
The Church of St Leonard

Warwick-on-Eden

Cumbria

Mandy Larkin & Frank Charters



JANUARY 2021

Archaeological Watching Brief
Report EH032/02

The Church of St Leonard, Warwick-on-Eden, Cumbria

Archaeological Watching Brief Report For Mandy Larkin & Frank Charters

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Heritage Impact Assessment
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
Historic Landscape Survey
Written Scheme of Investigation

Geophysical Survey
Trial Trench Evaluation
Archaeological Excavation
Archaeological Watching Briefs

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SUMMARY

Eden Heritage Ltd were commissioned by Mandy Larkin, to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the Church of St Leonard, Warwick-on-Eden, Cumbria (NGR NY 4660 5680). The archaeological work was associated with the conversion of the church to a dwelling, for which planning permission had been granted by Carlisle City Council (Planning reference 19/0399). The planning consent for the development was granted on the condition that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during the excavation of the new septic tank and drainage, due to the possible presence of human burials, which identified the site to be of archaeological interest.

The archaeological watching brief was undertaken over one day on 24th August 2020 during the excavation work for a new septic tank to the north of The Church of St Leonard. The watching brief monitored the excavation of an area measuring 2.7m by 2.0m to a depth of 1.35m. A single inhumation was identified which was recorded but left *in situ*. This was identified as being the burial of Isabella Wannop, aged 80 years who died in 1900. The only finds recovered were coffin fittings, which were returned to the graveyard and reburied.

A further inspection visit was undertaken on 8th January 2021 following the excavation of a new area for the septic tank, the first area being backfilled to preserve the integrity of the burial identified in 2020. The new area measured 2.0m by 4.0m and was 1.5m deep. There was no visible evidence for further burials within this area.

As this archaeological watching brief was conducted as part of a recommendation to observe groundworks in association with the excavation of the new septic tank, no further work is deemed necessary. However, given the potential for further burials in the area, it is anticipated that future excavation work will be subject to a similar programme of archaeological investigation, as recommended by Cumbria County Council.

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Eden Heritage Ltd thank Mandy Larkin, for commissioning the project, and for all assistance throughout the work. Eden Heritage Ltd also thank Alastair McGregor for his assistance throughout the project. Eden Heritage Ltd would also like to extend thanks to Rod Hind for his help during the watching brief.

The archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Martin Railton, who also produced the report.

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Circumstances

- 1.1.1 The following document outlines the results of an archaeological watching brief at The Church of St Leonard, Warwick-on-Eden, Cumbria (centred on Ordnance Survey grid reference NY 4660 5680). The archaeological work was undertaken in September 2020 for Mandy Larkin and Frank Charters (the client) and was associated with the conversion of the church to a dwelling, for which planning permission has been granted by Carlisle City Council (Planning reference 19/0399).
- 1.1.2 The site is located c.6.5km to the east of Carlisle, to the north of the village of Warwick-on-Eden, which lies on the A69 trunk road between Carlisle and Newcastle (Figure 1). The Church of St Leonard is a Grade II* listed building and is a 12th century village church, with 19th and 20th century alterations (Historic England List Entry 1121876).
- 1.1.3 The proposed development will comprise internal alterations to provide open plan living with minimal alterations to the existing building fabric. However, the development will require new foul drains to be installed on the north side of the building, connecting to a new septic tank to be located on the perimeter of the closed burial ground, situated at least 15m from the building (Figure 2).
- 1.1.4 As a result, a programme of archaeological work was required at the site, which was to comprise an archaeological watching brief. This was to be maintained during the excavation of the new septic tank and drainage, in accordance with Condition 4 of the planning permission, which stated:
- “Prior to the commencement of development, a written scheme of investigation for an archaeological watching brief must be submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Once approved, the scheme shall be implemented in full with an archaeological watching brief being undertaken by a qualified archaeologist. Within two months of the completion of the development, a digital copy of the archaeological report shall be furnished to the Local Planning Authority.”*
- 1.1.5 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was subsequently produced by Eden Heritage Ltd for the required archaeological watching brief at the site (Eden Heritage Ltd 2020). The Written Scheme of Investigation was submitted to Jeremy Parsons, Historic Environment Office at Cumbria County Council for approval, prior to the commencement of the project.

2 Methodology

2.1 Scope of the Work

2.1.1 The project comprised an archaeological watching brief, which was maintained over one day during the excavation work for a new septic tank to the north of The Church of St Leonard within the former graveyard (Figure 2). This work was undertaken between exchange and completion of the sale of the Church in order to satisfy the requirements of The Church Commissioners for England.

2.1.2 The general aim of the watching brief was to record any archaeological evidence revealed within the immediate vicinity of the excavation, in order to attempt to re-construct the history and past-use of the site. This comprised close monitoring of the excavation work undertaken by the groundworks contractor, followed by the archaeological investigation and recording of any archaeological features or deposits identified. This also included the recording any human remains identified at the site.

2.2 Archaeological Watching Brief

2.2.1 An archaeological watching brief consists of a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons, in this case during the excavation work for the installation of a septic tank and drainage system. All fieldwork was carried out in accordance with codes and practices outlined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists regarding archaeological watching briefs (CIfA 2014a).

