



ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH, WILMSLOW, CHESHIRE EAST

Archaeological Watching Brief



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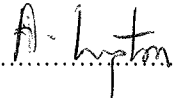
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SUMMARY

Buttress Fuller Alsop Williams Architects, acting on behalf of the PCC of St Bartholomew, has implemented proposals for a re-ordering scheme at St Bartholomew's Church in Wilmslow (centred on NGR 384802 381490). A church has occupied the site since at least the mid-thirteenth century, although the present building dates largely to the early sixteenth century, and was revamped in the 1860s. The church is of immense archaeological and historical importance, which is reflected in its statutory designation as a Grade I listed building.

The principal element of the re-ordering scheme required the removal of existing stone and timber surfacing in the nave to enable the installation of a new limecrete floor with under-floor heating. The existing timber floor is suspended over a void that is *c* 320mm deep, and overlies an earthen deposit that derived from the reuse of the church interior for burials since at least the early sixteenth century. It was recognised during the design stage of the scheme that this deposit had some potential to contain disarticulated human bones and other remains of archaeological interest. In addition, the scheme of works required several ledger stones in the nave aisle to be relocated, although it was uncertain whether these stones had been laid onto solid ground, or whether they overlay vaults, intact burials, or other sensitive deposits.

In order to secure archaeological interests, the Chester Diocesan Advisory Committee requested that an appropriate scheme of investigation accompanied the reordering works in order to mitigate any archaeological impact of the re-ordering scheme. The archaeological works were intended to monitor the removal of the Victorian timber floor and pews, as well as the remnants of an earlier stone flag floor, in order to determine the presence and nature of any earth-cut graves or crypts in the church, together with any other additional structures or features which may have been obscured by the mid- to late nineteenth-century modifications.

The archaeological work was carried out by Oxford Archaeology North between May and June 2013, and was focused on earth-moving works within the nave of the church; no excavation work or archaeological investigation was carried out in the chancel, the chapels or the tower. In total, 28 horizontal ledger stones and eight crypts were uncovered during the watching brief. All ledger stones were recorded *in-situ*, and their position recorded accurately prior to being lifted and relocated. The ledger stones revealed along the northern and southern aisles of the church were not associated with the individuals found interred in the vaults in these locations, although clear correlation between crypt and ledger stones was identified at the eastern and western ends of the central aisle. The south aisle contained two double-decker, brick-built charnel crypts, which contained the disarticulated remains of at least 13 adult individuals, although only the upper tier of each of the charnel crypts was examined. The three brick-built, stone-capped family crypts on the north aisle belonged to the Bower family (five inhumations within triple wood-lead-wood coffins), the Sutherland family (two infant inhumations in single wood coffins), and a third unknown family whose narrow brick crypt contained the remains of at least three adult inhumations in single wood coffins.

The central aisle was the only aisle where a direct correlation between the existing ledger stones and the underlying human remains was identified. The remains of the Greg family, founders of Quarry Bank Mill, were discovered interred within a brick-built crypt with barrel-vaulted ceiling, although this crypt was not opened fully; two bricks were removed from the eastern wall of the crypt in order to facilitate the capture of digital photographs of the interior, which confirmed the presence of six inhumations (four adults, one child and one neonatal infant) within triple wood-lead-wood coffins. All of the coffins had departum plates, at least three of which were legible, allowing the identification of Samuel Greg, Hannah Greg and Margaret Greg. At the western end of the central aisle, two further crypts were discovered after a section of the floor collapsed. These graves were identified as two family plots belonging to the Hulme family, whose ledger stones were uncovered within the same location.

In addition, four infants in earth-cut graves were identified less than 0.3m beneath the existing floor level. A large amount of charnel was also retrieved from the same level, and these remains were subject to rapid on site assessment before being re-interred in a charnel crypt, which was cleaned out and civilised for the purpose. All human remains within the family vaults, aside from those in Crypt 8, were recorded but left untouched and *in-situ*.

Following the completion of the archaeological works and the construction of a new floor and under-floor heating system, a new memorial to the Greg and Hulme family will be laid in the central aisle to indicate the location of the crypts.

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The fieldwork was undertaken by Caroline Raynor. The report was compiled by Caroline Raynor, the finds were examined by Christine Howard-Davis, and the illustrations were produced by Mark Tidmarsh. The report was edited by Ian Miller, who was also responsible for project management.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTRACT BACKGROUND

- 1.1.1 Buttress Fuller Alsop Williams (BFAW), acting on behalf of the PCC of St Bartholomew, has implemented proposals for a re-ordering scheme at St Bartholomew's Church in Wilmslow. A church is known to have occupied the site of St Bartholomew's since the mid-thirteenth century, and whilst the present church was built largely in the early sixteenth century, it has been suggested that the lower part of the tower dates from the fifteenth century. The church was restored in 1862-3 by Brakspear, a vestry and the south porch was added in 1878, and a clerestory was added to the chancel in 1898. The immense archaeological and historical importance of the church is reflected in its Grade I listed building designation status.
- 1.1.2 The principal element of the re-ordering scheme required the removal of existing stone and timber surfacing in the nave to enable the installation of a new limecrete floor with under-floor heating. The existing timber floor is suspended over a void that is *c* 320mm deep, and overlies an earthen deposit. It was considered likely at the design stage that this deposit derived from the reuse of the church interior for burials since at least the early sixteenth century and, as such, had some potential to contain disarticulated human bones and other remains of archaeological interest. The reordering works required some excavation of this material to a depth of *c* 100mm. In addition, several ledger stones in the nave aisle required relocation as part of the scheme. It was uncertain whether these stones had been laid onto solid ground, or whether they overlay vaults, intact burials, or other archaeologically sensitive deposits.
- 1.1.3 In order to secure archaeological interests, the Chester Diocesan Advisory Committee requested that an archaeological method statement was prepared to accompany and inform the re-ordering proposal. This was intended to outline an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation, which was required to mitigate any archaeological impact of the proposed re-ordering scheme.
- 1.1.4 In July 2012, the PCC of St Bartholomew commissioned Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) to devise the required method statement (*Appendix 1*). This allowed for an archaeological watching brief to be maintained during the proposed works inside the church. Following the formal acceptance of this method statement by the Chester Diocesan Advisory Committee, OA North was commissioned to maintain the watching brief, which was carried out between May and June 2013. This entailed monitoring the removal of the timber beam floor, considered to be of a mid- to late Victorian date, and the lifting of sections of earlier stone floor. This was followed by the removal of all grave ledger stones from the northern, southern and central aisles in the church, and then the manual excavation of deposits from within the footprint of the nave. The floor level within the nave was reduced by approximately 350mm with all materials being carefully sifted for human remains prior to removal from the building.

1.2 SETTING

- 1.2.1 St Bartholomew's Church (centred on NGR 384802 381490) lies on the northern fringe of Wilmslow town centre in Cheshire East (Fig 1). The church is situated on the western side of Chancel Lane, close to its junction with Church Street and Mill Street, occupying the high ground overlooking the River Bollin (Plate 1).
- 1.2.2 The underlying solid geology of the Wilmslow area comprises predominantly upper mottled sandstone, with a drift geology of glacial sand and gravel in the west of the settlement, and boulder clay in the east (British Geological Survey 1962).



Plate 1: Recent aerial view across St Bartholomew's Church

1.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 1.3.1 Evidence of early medieval activity in Wilmslow is limited to the former curvilinear churchyard of St Bartholomew's, which may indicate the site of an early medieval church (Harris and Thacker 1987, 241). It has also been suggested that the place name *hlaw* indicates the site of an aristocratic Anglo-Saxon pagan burial (*op cit*, 245), whilst the rising ground south of the River Bollin has been identified as a likely site for an Anglo-Saxon settlement (Hodson 1974, 27). However, the earliest documentary evidence for a church on the site is dated 1246, when it is mentioned in the inquisition post mortem of Sir Richard Fitton, who held the Manor of Bollin (Richards 1973). Nothing of this early church remains above ground, although there is a crypt leading from the chancel that pre-dates the present church.

- 1.3.2 The existing building is largely the result of rebuilding work implemented by Henry Trafford, rector of the church between 1517 and 1537, although it is possible that the lower part of the tower dates from the fifteenth century. The Hawthorne Chapel was added to the south side of the church in 1700, replacing a former chantry dated 1520 (Richards 1973).
- 1.3.3 The church was restored by WH Brakspear in 1862-3, with a new vestry and porch added by JS Crowther in 1878. In addition, a clerestory was added to the chancel in 1898 by Bodley and Garner (Salter 1995, 80-1). The present building is built from ashlar buff sandstone with a slate roof (Plate 2). The tower at the west end leads to a five-bay nave with north and south aisles, a chancel with chapels to the north and south, a vestry to the north of the north chapel, a south porch, and the Hawthorne Chapel projecting from the south wall (Hartwell 2011).
- 1.3.4 The building was afforded statutory designation as a Grade I listed building in 1951. The church also lies within a designated conservation area.



Plate 2: St Bartholomew's Church

1.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 1.4.1 Surprisingly little archaeological work has been carried out in Wilmslow town centre, although an archaeological watching brief monitored a scheme of underpinning to St Bartholomew's Church in 1985. This revealed that the foundations of the chancel and Hawthorn Chapel had several pieces of dressed stone incorporated in to their fabric. It was suggested that these derived from a pre-1490 phase of the church (Kenyon 1985).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1.1 The primary aim of the watching brief was to provide a detailed record of any archaeological remains identified during the removal of the existing floor and subsequent ground reduction within the nave of St Bartholomew's (Plate 3); no excavation work was carried out in the chancel or tower. Following the discovery of ledger stones within the nave, a programme of rapid archaeological recording was undertaken, with a description and copy of all inscriptions produced, together with a detailed floor plan of the ledger stones in the nave. An archaeological watching brief was maintained following the removal of the floor to ensure that no articulated remains were disturbed, and that no chanel or fragments of human bone were removed from the church.
- 2.1.2 All excavation was undertaken by hand. Material excavated from the floor in the nave was carefully sifted to check for human remains before being placed in rubble sacks and deposited in skips. Excavation commenced in the north aisle where it quickly became apparent that earth-cut burials, chanel deposits and brick lined crypts were present. The central and southern aisles also contained earth-cut burials, crypts and chanel deposits. All chanel deposits were inspected before being lifted to ensure that they were not part of an articulated burial. All excavation and recording associated with the crypts in the northern, central and southern aisles was undertaken under controlled archaeological conditions, whilst the lifting of the capping stones and the removal of the upper courses of brick work was undertaken by Lambert Walker Conservation and Restoration.



Plate 3: General view across the nave during the reordering works

3. WATCHING BRIEF

3.1 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1.1 A series of structural remains were exposed beneath the modern floor surfacing in the church. The earliest fabric was undoubtedly the stone-built foundations for the columns, presumably of a late medieval date. Eight post-medieval crypts were also identified during the watching brief, and seven parallel east/west-aligned brick walls that overlay the crypts. In total, 28 ledger stones were also exposed beneath the existing floor, and recorded during the watching brief
- 3.1.2 Further ledger stones had been substantially reduced in size and inverted for use as floor flags, capping stones and end stones within the charnel crypts, and also as a means of spanning the voids created by the Victorian under-floor heating system. As such, the information provided by these ledger stones is limited, as most were cut in such a way that the majority of the inscription was absent and, due to their relocation, it is not possible to elucidate conclusively whether they related to earlier inhumations in the nave.
- 3.1.3 The ledger stones and crypts are numbered in the order that they were identified and recorded. Ledger stones were given a letter prefix of either N (north), C (centre), S (south), E (east) or W (west), indicating the aisle in which each ledger stone was found during the course of the works.

3.2 THE MEDIEVAL COLUMNS

- 3.2.1 Removal of the timber floor and reduction of the floor level, coupled with the removal of 0.3m of the underlying deposits (*125* and *126*) exposed the original medieval column bases which flank the central aisle of the nave (Columns A-G; Fig 2). Column bases A-D (Plates 4-7) were all constructed of irregular, roughly hewn ashlar sandstone blocks with no two column bases being uniform. None of the bases were square, and all were mis-aligned slightly so that they did not respect the east/west orientation of the aisles. Table 1 provides the dimensions of the northern row of column bases, and illustrates their irregular nature.

| Column Base | North side (m) | East (m) | South (m) | West (m) |
|-------------|----------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| A | 1.0 | 0.88 | 1.06 | 0.94 |
| B | 1.05 | 1.02 | 1.06 | 0.99 |
| C | 1.08 | 1.0 | 0.99 | 1.0 |
| D | 1.04 | 1.0 | 1.05 | 1.10 |

Table 1: Dimensions of exposed column bases A-D

- 3.2.2 The eastern side of column base A was also packed with large river rolled cobbles, probably sourced locally from the River Bollin. All of the column bases had been subject to varying levels of modification, which was largely contemporary with the installation of the fixed pews during the later nineteenth century. The addition of hand-made red-brick stretcher bond courses along the north sides of column bases A–D probably relates to the need to add additional structural support for the columns during the construction of Crypts 1, 5 and 6 along the northern aisle of the nave.
- 3.2.3 Column bases E-G (Plate 8) along the southern side of the central aisle had been obscured entirely by the addition of poured cement, which was probably intended to strengthen the foundations prior to the construction of the timber floor. Consequently, no record of these medieval column bases could be made.



Plate 4: Column base A



Plate 5: Column base B



Plate 6: Column base C



Plate 7: Column base D



Plate 8: Column bases E-G

3.3 THE CRYPTS

- 3.3.1 In total, eight crypts were identified within the nave of St Bartholomew's during the course of the reordering work (Fig 2). These structures were typically identified by subsidence in the surface of the deposits beneath the Victorian timber floor, or by the presence of visible capping stones which typically took the form of roughly hewn sandstone slabs spanning a brick-lined shaft. The crypts were assigned numbers in the order in which they were recorded; the numbering system allocated bears no relation to the sequence of construction, physical relationships between the structures, or the sequence of deposition of human remains contained therein. Although the majority of the ledger stones within the church did not correspond directly with those buried within the crypts, it is likely that most of the crypts were constructed during the late Georgian or early Victorian period.
- 3.3.2 **Crypt 1:** the first crypt (Group number **102**) that was identified during the watching brief was located at the north-eastern side of the nave, directly north of Column A and adjacent to the organ room (Fig 2). Crypt 1, identified initially as a void at the western end of the capping stones (Plate 9), was recognised via a departum inscription on the uppermost coffin as the Bower family crypt. It comprised a brick-lined, lozenge-shaped vertical shaft (Fig 3) the aperture of which was covered by roughly hewn sandstone (**103**). Crypt 1 was one of three crypts in the nave, all flanking the north aisle, which were constructed in an unusual lozenge-shaped style.
- 3.3.3 The structure of the crypt (contexts **104, 105, 106, 123**) measured 2.11 x 1.16m, with a depth of 1.1m. The curved walls forming the long axis of the crypt (east/west-aligned walls **104** and **105**) comprised hand-made bricks in an irregular English Garden Wall bond and set in a white lime-based mortar (Plate 10). The base of the crypt comprised a stone floor. Due to the presence of coffins it was not possible to check for an inscription, or to check if the sandstone floor slabs were replacement from elsewhere in the church.
- 3.3.4 Contained within Crypt 1 were the remains of at least five triple-coffins (a smaller wooden coffin contained within a central lead coffin, which in turn was covered by a larger wooden outer casket). All of the visible coffins were for adult remains, with the upper coffin lead coffin bearing the name of Ralph Bower (Plate 11). The coffins appeared to be in disarray, although this can be attributed to the fact that the two stacks of coffins had collapsed as the outer timber layer of each coffin had rotted and become weakened. This 'collapse' of the stack is what gives such crypts their disorganised appearance. The collapse of the coffins had caused the upper three lead coffins to rupture giving a clear view of the timber coffin within, enabling confirmation of the triple-coffin burial type.



