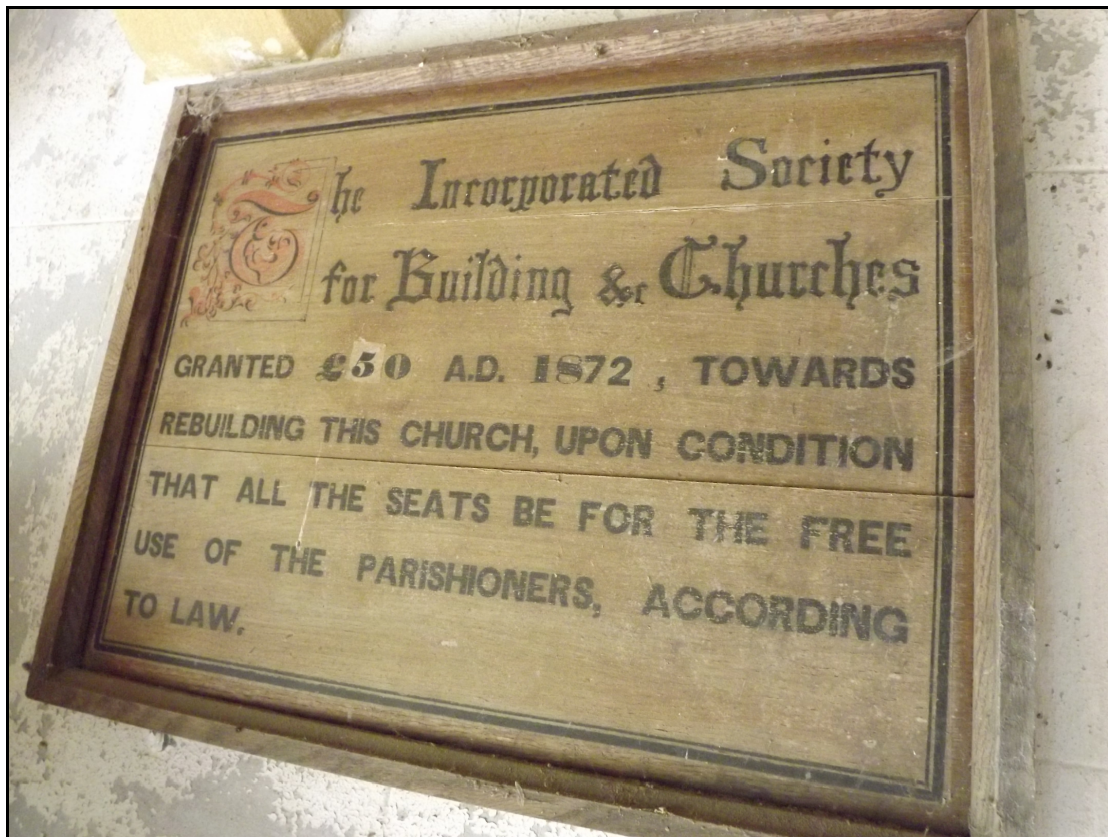


SAINT WILFRED'S CHURCH, KIRBY KNOWLE

NORTH YORKSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



JB Archaeological Services

On behalf of

Kirby Knowle PCC

July 2013

John Buglass Archaeological Services
Rosebank
Newby Wiske
North Yorkshire
DL7 9EX

01609 773764
07903 867 160

johnbuglass@yahoo.com
www.jbasarchaeology.co.uk

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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at St Wilfrid's Church, Kirby Knowle, North Yorkshire (NGR SE 46834 87283) under a Faculty from the Dioceses of York. The watching brief was on the excavation of a service trench for new lighting in the church.

The watching brief did not encounter any archaeological remains and only a very small number of fragments of human bone. The only finds were a fragment of post medieval glazed pottery and stone 'pot lid'.

