

Archaeological Observation

For

Splitlath Building Conservation Ltd

Concerning

Kingstone Church
Green Lane
Kingstone
Herefordshire

October 2017



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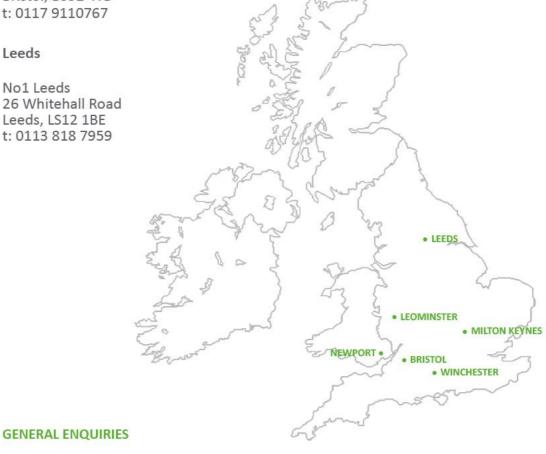
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1 Executive Summary

Border Archaeology Ltd (BA) was instructed by Splitlath Building Conservation Ltd to carry out a programme of Archaeological Observation of drainage trenching relating to the installation of a kitchen area and toilet inside the Church of St Michael & All Angels Green Lane Kingstone Herefordshire. The work was carried out in two phases: Phase 1 in February 2017 and Phase 2 during July to September 2017.

Whilst Phase 1 produced fragmentary human bone, Phase 2 revealed 19 human burials and a large quantity of disarticulated human remains. The north/south alignment of the Phase 2 trenching and its narrow width meant that no complete burials were available for examination, as these follow an east/west alignment consistent with established Christian burial practice. Grave cuts were not clearly visible but the shallow nature of many of the burials suggests a comparatively early date.

Evidence for a coffin was present in only one case (SK001). The majority of medieval and earlier post-medieval individuals would have been buried in shrouds, rather than coffins, thus providing further evidence that the burials encountered were likely to have been of medieval or earlier post-medieval date.

Moreover, the burials lay beneath a path shown on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888. It is possible that the presence of this path may have protected earlier burials against disturbance from later gravedigging activity. Different phases of burial were present implying reuse of burial space over the long period that interment has taken place in within churchyard.

The comparative paucity of burial evidence encountered during Phase 1, on the northern side of the church, may be partly explained by traditional practice, which tended towards the avoidance of burial activity in this area of the churchyard. The results may therefore be considered to provide further information regarding the layout of medieval and post-medieval rural churchyards.

Although it was necessary to remove human remains during the course of the work, these were kept in secure storage and treated with due respect throughout according to established ethical guidelines before their return to the Church authorities for reburial.



2 introduction

Border Archaeology Ltd (BA) was instructed by Splitlath Building Conservation Ltd to undertake Archaeological Observation of drainage works relating to the installation of a kitchen area and a toilet inside the Church of St Michael & All Angels Green Lane Kingstone Herefordshire HR29HB (NGR: SO 42444 35699) (*fig.* 1).

The work was carried out in two phases: Phase 1 (Trenches 1 and 2) in February 2017 and Phase 2 (Trench 3) during July to September 2017.

