel

The text panels may be defined by incised lines (1), a moulding (2), element of relief decoration (3) such as a wreath, or may be inset and flat (4), inset and convex (5), raised and flat (6), or raised and convex (7). The form has room for each shape of panel to have its type of definition recorded.

Techniques of memorial inscription

There tends to be a fairly restricted number of techniques used in inscriptions, though on the same monument there may be several treatments. The most common form is incised (1), but inlaid (2), and relief (3) are also frequently found; purely painted letters are rarer, though were quite common on some wooden and metal memorials (4). Incised painted or gilded (5) and relief painted (6) were probably more common than we can now tell because of erosion. Raised inlaid (7) and applied letters (8) also occur. The recording form allows for up to six techniques to be recorded for one memorial. The materials of the lettering can be noted on the annotation of the inscription, but are not used in the materials of the monument.

The various techniques may have been part of deliberate differentiation, such as an ornate false relief first word, with most of the inscription incised, and the name of the deceased picked out in paint. It is often the case, however, that differences in lettering technique indicate different phases of the monument's use. For example, incised lettering may have been used for the initial memorial, followed later by a commemoration to another person in inlaid lettering. The coding does not differentiate between these phases of inscription as it would be quite difficult to be certain of this in many cases, and complex to record it. The various styles, however, need to be annotated in the comments section or alongside the inscription, if they will not be obvious in the photograph. It is extremely important for dating purposes to identify what can be termed the inscriptional events that have affected a monument; these issues and how to come to a decision are discussed below, under Date of monument.

Where a letter is inlaid, this does not also count as incised, even though there has to be incision or cutting to prepare for the inlay. Where the inlay has fallen out, as is quite common with the normal soft black lead lettering, the small drilled peg holes, which should still be visible, indicate that this was not incised lettering and so should be coded as inlaid. On older stones, careful scrutiny of serifs and other parts of letters most protected from the elements is necessary to identify paint; the colour needs to be noted in the comments section.

Decorative motifs

In some parts of Britain almost all memorials are plain, in others they are highly decorated. The extent and nature of decoration, and the motifs used, also varies greatly over time. The range of decorated motifs given here is larger than that likely to be needed on any one survey undertaken at one place, but is a useful overview of the range. By subdividing in the same way as with the memorial type it is easy for those motifs with a similar theme, such as flowers, or symbols of mortality, to be grouped together for analytical purposes. The more complex problem with regard to decorative motifs is that of their number. A single monument can have many motifs, and so two lines of coded boxes have been provided on the form.

Central motifs

The first line of boxes is for the central motifs. In the headstone they are in the centre and across the top of the stone. If they are in the top corners they still count as central – the marginal ones run down the sides of the monument. There may still be several motifs that are part of the central design. The motif to be recorded first should be the most visible, often but not always in the centre. Where a complex picture may have several elements, special photographs can be taken to reveal the detail but the main features need to be coded. If there are more motifs than there is room on the form, place the most visually significant ones in the boxes, and note the others in the Comments box. Some codes are for complex designs and cover a number of motifs; most notable of these is the Passion (645), which can have many different symbols which do not need to be otherwise coded.

For a ledger, the central motifs would be in a similar place, at the top of the slab, but they may be found on one of the long sides on a table tomb (though its siting in the churchyard may determine which was its most prominent side).

Marginal motifs

Marginal motifs should be recorded in the separate set of boxes; they often include architectural designs such as columns, or rope work and foliage, as well as many other elements. Tombs in particular can have all their sides impressively decorated. How all the various elements fit together should be explained in comments, and a sketch may be useful, not in an attempt to replicate the designs, but rather to show their composition. These should also be recorded by photography.

Because decoration varies so much regionally, this is one of the categories that may need most reassessment on a local basis. It is also likely that for detailed work on designs greater reliance will be placed on photographs and rubbings than on the coded data alone. Moreover, the style of the decorative motif is not covered within this coding scheme. Thus, for example, different carvers preferred very visibly different elements such as skulls or cherubs. Stones with these motifs can be identified through these codes, but examination of the photographs would be necessary to decide whether they were made by the same carver. Many motifs can be incised, carved in relief or false relief (with the background cut back), and this also is not recorded except by photographs.

Tooling

Many stone memorials have indications of the production process of the block from which the monument was made. This tends to be with sandstones, slates and limestones, with granites and marble having very smooth surfaces. Tooling can be coded for the back, and separately for the sides. This may be the same for all surfaces but the one supporting the text, but many headstones may have fine hand tooling on the back, but machine cut tooling along the side. Machine cutting can create parallel-lined rilling, or concentric incisions produced by a circular saw.

Repairs

Many monuments suffer damage during their lives, and it may be repaired (1). Sometimes this was many years ago, in other cases it is more recent intervention using conservation techniques. The coding concentrates on the type of fixing and the material, with iron (2), copper alloy (3) or lead (4) clamps, or some form of adhesive such as mortar (5). Place details in Comments, and make sure the photographs record this. Some repairs (as with some initial constructional techniques) use iron which can later corrode and split the stone. If the graveyard recording is part of a management plan, it may highlight these that would benefit with replacement of the iron components with more benign materials. Conservation architects could advise on this, and how it might be done either by volunteers or specialists.

