

DERBYSHIRE

Tiles from Derbyshire's medieval tilery at Dale Abbey have survived in situ at a few locations, notably Morley church, and have provided exemplars for tile pavements installed during late nineteenth-century restoration of several churches, for instance Ashbourne. Churches provide the bulk of the county's locations; little, however, remains of the tiling at the half dozen churches to which Herbert Minton donated tiles during the 1840s and 1850s. Major items of interest include the 1920s art deco tile scheme at Buxton's Natural Baths, a completely intact former Lipton's shop in Chesterfield, 'Green Man' tiles by Godwin's at Monyash Church, a Compton Potters' Arts Guild plaque at Tideswell church and a seventeenth-century Flemish tile pavement at Church Wilne church. The *Gazetteer* entry for Derbyshire covers the administrative areas of Derby City Council and Derbyshire County Council.

ASHBOURNE

The tall spire of **St Oswald's Church** dominates the view westward along CHURCH STREET. There has been a church in Ashbourne from Saxon times, but the oldest part of the present structure - best known for its monuments and stained glass - dates from the thirteenth century; its medieval tiles (a few still on display) provided the inspiration for the line-impressed and encaustic tiles installed during George Gilbert Scott's 1876-81 restoration.¹ The sparkling encaustics of the chancel pavement, their yellow glaze protected by being let into the surface of the tiles, have unusual designs including a four-winged butterfly and a pair of long-tailed birds; they were made by the Campbell Brick & Tile Co (Fig 26). Back towards the centre of town (still on Church Street) is the **Methodist Church** (1880), bespattered with buff terracotta roundels, while round the corner in DIG STREET is a shop with a stall riser of brown glazed brick with two four-tile panels in a flower and grape design.

ATLOW

The little church of **St Philip and St James**, built in 1874, has an unexpectedly colourful interior, the highlight of which is a largely blue and white majolica reredos including a fine black-framed plaque of the Holy Lamb by the Campbell Brick & Tile Co. The reredos is topped by biblical quotations, some in plain brown-on-cream letter tiles, others within lavish floral decoration. Decorative tiling also features on the walls, where single tiles are dotted about on contrasting brick and stone bands; there is also a nine-tile group centred on a pelican in its piety. The geometric tile pavement complements the wall tiling but is less ornate.

AULT HUCKNALL

The tiling at **St John's Church**, Ault Hucknall (near Glapwell) was installed during restoration of the church by William Butterfield in 1885-8; the manufacturer was very probably Minton. The sanctuary pavement combines a grey fossil marble with plain tiles in blue (almost turquoise), red, yellow and

black as well as buff on red decorative encaustics. Typical Butterfield chevrons in the nave pavement echo the sanctuary wall tiling, in which strings of yellow on red chevron tiles make zig-zag bands; these form the borders to panels displaying the letters alpha and omega.²

BUXTON

The **Natural Baths** (1853), just west of THE CRESCENT, lie close to the site of a Roman baths and were designed by the Duke of Devonshire's architect Henry Currey. The gentlemen's baths and the plunge baths were included in the original plan, but all was rebuilt in 1924 when a ladies baths was added. The interior is completely tiled, mainly in white but with coloured friezes carrying classical motifs; the manufacturer was Craven Dunnill. This is an important survival of a major art deco interior tiling scheme, comparable to only a few others remaining in the south-east of England. The Natural Baths have been largely derelict since the 1970s, but are currently the subject of a development proposal intended to transform the structure into a mineral water spa. The nearby **Cavendish Arcade**, at the east end of The Crescent, was created in the mid 1980s from the Hot Baths. Most of its heavily moulded faience decoration, which probably dates from the late nineteenth century, was preserved in the conversion, although some replication was involved.

CHATSWORTH

The Oak Room, created around 1840 at **Chatsworth House**, has German woodwork, a tiled fireplace and a most unusual tiled floor. The tin-glazed fireplace tiles are grey with a relief pattern and were probably taken from a late eighteenth century German tiled stove before their installation in the Oak Room. The unexpectedly colourful mosaic-style majolica floor tiles in yellow, blue and white are probably Italian in origin and date from the early to mid-nineteenth century, the period when the room was being put together.

