

Ancient Monuments Laboratory
Report 62/97

WALL PAINTING CONDITION AUDIT,
GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

J Davies
T Manning

AML reports are interim reports which make available the results of specialist investigations in advance of full publication. They are not subject to external refereeing and their conclusions may sometimes have to be modified in the light of archaeological information that was not available at the time of the investigation. Readers are therefore asked to consult the author before citing the report in any publication and to consult the final excavation report when available.

Opinions expressed in AML reports are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England.

Ancient Monuments Laboratory Report 62/97

**WALL PAINTING CONDITION AUDIT,
GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

J Davies
T Manning

Summary

This condition audit of wall paintings at Gloucester, Blackfriars, 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.

Authors' addresses :-

Ms J Davies
PAINTINGS CONSERVATION STUDIO
English Heritage
Inner Circle Regents Park
London
NW1 4PA

Ms T Manning
PAINTINGS CONSERVATION STUDIO
English Heritage
Inner Circle Regents Park
London
NW1 4PA



Gloucester, Blackfriars Gloucestershire

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.

Contents

1 East range (Abbot's Lodgings)

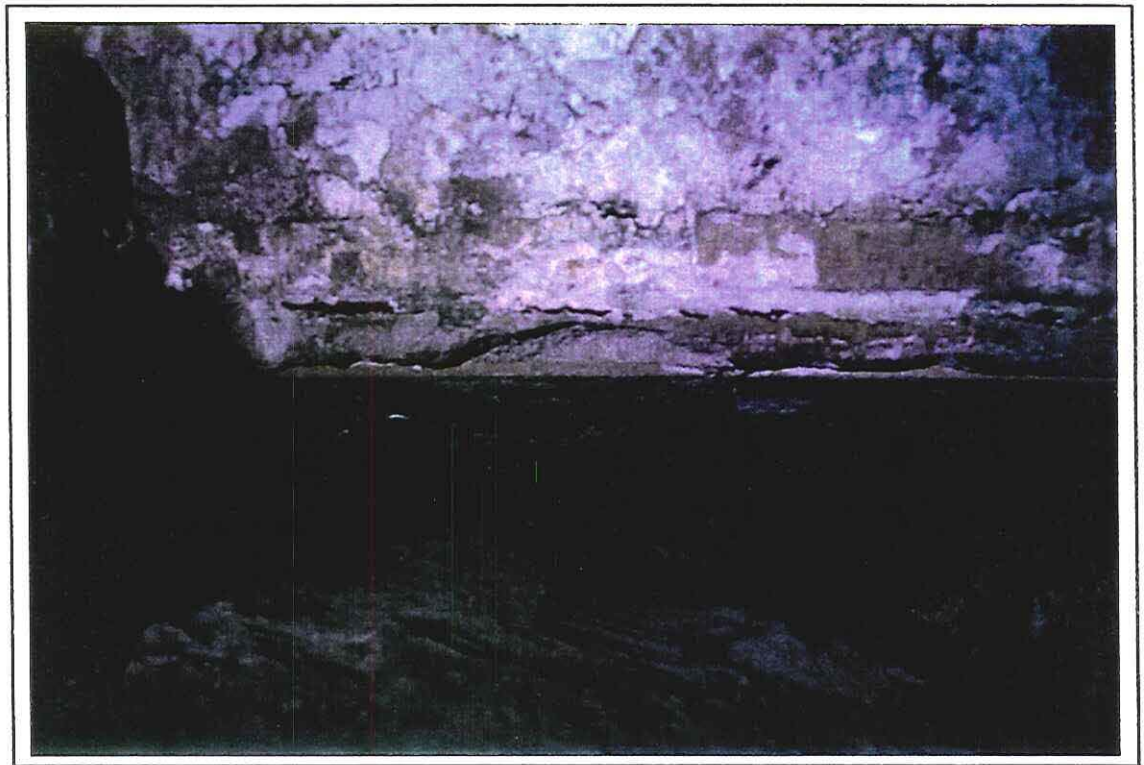
2 Laver (Cloister, south side)

