

# Rivington Parish Church, Chorley, Lancashire

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## An Archaeological Watching Brief



The University of Manchester

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## ***Summary***

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The University of Manchester Archaeological Unit (UMAU) was commissioned by Lloyd Evans Pritchard Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Rivington Parish Church, Horrobin Lane, Rivington, Chorley. The work was undertaken in response to a brief issued by Douglas Moir, Planning Officer (Archaeology), Lancashire County Archaeology Service.

The watching brief was conducted during the ground works associated with the construction of an extension to the west of the church and within the churchyard of Rivington Parish Church. The watching brief was implemented in order to record the positions and movement of the headstones within the affected area and to identify and record any structural remains or artefacts that may have been uncovered by the ground works.

The excavations to the west of the church uncovered no archaeological remains, either structural or artefactual. The headstones were photographed and their inscriptions and new locations recorded.

# ***1. Introduction***

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## **1.1 Introduction**

- 1.1.1 The University of Manchester Archaeological Unit was commissioned by Lloyd Evans Pritchard Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Rivington Parish Church, Horrobin Lane, Rivington, Chorley (NGR: SD 6249 1444). The archaeological watching brief took place within the churchyard and was commissioned following the approved proposal for a single storey extension to the west elevation of the church. This extension was to offer provision for a disabled WC, kitchenette and catering area and the creation of a new accessible entrance into the millennium room at Rivington Parish Church. Excavation of one foundation trench took place immediately to the west of the existing building, resulting in the relocation of a number of headstones to other areas of the churchyard.
- 1.1.2 The archaeological work was undertaken in response to a brief issued by Douglas Moir, Planning Officer (Archaeology), Lancashire County Archaeology Service and all work was carried out in accordance with the guidelines for watching briefs set by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) and the British Archaeological Codes of Practice. All safety requests and requirements as identified by the client were upheld. UMAU carried out a Risk Assessment in accordance with SCAUM health and safety guidelines.
- 1.1.3 The fieldwork was undertaken between 4<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> December 2007 inclusive and this report represents a summary of the findings. The fieldwork was undertaken by Phil Wilson and Brian Grimsditch and the report was compiled and written by Dr. Joanna Wright.

## **1.2 The Setting**

### **1.2.1 Topography**

The area identified for the watching brief is centred on NGR: SD 6249 1444. The church and its grounds lie on slightly raised ground at a height of 45m AOD, to the east of the Upper Rivington Reservoir. The main road through Rivington, Horrobin Lane, lies to the south and a bowling green is situated to the west, between the church and reservoir (**Fig. 1**).

