

St Michael & All Saints Church, Thornhill.

Conservation report on the internal monuments

Section 7

Monuments 8, 9, 10, & 11 on the south wall of the south chapel



Prepared for:
Thornhill Parish Church Council
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By
MARTIN HOLDEN
SCULPTURE AND ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION SERVICES
Dalshangan
Carsphairn
Dalry
DG7 3SZ



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DRAFT (rev)

Monument number 8 – William Elmsall (1817)

Location.

South wall of the south chapel; western end.



09/221

Dimensions.

840mm by 70mm by 960mm

Description.



09/223

The memorial consists of a Black marble backing panel with a pediment shaped top on to which is mounted a white marble (Carrara statuary) inscription panel with a moulded cornice and low relief carving of an urn above.

The inscription is incised and painted black and remains legible.



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The white marble is relatively clean and unstained in comparison to other memorials within the church. The black marble has become grey due to the loss of polish from the surface.

It appears that the top of the cornice has lost part of the moulding – old plaster from a joint remains (as indicated by the white arrows).

The memorial appears to be stable at the current time but it is likely that all the fixings will be ferrous and ongoing monitoring will be necessary.

Monument number 9 – the Elmsall family memorial.

Location.

South wall of the south chapel, western end.



09/222

Dimensions.

1340mm by 215mm by 2340mm

Description.



09/225

A central black inscription panel with incised and painted lettering is surrounded by a limestone frame with pilasters and a cornicing above forming a niche. The whole is supported on a shelf and two stone corbels between which is an additional inscription panel cut from limestone.

The lettering is barely legible from normal viewing due to the discolouration of the background stone and due to the loss of paint.

The painting of the lettering appears to be predominantly black but there appears to be remains of white infilling in the upper west quadrant. Further investigation of the paint would be necessary to ascertain the original

intention.



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Detail of the lower inscription showing the extensive and disfiguring soiling that has built up leaving the inscription barely legible from normal viewing.

Note also the heavy staining to the corbels.



09/227

Detail of the lower section of the main inscription panel.

The surface of the panel is exfoliating as indicated by the arrows – the exact cause of this is unclear. It may be that the surface has hardened and formed a skin which is being forced off by moisture but further investigation would be required to ascertain the exact cause of the problem.



09/228

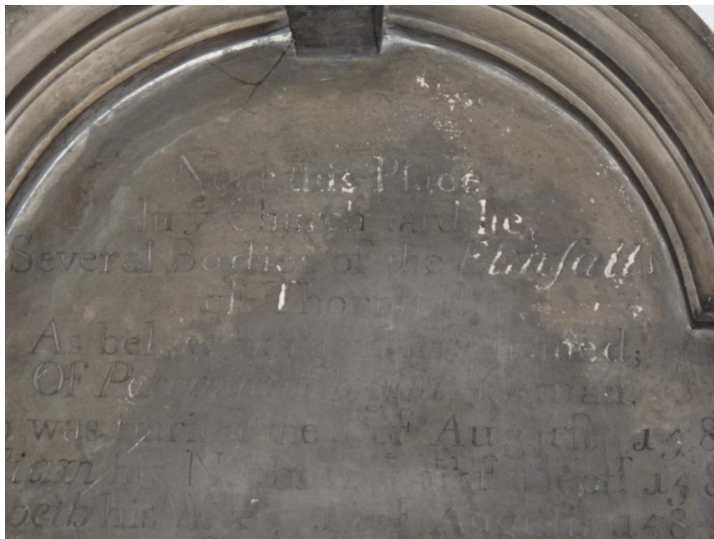
Detail of the upper section of the main inscription panel.

Note the water runs across the surface of the stone at various points as indicated by the white arrows in the photograph left and above. This is most likely from a leak in the roof above at some time.



09/225

Detail of the upper section of the monument.



09/230

Detail of the lettering in the upper section: showing the presence of white infilling where the lettering elsewhere is generally black: the cause or reason for this is unclear but paint analysis may be able to provide an explanation.



09/231

Detail of the east side cornice bracket showing a detail of the stains caused by water running across the surface – as suggested above probably as a consequence of the roof leaking at some point?



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Detail of the west side cornice bracket.



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Left and below - Oblique views of the east side cornice bracket.



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Detail of the west side shelf and corbel showing more detail of the water marks on the stone.



