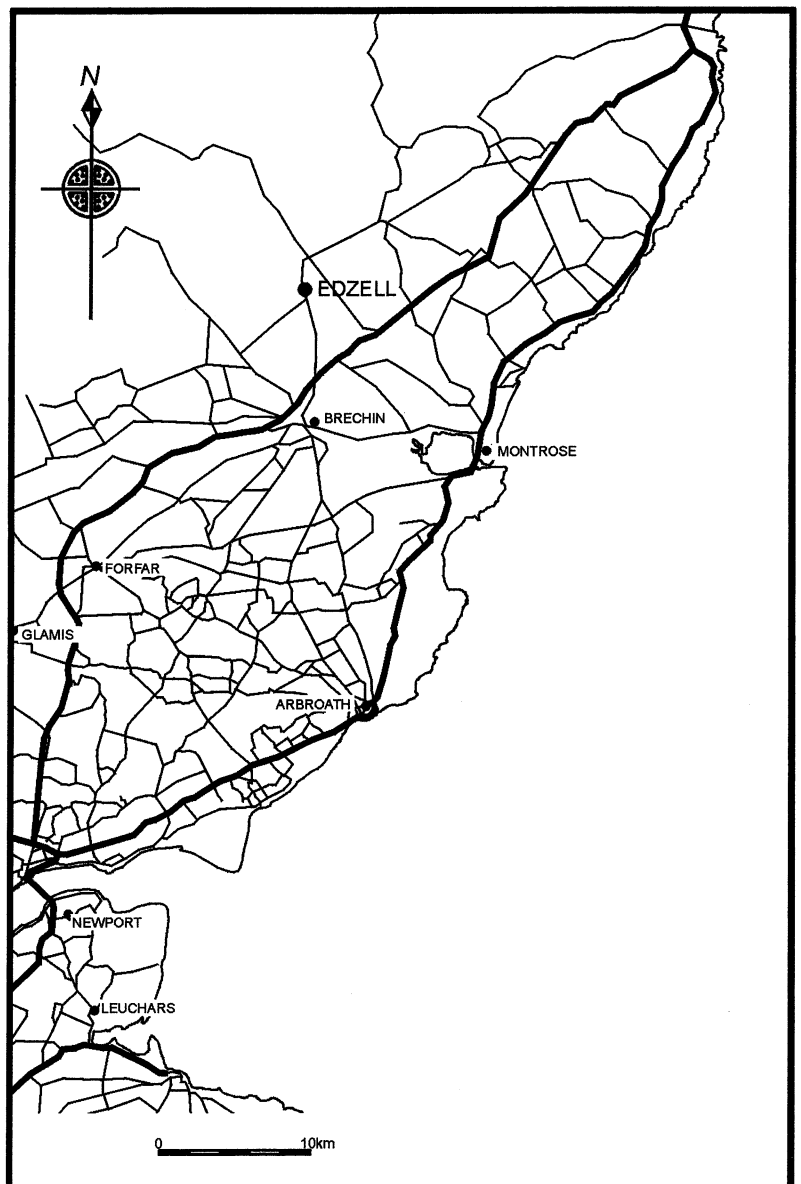
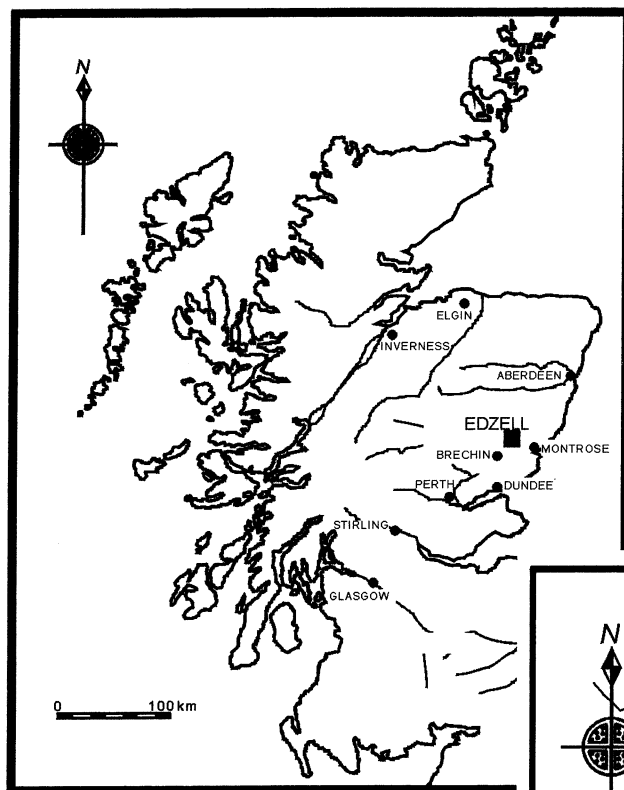




Illus 1 Location map.

Clearance and survey at Edzell Old Church, Angus

David Bowler, David Perry and Mike Middleton

Introduction (Illus 1–2)

Edzell old church and burial ground (NO 582 687) lies 1 mile (1.6 km) west of the village of Edzell, and 0.3 mile (0.5 km) south-west of Edzell Castle. In 1818 the church was replaced by a new building on the edge of the village, and the old church was demolished except for the Lindsay Aisle, an extension on the south side of the nave which now survives as a free-standing building with a burial vault beneath. As shown on early plans and confirmed by the date of the gravestones, the surrounding burial ground was originally confined to a rectangle roughly 35 m x 60 m, today bounded by gravel paths, mature trees and a marked drop in level, no doubt the result of centuries of gravedigging. As a result of extensions in the 19th and 20th centuries, the old burial ground now forms the south-eastern quadrant of a larger area, still in use. In the north-east corner of both the original and the enlarged burial ground is a small 19th-century sandstone tower, apparently a groundsman's store.

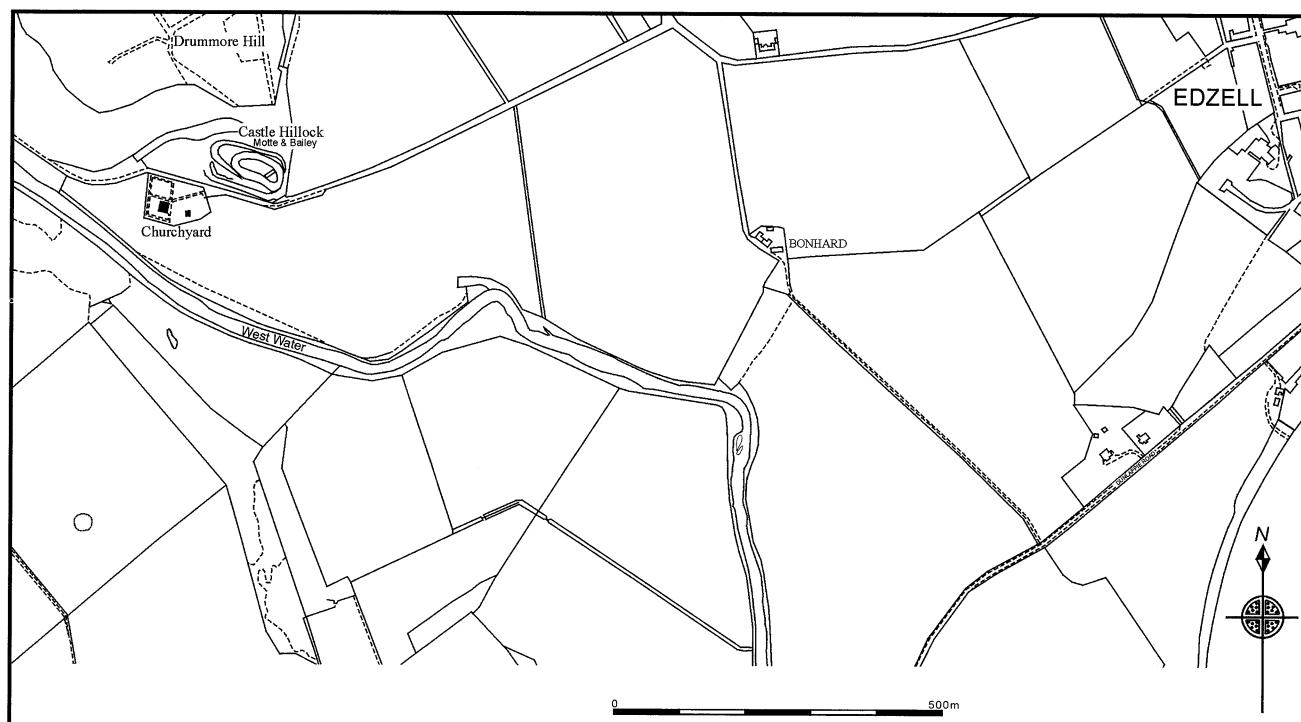
There is now a rectangular car park to the east of the cemetery, at much lower level, where undocumented burials appeared just below the surface in recent test pits (Paul Mitchell, pers comm). A separate triangular cemetery extension has been added east of the car park, where assessment by AOC (Scotland) produced largely negative results (O'Sullivan 1994). The present mature trees are successors of the ones shown on the early

plans, which in the 18th century were periodically cut down for timber (Perry, below).

Directly north of the burial ground, on the opposite side of the road, is Castle Hillock, a motte and bailey castle. This is clearly a glacial feature adapted as a fortification, but no structures survive above ground. To the south of the burial ground there is a marked drop in level retained by a high stone wall, and then a flat open field extending down to the West Water.

