

WILTSHIRE

Wiltshire was of crucial importance in the history of English tiles as it was at Clarendon Palace, near Salisbury, that the earliest two-colour tile pavement was manufactured between 1240 and 1244; a pavement was ordered from a Westminster tiler in 1237 but it is unknown whether this was actually made. The surviving tiles from the Clarendon Palace pavement are now in the British Museum, but an important Wessex pavement dating from around 1260 remains in the muniment room of Salisbury Cathedral; however, its preservation beneath boarding means access is difficult. The delightful but much later renaissance-inspired tile pavement at Lacock Abbey was taken up in the nineteenth century and is in storage at the house, whose entrance hall sports a series of unusual terracotta sculptures executed in 1755-6.

Wiltshire has many churches with Victorian tiling, notably those of the architect Thomas Henry Wyatt (1807-80), who became consulting architect to the Salisbury Diocesan Church Building Association in 1836, and William Butterfield, who restored many churches in the county, installing his typical brand of bright, geometric tile arrangements on floors and walls. There is an exceptional Minton armorial pavement at Wyatt's Cholderton Church (1841-50) and equally exceptional Powell's opus sectile work, some of the best in Britain, at St John the Evangelist, Warminster. However, Wiltshire has little to inspire twentieth-century tile enthusiasts. Suggested reading: TACS Tour Notes *Warminster* (2004). The *Gazetteer* entry for Wiltshire covers the administrative areas of Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire County Council.

BAVERSTOCK

The 1880-2 restoration by William Butterfield of **St Edith's Church** included the addition of east wall tiling in typical late Butterfield style, with striking colours and a strong geometric pattern.

BRITFORD

St Peter's Church was restored in 1872-3 by G. E. Street; his lavish east wall decoration included Spanish-style tiles below painted murals flanking the window. At Hilmarton, in a similar scheme combining tiles and murals, the cuenca tiles were made by Street's one-time assistant Frederick Garrard (c1838-93) at his Millwall works; it therefore seems likely that the Britford tiles were also by Garrard.

CALNE

For over thirty years, up until 1865, Calne had an evangelical vicar, but his high church successor was not popular with all the congregation and around eighty parishioners, led by members of the Harris family, owners of the town's large bacon factory, eventually left the parish church. The foundation stone of their own **Calne Free Church** in Church Street was laid in 1867, and the first service was held in 1868; their architect was William Jervis Stent of Warminster. Pevsner's description of the gothic exterior includes the one-word sentence

'Terrible' and the interior would probably have been just as unacceptable: the apse has a geometric tiled pavement and a brown relief-tiled dado around six feet in height, and there are also tile panels bearing hand-painted mottos on scrolls.

CASTLE COMBE

Much of **St Andrew's Church**, MARKET PLACE was pulled down and rebuilt in 1850-1; chancel fittings dating from this period include an encaustic tile pavement with Scrope family armorial tiles and an east wall of colourful glazed tiling.

CHOLDERTON

The Reverend Thomas Mozley, a convinced Tractarian who was also a *Times* leader-writer, became rector of Cholderton in 1836 and soon decided to rebuild **St Nicholas Church**. The work was carried out during 1841-50 by the architect T. H. Wyatt entirely at Mozley's expense; so great was the financial burden, in fact, that Mozley had to resign as rector in 1846, although he continued funding the project until the church was consecrated in 1850. Lavish Minton floor tiles run throughout the church in a design shown by the firm at the 1851 Great Exhibition; there is a fine representation of the royal coat-of arms in the ante-chapel.¹ The motifs for the modern hassocks were inspired by the tile designs.

DEVIZES

In the MARKET PLACE is the **Bear Hotel**, where over a hundred Bristol-made delftware tiles, dating from around 1750 and including many landscape motifs, are situated behind the main bar. Originally they probably formed the lining of a pantry or buttery.

