



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Archaeological Summary Report

St Mary's Churchyard

Luton

Bedfordshire



Quality Check

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Summary

In June 2018 a programme of Observation and Recording was undertaken by KDK Archaeology Ltd at St Mary's Churchyard, Luton, Bedfordshire following the collapse of a chest tomb within the churchyard. The tomb, belonging to the Haydon family, had become engulfed by a rosebush which had been thriving on the site since before the Second World War, and as a result of water and root damage, the tomb and stone ledger had fallen into the vault below. No human remains or funerary furniture were observed during this investigation.

1 Introduction

1.1 In June 2018 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording at St Mary's Churchyard, Luton, Bedfordshire. The project was commissioned by St Mary's Church PCC, and was carried out according to a Method Statement prepared by KDK (Kaye 2018), and approved by the Archaeological Advisor to the Diocese of St Albans.

1.2 *The Site*

Location & Description

St Mary's Church is situated to the southeast of Luton town centre. The church is bounded by busy shopping precinct 'the Mall' to the east, the University of Bedfordshire to the west and south and a main road to the north. The tomb itself is located to the north of the church at National grid reference TL 09510 21221 (Fig. 2).

Geology & Topography

The geology of the site comprises superficial deposits of glaciofluvial, mid Pleistocene sand and gravel above a bedrock of Holywell nodular chalk formation and new pit chalk formation. The site sits at approximately 106m AOD.

Works

The works involved the lifting of the memorial slab from the collapsed tomb, the backfilling of the vault with topsoil and the placing of the slab over the newly filled void.

