

WAR MEMORIAL

Donhead St Andrew

The carved letters in the slate are filled with a white material. A sample of this white was sent by Peter Martindale.

Examination One of the larger fragments was mounted as a cross-section. Other fragments were dispersed on glass slides, and the material examined using a polarising light microscope.

RESULTS

The white material is pure calcium carbonate. In dispersion one can see the characteristic shapes of coccoliths which means it is a natural product. It is most likely chalk, though it could be crushed limestone or marble dust.

When the material is handled, it is found to have a crystalline texture, but these crystals are easily crushed to powder. The texture could be the result of weathering.

In cross-section one can see that the white consists of a single layer and it must have all been applied at the same time. The upper surface has been penetrated by green plant material.

[x200]