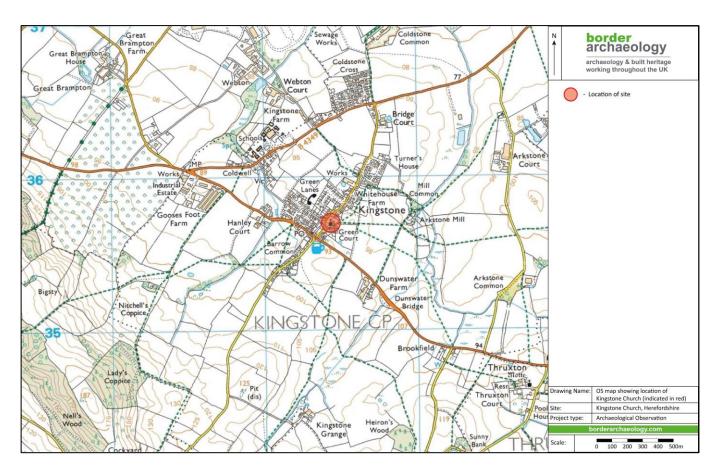


Fig. 1: Site location

3 Aim

The aim of the archaeological project was to locate and record any archaeological finds, features or deposits within the groundworks area - principally those associated with burials or monuments - and to confirm that no impact on the archaeological resource occurred during the course of the groundworks without the implementation of the programme of archaeological work.



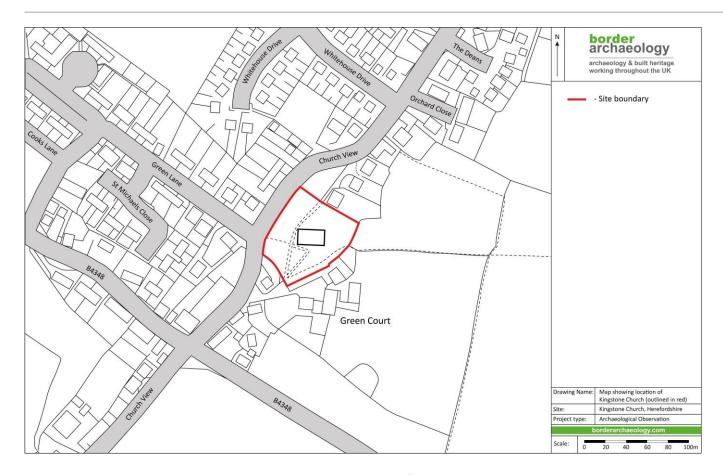


Fig. 2: Plan showing extent of churchyard.

3.1 Site Description

The church is situated at a height of approximately 97m AOD on the SE side of the village of Kingstone, with the churchyard fully surrounding the church. The churchyard is enclosed by an established hedge.

3.1.1 Soils and Geology

The soils are typical argillic brown earths of the ESCRICK series (571p), these being deep well-drained reddish coarse loamy soils overlying reddish till (SSEW 1983).

4 Historical and Archaeological Background

Kingstone lies some 8.5km to the SW of Hereford. The line of Stone Street, a section of Roman road connecting Kenchester and Ewyas Harold, runs on a NW-SW alignment to the W of the village. The Church of St Michael and All Angels is a 12th century Grade II* listed building (List Entry No: 1178447) which has been subject to continuous alteration up to the 20th century, the S door being the only surviving part of the Romanesque building.



The churchyard contains funerary monuments largely of post-medieval date, although a Grade II listed cross (List Entry No. 1099806) to the W of the church has a probable medieval square base (*fig. 3*).

5 Methodology

Archaeological Observation was carried out in accordance with Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The Project Managers' Guide (Lee 2015), Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief (CIfA 2014) and Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England (2nd Edition) (Mays 2017). BA adheres to the CIfA Code of conduct (2014) and to Standards for Archaeological Projects in Herefordshire (Issue 1) (Herefordshire Council 2004) and is cognisant of the deliberations by the Ministry of Justice in 2011 in respect of Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857.

Trenching of 0.7m width was opened by machine using an untoothed bucket, wherever possible, and all ground-breaking works were carried out under Archaeological Observation. Topsoil and subsoil were routinely checked for the presence of significant finds.

Written, graphic and photographic records were made in accordance with BA's *Field Recording Manual* (2017). The written record comprised standard numbered context record sheets, which included the following:

- Skeleton Recording Sheet
- Coffin Recording Sheet
- Structure Recording Sheet

The drawn record was made using gridded, archive-stable polyester film at scales of 1:50, 1:20 and 1:10, as appropriate. All drawings were numbered, listed in a drawing register and cross-referenced by drawing number to written site records.

A photographic record was made using a high-resolution digital camera and included photographs of all burials revealed. Photographs were indexed and cross-referenced to the written record with subject and direction of view recorded on a photographic register, indexed by frame number.

