

St Brandon's Church

BRANCEPETH

**AFTER THE FIRE**

Archaeological Recording  
1998-2002

Peter F Ryder

# St Brandon's Church, Brancepeth

## After the Fire:

### Archaeological Recording 1998-2002

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A CD containing an extensive collection of photographs of the recording works, and in addition the full text and illustrations of this report, is attached to the rear cover.

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## **St Brandon, Brancepeth.**

### **Introduction**

The Parish Church of St Brandon at Brancepeth, 7 km south-west of Durham City, stands in parkland alongside Brancepeth Castle; although in itself one of the more significant medieval parish churches in the County of Durham, it was best known for the sumptuous woodwork installed by its Rector (and later Bishop) John Cosin in the second quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century; much of this was contemporary with Cosin, although there were some important earlier pieces thought to have been brought from Durham Cathedral. Pevsner (1953, 62) wrote of the church that ‘there is hardly another in the country so completely and so splendidly furnished at his time’.

All this changed in the early hours of the morning of Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 1998 when a fire, of unknown origin, completely gutted the building, utterly destroying all its woodwork and leaving only a scorched shell. Despite only being granted the barest of mentions in the local media, this catastrophe was arguably the greatest loss suffered by the art/historical heritage of the North East in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Over the succeeding seven years the devastated building has been slowly restored and returned to use, with the replacement of virtually all the dressed stonework of its interior. The following account deals with the archaeological recording made possible as restoration work proceeded; fortunately a description of the church fabric as it formerly stood was available through an archaeological assessment commissioned by the Diocese a few months before the conflagration. is presented alongside a detailed account of the fabric and features exposed during the renovation. A resumé of the lost fittings, furnishings and monuments follows, based on the same 1998 assessment, and then an account of the collection of lapidary material (primarily a very large collection of medieval cross slab grave covers) that came to light during the works.

### **Historical Introduction**

The first record of a rector at Brancepeth is in 1085, although the dedication of the church to the 6<sup>th</sup>-century Irish St Brandon (or Brendan), and the probably derivation of the place name from ‘Brandon’s Path’ imply considerably earlier origins. Structural evidence of a church that was at least Saxon in style came to light during the restoration. The Saxon family of Bulmer retained Brancepeth despite the Norman Conquest; in 1174 the Bulmer heir Emma married Geoffrey de Neville and brought Brancepeth into the possession of one of the great medieval families of the North. It has been suggested that the church was remodelled soon after 1319 by Ralph, Lord Neville, to provide a suitable place for the tomb of his son Robert, the ‘Peacock of the North’ who had been killed fighting the Scots; John de Neville is thought to have been responsible for further alterations c1375 and in 1483 the Jesus Chantry was founded by Ralph, Lord Neville, and Isabel his wife. c1540 John Leland the antiquary records ‘dyvers tumbes of the Nevilles’ in the church and adds ‘In the quier is an high tumbe of one of them, porturied with his wife’.

The Nevilles fell from favour after the failure of the Rising of the North in 1569, and the Castle passed to the Crown; the church seems to have fallen into a poor condition, as in 1596 the Acts of Consistory Court for Durham state that the church and chancel windows were decayed, the leads decayed, and bells broken.

In 1626 John Cosin, aged thirty, became Rector of Brancepeth; he was responsible for repairing and richly furnishing the building; in 1639 his curate records that ‘the timber has been sawne for sieling the roof of the middle alley’; he added two porches, and probably also the nave clerestory. It would appear that Cosin was preparing the church to be his own mausoleum, but after the Civil War (during which he fled to France) he returned to be made Bishop of Durham, and is buried in the Chapel at Auckland Castle.

The first detailed description of the church is by the Durham historian William Hutchinson (1794, III, 314-8), who writes, with some measure of enthusiasm: ‘The church stands at the south end of the village, near the castle, is in the form of a cross, and beautifully decorated within. The chancel is in length fourteen paces, and in width seven paces, wainscotted and stalled in oak, in an excellent taste, highly finished with tabernacle-work; the roof is pannelled with oak, in diamonds, the joinings ornamented with cherubs crowned, supporting shields, on which are scripture sentences, in raised letters, of fine carving. The space within the rails, to which you ascend by three steps, is four paces wide, and the altar is gracefully covered by crimson velvet. The chancel is divided from the nave by a pointed arch, which is closed by gates and stalls canopied, and ornamented up to the roof, with elegant tabernacle work, in three spires. In the middle of the chancel is a tomb..... (Ralph 1st Earl of Westmoreland and wife)...There is a large porch on the south of the chancel, opened by an arch, cased with wood and ornamented with shields of arms;.... The chancel is lighted to the east by a large window of five compartments, to the north three windows and two to the south, under pointed arches, and ornamented with much tracery: there are two large windows in the porch to the south, and a smaller one to the east, of similar form. The nave is twenty paces in length, with side aisles, each formed by two octagonal pillar, long light shafts, supporting pointed arches; the ceiling is of wood, and one of the rafters on the north side is ornamented with a carved figure of a bull bearing a shield, with the arms of Nevill on the left shoulder. The stalls are of oak, regular, and ornamented with fleurs de lis; it is lighted with two old flat arched windows to the north, and three modern windows to the south: the upper windows are square and regular, four on each side. The cross is lighted at each end; the windows under pointed arches... (he also describes the monuments at some length)

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century the Castle was bought by the colliery owner William Russell, and his son Matthew (at his death ‘the riches commoner in all England’) began what was virtually a rebuilding of it in 1818; for a third time the church became something of a mausoleum. In 1850 the estate passed to the Boyne family (later Viscounts Boyne), and in 1864 Gustavus Frederick Boyne, 7<sup>th</sup> Viscount, had the church restored, retaining but to some extent re-arranging Cosin’s sumptuous fittings and the majority of the 20<sup>th</sup> century passed relatively uneventfully, save for some restoration work and some re-location of monuments within the building.

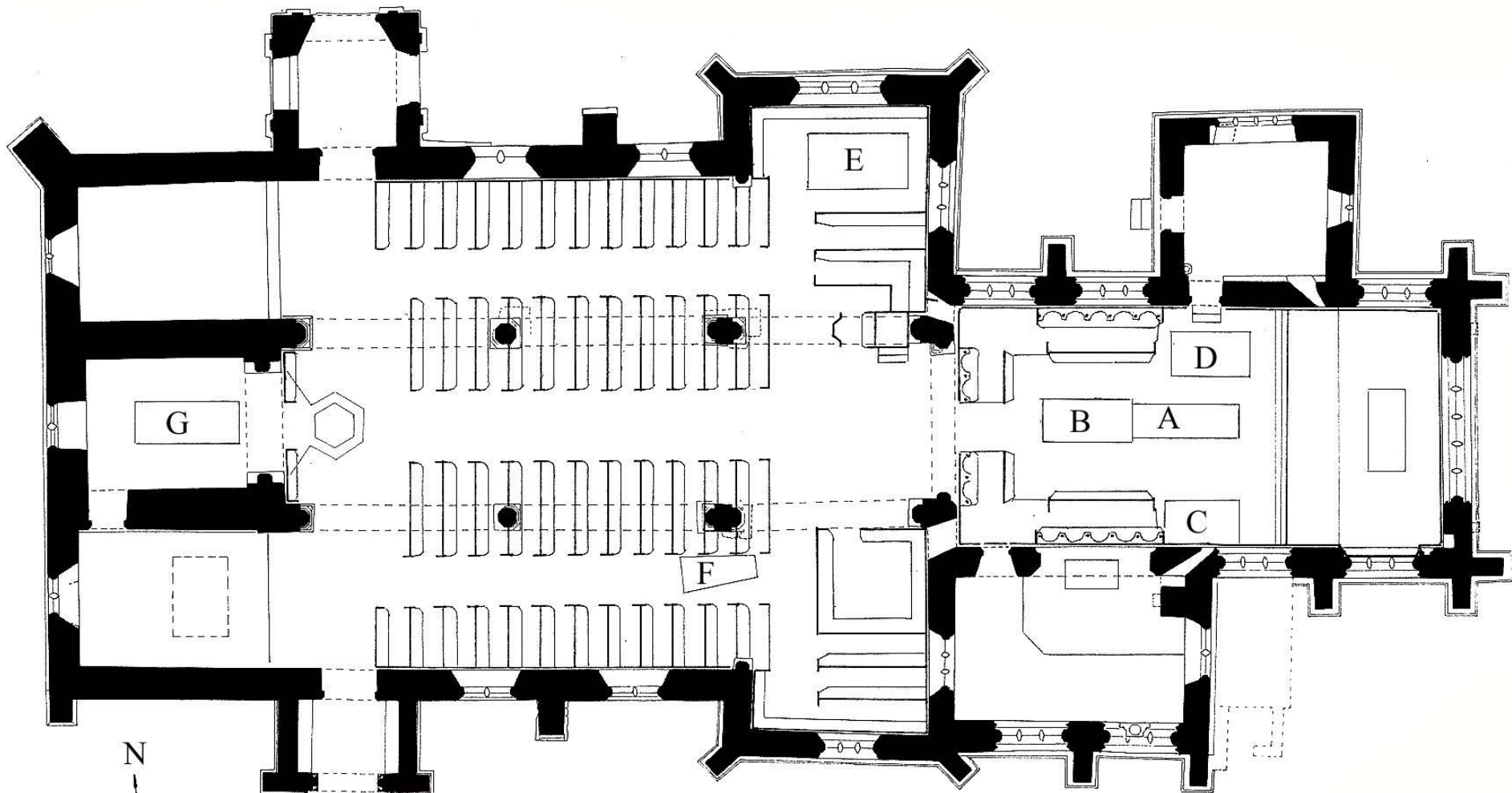
### **The Church before the Fire**

The church consists of a three-bay aisled nave with an engaged western tower, north and south porches, and north and south transepts; the chancel has a chapel on the south and a sacristy or vestry on the north. The interior of the building was plastered throughout, except for exposed dressings.

In the following account, an initial description of the building compiled in June 1998 is presented section-by-section (as written, ie in the present tense), each part being followed by an italicised account of additional features recorded after the fire. The sub-floor investigative

# ST BRANDON, BRANCEPETH

## INTERNAL LAYOUT BEFORE THE 1998 FIRE



### Principal Monuments

- A: Robert Neville ('the Peacock') d.1318 B: Drax brass 1453 C: Calverly ledger  
D: Wilkinson ledger E: Ralph (d.1484) & Margaret Neville F: Thomas Claxton brass  
G: Westmorland tomb

works in the base of the tower and nave, carried out by the Archaeological Practise of Newcastle University, are the subject of a separate account.

## A The West Tower.

The **West Tower** is roughly square in plan, and is engaged by the aisles. It is constructed of coursed roughly-squared stone, and rises in four stages. The lower three stages have alternating rather irregular quoins of no great size. At the foot of the west wall is a chamfered plinth with a 45° slope, of 12<sup>th</sup>-century character, with a slightly-projecting footing course below; the 0.6 m of walling below this is probably underpinning inserted when the perimeter drain was constructed. The west wall of the lower stage has quite an amount of recent stone replacement; the west window is of two trefoil-headed lights with a pair of trefoiled mouchettes under the arched head; all its stonework is tooled-and-margined ashlar of 19<sup>th</sup>-century character. A chamfered set-back marks the base of the tall second stage, which has single-light windows, just above the set-back, on west and north. The former seems to have a slightly-pointed arch, but the latter a semicircular head; both have simple chamfered surrounds. At this level the stonework on the north seems more regularly coursed (and lighter in colour) than on the west.

At the base of the third stage, which seems to have been the original belfry, is a string-course, apparently chamfered above and below; in each wall is an opening of two lancet-arched lights cut into a monolithic head and chamfered jambs, divided by a circular shaft with a moulded capital that has a square abacus. On the east the head and shaft have been renewed, and on the north the shaft.

A similar string course masks the base of the present belfry; its fabric is generally similar to that of the tower below, except that the quoins are rather larger and more regular. The belfry openings are very similar to those in the stage below; again the head and shaft of the eastern opening have been renewed; the other windows also seem to have been restored to some extent, perhaps in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A bold string marks the base of the tower parapet, carried on a series of variously-shaped corbels, several with masks and one (on the south) with a saltire cross. At either end of the west wall are boldly-projecting stone spouts, set just above the string. The parapet is of rather better-quality squared stone than the wall below, and has a single embrasure in the centre of each side, with a chamfered coping; at each corner is a small moulded pinnacle, clearly post-medieval, each capped by a weather vane.

Internally, the tower opens to the nave by a segmental-pointed arch of two orders, basically square in section with only a narrow chamfer to the angle (except for the outer order towards the tower, which is left unchamfered); this section is continued down the jambs below the impost band, which is chamfered beneath; the plain square bases again have a slight chamfer, only to the edge. The west window has a rather peculiar shouldered rear arch, that seems to be the product of the widening of an earlier and narrower opening, the head of which remains. At the west end of the south wall is a doorway opening into the west end of the south aisle; towards the aisle this has a flattened Tudor arch with a broad continuous chamfer and neat stepped broach stops at the base of each jamb; its rear arch is of plain square-headed form.

A 19<sup>th</sup>-century wooden stair-cum-ladder gives access to the Ringing Chamber; its floor timbers also appear of later 19<sup>th</sup> century date. Here the windows on north, south and west all have round-headed rear arches, the diagonal tooling of their dressings, of 12<sup>th</sup>-century character, can be seen through the whitewash. The internal splay of the western window is



considerably narrower than those on the north and south. On the east is another splayed recess, with a small square-headed chamfered opening into the nave, which is concealed by the re-set clock face; it has clearly been altered and the timber lintels may have replaced an older rear arch. In the south wall, c.1.2 m above the floor and to the east of the window is a large rough socket, and there is another to the west of the rear arch of the northern window.

The ladder/stair to the second floor is of considerable interest. The old part commences from a small platform c 2 m above floor level in the north-west corner, and rises eastwards along the north wall. Although provided with a relatively recent handrail, and with the platform at its base recently strengthened and stabilised, the stair itself is probably medieval; it consists of two raking beams with, nailed to their upper faces, a series of triangular-section oak blocks. There are a series of pairs of pegholes (some with pegs in place) in the raking timbers, but these do not seem to relate to the treads, so there may have been alteration at some time.

This second floor is carried on a series of old timbers, probably medieval; two show cut-outs so that a bell could be raised between them; the flooring itself is more recent.

The second-floor room was the first belfry; its four openings have round-headed rear arches, with in each case a small socket in each jamb, just within the outer opening, at mid-height. There is a recent concrete ring beam at floor level.

Another ancient ladder-stair, this time without handrail, leads up to the belfry. At this level the walls are not plastered, but were largely obscured by heavy pointing. Three of the four openings have rough semi-circular rear arches, but the fourth, on the north, has a plain square lintel, evidently a later repair; there is considerable evidence of other repairs and patching, notably a large area of tile below the eastern opening, and concrete sills to all four.

The tower roof is carried by five cambered tie-beams, running north-south, of heavy square section; three look ancient, and two more recent. Access to the battlements is by a trapdoor; there was no fixed ladder.

### ***After the Fire***

#### ***The External Wall Faces of the Tower***

*Externally the tower is little changed, although a close examination of the corbels below the parapet (made possible when the tower was scaffolded) shows that they are indeed of unusual interest. At each corner is a large slab with two corbels, one facing in each direction; that at the south-east angle has a pair of scalloped capitals, of mid-12th century style. Is this a re-cycled architectural piece (indicating two arches springing at right angles?) or a deliberate use of a motif half-a-century out of date just as an ornamental feature? Three of the corbels, including the one with the Neville saltire, are of gritstone, as opposed to the softer sandstone; these are probably 14<sup>th</sup> century additions or replacements, contemporary with the tower parapet. Another of these gritstone corbels is an intriguing piece that defies polite description, and might either be of some obscure ritual significance or simply an example of a 'robust' medieval sense of humour. The four weather vanes that stood at the angles of the tower were stolen shortly after the fire*

*Inside the nave, loss of plaster showed that the late-12th century tower arch appears to be inserted in older fabric; on the north side of the arch, about half way up its extrados, and adjacent to the voussoirs, was an L-shaped block.; above the arch was a small square-*



headed opening with a chamfered surround (that had previously been concealed behind the old clock face) , its head at roughly the level of the sills of the clerestory. Below this were two quite serious cracks, one running down on each side of the apex of the tower arch; these seemed to be structural, rather than relating to an infilled opening. This wall contains a number of large quite well squared blocks.

Above the small chamfered opening was a considerable patch of secondary masonry, possibly representing a blocked opening; this patch included some stones with diagonal tooling, and masons' marks, otherwise absent in this wall, and interrupts a slight set-back, coincident with a course of thinner stones, which runs across the wall at the level of the base of the corbels which carried the wall-posts of the nave roof, and slightly above the level of the base of the added clerestory in the side walls of the nave.

Higher up was a steeply-gabled roof-line, its apex truncated by the line of the destroyed nave roof, of much shallower pitch. Close inspection shows that this line was in fact an earlier gable that has been heightened; towards its apex there were some large cut triangular blocks set directly beneath a slab coping, which remained in situ, showing that the later tower wall has been raised directly upon the coping. This would appear a dangerous thing to do from a structural point of view, except that the wall was thickened on its western face when the tower was built.

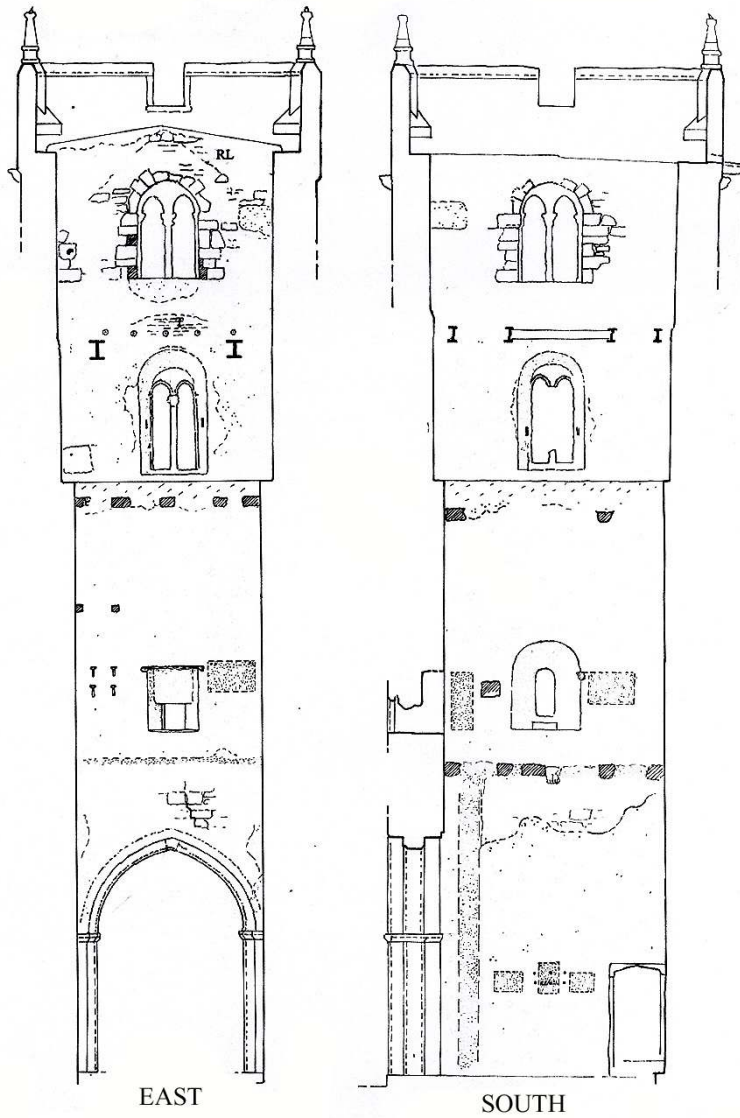
A chamfered plinth was exposed at the base of each of the side walls of the tower, within the aisles; this continued beneath the doorway between south aisle and tower set at the west end of the south wall just above this plinth, and adjacent to the south-west angle quoins of the earlier nave, was a block with what appeared to be a regular series of rough incised lines on its upper angle (L5). The external face of the north wall of the tower, within the north aisle, was of coursed roughly-squared stone, the blocks varying in size without any obvious re-used material. The external face of the south wall was again of coursed roughly-squared stone, although on this side there was a scatter of larger and possibly re-used blocks which may be re-used material.

### ***The Doorway between Tower and West End of South Aisle***

This doorway is set at the west end of the south wall of the 12<sup>th</sup>-century tower, but is clearly a later insertion. It is rebated towards the aisle, and has a flattened Tudor-arched head and a chamfered surround, a stop at the base of each jamb consisting of a slight step with a broach below. Whilst broach stops are a typical 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century form, the overall form of the doorway, and in particular its arch, strongly suggests a 17<sup>th</sup>-century date; the admixture of medieval and post-medieval motifs is characteristic of Cosin's work, so it would be reasonable to see this doorway as part of his alterations of the church, perhaps made in the 1630s. The insertion of a doorway in this position probably relates to the tower arch having been screened off, perhaps by an organ or gallery, and access being desired into the space behind this, possibly to a stair up to the loft or gallery.

The threshold of the doorway is set at a rather awkwardly high level, and is formed by the chamfered plinth that extends along the exterior of the walls of the tower; this appears to be an original 12<sup>th</sup>-century feature. The section directly below the doorway has a rather broader and sharper chamfer than that of the adjacent part; close inspection shows that it is in fact formed by render. The removal of some of this render (which had been cracked, probably as a result of the fire) showed that it had been applied to a genuine section of the plinth, albeit one that was quite badly damaged. One block of the plinth extends beneath the

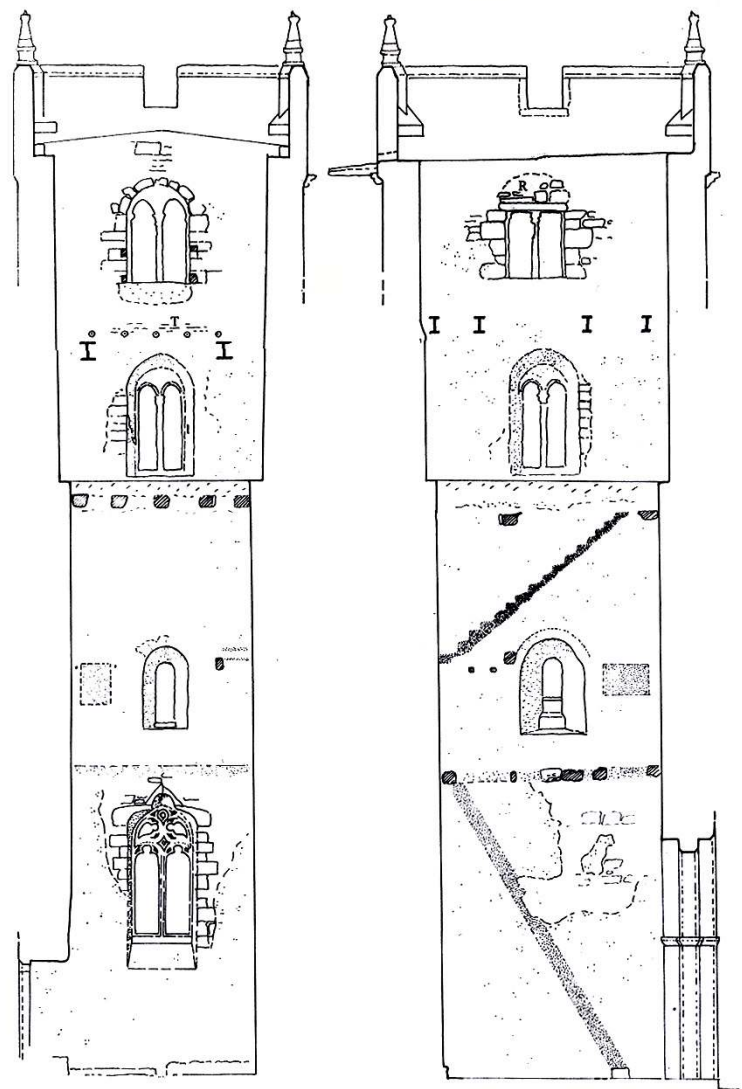
BRANCEPETH, ST BRANDON  
 INTERNAL ELEVATIONS OF TOWER  
 P F Ryder August 2000



RL : Possible early roof line  
 R : Rebuilt areas  
 T: Areas patched in tile

Plaster in situ  
 Sooted areas (evidence of wall plaques, ladders etc)  
 Cavities and sockets  
 Concrete ring beam

BRANCEPETH, ST BRANDON  
INTERNAL ELEVATIONS OF TOWER  
P F Ryder August 2000



WEST

NORTH

0 5 metres

*base of the east jamb of the doorway.*

*The masonry directly below this plinth is very irregular, with much mortar, and has the appearance of being a patch or repair; 0.45 m below the plinth some large stones project from the wall face; a little to the east of the door a corbel of the usual quadrant profile (L4) is re-used at this level.*

*One possible sequence of affairs that might explain this rather puzzling sequence is that there was originally a newel stair in the south-west angle of the tower (see report on archaeological investigation within the tower), and that, after the aisles were extended westward, a new doorway (possibly a fairly crudely inserted opening) was created by cutting through the external face of the wall (and also the plinth) to give access to the newel stair within. Then during Cosin's 17<sup>th</sup>-century works the old stone newel stair was removed, but its doorway renewed, perhaps to give access to a new timber stair. The old plinth was reinstated, with a couple of timber steps within the aisle giving access to it.*

### ***The Interior***

*Within the tower, all woodwork was totally destroyed. The stone fabric remained intact, except for damage to some dressings (notably around the belfry openings); much wall plaster remained in position, showing the sooted 'ghosts' of such features as wall plaques and the former ladder stairs.*

### ***The Lower Stage***

*The internal opening of the west window, both head and jambs, was shown to be of neatly-cut stone of later 19<sup>th</sup>-century character, like the external dressings. Some plaster had fallen, showing the wall fabric to be of coursed roughly-shaped stones. On the south the positions of three metal wall plaques and of a former timber weight shaft, close to the west end of the wall, were clear, and on the north the line of former ladder (?late 19<sup>th</sup> century).*

*The floor of the ringing chamber was carried by five north-south beams, the sockets for which remained; in their latest form these appeared to be of 19<sup>th</sup> century date. At the same level there are the damaged remains of a corbel, probably medieval, in the centre of both north and south walls.*

### ***The First Floor (Ringing Chamber)***

*This is lit by round-headed single-light windows on north, south and west; the latter having a narrower internal splay than the others. The sill of the external opening of the northern window has been raised at some time, to clear the roof of the north aisle. 'Ghosts' of five wall plaques remain; there are also a number of sockets, of uncertain function, a large one to the east of the southern window, a small one cut into its western internal jamb, and three on the north, one adjacent to the extrados of the voussoirs of the rear arch of the window, just above its western springing, and two smaller ones set a little lower, to the west. On the west wall a socket to the north of the window, again at the level of the springing of its rear arch, carried a platform at the base of the medieval ladder stair. The 'ghost' of this stair, rising steeply alongside the north wall, was very clear, individual tread positions still being evident*

### ***The Lower Belfry***

*At the level of the original belfry the internal wall faces are reduced in thickness on all four sides. A concrete ring beam had been inserted at the level of this step, a few years before the*

*fire. Immediately below the ring-beam were sockets for the timbers of the floor of the lower belfry, five in east and west walls and two at a slightly lower level on north and south.*

*The lower belfry is lit by two-light openings in the centre of each wall, their dressings have been somewhat damaged by the fire, in particular on the south where the central mullion had been destroyed. The rear arches of these windows were still concealed by plaster. In contrast to those of the otherwise similar windows of the upper belfry, both jambs and heads are splayed; the internal arches are of rather irregular form, either semicircular or slightly pointed. In each case there was a small socket at mid-height on the internal jamb, just within the outer opening, possibly relating to some sort of shutter arrangement.*

*No trace remained of the position of the second early ladder stair, at the east end of the south wall, that rose from lower to upper belfry.*

### ***The Upper Belfry***

*The openings of the upper belfry, externally quite similar to those below, have jambs and rear arches set square to the wall, with their cut dressings now largely exposed. On east and west substantial sockets had been cut into the inner faces of the dressings of the jambs, presumably relating to earlier bell frames. On the north the rear arch has been replaced at some time with a simple lintel, with an irregular patch of masonry above where the former arch has been infilled..*

*At the head of the internal east jamb of the southern opening is a slightly-projecting corbel-like block of brown sandstone with a line of indented ornament on the oversailing chamfer and possible remains of eroded ornament above that. At the north end of the east wall, c 0.45 m above the level of the internal sill of the belfry opening, is a large block with a small circular socket of uncertain function..*

*Above the eastern belfry openings are slight traces of what may be an earlier gable line, raising the possibility that the original tower, before the addition of the upper belfry, may have had a gabled roof. There is however no real evidence of this putative gable-line on the opposite (west) wall.*

*In August 2000, following checks on the security of the scaffolding, the internal faces of the walls of the tower were recorded; due to the amount of scaffolding inside the structure, recording by means of rectified photography would not have been easy. The elevations were drawn at 1:50 scale and all significant detail measured and drawn, hand-held photographs also being used.*

## B The Nave

The nave is slightly wider than the tower on the north, and very slightly narrower on the south. Its only walls to be exposed externally are the clerestory on each side and the eastern gable, above the chancel roof. The clerestory walls are of roughly-coursed stone, little better than rubble in parts. The south clerestory is of four bays, the western a little shorter than the others, articulated by shallow stepped buttresses; similar buttresses are set diagonally at the eastern angles, whilst at the west end the masonry of the clerestory simply abuts against the eastern angles of the tower. Its square-headed windows are each of three cinquefoil-headed lights, within a chamfered frame. There is a chamfered oversailing course at the base of the parapet; above the buttresses (which end just below the parapet) stubs of crocketed pinnacles rest on the coping (probably re-set after a rebuilding of the parapet), except above the buttress between the eastern bays.

Although the clerestory windows on the north are of the same type, their arrangement is quite different; the baying is much more irregular, the westernmost bay being long and the two eastern bays relatively short; neither are the windows set central to the bays. The buttresses are continued up through the parapet, and again carry the remains of crocketed pinnacles.

The shallow-pitched east gable of the nave stands well above the chancel roof, and is of roughly-coursed stone and rubble; it is capped by the eroded remains of an unusual Sanctus bellcote carried on slabs cantilevered out from the apex of the gable, and consisting of a pair of piers linked by an eroded arch of rough triangular form, perhaps once capped by a gable

Inside the church the nave is slightly wider than the tower on the south and slightly narrower on the north. The arcades are of three bays, with two-centred arches; a short block of wall (refaced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in tooled-and-margined ashlar) separates the eastern (transept) arches from the western pair. The western bays of the south aisle have arches of two chamfered orders (with quite broad chamfers), springing from an octagonal pier with a moulded base set on a square plinth, and a moulded capital with a line of nail-head; there is a hoodmould, chamfered beneath, with a mask stop above the pier. The responds have an inner order of semi-octagonal plan and a square outer; the moulded base and plinth of the western and the capital of the eastern have been renewed. The impost moulding of the eastern respond is continued across the short block of wall to the western respond of the transept arch which, again of two chamfered orders with a hood, is taller than the others and springs from responds of similar form, except that the semi-octagonal inner order is much broader; the capitals mouldings are slightly more elaborate, with a groove on the necking,

The north arcade shows some significant differences in detail. The inner order of both arches and responds is broader than on the south, and has a broad chamfer, whilst the outer order only has a narrow chamfer; the hood is curved above and chamfered beneath, and again has a mask stop above the pier. The central pier has the upper angle of its abacus cut with large nail-head, very different to that on the south. The impost moulding of the eastern respond of the arcade and the transept arch are linked, as on the south; on the south the hoodmoulds of both arcade and transept arches come down onto this moulding, but on the north that of the transept arch is stopped short, implying that the arcade hoodmould is the earlier. As on the south, the lower part of the western respond has been renewed. The transept arch is very similar in detail and proportion to its southern counterpart.