2.2.2 In summary, the main objectives of the watching brief were:

- to establish the presence/absence, nature, and extent of archaeological remains revealed by the works and to record these where they are observed;
- to investigate and record any evidence for archaeological features or finds present;
- to establish the character of those features in terms of cuts, soil matrices and interfaces;
- to recover artefactual material, especially that useful for dating purposes;
- to recover palaeoenvironmental material (where it survives) in order to understand site and landscape formation processes;

2.2.3 The excavation was undertaken using a Volvo EC35C excavator with a ditching bucket under close archaeological supervision. The excavation was undertaken to the specific depth required for a new 2800 litre low profile septic tank on the northeast edge of the graveyard.

- 2.2.4 All potential archaeological features encountered were investigated and recorded according to standard recording procedure as set out in the Museum of London Archaeological Service Archaeological Site Manual (Museum of London 1994). All written records utilised the Eden Heritage *pro-forma* record sheets. A full photographic record in digital format was maintained.
- 2.2.5 All non-modern finds were collected and are reported upon in Section 5. No environmental evidence was encountered during the work and therefore no samples were taken.

2.3 Archive

- 2.3.1 The project archive has been prepared in accordance with the recommendations in *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (Brown 2011) and will be maintained by Eden Heritage Ltd. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier EH053, SLC/A.
- 2.3.2 Copies of the final report (in PDF/A format) will be provided to Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Record (HER), where viewing will be available on request.
- 2.3.3 Eden Heritage Ltd supports the **Online Access to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS (OASIS)** project. This project aims to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature created as a result of developer-funded archaeological fieldwork. As a result, details of the results of this study will be made available by Eden Heritage Ltd as a part of this national project, and a copy of the report will be uploaded to OASIS. The OASIS reference is: edenheri1-402844.

3 Background

3.1 Location and Geological Context

- 3.1.1 Warwick-on-Eden is located approximately 6.5km east of Carlisle, in Cumbria. The village is situated on the A69 Trunk Road between Carlisle and Newcastle, to the east of the River Eden, centred on Ordnance Survey grid reference NY 4660 5680 (Figure 1).
- 3.1.2 The Church of St Leonard lies c.300m to the north of Warwick-on-Eden having once served as a chapel to Wetheral Priory, and later attached to the dean and Chapter of Carlisle (McGregor 2019, 5). The Church was closed to worship in 2017 and the historic burial ground to the north of the Church is now closed, although the later burial ground to the south is still in use (Figure 2).
- 3.1.3 The geology of the site is sandstone, known as Helsby Sandstone Formation. This sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 242 to 247 million years ago and is overlain by glaciofluvial deposits, of Devensian sand and gravel, formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period (BGS 2020).

3.2 Research Context

- 3.2.1 In the 12th century the Manor or Warwick was held by Odard of Corby, whose descendants took the name Warwick, remaining in the family until the death of Francis Warwick in 1772, when it passed by decent to the Maddison and Bonner families. In 1822 the manor was sold to Thomas Parker, who built Warwick Hall in 1828 (Winchester 2017, 305-306). It was subsequently bought by Charles Liddell in c.1900, whose son-in-law R G G j Elwes rebuilt Warwick hall in 1934, after it was destroyed by fire.
- 3.2.2 Although historical records first mention a church on the site of St Leonard's in 1088, the existing building dates from the 12th century (McGregor 2019, 5). Pevsner recorded The Church of St Leonard in his Buildings of England series, and stated that the building was '*the most memorable Norman village church in Cumberland*'. He attributed the Norman arch at the west end of the nave to c.1130 comparing this to Carlisle Cathedral (Pevsner, 1967, 198).
- 3.2.3 A chapel at Warwick was mentioned in the charter of Henry I in 1131 who confirmed the chapel, along with the Manor of Wetheral, to the abbot and monks of St Mary of York, having been granted them by Ranulph Meschin (1070–1129). Although subordinate to Wetheral church, the chapel was attached to the Parish of Warwick (it is referred to as a chapel in early records rather than a church). The first recorded chaplain was William, being documented from 1200 to 1231 (Graham 1912, 87).
- 3.2.4 In 1541 Henry VIII gave the newly constituted dean and chapter of Carlisle the priory of Wetheral, and in 1547 he gave them the rectory of Wetheral and Warwick. The rectory and tithes of the parish

churches of Wetheral and Warwick were subsequently leased to Lord William Howard of Narworth. Repairs were made to the church at Warwick by Lord William Howard in 1633 (Graham 1912, 88).

