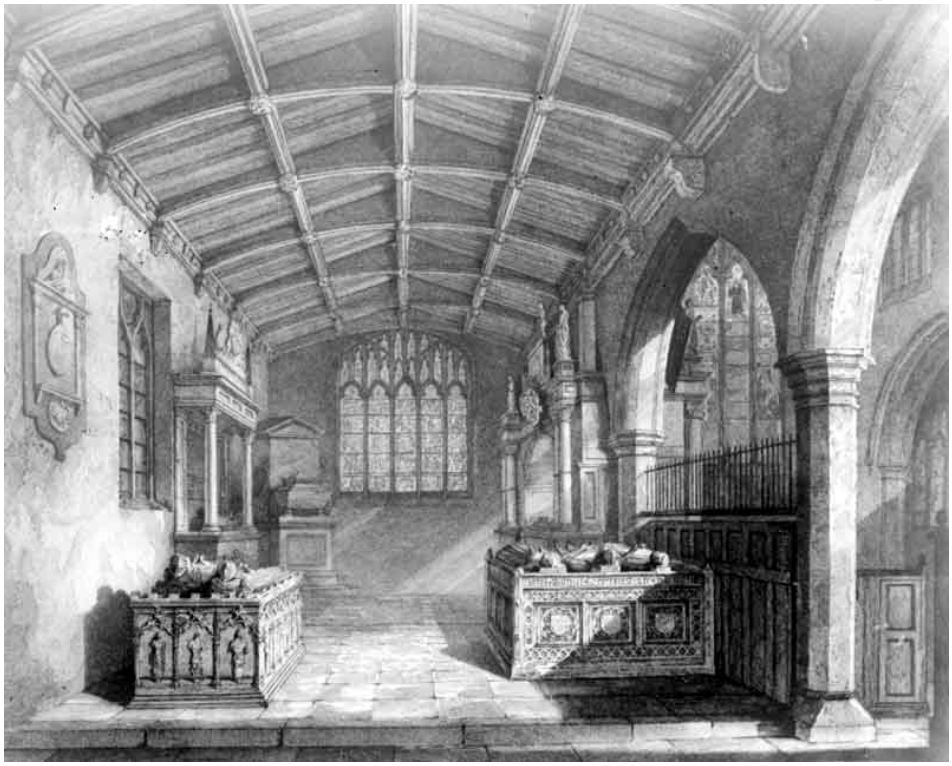
St Michael & All Angels Church, Thornhill.
Conservation report on the internal monuments
Section 3
Sir George and Lady Anne Savile Monument
North elevation detailed condition survey



Prepared for:

Thornhill Parish Church Council

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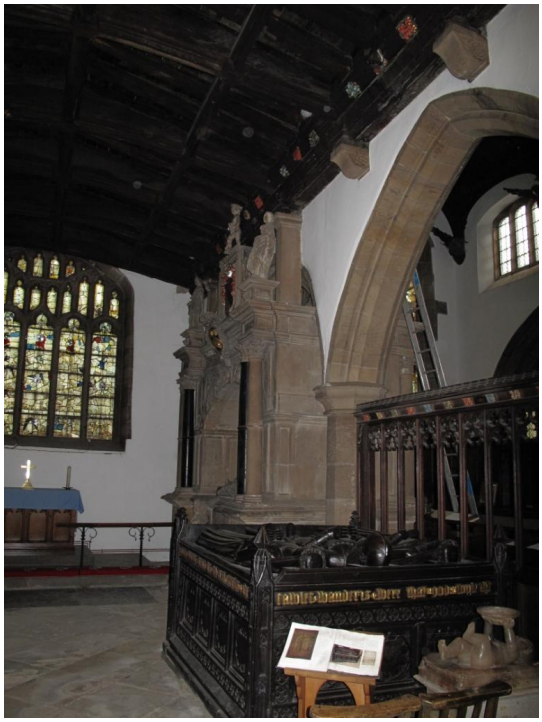
Monument number 1 – Sir George Savile (1614) and his wife Lady Anne Savile.

Detailed condition survey – north elevation.



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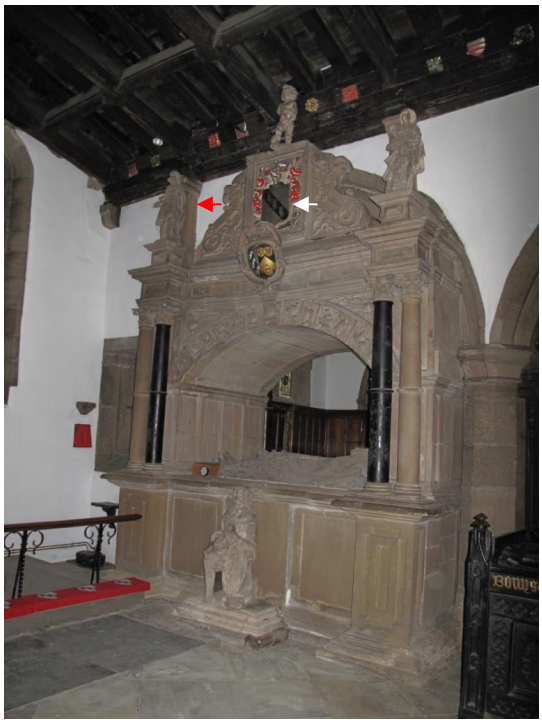
General view of the location of the north elevation looking east.



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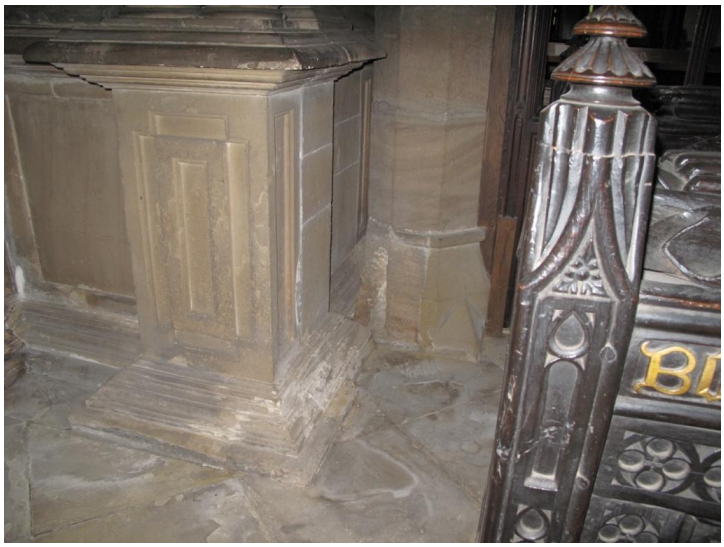
General view of the north elevation.

The elevation is basically symmetrical with the south elevation differing visually by the incorporation of the coat of arms in the upper detail of the pediment (white arrow); and structurally by the inclusion of stone piers which appear to transfer load from the corbels supporting the ceiling onto the top of the monument (red arrow).



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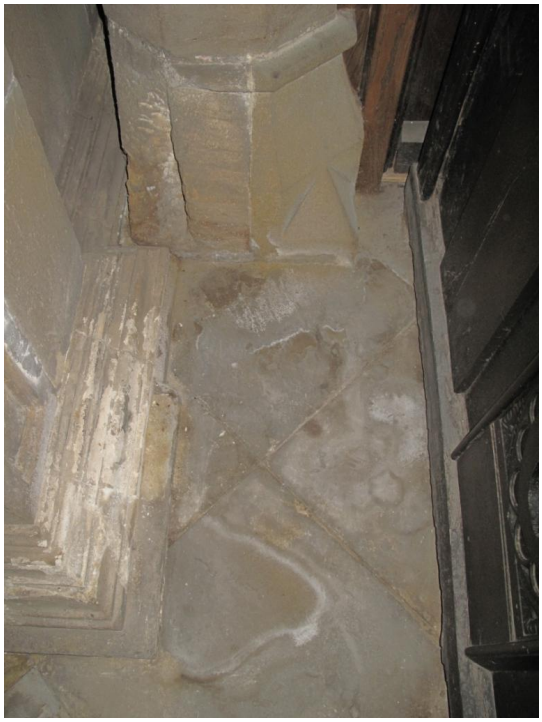
Western end of the north elevation of the chest.