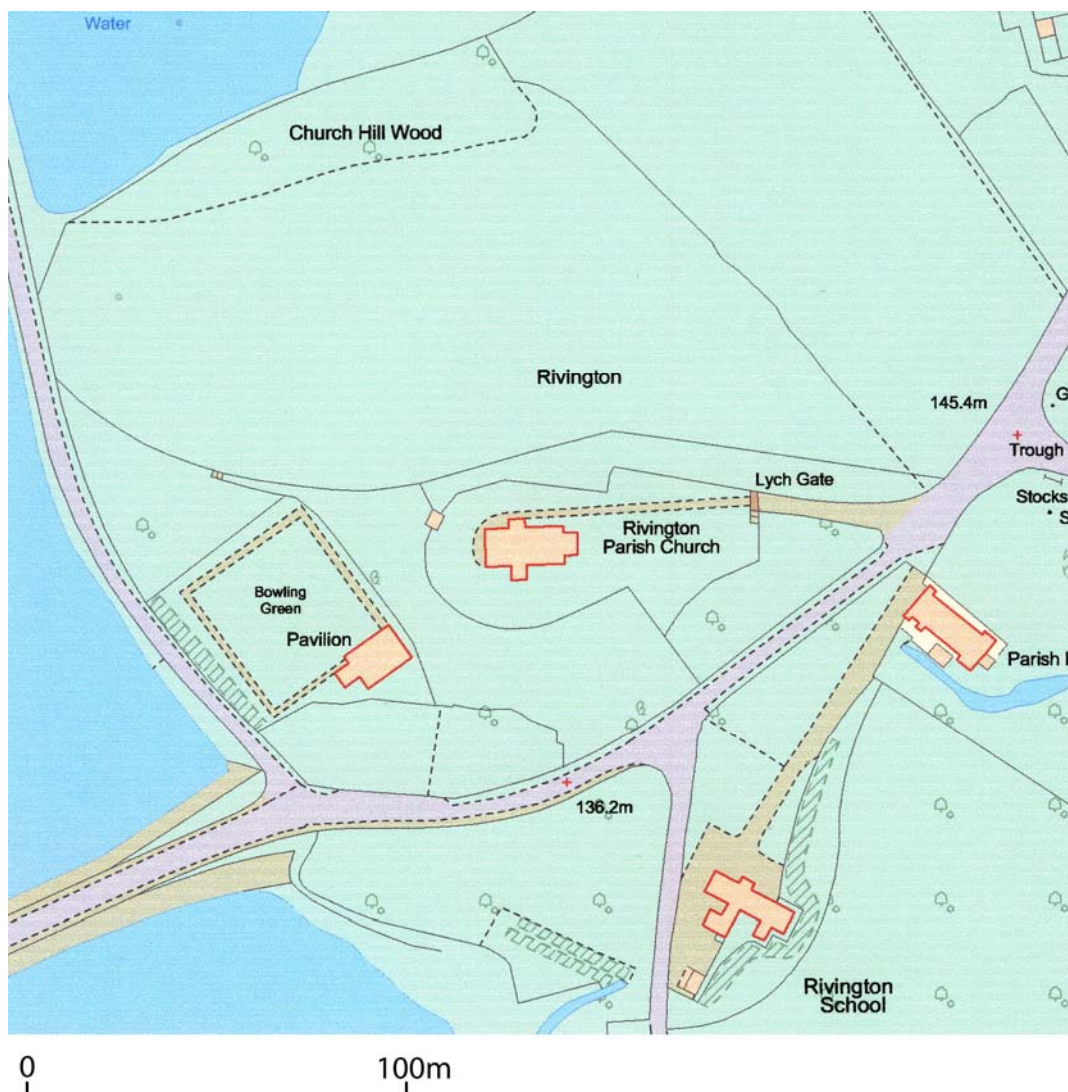
### **1.2.2 Geology**

The British Geological Survey shows Rivington as situated on an underlying solid geology of Langsettian Age Ousel Nest Grit Sandstone, with an overlying superficial geology of Diamicton till of the Devensian period.

## **1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background**

- 1.3.1 Rivington Parish Church (Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record PRN 926) is a Grade II Listed Building, thought to have been originally built in 1540, but rebuilt again in 1666. The earliest dated headstone is 1617. The shape of the graveyard is circular and is typical of churches with an early foundation. There are also references to carved stones in the graveyard and a Saxon font, which may be further proof of a pre-Conquest foundation to a church or chapel. Whether or not burials dating from

the period prior to 1540 lie within the graveyard are unknown, but there is potential for unmarked graves or other human remains to be disturbed by the proposals.



**Figure 1.** Location of Rivington Parish Church. Reproduced from modern OS mapping by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number WL8021.

## ***2. Watching Brief***

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### **2.1 Aims and Objectives**

- 2.1.1 The primary aim of the watching brief was to observe and record any features and/or artefacts of archaeological significance uncovered by the ground works within the area of proposed development. The watching brief would allow the preservation by record of any archaeological deposits, whose presence and nature could not be established in advance of the development, and would otherwise be destroyed. The fieldwork would enable enough data to be acquired to allow a record to be created that would address issues of Planning Policy Guidance on Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16). The initial fieldwork would also enable a decision for any further work to be made should any features or artefacts of archaeological significance be uncovered.
- 2.1.2 A further aim of the fieldwork was to record the headstones which were moved as part of the development.