Above the arcades, the clerestory windows have shallow segmental rear arches. The nave roof is of seven bays; the cambered ties are carried on wall-posts supported on stone corbels;

carvings at the feet of the posts include two shields with the Neville arms, borne on the north by a bull and on the south an angel, whilst other angels carry shields and musical instruments. There are arch braces from posts to ties, with large cusping of the same proportions as seen in the furnishings of the chancel. The ceiling between the ties is boarded, with moulded diagonal ribs (as in the chancel); there are carved bosses at the intersections of ribs, ties and wall-plate.

### ***After the Fire***

*Physically the nave walls remained intact (although the roof was completely destroyed) but in poor condition. The dressings of the arcades, chancel arch and clerestory windows were all badly affected. Following considerable debate, it did prove possible to retain the fabric of the walls in situ, although virtually all dressed stonework was replaced, and the arcade piers completely renewed. Dressings which on first examination appeared relatively unscathed (and were described as 'undamaged' in the report below) were subject to various tests, which showed that their structural integrity had in fact been seriously compromised and it would not have been safe to retain them.*

### ***The Western Quoins.***

*The collapse of plaster from the wall faces confirmed the suggestion of the 1998 report that the tower might have been built onto an earlier west wall. At the north-west angle the quoining of the early nave was exposed, and consisted of very large (up to c 0.80 m long by 0.65 m high) sandstone blocks laid in side-alternate fashion, with a slightly-projecting block at the foot revealed when the floor was taken up. There was a socket c120mm square and 50 mm deep cut into the face of the lowest quoin proper, and a smaller one into the upper angle of the next quoin up. It was clear that the original walling had been plastered externally; this survived where the tower wall had been added. The quoining at the south-west angle was less well preserved; the elongate blocks in the lower section seemed to have been cut back. These quoins appear to end c 2 m above the level of the arcade capitals, although the step-back in the wall face continues for some distance above this.*

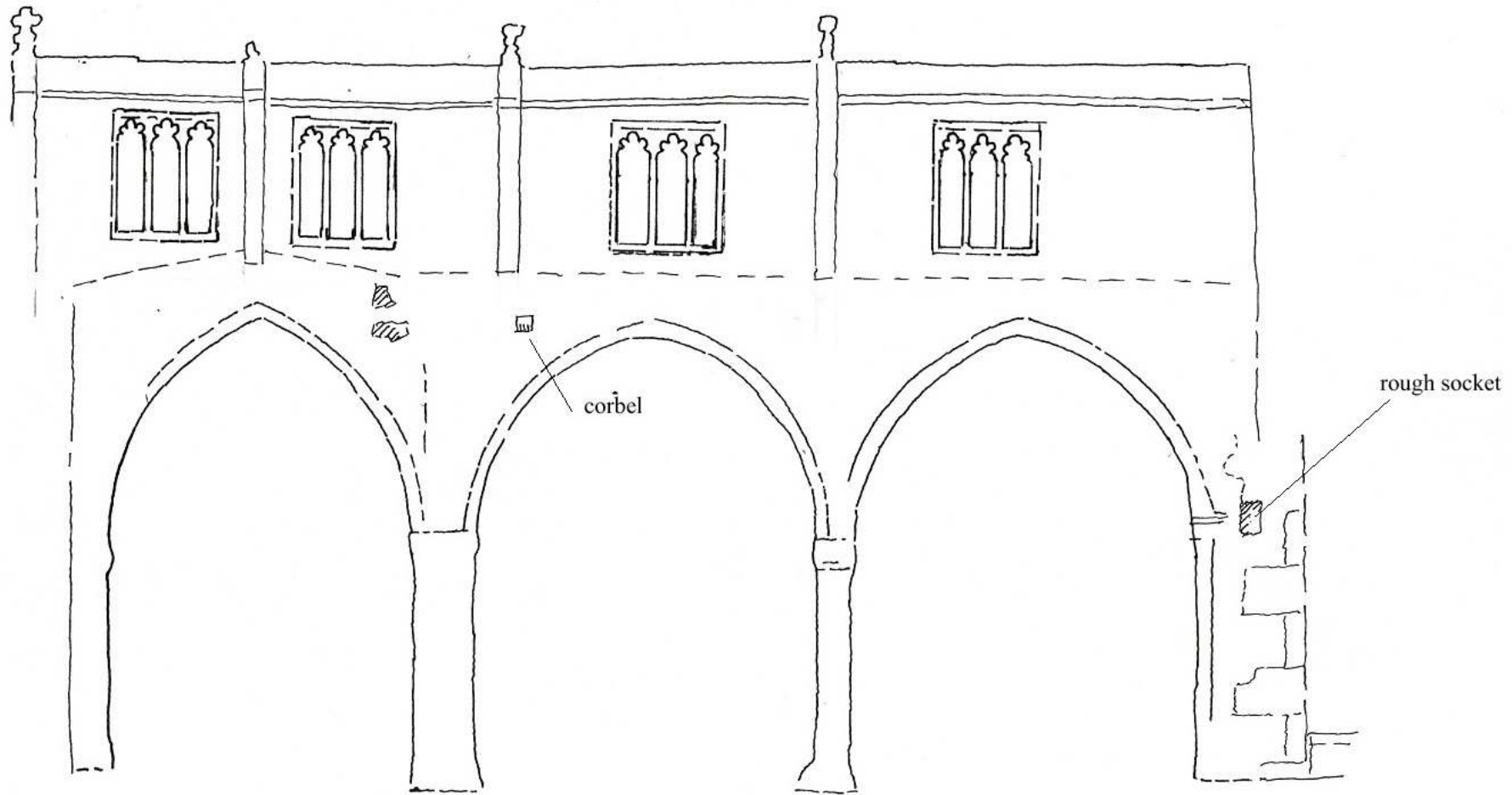
### ***The South Arcade.***

*The western respond of the south arcade was not too badly damaged, except for its capital, which had lost about half its mouldings. The first arch was only slightly damaged. The first pier had its base and shaft badly damaged, and only about a third of its capital surviving, although the head stop to the hoodmould above the pier was undamaged. The second arch again appeared to have suffered only minor damage. The second pier has its west-facing respond partly destroyed (the capital retained about half its section). Built into the central block of this pier, on the south, was a block with a roll-mould to two of its lower angles, presumably a re-used piece of a grave slab; above was an infilled socket, perhaps for part of a screen closing the east end of the aisle. The eastern side of the pier was very badly damaged, except for parts of its capital. The third arch had suffered moderate to serious damage, but not as much as the corresponding one on the north. The eastern respond was badly damaged throughout, although its elements retained their section in part.*

*Examination of the eastern pier prior to its removal showed that it had been more or less completely re-faced in 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century ashlar; detailed recording was not thought necessary.*

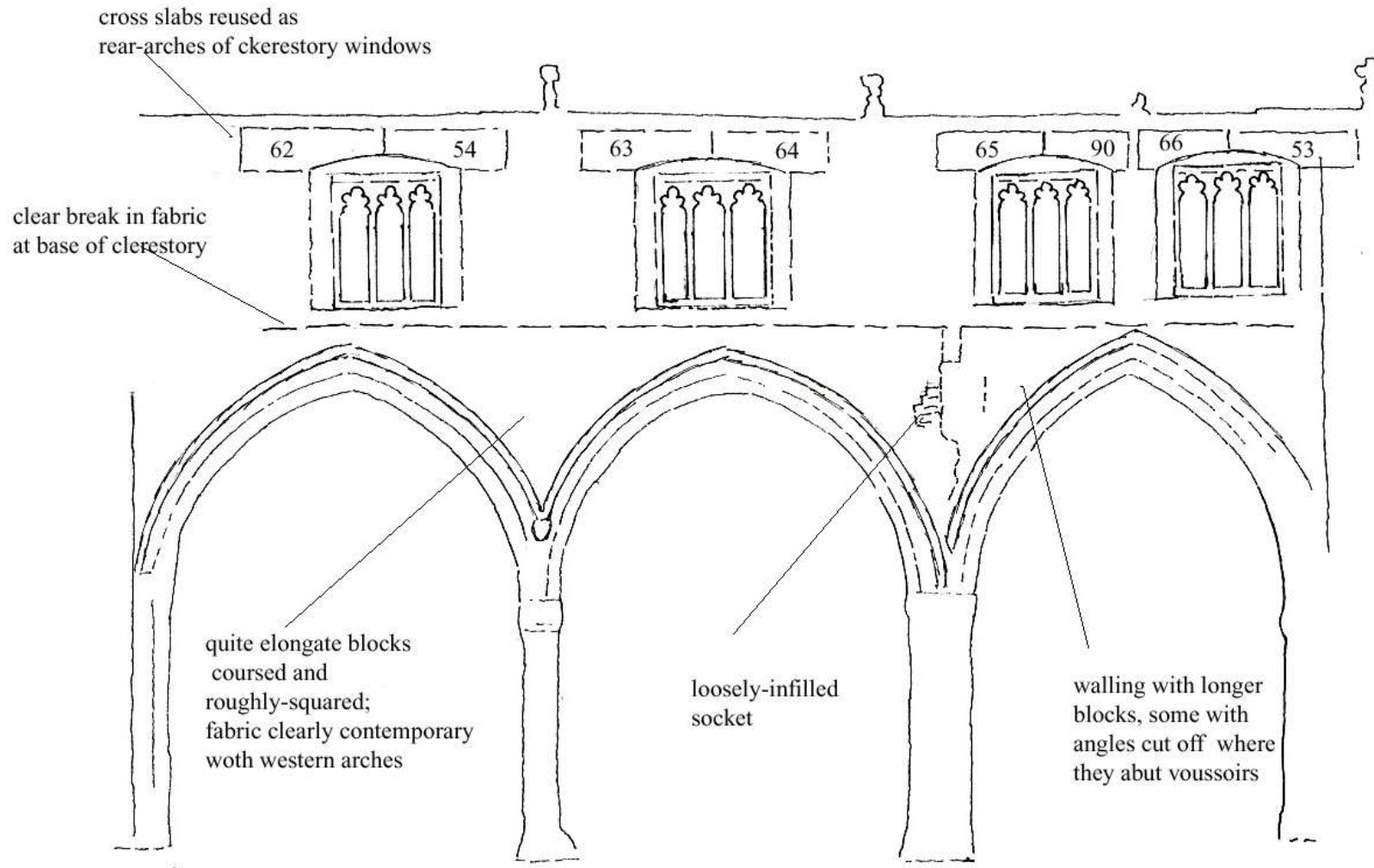


ST BRANDON, BRANCEPETH  
NORTH WALL OF NAVE: SKETCH ELEVATION OF EXTERNAL FACE

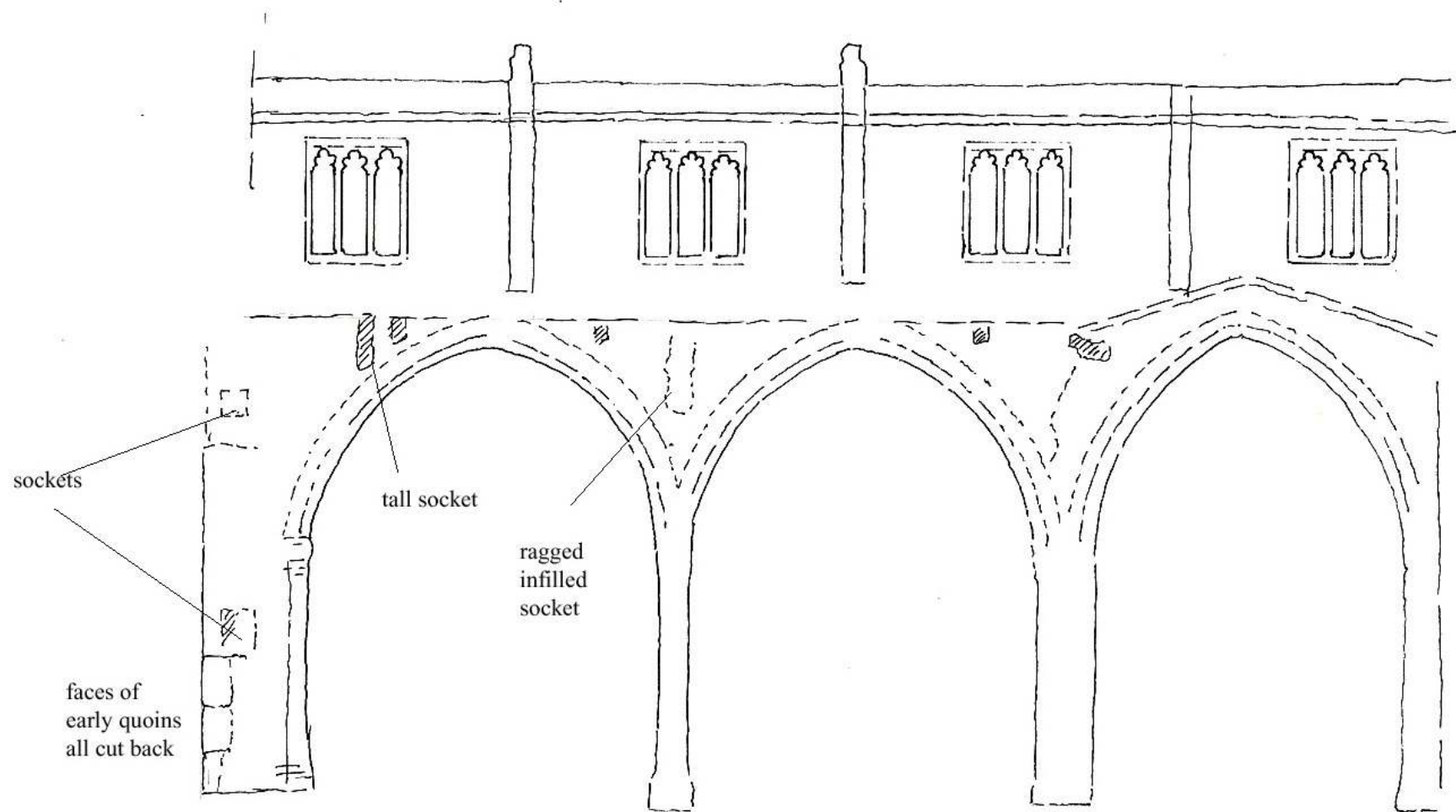


0 5 metres

ST BRANDON, BRANCEPETH  
NORTH WALL OF NAVE: SKETCH ELEVATION OF INTERNAL FACE

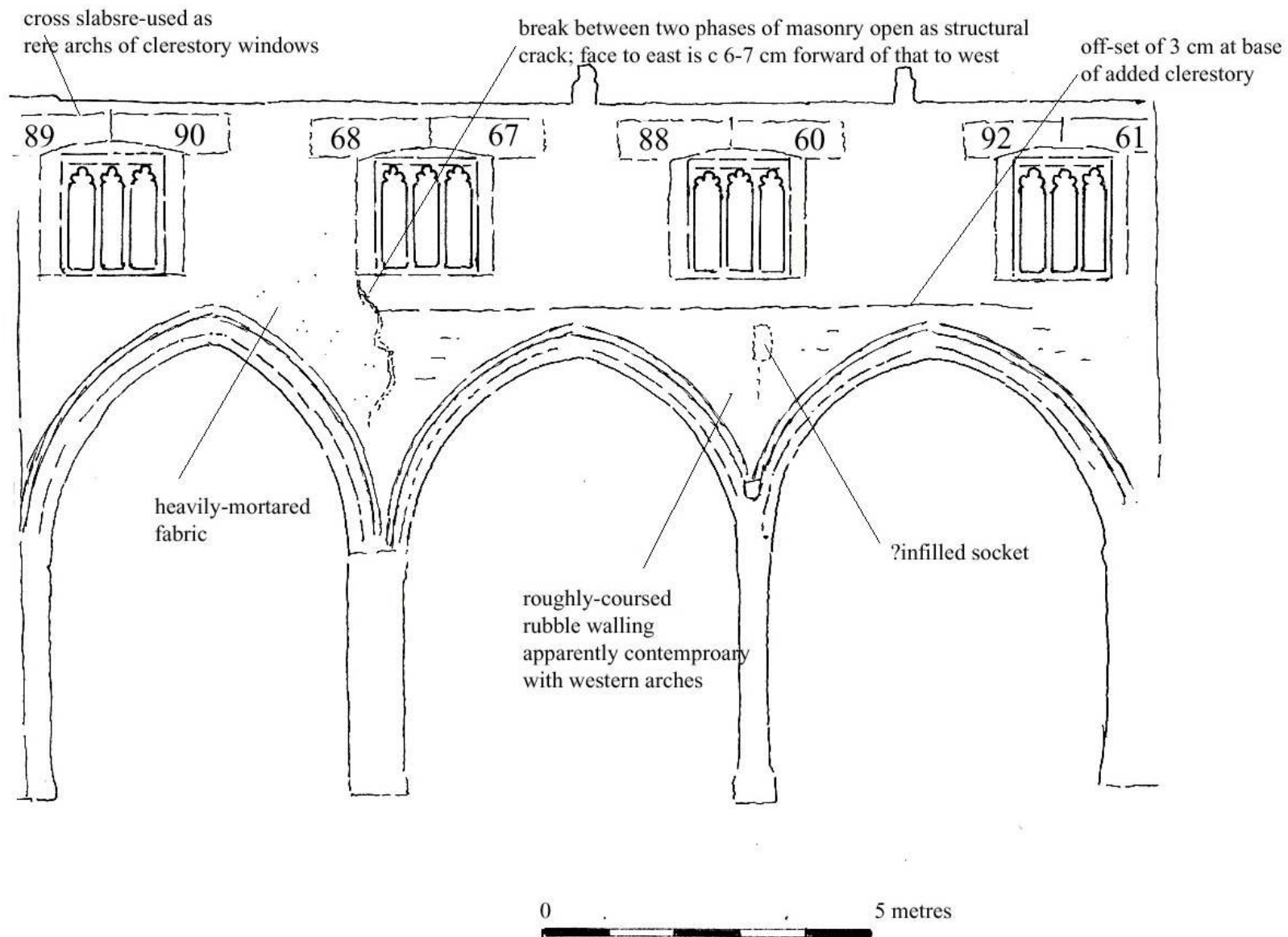


ST BRANDON, BRANCEPETH  
SOUTH WALL OF NAVE: SKETCH ELEVATION OF EXTERNAL FACE



0 5 metres

ST BRANDON, BRANCEPETH  
SOUTH WALL OF NAVE: SKETCH ELEVATION OF INTERNAL FACE



*When the eastern arch and respond were removed several pieces of re-used medieval cross slab grave covers were retrieved (99) and (100) from the respond and (101a-e) and (103) as voussoirs in the arch. Slab (102) formed part of the eastern respond of the arch.*

### ***The North Arcade.***

*The western respond of the north arcade had its moulded base somewhat damaged, and the capital more so, so that no part retained its full section. The respond showed some tooling and margining, suggesting some re-tooling in the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century. The western arch was badly damaged, especially towards the aisle; on the nave side the hoodmould remained fairly intact and its head stop above the first pier was cracked but otherwise intact. The first pier had a damaged base, and was spalling badly; the capital was badly damaged. The second arch was again badly damaged; few voussoirs retained their original section. The second pier had its west-facing capital virtually destroyed; the east-facing respond had its base only slightly damaged but its capital was in poor condition. The third arch was in a very bad state indeed, and the eastern respond again all quite badly damaged.*

*The eastern pier was recorded in detail prior to its replacement:*

### ***The South Face***

*Here the central part of the pier had been faced in lightly-tooled ashlar (dating from the 1864 restoration, prior to which the piers had been panelled round?). Following the fire, most of this had fallen away. The thin ashlar blocks had been held in place by iron cramps (which remain in position); behind these was a roughly-tooled surface of older stonework. There was an obvious break in coursing between this and the large cut blocks of the eastern respond, implying two phases of work within the respond (as was made more clear on the northern face of the pier). The south side of the base of the eastern respond (to the transept arch) showed some interesting detail, with a vertical band between two slightly-sunk panels. It was difficult to interpret this, whether it had some decorative intent or was simply the result of adaptation for later fittings.*

*The south face of the inner order of the western respond, four stones below the capital, had a rough square socket, which must have related to a screen or some other type of fitting, either in the medieval or Cosin period.*

### ***The North Face***

*This was not re-faced like the south, although there has been some replacement of dressings around the base. The irregular joint between the coursed blocks of the westward- and eastward-facing responds is much clearer. One of the large blocks of the outer order of the westward-facing respond, at mid-height, has clearly been cut to an L-shaped form when the eastern respond was constructed. A little above this is a large and roughly-hacked socket which presumably took the end of a timber spanning the aisle.*

*When the eastern respond of the arcade was removed two cross slab fragments (98) and (99) were found re-used within it, five pieces of slab (100) were re-used as voussoirs in the eastern arch of the arcade.*

### ***The Walls above the Arcades.***

*After the fire the external faces of the nave walls have lost much of their plaster (especially the north wall) but most of the plaster remained on the internal faces, especially on the south.*

### ***The South Wall.***

*On the south side was the same slight internal set-back at the base of the clerestory, and a possible infilled socket just below this, above the western pier of the arcade. The external face of the wall showed sockets for the tie-beams of the aisle roof. In the spandrel above the western pier the walling was barely even coursed, the quite large blocks being only very roughly shaped. Above the eastern there appeared to be a discontinuity; whereas the stone to the east was more heavily mortared and plastered, a ragged break rose from the line of the west face of the pier and then angled eastward, almost as if the older masonry was to the east, and the walling to the west has been built or rebuilt on top of it. Certainly the stone to the west was much cleaner, and none of the stones which abut on the extrados of the arch voussoirs look to have been broken, as they might if the arch had been inserted into a pre-existing wall. It seems likely that (as on the north) this western section of walling was contemporary with the arches below. On the internal face of the wall, this western section of walling included a number of blocks with fine diagonal tooling, presumably re-used. There was a very clear infilled socket c 0.50 m square directly above the eastern pier, with above and east of it the open socket that took the beam spanning the east end of the south aisle. To the west of the arcade two large square sockets were cut into the very end of the wall (the angle quoins of the early nave), one at a level a little below the respond capital and the other at rather more than half the height of the arch itself.*

### ***The North Wall.***

*In the internal face of the wall there was a straight joint, above the eastern pier and roughly in line with the springing of the respond on the eastern face of the pier, although the walling to east and west was of similar character (coursed roughly-squared stone) and there was no sign of any quoining; immediately to the west of this joint was what looked like a loosely-infilled socket, with a possible second one immediately to the east immediately below the slight set back (4-5 cm) just above the level of the apex of the arcade arches, which marked the base of the added clerestory. On the external face of the wall there was a corresponding joint, rising straight for c 2.5 m above the pier, to end in a disturbed area with two big sockets for timbers spanning the east end of the aisle.*

*To the west of the joint the arcade arches and the walling above looked contemporary; to the east the transept arch looked like an insertion, several of the blocks of the adjacent walling having roughly cut ends.*

*A series of simple corbels took the wall-plate on the inner side of the north aisle; higher up the change in build at the base of the clerestory was marked on this face by a course of much thinner stone.*

*At the west end of the arcade there was a rough socket, a little beyond and at the same level as the capital of the western respond.*



### ***The Clerestory.***

*Loss of plaster after the fire shows the shallow segmental rear arches of the clerestory windows to be each to be made up of two large blocks, meeting in a vertical joint at the centre (where there had generally been some degree of movement). Most of these blocks (at least 10 out of the 16) were re-used cross slabs (some in poor condition); these were later removed (see Sepulchral Monuments Section).*

### ***The East Gable***

*The Sacring Bellcote on the East Gable was dismantled; it proved to stand on a base of brickwork of 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup>-century character, showing that it had already been reconstructed at least once.*

### ***The Nave Roof***

The roof was completely destroyed. The fallen tie-beams, very badly burned, had been moved around by firemen and scaffolders, so recording their positions was pointless. The corbels for the wall-posts on the north were all damaged to some extent; the eastern two had been completely destroyed. On the south the westernmost corbel survived intact, the second had gone, and the others were damaged to a greater or lesser extent.

## **C The South Aisle**

The **South Aisle** is constructed of roughly coursed and roughly-squared stone, little better than rubble in parts, and has a shallowly-pitched roof. The west end has a chamfered plinth (partly renewed) a little lower in level than that of the adjacent tower, and with a steeper angle to its chamfer. The plinth extends around a stepped buttress, rising to about half the height of the wall, which projects southwards at the south-west angle of the aisle, but is not continued along the south wall. On the south face of this buttress are traces of an incised sundial, a faint circle and a socket for the gnomon remaining visible. The west window of the aisle is a pair of lancets, with chamfered surrounds, divided by a mullion. Its stonework seems old in parts, although the sill is tooled ashlar and must be a replacement; a curving line in the stonework to the north of the window head may indicate a previous window, but this remains uncertain.

The south wall of the aisle is of four bays, with a late 19<sup>th</sup>-century porch attached to the second. There is an ashlar parapet (partly renewed) carried on a chamfered oversailing course, with a chamfered coping. The first, westernmost, bay has no openings, although there seems to be a vertical line of disturbance to the left of centre which presumably relates to one of the buttresses shown here on the 1825 plan. Inside the porch is the old south doorway, which has a two-centred arch with a single chamfer, broken by moulded impost blocks with leaf ornament of 13<sup>th</sup>-century character; there is a hoodmould, chamfered beneath, with worn mask stops. The two bays to the east of the porch are divided by an old stepped buttress rising to about two-thirds the height of the wall; its base seems to have been disturbed (and underpinned, presumably when a perimeter drain was created) and has a plinth on either side but not on its end. Each bay has a 19<sup>th</sup>-century two-light window, with dressings of a grey sandstone with vivid ferruginous staining; each has trefoil-headed lights, with a larger quatrefoil in the spandrel, within a hollow-chamfered arch.



At its east end the wall abuts against the better-quality squared stonework of the south transept; from their relationship the transept all appears the earlier.

Inside the aisle the west window has a three-centred rear arch; the individual lights are rebated internally. The south doorway has a shallow segmental rear arch, and the two 19<sup>th</sup>-century winders further east, segmental-pointed rear arches with a chamfer only to their heads. At the east end of the south wall is a slender semi-octagonal respond for an arch, apparently never completed, to the pier that separates the transept arch and arcade; this has a swept base moulding that looks quite 'late' and a simply-moulded capital. The aisle roof is of eight bays, with fairly light principals springing from moulded corbels.

### *After the Fire*

*The west window of the aisle has cut dressings to its jambs, but a rough three-centred rear arch that was largely of brick; were the cut dressings re-used material?. Below the sill, and off-set a little to the south of the centre-line of the present opening, was the lower part of an earlier window only 1.24 m wide its south jamb c 0.10 m north of the line of the south jamb of its successor and its sill c 0.90 m below the present one.*

*The internal face of the south wall, when stripped of plaster, showed much of interest. All the walling was of coursed roughly-squared stone (of rather better quality to the east of the door); there were the usual small sockets for the removed dado. The stonework of the south door was intact, although the door itself had gone, leaving only its metal hinges. There was a clear vertical break in the masonry a little to the east of the doorway; the section of wall to the west of this (including the doorway), as far as a ragged break just short of the south-west corner, was vertical, and gave the appearance of having been rebuilt. The eastern part of the wall, in contrast, had a pronounced batter, although its uppermost courses looked like a 19<sup>th</sup>-century rebuild. Low down in this section of the wall were a number of elongate blocks, almost certainly re-used medieval grave slabs, including one block 1.4 m long around 0.50 m below the sill of the easternmost window. The two windows in this section had rear arches of 19<sup>th</sup>-century ashlar, and jambs (apart from the western jamb of the western window) that were clearly insertions, but above their heads were the semicircular brick rear arches of 18<sup>th</sup>-century predecessors. The arch respond at the east end of the wall was badly damaged, and has been completely renewed. The eight wall-head corbels were damaged.*

## **D The South Porch**

The late-19th century **South Porch** is of ashlar, with a moulded plinth and stepped buttresses at the end of each side wall. The outer arch is of four-centred form with a continuous casement moulding between two waves, and a chamfered hood with turned-back ends; above is a shield with the monogram 'ihc'. and a shallow gable; the parapet has a moulded string at its base, a moulded coping, and a cross finial on the gable. The side walls each have a stone spout breaking the string at the base of the parapet.

## **E The North Aisle**

The west wall of the aisle is built of coursed squared stone. There is a steep chamfered plinth, like that of the south aisle, but here set only slightly below the level of the adjacent tower plinth; it does not continue round the large stepped diagonal buttress at the north-west

angle. The uppermost four courses of the wall are laid on a slope following the roof pitch, which is rather steeper than that of the south aisle; there has been considerable replacement in modern stone. The west window of the aisle is similar to that of the south aisle; the north jamb and head look old, and there is a crude relieving arch directly above.

The four-bay north wall of the aisle is of similar fabric, more regular than that of the south aisle, but as on the south, it has no real plinth. There is a parapet, partly of renewed stone, with a chamfered oversailing course at its base and a chamfered coping. The bay west of the porch has a considerable amount of renewed stone, and no sign of any structural feature. The north door, inside the porch, is very plain, with a segmental-pointed arch that has a simple continuous chamfer. East of the porch the third and fourth bays are divided by an old stepped buttress, rising almost to the base of the parapet.

The third bay has a cement-topped plinth-like feature extending for c 2 m beyond the porch, of uncertain purpose and possibly of relatively recent date. The third and fourth bays each have a window of two trefoil-headed lights with an elongated quatrefoil in the spandrel, under a steep two-centred arch with a chamfered frame; that in the fourth bay has its sill set a little higher than the other; their jambs seem old but their other dressings are clearly 19<sup>th</sup>-century restoration.

Inside the aisle the west window has a segmental rear arch, and the same internal step or rebate to its outer lights as is seen in the corresponding window in the south aisle. The north door has a segmental rear arch like that of the south, and the two windows east of the door have segmental rear arches; at the east end of the wall is a respond for an intended arch between aisle and transept, very similar to that opposite. The roof of the aisle is of five bays, with principals carried on short wall-posts, springing from variously-shaped corbels. There are short arch braces from posts to principals; at their upper ends, above the arcade, the principals are supported on plain corbels. There are two levels of purlins, and heavy square-section rafters.

### ***After the Fire***

*The west wall of the aisle and the upper parts of the north wall retained their plaster: the principal roof timbers of the western bay survived in a charred state (see drawing 5 a). The internal face of the north wall was of coursed roughly-squared stone/rubble (with noticeably smaller stones than in the tower); there were some larger blocks in the lower courses. In the lower 1 m of so were a considerable number of small sockets relating to the fixing of the dado panelling. Of the five corbels at the head of the north wall, the third (from west) was broken and the fourth just a shattered stub. The respond at the east end of the north wall was quite badly damaged*

### **F The North Porch**

This is a 17<sup>th</sup>-century addition, part of Cosin's work, and quite a notable piece from an architectural point of view. It is built of ashlar, now badly weathered in parts, and has a chamfered plinth, which continues below the openings. The principal entrance is on the north, and has a round arch with a pendant keystone carrying an elaborate mask (a boar?), and a chamfered surround broken by a chamfered impost band carried across the stepped Ionic pilasters. Strapwork decoration frames the arch and rises to a frieze with cherubs' heads and a large moulded cornice; above this is a segmental-arched gable between two small ball-

capped finials. The side walls have similar but narrower arches with two-centred heads; that on the west now walled up; above are shields with Cosin's fret. The side walls have, above the cornice, an embattled parapet with a moulded coping.

## **G The South Transept**

Built of squared and coursed stone, this has a two-part chamfered plinth, with a course of large blocks between the steps; the plinth is continued round the stepped buttresses set diagonally at the southern angles of the transept. In the centre of the south wall is a window of three trefoil-headed lights, the centre one with an ogee arch, with cusped mouchettes above, under a chamfered four-centred arch; only its mullions have been restored. The parapet is carried on an oversailing hollow-chamfered course, and has a moulded coping; it runs at the same level across the south end of the transept, without any gable. The east side of the transept is largely concealed by the adjacent south-east chapel.

