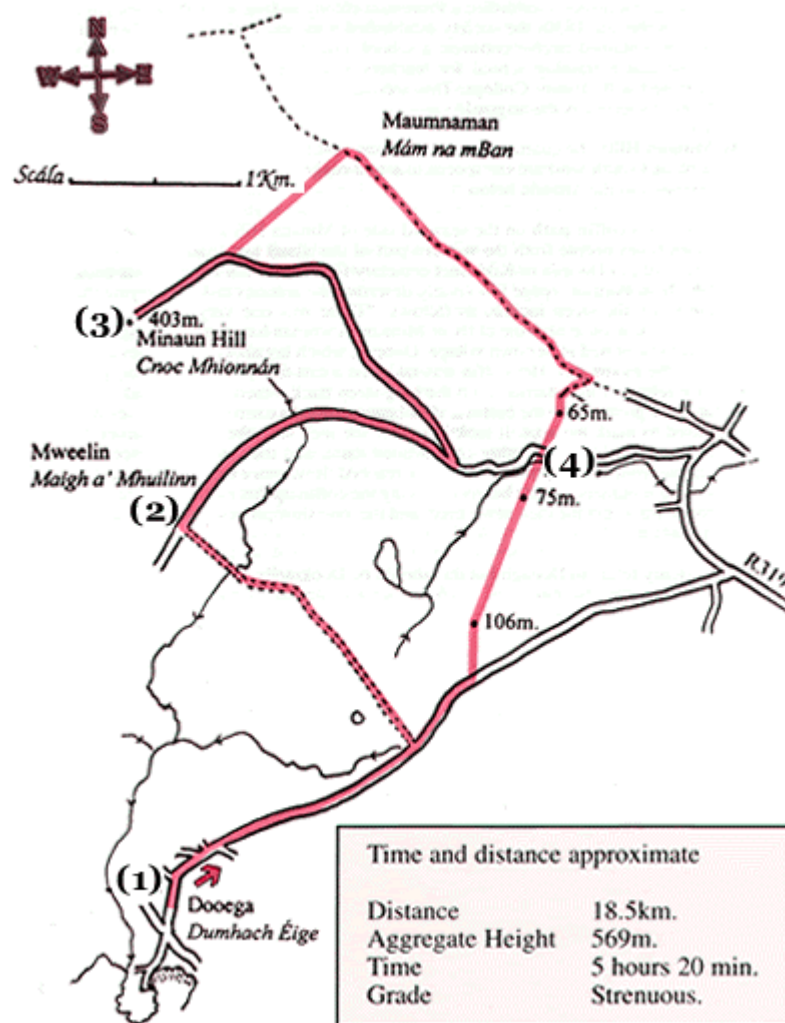


## Walk K – Dooega-Minaun Loop

Starting at the carpark at Lavelle's Seaside House (1) in Dooega travel north-eastwards for 2km (Knockmore 337m is on the right). Follow the gravel road on the left which passes through a series of turbaries, where turf is harvested as fuel for domestic use. Turn right where this road meets with the tarmac road at Mweelin (2). Take the next tarmac road on the left which zig-zags upwards to the T.V. mast on Minaun Hill (403m) (3). From here, there is a bird's eye view of the island in all directions – the Minaun cliffs to the south-west, Achill Head and Croaghaun to the north-west, Slievemore to the north, the Nephin Beg mountain range to the east, Croagh Patrick to the south-east, Clare Island to the south and in the far distance Mweelrea and the Mamturk mountains.

From the T.V. mast return along the tarmac road for 750m. Leaving the road, descend by following the spur to the north-east at Maumnaman. Further on, the spur is traversed by a bog cut trail. Follow this trail south-eastwards (to the right) as it contours the lower slopes of Minaun Hill.

Turn right where the trail meets a gravel road. Continue to the end of the road. Travel south-westwards across the open mountain, crossing the Mweelin road (4) and continue on to



## Walk K – Dooega-Minaun Loop (page 2)

### Points of Interest:

**(2) The Church Missionary Society at Mweelin:** Rev. Edward Nangle, a Church of Ireland minister, established a Protestant colony in Dugort in 1831. In the late 1830s the Society established a second settlement at Mweelin, which contained twelve cottages, a school, hospital, small church, minister's house and a training school for teachers and scripture readers which was affiliated with Trinity College. This second colony did not achieve the same level of success as the original.

**(3) Minaun Hill:** The quartzite ridge of Minaun is 466m at its highest point. To the west and south-west are the spectacular and rugged Minaun cliffs, which drop steeply into the Atlantic below.

There is a coffin path on the seaward side of Minaun Hill above the cliffs. In olden times people from the western part of the island were carried along this steep path to Dooega or Kildavnet cemetery for burial. Paul Henry in his book "An Irish Portrait" (p. 95) vividly describes the arduous task of carrying the coffin up the steep incline, as follows: "There was one very curious burial which I saw once near the cliffs of Minaun. A woman had died at Dooagh and was to be buried at her own village, Dooega, which lay about eight miles away over the mountains. Her coffin was taken on a cart to a point above Dooagh\*, then relays of men carried it up the long steep track – there was no road – and at every point where the coffin and its bearers rested a cairn of loose stones was raised to mark the spot. It took hours for the men with their heavy burden to reach the top where another cart awaited them, and the cavalcade descended another rough hill until the grave was reached. It was an extraordinary sight to see the mourners and the bearers carrying the coffin up this incredibly steep and rough track, but the men never tired, and the long slow procession wound up the mountain ..."

\* *Henry refers to Dooagh but this should be Dookinelly*