Broad Visions: Ceramics in the twentieth century church

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The origins of this survey of twentieth century church ceramics lay in the research carried out over the last ten years to produce the Society's Tile Gazetteer, published in 2005. Locations described in the Gazetteer were drawn from a database which eventually comprised around 6,000 sites, covering all types of buildings, anything and everything from pubs to power stations. The driving force behind the Gazetteer project was the provision of information on these sites in order to encourage conservation and appreciation of architectural ceramics, so we soon had to face up to the need to make our make specialist knowledge available to the broader spectrum of conservation organisations.

Although the Society produces a number of substantial publications, a website appeared to be a good method of reaching an even wider audience, so the TACS website was launched in April 2000. It was initially focussed on the Gazetteer project, but now has a much broader remit. At first the site carried almost the entire database, really simply a list, itself very much a work in progress and reflecting the current state of research as sites were being visited. Reports from even a few years earlier could often be quite misleading, as church tile pavements were carpeted over or buildings demolished. The database also included photographs and references to published works. The project ended with the publication of the Gazetteer containing details of the most significant 3,000 sites, and the replacement of the original website database with a searchable version that contained only verified sites; there is also an area for Gazetteer updates.

Was this approach successful in getting information across to the various conservation organisations? We have to remember here that nineteenth century ceramic tiles were regarded, and still are in some quarters, as intrusive installations which ought to be removed. Even when taken seriously they were considered as craft rather than art, and as decoration rather than an intrinsic part of a building. This led to a chicken-and-egg situation when applying for funding: we were interested in all types of building, listed and unlisted, which incorporated tiles; however, the view of some heritage bodies was that only listed buildings were of sufficient interest to warrant research. Their agenda was set already, and could not take in new information.

The problems from the point of view of these heritage bodies appear to have been:

- Different and changing agendas - the agenda of bodies such as English Heritage and the national amenity societies, that is those with a legal function in the planning control process, is bound to be different from that of a small, specialist society with an unrivalled in-depth knowledge of a specific aspect of buildings

- Quantitative, too much information - nineteenth century tilework had not previously received the same academic approach as, say, nineteenth century stained glass, thus list descriptions were often poor in this area and even reference lists of building materials quite inaccurate in relation to decorative tilework; we were bombarding organisations with information they may not have been able to use
- Qualitative, how reliable is information from a heritage body which is not a national amenity society - architectural historians in general may have perceived there was little information available on post-medieval tiles, thus there was nothing against which they could check the academic credibility of information provided by the Society

The 'consciousness-raising' part of the Gazetteer project seems to have helped solve some of these problems, with the Tile Gazetteer now seen as a standard work of reference. The appearance on the Society's website of reliable and updated site details should complement the book.

The problems with making information available from the Society's point of view obviously included lack of financial and other resources. Aside from that:

- Lack of access to the English Heritage listed buildings database, which is generally available only to the national amenity societies and local councils; Images of England, which takes in listings up to 2000, is no substitute. So the Society was in the position of having and offering more accurate information than the listed buildings database appeared to hold, but being unable to access the database directly or feed information into it.
- No national headquarters - and thus nowhere to store the growing project archive and make it accessible for researchers to inspect. The project archive has now been transferred to the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust Library.
- Not being a national amenity society - which we would not have the resources to be - and therefore not necessarily being informed about listed building applications which involved tile installations

On the positive side, the benefits of the project to TACS were:

- Creation of a network of information providers who then realised the significance of their tiles and could tell others about them
- Raising the profile of tiles and architectural ceramics
- Publication of the Tile Gazetteer
- Creation of informal links between TACS and other heritage organisations

Overall, and bearing in mind that the listed building system was changing during this project, and is still evolving, it was difficult to be certain that what TACS was providing was finding its way to where it would be most relevant. Other listing projects, because of their basis in a particular building type (synagogues), area or industry (Scottish ironwork), art form (sculpture) or field of archaeology (industrial archaeology), for instance, were able to access public

funding to develop their databases, but the Gazetteer project was not to any great degree because it was a nationally based project involving craftwork in all types of buildings.

In fact, we were trying to move the goalposts in relation to what is considered significant about our architectural heritage, and only time will tell whether we have succeeded. We were trying to encourage a broader vision of decorative ceramics, which is where the twentieth century work comes in, 'the sphere of broad visions' of the post Second World War artistic world, which initially prized collective working for common goals.[1]

After the great nineteenth century boom in church tiling, fashions changed dramatically, and ceramics moved from being an everyday part of church decoration to something of a one-off, generally used for little more than a few memorials. Doulton's, whose artist George Tinworth produced vast quantities of religious terracotta sculptures towards the end of the 1800s, lost substantial amounts of money as they allowed him to continue working well into the first decade of the twentieth century when his work was virtually unsaleable.[2] The sculptor Gilbert Bayes, who often worked with Doulton's using their polychrome stoneware, produced several stone, bronze and wood artworks for churches in the interwar years but nothing in ceramics, although he did design a stoneware funerary casket in 1928 which can be seen in the columbarium at Golders Green Crematorium.[3] There are also several glazed polychrome ceramic plaques, mostly in the form of wreaths, in its main cloister.

