

Ancient Monuments Laboratory
Report 67/97

WALL PAINTING CONDITION AUDIT,
RYCOTE CHAPEL, OXFORDSHIRE

J Davies
T Manning

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RYCOTE CHAPEL, OXFORDSHIRE

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Summary

This condition audit of wall paintings at Rycote Chapel 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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Rycote Chapel Oxfordshire

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.

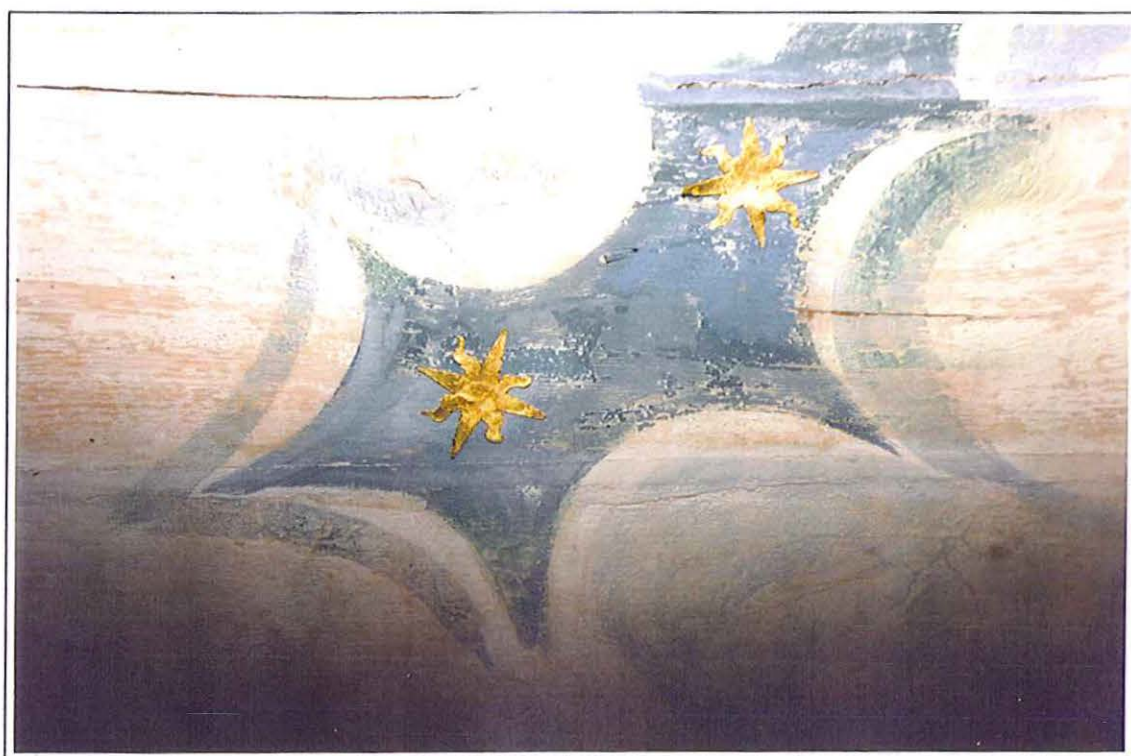
Contents

1 Ceiling, Western Gallery

2 Canopy ceiling, Norreys Pew



Western Gallery, general view to west



Norrey's Pew, ceiling, detail of condition: note various past retouchings, and flaking

1 Wall Painting Record

Property name	RYCOTE CHAPEL		
Region	South West	County	Oxfordshire
Location of painting	Ceiling, Western Gallery		
Orientation	WEST END		
Century 17 th	Date	Height (cm) 498	Width (cm) 564
Subjects included			
cloud(s)			
Sky			
Stars			

Description

This small chapel, dedicated to St. Michael and All Angels and built on the site of a former Benedictine chapel, dates from the mid-fifteenth century, and served the great house at Rycote. The chapel itself is important because it is entirely of one build and unaltered, constructed in 1449 by Richard Quatremayne of stone from the Taynton quarries near Burford. From the exterior it appears to be a simple, yet high quality, example of mid-fifteenth century Perpendicular architecture. However, it is the 17th-century fittings inside the chapel that make it unusual.