Clearance and survey

The burial ground is owned and managed by Angus Council. The Lindsay Aisle, recently re-slatted, is owned by the Dalhousie (1964) Trust, but is being taken into the care of Historic Scotland. As part of the preparation for this, it was decided to clear the burial vault of earth and debris, survey and record the surviving structure, and attempt to trace the location and extent of the now vanished nave. In addition, a historical background survey was commissioned, together with a public information panel. Finally, a watching brief was carried out on Historic Scotland clearance of debris in front of the doorway in the west wall of the aisle. SUAT Ltd was appointed by Angus Council to carry out these works (SUAT site code EZ01).



Illus 2 Site plan.

Historical background

David Perry

Edzell

At the start of the 13th century, Edzell seems to have belonged to a family of lay abbots of an otherwise unknown Celtic religious foundation in the valley of the North Esk. John the Abbot, son of Malise, granted to the monks of Arbroath Abbey the right to take charcoal in his *wood of Edale*, wherever it could most easily be found and as much as was needful for work on the abbey's buildings. He also granted the monks the right of a hospice and pasture for their animals on his land. John's son Morgund confirmed the grant at the time when his father made it, and King William the Lion subsequently confirmed the grant in 1209 or 1210 (*Arbroath Liber*, i, Nos 72–74; Barrow 1971, 445). The discoveries of a cross-slab (now in the Meffan Institute, Forfar) built into the graveyard wall at Edzell in 1870 (Eeles 1910, 358–60; Reid 1915, 296–7; Atkinson 1988, 27; Atkinson 1995, 93), and of a fragment of a 9th-century cross (now at Edzell Castle) in the graveyard in 1952 (Stevenson 1959, 42–3; Atkinson 1995, 93) suggest a religious presence here before the 12th century, although Edzell itself need not have been the site of the Celtic monastery. Celtic cross fragments have also been found at Lethnot and Menmuir (Allen & Anderson 1993, ii, 262–3), and the former has been suggested as a possible site for the supposed early foundation (Barrow 1971, 445). However, as Lethnot, Menmuir and Edzell were in the dioceses of Brechin, Dunkeld and St Andrews respectively (McNeill & Nicholson 1975, 140–1), they presumably had different origins.

Whatever Edzell's status around 1200, by the mid-14th century it formed part of the barony of Glenesk, belonging to Sir John Stirling of Glenesk, whose daughter and heiress, Katherine, conveyed it to her future husband, Alexander Lindsay, second son of Sir David Lindsay of Crawford (*RMS*, i, App 1, no 135). In the 15th century Edzell was inherited by Walter, younger son of the 3rd Earl of Crawford, and the Edzell estate remained with his descendants until 1715, when the Earl of Panmure bought it from the financially straitened David Lindsay of Edzell. Panmure only owned the estate for a short time before being forfeited for Jacobitism after the Fifteen. Edzell was acquired by the York Buildings Company but was bought back in 1764 by the heir of the forfeited Panmure, from whom it was inherited by the Earls of Dalhousie (Simpson 1982, 17–19).

In 1588 Sir David Lindsay of Edzell was licensed to erect a burgh of barony at Edzell (*RMS*, v, no 1579). A draft idea of the burgh was drawn up (NLS, Acc 9769, 4/1 'Portrait of ye new Citie of Edzel—Idea, 1592'). The burgh apparently was created as there are references to 'Burgh of Edzell' in the Kirk Session records in the 18th century. The burgh was not apparently situated at the present village of Edzell, which was then called Slateford (*NSA*, 624).

Edzell Church—history

The church of Edzell, whatever its probable early Christian origins, is not listed in Bagimond's Roll, an account of papal taxation of the Scottish Church in 1274–6 (Dunlop 1939). It may at that time have been part of another parish, not achieving parochial status until later. Edzell had become a separate parish by 1342, when Master William de Grinlaw held the *church of Adel* in the diocese of St Andrews (*CPL*, iii, 94). Its inclusion in the deanery of Angus, within the diocese of St Andrews, points to the survival of much earlier territorial arrangements, as it was separated from the other parishes of that deanery by the diocese of Brechin, while being adjacent to the deanery of Mearns in the diocese of St Andrews (Ash 1975, 39).

Almost nothing is known about the church of Edzell in the medieval period, apart from the names of some of its clergy (see Appendix). Even the dedication of the church is uncertain, although probably to St Laurence, commemorated in St Laurence Well near the churchyard and in the Bell of St Laurence (Warden 1882, 215). This is perhaps confirmed in the foundation charter by sir David Broun, vicar pensioner of Edzell, of a chaplainry at the altar of All Saints in Brechin Cathedral: among the duties of the chaplain was the annual distribution of 13s 4d Scots to the poor at the parish church of Edzell on the Feast of St Laurence the Martyr (*Brechin Register*, i, 230). It was one of the few unappropriated parish churches in Scotland at the Reformation, (ie its revenues had not been granted to a cathedral, monastery or collegiate church), despite an unsuccessful or short-lived attempt to unite it to the archiepiscopal *mensa* or household of St Andrews by 1483 (*CPL*, xiii, 142).

The papal archives give some information on the church. In 1428 Hugh Henryson, rector of Edzell had been celebrating masses and other divine offices for several days, months and years, despite suspension and excommunication by his bishop and being publicly denounced in his own church for publicly keeping a concubine (Dunlop 1956, 209–10; Dunlop & Cowan 1970, 245). Lack of, or difficulty in, communication in Scotland in the days before the motor car or telephone is evident in the petitions in 1457 and 1458 of Alexander Michelson, perpetual vicar of Kingoldrum, diocese of Brechin for the parsonage of the church of Edzell. In the first petition he claimed that Edzell was vacant by the death of the late John Kennedy long before, but in the second petition he corrected this to say that Edzell was vacant because Kennedy had been appointed to the parish church of Dysart in Fife (Kirk *et al* 1997, nos 644, 681).

Nor is it clear with whom the patronage of the church lay before the Reformation: the bishops or archbishops of St Andrews (Cowan 1967, 60); the Crown (*APS*, iv, 19–20); or the Earl of Crawford

(Bardgett 1989, 21). In 1352 William Grenlaw, presumably a relative of Master William de Grinlaw, received papal provision to the *church of Adel* at the request of Queen Joan, wife of David II, at that time a prisoner in England (CPL, iii, 484). This might imply Crown patronage, although Joan is not mentioned as exercising patronage. James VI claimed in 1593 that the patronage of Edzell had belonged to the Crown (APS, iv, 19–20), although whether because it always had, or because of the annexation to the Crown of the archbishopric of St Andrews along with other ecclesiastical property in 1587 is not clear, but the Crown had made two presentations to the church of Edzell in the 1570s (Kirk 1983, 107). (The Act of 1593 annulled all alienations by the Crown of church patronages, with certain specified exceptions, including ‘the advocation, donation and patronage of the parish church of Edzell’ pertaining to Sir David Lindsay of Edzell; Lindsay had been granted the patronage in 1588 [RMS, v, no 1579]).

In the absence of Kirk Session records for the 17th century, little is known of the church’s history. The records commence in 1706, with a note to the effect that the schoolmaster and Session Clerk, Mr Alexander Junior, from Cromarty, appointed in October 1705, had at Candlemass 1706 ‘deserted privately in the nithgt tym treacherously stealing of a part of our session records’ containing baptisms, marriages, collections and payments to the poor from October 1703 to March 1706 (NAS, CH2/627/1, f1; future references are to the Kirk Session records by date, unless otherwise stated).

The records also note the effect in the parish of the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution of 1688–9 with the overthrow of James VII and the abolition of episcopacy. The minister, Mr Robert Lindsay, was a Jacobite and Episcopalian, as was the laird, David Lindsay of Edzell. The authorities attempted to enforce compliance with the new regime: on 24th October 1708 no sermon was preached ‘in respect of disorder by Presbeterian preachers’. On 9th January 1709 again no sermon was preached because Mr Lindsay was summoned to appear before the Lords of Justiciary in Edinburgh the following day, ‘and that for exercising his Ministrie within this parish’. The result of the appearance was that on 8th February 1709 Mr Lindsay was forbidden by the Lords of Justiciary ‘to Exercise his Ministrie within the parish of Edzell’, as a result of which he resigned his charge on 6th June by delivering the Kirk Box and its keys to the Session Clerk (CH2/627/1, f1). The religious conflict resulted in services being held in the Great Hall of Edzell Castle from 26th May 1709 to 28th May 1710. Thereafter, until December 1713, entries in the Session Register are very intermittent: only three entries are made for 1712. Confusion over the appointment of a new minister resulted in some four claimants to the patronage of the church in 1713–14, with two appointments of ministers (NAS, GD45/13/129, 132–133).

