

Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork
School of Archaeology and Palaeoecology
Queen's University Belfast



Data Structure Report: No. 6.

Investigations at St John's Church, Co. Antrim
AE/02/123

On behalf of



Contents Page

<i>Sub Heading</i>	<i>Page No(s)</i>
Summary Account	1 - 3
Introduction	4 - 8
Excavation Account	9 - 12
Discussion	13 - 16
Further Work	17
Bibliography	18
Appendix One: Context Log	19
Appendix Two: Harris Matrix	20
Appendix Three: Photographic Record	21 - 22
Appendix Four: Field Drawing Register	23
Appendix Five: Small Finds Register	24

Figures and Plates

- Figure 1: Location map
- Figure 2a: *Ordnance Survey* Revised First Edition Map
- Figure 2b: *Ordnance Survey* Second Edition Map
- Figure 3: Location of the cavity within the church
- Figure 4: Plan of primary burial (Context 10)
- Plate 1a: St John's Church
- Plate 1b: All Saints Church of Ireland (Antrim)
- Plate 1c: 'Middle Church' Ballinderry
- Plate 2: Skull 1, Skull 2 and Skull 3
- Plate 3: Contexts 3 and 6 (coffin remains)
- Plate 4: Primary burial (Context 10)
- Plate 5: Base metal coin (Small Find No. 7)
- Plate 6: Ornate coffin from the 18th century

1. Summary

- 1.1 A small scale excavation was undertaken at St John's Church, Ballyharry, Islandmagee, County Antrim, during the period from 18th December to 20th December 2002. The construction of the church has been dated to 1595 (Reeves, 1847, 272), but it has also been suggested that the building is of early 17th century date (Chart, 1940, 35). The congregation received a Heritage Lottery Fund grant in 2002 for restoration work to the building's fabric.
- 1.2 As part of this programme of restoration work the interior of the church was stripped, the old window lintels were replaced, the walls re-pointed and the old floor lifted to enable a replacement floor to be laid down. During this latter work a human mandible was discovered, leading to a report to the PSNI, who subsequently contacted Mr Declan Hurl of the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage. After the floor had been lifted part of the central mortared aisle then collapsed, revealing a cavity that contained human remains. On 4th December 2002, Mr Hurl, accompanied by Mr John O'Neill of the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, visited the site and found that the cavity contained a disturbed human burial within a wooden coffin. Several human skulls were also within the same grave cut but outside the coffin.
- 1.3 An archaeological excavation was subsequently commissioned by the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage to investigate the cavity and its contents. This work was directed by Mr Peter Moore, of the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork.
- 1.4 The builders had no plans to disturb the aisle outside the collapse area or to carry out any further work that would be intrusive below the level of the floor. Therefore, only the area of the grave cut that was revealed by the collapse was investigated. The debris was cleared from within the grave cut, the skeletal remains removed for analysis, and the edges of the original cut were located.
- 1.5 A research agenda was drawn up with two key objectives identified. (a) The disturbed burial within the grave was orientated west – east (with the head to the

east), rather than the usual east – west; could the excavation reveal why this was the case? (b) Could the date for the deposition of the human remains within the grave cut be established?

- 1.6 The excavation revealed that the grave contained one articulated burial towards the bottom of the grave cut, Context 10, aligned east – west (with the head to the west). Situated above this was a disturbed burial, Context 11, aligned west – east (with the head to the east). Five human skulls were also discovered within the grave cut, three of which were located towards the west end of the cut (Contexts 7, 8 and 9), with the other two at the east end (Contexts 12 and 13). The disturbed nature of the upper portion of the cut meant in addition to the disturbed skeleton, there were many individual disarticulated bones, including ribs, vertebrae, metatarsals, mandibles and possible femurs. Fragments of coffins were also recovered (Contexts 3 and 14), many pieces still contained small decorative copper alloy studs. A base metal coin was found towards the base of the grave cut, together with iron coffin fittings and coffin handles.
- 1.7 The burial of individuals within a church was largely a Roman Catholic and Church of Ireland practice. St John's may originally have been built as a Presbyterian place of worship in the 17th century, although it is more probable that it was founded by the Church of Ireland. The documentary evidence suggests that the church was ruinous by the latter half of this century but that it was repaired and reused by the Church of Ireland in the 18th century. Given this, the earliest date for the two burials may be during the 17th century. It is more probable that they are of a later date than this, however, since both are contained within coffins of a type used during the 18th century. It is also probable that both bodies had been interred prior to the church's restoration in the 1820's, since they are positioned under the mortar aisle of the restored church, and there is no evidence that the aisle had been cut.
- 1.8 Folklore suggests that members of the Roman Catholic and Anglican clergy were buried in an opposite alignment to their lay people in order that they could face their 'flock' at the resurrection on Judgement Day. There is no known previous archaeological excavated evidence, however, to support this, although it has been known for priest's headstones to face opposite to the other headstones in a cemetery. It is therefore possible that the second burial in the grave cut (Context 11), with its west – east alignment, is archaeological evidence that supports the

folklore and that this individual was a member of the clergy, buried in the 18th century or early 19th century.

- 1.9 The two burials are associated with a number of disarticulated skeletal remains, most notably five skulls. The bones appear to be associated with the latter of the two burials, that of the possible clergyman. Two theories can be presented to explain the presence of these disarticulated remains within the grave cut.

- 1.10 It has been suggested that the church of St John's may have been constructed on or close to an earlier religious establishment (O'Lavery, 1878, 136). This suggestion is based on the information contained within the *Ordnance Survey Memoirs* for the parish, where it is reported that a burial ground was located within 200 yards of the church (Day *et al*, 1991, 45). The reuse of old burial grounds and ancient churches by the incoming Planters is a common feature of early 17th century Ulster (Gillespie, 1985, 62). Given this, it is possible that the church is situated directly over an earlier graveyard of Early Christian and/or Medieval date, and that the disarticulated bones represent burials within this old graveyard – now within the body of the Post-Medieval church - that were disturbed when the grave cut was opened in the 18th century. The disturbed bones may have been collected and then redeposited into the grave when it was being backfilled with earth.