Inside, the south window has a four-centred rear arch with a chamfer to its head only; in the east wall (covered externally by the South East Chapel) is a window of three trefoil-headed ogival lights with two trefoils and a quatrefoil over, with a segmental-pointed rear arch. At the north end of the east wall is a square-headed opening, evidently a squint (although it extends down to ground level) with a chamfered lintel, aligned on the chancel altar; Fowler (1863, 75) simply refers to it as 'a recess which has probably been connected with the staircase to the rood-loft'.

The roof structure of the transept consists only of seven slightly cranked ties, carrying boards.

### ***After the Fire***

*The eastern of the two lintels of the squint at the north end of the east wall was formed by a re-used medieval grave slab (23).*

*The short west wall of the transept showed various structural cracks; the dressings of the respond for the arch intended to span the east end of the aisle were all very short on this side, so that the respond was not bonded into the wall very well at all, perhaps suggesting that it pre-dated the transept?*

*The exposed lower walls of the transept show the usual sockets etc.; at the east end of the south wall was small and rough recess, difficult to interpret as either the medieval aumbry or piscina. One might have expected here. Further up, c 2 m above the floor, was a re-used block with a hollow-chamfered edge studded with either ball-flower or some other similar type of ornament.*

*To the west of the window was a triangular-headed panel infilled with old brick (set on edge) that presumably related to some previous wall monument.*

*The internal dressings of the south window survived the fire better than most in the church; the east window had lost parts of the internal face of its tracery, although the 19th-century stained glass (angels) in its head has in fact survived. The lower wall was of coursed roughly-squared stone, with some quite large blocks. The plaster has fallen from the lintels of the squint into the chancel, the eastern at least being a medieval grave slab (showing an incised cross shaft); these lintels have a worrying crack in them. The wall above had a ragged break, c 1.5 m from the north end, and extending virtually to eaves level. Between this*

*crack and the north end were a number of elongate slabs, clearly grave slabs - one had its lower face partly exposed, showing a simple incised cross within a circle. Is this area a later patch, or is the crack just a structural movement? The old buff plaster (with patches of white colouring) on this wall does not seem to extend north of the crack. However, south of the crack, another elongate slab is re-used directly above the apex of the rear arch of the east window.*

## **H The North Transept**

This transept is also of good-quality squared stone, with similar plinth, buttresses and parapet to its southern counterpart; re-used in the vertical section of the plinth on the east side are two pieces of medieval cross slabs (see ‘Sepulchral Monuments’ section). The three-light window on the north of the transept has dressing of tooled 18<sup>th</sup>-century ashlar (except for the lower part of its sill); it is of three cinquefoil-headed lights with flowing tracery above. There is a disturbed area in the masonry round its head, as if it replaces a slightly larger opening.

The short west wall of the transept is considerable taller than the adjacent north aisle, the oversailing course at the base of the parapet returning vertically down to join the aisle parapet.

On the east of the transept is a window of three cinquefoil-headed lights, the central one with an ogival top, with cusped mouchettes over, under a chamfered four-centred arch; the mullions and tracery are restoration but the outer arch seems medieval.

Inside the north window has a segmental rear arch and the east window a four-centred one. At the south end of the east wall is another squint, narrower than that on the south, but again with a chamfered lintel. The simple roof structure is rather like that of the south transept, but has only five ties, of rather heavier scantling, four of which are carried at their eastern ends by simple corbels.

### ***After the Fire***

*The western of the two slabs forming lintels to the squint at the south end of the east wall had a hollow chamfer studded with four-lobed flowers on its edge (and with traces of old red pigment) ; the similarity between the diagonal tooling of its face and soffit, and that of the adjacent dressings suggested that this was an original in situ architectural feature rather than a re-used piece.*

*After the fire plaster remained on the upper parts of the walls of the transept and there was evidence of an earlier layer, buff in colour, hacked to key in the later one that overlay it. One fragment of wall painting survived high on the east wall, near its south end (1.3 m above the capital of the eastern respond of the north arcade, and c 0.50 m from the south end of the wall), showing evidence of two lines of black-letter text, but insufficient to be decipherable.*

*The lower walls were of coursed roughly-squared fabric with quite a number of elongate stones; there was no clear evidence of any medieval ritual features such as aumbries or piscinae. As usual there was many small sockets for the former panelled dado. Low in the east wall, just west of the squint and c 1 m above the floor, was an elongate stone that was probably a cross slab; in same wall, about 4 m up, close to the springing of the rear arch of*

*the east window rear arch, was an elongate block with a roll-moulded lower edge, presumably another grave cover.*

*There were four corbels at the top of the east wall, which had all survived more or less intact; their spacing suggests there should be a fifth, of which there is no sign, at the north end.*

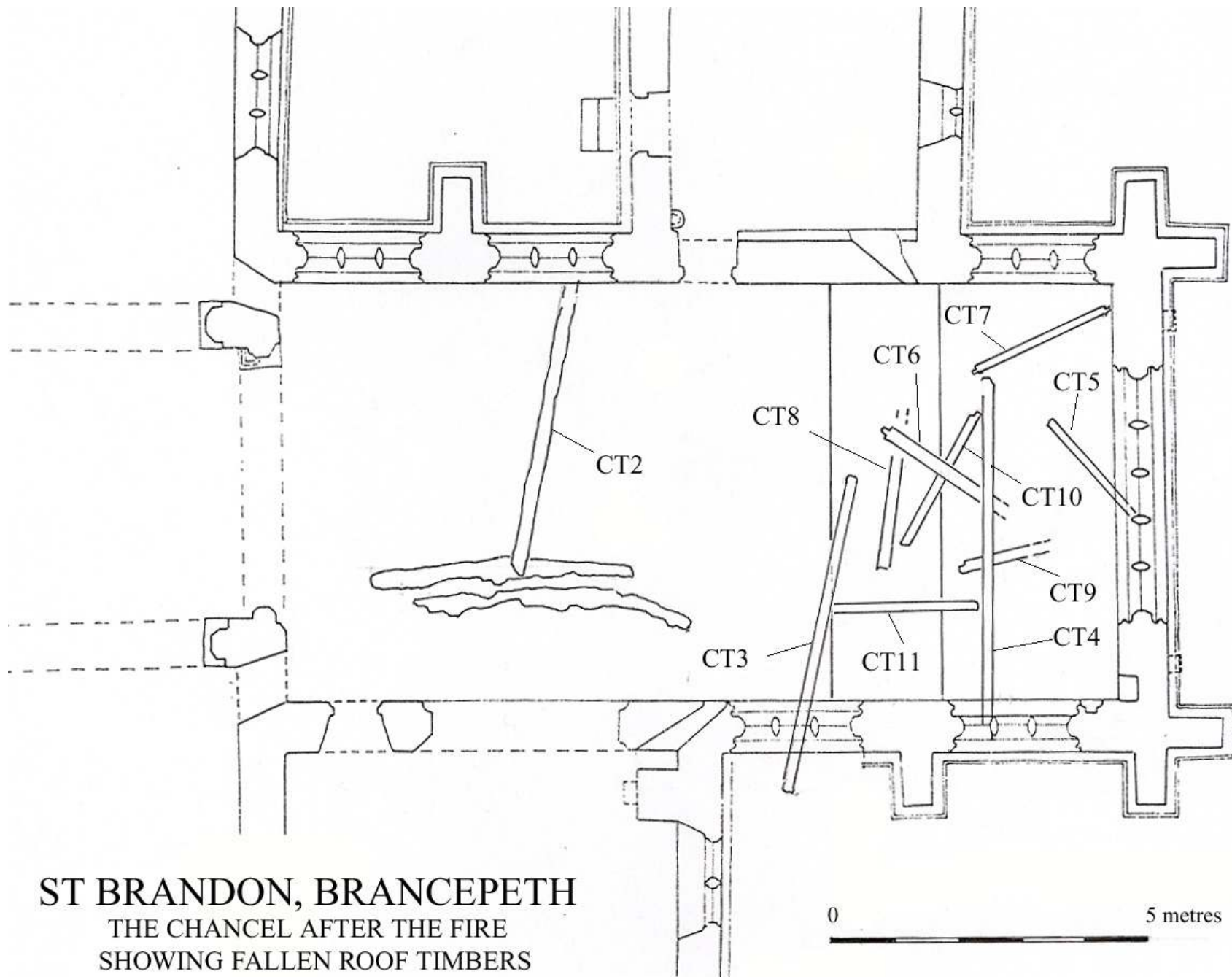
## **J The Chancel**

This has a large two-stepped plinth, the upper element having a bold convex moulding; there is also a moulded string course directly below the windows; the plinth is continued round the stepped buttresses which articulate the bays and are set in pairs at the eastern angles. There is a hollow-moulded string at the base of the parapet, which has a moulded coping. On the south there are two bays to the east of the south-eastern chapel, and on the north two to the west of the sacristy and one to the east. Each bay of the side walls has a window of three cinquefoil-headed lights with rectilinear tracery above, under a steep two-chamfered arch with a casement-moulded outer frame and a hollow-moulded hood with turned back ends; the frames and hoodmoulds are old but the tracery is all 19<sup>th</sup>-century restoration.

At the east end the central section of the string, below the five-light window, is 19<sup>th</sup>-century replacement, and the side sections have been partly cut away. Immediately above the string, c 0.40 m outside the jambs of the window, are projecting blocks with blank shields. The window has the same casement-moulded frame as those in the side walls; there are five cinquefoil-headed lights with rectilinear tracery above, and a moulded hood with turned back ends; all the tracery and parts of the surrounds (including the sill) are clearly restoration. The moulded string below the parapet is stepped up to accommodate the head of the east window. Built into the north face of the southern buttress is a sadly-decayed quatrefoil panel with Christ in majesty, and angels in the upper corners (see Lapidary Material 1).

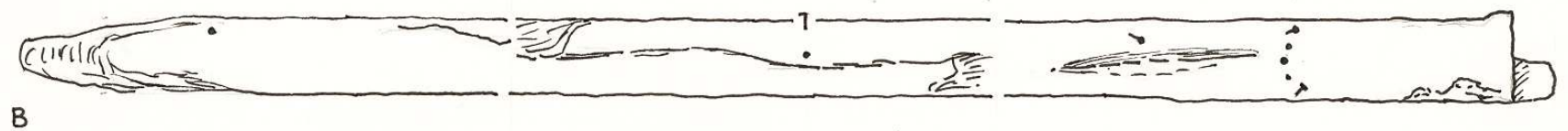
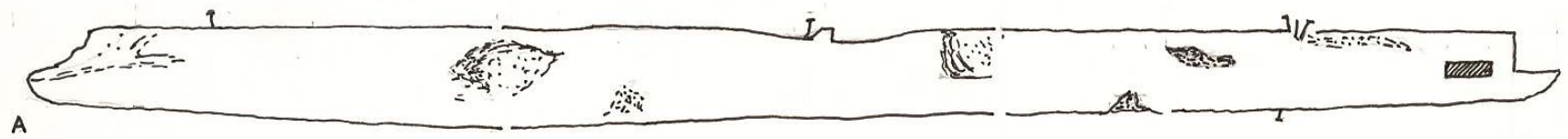
Inside the building the chancel arch of two chamfered orders, springing from semi-octagonal responds (of similar proportions to those of the south arcade) which have simple moulded capitals and renewed bases on square plinths; much of the detail of the arch is concealed by the fittings and furnishings. On either side of the arch, largely concealed by panelling, were squints cutting diagonally between the western angles of the chancel and the inner eastern angles of the transepts. At the west end of the south wall a doorway into the South-East Chapel, has a flattened ogee head and a continuous hollow chamfer. Immediately to the east of it is an arch (largely concealed by a panelled surround) which appears to be semicircular, with a large hollow chamfer, springing from heavy moulded imposts of rather peculiar section. The windows in the side walls all have hollow-chamfered internal frames, and the tracery set on the centre-line of the wall. There are no old ritual features exposed in the sanctuary, except that the internal sill of the easternmost window in the south wall is lowered, possibly to form a sedilia; any detail is concealed by post-medieval panelling. On its east side is a small ogee-arched recess which, together with the adjacent section of window jamb (which has a good pyramidal stop) is clearly of 19<sup>th</sup>-century date in its present form.

On the north of the chancel is the doorway into the Sacristy, with two-centred archway with continuous mouldings, a quarter-round and a chamfer.



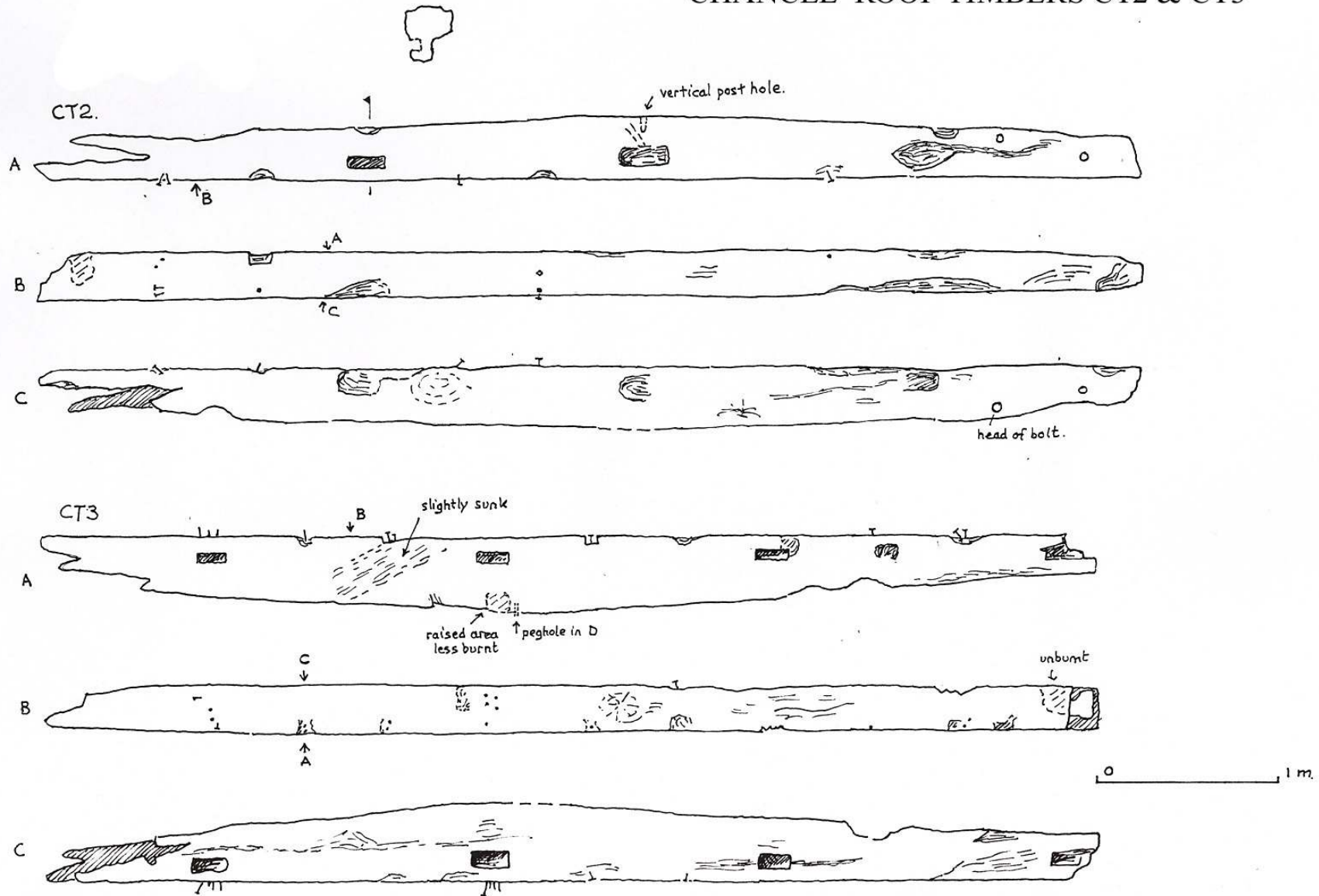
**ST BRANDON, BRANCEPETH**  
THE CHANCEL AFTER THE FIRE  
SHOWING FALLEN ROOF TIMBERS

ST BRANDIN, BRANCEPETH  
CHANCEL ROOF TIMBERS CT1



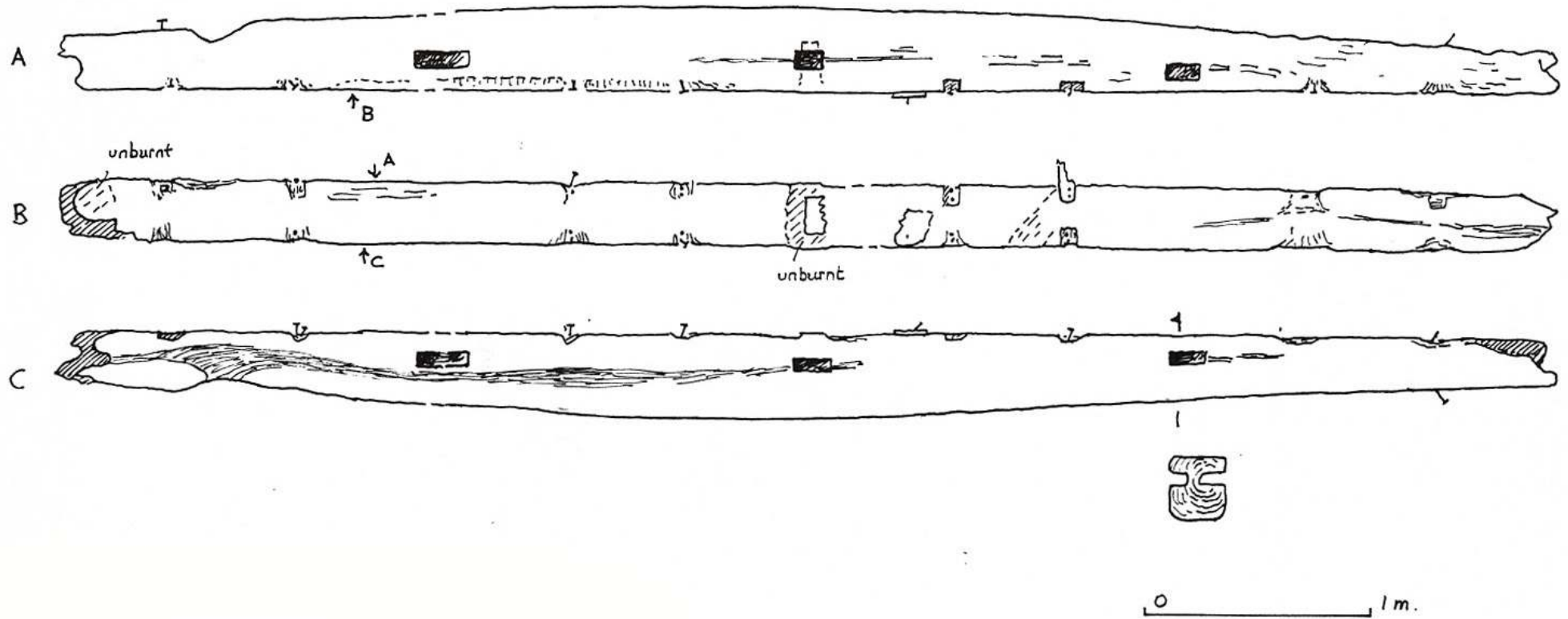



ST BRANDON, BRANCEPETH  
CHANCEL ROOF TIMBERS CT2 & CT3



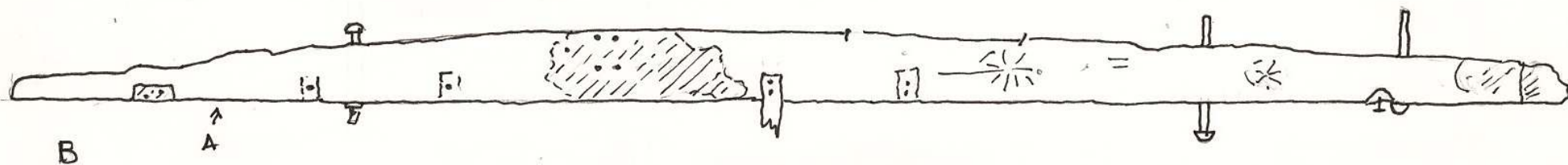
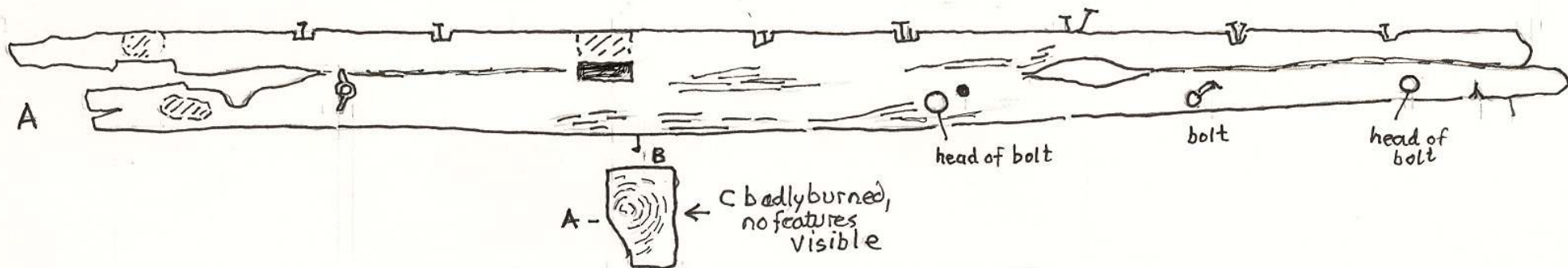
ST BRANDON, BRANCEPETH  
CHANCEL ROOF TIMBERS CT4

CT4



 unburnt areas

# ST BRANDON, BRANCEPETH CHANCEL ROOF TIMBERS CT5



 1m.

ST BRANDON, BRANCEPETH  
CHANCEL ROOF TIMBERS CT6, 7 & 8

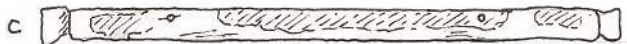
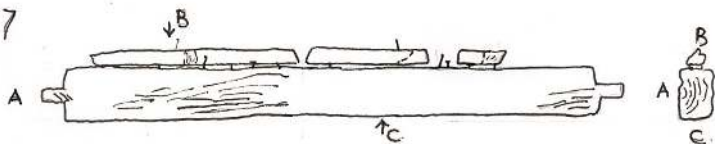
CT8

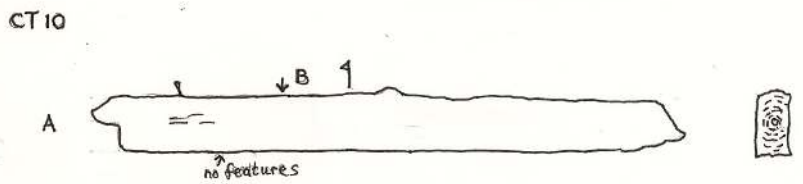
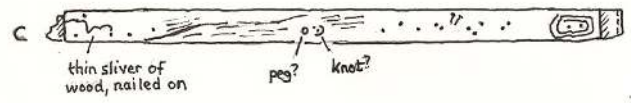
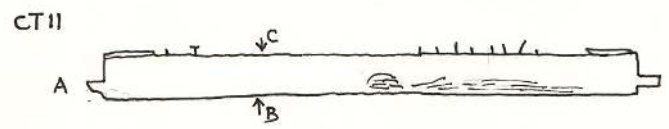
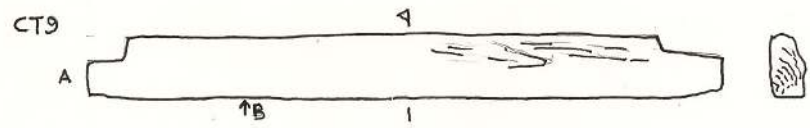


CT6



CT7





ST BRANDON, BRANCEPETH  
 CHANCEL ROOF TIMBERS  
 CT9, 10 & 11

The roof structure of the chancel is concealed by the splendid panelled ceiling, which has been described as 'faintly Gothic' and known to be of 1638. It is basically a flat boarded ceiling with diagonal intersecting ribs, with pendants at their intersections and where they met the walls; the section over the sanctuary is divided off by a transverse moulded beam carrying an inverted version of the openwork cresting of the chancel stalls and panelling, and provided with a mock lierne-vault with a central sun, and angels carrying Latin inscriptions in both Black letter and Roman capitals, all very much a return to the 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> century in style. The best record of the many and varied roof bosses of the chancel is to be found in the RCHM photographic survey of 1967 (see appendix)

### ***After the Fire***

*In the fire the dressings of the chancel arch were more or less completely destroyed, more so than those of any other major feature in the church. All the dressings of the arch and responds were renewed, although the outer jambs and lintels of the flanking squints were retained (see descriptions of transepts).*

*When the internal face of the north wall was stripped of plaster, a number of interesting features were exposed. The westernmost section of wall was of coursed and squared blocks of irregular size, like those of the south wall opposite. Beneath the west jamb of the second window came a change to rather rougher stonework, still coursed, then just beyond the eastern jamb of the same window a ragged break, exaggerated by structural movement but almost certainly a break in build, to fabric with rather smaller stones, which continued to the east end. The two windows towards the west end of the wall had both lost most of the internal face of their tracery. The doorway into the Sacristy remained in better condition; its ashlar surround showed several good mason's marks; the door itself had gone, but the strap hinges remained in position, and a pile of nails and other ironwork on the threshold.*

*On the south side of the chancel, all the stonework of the arch to the south chapel was exposed, showing that arch and jambs had a deep hollow chamfer that was almost a casement moulding. The impostes were peculiar, and of a quite different character, suggesting that they might be 12<sup>th</sup>-century pieces, perhaps slightly re-cut. Some of the stonework in this area (notably near the foot of the wall) included larger well-squared blocks, some of which show diagonal tooling; they may have been re-used material. There was a rough projecting footing beneath the doorway into the Chapel, and one block of this bore a hollow chamfer studded with raised four-lobed flowers (L2).*

*In the eastern part of the wall the western of the two windows had suffered more damage to its tracery than the eastern; west of it is the a small square-headed opening of a squint from the south-east chapel, its dressings still concealed by plaster. Further east the stonework of the possible sedile beneath the eastern window was exposed; this did appear to be an old feature, but its were of plain square section, as if it was always intended that they should be concealed by woodwork..*

*Following the fire most of the walls of the chancel retained their plaster, although this was often the 'old' buff-coloured plaster that underlies the more recent white layer. The only area where there seemed to be traces of paintings was on the north wall, high up, where the plain memorial tablet reputedly intended for Cosin's funerary inscription had hung. There appeared to be remains of a large figure, possibly a woman in Tudor costume, largely expressed in red ochre. The bracket from which the wooden plaque had been hung*

*obliterated the head, but below this was what looked like a collar, with a pattern of reversed SS; below and to the left an arm and elbow appeared to be outlined, with to the right swirling patterns in black; below a swelling skirt was in darker red ochre.*

*The east end wall retained most of its plaster, and the tracery of the east window had only suffered slight damage., At the extreme south end of the wall was a small rectangular recess c 0.35 m wide and 0.15 m high, and 0.25 m deep, its sill c 1.5 m above the ground; it was previously concealed by the reredos, and its function is uncertain.*

### ***The Roof Structure***

*The roof structure of the chancel had been destroyed except for the small diagonal beams at each corner; these remained in position, badly charred, at the east end. The roof timbers had also been supported by a series of small moulded corbels, four on each side wall and two at each end. Most of these remained, the majority apparently in fair condition.*

*The fallen and charred roof timbers of the chancel were recorded on plan before the church was cleared, and then examined more closely after they had been sawn up into manageable lengths and removed to the churchyard. At this stage all faces of timbers which retained significant recordable detail (mortices, nails, pieces of attached boarding) were drawn at 1:20 scale.*

*The roof appears to have been of five bays, with tie-beams that had level soffits, thickening at the centre to as to afford the leaded roof, carried by the ridge and single purlin on each side, a very shallow pitch. The recorded timbers comprised:*

- CT1 Probably a section of wall-plate (not located on the plan as it had been removed by the contractors before it was possible to commence archaeological recording.*
- CT2 A tie-beam*
- CT3 A tie beam*
- CT4 A tie-beam*
- CT5 Probably a section of wall-plate*
- CT6, 7 and 8 All probably either purlins or section of ridge*
- CT9 Uncertain*
- CT10 A purlin or section of ridge*
- CT11 Uncertain*

### **K The Lady Chapel (South East Chapel)**

This is set in the angle of chancel and south transept, and is of two bays. It is constructed of coursed squared stone; the east wall in particular is of rather inferior quality to the masonry of the adjacent chancel, and its fabric does not course in well with the dressings of the buttress at its southern end. Plinth, string course and parapet are of the same type as those of the chancel. In the south wall are a pair of three-light windows, again of the same type as those in the chancel, similarly restored; the buttress between the two (which awkwardly covers the end of the hoodmould of the adjacent window to the west) is entirely a 19<sup>th</sup>-century restoration, except perhaps for its base. The single south-ward projecting buttress at the east end of the wall is partly restoration. On the east wall the string course is of a rather different section to that elsewhere, with a level top section. Three courses of stonework intervene between the string and the window above, which is of two cinquefoil-headed lights under a



square head, with a hollow-moulded hood with turned-back ends; the jambs are of hollow-chamfered section. A broad chimney stack of 20<sup>th</sup> century date, rises from the external boiler room adjacent to the external face of the wall, behind the north end of the parapet.

Inside the chapel the arch to the chancel has a deep hollow chamfer to its eastern jamb, but the western cut back diagonal to the wall; the ogee-headed doorway alongside has a plain rear lintel. To the east of the arch a square-topped squint aligned on the chancel altar; this is now only accessible by means of a small arched recess behind a 20<sup>th</sup>-century internal flue that rises from the boiler room adjacent to the external face of the wall; all the detail of the recess is hidden by plaster, and it may be of relatively recent date. The south windows have casement-moulded surrounds; beneath the eastern is a piscina with a renewed semi-octagonal bowl and a pointed arch with a deep hollow moulding; its sill is now only c 0.30 m above the floor. In the west wall one sees the original external face of the earlier window in the east wall of the adjacent transept; its outer frame has a straight chamfer. In the east wall the two-light window has a slightly complex shouldered rear arch with a chamfered lintel.

The roof of the chapel is of two bays, with rather waney cambered ties against the end walls and in the centre, carrying a heavy square-section ridge and one pair of purlins, all chamfered on their lower angles.