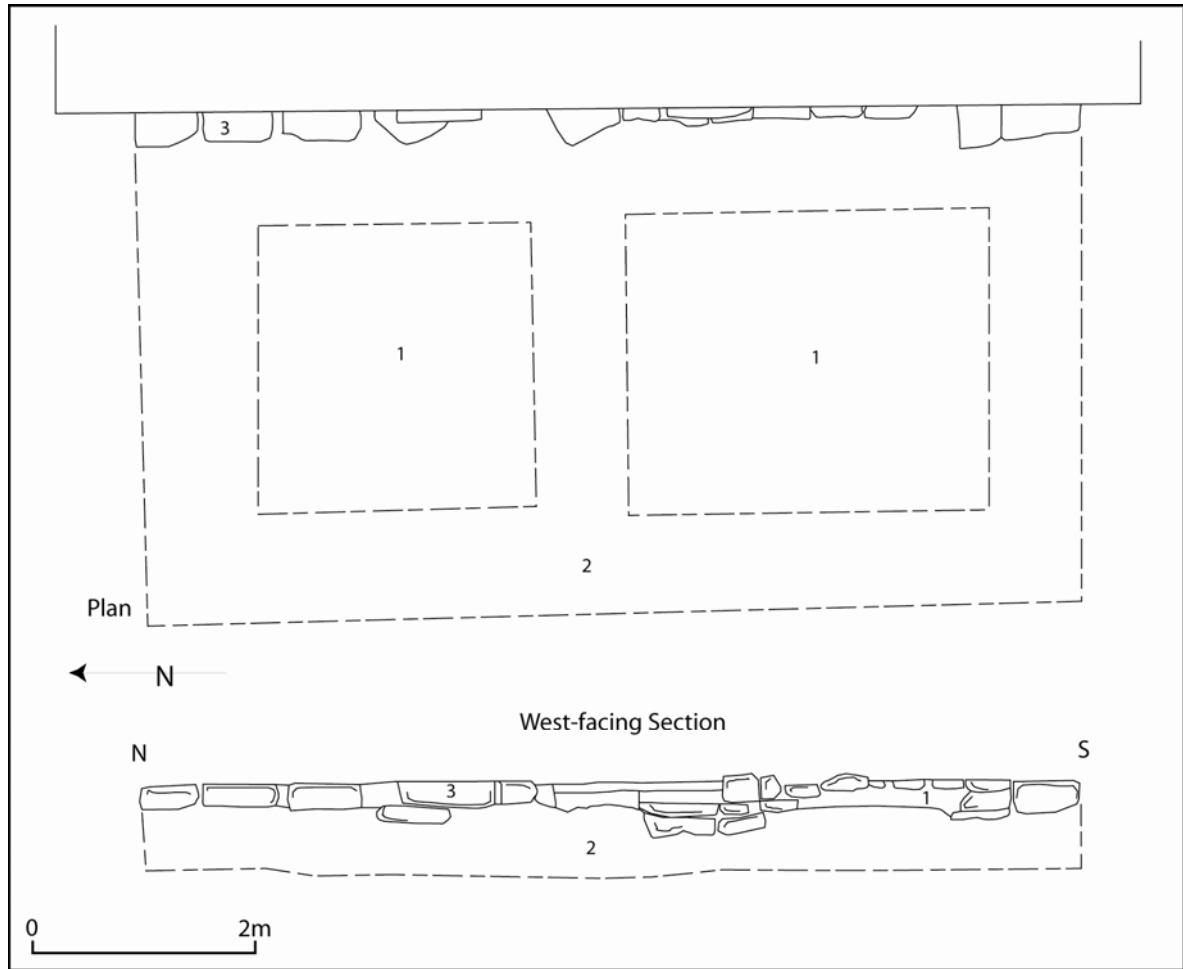
### **2.2 Methodology**

- 2.2.1 The site was visited during the ground works with a presence being maintained throughout the trenching operation. Any features of archaeological significance were located and recorded, whilst similarly any finds of significance were recorded with and their position within the stratigraphic sequence noted.
- 2.2.2 The entire trench was excavated with a mini-digger mechanical excavator. Details of the field visits were recorded in note form and any photographs taken were noted as to their orientation and content. Photographs were taken in digital format.
- 2.2.3 The original positions of the headstones, which were moved during the construction phase, were noted. The headstones were also photographed and any inscriptions on the headstones were recorded. The new locations of the affected headstones were also recorded. Unfortunately, four of the headstones were moved by the contractors without informing UMAU. Therefore, with these headstones it was not possible to plot their original locations, though a record was made of their new locations and any headstone inscriptions.

### **2.3 Results**

#### ***2.3.1 The Excavation***

The excavated trench was positioned across an area measuring 8.4m by 4.5m. The trench itself ran around the confines of this area, measuring approximately 1m in width, with a 1m strip also excavated across the centre. It was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.85m. The remaining central areas of the trench were not disturbed (**Figs. 2 and 4; Plate 1**).