- 1.11 Alternatively, remembering that these 18th century style coffins continued in use into the early 19th century, it is possible that the second burial may be of early 19th-century date and that it may have been interred immediately prior to the restorations of 1827-28. The disarticulated bones may therefore represent 17th-century or 18th-century burials in or around the church that had been disturbed during the radical alterations made to the church in the late 1820's. The bones may have been collected and deposited in the grave when the second burial was being interred, or the grave cut may have been re-opened in the 1820's by the workers, the bones placed beside the second coffin, the grave filled in, and the new aisle laid down over it.

2. Introduction

2.1 General

2.1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological investigation undertaken at St John's Church, Ballyharry, Islandmagee, County Antrim, from the 18th December to 20th December 2002. The work was conducted by the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, School of Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast, on behalf of the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage.



Figure One: Location Map

2.2 Background

2.2.1 St John's Church is located close to the east shore of Larne Lough (Figure 1) on Islandmagee, or *Oileán Mhic Aodha* (Magee's Island or peninsula, incorporating the name of *Mac Aodha*, a prominent Irish sept). Referred to locally as the 'New Church' it is currently the only Church of Ireland site on the peninsula. The church was attributed to 1595 by William Reeves (1847, 272), and to c.1596 by Dixon Donaldson (1927, 29), although neither Reeves or Donaldson provide any historical evidence to support these dates.

It has also been suggested that the church was constructed in the early 17th century. In *A Preliminary Survey of the Ancient Monuments of Northern Ireland* (Chart, 1940, 35) a date of 1609 is suggested, based on Donaldson's work. However, it seems that Chart confused the date of the building of the church with the appointment of Milo Whale to the position of Dean of Connor in 1609. Brett, however, also dates the church to 1609: "Perhaps of 1596, more probably of 1609" (Brett, 1996, 26). A later date is even more probable (William Roulston, *pers comm*), since in the 1622 *Ecclesiastical Visitation* the church is not recorded, indicating that it is possible that it had still not been constructed by that year.

The first conclusive documentary evidence for the existence of the church is contained in an inquisition by the Cromwellian Government in 1657 which states that the church was in repair (William Roulston, *pers comm*). The church, however, appears to have been frequently in need of restoration work. In 1683 it was described as handsome but much out of repair; it was also noted at this time that the inhabitants of Islandmagee were predominately Presbyterians (Hill, 1873, 380). In 1693-94 John Winder noted that the church was ruinous (Winder, 1714, 39).

It is likely that the church was therefore in a state of disrepair before 1683 and remained so through to 1693. It is also possible that the church remained in this condition after John Winder's record of 1693-94. An exact date of its repair is uncertain, but it is probable that the church saw re-use in the 18th century. Restoration work was again carried out in the church in the 1820's (see 2.2.4). The latest date suggested for the construction of the current structure is 1827 (Lewis, 2002, 66). Lewis describes the church as a "...small edifice, rebuilt in 1827, on the foundations of an ancient and more extensive structure." An entire rebuild, however, is unlikely as other contemporary sources provide more

detailed accounts of the work undertaken at this time, and these suggest that this was the renovation of an old structure rather than a total rebuild.

- 2.2.2 The *Ordnance Survey Memoirs* state that the works undertaken in 1828 included the removal of an aisle that was attached to the west end and north side and 26 feet of the west end (Day *et al*, 1991, 20). Like Lewis, Reeves (1847, 272) attributes the works to 1827, but again emphasises that this was renovation rather than a rebuild, with 27 feet at the west end and a transept on the north side removed. What remained after this work was completed was a building that was a "...plain but neatly finished structure to which its massive buttresses and ancient square windows with heavy stone mullions give an interesting appearance." (Day *et al*, 1991, 20).
- 2.2.3 Further evidence to suggest that the church was not totally rebuilt in the 1820's can be found by a review of the building's architecture. The architectural style of St John's is generally similar to that of Antrim and Ballinderry parish churches (Plates 1a, 1b and 1c). The date inscribed on a stone in the north wall at Antrim Church is 1596: "Church and walls newly erected." (Brett, 1996, 28), and the 1622 *Ecclesiastical Visitation* records the church in Antrim as being in repair (William Roulston, *pers comm*). The 'Middle Church' at Ballinderry was erected in 1666; by 1838 the structure was in decay and it was restored in 1902. It would seem that all three churches are of similar architectural style and belong to the very late 16th century or 17th century.
- 2.2.4 Archaeological material has been discovered in the vicinity of St John's. The *Ordnance Survey Memoirs* report the discovery within 200 yards of the church of: "...an immense quantity of human bones with many silver coins of various magnitudes and reigns, have been found in a rich blackish soil...the bones lay indiscriminately. No remains of coffins or graves have been found" (Day *et al*, 1991, 45). It is unfortunate that this description is not more specific, and that the exact location of these finds with regards to the church or in relation to any other landmark is not provided. On the *Ordnance Survey* first (revised) and second edition maps there is no evidence for another graveyard in the area, other than the one now associated with the church (Figures 2a and 2b). The presence of a burial ground in such close general proximity to St John's Church, however, has led to the suggestion that the Post-Medieval church was constructed on the site of an earlier ecclesiastical centre (O'Lavery, 1878, 136).

