

# **Madron Church**

## **Near Penzance, Cornwall.**

**Archaeology Investigation of a Flat Buried Gravestone,  
& Possible Lych Gate  
From a Water Pipeline Trench Insertion.**



**R. Achilleus MA (Cantab) Dip.Surv.**

**Archimedes Archaeological Consultants, Penzance**

**rhoops@protonmail.com**

**for**

**Rothwell Historic Restorations,**

**46, Godolphin Road,**

**Longrock, Penzance. TR20 8JP**

**20th December 2021**

# AAC - Madron Church Sewage Pipe Trench 2021

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Frontispiece: Pipe Line at Entrance & Gravestone on a Rainy Day

## A Note on Measurement & Dimensions

The original survey was conducted in metric using the centimetre as the most appropriate dimension for survey drawings at 1:50 scale. However the measurements used in this Report will use neither metric nor Imperial. They will refer only to the measuring systems used by the builders at the time of construction since this is an archaeological exercise. This, prior to 1972 introduction of decimal/metric, was not exclusively Imperial. Imperial measurement was a relatively recent introduction (1825). It was preceded by the Exchequer Standards (1588 -1825) and the Winchester system (1495 -1587) but formalised systematic measurement in Britain began with Clause 35 of the 1215 Magna Carta:

*"There shall be one measure ... throughout our whole realm..."*

Where discussion of building construction precedes 1495, the measurement dimensions referred to here must be the appropriate: 1215 inch and foot. Since these two dimensions survived until 1972, which encompasses the entire period building archaeology is concerned with, the inch and foot are the correct standard dimensions to refer to. These measurements identify the specific intended dimension by the builders/users who used this system. It might superficially appear that this is a mere reactionary whimsy by the author but the distinction is necessary to ensure the intended standard dimension is not lost by substituting an arbitrary magnitude of metric equivalence. For example: a wall: 83 cm thick inherently means nothing, but this represents the standard 32" wide wall thickness for secular and ecclesiastical buildings in the mid Medieval period- with a ¾ inch of internal plaster layer added. In practise, this means there is no such thing as a 83cm or a 84 or 85 cm thick wall. These are either inaccurate measurements, or indicative of secondary factors affecting the standard 81cm/32" wall. For instance: minor collapse, or rendering- aspects that are of significance to archaeological surveyors. Use of metric to interpret non metric buildings will inherently miss this highly significant standardisation affect. The site itself was however surveyed solely in metric as appropriate to contemporary surveying techniques and because the centimetre based variation: "+/- 1cm" is the most appropriate basis for measurement of rough surfaced/subject to micro movement historic building features. Variations above 1cm in historic fabric for example: in a wall's presumed parallel linearity normally have a significance which should be captured by a competent survey with the significance becoming apparent on 1:50 plan. The use of the millimetre is dismissed as impractical for two reasons. Firstly it has no function in anything but 1:1 scale drawings- which are rarely used. Secondly, it adds only a superficial and false sense of accuracy, while in practical terms adding a 30% increase in numeration notation failure rate. (12 cm =123 mm, a 30% increase in numbers written) Recording a building involves several thousand measurements normally, and reducing, not increasing the numeration recording failure rate is an important concern for any competent observation based surveyor.

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## **Archaeology Investigation of a Flat Buried Gravestone, & Possible Lych Gate From a Water Pipeline Trench Insertion.**

### **Summary**

Madron Church was surveyed by the author in 2003 for commercial historic building purposes, revealing a church originally a long rectangle based on the present South Aisle constructed about c.1280. Fairly soon afterwards, it was almost entirely rebuilt c.1320, giving approximately the present 3 cell layout, probably without the Tower, and retaining only the South Aisle southern section of its West Wall, and the nearby NW Respond of the southern Arcade. Generally Cornish medieval churches developed as single cell basilica churches on the site of their present North Aisles, but the exceptions - in being on the South Aisle site, seem to be principally in the Penzance area.

The minor archaeological investigation undertaken on 8th December 2021, was in consequence of a 20m long 25mm plastic sewage pipe and trench insertion about 30-40cm deep running from the present entrance gate opposite the North Porch, to the West Door in the Tower. This followed an existing path, and the contractor's excavation for the trench initially revealed a large flat laid stone with "Roman numerals" carved into it. Not being upright, and within a well established path this initially suggested a possibly very old piece of masonry re-used for an older path surface. Such re-used pieces were identified by the Contractor in 2020 at Sithney Church, and when investigated by the author, were seen to be from early construction probably c.1200. In addition re-used carved and inscribed masonry with Latin script were observed by the author fairly recently in a sedilla within a church Sanctuary, making the discovery possibly significant for a church that otherwise has no observable pre c.1280 fabric in its current walls.

The water pipe trench also revealed three granite support beams 16" x 8" (see above for specialist historic building analysis reasons for ignoring non relevant metric dimensions in discussions), within the entrance gate area. These functioned as supports for now lost slate flagstones in the entrance. This equivalent to a internal domestic suspended floor was probably for drainage reasons, being at the only point where the graveyard is vulnerable to water ingress from slightly higher ground level outside and adjacent the churchyard. Its over engineering aspect lead to identifying other features indicating a probable lost Lych Gate structure over the North graveyard entrance.

The inscribed stone, when fully excavated, was revealed to be a gravestone from 1817, which was unusually laid in the path. Judging by the relative heights, it appears about 4" lower than the entrance lost slate flagstone ground surface, which is only a metre or so away, within a generally flat path. This suggests it may have been laid, and buried under a slate flagged or rougher path. The reason being that, from an 1852 grave plot map currently displayed in the church, the grave occupant, in plot 83, is (inscribed on the headstone) William Hoskings, and plots 80/81 immediately adjacent to the West, are also William *Hoskins* (sic), presumably our plot 83 gravestone occupant's father/grandfather, or brothers. Given the proximity of the excavated gravestone date- 1817, and the plot map - 1852, it seems unlikely that the gravestone went from being a genuine grave headstone in 1817, to a displaced and re-used piece of path surface in only 40 or so years. Hence it being a peculiar flat grave headstone set in an existing path, probably because this was the only available area close to recently deceased family members known to the occupant of the excavated headstone burial.

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## Introduction

Archimedes Archaeological Consultants (AAC) was requested to investigate several features of potential archaeological significance discovered by the Contractor whilst inserting a shallow trench for a processed sewage pipe from the North entrance of the graveyard of Madron Church, to the West Door in the Tower. Excavations were conducted on 8th December 2021, in heavy rain and high humidity, which affected both the quality of photos and extent of drawing/recording.

