

Tibbermore Church

Tibbermore, Perth and Kinross

Archaeological Excavation: August 2019

for

Historic Churches Scotland

August 2019



Tibbermore Church and Graveyard

Addyman Archaeology

Archaeology Heritage Consultancy Architecture

Addyman Archaeology

The Old Printworks, 77a Brunswick Street, Edinburgh EH7 5HS
admin@addyman-archaeology.co.uk
0131 555 4678

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Job number 1075.00

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by Antoine Ruchonnet

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Acknowledgements

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Tibbermore Church

Tibbermore, Perth and Kinross

Archaeological Excavation

Executive Summary

Addyman Archaeology undertook archaeological excavation at Tibbermore Church, Perth and Kinross in relation to conservation works being undertaken at the church. Human remains were discovered under the church floorboards in the North Aisle, when they were removed for repair. Due to the presence of human remains excavations in advance of the repair works were undertaken by Addyman Archaeology to recover, analyse and rebury any further human remains.

The area of excavation is within the 19th Century extension to the 17th Century Church, which is a Category B Listed Building. The trench measured c3.5m by 3.5m and needed to be excavated to a depth of 0.2m below the current ground level to allow air circulation following replacement of the joists. No further human remains were unearthed during the excavation. The foundation of the original north wall of the Church was located, below a spread of the demolition rubble from the wall; this overlay the original graveyard soil which was not disturbed by the current excavation. The human remains consisted of a disarticulated skull, possibly from a 20-30 year old female, and a left tibia diaphysis. All human remains were reburied within a small slate cist in the south west corner of the trench and their location noted on plan.

1. Introduction

i. Background and previous work

Addyman Archaeology was contracted by Historic Churches Scotland to undertake an archaeological excavation in relation to works being undertaken at Tibbermore Parish Church, a 17th century Category B Listed Building (LB18297; NRHE 26861) in the care of Historic Churches Scotland since 2001. A number of joists in the North Aisle of the church had become rotten, which led to the weakening of the floorboards and pews above. Historic Churches Scotland propose to replace a number of the joists in order to repair the floorboards. In order to protect the replacement joists from damp, limited excavation of the soil below was required. During initial investigations below the floorboards a number of loose human skeletal remains were recovered by contractors. These were reported to Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust (PKHT). The Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) submitted to PKHT, outlined the archaeological works to be undertaken, which included clearance of loose debris immediately below the floorboards and excavation of deposits required to reach the required depth for the installation of the replacement joists.

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A record of the archaeological mitigation (*OASIS ID: addyman1-363802*) has been deposited with the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) website hosted by the Archaeological Data Service and with *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* (DES), the annual publication of fieldwork by Archaeology Scotland.

ii. Site location and setting

Tibbermore Church is located approximately 5km to the west of Perth, just south of Tibbermore crossroads, PH1 1QJ (NO 05200 23393; *figure 1*). The church stands on a shallow north facing slope overlooking the valley of the Pow Water.