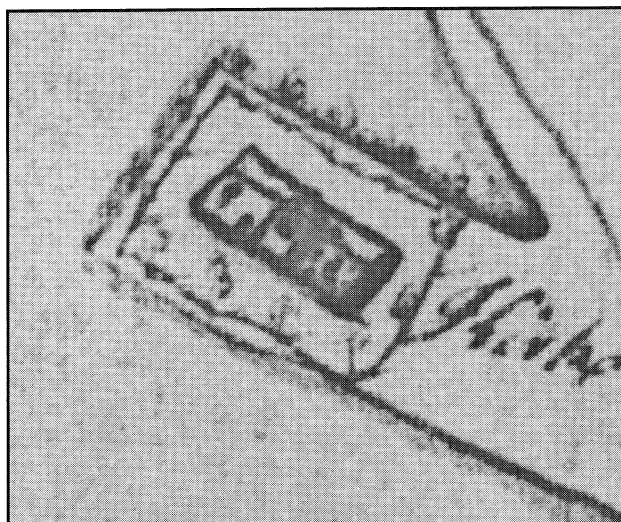
On 26th August 1714, the Presbytery of Brechin finally admitted Mr Robert Gray to the church of Edzell, but on the following Sunday, the 29th, the

minister had to preach in the churchyard because the church was locked. On 5th and 23rd September Mr Gray ‘found access into the church’ but there was no collection on either occasion, few being present. On 19th September Mr Gray was again forced to preach in the churchyard because the church was locked. The following Sunday matters took a more serious turn, when Mr John Johnstoun, minister at Brechin, arrived to preach (on the direction of the Presbytery) ‘Mr Gray being necessarily absent’. The church was again locked but this time Mr Johnstoun and his followers were ‘most inhumanely and barbarously treated and Rabled’ by a crowd ‘outhounded and hired to that purpose’ by David Lindsay of Edzell. On 8th October Mr Gray was prevented from entering the church by another crowd ‘outhounded and hyred by David Lindsay of Edzell to Mob and Rable him and those that were with him’. The crowd (19 are named, including five women) attacked the minister and his followers with big staves, naked knives and dirks, stones and ‘rungs’ [cudgels], knocking some unconscious and chasing others, including Mr Gray, into the West Water, which flows beside the churchyard (Mr Gray’s servant with the minister’s horse had been forced to flee). The crowd then returned to Edzell Castle to report to the laird, who had that morning supplied them with money, ale and brandy to intoxicate them, and his companions who applauded their actions. On the advice of the Presbytery of Brechin, Mr Gray initiated criminal proceedings against the laird, but an accommodation was reached before the case came to court, with the result that the minister was able to exercise his ministry peacefully from 30th January 1715. However, during the Fifteen, Mr Gray was obliged to withdraw to Edinburgh after 15th September 1715 until 26th February 1716. In the interval no records were kept, as Mr Lindsay intruded into the parish (CH2/627/2, 16th December 1716).

No such interruption is recorded during the Forty-Five, although Jacobite sympathisers were evidently still present in the parish. Two brothers, John and James Christison, carried arms against the rebels and ‘were somewhat remarkable for their loyalty in the spring of ‘forty-six’. The following September, a considerable number of their cattle were stolen, the thieves calling, probably derisively, John Christison ‘Captain’. This was not the only display of malice towards them, as in August 1747 the two brothers were set upon by a barbarous rabble on the evening of a market day, with the result that James probably never fully recovered (Miller 1909, 258).

Edzell Church—the building

Apart from the burial aisle of the Lindsays of Edzell, nothing remains of the former parish church, and no detailed plans apparently exist. In 1794 it was described as ‘a very old, strong building, incommodious in itself and inconveniently situated for the whole parish’ (OSA, 112). A Panmure estate farm plan of



Illus 3 *Panmure estate plan detail.*

1766 (RHP 1665/20) (illus 3) shows a small three-dimensional view of the church seen from the south. The church is shown as a T-shaped building, set centrally within the graveyard, with the burial aisle prominently visible in the centre of the south side, forming the short, vertical stroke of the T. Although the scale is very small, the large south window of the aisle is clearly recognisable. The kirk itself appears to be a simple rectangular structure with a pitched roof, and small windows arranged on either side of the burial aisle. There may be a small door in the south wall of the nave, just west of the aisle. The churchyard is shown as a small rectangle surrounding the church, with trees on its perimeter.

Before the addition of the aisle, the medieval church would have been a plain rectangle, divided by a wooden screen into a nave for the laity to the west, and a chancel to the east. The burial aisle was, presumably, in origin a private chantry chapel, founded by a laird of Edzell, where masses for the soul of the founder were celebrated. A niche or *piscina* is set into the east wall of the aisle, to the right of the presumed site of the chapel altar, and the absence of windows in the east wall similarly suggests an altar and retable in the aisle. It is not definitely known when the aisle was built; possibly in the 15th century (Eeles 1910, 358; Reid 1915, 297–8), but more probably in the 16th century by the 9th Earl of Crawford, who may have been seeking to establish Edzell as an important baronial and ecclesiastical centre (pers comm R Fawcett). David Lindsay of Edzell had succeeded his cousin as 9th Earl of Crawford in 1542 on the disinheritance of the latter's son, the Wicked Master, the title reverting to the Master's son on the 9th Earl's death in 1558 (Paul 1906, 27–9).

The aisle could in theory have been built by the 9th Earl's own son, Sir David Lindsay of Edzell (d.1610), but this would give a post-reformation date inconsistent with the *piscina* and apparent provision for a chapel altar.

The Kirk Session records give some indication of the layout of the church. Three doors are mentioned—an

east door, a west door and a door of the Laird's loft (3rd March 1717 and 30th November 1729; 12th June 1710), although the church possessed only two keys—for the door of the Laird's loft and for the 'Mikle Church door' (12th June 1710). There were east and west lofts or galleries, with four desks or seats in the former, common for all, ie not privately rented, which were to be let in future, the income to be distributed to the poor; while the ruinous seats in the west loft were to be repaired and let as well, the income likewise to be distributed to the poor (7th April 1724). The Laird's loft was presumably in the Lindsay aisle.

The ground floor of the church contained privately rented desks or seats of the better-off parishioners. These were apparently erected individually, on petition to the Kirk Session, which had a vested interest in allowing them, as the pew rents went into the Poor Box. The interior of the church must have presented a haphazard appearance, with desks erected in any available space: on 12th April 1730 a parishioner was allowed to erect a desk 'in the Empty space betwixt the Desk belonging to Alexander Walker...and the west door of the Church'.

Given the T-shape of the church, it might be expected that the pulpit would be on the north side of the church, opposite the Lindsay aisle, but the Kirk Session records are not clear on this point. On 7th April 1724 a parishioner purchased from another parishioner 'a back seat and fore seat in the Desk opposite to the pulpit on the north side of the church called the Christisons Dease [desk]'. The 'Christisons Dease' may be the same as 'the desk on the north side of the church' acquired by James Christison from David Lindsay of Edzell in 1711; on 10th November his son, John Christison, was permitted to erect 'a fore breast of the footgang belonging to the desk'. If so, then the pulpit would be on the south side of the church, presumably against one side of the arch into the Lindsay aisle.

The 'utensils' belonging to the Kirk were listed on 1st November 1716: 'Item a Kirk Bible in folio. Item two session boxes. Item two baptism cloaths. Item one Basine for Baptism. Item two Communion table cloaths, one long and another shorter. Item two communion plates for holding the Elements. Item two flaggons for holding the wine and four cuppis, all of pewther. Item one Mortcloath.' On 3rd November 1726 it was proposed to purchase a new bell for the church from a bell-founder at Finavon, the previous one being 'broken this severall years', and on 29th May 1727, the Session allowed £50 Scots and £17 for the purchase of two new bells.

The graveyard also produced revenue for the church, in addition to Mortcloth dues. On at least three occasions, 16th May 1717, 17th November 1723 and 15th November 1744, timber in the churchyard was cut down and sold, raising the sums of £55 16s 4d Scots, £50 2s 4d Scots and £43 1s 0d respectively. On the first occasion, the churchyard dykes needed repairing because 'they were thrust down' by the tree felling: £1

10s was allowed to David Watt, Church Officer for rousing the trees and repairing the dykes. On 10th December 1712, Watt had been paid 12s for mending the kirkyard dykes. Although burial was normally in the churchyard, evident from mortcloth dues, there is an instance of the payment of £3 Scots for a burial 'within the church' by the friends of the deceased James Strachan on 11th October 1730; the burial presumably took place in the Lindsay aisle.

The Kirk Session records contain little reference to the fabric of the church, repairs being the responsibility of the heritors. In 1641 the Kirk Session paid the 'Sclaitter for poynting the kirk £5 13s 4d Scots. Item, Mair of drinksiller to his boy 6d' (OSA, 112). On 24th March 1717 the Kirk Session allowed £15 Scots for repairs to the church roof, there being 'no heritor to take notice of such matter'. Almost a year earlier, on 17th April 1716, there had been 'an account of timber and workmanship for repairing the church of Edzell' (NAS, E650/53/46).

Presumably because of the expense of maintaining the old church, as well as its cramped state and inconvenient location, the medieval church was replaced in 1818 by a new church sited at the north end of the present village. Many old parish churches were replaced in Scotland at about this time, for similar combinations of reasons; many were well past economic repair. The last service in the old church was held on 22nd March 1818 and the church pulled down almost immediately, perhaps to re-use the stones in the new church. From the following Sunday, the 'congregation was convened in the schoolhouse by divisions at three different meetings generally'. The new church, designed by David Neave (Colvin 1978, 587), was opened for worship on 15th November 1818, the minister preaching on Psalm 122, 1: I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the House of the Lord.

At some unknown date the arch dividing the aisle from the body of the old kirk was infilled with masonry, which had only recently been taken down in 1915 (Reid 1915, 296).

Clearance of debris

David Bowler

This was carried out by David Bowler and Fraser Stewart from 6th to 8th April. At ground level the flagstone floor of the Lindsay Aisle was relatively clear, except for a small amount of pigeon waste and dust, which was cleaned off by trowel and brush so that the flagstones could be planned.

Access to the underground burial vault was by a steep flight of stone stairs, covered with a plywood board. There was a thick deposit of soft brown earth on the stairs, and a deep deposit of soft brown leaf mould mixed with rubble and debris inside the vault, including many modern artefacts, such as wire mesh, cigarette packets, and engraved plastic memorial tags from wreaths (*in loving memory...* etc.), as well as many dried leaves, offcut twigs and branches. It also included

the rotten remains of the trapdoor which guarded the top of the stairs when a local resident Mr Ken Aitken was a boy (pers comm.), and some broken wrought iron railings, probably the ones missing from the north front of the Aisle. The stairs to the vault must have lain open for many years, allowing earth and debris to enter.