Plate 9: Capping stones overlying the Bower Crypt (Crypt 1)



Plate 10: The form of the Bower Crypt

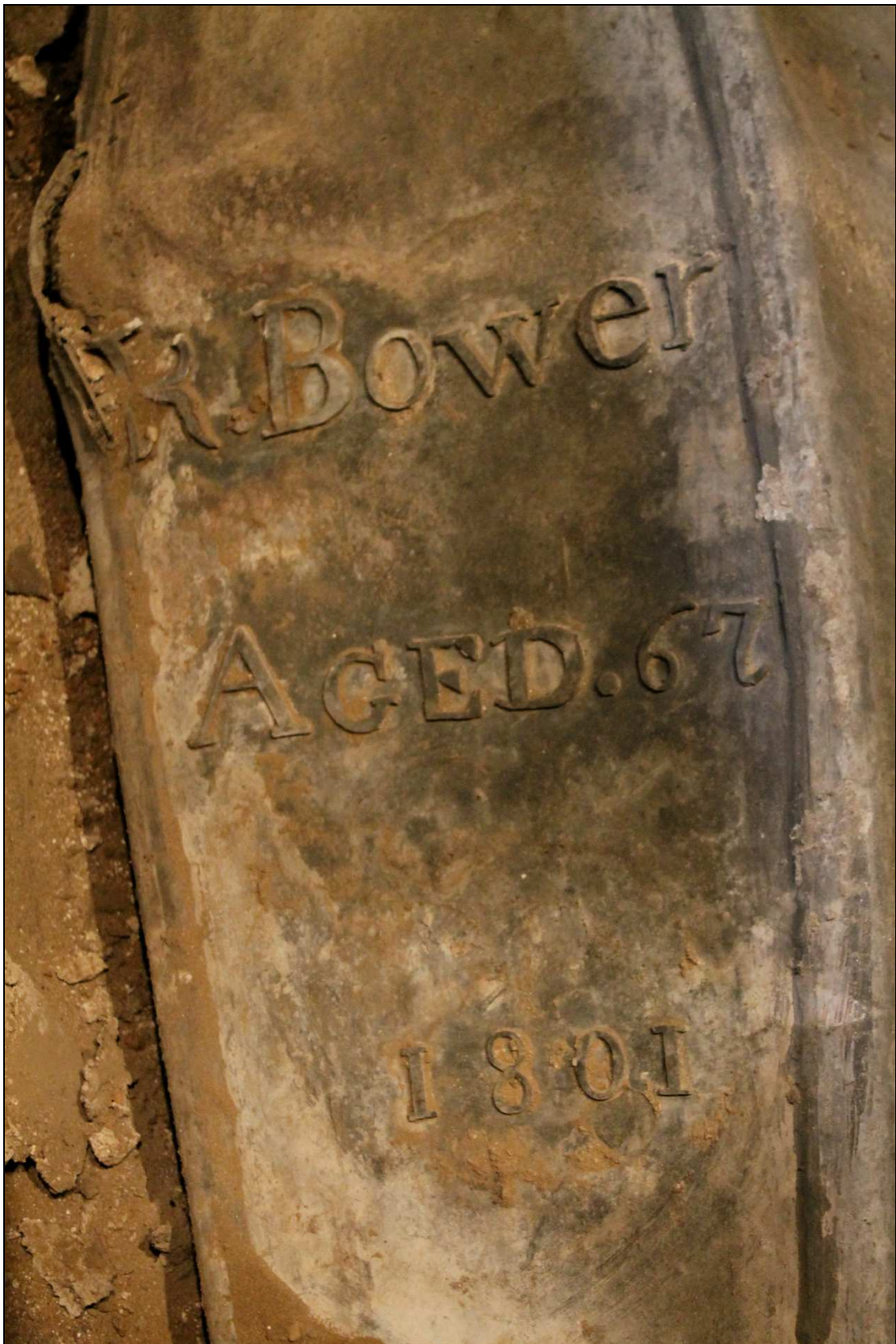


Plate 11: Detail of the upper coffin

3.3.5 **Crypt 2:** the second crypt identified during the course of the work was that of the Greg family (Plate 12), who were buried in the largest crypt, situated at the eastern end of the central aisle and broadly in line with altar (Fig 2). This substantial structure was one of only two crypts identified during the watching brief that were overlain by the corresponding family ledger stone. The presence of the Greg family within the crypt was suspected already, as a wall-mounted marble memorial with an inscription, located to the west of the Hawthorn Chapel clearly states: ‘*In memory of Samuel Greg of Quarry Bank, born in Belfast, died June 4th 1834 aged 76 years, and was interred in the family vault in this church. Also of Hannah his wife, daughter of Adam Lightbody of Liverpool, who died February 4th 1828 Aged 61 years. This tablet was erected by their eleven surviving children.*’



Plate 12: General view across the Greg Crypt (Crypt 2)

- 3.3.6 The crypt was uncovered following the removal of all ledger stones from the central aisle. A fine, white sandy bedding layer (**101**), approximately 0.3m thick, was excavated to reveal the remains of a brick surface (Plate 13). Further investigation demonstrated that this surface was the remains of the extrados of a brick barrel vault, which had been modified to create a flat surface. This presumably related to the relaying of the floor during the Victorian period, and the need for a more uniform ground level. The Greg crypt was the only one to have a barrel-vaulted roof, with the rest of the crypts simply being covered by flat, roughly hewn sandstone slabs.
- 3.3.7 Crypt 2 (**108**) was orientated east/west within the central aisle, and measured 4.9 x 2.78m, with a maximum depth (from the apex of the intrados to the floor of the crypt) of 2.2m (Fig 4). The walls (**110**, **111**, **112** and **113**) were constructed of hand-made brick with a sandy lime-based mortar bond, and laid in English Garden Wall bond. The barrel-vaulted ceiling (**109**) was two-courses thick, although in places the damage caused by levelling meant that the apex of the vault was less than 60mm thick in places.

- 3.3.8 Although the barrel vaulting was left *in-situ*, two bricks were removed from the east-facing elevation of the crypt wall in order to inspect the contents. Photographic survey confirmed that there are six individuals (three adults, one child, and two infants) buried within the Greg Crypt (Plate 14), and the departum plates on at least three of the coffins are clearly legible. At the western end (rear of the crypt) was the coffin of Samuel Greg, who was interred last. His coffin was situated directly in front of the bricked-up aperture in the west wall through which the coffins would have been carried into the crypt. The coffin of Hannah Greg, Samuel's wife who pre-deceased him by six years, lies to the east. Lying to the east of Hannah Greg is the coffin of Margaret Greg, their daughter. All six persons interred within the Greg crypt were buried within triple coffins (in the same fashion as those found within Crypt 1), and the baize fabric dressing and outer timber coffin had rotted away to reveal the lead inner coffin beneath.
- 3.3.9 Despite the relatively close date range for the burial of the Greg family (spanning a period of 24 years from 1810-34), there was a marked difference in the visible coffin furniture. Samuel Greg Senior was buried with a tin-dipped trapezoid shaped departum plate, onto which his personal details (name, age and date of death) had been painted in black enamel paint. Hannah Greg, and the infant burial to the north side of the crypt, had both been buried with small rectangular brass departum plates bearing an etched inscription of their personal details. Margaret and Jane Greg had both been buried in coffins adorned with shield-shaped copper alloy departum plates with black enamelled paint (Plate 15).
- 3.3.10 These visible differences suggest that the fashion for coffin furniture, including grips and departum plates, changed quite quickly during the Georgian period, and also indicates that the family had no concerns regarding maintaining a specific theme or style for their panoply of funerary decorations. Although it was not possible to examine the coffins closely, the exterior of each appeared to have been covered in a dark green felt or baize fabric, with the colour green representing rebirth and renewal.
- 3.3.11 There is a discrepancy between the inscription on the ledger stone and number of individuals interred within the Greg Crypt. Five persons are named on the ledger stone (Samuel, Hannah, Margaret, Samuel (son of Hannah and Samuel Greg), and Jane Greg), although there are clearly six individuals interred within the crypt. Despite the presence of departum plates on the exterior of the outer wooden coffins, it was not possible to discern who this additional individual was.



Plate 13: Surface of the barrel vaulting of the Greg Crypt exposed beneath the ledger stones



Plate 14: Four of the coffins in the Greg Crypt (Crypt 2)



Plate 15: Departum plate on Margaret Greg's coffin

- 3.3.12 **Crypt 3 and 4:** these two crypts (Group number **115** and **138** respectively) were located at the southern side of the nave, immediately east of the south porch (Fig 2). Both crypts were constructed in a more crude and simplistic fashion than the other crypts recorded during the watching brief, with roughly mortared walls of hand-made bricks forming a more uneven shape (Fig 5), and lacking the symmetry of the other lozenge-shaped crypts uncovered in the northern aisle of the nave (Plate 16). Crypts 3 and 4 were both orientated east/west, with the eastern dividing wall of Crypt 3 (**119**) forming the western terminus of Crypt 4. Crypt 3 measured 2.1 x 1.1m, with a depth of 1.3m. The curving brick walls were asymmetrical, and appeared to have been modified with additional grey cement mortar being added to the upper five courses sometime after construction. The eastern and western terminus of Crypt 3 comprised recycled ledger stones (**119** and **120**), which had been placed on their sides. The ledger stone used to construct the eastern terminus had a worn inscription, although this was not legible (Plate 17). The original location of these ledger stones is not known, although the smoothed and worn surface suggests that they formed part of a main thoroughfare where they were subject to foot-traffic. Further recycling of ledger stones became evident when the western capstone was lifted and revealed to be part of another ledger (**W028**), bearing the name Robinson, which had been cut to span Crypt 3.
- 3.3.13 Crypt 4 (Group number **138**) was small and poorly constructed, measuring 1.8 x 0.68m (Fig 5), and with a maximum depth of 0.52m. The upper five courses of the crypt walls were constructed crudely and, in places, poorly rendered with grey cement mortar (Plate 18).
- 3.3.14 Neither structure appeared to have been designed as a bespoke family plot to accommodate whole inhumations in coffins, and the shape and depth of Crypt 4 in particular could not accommodate an adult single-break wood coffin. Crypt 3 and 4 both contained disarticulated human remains in the form of charnel (**136** and **141**), with crania (minus mandible), the inominate (pelvis) and long bones specifically humerus, tibia, fibula and femur, being the most common bones (Plate 19 and 20). All of the bones found within the charnel crypts were those of prime or mature adults, and it is likely that any infant remains were overlooked or discarded at the time of disinterment.
- 3.3.15 During the civilising of Crypts 3 and 4 it became apparent that they were double-decker structures with another chamber beneath the stone floor. As it was not practical to dismantle the upper tier of the charnel crypts a basic investigation using a tape measure and torch was undertaken and demonstrated the existence of two further chambers with depths of 0.6m (Crypt 3a **157**) and 0.4m (Crypt 4a **137**) respectively. It is not clear if these chambers contain articulated burials or charnel.



Plate 16: The capping stones over Crypts 3 and 4



Plate 17: The re-used ledger stone forming the eastern end of Crypt 3



Plate 18: Charnel within Crypt 4



Plate 19: Charnel within Crypt 3



Plate 20: Crypts 3 and 4 following the removal of charnel

3.3.16 **Crypt 5:** this crypt contained members of the Sutherland family, and was located in the northern aisle of the nave, approximately 1.9m to the west of Crypt 1 (Bower family). Historic records indicate that the Bower and Sutherland families were known to each other, with the Sutherlands purchasing property from the Bowers in the 1830s. Constructed from hand-made red-brick in the same lozenge shape as that of Crypt 1, this structure (**I32**) measured 2.2 x 1.2m (Fig 3), with a depth of 2.2m. Removal of three, large, flat roughly hewn sandstone capping stones (Plate 21) revealed the coffins of two infants lying on a brick floor (**I35**) at the base of the crypt (Plate 22).

3.3.17 Both coffins were single-wood, single-break coffins with a baize outer covering that was discoloured by the decomposition process (Plate 22). Only one of the infants could be positively identified as 'E.B Sutherland Died July 7th 1836 Aged 7 months'. The departum plate upon which this information was inscribed was a small, rectangular, enamelled copper-alloy plate, decorated with hand-painted script in copper-plate handwriting (Plate 23). The departum plate on the second, smaller coffin, was also of copper alloy but was too corroded to read. Both coffins were decorated with small copper-alloy grips and grip plates, and rope rings at the head and foot ends, typical of burial practices during the late Georgian/early Victorian period.



Plate 21: The capping stones over the Sutherland Crypt (Crypt 5)



Plate 22: Infant coffins in the Sutherland Crypt (Crypt 5)



Plate 23: Departum plate on one of the infant Sutherland coffins

- 3.3.18 **Crypt 6:** it is unknown which family this crypt was intended for. It was located in the northern aisle, immediately to the north of Crypt 5 (Fig 3). It was a much narrower and deeper lozenge-shaped and brick-lined crypt (Plate 24). The two crypts were located so close together that the southern wall of Crypt 6 (Group number **I27**) abutted the northern wall of Crypt 5. Crypt 6 was also covered with three large flat roughly hewn sandstone capping stones (**I28**), which were mortared into place. Removal of the capping stones revealed a much narrower style of crypt. Crypts 1, 2, 5 and 7 were large enough to accommodate two coffins lying side by side, although this crypt measured 2m long by 0.75m wide, and had been intended to accommodate a single stack. Metal bars (**I31**) which had been built into the brickwork spanned the width of the crypt on a north-east/south-west orientation. These bars or spans would have acted as shelves upon which a coffin could be laid, and the depth of the crypt combined with the spacing of the visible spars suggests that Crypt 6 was built to accommodate at least five adult burials (the distance between spars was too great to accommodate infant burials).
- 3.3.19 All coffins within Crypt 6 were single-wood coffins and, as a result of the decomposition process, all had collapsed to the base of the stack where a pile of decomposing coffin timbers intermingled with disarticulated human remains was observed. Fragments of wood adhering to the spars at different levels suggest that at least three individuals were interred in stacks within the Crypt prior to the collapse, but there is no way to confirm this (Plate 25).



Plate 24: Crypts 5 and 6



Plate 25: Collapsed coffins in Crypt 6

3.3.20 **Crypt 7:** was located in the western end of the central aisle at the entrance to the tower, and was probably a crypt for the Hulme family. Crypt 7 (Group number **143**) was uncovered when the central section of the capping stones (**145**) collapsed into the vault interior. Excavation revealed a rectangular brick-built crypt, rather than the more elaborate lozenge shape seen elsewhere in the nave (Fig 6). The four capping stones were thinner and more finely worked than those covering Crypt 1, 5 and 6, and this may account for the collapse during the course of the work (Plate 26). The collapsed capping stones were not lifted, but a void beneath the easternmost stone was investigated. This enabled at least two burials to be identified, although it is likely that these represented the upper stack with further individuals beneath. It was not clear whether this crypt contained lead coffins.



Plate 27: Collapsed capping stone over Crypt 7

3.3.21 **Crypt 8:** as a result of the collapse within Crypt 7, Crypt 8 was also uncovered; this crypt contained members of the Hulme family. Crypt 8 was located directly to the north of Crypt 7, and shared a common partition wall (northern wall of Crypt 7 formed the southern wall of Crypt 8; Fig 6). The crypt (Group number **147**) was poorly constructed with an irregular brick bond and patchy mortar, forming a narrow, rectangular brick-lined shaft with sandstone partition/shelving and sandstone capping separating each coffin within the stack (the total number of individuals in this crypt could not be determined). The crypt measured 1.62 x 0.4m, and was the smallest of all those excavated during the course of the works and (Plate 27). Due to the collapse of the northern brick wall, it was necessary to exhume the uppermost individual in the stack. In this case, the individual was identified as female with confirmation coming in the form of a legible and elaborate tin-dipped iron departum plate which was inscribed 'Jane Hulme Died Nov 9th 1858 Aged 66 Years'. This information conforms to the inscription on the Hulme family ledger (**C019**), which was lifted from just slightly east of this location.



Plate 27: Crypt 8

- 3.3.22 *Exhumation of Jane Hulme*: the exhumation provided an opportunity to examine the coffin, funerary furniture and skeletal remains of Jane Hulme prior to her reburial within the same crypt, following structural stabilisation work which was carried out by the masons of Lambert Walker Conservation and Restoration.
- 3.3.23 Unfortunately, the skeletal remains were in very poor condition and extremely demineralised, with the majority of the skeleton, aside from the skull, presenting as little more than fragments or staining. The remnants of a pleat-fronted linen shroud and ribboned mop-style cap with a bow tied beneath the chin were retrieved, and it was the presence of this cap which was largely responsible for the partial completeness of the skull, as it had served to hold the remaining fragments of bone together. This type of shroud and cap are common for the period, and the backless linen shroud could be used for both male and female burials during this period. Sawdust and scraps of plain linen beneath the skull were probably the remains of a simple pillow or bolster. The length of the crypt and size of the coffin indicate that Jane Hulme was probably of average height.
- 3.3.24 The coffin was a well-preserved single-wood, single-break coffin with baize upholstery held in place by a combination of basic upholstery stud work around the perimeter of the head and foot panel. The upholstery covering the lid was held in place by pressed lead coffin-lace moulded in a recurring scallop-shell motif. Scallop shells were a common funerary motif during the Georgian and Victorian period and represented fertility, resurrection and pilgrimage.
- 3.3.25 The coffin furniture was well-preserved and quite elaborate, with six iron grips and grip plates: one at the head panel; another on the foot panel; and one on each side of the coffin, level with the pelvis. The grips were commensurate with those seen in later burials at Swinton Unitarian Burial Ground in Salford (identified as type SU18), and described as a plain bail with quatrefoil detail (OA North 2013). The departum plate was of the elaborate pressed iron type (probably manufactured in Birmingham), with a central cartouche for the text surmounted by the Grecian-style image of a mourning figure prostrated over a funerary bier while being observed from above by the figure of a spirit or angel (Plate 28). The bier bears the words "In Adam all die" which is taken from Corinthians 15:22 ("For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive"), and is a reference to resurrection, thus mirroring the message or themes expressed visually through the use of the scallop shells on the coffin lace.
- 3.3.26 The exhumation of Jane Hulme provided an opportunity to examine the stone slabs (*150*) upon which the coffin had rested (Plate 29). A further void was noted and cursory exploration indicated a further coffin on the lower tier. This individual could not be identified however it is likely that it is John Hulme, the brother of Jane Hulme, who died in 1854 at the age of 59.



Plate 28: Departum plate for Jane Hulme



Plate 29: Stone slabs in Crypt 8

3.4 EARTH-CUT BURIALS AND CHARNEL

- 3.4.1 During the course of the watching brief, it was necessary to exhume the remains of three neonatal infants who were interred less than 0.3m beneath the modern floor level within deposit **126**. Two infants (sk **204** and **205**) were discovered beneath the western window at the end of the north aisle. The two graves appeared to have shared a single cut (**203**) that had already been partially disturbed by a later charnel deposit (**208**) containing two adult male skulls in a small shallow pit. The two infants were probably buried in shrouds rather than coffins, and may date to the later medieval period.
- 3.4.2 Another neonatal infant burial (sk **201**) was found at the edge of the southern construction cut for charnel Crypt 3. This burial pre-dated the construction of the crypt, and was disturbed by the excavation of the construction cut for the brick-built crypt with a clear line of truncation along the north side of the grave which had resulted in the removal of numerous bones from the left side of the skeleton.
- 3.4.3 In total, 626 complete and fragmentary pieces of human bone were recovered during the watching brief, largely from the reduction of ground level across the nave. The majority of the material was scattered through the upper matrix of deposit **126**, and was probably disturbed as a result of the construction of the late Georgian/early Victorian crypts. Where remains were not deposited in the charnel crypts (Crypt 3 and 4), some effort had been made to re-bury larger bones by using them to pack the construction cuts for the brick-built crypts. This was particularly prevalent along the northern side of Crypt 2. Additional small charnel pits, commonly containing grouped caches of skulls (usually two or three to a pit) or groups of long bones were also identified between columns A and B as well as adjacent to the south porch and beneath the west window of the north aisle. Of these 19 were skulls (six adult male, seven adult female, three indeterminate adult, one young adult female, one young adult male, and one infant under three years of age) with the rest of the assemblage largely comprised of long bones and the bones of the hands and feet.

