

# HARRISON HILL LIMITED

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## RIVINGTON UNITARIAN CHAPEL - WILLOUGHBY MONUMENT

### REPORT ON CONSERVATION WORK CARRIED OUT

29th November, 1993

The friable areas of the lower inscription panel were faced with Eltoline tissue fixed in polyvinyl alcohol. The monument was then carefully dismantled and returned to our studio at Brigstock. Both salts tests and cleaning tests were carried out before any work was put in hand. Our initial salt tests showed a high content of both Chlorides and Nitrates, this points to the rising damp being the main cause of the disruption.

Cleaning tests to the painted surfaces by the opening of "windows", revealed a stone coloured paint on the main inscription panel with the carved lettering in black. The black of the lettering being painted over the stone coloured paint and a small area, where an attempt was made to clean through this, revealed the natural stone. We can therefore say fairly confidently, that the stone coloured paint with the black lettering is the original colour scheme applied when the monument was constructed. These paint layers were oil based and proved to be incompatible with the layers of varnish that had been applied to them. With careful cleaning, using cotton swabs and solvents, it was possible to clean down to the original paint layer.

Cleaning of the pedestals on either side of the lower inscription panel showed that the paint on the surface was an emulsion and had been applied to tidy the appearance of the monument. Beneath the emulsion on the coats of arms the faintest outline of the blazon could be distinguished. On the crowns above the coat of arms there was a considerable amount of colour showing that at some time the crowns had been fully painted with gilding. Two packs of purified paper in de-ionised water were applied to the lower inscription panel and the lower section of the main inscription panel in an attempt to reduce the concentration of salts in the surface of the stone. Tests carried out after the application of the poultices showed that although there were still Chlorides and Nitrates present in the stone, their concentration had been greatly reduced. After allowing the stone to dry the friable areas were consolidated with Paraloid B72 acrylic.

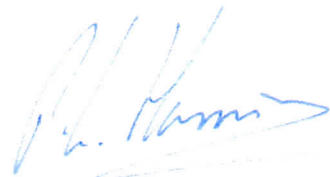
The coats of arms on the upper section of the monument were painted on mahogany panels. Several of these were loose and were removed, cleaned on the back, and re-bedded on a mix of P.V.A. and gilders whitening.

As with the inscription panel the heraldic panels had been heavily varnished. The varnish was carefully cleaned away with solvents, the cleaned surface being protected again with an application of Paraloid B 72 acrylic.

No restoration work was carried out, other than the re-touching of the lettering on the main inscription, and the tricking-in of the missing works to the bottom lines. The smaller inscription panel was considered too badly deteriorated to warrant similar treatment. The lettering had been almost completely lost.

The monument was then returned to Rivington and reconstructed in its position in the chapel. A code 4 lead damp-proof membrane was fitted to the wall and the floor to isolate the monument from any rising damp, the lead being coated with bitumastic paint.

The sections of the monument were bedded on a mix of P.V.A. and fine silica sand, the same material was used for pointing. Where necessary the monument was tied to the wall using stainless steel ties set in General polyester resin adhesive. Where it was necessary for the ties to penetrate the damp-proof membrane the lead was sealed with a flexible mastic.



P.L. Harrison