**Figure 2.** Plan and section of excavated trench,

Apart from the sandstone footings of the church, visible on the west-facing section, no features were observed and no finds were recovered from the area excavated. It is possible that remains lie within the area underneath the sections which were not excavated. The topsoil was of mid-/dark greyish brown loam containing frequent small stones. The excavated soil comprised mid-yellowish brown sandy clay with frequent small stones. This lay above a compact yellowish brown natural clay (**Plate 2**).



**Plate 1.** The excavated area.

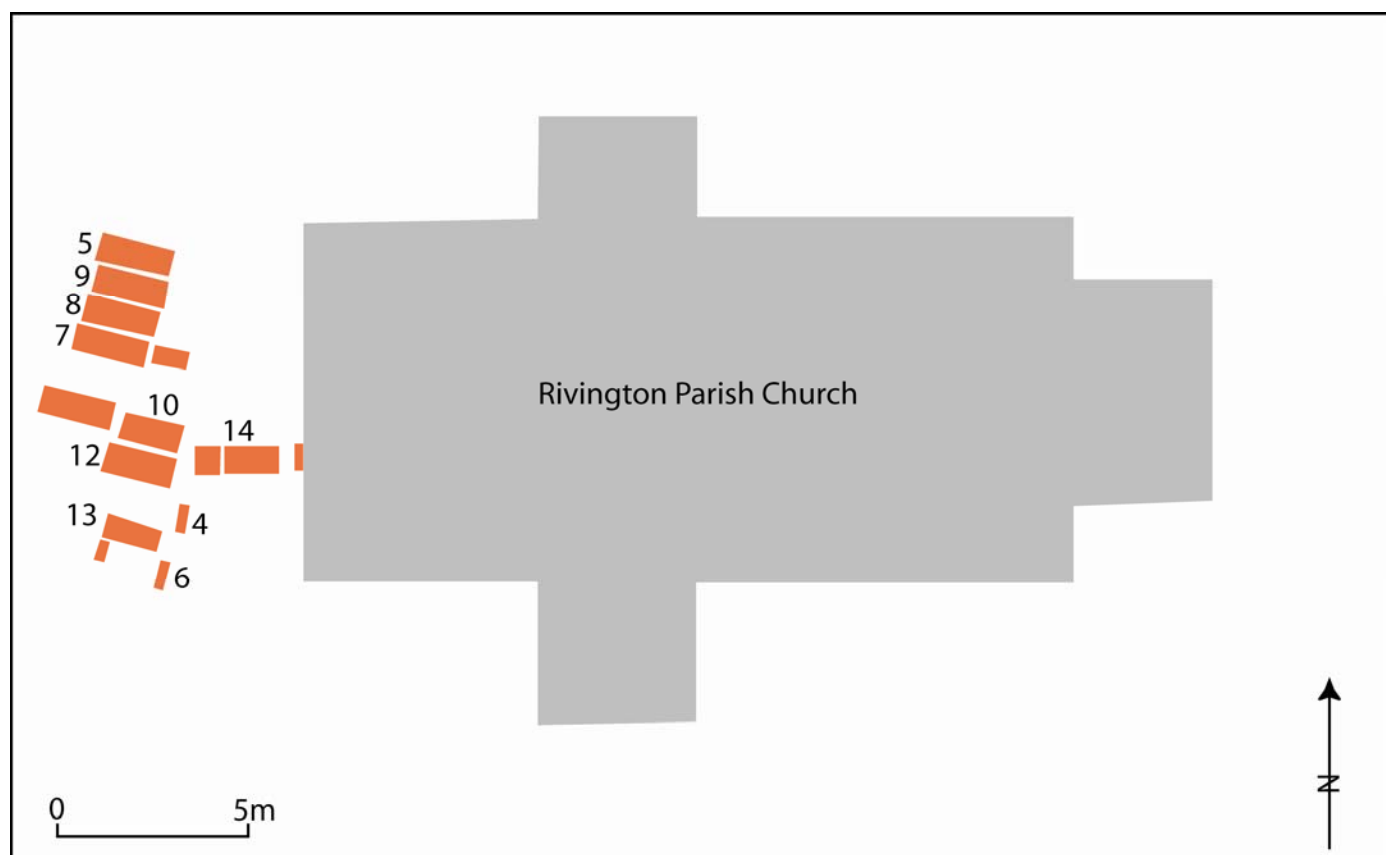




**Plate 2.** Part of the west facing section, beneath the wall of the church

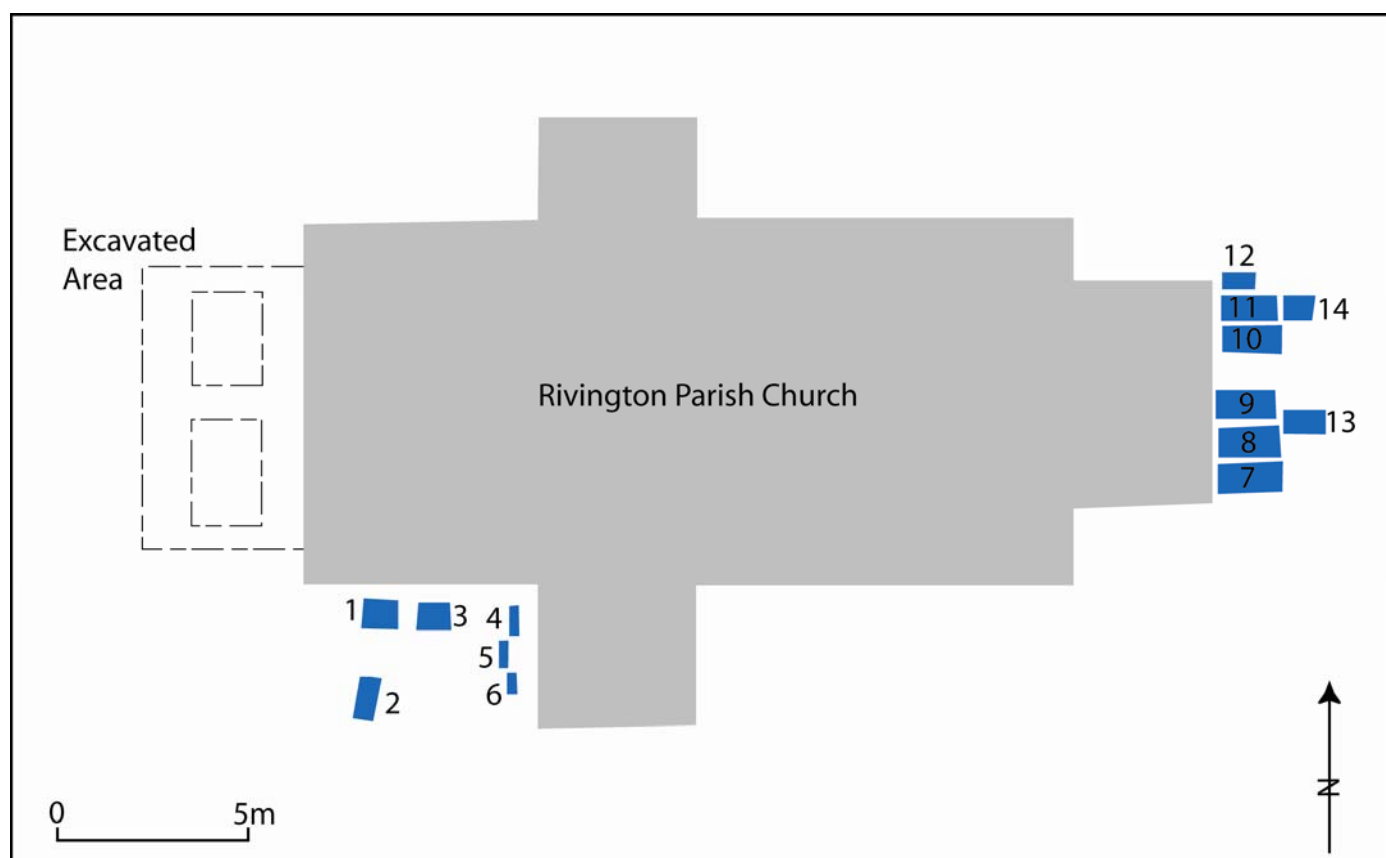
### 2.3.2 *The Headstones*

The headstones were individually recorded and where possible their former positions plotted. The new positions of the headstones were also noted (**Figs 2 and 3; Plates 3 and 4**).