3.5 LEDGER STONE INSCRIPTIONS

- 3.5.1 **Ledger N001 Bower:** this ledger stone was identified at the eastern end of the north aisle, adjacent to the cast-iron under-floor heating vent (Fig 3), and was clearly not *in-situ* (Plate 30). Originally rectangular in shape, the ledger stone had been cut into an L-shape with the removal of the upper right-hand quarter in order to make it fit around the existing heating pipes and radiators. The stone measured 1.87 x long by 0.86m wide and 0.07m thick, and commemorated members of the Bower family:

‘(...) *Lieth the body of J(...) Daughter of Ralph and (...)*
(...)e Bower of Wilmslow who (...)
(A)pril 15th, 1792 Aged 11 (Years)
(A)lso Ralph, their son who d(ied) (...)
(S)ept 1801 Aged 5 years,
(A)lso Ralph their son who die(d)
(Fe)bruary 1st 1804 Aged 6 months
Also Catherine Bower their daught(er) (...)
(...) November 21st 1808 Aged 12 years.’

- 3.5.2 The introductory text was presented in a larger and more elaborate free hand curlicue font, and probably originally read “*Here Lieth*” although the majority of this part of the stone was missing. The font varied for the entries relating to Ralph and Catherine Bower, being less elaborate and formalised and indicating either a change in fashions for the inscription, or possibly that the work was carried out by a less-skilled mason. The individuals named on this ledger were not the same individuals interred in the Bower crypt (Crypt 1).

- 3.5.3 **Ledger N002 Bower:** identified at the eastern end of the northern aisle, directly west of **N001** (Fig 2). The stone was orientated east/west, but was not *in-situ* and had been truncated along its right edge to fit the width of the northern aisle with the right side of the stone flush with the northern wall of the nave (Plate 31). The upper section of the stone was decorated with a plain incised border and a shouldered arch, which mimicked the shape of earlier bedstead design vertical headstones. The ledger stone measured 1.41m long by 0.84m wide and 0.07m thick, and also commemorated members of the Bower family:

‘*Here Lieth the Body of Jo(hn)*
Bower son of William and (...)
Bower of Wilmslow who de(parted)
This life July 25th 1706 Aged 2 year(s)
And 7 months. Also Sarah (...)
Daughter died August (...)
Also Sarah their daughter (...)
This life March 2nd 1806 Aged 6 (...)
Also Elizabeth their daughter
Died April 11th 1818 Aged (...)
Also the a(bove) (Willi)am Bower
Died Ap(ril) 1824 Aged (...)
Also the (...) (Wil)liam Bower (...)
Died S(eptember) (...).’



Plate 30: Bower ledger stone (Ledger N001)

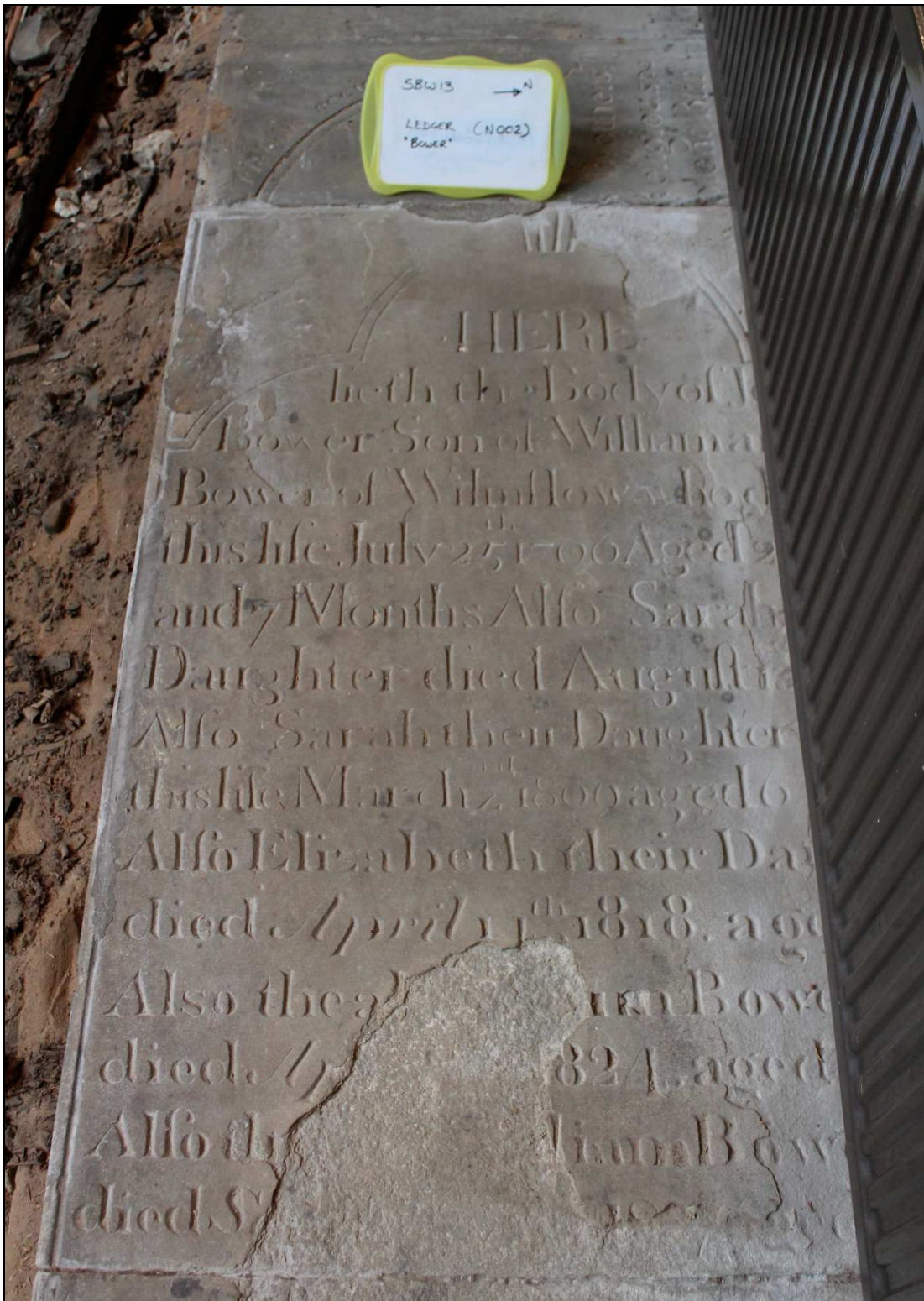


Plate 31: Bower ledger stone (Ledger N002)

3.5.3 **Ledger N003 Whittaker:** located at the centre of the northern aisle, to the west of ledgers **N001** and **N002**, this ledger stone was less than 25% complete with only the top right hand quadrant of the original stone surviving; the missing sections were not found within the church during the course of the watching brief, and their whereabouts are unknown. Ledger **N003** was orientated north/south (Fig 2). The plain perimeter border had been in-filled with modern grey cement mortar to create a more level surface, but an incised shouldered arch was visible on the face of the stone along with part of an introductory text rendered in Latin (Plate 5). The inscription is as follows:

‘(...) *Flebilis occidit*
 (Memo)ry of
 (...) (Wh)ittaker
 (...)s Brothers,
 (...) Religious
 (...)olent But (...)’

3.5.4 This ledger stone is unusual as the text does not conform to the common format of name, age and date of death seen elsewhere in church. The text was a mixture of English and Latin and it is likely that the truncated Latin text originally read “*Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit*” which can be translated as “Falling after daring great deeds, he perished”, possibly indicating a military memorial or commemoration of someone who died on active service, although without the missing section of the text it is not possible to be more precise. The full quotation which is often used on gravestones and ledger stones reads “*Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit nulle flebior quam tibi, Virgilius*” which translates as “Falling after daring great deeds, he perished, bemoaned by many good men.” Decorative scrolling has been used to fill in gaps where the text does not run to the edges of the stone.

3.5.5 **Ledger N006 Cooper:** also located in the centre of the north aisle, directly west of ledger **N003**. This stone was orientated east/west, but was not *in-situ* and had been cut along its left edge to fit the width of the northern aisle. The upper quarter of this stone had also been heavily damaged, and areas of missing text infilled with grey cement mortar (Plate 6). The ledger stone measured 2.05m long by 0.85m wide and 0.06m thick, and commemorated members of the Cooper family. The inscription read:

‘(Un)derneath th(is)(stone?)
 (Lie) the earthly remains of
 (...) Late wife of Thomas
 (...) of Deanrow who departed
 (...) the 22nd Day of April 1746
 (...) Year of her Age.
 (...) Margaret Cooper of (...)
 (...) widow who departed
 (This life) December the 26th 1726.
 (Here) lieth the body of Thos
 (...) of Deanrow who departed (...)
 (...) August the 14th 1771 Aged 9(?)’

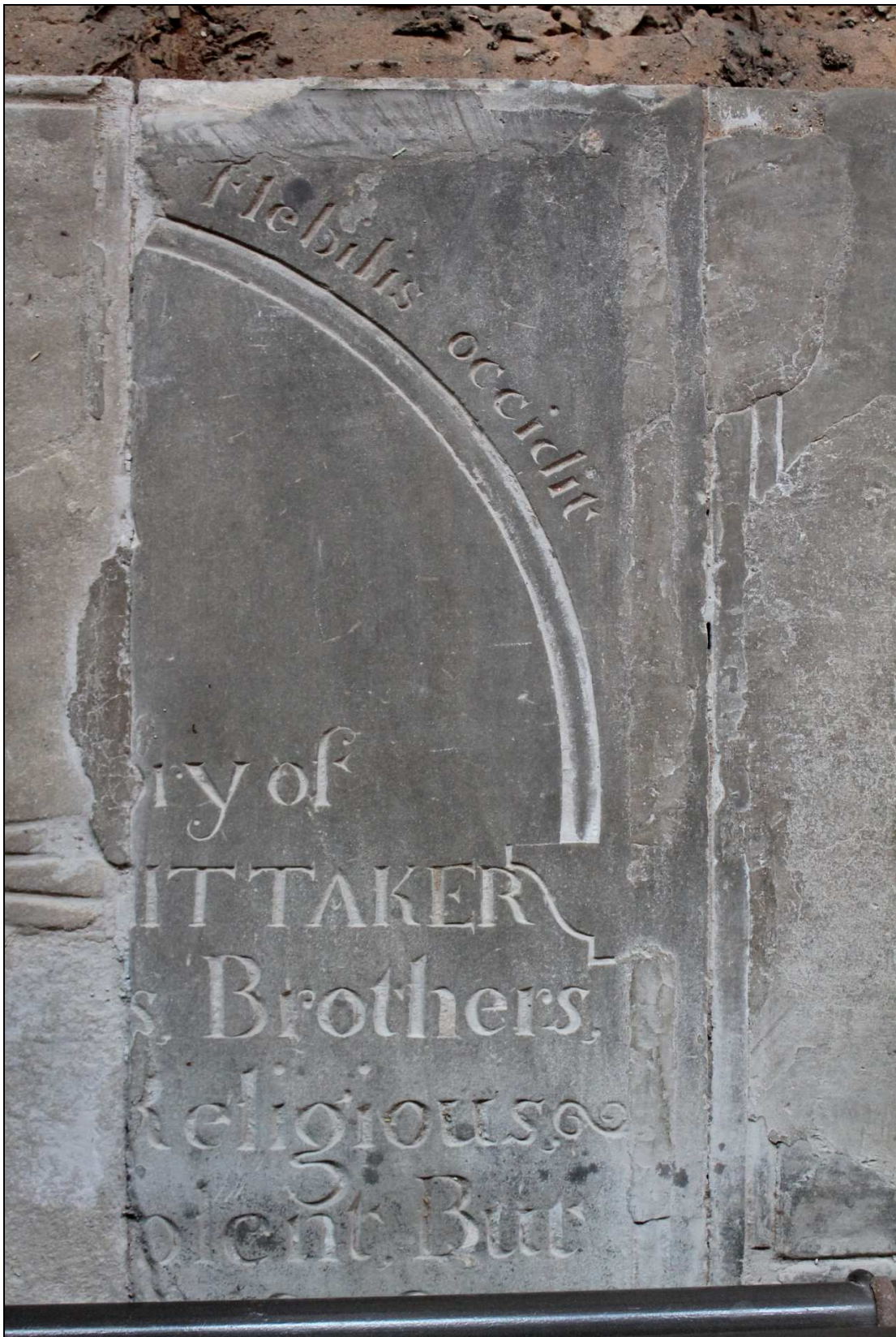


Plate 32: Whitaker ledger stone (Ledger N003)

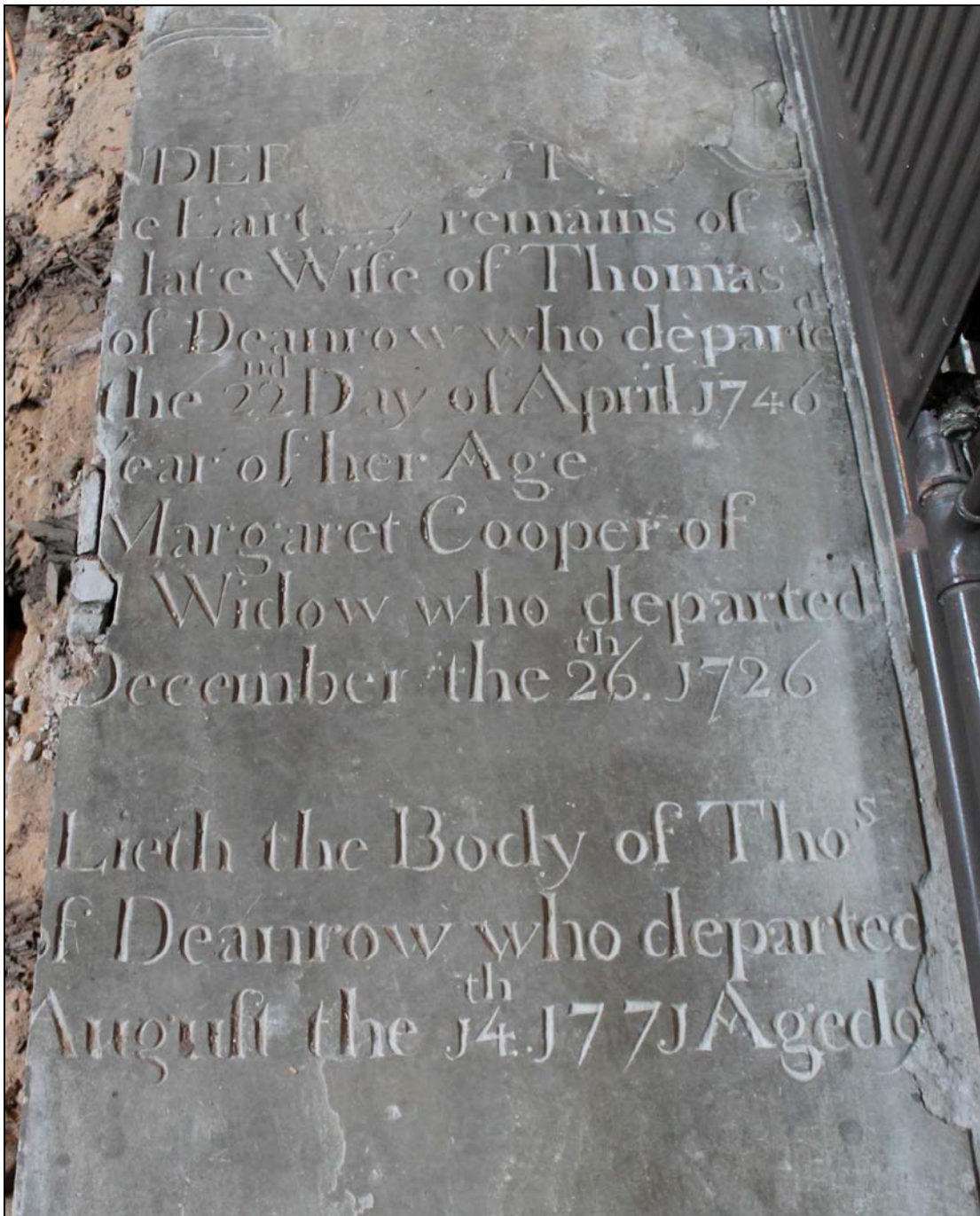


Plate 33: Cooper ledger stone (Ledger N006)

- 3.5.5 **Ledger N007 Bracegirdle:** this rectangular sandstone ledger was orientated east/west, but was not *in-situ* and had been truncated along its right edge to fit the width of the northern aisle with the right side of the stone flush with the northern wall of the nave. The upper section was decorated with an elaborate but poorly executed curlicue font introductory text, and incised shouldered arch mimicking the style of the early vertical bedstead gravestones (Plate 34). The ledger stone measured 1.77m long by 0.84m wide and 0.06m thick, and commemorated members of the Bracegirdle family. The inscription read:

*'Here Lieth the body of
Samuel son of Peter and
Mary Bracegirdle of
Hough who departed (this)
Life April 14th 1778 in the (...)
Year of his age. Also Hann(ah)
Their daughter died Septem(ber)
17th 1793 Aged 25 years.'*

- 3.5.6 The introductory text was larger than usual, and decorated with rather inexpertly carved elaborate curlicue text. A gap of 0.5m had been left between the introductory text and the main inscription, suggesting that the space had been left to ensure that the parents names could still be listed before the names of their children who pre-deceased them.