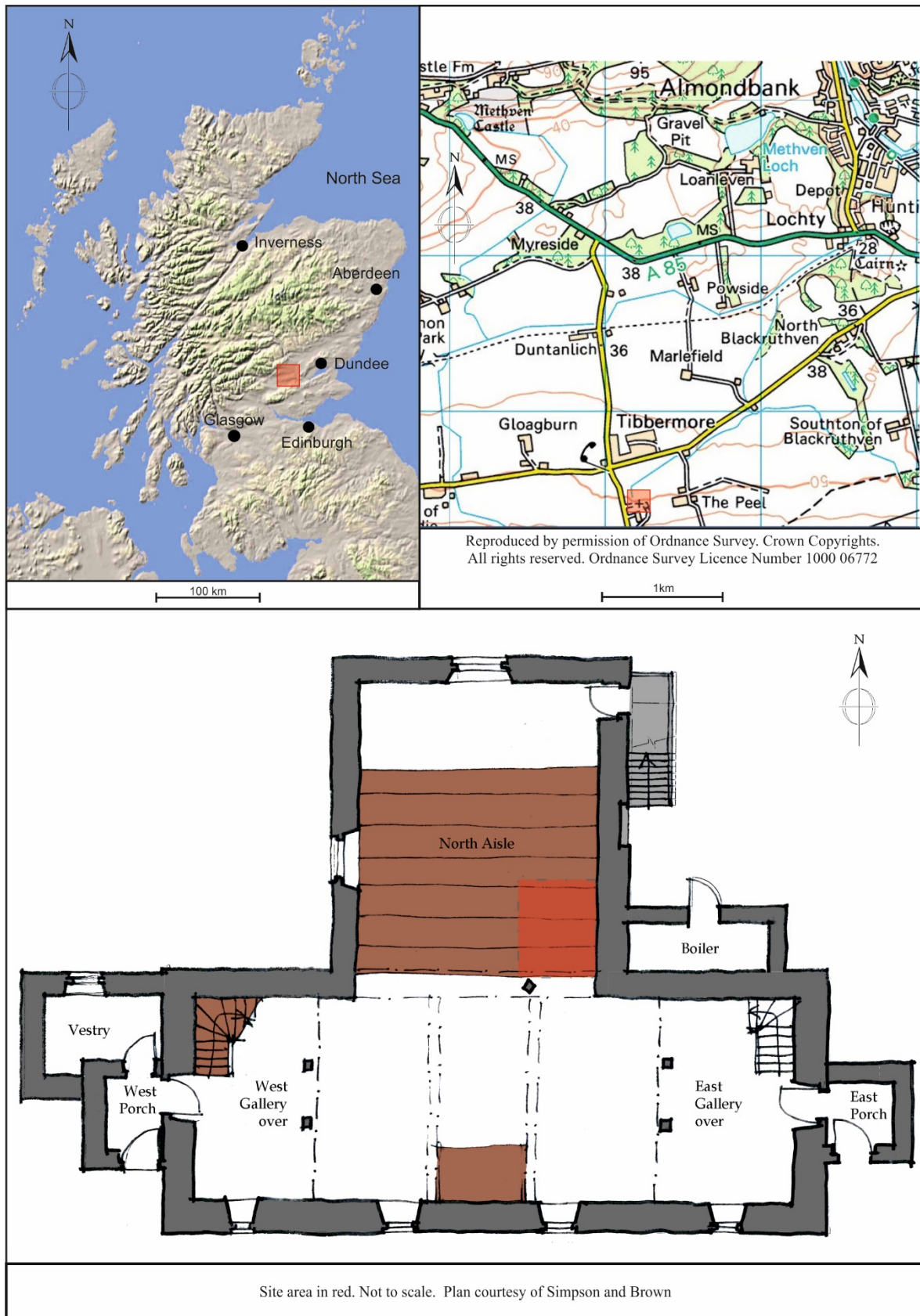


Figure 1 Site location (the area of excavation is indicated in red)

2. *Historical Summary*

The present church dates from 1632 but has medieval origins and is dedicated to St Mary. It originated as an oratory of the bishops of Dunkeld who possessed an episcopal residence in this parish by the middle of the 13th century. Tibbermore became the church of the parish when that of St Serf (alias Pitcairn) fell into disuse. The church was a mensal church of the bishopric of Dunkeld in the early 16th century, and probably as early as the 13th century, when the episcopal residence was established (Cowan 1967).

The building is a simple rectangle on plan with an aisle on the north side and some later additions. A fragment of re-used moulding is visible at the foot of an external stair on the east wall of the north aisle; a second fragment is built into the north wall of the stair. The graveyard contains numerous 18th-century stones, and also a slab dated 1699, along with other monuments of interest, in particular the exceptional memorial to James Ritchie, displaying his curling equipment and the recumbent figure of his bull (Scotland's Churches Trust). The east gateway, which is equipped with substantial masonry piers, bears the date 1731.