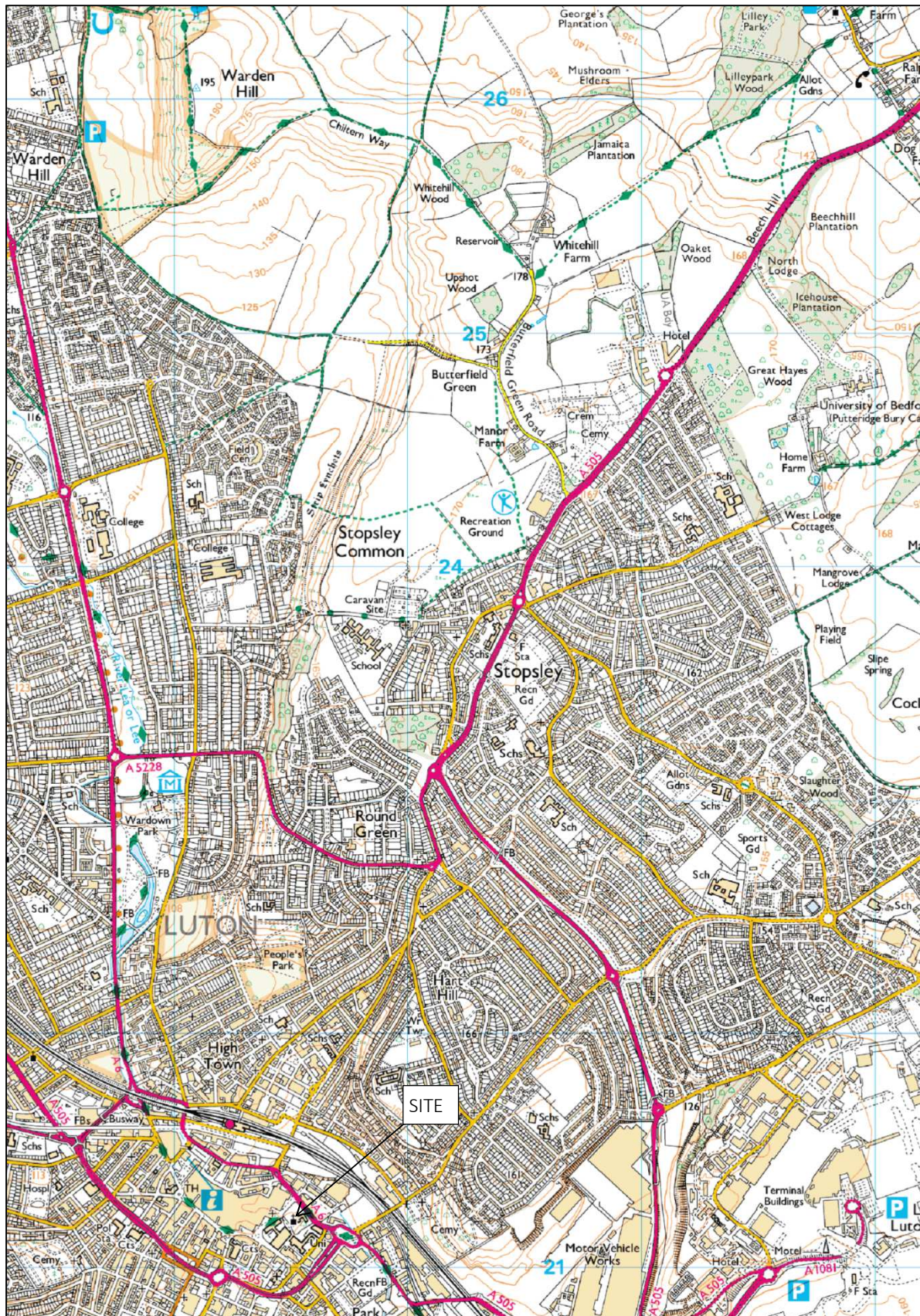


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

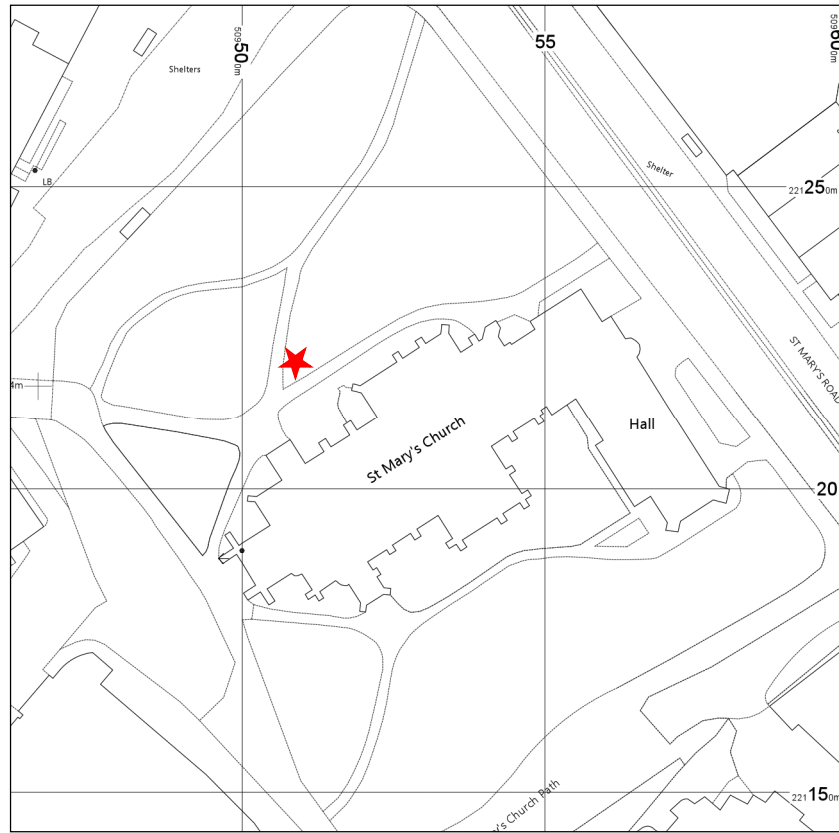


Figure 2: Approximate location of collapsed tomb (scale 1:1250)



2 Historical Background

Since the medieval period Luton has been a thriving market town. Its old English name 'Lygetune' suggests that during the Saxon period, Luton was an enclosed or defended farm/homestead on the River Lea which at the time provided the setting for territorial quarrels between competing fiefdoms (Mills 1991:218; Allsop 2018). During the reign of Edward the Confessor, Luton was a manor of considerable importance and at the time of the Domesday Survey of 1086, Luton or 'Loitoinen' was assessed at 30 hides, boasted six mills and a market, a combination of which were worth 100s (Williams & Martin 2002: 563).