- 3.5.7 **Ledger N008 Kelsall:** this sandstone ledger was located under the wall mounted memorial of Verger Samuel Fowden, to the west of the north door, and was orientated east/west but was not *in-situ*. It had been truncated along its right edge to fit the width of the northern aisle with the right side of the stone flush with the northern wall of the nave (Plate 35). The ledger stone measured 2.05m long by 0.85m wide and 0.06m thick, and commemorated members of the Kelsall family. The inscription read:

*'Here lieth the body of John Kelsall of
Styall Buried Ey 20th of December 1718
Here lyeth the body (of)
Alice Kelsall who
Departed this life Feb...
...ruary 27th 1765 in the
(...) (y)ear of her age.
Also Mary Daughter of John and Mary Kelsall of Styall
Who departed this life
February the 10th 1766 in the 9 year of her age
Also Mary wife of (...)
Kelsall of Styall (...)
(depar)ted this life (...) 1767 in the
35 year (of his) (a)ge.'*

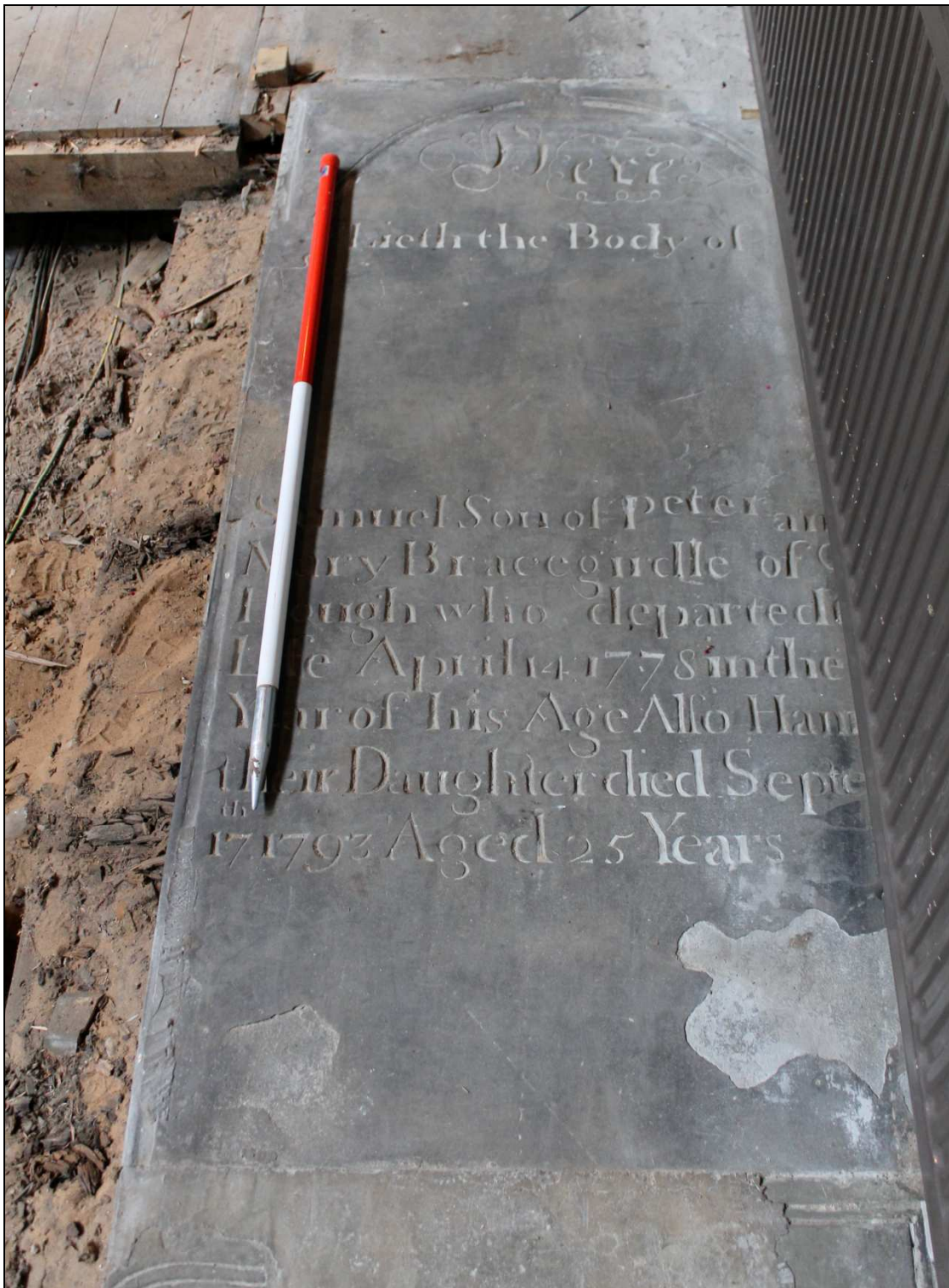


Plate 34: Bracegirdle ledger stone (Ledger N007)



Plate 35: Kelsall ledger stone (Ledger N008)

3.5.7 **Ledger N009 Hulme and Worstencroft:** located at the western end of the north aisle (Fig 3), this sandstone ledger was orientated east/west, but was not *in-situ* and the upper portion of the stone, including the introductory text, was missing (Plate 36). The stone had been set with its right side flush with the northern wall of the nave. The ledger stone measured 0.93m long by 0.65m wide and 0.06m thick, and commemorated members of the Hulme and Worstencroft families. The inscription read:

*'Sep. The 22nd 1750
Likewise Mary, wife
Of the above nam'd
John Hulme died Janry 5th 1796 Aged 87 years
Also John Worstencroft Grandson to the above
John Hulme who departed this life November 2nd
1820 Aged 41 years'*

3.5.8 **Ledger N026 Burgess:** a truncated and modified ledger stone measuring 0.62m long by 0.9m wide and 0.07m thick with shouldered curve motif across the top which is reminiscent of vertical headstone design (Plate 37). This stone was not found *in-situ*, but was located at the entrance to the organ room in the north aisle and was used to bridge a gap created by the Victorian under-floor heating ducts. The stone had been placed face down and was only identified as a ledger stone once it had been lifted and the inscription was revealed. The inscription read:

*'Here resteth the body of Job Burgess of Morley who departed this life
October(?) (...) th'*

3.5.9 **Ledger C013:** the easternmost stone in the central aisle, this sandstone ledger was blank aside from the mason's name inscribed at the base (Plate 38), suggesting that it had been prepared but never used. The stone measured 1.84m by 0.84m, and was 0.07m thick. It is unclear why this stone was chosen to be situated directly in front of the alter at the entrance to the chancel when it is likely that many prominent families would have been anxious to have their ledger stones placed in a similarly prominent position. The inscription simply read '*James Andrew*'.

3.5.10 **Ledger C014 Bullock:** located in the central aisle to the west of plain ledger C013, this sandstone ledger was orientated east/west with the inscription facing away from the alter. The stone was not *in-situ*, as the remains of the Bullock family were not identified within the nave. The inscription was very worn, implying that the surface had been eroded. Decorative sworls had been cut into the upper left and right corners of the stone (Plate 39), which measured 1.84m long by 0.91m wide and 0.06m thick. The inscription read:

*'In memory of
Martha Bullock of Park Hall Farm, Wilmslow
Who died April 20th 1821
Aged 27 years
Also Martha Bullock her niece who died
August 25th 1837
Aged 71 years'*



Plate 36: Hulme and Worstencroft ledger stone (Ledger N009)

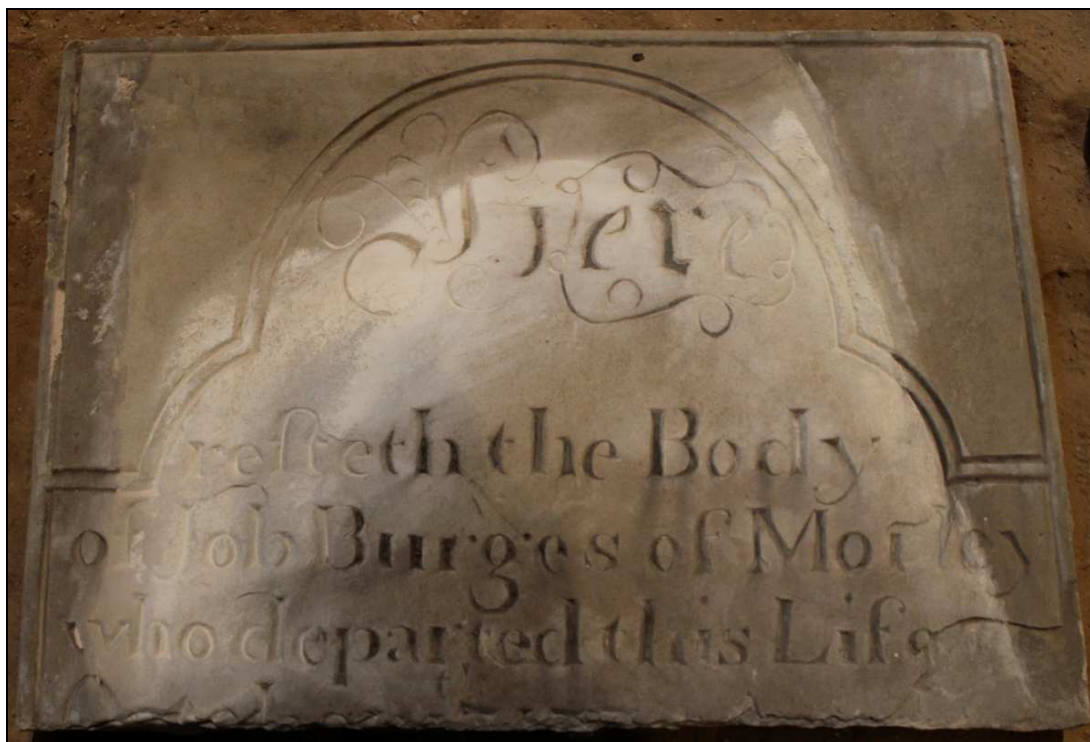


Plate 37: Burgess ledger stone (Ledger N026)

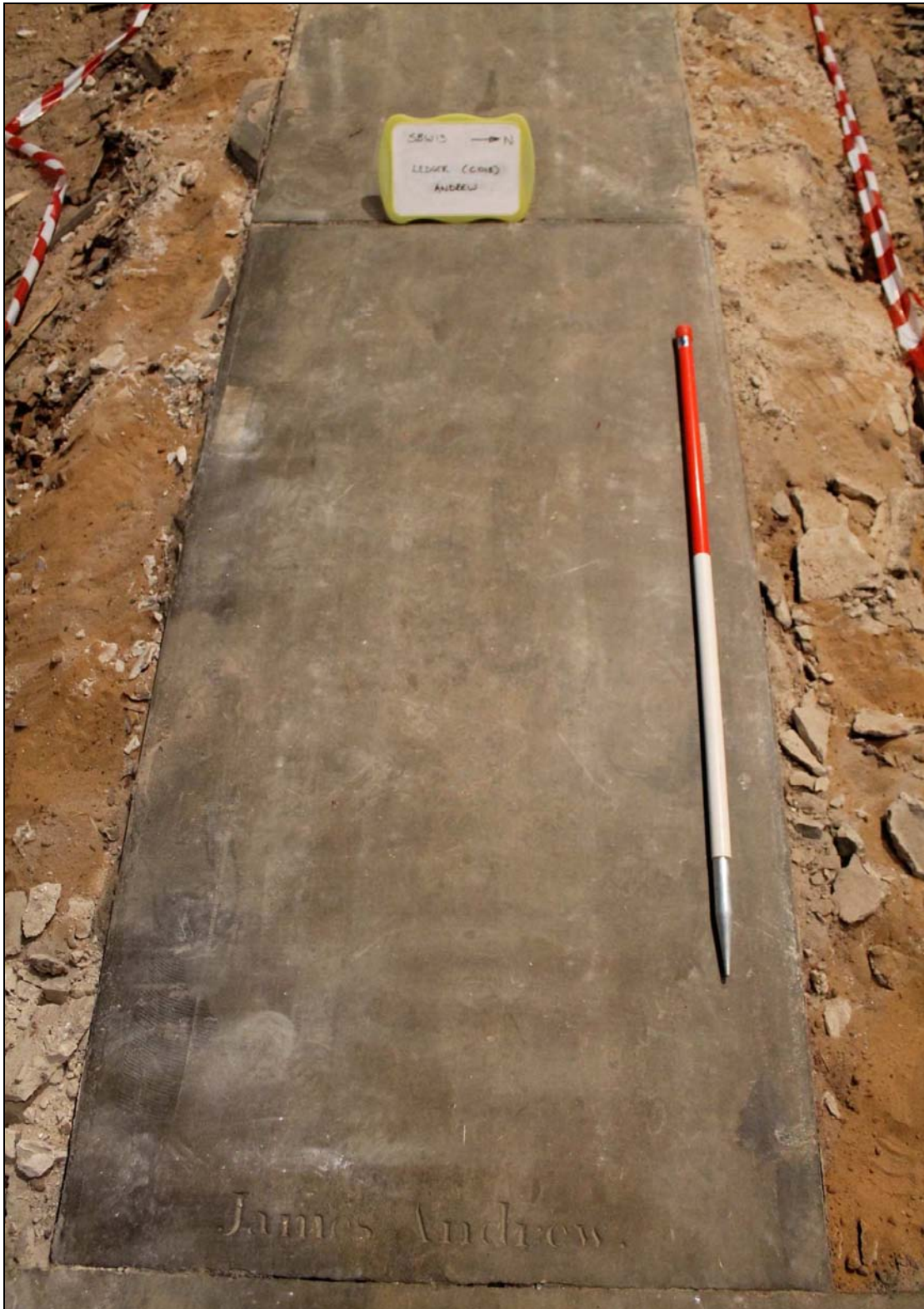


Plate 38: James Andrew ledger stone (Ledger C013)



Plate 39: Bullock ledger stone (Ledger C014)

- 3.5.11 **Ledger C015 Greg:** the Greg family founded Quarry Bank Mill and were noted industrialists and philanthropists in Georgian Cheshire. The Greg family also have a second memorial on the southern wall of the nave, adjacent to the Hawthorn Chapel. (Plate 40).



Plate 40: Greg memorial on the south wall of the nave

- 3.5.12 The Greg ledger stone was located in the central aisle (Fig 3), and was the second largest identified within the church (Plate 41). The surface was worn but still legible, and commemorates six members of the family. Aside from the inscription the ledger stone is not embellished. The ledger was orientated east/west, with the writing facing towards the western entrance. The stone measured 1.98m long by 1.08m wide and 0.06m thick. The inscription read:

*'Samuel Greg son of
Samuel and Hannah Greg
Died April 15th 18(?)0 Aged (...) years
Jane Greg daughter of the late Thomas Greg Esq of
Belfast who died Sept 1st 1817
Aged 68 years
Margaret Greg daughter of Samuel and Hannah Greg who died
Sept 5th 1817 Aged 14 years
Hannah youngest daughter of Adam Lightbody of Liverpool,
Merchant, and wife of Samuel Greg Esq. Of Quarry Bank
Who died Feb 4th 1828 Aged 61 years
Samuel Greg Esq. Of Quarry Bank who died
June 4th 1834 Aged 76 years.'*



Plate 41: Greg ledger stone (Ledger C015)

3.5.13 **Ledger C016 Barrow, Dicken, Cutts and Oldham:** a complete sandstone ledger with decorative incised arch and border framing the text (Plate 42). This ledger was orientated east/west with the text facing down the central aisle in a westerly direction and was directly to the west of the Greg ledger stone. This ledger was the largest of the stones retrieved from within the nave, and measured 2.2m long by 1.3m wide and 0.07m thick. The stone commemorated the Barrow family and members of the Dicken, Oldham and Cutts families although the link between the families is not expressed on the ledger stone. The inscription read:

*'Here Lieth the body of Jeffrey Barrow died
December 10th 1782 in the 82nd year of his
Also Ann Barrow his wife who departed this
Life September 9th 17(...) Aged 72 years
Also Josiah Barrow son of Jeffrey and Ann Barrow
Departed this life (...) Aged 22 Years
Also Joseph their son who departed this life
April 15th 1775 Aged (...) years
Also John their son who departed this life
July 7th 1781 Aged 37 years
Also John Dicken who departed this life
December the 11th 1780 Aged 71 years
Here Lieth the body of Betty Cutts wife of
Francis Cutts of Wilmslow who departed
This life August 2nd 1801 Aged 51 years
Also Francis Cutts son of Francis and Betty Cutts
Who departed this life March (...) 1792 Aged (...) years
Also Elizabeth Cutts died Decr 28th 1792 Aged (...) years
Also Ann Oldham wife of John Oldham Surgeon of Wilmslow (...)
Betty Cutts departed this life (...) Feb(ruary)
Aged (...) Also Ellen their daughter
Who died April 21st 1813 Aged 25 years*

3.5.14 **Ledger C017 Downs:** located in the central aisle to the west of ledger **C016** this stone had not been altered or cut in any way, and measured 1.83m long by 0.9m wide and 0.06m thick. The ledger commemorated a single individual who died in the service of the East India Company (Plate 43). The inscription read:

*'Sacred to the memory of
William Downs
Son of William Downs of
Cheadle, Lieutenant of the
Honourable the East India
Company's Service who died
February 24th 1828 Aged 38 years'*

3.5.15 This ledger bore the best executed and most elaborate introductory text (again carried out in curlicue font). The wording of the text on this ledger suggests that Downs was not buried at St Bartholomew's, and that the stone was only ever intended as a memorial rather than a grave marker.



Plate 42: Barrow, Dicken, Cutts and Oldham ledger stone (Ledger C016)



Plate 43: Downs ledger stone (Ledger C017)

3.5.16 **Ledger C019 Hulme:** located in the central aisle to the west of ledger C017, this stone has not been altered or cut in anyway way, and measured 2.21m long by 1.07m wide and 0.07m thick. Aside from a plain incised border, the stone was not decorated and there was no introductory text (Plate 44). The ledger commemorates the Hulme family and the inscription read:

*'Sarah wife of George Hulme of
Stanneylands who died October
27th 1821 Aged 69 years
George Hulme of Stanneylands
Son of George and Rebecca Hulme
Of Chorley who died July 11 1824
Aged 92 years. Also Daniel
Son of George & Sarah Hulme
Who died February 9th 1844
Aged 59 years. Also of John
Their son who died March
12th 1854 Aged 59 years
Also Jane their daughter
Who died November 9th
1858 Aged 66 years'*

3.5.17 This ledger stone bears the most modern inscription (dating to 1858) in the nave, and suggest that the earlier alterations to the floor were made sometime after 1858. The last named individual recorded on this ledger was Jane Hulme, whose remains were identified as being the uppermost within Crypt 8 at the entrance to the church tower.