The church was remodelled and enlarged in 1789 to designs by James Scobie. The north T-plan aisle was added in 1808 by Ruthven Printfield Coy for their servants. It was extensively repaired in 1834 and refurnished in 1874 to designs by William Maclaren of Sir George Condie Conning & Co. The present interior is little altered since that date.

3. *Methodology*

The excavation below the floor was undertaken by hand to the require depth of 0.2m below the floor joists in order to recover any human remains that might survive within the deposits. The area measured 3.5m by 3.5m and followed the slope of the ramp of the 19th century North Aisle extension. The human remains uncovered by the contractors (*Plate 1*) were recorded and studied before being reburied in a stone cist (*Plate 2 to Plate 4*).

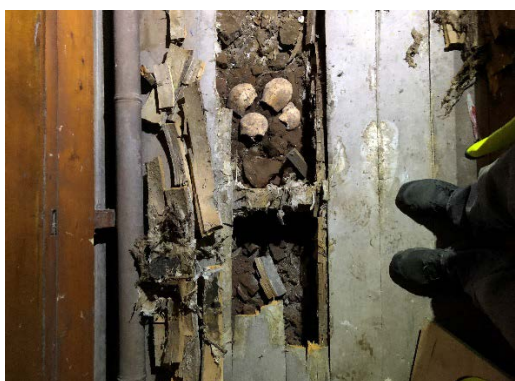


Plate 1 Human remains, as found by the contractors



Plate 2 Stone cist for reburial of human remains



Plate 3 Human remains reburied within the stone cist



Plate 4 Stone cist after reburial

4. Results

No further human remains were encountered within the removed deposits, however, evidence of the transformation of the church in the 19th century were found (*Figure 2, Figure 3, Plate 5 and Plate 6*)



Plate 5 General view of site, post-ex, looking east



Plate 6 General view of site, post-ex, looking north east

The foundations [001] of the original north wall of the church were revealed during the excavations (*Plate 7*). The foundations are of a similar construction to the visible elevations of the church, comprising sandstone blocks bonded with buff lime mortar and measured 0.9m in width.



Plate 7 Wall foundations [001]

Directly to the north of the foundations, the original graveyard soil (002), a reddish dark brown silt, was noted below a spread of rubble within a grey silt matrix (003) deriving from the demolition of the north elevation (*Plate 8*). It seems that the demolition rubble was used as a first layer of the earthen ramp upon which the north aisle was built. The ramp (004) itself is made of loose mid reddish-brown very clean sand and fine gravel. This appears to have been imported from elsewhere and selected for its free draining qualities. Above (004), a thin (0.05m thick) spread of very loose grey silt with general building debris (005) was removed over the whole site.



Plate 8 Demolition rubble (003) over graveyard soil (002) and red sand ramp (004) to the left.