Under the debris was a flagstone floor, bedded in sandy silt, mostly intact, but with some stones displaced. These were recovered and set aside for reuse if required. A very small number of human bone fragments were found at the bottom of the debris, and were reburied in one of the gaps in the floor.

Survey of standing structure (Illus 4–8)

Mike Middleton

This was carried out by Mike Middleton, assisted by Stuart Farrell, from the 5th–10th April 1999. The interior of the structure had been heavily repointed at the turn of the previous century, masking the majority of the structural detail, while the heavy slate roof had undergone substantial work in late 1998 and so was unlikely to produce any meaningful data. It was therefore decided to draw the exterior elevations, floor and vault in detail, but rapidly record the internal elevations and ignore the roof.

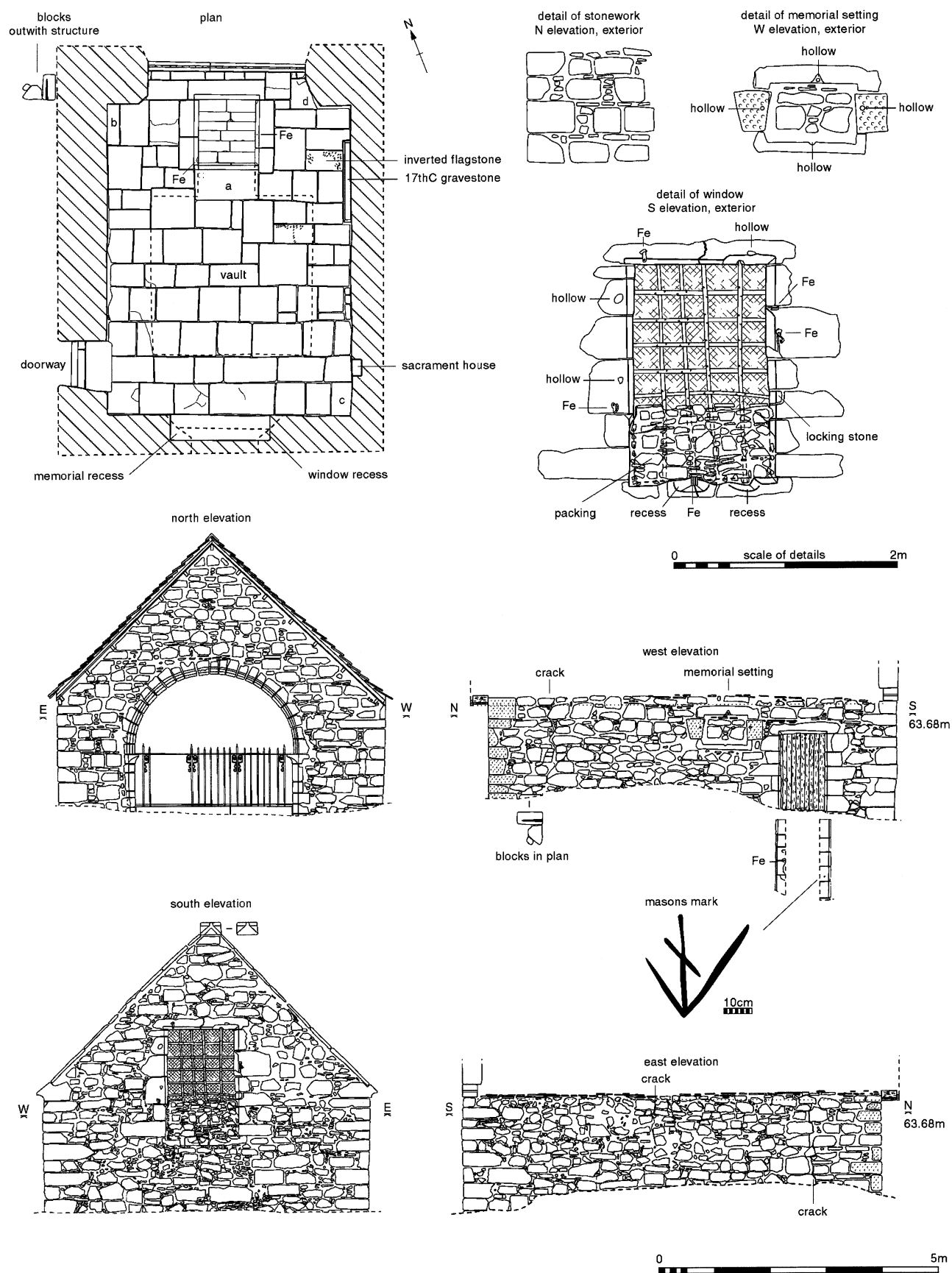
A 0.2 m grid was marked in soft chalk over the entire structure based on a temporary datum line at 68.68m OD. Field illustrations were hand drawn at 1:20, then scanned and inked up using current DTP software.

Results

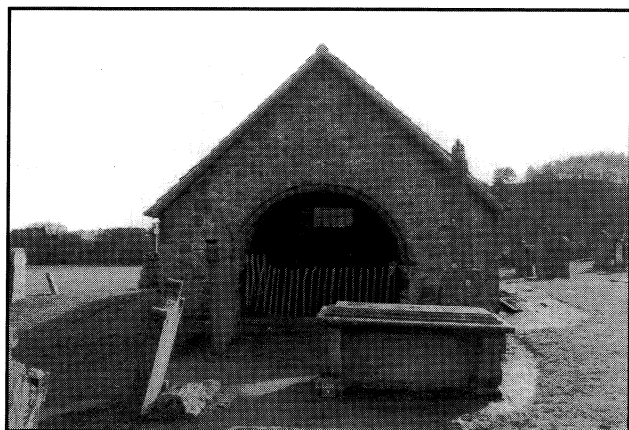
The Lindsay Burial Aisle is a rectangular structure, 7.35 m by 5.9 m. The north wall is open to the exterior through a large round archway, but restricted by a wrought iron fence. The west wall is pierced by a doorway at its southern end. The southern wall contains an internal arched memorial recess, above which is a partially blocked up and barred rectangular window. The eastern wall has a small arched niche at its southern end, and a 17th-century grave stone which has been relocated within the burial aisle and set vertically against the wall at its northern end.

Exterior elevations—general notes

The exterior elevations are predominantly of red sandstone, presumably quarried locally. Occasional unshaped and river-washed blocks of granite and quartz have been integrated randomly into the build. All four corners are keyed using shaped red sandstone blocks, although tooling on the corner blocks of the north wall may indicate a later build. The arch within the north wall is also of worked red sandstone. A more durable yellow sandstone has been used for some of the key architectural details such as the two skewputts, skews and finial on the south gable. Slate has been used to head the east and west walls. A lime mortar with relatively fine sand bonds the walls, though much of



Illus 4 Lindsay Aisle exterior.



Illus 5 The Lindsay Aisle.

this mortar has been lost around the lower walls. The effects of weathering are far more pronounced on the southern and eastern elevations; on the more sheltered western elevation there are large areas of what seems to be a lime rendering. Compared with the fine lime bonding, this rendering contains substantially larger inclusions. Patches of it show a regular swirling pattern as might be left by a square toothed spreading tool, although conversations with Ken Aitken, who lives nearby, indicate that the building was for many years covered by ivy, which may have been responsible for many of these patterned areas. All three exterior elevations show signs of substantial soil build up. Ground level to the east and west of the aisle is some 0.45 m above the internal floor level. This suggests that up to a quarter of the external elevation is below the ground, a detail which radically modifies the aspect of the structure. Three blocks were recorded in the ground surface directly to the west of the monument. It is unclear if they bear any relationship to it, although the largest has a shallow groove which coincides with the overhang of the slate roof.

North elevation

The dominant feature within the northern elevation is the large round arch, edged by a simple linear decorative motif which becomes a chamfered edge below the impost. Access to the interior is restricted by a wrought iron fence set into the top of two yellow sandstone blocks forming the coping of a low wall within the arch, which retains the external soil build up. Six wrought iron vertical bars are missing, of which five were probably recovered within the vault. The decorative ironwork within the fence echoes ironwork on the pedestrian access gate adjacent to the gatehouse. The stonework of the north elevation presents a far more consistent build than that of the other elevations, being composed of shaped blocks separated by three or four smaller packing stones with the completed courses being levelled using flat stones. Many blocks show a regular chisel pattern, rare in the remainder of the building.

West elevation

A wooden door, surrounded by bevelled stonework, is situated 1.27 m in from the southern corner. There is evidence on both sides of the door of bolt holes and settings for hinges no longer *in situ*. One of the blocks in the south jamb of the doorway has been marked by a mason. High on the wall immediately to the north of the doorway is shallow recess, probably a setting for a memorial plaque, formed by two jambs, a lintel and sill, all bearing shallow central hollows, perhaps the marks of fasteners or decorative fittings. The wall has a substantial vertical crack 1.15 m from the northern corner, probably where the west wall of the aisle is pulling away from a surviving fragment of the south wall of the nave. At the foot of the wall are two blocks set in the ground, shown on *illus 8*, perhaps a surviving fragment of the nave wall, although they are very fragmentary. The corner blocks to the north show a regular chisel pattern also seen on the two jambs of the memorial setting.

South elevation

A large, partially blocked and grated window sits slightly to the west of centre in this elevation. The skews rise to the apex of the gable at 45%, the lowest seated on shaped notches in the skewputts. The tops of the two skewputts are at the same level, but each has been shaped individually to bring the irregular rubble wall to the required height. At the apex of the gable is a square cut yellow sandstone finial, shaped to form a cross in plan with the southern side completing the line of the skews and the northern creating a smooth join to the stone ridge pieces. The build of the wall is fairly consistent, using relatively large partially worked blocks, with a packing of irregular small stone. There is an increased use of smaller packing stones beneath the lower window sill, which may reflect the wall being thinner here to accommodate the memorial arch on the inside.