The Church is located at Grid Reference: SW 454319 about 1 miles (2 km) NW of Penzance, in Cornwall. The trench excavated for a blue 25mm plastic processed sewage soil pipe extended about 30 metres from the West side of the main North Entrance to the graveyard, along the exiting path-South West to the West Door in the Tower. The trench was excavated, subject to archaeological investigation, sewage pipe inserted and backfilled the same day. See Fig. 1 for location details.

The archaeological investigation was requested by the contractor:

Rothwell Restoration,  
46, Godolphin Road,  
Longrock, Penzance. TR20 8JP.

and copies of this report are to be sent to the Contractor and Madron Church PCC. This investigation was not subject to any statutory development conditions.

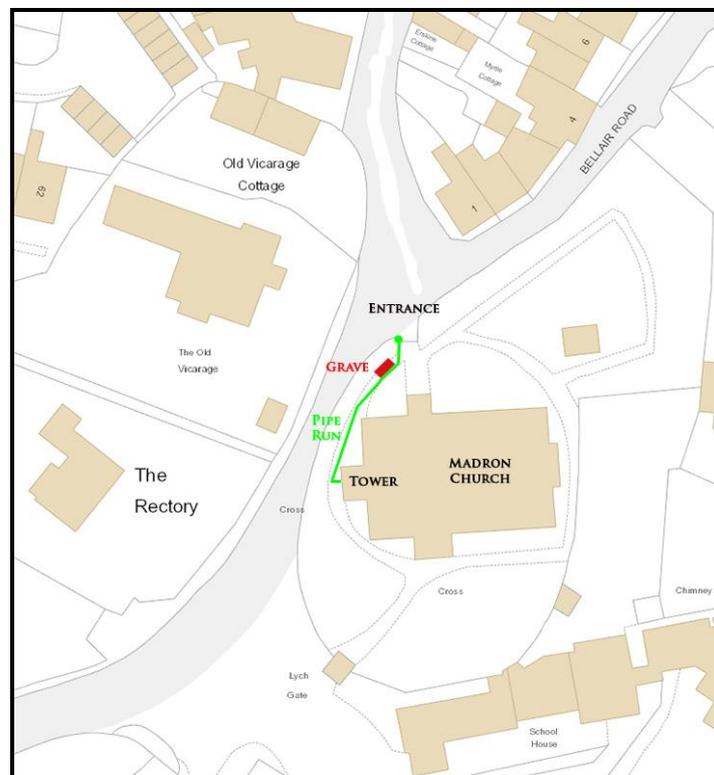


Fig.1 Location & Excavation Map.

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## The Excavation's Features

The archaeological excavation was focused on two aspects revealed by the Contractor's trench insertion to about 30-40 cm deep and 30 cm wide for a plastic pipe. These were:

1. A flat light yellow/cream sandstone slab in the existing path from the North Graveyard Entrance heading SW to the Tower and beyond, with partially revealed 'Latin inscription'. The stone may be 'Salcombe Stone' as used in Exeter Cathedral, and other ecclesiastical sites for finer detailing.
2. Three granite beams crossing the centre of the North Graveyard Entrance, revealed only where existing c.1980's white ceramic block tiles had been raised from the path to the North Porch church entrance on the West side of the Graveyard Entrance. See Fig. 2.