CHESTERFIELD

The bulky and inelegant **Market Hall** (1857) occupies most of the MARKET PLACE. Upstairs is the Assembly Rooms Main Hall, a huge high-ceilinged space with dado tiling all around, mainly in shades of dark brown but topped by a single row of colourful majolica tiles. Then there is a delightful survivor just to the east: **Jackson's the Bakers**, 7 CENTRAL PAVEMENT is a brilliant, near-perfectly preserved 1920s Lipton's; only the exterior stall risers have suffered damage. Inside, the shop is completely tiled in white with colourful floral swags, and four large stall riser tile panels offer 'Cooked Meats' and suchlike in green on white. Finally, a high-level frieze of pale blue and white tiles announces that Lipton's is 'The business on which the sun never sets'. The tiles were probably made at Wade's Flaxman Tile Works in Burslem.

Old Whittington

In the encaustic pavement at **St Bartholomew's Church** in the suburb of Old Whittington, on the northern edge of Chesterfield, are several patterned designs shown in Maw & Co catalogues, along with unusual green border tiles and a

four-tile buff and red memorial tablet. Its slightly clumsy lettering is very similar to drawings for tablets in Maw's design books, which show experiments with the lay-out of lettering for tablets dating from the 1870s into the 1890s.³

CHURCH WILNE

The Willoughby Chapel (1622) at **St Chad's Church** is floored with tiles of an unusual design in which groups of four tiles centre on a yellow, white, blue and green flower. These tiles were initially made in the Netherlands during 1580-1600, then copied in England in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, mainly in the London area, for instance at Pickleherring Quay, Southwark. The St Chad's tiles appear to have a pinkish body, which identifies them as the Flemish version, as opposed to the London tiles which have a hard, grey body. To confuse the issue still further, faithful reproductions of this design were made in the late nineteenth century by Frederick Garrard of London; these latter tiles have a deep red body. The church was gutted by fire in 1917 and restored during 1917-23, so it is possible that Garrard tiles were introduced at that point, although the chapel's original stained glass survived the flames. It may even be that the chapel floor is a mixture of Flemish and Garrard tiles.

CRICH

In the Tramway Village at the NATIONAL TRAMWAY MUSEUM is the **Red Lion** public house, erected in Stoke-on-Trent around 1830 and rebuilt at the Museum during 1991-2002. The pub was about to be demolished in 1973, to make way for a new road, but was rescued by volunteers from the Museum (notably Jim Soper) who had the pub taken down brick by brick and moved to Crich. The ornate pub exterior features tiling by the Campbell Tile Co of Stoke, dating from about 1890, and a magnificent balustrade topped by a fibreglass replica of the original terracotta lion. The pub was part of the estate of Showell's Brewery of Oldbury, and the tiled lettering refers to their 'Amber Bitter' and 'Nut Brown Ales' as well as 'Showell's Stingo'.

DERBY

As a result of modern road building, A. W. N. Pugin's **St Marie's R. C. Church** (1838-41), off ST ALKMUND'S WAY, now stands perilously close to roaring traffic. The Lady Chapel, added in 1854-5 by E. W. Pugin, has a Minton tile pavement leading to its high altar. The tiling is mainly in buff, brown and sky blue, with fleur-de-lys designs in white on a stronger blue ground. **Derbyshire Children's Hospital** (now closed) originally had a fine selection of tiles dating from its construction in 1882-3 and extension during the 1930s. The earlier tiles were probably made by J. C. Edwards of Ruabon, while the 1930s tiles (mainly animal designs) came from two manufacturers: Pilkington's and Dunsmore, the latter printing on to Minton blanks. The tiles were moved by the Jackfield Conservation Studio to a new children's hospital in 1997.