Terracotta was used in the early twentieth century for occasional headstones, but there are also a few Doultonware memorials, this grand example in Burslem Cemetery to Thomas Hulm of Longport, who died in 1905 and was organist at Burslem Sunday School for forty years. Sometimes tiles were used on gravestones, more often in the nineteenth century but here in 1913 at Skirlaugh in East Yorkshire, on the grave of David Reynard Robinson, tile enthusiast and builder of the tiled house *Farrago* in Hornsea. An exceptional tiled grave is that of the artist Alfred Wallis, who died in 1942 and is buried close to the Tate St Ives in the town's Old Cemetery. The grave cover is of stoneware tiles made by Bernard Leach.[4]

Moving from memorials to the buildings themselves, a small number of churches were built using various forms of terracotta. St Peter's Church in Galley Common, near Nuneaton, was built in 1909 with walls of hollow terracotta blocks apparently not made by the local firm Stanley Brothers but imported from Italy. Better known is the White Church, Fairhaven Congregational Church (1904-11), at Lytham St Anne's. Its faience, tradename Ceramo, was supplied by the Middleton Fireclay Works, an offshoot of the Leeds Fireclay Company. Also well known is the now-redundant Church of St Osmund (1904-16) at Parkstone in Poole. The external detailing uses a combination of thin wire-cut bricks, hand-made locally at Newtown Vale Brickworks, and buff terracotta. The interior features a great deal of red and cream terracotta supplied by Carter's of Poole.

There were also a few large-scale mosaic installations before and during the First World War, for instance at St Bartholomew's Church, Brighton, in 1911 where the designer and mural painter F. Hamilton Jackson decorated the lower part of the east wall with mosaic figures. Much better known is St Aidan's in Leeds with Frank Brangwyn's fabulous mosaic mural, commissioned in 1909 and completed in 1916. A real curiosity is the Little Chapel in Guernsey at St Andrew, just west of the capital, St Peter Port. A religious community was set up there in 1904 by a French brotherhood, and in 1914 they built a tiny chapel, a miniature version of the grotto and basilica at Lourdes. It still exists, albeit much rebuilt and restored, and is covered with a mosaic of seashells, pebbles and broken china; it may well be the smallest chapel in the world.

The ending of the First World War of course brought about the commissioning of many memorials, some of which used ceramics. This 1920 example in Ledbury has three mosaics of a soldier, sailor and angel at its base. The Biggles-like panel above is later, perhaps dating from the 1980s. The Albion United Reformed Church in Ashton-under-Lyne has a ceramic war memorial reredos of 1919-21 made by Pilkington's and designed by Gordon Forsyth. The two small tablets were added following the Second World War, but replaced in the 1960s. One of the largest memorials was exported to South Africa: the massive faience centrepiece of Durban's First World War memorial was commissioned from Carter's of Poole and completed in 1925. The group of two angels and a figure of Christ, designed by Harold Stabler, was 21 feet in height, 11 feet wide and weighed 14 tons.[5]

For church decoration, between the wars the story was almost entirely of mosaic. One of the few exceptions appears to be the 1930s stained-glass-window-style Woolliscroft ceramic panel now at Gladstone Working Pottery Museum, which may have been an exhibition piece. There is also a small faience plaque by Carter's, designed by Phoebe Stabler, at St Andrew's Church, Ilford, in the London borough of Redbridge. The church, a great brick box, was built in 1923-4 as a memorial to Bishop Edgar Jacob, who had been keen to promote church building in the expanding eastern suburbs of London. The architect, Sir Herbert Baker, wrote that 'An effort was made to get good craftsmanship with simplicity, and let work and material tell their story'.[6] Baker suggested the idea of the faience plaque, one of many which Carter's made at that time, and donated it to the church. Papers now at the V&A record Carter's remark that 'We are anxious, seeing Mr Baker is giving this to the church, to do it as reasonably as possible', and their estimate worked out at £65 for making the plaque with an extra £12-15 for fixing it.[7] There are interesting floor tiles in this church, which the recent Pevsner describes as having different patterns in every bay, but these were installed after the initial building programme.[8]

The continued use of glass and ceramic mosaic between the wars was perhaps inspired by the story of Westminster Cathedral (1895-1903), which was built remarkably quickly but whose internal mosaic decoration is still

incomplete. The first mosaics were designed for the Chapel of the Holy Souls by the artist William Christian Symons, and laid in 1902-3. Work carried on gradually, using a variety of artists, with a break from the First World War until the 1930s, when a school of mosaics was established at the Cathedral.[9] Elsewhere, there were many works by Oppenheimer's of Manchester and their designer Eric Newton, often in the north-west of England, and other significant artists involved with church mosaics during the 1930s were Philip Suffolk, Boris Anrep and the Christian craftsman Gabriel Pippet (c1880-1962), who came from a large family of designers. Of course mosaic work continued after the Second World War, notably at the memorial chapel of the American Cemetery near Cambridge, with its spectacular 1956 mosaics by the American mural artist Francis Scott Bradford (1898-1961).