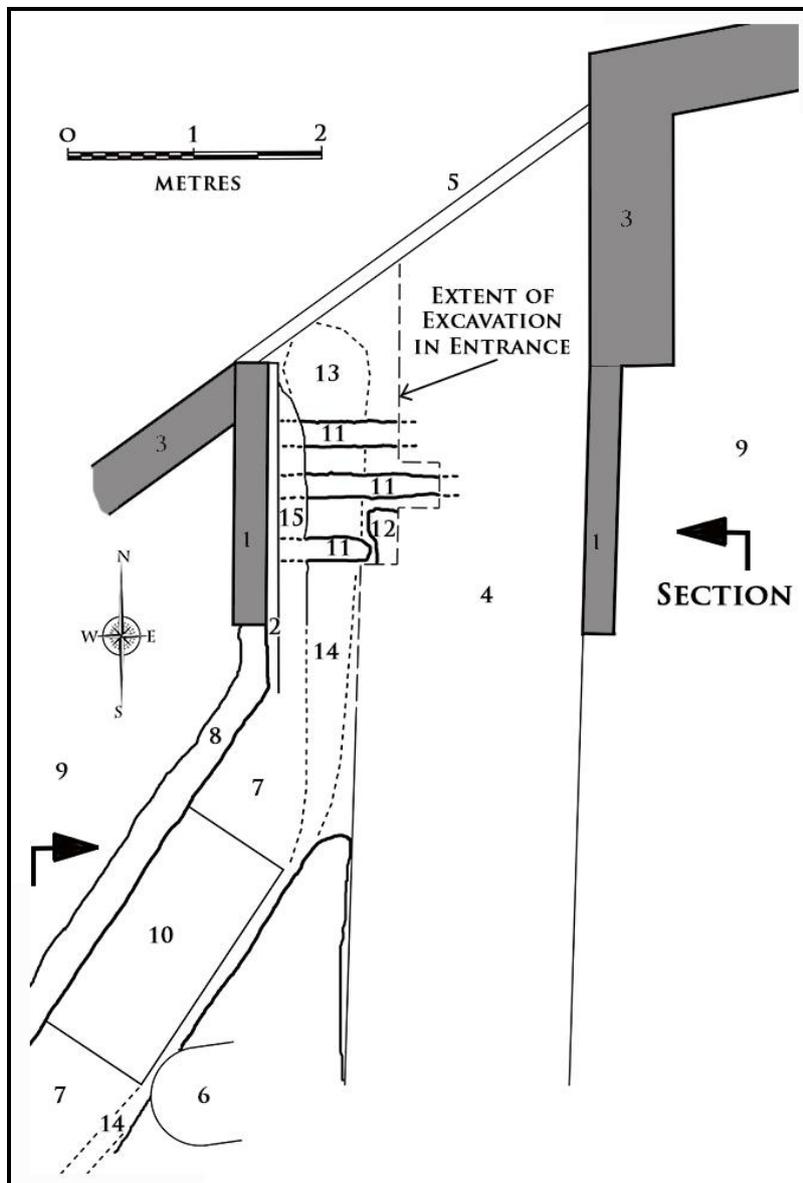


Fig. 2 Plan of Excavations at North Graveyard Entrance

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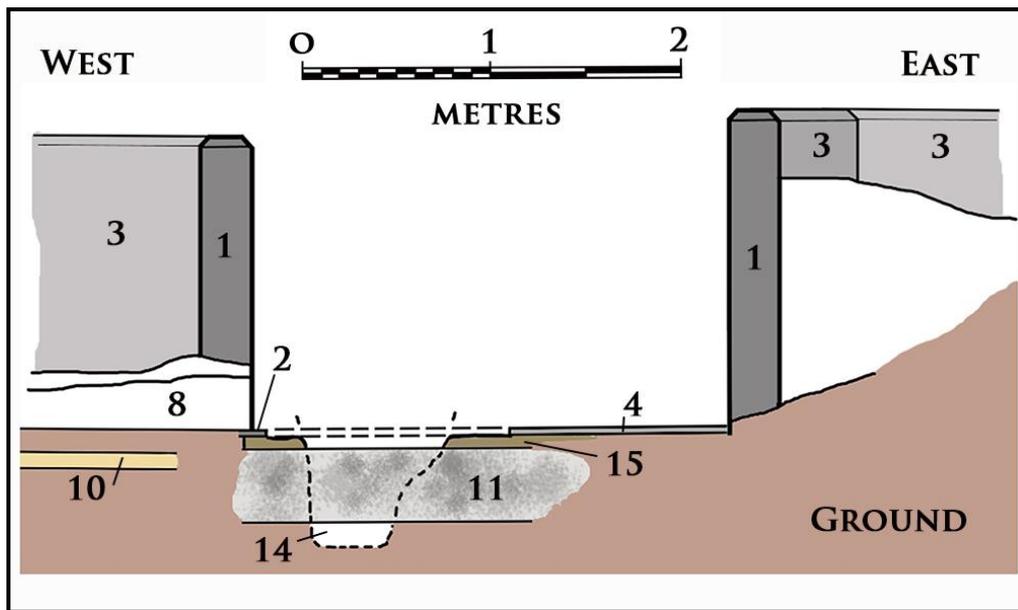


Fig. 3 Section Looking North At North Graveyard Entrance.

With respect to Figs 2 & 3, the following numerically marked features were identified:

1. Two North Graveyard Entrance granite block walls 10" wide, making a distinctly broad entrance between them of 100-102" wide. The intended dimension was 100", the extra 2" is accounted for by wall lean outwards.
2. A flat cut regular slate flag section going under (1), and extending southwards along (8) to at least the bend in the low graveyard retaining wall (8). Probably indicating that the path (7) to the Tower was slate flagged.
3. Graveyard walls
4. c.1980's white ceramic block tiles (see foreground in Fig. 4) forming path from North Graveyard Entrance to North Porch
5. Granite kerb, flush top surface, without a step.
6. Flat laid Headstone adjacent path- (not investigated)- see Fig. 5, left side under trowels.
7. Path from North Graveyard Entrance to Tower and beyond. Currently gravel /mud.
8. Low graveyard retaining wall to (7), abuts (1) on western side. Formed of granite blocks as seen in Fig. 5 to right.
9. Graveyard
10. Sandstone Headstone of William Hoskings (Plot 83)
11. Three granite beams (16" depth x 8" wide) that support lost slate flagstones- part of (2). A mortar bed (15) for white ceramic tiles (4) sits on these beams. Beams are very degraded by erosion/damp, but appear to have been regularly shaped in one instance. See under tape in Fig. 4

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Fig. 4 North Graveyard Entrance, Looking West.



Fig. 5 Gravestones Under Tape & Trowels

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12. The southern most of the three granite beams (11) is broken about 80cm out from the West side of the Entrance. A replacement section of granite masonry (12), which also fills in the area between the lost southern section and the middle granite beam- though as a flat top pad rather than beam. It indicates that the original arrangement including the three granite beams was altered for secondary reasons at some point- probably repair, but not necessarily exclusively.

13. Larger hole excavated for pipe run access chamber/man hole cover by Contractor. Interacts with new sewage access under adjacent tarmac scar in road.

14. Sewage pipe trench. Generally about 30-40 cm deep and 30cm wide. It went only superficially under the gravel/ grit of the existing path, giving little indication of the general ground matrix. No stratigraphy was identified at the minimal depths encountered. This would be accounted for by the usual grave excavation turnover debris forming the background deeper graveyard stratigraphy normally interspaced with construction debris layers.

15. The mortar bedding layer for the existing c.1980's white ceramic tile (4). Contained a large amount of charcoal and lime, not cement based suggesting it may be a reused bedding layer from the previous/earlier slate slab flags as remaining at (2).

From these features, and other evidence gathered on site, the nature of the two principal aspects identified by the excavation: the North Graveyard Entrance structure, and the flat headstone (10) can be described in detail.



Fig. 6 Path to Tower West Door with Trench



Fig. 7 Path from Tower to North Graveyard Entrance

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## North Graveyard Entrance

The current North Graveyard Entrance (NGE), is formed of two high regular cut/coursed granite block walls (1) 5' 2" tall to the West, and 5' 6" to the East, although from an uneven base. The plan shape is open rectangular, with the outer dimension of the walls 10' x 7', with the larger dimension open for transit, and the shorter forming the walls length. The walls both have simple chamfered flush caps, with a flat top between the chamfers, unlike the graveyard walls adjacent (3), which have the standard wall cap protruding either side above the wall below, and the cap culminating in a shallow point- not a flat surface. This may suggest two different functions: allowing unhindered access through the gate; and: possibly construction over. However given the existing width of the entrance- just over 8', the 'lack of hindrance' would seem to be superfluous- if the gate was single passage only, which may not have always been the case.

The base of the NGE West wall is sat on a 2" thick regular slate slab (2), under the wall, but protruding eastwards about 3" (8 cm) into the entrance area. This suggests two things. Firstly that the projecting slate slab is the only remains of the previous slate slab floor surface in the entrance; and secondly that the wall (1) was built on top of the slate floor slab- an unusual construction format, but one that indicates that the slate slab floor was there first. The slate slab is set on a dark brown/grey lime mortar with high charcoal content (15), and the flat top surface of this, appears to have been expediently used c.1980 to lay a new surface - the present white/cream block ceramic tiles (4), that replaced the slate slab floor surface or a intermediate floor surface now lost completely. The latter is unlikely- as the flat top of the slate mortar's opportunistic reuse as the new bedding surface c.1980, is unlikely to have survived multiple intermediate re-surfacing with this lower grade 'robbing' bedding method.

Below the mortar layer (2), are the three granite beams which were used to support the *suspended floor* where the slate slabs were previously extant. The larger size of the previous flooring slate slabs allowing their setting on the granite beams- 8" wide and set at 18" centres, with a 10" gap between each beam. This 10" gap had been infilled later to create a solid floor base for the c.1980 ceramic floor (4), which is formed of small standard 6" square tiles.

The question arises- "why was there a suspended slate slab floor in the NGE?"

