



St John Chapel, south wall, evidence for medieval chantry

To the right of the cupboard was the 16th century St John memorial until it was moved into the nave in the 1980s. It concealed a blocked squint (below) giving a view through the wall of the altar in the original 13th / 14th century chancel, which was then only half the length of the present one. To the left of the cupboard are two arched recesses, a double piscina for washing the sacred vessels used by the chantry priest in saying masses for the souls of those, probably the Pateshull lords of the manors, who created the chantry.



The blocked squint through the shared south wall of the chantry and north wall of the chancel (upper part of picture). On the surface below it, against which the St John Memorial was later placed, are the only surviving traces of wall paintings that probably covered much of the walls of the chantry chapel. What became the St John Mausoleum after the 16th century was substantially rebuilt on the same plan in the major restoration of the 1860s.



The double piscina for the sacred vessels used by the chantry priest. These are 14th century but the first documentary reference to the chantry dates to 1279. The chantry may not have lasted for more than a century or so before the supporting funding ran out. Anyway, chantries were abolished by Edward VI in the 1540s as part of the English Reformation, and by then the chantry had been converted into a mausoleum for the new St John lords of Bletsoe.