Luton is unusual in that the Domesday Survey records that it had a church within a 5 hide estate that was part of the royal manor of Luton. The church was founded in 931 by King Athelstan (Zipfel 2014) and at the time of the Norman Conquest was held by Morcar the Priest (Williams & Martin 2002: 563). In the early 12th century Luton Manor was granted to Robert, Earl of Gloucester by Henry I. It was Robert who is recorded to have built the current church around 1121 (stmarysluton.org; Zipfel 2014).

St Mary's Church is one of the largest parish churches in England, and the largest in Bedfordshire. It has undergone a number of alterations and extensions in the last 900 years particularly in the 14th century when it was enlarged and a tower was constructed. Further restoration and rebuilding was undertaken in the 15th century when the tower was heightened and Someries Chapel rebuilt and extended. Restorations were also undertaken in the 19th and 20th centuries including a complete restoration of the building between 1865 and 1885 by G. E. Street (Page 1907; stmarysluton.org; Zipfel 2014).

The Church is a Grade I listed building and is described by Historic England as follows:

Large predominantly C14 and C15 parish church with some earlier survivals, much restored by Street 1865-85. Flint and stone, some clunch, chequerwork. Plan consists of west tower, 5 bay nave with north and south aisles and north and south porches attached, crossing, transepts and chancel flanked by Wenlock Chapel to north and Hoo chapel to south. Vestry between chancel and Wenlock Chapel. Most elements of church have embattled parapets. Three stage tower with octagonal angle turrets at top; moulded cornice with gargoyles at corners; cinquefoil lights in belfry windows under 2-centred arch; staged pairs of buttresses at corners with canopied statue niches; restored C14 west doorway and window; tall eastern arch to nave. Western bay of nave has C14 octagonal baptistery with font of similar date. Aisle windows mostly C15 3 light under segmental arches; clerestory windows 5 each side, of 2 cinquefoiled lights under square heads. Both porches 2 storey, the southern buttressed and with a semi-circular stair turret in the corner with the aisle. C15 Wenlock Chapel contains several monuments, brasses and recessed tombs, to members of Wenlock and Rotheram family. Vestry has C14 ribbed stone vault. Late C15 Barnard chantry lies on the south side of the chancel. Many other memorials and details of note. (HE List Number 1114615)



3 Results

Introduction

This Watching Brief was undertaken in response to the collapsing of a grave monument which occurred in October of 2016. The tomb was located approximately 13m to the north of the church (Fig. 3). The collapse occurred due to the presence of a large rose bush whose roots had destabilised the monument. Heavy rains in the lead up to the collapse proved to be too much causing the structure to drop into the vaulted tomb below. The lifting of the ledger stone was monitored under archaeological supervision. The vault beneath was then recorded and the void was backfilled with approximately 12 tonnes of topsoil. Once the area had been filled, the stone ledger was placed back on top of the tomb (Plates 1-5 & 15-16).

Stone Ledger

The stone ledger had fallen to a depth of 0.72m below ground level (Plates 1-2; Fig 4). The slab, which was of York stone, measured 1.98 x 1.06 x 0.11m and was orientated east-west with the top of the ledger to the west. The stone was in excellent condition and the inscribed text was clear and legible (Fig. 5). Slight damage had occurred on the southern side of the stone but this only affected the surface and there was no visible loss elsewhere (Plate 6).

The inscription was incised using Roman and Roman italic text styles and read as follows:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
 SAMUEL HAYDON OF NEWMILLEND
 WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE DEEPLY LAMENTED
 BY HIS WIDOW AND FAMILY
 ON THE 16TH OF MAY 1839, AGED 60.
 NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE BE DONE
 LUKE. CHAP 22. VER 42.
 ALSO SARAH THE RELICT
 -F THE ABOVE NAMED SAMUEL HAYDON
 -HO DIED ON THE 5TH MAY 1846, AGED 65.
 -NOW, O LORD, THAT THY JUDGEMENTS ARE RIGHT
 --AT THOU IN FAITHFULNESS HAST AFFLICTED ME.
 ALSO MATILDA THE LAMENTED DAUGHTER
 OF SAMUEL & SARAH HAYDON.
 WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE
 ON THE 21ST OF SEPTEMBER 1840, AGED 25.
 I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE: NO MAN
 COMETH UNTO THE FATHER, BUT BY ME.
 JOHN. CHAP 14. VER 6.
 ALSO SAMUEL FRANKLIN HAYDON WHO
 DIED FEBRUARY 24TH 1849, AGED 7 YEARS AND
 OF THOMAS, AN INFANT, WHO DIED, FEBRUARY
 23RD 1849, AGED 5 MONTHS, BOTH GRANDSONS
 OF THE ABOVE SAMUEL AND SARAH HAYDON

T. HASELGROVE

The name of the stonemason, T. Haselgrove, was inscribed at the bottom of the monument.