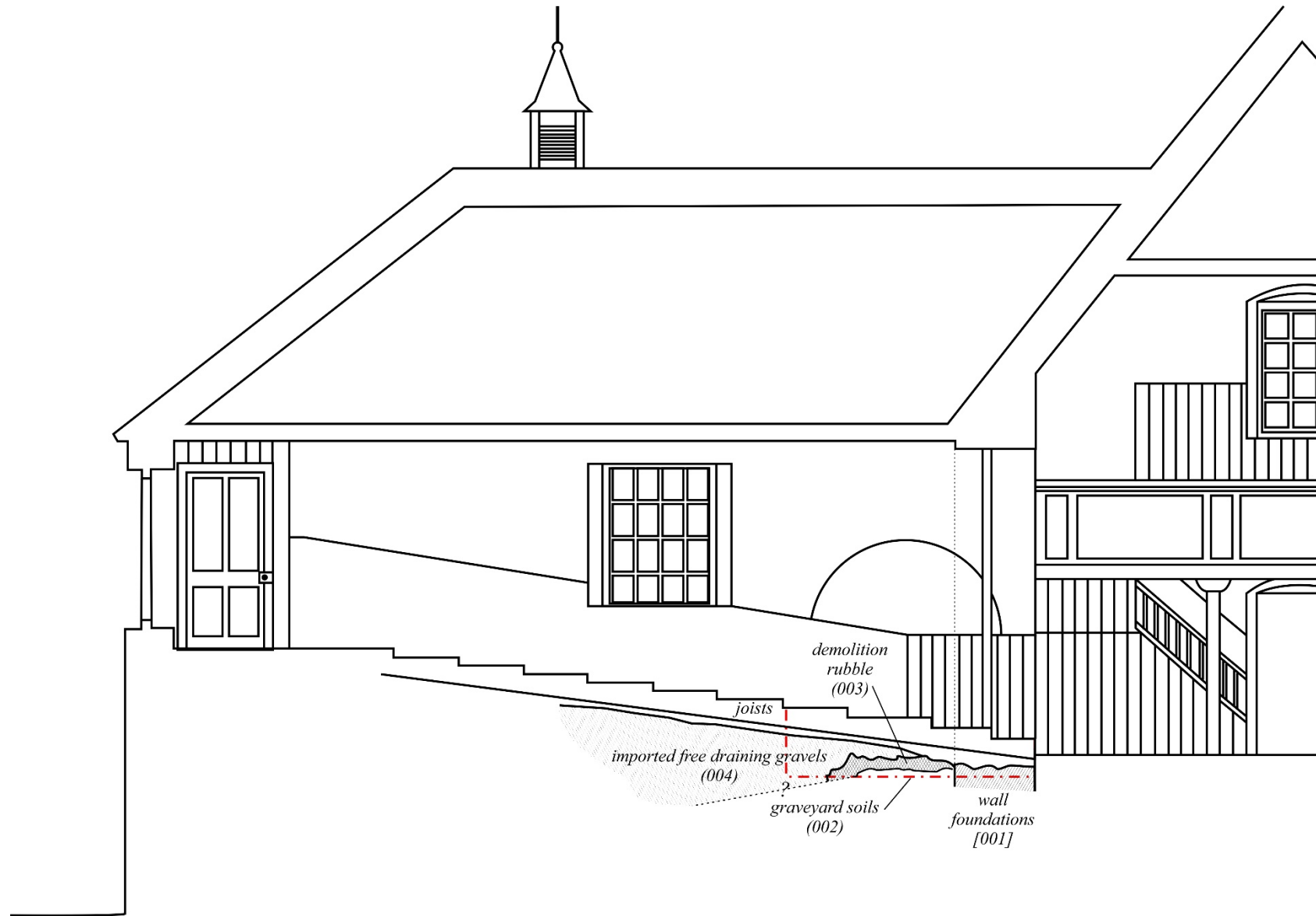


Figure 2 Sketch section of site

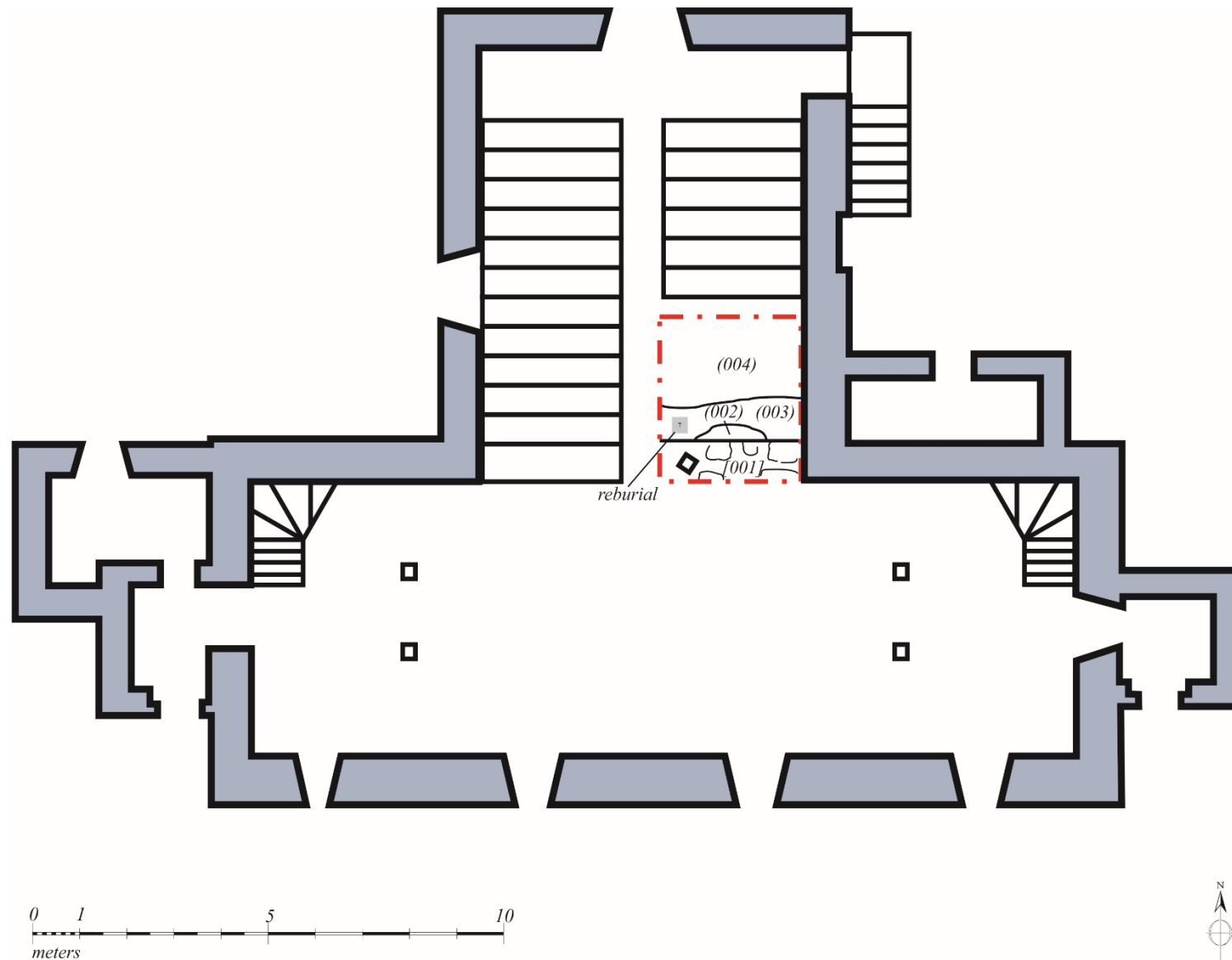


Figure 3 Site plan

5. Human Remains

The human remains unearthed during the works at Tibbermore Church were briefly analysed, recorded and reburied underneath the floor of the north extension, 0.5m north of the metal column (*Figure 3*). The remains consisted of a left tibia and a disarticulated skull in four fragments.

i. Tibia

One left tibia was found underneath the floorboards. Although both epiphyses were broken off, it was, however likely to be from an adult individual (*Plate 9* and *Plate 10*). Measurements (*Table 1*) were taken according to the *Standards for Data Collection for Human Remains* (Buikstra & Ubelaker 1994) using sliding callipers. No signs of pathology or fracture were noted.