A number of historic pieces of masonry were observed in and around the church which were photographed.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief in the churchyard of the parish church of Saint Wilfrid (Grade II listed no. 332558) at Kirby Knowle, North Yorkshire. The archaeological watching brief was on the excavation of a narrow, shallow cable trench for new lighting in the church. The church stands by itself a short distance from the other buildings in the settlement and is in Kirby Knowle civil parish of Hambleton district (NGR SE 46834 87283) (Figures 1 & 2).
- 1.2 The archaeological works were undertaken by JB Archaeological Services (JBAS) for the PCC on the 2nd July 2013.

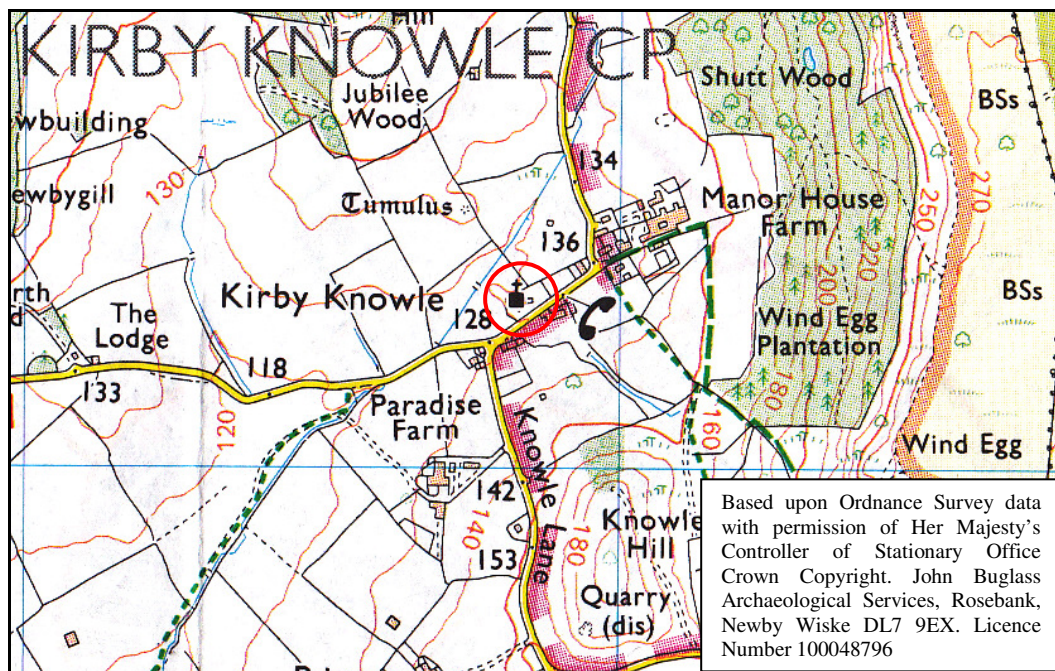


Figure 1. General Location of St Wilfrid's Church.