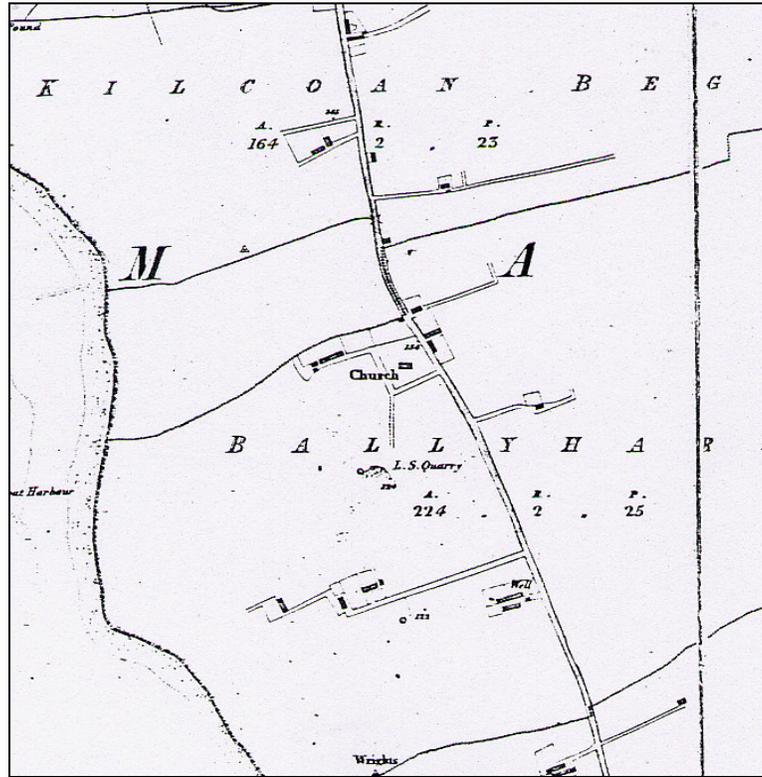


Figure 2a- Ordnance Survey Revised First Edition map showing St John's Church

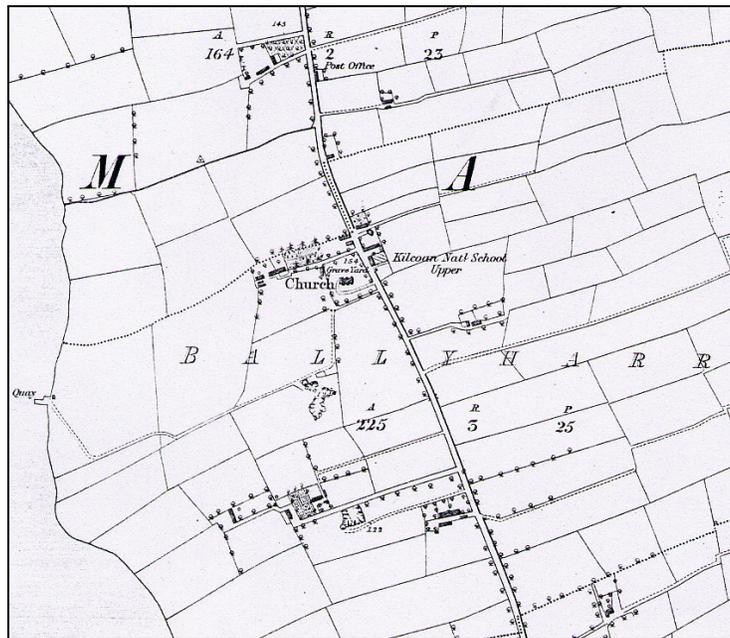


Figure 2b- Ordnance Survey Second Edition showing the position of St John's Church

2.3 *Reason for Excavation and Research Objectives*

2.3.1 The burial exposed by the collapse of a portion of the central aisle was unusually aligned west – east (with the head to the east). This alignment, combined with the position of the burial underneath the church aisle, suggested that further archaeological investigation of the cavity and the grave cut within it was required. Further questions emerged: Were there several phases of activity within the same grave cut or was there a single action of deposition? Was it possible that the church was situated on the site of an earlier church?

2.3.2 The proposed excavation offered an opportunity for an archaeological investigation within the church. It also offered the chance to answer the questions raised within the research objectives. No previous archaeological work had been carried out at the site.

2.4 *Archiving*

2.4.1 A copy of this report has been deposited with the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage. All site records and finds are temporarily archived with the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork within the School of Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast.

2.5 *Credits and Acknowledgements*

2.5.1 The excavation was directed by Mr Peter Moore, (Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork), on behalf of the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage, assisted by Janet Bell and Nicholas Beer.

2.5.2 Assistance during the course of the excavation and in preparation of this report was kindly provided by: Dr Philip MacDonald, John O'Neill, Keith Adams (CAF); Dr Eileen Murphy, Dr Richard Gregory (QUB); Declan Hurl (EHS); William Roulston (Ulster Historical Foundation); Rev Mark Taylor.

2.5.3 The illustrations in this report were prepared by Bronagh Murray of the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork.

3. Excavation

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 The programme of work involved an archaeological investigation of the cavity revealed by the collapse of a portion of the aisle within the church. As there were no plans to remove the entire aisle or to disturb the floor sub-levels within the church, the excavation process was limited to an investigation of the cavity and grave cut within it.

3.1.2 Excavation was undertaken between the 18th December and 20th December 2002. The grave cut was cleaned to reveal its original edges. No other trench was opened and no other area within the church was archaeologically investigated.

3.1.3 The excavation was undertaken by hand and the context record for the site was created using the standard context recording method. Individual features and deposits were photographed. An overall plan was drawn of the grave cut (Scale 1:10) and a plan positioning the cut within the church, using the unaltered south-east corner of the structure as the fixed point (Scale 1:20). For details of site photography see Appendix Three, and for details of the field illustrations see Appendix Four. In addition to the records noted above, the site records also consisted of skeleton record sheets and a small finds register (Appendix Five). Following the completion of the excavation the primary burial was covered with sand, and the cavity was partially backfilled in order that the removed bones could be reburied after scientific examination.

3.1.4 A full assessment of the health and safety aspects of the work was undertaken. Hard hats were compulsorily worn and the use of surgical gloves was advised when handling human remains. Masonry was cut within the church using modern cutting equipment; dust masks were therefore also issued.

3.1.5 The nature of the excavation meant that the recovery of human remains was inevitable. Given this, a faculty was obtained from the Church of Ireland which provided approval for the archaeological work and allowed the removal of human remains for scientific study, provided they were returned after analysis for

reburial. All human remains recovered, after their recording, were immediately bagged and deposited in the Bone Laboratory in the Palaeoecology Centre at Queen's University Belfast for washing, storage and analysis.

3.2 *Account Of The Excavations*

3.2.1 The excavation consisted of an archaeological investigation of the cavity revealed by the collapse of a section of the aisle. This cavity represented a single grave cut. It is recommended that the Harris Matrix (Appendix Two) is referred to whilst reading the following account of the stratigraphic sequence revealed during the course of the excavation.