Plate 9 Tibia, anterior view



Plate 10 Tibia, posterior view

	<i>Measurement (in mm)</i>
<i>Maximum diameter at the nutrient foramen</i>	29.69
<i>Medial-lateral diameter at the nutrient foramen</i>	23.06

Table 1 Tibia measurements

ii. Skull

Four skull fragments joined to form the calvaria (skullcap) of a single individual. Present were the frontal, both parietals, and parts of the occipital, the vomer and the ethmoid. Slightly warped, the right parietal does not fit with the frontal, but the sutures match perfectly (*Plate 11* to *Plate 18*). The skull appears to belong to a young adult.



Plate 11 Calavaria, superior view



Plate 12 Calavaria, right view



Plate 13 Disarticulated calavaria, ectocranial view



Plate 14 Disarticulated calavaria, endocranial view



Plate 15 Frontal



Plate 16 Left parietal



Plate 17 Right parietal



Plate 18 Occipital

Considering the disarticulated remains only a few measurements were possible (*Table 2*). All were taken according to the *Standards* (Buikstra & Ubelaker, 1994) using sliding callipers.

	<i>Measurement (in mm)</i>
<i>Maximum cranial breadth</i>	109.22
<i>Minimum frontal breadth</i>	92.77

Table 2 Skull measurements

Sex was determined using cranial morphology (White & Folkens, 2005). The external surface of the occipital is smooth and no projection is visible (score 1), the supraorbital margin is very sharp (score 1) and the glabella is projecting very little (score 2). All of the above tends to indicate a female individual.

Age was estimated using the cranial suture closure (Meindl & Lovejoy 1985). The lambdoid, lambda, obelion, anterior sagittal, bregma and midcoronal suture were observed and scored (respectively 0, 0, 1, 0, 0, and 0) indicating a 30.5 ± 9.6 years old individual. Furthermore, the vomer is fused, which normally happens between 20 and 30 years of age (Scheuer & Black, 2004).

Considering that only a fragmented skull was used for this assessment these are only estimates, but it is likely that it is a 20 to 30 year old female individual.

A possible peri-mortem injury was noted on the right parietal (*Plate 19*). It was a small 11.49mm by 5.38mm oval dent with a corresponding elevation endocranially. No evidence of haemorrhaging or haematoma was noted, and its origin is unclear.



Plate 19 Possible perimortem injury

6. Finds

A total of six finds were found during the excavation (*Plate 20*), consisting of a coin, a square section nail, two copper alloy pins, a cork and a small faceted glass ornament. All the finds are from the mixed spread (005) that was covering the area.

The cork, possibly from a Communion wine bottle, interestingly displays a corkscrew indent on its end (*Plate 21*). The coin is a Half-Penny from George III, minted in 1806 (*Plate 22* and *Plate 23*), it was found above the foundations [001].



Plate 20 Finds assemblage

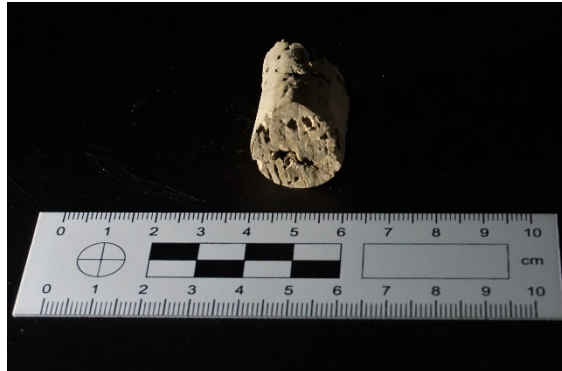


Plate 21 Cork with corkscrew mark



Plate 22 Coin, obverse



Plate 23 Coin, reverse

7. Discussion

The archaeological excavations conducted at Tibbermore Church did not unearth further human remains but revealed information on the construction of the 19th century north extension. It appears that the north elevation was demolished down to the foundations and the rubble spread over the graveyard soil before clean free draining sands were imported to build up a ramp upon which the slope of the extension was built. The finds recovered from site all seem to have been lost between floorboards by congregants, either from their clothes, like the pins and the faceted glass objects, or dropped like the coin and the cork, during services.