The floor on the north side of the monument is stone with no secondary covering. This offers a more permeable structure Compare this with the south elevation where the Victorian tiles and carpet present a more impervious structure.

Not withstanding this, the monument is suffering from moisture rising into the stones together with soluble salts.

This is apparent in the discolouration on both the floor and the monument in the view above and the detail below.



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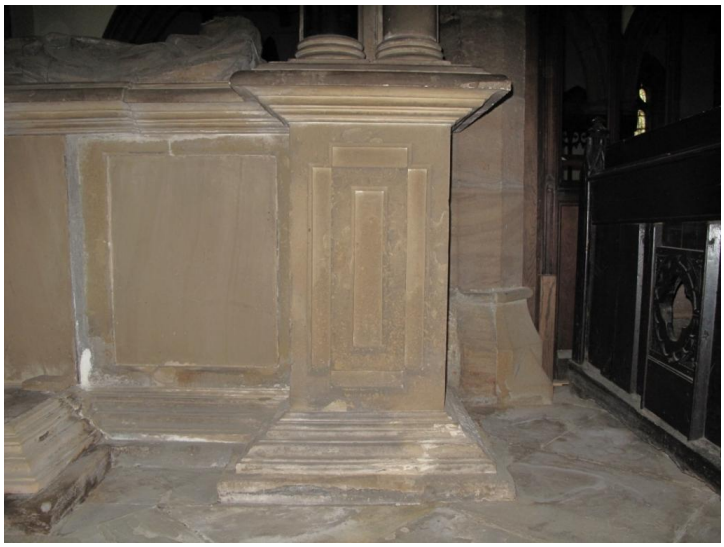
Detail of the stones of the floor at the western end of the north elevation.

The plinth of the monument can be seen to be suffering badly from moisture and salt damage.



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Western end of the plinth.

Note the various types of pointing in the joints indicating past restorations and maintenance.

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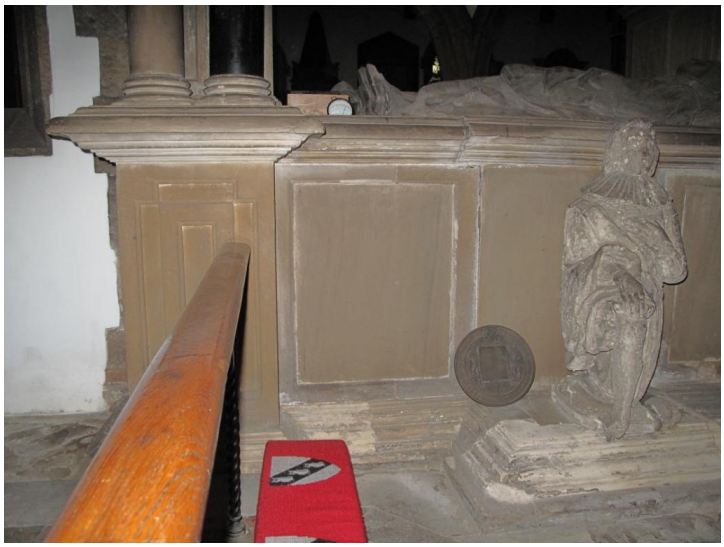
Central area of the north elevation of the chest and the figure of the second son of Sir George and Lady Anne.



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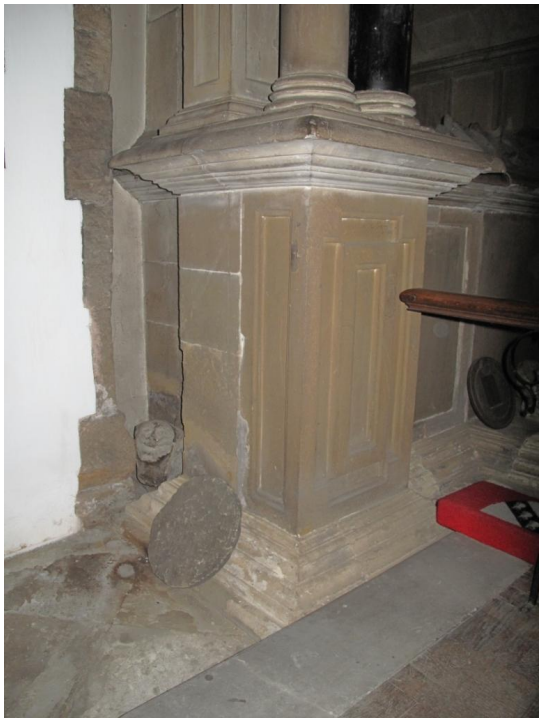
Eastern end of the chest.



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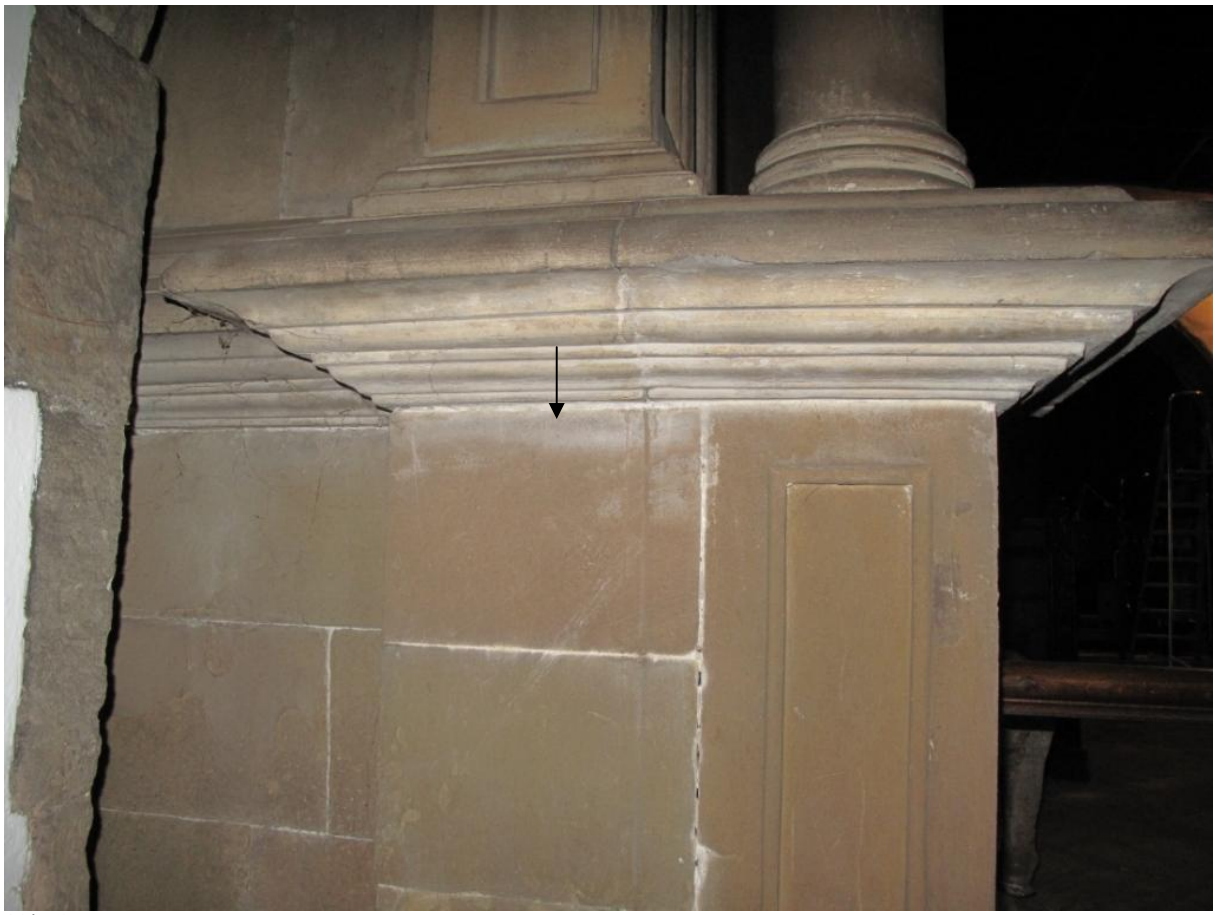
The eastern elevation of the chest also has strong indications of moisture and salt damage. This has been dealt with in detail within section one of this report.