3.2.2 The grave cut was located partially underneath and slightly to the north of the aisle (Context 1), which was probably laid during the 1827-28 renovations in the church (Figure 3). Partially filling the grave cut was a friable reddish brown clay loam (Context 4) which contained human bones, including ribs and several vertebrae. Small finds were also located within this context, including iron coffin fittings and nails. Context 4 formed the remainder of the collapsed material and can be regarded archaeologically as an unsecure context, also containing fragments of Context 1. Any human remains recovered from this context were undoubtedly disturbed by the action of collapse.

3.2.3 After the removal of Context 4 the edges of the grave cut (Context 2) were clearly visible, consisting of vertical subsoil sides of very compact brown – orange clay. However, due to the nature of collapse the eastern edge could not be defined, as it was located underneath the part of the aisle that had not collapsed.

3.2.4 Underlying Context 4 was a very compact reddish brown clay loam (Context 5). This layer was similar to Context 4 but was more compact and represented the undisturbed fill. Situated within this context was a disturbed human burial (Context 11) within a coffin (Context 14), aligned west – east (with the head to the east). Also located at this level were five human skulls, three located at the west extremity of the cut (Contexts 7, 8 and 9: Plate 2), and two located at the east end (Contexts 12 and 13). Skull One (Context 7) lay on its right side with the face orientated towards the south. Skull Two (Context 8) consisted of little more than the skullcap or cranium. Skull Three (Context 9) was similar to Skull One in that it also lay on its right side with the face orientated towards the south.

Located with these skulls were two disarticulated human bones, a single rib and what appeared to be a femur. However, only a portion of the femur was visible, since it was located in the mortar layer associated with the foundation of the aisle. Skull Four (Context 12) and Skull 5 (Context 13), both located at the east end of the cut, had been disturbed by the collapse and their original exact orientation and position could not be recorded.

3.2.5 Beneath Context 11 a second burial in a coffin was discovered. Located within Context 5 and roughly aligned with the north and south edges of Context 2 was a deposit of black mineralised wood (Context 6) probably derived from the rotting of part of a coffin, as intact outer fragments of coffin were located beside the rotted deposits (Context 3: Plate 3). Individual coffin handles were also recovered (Small Finds Nos. 6a/6b).

3.2.6 The second burial was situated at the base of Context 2 and comprised an articulated human burial (Context 10) within a coffin (Contexts 3 and 6). The burial was aligned east – west, with the head at the west. The right and left humerus, radius and ulna, together with the upper portion of the ribcage, spinal column and neck vertebrae were intact (Figure 4). A portion of the right side of the pelvis and the right femur were also intact. However, the skull and some of the upper neck vertebrae were not present. The skeleton's leg bones were only partially exposed due to the presence of the overhanging aisle (Plate 4). After the skeleton had been exposed and recorded the bones were left *in situ* and the burial covered with sand.

3.2.7 A base metal coin (Small Find No. 7) was recovered from Context 5 and located immediately above Context 10 (Plate 5). Although in need of conservation it could provide a date range for the burial. Three more coffin handles were also recovered from Context 5 (Small Finds Nos. 4/5).

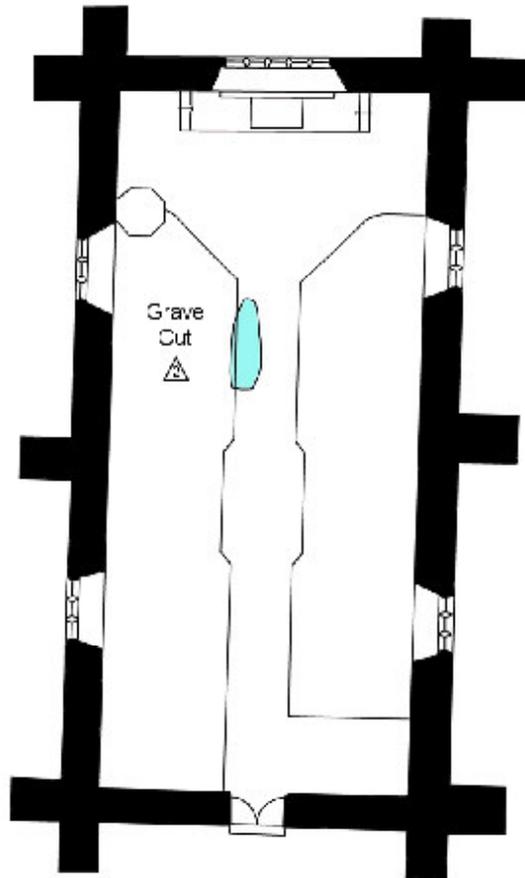


Figure Two: Plan of St. John's Parish Church showing area of excavation



4. Discussion

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The burial of an individual within a church in the Medieval period was usually reserved for those in society who had obtained high status. The choir was noted as the burial place of local landowners and benefactors of the church. The status of an individual within society could be shown by the position of their grave and the elaboration of the coffin, presumably combined with the pomp of their funerary procession and service (Taylor, 2001, 179). Therefore, one cannot overlook the importance of the burials placed within the church at Ballyharry.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 The exact date for the construction of St John's Church is unclear. The late 16th century date suggested by Reeves (1847, 272) and Donaldson (1927, 29) is not supported by any other historical evidence. Although architectural comparisons can be drawn with Antrim Parish Church, which was built in 1596 (Brett, 1996, 28), comparisons can also be drawn with Ballinderry 'Middle Church' which has been attributed to 1666 (Brett, 1996, 30). Therefore, St John's could have been constructed sometime between the late 16th century and the mid to late 17th century, based on its architecture. Both Chart (1940, 35) and Brett (1996, 26) have dated the construction of St John's to 1609, although the validity of this date is also questionable. Significantly, the *Ecclesiastical Visitation* of 1622 does not mention St John's, although the condition of the church at Antrim is included. It is unlikely such a record would have ignored a complete and used church. It is therefore probable that the church was constructed after 1622. The first firm documentary evidence for the church is to be found in a Cromwellian Government inquisition of 1657, which states that the church was under repair (William Roulston, *pers comm*). A construction date of 1827 for the present church was suggested by Lewis (2002, 66) but this is unlikely to have been the case. It is probable that Lewis thought that the programme of restoration work that was carried out in 1827-28 involved a complete re-build. The *Ordnance Survey Memoirs*, however, provide valuable and detailed information on the work undertaken at that time and this indicates that this was an episode of major restoration, but not rebuilding (Day *et al*, 1991, 20).