DITTERIDGE

In 1859-61 the architect and designer E. W. Godwin (1833-86) restored **St Christopher's Church**, most of the work comprising an internal refit. The geometric and encaustic tile pavement, manufactured by Minton Hollins to a design by Godwin, includes triangular black tiles of different sizes and results in a striking overall pattern. E. W. Godwin first specified encaustic tiling in 1854 (for a Bristol church), but his ledgers do not cover the period 1853-8, making Ditteridge his earliest identifiable pavement.²

EAST KNOYLE

The chancel decoration of **St Mary's Church** is astounding, with relief plasterwork of biblical scenes designed by the ardent royalist Dean Christopher Wren (father of the architect of St Paul's Cathedral) and executed around 1639 by a local plasterer. In 1876, Sir Arthur Blomfield introduced into this setting a Minton tiled reredos - now found so abhorrent by the congregation that it is covered by curtains - and a Minton encaustic tiled pavement, which is still visible.

FONTHILL GIFFORD

Holy Trinity Church (1866, architect T. H. Wyatt) was built for the local landlord, the Marquess of Westminster, who bought the Fonthill Abbey estate

following the collapse of William Beckford's gothic folly tower in 1825. It replaced the church built by Beckford's father in 1748, which had fallen into disrepair. The attractive encaustic tile pavement, featuring mostly nine-tile groups divided by plain black bands, is by Maw & Co; a broken fragment held in the church reveals the 'Benthall Broseley' backmark.

HEYTESBURY

The **Church of St Peter and St Paul** was restored by William Butterfield in 1865-7. The works included paving the nave with Peake's plain Staffordshire tiles, while coloured tiles by Minton's were used as inlays on some walls and the reredos; the encaustic pavement in the chancel was also by Minton's.³

HILMARTON

St Laurence Church was restored by G. E. Street during 1879-81; from this period date the panels of cuenca tiles flanking the reredos, with wall paintings above. The tiles were made for Street by Frederick Garrard of Millwall.⁴

LACOCK

Lacock Abbey (NT) was founded in 1229 for Augustinian canonesses; most of its buildings were complete by 1247, although there were later additions. The abbey was dissolved in 1539 and bought by William Sharrington (d1553) in the following year; his niece married into the Talbot family, with whom the house remained until 1958. Much of the nunnery survives, with some medieval tiles still *in situ* in the sacristy and the chapter house. The most interesting tiles of this period, however, were those made for William Sharrington in the early 1550s, possibly at Lacock itself, and used in conjunction with some traditional designs from the Bristol and Malvern tileries to floor his newly-built south gallery.⁵ This pavement was taken up in the nineteenth century but most of the tiles, which reflect Sharrington's advanced tastes in design, are still stored at the house.⁶ The two-colour tiles, which had their white clay applied as a shallow inlay rather than poured slip, had delicate renaissance-inspired motifs including Sharrington's scorpion badge and initials. These high-quality examples are the latest two-colour tiles to which a date can be ascribed, after which the industry declined due to its unfashionably gothic products, rather than a lack of expertise.⁷

The entrance hall of Lacock Abbey was created in 1754-5 for John Ivory Talbot by the gentleman architect Sanderson Miller. Its decoration included a series of canopied gothick niches which were filled with theatrical terracotta statuary by Victor Alexander Sederbach, an otherwise unknown Austrian or German who worked at Lacock during 1755-6. The obscure figures include the foundress of the Abbey, *Death*, and the scapegoat (from the Old Testament).

MARLBOROUGH

The medieval **Church of St Peter and St Paul**, HIGH STREET, was made redundant in 1974 and is now a crafts and exhibition centre. Its chancel was refitted in 1862-3 by the architect T. H. Wyatt, who introduced an elaborate Minton encaustic tiled pavement and lavish east wall decoration including encaustic, majolica and plain tiles (possibly by Maw & Co) with glass and

ceramic mosaic and inlaid and painted stone. The east wall scheme was overpainted during the 1960s but cleaned completely in the early 1990s. There are also a few relaid fifteenth century two-colour tiles.