Below the photograph shows the presence of salt efflorescence at higher level on the chest end panel (black arrow). At present there is not significant erosion in this particular area as a consequence of this. This is in contrast to other areas and it might suggest that this is a relatively new incursion?



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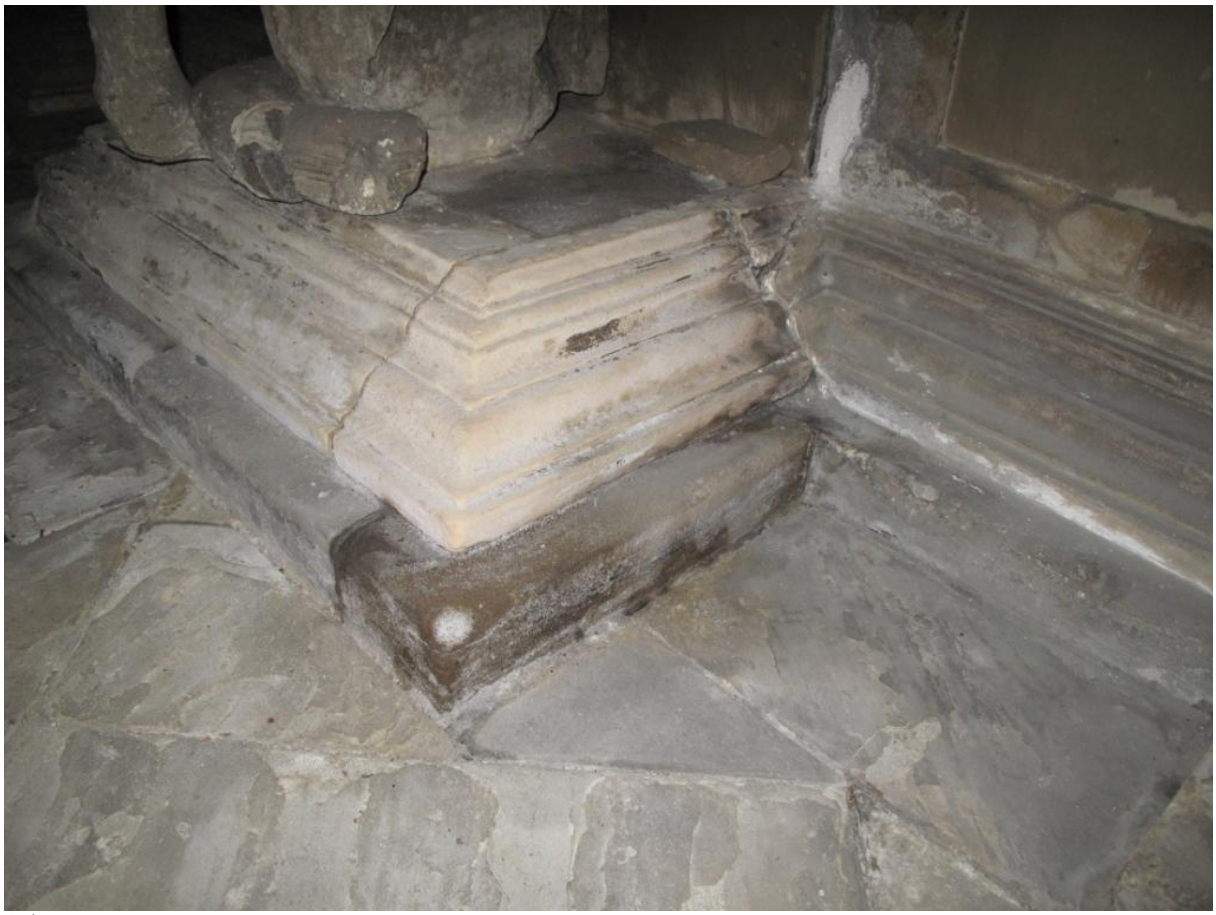
General view of the kneeling figure.

Note the presence of a possible surface coating and the extent of subsequent exfoliation which is comparable to the south side figure.

The plinth to this sculpture is suffering badly.

Below is a detail of the western end which was extremely damp with active and progressive slat efflorescence at the time of the survey.

The salts may be deliquescent and exacerbating the situation; the areas with high salt growth appear damp.



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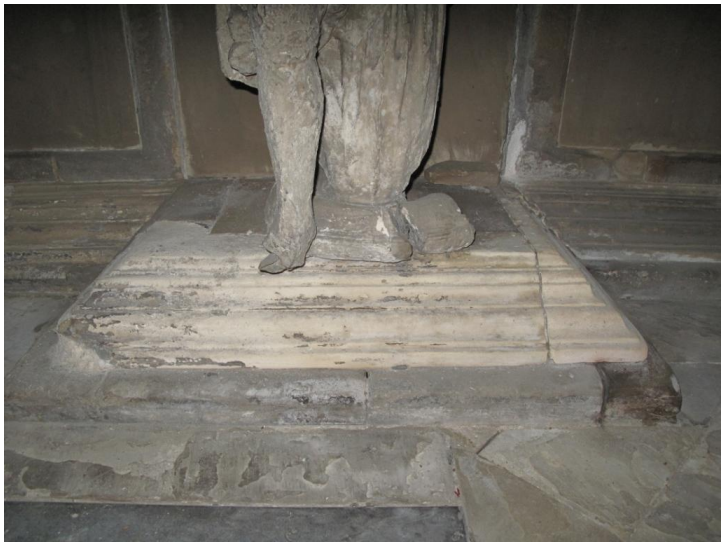
North-west corner of the plinth to the kneeling figure.