3 Library

4 Church (Nave)



East range, east wall, south window, south splay



Cloister, south side, laver, third niche from west, detail painted inscription

1 Wall Painting Record

Property name	GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS		
Region	South West	County	Gloucestershire
Location of painting	East range		
Orientation	EAST WALL, NORTH AND SOUTH WINDOW SPLAYS		
Century 16 th	Date	Height (cm) 190	Width (cm) 60
Subjects included			
Figurative			
Various decorative motifs			

Description

Blackfriars was first mentioned in 1241 when a Royal grant of twenty marks was made towards the building, and by 1265 the main lines of it are recorded as more or less complete. The founder of this Dominican house is thought to be Sir Stephen de Herneshall, but there were equally generous gifts from the Crown. In the late-thirteenth, and then mid-fourteenth century, the lands of the priory were considerably enlarged. In its richest days, the priory housed up to forty monks, but this was reduced to six at the Dissolution. In 1539, the house was finally purchased by Thomas Bell, a Gloucester Alderman and draper, who converted the church into a residence for himself called Bell's Place, and the priory became a manufactory. Since that time that priory has been maintained as a domestic and commercial property until its purchase by the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works in the 1950's.

The priory was laid out in a conventional monastic plan, and the ground floor of the east range, where the wall paintings are found, comprised a centrally placed chapter house, with a vestry, parlour and warming house attached, and a dormitory above this complex. Up until the Dissolution, it has been suggested that these ground floor rooms were designated for the Abbot's use. After 1539 their employment was rather more humble: Thomas Bell appears to have turned the ground floor of the east range to domestic use, converting it into two rooms divided by a timber partition, which were entered from a passage on the west side. Saunders writes that Bell was also responsible for extending the range to the east, but the date of the painted decoration would suggest it to be earlier. This extension was demolished in the 19th century, when a doorway was inserted in the four light window of the east wall, and this was presumably when the paintings were also blocked in (the window has since been replaced).

The decoration consists of foliage, birds and rosettes, against a reddish-brown background. The painting survives within the north and south splays of the (now modernised) 16th-century window. The dimensions given above are only approximate indications of the size of each window splay. The painted decoration of the north window splay consists of a maximum width of 54 cm, and a minimum of 43 cm; its height measures 183 cm. The decoration on the south window splay measures a maximum width of 94 cm (including east and north faces); and a height of 198 cm.

The painted decoration is likely to have been used throughout the ground floor of the east range and clearly extended beyond the existing east wall before the Victorian alterations to the room (it now only survives on the east wall window splays). Painted imitation tapestry was popular in the sixteenth century, both in ecclesiastical and secular settings, and comparison may be made with the Green Bedroom at Cothay in Somerset (c.1500). However, stylistically the closest parallel is probably the painted imitation tapestry of the Ballroom at Bramall Hall Cheshire (c.1500).

Photographic Record

29/6/94 EH 'current' contact photo files; wall painting fragment with foliate decoration, birds and inscriptions, May 1985, A860691, E850282.

EH photo library, computer keyword search;
March 1990, section of wall painting; A900323 (cross-refs; E900055), A900324 (cross-refs; E900056), E900055 (cross-refs; A900323), E900056 (cross-refs; A900324).

Photographs in studio files

14-4-61

*A5732/1 'East range, ground floor, east wall, south end. Top section of left window jamb exposed prior to the complete removal of stone reveal, viewed from interior.'

*A5732/2 'East range, ground floor, east wall, south end. Left window jamb, top exterior section, viewed from the interior.'

*A5732/3 'East range, ground floor, east wall, south end. Second section from top of the left window jamb revealed as stonework removed. Viewed from interior.'

*A5732/4 'East range, ground floor, east wall, south end. Left window jamb viewed from the interior.'

*A5732/5 'East range, ground floor, east wall, south end. Left window jamb displaying fracture. Viewed from interior.'

*A5732/6 'East range, ground floor, east wall, south end. Close up, showing bird, of the centre and lower sections of the left window jamb. Viewed from interior.'

*A5732/7 'East range, ground floor, east wall, south end. Extension of top right hand section of the right window jamb viewed from the interior.'

*A5732/8 'East range, ground floor, east wall, south end. Close up of the second from the right hand section of the right window jamb. Viewed from the interior.'