MONYASH

St Leonard's Church was restored by William Butterfield in 1884-7. His tile pavement includes many plain red, yellow and blue tiles as well as a most

unusual and striking 'Green Man' tile, found four times over within a nine-tile group (Fig 27). There are also tiles with a paired bird design, and an area of Butterfield's trademark chevron patterning, here carried out in red, yellow and black. The 'Green Man' tile, its motif an ancient and enigmatic fertility symbol, was manufactured by Godwin's; the design was taken directly from that of a fourteenth century Wessex tile. Examples of this medieval design have been found at churches in Berkshire (Great Shefford) and Hampshire (Stoke Charity); they are now in the British Museum collection. ⁴

TIDESWELL

The fourteenth century **Church of St John the Baptist**, COMMERCIAL ROAD, known as the cathedral of the Peak, is packed with high-quality wood carving. Above the altar in its Lady Chapel (in the north transept), restored in 1924, is a coloured, moulded ceramic plaque measuring about 3' by 1' 6" and depicting the Nativity; this appears to be the work of the Compton Potters' Arts Guild (Fig 28).

WIRKSWORTH

St Mary's Church was restored by George Gilbert Scott in 1870-6. He added a Campbell Brick & Tile Co encaustic tile pavement in the choir with designs, derived from local medieval examples, similar to those he used a few years later at Ashbourne but without any plain tile bands. The resulting effect is much brighter than the restrained tiling of the sanctuary.

Derbyshire Roundup

The Godwin chancel pavement at St Michael's Church, **Church Broughton** was laid in 1886 during restoration of the church by the architect J. R. Naylor of Derby; it comprises mainly four-tile groups of common designs, divided by black-tiled diagonal bands.⁵ St Peter's Church (1867), built by George Gilbert Scott for the 7th Duke of Devonshire in the gloriously sited Chatsworth estate village of **Edensor**, has a chancel pavement of Godwin dust-pressed encaustic tiles, the designs a mixture of fleur-de-lys, roses, birds and lions. The Ritz Cinema (1938), South Street, **Ilkeston** is one of the best surviving works of the architect Reginald Cooper of Nottingham, a specialist in cinema design; for the facade, he used Doulton Carraraware around the main entrance and on the fin-shaped tower. There are cream, green and blue art nouveau floral tiles in the tympanum of York Chambers (1903, formerly the Midland Counties Bank, architects Gorman & Ross, now a café), 40 Market Place, **Long Eaton**; the town also has many examples of art nouveau porch tiles. All Saints Church, **Lullington** has a Minton chancel dado (a geometric pattern in brown, buff and blue) dating from restoration in 1861-2; in addition, there are four roundels of the Evangelists in the dais pavement. The richly decorative 1851 restoration of All Saints Church, **Mackworth** included its Minton encaustic tiled sanctuary pavement.⁶ Medieval tiles survive in the north chancel chapel (c1370) of St Matthew's Church, **Morley**; the tiles, which include butterfly and paired-bird

designs (like those copied by Scott at Ashbourne) were probably made in the kilns of Dale Abbey, four miles to the south-east.⁷ As well as a Minton encaustic tile pavement (1863) in the chancel of St Michael's Church, **Sutton on the Hill**, there are elegant encaustic roundels and squares set into the font surround.⁸ St Mary's Church (1840-3), **Wensley** was designed by the architect Joseph Mitchell of Sheffield, his son J. B. Mitchell-Withers extending the tiny chancel in 1885-6 when the Minton Hollins tiling was installed. All Saints Church, **Youlgreave** was restored by Norman Shaw in 1869-70; he designed the mosaic reredos and the tile pavements in sanctuary and chancel.

References

1. Philip and Dorothy Brown, 'Victorian Varieties - Church tiles at Lichfield and Ashbourne', *Glazed Expressions*, (1989) 18, pp2.
2. Philip and Dorothy Brown, 'Obliterating Butterfield', *Glazed Expressions*, (1989) 19, pp8-9.
3. Maw & Co Collection, D/MAW/9/2 Modern Encaustic Tile Design vol 4, design numbers 611-613, Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust Library.
4. Elizabeth S. Eames, *Catalogue of Medieval Lead-Glazed Earthenware Tiles in the Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities, British Museum*, (British Museum Publications, London, 1980), vol 2, design 1822.
5. *The Builder*, 3rd July 1886, vol 51.
6. *The Builder*, 29th November 1851, vol 9, p752.
7. Eames, *Catalogue of Medieval Lead-Glazed Earthenware Tiles*, vol 1, p231.
8. *The Builder*, 9th January 1864, vol 22, p33.