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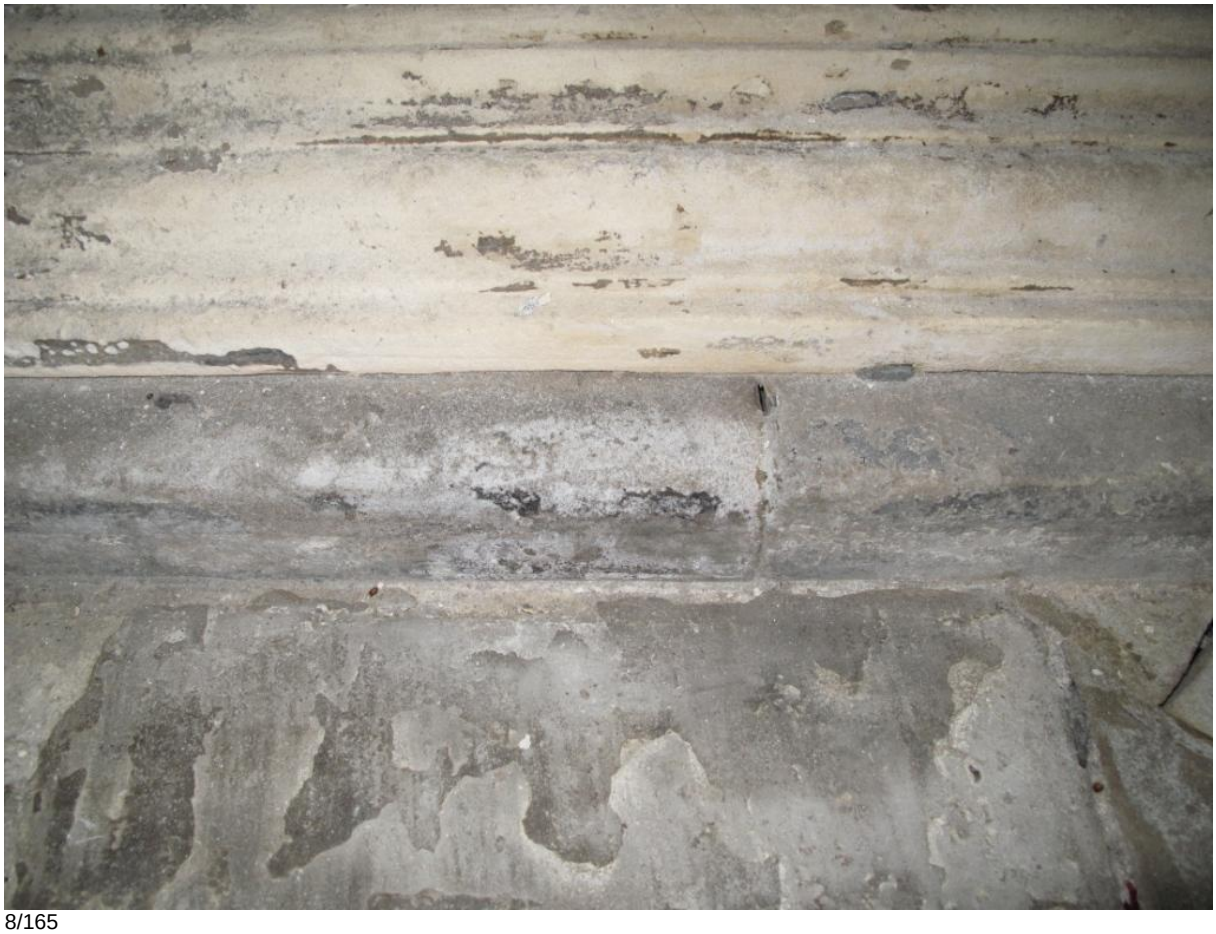
Left; Front elevation of the plinth to the kneeling figure and,

Below; detail of the slat growth on the lower edge which appears to be recent and progressive.

In general the very clean appearance of the plinth stones indicates severe ongoing exfoliation of the stone surface as a consequence of salt erosion.



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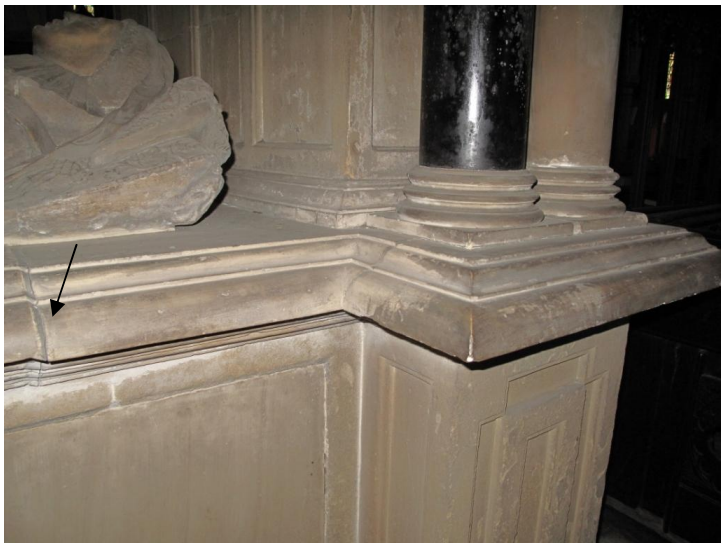

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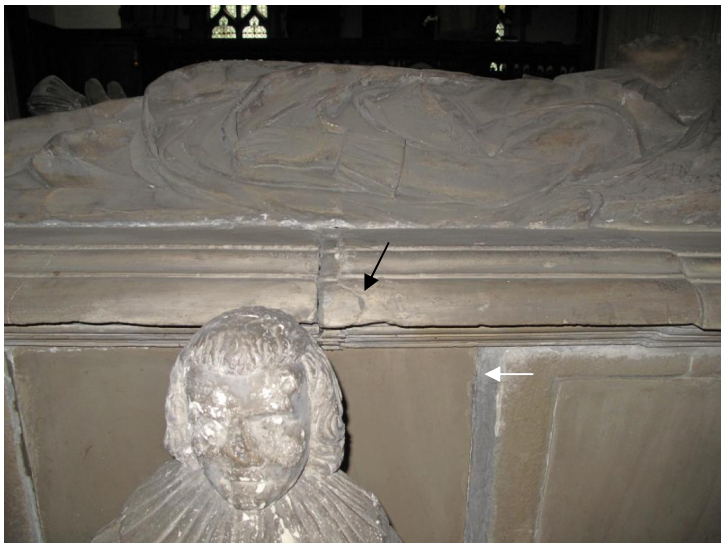
The top stones of the chest are showing signs of previous movement that has been pointed and made good: Indicated by the black arrow in the photograph to the left and in the photographs below.



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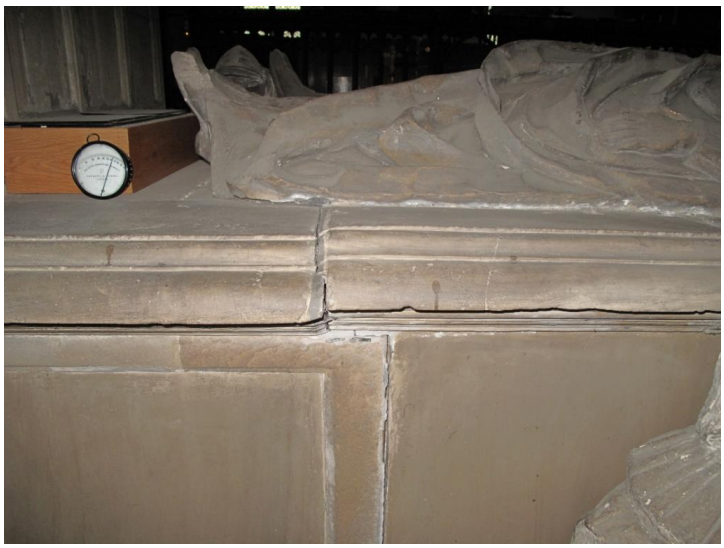
Note also the extensive dark re-pointing in the eastern joint of the panel below; indicated by the white arrow.

The joint at the eastern end of the plinth (see below) has also moved outwards and away from the centre as the western end has.

This is indicating thrusts in a north eastern and north western direction.