*A5732/9 'East range, ground floor, east wall, south end. Top right hand section of the right window jamb showing scroll. Viewed from interior.'

*A5732/10 'East range, ground floor, east wall, south end. Right window jamb viewed from the interior.'

*A5732/11 'East range, ground floor, east wall, south end. Lower section of right window jamb viewed from the interior.'

*A5732/12 'East range, ground floor, east wall, south end. Left window jamb viewed from the interior showing painting behind reveal.'

*A5732/13 'East range, ground floor, east wall, south end. Right window jamb viewed from the interior showing painting behind reveal.'

17-01-86

*E860120 Painted panel, copy of wall painting, in studio, colour print.

*E860121 Painted panel, copy of wall painting, in studio, colour print.

*A860220 Painted panel, copy of wall painting, in studio.

*A860221 Painted panel, copy of wall painting, in studio.

-3-90

*E900055 Painted panel, copy of wall painting, in studio, colour print.

*E900056 Painted panel, copy of wall painting, in studio, colour print.

*A900323 Painted panel, copy of wall painting, in studio.

*A900324 Painted panel, copy of wall painting, in studio.

Audit record, TM/JD Studio archive ref: HPBF 200994(39)C/1-28

Photograph search, DOE files, EH photo library (JD24/03/95)

Blackfriars, Glos.; 11/14-4-1961 (as in report?) A5732/1-13.

Bibliography

B. Morley, Blackfriars, Gloucester, EH guidebook, HMSO 1979.

A.D. Saunders, The Black Friars, Gloucester: Interim report, Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 82, 1963, 168-176.

2 General Audit Information

Property name	GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS	County	Gloucestershire
Region	South West		
Location	East range		
Orientation	EAST WALL, NORTH AND SOUTH WINDOW SPLAYS		
Century 16 th	Date	Height (cm) 190	Width (cm) 60
Auditor(s)	JD, TM	Start date	12/09/94

Overall condition score **3**

Recommendations

Monitoring equipment was installed in 1991 (for a year, according to correspondence), but has since been removed. It is not known where the squirrel probes were placed, or what types of measurements were taken. Access to this data, and perhaps re-installation of this equipment, is crucial to an understanding of the environmental causes of deterioration.

Although the majority of the scheme has been lost since 1961, certain measures can be taken to improve the presentation of the paintings. Improvements to the lighting will highlight their importance and help encourage awareness, and consequently, better maintenance of the room. It has also been suggested in the past to exhibit the replica made by M. Keevil (c.1965) in order to give the viewer a better understanding of the painted decoration. This is currently housed at the EH Conservation Studio, Regent's Park.

Unfortunately, at this stage, conservation treatment would probably not significantly improve the appearance of the paintings, but the focus should now be on stabilisation and better maintenance. Some flake fixing on the north splay, at low level, is required, as well as a general dusting of the surface. Removal of the salt crust proved difficult during the last campaign of conservation, and may have to be abandoned until techniques are further developed. [Timescale: maximum 1 week within 2 years].

3 Audit Information: Technique

Property name GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS
Region South West County Gloucestershire
Location East range
Orientation EAST WALL, NORTH AND SOUTH WINDOW SPLAYS
Century 16th Date Height (cm) 190 Width (cm) 60
Auditor(s) JD, TM Start date 12/09/94

Overall Condition Score 3

Stratigraphy

Layer type	Support Layer	Specific condition Score	4
Thickness	90 cm		

Comments

Support consists of rough-dressed stone with ashlar quoins. The condition score has been given as '4' due to the severe exfoliation on the north side.

Layer type	Ground Layer 1	Specific condition Score	3
Thickness	0.2 cm		

Comments

White limewash ground. Varies in thickness. Actively flaking on north side. There appear to be direct incisions in the limewash ground.

Layer type	Paint Layer 1	Specific condition Score	3
Thickness			

Comments

Includes dark red/brown ground with foliate decoration painted over it. Medium unknown, but is possibly organic. Heavily retouched, which makes deciphering the original from the modern difficult. This also complicates any accurate analysis of the pigments and medium.

