

SM7 / FERM 193:19

BALLYREAGH

Dual count tomb : 'Giants' Graves'

BALLYREAGH: DUAL COURT TOMB

600 ft + OD

CS 17; IG 193

H 3143 5040

On the summit of a spur on Ballyreagh hill in the yard of a deserted farmhouse. This dual court tomb is designated 'Giant's Graves' on all OS 6 inch maps and the current Irish Grid map. It comprises a long, low cairn aligned W to E which is 30.0 m long by approximately 14.0 m wide, and is poorly defined on the W and S sides. At the W end of the cairn there is a gallery 5.50 m long, formed by four large sidestones and a backstone ranging in height from 0.80 m to 1.05 m. The gallery is divided into two chambers by a pair of lateral jambs and a sill. A small adjoining ante-chamber is composed of two portals 1.50 m high, and a sill, whilst a V-shaped forecourt is represented by two uprights 0.70 m high, plus three broken uprights uncovered by excavation in 1940. The presence of a flat, frontal kerb is indicated by several surviving stones. A second separate gallery 5.25 m long at the E end of the cairn is formed by six sidestones and a backstone. These orthostats vary in height from 0.90 m to 1.50 m. Two lateral jambs segment this gallery into two chambers, whilst two small uprights at the SE, revealed during the 1940 excavation, could be the remains of a forecourt.

The cremated remains of an adult male aged 25 to 35 years were found in Chamber 1 East, and some unidentifiable spicules occurred in Chamber 2 West. Neolithic pottery of various forms was discovered in all the chambers, and fragments of a Bronze Age cinerary urn were recovered in the W forecourt. Flint of poor quality was also unearthed, including two hollow scrapers and a broken scraper.