The window is lined by large sandstone blocks with bevelled edges. The lintel is cracked centrally while the sill seems to have been reshaped into three individual blocks. The window is barred by a wrought-iron grille of four vertical bars and at least five horizontal, with the lower part of the window being blocked up with an irregular small stone packing. The packing is lined along its upper edge with slate. The bars are set within drilled holes in the stone, and interlock with one another in the traditional Scottish way. The two vertical bars to the west thread through holes formed in the horizontal bars, whereas the two to the east are pierced by the horizontals. The grate is locked by the lowest of the horizontals which reverses the pattern, eastern vertical bars pierced, western threading through, so making it impossible to slide the bars along each other. This lowest visible horizontal is itself locked in position by a small packing stone which is mortared into the window surround.

An interlocking grille is impossible to dismantle or assemble *in situ*, and impossible to insert in a pre-existing opening. It must be prefabricated and installed first, and the wall built around it. In this case, the grille is bent out of square, the window is partly blocked, the lintel is cracked in two, the sill is broken into three pieces, and three of the sockets have been broken open and patched. Some of this could be caused by the iron bars rusting and bursting their sockets, but the damage is extensive, and probably results from desperate improvisation by workmen who thought they could manipulate the grille into an existing opening by drilling the sockets oversize and partially dismantling the sill and jambs, and found it was impossible after they had gone too far to stop. There may be further horizontal bars concealed in the lower blocking, but there is no evidence for them. The concentration of smaller stones beneath the sill may also indicate patching and repairs, though it may only reflect the memorial arch behind making the wall thinner here, therefore requiring smaller stones. It seems odd that the workmen and their client had the skill and resources to make something as complicated and expensive as an interlocking iron grille, without knowing how to install it properly. Perhaps they were trying to re-use an old grille, for example taken from the castle, and had no skill or experience in this kind of work.

External shutters are indicated by four iron fittings *in situ* around the window. Three hollows may indicate the position of further fittings. A modern removable fine mesh grate has been attached internally.

East elevation

The plainness of this wall perhaps reflects a blank interior wall supporting a retable behind the altar. The most striking features are the two vertical cracks. The first is 1.2 m from the northern corner, apparently flanked by large blocks on its southern side. North of this crack the build is different and this is highlighted by the use of horizontal slabs and far less, yet more organised, stone packing. Like the similar crack in the west wall, this probably reflects the join between the aisle and the original south wall of the nave. The second crack is smaller and located centrally within the upper half of the wall. The corner blocks to the north show a regular chisel pattern.

Aisle floor

Internally the floor is covered by rectangular red sandstone flagstones covering an area 5.55 m by 4.15 m. Access is gained to the vault by a rectangular opening 1.25 m by 1.15 m, set centrally within and flush to the northern internal elevation. The opening is framed by yellow sandstone flags which are lapped to receive a wooden hatch. The remains of the most recent hatch were recovered within the vault. Two screws survive within the lap joint, heads flush with the flags suggesting the hatch was in position and sealed prior to it

rotting, although these may have been used to secure the more recent plywood cover. Spanning the stairway is a removable flagstone 'a', half the thickness of the surrounding flags, and supported on their lapped edges. The remains of four iron screws form a small 80 mm square at its north west corner, presumably to secure a fitting now lost. Lifting flag 'a' would enlarge the opening and allow coffins to be lowered down the steep stairs without excessive and unseemly tilting.

A number of flagstones show chisel marks. This may be incidental, but could indicate inverting at some time, exposing a less worn or less finished surface. Chisel marks are frequent around the setting of the 17th-century gravestone. Flags 'b' and 'c', at the north west and south-east corners, are built into the wall and are of yellow sandstone. A number of flags to the south west are cracked, most likely due to subsidence of the vault beneath. Mouldings at floor level of the arch have been chiselled away beside flag 'd'.

North wall—interior

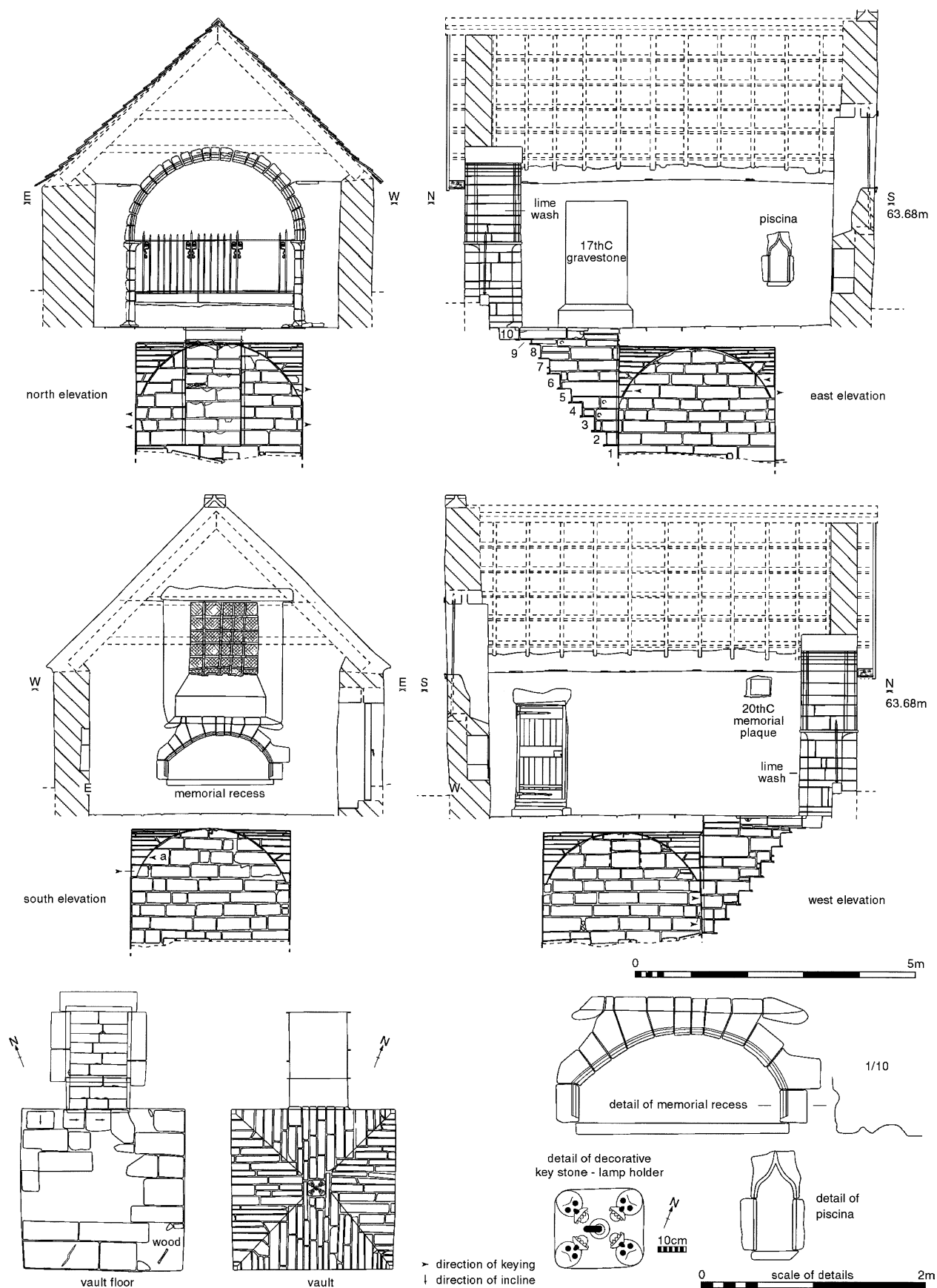
Internally the decoration of the arch repeats that seen externally. The wall on either side of the arch narrows to 0.5 m above the head of the east and west walls, with only the arch voussoirs retaining the full width. This internal wall-head is capped in slate, perhaps suggesting that this is a surviving fragment of the south wall of the nave, the slate capping serving to protect the nave roof timbers from rising damp. Traces of a fine lime wash are preserved within the arch.

East wall—interior

The head of this wall is again capped in slate. Beyond the slate the build is inclined at approximately 45° toward the exterior. The collars of the roof trusses are incorporated within this build. At the southern end of the wall a *piscina* is formed from four worked blocks. The sill is undecorated. The two side blocks have a simple rounded moulding along their inner edge. The moulding continues into the lintel which has been shaped into an ogee arch. Interestingly, the lintel is only 90 mm thick whereas the *piscina* is up to 170 mm deep. This has created a void behind the lintel giving access to a small portion of the internal packing of the wall. To the north a 17th-century gravestone is held vertically by four iron brackets set into the wall.

South wall—interior

The lower wall is dominated by an arched memorial recess 1.8 m wide by 0.8 m high and 0.4 m deep. The front edge and underside of the recess is decorated with a filleted roll moulding, while the sill remains undecorated. The settling of some of these blocks has flattened the arch. The voussoirs in the centre of the arch are shaped on top to form the gently chamfered sill of the original window opening. Similar chamfering on either jamb of the window has created a wide internal



Illus 6 Lindsay Aisle interior.

splay. The lower window is again blocked by packing which incorporates the iron bars of the grate within it. The window is spanned by two stone lintels. Between them a 0.12 m void may once have been filled by a wooden lintel, like two of the doorway lintels at Eassie Old Church (D P Bowler, pers comm). The iron grate is set into holes drilled into the exterior lintel. The wall narrows above the lintels, but less so than the northern wall above the arch.

