

## CUMBRIA

Apart from ecclesiastical tiling and the work of local ceramic artists Paul Scott and Maggie Angus Berkowitz, the vast majority of Cumbria's ceramic sites are located in Carlisle, with the staggering Burmantofts excesses of the County Hotel to the fore. Other Cumbrian highlights are the unusual encaustic tiling at Greystoke Church and a complete Edwardian Turkish bath scheme in Carlisle, while the 1960s abstract mural by Pilkington's in Carlisle's intriguing Civic Centre is also worthy of note. Finally, hidden away in Milnthorpe is a fine ceramic mural of the Stations of the Cross (1971) by Adam Kossowski. Suggested reading: TACS Tour Notes *Carlisle* (1997). The *Gazetteer* entry for Cumbria covers the administrative area of Cumbria County Council.

## BARROW-IN-FURNESS

The former **Technical School** (1900-3), ABBEY ROAD has lavish buff terracotta detailing (probably by Burmantofts) including a domed tower and two figurative panels depicting technology and the arts. The terracotta continues as an ornate frieze inside the entrance hall, while the stairwell has a glazed brick dado.

## BOWNESS-ON-WINDERMERE

The arts and crafts house **Blackwell** (1900) stands about a mile and a half south of Bowness on the B5360, well above Windermere. It was the holiday home of Manchester brewer Sir Edward Holt, for whom it was designed by the architect M. H. Baillie Scott. The interior was intended by Scott to be a work of art in itself, and to this end great care was taken with the detailing, down to door furniture, light fittings and of course fireplaces, whose tiling was an integral part of the colour scheme. One of the three delft tiled fireplaces is in the dining room; its extraordinarily massive surround is of slate and sandstone sections (all the delft tiles are probably by Ravesteijn of Utrecht). In addition there are seven fireplaces with a few decorated but mostly plain tiles from William De Morgan's Sands End Pottery. The house was restored for use as an art centre during 1999-2001, since when it has been open to the public.

## CARLISLE

Henry VIII would not be disappointed with the current appearance of his Citadel, the twin-towered guardian of the south-east gateway to Carlisle. The king modernised the castle (half a mile north-west on the bank of the Eden) and built the Citadel in 1541-3; Sir Robert Smirke completed modifications to the Citadel in 1812, creating circular assize court rooms in the castellated towers. Their monumentality still humbles mere passengers arriving at the railway station in COURT SQUARE, whose east side is occupied by the **Lakes Court Hotel** (originally the County Hotel), which owes its origins to the railway. The railway came to Carlisle in 1836, but the station - which became the terminus for seven railway companies - was built in 1847-8 by Sir William Tite. The gently Italianate hotel appears to have been started in 1852 and is usually credited to Anthony Salvin; further building work was done in 1866-8. The major tile features of the

building are the broad frieze of geometrics high on the tower and the tiled window reveals using enamelled encaustic tiles. The latter use of tiling is rare in Britain, although much commoner in southern Europe; the encaustic tiles, which feature much bright yellow in their design, are probably by Minton.

Just across BOTCHERGATE is the **County Hotel**, formerly the Red Lion, a complex building erected during 1885-1900. An elegant, electric blue tile-lined lightwell in the inner foyer (perhaps by Burmantofts) does not prepare one for the stunning former dining room (1893-6), where a Burmantofts ceramic coffered ceiling hovers above two identical ceramic fireplaces, both complete with bevelled mirrors, and a ceramic doorcase with a red lion motif. The corner of the building facing the Citadel, known as **1 Botchergate**, is dated externally 1885; this originally formed a sumptuous entrance to the hotel (Fig 22). Indeed it is a room fit for a queen, and was intended for the use of Queen Victoria when breaking her journey to Balmoral. Its exquisite Burmantofts interior, complete with ceramic ceiling and pale blue dragon frieze, was revealed again in its full glory after a conservation project which began in 1995 and was carried out by the Jackfield Conservation Studio and the Decorative Tile Works.