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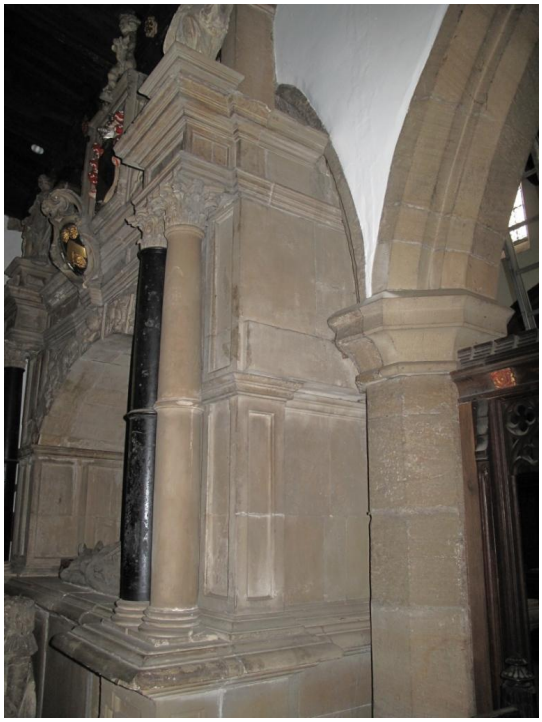
In this crack the remedial works demonstrate that the movement has continued as there is subsequent opening of the joints. This does not have the appearance of shrinkage. None of the evidence is appearing to be fresh but it could be very gradual but ongoing movement that is barely discernible by purely visual means.



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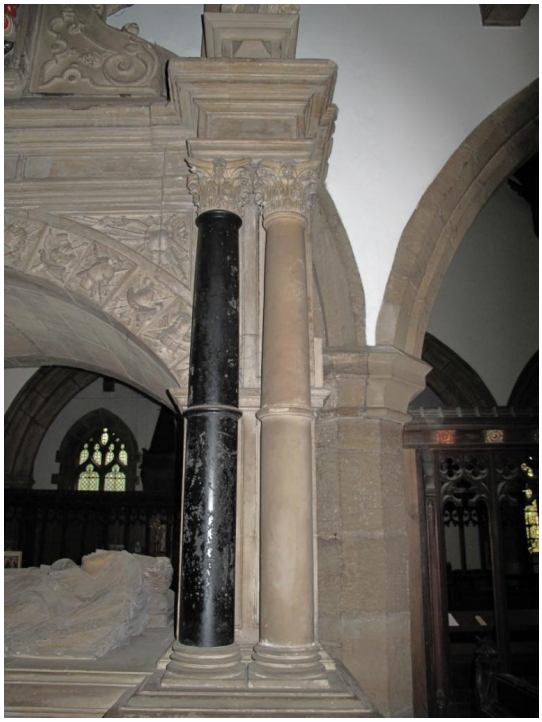
Overall view of the western elevation of the canopy section of the tomb.



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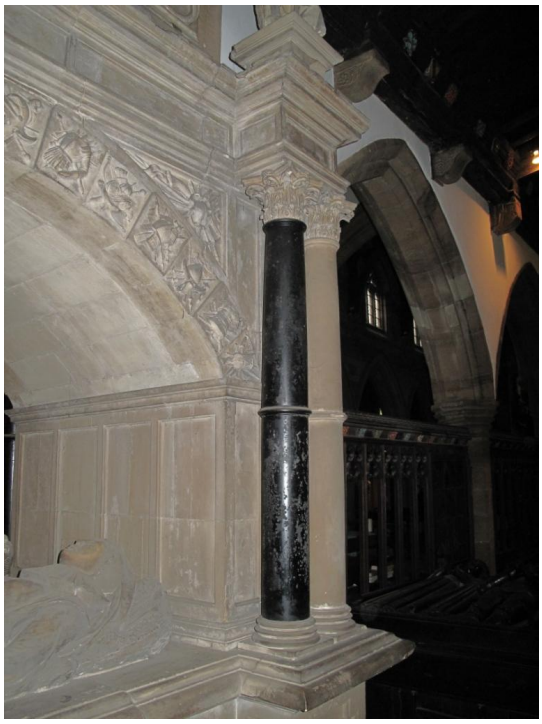
General view of the western columns.

At this level the overall condition of the north elevation is comparable with the south elevation.



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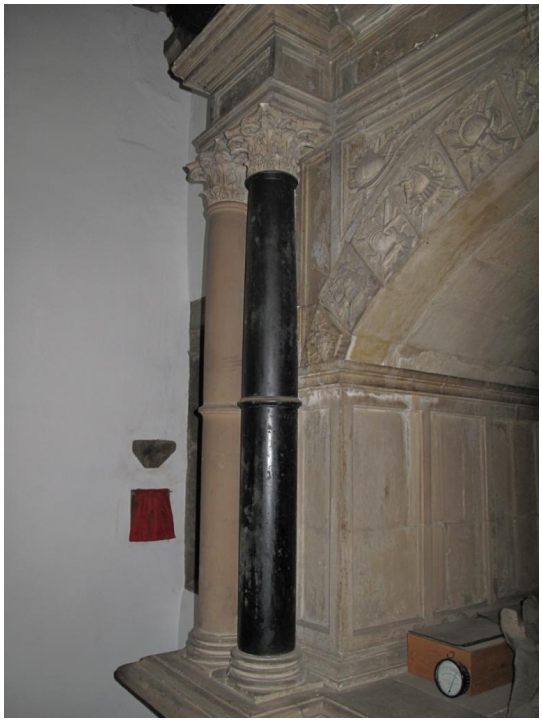
Looking south west at the columns and the underside of the canopy.



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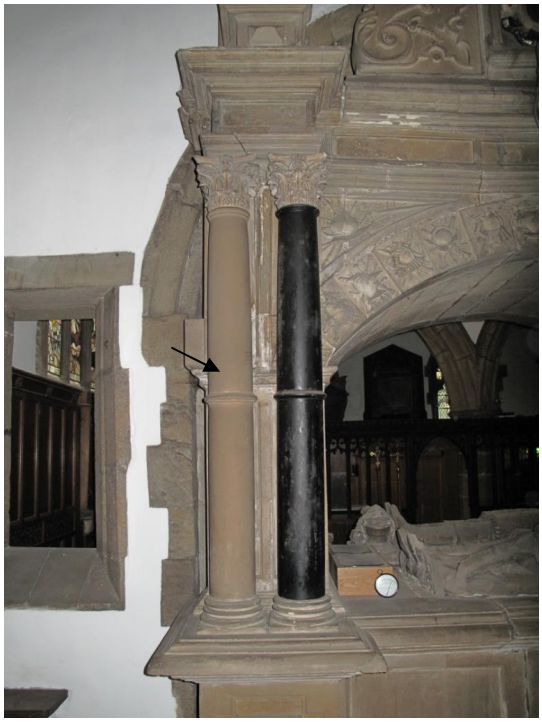
The eastern end columns.

At the time of the survey there was a thermo hydrograph resting on the tomb (white arrow) – the purpose of this was unknown but may relate to ongoing investigations on the adjacent stained glass in the eastern end of the Savile chapel.



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Left: Eastern columns - front elevation.

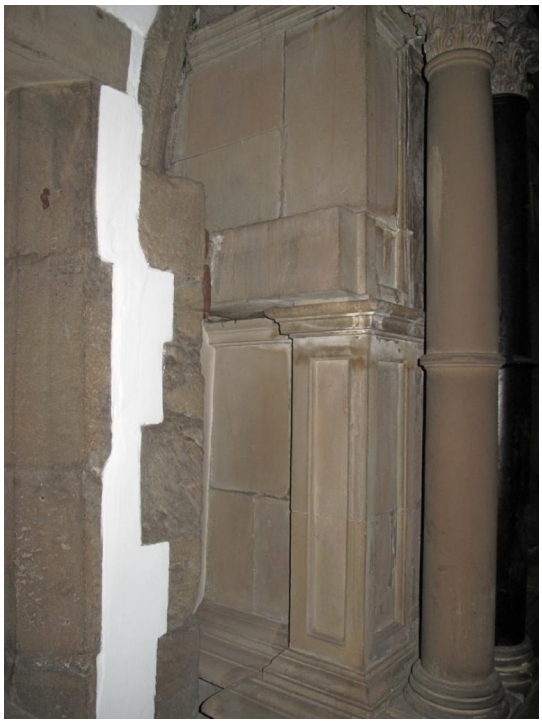
Below: Eastern columns and eastern return.