Identified pigments Colours

--- black
--- white
--- yellow
--- red
--- blue
--- orange

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

Property name	GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS		
Region	South West	County	Gloucestershire
Location	East range		
Orientation	EAST WALL, NORTH AND SOUTH WINDOW SPLAYS		
Century	16th	Date	Height (cm) 190
			Width (cm) 60

DETERIORATION AND DAMAGE

Deterioration phenomena

Type spalling
Location support; especially north splay, lower level
Comments The surface of the stone support is scaling/spalling.

Type losses (paint layer)
Location general
Comments Losses to upper paint layers. Only ground remains which is lacking in cohesion. Approximately 60-70% loss.

Type delamination (paint layer)
Location ground layers, generally
Comments Macro-flaking of ground layer

Type flaking
Location general
Comments Micro-flaking of paint layer

Mechanical damage

Type keying marks
Location general
Comments Small losses which appear to be light keying marks

Type substantial losses
Location general - to plaster support
Comments Damage associated with blocking-in of window, subsequent removal of blocking material, and renovation of window. Loss especially to north splay.

ADDED MATERIALS

Accretions

Type salt efflorescences

Location general

Comments Salt efflorescences and encrustation generally. See 1991 report by C. Babington: '...much of the surface of each fragment has been badly disrupted by salt efflorescences- a combination of small salt crystals and large extremely hard incrustations. Examination of these salts in a scanning electron microscope revealed them to be mainly recrystallized calcium sulphate and iron chlorides. The presence of recrystallized calcium carbonate is also likely.'

Type biodeterioration

Location south splay, lower level

Comments Possibly associated with the organic coating (casein?) found on the painting surface.

Type dirt

Location general

Comments Low maintenance of area has resulted in accumulation of surface dirt.

Type dust

Location general

Comments Low maintenance of area has resulted in accumulation of dust and cobwebs.

Type cobwebs

Location corners

Comments Low maintenance of area has resulted in accumulation of dust and cobwebs.

Coatings/Coverings

Type unknown

Location general

Comments Organic coating, possibly casein, throughout surface (see Past Treatment section). This was partially removed during the 1990 conservation campaign.

Type stone

Location entire

Comments Stone blocking-in of window, probably dating to the 19C, partially removed c.1961.

Repairs

Type lime:sand

Location small repairs throughout surface

Comments Lime/silver sand repairs from EH/CIA 1990 conservation campaign. See Past Treatment section.

Type modern lime plaster
Location small repairs throughout surface
Comments Smooth, pinkish lime/sand repairs, possibly inserted by M. Keevil c.1965. See Past Treatment section.

Type modern plaster
Location north splay, edge repair
Comments Hard repair, possibly lime gauged with cement. Greyish appearance.

TREATMENT

Past Treatment

Type UNCOVERING **Date** 01/04/61

Person EH craftsmen

Comments The paintings were revealed in April of 1961. 'The photographic documentation of the paintings just before and after their being revealed in April 1961 provides an invaluable record of the 16th-century decoration of the room. It is sadly only too evident from these photographs that a substantial portion of the painting was lost when the window casement was subsequently replaced.' (Babington, 1991)

Past Treatment

Type APPLICATION OF COATING **Date** 01/01/64

Person EH craftsmen

Comments 'It was also intended that the paintings were sprayed with casein, but Stewart records that although purchased it was never used... recent treatment of the paintings has revealed the use of some organic coating as "preservative", and since it is not reported in subsequent treatment it is possible that casein was applied around this time.' (Babington, 1991)

Type CONSOLIDATION **Date** 01/01/64

Person EH craftsmen

Comments '[The work was done]... without direction from a conservator. A lime water solution was sprayed onto the painting fragments before any attempt at consolidation. Mr. Stewart of the MOW conservation studio, who was called to inspect the paintings in June 1965 described the results: "this liquid, inexpertly sprayed, has caused efflorescence, paint loss, and the colours to run" ' (Babington, 1991).

Past Treatment

Type CONSOLIDATION **Date** 01/10/65

Person M. Keevil

Comments 'The paintings were carefully dusted down and sprayed a number of times with lime water.' (M. Keevil report, Nov.1965) From correspondence it seems that the treatment spanned several years and was not completed until March 1969.