Overpainting and damage necessitated the manufacture of at least seven different types of replacement wall tiles, while the ceiling (held in a mahogany framework) also required reconstruction. The large ceiling tiles, with a complex yellow and green rose and thistle design unique to Botchergate, were originally made in five pieces. It seems likely that Burmantofts produced the dining room ceiling after learning from the experience of constructing and installing the ceiling in the hotel entrance; the dining room ceiling is completely ceramic and uses smaller tiles, thus avoiding the difficulties inherent in fitting large, heavy tiles into a wooden framework. The Café Solo now occupies 1 Botchergate, and the glistening pale blue and cream wall tiles along with numerous figurative relief panels (including the *Seasons*) and the magnificent ceiling make for an atmospheric and surprisingly delicate interior.

Head west towards English Street and the market place, then left over the railway tracks on the Victoria Viaduct, built in 1877 by the council and the railway companies in order to connect the city centre and the western suburbs. This leads into JAMES STREET and **The Pools**, a swimming pool complex with that rarity, a completely tiled turkish bath (now known as the Victorian Health Suite). The five rooms of varying temperature, which include a plunge pool, were added to the main baths complex of 1883-4 in 1909.<sup>1</sup> The ceramic facing is in shades of green and white, the most striking elements of this beguiling interior being the striped, moorish-style keyhole arch and curious capitals; this is a remarkable survivor (Fig 23). The ceramics manufacturers may have been Craven Dunnill, who were the leading suppliers of ceramics for turkish baths, or possibly Pilkington's. Potential visitors to The Pools should note that Sunday is normally the sole day for mixed bathing, the remainder of the week being divided into gents days and ladies days.

Return to the city centre then turn left into CASTLE STREET to reach **Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery**, a combination of Old Tullie House (1689), which was bought for the city around 1890, and its extension of 1892-3, designed by the architect C. J. Ferguson. The building opened as a museum in 1893. A Craven Dunnill tiled staircase dado, in olive green relief moulded tiles with a colourful decorative frieze, runs throughout most of the museum; this dates from the 1892-3 works. In addition, a robust tile and faience fireplace can be found in the room adjacent to the tearoom. A more modern extension to the museum is commemorated in the new entrance: a ceramic wall plaque designed and made by Paul Scott, showing delicate black and white images relating to the museum, records the opening of the new building by the Queen on the 3rd May 1991.

Now to the **Civic Centre** in RICKERGATE for an architectural treat. At first glance this is simply an anonymous 1960s office block, but the unusual octagonal protrusion on its southern flank gives a clue as to its purpose. The search for a unified administrative building had begun in 1914, but war and land shortages delayed progress until an architectural competition was held in 1956-7. It was won by Charles B. Pearson & Partners, and the Civic Centre finally opened in 1964.<sup>2</sup> Entering the building is what might be termed an Alice in Cumberland experience: much of the internal wall surfaces are faced with small panels of rustic abstract mock brown stone, while unsupported stairways criss-cross upward and the airy, double-height rates hall has white mushroom columns reminiscent of the Johnson Wax Building. The first floor is stranger still, with a reception room where an unbelievable pendant ceiling shelters behind a moorish-style latticework screen, while the council chamber (in the isolated octagon, of course) has a back-lit fibrous plasterwork panel by T. F. Copplestone showing local scenes. The street entrance to the council chamber is via a stairwell lined with a dramatic abstract tile mural by Pilkington's. It stretches vertically over two floors and uses mainly bright purple and green tiles, with a pattern of white circles exploding away from an off-centre group of coloured squares, the whole perhaps symbolising the growth of the city. This excellent building with its fine sixties decorative art deserves wider appreciation.