- 4.2.2 The religious denomination that initially constructed the present church is unclear. If a date in the 1620's is correct it is possible that the church could initially have been built as a Presbyterian place of worship. Antrim saw large numbers of Scottish settlers, and the influx remained steady throughout the early and mid 17th century. Significantly, there is also evidence that the Presbyterians were building new churches and repairing old ones during the 1620's (Gillespie, 1985, 62). Specifically, within County Antrim the churches at "Ballyrashane, Derrykeigan and Dunagh were all repaired to accommodate settlers from the coast moving inland." (*Ibid*, 62). It would seem, however, that the church was not in Presbyterian use by the 18th century. The burial of individuals within a church is a Roman Catholic and Established (Anglican) practice. Therefore, one can assume that the individuals interred within St John's were not of Presbyterian faith; what is probable is that they worshipped as Anglicans, and by the time of their burial the church was in definite use as a Church of Ireland establishment.
- 4.2.3 It has been tentatively suggested that the church at St John's occupies the site of an earlier church or religious centre (O'Lavery, 1878, 136). The presence within 200 yards of the church of "...an immense quantity of human bones with many silver coins of various magnitudes and reigns...in a rich blackish soil" (Day *et al*, 1991, 45) suggests that an earlier burial ground is located very near to the church. It is even possible that St John's is located on top of this earlier burial ground.
- 4.2.4 The restoration work that took place in the 19th century is described in the *Ordnance Survey Memoirs* as consisting of the removal of an aisle that was attached to the west and north side, and 26 feet taken off the west end (Day *et al*, 1991, 20). Reeves (1847, 272) dates the works to 1827, with 27 feet taken off the west end and a transept on the north side removed. It was probably at this time that the current aisle was laid through the centre of the church, running east – west. It appeared that the grave cut (Context 2) was located underneath this aisle. Therefore, it can be argued that the grave cut, and all the remains within it, were interred before the aisle was laid down. The funerary furniture retrieved during the excavation and associated with the burials would suggest that they were interred in the 18th century. The fragments of coffins recovered in St John's displayed ornate copper alloy studs, and are likely to be of 18th- century date (Richard Gregory, *pers comm*: Plate 6). Since an individuals 'rank' within society

was displayed by their burial, coffin and funerary service, it is therefore likely that both individuals interred at St John's were of good social standing.

- 4.2.5 It can be suggested that the secondary burial within the grave cut is that of a member of the clergy due to its west – east alignment. The two burials are associated with a number of disarticulated skeletal remains, most notably five skulls. The skulls appear to be associated with the latter of the two burials, that of the possible clergyman. Two theories can be presented to explain the presence of these disarticulated remains within the grave cut.
- 4.2.6 It has been suggested that the church of St John's may have been constructed on or close to an earlier religious establishment (O'Laverty, 1878, 136). This suggestion is based on the information contained within the *Ordnance Survey Memoirs* for the parish, where it is reported that a burial ground was located within 200 yards of the church (Day *et al*, 1991, 450). The reuse of old burial grounds and ancient churches by the incoming Planters is a common feature of early 17th century Ulster (Gillespie, 1985, 62). Given this, it is possible that the church is situated directly over an earlier graveyard of Early Christian and/or Medieval date and the disarticulated bones represent burials within this old graveyard – now within the body of the Post-Medieval church - that were disturbed when the grave cut was opened in the 18th century. The disturbed bones may have been collected and then redeposited into the grave when it was being backfilled with earth.
- 4.2.7 Alternatively, remembering that these 18th century style coffins continued in use into the early 19th century, it is possible that the second burial may be of early 19th-century date and that it may have been interred immediately prior to the restorations of 1827-28. The disarticulated bones may therefore represent 17th-century or 18th-century burials in or around the church that had been disturbed during the radical alterations made to the church in the late 1820's. They may have been collected and deposited in the grave when the second burial was being interred, or the grave cut may have been re-opened in the 1820's by the workers, the bones placed beside the second coffin, the grave filled in, and the new aisle laid down over it.