Note the intense discolouration in the area at the top of the pilaster block.

For some reason it appears that moisture and salts concentrate with in this section.

Has there been a previous leak in the roof that has lead to a concentration of salts within this area?

This might require more detailed on site investigations.



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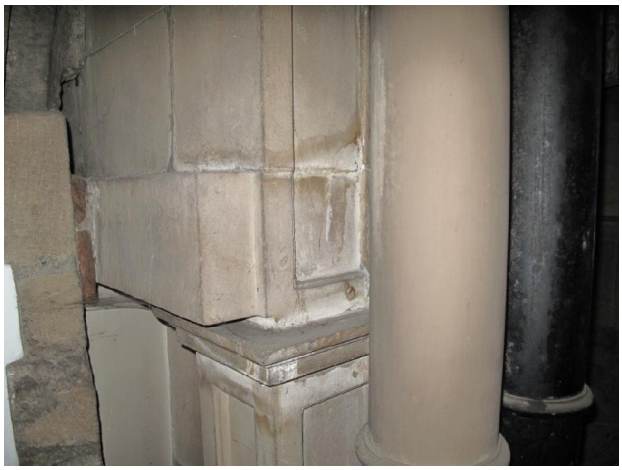

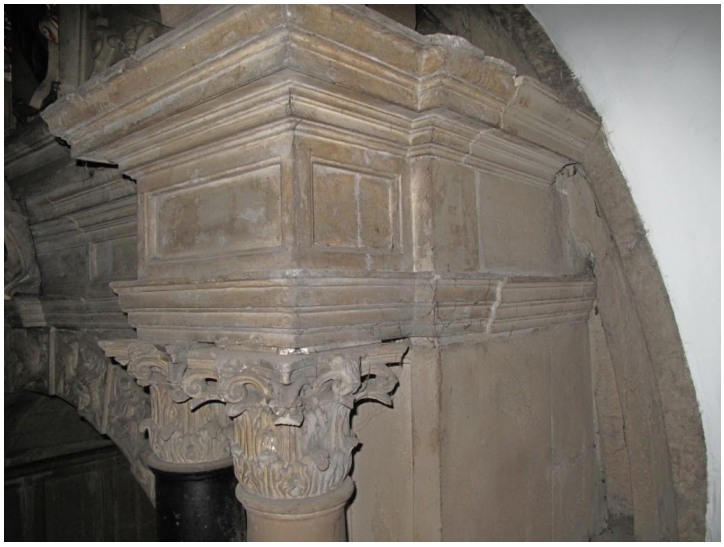

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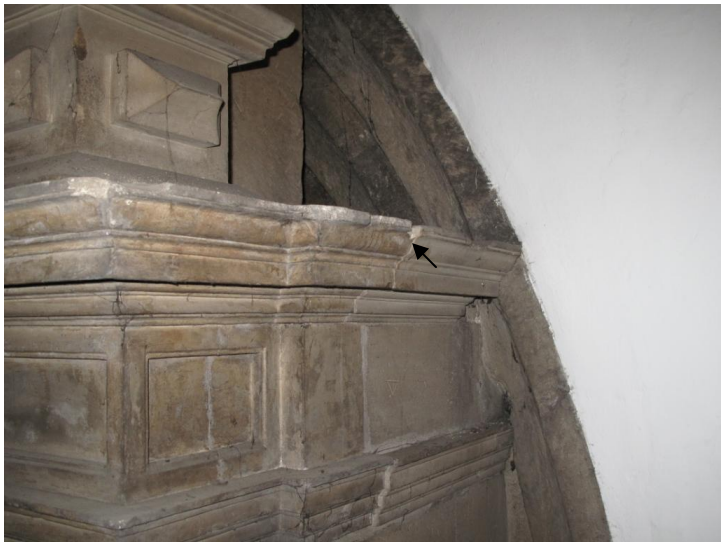
The western elevation of the north side entablature exhibits wide joints indicating movement within the structure.



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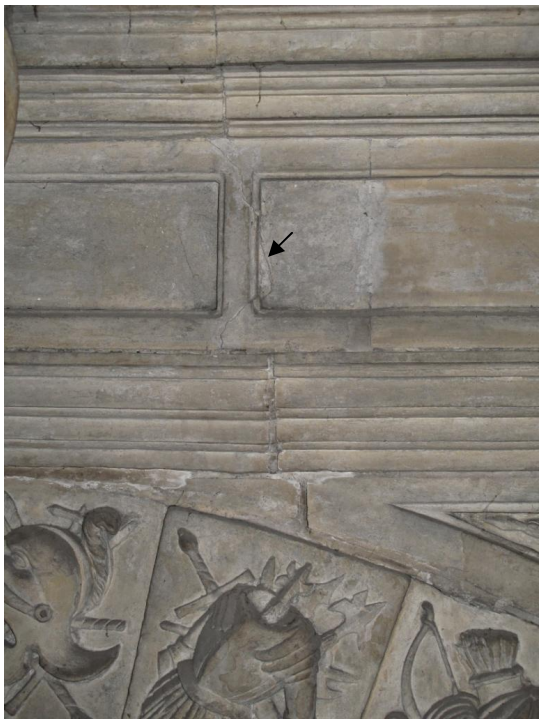
Detail of the western return.

Note the misalignment in the joints indicating previous movement.

08/193

The western spandrel has movement in the joints comparable with the spandrels of the south elevation indicating a consistent problem of movement within the structure of both elevations of the monument.



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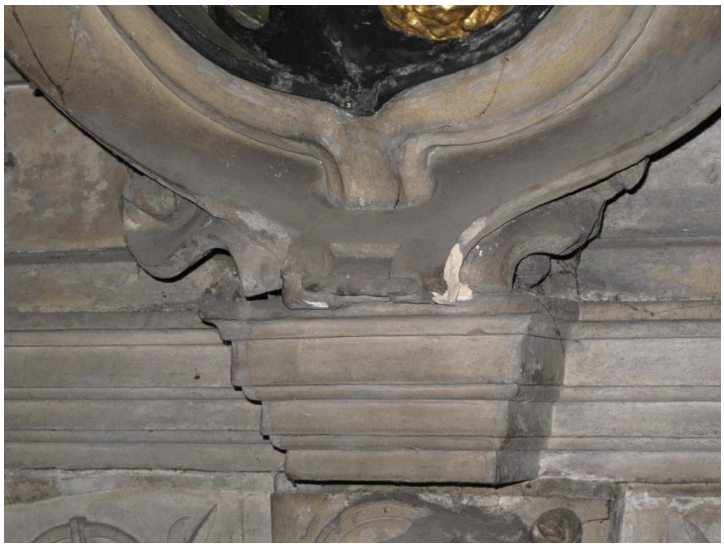
Detail of the western spandrel showing the movement across the vertical joint. Note also the cracked stone as indicated by the black arrow.