The human remains have been reburied in a small stone cist, and the skull, though fragmentary, appears to be from a 20 to 30 year old female.

References

Buikstra, J E & Ubelaker, D H 1993 *Standards for Data Collection from Human Skeletal Remains*. Arkansas Archaeological Survey Research Series No 44.

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Meindl, R S & Lovejoy, C O 1985 'Ectocranial Suture Closure: A revised method for the determination of skeletal age at death based on the lateral-anterior sutures', *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* no.68, 57-66.

Scheuer, L & Black, S 2004 *The Juvenile Skeleton*. San Diego: Academic Press.

White, T D & Folkens, P A 2005 *The Human Bone Manual*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Appendix A Context Register

<i>Context No.</i>	<i>Recorded by</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions (in m)</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
001	Kmacf	08/08/2019	Structural. Linear, E-W, sandstone and mortar wall foundations.	0.9 wide	Original north wall foundations
002	Kmacf	08/08/2019	Deposit. Loose reddish black - brown silt.		Original graveyard soil
003	Kmacf	08/08/2019	Deposit. Sandstone rubble within a loose grey silty matrix.	0.7 to 0.9 wide	Demolition of wall [001] spread over the graveyard soil (002)
004	Kmacf	08/08/2019	Deposit. Loose red - brown sand with fine gravel.		Ramp for the north extension, probably imported from elsewhere and selected for good drainage
005	Kmacf	08/08/2019	Deposit. Loose, thin spread of grey silt and general building debris.	0.05 thick	

Appendix B Finds Register

<i>Finds No.</i>	<i>Context No.</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Initials</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Comments</i>
001	(005)	CuA	08/08/2019	Kmacf	1	Coin, George III half-penny, 1806	
002	(005)	Fe	08/08/2019	Kmacf	1	Nail, square section	Pre 19th Century
003	(005)	CuA	08/08/2019	Kmacf	2	Pin, one flat head, one globular head	
004	(005)	Wood	08/08/2019	Kmacf	1	Cork from wine bottle, with a corkscrew mark	
005	(005)	Glass	08/08/2019	Kmacf	1	Small faceted glass ornament, broken off on the back	

