

Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	East Lothian
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Seton Collegiate Chapel
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PARISH:	Tranent
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Sarah Hogg
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Kirkdale Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching brief
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PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	Stewart, D (2004 e) 'Seton Collegiate Chapel (Tranent parish), evaluation', <i>Discovery Excav Scot</i> , 5, 2004, 46,
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A watching brief was maintained during the excavation of drains running from the north end of the west elevation of Seton Collegiate Church. These were needed to connect new guttering and drainpipes to an existing surface water drain. One of the two trenches partially uncovered the burial remains of two adults and one child. The date of these remains was uncertain and they were left <i>in situ</i> .
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	

Historic Scotland
Properties in Care
Minor Archaeological Works 2007

**Seton Collegiate Church:
Archaeological Monitoring,
February 2007**

HS PIC Index number: 90275
Project code: HSCO-90275-2007-01



9 March 2007
Kirkdale Archaeology

<u>Site</u>	Seton Collegiate Church
<u>N.G.R</u>	NT 418 751
<u>Project Description</u>	Archaeological monitoring
<u>Project code</u>	HSCO-90275-2007-01

Contents

1.0 Introduction	1
2.0 Description	1
3.0 Interpretation and observations	5
A1.0 Appendix 1: List of contexts	6
A2.0 Appendix 2: List of drawings	7
A3.0 Appendix 3: List of photographs	7
A4.0 Appendix 4: List of finds	9
A5.0 Appendix 5: Archival references	10

SUMMARY: A watching brief was maintained during the excavation of drains running from the north end of the west elevation of Seton Collegiate Church. These were needed to connect new guttering and drainpipes to an existing surface water drain. One of the two trenches partially uncovered the burial remains of two adults and one child. The date of these remains was uncertain and they were left in situ.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to undertake a short period of archaeological monitoring at Seton Collegiate Church while HS MCU personnel excavated two drainage channels. These new drains were needed to carry water from new guttering and drainpipes at the N end of the church's west elevation to an existing surface drain.

This work took place on 19 February 2007.

2.0 DESCRIPTION

2.1 Trench 1

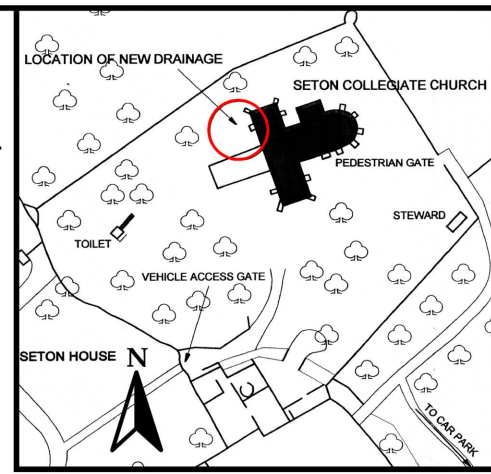
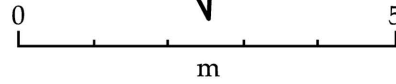
In Trench 1 excavation commenced with the removal of turf and topsoil (101) at the site of the drain junction. This revealed two contexts; the first a black, gritty, loose, cinder surface (102) in the NE corner of the de-turfed area and the second a mixed orange-brown clay and brown silt fill (103) of drain cut (106). Drain cut (106) was cut through the cinder path. Orange plastic drain and junction (105) were revealed 300 mm below ground surface in cut (106) - the full profile of which was not exposed - filled with mixed silt and clay (103), and beneath this, pea gravel (104).

Once drain (105) was located excavation of a trench running E to meet the E corner of the church commenced. This revealed a sandstone rubble base (108) to cinder path (102). The rubble base was revealed at a depth of 250 mm and continued to the bottom the trench, a depth of 500 mm, and possibly deeper. Only the E side of the cut for the cinder path (120) was visible since the drain cut (106) had destroyed the W side of the path. The path cut (120) appeared vertical, but the base of the cut was

- Key Depths**
- 1-100mm
 - 101-200mm
 - 201-300mm
 - >300mm (< natural)
 - Dug to natural