Type FILLS/REPAIRS INSERTION **Date** 01/10/65

Person M. Keevil

Comments 'Holes and damages to the painted surface were filled with lime putty and sand. All edges of the painting were secured with the same mixture of lime putty and sand.' (M.Keevil report, Nov.1965). From correspondence it seems that the treatment spanned several years and was not completed until March 1969.

Type GROUTING **Date** 01/10/65

Person M. Keevil

Comments In his report of November 1965, M. Keevil states that grouting was unsuccessful due to the dampness of the wall: 'After the filling of holes in the surface of the painting an attempt was made to inject lime and sand where the surface layer of lime had become detached from the main support of the wall. This however was not successful as the paintings are at present exposed to atmospheric conditions and at the time when this work was carried out the wall surfaces were extremely damp, and the lime putty and sand filling of the surface damages would not dry sufficiently to hold back the injected material. This operation should be carried out when the weather is dry.' From correspondence it seems that the treatment spanned several years and was completed in March 1969.

Type PRESENTATION/REINTEGRATION **Date** 01/10/65

Person M. Keevil

Comments 'Repairs were toned down to harmonize with the surrounding colours using dry colour with skimmed milk and lime water as a medium.' (M. Keevil report, Nov. 1965) From correspondence it seems that the treatment spanned several years and was not completed until March 1969.

Past Treatment

Type CLEANING **Date** 01/01/91

Person C. Babington/CIA students

Comments For 'the removal of the "organic" coating and accumulated surface dirt... a "Wolbers" gel formulation was found particularly effective, and a reasonable level of cleaning achieved.' (Babington, 1991)

Type FILLS/REPAIRS INSERTION **Date** 01/01/91

Person C. Babington/CIA students

Comments 'At this stage [after fixing] it was then possible to remove loose repairs with spatulas and scalpels, and replace them with a fine lime:sand mortar (4 parts silver sand: 1 part lime).' (Babington, 1991)

Type FLAKE FIXING **Date** 01/01/91

Person C. Babington/CIA students

Comments 'Following... [grouting], areas of flaking paint were re-laid with a dilute adhesive (5% Plextol B500), after pre-wetting with water: IMS 2:1). (Babington, 1991)

Type GROUTING **Date** 01/01/91

Person C. Babington/CIA students

Comments 'Areas of delaminated plaster were faced if necessary with tissue and applied with a 5% solution of Paraloid B-72 in acetone and then prepared for grouting by injection with water and IMS 2:1. The grout (1 part HTI (500um seive)):1 part lime (1 mm seive): 0.5 part Plextol B500, plus water to dilute) was finely ground in a pestle and mortar. Prior to use, the mixture was further diluted as necessary, and injected using syringes and large needles or plastic tubing. Once the grouting was complete the plaster was simply eased back in position, and allowed to dry before the facing was removed.' (Babington, 1991)

Type PRESENTATION/REINTEGRATION **Date** 01/01/91

Person C. Babington/CIA students

Comments 'Finally to improve presentation the repairs were toned to match the red/brown background using Winsor & Newton watercolour in thin vertical lines to make certain of distinguishing the repairs from the original.' (Babington, 1991)

Type SALT REMOVAL **Date** 01/01/91

Person C. Babington/CIA students

Comments 'Following consolidation it was clearly important to remove the encrusted salts from the surface, as well as the organic (?) coating that was particularly evident over the upper area of this section of painting. After it had been established that the salts could not be removed mechanically, a range of solvents were tested including 'AB57', a mixture of basic salts and surfactants recommended by Mora Mora and Phillippot for this purpose. Unfortunately, none of these proved effective...' (Babington, 1991)

Proposed Treatment

Type DUSTING **Date** 20/09/94

Person TM, JD

Comments A general light dusting of the surface is recommended to improve the appearance of the paintings.

Type FLAKE FIXING **Date** 20/09/94

Person JD, TM

Comments There is some limited active flaking to the lower part of the north splay. Flake fixing is required.

Type SALT REMOVAL **Date** 20/09/94

Person JD, TM

Comments At some stage in the future a suitable material may be developed for the further removal of the salt crust.