The Chest Tomb and Vault

The removal of the slab exposed the collapsed chest tomb below (Plates 7-9: Fig. 6).

The chest tomb measured 1.95m long by 0.86m wide and was approximately 0.80m deep. It was roughly 15 courses high and had a large flat worked stone slab in the north and south sides, framed above and below by a course of lipped bricks. The standard bricks, which measured 22.5 x 11 x 7cm (9 x 4¼ x 2¾ inches) were frogged and some had horizontal skintlings.

The bricks had been heavily disturbed by the fall and many had become displaced, particularly to the west. Visibility was restricted beyond the top few courses of brick and due to the limited space and unsecured floor surface entrance into the vault itself was not possible. The internal measurements of the vault were 2.26 x 2.09m and the vault floor was approximately 1.80m below ground level. The bricks used in the vaults construction were well made, measured 22.5 x 11 x 6.5cm (9 x 4¼ x 2½ inches) and were set in a friable lime mortar. Some repointing in a yellowish white firm mortar was visible on the east and south walls (Plates 11-12).

To the west of the vault was a bricked up entrance way (Plate 13). This measured 0.87m wide by 1m deep and had been bricked up with 15 courses of frogged Fletton bricks set in an orangey yellow lime mortar. The bricks measured 22.5 x 11 x 6.5cm (9 x 4¼ x 2½ inches)

Regular holes in the wall of the vault may suggest that there had been or was intended to be, shelves to hold individual coffins; however no coffins were observed within the vault. In the northwest corner a displaced headstone was exposed. The headstone had become pinned between the chest tomb and the vault wall. No inscription could be seen on the stone and no measurements or further investigation could be undertaken due to the vault being inaccessible (Plates 15-16).

Bricks possibly from the vaulted roof were observable in the initial site visit in 2016 but had silted over by the time the grave slab was lifted. Leaf litter and other debris had fallen into the vault further obscuring the view of the vault base (Plate 3).