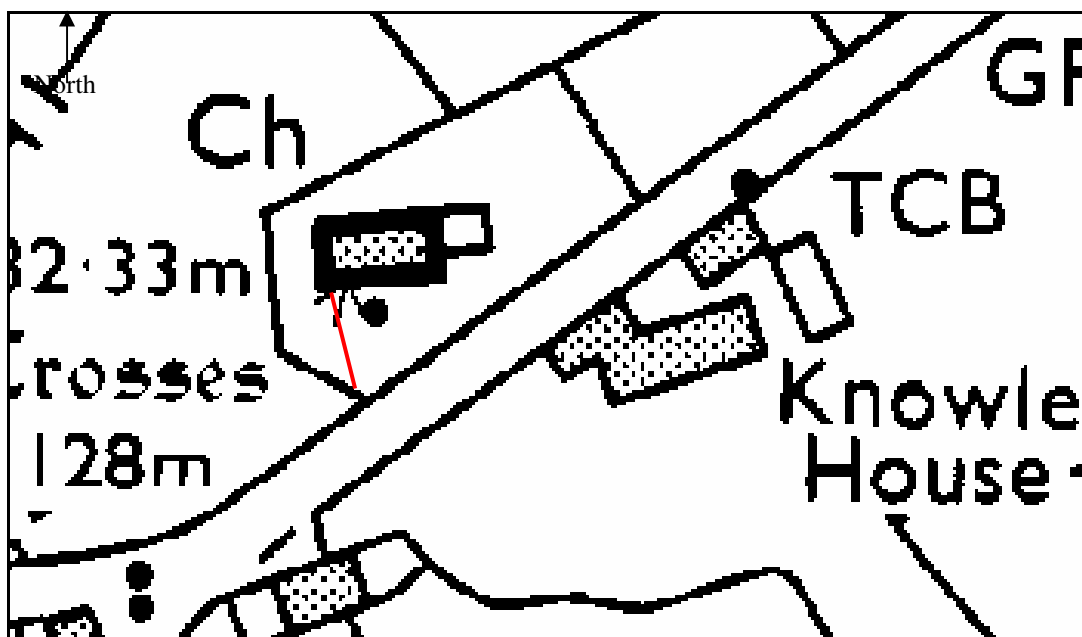


Figure 2. Location of Cable Trench.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Historic Background

- 2.1 The place name for Kirby Knowle is first recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as *Chirchebi*. The name is derived from the Old Scandinavian *kirkju-by* meaning 'village with a church' and the Old English *cnoll* meaning '(place at) the hill-top to hillock (Mills, 1998, 206 & 210). The current church was built in 1873 by G. Fowler Jones on the site of the old one (for further details of the history of the church and village see <http://www.thirsk.org.uk/kirbyknowle/st-wilfrid-kirby-knowle.php> and <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=64608>). Evidence for the long term use of the location as a church can be seen from the remains of various pieces of historic stonework to be found in and around the church and churchyard. These included a possible pre-Conquest cross, a piscina, stone sarcophagus, 17th century font and a collection of various fragments, mostly column sections, in the churchyard.

Geology and Soils

- 2.2 The underlying solid geology of the site is Lower Lias of the Lower Jurassic Period (British Geological Survey, 2001) which is overlain by a quaternary geology of glacial till (British Geological Survey 1977). The soils which have developed from this are classified as the Dunswick association which are seasonally waterlogged fine loamy soils over clay (Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983).

Topography and Land-use

- 2.4 The church lies at a height of c.130mOD in an area of generally level ground with the road to the south. The site is generally surrounded by agricultural land with a low density of domestic dwellings.

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objective of the watching brief was to identify and record any features of archaeological interest revealed or damaged during the excavation of the cable trench (Figure 2). The specific aims were to:
- archaeologically record (graphically and photographically) any archaeological features revealed by the ground works
 - recover any archaeological artefacts and environmental material exposed by the ground works

4.0 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The excavation of the cable trench was undertaken by a tracked mini-digger under direct archaeological supervision. The trench was 0.60m deep and 0.30m wide and ran from the western side of the church door to the western side of the gate to the churchyard alongside the path (Plate 1).
- 4.2 During the ground works the exposed ground surfaces were inspected for archaeological features and the resulting topsoil stockpiles were monitored for archaeological artefacts.

5.0 RESULTS

- 5.1 The watching brief only noted three fragments of human bone along with a single sherd of post-medieval, brown glazed pottery. The only find of any particular note was a possible stone 'pot lid' 80/95mm diameter, 16mm thick. These items are carefully crafted discs either of stone or sometimes ceramic which are typically interpreted as having been used as lids for small post though another line of debate suggests that they may have been some form of gaming pieces (Plate 2).



Plate 1. Cable trench under excavation, looking north



Plate 2. Possible stone pot lid from cable trench, scale cms

- 5.2 In addition to the watching brief a brief photographic catalogue was made of the historic stone work around the church – see Plates 3 – 7 below.



Plate 3. Cross fragments and 17th century font, south side of church



Plate 4. Piscina (on left) and stone sarcophagus, south side of church



Plate 5. Architectural fragments, possibly from previous church, in hedge row on north side



Plate 6. Part of cross marked grave slab with secondary emblem of shears, ?C12th



Plate 7. Carved stone

References

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Andrew Turner for inviting me to undertake the project, Mike and Max who dug the trench with much hilarity.