1 Wall Painting Record

Property name	GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS		
Region	South West	County	Gloucestershire
Location of painting	Laver		
Orientation	SOUTH SIDE (AUDIT RECORD 1)		
Century 13 th	Date	Height (cm) 15	Width (cm) 45
Subjects included			
Inscription(s)			
Various decorative motifs			

Description

Blackfriars was first mentioned in 1241 when a Royal grant of twenty marks was made towards the building, and by 1265 the main lines of it are recorded as more or less complete. The founder of this Dominican house is thought to be Sir Stephen de Herneshall, but there were equally generous gifts from the Crown. In the late-thirteenth, and then mid-fourteenth century, the lands of the priory were considerably enlarged. In its richest days, the priory housed up to forty monks, but this was reduced to six at the Dissolution. In 1539, the house was finally surrendered to Thomas Bell, a Gloucester Alderman and draper, who converted the church into a residence for himself called Bell's Place, and the priory became a manufactory. Since that time the priory has been maintained as a domestic and commercial property until its purchase by the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works in the 1950's. The laver is situated on the south side of the cloister, at the west end.

The dimensions given above are those of the inscription which is currently visible. It is set within a niche (125 x 75), forming part of an Early English arcaded lavabo. The inscription runs along the cavetto moulding at corbel level; it is painted in Gothic letters, in black on a limewash ground. There are several areas of red colour visible, applied over a limewash ground, such as on the neck mouldings of the corbels and on other mouldings throughout the surrounding stonework.

The painting was uncovered in 1993.

Photographic Record

29/6/94 EH 'current' contact photo files; masonry pattern? could be ashlar? Sept 1986, A860692.

Bibliography

B. Morley, Blackfriars, Gloucester, EH guidebook, HMSO 1979.

A.D. Saunders, The Black Friars, Gloucester: Interim report, Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 82, 1963, 168-176.

1 Wall Painting Record

Property name	GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS		
Region	South West	County	Gloucestershire
Location of painting	Laver		
Orientation	SOUTH SIDE (AUDIT RECORD 2)		
Century 13 th	Date	Height (cm) 15	Width (cm) 45
Subjects included			
Inscription(s)			
Various decorative motifs			

Description

Urgent treatment (to fix flaking limewash) was carried out in December 1994 in response to audit 1. See 'Laver, audit record 1'.

Photographic Record

Bibliography

See 'Laver, audit record 1'.

2 General Audit Information

Property name	GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS	County	Gloucestershire
Region	South West		
Location	Laver		
Orientation	SOUTH SIDE (AUDIT RECORD 1)		
Century 13 th	Date	Height (cm) 15	Width (cm) 45
Auditor(s)	TM/JD	Start date	12/09/94

Overall condition score **4**

Recommendations

The trial removal of bricks from the upper part of the blocked laver, carried out in 1992, revealed the remains of a painted inscription. The decision was taken at that time to halt the unpicking of the masonry, until such time as a conservator could inspect the area, carry out any emergency treatment, and, if necessary, supervise further removal of bricks and masonry.

The inscription is painted on a thick limewash ground which is severely delaminating. Urgent treatment is required including flake fixing and small repairs to the edges of the delaminating limewash. [Timescale: 1 day asap].

2 General Audit Information

Property name	GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS	County	Gloucestershire
Region	South West		
Location	Laver		
Orientation	SOUTH SIDE (AUDIT RECORD 2)		
Century 13 th	Date	Height (cm) 15	Width (cm) 45
Auditor(s)	JD/TM	Start date	22/12/94

Overall condition score **3**

Recommendations

The emergency treatment recommended in the audit of 12/9/94 was undertaken on 22/12/94.

Given the importance of this architectural feature, and the clear evidence that painted decoration survives behind the masonry/brick blocking, the removal of this infill is warranted. The exposed areas have been stabilised in the short term, but if further work is to be carried out in this area, it is highly recommended that a conservator be on-site to supervise. If possible, it would be desirable that a conservator actually carry out the un-picking directly adjacent to the painted surface, in order to perform any emergency treatment as it is needed. Once the full extent of the painted decoration is known, decisions can be made with regard to the final presentation of the laver.