Burials were not disturbed without good reason and wherever subject to such disturbance human remains were treated with dignity and respect consistent with professional and ethical standards (Mays 2005). Remains were excavated consistent with professional standards (CIfA 2014), temporarily removed from site into secure storage and subsequently returned to the Church for reburial. Three environmental samples were taken during the course of the work were not processed due to the absence of clearly defined archaeological contexts.

Phase 1 (February 2017) represented the original planned trenching route with Phase 2 arising due to specific engineering issues.

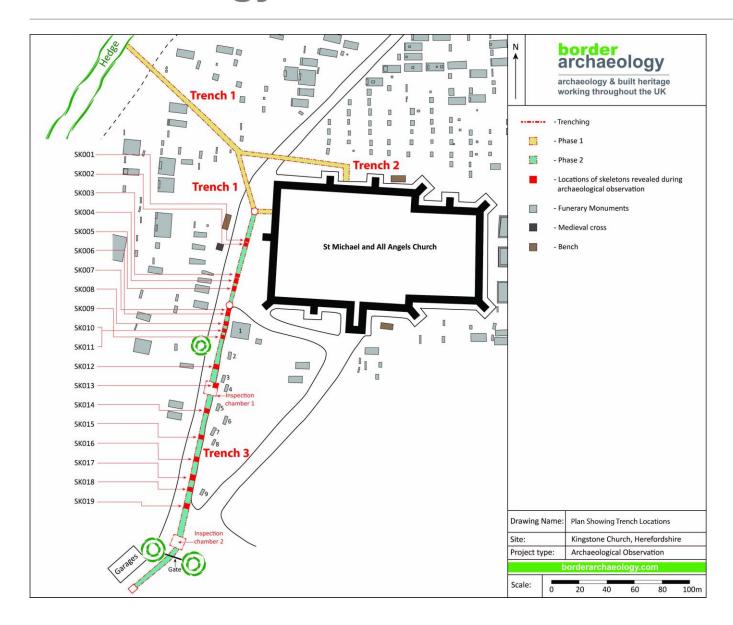


Fig. 3: Plan showing trench locations and locations of burials



6 Results

6.1 Phase 1: Trench 1

						Finds					
Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Туре	Interpretation	Discussion	Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	Comments
1	1000		Deposit	Topsoil	Moderately compacted mid brownish-red organic silty clay;	-	-	1		-	1 × human rib
1	1 1000	-	Deposit	Торѕоп	frequent small rounded stones; 0.2m thick. Overlying (1001).			\ \ \	-		fragment
2	1001		Donosit	Subsoil	Compact red brown silty clay with very frequent irregular			~	-	-	8 × human bone
2	1001		Deposit		stones; 0.75m thick. Underlying (1000).	_					fragments.

6.2 Phase 1: Trench 2

		Matrix Phase	Туре	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					
Item						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	Comments
1	2000		Deposit	Topsoil	Well compacted mid reddish-brown organic silty clay; frequent small rounded stones; 0.2m thick. Overlying (2001).	-	-	-	-	-	
2	2001		Deposit	Subsoil	Well compacted mid reddish-brown silty clay; very frequent irregular/small rounded stones; 0.6m thick. Underlying (2000).	-	-	V	√	-	3 × human bone fragments. 3 × coffin nails.