Letter styles

Letter styles can be an interesting categorisation, but this is difficult to develop as so many typographic styles can be used even on one stone. Someone well versed in calligraphy and typography may be able to devise a local categorisation, and where there is such expertise it may be better if the same person records this feature for all the memorials to ensure standardisation. Alternatively, selective rubbings or detailed photographs can be produced to indicate the stylistic categories. A basic set of different generic styles is offered here, but close examination will show that there is much variation within each of these and this may be interesting and worthwhile to record if a member of the team ca consistently categorise this, though it may be possible to do much of this from the photographs with just further on-site checking. Only lettering in the Roman alphabet can be coded here; other scripts can be recorded under language, as discussed below. Space is provided for up to four letter styles on each memorial.

Date of erection of monument

One of the most important features to establish about the memorial is its date. For some forms of analysis, people are the subject of study, and dating is provided for them by their dates of death. For the memorials, however, the situation is more complicated. In a few cases the date of erection is explicitly stated, usually but not always at the top memorial text. For the vast majority of memorials an inference has to be made. A memorial can be erected before anyone later commemorated on it has died; in other cases, the monument is only put up decades after the death of the latest person mentioned. It is normal, however, for the stone to be erected within two or three years of either the first person mentioned, or the latest in a group all inscribed at the same time when the stone is first used. The recorder should try to decide how much of the inscription on the stone was carved all at once when the stone was first erected. This text is called the primary inscription, and the latest year of death with this inscription is

likely to be the most accurate estimate of the date of erection. Where there is any doubt, use the year of death of the first person commemorated.

The date of the monument has been given its own line on the form, to be followed by a code number to indicate how this has been decided. It could be ascertained on the basis of an explicit date of erection (1), or it may be inferred from the first person commemorated (2) or from the latest on what is through as the first group recorded (3). Sometimes it is clear that the monument is much later than the date of those inscribed and is a more recent replacement, and can be coded 9. Examples of all these possibilities are illustrated. One would not wish to use a memorial coded 9 in any study of change of shapes, materials or motifs over time, and so this coding allows it to be filtered out for such an analysis. A memorial may be undated – often because the text is eroded – but an associated footstone may have initials and a year on it, and that might provide a suggested date.

Comments/sketch

The comments box is for use to record any features that are not otherwise covered, to elaborate on any interpretation (or doubt about it), and to note when further investigation may be worthwhile, for example in better light. Masons may be noted here, though they will also appear on the inscription, and they could be separately coded (see under Additional information, below).

It can also be helpful to provide a sketch of the stone or any particular motifs here. Experience shows that though these may be very inaccurate they can still convey the essential features of the stone. If photography is being undertaken at more or less the same time it may be better to delay the sketches until the photographs have been developed and mounted on the forms. Then the sketches can add any detail not easily seen on the photograph. When there is to be some time before photographs are taken, then the sketch is even more important. It is still worth emphasising, however, that recorders should not spend too long in producing their sketches. They should concentrate on indicating shape, decorative elements and perhaps highly decorated introductory terms rather than normal forms of text.

Field record check

It is very easy to make mistakes when filling in forms, perhaps by misreading a date or name, writing in the wrong box, or failing to fill in a section of the form. The very repetitive nature of recording can lead to lack of concentration, and indeed it is helpful if recorders take some time to visit each other and have regular short breaks. Most inexperienced recorders do not realise how they, and even experienced recorders, will make mistakes either in mis-reading text or a measurement, or by omitting a section of the form that should be filled in. That is why the on-site and base checks are necessary.

Errors need to be kept under control, however, otherwise little is achieved in the recording process! It is essential that all forms be checked through by another member of the team. It is best if this can be done by someone with more experience (who may, for example, be able to identify weathered and almost illegible text), and also by someone used to the form and its codes. Any different pair of eyes, however, can sometimes see different aspects and can check what has been written down for the inscription, measurements and coding. The initials and date of checking should be placed in the field check box in the bottom left hand comer of the form. The base check is useful especially if conditions are challenging when recording and checking

takes place, as the photographs can be compared with the form, unfilled sections can be seen as either irrelevant for that monument or need another on-site review. A checklist with monument numbers and the specific queries to be resolved should be draw up, and then resolving these can be relatively rapid. As photographs also need checking back at base, and some may require replacements, revisiting burial grounds is normally required and should not be seen as any form of criticism or failure by the team.

Additional information - some suggestions

Other information could be recorded, and has been done for some studies, but it depends on the interests and aptitudes of the recording team. For this purpose, extra unlabelled boxes have been provided on the form, to be used as required.

If there are many memorials with details of masons it may be very useful to codify both the names of the masons, and the places from which they traded. This can show changing fortunes of workshops, and their catchment zones. Codes to cover this will need to be designed for each burial ground or area. Otherwise masons can be studied by selecting out the forms which have masons' marks, using a simple scheme of 1 for a mark being found, and 0 for no mark in one of the sets of boxes on the form. The details of the mason can be placed in the comments section, and those forms found by searching for those records with 1 rather than 0. The forms can then be manually sorted and analysed.

A further coding scheme would be to note where memorials have been constructed. More complex monuments such as chest tombs or pedimented headstones, may involve the use of joints, dowels, and clamps.