West wall—interior

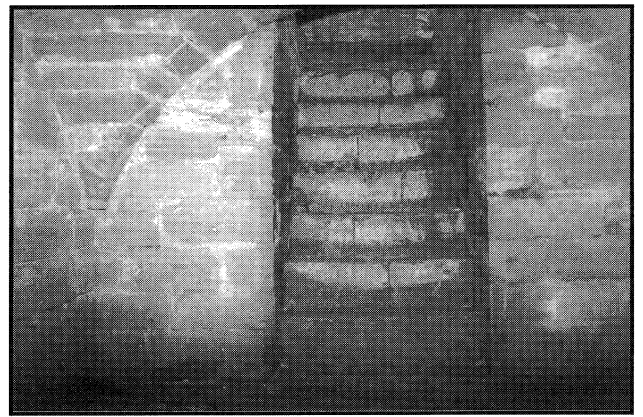
The wall-head is as described for the eastern internal wall. A modern memorial plaque has been set high into the northern end of this wall. To the south a doorway of 1.7 m by 0.9 m stands to its full height, but only the upper 1.4 m of this doorway was visible from the exterior until recent clearance. This doorway, as with the window of the southern wall, is also spanned by two stone lintels. The door sits at the top of two shallow steps of 0.13 m. Hollows for hinge settings and bolt-holes can be seen on both jambs of the doorway.

Vault

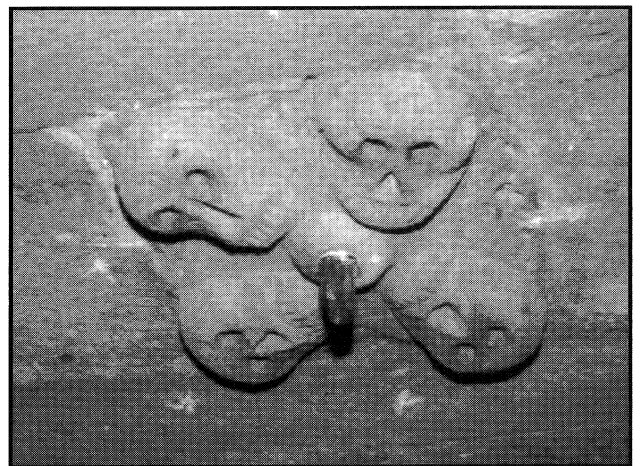
The stair into the vault is composed of ten steps. Step 1 rises 0.13 m from the vault floor. Steps 2 to 8 are a consistent 0.25 m high by 0.2 m wide. Step 9 at only 70 mm high seems designed to fill the remaining space between stairway and aisle floor, with step 10 at 0.2 m high being one of the lapped aisle flagstones. All the steps show a certain amount of wear, but steps 8 and 9 are extremely worn. Three small half-spherical hollows, about 200 mm in diameter, are set into the east wall of the stairway, two at about 1 m above the foot of the stairs, and a third just below the ledge for the trapdoor. One of the authors saw numerous similar ‘cup-marks’ in a brick pier in the early 1960s, apparently cut by naughty schoolboys rotating pennies on edge while waiting for a bus. The present examples may have an equally fortuitous cause.

The vault floor is 2.9 m square, with the western wall being slightly bowed. The floor is covered by heavily disturbed yellow sandstone flags, mostly rectangular, although the largest was L-shaped. The undersides of the flags are slightly bevelled. Three flags to the north-west are steeply inclined indicating subsidence into a void beneath.

The five lower courses of the vault, up to the imposts of the vault roof, seem to be of one build. This build continues into the stairwell to include steps 1 to 4. The vault roof, which is cross or groin vaulted, has been built onto these lower courses and is supported by four corner imposts. This building sequence is illustrated by the stonework of the vault roof being sealed behind the stone work of the side walls. Block ‘a’ is the only block within the side walls of the vault to pass behind the blocks of the vault roof. This may indicate that a certain amount of the southern wall had been built up to support the south-eastern impost while the vault roof



Illus 7 *The burial vault.*



Illus 8 *Detail of the lamp holder.*

was under construction. The remainder of the blocks within the side walls have been cut to fit within the arc of the vault roof, with the upper section of the stairway being added last.

A 0.52 m square recess is set into the upper western elevation of the vault. The north and south edges of the recess have an inverse bevel, which effectively traps the two blocks set internally within the recess. These same blocks are separated by three slate packing stones, a material not seen anywhere else within the vault. The recess could mark the entrance of a sealed burial niche, though this is not known elsewhere, or a ventilation shaft, though no other evidence of this was found, or it might be a lamp recess. It most probably held a commemorative plaque. No evidence for a plaque was found in the debris, but it might have been removed when the Lindsay Aisle changed hands, for example in 1715.

At the centre of vault is a splendid yellow sandstone keystone and lamp holder, with four naively carved skulls surrounding a central iron lamphook. The remainder of the vault is of red sandstone, the blocks over the stairway having a small bevelled edge. The N–S vault is notably 0.02 m higher than the E–W vault.

The lower vault walls consistently key into one another, except in the south-west corner, where the three courses below the impost are packed with small, irregularly sized blocks. Also, the upper blocks of the

southern vault wall, although shaped, have irregular broken edges as if regularly removed and replaced.

Chronology

The surviving structure reveals three major phases. The first is the mid-16th-century building of the aisle. The large blocks to the south of the cracks in the east and west external walls are clearly the original butt joints on to the earlier medieval church. The window to the south would not yet have been partially blocked, and the iron fittings around the exterior of this window were designed to support wooden shutters. The internal splay of the window opening would have reflected light deep within the structure, especially if a thin plaster wash seen within the archway covered all of the internal walls. The similarity in the lintel arrangement of both window and doorway point to the doorway being a part of the original build. The integration of the voussoirs of the memorial recess with the sill of the south window implies that the recess too is original. The recess could have held a memorial sculpture. The niche or *piscina* in the east wall also seems original and would have been associated with an altar set centrally against the wall.

It may be questioned whether the large round arch in the north wall of the aisle is original; the aisle could have opened directly into the nave without such a division. However, this would have created problems in supporting the nave roof. Also, the decorative mouldings are symmetrical on the inside and outside faces of the arch, indicating that it was meant to be seen from both sides, and its piers rise from the interior floor level of the aisle, not the higher ground level of the graveyard outside, indicating that the nave was still standing when it was built. Also, the similarity of detail and symmetrical arrangement with the memorial recess in the south wall suggest that it was part of a single unified concept.

The second phase is dominated by the building of the vault. There are a number of details which point to the vault being a later addition. The build of the vault is of fine ashlar, contrasting with the rubble construction of the aisle, and the narrow step 9 indicates a mason having to respect a pre-existing internal aisle floor level.

The mouldings on the eastern pier of the large round arch have been roughly trimmed away perhaps at this time, to allow more space for movement around the open trapdoor to the vault. The barring of the south window of the aisle is clearly a late modification, as it seems to have involved extensive alteration to the sill, jambs and lintel of the window. The need to make the aisle secure might have coincided with the creation of a burial vault beneath it. The style of construction of the grille seems a little early to coincide with the 19th-century fear of body-snatchers, and is quite different in detail from the rivetted iron cage mortsafes at Logierait in Perthshire, although the grille itself may perhaps be re-used.

The final phase begins in 1818, with the removal of the parish church to its present site. A veneer of new stone squares off the corners to the north and accounts for the tool marks and the differences in build seen throughout the northern elevation. The thin infill of the north gable wall above the arch probably dates to this same period; when the church was standing, the aisle roof would have joined the nave roof, and no north gable would be required. Once the church was gone, the gable would be required, and building it thin would avoid overloading the arch.

The setting for a plaque on the outside of the west wall probably belongs to this phase, as there are similarities between the tooling of the two large blocks and work on the north gable.

Survey of the burial ground

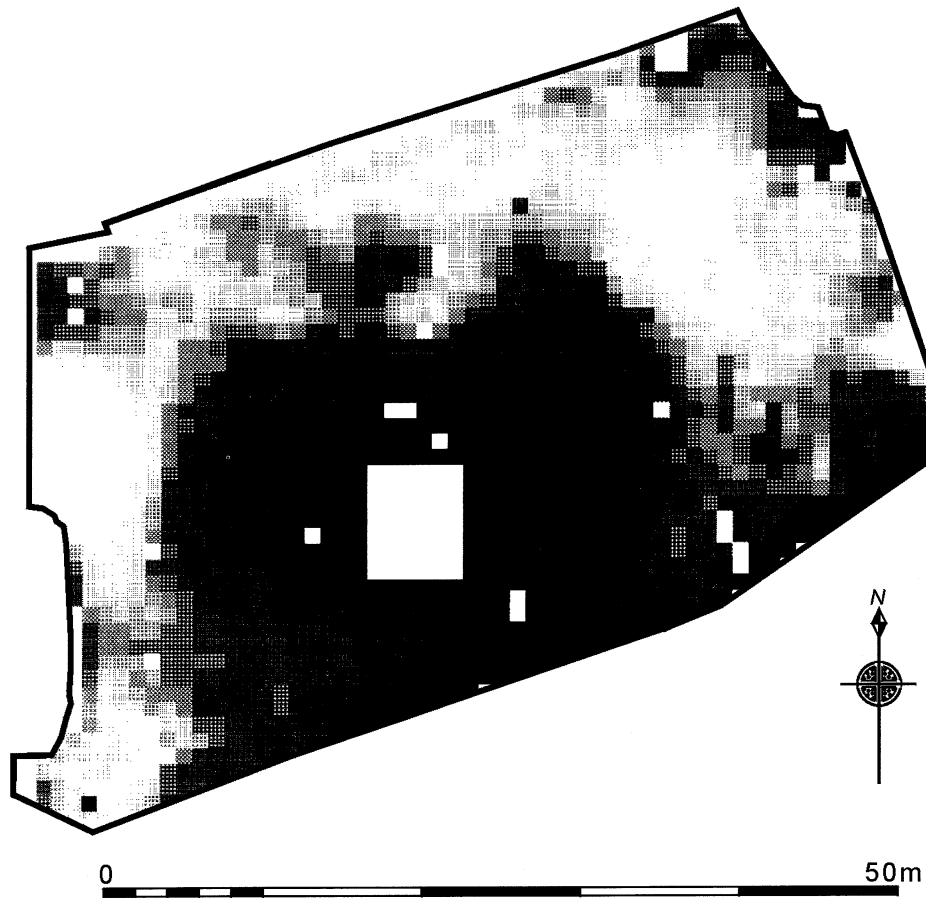
David Bowler

Resistivity (Illus 9 and 10)

