



Community Archaeology Study Days 2007/8



Graveyard Surveys at Acaster Selby
With Yvonne Clarke and Jon Kenny
Saturday, 25th August 2007

Feedback from the study day:

'Very informative, interesting and enjoyable.'

'Another super session! Many thanks!'

'Plenty of items of interest to encourage wider reading.'

The study of graveyards provides information on the burial practices of past peoples. Graveyard surveys provide genealogical information and allow for an examination of the sex and age of the inhabitants of a particular community through time. Lists are made of the inscriptions on graveyard monuments, and plans can be drawn up to assist future visitors in finding specific areas of the graveyard. Details of the monuments, including the materials used, the monuments' dimensions, and carving styles, can be recorded along with photographic records of separate features. Information can be gathered about local personalities within a community as well as other statistics such as the occupations of residents and infant mortality rates. Thus, graveyards provide varied information that can tell us a great deal about past communities.



This study day focused on a survey of graveyards at Acaster Selby, a village six miles south of York. The participants learned about the proper methods of recording graveyard monuments and plans using Acaster Selby as an example. Some of the issues discussed included the proper recording of inscriptions and monument types and the construction of plans to plot out the extent of specific graveyards. An interesting and productive day!