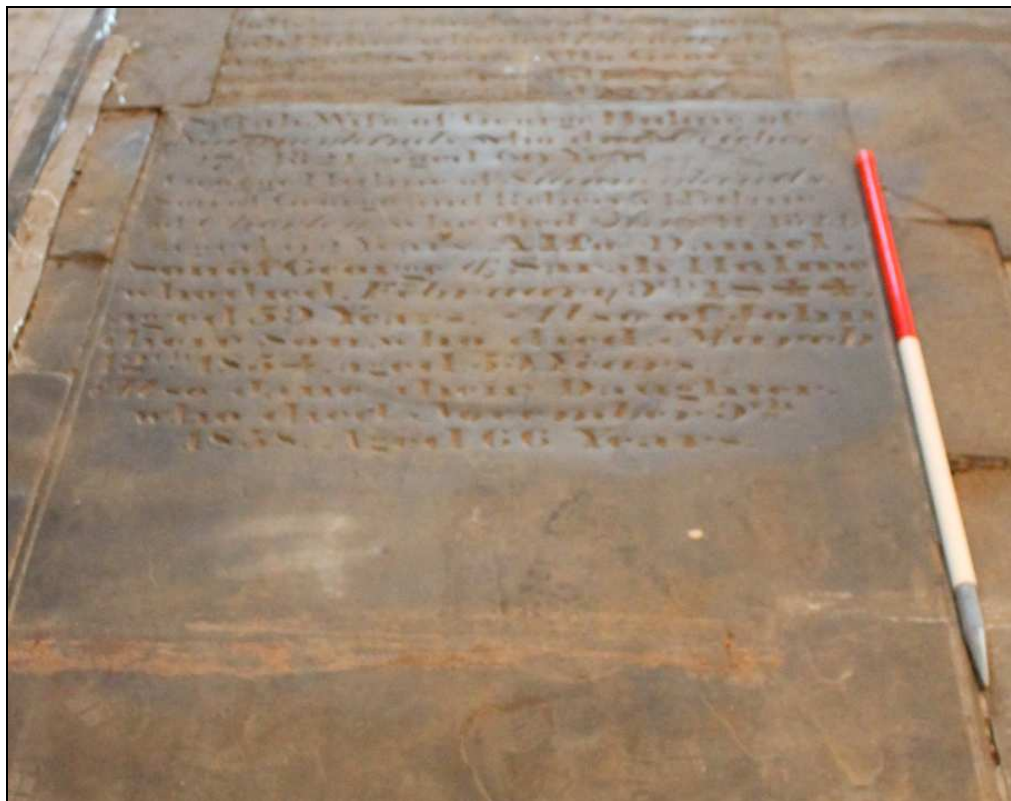


Plate 44: Hulme ledger stone (Ledger C019)

3.5.18 **Ledger C020 Hulme:** located in the central aisle to the west of ledger **C019**, and closest to the bell tower, this sandstone ledger had not been altered, but was quite abraded and worn (Plate 45). The stone measured 1.92m long by 0.84m wide and 0.06m thick. This stone was not decorated, and there was no introductory text. The ledger also commemorates the Hulme family, and the inscription read:

*'Lieth the body of Daniel Son
Of George and Rebeka (...)
Hulme (...)
(dep)arted this life March (...) 82
Aged 31 years
Here lieth Marie(?) (...)
Of George Hulme (...)
(... whole line illegible)
(th)is life (...)
Also the above George Hulme
(...) Yeoman who departed (this)
Life February 9th (...)
Aged (...) years. Also Sarah daughr
George and Sarah Hulme who (die)d (...)
September 1799 aged 11 years
Also Rebecca daughter of George and
(Sar)ah Hulme who died February 12th (...)
Aged 18 years.'*

3.5.19 **Ledger S004 Usherwood:** a worn sandstone ledger located at the entrance to the Hawthorn Chapel at the east end of the southern aisle, and orientated east/west. This ledger appeared to be the oldest of all the ledgers recorded during the course of the archaeological investigation, and was the only stone inscribed entirely in Latin text (Plate 46). The font is an irregular free hand style, and the stone had been cut across the bottom so the lower portion of text was missing. The ledger measured 0.83m wide by 0.77m long and 0.1m thick, and was dedicated to Joannes Usherwood. The inscription read:

*'Joannes Usherwood am(...)
Rector hujus ecclesia infia
Requiescil in spe beatae
Resurrectionis
Obijittertio
Sepulterat 05 die odo (...).'*

3.5.20 Joannes Usherwood is recorded in the Clergy of Church of England database as having been active in the Chester Diocese between 1689 and 1707 and was based in Wilmslow, possibly as Rector, in 1691 (<http://www.theclergydatabase.org.uk>). As Usherwood's ledger stone was used to span the void created by the Victorian under-floor heating system, it is clear that his stone was not *in-situ*, although that does not rule out the possibility that he is buried elsewhere within the church, as he was a significant member of the ecclesiastical community.



Plate 45: Hulme ledger stone (Ledger C020)

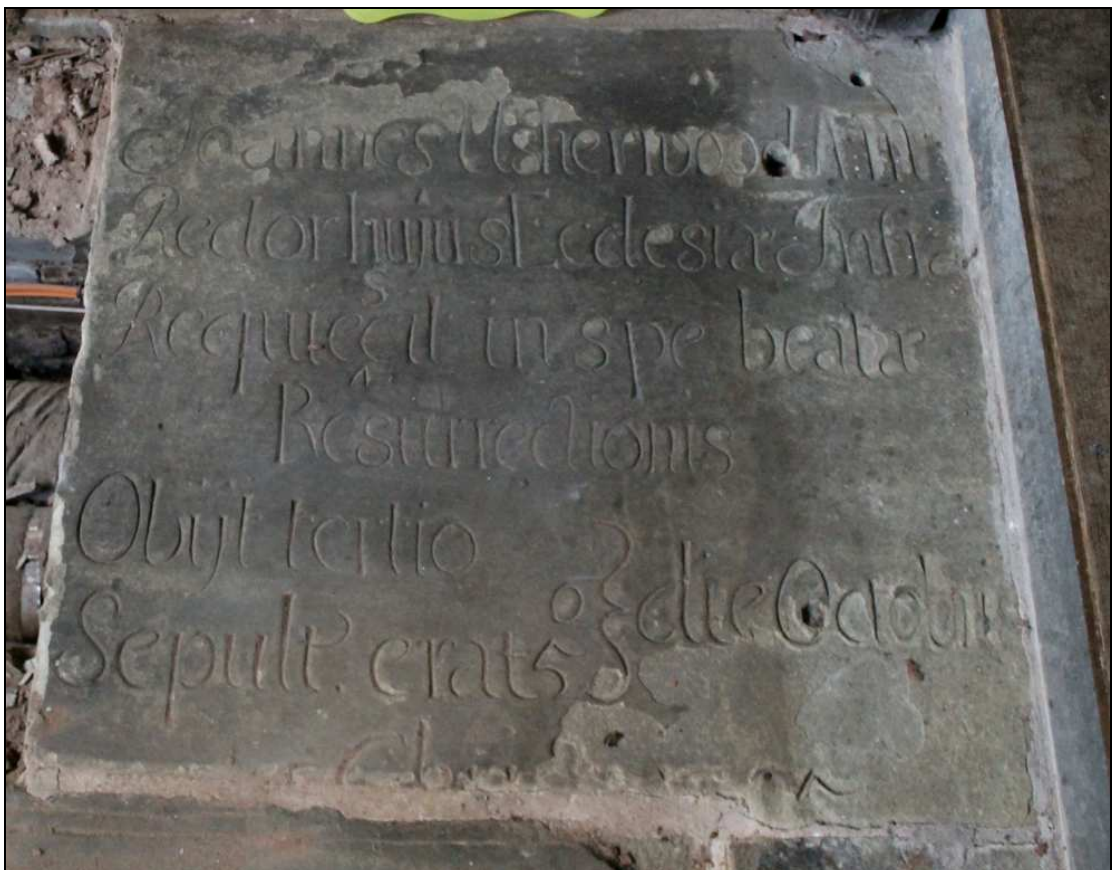


Plate 46: Usherwood ledger stone (Ledger S004)

3.5.21 **Ledger S010 Bayley:** a rectangular sandstone ledger, truncated along the right-hand edge, and cut crudely to fit around the base of a radiator along the bottom left corner. This stone measured 1.8m long by 0.81m wide and 0.08m thick, and was orientated so the writing faced towards the east, rather than the west. The stone would have been visible to those entering and leaving the Jesus Chapel and the Hawthorn Chapel, rather than those sitting in the pews in the nave (Plate 47). The upper section of the stone was decorated with an incised shouldered arch with introductory text executed in an elaborate curlicue font. The inscription was dedicated to the Bayley and Hankin families, and read:

*'Here resteth the body of
Ralph Bayley late of Wilmslow
Yeoman wh(o)
Departed this life Ma(...)
The 2nd 1753 Aged 18 yea(rs)
Also Elizabeth his wif(e)
Who departed this lif(e)
May the 28th 1763 age(d)
69 (?) years
Also James Son of Ralp(h)
Bayley who departed
This life March ye 30th 178(?)
(ag)ed 16 also Ann Hankin
(die)d Debr 10th 1785 Age 29 years
(Al)so John Bayley died
(...) (Ma)rch 1795 Aged 37 yea(rs)*

3.5.22 **Ledger S011 Bayley:** a rectangular ledger stone, complete but abraded and damaged down the left side where it had been placed against the southern wall of the church, and across the upper third where the decorative motif had been removed (Plate 48). This ledger measured 1.9m long by 0.85m wide and 0.09m thick, and was located to the west of ledger **S010**, which also commemorated the Bayley family, directly beneath the wall-mounted memorial dedicated to the Greg family. It is likely that these two Bayley family ledgers were previously laid side by side, rather than end to end. The inscription read:

*"Both the b(od)y of An(n)(and) Ralph Bayley
(...) on forth who departed ... life May 23rd 1778 Aged (...)
(Afore)said Ralph Bayley who(...) 5th 1795 Aged 66 Years"*



Plate 47: Bayley ledger stone (Ledger S010)



Plate 48: Bayley ledger stone (Ledger S011)

3.5.23 **Ledger S012 Hankinson:** a rectangular ledger stone measuring 1.8m long by 0.85m wide and 0.07m thick. The stone was complete, but abraded at the top left and bottom right quadrant with the upper surface of the stone missing (Plate 49). The introductory text was executed in an elaborate scroll work style:

*' Here lieth the body of George, Son
of Geroge and Sarah Hankinson
of Styal who departed this life
January 28. 1794 Aged 4 Years'*



Plate 48: Hankinson ledger stone (Ledger S012)

3.5.24 **Ledger S021 Goddard:** a large rectangular sandstone ledger stone that had been cut longitudinally along the left side in order to make it fit the width of the aisle (Plate 49). Consequently, the incised border along the left side of the stone and a portion of the text were both missing. The upper third of the stone was also badly damaged, with a large section of text missing. This ledger measured 2.01m long by 0.87m wide and 0.08m thick, and was one of the longest ledgers identified within the church (that of the Barrow family **C016** was the largest). The stone was laid beneath the Ashton memorial window, but it is unlikely that there is any direct link between the two families.

*'...(G)oddard
...John who died
Nov(ember)... Aged 76 years
And... children of (....) this
Parish for (...) years
Also Ann Goddard Wife of Heskey Goddard
Of Stanneylands, nephew of the above said
Heskey Goddard who died Nov 3rd 1840
Aged 60 years
Also the said Heskey Goddard who died September 5th 1851 Aged 76 years'*



Plate 48: Goddard ledger stone (Ledger S021)

3.5.25 **Ledger S022 Barrow and Cutts:** a large rectangular sandstone ledger measuring 1.92m long by 0.92m wide and 0.12m thick, and situated to the east of the south door, forming part of the floor of the southern aisle. This stone was cut to fit around the heating pipes, and had been heavily damaged across the top quarter and down the left side (Plate 49). As a result a proportion of the text was missing. The inscription read:

'(...) *daug(hter)* (...)
 (...) *of* (...)
 (...) *1819 Ag(ed)*...
(Sara?)h Daughter of the Said John? Robinson and wife of the said
(Jo)hn Cutts died June 29th 1821
Aged 39 Years
Also the said John Barrow Cutt, who
(...) (..)nd December 8th 1821 Aged 35 years
Also Henry Isaac Cutts son of the
Above said John and Sarah Cutts
(of) Wilmslowe who departed this (life)
July 8th 1840 Aged 26 years
(...) Thomas Cutts son of
Henry Isaac and Ann Cutts
Who departed this life Febru_y
(...) 1840 Aged 4 months
Also Henry Isaac their son who departed this life April
(...) 1842 aged 1 ¼ Years

3.5.26 **Ledger S023 Street:** a well-preserved, rectangular sandstone ledger, measuring 1.98m long by 0.98m wide and 0.05m thick (Plate 50). The ledger was located to the west of the south door beneath the wall-mounted Bower family memorial, although it is not likely that there is any direct correlation between the two. The inscription read:

'(Here) *resteth the body of* (...) *Street*
wife of Samuel (...) *Wilmslow who* (...) *this life September*
The 2nd 1744 Aged 62
Mary Wife of John Street (of) Wilmslow who departed (this)
Life Febr 6th 1760 Aged 43
Also Benjamin son of John (and)Mary Street who departed
(this) life March (...) *1742 aged* (...) *and six weeks.*
Also (...) *daughter of John and* (...) *Street who departed this life May* (...)

3.5.27 The execution of the inscription on this ledger was less formal than the rest of the ledger stones uncovered during the works. Frequently, words at the end of a line were abbreviated or reduced in font size in order to fit them in, suggesting that the work was carried out by a less experienced mason or layman.



Plate 49: Barrow and Cutts ledger stone (Ledger S022)

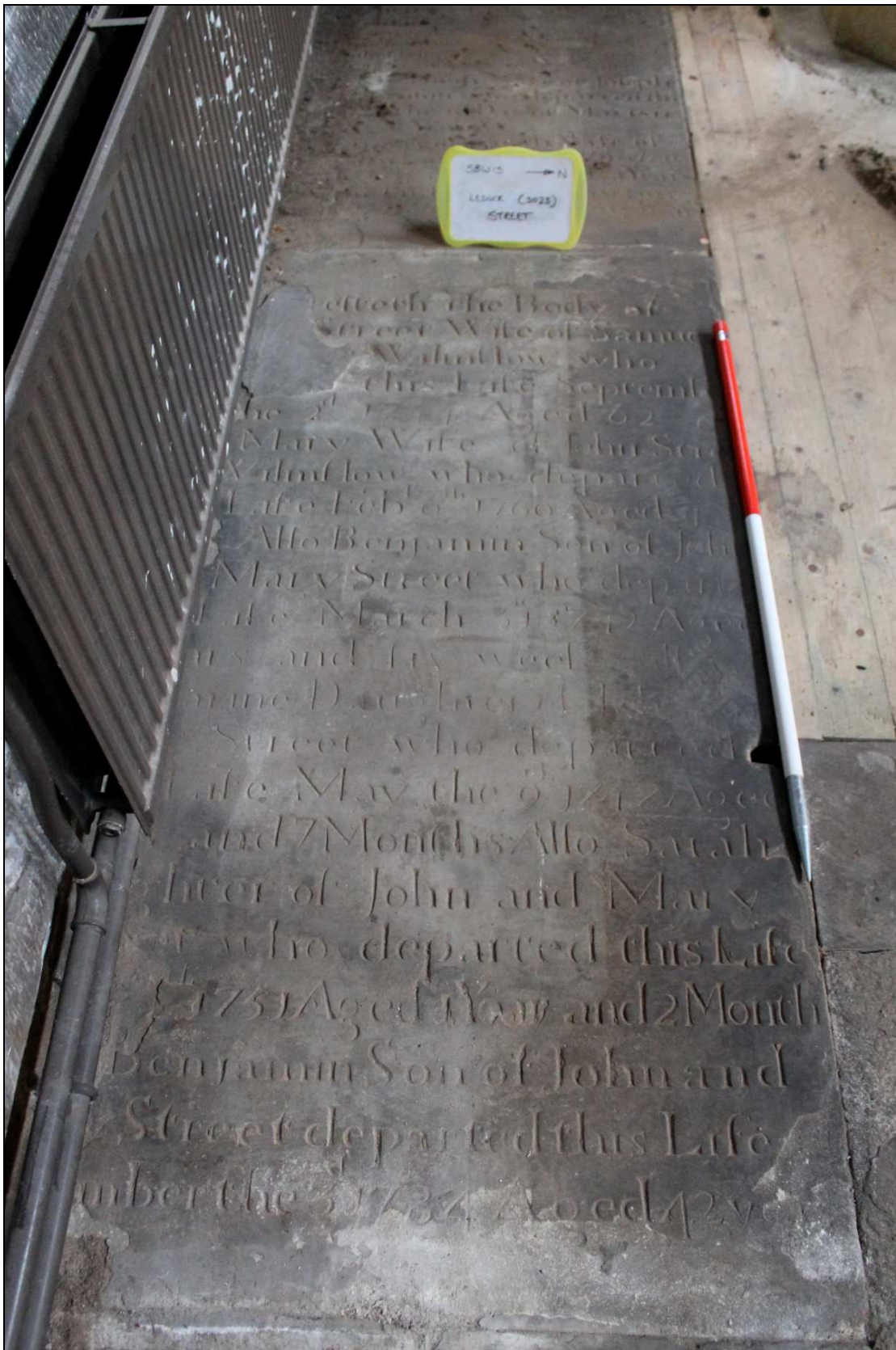


Plate 50: Street ledger stone (Ledger S023)

3.5.28 **Ledger S027 Williamson and Lawton:** this large sandstone ledger was the only one with a peaked rather than a flat top in the church, although it is possible that other ledgers may have had peaked tops which were cut in order to create a more regular shape during the Victorian phase of re-flooring. This stone was located to the west of the south door, and to and south of the font (Plate 51). It measured 1.98m long by 0.98m wide and 0.07m thick. The inscription on this ledger is one of the few which includes a religious passage along with the factual information relating to the deceased. It read:

*'Here (lie)eth the body of Phebe wide of Josph Williamson now of
Manchestr
and daughter of Jeffrey Burgess of (...)
(...) this life May 24 179(...) in the (...) year of their age
Also the (...) Joseph Williamson of
Manchester who died the 7th day of March 1809 aged (4?)5 years
With patience to the Lord he did (...) and murmur (...) thought fit but with
Christian will (...) did resign. His son to (...) disappointed time.
Also Elizabeth wife of Joseph Williamson who departed this
Life (on the) 29th of May 1811 Aged (...) Years
(...) of Sarah wife of (...) Lawton of Wilmslow
(...) 3rd 1816 Aged 71 years
(...) William Lawton (...) March 27th 1820 Aged 72 years'*

3.5.29 **Ledger E005 Bayley:** a truncated sandstone ledger, laid on a south/north orientation adjacent to the pulpit and in front of the entrance to the chancel and Hawthorn Chapel (Plate 52). The ledger measured 0.98m long by 0.8m wide and 0.08m thick, and was in poor condition. It had been heavily modified, and the inscription was barely legible:

*' William (...) who departed (...)
(...) aged 51 years
And Sarah his wife who died (...)
(...) 12th 1841 Aged 77 years (...)
(...) Bayley their daughter (...)
(...) 1800 Aged (...)
Martha their daughter (...)
(...) April 3rd 1811 Aged (...)
Months also (...) October (...)*

3.5.30 **Ledger W024 Street:** a modified sandstone ledger measuring 1.15m long by 0.71m wide and 0.06m thick. This ledger was not *in-situ*, and had been cut in half and trimmed to fit this area of the western aisle. The stone was badly abraded in the top right corner, and a portion of the text was illegible as a result. The inscription read:

*'(S)treet depa(rted)... (...)y... 1743 Age(d) (...)
Street son of (...)
(Sam)uel Street departed (...)
(...)23 1786 Aged (...)*



Plate 51: Williamson and Lawton ledger stone (Ledger S027)



Plate 52: Bayley ledger stone (Ledger E005)

3.5.31 **Ledger W025 Boulton:** a plain sandstone ledger which had been greatly reduced in size (measuring 0.5m long by 1.1m wide and 0.06m thick) in order to be incorporated into the sandstone flag area at the southern door (west of column G). The stone had been placed face down, and the inscription was only revealed after the stone was lifted and cleaned. The legible part of the inscription read:

'Also Sarah Boulton (...) daughter of the above (...) Lamb inter'd June 1 (...) Aged 90.'