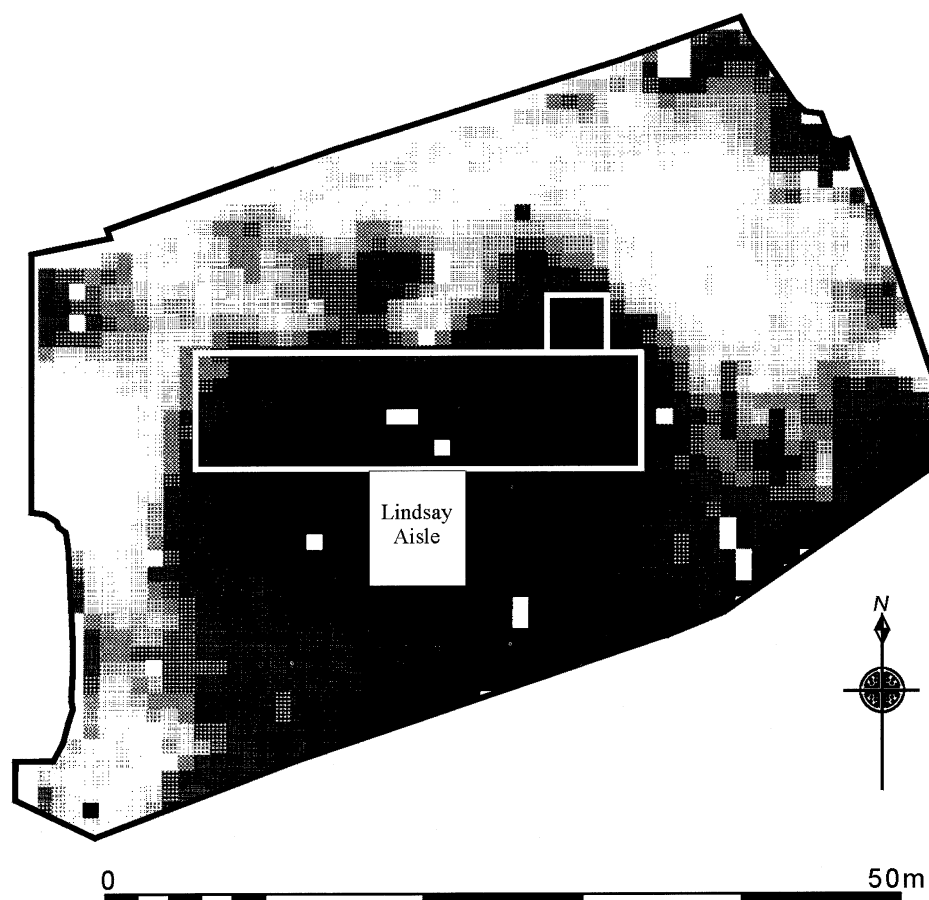
The approximate position of the old church can be inferred from its relation to the Lindsay Aisle, particularly as both are shown together on an estate plan of 1766 (Perry, above, illus 3). To refine this knowledge, a resistivity survey was conducted over the whole of the original burial ground by David Bowler and Fraser Stewart from the 9th to 18th April. A twin electrode Geoscan RM4 machine set at 2kOhm with a remote pair of electrodes was used, with readings at 1 m intervals. A grid was laid out orthogonal to the Lindsay Aisle, and data was collected in 9 squares of 20 m x 20 m. The results were plotted using Geoplot 2.01 software, and the results are shown in illustration 5, without any filtering or enhancement.

The survey was hampered by frequent heavy showers, which it was feared might waterlog the site and swamp the survey with uniformly low resistance readings, but in fact the results were clear, though surprising. The centre of the site stands out as an area of low resistivity c 28 m long east–west, and c 13 m wide north–south, corresponding to the plan of the church, perhaps surrounded by a margin of disturbance and debris, especially in the south around the Lindsay Aisle. What is surprising is that it appears as an area of low resistivity, whereas rubble and masonry normally show high resistivity, because they drain more freely than the surrounding soil. However, the whole site lies on very free-draining glacial sands and gravels, and in wet weather immediate drainage of topsoil may have more effect than progressive drying of subsoil. In these conditions masonry and rubble may act as a barrier to drainage of rainwater, especially if there are remains of a flagstone floor within the church, or if floors and foundations were bonded or bedded in clay.

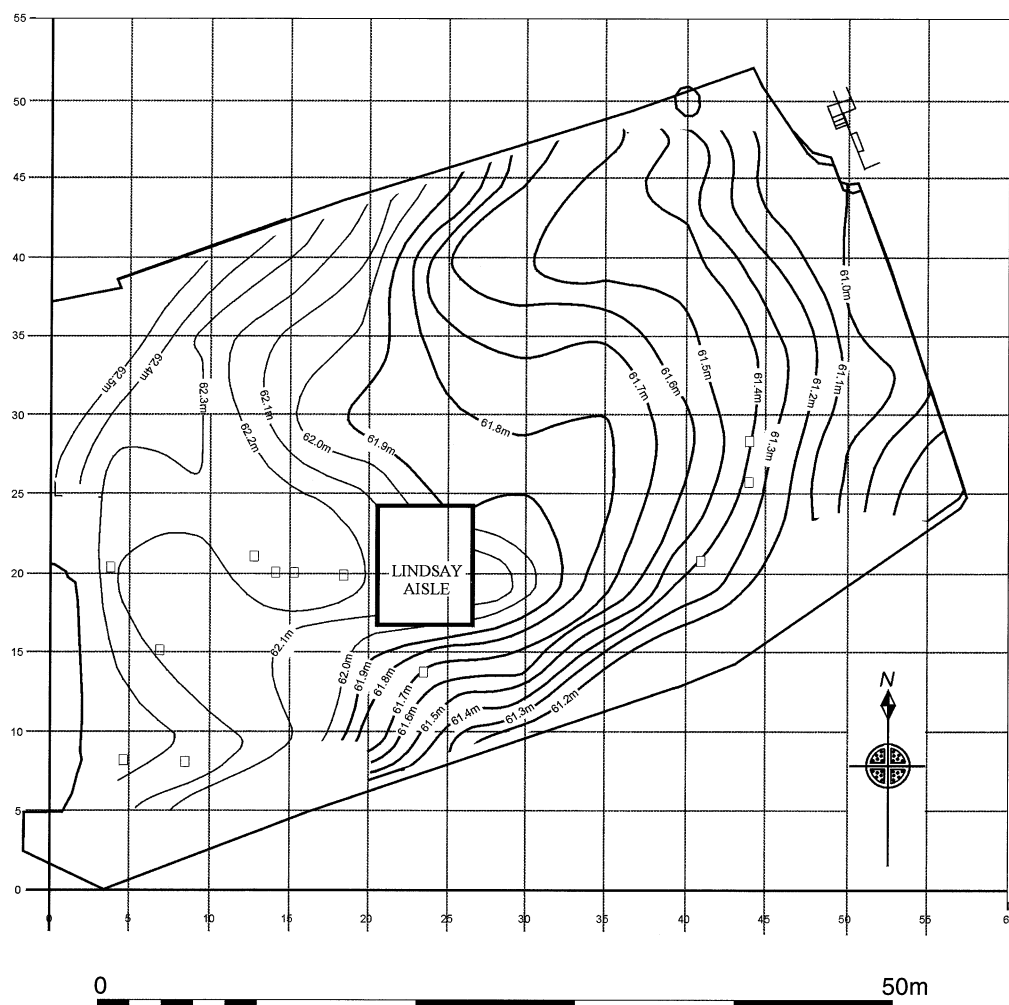
The extension of the church ‘platform’ southward to envelop the Lindsay Aisle is not surprising, especially as the rise of ground level on either side of the aisle makes it obvious that it must be surrounded by a deposit of rubble or debris, perhaps including the upcast from the



Illus 9 Resistivity survey (dark areas are low resistivity).



Illus 10 Resistivity survey with suggested church plan.



Illus 11 Contour plan and pre-1818 grave stones.

excavation of the burial vault beneath it. There is a less prominent extension in the north-east corner of the church, which may be an accidental effect of errors in the technique, but could indicate an otherwise undocumented annexe to the building. If pre-Reformation in date, this could be a sacristy to the north of the chancel, beside the altar.

On the other hand, there is a 1717 reference to an east door (Perry, above), and if the post-Reformation church had been re-organised with the pulpit in the middle of the south wall, the north-east corner would be a natural point for an entrance door, perhaps sheltered by a porch. The annexe could also have been an undocumented external stair to the east loft. The arrangements at Edzell apparently left the Lindsay Aisle behind the pulpit, making its function unclear, and different from some other T-plan churches, where the pulpit is in the centre of the T, and all three branches face in towards it.