- 3.2.5 The existing church at Warwick-on-Eden has dressed red sandstone walls, graduated slate roof with decorative ridge tiles and coped gables, having a nave of three bays with porch, and a chancel of one bay with semicircular apse. The church was built by R.J. Withers in 1869, incorporating the earlier fabric, with later alterations made by J.H. Martindale in 1908-9 (Historic England 2020).
- 3.2.6 The first edition Ordnance Survey map of c.1863 depicts The Church of St Leonard located within a sub-oval graveyard within woodland and accessed by a road from the south (Figure 3a). A path/track is also depicted to the north of the church leading northwards towards Warwick Hall, and southwards around the periphery of the graveyard. This map appears to depict a porch to the north of the church, which is not shown by the time of the second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1901 (Figure 3b). This may relate to the rebuilding of the church by R.J. Withers in 1869, when the northern path also appears to have been removed from the graveyard. However, this porch and path are again depicted on the revised edition Ordnance Survey maps of 1925 and 1947 (Figure 3c and Figure 3d).
- 3.2.7 No burials are depicted on these maps, the scale of the Ordnance Survey mapping being too small to provide details about the layout of the graveyard. However, the extent of the graveyard is shown, and this has remained unchanged to the north of the church. The cemetery has been extended southwards during the 20th century and continues to be used for burial (Figure 3c and Figure 3d). A c.1990 plan of the graveyard showing the location of graves (Plate 1) is held in the Carlisle Record Office along with a schedule of names (Ref. PR 42/78) but the office is currently closed to the public.

3.3 Previous Archaeological Work

- 3.3.1 There has been no known previous archaeological work at the site.

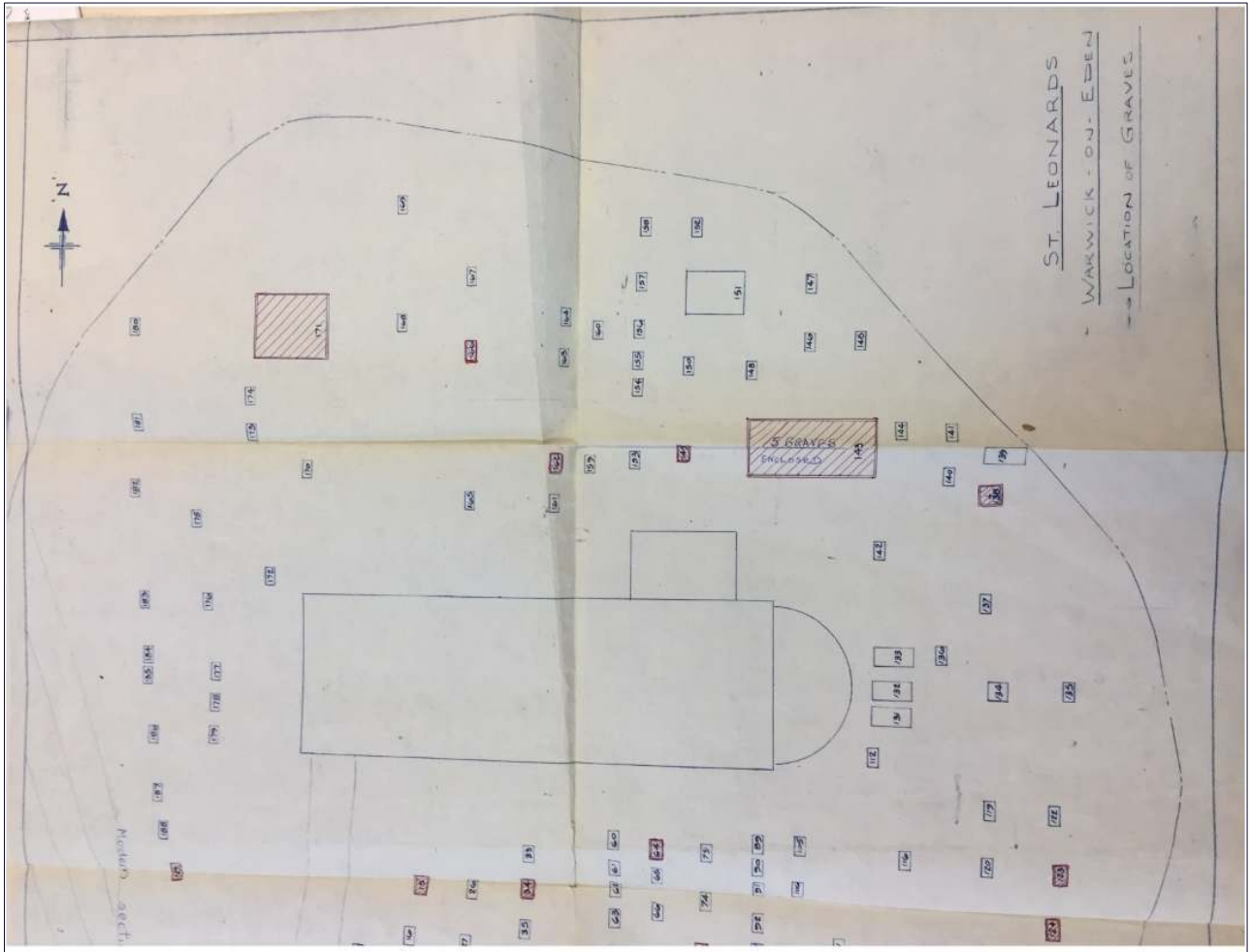


Plate 1: Plan of the graves at the site, dated c.1990 (grave locations are approximate)

4 Archaeological Watching Brief

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken on 24th August 2020 during the excavation of an area for the new septic tank. This work comprised the monitoring of the excavation of an area measuring 2.7m by 2.0m in the graveyard to the northeast of the Church of St Leonard (Figure 2, Plate 2). A further visit was made on 8th January 2021 to inspect an area measuring 2.0m by 4.0m which was excavated by the client on order to re-locate the new septic tank further to the north.
- 4.1.2 The initial excavation revealed a 0.3m-deep layer of topsoil **(100)** which comprised a dark sandy loam with frequent tree roots throughout. This overlay a deposit of coarse red/brown sand **(101)** which contained frequent sandstone pieces and mortar fragments. Due to the sloping ground at this location this deposit was 0.3m deep in the northeast section and 0.6m deep to the southwest. This deposit overlay fine red/orange sand **(102)** which was observed to the base of the excavation, being 0.4m deep in the northeast section and 0.7m deep in the southwest section (Plate 3).