### ***After the Fire***

*The floor of the chapel is raised c 0.60 m above that of the chancel; after the fire, the exposed step between the two parts could be seen to be partly at least composed of 20<sup>th</sup>-century brick.*

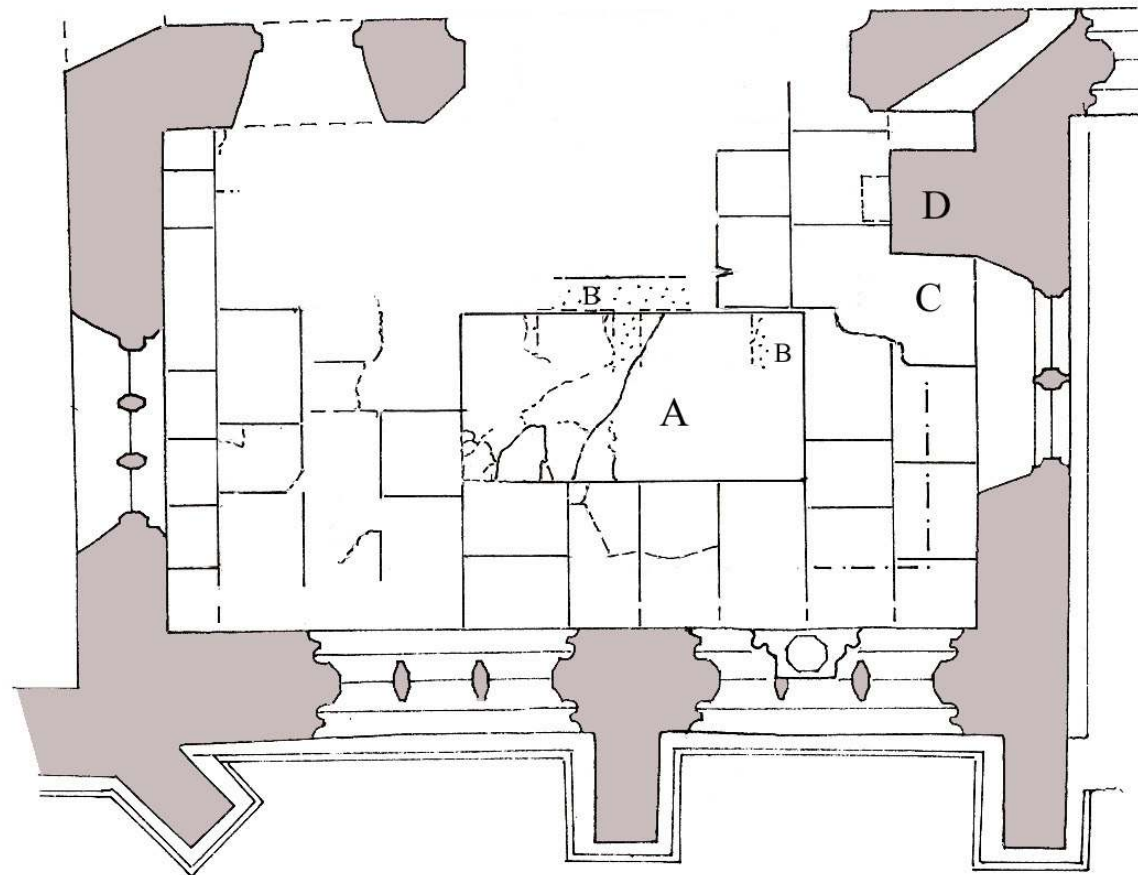
*The walls still retained their plaster after the fire; on the west, immediately to the north of the sill of the three-light window, a small re-used cross-slab (19) could be seen through the plaster, its design - a four-circle cross with a sword on the r. - showing up in white on the blackened surface. The windows of the chapel were in better condition than elsewhere, and retained their (plain) glazing.*

*At the foot of the west wall of the chapel (originally the external face of the west wall of the south transept) a section of chamfered plinth was exposed, with its chamfer off-set a few cm in front of the wall face above; might this relate to an earlier wall rebuilt on old footings?*

*Considerable remains of wall painting were exposed in the chapel, most significantly on the north wall; these were assessed in an April 2002 report by Hirst Conservation, who give an account of the stratigraphy of wall coverings, and a brief description of the paintings; the following notes are largely taken from this report. The remains of medieval painting are all thought to be of 16<sup>th</sup> century date. The remains of painting comprise:*

- (1) *On the lower part of the north wall, on either side of the doorway at its west end. A foliate pattern in red, probably used to frame the doorway and adjacent arch; the best-preserved section is on the west side of the doorway, and shows curling branches with many spiralling off-shoots, in dark red on a pinkish background.*
- (2) *Higher up the north wall, above the main arch into the chancel, 'yellow, orange and black paint is blended and applied in broader, more complex brushstrokes, suggestive of draper...it is probable that a figurative scene was depicted (although) no definite image can yet be deciphered'*
- (3) *On the west wall traces of decoration survive, but uncovering it would be difficult because the ground layer here is a fine limewash rather than a plaster.*

ST BRANDON'S CHURCH, BRANCEPETH  
THE LADY CHAPEL: FEATURES AT AND IMMEDIATELY  
BELOW LEVEL OF 19TH CENTURY FLOOR



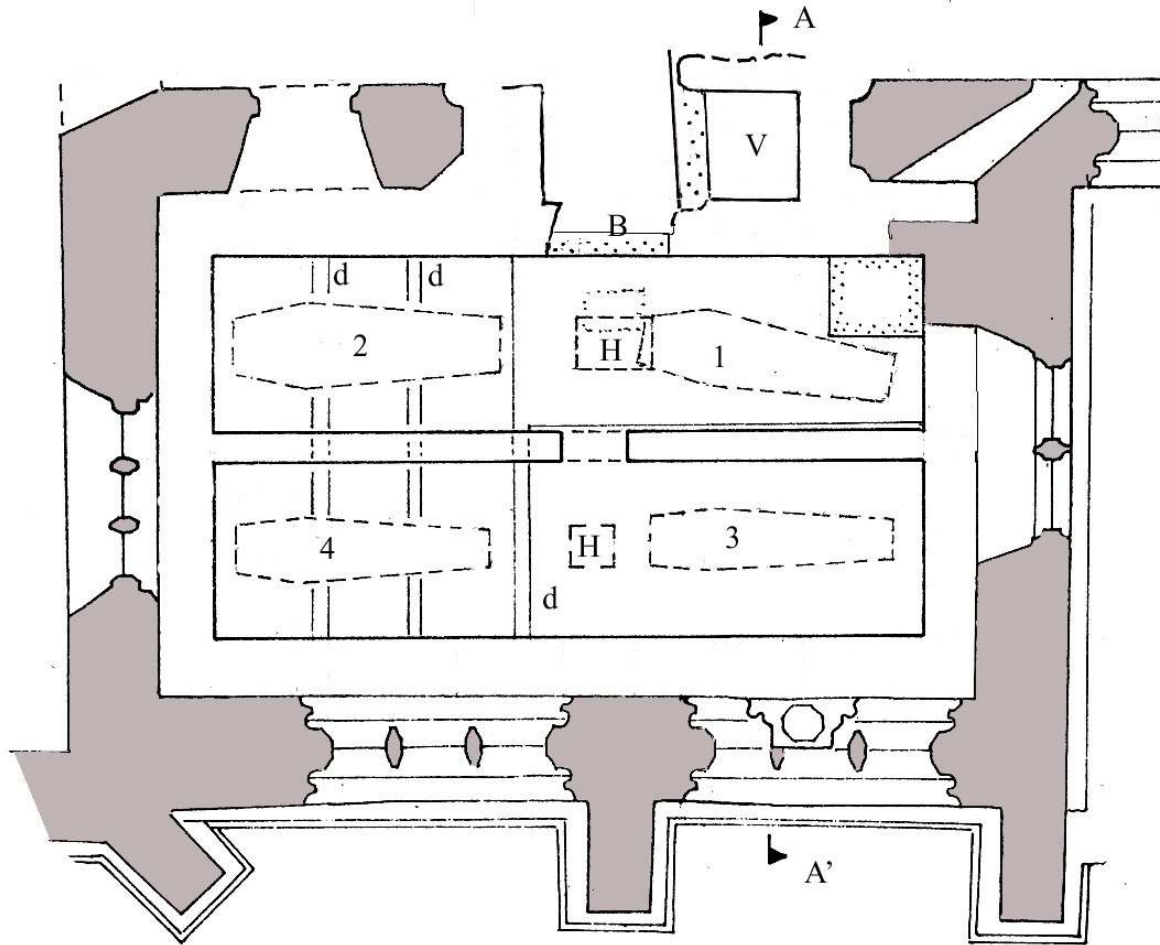
A: Top slab of c1500 tomb  
dismantled in 1876, re-used  
in pavement

B: Brick sleeper walls beneath  
1876 floor

C: Remains of c1970 raised dais

0 3 m

ST BRANDON'S CHURCH, BRANCEPETH  
 THE LADY CHAPEL: VAULTS

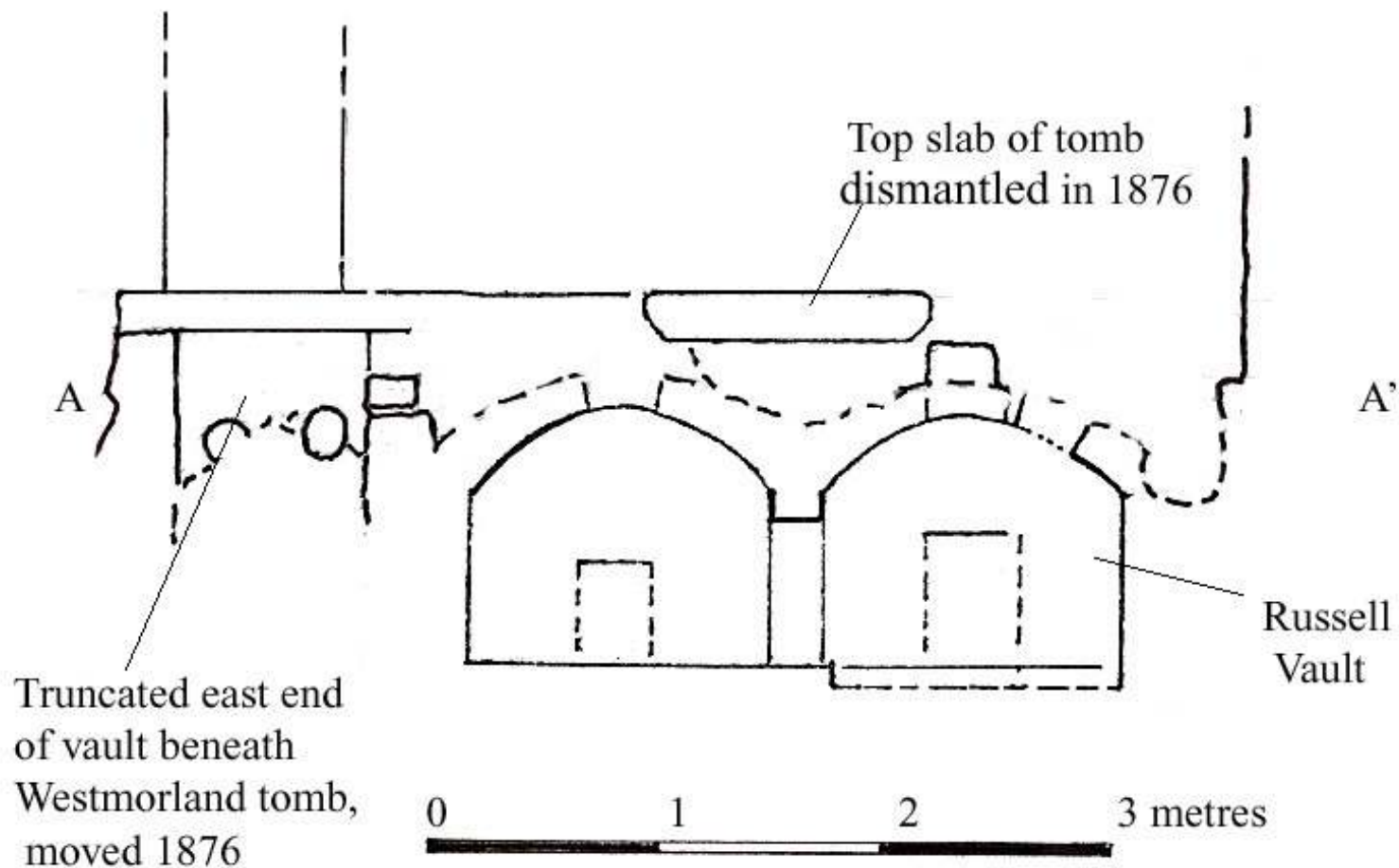


B: Original access to Russell  
 Vault, later bricked up  
 H: Access hatches  
 d: drainage channels  
 between floor slabs  
 V: Remains of earlier vault,  
 re-used as charnel pit

Coffins in vault  
 1: ?Mary Hamilton Bunbury d 1832  
 2: William Russell d 1850  
 3: Ann Russell d 1818  
 4: William Russell d 1817

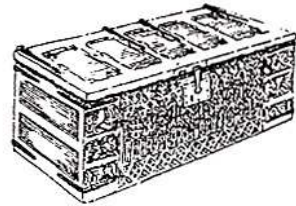
0 3 m

ST BRANDON'S CHURCH, BRANCEPETH  
SECTION THROUGH VAULTS BENEATH LADY CHAPEL

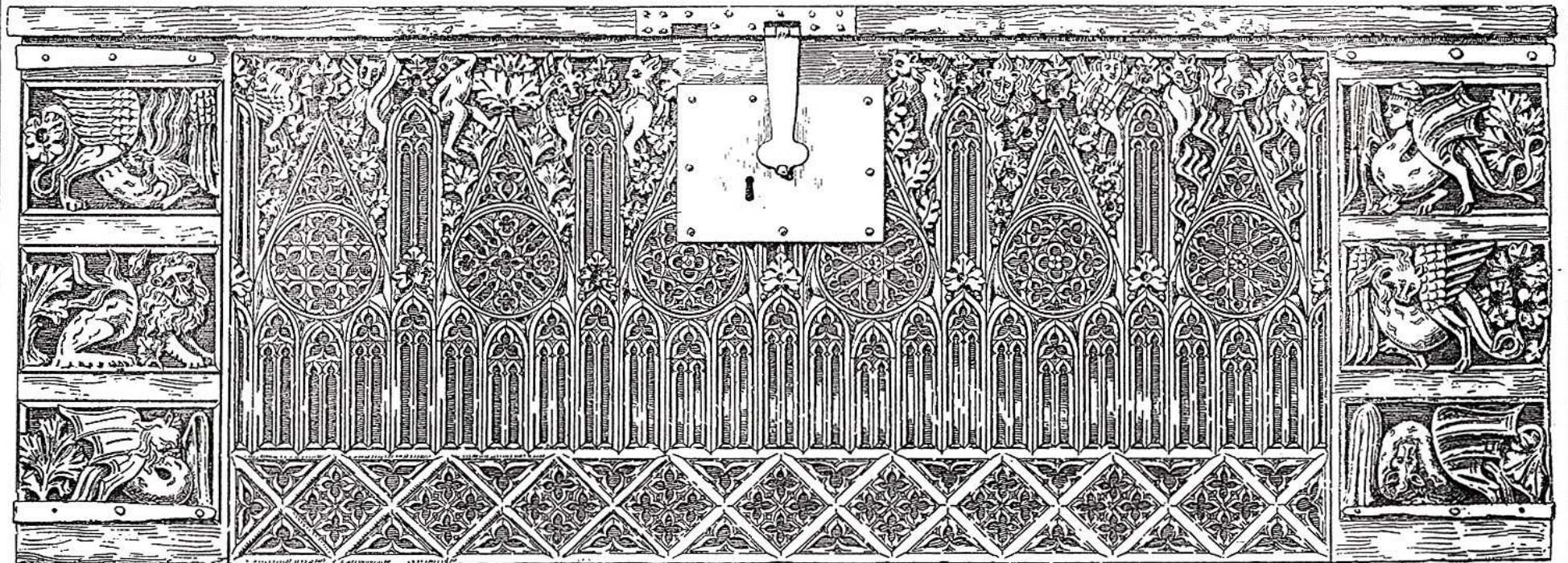




OLD OAK CHEST.



BRANCEPETH CH.



SCALE OF 12 9 6 3 0 1 FEET.

W. G. Footitt.  
1890.

PHOTO-LITHO. SPRAGUE & CO., 22, MARTIN LANE CANNON ST. LONDON, E.C.

(Reprinted by kind permission of the Publisher of "The Builder," and of Mr. Footitt).

- (4) *On the south wall remains of paintings exist, although no definite pattern can be discerned, except for a dark red line between the windows at sill level.*
- (5) *On the east wall fragmentary traces of traces of medieval paintings with black, orange and red pigment are most extensive to the south of the window. There are post-medieval painted bands around the window, originally in black and later in red.*

### ***The Vaults beneath the Chapel***

*As restoration work proceeded, the remains of the 1970s dais and flooring were removed to reveal the earlier slab floor of the chapel; a large plain limestone slab in the centre is almost certainly that top slab from the plain box tomb of the son of the Third Earl of Westmorland, recorded as being dismantled in 1876. This floor was carried on low brick sleeper walls, which in turn were carried by the extrados of the brick vault of the underlying 'Castle Vault'.*

#### ***(A) The 'Castle Vault'***

*On the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2002, as works continued, a hole appeared in the floor of the 'Lady Chapel'. This proved to be broken through the brick vault of the underlying 'Castle Vault' (named as such on a nearby wall tablet) in which members of the Russell family were buried. On 7<sup>th</sup> March the vault was carefully entered, photographed and a sketch plan made; shortly afterwards the vault was sealed once more. Its contents remain undisturbed.*

#### *Description.*

*The vault underlay virtually the whole area of the Chapel, its walls being set in only 0.45 m from the faces of the internal faces of the chapel walls above. It consisted of two parallel east-west chambers each c 5.45 m long by 1.35 m wide, separated by an axial wall of brick 0.23 m thick. The entrance into the vault had been by means of an opening in the centre of the north wall, probably reached by a flight of steps (now filled in with sand; not cleared) descending beneath the arch to the chancel; the hole through which access was gained was broken through the top of the vault immediately above the original entry. Access between the two chambers was by means of a central opening in the axial wall, 0.47 m wide and 0.63 m high. Each chamber was 0.74 m high to the springing of the vault, and 1.11 m high to the centre of the segmental vault. The side and end walls were of lime-washed brick (12 courses in each side wall) and the vaults of clean orange brick (18 courses) which appeared more recent. Near the centre of each vault and more or less in line with the original entrance was a small infilled hatch, that of the northern chamber 0.50 by 0.38 m, that of the southern only 0.32 by 0.29 m. The floors were of stone slabs, cut by a series of north-south gaps (drainage gullies?) which continued beneath the axial wall, except in the case of the central and eastern part of the northern chamber, where there was a bare earth floor at a slightly lower level, as if slabs had been removed. A column of more recent brickwork had been constructed in the north-east corner of the northern chamber, associated with the construction of a flue from the adjacent boiler room in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.*

*The vault contained four coffins, one at each end of each chamber, all with their heads to the west; coffin 1 in the eastern part of the northern chamber had been swung sideways to allow for the insertion of the flue. All the coffins were of lead, boxed round in wood; the woodwork and fittings were in a very friable and decayed state, ready to collapse if touched.*

- (1) *In the eastern part of the northern chamber. The wooden coffin, partially collapsed was covered with leather or leathercloth, and decorated by rows of bronze studs, outlining panels on the top and sides. There was no large coffin-plate as on the other coffins. The evidence of a mural inscription (see below) suggests that the coffin belongs to Mary Hamilton Bunbury d 1832.*
- (2) *In the western part of the northern chamber. A large and ornate coffin, again with the leather/leathercloth covering and bronze studs, but also with decorative plates and handles on the sides and visible end, and on the top a coloured armorial plate and a large shield-shaped coffin plate bearing the inscription:*

*WILLIAM RUSSELL  
BRANCEPETH CASTLE  
BORN 9<sup>TH</sup> NOV  
1798  
DIED  
30<sup>TH</sup> JAN 1850*

- (3) *In the eastern part of the southern chamber, a plainer coffin bearing a coffin plate inscribed:*

*ANN RUSSELL  
Died 20<sup>th</sup> May  
1818  
Aged 66 Years*

- (4) *In the western part of the southern chamber, a badly-decayed coffin; the lead-lined interior is intact, but of the rest little remains except for debris and a coffin plate, reading:*

*Wm RUSSELL Esq  
Died  
June 8<sup>th</sup> 1817  
Aged 82  
Years*

### *The Use of the Vault*

*Two wall monuments (destroyed in the 1998 fire), which were placed on the south wall of the chancel above the arch leading into the Chapel, related to members of the Russell family interred within the vault. The upper bore the inscription:*

*'In the Castle Vault  
are deposited the Remains  
of WILLIAM RUSSELL, Esqre  
who departed this Life at his  
Castle of Brancepeth  
on the 8<sup>th</sup> Day of June 1817.  
In the 83<sup>rd</sup> Year of his Age.*

*This is the William Russell buried in coffin (4). The lower monument bore the inscription:*

*IN THE CASTLE VAULT*

ARE DEPOSITED THE REMAINS OF  
**MARY**  
 WIFE OF W. HAMILTON BUNBURY OF CRANAVONA  
 IN THE COUNTY OF CARLOW, LATE LIEU. COL. IN HIS  
 MAJESTY'S SERVICE, AND ELDEST DAUGHTER  
 OF THE LATE WILLIAM RUSSELL, ESQ  
 OF BRANCEPETH CASTLE, WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE  
 AT PARIS ON THE 23<sup>RD</sup> OF APRIL 1832, LEAVING AN  
 ONLY CHILD MARY DIANA

*By a process of elimination this identifies coffin (1)*

*To right of the lower tablet, another in the form of a scroll,*

'Sacred  
 to the memory of  
 William Russell Esquire  
 only Son of  
 Matthew Russel Esqure  
 and Elizabeth his Wife  
 He ..... of the  
 .....of Parliament  
 for the County of Durham

.....

.....

Aged 80(?) years

*This is the William Russell of coffin (2).*

*It would appear that the two earlier coffins (3) and (4) must have been placed in the vault at the time of its construction, c 1818, as they could not have entered by either the small doorway in the axial wall, or the hatch in the vault (which in case must be of later date). The blocked entry in the north wall is probably wide enough to admit a coffin, so one can assume that coffins (1) and (2) (1832 and 1850 respectively) were introduced after its construction.*

*One must assume that the original vault had some form of slab or brick top to it; the present brick vault is clearly secondary, and may date from the 1876 restoration, although another phase of alterations is indicted by the fact that the two trapdoors in the secondary vault have been blocked up by the sleeper walls used to support the large slab from the dismantled Westmorland tomb when it was re-used in the pavement, or perhaps at some post-1876 date when the pavement was relaid.*

*After the death of William Russell (coffin 2) in 1850 the estate devolved to his sister who had married into the Boyne Family; her husband Gustavus inherited the title Viscount Boyne, and adopted the family name of Hamilton Russell. The 'Castle Vault' being full, the Boyne Mausoleum was constructed at the south-east corner of the churchyard; only 6 of its 24 compartments were filled.*



### **(B) The Westmorland Vault**

*It is recorded that the Westmorland Tomb, in 1876 removed to the base of the tower, formerly used to stand beneath the arch between the Chancel and Lady Chapel. Reconstruction of the floor in July 2002 revealed what was clearly the eastern part of the vault beneath this tomb; the western part had been cut away when the Russell Vault was constructed in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century; the remaining eastern part, with walls of diagonally-tooled sandstone ashlar, being sealed off with a brick wall to form a convenient square 'box' that was utilised as a charnel pit for at least six skulls and long bones, doubtless the remains of any individuals that had been buried in this vault and in that ascribed to the son of the Third Earl of Westmorland within the Lady Chapel, which had a plain box tomb dismantled in 1876. These remains were cleaned and photographed, but not otherwise disturbed.*

### **L The Sacristy**

The **Sacristy** on the north of the chancel is constructed of squared stone, with considerable variation in course height; at mid height there is a marked change from narrower to taller courses that is most pronounced on the west, where two blocks are so elongate that they may be re-used grave covers. The moulded plinth appears to be of the same section as that of the adjacent chancel wall, and the parapet is also similar. At the south ends of both side walls are what appear to be inserted fillets of later stonework, presumably repairs following structural movement. In the centre of the west wall is a doorway with a chamfered two-centred arch and neat broach stops at the feet of its jambs; all its dressings (of diagonally-tooled ashlar), and the manner in which it cuts through the upper part of the plinth, make it look like a 19<sup>th</sup>-century insertion; to the south, just above the plinth, is a projecting stone spout serving the small recess seen internally. On the north is a window of four cinquefoiled ogee-headed lights under a shallow segmental arch; its jambs do not course happily with the adjacent walling. The east wall, unlike the others, has a string course, chamfered above and below, terminating at each end in a pair of round-ended leaves; above is a square-headed window of two trefoiled ogee-headed lights, under a chamfered hood with turned-back ends. Once again its jambs do not course in well with the adjacent walling. Beneath the window part of the string, and the masonry below, have been renewed; this marks the position of doorway shown both on the 1825 plan and in Billings' print; although the plinth below looks to remain undisturbed the print clearly shows it as cut away.

This is now known as the 'Cosin Room' and used for Sunday Schools. At the west end of the south wall the doorway into the chancel has a plain square-headed rear arch, with a re-used cross slab as its lintel. To the east the wall has a set-back of c 0.12 m, c 1.2 m above the floor; to the west of the door it steps up to the level of the door lintel. At its east end, cutting down into the set-back is a squint that provided a view of the chancel altar (now blocked by the 17<sup>th</sup>-century panelling); its sides are re-used pieces of cross slab (see 'Sepulchral Monuments' section).

The inserted doorway in the west wall has a plain square head internally; low down at the south end of the wall is a small projecting semi-circular stone bowl, with a drain funnelling back into the wall. The north window has a rough segmental rear arch, with below its western a square-headed recess; on of the slabs forming its roof has a chamfered edge, and might be a cross slab, although no design is exposed. Yet another cross slab has been re-used as the internal lintel of the window on the east; the edge chamfer of the lintel is probably

original to the slab. There is evidence in the south-east corner of various repairs made to counter the structural movement evident externally.

The sacristy roof has cambered tie-beams set against the end walls and in the centre, carrying a single north-south beam, chamfered on its lower angles, as the ridge-piece; on either side are heavy square-section rafters.

### *After the Fire*

*This is the one part of the church to survive unburned (except for its door), although the walls were heavily coated with soot.*

## **The Structural History of the Church**

Prior to the 1998 fire most antiquarian accounts of the church had concurred on the general building history of the church; the late 12<sup>th</sup> century church had a tower that was heightened in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, at around the same time as which when aisles were added to the nave. There was then a remodelling when the nave was extended a bay further to the east (the old chancel arch being moved), and the transepts built. The aisles were also widened and extended west to engage the tower, and then the eastern arm was entirely rebuilt, and a clerestory added to the nave. The north porch was seen as the only significant structural addition coeval with Cosin's great reordering of the internal fittings and furnishings. There has been some variation in the dates ascribed to the various phases.

The detailed examination of the fabric made possible by the recent events has meant that further light has been shed on the structural development of the building, although inevitably some major puzzles still remain. A tentative building chronology of the church, as it is now understood, may be as follows:

### **(A) The Saxon Church.**

The 1998 assessment, made prior to the fire, commented that (the nave walls) 'could conceivably be Pre-Conquest; further light on this question might be shed if the quoining of the south-west angle of the old nave could be examined., either physically or using some remote-sensing technique'. Within months of this being written drastic and unforeseen circumstances allowed just such a physical examination, and showed that both western quoins of the nave were very much of Saxon character, with large side-alternate blocks. Only the gabled west end of this first nave can be claimed with certainty to survive; masonry older than the present arcades survives in the eastern part of each side wall of the nave, but there is no evidence by which it can be dated, and no further evidence of distinctive quoining such as one might expect if the early nave remained to its full length.. The actual date of the fabric of this first aisleless nave is less certain, as similar quoining is seen at Norton (Stockton) in a church now generally thought to be of late 11<sup>th</sup> century date. Despite the large number of carved stones and grave covers that have come to light during the recent restoration, there has been nothing that could be ascribed a pre-1100 date, with the possible exception of the two stones built into the churchyard stile (16 and 17 in the list of grave covers) which may either be headstones or the heads of free-standing churchyard crosses.

### **(B) The Late 12<sup>th</sup> Century: The West Tower**

In the later 12<sup>th</sup> century a substantial tower was added, virtually the full width of the nave. The three round-arched windows of the second stage are thoroughly Norman in style, and the arch to the nave only betrays the coming Gothic in being slightly pointed rather than semicircular.

It is not clear whether there was any break in building between the second and third stages of the tower, where the original belfry lights have lancet arches which stylistically might be taken as c.1200. The openings of the present belfry, the fourth stage, are very similar; the tower must have been heightened within twenty or thirty years of its initial completion.

### **(C) The 13<sup>th</sup> Century. The First Aisles**

Prior to 1998 antiquarian opinion had been to the effect that two-bay aisles were added to the nave before its extension eastwards; a detailed examination of the wall fabric when exposed suggests that this was not the case. It seems clear that when the two-bay 13<sup>th</sup>-century arcades were constructed, the arches were not built into a pre-existing wall (as often happened) but that sections of the walls were demolished and the arches and new walling above constructed, leaving older walling - of uncertain date - still in situ to the east. It seems likely that there were already transepts of some form before the aisles were added; it seems likely that these aisles were narrower than at present, and did not extend so as west as to engage the tower.

Stylistically the chancel arch looks to be of similar date to the western parts of the arcades, possibly implying that the older chancel was rebuilt at this time, as many others in the area were.

### **(D) The Earlier 14<sup>th</sup> Century. The First Remodelling; the Transepts and then the Aisles rebuilt.**

The generally-accepted theory suggested that the nave was extended eastwards (the old chancel arch being re-erected a bay to the east of its original position) and the transepts added at the same time. Pevsner & Williamson place this phase in the 'late C13 or early C14' whilst the older authorities prefer the latter. Hodgson (1895) is more specific still; he sees the transepts as being built by Ralph Neville to house the tomb of his son, 'The Peacock' (whose effigy survives), who was killed fighting the Scots at Berwick in 1319; Ralph himself died in 1331, giving a fairly narrow date-bracket for the works. Hodgson debates (in his usual wordy style) the significance of the variation in style of the transept windows, and comes to the conclusion that the east window of the south transept is of slightly earlier date, and had probably been inserted at the west end of the south wall of the older chancel, in the section destroyed by the eastern extension of the nave. He sees the other chancel windows, with their 'fully-flowing' tracery, as contemporary with the transepts, although admittedly an earlier example of their style than similar windows in Durham Cathedral known to date from the time of Prior Fossor (1341 -1374). He also sees the rebuilding of the aisles (and their western extension) as part of Ralph Neville's works.

Hodgson is not entirely convincing, in that the works he links to Ralph Neville, and the third decade of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, in reality seem to comprise three if not four different constructional phases.

First come the transepts; as already mentioned, the restriction of the 13<sup>th</sup>-century aisles to the western part of the nave suggests that they had earlier, perhaps 12<sup>th</sup>-century predecessors. The rebuilt transepts are built in much superior masonry to the present aisles, and, as far as can be made out, seem to pre-date them. However, the two transepts are slightly different both in their fabric (the southern seems of the better quality) and also in their dimensions (internal widths north transept c 4.45, south transept c 4.70 m) so they may be of slightly different dates.

The transept arches, which it is now known were inserted into earlier walling, are presumably of the early 14<sup>th</sup>-century as well, although there is little to date them closely; it is obvious from structural relationships that they are later than the chancel arch. The eastern respond of the north transept arch did re-use pieces of cross slab grave covers (eg 101) which are stylistically dateable to c1300.

Next comes the rebuilding of the aisles. These are hard to date, partly because their architectural features may be, at least in part, re-used from earlier parts of the building. The chamfered plinths, the use of which is restricted to the west end of each aisle (was this seen as the 'show front' of the church, facing the Castle?) are of quite steep sections, and on their own might be ascribed to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, as at first glance might the west window in the same wall, although close inspection suggests that their dressings may be largely post-medieval; the south doorway, and possibly also the north, also look like 13<sup>th</sup>-century pieces re-set. The two windows on the south of the south aisle are 19<sup>th</sup>-century Gothic, replacing large 18<sup>th</sup>-century ones, whilst those in the north aisle have old outer jambs but their present 14<sup>th</sup>-century style cannot be trusted, despite the fact that one is visible, in its present form, in Billings' print (1843). Hutchinson refers to them as 'old flat-arched windows' which might imply a 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup>-century date. The only features one could argue are coeval with the rebuilding are the pair of responds for the intended arches between aisles and transepts; their bases have mouldings that look later 14<sup>th</sup> or even early 15<sup>th</sup> century work, quite different in feeling to the eastern arches of the arcades and anything in the transepts themselves.

### **(E) 1370-1381? The Rebuilding of the Chancel**

The present chancel was formerly thought to be of a single, but the exposed masonry of the internal face of its north wall showed a clear break between what was presumably earlier fabric to the west and later to the east. This earlier phase however had no datable features. The central axis of the present chancel is a little to the south of that of the chancel arch, which would tally with the retention of the north wall of an earlier chancel which was then both lengthened and widened to the south.

All the features of the chancel date to a single later medieval build, although Pevsner & Williamson and earlier authorities differ somewhat as to the date. The former simply states 'in the C15' but Hodgson (1905, 86) places the chancel firmly in the bracket 1371-1381, on the strength of a piece of medieval glass - apparently lost before the fire - that bore the arms of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, in a form only used during this period. He saw the

rebuilding as carried out by John Lord Neville (d.1388), and its architectural detailing - on the transition between Decorated and Perpendicular - as having links with the York school, and being intermediate in style between the Lady Chapel (completed 1374) and the Choir (c.1400) of York Minster.