This is an unusual format to put here, indicating that there is probably more to the entrance area than just the present two tall walls. There are two other pertinent features to do with the suspended floor structure here. There are only three surviving beams in situ, one of which- the inside one to the South, is half broken and a granite pad added to replace it at the broken end. Its extent was not excavated- as the pipeline required only limited removal of the ceramic floor surface here. The three beams are central to the entrance structure (see Fig. 4), and the 18" centres in which they are laid suggests that two end beams have been subsequently removed. When in situ, these would have formed an 80" long suspended floor structure with the slate slabs if left vertically flush with the granite beam outer faces, 2" short either end of the entrance wall ends. This could either have been merely extended with two slightly wider slates- 12" wide slate slabs, or more likely the 2" inside the entrance shortness, was added with a 2-4" outer lip and being provided with a 4- 6" wide granite kerb stone, possibly even the extant examples (5), which may have been reset at their present angle across the entrance.

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The outer beams- now lost would have been a necessity, as the three surviving- being central, do not allow for the outer edge of the outer slate slabs over them to have a bearing surface.

The second feature of the granite suspended floor structure is the half broken inside granite beam, and possibly replaced bearing surface pad feature (12). The latter's position is fairly central in the entrance, and it has a flat top surface- ie it was a utility feature, if only for setting the floor surface bedding mortar on. Hence it appears a repair to the retained suspended floor structure, not to facilitate the later bedding for the c.1980's ceramic tiles. The gaps between the extant granite beams appear to have been foiled in with rubble/mud to provide a continuous bedding surface for the small tiles.

The central surviving beam was recorded extending at least 137 cm into and beyond the middle of the entrance way. This implies that originally five large 16" x 8" granite beams extended the full width of the 7' wide entrance, with a standard 6" (same as current Building Regs 15cm) bearing surface under the walls- producing 8' long beams.

This is a substantial floor structure, on which in addition the two walls were sat. The question as to why there is suspended floor here, and a significant one in scale, begins to resolve itself. The suspended floor in an exterior build location can only be for water avoidance/drainage. The extremely degraded faces and bulk of the granite beams, including at least one structurally failed example indicates that if the suspended floor structure was designed to raise it above ground water- presumably by provided drainage downhill from the sub floor area to the East. The inevitable lack of maintenance and drain blockade achieved the opposite effect. The beams being probably soaked in a pit full of water for decades or even centuries, and being fairly coarse granite, and especially given their relatively large surface area to section proportions- subject to chronic degradation.

The final part of the picture here derives from the question: "why go to all this trouble for a mere two wall entrance?" The answer being that: "It probably wasn't just a two wall entrance." Looking at Fig. 8, the lean outwards on the West (right) side of the entrance wall is very apparent. The red line on the opposite side- marking the straight joint between the East entrance wall (1) and the Graveyard wall (3), is also noticeably leaning outwards too. Why would both be leaning outwards? The obvious answer is that they had an A frame collared roof structure on top- as shown in green in Fig. 8. It was possibly also arched braced with a gable infill at both ends. In addition, given the width, there may have been a central bench, separating the entrance into two walkway routes: "in and out". Exemplars for both the roof- as a Lych Gate and the bench are shown in Figs. 9 & 10.



Fig. 8 North Entrance Looking South, with Reconstruction.



Fig. 9 Lych Gate Direct to Porch Sat on Flat Chamfered Walls  
(<https://www.publicdomainpictures.net/pictures/50000/velka/church-lych-gate-entrance.jpg>)



Fig. 10 Lych Gate at Rame Church With Central Bench

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In Fig. 9 there are three interesting minor additional minor correlations with the entrance details at Madron. Firstly to the right side in Fig. 9, the post supporting the roof is leaning outwards, just as the walls do at Madron. Secondly, concerning the route, a comparison with Fig. 8, show the identical 'direct route' layout from church yard entrance gate to church porch. Thirdly, the interface between the roof base and wall top is the same- flush chamfered, allowing a good draining ability to prevent rot in the wood wall plate for the roof supports sat on the wall top. The entrance width proportions too, are virtually identical.

With the evidence suggesting a lost Lych Gate giving access to the North Porch at Madron Church, some rudimentary attempt at dating may be possible.

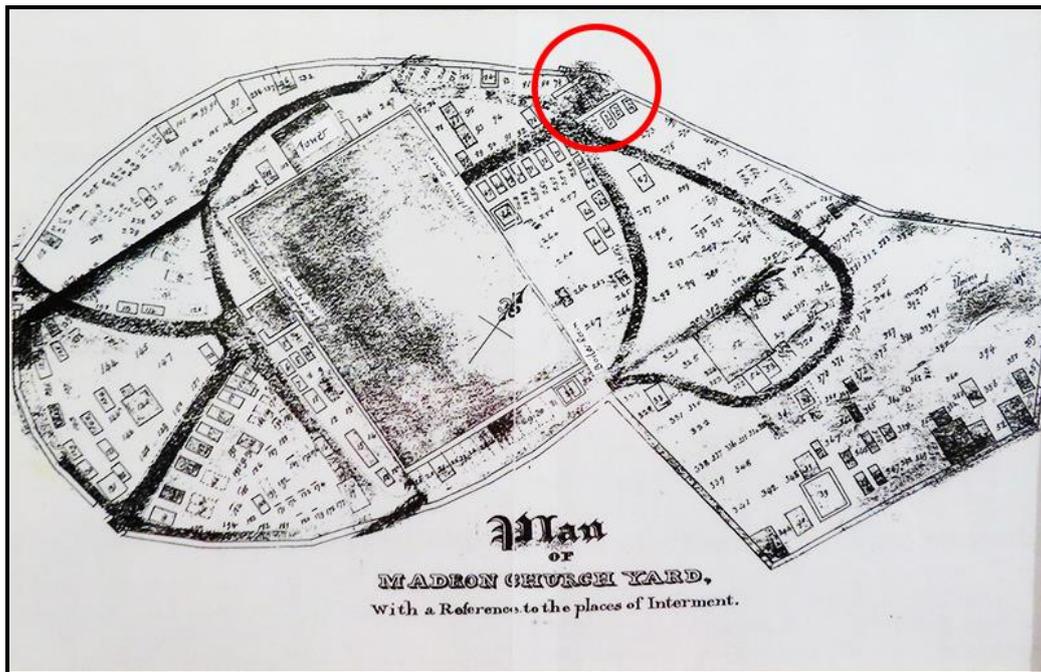


Fig. 11 Copy of Burial Plot Map in Church (dated separately 1852), North Entrance Highlighted

Referring to Fig. 11, the map is referred to in a C20 list accompanying it as shown in Fig.12.