The estate was sold in 1521 to Sir John Heron, then purchased in 1539 by Sir John Williams. Sir John Williams held several prominent state offices in his lifetime. It was he, who, in 1553, erected two private pews in the chapel: a family pew on the north side of the chapel, and a domed pew on the south side for the exclusive use of Princess Elizabeth (Queen Mary had appointed Williams guardian to Elizabeth), linked to the north pew by a wooden strapwork screen. Ownership of the estate then passed to Lord Henry Norreys (from 1559-1601), also active in the court of (now) Queen Elizabeth I, who was a frequent visitor. It was his grandson Francis (owner from 1603-1622) who was responsible for the further decoration of the chapel. The fabric of the chapel with its original wagon roof remained unaltered, as did the benches in the nave, but the west gallery was built and the musicians' gallery over the north pew was added. The painted decoration of both of these structures, and the wagon roof, was probably executed at this time.

The ceiling under the Western Gallery is painted with a stylised representation of the heavens, with clouds (their edges accented in red and blue) in a blue sky studded with applied gilded stars. The wagon roof is painted in imitation marbling with the same gold stars decorating the laths (however most of these stars are now lost). Chapter records from 27 January 1612 note that 'the whole space between the Organs & the pillars over the knights stalls should be colored blue, & be sett with starres gilded.' This may refer to the decoration under the Western Gallery, which is in all likelihood contemporary with that of the Norreys Pew. In any case, it seems the painted decoration in both areas can be reasonably attributed to the second decade of the 17th century.

The ceiling of the Western Gallery is T-shaped, and the dimensions given above are those at the two longest points. The westernmost section, over the door, measures 498 x 260, approximately, and the section spanning the nave measures 564 x 108, approximately.

The church also retains original polychromy on the carved stone font (12C, but recut, and presumably painted, in the 15C), found at the west end of the chapel. This consists of traces of red and green paint, but has not been audited separately due to the scant remains. Traces have also been noted on the east wall behind the reredos, and within the west door on the south wall (Salmon 1991), but these were not noted during the present survey.

After the last descendant died in the fire of 1745, the house was purchased and partly rebuilt by Lt.Col. A St G Hamersley, who put the chapel under the guardianship of the MOW in 1952. Extensive correspondence exists in the EH files regarding the restoration of the entire interior (and its fittings) in preparation for the opening of the building to the public for Easter 1967. Records show that treatment was

carried out on the Western Gallery 'to be repaired and decoration fixed', and 'to be treated and revised by spraying', and again in 1973 for 'repairs to the ceiling'. At this time it was discovered that the applied gilded stars were cut from 17th-century Continental playing cards (datable to before 1628, after which time they were banned). They are not only an unusual use of redundant cards but a confirmation that the paintings were executed before this date. And finally, in 1990 the Western Gallery paintings underwent further treatment in a joint campaign with the Courtauld Institute.

Photographic Record

29/6/94 EH 'current' contact photo files; Canopy over south pew, Jan 1991, K910022. Canopy over north pew, Jan 1991, K910029. Detail painted ceiling beneath western gallery, Jan 1991, K910023. Audit photography (JD, TM) 18/8/94: colour prints HPRC180894(34)C, and slides.

Bibliography

J. Salmon, Rycote Chapel, English Heritage guidebook, English Heritage, 1991, first edition 1967.[most useful for structure]

S & M Bond, The Chapter Acts of the Dean and Canons of Windsor, 1430, 1523-1672, Windsor 1966, p.79.[only brief mention, with above quote from 1612]

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, English Heritage, London 1987, p. 93. [good short summary of history]

M. Aston, England's Iconoclasts, I, Laws Against Images, Oxford 1988, p. 375. [only brief mention]

J. Harvey, The Perpendicular Style, London 1978, pp 186-7. [only brief mention]

J. Sherwood & N. Pevsner, Oxfordshire, Hammondswoth 1974, pp 747-9. [good summary of structure and fittings]

P. Welford, A report on the conservation of the painted decoration on the west gallery ceiling at Rycote Chapel, unpublished report, CIA, 1990.