SALISBURY

Salisbury Cathedral was once richly tiled throughout its east arm and into the octagonal chapter house, the latter tiling dating from around 1266 and having an arrangement of wedges radiating out from the central column. The medieval designs and overall layout were replicated in the Minton pavement laid in 1855-6 during the restoration of the chapter house by Henry Clutton and William Burges, thus at least enabling the present-day observer to study a facsimile of the complex medieval arrangement with its eight adjoining mirror-image sections.⁸ Most of the original tiling, still apparently in good condition, was simply thrown out, although a group of reset medieval tiles, probably from the chapter house, has been reset in the chapel at the east end of the north presbytery aisle.⁹ The Godwin encaustic pavement of 1876 installed by George Gilbert Scott in the choir was destroyed in 1969.

However, one of the best-preserved medieval tile pavements in Europe remains within the Cathedral, mostly out of sight beneath protective boarding in the muniment room (no public access); there are also patches of tiles on the staircase leading up to the muniment room.¹⁰ This octagonal, inlaid tiled floor dates from around 1260 and comprises fifteen different designs of Wessex tiles including lions, griffins and fleur-de-lys; the contrast in appearance between these glazed tiles and the worn tiles of the north presbytery aisle is arresting. The tiles of the muniment room are similar to the Wessex tiles commissioned by Henry III for Clarendon Palace, whose site was just a few miles east of Salisbury. The earliest two-colour tile pavement for which there is both documentary and archaeological evidence was made between 1240 and 1244 at Clarendon Palace for its new chapel.

Opposite the west door of the Cathedral in the King's House at 65 THE CLOSE is the **Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum**. On the first floor, at the entrance to its ceramics gallery, is a specially-commissioned earthenware tile panel (1985) by designer-makers Wendy Barber and John Hinchcliffe of Charlton Marshall in Dorset. It shows a selection of objects from the Museum's collection; much of the tile painting was carried out by Wendy Barber in the Museum.

Just beyond the east side of the Cathedral Close on EXETER STREET is **St Osmund's R. C. Church**, designed by A. W. N. Pugin and built in 1847-8 to replace the tiny Salisbury chapel where Pugin had been received into the Roman Catholic Church in 1835. Pugin lived in the city during 1834-7, and retained many friends there even after leaving to better his career in London. His vision for St Osmund's was that it should replace the Cathedral, which held the shrine of St Osmund, as the true centre of Catholic faith in Salisbury. His drawings for the church survive, and include a plan which shows designs for three different encaustic floor tiles, one a fleur-de-lys, and their arrangement in the chancel and

south aisle.¹¹ Despite many changes to this pretty little church, most of the tiles, which were manufactured by Minton's, still remain.

WARMINSTER

The **Church of St John the Evangelist**, BOREHAM ROAD, lies on the south-eastern edge of Warminster in Boreham (Fig 290). It was designed by the architect G. E. Street and built in 1864-5 to relieve the pressure of numbers on the parish church; the land was endowed by a local farmer, William Temple, and the funds were raised by public subscription. Following the consecration of St John, gifts of furnishings and other items continued for many years, with Temple's son donating the reredos in 1868 and his daughter, Elizabeth Rule, funding the construction of the baptistery in 1925-6. Its architect was Charles Edwin Ponting (1850-1932), who became Diocesan Surveyor for the Wiltshire part of the Salisbury Diocese in 1883. Ponting was also Diocesan Surveyor for a section of the Bristol Diocese from 1887 and the Dorset half of the Salisbury Diocese from 1892, giving him a district larger than any other diocesan surveyor in England. He became well known for his sympathetic church restorations and the introduction of high-quality arts and crafts fittings; Ponting resigned from the Salisbury Diocese in 1928.¹²