6.3 Phase 2: Trench 3

						Finds					
Item	No.	Matrix Phase	Туре	Interpretation	Discussion		Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	Comments
1	3000		Surface	Gravel surface for existing path	Loose gravel; 0.05m thick. Overlying (3001).	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	3001		Deposit	Topsoil	Moderately compact mid pinkish-brown silty clay; occasional small irregular stones; <0.3m thick. Overlying (3005), (3008), (3019), (3012), (3014), (3016), (3018), (3020), (3022), (3024), (3026), (3028), (3030) (3032), (3034), (3036), (3038), (3040), (3042), (3044). Underlying (3000).	-	-	V	✓	-	Variable depth
3	3002		Deposit	Subsoil	Soft mid brownish-red. silty clay; occasional medium subangular stones; 0.37m depth. Cut by [3004], [3007], [3009], [3011], [3013], [3015], [3017], [3019], [3021], [3023], [3025], [3027], [3029], [3031], [3033], [3035], [3037], [3039], [3041], [3043]. Overlying (3003).	-	-	✓	√	-	-
4	3003		Deposit	Natural	Moderately compacted mid reddish-brown silty clay; very frequent small rounded stones (similar to a riverbed gravel); <0.78m thick. Underlying (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	Variable depth, more visible to S.
5	3004		Cut	Grave cut	Grave for (SK001). Cutting (3008). Filled by (3005).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
6	3005		Fill	Fill of grave	Fill of [3004]. Overlying (SK001), (3006). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-
7	3006		Coffin	Coffin	Coffin for (SK001) (represented by nails only).	-	-	-	✓	-	Heavily corroded coffin nails
8	3007		Cut	Grave cut	Grave for (SK002). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3008).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
9	3008		Fill	Fill of grave	Fill of [3007]. Overlying (SK002). Cut by [3004]. Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-

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						Finds					
Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Туре	Interpretation	Discussion	Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	Comments
10	3009		Cut	Grave cut	Grave for (SK003). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3010).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
11	3010		Fill	Fill of grave	Fill of [3009]. Overlying (SK003). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-
12	3011		Cut	Grave cut	Grave for (SK004). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3012).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
13	3012		Fill	Fill of grave	Fill of [3011]. Overlying (SK004). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-
14	3013		Cut	Grave cut	Grave for (SK005). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3014).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
15	3014		Fill	Fill of grave	Fill of [3013]. Overlying (SK005). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-
16	3015		Cut	Grave cut	Grave for (SK006). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3026).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
17	3016		Fill	Fill of grave	Fill of [3015]. Overlying (SK006). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-
18	3017		Cut	Grave cut	Grave for (SK007). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3018).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
19	3018		Fill	Fill of grave	Fill of [3017]. Overlying (SK007). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	~	-	001	-
20	3019		Cut	Grave cut	Grave for (SK008). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3020).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
21	3020		Fill	Fill of grave	Fill of [3019]. Overlying (SK008). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓		-	-
22	3021		Cut	Grave cut	Grave for (SK009). Cutting (3026). Filled by (3022).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
23	3022		Fill	Fill of grave	Fill of [3021]. Overlying (SK009). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-

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						Finds					
Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Туре	Interpretation	Discussion	Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	Comments
24	3023		Cut	Grave cut	Grave for (SK010). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3024).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
25	3024		Fill	Fill of grave	Fill of [3023]. Overlying (SK010). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-
26	3025		Cut	Grave cut	Grave for (SK011). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3026).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
28	3026		Fill	Fill of grave	Fill of [3025]. Overlying (SK011). Cut by [3021]. Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-
29	3027		Cut	Grave cut	Grave for (SK012). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3028).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
30	3028		Fill	Fill of Grave	Fill of [3027]. Overlying (SK012). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-
31	3029		Cut	Grave Cut	Grave for (SK013). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3030).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
32	3030		Fill	Fill of Grave	Fill of [3029]. Overlying (SK013). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-
33	3031		Cut	Grave Cut	Grave for (SK014). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3032).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
34	3032		Fill	Fill of Grave	Fill of [3031]. Overlying (SK014). Cut by [3033]. Identical to (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-
35	3033		Cut	Probable later grave dug to a greater depth.	Truncated (SK014). Cutting (3032). Filled by (3034).	-	-	-	-	-	SK014 truncated by later burial
36	3034		Fill	Fill of Truncation	Fill of [3033]. Underlying (3001). Identical to (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-
37	3035		Cut	Grave Cut	Grave for (SK015). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3036).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
38	3036		Fill	Fill of Grave	Fill of [3035]. Overlying (SK015). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	002	-