Plate 1: Ledger in situ looking west



Plate 2: Ledger in situ looking south



Plate 3: View into the vault (2016) looking southwest



Plate 4: Mechanism used to lift the ledger



Plate 5: The lifting of the ledger



Plate 6: Damage on ledger



Plate 7: The chest tomb looking west



Plate 8: The chest tomb looking east



Plate 9: South side of the chest tomb looking northwest



Plate 10: Rooting damage looking south



Plate 11: Vault wall looking north



Plate 12: Vault wall looking east



Plate 13: Bricked up vault entrance looking west



Plate 14: Displaced gravestone in northwest corner looking north



Plate 15: Displaced gravestone close up looking east



Plate 16: Ledger replaced looking west



Plate 17: Ledger in relation to church looking south

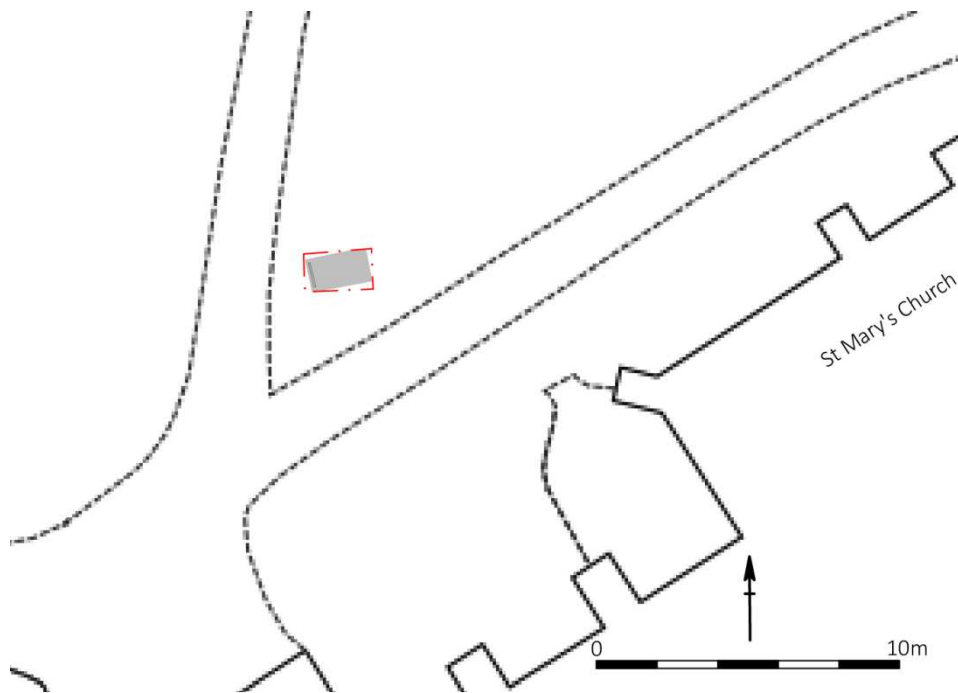


Figure 3: Location of grave in relation to the church (scale 1:250)

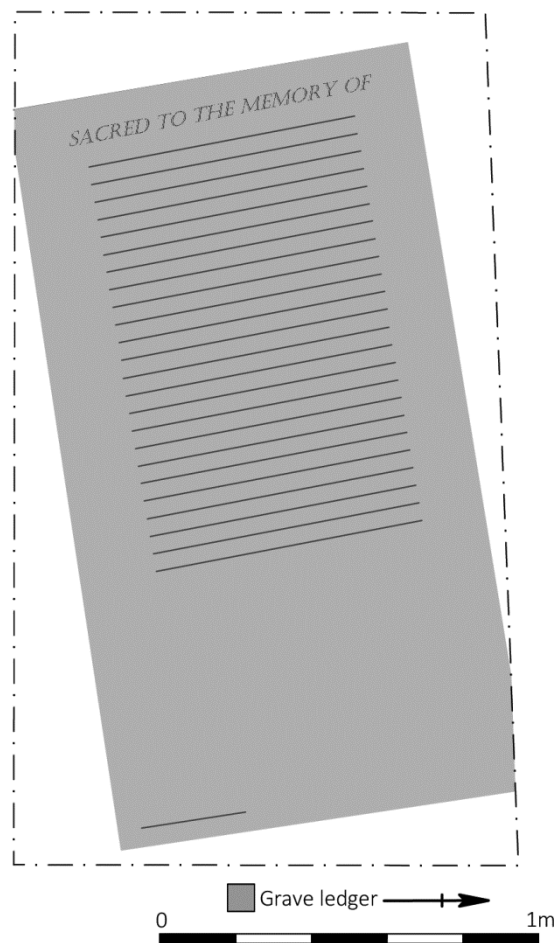


Figure 4: Grave ledger in situ (scale 1:20)

