

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Although there are interesting church tiles, from medieval examples to a Victorian maze, throughout Cambridgeshire, most of the county's ceramic highlights are in Cambridge. The splendid Morris & Co overmantel at Queens' College must rank first among the city's sites, but the octagonal banking hall at Lloyds Bank comes a close second. The most unusual sites in Cambridgeshire, however, are Waterbeach Church with its Ten Commandments tile panel, and the delightful Adam and Eve medieval tiled pavement at Ely, a location of national importance. In Peterborough, the Law Courts (1978) and the Mosque (2002-3) both provide modern brickwork of significant interest. Suggested reading: TACS Tour Notes *Cambridge* (1996); Jane Cochrane, 'Medieval Tiled Floor Patterns', *TACS Journal* 5, 1994, pp11-19. The *Gazetteer* entry for Cambridgeshire covers the administrative areas of Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council.

BOTTISHAM

Just east of Cambridge, right on the edge of the Fens, stands the fine medieval church of **Holy Trinity**. Several changes were made to its chancel in the 1860s and 1870s. The step up to the altar was initially laid with Maw & Co encaustic tiles (designed by J. P. Seddon) around 1860, but its central panel was replaced in 1877 with Pugin-designed Minton tiles including a Lamb of God roundel, while the altar dais was also paved with Minton tiles; the border tiles have an unusual red and green design. The walls to either side of the altar were faced with polychrome Spanish majolica tiles at some point during this period, perhaps when the east window was replaced in 1875. The main four-tile repeating motif copies the early Dutch *Pompadour* pattern, and there is a *bead and bud* border in blue and white.

BOURN

Beneath the west tower of the church of **St Helen and St Mary** is a rectangular maze in the form of a pavement of red and black tiles, measuring 15' by 12' and constructed in 1875; its design was based on the Hampton Court hedge maze of 1690, a plan much repeated elsewhere. Since ancient times, the maze or labyrinth had been seen as a symbol of pilgrimage to the Holy Land. George Gilbert Scott included a black and white stone maze pavement in his 1870 restoration of Ely Cathedral; its path length is the same as the height of the west tower, beneath which it situated. It would appear likely that the Ely maze was the inspiration behind the Bourn maze, installed when the entire church floor was being relaid.¹

CAMBRIDGE

In the very centre of Cambridge is the towered and extravagantly striped form of **Lloyds TSB Bank** on SIDNEY STREET, built as Fosters' Bank in 1891-4 and designed by Alfred Waterhouse (Fig 8). The interior is completely unexpected: a domed octagonal banking hall whose walls are totally clad in cream, green and buff Burmantofts faience in a variety of relief patterns.² This wonderful arcaded

space is entered through faience-clad arches leading from the street, and although slightly cluttered with modern banking equipment, retains its Victorian grandeur. Restoration of the faience was carried out during the early 1990s by Shaws of Darwen, with assistance from specialist tilemaker John Burgess for the smaller dust-pressed tiles. Shaws matched the colour of the original raw lead glaze (now not permitted under Health & Safety regulations) by using a low solubility lead glaze with specially prepared metal-based colour pigments.

Just north on JESUS LANE is **All Saints Church**, now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust. The church was designed by George Frederick Bodley and built during 1860-4, the landmark spire being added in 1869-71. The lofty interior, a Tractarian gem, is remarkable for the patterned, painted decoration which covers the walls throughout the church. This was carried out by F. R. Leach, a local artist, under the direction first of William Morris, later C. E. Kempe, and finally Bodley himself, who directed the bulk of the wall decoration in 1878-9; its restoration was completed in 2003. The Godwin encaustic tiles in the chancel, however, play only a minor role in this fine decorative scheme. Across the road is **Jesus College**, where the chapel restoration of 1846-9 by A. W. N. Pugin included the installation of a Minton chancel pavement.