Return to the city centre along LOWTHER STREET, passing the yellow and green Doulton faience and tile facade of the **Howard Arms**, which advertises 'India Pale and Mild Ales', 'Lager Beer & Stout' and 'Wines Spirits & Liqueurs' (Fig 24). The Doulton signature is at the bottom right, close to 'Liqueurs'. Off to the left (via Victoria Place) is CHATSWORTH SQUARE, where **Red Gables** - on the south corner with Currie Street - displays bright red external terracotta by Burmantofts, including massed panels of sunflowers and high-relief fruit. There is more terracotta further east at 161-3 WARWICK ROAD, where two terrace houses have red terracotta plaques, showing sunflowers in a vase, between ground and first floor windows. Almost back in the centre, the **White House**, Warwick Road is a Spanish-style pub (originally the Crescent) built in 1932 and designed by

Harry Redfern; it sports Medmenham tiles in a foyer frieze and two fire surrounds on the first floor.

#### GREYSTOKE

Behind the drab curtains which hide the east wall inside **St Andrew's Church**, all is tiles, and very strange they are. A frieze of deep relief tiles, bearing a biblical quotation, runs along the top; its colours are mostly yellow and a bright pink. Below is mainly darker geometric tiling, but stretching across the width of the altar is an area of small tiles with a floral motif. In the middle of these floral tiles is a colourful mosaic panel surrounding a circular gold-coloured metal boss with a jewel-like hemisphere of coloured glass at its centre. This unusual and attractive piece was probably installed during the 1848 restoration of the chancel by Henry Howard of Greystoke Castle, where the architect Anthony Salvin had just completed work.

#### KENDAL

In the **ELEPHANT YARD** shopping centre is a large Ruabon tile panel by the ceramicist Maggie Angus Berkowitz showing images of Kendal and its twin town, Rinteln, which is in north-west Germany. Berkowitz was also responsible for the extensive tiled floors in the **Brewery Arts Centre** on nearby **HIGHGATE**. East of the town centre, at the coffee shop of the **Abbot Hall Art Gallery** (in the ladies' toilet), is an attractive tile panel entitled *Venice* (1963) by Diana Braithwaite. Additionally, several good examples of ornate Victorian chimney pots may be found in Kendal.

#### KESWICK

The **Theatre by the Lake**, **LAKESIDE**, opened in 1999, replacing the 'blue box' Century Theatre which had served the town since 1975; inside are six high-fired porcelain panels by Paul Scott. The theme of the distinctive blue-framed panels celebrates the theatre's history and setting, with imagery in painted and printed under-glaze colour. The transparent glaze was fired to 1,200°C.

#### MARYPORT

In the centre of Maryport is the excellent tiled facade of **Gearing's** butcher's shop (currently vacant). The stall riser sports twin bull's heads and chequerwork borders, while the porch tiles include a larger bull's head within an ornate golden wreath, set above a pretty blue and white 16-tile panel of grazing sheep; the latter is signed 'W. Lambert, 1904'. Unusually, assorted fowl are portrayed on another panel; most of the decoration is underglaze. The artist was probably William Lambert, who was taken on by the Lancaster stained glass firm Shrigley & Hunt in the mid-1870s to oversee their tile department, but left in 1891 to establish a rival stained glass firm and went bankrupt in 1895.<sup>3</sup> W. Lambert is known to have painted two large tile panels in 1896 on Wooliscroft tiles, so it is possible that the butcher's shop panels were also manufactured by George Wooliscroft and Sons.<sup>4</sup>

#### MILNTHORPE

The polygonal stone box of the **R. C. Church of Christ the King**, HAVERFLATTS LANE, holds all manner of wonders executed by the Polish-born artist Adam Kossowski (1905-86). The most dramatic is his irregularly-shaped ceramic mural of the *Way of the Cross* (1971), linking the twelve Stations of the Cross in one long, complex figurative composition. There is also a ceramic plaque of Our Lady (1970) and another representing *Christ the King* (1970), the latter a welcoming figure on the outer wall near the broad doorway (Fig 25). Kossowski's *Way of the Cross* is one of his most powerful expressions of the Stations of the Cross, which he produced in various forms for several other churches.<sup>5</sup>

#### ROSLEY

**Rosley Church of England Primary School** stands in a delightful rural setting opposite Holy Trinity Church (1841); the school was built in 1960-61. A tile panel showing a female figure is to the left of the entrance, its date and artist unknown. In the school hall is a map-like, irregular porcelain mural made by pupils, staff, parents and other members of the local community in autumn 1996, designed and supervised by Paul Scott. Individual elements of the panel show local scenes and activities.