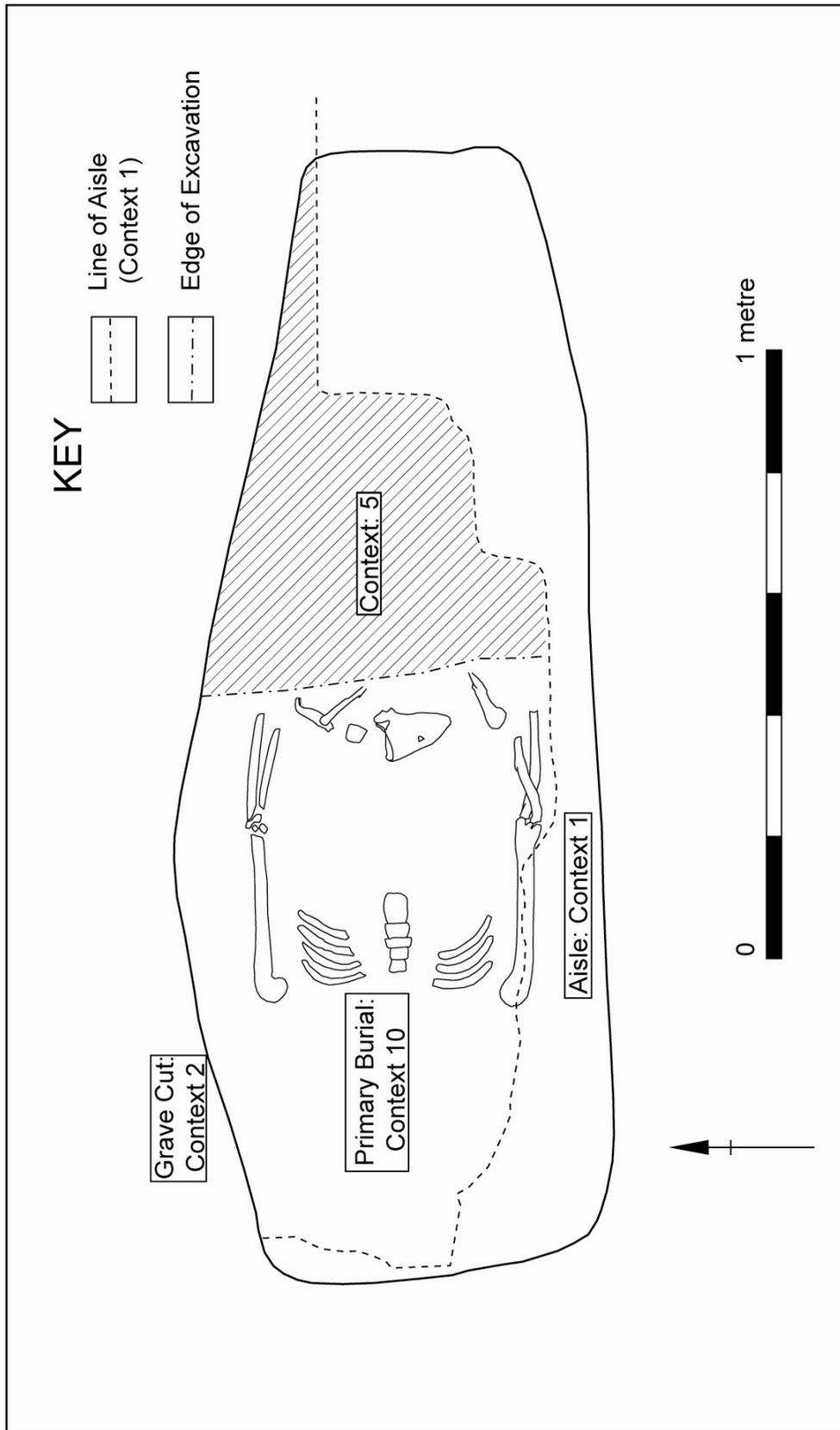


Figure 4: Plan of Primary Burial (Context 10).

5. Recommendations for further work

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 There are areas of further work required to bring the excavation report for St John's Church to final publication.
- 5.1.2 The metal artefacts recovered during the course of the excavation are of Post-Medieval date and belong to the funerary furniture of the period. The corpus comprises coffin handles, iron nails and portions of coffin containing copper alloy studding. The study of this assemblage would provide insight into a largely neglected aspect of Post-Medieval archaeology.
- 5.1.3 A base metal coin was found from a secure archaeological layer associated with Context 10, the burial located at the bottom of the cut (Context 2). The coin is corroded, but with conservation could provide further understanding of the archaeological sequence and help date the context it is associated with.
- 5.1.4 A large number of disarticulated and fragmentary human bones were recovered, together with five skulls and two articulated burials, all contained within a single grave cut (Context 2). As a minimum the disturbed burial should be sexed and all remains should receive osteoarchaeological and palaeopathological study.
- 5.1.5 The scientific dating of the skulls would help to resolve unanswered questions about the events that led to the deposition of the skulls and disarticulated skeletal remains within the grave cut (Context 2), since the exact sequence of events that led to their deposition remains uncertain. They may be of Early Christian or Medieval date. Alternatively they may belong to the 17th century or 18th century. Radiocarbon dating would therefore undoubtedly enhance our understanding of the archaeological sequence.
- 5.1.6 The records belonging to the church dating to the 18th century and 19th century should be examined as they may provide an insight into the activity that took place in St John's during this time, as well as possibly establishing the identity of the secondary burial.

6. Bibliography

Brett, C. E. B., 1996: *Buildings Of County Antrim*, Ulster Architectural Heritage Society, in association with the Ulster Historical Foundation. Belfast.

Chart, D. A., 1940: *A Preliminary Survey of the Ancient Monuments of Northern Ireland*, Ancient Monuments Advisory Council, H.M.S.O. Belfast.

Day, A. & McWilliams, P., 1991: *Ordnance Survey Memoirs of Ireland, Parishes of County Antrim III; 1833, 1835, 1839-40; Vol. 10*, Institute of Irish Studies of the Queen's University of Belfast, in association with the Royal Irish Academy. Belfast.

Donaldson, D., 1927: *The Historical, Traditional and Descriptive Account of Islandmagee*, Independent Publication. Islandmagee.

Gillespie, R., 1985: *Colonial Ulster: The Settlement of East Ulster 1600-1641*, Cork University Press. Cork.

Hill, G., 1873: *An Historical Account of the Macdonnells of Antrim*, Archer. Belfast.

Leigh Fry, S., 1999: *Burial in Medieval Ireland, 900-1500*, Four Courts Press. Dublin.

Lewis S., 2002: *County Antrim, A Topographical Dictionary*, Friars Bush Press. Belfast.

Litten, J., 1991: *The English Way of Death*, Robert Hale. London.

O'Laverty, J., 1878: *An Historical Account of the Diocese of Down and Connor, Ancient and Modern; Vol III*, J. Duffy. Dublin.

Winder, J., 1714: *Public Record Office of Northern Ireland T/545/7*. Belfast.