MADRON CHURCHYARD - INDEX TO 1852 PLAN			
NAME	PLOT NO(S)	NAME	PLOT
Wm <sup>24</sup>	259	HOSKIN, Joseph	275
Peter	371	HOSKIN, Martn	232
<sup>25</sup>	143	HOSKIN, Mary	10
<sup>26</sup>	144	HOSKIN, Mary	11
Jas <sup>27</sup>	300	HOSKIN, Peggy <sup>47</sup>	329
Wm	326	HOSKIN, Rd	11
Thos <sup>28</sup>	340	HOSKIN, Wm <sup>48</sup>	80/81
Herbert	356	<b>HOSKIN, Wm</b>	<b>83</b>
Jas	50	HULL, Wm <sup>49</sup>	338
Jas	356	HUSBAND, Henry	40
Lavinia	358	IRELAND, Jane Soph.	53

Fig. 12 Index Transcript of Burial Plot List accompanying 1853 Plan, Displayed in The Church

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This states that it is from 1852, and the map shows the present entrance walls within the superimposed red circle as they are today. Hence the wall base of the presumed Lych Gate was there in the mid C19.

According to the National Churches Trust:

*"Lych is derived from the Old English 'lich', meaning corpse. They were meeting places and shelters for the party bringing a corpse for burial, and for the priest to receive the corpse.*

*Although some had been built earlier, the 1549 Prayer Book required the priest to meet the corpse at the churchyard entrance. This encouraged the provision of lych-gates to shelter the corpse and the funeral party for that purpose.*

*Medieval lych-gates were made of timber and most have long since disappeared.*

*However, many new lych-gates were erected in Victorian times, sometimes as memorials to prominent local people or as war memorials."*

<https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/what-see-outside/lych-gate>

If the 1549 date is taken as a general guide to origin, some minor aspects may give a rough idea of construction. The 10" thick walls are not standard medieval dimensions, church and domestic curtain walls were being constructed to minimum of 2' width by the late 1400's when medieval churches ceased being built. The weathering on the cap stones of the entrance walls, also is short term, and far from medieval or immediately post medieval. Granite weathering in Cornwall is systemically defined for archaeological purposes by the extremely weathered head stone examples found in the graveyard at St Ives. Polished granite survives for about 30-40 years, and then weathers to extremely rough after about 120 years. The popular notion amongst many church historians that granite windows in Cornish churches are 'medieval' in style or origin, is contradicted by this weathering factor. Granite mullion/jamb mouldings would be almost entirely lost after about 200 years natural weathering; in addition to the more obvious and observable indications of various phases of masonry replacement in and around the windows themselves. Archaeological investigations of church walls reveal multiple refacing internally and externally, giving in one example at Sithney Church- 12 Sanctuary wall refacings. Each an incremental reduction in wall width accompanying re-windowing. There is therefore by default no correlation whatsoever between extant church window 'style'/structure and the original or medieval windows, unless there is definite proof for the asserted exception. Where the odd one remains it is usually in the earliest aisle- usually the North Aisles' West window- the lowest status main window in the building.

The granite wear factor also applies to the suspended floor beams here. It would appear that the central/south suspended floor granite beam broke and was replaced by a rough pad with a flat top for a mortar surface. This presumably due to being in a failed drainage pit, and being enveloped in water for long periods of time. The other surviving granite beams also having high degradation to the surface. This would suggest a generation of maintenance failure after construction and several centuries before the beam failed and was repaired. The 1852 map shows a bare entrance gate, not a building, possibly suggesting that the Lych Gate wood structure had gone by then. The change to an infilled solid floor was probably c.1980.

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This would suggest a repair c.1800 possibly and a gate in use and deteriorating beneath for between 100- 150 years, plus 30 years for the drainage to fail. Roughly c. 1650. However the entrance walls are remarkably thin, indicating a later date: 1650-1750. This suggests a date of original construction c.1700. +/-50 years, bearing in mind the paucity of primary data, and rough estimate process though.

## **The Flat Buried Gravestone in The Path**

The second interesting feature, and that which brought this archaeological investigation into this site in this instance initially, was the discovery of a possible 'Latin' inscription on a large flat piece of sandstone (10), revealed by the pipe trench excavation in the middle of the well established path from the North Entrance to the Tower West Door.

As detailed above, there were sound recent precedents for potential historic building archaeology interest in this enigmatic discovery.

The peculiarities can be listed:

(i) an inscription is usually from a grave headstone in a graveyard, but these are rarely found in paths, unless a re-used piece of masonry for impromptu path surfacing.

(ii) If re-used and pre -path with 'Latin inscription', the most likely origin was initially considered an early piece of church fabric. Given the small amount of only mid Medieval fabric surviving in the Church, no hints of early medieval or Norman, this section of inscribed stone was considered before excavation began to have interesting potential as evidence for an earlier church.

(iii) Why flat laid? Inscriptions are usually vertical.

(iv) Why in the path?

((v) Why sandstone not the ubiquitous granite/slate?

Excavation of the partially revealed inscription rapidly resolved these points- and fully revealed is shown in Fig. 13. The inscription when fully revealed, as shown more clearly enhanced in Fig. 14 reads:

IN MEMORY OF  
WILL HOSKINGS  
WHO DIED  
ON THE 16 DAY OF  
SEPT. 1817  
AGED 25 YEARS

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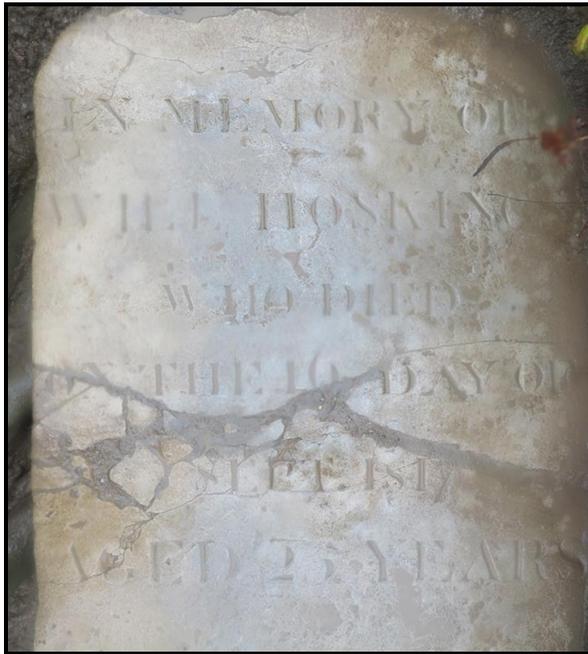