C. Babington, The Chapel of St. Michael and All Angels, Rycote, unpublished report, EH, 1990.

A.C. Morris, The Rycote Yew, Thame, 1978. [useful, most detailed, (and most entertaining) version of building and family history]

2 General Audit Information

Property name	RYCOTE CHAPEL	County	Oxfordshire
Region	South West		
Location	Ceiling, Western Gallery		
Orientation	WEST END		
Century 17 th	Date	Height (cm) 498	Width (cm) 564
Auditor(s)	TM, JD	Start date	18/08/94

Overall condition score **2**

Recommendations

The areas treated in 1990 appear to be stable, but the deterioration in the Norreys Pew seems to be active. Considering the importance of the paintings, it may be necessary within the next five years to consider further treatment in this area. For the moment, visual monitoring (i.e. of rate of flaking, spread of MBG) should be sufficient. However, before embarking on any conservation programme in the Norreys Pew, it would be most helpful to look further at the samples, both of pigment and microbiological growth, taken from the Western Gallery in 1990. As this painting has both a similar original technique and conservation history to the Norreys Pew, it should yield some valuable information.

Further to this, the recommendations made in 1990 by C. Babington with regard to the Western Gallery have not been addressed. The heating system directly below the Western Gallery is still in place (and on 'high' in mid-August), and although it does not seem to have provoked any localised damage, this should be examined further. It was found to have caused damage in 1985 (shortly after it was installed) and at that time, A. Wright, the London Area Architect, requested M&E to monitor the environmental conditions of the chapel. It is not known if this ever happened; but if it did, it would be useful to gain access to this data. In addition, the fluorescent tube lighting in the Norreys Pew is still in place, giving, as noted in 1990, an insensitive 'raking light' appearance to the paintings. Its proximity to the paintings is surely not necessary, and visually detracts from both the paintings and the surrounding woodwork.

It should also be noted that the problem of condensation at the east end of the wooden ceiling, which was first noticed and diagnosed in 1979 (see correspondence in EH file) is ongoing. E.W. Eldridge, the foreman, noted in 1979: 'large spots, some as large as a sixpence, sticky in nature covered the whole floor', and the architect, N.Hodgson, diagnosed it as condensation at that time. Eldridge also noted that the dripping only occurred on the section of the ceiling that had been treated with Cuprinol, and that Wykamol had been used for the rest. Upon our visit in August 1994 there were fresh spots on the floor, at the east end. A specialist in polychrome wood, etc, should advise, and the environmental conditions should be assessed.

In addition, there seems to be bat activity in the church. No damage from this was visible on the paintings (which are somewhat protected by their location) but excreta was noted on the walls and floor of the upper Western Gallery.

The paintings appear to be stable since treatment in 1990, and no conservation treatment appears necessary at present. However, because of the uncertain effects of the heating system, and the presence of bats, it is highly recommended that the paintings be inspected on a regular basis.

3 Audit Information: Technique

Property name	RYCOTE CHAPEL		
Region	South West	County	Oxfordshire
Location	Ceiling, Western Gallery		
Orientation	WEST END		
Century 17 th	Date	Height (cm) 498	Width (cm) 564
Auditor(s)	TM, JD	Start date	18/08/94

Overall Condition Score 2

Stratigraphy

Layer type	Support Layer	Specific condition Score	2
Thickness	15 cm		

Comments

Lath and plaster construction. Access was not possible during the present survey to view the support directly - the floorboards of the musicians' gallery have to be lifted. During the conservation work in the 1960s, however, the laths were inspected; at which time a new steel mesh support was inserted and the whole filled with plaster of Paris in order to re-key the original plaster.

Layer type	Render Layer 1	Specific condition Score	2
Thickness	2 cm		

Comments

Lime/hair plaster. The thickness of the plaster is now difficult to discern, but was noted by C. Babington during repairs made to the ceiling in 1990. It is a naturally undulating plaster, and has experienced movement and cracking in the past, but there does not seem to be any further movement since the conservation campaign of 1990.

Layer type	Render Layer 2	Specific condition Score	2
Thickness	0.2 cm		

Comments

Very fine plaster skim applied over beams and plaster, no visible aggregate.

Layer type	Ground Layer 1	Specific condition Score	2
Thickness			

Comments

Limewash ground; striations of brushstrokes clearly visible.

Layer type	Paint Layer 1	Specific condition Score	2
Thickness			
Comments	Red lead and vermillion have been identified, as well as a black, white and blue. The blue has been identified as an 'artificial copper blue'. Medium is unknown, but organic, due to the types of pigments employed. Possibly size or glue?		
Identified pigments	Colours		
red lead	red		
vermillion	red		
---	black		
---	white		
---	blue		
Analysis undertaken			
Method	POLARIZING LIGHT MICROSCOPY		
Person	C. Babington	Date	1990
Comments	Analysed briefly, to identify pigments, as part of the CIA campaign at Rycote in 1990.		