09/239

View looking down on the west side of the pediment.

The restraint of the monument is provided by metal cramps one shown buried in the surface as indicated in the photograph left and another buried as indicated in the photograph below.

It is likely that there are others cramps corresponding on the eastern side.



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Monument number 10 – William Toone (steward to the Savile family) died 1850.

Location.

South wall of the south chapel; eastern end.



09/221

Dimensions.

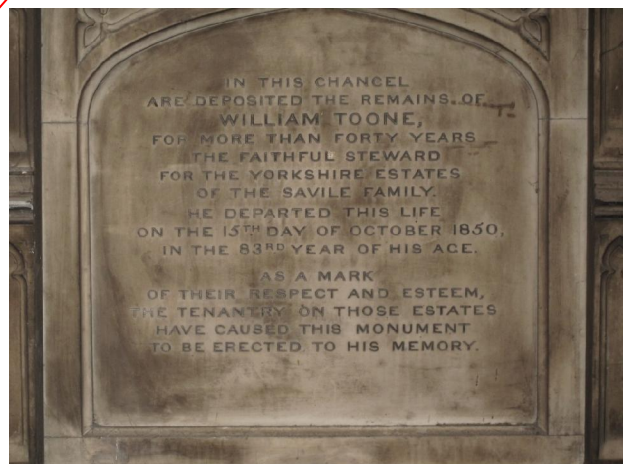
1340mm by 200mm by 1860mm

Description.

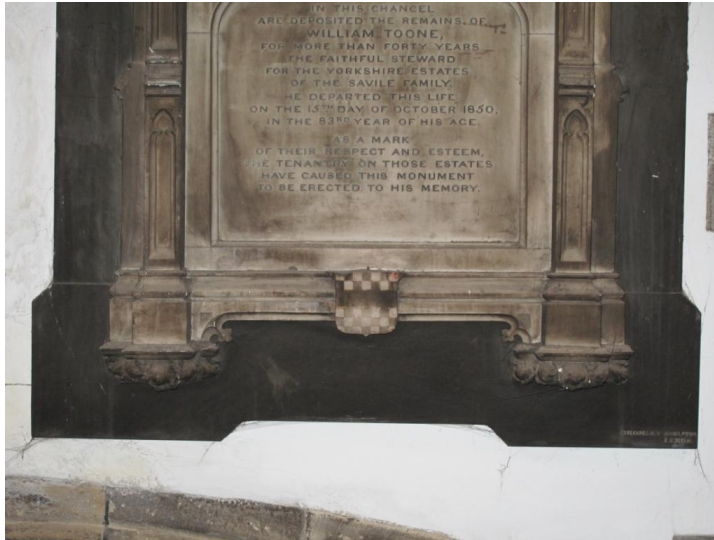


09/245

A black marble backing panel with pediment top supports a white statuary marble niche formed by gothic pilasters and entablature. The inscription is incised and painted black. Signed "Bromley Sculptor Leeds".



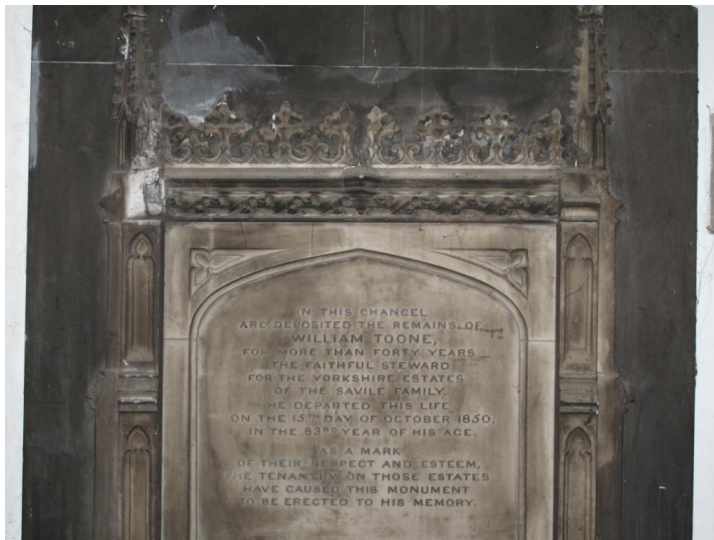
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09/246

The surface of the white marble is very disfigured by dirt and deep staining particularly on the high points.