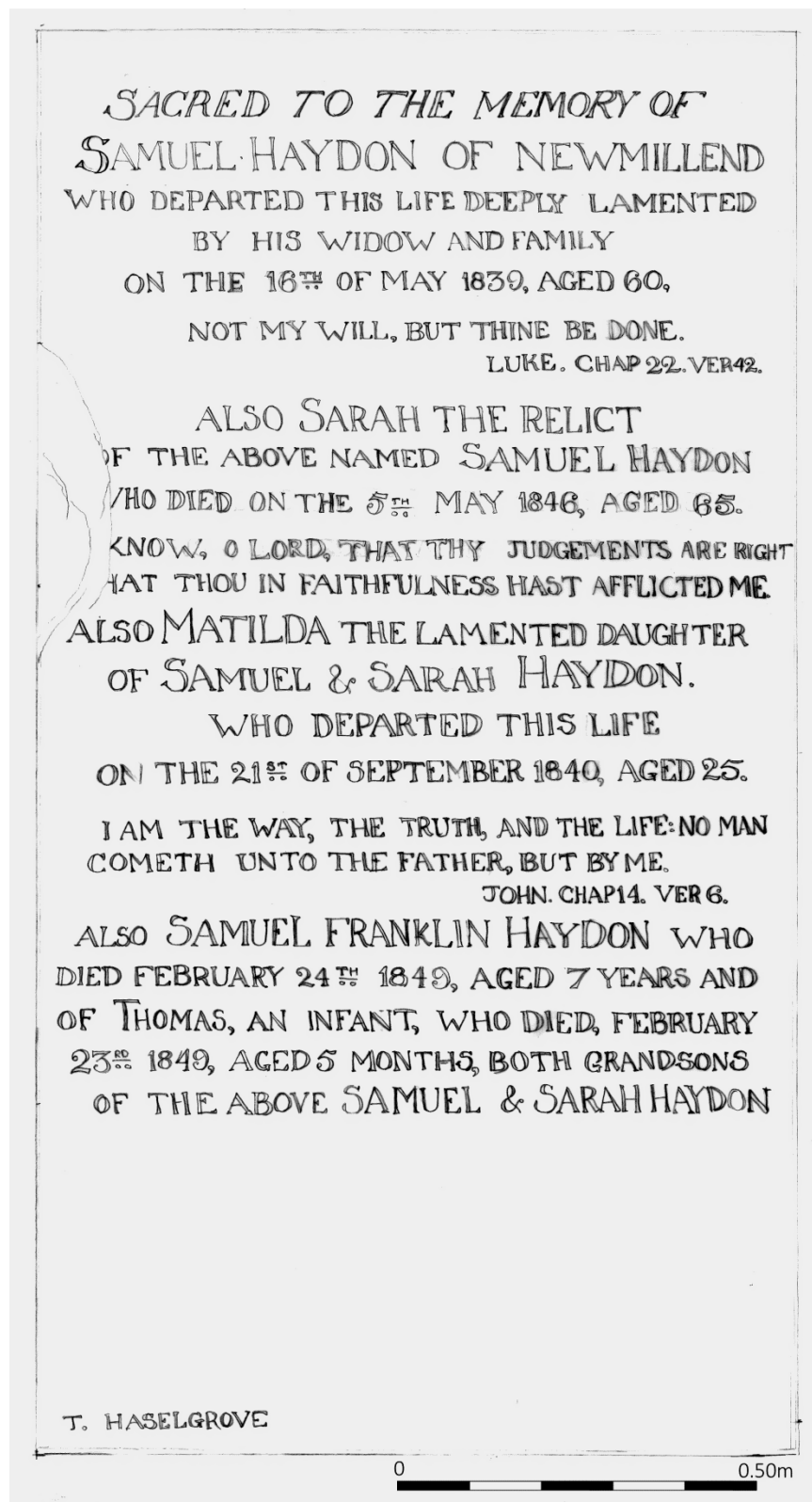


Figure 5: Ledger inscription (scale 1:10)

