

## Death Source A

The separate Resource Material for use with Section A.

**This extract is an account of John Macintire, who was buried alive, in Edinburgh in 1824 and was taken up by the resurrection-men, and sold to the doctors to be dissected.**

**Miraculous Circumstance- this account is of the ‘many strange and wonderful things’ which he saw and felt.**

“I had been some time ill of a low and lingering fever. My strength gradually wasted, and I could see by the doctor that I had nothing to hope. One day, towards evening, I was seized with strange and indescribable quiverings. I saw around my bed, innumerable strange faces; they were bright and visionary, and without bodies. There was light and solemnity, and I tried to move, but could not; I could recollect, with perfectness, but the power of motion had departed. I heard the sound of weeping at my pillow, and the voice of the nurse say, ‘He is dead.’ I cannot describe what I felt at these words. I exerted my utmost power to stir myself, but I could not move even an eyelid. My father drew his hand over my face and closed my eyelids. The world was then darkened, but I could still hear, and feel and suffer.

For three days a number of friends called to see me. I heard them in low accents speak of what I was, and more than one touched me with his finger. The coffin was then procured, and I was laid in it. I felt the coffin lifted and borne away. I heard and felt it placed in the hearse; it halted, and the coffin was taken out. I felt myself carried on the shoulders of men; I heard the cords of the coffin moved. I felt it swing as dependent by them. It was lowered and rested upon the bottom of the grave.

Dreadful was the effort I then made to exert the power of action, but my whole frame was immovable. The sound of the rattling mould as it covered me, was far more tremendous than thunder. This also ceased, and all was silent. This is death, thought I, and soon the worms will be crawling about my flesh. In the contemplation of this hideous thought, I heard a low sound in the earth over me, and I fancied that the worms

and reptiles were coming. The sound continued to grow louder and nearer. Can it be possible, thought I, that my friends suspect that they have buried me too soon? The hope was truly like bursting through the gloom of death. The sound ceased.

They dragged me out of the coffin by the head, and carried me swiftly away. When borne to some distance, I was thrown down like a clod, and by the interchange of one or two brief sentences, I discovered that I was in the hands of two of those robbers, who live by plundering the grave, and selling the bodies of parents, and children, and friends. Being rudely stripped of my shroud, I was placed naked on a table. In a short time I heard by the bustle in the room that the doctors and students were assembling. When all was ready the Demonstrator took his knife, and pierced my bosom. I felt a dreadful crackling, as it were, throughout my whole frame; a convulsive shudder instantly followed, and a shriek of horror rose from all present.

The ice of death was broken up; my trance was ended. The utmost exertions were made to restore me, and in the course of an hour I was in full possession of all my faculties.