### **(F) The Sacristy**

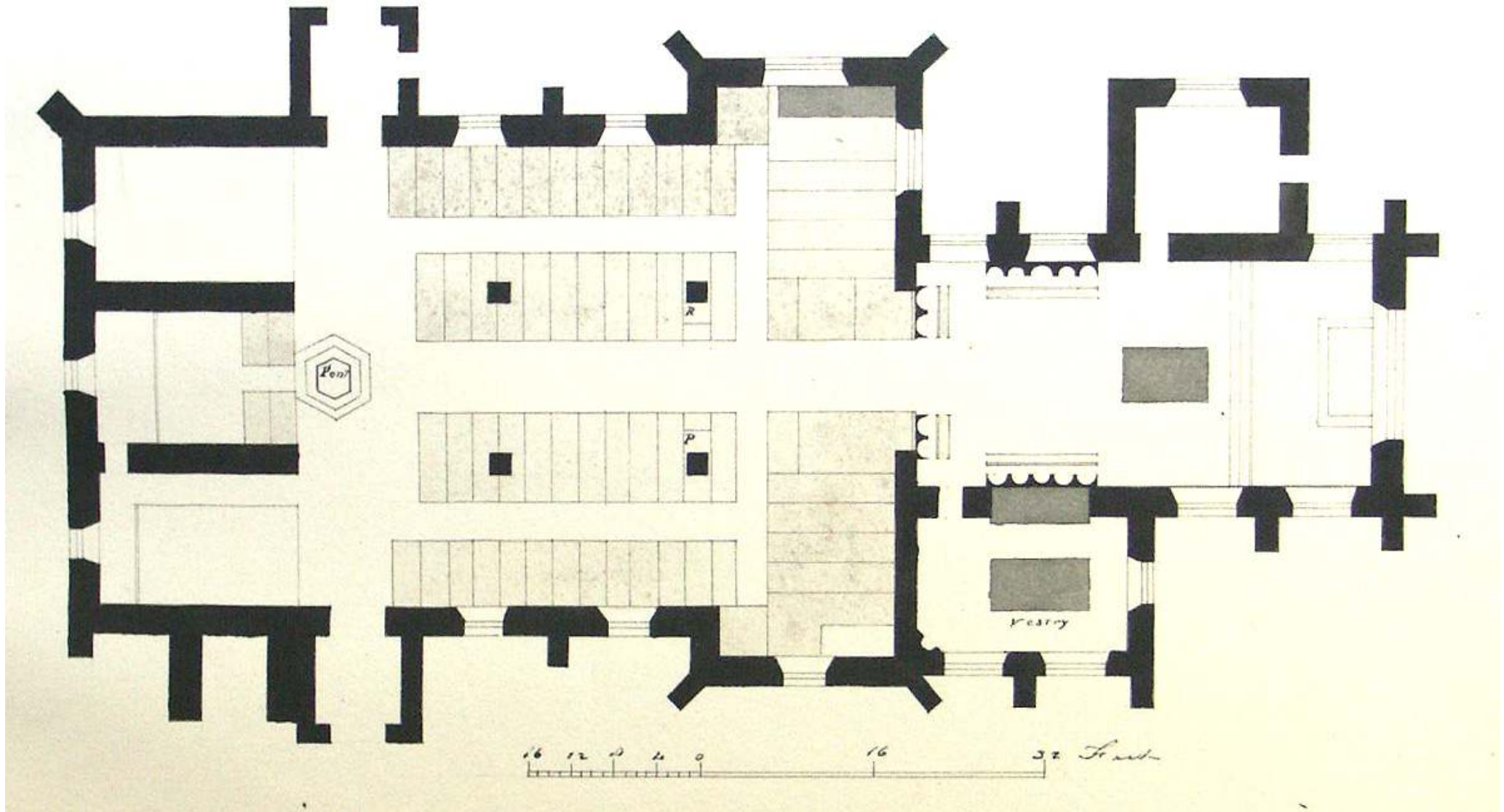
This poses something of a puzzle. At first glance the continuous plinth suggests that it is of one build with the chancel, but it has a number of puzzling features. One is that the lower section of its south wall is thicker than the upper, although this is to the east of the apparent break between the two phases of fabric visible in the internal face of the north chancel wall. Could the chancel north wall incorporate three separate phases? Fowler (1863, 73) suggests that the sacristy is a little earlier than the latest phases of the chancel, and that it was 'cut away in part when the present chancel was built'. The two windows of the sacristy are both of mid-14th century type, but could be re-set; more puzzling is the string course on the east wall, the line of which relates very uncomfortably to the adjacent chancel sill-string and window, although the awkwardness of the junction has been disguised by the re-cutting of the ends of the string with an unusual little ornament, which might even be post-Reformation.

The upper parts of the sacristy walls are of quite different fabric to the lower, and may have been rebuilt; possibly in its original form there was an upper floor with a priest's room (as for example at Staindrop).

### **(G) c.1510-1520? The South-East Chapel.**

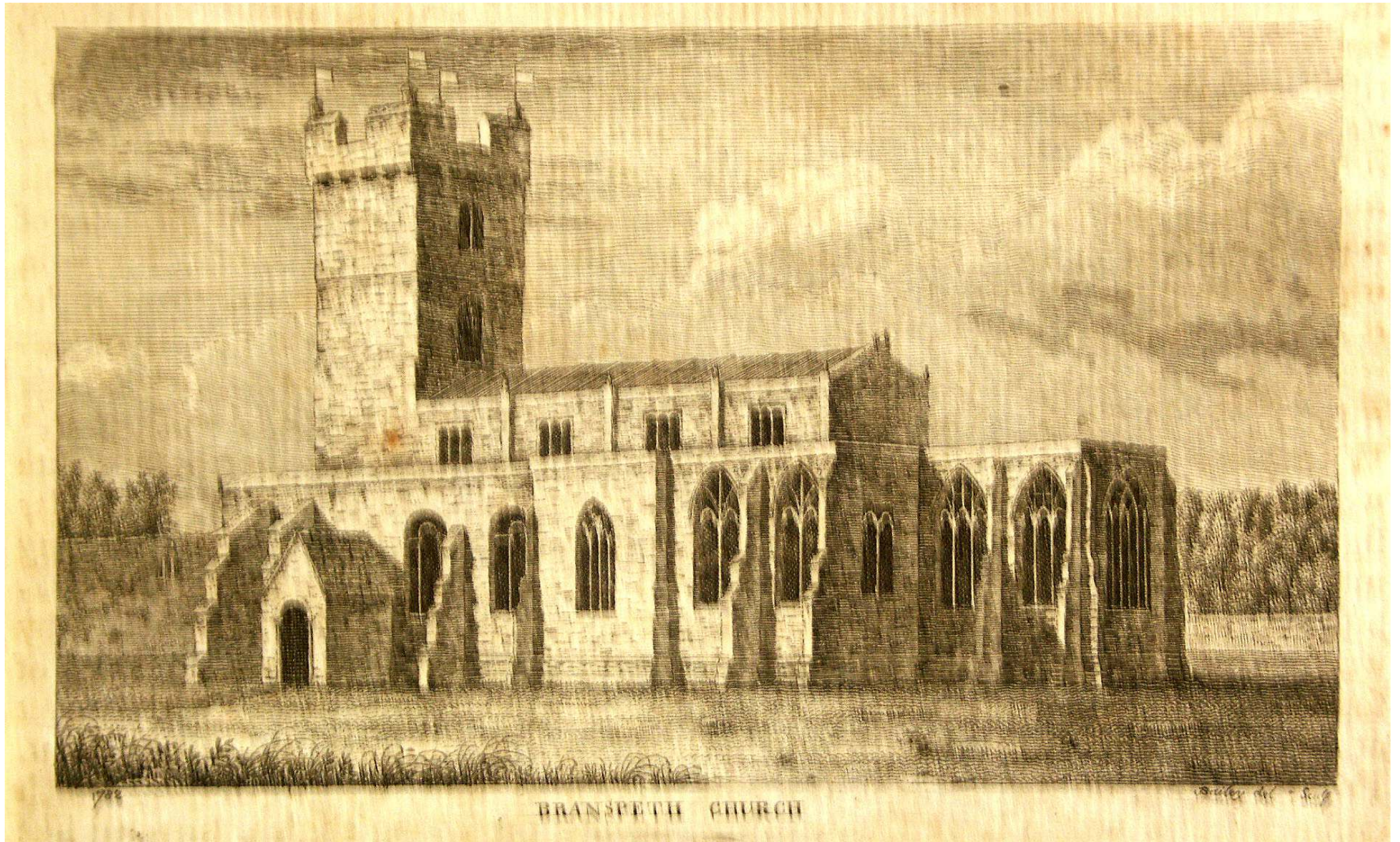
The two windows in the south wall of the chapel are identical in form to those in the side walls of the chancel, which leads several authorities to consider chancel and chapel contemporary, although the much plainer window on the east has aroused comment; Boyle (1892, 452) considers that the east wall had been rebuilt in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century.

Hodgson (1905, 87) offers a more convincing explanation; he sees the Chapel as being built by Ralph Neville, Third Earl of Westmoreland (1484-1530) as a burial chapel, the southern windows and buttresses being re-used from the south wall of the chancel, whilst the 'poor, mean' east window was of 'purely local Durham work' in contrast to the earlier windows of the York school. Several other features back up Hodgson's suggestion; the two buttresses on the south wall look awkward, one obstructing the hoodmould of the adjacent window and the other with its dressings not coursing in well with the wall behind. The arch between chapel and chancel, clearly constructed to accommodate a tomb (with a separate doorway into the chapel alongside), is of relatively rough workmanship, which was inconsequential in that its stonework is largely obscured by contemporary panelling. The mouldings of its impostes look Tudor rather than Gothic; a date of c.1510-20 for the whole chapel seems likely. The panelling from the Chapel, now behind the altar, bears the badge of Prior Castell of Durham (d.1519), so may fit well with this date, although the lack of known connections between the prior and Brancepeth has led to the suggestion that the panelling is a later import from the Cathedral.



PLAN OF THE CHURCH C 1825 FROM ARCHDEACON THORP CHURCH PLAN ALBUM (DURHAM CATHEDRAL LIBRARY)  
ADDITIONAL MANUSCRIPTS 82-85, REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION





THE CHURCH C 1794 AFTER HUTCHINSON: NOTE THE SOUTH AISLE WINDOWS BEFORE RESTORATION





*Drawn & Engraved by E. Blore.*

*Brancepath Church,?*

*Printed by W. Durr.*

*Edinb. & Lon. 1840.*



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
The names of the persons who have been baptized in this church since the year 1729.												The names of the persons who have been baptized in this church since the year 1729.																		

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
The names of the persons who have been baptized in this church since the year 1729.												The names of the persons who have been baptized in this church since the year 1729.																		

2<sup>d</sup> July 1629 -  
 According to the Constitution of the Church of England the Right Reverend Bishop of London (who has a seat in the Convocation) is to be the ordinary of the diocese in all ecclesiastical matters.

To the Dean of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul's London.

John Berington

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
The names of the persons who have been baptized in this church since the year 1729.												The names of the persons who have been baptized in this church since the year 1729.																		

And singular the date in this Schedule mentioned to be added to the several Baptismal Records being the natural Birth of each of them if they were not otherwise recorded in this parish and not otherwise they being only in Church and not in the Parish Register. And that the several Baptismal Records of each of them be added to the several Baptismal Records of the Parish in which they were baptized and that the several Baptismal Records of the Parish in which they were baptized be added to the several Baptismal Records of the Parish in which they were baptized.



## **(H) Post-Medieval Changes**

The major interest in post-medieval work at Brancepeth has of course been in its fittings, here dealt with separately, rather than fabric. However, a number of changes were clearly made in the centuries between the Reformation and the Victorian restoration. There has been some confusion in the past as to the dates of the various internal furnishings; those in the chancel tended to be classified as 'Elizabethan' on the strength of their Gothic features. This problem is also seen, to a lesser extent, in the fabric of the church. The nave clerestory and roof are usually placed in the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> century, and the documented 1638 works there seen as merely repair; it seems possible, however, that clerestory and roof are all Cosin's work (possibly re-using some medieval material); the Bishop is known to have used convincingly Gothic forms in masoncraft as well as woodwork, as at Bishop Auckland.

Turning to the internal arrangements of the church, the 1639 plan provides a valuable picture of the interior of the nave and transepts as newly fitted out under Cosin; under transept arches on each side were three square box pews, with behind them pews, six on the north and seven on the south, facing into the main body of the church. The arrangements within the nave, ie eastward of the two doors, were, on plan, much as they remained, except that instead of the second pew, the 'sermon' and 'reading' pulpits were set against the internal faces of the eastern piers. Pewing extended to the west end of the each aisle, and there were a series of boxes or pews for children beneath the tower.

As in many Durham churches, a number of 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century features were erased by 19<sup>th</sup>-century restoration. Although Cosin's north porch was decried as 'unseemly' by Fordyce (1856, 428) and even 'the acme of debasement' (Fowler, 1863, 79) it was fortunately allowed to survive. The south porch, which from Hutchinson's print looks to have been of 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century date, did not.

The 1825 plan (Durham Cathedral Library) shows little change to the internal layout as it had been in 1639, except that the pewing in the west ends of the aisles seem to have been removed, the arrangements under the tower altered, and the three box pews at the entrance to the south transept apparently reduced to two; there were also apparently less pews in the transepts.

Hutchinson's print and the 1825 plan together allow some more details of the pre-restoration south aisle to be put together. West of the porch were two tall stepped buttresses, and east of it a pair of large round-arched windows with arched central panels, clearly of 18<sup>th</sup> century date, of the type often termed 'debased insertions' by antiquarian sources (Boyle, 1892, 452). It seems likely that the west windows of the aisles, although more convincingly medieval at first glance, are also of this period.

## **(I) The 19<sup>th</sup> century**

It is clear from Fowler (who, writing in 1863, refers to 'most' of the aisle and transept windows as 'recently supplied with new tracery'), Glynne and other sources that considerable 'restoration' work, ie the remodelling of window openings with suitably Gothic tracery, took place before the major restoration in 1864, although, as no faculty evidence seems to survive, it is difficult to sort out exactly when individual changes were carried out. Visible evidence in the fabric suggests that the west part of the south wall of the south aisle was wholly rebuilt.

# ST BRANDON, BRANCEPETH

## Provisional Phased Plan

Plan based on EDM survey by R. Bayliss & L. Barker  
of the Archaeological Practise, University of Newcastle



Much window tracery was renewed, that in the chancel at least copying the old work fairly closely.

Whilst the 1864 restoration left the furnishings within the chancel largely intact (although some minor interesting pieces, such as carved oak facings of the altar steps described by Fowler, were removed), the transepts and nave were completely re-ordered.. Whilst the plan of the seating in the nave and aisles remains unaltered, the pews themselves have been reconstructed and the platforms on which they stood removed. The most significant change was the removal of the two nave pulpits, and the replacement of one of them - it is not clear which - on the north of the chancel arch. Although the furnishings in the transepts, including the large box pew on the south, appear at first sight to be authentic 17<sup>th</sup>-century work, a comparison of the 1825 plan and the situation today shows that nothing seems to survive in situ; the 1864 reconstruction was carried out to a high standard, and there is little obvious evidence of re-use.

The history of the south porch remains unclear; it appears on the 1825 plan but is not mentioned by later 19<sup>th</sup>-century writers after Glynne (1860), although it does seem to be shown on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey 6": 1 mile map (surveyed in 1857); perhaps it was taken down in 1863. The present south porch was built in 1892.

Alterations in the 20<sup>th</sup> century., mostly relatively minor, are best chronicled in the form of a list of the surviving faculties:

### Faculties and Other Records of Structural Work

Faculty No.	And Date	Works
347	27.7.1892	Faculty for South Porch
456/3	2.1.1905	Stained glass windows with inscriptions 2 Jan 1905
2961	16.11.46	Repairs to stained glass windows
3537	1.8.52	AC Restoration of north-east vestry roof
3839	29.2.56	Restoration and repair of church
4505	1.10.62	Installation of oil-fired boiler and storage tank
4904	24.8.66	Renovation of shields and introduction of D.L.I. plaques
5226	23.12.70	New electric lighting and pendant crucifix
5415	2.5.73	Restoration of external stonework, cleaning internal woodwork
5507	16.5.74	Restoration of font cover and other alterations
5624	2.9.76	Introduction of an aumbry and light
5672	16.5.77	Resiting the Organ & redecorations
5713	15.2.78	New oil-fired boiler, redecorations, repairs
5757	13.11.78	Restoration of ancient panels & crockets in the soffit
5771	11.1.79	AC Interior redecoration
6089	19.4.83	Restoration of hatchments
6227	6.12.84	AC Cleaning of D.L.I. brasswork
6227B	19.12.84	Consistory Court Hearing. Reordering of chancel, movement of effigies
6352	11.3.86	Restoration of north porch doors
6389	10.7.86	AC Restoration of clock mechanism and display of clock
6738	1.6.88	Restoration of stonework on north wall.

6995	28.11.89	Cleaning and restoring Frosterley marble font
7032	19.2.90	Cleaning memorial plaques
7144	20.9.90	AC Replacement of roof members
7145	20.9.90	AC Repairs to south side chancel windows
7644	5.1.93	Conversion of heating system to gas and provision of gas supply
7899	2.9.94	Restoration of entrance gate piers and tombstone

A programme of repairs and the replacement of decayed stone in the tower was underway at the time of the 1998 fire.

### **The Churchyard**

The churchyard is of irregular plan; its western angles are rounded, as if it may once have been sub-circular. There is a 20<sup>th</sup>-century extension on the north; the 'adjoining plot of ground' consecrated in 1853 (Fordyce 1856, 428) was presumably to the east where a slight bank c 12 m east of the chancel may mark the older boundary; the earliest monument beyond is dated 1855.

The enclosing wall is generally 1- 1.5 m high; the gateway, to the north-west, has a pair of piers with moulded finials and ball caps (later 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century?) and immediately to the east, an interesting and quite elaborate stile having stone steps with moulded nosings; the stile is partly constructed of medieval cross slabs, and there are further ones set in the internal face of the wall further east (see Sepulchral Monuments section). There is a second gateway west-south-west of the church with a chamfered square-headed doorway (badly weathered but possibly no older than the early 19<sup>th</sup> century) in a raised section of wall.

Although the majority of the headstones (which seem to have been thinned in parts) are of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there are some interesting earlier monuments. A short distance from the south-east corner of the South Chapel, alongside an 18<sup>th</sup>-century table tomb, is a tapered limestone slab with a broad chamfer all round, now bearing an inscription of 1721 but almost certainly a medieval piece re-used. About 12m south of the west end of the south aisle is a headstone to Thomas Jonson, d.1791, a local surgeon, with carvings of his bag and a wide range of surgical instruments.

In the south-east corner of the churchyard is a raised enclosure, now rather overgrown, containing the Boyne family vault. This appears to be associated with an interesting tunnel or drain, opening from the Golf Course beyond the churchyard wall (see 1998 Assessment)



## The Fittings and Furnishings of the Church

The following account is partly taken from the Archaeological Assessment of July 1998, and brings home the extent of the loss suffered in the fire. Additional and more detailed accounts of the font and Drax brass were prepared after the fire, and these are included. All timber fittings and furnishings were completely destroyed. As with the structural account, italicised comments relate to the post-fire condition of the few monuments etc that did survive.

Brancepeth Church is unusually rich in its fittings and furnishings, primarily through the works carried out by John Cosin, who was rector from 1626-1640 and Bishop of Durham 1660-1672; Pevsner & Williamson (1983, 115) comment 'Cosin had done his church proud. There is hardly another in the country so completely and splendidly furnished in the C17'. Most of the furnishings date to the period of Cosin's incumbency (works were underway in 1638); a seating plan of 1639 survives (as an 18<sup>th</sup>-century copy) and shows box pews, benches, and reading desk & pulpit attached to easternmost nave piers; rood screen and chancel furnishings are not shown, but may be more or less contemporary. The best visual record of the lost fittings and furnishings is undoubtedly the photographic survey of the church and its contents carried out in 1967 by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, and now lodged with the National Monuments Record (Swindon); an index of these is given as an appendix to this report.

The **Chancel Screen** 'is the most sumptuous piece in the church' and the most thoroughly Gothic of Cosin's introductions, although earlier influences are evidence in the incised zigzag obviously copied from the Norman nave piers of Durham Cathedral, and again seen on the roughly contemporary chancel screen at Sedgfield. In general its influences are 15<sup>th</sup>-century work (perhaps copied from the panelling re-used in the reredos) executed with such accuracy that some antiquaries have been deceived into considering it genuinely medieval work. Pevsner & Williamson see the canopies, probably based on those of the Neville screen in the Cathedral, as 'an incredible *tour-de-force*.

The **Choir Stalls** are again Gothic, although Renaissance influences appear in their strapwork below the poppy heads on the stall ends-; between the stalls balusters carry a canopy with cusped arches and an openwork cresting. East of the stalls the cresting is continued on the **Panelling**, again basically 15<sup>th</sup>-century in style except for Cosin's introduction of cherubs' heads. The **Reredos and panelling flanking the altar** are genuine 15<sup>th</sup>-century work, re-used, although cherubs' heads have been added; the badge of Prior Castell of Durham (1494-1519), a winged and pierced heart, appears at one point; Hodgkin (1913, 74) notes that the panels behind the altar were formerly in the south chapel; it has been suggested that they originated at Durham (but see Structural History section).

The **Communion Rail**, in contrast, is a Renaissance piece, with fat diabolo balusters very like those at Haughton-le-Skerne, although here they occur in pairs, divided by square posts with arched panels on their faces, rather than a continuous run. The six-legged **Communion Table** of 1628 is largely Renaissance as well, although the shallow arches between the legs have broad Gothic cusping linking it to the chancel panelling, choir stalls and nave roof.

Above all this is a splendid panelled **Ceiling**, 'faintly Gothic', and known to be of 1638. It is basically a flat boarded ceiling with diagonal intersecting ribs, with pendants at their intersections and where they met the walls; the section over the sanctuary is divided off by a transverse moulded beam carrying an inverted version of the openwork cresting of the chancel

stalls and panelling, and provided with a mock lierne-vault with a central sun, and angels carrying Latin inscriptions in both Black letter and Roman capitals, all very much a return to the 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> century in style.

*The best record of the bosses and details of this ceiling is in the 1967 RCHM photographic survey (see appendix)*

The **Creed/Pater and Commandments Boards**, flanking the east window, are coloured and gilded, and look of mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century date. High up on the side walls are 17<sup>th</sup>-century panels with Scriptural texts, 'WE HAVE AN ALTAR' (on the south) and 'LET US DRAW NEAR WITH A TRUE HEART' (on the south).

The arch into the **South Chapel** has a panelled surround that is probably of early-16th century date; it has a cresting of crocketed leaves, and, towards the chancel, a crowned angel; the soffit (seen from the chapel) has panelling with foliage bosses and a row of shields, now blank. The arch now contains a glazed screen behind the choir stalls, which on the chapel side forms the reredos to an altar, the frontal of which is an elaborate carved piece taken in the 1970s from a Flemish **Chest** of early to mid 14<sup>th</sup>-century date (see Hodges 1892); the remainder of the chest was apparently destroyed. Against the south wall of the chapel are two old pews with poppy head ends, and a 17<sup>th</sup>-century **Settle**; its back has arched panels like those on the fronts of the first pews in the nave.

The **Pewing** in the nave and transepts, by contrast to the chancel furnishings, is all Jacobean; the pew ends have poppy heads, rusticated bases and strapwork, very like those at Haughton le Skerne. There has obviously been considerably rearrangement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; the backs of the pews in the south aisle have been re-set at an angle, the insides of the pew ends showing the evidence of two earlier positions of the backs. The 1863 account makes clear how much the pews were altered; prior to the restoration they were all provided with 'panelled doors, having quaint iron hinges and fasteners, and some (dare we confess it?) are provided with locks'; the floors of the pews were raised about 18" above the general floor level, with a step running along just under their door sills. Fowler, commenting again in 1901, simply pointed out the 'in reconstructing the pews, the old oak had been retained'.

Fowler refers to 'half a dozen large square boxes still more enriched, one of which is the "Castle pew"; two have high oak framework, as if to support curtains"; the 1639 plan shows these six larger box pews as being arranged in the transepts, a row of three on each side of the central aisle, with six east-west pews behind each row. The arrangements here have been completely altered, with the pulpit taking the place of the northern row; one large box pew complete with its gate remains, or has been re-constituted, in the south transept, and sections of others have been re-used in the north, but the 'high oak framework' has gone.

The **Pulpit** has been described as 'a pure and imaginative piece of early C17 design' (Pevsner & Williamson 115) with a crown-like lantern above its tester; again there is similar work, although inferior in quality, at Haughton-le-Skerne. It was installed in its present position in the 1864 restoration; what became of the corresponding reading desk a 'smaller and less imposing-looking structure' (Fowler) is unknown.

Nave and transepts have a **Panelled Dado** of 'plain and domestic' character (Pevsner & Williamson); prior to 1864 similar panelling encased the lower parts of the nave piers

The **Font** at the west end of the nave, in front of the tower arch, is of late 12<sup>th</sup> century date, the same date as the lower part of the tower, for long thought to be the earliest part of the building. It is carved from Frosterley marble, a dark limestone quarried around Frosterley and Stanhope in Weardale, c 15 miles to the west of Brancepeth. This ornamental stone was important in the medieval period, and the Bishop of Durham had his own quarries there; the stone was used in the Chapel of Nine Altars in Durham Cathedral, and in the great hall of the Bishops' Palace at Bishop Auckland, as well as for fonts and grave slabs. It is a hard limestone of the Carboniferous period (c 350 m years ago) rather than a true marble and its white patterns are produced by fossils, mostly the coral *Dibunophyllum* but also some shells, seen in section when the stone is cut and polished.

The font has a steep-sided circular bowl with a simple moulding on its lower angle, without any evidence of fastenings or fittings. It is set on a plain cylindrical shaft which rises from a base with a simple recessed quarter-round moulding on its upper angle, which in turned rose from a hexagonal sandstone step. The font is very similar to another one, also of Frosterley Marble, at St Margaret's Church in Durham. The Brancepeth font was described by the Rev. John F Hodgson of Witton le Wear in an article in the Transactions of the Architectural & Archaeological Society of Durham & Northumberland VI (1912, 221), in which he considered it to date from the latter period of the episcopate of Bishop Le Puiset (1154-1195).

The handsome **Font Cover** in the form of a tall crocketed wooden spire, was thought to have been donated to the church by Bishop Cosin after he became Bishop of Durham, in the third quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century; in 1972 a framework of four iron posts to support it was designed by the architect *George Pace*.

*In the 1998 fire the font cover was completely destroyed, but the font remains, although shattered into many pieces. These have been painstakingly collected, and, although providing the conservator with a difficult three-dimensional jigsaw puzzle, have been reassembled. There was some evidence that the font bowl had been shattered and then reassembled on at least one previous occasion.*

Set high on the east wall of the nave, over the chancel arch, are two piece of **Screen Work**, both coved and thought to be from rood screens). The upper has ribs with bosses of the Instruments of Passion and various shields, including the saltire and bull of the Nevilles. These, and the fact that the screen fits the nave so well, suggest that it may belong here; Cosin's fret is presumably an addition. Above are the Royal Arms. The lower, of oak painted white, is a very elaborate piece with three rows of nine panels of Flamboyant tracery; it has been suggested that this was brought from the Jesus Altar in Durham Cathedral at the time of the Commonwealth., although there is a tradition that this piece as well is part of the medieval rood screen of the present church. It was described and illustrated by R.W.Billings in a monograph 'The Geometric Tracery of Brancepeth Church' (Fowler 1863, 78)

The **Stained Glass** in the church is almost all 19<sup>th</sup>-century work, apart from three Flemish roundels in the eastern of the two windows in the north wall of the north aisle; Fowler refers to some texts that he thought of Cosin's date, and some mutilated remnants of 'ancient' glass in the chancel, and Hodgson (1905, 86) to a surviving shield of arms of John of Gaunt (from which he dated the rebuilding of the chancel to the period 1370-1381). but these all appear to have been lost.



Built into the north side of the buttress at the south end of the east wall of the chancel is a **Carved Stone Panel** with Christ in majesty within a mandorla, surrounded by symbols of the evangelists; it is thought to be of 13<sup>th</sup> century date, and is now badly worn. A similar panel, in rather better condition, taken from St Giles' Church in Durham is now in St Mary the Less in the same city.

*This stone (L1) was not affected by the fire.*

On the north aisle wall immediately west of the north door is a brass plate stating 'THIS CHURCH WAS RESTORED A.D. 1864 BY GUSTAVUS FREDERICK 7<sup>TH</sup> VISCOUNT BOYNE AND EMMA MARIA, VISCOUNTESS BOYNE'. In a corresponding position on the south aisle wall another brass records 'The South Porch of this church was erected A.D. 1892 by the Rev. Arthur Duncombe Shafto, M.A., Rector of Brancepeth'.

*Both these plates survived the fire, and are currently in store*

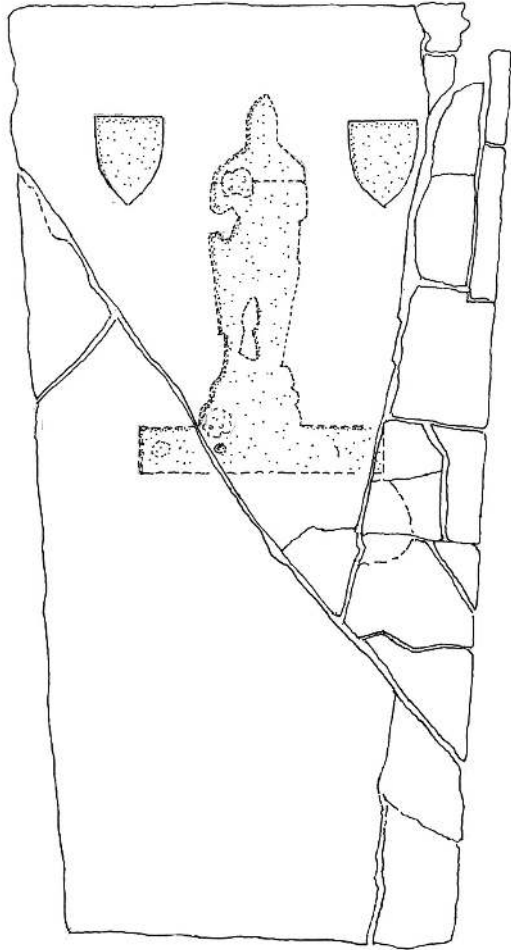
Fowler (1863, 78) records the 'elaborate accompaniments of a **Clock**, given by one of the Calverleys, and having their armorial bearings' as lying in a corner; at some subsequent date the old clock face has been set on the west wall of the nave, above the tower arch, and its mechanism restored and set in a new frame, which now stands beside the south door. The armorial bearings are however now lost.

*The old clock mechanism survived the fire, although in need of conservation work.*

The present ring of eight **Bells** were hung in 1889, as a gift of the Eighth Viscount Boyne; Boyle (1892, 457) describes their predecessors, which consisted of three cast in 1632 (he cites their inscriptions) and three given in 1859 to replace others reputed to have been sold to provide liquid refreshment for the 'gentlemen of the Four-and-Twenty'. The cast iron low-sided frames (Pickford type 8.3 A) are of plan type 8.3., with a central range of four east-west pits with two aligned north-south on either side.