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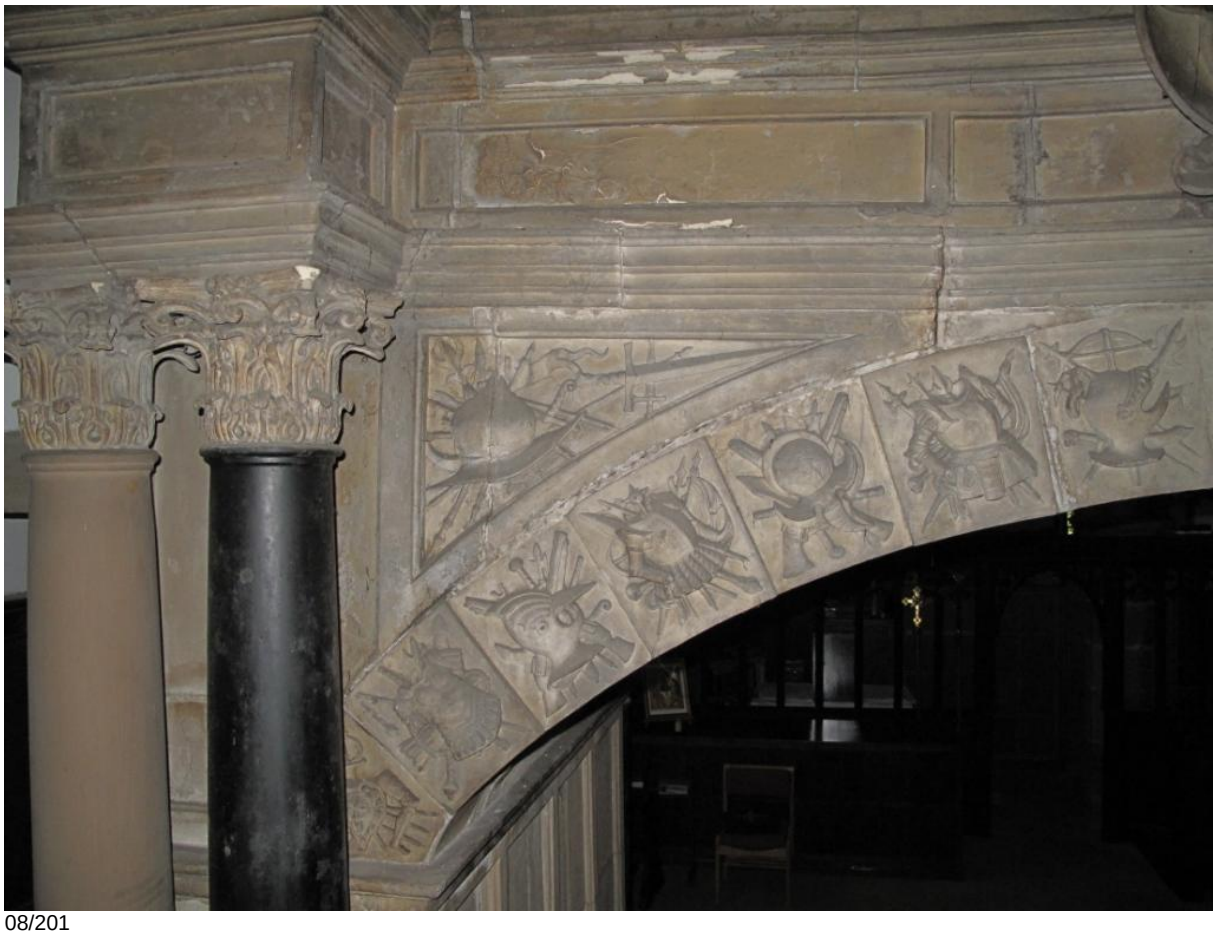
Detail of the shield showing recent impact damage. This seems to have been a problem generally across the monument even at high level which indicates that perhaps ladders are being placed against the structure – if this is the case it is to be discouraged.



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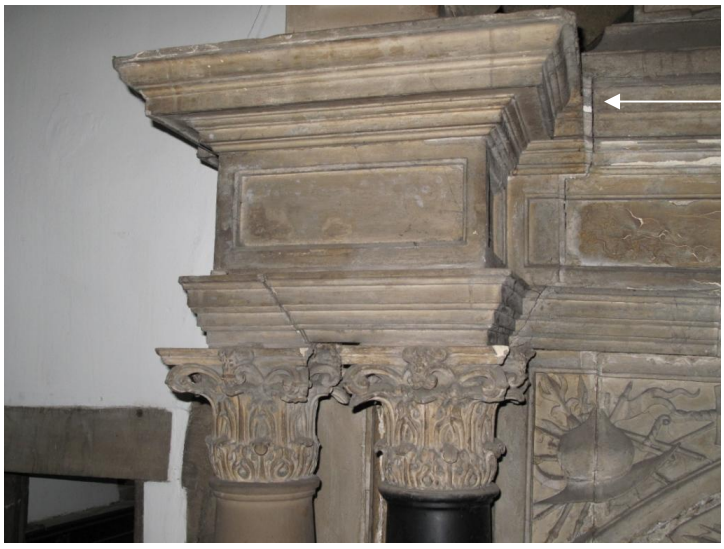
General view of the eastern spandrel: As noted previously the joints have been progressively opening as the monument spreads and have been re-pointed on a number of occasions but as clear here the movement has continued since the last intervention which is of unknown date. The open joints resemble movement in the structure rather than shrinkage in the mortars.



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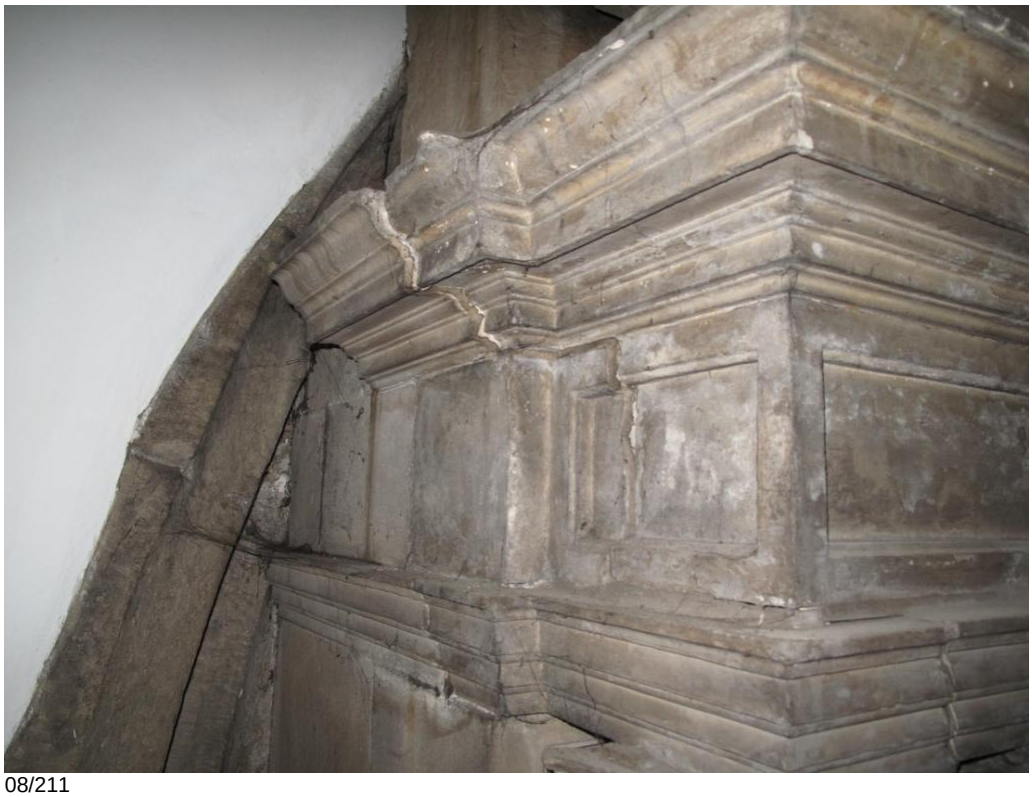
Detail of the open joint.