The inscription remains legible and appears as if some rudimentary cleaning has been carried out perhaps to make the lettering more legible.



09/247

The entablature has sustained some loss and damage. The east pilaster capital is missing and several of the crockets have pieces missing.

There is also a white bloom on the surface of the black marble adjacent to the eastern spire which appears to be the consequence of plaster being smeared on the surface – perhaps the joint was re-pointed

and the bloom is the consequence of inadequate cleaning.



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Detail of the pediment top.



09/250

Detail of the missing eastern pilaster capital and damage to the crocket as indicated by the white arrow.



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Detail of the crenulated top.

Is there perhaps a missing detail from the central location – both the east and west crockets are missing details that support this view and there is a halo remaining in the back ground that could be the outline of an emblem or cresting detail?



09/254

Detail of the central section showing the location of a possible missing carved detail.



09/253

Detail of the signature;

BROMLEY SCULPTOR

LEEDS.

The fixings for the monument are unknown and the memorial should be subject to ongoing inspection for stability.

Monument number 11 – Johannes Coply Armiger (1745).**Location.**

South wall of the south chapel, eastern end.



09/221

Dimensions.

1160mm by 180mm by 2510mm

Description.

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A winged cherub and two (one currently missing) shallow corbels support a Carrara statuary marble inscription panel flanked by shallow brackets. Above is a pediment which forms the support to a black marble obelisk resting upon a white marble plinth. Flanking the obelisk on either side are two horns or shells and centrally fixed to the obelisk is a white marble crest with painted decoration.

The inscription is incised and painted black.



09/256

Detail of the cherub supporting the base of the memorial. The western wing is partially missing or cut away and the placing of the cherub sits somewhat uncomfortably within the design – is it perhaps not originally part of this monument? The surface of the marble is heavily discoloured with surface soiling.



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View of the inscription panel and surrounding elements.

The western corbel is missing and as shown in later photographs a ferrous bar is visible as the main support.

Note the intense deep red brown staining across the inscription panel.



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The monument has been subjected to water running across the surface most notably on the western side (black arrows). This has resulted in a markedly clean area and distinctive run marks across the moulding of the pediment cornice (white arrow). Compare this to comments made regarding the memorial immediately to the west of this one where water damage is also

noted.



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Detail of the upper sections of the monument showing clearly the impact of the water running across the surface.

The pale colour of the black marble is the consequence of the surface being etched. The intense black colouration comes by polishing and is easily lost.



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Detail of the west side horn.



09/262

Detail of the east side horn with evidence of additional water runs across the surface at this point.

Note the heavy salt exfoliation on the stone work adjacent to the window. There is an ongoing issue of moisture and salts in the fabric of the building at this location.

The paint in this area should be checked to ascertain if it is permeable or whether it is exacerbating the passage of moisture into the stonework by being impervious.



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General view of the lower east side of the wall adjacent to the memorial: showing where the decorations are being disrupted by moisture and salts.



09/264

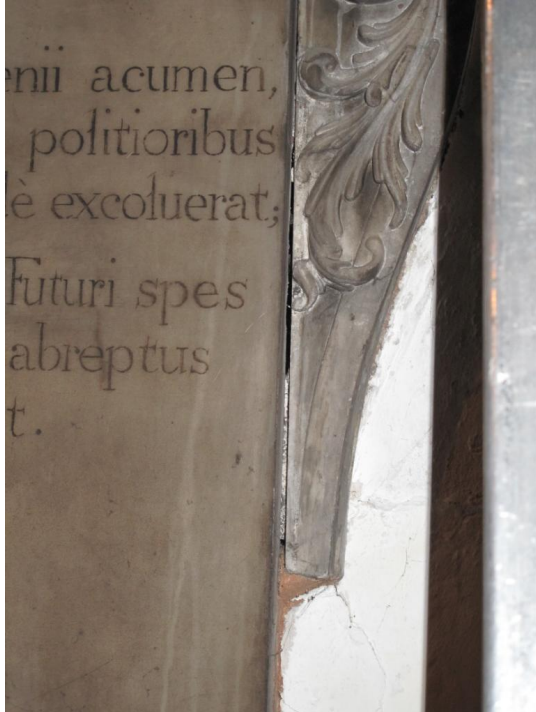
General view of the underside area adjacent to the east corbel showing where the latter is missing.