Trench 1

Trench 2



Trench 1

+ denotes skull position

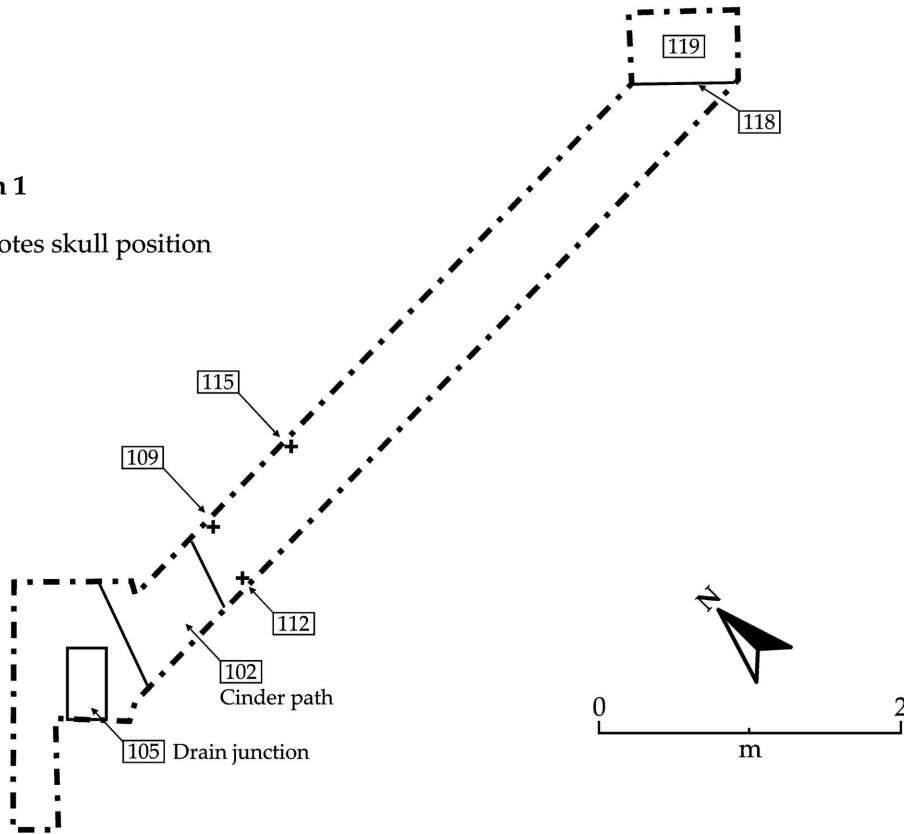


Fig. 1 : Plan showing location of Trenches 1& 2, and a detailed view of Trench 1

not revealed in the trench.

The path was cut through a general deposit of mixed, orange-brown clay and silt (107) with charcoal, shell and human bone. Grave cuts (110) and (113) were filled by (111) and (114) respectively. Both fills were mixed, orange-brown clay and silt, containing charcoal, shell and human bone. The grave cuts were not discernible in the sections of the trench since the deposit through which they had been cut was indistinguishable from the redeposited fills.

The first burial revealed in the trench was indicated by the top of adult skull (109) in the N section of the trench at a depth of between 400 - 500 mm. Although not excavated fully, this burial appears to be cut into burial (112). This second burial spanned the width of the trench with the spine, ribcage and left arm of an adult visible with the jaw revealed in the S section of the trench. Both burials (109) and (112) are aligned roughly SW-NE with the head at the SW as opposed to the conventional E-W with the head at the W.



Plate 1 : Trench 1 - showing uncovered human remains (109) / (112), taken from N

At this stage, a discussion took place with the MCU staff to ascertain whether the drain could be positioned slightly higher in order to avoid disturbing the burials and to try to avoid burials along the remaining section of trench. This was agreed and excavation continued at a depth of 400 mm rather than 500 mm. However this depth revealed one more burial (115), that of a child. Only the slightly crushed skull of the child was revealed at a depth of 400 mm, aligned roughly WSW-ENE. The depth of the trench was then reduced once more to roughly 300 mm and no further burials were encountered. All the burials were left *in situ* and covered with a layer of pea gravel to protect them from the drain.

The large rounded foundation stones (119) of the church were revealed at a depth of 300 mm beneath gravel border (121) between timber edging (118) and the SW wall of the church.

2.2 Trench 2

Excavation commenced with the removal of turf and topsoil (201) at the site of the drain junction. This revealed the mixed, orange-brown clay and brown silt fill (203) of drain cut (206) in the SW of the trench and mixed, orange-brown, clay and silt deposit (207) with charcoal, oyster shell, pottery and bone to the NE of the trench cut by (206). Mixed, orange-brown, clay and silt fill (203) was removed to a depth of 250 mm revealing orange plastic pipe and junction (205) surrounded by pea gravel (204) in cut (206). In the SW section of the trench cinder path surface (202) was revealed, cut through by drain cut (206).