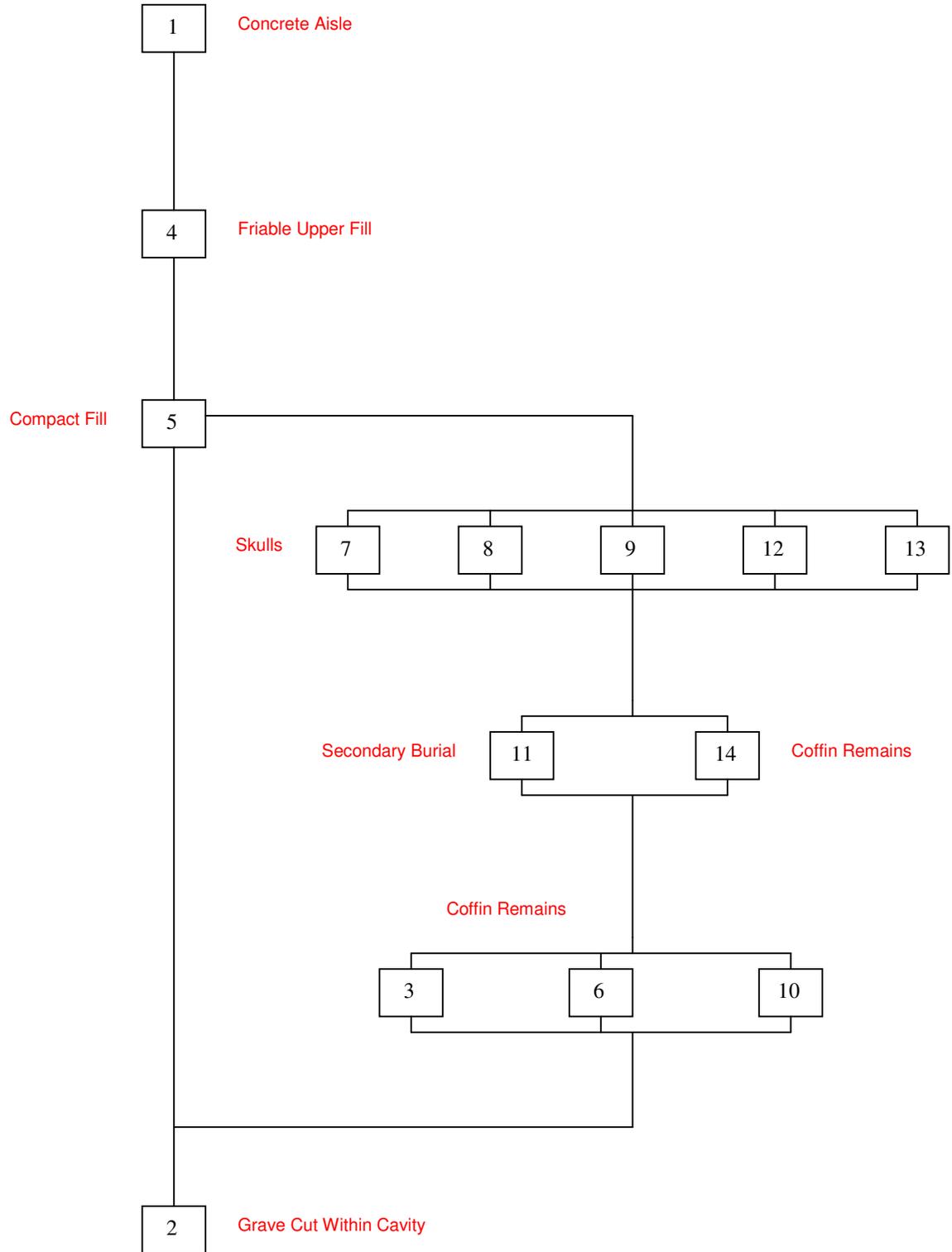
Reeves, W., 1847: *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor and Dromore*, Hodges & Smith. Dublin.

Taylor, A., 2001: *Burial Practice In Early England*, Tempus. Gloucestershire.

Appendix One: Context List

Context No.	Description
1	Concrete aisle running east - west
2	Grave cut
3	Wooden coffin remains
4	Friable reddish brown clay loam
5	Compact reddish brown clay loam
6	Black mineralised wood
7	Skull 1
8	Skull 2
9	Skull 3
10	Articulated burial towards the base of Context 2
11	Secondary Burial aligned west – east
12	Skull 4
13	Skull 5
14	Coffin remains associated with the secondary burial

Appendix Two: Harris Matrix



Appendix Three: Photographic Record; Nikon Colpix 5000 Digital Camera

Catalogue No.	Description
SJC-02-01	Disarticulated skeletal remains, including a human mandible within Context 4
SJC-02-02	Aerial view of the cavity showing Context 4
SJC-02-03	Close-up image of the human mandible shown in SJC-02-01
SJC-02-04	Possible pelvis fragment within Context 4
SJC-02-05	Edge of grave cut (Context 2) and disarticulated skeletal remains
SJC-02-06	Aerial view of grave cut (Context 2) taken from the north
SJC-02-07	Close-up image of the possible pelvis shown in SJC-02-04
SJC-02-08	Line of Context 3
SJC-02-09	Alignment of Contexts 3 and 6
SJC-02-10 (Plate Three)	Contexts 3 and 6 <i>in situ</i> looking west
SJC-02-11 (Plate Two)	Contexts 7, 8 and 9 located towards the west end of Context 2 taken from the east
SJC-02-12	Disarticulated vertebrae within Context 5
SJC-02-13	Close-up image of vertebrae shown in SJC-02-12
SJC-02-14	Aerial view of Context 2 also showing Context 10 (primary burial)
SJC-02-15	Aerial view of Context 10 looking west
SJC-02-16	Aerial view of Context 2 also showing primary burial (Context 10)
SJC-02-17	Contexts 2 and 10, also showing the overhanging aisle (Context 1)
SJC-02-18	Context 10 looking south
SJC-02-19	Close-up of the humerus, radius, ulna and upper vertebrae of Context 10
SJC-02-20	Aerial view of Context 2 also showing Contexts 1 and 10
SJC-02-21	Aerial view of primary burial Context 10

Catalogue No.	Description
SJC-02-22	West end of Context 2 also showing Context 1
SJC-02-23	Context 10 (primary burial) fully exposed
SJC-02-24	View of Contexts 1 and 2 taken from the south-east
SJC-02-25	Contexts 2 and 10 taken from the east
SJC-02-26 (Plate Four)	Context 10 fully exposed taken from the east

Appendix Four: Field Drawing Register

Drawing No.	Scale	Type	Date	Description
1	1:10	Plan	20.12.02	Plan of grave cut Context 2, also showing articulated burial Context 10
2	1:20	Plan	20.12.02	Plan of grave cut Context 2 showing its relative position within the church and the plotted position of the aisle over the grave