#### ST BEES

The present **Priory Church of St Mary and St Bega** dates from its refoundation in the twelfth century, although its chancel is almost wholly Butterfield, with a superb decorative scheme which suits the strengths of church, its colours strong but spare. William Butterfield carried out the bulk of the restoration work around 1855-71, although his majestic and brightly coloured ironwork screen dates from 1886. There are some delightful Minton encaustic tiles in the chancel: a series of 36-tile red and yellow panels in the choir, then black and yellow zigzag risers, with more patterned tiles in the sanctuary and two thin bands of wall tiles running around the east end. The patterned tiles, including a fleur-de-lys with serrated border, have a majolica glaze over their white inlay, suggesting a date of 1845-55. This would be possible if the tiles had been installed during the early part of the restoration work, or reserved until the chancel restoration, which appears to date from 1867-9. Their overall effect is one of delicacy and elegance in the context of a powerful polychromatic scheme.

#### Cumbria Roundup

St Mary's Church, **Ambleside**, was built in 1850-4 by Sir George Gilbert Scott; Herbert Minton donated tiles for its chancel pavement in 1853. Appleby War Memorial Swimming Pool, Chapel Street, **Appleby**, has a large pictorial tile panel (1995) by Maggie Angus Berkowitz. In the Parish Room (formerly village school) at **Blencogo** is an early community mural by Paul Scott. Eighteenth century English tin-glazed tiles line the sides of a fireplace at the Wordsworth House (NT), Main Street, **Cockermouth**; the house was William Wordsworth's birthplace. St Andrew's Church, **Coniston** dates from the sixteenth century, although its chancel was added in 1891, when the Maw & Co tiling was also

installed. The medieval church of St Lawrence, **Crosby Ravensworth** has a complex building history; its south chapel, separated from the body of the church by a wooden screen, dates from the nineteenth century and includes Minton tiling. Remote St Paul's Church, **Irton** (NY 091005) has an expansive view of Wasdale Head; the church, which has interesting stained glass, was built in 1857 but the Maw & Co nave tile pavement (which includes a single memorial tile) dates from the 1887 works undertaken in celebration of the Queen's golden jubilee. The entrance of Burlington Slate Limited's head office Cavendish House, **Kirkby-in-Furness**, has a 1982 tile panel by Maggie Angus Berkowitz entitled *Riving Slate, Elterwater Quarry*; its rich appearance was achieved by outlining the figures in black then building up the colours with layers of multi-fired glazes. At **Seascale** School is a ceramic mural created in 1996 by pupils under the guidance of Paul Scott; it shows the history of Seascale. Clayton's the butcher's in Crescent Road, **Windermere** has a complete tiled interior (probably interwar) although no picture panels; its tiled stall riser bears the shop name.

### References

1. Marcus Binney, Hana Laing and Alastair Laing, *Taking the Plunge: The architecture of bathing* (Save Britain's Heritage, London, 1981), p22.
2. 'Civic Centre', *Architects' Journal*, 141 (1965) 15, pp883-898.
3. William Waters, *Stained Glass from Shrigley & Hunt of Lancaster and London* (Centre for North-West Regional Studies, University of Lancaster, Lancaster, 2003), pp25-7.
4. *TACS Tour Notes: South-East London Adventure*, (1998).
5. *Adam Kossowski: Murals and Paintings*, (Armelle Press, London, 1990).