Fig 13 Plot 83 Headstone as Existing

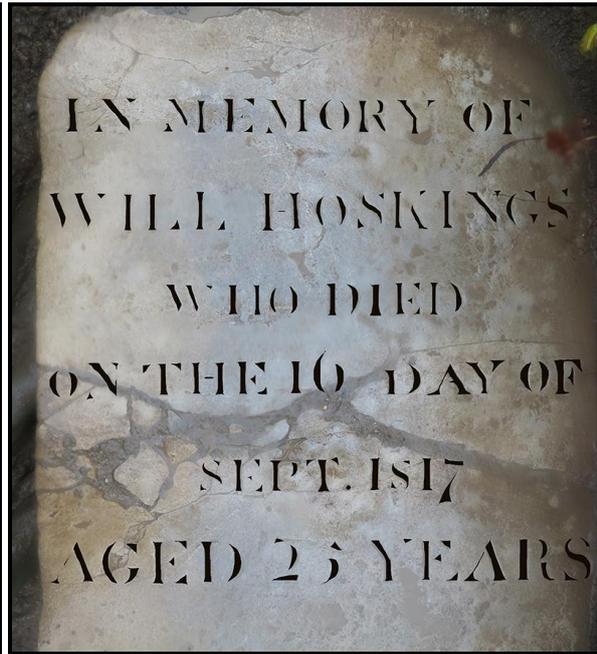


Fig. 14 Headstone Inscription Enhanced

Of note is the style of the inscription- a very minimalist use of carving strokes. Almost all those seen are from about 5mm deep cuts. However in one or two instances- the 'A' in 'YEARS', the front stroke of the A can be clearly seen- from a cut only 2 mm deep. In most other cases, the surface wear has obliterated these shallow strokes. The horizontal bar in the 'H' of Hoskings in Fig. 14 is only just discernable. The style is close to a similarly dated example from within the Church- see Fig. 15. and even more so in terms of inscription style and sandstone material to an undated headstone in the church floor of 'Harriet Frances Vyner' shown in Fig. 16, but probably later from the 1820-30's.



Fig. 15 Slate Inscription in Church Floor "TL 1812"

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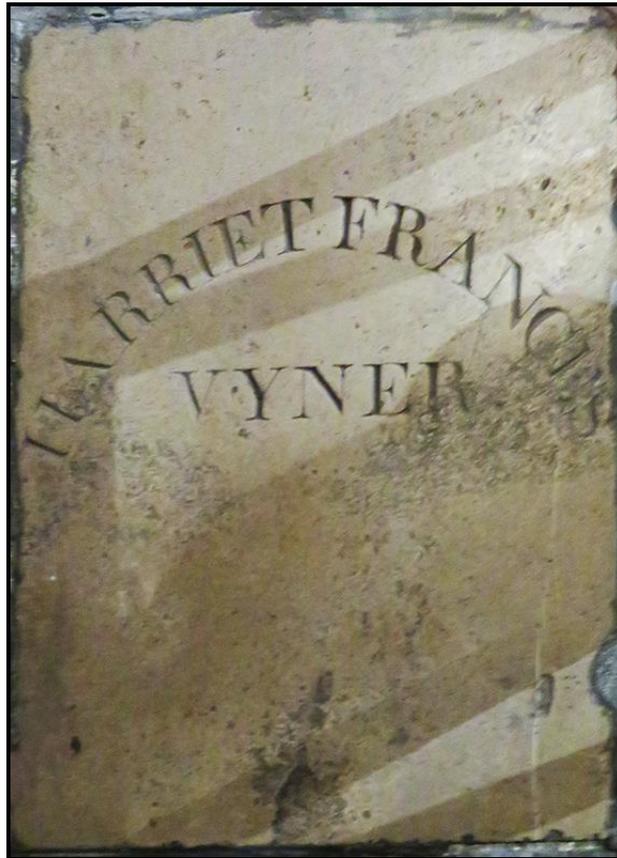


Fig. 16 Grave Stone in Floor of Madron Church

Whilst solving the issue of what the path artefact was- it was a 80" x 3' x 4" sandstone grave stone from a young man called William Hoskings who died in 1817, the question of why a fairly recent (archaeologically speaking) headstone was buried in a path, remained at first a mystery. It was assumed to begin with that- as a headstone, it had been removed from a grave in the periodic grave re-use standard in church yards, and placed in the path as a section of path surfacing years later.

However a chance mention by a visiting churchwarden pointed out the existence of a framed 1852 Burial plot map and plot list archive displayed in the Church. Both were investigated, and three similar 'William Hoskin's' were identified on the burial plot list from 1852 as shown in Fig. 17.

HOSKIN, Joseph	275
HOSKIN, Martn	232
HOSKIN, Mary	10
HOSKIN, Mary	11
HOSKIN, Peggy <sup>47</sup>	329
HOSKIN, Rd	11
HOSKIN, Wm <sup>48</sup>	80/81
HOSKIN, Wm	83
HULL, Wm <sup>49</sup>	338
HUSBAND, Henry	40
IRELAND, Jane Soph.	53
JAMES, - <sup>50</sup>	260
JAMES, Henry <sup>51</sup>	353
JAMES, - <sup>52</sup>	270

Fig. 17 William Hoskin's Burial Plots 80, 81 & 83 from 1852 Burial Map

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The proximity of the names ' Wm Hoskin' -listed with the 'Will Hoskings'- headstone, presumably both William Hoskings, and for three listed plots, suggested a family- either grandfather, father, son, or a mix with brothers.

The final piece of evidence was the map itself, which shown in Fig. 11, is shown in detail in Fig. 18 below.

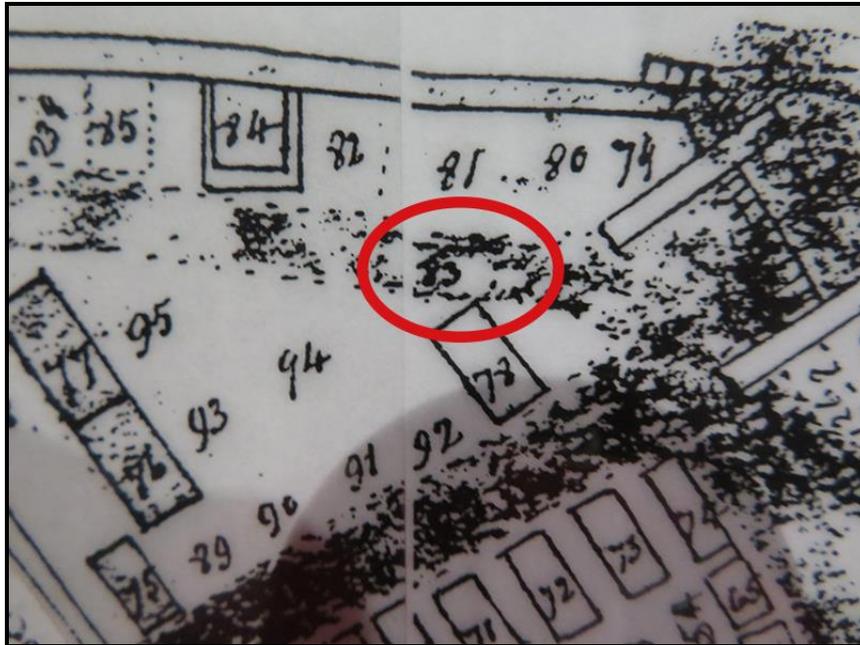


Fig. 18 Detail of 1852 Burial Plot Map by North Graveyard Entrance. Plot 83 Highlighted