C. E. Ponting appears to have had a strong influence on planning the most notable feature of St John's Church: its collection of opus sectile panels made by Powell's of Whitefriars and donated to the church between 1888 and 1930. The first panels were acquired for the north aisle in 1888, five years after Ponting took over responsibility for the church, and 1893, but the project expanded into a complete decorative scheme in 1911, when the Reverend Brocklebank paid for the opus sectile work in the chancel. He asked C. E. Ponting to plan for similar panels, mainly representing scenes from the life of Christ, on the south and west walls, but following 1915 the impetus behind the scheme appears to have faltered, to be replaced by the idea of building the baptistery at the west end. The final panel, a madonna and child, was installed in 1930 in memory of Elizabeth Rule.¹³

The sketches and cartoons for most of the substantial panels were supplied by Charles Hardgrave, for many years Powell's highest paid in-house designer, whose speciality was opus sectile and mural decorations. The major panels include the *Annunciation* (1914), the *Nativity* (1912), the *Presentation in the Temple* (1893) and the four archangels flanking the east window. The scenes run from the west end of the north aisle into the chancel roughly in chronological order, although this was not the order in which they were supplied by Powell's, for whom this was clearly a lucrative contract.¹⁴ The interior of this unpretentious church is a revelation, with one of the best displays of opus sectile work in Britain.

On the western edge of Warminster in SAMBOURNE ROAD is a cottage displaying a real curiosity, an 1897 Queen Victoria Golden Jubilee plaque made by Stanley Brothers of Nuneaton; it is of the standard design but has a pale

chocolate coloured glaze rather than being the usual plain buff or red terracotta. The *British Clayworker* reported in April 1897 that the firm was making the plaques in glazed ware as well as terracotta, and this is a rare example of the glazed (and presumably more expensive) variety.¹⁵

Wiltshire Roundup

Polychrome east wall tiling, dating from William Butterfield's 1852-3 restoration, is hidden behind a curtain at the Church of St Mary and St Melor, **Amesbury**. The late nineteenth century reredos at St Mary's Church, **Burton** (actually Nettleton Church) is a Doulton terracotta panel of the *Last Supper* by George Tinworth. The encaustic tile pavement in the chancel of All Saints Church (1861-2), **Chitterne**, was supplied by Minton's.¹⁶ On the porch floor of St Andrew's Church, **Donhead St Andrew**, are medieval tiles with a star motif, and there is a Godwin pavement (probably dating from the 1875 restoration) in the chancel. St Nicholas Church (1844, architect Benjamin Ferrey), **East Grafton**, has a Chamberlain tile pavement. There is a Minton tiled reredos at St Nicholas Church, **Fisherton de la Mere** (now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust); it may date from the 1861 rebuilding. St John the Baptist Church (1878-81, architect William Butterfield), **Foxham**, has a colourful tiled dado. In the chancel of St Margaret's Church (1846, architect James Thomson), **Leigh Delamere**, is a fine Minton encaustic tile pavement, and there is another Minton pavement at St Katherine's Church (rebuilt 1876-7, architect William Butterfield), **Netherhampton**. The architect G. E. Street restored the chancel of St John Baptist Church, **Pewsey**, in 1861, installing a tile pavement by Maw & Co.¹⁷ The tiled reredos at St Peter's Church, **Pitton**, probably dates from the 1878-80 restoration by Ewan Christian. There are good armorial floor tiles in the mausoleum of J. L. Phipps (d1871) at the Bratton Road Cemetery, **Westbury**. St Mary Magdalene Church, **Winterbourne Monkton**, was rebuilt by William Butterfield in 1877-9 and displays his typical chancel and reredos tiling.

In addition, medieval tiles survive at the following sites: St James Church, Avebury; St Nicholas Church, Huish (on display only, none *in situ*); Malmesbury Abbey (on display only, none *in situ*); St Michael's Church, Mere; St Mary's Church, Stapleford; and St Peter's Church, Winterbourne Stoke.

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