Layer type	Attachment 1	Specific condition Score	4
Thickness	1 cm		
Comments	<p>This plaster layer is bulging severely, especially over the doorway. The aggregate varies from very fine to 0.5mm size. The plaster may contain hair. There is also extensive microbiological growth throughout the render, in the form of small black particles. The render thins out over the quoins.</p>		

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

Property name	RYCOTE CHAPEL		
Region	South West	County	Oxfordshire
Location	Ceiling, Western Gallery		
Orientation	WEST END		
Century 17th	Date	Height (cm)498	Width (cm) 564

DETERIORATION AND DAMAGE

Deterioration phenomena

Type	cracking
Location	minor
Comments	not serious

Type	loss
Location	gold stars
Comments	The gold stars are damaged and bent.

ADDED MATERIALS

Accretions

Type dust

Location Entire

Comments Normal accretion of dust, does not obscure painting.

Coatings/Coverings

Type repainting

Location Patchy; entire

Comments Concentrated in areas of blue; relates to 1967 restoration.

Repairs

Type lime:sand

Location Edges

Comments Along edges of timbers; relate to 1990 conservation work.

TREATMENT

Past Treatment

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

Person MOW

Comments During major building work in the mid-60's, the floorboards were lifted, steel mesh was inserted to support rotting laths, and plaster of Paris was poured in to 're-key' the original plaster to the support. Later, in 1967, the MOW carried out surface repairs in plaster of Paris.

Past Treatment

Type CONSOLIDATION **Date** 01/01/67

Person MOW

Comments Lime water used to consolidate the plaster and paint layers, applied by spray.

Type FILLS/REPAIRS INSERTION **Date** 01/01/67

Person MOW

Comments Both plaster of Paris and lime mortar repairs were inserted by the MOW, perhaps at slightly different dates, along edges and losses.

Type PRESENTATION/REINTEGRATION **Date** 01/01/67

Person MOW

Comments Correspondence notes plans to 'revive conservatively'. Repainting is evident throughout, especially in blues; also within repairs (with cloud reconstruction); and attachments (cardboard stars) were reconstructed and replaced where they had been lost.

Past Treatment

Type FILLS/REPAIRS INSERTION **Date** 01/01/73

Person MOW

Comments In 1973, a hole was accidentally knocked in the plaster during filming. This was replaced with a plaster of Paris fill and the painting was reconstructed.

Past Treatment

Type BIODETERIORATION REMOVAL **Date** 01/04/90

Person EH

Comments The entire ceiling was vacuumed and dusted.

Type DUSTING **Date** 01/04/90

Person EH

Comments Entire ceiling was vacuumed and dusted.

Type FILLS/REPAIRS REMOVAL **Date** 01/04/90
Person EH
Comments Loose edging repairs (gypsum and lime/sand) were removed with spatulas and scalpels. Fragile edges were faced with tissue and 10% Paraloid B72.

Type FLAKE FIXING **Date** 01/04/90
Person EH
Comments Areas of flaking were protected with tissue and relaid with a dilute lime-based adhesive of 10ml lime milk: 500 ml of 2.5% by vol. Plextol B500: 3 ml IMS: 7 ml water, after pre-wetting with water:IMS (2:1).

Type GROUTING **Date** 01/04/90
Person EH
Comments Areas were faced if necessary (with tissue and 10% Paraloid B72 in acetone). A mixture of water and IMS (2:1) was injected prior to grouting with 1 part HTI (500m sieve): 1 part lime (1mm sieve): 0.05 part Plextol B500, finely ground, diluted with water.

Past Treatment

Type FILLS/REPAIRS INSERTION **Date** 02/04/90
Person EH
Comments After removal of old repairs (see 'fills/repairs insertion'), any fragile edges were faced with tissue and 10% Paraloid B72 in acetone. They were then replaced with a fine lime mortar: 2.5 parts silver sand: 1.5 parts marble dust: 1 part lime (1mm sieve).

Proposed Treatment

Type MONITORING CONDITION **Date** 18/08/94
Person TM, JD
Comments The ceiling appears to be stable. However, the condition should be monitored, especially in light of the fact that the heating system has not been removed from directly below the painting. This was recommended in 1990.