Plate 2: Location of the excavation area to the northeast of the Church of St Leonard, looking south



Plate 3: Southwest section of the excavated area showing a burial at the base, looking southwest



Plate 4: Second excavated area to the north showing deposits in section, looking west

- 4.1.3 The subsequent excavation revealed similar sequence of deposits comprising a 0.4m-deep layer of topsoil (**100**) which was a dark sandy loam with frequent tree roots throughout. This overlies a 0.5m-deep deposit of coarse red/brown sand (**101**) which contained frequent sandstone pieces, slate fragments, blackened gravel, corroded iron and mortar fragments. Two large rectangular sandstone

slabs were also recovered from this layer which had been shaped and had traces of mortar on their surfaces, indicating they had been used within a building. This deposit overlay fine red/orange sand **(102)** which was observed to the base of the excavation, being 0.6m deep (Plate 4).

4.2 Results

- 4.2.1 A single burial was revealed on the west side of the original excavation at depth of 1.35m at which point excavation ceased. The burial was cleaned but not excavated and was left *in situ* (Figure 4).
- 4.2.2 A vertical grave cut **[103]** was identified at the bottom of the excavated area, aligned east-west, which measured 1.75m long, and 0.5m to the west, narrowing to 0.3m to the east (Plate 3 and Plate 5). The remains of a coffin burial **(105)** was identified filling the grave cut, the space around it being filled with loose red/orange sand **(104)** which was very similar to the surrounding soils.
- 4.2.3 The burial **(105)** measured 1.7m long with a typical coffin-shaped profile, being 0.36m wide at the west end (head) and 0.25m wide to the east (feet). The coffin had mostly deteriorated, but fragments of timber were present at the east end and attached to several metal plates on the sides and ends. There were eight upright metal plates in total, six each side of the coffin and one either end, to which handles were attached. Two of these were dislodged by the machine and recovered from site.
- 4.2.4 Only the skull and part of the right femur of the skeleton **(107)** were exposed, the skull lying on its left side. Overlying the inhumation was breast plate, which had presumably originally been attached to the coffin lid, with painted text in red and black: "Isabella Wannop Aged 80 Years 1900".
- 4.2.5 Overlying the inhumation and filling the space within the coffin was fine red/orange sand **(106)** which was indistinguishable from the surrounding soils **(102)** and partially excavated to a depth of 0.1m.
- 4.2.6 Following the recording of the inhumation the skeleton was covered over with the excavated soils. The two coffin fittings were the only finds recovered from the site which were subsequently reburied within the second excavated area (see Section 5 below).



Plate 5: Burial of Isabella Wannop at the bottom of the excavated area, looking south

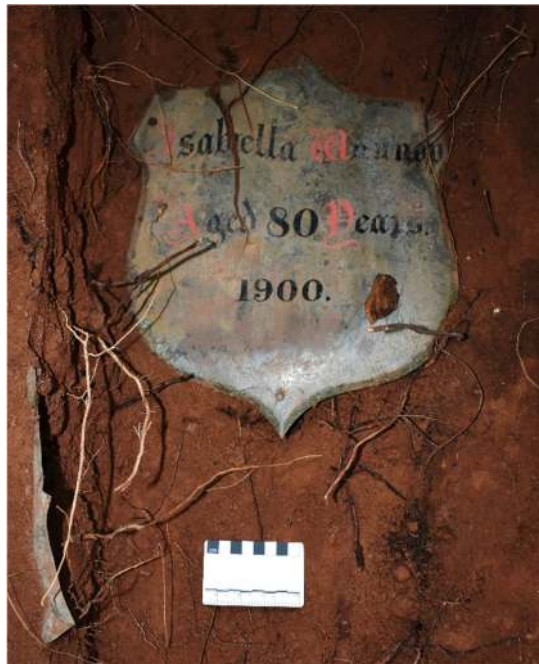


Plate 6: Detail of the breast plate, looking west

4.3 Discussion

- 4.3.1 A single coffin burial was identified at a depth of 1.35m below ground level, which was a typical Christian burial with the skeleton aligned east-west and the head in the west. The coffin was in a poor condition, all of the organic material having deteriorated apart from some fragments of wood where they were attached to the metal coffin fittings, however the preservation of bone was good.
- 4.3.2 The presence of the breast plate means that the burial was precisely dated to 1900 and was of an elderly female (Isabella Wannop, Aged 80 years). The size of the coffin indicates that she was of small stature, being around 5ft tall. The small size of the skull also indicated she was a small individual. The coffin appears to have been tailor-made to fit the individual and was of relatively good quality. The graveyard plan (Plate 1) suggests that this is grave No. 145 on the edge of the recorded graveyard.
- 4.3.3 The Wannop family appear to have been in Cumberland since the 1600's, having moved from Northumberland. Farming was still the principal occupation of Wannops in Cumberland and over the three centuries between 1600 and 1900, at least 40 farms between Wetheral and Brampton were at one time or another occupied by Wannops, or about 1 in 3 of all farms in the area (Wannops of the Border Country 2020).
- 4.3.4 It was evident that the graveyard sloped slightly downhill to the east in the location of the excavation, and a layer of sand and sandstone rubble (**101**) had subsequently been deposited over this part of the graveyard to level this area. This must have taken place at some point after the graveyard had gone out of use in the 20th century and appears to relate to either a nearby demolished sandstone building or possibly a phase of rebuilding of the church.