3.5.32 **Ledger W028 Robinson:** a plain sandstone ledger measuring 0.53m long by 1m wide and 0.08m thick. It had been cut to span the void created by the western end of Crypt 3. The stone has been placed on a north/south alignment, with the writing facing upwards, although a thick layer of mortar had been applied which, prior to careful removal, obscured the majority of the text (Plate 53). This ledger was clearly not *in-situ*. The inscription read:

'(...)y Also the body of (...) Robinson of Wilmslow who (de)parted this life February (...) (...) 90 Aged 40 years'

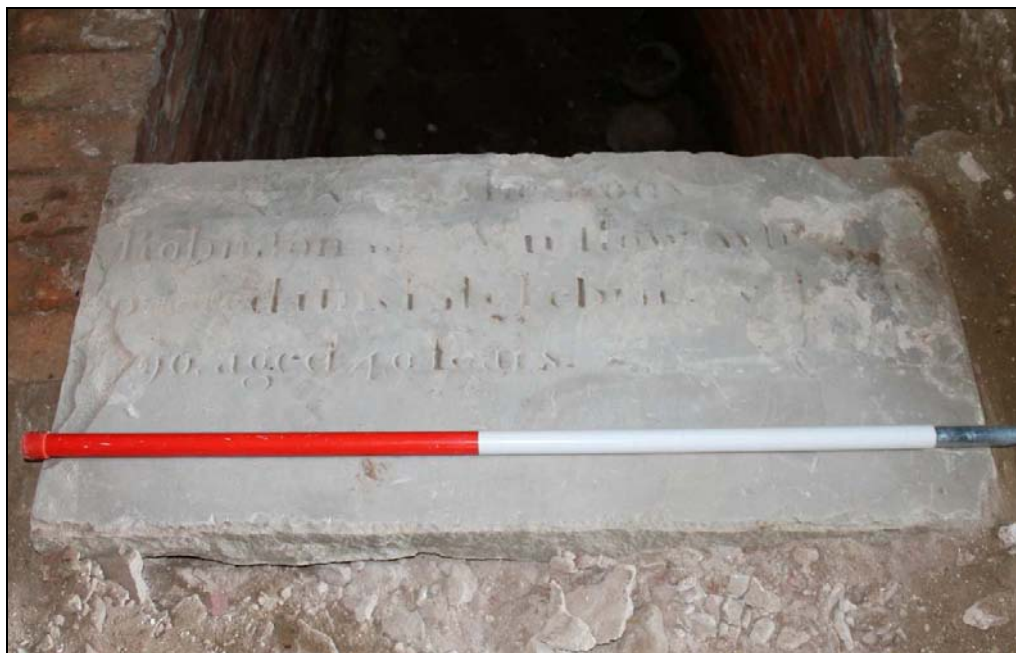


Plate 53: Robinson ledger stone (Ledger W028)

3.6 FINDS

3.6.1 A small assemblage of 45 fragments of artefacts and ecofacts was recovered in the course of the project. All were in good condition, but in small to medium-sized fragments. Their distribution between contexts is shown in Table 2 below.

| Context | Pottery | Clay Pipe | Building Material | Aluminium | Copper Alloy | Iron | Lead | Bone | Other | Totals |
|---------|---------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|--------------|------|------|------|-------|--------|
| 001 | | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 |
| 101 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| 125 | 7 | 3 | | 3 | 6 | 12 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 36 |
| 126 | 2 | | | | | 1 | | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| 8000 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Totals | 9 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 13 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 45 |

Table 1: Distribution of finds, by material

3.6.2 Pottery was only recovered, in small amounts from deposits **125** and **126**. Both groups were mixed in date, but equally, both groups produced fragments of late seventeenth-century blackwares typical of the region. In both cases the vessels present were probably cups, with a small, handled, fragment from deposit **125**, and a pedestalled base, comparable with those seen at Norton Priory (Howard-Davis 2008, fig 248) and Bewsey Old Hall (Lewis *et al* 2011, fig 60), both in Cheshire, from deposit **126**. Other pottery included a probably eighteenth-century tankard base from deposit **125**, and a fragment of Industrial slipware, probably of nineteenth-century date.

3.6.3 There were some only three small fragments of clay tobacco pipe stem, none of which are particularly diagnostic. There was no glass in the assemblage, but a stoneware ball is the spherical stopper from a Codd-type bottle, dating to after 1872, when the bottle form was patented.

3.6.4 Ironwork was confined to structural elements, predominantly nails, but including a screw plate, originally set into stonework by the use of a lead gallet. Other ironwork included probable coffin nails and a plain coffin handle. A small fragment of coffin wood, with scraps of baize adhering, was associated with the coffin of Jane Hulme, in Crypt 8. The use of a fabric covering for the coffin probably places it after 1750, when it became the custom to cover coffins with fabric (Litten 1991, 103). Fabric-covered coffins fell from vogue after the introduction of French polished ones in the mid-nineteenth century (*op cit*, 115). Lead from deposit **125** is a solidified spill, indicating the use of lead in the structure of any building on the site. Similarly, fragments of very light white metal sheet, cut into various curving shapes, is probably aluminium, and would again, have been used in some element of the structure of buildings or fittings. After technological change in the 1880s which allowed aluminium to be produced in quantity, it was widely used as a structural material.

- 3.6.5 Several of low denomination coins were recovered from deposit **125**. The earliest of them is a well-preserved penny of Victoria, dated 1901 (Plate 54), the latest a recent (2007) two pence piece of Elizabeth II.
- 3.6.6 Three fragments of animal bone were recovered from deposits **125** and **126**. Both contexts produced a single boar tusk, that from deposit **126** clearly trimmed to remove the root, and perhaps to allow it to be mounted (Plate 55). The presence of these two distinctive teeth is unusual in such a context, but cannot be further explained.



Plate 54: Coin of Victoria, dated 1891



Plate 55: Trimmed boar's tusk from deposit 126

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 The principal aim of the archaeological investigation was to monitor the excavation of ground levels beneath the Victorian floor, and to establish the location, survival and condition of any underlying graves or crypts exposed as a result of the works. It was also intended to examine the stone-built foundations for the eight medieval columns that are arranged in two rows of four and flank the central aisle of the nave.

4.2 CONCLUSION

4.2.1 In total, eight crypts and three articulated earth-cut infant burials were uncovered during the course of the work, with the potential for further crypts being identified but not investigated at the entrance to the church tower. In general, the crypts survived intact, and were in good condition. All eight crypts were opened by hand under close archaeological supervision with the capping stones being recorded, removed and stored within the churchyard. Crypt 2 was not opened, aside from the removal of two bricks in the eastern wall, and the original barrel-vault ceiling was left *in-situ*. The contents of each crypt were subject to rigorous archaeological recording before the upper two courses of brickwork in each crypt (except for Crypt 2) were removed. Each crypt was then stabilised and sealed using a superior concrete block-and-beam system in order to support the weight of the new stone floor.

4.2.2 A large quantity of charnel (626 complete or fragmentary bones) was recovered from the excavation works, where the ground level beneath the Victorian floor was reduced by approximately 0.3m across the whole of the nave. The nave of the medieval church had clearly been used extensively as a burial ground, and a concentration of disarticulated human remains were encountered immediately beneath the surface of the modern floor level. In some cases, crania and long bones were lying exposed on the compacted sandy silt directly beneath the timber flooring. All charnel material was gathered together and placed in 'coffin boxes' for reburial within charnel Crypt 4, which was cleaned and civilised for this purpose.

4.2.3 Remains were not cleaned or stacked within the purpose-built charnel crypts, and were intermingled with dumped deposits of light brown sandy silt beneath the wooden sprung floor. The assemblage of charnel within Crypts 3 and 4 was representative of human remains which have been subject to rapid clearance and collection, and it is commonly the case that smaller, less identifiable bones such as those which make up the hands and feet are overlooked or simply discarded during the clearance process. It is likely that this charnel material was generated as a result of the construction of the brick-built family crypts in the northern and central aisles and therefore the remains within Crypt 3 and 4 most likely come from the late medieval period and have simply been moved from one location to another within the church.

- 4.2.4 The lack of care and attention given to the construction of Crypts 3 and 4, and the inclusion of clearly recycled materials, supports the idea that they were constructed quickly and with minimal consideration to aesthetics and limited investment. This implies that these crypts were intended simply to provide an immediate receptacle for the chanel generated as a result of the main crypt building phase in the mid-nineteenth century.
- 4.2.5 The chanel from Crypt 4 was gathered and placed in Crypt 3 during the civilising process, and all other chanel gathered from elsewhere within the church was also placed in Crypt 4. The remains of three neonatal infants retrieved from shallow earth-cut burials were placed separately in small clean coffin boxes and reburied within Crypt 4. A service was performed by the Reverend Paul Smith to mark the reburial and final closure of the crypts.
- 4.2.6 It is likely that the crypts were all constructed at roughly the same time, as there is no convenient way to access these chambers, aside from moving pews and lifting sections of the church floor. At a time when the church would have had a thriving congregation and holding more than one service per day, it is unlikely that the floor would have been taken up piecemeal on a year by year basis to construct crypts at the behest of some of the wealthier patrons. The similar lozenge-shaped design of each crypt also supports the idea that all the crypts were constructed as part of one phase of activity. This in turn implies that there would only have been one phase or opportunity for interment before the crypts were sealed permanently, indicating that all the incumbents had been deceased for a period of time prior to the construction of the crypts and may have been moved from elsewhere in the churchyard to be buried within the more prestigious newly constructed vaults. This is reinforced by the design of Crypt 6, where the fixed spars indicate that the coffins would have to be added as the crypt was being constructed, as there was no room to insert an adult coffin between each tier of fixed spars.
- 4.2.7 Crypt 8 was unusual as it appeared to have been constructed as an after-thought or extension to Crypt 7, with both crypts constructed to accommodate members of the Hulme family. It is possible that Crypt 7 was not excavated to a suitable depth to accommodate all members of the Hulme family, and so a more rudimentary extension was created to accommodate Jane Hulme and one other member of the family.
- 4.2.8 Removal of the timber floor and reduction of the ground level within the nave revealed the column bases that had previously been obscured. All of the column bases had been modified, with niches cut into the sides of the columns and bases to facilitate the installation of fixed Victorian pews. Evidence of additional hand-made red-brick courses along the north sides of column base A – D was evident and probably relates to additional structural support for the bases during the construction of Crypts 1, 5 and 6 along the northern aisle of the nave. The proximity and depth of the crypts to the relatively shallow column bases probably gave rise to concerns regarding undermining and subsidence, and Victorian brick work was added to counter this.

- 4.2.9 The southern row of columns, specifically columns E, F and G had evidently been subject to more substantial modifications and were encased in concrete, which obscured the earlier stone bases completely. Only stone column base H was left exposed. Examination of the church roof above columns E–G indicated clear evidence of movement and possible subsidence of column F, and the addition of concrete to the column bases was probably undertaken with a view to limiting further movement along this line of columns. It was not possible to determine whether this work was carried out at the same time that Crypts 3 and 4 were constructed.
- 4.2.10 Confirmation that the Greg family crypt (Crypt 2) and Hulme family crypt (Crypts 7 and 8) lay beneath the central aisle, along with the vaults of the Bower (Crypt 1) and Sutherland (Crypt 5) families in the northern aisle, has added valuable information about late Georgian and early Victorian activity within the nave of the church. Investigation of these crypts has also provided valuable information regarding coffin furniture and funerary practises within growing industrial communities outside of Manchester.

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APPENDIX 1: WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

July 2012

Oxford
Archaeology
North

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH,
WILMSLOW,
CHESHIRE



ARCHAEOLOGICAL WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

Proposals

The following Written Scheme of Investigation is offered in response to a request from Mr S Welsh, of Buttress Fuller Alsop Williams, for a programme of archaeological investigation to support a proposed re-ordering scheme for St Bartholomew's Church in Wilmslow.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF PROJECT

1.1.5 Buttress Fuller Alsop Williams is devising a proposal for a re-ordering scheme at St Bartholomew's Church in Wilmslow (NGR SJ 848814). A church is known to have occupied the site of St Bartholomew's since the mid-thirteenth century, and whilst the fabric of this original building has been replaced almost entirely, a crypt leading from the chancel is clearly an early feature. The present church was largely built in the early sixteenth century, although it has been suggested that the lower part of the tower dates from the fifteenth century. The church was restored in 1862-3 by Brakspear, a vestry and the south porch was added in 1878, and a clerestory was added to the chancel in 1898. The archaeological and historical importance of the church is reflected in its Grade I listed building designation status.

1.1.6 The principal element of the proposed scheme requires the removal of existing stone and timber surfacing in the nave to enable the installation of a new limecrete floor with under-floor heating. The present timber floor is suspended over a void that is *c* 320mm deep, and overlies an earthen deposit. Whilst this deposit has yet to be examined in detail, it is likely to have derived from the reuse of the church interior for burials since at least the early sixteenth century and, as such, has potential to contain disarticulated human bones and other remains of archaeological interest. The proposed works are likely to require some excavation of this material to a depth of *c* 100mm.

1.1.7 In addition, several ledger stones in the nave aisle will require relocation as part of the proposed scheme. It is presently uncertain if these stones have been laid onto solid ground, or whether they overlie vaults, intact burials, or other archaeologically sensitive deposits.

1.1.8 In order to secure archaeological interests, the Chester Diocesan Advisory Committee has requested that a method statement is prepared to accompany and inform the re-ordering proposal. This Written Scheme of Investigation has been prepared by Oxford Archaeology North, and presents a methodology for an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation. This programme of works has been designed to mitigate any archaeological impact of the proposed re-ordering scheme.

1.2 OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

1.2.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) is an educational charity under the guidance of a board of trustees, and has over 30 years of experience in professional archaeology. We have offices in Lancaster, Oxford and Cambridge, trading as Oxford Archaeology North (OA North), Oxford Archaeology South (OA South) and Oxford Archaeology East (OA East) respectively, enabling us to provide a truly nationwide service. OA is an Institute for Archaeologists' Registered Organisation (No 17). All work on the project will be undertaken in accordance with relevant professional standards.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 ACADEMIC AIMS

2.1.1 The main research aim of the investigation will be to assess the presence or absence of any archaeological remains beneath the floor and ledger stones within the church and, should they prove to survive, to ensure the long-term preservation of the archaeological information by the production and deposition of a report, and an ordered project archive.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

1.2.1 The objectives of the project may be summarised as follows:

- to establish the presence or absence of any buried archaeological remains beneath the floor of the church, and assess their significance;
- to establish the presence or absence of any buried archaeological remains beneath the ledger stones, and assess their significance;
- to determine or confirm the approximate extent of any buried remains;
- to compile an appropriate archaeological record of any buried remains to mitigate their ultimate loss as part of the proposed re-ordering scheme;
- to produce a fully illustrated report and project archive.

1.2.2 The required stages to achieve these ends are as follows:

- **Watching Brief:** the initial stage of the works will comprise archaeological monitoring during the removal of the floors and ledger stones, and any earth-moving works necessitated by the proposed scheme. This stage of the archaeological works is intended to enable an appropriate record to be compiled of any archaeological remains that are present, and recover any artefacts and fragments of disarticulated human remains;
- **Excavation:** where significant buried remains, including *in-situ* burials/articulated human remains, are found to survive and will be destroyed during the proposed re-ordering works, further excavation archaeological excavation may be required. This scope and extent of any further works will be agreed with the Client in consultation with the Chester Diocesan Advisory Committee and/or archaeological curator;
- **Post-excavation assessment and reporting:** a programme of post-excavation work, leading to the production of a fully illustrated report, project archive and publication will be carried out on completion of the fieldwork.