**Figure 2.** The original positions of the headstones. The original locations of headstones 1-3 and 11 are unknown.





**Figure 3.** The new positions of the headstones



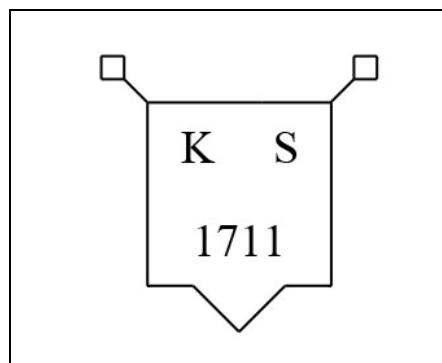
**Plate 3.** The new positions of headstones 1 to 6. Headstone 1 is placed against the wall of the church, 2 is in front and placed side-on, 3 is placed in the centre of the picture face-on, and 4-6 are on the right of the picture.



**Plate 4.** The new positions of ledgers 7 to 14. Ledgers 7 to 12 are placed left to right along the wall of the church (the central stone is *in situ* and not a moved stone). Ledger 13 is in front of 8 and ledger 14 is placed in front of 12.

Photographs and inscriptions are provided below. The numbers provided in brackets relate to the shape or form of the headstone, shape of the inscription panel and lettering. These descriptions and numbering are based on those described by Mytum (2000, 79-136).

**Headstone No. 1**  
**Original Plot No. Unknown**





**Plate 5.** The headstone is of sandstone and is flat topped with straight sides (4700). The text panel is of incised lines (1), and is square in shape with a triangular central feature in the base of the panel (a variation on 1000). The top two corners have straight lines projecting from them with small diamond-shaped motifs at the end of each line. The text is incised (1) and the letter style is Roman (10).

**Headstone No. 2**  
**Original Plot No. Unknown**

To Affectionate Remembrance of  
JOHN  
SON OF JOHN AND LYDIA WINSTANLEY  
WHO DIED JAN, 20<sup>TH</sup>, 1831, AGED 2 YEARS.  
ALSO CORNELIUS, SON OF THE ABOVE  
DIED AUG, 25<sup>TH</sup>, 1834 AGED 1 YEAR.  
ALSO BETTY DAUGHTER OF THE ABOVE  
DIED DEC, 1<sup>ST</sup>, 1866, AGED 26 YEARS.  
ALSO THE ABOVE LYDIA WINSTANLEY  
DIED DEC, 20<sup>TH</sup>, 1875 AGED 75 YEARS.  
ALSO WILLIAM SON OF THE ABOVE  
DIED FEB, 20<sup>TH</sup>, 1880 AGED 50 YEARS.  
IN AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE OF  
JOHN WINSTANLEY OF ANGLEZARKE  
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE FEB, 11<sup>TH</sup>, 1802 AGED 87 YEARS  
WHO WAS INTERRED IN RIVINGTON CHURCH ON THE 16<sup>TH</sup>.  
ALSO ROGER WINSTANLEY OF ANGLEZARKE  
BURIED JAN, 20<sup>TH</sup>, 1919  
AGED 89 YEARS





**Plate 6.** The sandstone headstone is gothic pointed with a central triangular element, indented sides and convex shoulders (4216). The text is incised (1), with the lettering around the central motif of gothic style (60) and the remainder in San serif (20). The decorative motif, roughly triangular in form with a concave base and indented, convex sides, is placed at the top of the headstone and depicts a flower (300) and sheaf of wheat (360).

**Headstone No. 3**  
**Original Plot No. Unknown**

IN MEMORY OF  
JAMES SAMPSON  
OF BLACKROD  
WHO DIED JUNE 10 1874  
AGED 59 YEARS



**Plate 7.** This sandstone headstone has a rounded top and straight sides (4100). The text is incised (1) and in Roman style (10). The decorative motif is located around the top of the headstone and is an incised continuous line, with a central raised area, following the shape of the top of the headstone. Beneath each end is a small, incised upside-down 'V' shape.