1 Wall Painting Record

Property name	RYCOTE CHAPEL		
Region	South West	County	Oxfordshire
Location of painting	Canopy ceiling, Norreys Pew		
Orientation	NORTH PEW, NORTH WALL		
Century	17 th	Date	
		Height (cm)	280
		Width (cm)	211
Subjects included			
cloud(s)			
Sky			
Stars			

Description

This small chapel, dedicated to St. Michael and All Angels and built on the site of a former Benedictine chapel, dates from the mid-fifteenth century, and served the great house at Rycote. The chapel itself is important because it is entirely of one build and unaltered, constructed in 1449 by Richard Quatremayne of stone from the Taynton quarries near Burford. From the exterior it appears to be a simple, yet high quality, example of mid-fifteenth century Perpendicular architecture. However, it is the 17th-century fittings inside the chapel that make it unusual.

The estate was sold in 1521 to Sir John Heron, then purchased in 1539 by Sir John Williams. Sir John Williams held several prominent state offices in his lifetime. It was he, who, in 1553, erected two private pews in the chapel: a family pew on the north side of the chapel, and a domed pew on the south side for the exclusive use of Princess Elizabeth (Queen Mary had appointed Williams guardian to Elizabeth), linked to the north pew by a wooden strapwork screen. Ownership of the estate then passed to Lord Henry Norreys (from 1559-1601), also active in the court of (now) Queen Elizabeth I, who was a frequent visitor. It was his grandson Francis (owner from 1603-1622) who was responsible for the further decoration of the chapel. The fabric of the chapel with its original wagon roof remained unaltered, as did the benches in the nave, but the west gallery was built and the musicians' gallery over the north pew was added. The painted decoration of both of these structures, and the wagon roof, was probably executed at this time.

The ceiling of the north pew, now known as the Norreys Pew, is painted with a stylised representation of the heavens, with clouds (their edges accented in red and blue) in a blue sky studded with applied gilded stars. The wagon roof is painted in imitation marbling with the same gold stars decorating the laths (however, these stars are now mostly lost). Chapter records from 27 January 1612 note that 'the whole space between the Organs & the pillars over the knights stalls should be colored blue, & be sett with starres gilded.' This may refer to the decoration under the Western Gallery, which is in all likelihood contemporary with that of the Norreys Pew. In any case, it seems the painted decoration in both areas can be reasonably attributed to the second decade of the 17th century.

The church also retains a 12th-century carved stone font found at the west end of the chapel. Recut in the 15C its surviving polychromy probably also dates to this time. This consists of traces of red and green paint, but has not been audited separately due to the scant remains. Traces have also been noted on the east wall behind the reredos, and within the west door on the south wall (Salmon 1991), but these were not audited during the present survey.

After the last descendant died in the fire of 1745, the house was purchased and partly rebuilt by Lt.Col. A St G Hamersley, who put the chapel under the guardianship of the MOW in 1952. Extensive correspondence exists in the EH files regarding the restoration of the entire interior (and its fittings) in preparation for the opening of the building to the public for Easter 1967. Records show that treatment was carried out to 'replace stars to ceiling, revive colouring conservatively and fix,' as well as to fill cracks, on the Norreys Pew. Similar work was done on the Western Gallery and the font. At this time it was discovered that the applied gilded stars were cut from 17th-century Continental playing cards (datable to before 1628, after which time they were banned in England). They are not only an unusual use of

redundant cards but a confirmation that the paintings were executed before this date.

The dimensions given refer to the length (E-W) 280cm and width 211cm.

Photographic Record

29/6/94 EH 'current' contact photo files; Canopy over south pew, Jan 1991, K910022. Canopy over north pew, Jan 1991, K910029. Detail painted ceiling beneath western gallery, Jan 1991, K910023.

Audit photography (JD, TM) 18/8/94: colour prints HPRC180894(34)C, and slides.

DOE negative search;

Rycote Chapel

22/23-7-57

Painting on plaster panels and timber studs (which appears to have been removed by DOE and replaced with timber infill panels!)

A4775/4 Detail of deterioration and painting to main curved roof.

A4775/5 Detail of deterioration and painting to main curved roof.

A4775/7 Detail of deterioration and painting to main curved roof.

A4775/9 Detail of deterioration and painting to main curved roof.

A4775/11 Detail of deterioration and painting to main curved roof.

A4775/11 Detail of deterioration and painting to main curved roof.

7-6-64

A6488/1-2 Show panels from Norreys pew before restoration.

22-11-66

A7220/1-5 show painted scheme to main curved ceiling recreated at west end of chapel.

22-3-67

A7291/1-3 Show restoration of panels from Norreys pew - wax being used to replicate moulded detail.