09/266

Detailed view of the structural metal bar set in the underside. It is likely that the marble corbels were never designed to be load bearing and may be surface mounted which would account for the loss of the western section.

There is movement and disruption to the joints on the western side of the monument as detailed in the following photographs.



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The joint between the inscription panel and the flanking bracket has apparently moved.



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The cornice on the west side has been jacked upwards by the corrosion of an internal metal cramp.

Note also the impact damage to the edge of the cornice – this is also visible in the previous photographs.



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The western side of the obelisk is lifting due to the jacking from an internal ferrous fixing.



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Detailed view of the crest fixed to the obelisk showing the black painted cross.

Treatment options

Monument number 8 – William Elmsall (1817)

This memorial is relatively clean in comparison to others memorials in the church but it would benefit from being lightly cleaned and given a protective coating of micro crystalline wax. It would be advised to undertake the cleaning to the adjacent memorials first and to ascertain to what level this monument could be cleaned without upsetting an overall balanced appearance.

The missing section is unfortunate but it is not considered necessary to replace it. The plaster traces could perhaps be left to provide future indication of the missing moulding.

Ongoing monitoring to ensure that the structure remains safe is recommended.

Monument number 9 – the Elmsall family memorial.

Cleaning of the monument would be of great benefit as the current soiling is extremely disfiguring and makes the inscription barely legible. On site tests would be required to establish the method and the desired level of cleaning. The marble surfaces should be given an application of micro crystalline wax.

There is a possibility that this memorial has been given a surface coating over the limestone and it is suggested that it be examined as part of any future works to establish if there has been a general treatment applied to the Sir George and Lady Anne Memorial and other memorials as suggested on page 5 of section 4 of this report.

Paint analysis of the inscription would be required to help ascertain the reason for the confusing white sections as detailed above.

Pointing would need to be checked and where defective replaced with material to match the original, most likely Plaster of Paris.

The monument was considered to be structurally stable but ongoing monitoring would be essential.

Monument number 10 – William Toone (steward to the Savile family) died 1850.

The monument would benefit from cleaning as it is currently badly disfigured by heavy soiling.

On site tests would be required to ascertain the appropriate method and level of cleaning.

It is not necessary to replace the missing section of the pilaster but the embellishments should all be carefully checked and where found loose they should be fixed back to ensure their long term stability.

All marble surfaces should be given a protective coating of micro crystalline wax.

The pointing should be checked and where defective replaced with a material to match the original which is most likely plaster of Paris.

The monument was considered to be structurally stable but ongoing monitoring would be essential.

Monument number 11 – Johannes Copley Armiger (1745).

All the monuments within the south chapel have been subject to the ingress of moisture from above and there is a possible ongoing issue about dampness in the fabric of the wall adjacent to the monument.

The cramps on the eastern side have corroded and are jacking the stones apart.

The adjacent walls would benefit from more investigation to ascertain if the plaster is too impervious and whether the paint is also impervious. If this is the case there may be benefit to removing and replacing the wall finishes with breathable plaster and paint.

The movement in the joints is a concern as the memorial is located above a narrow passage much used during the life of the church and therefore the safety of the monument is paramount.

The main supporting metal corbel that was visible at the time of survey appeared to remain in good condition although with surface corrosion it is not causing any stress from jacking at present. However the cramps located within the structure at higher level are obviously suffering and it is not possible to ascertain to what extent they have lost overall strength.

At the very least this monument must be monitored very closely and frequently to ascertain if any further movement occurs but preferably the monument should be dismantled and steps taken to introduce stainless steel fixings and to isolate it from the fabric of the wall by introducing a damp proof membrane.

If monitoring is the preferred option consideration should be given to checking and replacing all defective pointing to both prevent atmospheric moisture from easily affecting the buried metal and to aid in monitoring for future movement: the recurrence of cracking in the joints would be an easy visual indication of further movement.

Even if dismantling is not to be undertaken in the short term cleaning would be highly recommended following on site tests carried out to ascertain the most appropriate method and the level of clean. The application of micro crystalline wax to the marble surfaces would be of great benefit. The exposed cramp should be treated to inhibit corrosion and consideration given to painting it.