

Ancient Monuments Laboratory
Report 55/97

WALL PAINTING CONDITION AUDIT,
TITCHFIELD ABBEY, HAMPSHIRE

T Manning

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Summary

This condition audit of wall paintings at Titchfield Abbey 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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Titchfield Abbey Hampshire

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	TITCHFIELD ABBEY		
Region	South East	County	Hampshire
Location of painting	Nave		
Orientation	WEST WALL, SOUTH CORNER		
Century 13 th	Date	Height (cm) 50	Width (cm) 30
Subjects included			
Masonry pattern			

Description

The Abbey of St.Mary and St.John at Titchfield was founded in 1232 by Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester, for Premonstratensian canons. It seems that the first major alteration to the structure is that dating from 1529-1536, when the monastery and church (described as 'ruinous') were rebuilt by abbot John Maxey. At the Dissolution it passed into the hands of Thomas Wriothesley, a subordinate of Thomas Cromwell, who converted it into a residence. It was described at this time as 'naked and barren', and most of it was ordered to come down, except the portion north of the steeple, adjoining the dorter. Most of the building materials (tiles, stone, altars, images and retables) were bought by local residents.

By 1542 the abbey - now called Place House - was complete, with the addition of a fortified gatehouse, and the majority of the structure which is visible today, designed by Thomas Bartewe of Winchester. Wriothesley was eventually made Earl of Southampton, and the house stayed within his family, only passing into the Delme family in 1741. In 1781 the greater part of the house was demolished, and it was through this destruction that much of the medieval monastery was revealed. Some excavation was undertaken in c.1906.

Keyser noted masonry pattern remains on 'various parts of walls'. M. Bardswell, for Tristram, noted this as 'not visible' in 1935. The traces consist of painted fragments measuring no more than 3 x 5 cm each. However, an area of approximately 50 x 30 cm retains traces of the original render and ground layers.

Photographic Record

TM/JD audit record.

DOE negative search;
Titchfield Abbey; no relevant DOE negatives found.

Bibliography

C.E. Keyser, 'Wall paintings in Hampshire churches', in *Memorials of Old Hampshire*, ed. G.E. Jeans, London 1906.

M. Howard, *The Early Tudor Country House 1470-1550*, London 1981.

Sir William St John Hope, 'The Story of the Making of Place House' *Archaeological Journal* Vol LXIII, 1906.

2 General Audit Information

Property name	TITCHFIELD ABBEY	County	Hampshire
Region	South East		
Location	Nave		
Orientation	WEST WALL, SOUTH CORNER		
Century 13 th	Date	Height (cm) 50	Width (cm) 30
Auditor(s)	TM	Start date	16/08/94

Overall condition score **3**

Recommendations

The fragments are an important archaeological record, and have been documented and photographed. Although the site is exposed and some deterioration of the fabric may continue to occur, conservation at such a small scale, and in such an exposed environment, is practically very difficult. Periodic visual inspection (every 5 years or so) is recommended.

3 Audit Information: Technique

Property name	TITCHFIELD ABBEY		
Region	South East	County	Hampshire
Location	Nave		
Orientation	WEST WALL, SOUTH CORNER		
Century 13th	Date	Height (cm)50	Width (cm) 30
Auditor(s)	TM	Start date	16/08/94

Overall Condition Score 3

Stratigraphy

Layer type	Support Layer	Specific condition Score	2
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Thickness

Comments

Ashlar support. Exposed ruin, but wall appears stable.

Layer type	Render Layer 1	Specific condition Score	3
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Thickness

Comments

Thick lime/sand construction skim. The greater thickness of the limewash on the west side corresponds to the corner formed where a column once abutted the wall (the remains of this column is still visible above).

Layer type	Ground Layer 1	Specific condition Score	3
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Thickness

Comments

Appears to be a lime white ground. No striations of brushstrokes visible.

Layer type	Paint Layer 1	Specific condition Score	3
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Thickness

Comments

Yellow and red pigments visible.

Identified pigments	Colours
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---	yellow
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---	red
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4 Audit Information: deterioration and damage, added materials, treatment

Property name	TITCHFIELD ABBEY		
Region	South East	County	Hampshire
Location	Nave		
Orientation	WEST WALL, SOUTH CORNER		
Century 13 th	Date	Height (cm) 50	Width (cm) 30

DETERIORATION AND DAMAGE

Deterioration phenomena

Type general erosion

Location Entire

Comments Exposed site: wind, rain, etc have eroded surface.