Bibliography

J. Salmon, Rycote Chapel, English Heritage guidebook, English Heritage, 1991, first edition 1967.[most useful for structure]

S & M Bond, The Chapter Acts of the Dean and Canons of Windsor, 1430, 1523-1672, Windsor 1966, p.79.[only brief mention, with above quote from 1612]

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2 General Audit Information

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Region	South West		
Location	Canopy ceiling, Norreys Pew		
Orientation	NORTH PEW, NORTH WALL		
Century 17 th	Date	Height (cm) 280	Width (cm) 211
Auditor(s)	TM, JD	Start date	18/08/94

Overall condition score **3**

Recommendations

The areas treated in 1990 appear to be stable, but the deterioration in the Norreys Pew seems to be active. Considering the importance of the paintings, it may be necessary within the next five years to consider further treatment in this area. For the moment, visual monitoring (i.e. of rate of flaking, spread of MBG) should be sufficient. However, before embarking on any conservation programme in the Norreys Pew, it would be most helpful to look further at the samples, both of pigment and microbiological growth, taken from the Western Gallery in 1990. As this painting has both a similar original technique and conservation history to the Norreys Pew, it should yield some valuable information.

Further to this, the recommendations made in 1990 by C. Babington with regard to the Western Gallery have not been addressed. The heating system directly below the Western Gallery is still in place (and on 'high' in mid-August), and although it does not seem to have provoked any localised damage, this should be examined further. It was found to have caused damage in 1985 (shortly after it was installed) and at that time, A. Wright, the London Area Architect, requested M&E to monitor the environmental conditions of the chapel. It is not known if this ever happened; but if it did, it would be useful to gain access to this data. In addition, the fluorescent tube lighting in the Norreys Pew is still in place, giving, as noted in 1990, an insensitive 'raking light' appearance to the paintings. Its proximity to the paintings is surely not necessary, and visually detracts from both the paintings and the surrounding woodwork.

It should also be noted that the problem of condensation at the east end of the wooden ceiling, which was first noticed and diagnosed in 1979 (see correspondence in EH file) is ongoing. E.W. Eldridge, the foreman, noted in 1979: 'large spots, some as large as a sixpence, sticky in nature covered the whole floor', and the architect, N.Hodgson, diagnosed it as condensation at that time. Eldridge also noted that the dripping only occurred on the section of the ceiling that had been treated with Cuprinol, and that Wykamol had been used for the rest. Upon our visit in August 1994 there were fresh spots on the floor, at the east end. A specialist in polychrome wood, etc, should advise, and the environmental conditions should be assessed.

Conservation treatment of the Norreys Pew painting is recommended following further technical analysis. This will mainly involve minor flake-fixing in order to prevent the loss of original material. [Timescale: 2 people, 1 week, within 5 years].

In addition, there seems to be bat activity in the church. No damage from this was visible on the paintings (which are somewhat protected by their location) but excreta was noted on the walls and floor of the upper Western Gallery.

3 Audit Information: Technique

Property name	RYCOTE CHAPEL		
Region	South West	County	Oxfordshire
Location	Canopy ceiling, Norreys Pew		
Orientation	NORTH PEW, NORTH WALL		
Century 17 th	Date	Height (cm) 280	Width (cm) 211
Auditor(s)	TM, JD	Start date	18/08/94

Overall Condition Score 3

Stratigraphy

Layer type	Support Layer	Specific condition Score	2
Thickness	15 cm		

Comments

The support is comprised of lath and plaster with timber framework. However, access was limited so it was not possible to view the support directly - the floorboards of the musician's gallery have to be lifted. One small loss at the edge (under the central timber) show the use of hair plaster, and it is known to be a lath construction from the restoration done in the 1960s, when the floorboards were lifted. The lath construction is framed within timbers, with one cross-timber at the centre, to provide further support. The thickness is approximated according to the thickness of the floor above.

Layer type	Render Layer 1	Specific condition Score	2
Thickness	1 cm		

Comments

Lime/hair plaster. The plaster surface is naturally undulating so although it appears uneven it also seems sound. However, there is fine cracking throughout, especially at the edges of the timbers. There are also characteristic scratch-marks, which may be due to the original technique of trowelling. The thickness was only approximated from the small loss behind the central timber.

Layer type	Render Layer 2	Specific condition Score	2
Thickness	0.2 cm		

Comments

Very fine lime plaster skim applied over beams and plaster.