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						Finds					
Item	No.	Matrix Phase	Туре	Interpretation	Discussion	Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	Comments
39	3037		Cut	Grave Cut	Grave for (SK016). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3038).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
40	3038		Fill	Fill of Grave	Fill of [3037]. Overlying (SK016). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	003	-
41	3039		Cut	Grave Cut	Grave for (SK017). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3040).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
42	3040		Fill	Fill of Grave	Fill of [3039]. Overlying (SK017). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-
43	3041		Cut	Grave Cut	Grave for (SK018). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3042).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
44	3042		Fill	Fill of Grave	Fill of [3040]. Overlying (SK018). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-
45	3043		Cut	Grave Cut	Grave for (SK019). Cutting (3002). Filled by (3044).	-	-	-	-	-	Cut not visible in section
46	3044		Fill	Fill of Grave	Fill of [3043]. Overlying (SK019). Underlying (3001). Identical to subsoil (3002).	-	-	✓	-	-	-

6.4 Summary of Burials

SK No∘	Orientation	Position	Description					
SK001	E-W Supine, extended, arms at sides.		kull. Cervical, thoracic and partial lumbar vertebrae, R+L clavicle, R+L scapula, R+L humerus, partial R radius and lna and ribs. Probable young adolescent. Overlying (SK002).					
SK002	E-W Supine; head facing forward.		Skull and mandible, cervical vertebrae, R+L clavicle. Probable young adult. Underlying (SK001).	0.75m				
SK003	Supine, extended, head facing forward, arms at sides.		Adult; skull and mandible, cervical and thoracic vertebrae, R clavicle, R+L scapula, R+L humerus and ribs. L shoulder truncated.	0.68m				

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SK No°	Orientation	Position	Description	Depth		
SK004	E-W	Supine; head facing R	Skull and cervical vertebrae. Burial left in situ.	0.66m		
SK005	E-W	Supine, extended, head facing R.	Adult; Skull and mandible, cervical and thoracic vertebrae, R+L clavicle, R+L scapula and R+L humerus.	0.7m		
SK006	E-W	Supine.	Skull, mandible, cervical vertebrae, burial left <i>in situ</i> in E section.	0.97m		
SK007	E-W	Supine, extended; lower legs only present.	Adult; R+L tibia and fibula.			
SK008	E-W	facing slightly to L. humerus, ribs.				
SK009	E-W	Supine; head facing forward.	Adult; skull; maxilla and mandible, cervical vertebrae, R+L clavicle. Possible damage from rooting. Above (SK010).	0.63m		
SK010	E-W	Supine, head facing forward.	Adult; Skull, mandible, cervical vertebrae, R+L clavicle. Damaged by rooting; below (SK009).	0.83m		
SK011	E-W	Supine, extended.	Adult; pelvis, sacrum, R+L femur.	0.8m		
SK012	E-W	Supine, extended, arms at sides.	Juvenile or adolescent; skull, mandible, cervical and thoracic vertebrae, R+L clavicle, R+L humerus, ribs. Poor condition with previous damage to L humerus.	0.6m		
SK013	NE-SW	Supine, extended.	Adult; pelvis, sacrum, R+L femur, R+L tibia, R patella. Truncated in antiquity. Hands not present so may have been at waist or chest.	0.9m		
SK014	E-W	Supine, extended. Hands probably at pelvis.	Adult; skull, maxilla and mandible, cervical and thoracic vertebrae, R clavicle, L scapula, L humerus and ribs. Truncated, probably by a later grave dug to a greater depth.	0.55m		
SK015	E-W	Supine.	Adult; ante-mortem tooth loss may suggest mature or elderly. Skull, mandible, cervical vertebrae, R clavicle, R humerus, R Ribs. Charnel deposit (femurs) associated with this burial.	0.7m		
SK016	E-W	Supine.	Skull, cervical vertebrae. Badly damaged.	0.89m		
SK017	E-W	Supine, extended.	Possible elderly female; skull, mandible, cervical vertebrae, R clavicle and ribs. Associated with charnel deposit.	0.98m		
SK018	E-W	Supine, extended.	Adult; R+L Lower femur. R+L upper tibia.	0.98m		
SK019	E-W	Supine.	Adult; skull, mandible, cervical vertebrae, R+L clavicle, upper ribs. Some disturbance due to rooting.	0.77m		



7 Discussion

Although limited in scope, the groundworks provided an opportunity to examine the layout of a rural graveyard.