The map detail shows plot 83 highlighted, which referring back to the archaeological excavation plan in Fig. 2, and the photo in Fig.5, is exactly in the same place as Will Hoskings gravestone as excavated. The oddity of its placement in the path is also resolved. Plots 80/81 containing the two other William Hoskings, according to the Burial Plot list are immediately adjacent and to the West, above the path. Plots 82 and 79 don't appear to be Hoskings, according to the Plot List, hence the path headstone plot 83 William was probably a son, who dying young at 25 appears to be the last Hoskings to die and be buried in this odd location- or at least before 1852, when the map was made. The burial plot map shows only this one instance of a path burial in the church yard indicating its unusualness, but the logic of proximity to previously buried and same named and immediate family being self evident.

Madron church does by coincidence exhibit another instance of slightly unusual 'proximity burial'. The Burlage grave (plot 28) set outside the church's East central Sanctuary window, is inserted into the Sanctuary wall with a arch in the wall above to facilitate the intrusion. Internal burials in Churches becoming unpopular in the C19 supposedly for hygiene reasons- apocryphally the term 'stinking rich' is believed to have originated from the ability of the rich parishioners to pay for higher status internal (but often shallow) burials, which supposedly provided a nifty atmosphere within many churches. However, the ubiquitous smell of damp was probably far more noticeable than a decomposing body under 10-15 cm of dry soil and a well sealed lime mortared slate flagged floor. Some dogs may be able to smell buried dead bodies in these circumstances- humans probably can't.

The Burlage grave would be the next best thing- with the head potentially buried virtually under the Altar- assuming it was buried head to the west- 'looking' East to Jerusalem as traditional. By contrast

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Plot 83 with William Hoskings in, was trodden under foot by every person walking to the West Door. However in terms of level, the 3' wide x 80" long x 4" thick grave stone cover- (not a headstone) has a top surface about 10cm/4" below the slate slab defined path surface only a metre or so away, and the path is relatively level hereabouts. This suggests that the path surface- whether mud or gravel was intended to cover the grave top and inscription. There is wear on the grave cover- as the worn and mostly obscured 2mm strokes of the inscription show, but that still seems relatively light for an otherwise highly exposed and almost 200 year path component.

Given the oddity of the location, rareness of 'path burials', and lack of precedents for early C19 graves types of this format known to the author, the limited evidence suggests that the grave cover itself was deliberately buried under the path surface, with its location next to close family members taking precedence. Perhaps as the Grave plot evidence suggests negatively, there were no more Hoskings alive/buried here afterwards to require a visible memorial to a deceased lineage.

## Discussion

The approximately 20 metre sewage pipe excavation conducted by Rothwell Restoration for Madron Church PCC, was a minor excavation, but as almost always the case with church archaeology, much evidence and extrapolation can be garnered from very little. This is for two reasons generally.

Much that has been written concerning church architecture is merely regurgitated from Victorian inspired fantasy, dwelling overly upon stylistic interpretations that rarely survive archaeological or indeed any reasonably intelligent observation of the less artistic but considerably more prevalent masonry around it. Context in a church- the 99% plain unadorned fabric, was almost universally ignored in the early to mid C20 in favour of the superficially attractive aesthetic as a relic of late Victorian blossoming of assertive aesthetics. Unfortunately its more systematic and useful approaches dying immediately after Bernadetto Croce's 'Aesthetics' (English edit 1909). It's temporary revival in a less than helpful form as *Deconstructionalism* in the mid 1980's with Jacques Derridas's 'The Truth In Painting' (English edition 1987), rendering itself intellectually redundant by the mid 1990's, under the sheer weight of its own convoluted relativism. However it did take on a new lease of life as an expedient new tool in the Arts: History, Politics, Sociology from the mid 1990's disregarding its earlier origins in Art History and Anthropology where its methodology had a more direct and legitimate relationship to those subjects' content. The 'new' format being called- *Post modernism*, and for the purposes of 2021 analysis, it is now an aged and fairly redundant methodology, despite its swan song popularity amongst the more vocal to facilitate: 'narrative control'.

Aside from the ability to side step the rabbit hole of inapplicable aesthetics, the second reason for the high productivity of archaeological investigations above and below ground in churches derives from the surprisingly virgin nature of the territory. A Cornish church is not a building, it was an almost continuous process of development of about a dozen buildings built on top of each other, each partially or more so destroying the previous. Inevitably this means that only the last principal masonry development- usually about c.1480 alone contains direct evidence of its full form. Each previous building- used and recognized in its own unique format by its then contemporary users, has less and less surviving evidence of its form as one goes back in time, and as more and more later

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phases removed surviving fabric of the earlier stages. At the earliest stage there may only be 1-4 small sections surviving. In Madron Church there are only two sections totaling less than 3 metres in length of the Early/Mid Medieval church.

These can be recognized by the simple process of measuring wall thickness. Walls 3' - 4'4" thick are invariably pre 1300, with the thickest in the first phase of the Norman 'Spiritual Conquest'. This occurred immediately after the third Norman generation c.1150-80 finished its 'translation of motte & bailey fortifications into stone', added similar Welsh frontier forts, and thereafter the now under employed masons began to build the long single cell Churches, that are usually just apparent as c.1170 Phase 1 in many medieval Cornish Churches. Constructionally speaking the C12 Norman church is the natural evolution from the military architecture that preceded it, and for much the same reasons- hence 'spiritual conquest'. It is no coincidence that William the Conqueror put much credence in obtaining a Papal Blessing for the 1066 Invasion, and was so usefully aided in this by Prior Lanfranc of the Abbey of Bec in Normandy, and Archbishop Hildebrand in Rome, both of whom had acted on his behalf previously in a similar enterprise for arranging his wedding.

Such Norman invasion details may seem peripheral, but then Madron Church has its own famous Trafalgar Memorial, commemorating the defeat of the fifth of the six historic invasions/attempts of Britain: Julius Caesar's, Claudius', Tostig & William the Conqueror's, The Armada, Napoleonic, and Operation Sealion last century.

