

**HISTORIC SCOTLAND PROPERTIES IN CARE  
MINOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS 2011**

**Dryburgh Abbey: Excavation, June 2011.**

**HS PIC Index Number: 90103**

**SITE:** Dryburgh Abbey, Roxburghshire.

**N.G.R.:** NT 5914 3172

**DESCRIPTION:** Small-scale excavation ahead of the installation of a new  
gravestone.

**PROJECT CODE:** HSCO-90103-2011-02

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**OCTOBER 2011**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Under the terms of its PIC call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to monitor a small excavation within the Church of Dryburgh Abbey (Fig.1). The trench was required to allow the installation of a gravestone at the E end of a grave dug previously for Earl Haig. This grave was the subject of an earlier excavation by Kirkdale Archaeology which revealed a sequence of human burials, as well as a mass of disarticulated bone, much of it human.

The Haigs of Bemersyde have a burial plot in the N transept of the Church, with the eastern roofed bay occupied by a crypt, and the western open end occupied by recent gravestones. These are to Douglas Haig (died 1928) and his wife Dorothy Maude (died 1939), and are marked by head and foot stones. The previous trench, for the younger Earl Haig, was to the E of his father's; the gravestone that the current excavated trench was to hold was located at the W end of his trench.

The work was carried out on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2011.

## **DESCRIPTION**

The trench measured 0.65m N/S x 0.5m E/W, with its S edge 1.55m N of the S wall of the transept. It was hand dug and reached a total depth of 0.3m. The topsoil **001** proved to be 0.06m - 0.07m deep, and of a mid brown silty clay. Below this context **002** was at least 0.2m thick - a pale brown silty clay rich in stone (mostly small rounded pebbles, but including some larger angular reddish sandstone chunks), charcoal, mortar and bone. The eleven fragments of bone recovered were photographed and then re-buried.

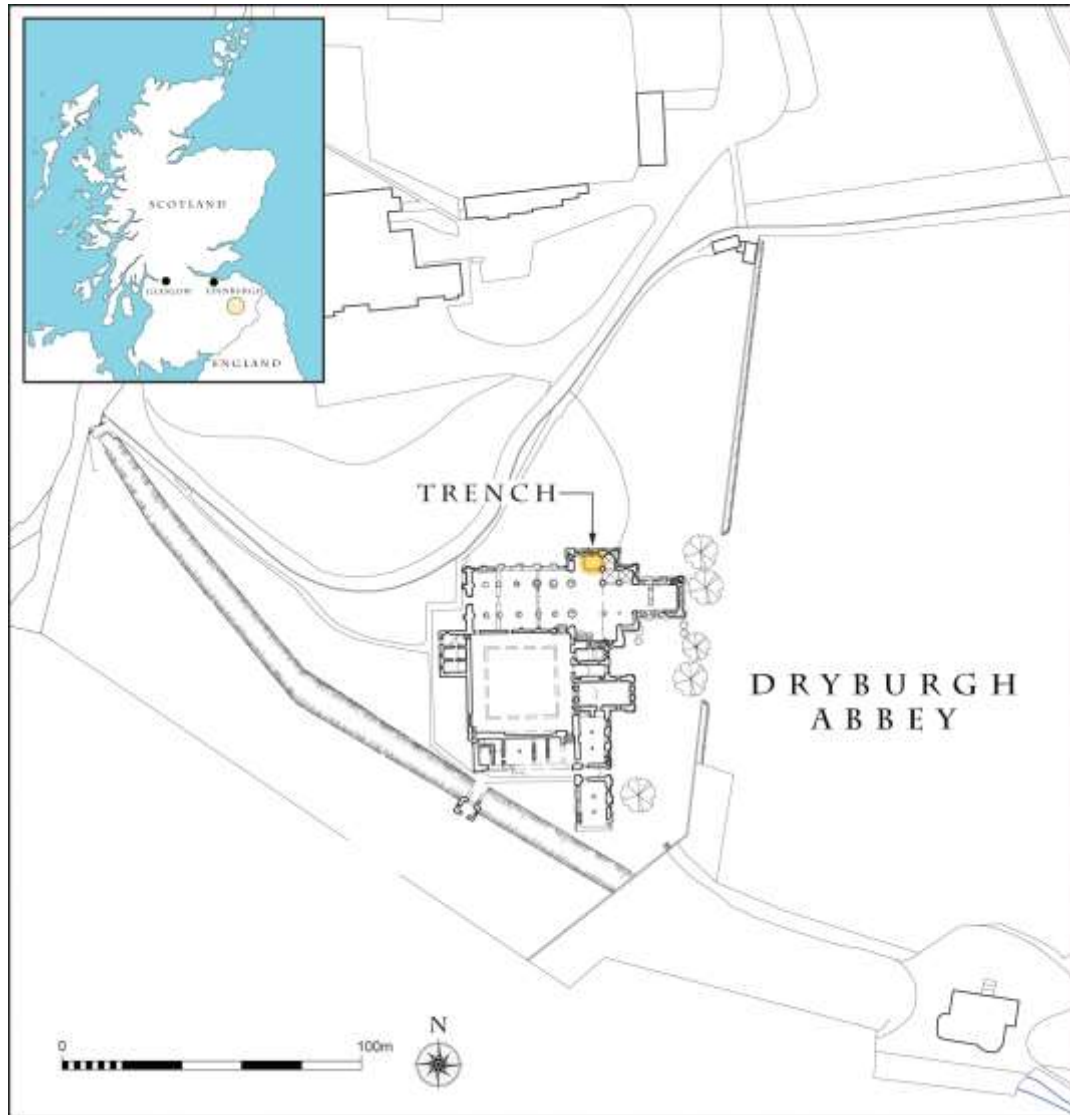


Figure 1: Location map of the works.

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## CONCLUSIONS

This small scale excavation revealed the presence of considerable quantities of bone, much of it doubtless human, although with no indication that any of it was from an *in situ* articulated burial. This confirms the findings from the earlier work that the site contains a complicated sequence of inhumations, with later burials disturbing earlier ones. The fragments of reddish sandstone are likely derived from the demolished Abbey Church.

## LIST OF CONTEXTS

No.	Description
001	Turf and topsoil
002	Pale brown silty clay, rich in stone, charcoal, mortar and bone

## LIST OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

No.	Description	From	Date
01	Trench being opened	SW	15/06/2011
02	Trench being opened	E	15/06/2011
03	Bone fragments from trench	N/A	15/06/2011
04	Bone fragments from trench	N/A	15/06/2011
05	Trench as finished	E	15/06/2011
06	Trench as finished	E	15/06/2011
07	Trench as finished	E	15/06/2011
08	Detail of E facing section	E	15/06/2011
09	Detail of E facing section	E	15/06/2011
10	Trench as finished, general shot	SW	15/06/2011
11	Detail of memorial stone	N/A	15/06/2011
12	Detail of memorial stone	N/A	15/06/2011