Type loss

Location Entire

Comments Painting only survives in small fragments.

Type damp

Location Entire

Comments Stone feels damp in dry weather

ADDED MATERIALS

Accretions

Type mosses/lichens

Location Entire

Comments Extensive lichen growth throughout site.

Type biodeterioration

Location Entire

Comments Possibly algae.

Type cobwebs

Location Corners

Comments Exposed site subject to insect activity

Type dust

Location Entire

Comments

Coatings/Coverings

Type limewash

Location Entire (patchy)

Comments Possibly repainted during the Tudor restoration. Seems to have a black (powdery) design associated with it; however, this goes directly over the stone as well, and may be something else.

Repairs

Type modern lime plaster

Location Surrounding support

Comments The support has been re-pointed in the past, using a lime (?) mortar with coarse aggregate.

TREATMENT

Past Treatment

Type FILLS/REPAIRS INSERTION **Date** 01/01/01

Person Unknown

Comments The support has been re-pointed in the past, using a lime (?) mortar with coarse aggregate.

Proposed Treatment

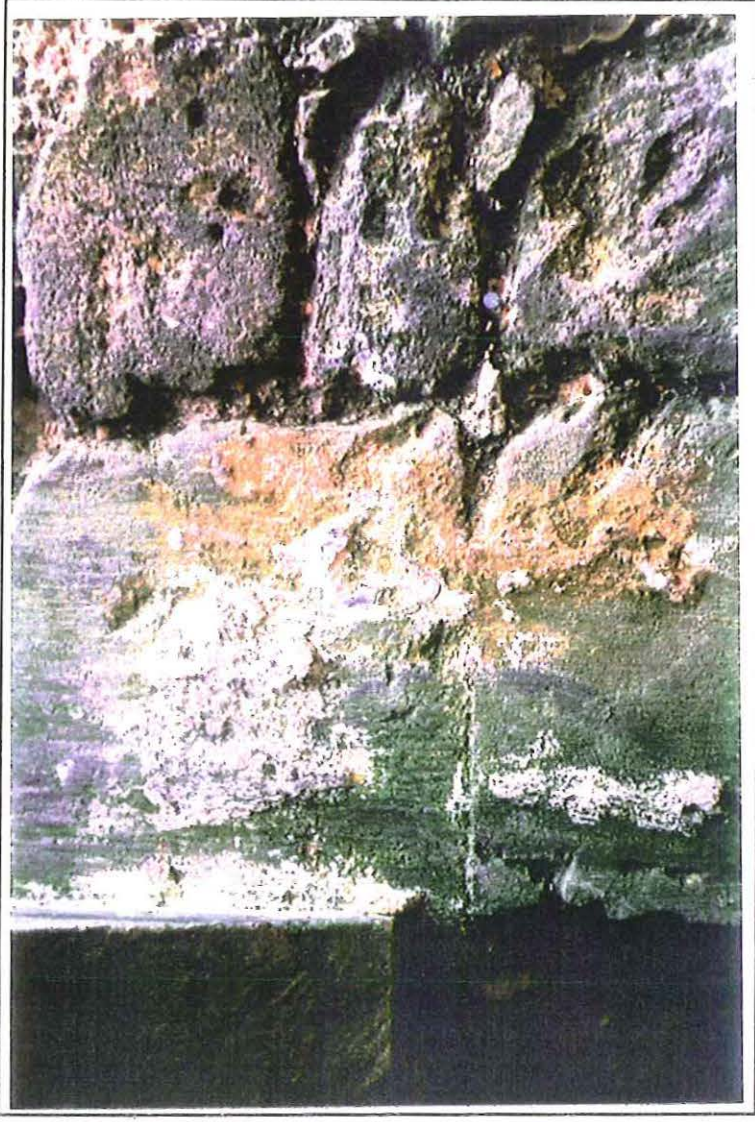
Type MONITORING CONDITION **Date** 16/08/94

Person JD, TM

Comments Documentation and photography only; periodic visual inspection.



West wall, south corner



Detail, faint traces of painted decoration