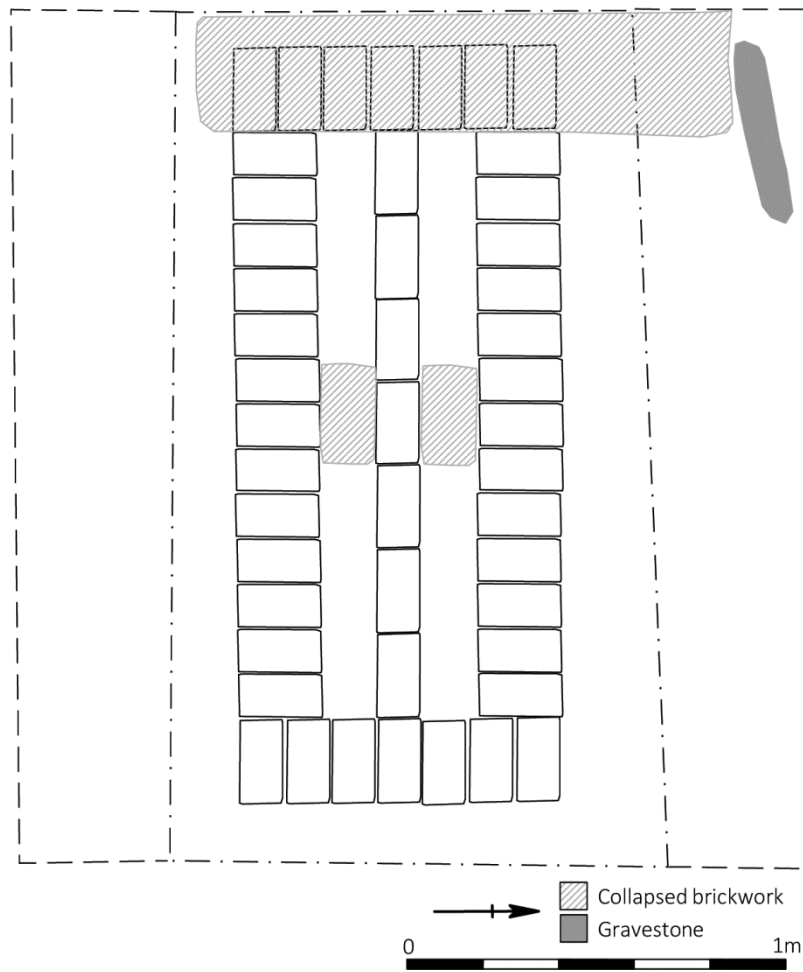


Figure 6: Chest tomb and vault (scale 1:20)



4 Conclusions

It is difficult to determine the process of the collapse of the tomb. It appears that the collapse was a single instantaneous event with the tomb and the vaulted roof falling and crushing any burials that may have been beneath. The collapse of the brickwork and the subsequent silting over of the vault floor may have obscured any human remains or funerary furniture from view. The rosebush, the roots of which seemed to have been assisting in holding up the tomb is noted to have been on the site as early as the Second World War and perhaps earlier (Orrin *pers comm*). A postcard from the beginning of the 20th century shows the chest tomb intact and free of any vegetation. Although taken from a distance, a rectangular structure can be seen on the Haydon family plot (Plates 18-19).

There appears to be very little information on the Haydon family. The monument stated that Samuel Haydon resided in New Mill End, a small hamlet within the civil parish of Hyde on the Bedfordshire/Hertfordshire border, 2.8 miles southeast of St Mary's. A mortgage by lease and release dated the 9th and 10th February 1801 lists a Samuel Haydon of New Mill End, Luton, Bedfordshire as being a yeoman of the manor of Kings Langley (HALS Doc ref 20550 and 20551). A probable descendant also known as Samuel Haydon is noted in a newspaper article dated October 15th 1858 as being a sheep and cattle salesman (Plate 20).

More information is available about the stonemason Thomas William Haselgrove who inscribed the Haydon's monument (Fig. 21). A local man based in Chapel Street, Haselgrove provided the letter cutting for a number of the monuments within St Mary's churchyard. On many of his works he states his full initial 'T. W.' and on some he inscribed 'Luton'. In 1863-64, Haselgrove worked on repairs in the chancel, the cost of which amounted to £3.1.0 (BLARS P85/2/4/10). It appears his connections with the church extend beyond his work, as a few metres to the northeast of the Haydon tomb, lies the tomb of what one can assume is Thomas Haselgrove's family (Plate 22). The gravestone stands out as being more ornate than its fellows. Decorative motifs are displayed at the top and the letters are much deeper and thicker than elsewhere. The monument gives the name of Thomas (d.1847 aged 53) Matilda (d.1850 aged 16) Harriet (d.1850 aged 19) and finally Ann (d.1855 aged 59).



Plate 18: Early 20th century Photo of St Mary's



Plate 19: Close up of Haydon chest tomb

NOTICE is hereby given, that the Partnership heretofore subsisting between us the undersigned, Samuel Haydon, of New Mill End Beds, and Edward Dowling, of Woodford Bridge, Essex, as Sheep and Cattle Salesman, has been this day dissolved by mutual consent.—Dated this 11th day of October, 1858.

*Saml. Haydon.
Ed. Dowling.*

Plate 20: Exerpt from The London Gazette, October 15th 1858 (www.thegazette.co.uk)

Plate 21: Advert for services provided by T. W. Haselgrove (1865) (gracesguide.co.uk)



Plate 22: The Haselgrove grave stone



5 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to St Mary's Church PCC for commissioning this report. Thanks are also due to the David Baker, Diocesan Archaeological Advisor, for monitoring the project. A very special thanks are due to Rebecca Orrin, Peter and Anne Adams, Rev. Andy Gardner and Rev. Mike Jones for their kindness and hospitality during this investigation. We would also like to thank Sean Collins and the team at Boden and Ward and the members of Luton Borough Council who assisted on site.