Appendix C Photograph Register

<i>Image No.</i>	<i>Original No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Direction</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Initials</i>
001	3643	11/12/2018	E	Discovery of human remains, damage to the floor boards	-
002	3647	11/12/2018	E	Discovery of human remains, skull as it was found	-
003	3653	11/12/2018	E	Discovery of human remains, skull as it was found	-
004	3682	11/12/2018	E	Discovery of human remains, skull as it was found	-
005	7929	23/07/2019	E	Site visit, general view	EJ
006	7931	23/07/2019	NE	Site visit, general view	EJ
007	7932	23/07/2019	E	Site visit, east of church, general view	EJ
008	7934	23/07/2019	-	Site visit, human remains	EJ
009	7840	08/08/2019	E	General view, pre-ex	AR
010	7841	08/08/2019	SE	General view, pre-ex	AR
011	7842	08/08/2019	SE	General view, pre-ex	AR
012	7843	08/08/2019	NE	General view, pre-ex	AR
013	7844	08/08/2019	NE	General view, pre-ex	AR
014	7845	08/08/2019	E	General view, post-ex	Kmacf
015	7846	08/08/2019	E	General view, post-ex, with funerary monument in background	Kmacf
016	7848	08/08/2019	E	Wall foundations [001], detail	Kmacf
017	7849	08/08/2019	E	General view, post-ex, with funerary monument in background and wall foundations [001]	Kmacf
018	7850	08/08/2019	E	General view, funerary monument	Kmacf
019	7852	08/08/2019	E	General view, funerary monument, with raking light	Kmacf
020	7853	08/08/2019	SE	General view, post-ex	Kmacf
021	7854	08/08/2019	NE	General view, post-ex	Kmacf
022	7856	08/08/2019	-	Tibia, ventral view	AR
023	7857	08/08/2019	-	Tibia, dorsal view	AR
024	7859	08/08/2019	-	Tibia, ventral view	AR
025	7860	08/08/2019	-	Tibia, lateral view	AR
026	7862	08/08/2019	-	Calavaria, ectocranial view	AR
027	7863	08/08/2019	-	Calavaria, ectocranial view, left side	AR
028	7864	08/08/2019	-	Calavaria, ectocranial view, right side	AR
029	7865	08/08/2019	-	Calavaria, possible peri-mortem fracture in right parietal	AR
030	7867	08/08/2019	-	Calavaria, endocranial view, fragmented	AR
031	7870	08/08/2019	-	Calavaria, ectocranial view, fragmented	AR
032	7871	08/08/2019	-	Frontal, ectocranial view	AR
033	7873	08/08/2019	-	Frontal, endocranial view	AR
034	7874	08/08/2019	-	Left parietal, ectocranial view	AR
035	7875	08/08/2019	-	Left parietal, endocranial view	AR
036	7877	08/08/2019	-	Right parietal, ectocranial view	AR
037	7878	08/08/2019	-	Right parietal, endocranial view	AR
038	7879	08/08/2019	-	Parietals, endocranial view	AR
039	7880	08/08/2019	-	Parietals, detail of arachnoid fovea	AR
040	7881	08/08/2019	-	Occipital, ectocranial view	AR
041	7882	08/08/2019	-	Occipital, endocranial view	AR
042	7883	08/08/2019	E/Vert.	Cist for reburial, before reburial	Kmacf
043	7884	08/08/2019	E	Reburial of human remains	Kmacf
044	7885	08/08/2019	E	Reburial of human remains	Kmacf
045	7886	08/08/2019	E	Reburial of human remains	Kmacf
046	7887	08/08/2019	N	Cist for reburial, after reburial	Kmacf
047	7919	14/08/2019	-	Finds assemblage	AR
048	7925	14/08/2019	-	Coin (001), Reverse	AR
049	7926	14/08/2019	-	Coin (001), Obverse	AR
050	7928	14/08/2019	-	Cork (004), corkscrew hole	AR

Appendix D *DES* entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Perth and Kinross
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Tibbermore Church
PROJECT CODE:	1075
PARISH:	Tibbermore
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Antoine Ruchonnet
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Addyman Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Excavation
NMRS NO(S):	Canmore ID: 26861
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Church (17 th Century)
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	Human remains, 1806 half-penny
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NO 05201 23397
START DATE (this season)	08/08/2019
END DATE (this season)	08/08/2019
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>Addyman Archaeology undertook archaeological excavation at Tibbermore Church, Perth and Kinross in relation to conservation works being undertaken at the church. Human remains were discovered under the church floorboards in the North Aisle, when they were removed for repair. Due to the presence of human remains excavations in advance of the repair works were undertaken by Addyman Archaeology to recover, analyse and rebury any further human remains.</p> <p>The area of excavation is within the 19th Century extension to the 17th Century Church, which is a Category B Listed Building. The trench measured c3.5m by 3.5m and needed to be excavated to a depth of 0.2m below the current ground level to allow air circulation following replacement of the joists. No further human remains were unearthed during the excavation. The foundation of the original north wall of the Church was located, below a spread of the demolition rubble from the wall; this overlay the original graveyard soil which was not disturbed by the current excavation. The human remains consisted of a disarticulated skull, possibly from a 20-30 year old female, and a left tibia diaphysis. All human remains were reburied within a small slate cist in the south west corner of the trench and their location noted on plan.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Historic Churches Scotland
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	The Old Printworks, 77a Brunswick Street, Edinburgh EH7 5HS
EMAIL ADDRESS:	admin@addyman-archaeology.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	NRHE (intended)