5 Finds

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 All non-modern finds were returned to the Eden Heritage offices where they were assessed under the direction of Martin Railton, Managing Director. All finds were dealt with according to the recommendations made by Watkinson & Neal (1998) and to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance for finds work* (CIfA 2014b). All finds were assessed according to material type and conforming to the deposition guidelines recommended by Brown (2011).
- 5.1.2 The material recovered during the watching brief was limited to coffin fittings associated with the burial of Isabella Wannop. This material was recovered from excavated graveyard soil (**103**) but was clearly associated with the coffin burial (**105**).
- 5.1.3 A breast shield was also recorded which dated the burial to 1900. This shield was left *in situ* with the burial but was of thin tinplate in the shape of a shield with lettering painted in red and black and the text "Isabella Wannop Aged 80 Years 1900" (Plate 5).

1.1 Metal Objects

- 1.1.1 In total three metal objects weighing 552g were recovered from the burial. These included two coffin handles and a corner clip of post-medieval date (the burial being dated to 1900).
- 1.1.2 Two of the objects are brass handles with backing plates pressed from thin tinplate, weighing 259g. The handles are twisted brass swing handles with round ends measuring 170mm long and 18mm in diameter. The handles are attached to the backing plates at either end with two pivots and brackets. The backing plates are formed in the shape of a shield, like the breast plate, and measure 205mm long by 160mm, being 0.05mm thick. Both are discolored and buckled due to the time in the ground.
- 1.1.3 The third object is a plain tinplate coffin corner clip weighing 34g. This measures 400mm by 80mm being 0.05mm thick, with ends in the shape of a shield, similar to the breast shield and backing plates.

1.2 Discussion

- 1.2.1 The material comprised two handles ('grips' to the funerary trade) with backing plates pressed from thin tinplate, of which there were eight on the coffin in total. The corner clip is an ornamental metal clip used on the four corners of coffins. The material is dated to 1900 by the associated breast plate. By this time, technological developments meant that cheap metal fittings were widely available and frequently used for burials (Early Victorian Coffins and Coffin Furniture 2020).

2 Conclusions

2.1 Interpretation

- 2.1.1 Since the graveyard to the north of the Church of Leonard ceased to be used for burial, several of the gravestones have been removed, and the exact numbers and locations of the burials is unknown. The excavation for a new septic tank has been undertaken on the edge of the known graveyard, to the northeast of the Church, as indicated by a sketch plan of the graveyard dated c.1990.
- 2.1.2 The watching brief has identified a single coffin burial on the edge of the graveyard, which has been identified as that of Isabella Wannop, who died in 1900 at the age of 80 years. The remains have been recorded but left *in-situ* and will not be disturbed further by the proposed development. The Wannop family are known to have been an important farming family in the Cumberland area, with at least 40 farms between Wetheral and Brampton occupied by Wannops between 1600 and 1900.
- 2.1.3 Following the disuse of the graveyard it is apparent that the ground level in this area was raised with a layer of sand and sandstone rubble. The origin of this material is unknown, but it may have come from a nearby demolished structure. This is believed to have taken place in the 20th century.

2.2 Research Potential

- 2.2.1 The watching brief has identified the presence of post-medieval/modern burials within the former graveyard which corresponds with the graveyard plan dated c.1990. The recorded burial is No. 145 on the edge of the recorded graveyard. It should also be possible to identify the burial through existing church records. This information will help inform future excavation work within the area.
- 2.2.2 The coffin fittings were of no research value and were reburied within the graveyard.