Layer type	Ground Layer 1	Specific condition Score	3
Thickness			

Comments

White limewash ground: striations of brushstrokes clearly visible.

Layer type	Paint Layer 1	Specific condition Score	3
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Thickness

Comments

The blue has only been identified as an 'artificial copper blue'. Medium is unknown, but organic, due to the types of pigments employed. Possibly size or glue?

Identified pigments Colours

red lead	red
vermilion	red
---	black
lime white	white
---	blue

Analysis undertaken

Method POLARIZING LIGHT MICROSCOPY

Person C. Babington Date 1990

Comments Analysed briefly, to identify pigments, as part of the CIA campaign at Rycote in 1990.

Layer type	Attachment 1	Specific condition Score	2
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Thickness 0.3 cm

Comments

Early 17th-century playing cards cut into star shapes and gilded.

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

Property name	RYCOTE CHAPEL		
Region	South West	County	Oxfordshire
Location	Canopy ceiling, Norreys Pew		
Orientation	NORTH PEW, NORTH WALL		
Century 17 th	Date	Height (cm) 280	Width (cm) 211

DETERIORATION AND DAMAGE

Deterioration phenomena

Type flaking

Location entire

Comments Micro-flaking of paint layer, perhaps at maximum, 10% of the surface. There seem to be many areas of past flaking, which have been retouched since. The flaking is certainly still active.

Type blistering (paint layer)

Location entire

Comments These micro-blisters may be related to the pitting, which is concentrated within the blue areas. It may be a result of the medium used, or medium-rich areas. On the timbers, loss has occurred, whereas on the plaster, the paint layer seems to blister.

Type loss

Location entire

Comments There is a patchy survival of original paint layer, much of which has been overpainted.

Type pitting (surface)

Location entire

Comments Small pits can be found throughout the surface, and is either related to the original technique (i.e. medium-rich areas) or some type of past efflorescence.

Type cracking

Location entire, especially edges

Comments Hairline cracking throughout. Presumably movement of the lath construction has contributed to this; therefore the cracks are concentrated along the edges, adjacent to the supporting timbers.

ADDED MATERIALS

Accretions

Type biodeterioration
Location small patches towards north-west corner
Comments Rusty-brown, powdery appearance. A sample was taken during the 1990 campaign but has not been analysed.

Type dust
Location entire
Comments Does not significantly obscure the painting

Coatings/Coverings

Type repainting
Location patchy, over old losses throughout entire surface, but mainly restricted to blues
Comments Similar to repainted areas seen in the Western Gallery ceiling; presumably done during the same (1967) campaign.

Repairs

Type lime:sand
Location Edges, along timbers, and in minor losses.
Comments Appear to be a lime/sand mortar, fine aggregate. No sign of the gypsum repairs that were found on the Western Gallery ceiling.

TREATMENT

Past Treatment

Type CONSOLIDATION **Date** 01/01/67
Person MOW
Comments There is definite reference to the ceiling of the Western Gallery being treated with a limewater spray. It is probable that this pew was treated similarly, however, correspondence only states plans to 'treat and revive' and to 'revive conservatively and fix'.

Type DUSTING **Date** 01/01/67
Person MOW
Comments

Type FILLS/REPAIRS INSERTION **Date** 01/01/67
Person MOW
Comments Lime:sand mortar with fine aggregate.

Type PRESENTATION/REINTEGRATION **Date** 01/01/67
Person MOW
Comments Correspondence notes plans to 'revive conservatively'. Repainting is evident throughout, especially blues; reconstruction of losses; attachments (stars) reconstructed and replaced where lost.

Proposed Treatment

Type FLAKE FIXING **Date** 18/08/94
Person JD, TM
Comments The most immediate problem is that of micro-flaking. It seems that the Norreys Pew is now in much the same condition that the Western Gallery was in before it was treated in 1990, and the latter appears stable, therefore a similar methodology might be employed (i.e. a lime-based adhesive such as lime milk and Plextol B500).

Type MONITORING CONDITION **Date** 18/08/94
Person JD, TM
Comments The flaking, MBG, and cracking should be monitored (visually) regularly over the course of the next few years in order to assess the rate of deterioration, and whether or not it is still active.

Type UNSPECIFIED **Date** 18/08/94
Person JD, TM
Comments Analysis of Western Gallery samples, both of pigment and MBG, could be assessed before treatment.