The fieldwork was carried out by Laura Dodd MSc ACIfA. The report was written by Laura Dodd MSc ACIfA, and edited by Karin Kaye MA MCIfA.



6 References

Standards & Specifications

ADCA Guidance Note 1 *Archaeological requirements for works on churches and churchyards*

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<https://www.thehistorypress.co.uk/articles/a-brief-history-of-luton/> [accessed 11 June 2018]

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Appendix 1: Photograph List

Shot	B&W	DSLR	View	Subject
1		X	-	Preliminary photos (Oct 2016)
2		X	-	Preliminary photos (Oct 2016)
3		X	-	Preliminary photos (Oct 2016)
4		X	-	Preliminary photos (Oct 2016)
5		X	-	Preliminary photos (Oct 2016)
6	X	X	W	Ledger in situ
7		X	W	Ledger in situ
8		X	S	Ledger in situ
9		X	S	Ledger in situ
10		X	W	Ledger in situ
11		X	W	Ledger in situ
12		X	-	General shot
13		X	-	Lifting mechanism
14		X	-	Ledger being lifted
15		X	-	Ledger being lifted
16	X	X	W	Collapsed chest tomb
17		X	S	Collapsed chest tomb
18	X	X	N	Root damage
19	X	X	W	Bricked up vault entrance
20		X	-	Chest tomb detail
21		X	-	Chest tomb detail
22		X	-	Chest tomb detail
23		X	N	Displaced gravestone
24	X	X	N	Displaced gravestone
25		X	-	Close up of displaced gravestone
26		X	E	Collapsed chest tomb
27		X	S	South wall
28		X	E	East wall
29		X	-	Close up of gravestone
30		X	E	East wall
31		X	N	North wall
32		X	N	North wall
33	X	X	-	Ledger
34		X	-	Inscription
35		X	-	Inscription
36		X	-	Inscription
37		X	-	T. Haselgrove inscription
38		X	-	Damage to south edge
39		X	-	Haselgrove grave
40	X	X	W	Ledger in final place
41		X	S	Ledger in final place
42		X	S	Ledger in final place



Appendix 2: OASIS and Site Data

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name & Address	St Mary's Churchyard, Luton, Bedfordshire	Project Site Code	248/LSM
OASIS reference	kdkarcha1-319721	Event/Accession no	2018/15
OS reference	TL 09510 21221	Study area size	4.77 sq m
Project Type	Watching Brief	Height (mAOD)	106
Short Description	In June 2018 a programme of Observation and Recording was undertaken by KDK Archaeology Ltd at St Mary's Churchyard, Luton, Bedfordshire following the collapse of a chest tomb within the churchyard. The tomb, belonging to the Haydon family, had become engulfed by a rosebush which had been thriving on the site since before the Second World War, and as a result of water and root damage, the tomb and stone ledger had fallen into the vault below. No human remains or funerary furniture were observed during this investigation.		
Previous work	None	Site status	Churchyard
Current land use	Churchyard	Planning proposal	Backfilling a collapsed tomb within the churchyard
Local Planning Authority	Luton Borough Council	Planning application ref.	N/A
Monument type	Chest tomb, stone Ledger	Monument period	Post Medieval
Significant finds	None	Future work	N/A
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	KDK Archaeology Ltd		
Project Brief originator	N/A	Project Design originator	KDK Archaeology Ltd
Project Manager	Karin Kaye	Director/Supervisor	Laura Dodd
Sponsor/funding body	St Mary's Church PCC		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	08.06.2018	End date	08.06.2018
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical	Luton Culture	None	
Paper		Report, Method statement, site drawings, B&W photos and negatives	
Digital		CD ROM containing all digital files	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title	St Mary's Churchyard, Luton, Bedfordshire		
Serial title & volume	248/LSM/2.1		
Author(s)	Laura Dodd MSc ACifA		
Page nos	19	Date	13.06.2018