No articulated burials were encountered during Phase 1 (Trenches 1 and 2); however, Phase 2 (Trench 3), where the trench ran to the S of the church, revealed a total of 19 articulated burials and a substantial quantity of disarticulated human bone. Although the Phase 1 trenching was shallower, this difference does not explain the paucity of burials in the northern part of the churchyard, as 11 of the 19 burials revealed in Trench 3 lay at a comparatively shallow depth.

Although some disturbance had taken place during the installation of earlier drainage, the difference in burial density may also be accounted for by the traditional avoidance of the area to the N of the church, on the left-hand side of the altar. Although burial activity clearly did take place in this northern area, as attested by the small quantity of human bone recovered, the frequency of burials was far less than was the case in Trench 3 to the S of the church. It was observed during the work that a majority of modern monuments were present in the N part of the graveyard and it could be suggested that this reflects the more recent relaxation of traditional practice and the practical need to make use of a previously underutilised area and thereby to avoid disturbing large numbers of earlier graves.



Plate: 1: (SK005) revealed in base of Trench 3.



Historically, the highest density of burials would be found at the E end of the churchyard, closest to the altar, followed by the area to the S; additionally, areas closer to the church were more favoured than those more distant from it. It is noticeable that the majority of disarticulated bones were found close to the church, albeit at the W end. However, in addition to the proximity of the church, these burials lay close to the churchyard cross, which may also have been a focus for burials. Although pressure on burial space would be considerably less than in an urban graveyard, the churchyard has been in use over a very long period resulting inevitably in the disturbance of earlier graves. Charnel deposits were encountered in association with (SK015) and (SK017) while (SK003), (SK013) and (SK014) (*Plate 2*) appeared to have been cut by later interments. Both (SK001) and (SK010) lay beneath later, shallower burials.



Plate 2: (SK014) showing damage to the right side as a result of a later burial.

While there is clear evidence of different phases of burial, none of the interments could be dated. As is usual in a Christian burial ground, artefactual dating evidence was absent. However, a lack of coffins for all but (SK001) could imply a pre-mid-17th century date. It was at this time that coffin burials became more or less universal whereas previously shroud burial was the norm. Although the poorly preserved condition of the bone could also imply an early date, it is possible that this can be attributed to acidic soil conditions. It should be noted that the N/S alignment of the trench meant that no complete burial was present. Those encountered were mainly adult burials, although at least two were identified as juveniles or adolescents. Grave cuts and fills could not be seen, presumably because graves were backfilled with upcast material almost immediately after they were dug.



It can, however, be confidently stated that the burials predate the later part of the 19th century, as the path beneath which they lay is shown on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888. A number of gravestones appear to have been placed with respect to the path, the earliest legible inscription dating to the earlier part of the 19th century. This would suggest that the burials were 18th century, at the latest, and a considerably earlier date cannot be ruled out. The presence of the path may, in fact, have preserved earlier burials from later intrusions.



Plate 3: (SK008) in base of trench.

Although it was difficult to be certain in the narrow trenching, it appears that burials were regularly spaced. This would imply the use of markers, although these may have been simple earth mounds or wooden crosses. The use of gravestones did not become common until the 17th century; before this, such memorials would have been the preserve of the wealthy.

All skeletal remains removed during the course of the work have been returned to Kingstone Church for reburial.



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8.1 Cartography

Ordnance Survey 1st edition 25-inch map (Herefordshire XXXVIII.12) – 1888.



Report Title		Report Ref					
Archaeological Observation Conservation Ltd concerning Green Lane Kingstone Here	ng Kingstone Church	BA1716KCH.					
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