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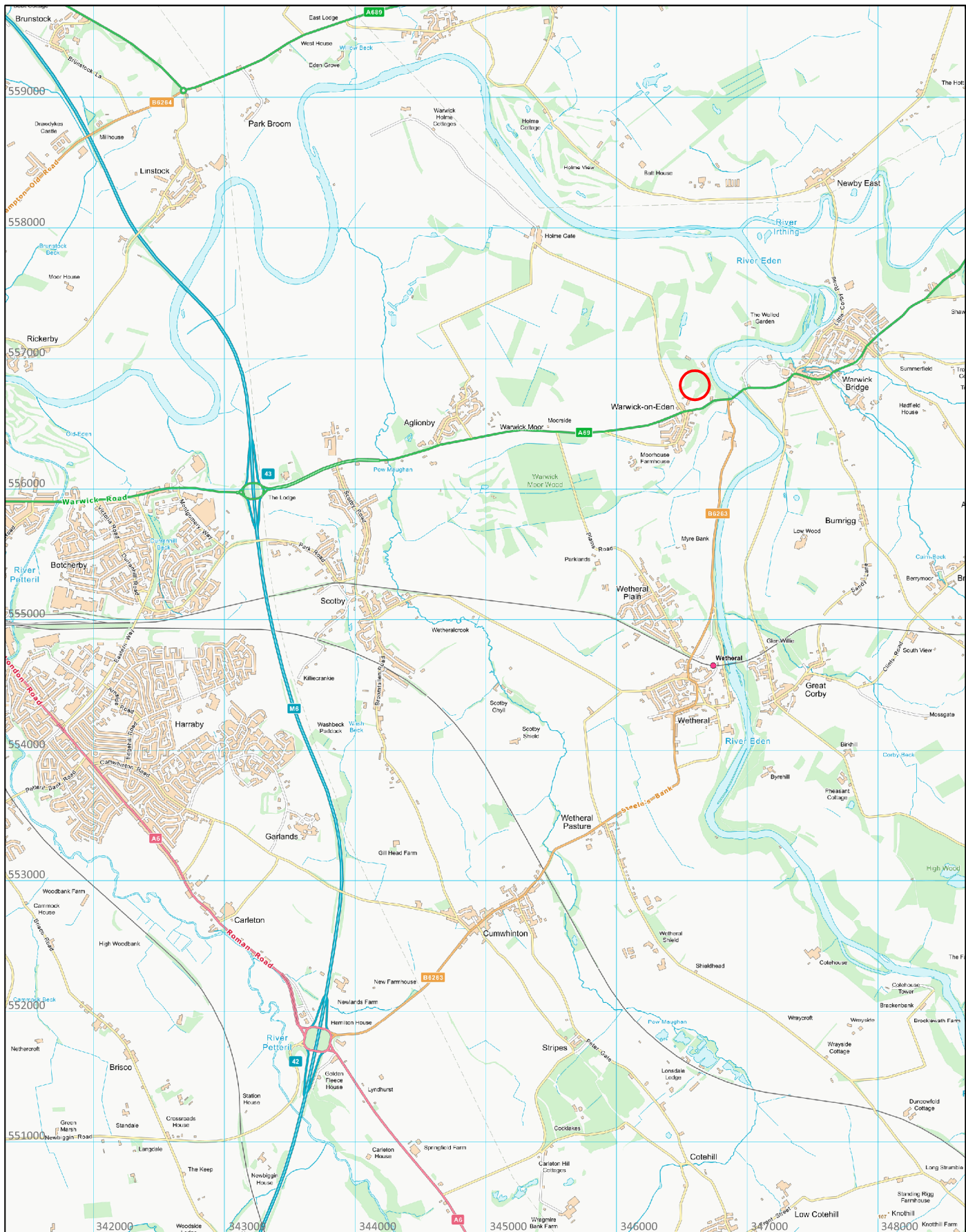
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APPENDIX 1: FIGURES



Eden Heritage Ltd 2020

PROJECT: The Church of St Leonard, Warwick-on-Eden, Cumbria
 CLIENT: Mandy Larkin and Frank Charters
 REPORT: EH053/02
 SCALE: 1:40,000 at A4
 DRAWN BY: MDR
 DATE: September 2020

KEY:
 site location



Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018)

Figure 1: Site Location.

PROJECT:

The Church of St Leonard,
Warwick-on-Eden, Cumbria

CLIENT:

