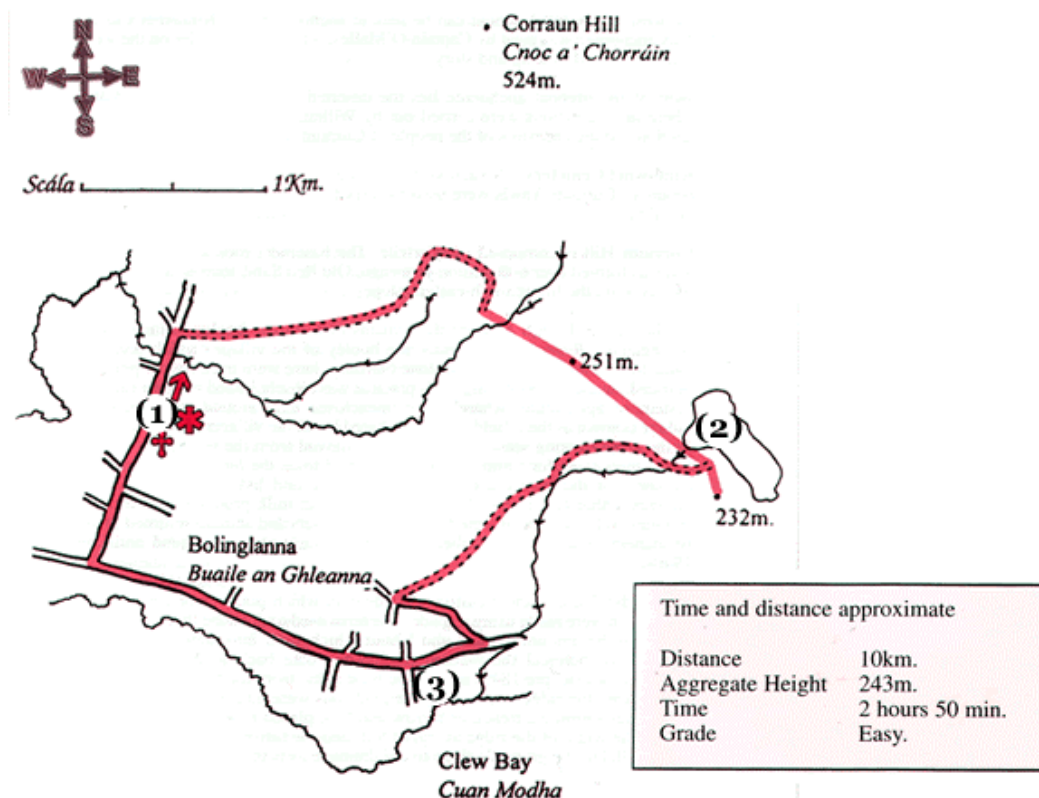


Walk M – The Corraun-Lough Ard Loop

The walk starts at the carpark at Corraun church (1). Leaving the carpark, turn right and right again after 500m on to a gravel track. Continue on to the end of the track. Corraun Hill (524m) lies to the north. Cross the river and travel in a south-easterly direction towards the 251m hillock. From here various bog tracks can be seen which lead to the village.

Travel north-eastwards for 800m towards Lough Ard (2), a beautiful lake. From the lake ascend the 232m hill which lies to the south of the lake. The view from here is spellbinding – the village of Bolinglanna below, Clew Bay with its many islands to the east, Croagh Patrick to the south-east, Mweelrea, the Sheeffry Hills and the Mamturks in Connemara to the south, the islands of Achill Beg and Clare to the south-west and the southern portion of Achill Island across the bay to the west.

Return to the lake and follow the track which leads back to the tarmac road. Turn left here and take the next road on the right through the townland of Bolinglanna. Numerous lazy beds (3) can be seen on the left. Continue to the junction for Achill Sound. Turn right here and continue straight back to the carpark.



Walk M – The Corraun-Lough Ard (page 2)

Points of Interest:

(1) **Caladh Mhanais Harbour** can be seen on the left as you leave the church carpark, and is used by local fishermen. Across the channel of Achill Sound to the west, the Achill Lifeboat can be seen at anchor, close to Kildavnet Castle. This anchorage was used by Captain O'Malley, a famous smuggler on the west coast renowned in song and story.

West of the lifeboat anchorage lies the deserted village of **Baile na nAilte**, where mass evictions were carried out by William Pike, a nineteenth-century landlord. Many ancestors of the people of Corraun were victims of his tyranny.

Kildownet Cemetery (also across the bay) was the former burial ground for the people of Corraun. Yawls were used to carry the coffins across the channel for burial here.

Corraun Hill is composed of quartzite. The basement rock is Pre-Cambrian and was formed over 600 million years ago. Old Red Sandstone is the dominant rock type on the lower south-eastern slope.

(2) To the east of **Lough Ard** are the remains of a former **booley village** called Bolinglanna (*Buile an Ghleanna* – the booley of the village) which gives its name to the townland. The oval stone buildings here were used for the practice of transhumance or booleying. This practice was closely linked with the rundale system of agriculture, whereby the unenclosed land around the permanent village (known as the infield plot) was shared by all the villagers for cultivation. In the crop-growing season livestock were moved from the permanent village to the mountains for summer pasture (referred to as the *buaille*). The younger members of the family accompanied the cattle and lived in these seasonal villages. Other family members visited to collect milk products and to bring supplies. When the crops were harvested the herders and animals returned to the permanent village in September or October. The custom continued until the 1940s.

(3) **Lazybeds**: These ancient cultivation ridges in which potatoes or cereal crops were sown were made using a spade. The term used to describe them fails to do justice to the amount of time and labour which went into their construction, however economical the method used. They date back to pre-Famine and Famine times (ie. pre 1845) and derive their name from the fact that the sod or soil beneath the ridge was not dug. Instead sods were dug on both sides of the ridge, thus forming a trench or furrow and then placed face down on the ridge itself. The width of the ridge averages 5 ft. and the furrow 1.5 ft. They usually run parallel to the ground's slope to aid drainage as is the case here.