The identification of features at the North Entrance , which are usually associated with Lych Gates, and the addition of an unusual and substantial granite beam suspended floor structure beneath it, again indicate the invariable discovery of significant new features when engaged in church archaeology. It is particularly these structural features- that had little or no interest for the C20 aesthetic orientated historian of churches that are significant. Again in attendance on Rothwell Reconstruction at Sithney Church from 2019-20, AAC became aware during the attempt to find a bearing surface for the new floor, that- the resultant approximately 2 m deep pit immediately adjacent the North Transept end wall base, clearly indicated the total absence of medieval church wall foundations to a point where this point was absolutely conclusive. This then raised the research question: "Do medieval Cornish churches ever have foundations- or is this a one off?" The answer apparently being that non foundations is the norm. This then developed to: "Do Church Towers have foundations? The answer more interestingly has been 'Yes- they have several different types of foundations, and these surprisingly are still standard today.' Even more bizarre being the result at Breage Church near Helston, where the foundation for the late C15 Tower extant- is... an earlier tower! Breage Church literally being a unique Twin Tower church, although the earlier is completely buried (and mostly demolished).

The lost Lych Gate at Madron Church appears to have had a wooden roof structure that sat on top of the usual flat topped flat chamfered flush wall cap. Lych Gates are not particularly varied in format, so it is likely that the masonry wall top would have had a flat long 6' 6" long, 6" x 3" section wooden wall plate sat on it. This would have supported two end trusses, and possibly a central one too. The trusses would have had collars, and possibly arch braced beneath. The truss feet, sat on the wall plate provided the thrust from the weight of the slated roof that is still evident in the walls leaning outwards on both sides. The trusses probably had a single purlin and ridge, which with the continuous wall plate provided the base for fixing the rafters. These may have been either planked or battened, and the slates affixed over, with a ceramic or lead ridge placed on top. The outer truss faces exposed to the weather may have been covered in gable planking, or if ornate trusses, given a weather protecting slate overhang from the pitches above.

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With the lost slate slab floor on the granite beams and pit below, the structure was initially well drained, and able to accommodate the roof rainwater presumably to the same drain, that would have led downhill and Eastwards, and possibly to the outside of the churchyard wall. One might expect to find a disused low hole in the granite wall about 15- 25 metres East of the Entrance, which was the old drain outlet. The structure may have been constructed c.1700, and with the C18 pre-occupation with constant global warfare, impoverishing the country and creating a noticeable decline across the board in the maintenance of the national building stock; a century of non maintenance may have resulted in its demolition in the early 1800's. It is not explicit on the 1852 map.

The Will Hoskings headstone, that is actually a burial plot 3' x 6' 8" long inscribed grave cover, is also remarkable. It is according to the Burial Plot map from 1852, the only example of a 'path grave' at this site, and the only one ever seen by the author in 20 years surveying Cornish churches. It effectively states that 'proximity to family' was a more significant feature of burial than the surviving families' (if any) interest in commemorating the dead. This is very significant from an anthropological perspective, because as we are culturally speaking further and further away with each generation from a pre/non materialist dominated mind set; evidence of the day to day living articulation of a very different spiritually dominated culture, becomes increasingly difficult to identify, or in many cases- even recognize it existed. Here, physical proximity of the dead with each other was more important than having the grave walked over- it being in the middle of a path. The same concern with post life physical proximity is evident at Madron with the Burlage grave partly within the Sanctuary wall. In both cases, it was not the material aspects of the proximity that are important- those holding it were too dead to care less, but the spiritual significance of the physical proximity. What it meant to the spirits of the dead, and also from the perspective of their survivors who in both cases placed the dead in those positions- evidently as part of a continuum wherein both they and the deceased recognized the shared benefits of the spiritual values espoused by the physical expressions of those values. The physical, like most anthropological artefacts- is only an expression of the latent human value system beneath. In the latter is where the real significance is- and why we bother grubbing about in the mud on filthy rainy days- to discover it!

This being the reason why methodologically systemic structurally orientated building archaeology is so effective at piecing together the sublime. Unlike superficially attractive stylistic based methods, it is built up step by explicit step from solid foundations upon the simple physical evidence of its expressions, not imposed arbitrarily from above via uncritical personalized individual assertions using unchallengeable relativistic aesthetics; which have bedeviled much of the Art's intellectual validity in the UK for the last several generations.

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## ARCHIVING

No artefacts were collected, and the Reports' drawings better illustrate the site recorded written material- which was subject to constant rain damage on site.

The Report will be sent to Rothwell Restorations- the Client, who state their intention to pass the Report onto Madron Church PCC. No further archiving was required, and given the current inefficient and unusable nature of the new central OASIS archive, deposition here was rejected for reasons of unjustifiable cost and being contrary to normal standards of professional 'good practice'.

Copies of the Report may be requested from Madron Church PCC, the author has no authority to disperse details of a private contract conducted on private land with no statutory requirement provisions; without their permission.

## ARCHIMEDES ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANTS

Archimedes Archaeological Consultants (AAC) has in various guises been producing independent archaeological services, principally survey plans and historic building analysis since 1984. AAC offers a discreet service for selected customers, either independently, or through Scott & Co Chartered Surveyors of Truro (01872 263939). Customers have included English Heritage, The National Trust, Truro DAC, various Cornish Methodist circuits, Cornwall, Devon and Somerset and Avon County Councils, and the US Dept. of Agriculture.

AAC's services have been in constant demand for over 25 years, and continues to be so. Its principal approach was established while developing new survey techniques to cover large swathes of North American forests, and operating alone to identify and survey sensitive Indian burial sites in secret. In consequence, cutting edge surveying methodology (not blind acceptance of technological fads) remains a key to AAC's approach and in consequence of involvement in often sensitive and discreet projects, publicity, internet profiles, and direct publication are where possible avoided.

AAC specialises in larger building historic analysis, using AAC's highly specialised survey methods developed in house using a unique *archaeo-mathematical* process. This involves an advanced comprehension and utilisation of survey methodology to deliver volumetric analysis for phased historic construction, where the otherwise necessary seriation/stratigraphy is either minimal or absent. All surveys are conducted using laser measurers and hand drawing, which gives a far higher observational accuracy methodology and result than the comparable industry standard but unfortunately non observed and thus lower quality EDM\CAD processes.

AAC conducts specialised research for conceptual archaeological advances. Surveys of over 80 Cornish churches has generated a statistical project with unprecedented results enabling a new form of onsite constructional dating method to be produced. Similar investigation have allowed AAC to discover how to 'fill the gap' of the otherwise unavailable magnetic variance record for the Medieval period. AAC is currently working on a method to apply mathematical algorithms to rubble constructed historic building elevations, in order to identify constructional patterns.

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AAC has conducted over 350 secular historic building surveys from c.400AD to the present, 10+ landscape site surveys, and 80+ church surveys, all to the highest standards. AAC is probably the most experienced historic building site surveying operation in the UK, and as the UK leads this field, this unrivalled status also extends into the global arena.

But hopefully due to client confidentiality and our innate preference for professional discreteness, you will never have heard of us...!