3 METHOD STATEMENT

3.1 WATCHING BRIEF

- 3.1.1 In the first instance, an archaeologist will be present during the removal of the existing flooring, and all the excavation works required to prepare the site for the installation of the new floor and heating system. This watching brief will be maintained to enable the area to be viewed as it is being excavated, and any vertical sections to be examined after excavation has been completed. Where archaeological remains are identified during the works, the excavated area will be rapidly cleaned, and the need for any further archaeological investigation will be assessed. Where appropriate, any features and finds will be excavated by hand, sampled and recorded, within the confines of the excavated area.
- 3.1.2 Excavated soil will be searched as practicable for artefacts and human remains. It should be anticipated that significant quantities of disturbed and disarticulated human remains may be encountered, although the shallow depth of the proposed works beneath the floor of the nave should preclude the discovery of intact and *in-situ* burials; the possibility that burials exist beneath the ledger stones cannot be discounted, however.
- 3.1.3 The areas subject to ground disturbance, and any features of archaeological interest, will be located accurately on a site plan, and recorded by photography, scale drawings, and written descriptions. All human remains encountered will be recorded, recovered and retained for assessment and reporting purposes, and will be treated with appropriate care and consideration, in accordance with the *Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England* (English Heritage and The Church of England 2005).
- 3.1.4 In the event of unexpectedly significant or complex discoveries, more detailed archaeological excavation and recording may be merited. Where any intact burials or other articulated human remains are encountered, they will initially be left *in-situ*, covered and protected, and their discovery notified to the Client and the Chester Diocesan Advisory Committee. If removal is deemed necessary following consultation, this will comply with the relevant guidelines, and in accordance with the methodology outlined below.

3.2 FURTHER EXCAVATION

- 3.2.1 In the event of more detailed archaeological investigation being required, all excavation will be undertaken in successive, level spits by a suitably experienced archaeologist. The area will then be cleaned to define the extent of any archaeological features, and a base plan produced. All features identified will then be manually excavated down to the required level. Any burials will be recorded in terms of burial position, any grave goods etc. Burials will be characterised and their location recorded. The human remains will be lifted and contained within lidded cardboard boxes or opaque burial sacks with attached identification/location tags, and removed from the immediate vicinity for storage prior to their assessment.

- 3.2.2 Whilst burials will not normally be chased horizontally into the trench sides (English Heritage and the Church of England 2005, paragraphs 183-7) where a burial in a void will be intersected by the excavation or it is so closely adjacent that it is likely that the void will be broken into during the construction process and adequate protection cannot be arranged, then the whole burial in that void will be lifted. The depth to which the trench is excavated will depend upon the requirements of the construction process and professional judgement will be exercised as to the depth to which human remains will need to be excavated and which can be left *in-situ* and protected.
- 3.2.3 **Recording:** all information identified in the course of the site works will be recorded stratigraphically, using a system adapted from that used by English Heritage and in accordance with IfA guidelines. A complete stratigraphic sequence and Harris Matrix will be compiled during the site work.
- 3.2.4 A single context recording system is usually employed in traditional burial excavation using separate context sheets for the grave cut, fill and skeleton. Experience on similar burial grounds, however, has shown that this is not necessarily informative (cf Bashford and Pollard 1998, 155). For example, grave cuts vary only in their dimensions, and grave fills are generally of a fairly uniform character. It is considered more useful to record the grave and its contents on a single burial sheet, with additional sheets for recording osteology and coffins, for instance. Thus, the grave cut, fill and skeleton of a burial will be assigned a single group number.
- 3.2.5 Charnel will be collected for reburial but will not undergo systematic osteological analysis. The disarticulated remains will simply be quantified numerically and, like the articulated skeletons, will be retained at OA North's offices pending reburial.
- 3.2.6 Should any vaults, crypts or cists be present, a scaled plan of each will be produced. Location, dimensions and method of construction will be noted. Any memorials discovered beneath the present ground surface in the course of excavation will need archaeological recording. Each buried memorial will be accorded an individual context number. They will also be included as part of the grave group, if the association with the burial is clear. Such buried memorials will be recorded on *pro-forma* context sheets, based on and following the guidelines set out by Mytum (2002) and will include details of:
- Shape;
 - Dimensions;
 - Type of stone used;
 - Iconography (an illustration may best describe these features);
 - Inscription (*verbatim* record of inscription; font of the lettering);
 - Stylistic type.

- 3.2.7 Plans will be drawn at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate. The location, depth and orientation of any articulated burial will be recorded using EDM, by noting the relative position of the skull and feet, and recorded using rectified photography. Long sections of trenches showing layers will be drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate.
- 3.2.8 OA has developed a specific CAD programme (Crossbones) into which survey data may be entered. A three-dimensional image of the spatial distribution of the burials may thereby be generated. This has proved particularly useful in the analysis of complex burial stratigraphy, and may be utilised if similar conditions are encountered.
- 3.2.9 A monochrome print and colour digital photographic record, illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered, will be maintained. The photographic record will also include working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological work. Photographs will be recorded on OA Photographic Record Sheets.
- 3.2.10 ***Fleshed or partially-fleshed bodies:*** excavation may reveal the presence of fleshed or partially-fleshed burials, or coffins containing liquor or other corruption products. This would require informing the Environmental Health Officer to agree a suitable strategy for their recovery and disposal; all further works would conform to any requirements that the EHO may set. Detailed archaeological recording of recent burials is not desirable, and only their location will be noted. OA does not remove fleshed human remains, but will be happy to recommend a recognised exhumation company who will undertake this work at a cost agreed with the Client and charged as a variation. Any lead coffins would not be opened, but would need to be removed, stored and deposited by a specialist contractor, the costs of which would be agreed with the Client as a variation.
- 3.2.11 ***Finds:*** all finds recovered during the investigation will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, bagged and boxed in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC) *First Aid For Finds*, 1998 (new edition) and the recipient museum's guidelines.
- 3.2.12 Any gold and silver artefacts recovered during the course of the excavation will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local Coroner according to the procedures relating to the Treasure Act, 1996. Where removal cannot take place on the same working day as discovery, suitable security will be employed to protect the finds from theft.

3.3 POST-EXCAVATION

3.3.1 Post-excavation work will comprise the following:

- checking of drawn and written records during and on completion of fieldwork;
- production of a stratigraphic matrix of the archaeological deposits and features present on the site, if appropriate;
- cataloguing of photographic material.

3.4 ARCHIVE/REPORT

3.4.1 **Archive:** the results of all archaeological work carried out will form the basis for a full archive to professional standards, in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (*Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition, 1991), and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-Term Storage* (Walker 1990). The project archive represents the collation and indexing of all the data and material gathered during the course of the project. This archive will be provided in the English Heritage Centre for Archaeology format. A synthesis (in the form of the index to the archive and a digital copy of the report) will be deposited with the County Historic Environment Record.

3.4.2 The Arts and Humanities Data Service (AHDS) online database project *Online Access to index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) will be completed as part of the archiving phase of the project.

3.4.3 **Report:** a written synthetic report will be submitted digitally to the Client for comment within four weeks of completion of fieldwork. The report will include:

- a title page detailing site address, NGR, author/originating body, client's name and address;
- full content's listing;
- a non-technical summary of the findings of the fieldwork;
- a description of the archaeological background;
- an account of the historical development of the site;
- a description of the topography and geology of the study area;
- a description of the methodologies used during the fieldwork;
- a description of the findings of the fieldwork;
- plans of the excavated areas, showing the archaeological features;
- an overall plan with sections of the excavated archaeological features;
- appropriate photographs of specific archaeological features;
- a consideration of the importance of the archaeological remains present on the site in local, regional and national terms.

3.5 OTHER MATTERS

3.5.1 **Health and Safety:** archaeological staff will respect Health and Safety provisions and site-specific safety regulations. It is the policy of OA North ('the Employer') to conform fully with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), and all site procedures will be in accordance with the guidance set out in the Health and Safety Manual compiled by the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers (1997). Attention will also be paid to the requirements of more recent legislation, including the provision and use of Work Equipment Regulations (1992), the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1992), and the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (1994).

- 3.5.2 In furtherance of the duty of care imposed by the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), the Employer shall make available to his employees whatever reasonable facilities are required by particular circumstances, *eg* appropriate protective clothing, safety equipment, rest breaks for specialised tasks, etc. A written risk assessment will be undertaken in advance of project commencement, and copies will be made available on request.
- 3.5.3 **Insurance:** evidence of Public Liability Insurance to the minimum value of £5m, and Professional Indemnity Insurance to the minimum of £2m, will be provided prior to the commencement of the archaeological works.
- 3.5.4 **Project Monitoring:** the aims of monitoring are to ensure that the archaeological works are undertaken within the limits set by the Written Scheme of Investigation, and to the satisfaction of the Chester Diocesan Advisory Committee and/or the curatorial archaeologist.
- 3.5.5 **Storage of Remains and Reinterment:** in the event of articulated human remains being encountered and excavated, OA will be responsible for the individual bagging or boxing of skeletons. The excavated assemblage will be transported to OA North's offices at Lancaster on a regular basis, where they will reside whilst being assessed. Once complete it is envisioned that reburial will be undertaken soon after within the churchyard. English Heritage scientific advisors will be consulted as to the most appropriate methods and containers for the placement of the remains in the churchyard. However, these costs have not been included and will be subject to variation should the client wish for OA North to organise this.
- 3.5.6 **Rapid osteological assessment:** all skeletons will undergo rapid osteological assessment on return to OA North's offices. Although not anticipated at present, but depending on the numbers of burials, it may be decided that an appropriate sample is selected for more detailed analysis should it take place in the future. This would be dealt with under a separate Written Scheme of Investigation.
- 3.5.7 Rapid skeletal assessment of the entire articulated assemblage will allow the most accurate and representative reconstruction of the demography of the buried population, including age, sex and stature. To include the entire assemblage is preferable to selecting a sample, however representative it is judged to be. Assessment of all articulated skeletons will be carried out by a suitably qualified OA osteologist.
- 3.5.8 This rapid assessment employs the same osteological methods set out by the IfA and BABAO (Brickley and McKinley 2004). Wherever bone survival permits, this will include: minimum number of individuals; full age and sex estimation; preservation and completeness (including dental inventory); stature estimation; and gross skeletal pathology.
- 3.5.9 In addition to this palaeodemographic data, a rapid assessment of the dentition of each skeleton will be made. In addition, the skeletons will be rapidly scanned for pathological conditions, and the location and general appearance of any lesions described.

4 WORK TIMETABLE

- 4.1 The duration of the watching brief will be determined by the main contractor's timetable.
- 4.2 The time required for any additional excavation that is deemed necessary as a result of the watching brief cannot be determined at this stage.
- 4.3 A report will be submitted to the Client for comment within four weeks of the completion of the fieldwork.

5 STAFFING PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The project will be under the overall charge of **Ian Miller BA FSA** (OA North Senior Project Manager) to whom all correspondence should be addressed.
- 5.2 It is not possible to provide details of the archaeologists that will be involved with the fieldwork at this stage, but all shall be suitably qualified with proven relevant experience.
- 5.3 Assessment of any finds recovered from the excavation will be undertaken by OA North's in-house finds specialist **Christine Howard-Davis BA** (OA North Finds Manager). Christine has extensive knowledge of all finds of all periods from archaeological sites in northern England, and is a recognised expert in the analysis of medieval and post-medieval artefacts.
- 5.4 Assessment of any palaeo-environmental samples which may be taken will be undertaken by **Elizabeth Huckerby MSc MIFA** (OA North Environmental Manager). Elizabeth has extensive knowledge of the palaeo-ecology of the North West through her work on the English Heritage-funded North West Wetlands Survey.

APPENDIX 2: OUTLINE CATALOGUE OF CHARNAL

| Bone type | Adult | | | Infant | Neonate | Indeterminate fragments (adult) | Total |
|-------------------------|-------|---|----|--------|---------|---------------------------------|-------|
| | M | F | ? | | | | |
| Crania | 7 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 49 | 66 |
| Mandible | | | 15 | | | 10 | 25 |
| Maxilla | | | 5 | | | | 5 |
| Vertebrae | | | 34 | 3 | | | 37 |
| Clavicle | | | 12 | | | 1 | 13 |
| Scapula | | | 4 | | | 1 | 5 |
| Humerus | | | 11 | | | 6 | 16 |
| Ulna | | | 17 | | | | 17 |
| Radius | | | 11 | 1 | | | 12 |
| Rib | | | 48 | | | | 48 |
| Inominate | | 2 | 8 | 2 | | 7 | 19 |
| Femur | | | 26 | 1 | | 27 | 54 |
| Tibia | | | 27 | | | | 27 |
| Fibula | | | 13 | 1 | | | 14 |
| Patella | | | 4 | | | | 4 |
| Carpals and Metacarpals | | | 31 | | | | 31 |
| Tarsals and Metatarsals | | | 80 | | | | 80 |
| Undiagnostic fragments | | | | | | | 247 |
| Burned bone fragment | | | | | | | 1 |
| Total | | | | | | | 626 |

APPENDIX 3: FINDS CATALOGUE

| Cxt | OR no | Qty | Material | Category | Description | Date |
|------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|-------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| 001 | 1014 | 1 | Stone | Building material | Small fragment carefully dressed ashlar | Not closely dateable. |
| 101 | 1018 | 1 | Stone | Whetstone | Worn whetstone | Not closely dateable |
| 125 | 1000 | 2 | Aluminium | Sheet | Two small offcuts | After 1880s |
| 125 | 1001 | 11 | Iron | Nail | Headless nails | Not closely dateable |
| 125 | 1002 | 1 | Lead | Melt | Large solidified run of melted lead | Not closely dateable |
| 125 | 1003 | 1 | Copper alloy | Coin | Threepenny piece. George VI, 1943 | 1943 |
| 125 | 1004 | 1 | Copper alloy | Coin | One penny. Victoria, 1901 | 1901 |
| 125 | 1005 | 3 | Copper alloy | Coin | Twopenny piece. Elizabeth II, 1988; Twopenny piece. Elizabeth II, 2007; Penny. Elizabeth II, 1975. | 1975, 1988, 2007 |
| 125 | 1006 | 1 | Copper alloy | Coin | Decimal half penny. Elizabeth II, 1971 | 1971 |
| 125 | 1007 | 1 | Iron | Pin | One complete steel pin, with stamped head. | Twentieth century? |
| 125 | 1008 | 1 | Iron, Lead | Screw plate | Iron countersunk screwplate or hinge in a lead gallet, allowing it to be set in stone. | Late nineteenth century or later |
| 125 | 1010 | 1 | Aluminium ? | Sheet | Offcut? Thin ?aluminium sheet. | After 1880s |
| 125 | 1012 | 3 | Ceramic | Tobacco pipe | Three undiagnostic stem fragments. | Post-medieval |
| 125 | 1013 | 7 | Ceramic | Vessel | Three fragments blackware; one fragment blackware tankard base, one fragment blackware body; one fragment industrial slipware; one fragment refined white earthenware. | Late seventeenth century and later |

| Cxt | OR no | Qty | Material | Category | Description | Date |
|-------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|---|
| 125 | 1019 | 1 | Bone | Animal | Boar's tusk, carefully sawn to remove roots, perhaps for mounting. | Not closely dateable |
| 125 | 1021 | 2 | Plaster | | Small fragments of white-washed wall plaster with impressions to the rear suggesting straw. | Not closely dateable |
| 126 | 1009 | 1 | Iron | Handle | Plain semi-circular coffin handle | Not closely dateable |
| 126 | 1011 | 1 | Ceramic | Closure | Codd bottle stopper | Late nineteenth – early twentieth century |
| 126 | 1015 | 2 | Ceramic | Vessel | One base fragment blackware; one body fragment brown stoneware. | Late seventeenth century and later |
| 126 | 1020 | 2 | Bone | Animal | One fragment sawn pelvis, one boar's tusk. | Not closely dateable |
| 8000 | 1022 | 1 | Wood | Coffin | Small fragment of wood, now dried and twisted. Small remnant of baize adhering. Colour now lost. | Nineteenth century |

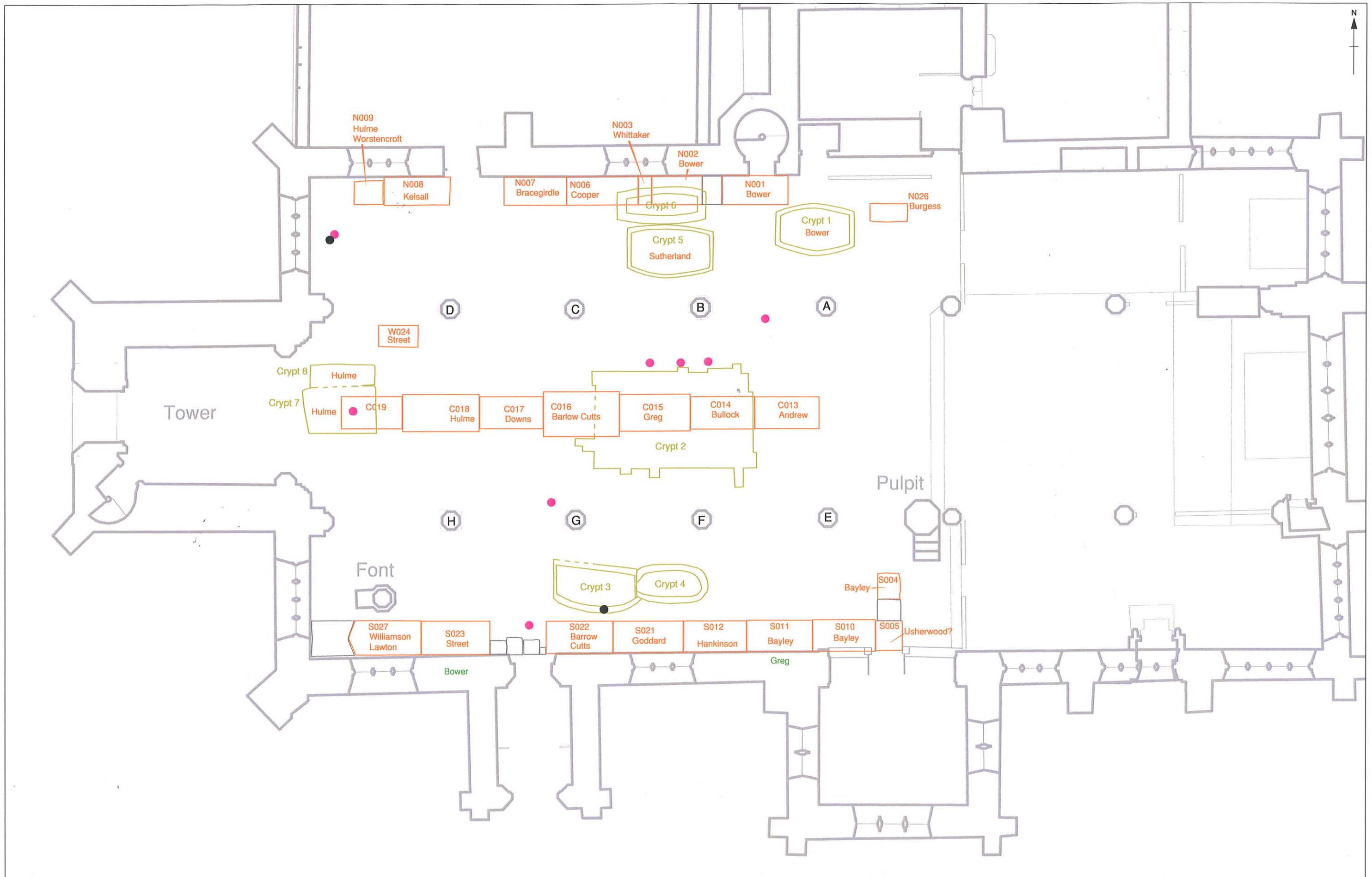
ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURES

- Figure 1: Site location
- Figure 2: Plan of the nave, showing the location of the crypts and ledger stones
- Figure 3: Detail of Crypts 1, 5 and 6
- Figure 4: Detail of Crypt 2
- Figure 5: Detail of Crypts 3 and 4
- Figure 6: Detail of Crypts 7 and 8



Figure 1: Site location



- Ledger stones
- Crypt
- Bower Wall memorial
- Charnel deposit
- Earth-cut burials

0 ————— 2.5 m
1:100 @ A3

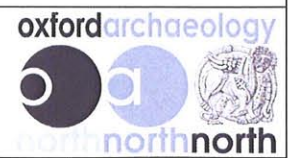


Figure 2: Plan of the nave, showing the position of the crypts and ledger stones

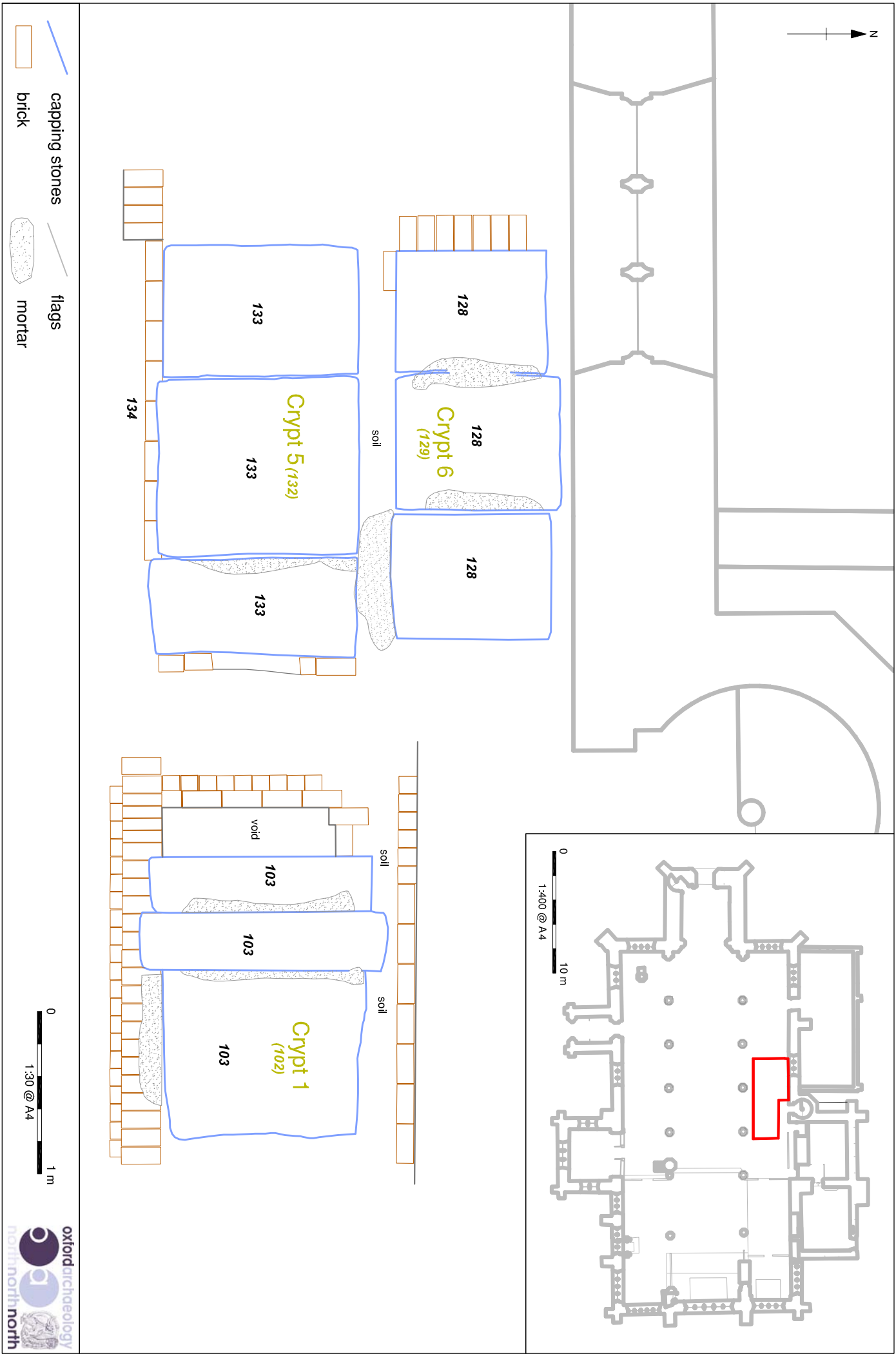


Figure 3: Detail of Crypts 1, 5 and 6

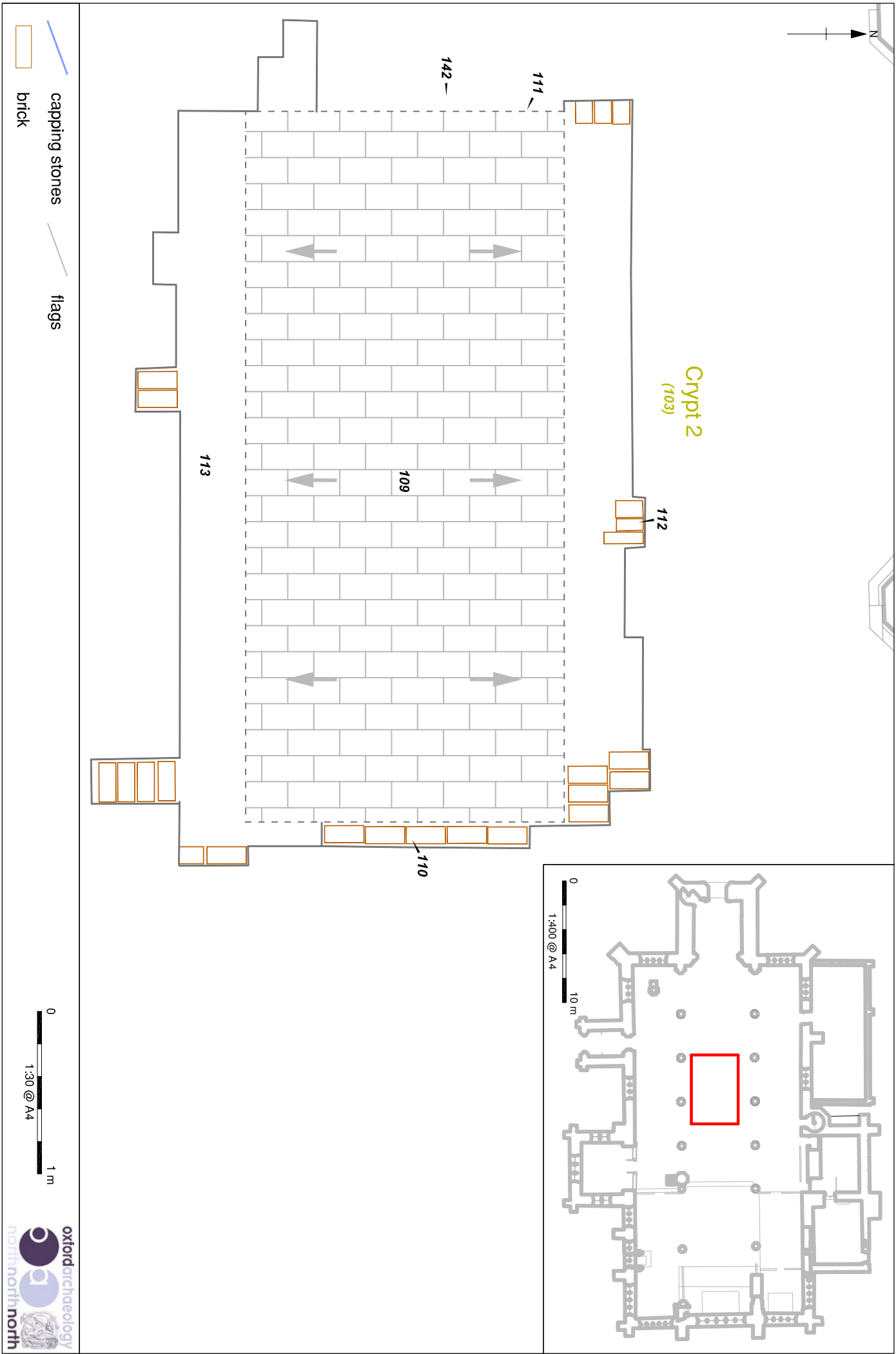


Figure 4: Detail of Crypt 2

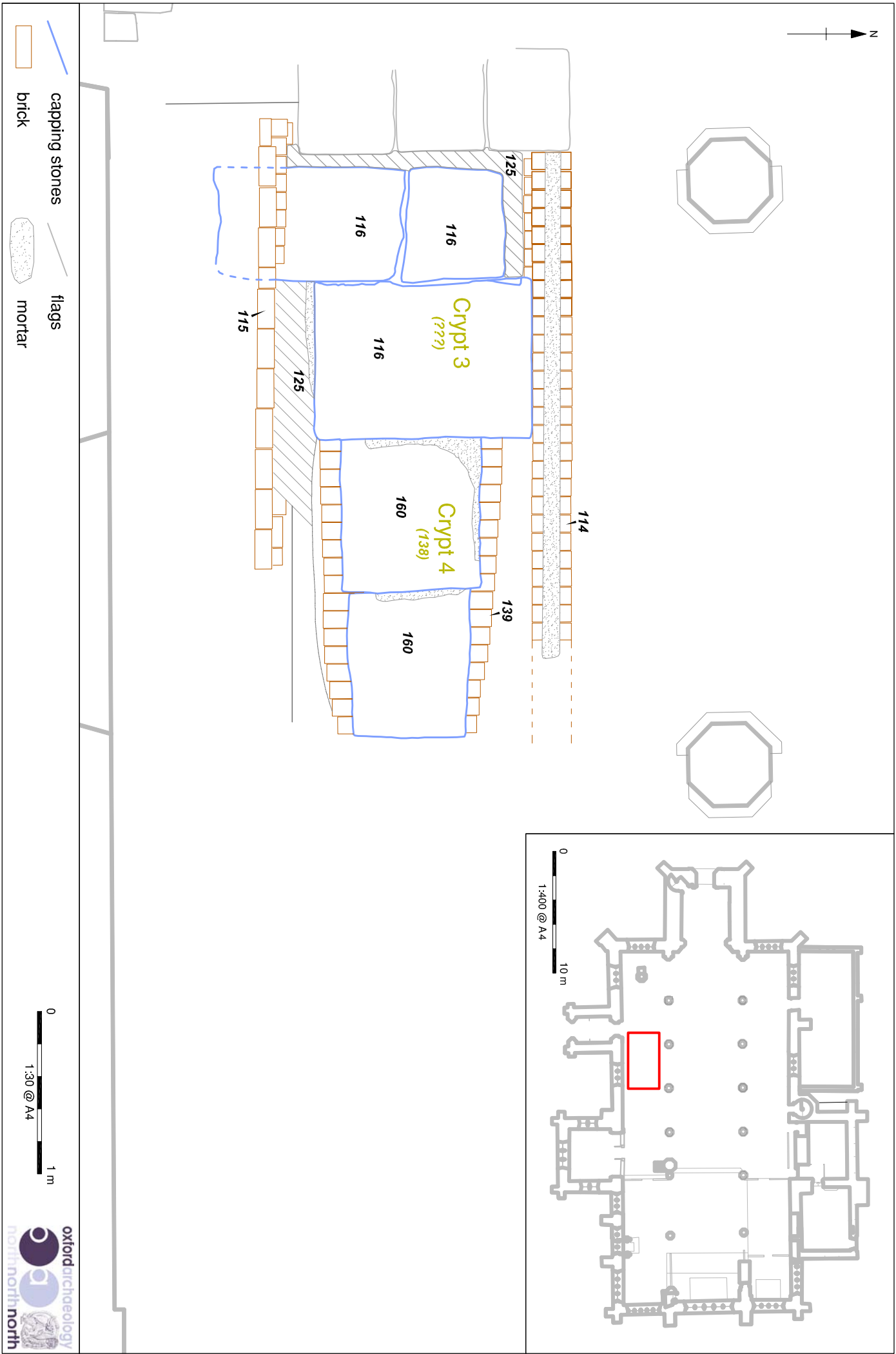


Figure 5: Detail of Crypts 3 and 4

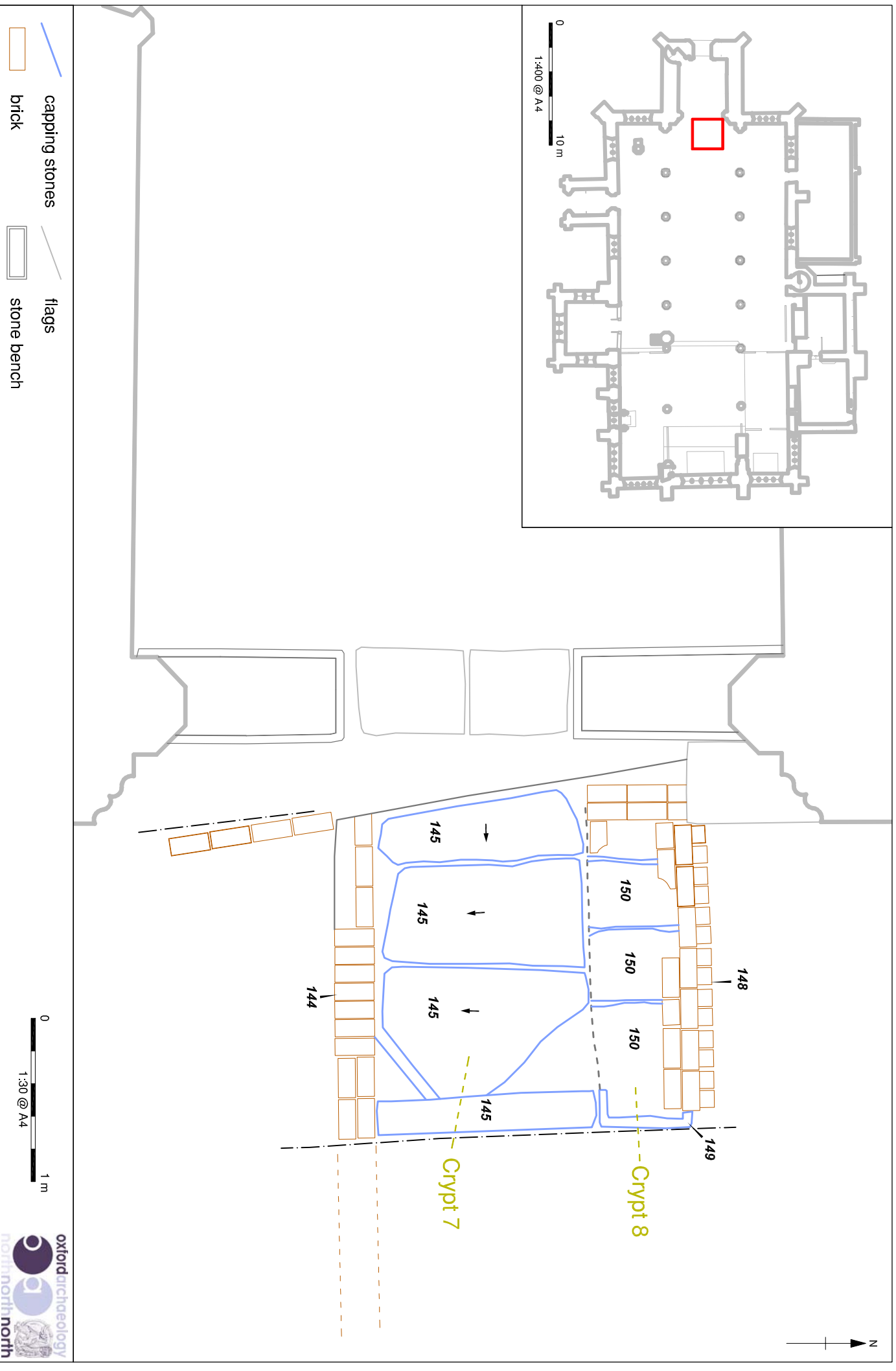


Figure 6: Detail of Crypts 7 and 8

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