Return to the centre via TRINITY STREET, where the former **St Michael's Church** (now a café) retains its late Victorian encaustic tiled pavement, and continue south to **Queens' College**, QUEENS' LANE, whose Old Hall - in the range opposite the gatehouse - was restored over a period of about thirty years from the 1840s. The architect G. F. Bodley supervised work from 1861, opening up the original fireplace and adding an alabaster panel above it; a new floor was also laid, using tiles by Godwin. In 1862-3 Bodley brought in the firm Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co to provide tiles for the overmantel, in an ambitious scheme which included eighteen separate panels of between two and nine tiles, set in a surround of the *Swan* pattern within a border of oblong tiles (Fig 9).³ The panels, which used overglaze polychrome decoration on 6" tin-glazed tiles, show the twelve *Labours of the Months*, the *Angels of Night and Day*, the College's two patron saints (St Margaret and St Bernard), and the founding queens of the college, Margaret of Anjou (Henry VI) and Elizabeth Woodville (Edward IV). All but the pair of queen panels were installed during 1862-3 and variously designed by William Morris, Edward Burne-Jones, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Ford Madox Brown; an important source for the designs were notes taken by William Morris from fifteenth century Books of Hours.⁴ During this period, Godwin's encaustic tiles were introduced to flank the fireplace itself, and in 1864 the shields on the alabaster frieze below the tile panels were painted by Philip Webb to his own designs; the nine-tile queen panels were designed by Ford Madox Brown and added in 1873. This ornate overmantel forms just a small part of the lavish decorative scheme in this surprisingly small and intimate space. In 2003 the 1862-

3 tiled floor was removed and replaced with a reproduction made by Craven Dunnill of Jackfield.

Just south of Queens' on TRUMPINGTON STREET is **Peterhouse**, where the thirteenth century Hall was restored, almost rebuilt, in 1868-70 by George Gilbert Scott junior, who also restored the adjoining fifteenth century Combination Room. The William Morris tiles in the Hall fireplace date from 1870, while in the Combination room are two fireplaces with tiles said to have been painted by Lucy Faulkner, sister of Charles Faulkner.⁵ The larger fireplace has allegorical figures of the seasons designed by Burne-Jones and incorporating verses by William Morris. The earliest building at **Girton College** on the HUNTINGDON ROAD was erected in 1873 by Alfred Waterhouse, who chose the Norfolk firm Gunton's to supply red terracotta for his neo-Tudor design; the clock near the original front door has a mosaic face by Powell's of Whitefriars.⁶ Finally, out west to **Robinson College**, GRANGE ROAD, a brick tour-de-force built in 1977-80, where the superb chapel has tiling (1979) by the artist-potter Geoffrey Eastop. His unusual deep khaki-coloured ceramic slabs form part of the wall and floor of the ante-chapel, and are complemented by stained glass designed by John Piper; Piper, with whom Eastop collaborated on ceramic works from 1969 until the early 1980s, also designed the ceramic of the Deposition in the main chapel.⁷

ELY

Difficult as it is to divert one's attention from the preposterous octagon which dominates **Ely Cathedral**, there are tiles worth seeking out, firstly in the choir, where the pavement is a mix of marble and Minton's tile tesserae, installed in 1851 during restoration by George Gilbert Scott.⁸ Bishop West's Chantry, a small chapel at the east end of the cathedral, has an encaustic tile pavement dating from 1868.⁹ It includes depictions of a cockerel, part of the rebus (in its entirety a cockerel above a globe) of one of those who endowed the chapel (Fig 10). Most of the yellow enamel which originally covered the buff inlay of these Minton tiles has worn away.¹⁰

There are also relaid fourteenth-century line-impressed tiles (normally covered) in the south transept, whose door leads out into the cloister and thence **Prior Crauden's Chapel**; its key may be obtained from the Cathedral. The chapel, built by Prior John de Craudene for his private prayers and directly connected to his study (now demolished), was probably completed around 1324; it may even have been designed before the octagon. Entry into this perfect little medieval world is via a small doorway and stairs in a tiny turret, which deposit the visitor into a wonderfully elegant, light space, originally full of colour from frescoes and gilding, painted glass and glazed tiles. Little of the frescos and glass remain, but the tile pavement is one of the most important and complex *in situ* survivals in the country.¹¹ Initially the loss of glaze makes it difficult to read the opus sectile shapes by the altar, but soon the main image emerges: Adam and a rather apprehensive Eve grappling with the serpent (which has a female head) and the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge (Fig 11). The picture was glazed in

yellow, green and brown, while the background was black; although all is now almost reduced to monochrome, the dulled colours do not diminish its impact. Either side of Adam and Eve are tiles depicting lions, while the nave is paved with plain mosaic tiles, some with line-impressed decoration, in a pattern based on interlocking circles arranged in three long strips defined by borders.¹²