Mandy Larkin and Frank Charters

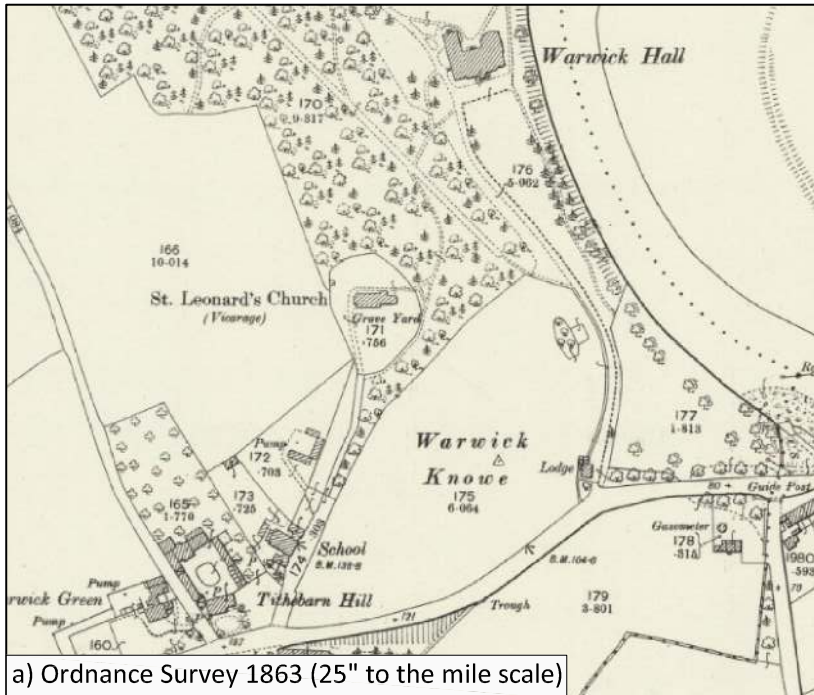
REPORT: EH053/02

SCALE: 1:200 at A4

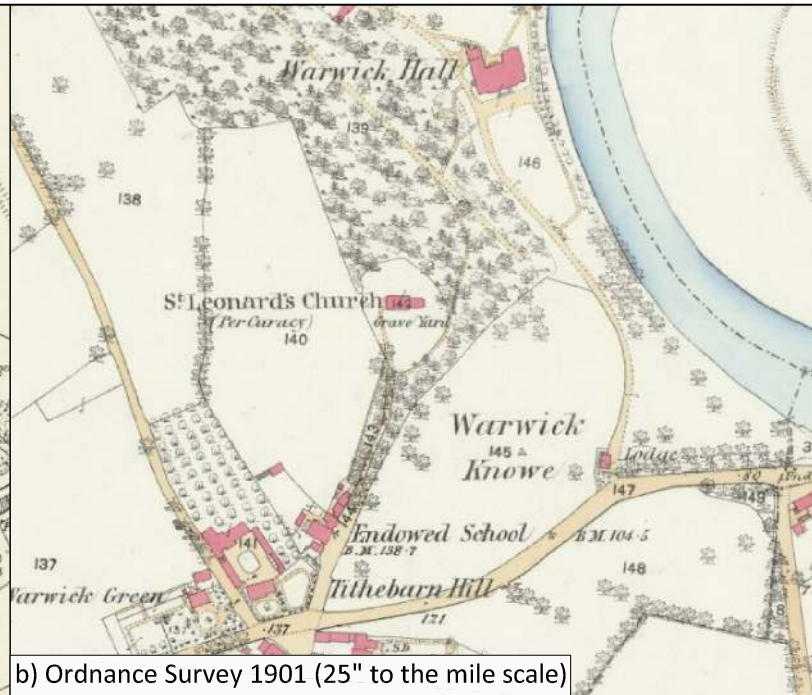
DRAWN BY: MDR

DATE: September 2020

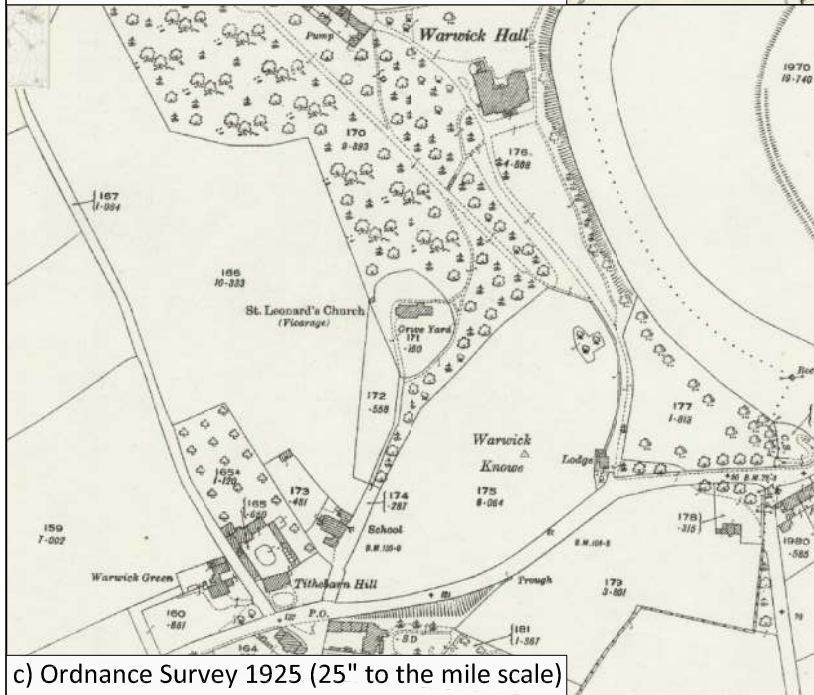
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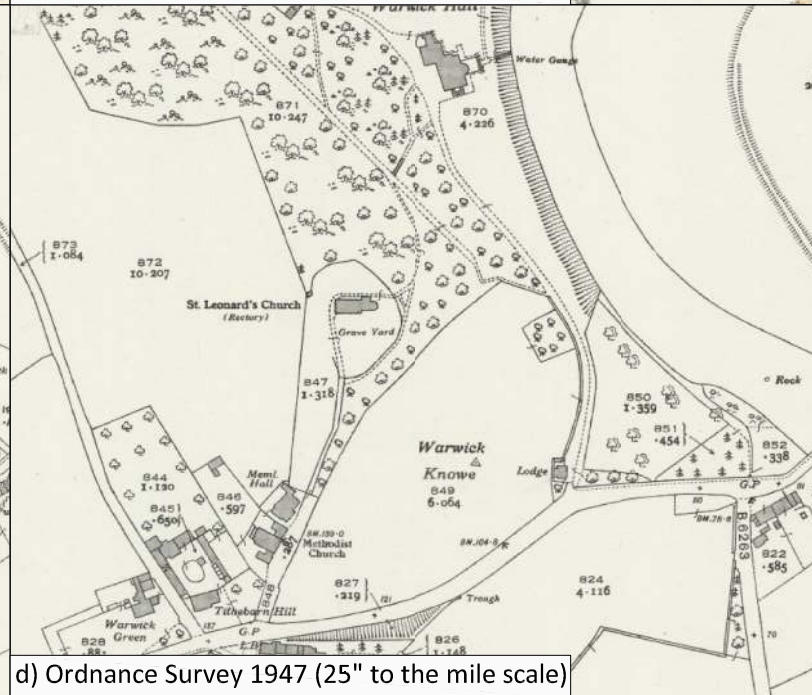
a) Ordnance Survey 1863 (25" to the mile scale)