The 1710 reference to the door of the Laird's loft (Perry, above) strongly suggests that this was in the Lindsay Aisle, which still has a side door, and certainly belonged to the Laird. However the aisle roof is not really high enough to accommodate a loft easily,

especially given the round arch which would have divided it from the nave. Perhaps the laird's private seating was known as a 'loft' by custom, but was actually on the ground floor; or perhaps the round arch is a later addition. On the other hand, the laird's actual pew might have been in some sort of gallery projecting forward from the aisle into the nave. Placing the Laird behind the minister's back and perhaps even above his head may seem a little odd, but reflects rather well the ambivalent relationship between the Lindsays and some of the ministers (Perry, above). Unfortunately, a heavy-handed repointing of the aisle interior some years ago has obscured any traces of screens, galleries or partitions, which might resolve how the aisle was arranged and used.

Contour survey (Illus 11)

Irregularities in ground level around the Lindsay Aisle probably correspond to the ground plan of the old church; the likely area of the nave is a flat platform, bounded by very slight banks, after which the ground generally falls away, except on either side of the Lindsay Aisle, where there are very steep banks, perhaps formed

by rubble, or by upcast from digging the subterranean burial vault beneath. It was decided to record the surface irregularities by means of a contour survey. Spot heights were taken at 5 m intervals on the grid previously set out for the resistivity survey, and from these contours were interpolated at a vertical interval of 0.1 m. The results are shown in Illus 4, and generally confirm the impression given by the resistivity survey of a level platform in the place where the nave was expected to be. The platform is even more evident to the naked eye.

Gravestones predating the demolition of the church in 1818 presumably lay outwith the church. These are shown on illustration 4, and suggest that the nave cannot have extended more than c 15 m east of the aisle.

Watching brief

This was conducted by David Bowler on 14th September 1999, when Historic Scotland workmen dug a small trench outside the door in the west wall of the aisle, in order to restore access, and remove the heap of damp earth which had made the door rot. The sides of the trench were revetted in stone, and the bottom paved in gravel, forming a ramp down to the door approaching from the south.

The trench cut into one of the prominent banks of earth on either side of the aisle. The layers exposed were mostly loamy soils, with finds of 19th or 20th-century date, and large amounts of disarticulated but well-preserved human bone, as little as 0.36 m below the surface, which must have been reburied after disturbance, perhaps in fairly recent gravedigging. Tooth and jaw fragments showed no signs of modern dentistry, so are not very recent. Bones were left in place where possible; where disturbance was unavoidable, they were lifted, bagged and set aside for reburial as found.

A sandstone door sill was revealed, 0.36 m below the surface, set on a damp-proof or packing course of blue slate, so probably a 19th or 20th-century repair. The bevells of the door jambs continue below the top of the sill, confirming it was a late insertion. They may even turn under the sill, but this lay just below the bottom of the trench. In front of the sill was a very rough pavement of four irregular sandstone slabs, rather like a doormat, over which was found a clay tobacco pipe stem. The arrises of the door jambs were much sharper where buried, indicating a marked acceleration in erosion, not only since the sill was inserted, but even since it went out of use.

The excavation barely reached the 19th-century ground surface, itself a little higher than the aisle floor surface. It was therefore not possible to see the aisle foundations or the medieval ground surface. There was some evidence of demolition material, but no sign of upcast from digging the vault.

Comparison with other churches

The Lindsay Aisle is very similar to the Guthrie Aisle, also in Angus, described by Apted and Robertson (1964). The Guthrie Aisle measured 28' x 20' (8.5 m x 6 m) (Apted & Robertson 1964, 266) compared with the Lindsay Aisle at 7.35 m x 5.9 m, and lay on the south side of a now demolished church. The round arch, south window, north-east *piscina* and south-west door are all common to both, the only obvious differences being a west window, and mullions in the south window. Unlike Edzell church, however, Guthrie church was recorded by its minister, James Will, in 1815, before being demolished in 1826 (Apted & Robertson 1964, 262, 278). Will measured the old church externally as 76'6" x 21'6" (23.3 m x 6.5 m), longer and slightly narrower than Eassie (below) at 18.8 m x 7 m (61.7' x 23'), but smaller both ways than the maximum possible dimensions for Edzell (below), 28 m x 8 m. Curiously, Will measured the Guthrie Aisle externally as 25'11" x 18'3", which disagrees with George Hay's plan, published by Apted and Robertson (1964, 267, 275). The difference in length (2'1") is explicable because Will must have measured from the south face of the south wall of the nave, then still standing, but his width measurement of 18'3" matches neither the external width (20') nor the internal (14'6") on Hay's plan. Will records that the decoration inside the Guthrie Aisle included the arms of the Earl of Crawford, a family closely connected also with Edzell (Perry, above).

Eassie Church (Eassie and Nevay, NO 3525 4745), also in Angus, between Meigle and Glamis, may be better known for the fine Pictish cross-slab preserved within it, but the ruins of the church itself are of interest for the present purpose, being roofless but mostly complete up to the wall-head. Eassie Church is a simple rectangle, 18.8 m x 7 m (61.7' x 23') with walls 0.75 m thick. The dimensions of 56'6" x 15'6" recorded by MacGibbon and Ross must be internal (MacGibbon & Ross 1897, III 560–2). The skewputts on the gable ends are very similar to those on the Lindsay Aisle, and like the Lindsay Aisle, Eassie is built of sandstone rubble. There are tall rectangular windows in the gable ends, like the one in the Lindsay Aisle but larger, and in the south wall there are two doors and three small rectangular windows, comparable to the ones shown on the 1766 estate plan of Edzell (illus 3). There are no windows or doors on the north side, presumably because this is the dark, cold and windy side of the church.

There is a door in the east gable, at the north-east corner of the church. It is rather roughly formed, and must be a post-Reformation insertion, as it would be directly beside the altar of the pre-Reformation church. It contrasts interestingly with the north-east porch conjectured for Edzell on the basis of the resistivity survey. It may be very late, as it does not appear on the sketch plan in MacGibbon and Ross 1897 (III, 560–2), but the rotten state of the middle wooden lintel suggests it is of some age. The bellcote on the apex of



Illus 12 *Edzell Old Church. Reconstruction, looking north-east.*

the west gable appears to be a late addition, but probably had its counterpart at Edzell, given the 1726 decision to replace a broken bell (Perry, above), indeed the Edzell bellcote may have been rather grander, as in 1727 *two* bells were purchased, though of course at least one of these might have been a handbell.

The 'platform' indicated by resistivity, contours and early gravestones at Edzell is rather larger than Eassie church, perhaps 28 m x 13 m. However, as the south wall of the nave is fixed by reference to the standing Lindsay Aisle, the available width is reduced to 8 m, close to the 7 m seen at Eassie, and in practice Edzell church is unlikely to have been much wider, as this would lead to inconveniently high gables and wide roof trusses. The gables at Eassie already look high enough, and even have room for a little 'attic' window over the main one in the west gable. Length does not create the same problems, and there would be no difficulty giving Edzell the extra 9 m indicated by the survey.

The evidence is consistent with a 'stretched' version of Eassie, with the Lindsay Aisle added to its south side, essentially as seen on the estate plan of 1766.

Acknowledgements

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Note on sources

Only readily available published and unpublished sources have been researched. The Crawford Papers in the National Library of Scotland have not been examined: prior written permission from the Earl of Crawford is required. Other information may exist in unpublished material from the Vatican Archives held in the Department of Scottish History, University of Glasgow and the Department of Private Law, University of Dundee. F D Bardgett's PhD thesis in Edinburgh University Library contains information on the exchange of benefices concerning Edzell without consent of the patron, the Earl of Crawford.

The National Monuments Record of Scotland contains two photographs of the cross-slab, as well as eleven photographs of gravestones in the churchyard. There are also four copies of architectural drawings of the new church of Edzell in 1818.

Appendix

Pre-Reformation clergy (post-Reformation clergy are listed in Fasti).

nb i List not exhaustive.

ii 'Master' means Master of Arts; 'sir' is a clergyman who was not a Master of Arts—he may have been a Bachelor of Arts or Law.

1342–49 Master William de Grinlaw or Grynaldo, rector (CPL, iii, 94 and 484; CPP, i, 131 and 188)

1352/1353– William Grenlaw, rector (CPL, iii, 484)

–1383 Cuthbert Fernarial, rector (Burns 1976, 92–3)

1383–1428 Hugh Henryson (Henrici), rector (Burns 1976, 92 3; Cameron 1934, 96)

1428– William Vischart, rector (Dunlop 1956, 209–10; Cameron 1934, 96)

before 1432 William Lychton, rector (Dunlop & Cowan 1970, 245)

- 1451 Robert Manuel, rector (Kirk et al 1997, no 445)
 1451– John Kennedy, rector (Kirk et al 1997, no 445)
 1457/1458– Alexander Michelson, rector (Kirk et al 1997, nos 644, 681)
 1471 sir William Wischarde, vicar (RMS, ii, no 1028)
 1505/1525 Master Charles Fotheringhame, rector (RMS, ii, nos 2850, 3249, 3646, 3648; iv, no 2946; iii, no 340)
 1535/1541 sir David Broun, vicar pensioner (RMS, iii, no 1477; Brechin Register, i, 227)
 1535 sir William Myl, curate (RMS, iii, no 1477)

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 HR173/1 Heritors Records minute book 1859–1929
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 GD45 Dalhousie Muniments
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Abstract

Clearance and survey for Angus Council showed that evidence for the missing nave may be preserved below ground, and also in parts of the surviving Lindsay Aisle. Documentary research shows that the church had a turbulent and eventful history.

Keywords

Angus
church
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