Appendix Five: Small Finds Register

Small Find No.	Context No.	Description
1	5	Corroded iron nail, with possible fragments of wood still attached
2	5	Heavily concreted iron object
3	5	Unidentifiable corroded metal object
4	5	Small concreted coffin handle found towards the west end of Context 2
5	5	Large concreted coffin handle
6a/6b	Unsecure	Two concreted coffin handles from an uncertain archaeological strata
7	5	Base metal coin
8	4	Concreted iron nail
9	4	Heavily corroded iron nail
10	5	Iron nail that possibly has coffin wood still attached
11a/11b	5	Two metal objects of unknown function
12	5	Coffin fragment containing copper alloy studding



Plate 1a- Photograph of St John's taken looking north-west

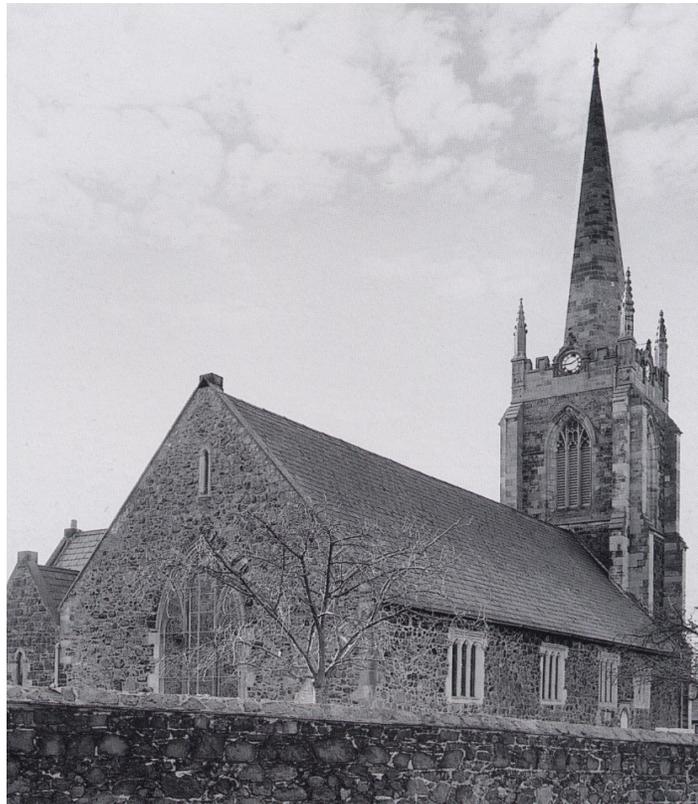


Plate 1b- All Saints Church Antrim (Brett, 1996, 28)

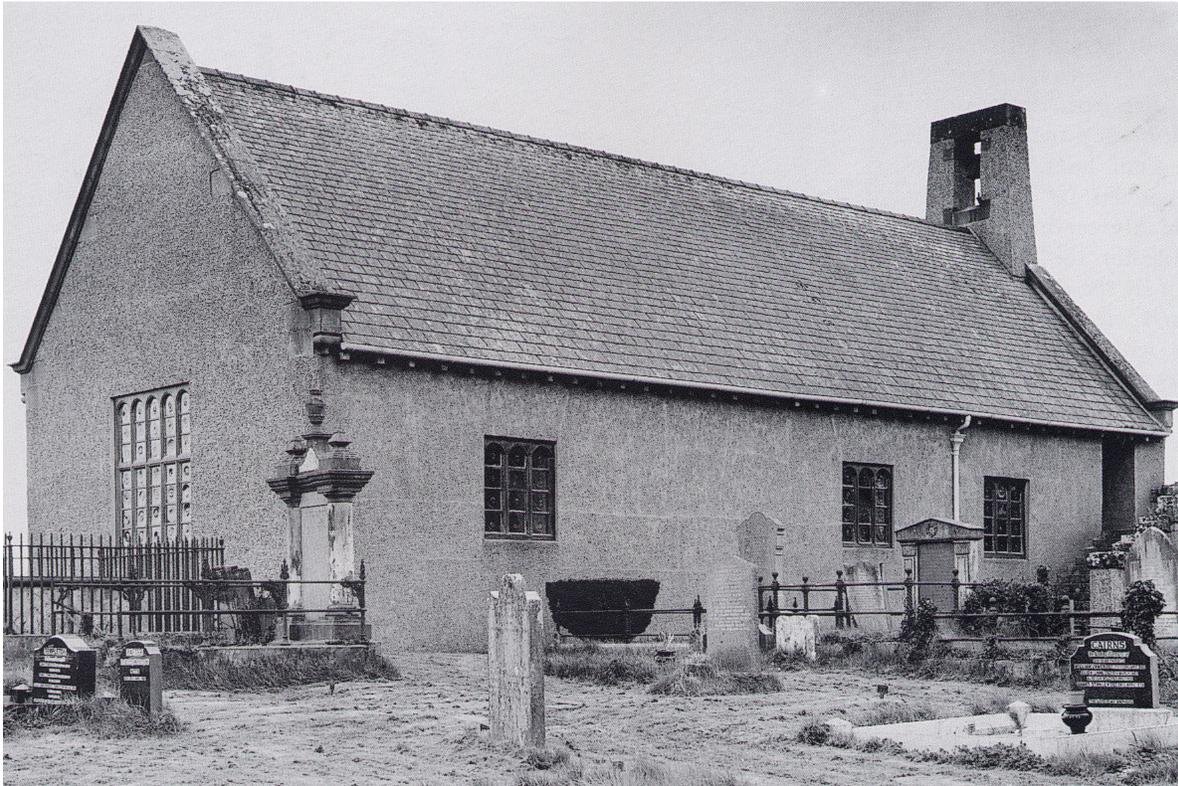


Plate 1c- Ballinderry 'Middle Church' (Brett, 1996, 30)



Plate 2- Skull 1, Skull 2 and Skull 3 located towards the west end of the grave cut



Plate 3- Line of coffin (Contexts 3 and 6) of primary burial (Context 10)



Plate 4- Context 10 located towards the base of the grave cut



Plate 5- Base metal coin (Small Find No. 7) recovered from immediately above Context 10
(Scale 2:1)



Plate 6- Ornate coffin from the 18th century
(Litten, 1991, 47)