

Ancient Monuments Laboratory
Report 22/97

WALL PAINTING CONDITION AUDIT,
GOODRICH CASTLE, HEREFORDSHIRE

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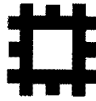
Summary

This condition audit of wall paintings at Goodrich Castle includes a wall painting record, general audit information, documentation of original materials and execution of the painting, and deterioration and damage including previously used materials and treatment, as well as proposals for treatment and monitoring strategies.

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Goodrich Castle Herefordshire

The following report has been generated by the Wall Painting Section database. This archival system provides a computerised record of all wall paintings in English Heritage Historic Properties and is intended to comprehensively document the collection. Each report has been subdivided into four sections to present the data in a clear format. These include:

1 **Wall Painting Record:**

Includes a description of the site and paintings, as well as archival information, such as bibliographic references and photographic records.

2 **General Audit Information:**

Describes any monitoring undertaken and a synopsis of future conservation requirements.

3 **Technique:**

Documents the nature and condition of the original materials and execution of the painting which is described according to its stratigraphy and any related analysis.

4 **Deterioration and damage, added materials, treatment:**

Deterioration and damage lists the types of alterations which may have occurred, that is either deterioration (natural alterations such as cracking or delamination) or mechanical damage (such as graffiti).

Added Materials documents all non-original materials present on or within a painting. These may include naturally occurring substances (accretions, such as dirt and dust) or deliberately added materials (coatings, coverings and repairs).

Treatment documents previous interventions and proposed treatment and monitoring strategies.

Throughout each section, an area of painting is assigned a number between 1 and 4 which is intended as a general indication of present condition. These are: 1 good, 2 fair, 3 poor, 4 unacceptable.

This report is based on information gathered prior to March 1996 and does not include any changes in condition, further research or treatment undertaken after this date. Amended editions will be produced as necessary.

1 Wall Painting Record

Property name GOODRICH CASTLE
Region Midlands **County** Herefordshire
Location of painting Chapel
Orientation RECESSES OF NORTH, SOUTH AND EAST WALLS
Century 13th **Date** **Height (cm)** 0 **Width (cm)** 0
Subjects included
Masonry pattern
Various decorative motifs

Description

HISTORY OF THE SITE [from Renn 1993:20-21]

Goodrich Castle is mentioned first in a document dated 1102, and apparently acquired its name from Godric Mapeston, who, at the time of the Domesday Book (1086) held Hulle, a village 2 miles east of the present castle. The Norman stone tower was probably built as a replacement during the war between King Stephen and Empress Matilda (1138 to 1153), when the area was disputed between the Earls of Gloucester and Hereford.

The first proper mention of the castle was in 1204, when King John gave it to William Marshal upon his marriage, in return for his support. The stone walls and towers were probably built at this time. When William Marshal's heir died in 1245 without offspring, the castle passed to his niece's husband, William de Valence, who was half brother to King Henry III. Grants of oak trees from royal forests in 1280 and 1282, and the presence of royal clerks and workmen nearby in 1296, all suggest that major rebuilding work was taking place here during the reign of Edward I. The chapel and its decoration are probably attributable to this period. William was exiled twice, in 1258 and 1264/5. He took part in the Crusade of 1270-73, and died in 1296. His widow continued to live at the castle until her death in 1307.

The castle passed into various hands until 1643, when it was the site of several sieges during the Civil War. It was finally partly demolished to prevent its continued defensive use. It was purchased in 1740 for domestic use, but by 1828 it had ceased to be inhabitable, and a house (now demolished) was built nearby. By the 1890s the castle was overgrown, and by 1925 it was repaired and cleared by the Ministry of Works.

THE CHAPEL AND DECORATION

The castle (c.1300) is square in plan, with round towers at three of the corners and a round-fronted gatehouse at the fourth. It is built on bare rock foundations of local stone (a type of red sandstone). The chapel flanks the gatehouse on its south side.

The chapel retains some 13th-century features, such as the aumbry and sedile (priest's seat recess) at the east end. Fragments of original plaster and limewash remain on the east wall, south side, as well as within the window recesses (two on the south, one on the north). The two recesses of the south wall and that of the north wall contain traces of painted decoration. These scant remains only give an indication of the type of decoration originally employed in the chapel. There are traces of a type of red-line masonry pattern within the soffits of the recesses, and what may have been a foliate border within the western recess on the south wall.