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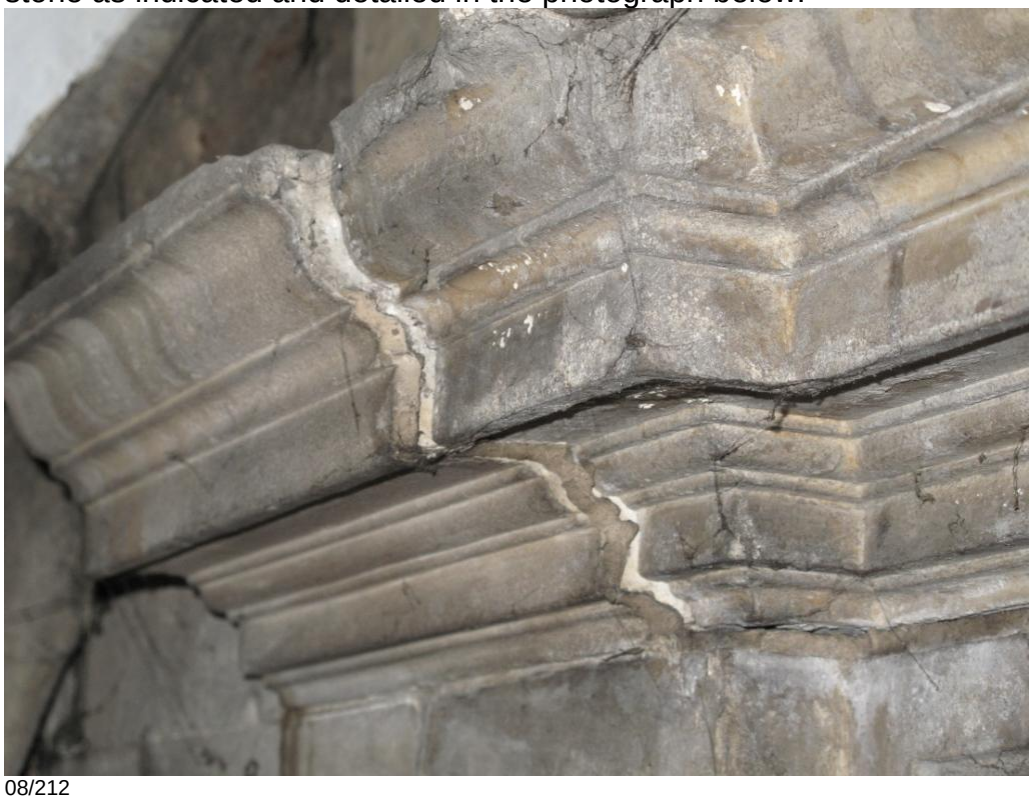
General view of the entablature eastern return showing the movement present in the stone as indicated and detailed in the photograph below.



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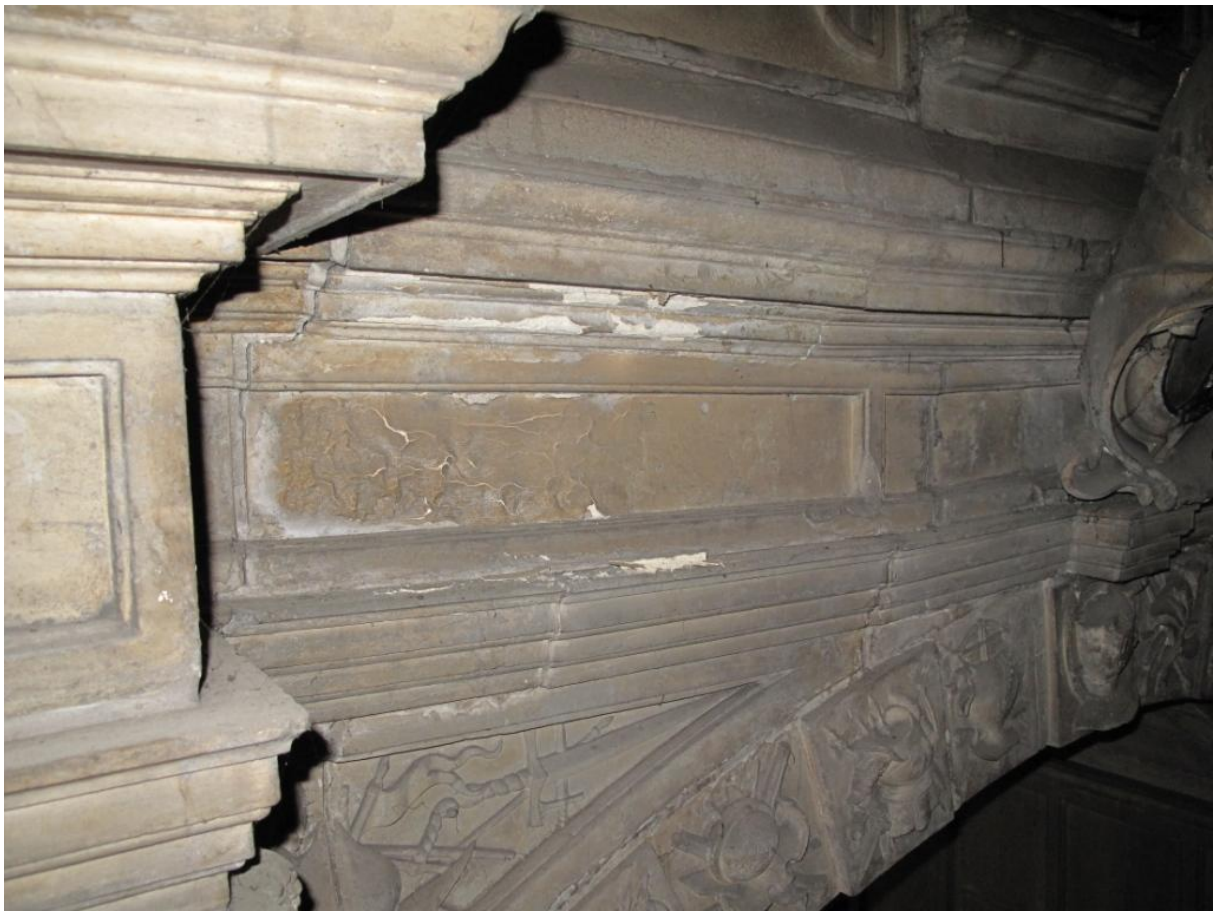
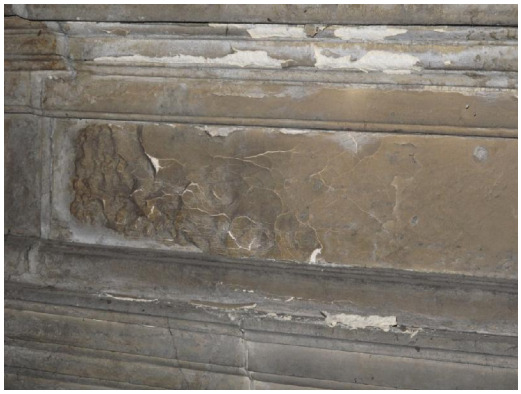


08/213. The entablature above the eastern spandrel.

It has been previously noted that the stone appears to have been coated with an unknown material. The blistering shown on this stone is further evidence of this and supports the proposal that further investigation is required to try and ascertain what this is and indeed if it is original or a restoration coating. Experience based on other church projects indicates that in the 19th century it was not uncommon for monuments to be cleaned and coated with oil based toning layer to homogenise the surface appearance. Another possibility is that the stone was treated with a linseed (or other) oil at an early stage of its life or at some point when it was showing signs of being friable.



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A hardened finish coat might prevent the structure from “breathing” and the severe surface exfoliation shown here may be a consequence. At the time of survey flakes of surface were on the ledge below.

08/224

The eastern allegorical figure.

Note the adjacent stone pillar apparently supporting the stone corbel above (see also the western pillar below).

Should any proposal be agreed to dismantle the monument the function of this pillar would need to be investigated by an engineer and consideration given to any support it may be providing to the roof above.

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The western allegorical figure.

See below for a view of the complete western pillar.

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Any proposal to dismantle the monument will need to include prior investigations to ascertain the load carried by the two pillars.