b) Ordnance Survey 1901 (25" to the mile scale)



c) Ordnance Survey 1925 (25" to the mile scale)



d) Ordnance Survey 1947 (25" to the mile scale)



Figure 3: Extracts from Ordnance Survey mapping (1863-1947) depicting The Church of St Leonard.

PROJECT:

The Church of St Leonard,
Warwick-on-Eden, Cumbria

CLIENT:

Mandy Larkin and Frank Charters

REPORT:

EH053/02

SCALE:

1:20 at A4





DRAWN BY:

MDR

DATE:

September 2020

KEY:

-  excavation area
-  wood
-  metal
-  context number

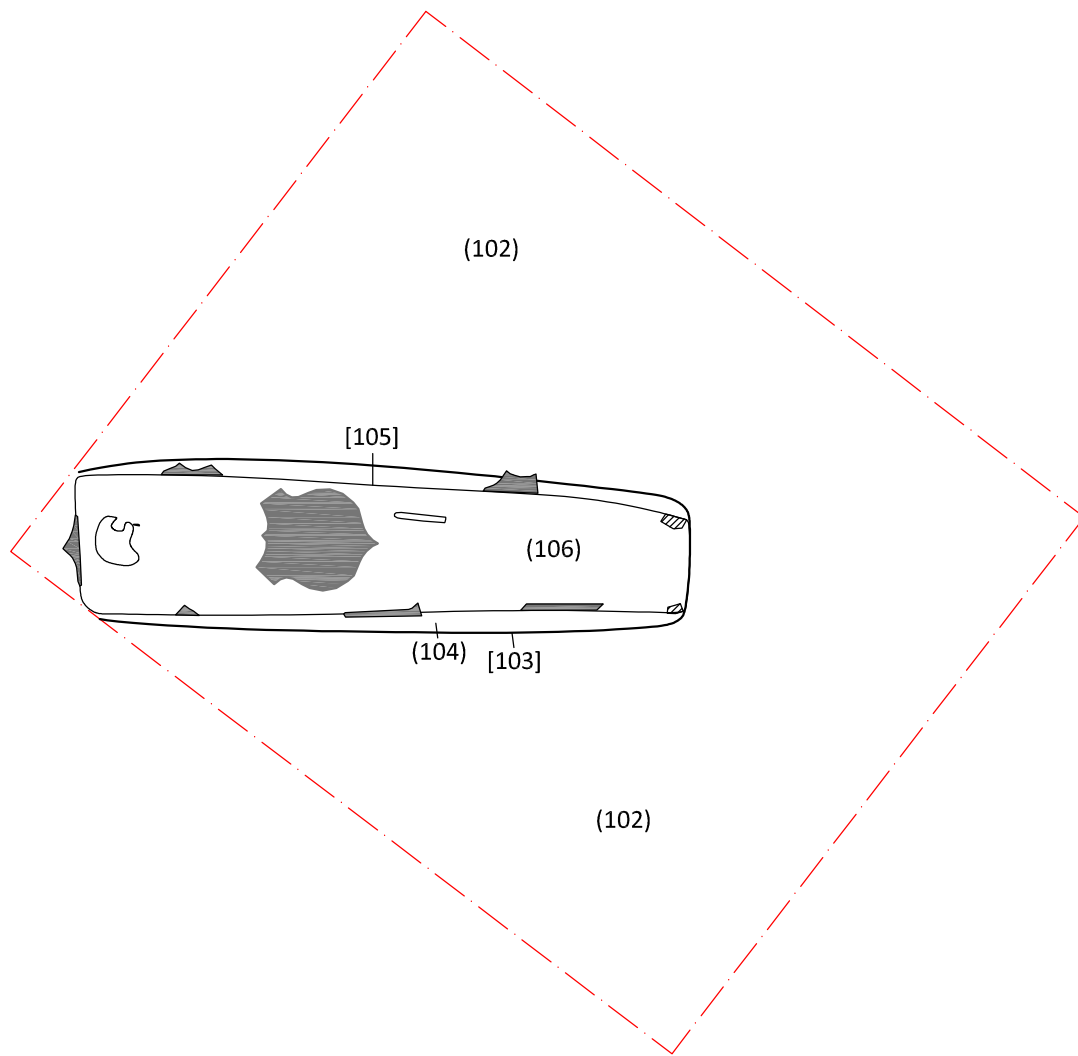


Figure 3: Watching brief area.

**Heritage Impact Assessment
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
Historic Landscape Survey
Written Scheme of Investigation**

**Geophysical Survey
Trial Trench Evaluation
Archaeological Excavation
Archaeological Watching Briefs**