Once drain (205) was located excavation of a trench running NE to meet the SW wall of the church commenced. The trench was excavated to a depth of c 300 mm and the only deposit revealed was mixed, orange-brown clay and silt deposit (207) with charcoal, oyster shell, pottery and bone. However, it is likely since this deposit was not disturbed by modern features that there are burials beneath this at a depth of between 400 - 500 mm. No grave cuts or fills were visible in Trench 2 but as demonstrated in Trench 1, the fill of the graves and the surrounding deposit were so similar that cuts were hard to see.

The large, rounded, foundation stones (208) of the church were revealed at a depth of 300 mm beneath gravel border (210) between timber edging (209) and the SW wall of the church.

3.0 INTERPRETATION AND OBSERVATIONS

Excavation revealed a number of archaeological features, the oldest of which were the foundation stones of the medieval church and the three burials. The burials were unmarked and shallow, containing two adults aligned roughly SW-NE and one child (probably between 2 and 8 years old estimated from the size of the skull) aligned roughly WSW-ENE. It was not possible to date the burials without further analysis but it seems likely that they are more than 200 years old.

The cinder path is probably late 18th- to early 20th-century in date, now completely grassed over but still visible. The defunct path had been cut by the late 20th-century drain around the church.

Trench 1

#	Description
101	Turf and topsoil.
102	Cinder path surface, approx 10cm thick, just under turf and topsoil (101), sits in top of cut (120).
103	Mixed orange/brown clay and brown silt fill of drain cut (106).
104	Grey and light brown pea gravel fill of drain cut (106).
105	Orange plastic drain junction in cut (106).
106	Cut for drain (105).
107	Mixed orange brown clay and silt deposit with charcoal, shell and human bone, cut by (120) for cinder path (102/108).
108	Concentration of sandstone rubble (20cm-30cm in size) under cinder path surface (102) in cut (120).
109	Adult skull in the N section of the W end of the trench in cut (110) and fill (111).
110	Grave cut for skeleton (109) cut through mixed clay and silt deposit (103). Not visible because deposit (103) and fill (111) are Indistinguishable.
111	Mixed orange brown clay and silt fill of grave cut (110) with charcoal, shell and human bone.
112	Adult skeleton comprising jaw, spine, ribcage, and left arm. Aligned roughly SW-NE in grave cut (113) with the jaw exposed in the S section of trench 1.
113	Grave cut for skeleton (112) cut through mixed clay and silt deposit (103). Not visible because deposit (103) and fill (114) are Indistinguishable.
114	Mixed orange brown clay and silt fill of grave cut (113) with charcoal, shell and human bone.
115	Child skull exposed to the E of skeletons (109) and (112), aligned roughly W-E in grave cut (116). Probably aged between 2 and 8 years old.
116	Grave cut for skeleton (115) cut through mixed clay and silt deposit (103). Not visible because deposit (103) and fill (117) are Indistinguishable.
117	Mixed orange brown clay and silt fill of grave cut (116) with charcoal, shell and human bone.
118	Wooden edging to contain gravel (121).
119	Foundation stones of the church.
120	Cut for cinder path filled by cinder (103) and rubble (108).
121	Gravel border around the church contained by wooden edging (118).

Trench 2

#	Description
201	Turf and topsoil.
202	Cinder path surface, approx 10cm thick, just under turf and topsoil (201)
203	Mixed orange/brown clay and brown silt fill of drain cut (206).
204	Grey and light brown pea gravel fill of drain cut (206).
205	Orange plastic drain junction in cut (206).
206	Cut for drain (205).
207	Mixed orange brown clay and silt deposit with charcoal, oyster shell, pottery and bone, cut by (206).
208	Foundation stones of the church.
209	Wooden edging to contain gravel (210).
210	Gravel border around the church contained by wooden edging (209).

A2.0 APPENDIX 2: LIST OF DRAWINGS

#	Type	Description	Scale
1	Plan	HS plan, annotated	1:50

A3.0 APPENDIX 3: LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

HSCO-90275-2007-01-CD1

#	Description	From	Date
1	Turf stripping at the site of trench 1	W	23/02/07
2	Turf stripping at the site of trench 2	SW	23/02/07
3	Turf stripping at the site of trench 1	SW	23/02/07
4	Cinder path surface (102) in trench 1	SW	23/02/07
5	Cast iron pipe debris removed from Mixed clay and silt (103) in trench 1.		23/02/07
6	Turf stripping at the site of trench 2	SW	23/02/07
7	Orange plastic pipe 206 revealed in trench 2	NE	23/02/07
8	Orange plastic pipe and drain junction (206) revealed in trench 2	NW	23/02/07
9	Orange plastic pipe and drain junction (105) revealed in trench 1.	NE	23/02/07