3 Audit Information: Technique

Property name GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS
Region South West **County** Gloucestershire
Location Laver
Orientation SOUTH SIDE (AUDIT RECORD 1)
Century 13th **Date** **Height (cm)** 15 **Width (cm)** 45
Auditor(s) TM/JD **Start date** 12/09/94

Overall Condition Score 4

Stratigraphy

Layer type Support Layer **Specific condition Score** 2
Thickness 50 cm

Comments

The support appears to be limestone, formed into ashlar blocks and finely carved arcading. The inscription is situated within a horizontal band carved cavetto, level with the corbels of the arcading.

Layer type Ground Layer 1 **Specific condition Score** 4
Thickness 0.3 cm

Comments

The limewash ground is thickly applied. Horizontal striations from the brush application are visible.

Identified pigments **Colours**
lime white white

Layer type Paint Layer 1 **Specific condition Score** 3
Thickness cm

Comments

Identified pigments **Colours**
--- black
--- red

3 Audit Information: Technique

Property name GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS
Region South West **County** Gloucestershire
Location Laver
Orientation SOUTH SIDE (AUDIT RECORD 2)
Century 13th **Date** **Height (cm)**15 **Width (cm)** 45
Auditor(s) JD/TM **Start date** 22/12/94

Overall Condition Score 3

Stratigraphy

Layer type Support Layer **Specific condition Score** 2

Thickness 50 cm

Comments

See audit record 1.

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

Thickness 0.3 cm

Comments

See audit record 1. The limewash ground has now been stabilised but is still vulnerable and should be monitored.

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

Thickness

Comments

See audit record 1.

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

Property name	GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS		
Region	South West	County	Gloucestershire
Location	Laver		
Orientation	SOUTH SIDE (AUDIT RECORD 1)		
Century 13 th	Date	Height (cm) 15	Width (cm) 45

DETERIORATION AND DAMAGE

Deterioration phenomena

Type delamination (paint layer)

Location General.

Comments The paint layer is firmly adhered to the limewash ground. The ground layer is delaminating from the stone support. This has resulted in extensive loss of the paint and ground layers.

Mechanical damage

Type insertions

Location Entire surface.

Comments It is probable that some mechanical damage occurred during the first blocking-in of the arcading, in the sixteenth century.

Type insertions

Location Upper surface.

Comments It is probable that some damage occurred during the second blocking-in, in brick, of the upper niches of the arcade. This is dated to the nineteenth century and may replace an earlier stone infill.

Type scratches

Location Upper areas.

Comments It is probable that some mechanical damage would have occurred during the removal of brick/stone blocking from the upper niche of the arcade. The unblocking revealed the remains of red painted decoration and the painted inscription.

ADDED MATERIALS

Accretions

Type dirt

Location Entire.

Comments Large pieces of stone and plaster together with sand and building debris.

Type cobwebs

Location Corners.

Comments Several cobwebs noted.

Type insect activity

Location Upper surface/sill formed by partial unblocking.

Comments A few dead spiders were noted.

Coatings/Coverings

Type stone

Location Lower half of louver

Comments The niches of the arcade are thought to have been blocked in with stone during the sixteenth century.

Type brick

Location Upper parts of niches

Comments The sixteenth century stone blocking in was amended/ repaired/ completed by insertion of brick blocking to the upper areas of the niches during the nineteenth century.

TREATMENT

Past Treatment

Type UNCOVERING Date 01/01/92

Person EH craftsmen

Comments An area of blocking in was removed during 1992 by EH craftsmen at the instruction of the architect. Once wall painting fragments were noted uncovering work ceased. It is not known whether it is planned to uncover further areas of the arcade.

Proposed Treatment

Type FLAKE FIXING Date 12/09/94

Person TM/JD

Comments The flaking limewash ground urgently requires flake fixing and consolidation. Timescale: 1 day asap.

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

Property name	GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS		
Region	South West	County	Gloucestershire
Location	Laver		
Orientation	SOUTH SIDE (AUDIT RECORD 2)		
Century 13th	Date	Height (cm) 15	Width (cm) 45

DETERIORATION AND DAMAGE

ADDED MATERIALS

Repairs

Type lime

Location Edges of inscription on cavetto moulding

Comments Small lime edge repairs were made during consolidation of this area 22/12/94.