**Headstone No. 4  
Original Plot No. 133**

3 BREADTHS  
the Property of Thomas  
Rigby  
In Loving Memory of  
ELLEN VAUGHAN DAUGHTER OF  
THOMAS RIGBY  
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE MAY 1<sup>ST</sup> 1910  
AGED 60 YEARS





**Plate 8.** This sandstone headstone has a flat top with two semicircular and one flat topped central elements, concave shoulders and straight sides (5137). The text is incised (1) and is a mixture of Roman (10) and Gothic (60) style.

**Headstone No. 5  
Original Plot No. 87**

SACRED  
TO THE MEMORY OF  
RICHARD BERRY  
of Allington who de-  
parted this life Februa-  
ry 14<sup>th</sup> 1861 aged 60 yrs





**Plate 9.** This headstone is of sandstone and has a rounded top with a central indentation, rounded shoulders and straight sides (4121). The text is incised (1) and is a mixture of Roman (10) and Gothic (60) style.

**Headstone No. 6**  
**Original Plot No. 131**

6 B  
Here resteth the body of  
John Davenport who died  
May 29<sup>th</sup> 1819 Aged 67  
Years. James Waterworth  
Died Ap: 2<sup>ND</sup> 1860 aged 62.  
Ellen his Wife died Jan  
2<sup>ND</sup> 1859 aged 61 Years



**Plate 10.** This sandstone headstone has a sinuous top with a central indentation and vertical sides (4620). The text is inscribed (1).

**Headstone No. 7**  
**Original Plot No. 84**

SACRED  
TO THE MEMORY  
OF ANN the beloved Wife of  
Adam Brindle of Sharples  
who departed this life Sepr: 26<sup>th</sup>  
1833, aged 53 Years.  
Also of the above named Adam  
Brindle, who departed this life  
July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1848, aged 69 years.  
Also of RACHEL their Daugh  
ter who departed this life Decr:  
20<sup>th</sup>, 1827, aged 21 Years.





**Plate 11.** This sandstone ledger is a low rectangular monument with a flat top. It may once have stood upright, although was lying flat prior to the recent move and is more likely to have been laid flat originally (0510). The text is incised (1) in Egyptian style (40).

**Headstone No. 8**  
**Original Plot No. 85**

Here refteth the Body of  
 James Berry of Rivington who  
 Departed this Life March 13<sup>th</sup>  
 in the Year 1773 Aged 25.  
 ALSO William Berry who  
 Departed this Life Octr: 6<sup>th</sup>  
 in the Year 1792, Aged 37.  
 ALSO Henry Berry Father of  
 the above, who departed this life  
 Nov 6<sup>th</sup> 1812 aged 85 Years.  
 ALSO ELLEN Wife of the above  
 Henry Berry who departed this  
 life Jan 30<sup>th</sup> 1815 aged 87 Years.  
 John their Son departed this

life 15<sup>th</sup> DEC 1833, aged 72 Years.  
Jannet his Wife departed this  
life 18<sup>th</sup> April 1812 aged 80 Years.  
MILES their Son departed this  
life 14<sup>th</sup> OCTR: 1810 AGED 57 Years.  
Henry their Son departed this  
Life 7<sup>th</sup> May 1854 aged 65 Years.  
Ann Wife of Henry Berry depart  
ed this life Feb 8<sup>th</sup> 1861 aged 50 Years.  
A toilsome world weve left behind  
A glorious heaven in hope to find  
I Breadihs



**Plate 12.** This sandstone ledger is a low rectangular monument with a flat top (0510). The text is incised (1) in Roman style (10).

**Headstone No. 9**  
**Original Plot No. 86**

IN MEMORY OF  
ANDREW BERRY OF RIVINGTON  
WHO DIED MAY 12<sup>th</sup> 1866 AGED 72 YEARS  
ALSO MARY HIS WIFE DIED HULY 29<sup>th</sup>  
1851 AGED 51 YEARS  
WILLIAM BERRY AGED 10 YEARS 1835  
JANNET BERRY AGED 21/2 YEARS 1839  
WILLIAM BERRY AGED 7 months 1845  
ELIZABETH BERRY AGED 7 months 1849





**Plate 13.** This sandstone ledger is a low rectangular monument with a flat top (0510). The text is incised (1).

**Headstone No. 10**  
**Original Plot No. 112**

Here lieth the Body of  
John Willson of Anglezark  
Who departed this Life  
Aprill 17<sup>th</sup> 1743 Aged  
and also Margreat Willson  
his wife who departed  
this Life June 6<sup>th</sup> 1759  
Aged 65.  
Likewise Richard their  
Son who departed this  
Life August 13 1762  
Aged 27.