Correspondence from 1964 refers to '14th century fragments of wall painting on plaster' and indicates their need for examination. However, it is unclear whether this was ever carried out and there are no other records of the existence of the wall paintings.

Photographic Record

TM colour slides 25/2/95

Photograph search, DOE files, EH photo library (JD24/03/95)
Goodrich Castle; no relevant DOE photographs found.

Bibliography

D. Renn, Goodrich Castle, EH guidebook, 1993.

2 General Audit Information

Property name	GOODRICH CASTLE	County	Herefordshire
Region	Midlands		
Location	Chapel		
Orientation	RECESSES OF NORTH, SOUTH AND EAST WALLS		
Century 13th	Date	Height (cm)0	Width (cm) 0
Auditor(s)	JD, TM	Start date	21/02/95

Overall condition score 4

Recommendations

The Conservation Studio has only recently become aware of these fragments of painted decoration, and therefore several recommendations can be made:

- 1) The fragments should be recorded and their condition documented. Their existence of these fragments was (previous to the Condition Audit of 1994-5) unknown, and there are no records of them or their past treatment within the Conservation Studio files. For this reason it is highly recommended that they be fully recorded.
- 2) There is serious damp (and related salt) damage in the crypt below the chapel, and at the base of the chapel walls. This appears to have been a cause of damage in the past, however, at the present time this does not appear to be directly affecting the remains of plaster.
- 3) New edge repairs are urgently needed for the painted and unpainted fragments of plaster throughout the chapel. Some small fills may also be required [Timescale: within 2 years].
- 4) The plaster fragments urgently require consolidation. Most of this work can be carried out by specialists trained in the conservation of historic plaster. In addition, removal of the cement-type pointing and re-pointing with a more suitable material could be considered [Timescale: within 2 years].
- 5) Staff should be made aware of the fragments and should visually monitor their condition.
- 6) There is evidence of infiltration of moisture at the northern edge of the ceiling. In addition moisture was found to be collecting under concrete slabs which cover the roof above during the audit. Remedial building work maybe required to ensure damp proofing of this area.

3 Audit Information: Technique

Property name GOODRICH CASTLE
Region Midlands **County** Herefordshire
Location Chapel
Orientation RECESSES OF NORTH, SOUTH AND EAST WALLS
Century 13th **Date** **Height (cm)** 0 **Width (cm)** 0
Auditor(s) JD, TM **Start date** 21/02/95

Overall Condition Score 4

Stratigraphy

Layer type Support Layer **Specific condition Score** 3

Thickness cm

Comments

The original red sanstone (with greenish striations in places) has eroded badly in several areas. The chapel was without a roof for a long time, which has obviously contributed to the decay of the inner wall surfaces. The stone is eroding, spalling, and has suffered from accelerated deterioration due to the presence of hard modern cement pointing. It appears to be rough-dressed (no tooling is visible) and was keyed with short, sharp, diagonal strokes (right to left) in order to prepare it for plastering.

Layer type Render Layer 1 **Specific condition Score** 4

Thickness

Comments

Lime plaster, with coarse aggregate of chalk(?), smooth grey/green pebbles (mica?) up to 1cm in diameter, fine pale brown hair (in bunches rather than distributed throughout the plaster), and fine grey sand.

Layer type Render Layer 2 **Specific condition Score** 4

Thickness

Comments

Fine lime skim with fine sand aggregate. Slightly textured surface, appearing striated but not brushed.

Layer type Ground Layer 1 **Specific condition Score** 3

Thickness cm

Comments

Fine lime ground layer, fine brushed texture. Has slightly reddish/peach colour, possibly pigmented or a result of weathering.