*The bells have been re-cast after the fire.*

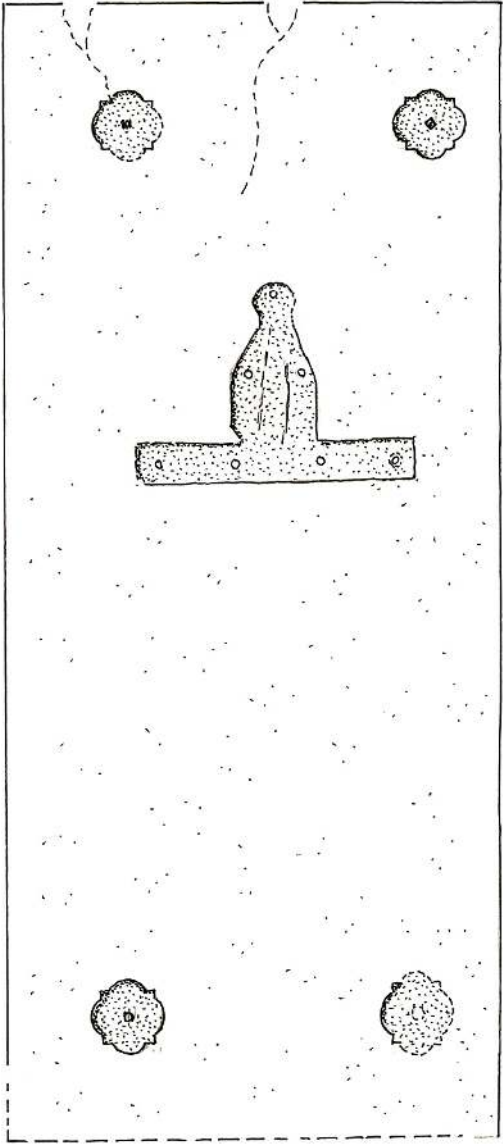
ST BRANDON, BRANCEPETH  
MATRIX OF KNIGHT'S BRASS (after fire damage)



drawn PFR 11 1 99



ST BRANDON BRANCEPETH: MATRIX OF DRAX BRASS



drawn June 2002 PFR

0 1.00 metre

## Sepulchral Monuments.

The medieval cross slab grave covers are described separately.

There are also two **Brasses**:

### **Thomas Claxton (?)**

In the floor at the east end of the south aisle is a figure of a knight in armour, in the style of the late 14<sup>th</sup> or early 15<sup>th</sup> century, set in a tapered slab. An inscription and shields have been removed; the figure itself was stolen at one time and retrieved from a shop in London. The figure is described by Boyle (1892, 457) as... ' a knight in armour about the end of the fourteenth or beginning of the fifteenth century....He wears a sharply-pointed bascinet with a camail, having a fringe at its base; a breastplate with faces, beneath which is a hauberk of mail, the lower part of which appears; a baldric across the loins attaches sword and dagger; the knee pieces, or genouillieres, are sharply ridged, and the solerettes very long and pointed; a lion is at the feet'. The monument has been linked to a Thomas Claxton, Constable of Brancepeth castle from 1400 to 1402.

*The brass itself survived the fire without serious damage, but its slab, positioned above a heating duct, disintegrated.*

### **Richard Drax**

The monument of Richard Drax, priest, is a slab, with five separate brasses, now set in the centre of the floor of the chancel immediately to the west of the effigy of Robert Neville, 'The Peacock'. This was not necessarily its original position, as the church floors have been re-ordered and monuments moved at various times in the past.

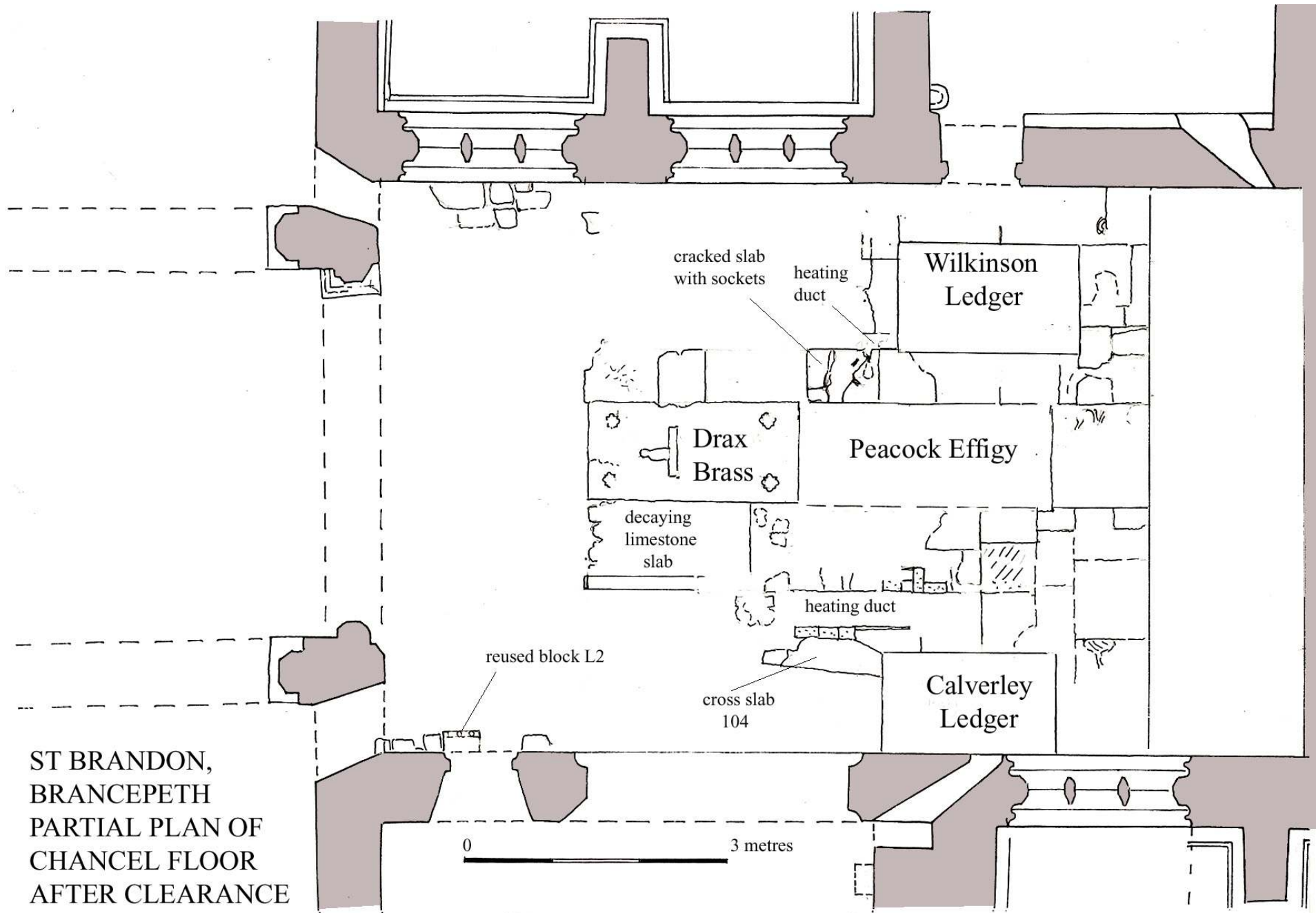
The slab, 2.4 long by 1.04 - 1.06 m wide, and 0.165 m thick, is of a dark blue argillaceous limestone, possibly from quarries in the Stanhope area of Weardale, although not the common 'Frosterley Marble'.

The brass is described by Boyle (189, 457) as 'a demi-figure of a priest in academical costume, with hood, cape etc'. The inscription, much defaced, he gives as follows:

hic iacet Ric'us drax Cl'icus in utroq; iure Bacluari q'n'dm Rector  
isti' eccl'ie q' obiit die natalis dei A' d'ni M<sup>o</sup>CCCC<sup>o</sup> lvi cui aie p'piciet de'.

Despite Boyle's 'much defaced' the inscription remains at least in part legible; the face of the demi-figure above is worn virtually smooth, but some detail survives of sleeves, clasped hands and collar. The emblems of the Evangelists (not mentioned by Boyle) are set near to the corners of the slab, each take the form of a plate c 110mm square with a segmental projection in the centre of each side. They each comprise a figure, accompanied by a short scroll which presumably at one time bore their name. They comprise:

- (1) Top l. Eagle (John)
- (2) Top r. Winged man (Matthew)
- (3) Lower l. Winged lion (Mark).
- (4) Lower r. Winged ox (Luke)



Plates (3) and (4) are generally in better condition than the others, although the raised parts of their designs have been worn smooth, the 'pecked' background remains in good condition.

*When inspected after the 1998 fire the slab, although spattered with melted lead, did not seem to have suffered seriously, and the brass plates appeared undamaged. Due to concerns about their security, the brasses were removed from the stone by being gently prised up; they were freed easily, without any distortion or damage. It would appear that they had been set in bitumen or pitch, and secured by rivets to drilled holes in the stone. Subsequently, as with other stonework in the church, the long-term effect of intense heating on the slab has become evident with cracking and break up; it is now in poor condition, and could not be lifted without fragmenting.*

From the later medieval period there are two important **Effigial Monuments**:

### **The Peacock of the North**

The earlier is set in the centre of the chancel floor, and is a large (c 2.3 m long) stone effigy thought to represent Robert Neville, the 'Peacock of the North', who was killed fighting the Scots at Berwick in 1318. The following description is given by Hunter Blair (1929, 22)

*Person:* Robert Neville, called the Peacock of the North, d.1318.

*Material:* Sandstone, in excellent preservation, 7 feet 6 inches in length.

*Armour, etc:* Head, in mail coif bound by a fillet, decorated with foliage, above a circular skull-cap, rests upon two cushions supported on the backs of six lions whose heads face outwards; at each side is a kneeling clerk reading from a book lying upon the top cushion. At each of the four corners is an angel with folded wings looking outwards. A loose sleeveless surcoat of the cyclas style is above a mail hauberk and a quilted gambeson. A narrow girdle is around the waist. Legs and feet are in mail with plain leather knee-cops, the right leg is crossed over the left and the feet are armed with prick spurs. The foot-rest is a finely carved lion with a dragon, biting at the point of the scabbard, curled over him. The bare hands are joined in prayer. A little pug dog is curled up on the right side of slab below the knees; foliage is carved upon the top of the slab showing between the legs. The mail is indicated by bands of incised curved lines.

*Sword:* Straight quillons and round pommel; it is attached by interlaced thongs to a broad belt, ornamented with foliage and loosely fastened around the hips. Its lower part is destroyed. The tag of the belt falls down at the left side.

*Shield:* Heater shape, held at the left side by a narrow strap, decorated with foliage, passing over the right shoulder.

*Armorial:* (Gules) a saltire (silver) and a label of five points (He was killed at Berwick, in a fight against the Scots, during his father's lifetime, hence the label of cadency)

The 1639 plan shows this effigy set against the north wall of the north transept, although Hodgson suggested that it was originally placed alongside the altar in the south transept. In 1864 it was moved to the north side of the chancel, and then into its present position c1984 when the monument of Ralph Neville and wife was moved from the chancel into the transept.

*This effigy, although damaged by heat and spattered with molten lead, did survive the fire, and has been the subject of an intensive programme of conservation.*

## The Neville Tomb

In the north-east corner of the north transept, close to the original position of the first effigy, are a pair of wooden effigies ascribed to Ralph Neville d.1484, second Earl of Westmoreland, and Margaret, his second wife. These had stood in the western part of the chancel, probably their original position, although displaced to the south in 1864 when the Peacock effigy was placed alongside; c1984 the effigies were moved to the transept, and placed on a new box tomb. The following description is taken from Hunter Blair (*ibid*, 33-34).

...(the tomb) was probably a copy in oak of the alabaster tomb of Ralph, first earl of Westmorland, at Staindrop.

*Persons:* Ralph Neville, second earl of Westmorland, and his wife Elizabeth Percy. He died 1484

*Material:* Oak, carved from a solid block, in good condition and with traces of the original gesso upon it, but no paint is left.

*Armour, etc.:* The head, in a salade with open visor, rests upon his mantled heaume with crest of a bull's head. A plate (*mentionière*) covers the chin and is joined to the plates of the gorget. A jupon with deeply engrailed lower edge is worn above a breastplate and mail hauberk. The shoulders are protected by four laminated plates: the arms are in plate with plain elbow-cops (*coudières*). The legs are also in plate with flanged and decorated *genouillères*. The hands, in gauntlets with jewelled knuckles, are joined in prayer. A belt, ornamented with decorated *quatrefoils*, is around the hips, and a narrower transverse belt suspends a dagger with hexagonal hilt and pommel at his left side. The feet, in pointed *sollerets*, rest against a collared hound, beyond which is a double desk with a low stool at each side upon which two clerks (now destroyed) have been seated reading from two open books on the desk. A collar of radiated roses (*Yorkist*) from which was suspended the White Boar badge of Richard III. There is neither sword, shield nor armorials

These effigies originally lay on an altar tomb in the centre of the chancel; the tomb was destroyed, probably in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (illustrations of it survive) and the effigies and entablature replaced upon its plinth. The monument, in this condition, is figured by Billings (plate f.p.25); within the present century it has been moved twice, first to the south side of the chancel, and then to its present location, mounted on a modern tomb (over the old plinth).

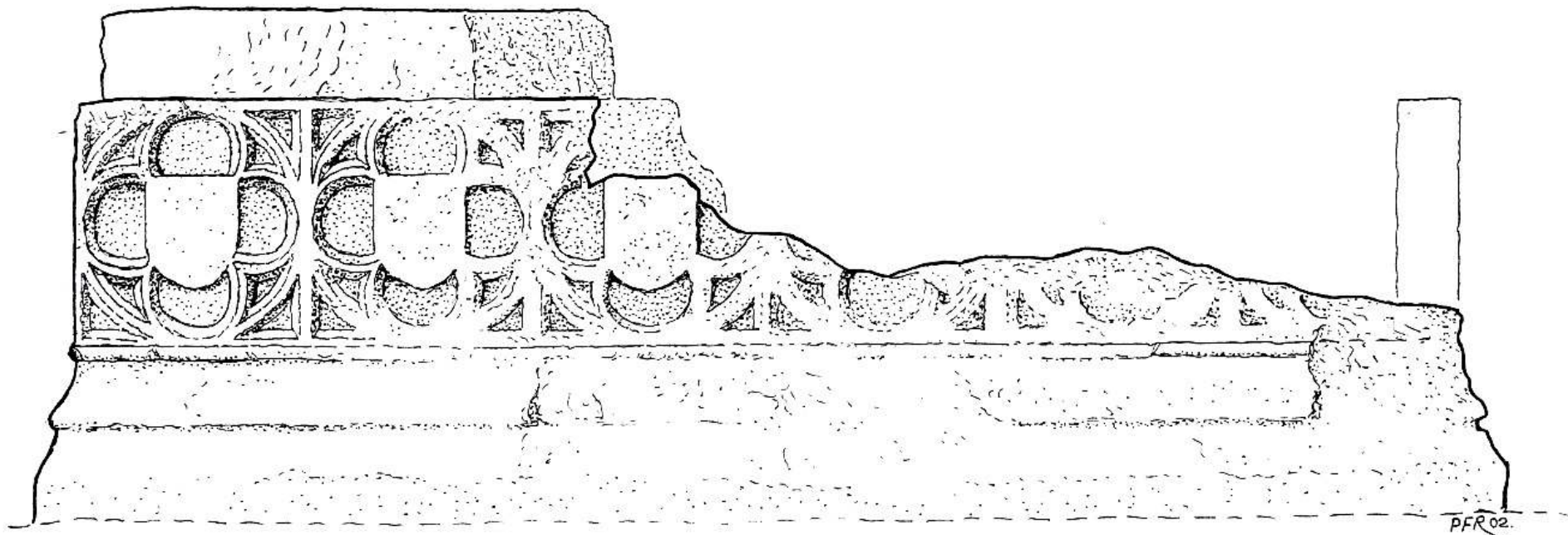
*After the fire no trace whatsoever remained of these effigies.*

## The Westmorland Tomb

A third Neville tomb is now set beneath the tower. This is a large tomb chest with a plain top slab and six *quatrefoil* panels on the sides, containing shields; three on the south retain traces of colouring but the Neville saltire which could still be 'dimly traced' a hundred years ago (Boyle 1892, 457) is no longer apparent. The ends of the tomb are plain, as prior to 1876 it stood beneath the arch between chancel and south chapel. This is thought to have been intended as the tomb of Ralph Neville, third Earl of Westmorland who died in 1523 but was actually buried at Hornby (North Yorkshire) although his wife was interred beneath it. When the tomb was removed to its present location in 1876 a second similar uninscribed altar tomb in the chapel, that of the son of the Third Earl, was buried beneath its floor 'to get it out of the way' (Hodgkin 1913, 74) (*see account of Lady Chapel*).

*After the fire the remains of the Westmorland tomb were recorded in detail, and the following*

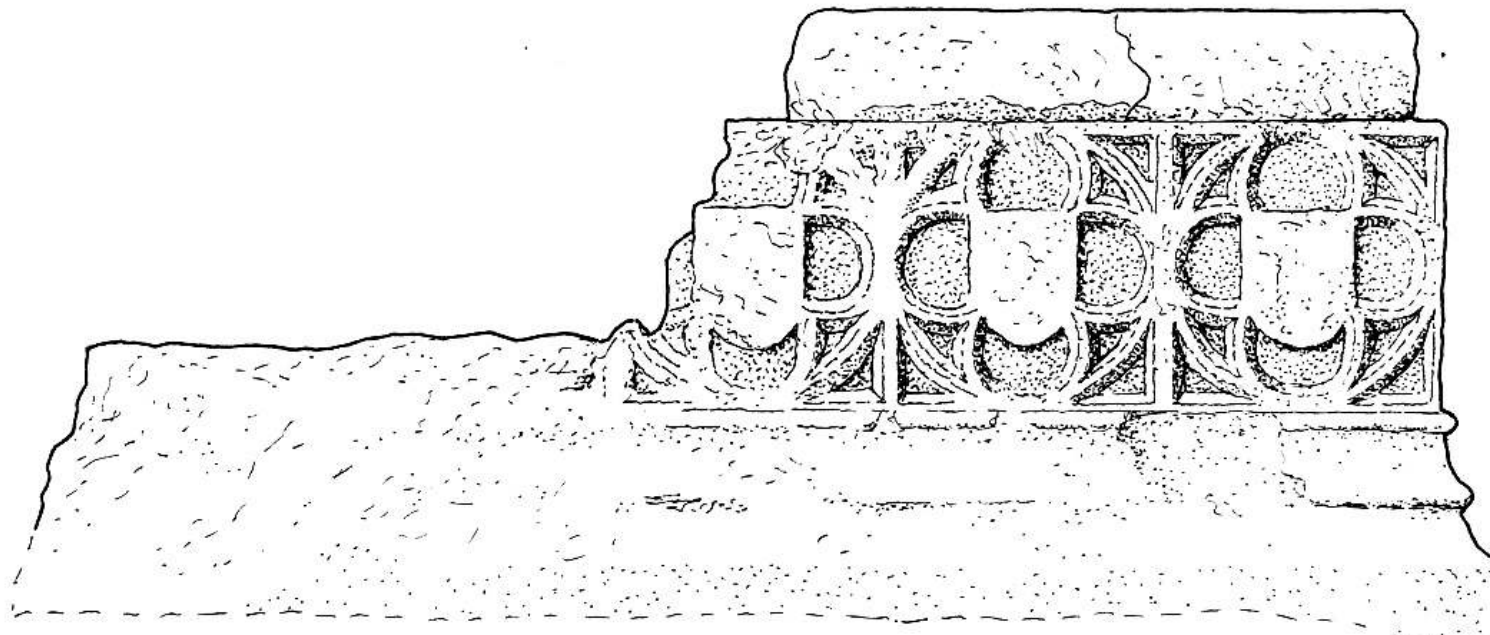
**St Brandon's Church, Brancepeth**  
**The Westmorland Tomb,**  
**after Fire Damage**  
Survey P F Ryder January 2002  
North Side



0 1 metre



**St Brandon's Church, Brancepeth**  
**The Westmorland Tomb**  
**after Fire Damage**  
Survey P F Ryder January 2002  
South Side

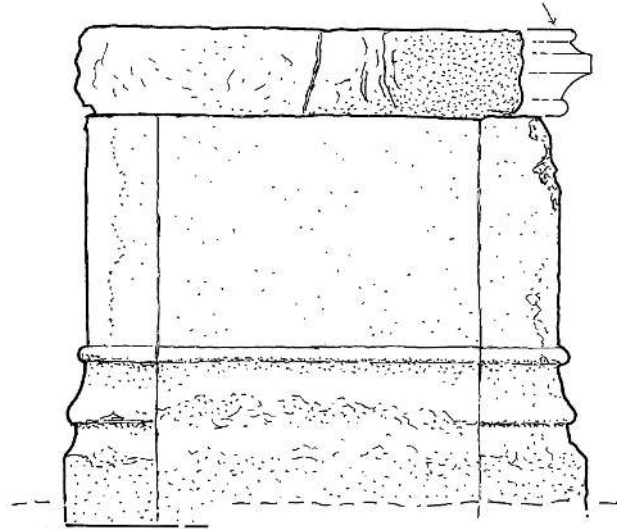


0 1 metre

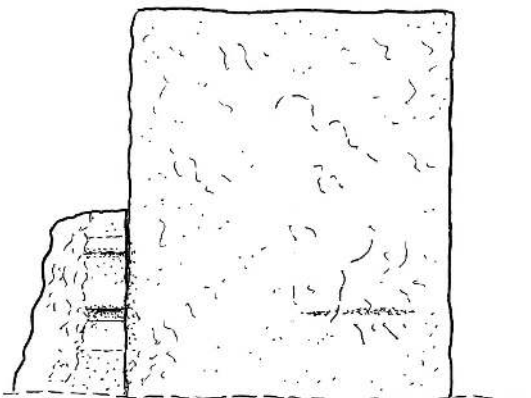
A horizontal scale bar with alternating black and white segments, used to indicate the size of the drawing.

**St Brandon's Church, Brancepeth**  
**The Westmorland Tomb,**  
**after Fire Damage**  
Survey P F Ryder January 2002  
**End Elevations**

Edge section from detached fragment



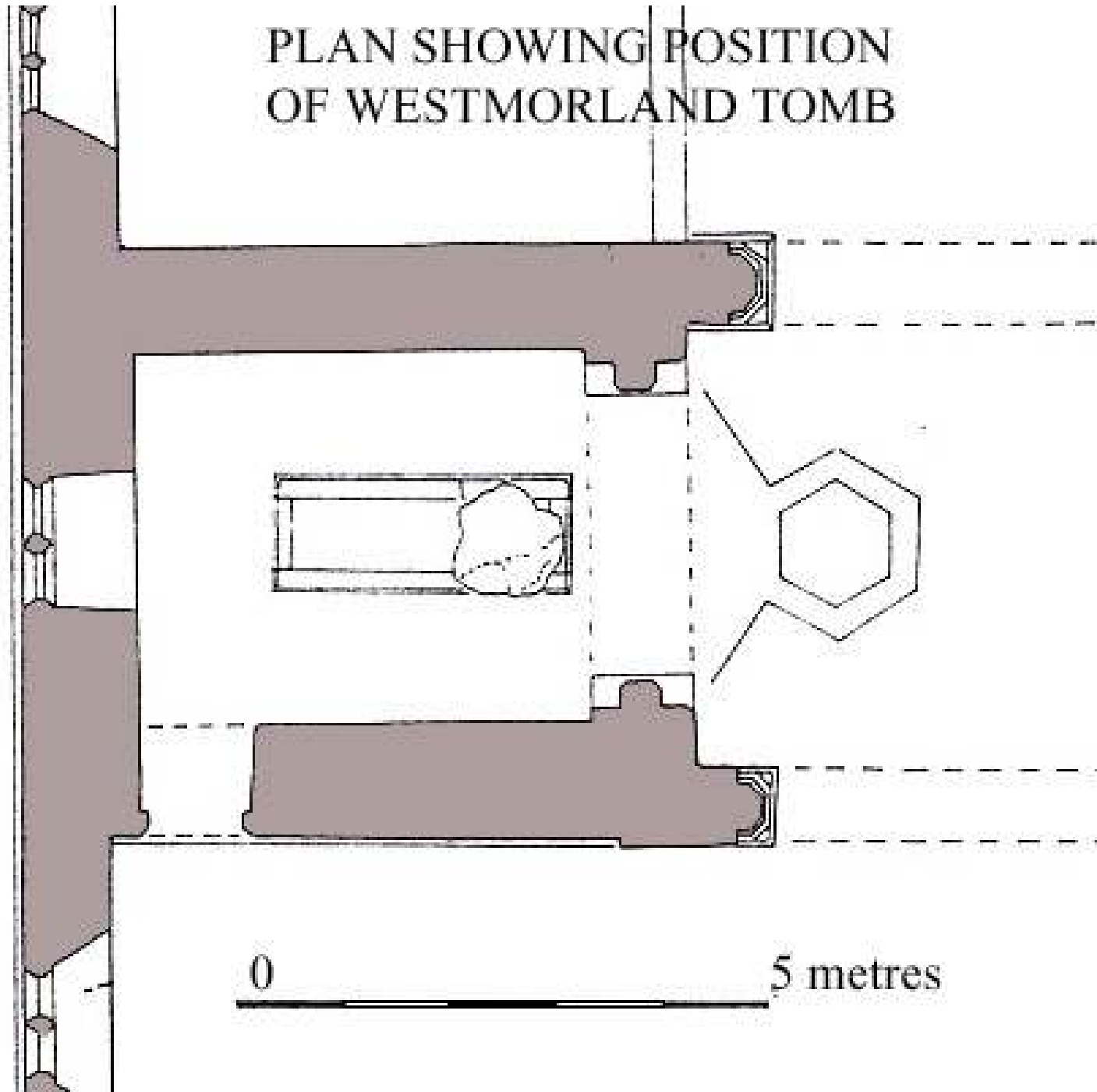
**East End**



**West End**

0 1 2 m

PLAN SHOWING POSITION  
OF WESTMORLAND TOMB



*account compiled; actual restoration was not thought worthwhile, and the remaining fragments have been placed in the churchyard north of the north porch.*

*The tomb consists of a rectangular box 2.48 m long by 0.48 m high, set on a moulded plinth 0.38 m high and with a top slab 0.18 m thick. It is made of a hard bluish Carboniferous limestone, with traces of fossils, perhaps 'Tees Marble' from the Barnard Castle area..*

*Both ends of the tomb are made up of plain slabs; its original location was beneath the arch between the chancel and south chapel, so these would not be exposed. The sides have each had relief carving of six circular panels with quatrefoil cusping, containing shields, on which the Neville saltire could still be 'dimly traced' on these a hundred years ago (Boyle 1892, 457). A 1996 report by Hanna Conservation refers to 'traces of original pigment and ground on the shields' but this is no longer apparent. The ends of the tomb are plain, as prior to 1876 it stood beneath the arch between chancel and south chapel.*

*The 1996 report found the tomb chest 'in an advanced state of deterioration, with massive loss of surface detail' and recommended an extensive programme of conservation. This was never carried out. During the fire the west end of the tomb was hit by a falling bell. The remains of the tomb at present are in a sorry condition. The eastern part of each side survives, with two panels more or less intact and most of a third, although their carving is in poor condition. On the north the bases of the western three panels remain, but on the south this end of the slab has disappeared entirely. The east end slab remains intact, as does the western, although it has lost most of its surface. Sections of the moulded plinth survive (except for the west part of the south side) and about a third of the top slab, cracked in to several pieces and lacking all its edge (although the moulding can be retrieved from detached fragments currently stored in the south porch).*

*The tomb is very typical of its period.. Never personalised in any way (except perhaps by the now lost painted detail) it cannot rate as of major importance, and had been moved from its original location into one which was never appropriate. In its present shattered condition it would not seem to merit retention within the building; it is suggested that its remains might be reconstructed, in their present condition, in the churchyard (perhaps close to the north wall, in which Victorian restorers set several medieval slabs). The remains of the top slab may not survive movement, but would in any case present a safety hazard.*

*The remains of the tomb were recorded as a series of measured sketches, drawn up with the aid of photographs; a proper photographic record would be difficult, bearing in mind the amount of scaffolding around the tomb.*

## **Post-Medieval Monuments**

The most ambitious post-medieval monument is a wooden wall tablet on the north of the chancel, which it appears was intended as a memorial to Cosin himself, but was never completed as the Bishop was buried in his palace Chapel at Bishop Auckland. Pevsner & Williamson (116) debate whether the monument was put up by Cosin himself pre-1640 or by his successor and protégée, Brevint, after 1660.

*Being timber, this was of course destroyed.*

Set in the internal face of the north wall of the north aisle, in the section to the west of the north

door, used as a choir vestry, are two ledger stones, one with a Latin inscription to Nicholas Hull of Stockley, pardoned for taking part in the Rebellion of the North in 1569. A translation of the inscription reads:

October 21  
1600  
Here lies Nicholas Hull of Stockley  
Who of his volition sang as a swan sings when it is dying  
Come Lord and come quickly

(Translation taken from: Genealogy and the Rising of the North by Dr Peter Hill in the Journal of the Northumberland and Durham Family History Society, vol 20 no3, Autumn 1995, 78).

The other is probably the slab recorded as bearing the inscription 'Pray for the soul of Nicholas Cokke I.C.H.W.'; this Nicholas is thought to have been a curate who died in 1644.

*The surfaces of both these stones spalled off in the fire; the fragments bearing the inscriptions were collected; in the case of the Nicholas Hull stone it has been possible to fit together the majority of the inscribed face.*

In the chancel floor are two more ledgers, one to the south of the 'Peacock' effigy with a Latin inscription, and coat of arms, to Thomas Calverly d.1613 and his son John d.1638, and one to the north with a worn 18<sup>th</sup> century inscription to Timothy Wilkinson .

*The Calverley ledger appeared to have survived the fire relatively undamaged, but when lifted from the floor broke into a number of pieces; at the time of writing it lies in the churchyard and its future has not been decided. The more decayed Wilkinson stone was further damaged; its remains were recorded, but not retained.*

There are several **Hatchments**, probably of 18<sup>th</sup> century date; two in the north aisle, one over the south door, one on the east wall of the south transept, and one on the north wall of the south-east chapel. Blair (1954,6-8) lists six hatchments in the church, giving full descriptions of the heraldry; he ascribes them as follows

- (1) On west wall of Lady Chapel. Matthew Russell d 1822
- (2) On north wall of Lady Chapel. Matthew Russell; d 1817
- (3) On north wall of chapel. Emma Maria Russell d.1870
- (4) Standing against south wall of Lady Chapel 'in a very dilapidated condition'. William Bellasis d1769
- (5) On south wall of vestry (sacristy). Possible Sir Henry Bellasis d.1717
- (6) On east wall of vestry. Probably William Russell d. 1850

Summers (1980) records (1), (2) and (6) and notes that (3) and (4) were no longer present; he also describes a fourth hatchment, which he could not identify, which he thought might be Blair's (5), which had been incorrectly described; this is illustrated in the RCHM collection of photographs..

*All these hatchments were of course destroyed, although the positions of some remained visible as 'ghosts' on the wall plaster.*

## Wall Monuments

Only the more significant of these, listed below, were included in the 1998 assessment. Others

which survived the fire, and are not listed below, are detailed in a separate finds report by Sue Degnan; these include a series of brass plates relating to the Durham Light Infantry, from beneath the tower.

- (1) In the north aisle, set on top of the unfinished respond at the east end of the north wall, is a **Funeral Helmet** of uncertain date, possibly associated with one of the Neville tombs.  
*This seems to have been of wood, and did not survive the fire.*
- (2) On east wall of North Transept, two 1876 brass plates to John Parrington (one in Latin, one dedicating adjacent window) and one to of Edward Duncombe Shafto (1858?) Captain of the Royal Artillery who lost his life in the Explosion at the Bala Nissar Kabul. *In store.*
- (3) In the South Aisle a good wall tablet to William Forster d.1756, topped by urn and with a cherub at its base..