Thomas Wilfon died February  
15<sup>th</sup> 1819 aged 87 Years.  
Mary his wife died August  
6<sup>th</sup> 1777 aged 39 Years.  
Margaret their Daughter, died  
June 29<sup>th</sup> 1835 aged 64 Years.  
Efter Monks their Daughter  
died May 26<sup>th</sup> 1839 At 62 Years.  
John their Son, died February  
23<sup>rd</sup> 1815 aged 77 Years.



**Plate 14.** This sandstone ledger is a low rectangular monument with a flat top (0510).  
The text is incised (1) in Egyptian style (40).

**Headstone No. 11**  
**Original Plot No. Unknown**

In Memory of  
NATHAN SMITH  
of Chorley  
who departed this Life  
April 2<sup>ND</sup> 1863,  
Also SARAH SMITH widow of the above  
Who died October 6<sup>th</sup> 1875  
Aged 51 years.  
ALSO ELLEN DAUGHTER OF JAMES & ANN SMITH  
OF HEATH CHARNOCK WHO DIED MARCH 27<sup>TH</sup> 1892  
AGED 50 YEARS.





**Plate 15.** This sandstone ledger is a low rectangular monument with a flat top (0510).  
The is incised (1) in Sans serif style (20).

**Headstone No. 12**  
**Original Plot No. 111**

SACRED  
TO THE MEMORY OF  
ANN, DAUGHTER OF WILLIAM WILSON AND  
ELLEN DRINKWATER, OF HEATH CHARNOCK  
WHO DIED AUGT: 1853, AGED 6 WEEKS.  
ALSO JANE THEIR DAUGHTER WHO DIED  
JANUARY 6<sup>TH</sup> 1866 AGED 20 YEARS.  
ALSO WILLIAM WILSON DRINKWATER;  
WHO DIED NOVEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup> 1882  
AGED 73 YEARS

ELLEN WIFE OF THE ABOVE, WHO died  
Novt: 20<sup>th</sup> 1879 Aged 64yrs  
Also ELIZABETH, daughter of the above  
Who died Decr: 19<sup>th</sup> Aged 61 Years.



**Plate 16.** This sandstone ledger is a low rectangular monument with a flat top (0510). The text is incised (1) in Sans Serif style (20).

**Headstone No. 13**  
**Original Plot No. 110**

THOMAS CRITCHLEY  
of Chorley  
died June 15<sup>th</sup> 1858  
ANN, his wife died March 3d  
1848. Aged 55 Years.  
THEIR CHILDREN. DIED AGED YRS  
MARIA FEBY: 22<sup>ND</sup> 1835 2  
ANN MAY 16<sup>TH</sup> 1853 26





**Plate 17.** This sandstone ledger is a low rectangular monument with a flat top (0510). The text is incised (1) in a mixture of Roman (10), Sans Serif (20) and Copper plate (50) styles.

**Headstone No. 14**  
**Original Plot No. 000**

**Top half indecipherable (worn away)**

.....body  
.....life  
.....  
.....  
.....f.....1730  
.....1715  
T                    H

James Hampson  
Jennet Hampson

.....their daughter died Aug.  
7<sup>th</sup> 1815 aged 10 months.  
Mary, their dr: died Jany: 13<sup>th</sup>  
1817 aged 1 day.  
Ellen, their dr: died Feby: 9<sup>th</sup>  
1817 aged 27 days.



**Plate 18.** This sandstone ledger is a low rectangular monument with a flat top (0510). It has been broken into two pieces, some time prior to the move. The text is incised (1) in Roman style (10).

### ***3. Discussion***

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- 3.1 A total of fourteen headstones were moved during the works described above. Their inscriptions and new locations were recorded and a detailed photographic record was compiled.
- 3.2 The visits conducted during the period of the watching brief did not find below-ground features or artefacts in the area of the excavated trench. It is possible that graves or other features may remain undisturbed within the excavated area, but no evidence for this was recorded.

## ***4. Bibliography***

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Mytum, H 2000 *Recording and Analysing Graveyards*, Practical Handbooks in Archaeology 15, Council for British Archaeology in association with English Heritage.