Layer type Paint Layer 1 **Specific condition Score** 2

Thickness

Comments

Identified pigments Colours
--- red

4 Audit Information: deterioration and damage, added materials, treatment

Property name	GOODRICH CASTLE		
Region	Midlands	County	Herefordshire
Location	Chapel		
Orientation	RECESSES OF NORTH, SOUTH AND EAST WALLS		
Century	13 th	Date	Height (cm)0
			Width (cm) 0

DETERIORATION AND DAMAGE

Deterioration phenomena

Type loss

Location general

Comments Only patches of plaster remain, and these are suffering from further loss and undercutting of the render layer.

Type salt activity

Location general, support

Comments Fine white pustules (possibly salts?) visible throughout the sandstone support.

Type salt activity

Location low level, support

Comments Fluffy efflorescences clearly visible along the base of the walls.

Type general erosion

Location general

Comments Weathering of the support and render layers. The chapel was exposed to the elements for an unknown period of time, the present roof probably being installed when the building was handed over the Ministry of Works. The extent of the erosion of the sandstone support can be gauged by the depth of the re-pointing which now stands proud of the sandstone surface in many areas.

Type delamination (render layer)

Location general

Comments Severe delamination and undercutting of the render layer. The fragments on the east wall (where there are no traces of pigment visible) are the most seriously affected.

Type damp

Location base of walls and soffit of east window

Comments Growth of green microbiological growth (possibly algae?) on the lower walls indicate the level of damp within the room. The crypt (directly below the chapel) was found to be extremely damp and suffering from both salt and algal growth.

ADDED MATERIALS

Accretions

Type algae

Location general, but especially at low level

Comments Bright green microbiological growth (probably algae) is visible throughout the support in the chapel, but especially along the base of the walls. The crypt below the chapel is extremely damp.

Type dirt

Location general

Comments General accumulation of dirt and dust due to low maintenance and neglect. Not too disfiguring.

Type dust

Location general

Comments General accumulation of dirt and dust due to low maintenance and neglect. Not too disfiguring.

Type cobwebs

Location general

Comments Cobwebs have accumulated within corners and crevices. May serve to hold together certain areas of plaster and are probably better left in situ until the fragments can be conserved.

Repairs

Type cement

Location edge repairs, generally

Comments These repairs are extremely hard and appear to contain cement. They may be contemporary with the surrounding re-pointing of the support, which also seems to contain unsuitable materials. More edge repairs are now required, and this may necessitate removal of the cement edging.

Type modern lime plaster

Location edge repairs, generally

Comments These are of an unsuitable colour (using dark red sand) but seem to have been effective. However, more edge repairs are now required.

Type modern plaster

Location pointing of support

Comments Obviously unsuitable materials have been used. In many other areas of the castle, efflorescence is visible on the pointing and adjacent stone, indicating that the salts have been introduced by the pointing.

TREATMENT

Past Treatment

Type FILLS/REPAIRS INSERTION Date

Person Unknown

Comments There are two types of edge repairs present throughout the chapel. These are (1) a reddish lime/sand mortar, and (2) a cement or cement/lime mixture. It is not known when these were inserted.

Proposed Treatment

Type CONSOLIDATION Date 21/02/95

Person TM, JD

Comments The plaster fragments urgently require consolidation. Most of this work can be carried out by specialists trained in the conservation of historic plaster.

Type FILLS/REPAIRS INSERTION Date 21/02/95

Person TM, JD

Comments New edge repairs are urgently needed for the painted and unpainted fragments of plaster throughout the chapel. Some small fills may also be required.

Removal of the cement-type pointing and re-pointing with a more suitable material could be considered.

Type MONITORING CONDITION Date 21/02/95

Person TM, JD

Comments The fragments should be recorded and their condition documented. Their existence of these fragments was (previous to the Condition Audit of 1994-5) unknown, and there are no records of them or their past treatment within the Conservation Studio files. For this reason it is highly recommended that they be fully recorded.

There is serious damp (and related salt) damage in the crypt below the chapel, and at the base of the chapel walls. An assessment of the environmental conditions is desirable.

Staff should be made aware of the fragments and should visually monitor their condition.

Type STRUCTURAL REPAIRS Date 21/02/95

Person TM, JD

Comments There is evidence of water infiltration from the roof, on the north wall. The drainage system and/or leaks should be inspected immediately.



Chapel, general view to east



South wall, east window recess, soffit, remains of painted plaster