To the Memory of  
WILLIAM FORSTER Esq  
of the City of Durham  
Who died Janu:6.1766 Aged 50  
and lies interred with his  
Ancestors in the Yard  
near the South Wall  
of this Church  
HENRY MILLS  
his Affectionate Nephew  
erected this Monument

*This survived the fire more or less intact but has been removed at some stage since.*

- (4) Beside the south door a brass records ‘The South Porch of this church was erected A.D. 1892 by the Rev. Arthur Duncombe Shafto, M.A., Rector of Brancepeth’. *In store*
- (5) In the south transept were four brass wall plaques to later C19/C20 Boynes.  
*One and a fragment of a second are in store*
- (6) Further west a wall tablet above choir stalls, between windows, and below that a brass plaque to ? Rev J Osmonde
- (7) On the south of the chancel, above and two the west of the arch to the Lady Chapel are four tablets to members of the Russell family:

(A) (upper)

‘In the Castle Vault  
are deposited the Remains  
of WILLIAM RUSSELL, Esqre  
who departed this Life at his  
Castle of Brancepeth  
on the 8<sup>th</sup> Day of June 1817.  
In the 83<sup>rd</sup> Year of his Age.

(B)(lower)

IN THE CASTLE VAULT



ARE DEPOSITED THE REMAINS OF  
**MARY**  
 WIFE OF W. HAMILTON BUNBURY OF CRANAVONA  
 IN THE COUNTY OF CARLOW, LATE LIEU. COL. IN HIS  
 MAJESTY'S SERVICE, AND ELDEST DAUGHTER  
 OF THE LATE WILLIAM RUSSELL, ESQ  
 OF BRANCEPETH CASTLE, WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE  
 AT PARIS ON THE 23<sup>RD</sup> OF APRIL 1832, LEAVING AN  
 ONLY CHILD MARY DIANA

- (C) To right of the lower tablet, another in the form of a scroll,

‘Sacred  
 to the memory of  
 William Russell Esquire  
 only Son of  
 Matthew Russel Esqre  
 and Elizabeth his Wife  
 He ..... of the  
 .....of Parliament  
 for the County of Durham  
 .....  
 .....  
 Aged 80(?) years

- (D) To the right of this, close to the west end of the wall and over the doorway into the chapel, a tablet with a shrouded urn above, and Greek key frieze at bottom. Long inscription to Matthew Russell.

*All these were largely destroyed in the fire, apart from sections of their rear plates.*

## The Cross Slab Grave Covers

Perhaps the most significant positive consequence of the Brancepeth fire, from an archaeological point of view, has been the discovery of what has turned out to be the largest collection of medieval cross slab grave covers in the North of England. Nineteen were recorded before the fire (Ryder 1985, 62-4, pl 9-10 and 1994, 43-44); subsequent to the fire another eighty six have been recorded, twenty-two of which remain built into the fabric. Arrangements for the conservation and display of the remainder of the material are still to be finalised at the time of writing, but it is hoped that the more significant slabs will be arranged on the internal faces of the aisle walls of the restore church.)

A complete list of these slabs, along with brief descriptions and illustrations, follows. The preliminary discussion should only be treated as an interim document; such a substantial body of material as this merits a more detailed consideration.

Of the 105 slabs, all but 5 show evidence of having carried full-length crosses and having been cross slabs of the conventional type; these are by far the most common type of medieval monument to survive, and occur in some numbers at many old parish churches in County Durham. The vast majority of the slabs bear incised designs, although there are sometimes sunk panels included in the cross head design. A handful of relief-carved stones (3,93) are indicative of higher-status burials.

The cross head forms are usually seen as the best indicant of the date of the slab; a basic typology was laid down by Butler (1964) and the County Durham material discussed by Ryder (1985). The only slabs that may fall before the Norman Conquest are two (16) and (17) built into the stile at the entrance to the churchyard; these may well be the heads of free-standing crosses rather than cross slabs proper. Of the other crosses, simple designs made up of four circles, such as (50) and (68) may be as early as c1100; these patterns develop through the four broken circles (48), (49) through to the familiar 'round-leaf bracelet' type (47, 61, 70) seen as typical of the late 12<sup>th</sup> and early 13<sup>th</sup> century. This dating is broadly confirmed by the line of typical 'Early English' nail-head ornament accompanying a simialr cross (44). A further development from these is seen when combinations of bracelet and a simple cross allow clusters of trefoil terminals seen on the elegant (100) and in simpler outline on (1) and (11) which probably date to the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century. A more elaborate 'bracelet derivative form' in which the terminals become naturalistic leaves is seen in (79), an attractive slab now badly worn, possibly of the earlier 14<sup>th</sup> century..

Straight-armed crosses with terminals in the form of varying forms of fleur-de-lys are not so easy to date, and occur in some numbers. Some are quite crude (25, 26, 64, 64, 73) and may date from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, but the more elaborate eight-arm forms such as (30, 32, 46 and 101) may be as late as c1300. The 'interlaced diamond' cross of (3) is probably of similar date.

As is common in the area there are no slabs that one can place, stylistically, more recently than the Black Death. By this time higher-status monuments such as brasses an effigies have come into vogue for the higher ranks on society; it is not clear whether cross slabs passed out of use, or whether older designs were simply copied. It is impossible to date simple straight-arm crosses such as (6) and (8).

The majority of the crosses carved on slabs have a plain or slightly tapered shaft rising from a

stepped base; four Brancepeth examples (25, 29, 31 and 69) have foliage springing from the cross slabs, which might relate either to the concept of the 'Tree of Life' or possibly a custom of throwing freshly-cut foliage onto the coffin at a burial.

Turning to the emblems carved on the slabs, as one would expect in the area by far the most common are the sword and shears. The sword, presumed to relate to the right to bear arms, occurs on 27 slabs, usually carved on the right side of the cross shaft; the high-status (93) has the sword wound round with a sword belt, presumably an indicant of a higher rank; this is seen again on two slabs in the city of Durham one in the Cathedral and one at St Oswalds' Church (Ryder 1985, 19).

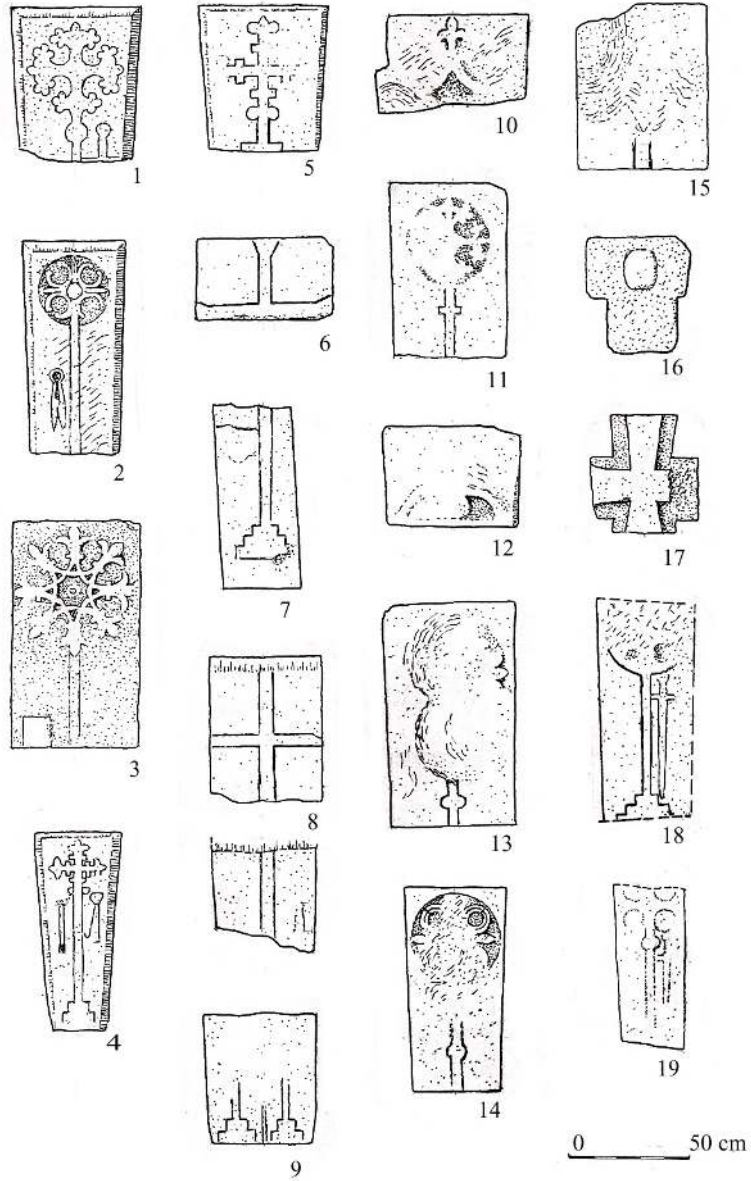
The significance of the shears was much debated by Victorian antiquaries, but it now seem to be agreed relates to a female burial ; at Brancepeth there are 15 examples mostly set on the left of the cross. The key, more common in Northumberland than in Durham is also seen as a woman's emblem, and Brancepeth has one example, (56) There is, rather surprisingly, only one example of a priest's slab, (100), bearing a chalice. The impressive (46) has, along with its sword, a much larger pair of shears that may symbolise a cloth merchant ; the rare scissors (seen again at Edlingham in Northumberland and Tadcaster in Yorkshire) occur on (39). The small slab (4) has tongs and a hammer, presumably indicating a smith, which (3) and (64) have a rectangular object that could be a book, or perhaps a lady's work-box. (73) has a clasped book along with a sword., and may indicate a clerk. The fragment (76) has an unidentified emblem seen again at Woodhorn in Northumberland, Dewsbury in West Yorkshire , and at Doncaster and other sites in South Yorkshire, 'which might be an acolyte's stole or a musical instrument' (Ryder 1991,20,65).

Eleven slabs at Brancepeth show an unusual and distinctive feature, perhaps indicate of a localised tradition, in the appearance of small equal-armed crosses at various points of the design. On (48) and (66) slabs these are located both on a knop on the cross shaft and the pommel of the adjacent sword, on (49), (68) and (69) on a shaft knop and on (47), (96) and (101) on the sword pommel. (50) and (51) have similar small crosses at the centre of the cross head. The 'cloth-merchant's slab' (46) has crosses, akin to those found on medieval altar slabs, at the upper angles and the centre of the base.

An interesting parallel to these small incised crosses, and in particular those on slab (46) is seen in a slab at Aycliffe (Ryder 1985, 52 and pl.3) which also has parallels with slabs (28) and (72) at Brancepeth and several at Lanchester in its cup-like terminals carved in relief within a sunk circle. The Lanchester slab, a double one with key and shears accompanying the female cross and blacksmith's hammer, tongs and sword the male one, has five small crosses very like those on an altar; some writers have argued that it was in fact re-used as an altar, but Hodgson (1908, 13-17 and pl.viii) argues for the crosses being 'a sort of consecration crosses....probably...anointed with holy oil and chrism' (as part of the burial rite).

It may also be useful to comment on the re-use of slabs. It is clear that such monuments were unceremoniously recycled in the church fabric wherever a long slab was needed; a large number were seen side-on in the transept walls, and others (32, 57, 82 and 83) were utilised as drain spouts. Others were cut up to form voussoirs for arcade arches, and parts of window surrounds. The greatest number were however found reused in the clerestory; (25-31') and (35-41) formed the outer orders of the heads of the windows themselves, and were only briefly seen when the inner stonework was being replaced, whilst (33) and (34) had been re-cut as sills, only a tiny fraction of their carved surface being retained. Sixteen further slabs were re-used,

St Brandon's Church, Brancepeth. The Cross Slabs.





20



21



22



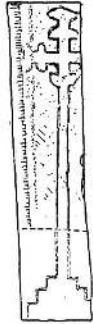
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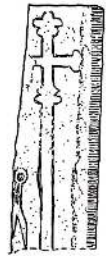
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25



26

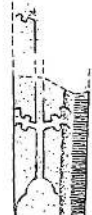


27



28

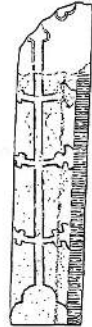
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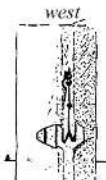
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31



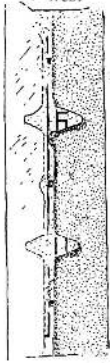
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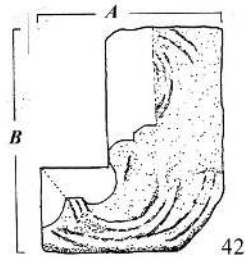
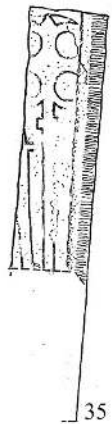
east 33



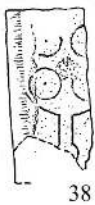
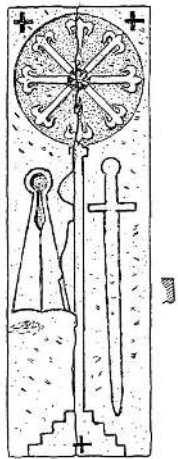
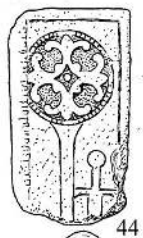
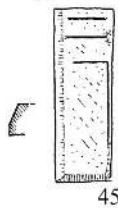
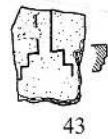
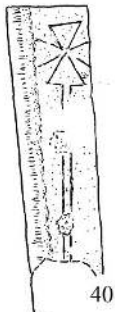
west



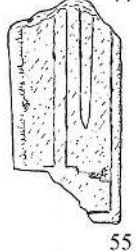
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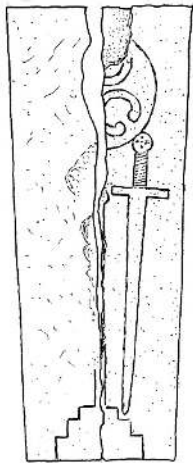
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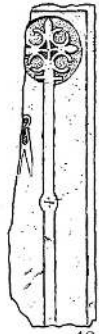
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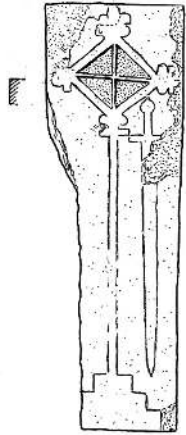




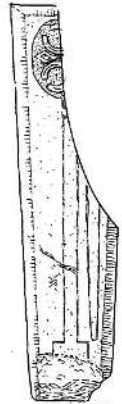
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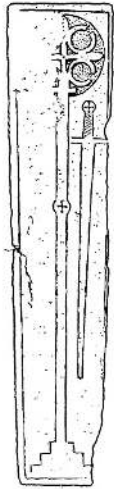
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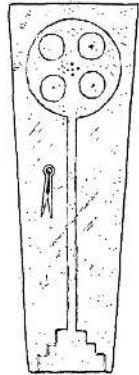
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54



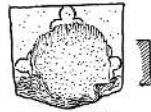
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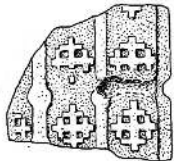
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53



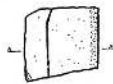
57



58

0 30cm

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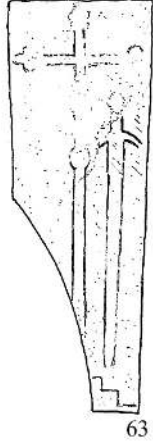


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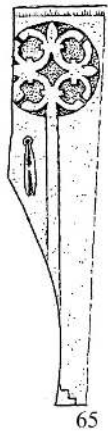
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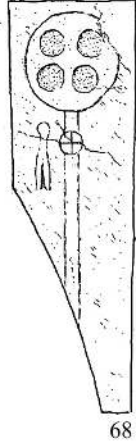
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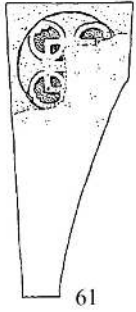
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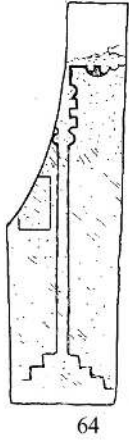
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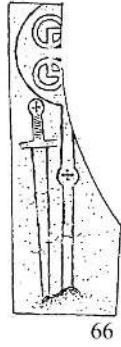
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61



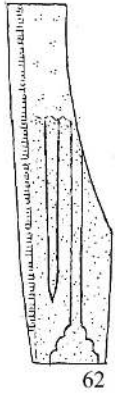
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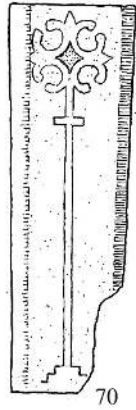


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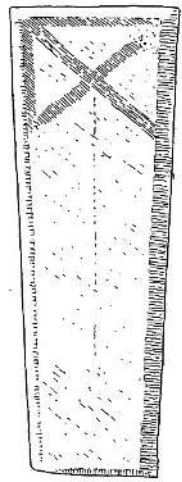
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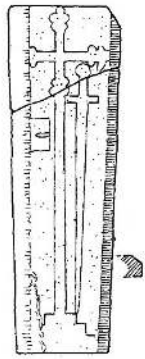
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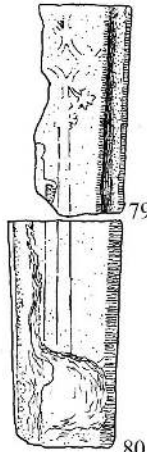
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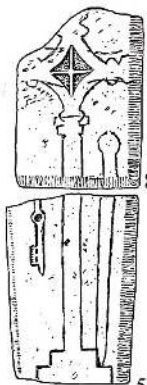


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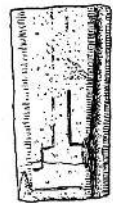


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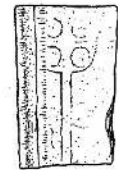
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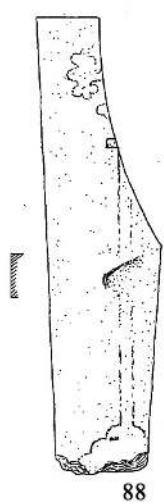


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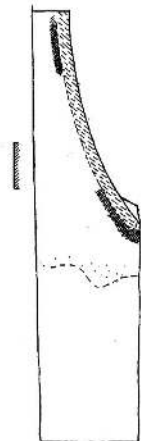


85

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88

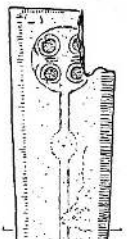


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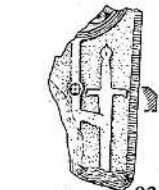
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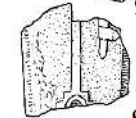
91



92



93a



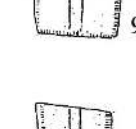
93b



94



95a



95b



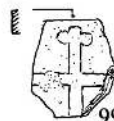
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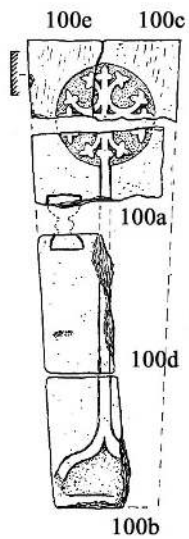
98a



98b



99



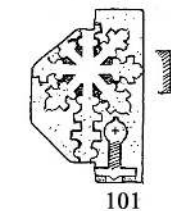
100e

100c

100b

100a

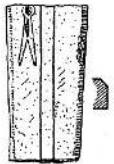
100d



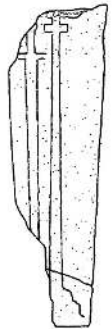
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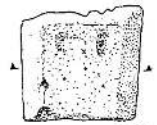
102



103



104



105



0 50 cm

each as a half of a segmental rear arch to the windows; another dozen or so, laid horizontally and quite undamaged, formed the wall-head above the windows. Further slabs capping the walls of the transepts and chancel had usually been cut into two pieces before re-use.

Only slabs which would have been physically cut into by the inserted ring-beam or other structural components were actually removed from the fabric; if further ones seen in the walls below had been removed, the total of slabs would have been substantially enlarged. Unfortunately, in the nave walls at least, drilling and grouting of the walls means that these have effectively been destroyed.

Slabs (1)-(5) were built into the internal face of the west wall of the north aisle, from north to south. They were so badly damaged in the fire that only a few fragments were retrievable:

- (1) Upper part of slab of coarse brown sandstone; incised bracelet-derivative cross with clustered trefoil terminals, with sword on r. of shaft. Second half 13<sup>th</sup> century.
- (2) Slab lacking its base; cross with round-leaf bracelets on a Greek cross, the head carved in relief within a circle, shears on l. of shaft. Late 12<sup>th</sup> or early 13<sup>th</sup> century.
- (3) Upper part of grey sandstone slab; interlaced-diamond cross in relief, with on l. of shaft what appears to be the upper part of a rectangular emblem, perhaps a book. Probably 14<sup>th</sup> century.
- (4) Intact slab with incised design, Greek cross with cross-bars and terminals between a trefoil and a fleur-de-lys in form, rising from stepped base; blacksmith's tongs on r and probable hammer on l. Possibly 14<sup>th</sup> century.
- (5) Upper part of grey sandstone slab with incised design of Greek cross with cross-bars and terminals with round leaves and pointed buds. Later 13<sup>th</sup> century.
- (6) Part of a slab of yellow-brown sandstone built into the external face of the east wall of the north transept 1 m above ground; incised expanded-arm cross, not datable.
- (7) Adjacent to (6) on the north; incised cross shaft, oddly widening upwards from the stepped base.
- (8) Two pieces of a slab re-used in the internal jambs of the squint from the sacristy into the chancel. Incised Greek cross, with possible shears on r. of shaft. Not datable.

Slabs (9)-(15) are built into the internal face of the north wall of the churchyard, from west to east, and tend to be hidden by vegetation. Hodges (1884) gives drawings of these when they were in a less-weathered condition.

- (9) Lower part of double slab of whitish sandstone; incised cross shafts and stepped bases. Not datable.
- (10) Head of slab of pink/white sandstone; very worn relief-carved slab with fleur-de-lys terminals. 14<sup>th</sup> century?



- (11) Upper part of slab of coarse orange sandstone; bracelet-derivative cross with clustered terminals carved in relief in sunk circle; perhaps late 13<sup>th</sup> century.
- (12) Base of white sandstone slab; arched base with a circular motif; Hodges' drawing shows an ogee-arched base with a quatrefoil within a circle below and a sword blade on the r. 14<sup>th</sup> century.
- (13) Upper part of white sandstone slab; eight-armed cross with fleur-de-lys terminals (now very worn). Early 14<sup>th</sup> century.
- (14) Upper part of slab of coarse white/orange sandstone. Cross head with Greek cross and bracelets within a circle Late 12<sup>th</sup> or early 13<sup>th</sup> century.
- (15) Section of orange sandstone slab with incised cross shaft. Not datable.
- (16) Stone built into south side of stile beside churchyard gate. This may be part of a free-standing cross rather than a grave cover; it has angular armpits and a central roughly; rectangular raised boss. This may be an early medieval headstone, but could equally well be a Pre-Conquest piece.
- (17) Stone built into the north side of the stile; this seems to be the head of another free-standing cross, with slightly-expanded raised panels on the arms. The same comments as for (16) apply.
- (18) Slab re-used as internal lintel of vestry door. Incised design; four-circle cross head, stepped base, sword on r. Perhaps 12<sup>th</sup> century (Ryder 1994 43, fig.1). There is another slab (18a) reused as the internal lintel of the east window of the vestry One incised bracelet of round-leaf cross head is all that is visible, through whitewash (not drawn)..
- (19) Slab re-used in west wall of Lady Chapel, below sill of window. Design faintly visible through plaster; four-circle or bracelet cross with sword on r. 12<sup>th</sup> century. Sandstone
- (20) Slab re-used in external face of north parapet of chancel. Lower part of slab with broad tapering cross shaft rising from rather irregular stepped base. Not datable.
- (21) Slab re-used in internal face of north parapet of chancel.. Ferruginous sandstone; cross head with broad fleur-de-lys terminals carved in relief in sunk circle, rest of design destroyed by erosion. 13<sup>th</sup> century?
- (22) Slab re-used in centre of internal face of east parapet of chancel. Incised design: short length of cross shaft, and emblem on r. rest destroyed - cuts for two levels of roof leading.
- (23) Slab re-used as eastern lintel of opening on south of chancel arch. Incised sword and border on r.
- (24) Slab re-used high in internal face of east wall of south transept, partly visible when stones removed during repair; very simple cross with head within ring, expressed by single incised lines.

Slabs (25 - (41) were all re-used in the clerestory, and only exposed when the dressings of the windows were being renewed. All were of local sandstone, and the designs incised unless otherwise stated.

- (25) Slab forming part of internal head of western window of north clerestory.; cross with cross-bars and trefoil terminals; foliage, of same form as cross arms, springs from the shaft.
- (26) Slab forming east part of internal head of western window of north clerestory; cross head similar to but rather cruder than (27), traces of a probable pair of shears on r. of shaft.
- (27) Slab forming west part of internal head of second window from west in north clerestory; cross head with cinquefoil terminals, with shears on l. of shaft.
- (28) Slab forming east part of internal head of second window from west in north clerestory. The cross has cup-shaped terminals, carved in relief within a sunk circle; sword on l. of shaft.
- (29) Slab forming east part of internal head of third window from west in north clerestory. Cross, head concealed, with foliage springing from shaft (cf 26 and 32) and two rounded steps to base. very similar to (26), with rounded steps to base.
- (30) Slab forming west part of internal head of eastern window in north clerestory. Cross with eight-armed head and fleur-de-lys terminals, carved in relief in sunk circle, with sword on r. of shaft. Late 13<sup>th</sup> or early 14<sup>th</sup> century.
- (31) Slab forming east part of internal head of eastern window in north clerestory; very similar to 26 and 30, head with trefoil terminals.
- (32) Slab re-used as drain spout near the west end of the north wall of the chancel; probably completed tapering slab, but the majority of the design has been erased by the scooping out of a drain; at the head (the inner end) part of the head remains, with eight arms and fleur-de-lys terminals. Late 13<sup>th</sup> or early 14<sup>th</sup> century.
- (33) Slab re-used as sill of western window in north clerestory; the cutting of chamfers means that only a fragment of the design survives (largely on the base of a mullion) but enough to show an incised cross shaft with a pair of shears on the r.
- (34) Slab re-used as sill of the third window from the west in the north clerestory; like (33) only a very small area of the design survives, but sufficient to show a sword on the r. of a cross shaft, and the top of a stepped base
- (35) Slab forming east part of internal head of west window in south clerestory. Cross with bracelet or four-circle head and sword on l. 12<sup>th</sup> century.
- (36) Slab forming west part of internal head of second window from west in south clerestory. Cross shaft rising from base with rounded steps, sword blade on l.

- (37) Slab forming east part of internal head of second window from west in south clerestory. A difficult stone to interpret; at the base is a sunk ogee-topped panel, from which a cross shaft with a rounded knob rises, with a second cross shaft (?) at a slight angle to the l., rising to a sunk circular area.
- (38) Slab forming west part of the internal head of the third window from west in south clerestory. Cross head of four incised circles within a ring. 12<sup>th</sup> century.
- (39) Slab forming east part of internal head of third window from west in south clerestory. Cross with four incised rings within a circle, and a pair of scissors on the l. of the shaft.
- (40) Slab forming the west part of the internal head of the easternmost window in the south clerestory. Cross with simple splay-armed head. 12<sup>th</sup> century?
- (41) Slab forming east part of the internal head of the easternmost window in the south clerestory. Cross shaft rising from stepped base, pair of shears on r.

The following slabs were removed from the fabric during the 1998-2002 works; the bracketed number at the end of the description refers to their original code number, used as a reference in interim reports.

- (42) From high in wall at north-east angle of north transept. Top of incised 12<sup>th</sup>-century slab with a four-circle cross, re-used as the base of late 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>-century window jamb; in its context as an architectural fragment it is included separately in the hand list of lapidary material as item (4). This stone 'went missing' after being drawn and photographed. (0101).
- (43) From high in wall at south-west corner of north transept, the lower part of incised slab with crude stepped base and cross shaft (0103)
- (44) From the top of the internal face of the west wall of the south transept. Round-leaf bracelet cross in sunk panel with nailhead moulding round edge; line of nailhead on sides of stone. Sword on r. Mid C13. Fragile (0104)
- (45) From the top of the angle between the south aisle wall and the south transept. Block, probably part of across slab, with several incised lines (0106).
- (46) From the head of the north wall of the nave, at its west end. A large and impressive slab, which had been split down its centre.. Eight-arm cross with cloth merchant's (?) shears l. and sword r. C13? Unusual 'consecration' crosses on either side head and in base. (0107 a & b)
- (47) From the head of north wall of the nave, w end and centre. Round-leaf bracelet cross, incised, sword (with small cross on pommel) r. of shaft, stepped base. Left part eroded but for base. Late C12/C13 (0108/0110)
- (48) From head of north wall of nave, above second clerestory window from W. Well-preserved slab, cross of 4 broken circles; 'consecration' crosses on boss on shaft & pommel of sword r. of shaft. Probably mid/late C12 (0109)

- (49) From the head of the north wall of the nave, at east end. A pair with (48), except that here the emblem is a pair of shears on the l. of the shaft, and base is broken away. Probably mid/late C12 (0111)
- (50) From the head of the south wall of nave, near the east end. 4-circle cross head with small indented cross at centre. Stepped base, with pair of shears on l. Mid C12 (0112),
- (51) From the head of the south wall of nave, at its east end. Incised cross with fleur-de-lys terminals, ogee-buds, and quatrefoil at centre. Stepped base, and sword on r. of shaft. C13?. (0113)
- (52) From the head of the south wall of the nave, above second clerestory window from W. Cross with unusual lozenge-shaped head, with badly-laid-out trefoil terminals; sword on r. stepped base. Probably C12. (0114)
- (53) Slab forming the east part of the rere arch of the eastern window of the north clerestory. Deeply-incised cross head made up of rather asymmetric bracelets with trefoil terminals, no buds. Quillon of sword? on r, stepped base. Mid C13?. (0115)
- (54) Slab forming the east part of the rere arch of western window in the north clerestory, re-used face into wall. Cross head of four broken circles Stepped base with sword on the r. Later C12 (0116)
- (55) From the top of the internal face of the west wall of the south transept. Lower part of (45), with sword blade and stepped base. Mid C13. (0117)
- (56) From the top of the internal face of the south wall of the south transept. Lower part of slab; incised cross shaft rising from stepped base, with key (on chatelaine?) on l. (0118)
- (57) From the top of the south-west angle of the south transept. Head of sandstone slab; incised cross with trefoil/fleur-de-lys terminals, largely scooped away by re-use as a drain (cf (33), (83) and (84). C13? 0119)
- (58) From the top of the south-west angle of the south transept. Relief design; a fragment with two parallel shafts with a boss/disc on each, and several small cross crosslets.; hollow chamfer to edge Date? (0120)
- (59) From the top of the south transept. A mere fragment with an incised line,. Re-used as moulding (hoodmould or string)(0121)
- (60) Slab forming the west part of the rere arch of the second window from the west in the south clerestory. Cross head of four bracelets carved in relief in sunk circle, tapering shaft. Late C12/C13 (0123).
- (61) Slab forming the west part of the rere arch of western window of the south clerestory. Largely covered by plaster, only top of head - incised, four circles within larger ring - visible. C12 (0124)
- (62) Slab forming the west part of the rere arch of western window of the north clerestory. Incised cross with rounded steps to base, sword on l. Upper part covered by plaster.