The chapel has had a difficult history, at one time being used as a laundry, and was in a ruinous condition by 1846. The tiles have suffered, although rather less than its other decorative features, but the nave pavement is very worn and sixteen tiles were stolen from around the altar in the late 1980s. Manufacture of replacements was undertaken in 1990 by Diana Hall, who used a mixture of clays to obtain the colours and textures required to match the patination (rather than the original appearance) of the remaining tiles.¹³

PETERBOROUGH

The entrance hall of the ancient **Bishop's Palace** was rebuilt in 1864-5, when the handsome Minton encaustic tile pavement was installed.¹⁴ In the foyer of the **Law Courts**, RIVERGATE, is a brick wall with an incised pattern created by the letter-cutter David Kindersley in 1978. North of the centre, the **Mosque** (2002-3, by Archi-Structure of Bradford) has large panels of glazed brickwork as well as its glistening, deep green dome.

WATERBEACH

St John's Church originated around 1200 but was successively extended and rebuilt in the early thirteenth century, the fifteenth century, 1616, 1821, 1849 and finally 1878 when the chancel was enlarged to accommodate the organ and choir (and to compete with the thriving local nonconformist church). This much-altered church is full of ceramic surprises, beginning in the porch, where a five-tile square encaustic floor panel bears the eagle symbol of St John the Evangelist above the wording 'St Johannes'; unusually, the eagle's head is depicted on a single small tile. The manufacturer of these tiles is unknown, but could be Godwin's, who produced a similar St Johannes group.

Following its enlargement, the chancel was redecorated in 1879-80 to designs by the diocesan architect, J. Ladds. This scheme featured a large opus sectile reredos by Powell's of Whitefriars, which was ordered in 1878; the central three-figure section (including the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist) is flanked by side pieces each with a further three figures. This substantial work, with much gold mosaic, cost £155. Two more colourful Powell's opus sectile panels adorn the marble pulpit of 1883. They were designed by Charles Hardgrave, then Powell's top designer, and show the sermon on the mount and Paul at Athens.¹⁵ But the major tile interest of this fascinating church is the series of large and attractive panels running across the east ends of north and south aisles, complemented by a continuous tiled strip around the whole nave. The tile panels, in mainly black lettering on cream ground, and with multicoloured ornament in the style of medieval manuscript illumination, carry the text of various prayers and the Ten Commandments; the dado has a single line of

lettering in the same manner. The Ten Commandments panel is signed 'W. H. Constable, Cambridge 1879'. It seems probable that Constable's was a local stained glass firm specialising in church decoration.

Cambridgeshire Roundup

The Old Butcher's Shop at **Barnack** has two stall risers with pictorial tile panels. Buckden Towers (1872, now a religious community), in the centre of the village of **Buckden**, has several fireplaces with pictorial tiles signed by the Gower Street stained glass maker G. E. Cook and his designer F. Hart.¹⁶ As well as excellent mural painting, the chancel of Holy Trinity Church, **Hildersham** contains a fine Maw tile pavement, probably dating from the 1878-90 restoration. The R. C. Church of Our Lady and St Philip, Newmarket Road, **Kirtling**, stands next to Kirtling Tower, which is dominated by the twin-towered gatehouse of 1530 remaining from the mansion demolished in 1801; the church (1877, architect C. A. Buckler) has interesting patterned floor tiling. There are Minton floor tiles at the Church of St James, **Newton**, near Wisbech. Pig, sheep and bull interwar pictorial tile panels feature on the shop which was formerly Harry Anderson's the butcher at 12 The Waits, **St Ives**. St Peter's Church, **Snailwell**, has a good geometric pavement, letter tile risers to the sanctuary and a memorial floor tile. There is tilework by the architect William Butterfield at St Giles Church, **Tadlow**, which he restored in 1860; the sanctuary wall shows his typical plain and encaustic tile patterning. The church of St James the Great, **Waresley**, was designed by William Butterfield and built in 1855-7; in the chancel is an excellent polychromatic display including geometrical stencilling in pink, buff and green, and tiling in red, green and yellow. The entrance hall of **Wimpole Hall** (NT), near Arrington, has a spectacular pavement of Maw & Co encaustic tiles made at their Benthall works, Broseley, around 1880; in addition, there are Wedgwood tiles in the dairy.

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