10	Orange plastic pipe and drain junction (105) and cinder path surface (102) revealed in trench 1.	NW	23/02/07
11	Turf stripping from the E-W section of trench 1.	W	23/02/07
12	Turf stripping from the E-W section of trench 1.	W	23/02/07
13	Turf stripping from the SW-NE section of trench 2.	W	23/02/07
14	Cinder path surface (102) revealed in trench 1.	SW	23/02/07
15	Detail of cinder path surface (102) revealed in trench 1.	SW	23/02/07
16	General shot showing excavation of trench 1.	W	23/02/07
17	General shot showing excavation of trench 1.	E	23/02/07
18	Cinder path surface (102) revealed in trench 1 and rubble (108) beneath.	S	23/02/07
19	General shot showing excavation of trench 1.	E	23/02/07
20	Cinder path surface (102) revealed in trench 1 and rubble (108) beneath.	S	23/02/07
21	General shot showing excavation of trench 2.	SW	23/02/07
22	Skull of skeleton (109) , ribs, spin and arm of skeleton (112) as first exposed.	N	23/02/07
23	Skull of skeleton (109) , ribs, spin and arm of skeleton (112) as first exposed.	S	23/02/07
24	Skull of skeleton (109) , ribs, spin and arm of skeleton (112) as first exposed.	W	23/02/07
25	Detail of Skull of skeleton (109) , ribs, spin and arm of skeleton (112) as first exposed.	W	23/02/07
26	Skull of skeleton (115) as first exposed.	S	23/02/07
27	Skull of skeleton (115) as first exposed.	S	23/02/07
28	Detail of skull of skeleton (115) as first exposed.	S	23/02/07
29	Spine, ribcage, left arm and jaw of skeleton (112) showing relationship with cinder path (102/108) .	N	23/02/07
30	Spine, ribcage, left arm and jaw of skeleton (112) and the skull of skeleton (109) .	N	23/02/07
31	Spine, ribcage, left arm and jaw of skeleton (112) and the skull of skeleton (109) .	N	23/02/07
32	Detail of the spine, ribcage, left arm and jaw of skeleton (112) and the skull of skeleton (109) .	W	23/02/07
33	Skull of child skeleton (115) .	S	23/02/07
34	Skull of child skeleton (115) .	S	23/02/07
35	Skull of child skeleton (115) .	S	23/02/07
36	Detail of skull of child skeleton (115) .	S	23/02/07

37	Detail of skull of child skeleton (115).	E	23/02/07
38	Detail of skull of child skeleton (115).	E	23/02/07
39	Trench 1, excavation complete.	W	23/02/07
40	Trench 1, excavation complete.	W	23/02/07
41	Trench 1, excavation complete.	E	23/02/07
42	Trench 2, excavation complete.	SW	23/02/07
43	Trench 2, excavation complete.	NE	23/02/07
44	Trench 2, excavation complete showing cut (206) for pipe (205) and fill (204).	NW	23/02/07
45	Trench 2, excavation complete showing cut (206) for pipe (205) and fill (204).	NW	23/02/07
46	Foundation stones (208).	SW	23/02/07
47	Foundation stones (208) and wooden edging (209).	SW	23/02/07
48	SW end of trench 2, excavation complete.	NE	23/02/07
49	Cinder path surface (202) in the NE facing section of trench 2.	NE	23/02/07
50	Cinder path surface (102) and rubble (108) in trench 1 beside skeleton (112).	N	23/02/07
51	Foundation stones (119) and wooden edging.	SW	23/02/07
52	Foundation stones (119) and wooden edging.	SW	23/02/07
53	Skull of skeleton (109) and Skeleton (112).	E	23/02/07

A4.0 APPENDIX 4: LIST OF FINDS

Bag No.	Description	Quantity	Ctxt
1207-001	Blue and white china	1	107
1207-002	Red brick/tile/mortar	1	207
1207-003	Pot rim	1	207
1207-004	Fe Hook	1	207
1207-005	Field drain	2	107
1207-006	Glazed brick	1	107

A5.0**APPENDIX 5: ARCHIVAL REFERENCES**

Site	Seton Collegiate Church
HS PIC Index no	90275
Kirkdale Project no	HSCO-90275-2007-01
Date(s) of site work	19 February 2007

Report files submitted on CD:

Report in MS Word	HSCO-90275-2007-01-Report.doc
TIFFs	HSCO-90275-2007-01-Report Fig 1.tif(s)
PDF	HSCO-90275-2007-01-Report.pdf

Other files submitted on CD:

Photo scans	HSCO-90275-2007-01-CD1- 1-53.jpg(s)
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