- (0125)
- (63) Slab forming the west part of the rere arch of second window from the west in the north clerestory. Incised straight arm cross with trefoil/fleur-de-lys terminals (faint), sword on r. C12/C13? (0126)
- (64) Slab forming the east part of the rere arch of second window from the west in the north clerestory. Incised straight-arm cross with complex terminals, rectangular emblem on l. of shaft, stepped base. C12? (0127)
- (65) Slab forming the west part of the rere arch of the third window from the west in the north clerestory. Bracelet cross carved in relief within circle, shears on l. of shaft. Late C12/C13 (0128)
- (66) Slab forming the west part of the rere arch of the easternmost window in the north clerestory. Incised cross with four circles and central box, within larger ring; sword on l. of shaft with wound hilt, C12.(0129)
- (67) Slab forming the west part of the rere arch of the third window from the west in the south clerestory. Shaft with stepped base and bracelet head, some plaster further up.(0130)
- (68) Slab forming the east part of the rere arch of third window from the west in the south clerestory. Cross with four sunk discs within incised ring; disc on shaft, shears on l, badly damaged in the fire. C12 (0131)
- (69) Slab from the top of the north wall of the chancel, at its west end, in two pieces ; 8-arm cross with fleur-de-lys small quatrefoil at centre; pairs of fleur-de-lys springing from shaft, shears on l. C13? (0133).
- (70) Slab from the head of the south wall of the nave, the eastern of two above the third clerestory window, laid face down. Incised round-leaf bracelet cross with cross-bar high on shaft, rising from stepped base. No emblem. Late C12/early C13. (0134)
- (71) Slab from the head of the south wall of the nave, the western of two above the third clerestory window, laid face-down. Intact tapered slab, ashlar, but only roughly tooled saltire cross and setting-out line. Date? (0135)
- (72) Slab from the head of the south wall of the nave, the eastern of two over the westernmost clerestory window. Tapered slab, cracked into two. Cross head of 'Lanchester type'; shears on l., partly cut away by secondary chamfer for string course. C12? (0136)
- (73) Slab from the head of the south wall of the nave, the western of two over the westernmost clerestory window. Tapering slab, cracked into two. Incised straight-arm cross with lobed terminals, stepped base. Sword on r. of shaft, clasped book on l. C12? (0137)
- (74-77). Four fragments from the parapet on the south side of the nave, three perhaps from the same relief-carved slab; 76 shows an emblem with its end section set diagonally,

across the shaft of the adjacent cross; an unidentified device that occurs again at Woodhorn in Northumberland and Doncaster in South Yorkshire . (0138-0141)

- (78) Lower part of a slab from the head of the north wall of the north transept, near the north-west angle. Cross shaft with stepped base, with a peculiar broach stop at the base of the chamfer on the l. Returned to wall (0142)
- (79) Slab from the head of the north wall of the north transept, part of string course.. Incised, very worn. Bracelet-derivative cross with clustered naturalistic leaf terminals. C1300? (0143a)
- (80) Lower part of slab from the head of the north wall of the north transept, part of string course. Lower part of (80); incised cross shaft with sword on l., badly eroded in parts. Returned to wall. (0143b)
- (81) Slab from the head of the north wall of the north transept, part of string course. Incised, simple 4-circle cross in ring. Possible traces of ? emblem. Earlier C12. (0144)
- (82) Head of slab re-used as a drain spout at the east end of the north wall of the north transept. Cross head carved in relief in sunk circle, 4 broken circles, lozenge-shaped buds. Later C12 (0145).
- (83) Head of a slab re-used as a drain spout at the west end of the north wall of the north transept. Cross head carved in relief in sunk circle, 4 rings, central box, lozenge-shaped buds. The top of the stone is cut to a segmental curve- perhaps an original feature, and unusual. Mid-C12 (0146)
- (84) Head of S wall of S transept, re-used as part of string-course at SW corner. Almost certainly the upper section of 0118; Cross head very like 0114, sword on r. of shaft. Mid-C12 (0147)
- (85) Slab re-used as part of the string-course on the south side of the south transept transept, adjacent to the W end of (56). Faint; incised plain cross with a ring around the head and shears l. of shaft. C12? (0148)
- (86) Slab re-used as part of the string course on the south side o the south transept, towards E end. Mid-section of slab with faint cross shaft and probable sword on r. (0149)
- (87) From high in the south transept, the exact location uncertain. Part of the head of a slab with clustered fleur-de-lys terminal., late C13 (0150)
- (88) Slab forming eastern part of the rere arch of the second window from the west in the southern nave clerestory; clustered trefoil terminals, rounded steps to base (0151)
- (89) Slab forming eastern part of the rere arch of the eastern window of the southern nave clerestory, with plaster and paint remains but no design visible (0152)
- (90) Slab forming eastern part of rere arch of the third window from the west in the northern nave clerestory, no design visible but needs cleaning (0153).



- (91) Slab from top of internal face of west wall N transept, incised except for sunk panels in bracelets of cross head. (0154)
- (92) Slab forming eastern part of the rere arch of the western window in the southern nave clerestory, conservator's fabric covers presumed design. (0155)
- (93) Two pieces of the same slab, found close together on the top of the north wall of the chancel above the second window from the west
- (93a) Relief design, fragment of cross head, shaft with knob enclosing four-lobed flower, sword and sword-belt on r. (0160a)
- (93b) Lower section of same stone, end of sword, shaft and part of base, stepped but with arch of some sort beneath. (0160b)
- (94) Reused Slab from further west on the top of the chancel north wall; simply with length of incised cross shaft. (0161)
- (95) Two pieces of a slab from the top of the north wall of the chancel, adjacent to the vestry:
- (95a) Part of head, four broken circles in relief within sunk circle.(0162a)
- (95b) Mid-section of tapered slab with cross shaft and beginning of head (0162b)
- (96) Fragment, probably from the top of the south wall of the chancel. Incised design on whitish sandstone; part of clustered cross head and sword with diagonal binding on hilt and cross on pommel, almost certainly from same slab as (88) (0163)
- (97) Lower part of a slab from the head of the north wall of the chancel, to the east of the vestry: Incised shaft and top of base, poor condition. (0164)
- (98) Two pieces of the heads of a slab re-used in the base of the west respond of the eastern arch of the south arcade (98a and b). Incised cross botonée head, fleur-de-lys terminals (0165 a and b)
- (99) Part of the head of a slab re-used in the eastern pier of the south arcade. Incised cross with round-leaf trefoil terminals, crude.(16 1 04 under plastic sheet on S side chancel) (0166)
- (100) Sandstone slab in several pieces, all of which had been re-used as voussoirs in the eastern arch of the south arcade.
- (100a) Lower part of head of slab, bracelet cross with clustered terminals, chalice on l., shaft.
- (100b) Most of base of slab with sunk panel under ogival arch
- (100c) Upper r. quarter of head of slab, bracelet cross with clustered terminals.
- (100d) Lower l. side of slab, cross shaft, base of chalice.

- (100e) Upper l. quarter of head of slab, bracelet cross with clustered terminals.  
(0167 a-e)
- (101) Part of the head of a slab re-used in the eastern respond of the south arcade: Incised eight-arm cross head with fleur-de-lys (cf 33), sword on r. of shaft (0168)
- (102) Substantial mid-section fragment of crude sandstone slab re-used as a voussoir in the eastern arch of the south arcade: Cross with a ring around the head, shears l. of shaft (0169)
- (103) Mid-section of slab with incised cross shaft and shears on l., found at head of chancel wall (exact location not recorded) (0170)
- (104) From chancel floor, immediately to the west of the Calverley ledger, found after fire.
- (104a) Greater part of sandstone slab bearing incised cross with sword on l and fragment of four-circle/bracelet head.(16 1 04 under plastic sheet on S side chancel)
- (104b) Detached fragment with base that has rounded steps (cf 62). (0173)
- (105) Found in pipe trench in churchyard (6 June 2003), head of very worn slab, only sinking at head centre and trace of incised shaft visible. (0174)

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## Appendix 1

### St Brandon's Church, Brancepeth. Catalogue of Photographs held in National Monuments Record

This collection of photographs constitutes the prime visual record of the fabric, fitting and furnishings of the church as they were before the 1998 fire.

RCAHMS (Royal Commission on Historic Monuments of Scotland) set, 1944  
Four photographs on one sheet::

A45/2550	North-east view
A45/2551	South-west view
A45/2552	Detail of south door
A45/2553	Tower from south-west.

Page with 2 similar views of old chest,

A 45/2549 (by RCAHMS. Aug 1944)  
AA62/8009 (by Claude Blair, undated) \*

W Maitland (undated) Distant north view

1958 John Hearsey South view (with it a newspaper cutting for 12.March 1946 re: break in to church when £1000 damage done to windows, and also damage to woodwork).

BB65/2409                      Neville tomb (pair of wooden effigies) when in chancel

BB67/3076                      West view (from Castle). March 1967

Large-format set, August 1967

BB67/7784	General south-east view
BB67/7786	Tower from south
BB67/7787	North-west view
BB67/7788	North-east view
BB67/7789	Tower from north-west
BB67/7790	West-north-west view
BB67/7791	Nave and chancel from north-west.
BB67/7792	North porch from north-west
BB67/7793	North porch from north-east
BB67/7794	North view showing north transept etc.
BB67/7795	Looking north-east across nave to pulpit, benches in foreground
BB67/7796	Detail of pulpit
BB67/7797	Detail of pulpit
BB67/7798	Chancel, looking south-east
BB67/7799	Chancel, looking north-east
BB67/7800	'The Peacock' effigy.
BB67/7801	'The Peacock' effigy

BB67/7802	Neville tomb (pair of wooden effigies) when in chancel
BB67/7804	General interior of nave looking west.
BB67/7805	Font canopy (when standing on floor at W end S aisle)
BB67/7806	Font, from north-east
BB67/7807	Pulpit
BB67/7808	General interior looking east
BB67.7809	Nave ceiling, looking east.
BB67/7810	Cover canopy, with Royal Arms etc, above chancel arch.
BB67/7811	Chancel ceiling looking east
BB67/7814	Chancel arch and screen, from west
BB67/7816	Chancel stalls on north of chancel
BB67/7817	Intended memorial plaque on north of chancel
BB67/7818	Bench ends in south aisle.
BB67/7819	Carved canopy over chancel arch
BB67/7820	Westmorland Tomb under tower, from north-east
BB67/7821	Hatchment in south aisle
BB67/7822	Hatchment in north aisle
BB67/7823	Hatchment 'In Coelo Quies'
BB 67/7824	William Russell & Mary Hamilton Bunbury wall monuments on S chancel
BB67/7825	William Forster wall monument in south aisle.
BB67/7826	Wall monument to William Mills in south aisle.
BB67/7827	Wall monuments to William Russell and Matthew Russel, on south of chancel
BB67/7828	Wall monuments to Margaret Russell and William R Drummond, on north of chancel
BB67/7829	Wall monuments to Rev Henry F Mills and Jane Mills in south aisle
BB67/7830	Ogee-arched doorway (and door) between Chancel and Lady Chapel, from Chapel.
BB67/7831	Chancel stalls on south, with arch behind
BB67/7832	Chancel stalls on south of chancel, with arch behind

BB76/4520 'Peacock' effigy

Set 1-C-1 Page with 3 view of fittings.

Box pew in S transept, looking S (incorrectly labelled 'pulpit, detail'), 1963 by A. Tait  
View of pulpit from NW, with ends of nave pews in foreground (incorrectly labelled Choir Stalls, detail), 1963 by A Tait..

Canopies of choir stalls on S of chancel, undated.

Set 1-C-1 North porch, 1963 by A Tait

North porch, detail. 1963 by A Tait.

Undated NW view by W Maitland

Set 1-C-1 Font cover 1963 by A A Tait

Looking west from chancel screen

Looking south-west across nave (RCAHM Scotland A Graham 1944, A45/2548)

C35/259 Page with 2 similar details of screen, not dated

Roof bosses, by C J P Cave (no date)

Page of 6 roof bosses XX37.13-17 and 32

Page of 6 roof bosses XX37.20, XX 37.34-38

Page of 4 roof bosses XX 37.18, 19, 21 and 29

Page of 5 roof bosses XX 37.22-25 & 30

Page of 4 roof bosses XX.37.26-28 & 31.

(Unnumbered) general E view

## Appendix II

### The Boyne Mausoleum, Brancepeth

The Boyne Mausoleum is sited at the south-east corner of the churchyard of St Brandoin's Church, Brancepeth. A railed enclosure (plate 1) m by m, set in the corner of the churchyard, has a pair of gates placed centrally on the north side; the cast-iron rails, set on a dwarf wall with a chamfered ashlar coping, have quatrefoil-plan standards and round bars each with foliate terminals; between the bars are pendant fleur-de-lys. Within the enclosure the only surface expression of the mausoleum is a low mound (now much overgrown) on which reposes a single ashlar block, cut to a gabled triangular section, with a roll-moulded ridge. This lifts aside to reveal a vent 150 mm square, which drops vertically for 400mm to open into the vault of the mausoleum chamber. The only other surface expression of the subterranean structure is to be found on the external face of the south wall of the churchyard. Here the ground level within the yard is c 1 m higher than that outside. At the foot of the external face of the wall is a small gabled projection, 0.30 m square at its base, formed from a single ashlar block. This has a small vent on each side, in the form of a trefoil-arched light closed by a perforated lead (?) grille, and an oversailing gabled cap with a moulded lower edge. Directly above it, the upper part of the wall face is formed by a separate block that is pierced by a circular opening c 100 mm in diameter; evidence of external fixings show that this was formerly covered by some form grille or other device structure. It does not open directly into the mausoleum, there being a rough wall immediately within it.

### The Mausoleum Chamber

Inspection of this chamber has, at the time of the compilation of this report, been limited to the examination of a number of photographs taken with a small automatic camera, lowered into the vent. All dimensions are approximate; the only measurement possible was that from the present ground surface to the floor of the chamber, 2.98 m.

The chamber appears to measure c 3.5 m north south by 2.0 m east west, with the tomb recesses or compartments extending a further c 2.0 m back from either side. The external walls of the chamber appear to be constructed of coursed stone, the courses varying in height; the segmental vault, set north-south, is however of brick. Walls and vault are all whitewashed over. In the south end is the internal opening of a square-headed doorway, its lintel showing a vertical tooling characteristic of late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century work. Its jambs are rebated on the external face of the wall, and its door, with iron strap hinges, seems to be intact. Presumably access to this door is by an external ramp or flight of steps, in line with the gateway to the enclosure; it is not clear whether these have been filled in earth, or lie beneath a trapdoor which is currently concealed by soil and/or vegetation.

The side walls of the chamber each have three tiers of four compartments for coffins, formed by stone slabs carried on brick piers. Those on the west are all simple square-headed recesses; six of these, the first, second and third from the south on the central and upper levels, are occupied by burials, and their ends are blocked sealed flush with their openings; with brass plates fixed on the blocking walls. From the photographs it is possible to read the plates on two of the plates. On the upper level of the third bay

DAME (?) FRANCES VISCOUNTESS BOYNE  
WIFE OF GUSTAVUS RUSSELL  
HON VISCOUNT BOYNE.

Directly below, on the centre level of the third bay:

VISCOUNT(?) RUSSELL(?) BOYNE  
.....  
AGED -7 YEARS

Above the between the central two compartments on the top row what looks like a piece of wood, somewhat decayed, projects c 0.50 m from the top of the wall. On the east the compartments of the lower two rows each have a semicircular arch in brick over them; it is not clear whether these are simply arches at the entrance to the compartment, or are carried back as tunnel vaults. The south end wall of the vault has a large block set centrally, immediately below the vault, pierced by an oval opening that seems to be closed by grille of vertical bars, and is possibly closed by stonework (presumably secondary) immediately beyond these. It is not clear whether this relates to the slab with a circular opening in the external face of the churchyard wall or the small gabled projection below this. At the foot of the wall, again in the centre, is the mouth of an orange ceramic drainpipe.



Fig.1 The Boyne Mausoleum, St Brandon's Church, Brancepeth.  
Plan of Area

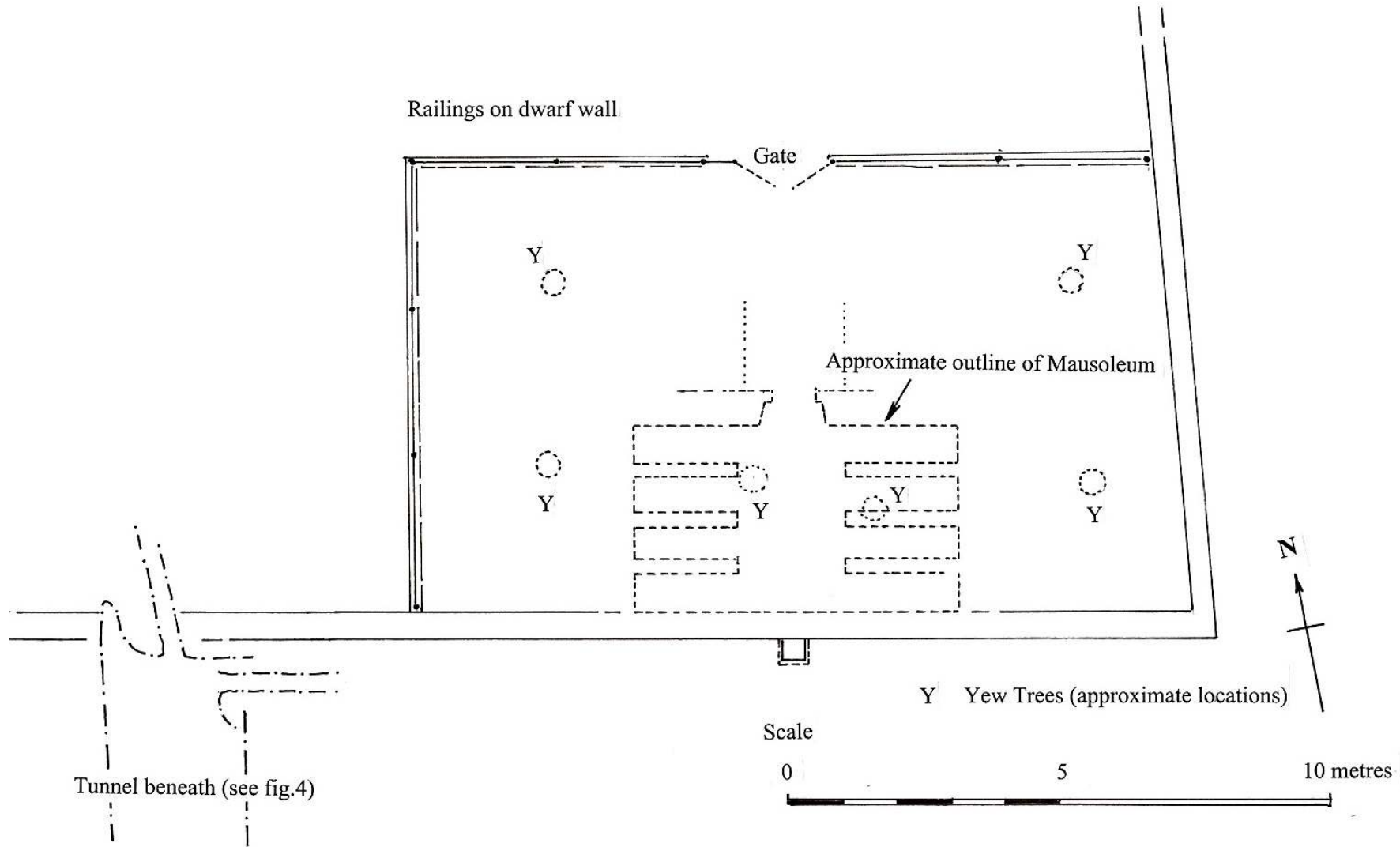


Fig.2 The Boyne Mausoleum, St Brandon's Church, Brancepeth.  
Sketch plan (made on basis of photographs)

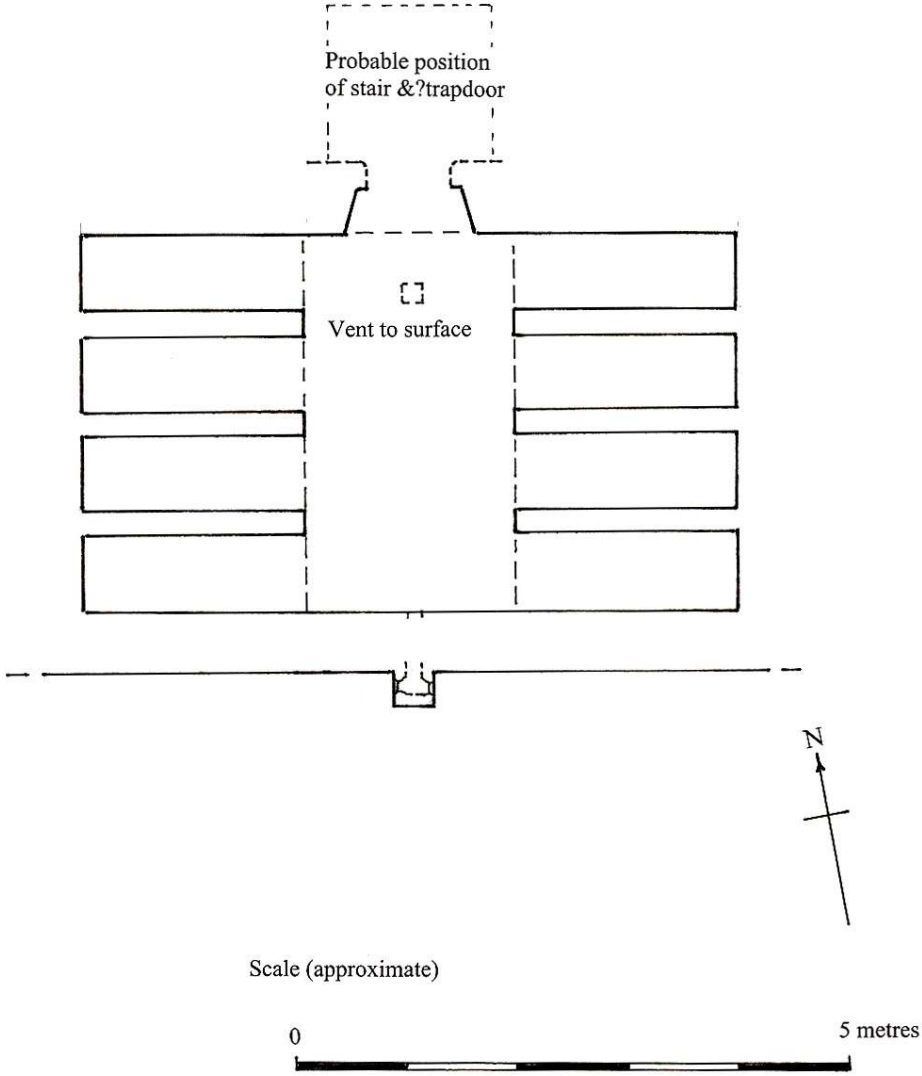
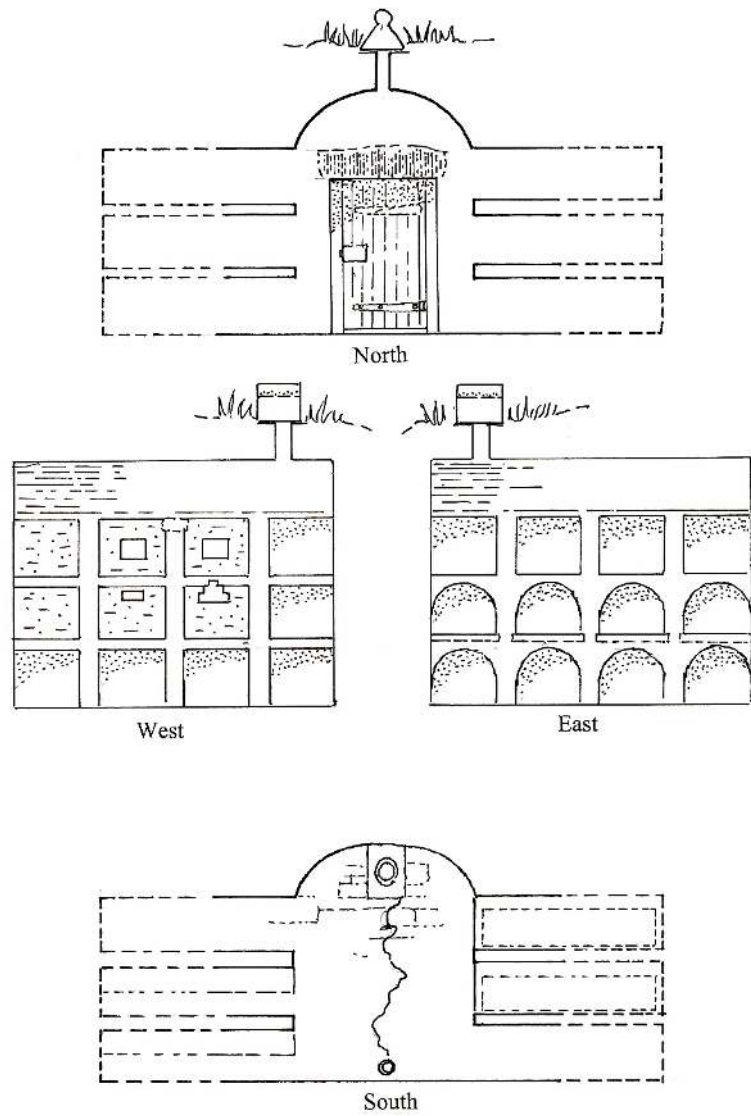


Fig.3 The Boyne Mausoleum, St Brandon's Church, Brancepeth.  
Sketch Elevations (made on basis of photographs)



Scale (approximate)

0 5 metres

## Structural Condition

There is clearly some cause for concern as to the structural condition of the subterranean mausoleum, as the photographs show a major roughly-vertical crack running the full height of the south end wall of the vault (plate 5), and then extending along the crown of the vault; there also appears to be a major crack at the north end, at the west end of the internal lintel of the access doorway.

## Discussion

A monument formerly on the south wall of the chancel, destroyed in the recent fire, recorded that the remains of William Russell, d. 1817, were deposited in the 'Castle Vault'. It is not clear whether this is the vault in question, or whether there was an earlier vault in or near the church. The fact that only six of the twenty four compartments in the present vault appear to be occupied by burials rather suggests that it is a 19<sup>th</sup>-century replacement for an earlier vault. The vault is a structure of some architectural interest. Considerable care was obviously taken to allow it to remain ventilated and drained, as can be seen from the remarkable little Gothic structure that projects from the external face of the churchyard wall. This clearly seems to have been designed to allow circulation of air, although its exact structural relationship with the underground chamber is still a little unclear. Also associated with the tomb is a puzzling tunnel, surveyed in 1996 (see appendix III).

### Appendix III Tunnel on Brancepeth Golf Course (report 23.11.96)

Mr John Muirhead of Brandon had contacted PFR requesting information about a tunnel recently been exposed on the golf course at Brancepeth, close to the south-east corner of the churchyard; it was 'discovered' when a tractor fell into it (although apparently it had been similarly opened up a few years ago and promptly filled in again). The entrance has now been cleared out and fitted with a padlocked iron grille by the golf club.

The opening is an open hole c 2.2 m square and 1.5 m deep; rough walling on the south shows that this was always the end of the tunnel, although the original opening was doubtless smaller. A small walled drain runs westwards from the open hole, c 0.35 m square. The tunnel runs a little east of north; the initial metre-long section is 2.15 m wide and 0.85 m high, with walls each of three or four courses of roughly squared stone, and a segmental-arched roof of bricks each c 220 x 100 x 60 mm in size, and generally of late 18th or early 19th century character. After this the roof lifts to a stone arch, of similar section but c 1.2 m high. At one point, 5.8 m from the entrance, there is a small hatch-like opening at the apex of the roof, sealed by a flat slab.

The passage ends 9.2 m from the entrance in a transverse wall, with at right angles to the r. a low culvert-like drain, half full of water, entering through a rough section of drystone walling which may be secondary. The main end wall is pierced by one small drainpipe low down, and a larger one set centrally just below the roof, which rises at quite an angle; on the left the wall has fallen away, exposing an earth slope and rubble (although there is no evidence that the passage ever continued any further).

Survey shows the tunnel to end directly under the churchyard wall; as the ground rises the roof of the tunnel is c 2 m below the ground level at this point. The larger drainpipe must come close to some graves of the Shaftoe family; the low-level partly flooded drain is trending beneath a railed enclosure, at the south-east corner of the churchyard, which contains the tomb of Lord Boyne.

How the passage relates to the tombs, and what its function was, remain unclear. The Boyne tomb is of some interest; it has a peculiar little gabled vent, with Gothic-style openings, projecting from the external face of the churchyard wall, and, within its enclosure, a moulded block positioned above a vertical vent c 10 cm square, dropping into a vault; a camera held down this took photographs revealing a blocked doorway with a lintel showing distinctive vertical tooling of early-19th century character, and internments on two levels of shelving in one end wall, each with an inscribed brass plate at the end.

The 1st edition OS 6":1 mile map (Mr Muirhead had a copy) appears to show a double wall enclosing the churchyard, with the outer one apparently stepping out to enclose the area of the tunnel entrance.

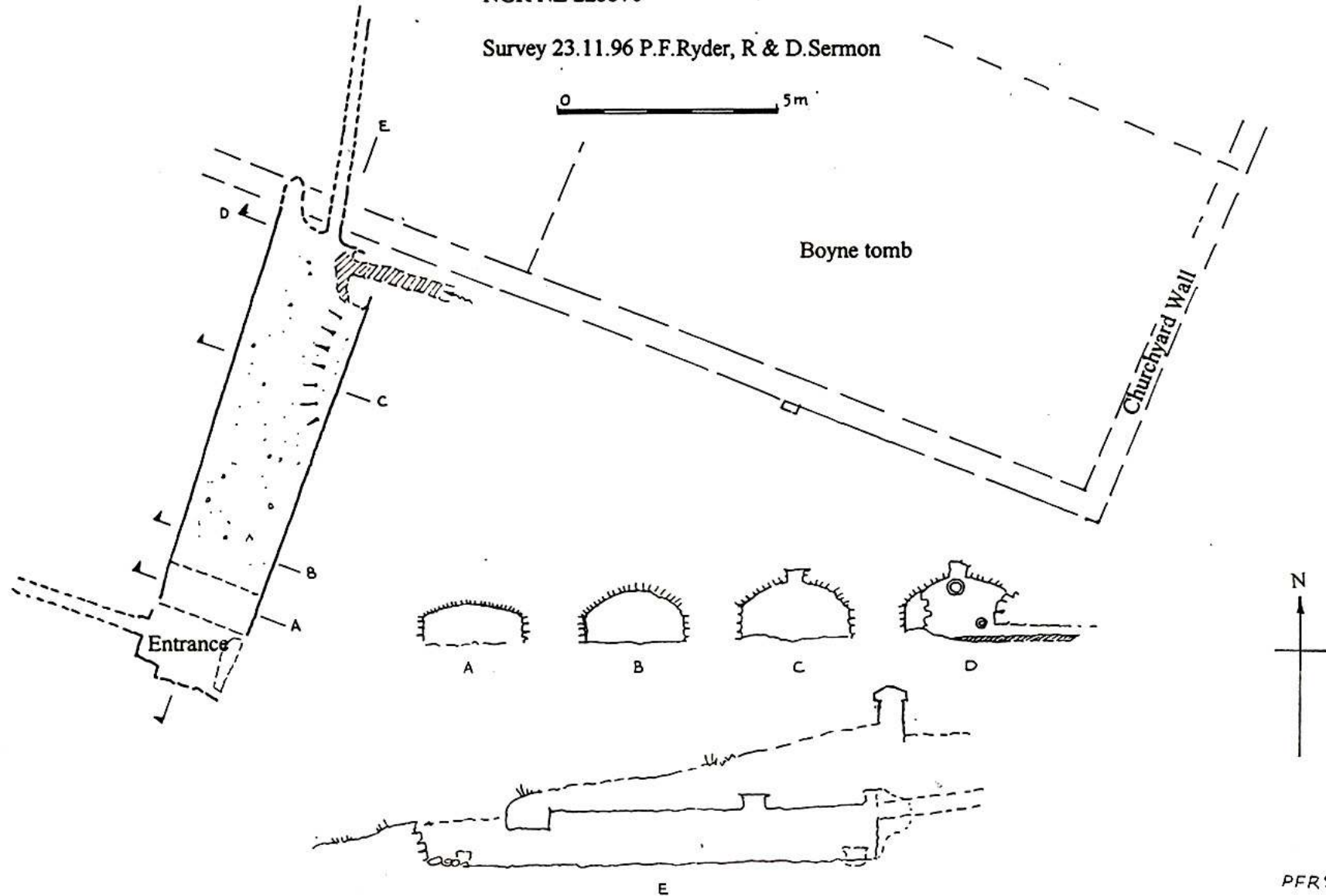
Fig.4 1996 Survey of Tunnel

TUNNEL AT BRANCEPETH

NGR NZ 225376

Survey 23.11.96 P.F.Ryder, R & D.Sermon

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