TREATMENT

Past Treatment

Type FLAKE FIXING **Date** 22/12/94
Person TM/JD

Comments The flaking limewash ground was consolidated and flakes fixed on 22/12/94 in response to recommendations in first condition audit. The area below the inscription (still formed by partial unblocking) was dusted using a soft bristle brush, directing dust away from the paintings. The flakes were pre-wetted using a distilled water:acetone (1:1) solution which was injected behind the flakes. Plextol B500 10% in water was injected behind the flakes. Where possible the flakes were gently pressed back against the stone support using a pad of cotton wool covered with a nitrile rubber sheet. Proud edges and pockets of limewash which it was not possible to fully read here were supported by injection of lime milk:Plextol B500 (5:1) which formed miniature edge repairs. A photographic record of treatment was made kept in Studio.

1 Wall Painting Record

Property name	GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS		
Region	South West	County	Gloucestershire
Location of painting	Library		
Orientation	SOUTH WALL		
Century 13 th	Date	Height (cm)	Width (cm)
Subjects included			
Various decorative motifs			

Description

Blackfriars was first mentioned in 1241 when a Royal grant of twenty marks was made towards the building, and by 1265 the main lines of it are recorded as more or less complete. The founder of this Dominican house is thought to be Sir Stephen de Herneshall, but there were equally generous gifts from the Crown. In the late-thirteenth, and then mid-fourteenth century, the lands of the priory were considerably enlarged. In its richest days, the priory housed up to forty monks, but this was reduced to six at the Dissolution. In 1539, the house was finally surrendered to Thomas Bell, a Gloucester Alderman and draper, who converted the church into a residence for himself called Bell's Place, and the priory became a manufactory. Since that time the priory has been maintained as a domestic and commercial property until its purchase by the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works in the 1950's.

The hood moulding on the carrels of the south side retain traces of paint within the crevices. The mouldings were picked out in red, over a limewash ground. They have been covered with various layers of limewash. These minute fragments were not audited, but have been recorded photographically.

Incised graffiti, showing the face of a woman, also survives on the south side. This is thought to be medieval.

Photographic Record

29/6/94 EH 'current' contact photo files; masonry pattern? could be ashlar? Sept 1986, A860692.

Bibliography

B. Morley, Blackfriars, Gloucester, EH guidebook, HMSO 1979.

A.D. Saunders, The Black Friars, Gloucester: Interim report, Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 82, 1963, 168-176.

1 Wall Painting Record

Property name	GLOUCESTER, BLACKFRIARS		
Region	South West	County	Gloucestershire
Location of painting	Nave		
Orientation	WEST WALL		
Century 17 th	Date	Height (cm)	Width (cm)
Subjects included	Heraldry		

Description

Blackfriars was first mentioned in 1241 when a Royal grant of twenty marks was made towards the building, and by 1265 the main lines of it are recorded as more or less complete. The founder of this Dominican house is thought to be Sir Stephen de Herneshall, but there were equally generous gifts from the Crown. In the late-thirteenth, and then mid-fourteenth century, the lands of the priory were considerably enlarged. In its richest days, the priory housed up to forty monks, but this was reduced to six at the Dissolution. In 1539, the house was finally surrendered to Thomas Bell, a Gloucester Alderman and draper, who converted the church into a residence for himself called Bell's Place, and the priory became a manufactory. The nave of the church was then converted into a residential area, with the division of the space done in wood (destroyed earlier this century), and the insertion of fireplaces. Since that time the priory has been maintained as a domestic and commercial property until its purchase by the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works in the 1950's.

Traces of a coat-of-arms survive on the chimney-breast at first floor level in the old nave. Access was therefore limited, and the remains of paint were not audited, but were recorded photographically. The colours visible were green, blue, red and white.

In the south corner of the west wall, traces of a bright blue on a white ground remain.

The moulding of the embedded capital in the north wall of the nave retains traces of a deep red pigment.

Photographic Record

29/6/94 EH 'current' contact photo files; masonry pattern? could be ashlar? Sept 1986, A860692.

Bibliography

B. Morley, Blackfriars, Gloucester, EH guidebook, HMSO 1979.

A.D. Saunders, The Black Friars, Gloucester: Interim report, Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 82, 1963, 168-176.