The war had a great effect on church building. Between the wars, over 250 Anglican churches had been built in England and Wales, and at the end of the war many more were needed, to replace those bombed - 283, of all denominations, had been lost by the end of 1942 - and to cope with large population movements.[10] But building materials were scarce, and only 41 Anglican churches had been consecrated by 1956. The situation was rather different abroad, with Germany, America, Sweden and especially France racing ahead, not only in numbers but in their innovative plans and decoration. The Liturgical Movement, which originated in France, called for greater church unity, and for church planning to emphasise a single unified space, often with the altar at its centre. In addition, there was a movement calling for churches to be multi-functional spaces, useable by the community at all times and not just on Sundays. Also in France, and from before the war, artists, rather than artist-craftsmen, had been encouraged to contribute to church decoration, for instance the work of Matisse in the late 1940s at the Chapel of the Rosary in Vence, near Nice, which includes stained glass and ceramics. Another example is Notre-Dame-de-Toute-Grâce near Chamonix, on a mountainside facing Mont Blanc.[11] It was built in 1937-45 and its decoration, by a wide range of artists, was completed in 1958. Fernand Léger designed the facade mosaic, Chagall produced a ceramic mural showing the crossing of the Red Sea and Matisse designed the tiled altarpiece showing St Dominic.

What effect did these new ideas on liturgy and art have in Britain? The Catholic church was affected more than the Anglican church, because the existing pre-war shortage of churches had been exacerbated by bombing and by the influx of Irish and Polish Catholic immigrants. A School of Architecture was established at Liverpool for Polish refugees in 1944, and they contributed a great deal to the extensive Catholic church building programme which began in 1953 and continued until the mid 1960s.[12] Specialist architectural firms worked in every diocese and often produced exciting results, as at St Mary's Church in Leyland, Lancashire, which was commissioned in 1959 by the Benedictines of

Ampleforth and completed in 1964. The Polish architect Jerzy Faczynski worked to a carefully defined and innovative brief to produce a circular interior (Fig. 1)

Figure 1

with artworks including stained glass, a tapestry and the ceramic cross by another Polish refugee, Adam Kossowski. The first cathedral to break with longitudinal planning was the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King (1962-7) in Liverpool. The basement below the main foyer has a tiled floor in a geometric design by David Atkins, who also laid out the marble flooring of the Cathedral itself.

In general, the Anglican church was more conservative, even reactionary, in its choice of designs for new churches.[13] Its flagship building, Coventry Cathedral, was built in 1956-62; the architect Basil Spence won a competition for its design in 1951 and kept to the traditional Latin cross plan. His inspiration came from the great medieval cathedrals with their many artworks; this was definitely no purely functional 'liturgical shed' and was therefore seen by many critics, both architectural and clergy, as outmoded even before it was consecrated.[14] The Cathedral's Chapel of Unity was floored with a marble mosaic designed by the Swedish artist Einar Forseth (1892-1988), with a dove in the centre and symbols of the four evangelists and the five continents around the edge; the work was carried out by the mosaicist Trata Maria Drescha at the marble firm Whiteheads.[15] In the sanctuary are six huge stoneware candlesticks by the potter Hans Coper (1920-81). They are 7 feet, over 2 metres, high and were each made from six or seven individually hand thrown pieces, which were threaded on to vertical steel rods set into the floor (Fig. 2). Nearby is the

Figure 2

Gethsemane Chapel, its wrought iron screen designed by Spence and the mosaic of the angel Michael by the mosaicist Steven Sykes (b1914), who used an experimental technique, cast concrete - in fact ciment fondu, high aluminium cement - set with mosaic. The panel was modelled in a clay bed, in reverse relief.

Other cathedrals and churches also took on the idea of using modern artworks, notably at Chichester Cathedral, where works including tapestry, painting, stained glass and sculpture - although no ceramics - were installed between the mid fifties and the mid 1970s. Another example is the vast sgraffito east wall plasterwork mural at St Boniface German Church (1959-60) in Tower Hamlets. So in the postwar period, the plan form of the churches was often different from prewar buildings, and modern artworks became more common in churches. By the mid 1980s the first issue of the magazine *Church Building* was able to say that 'modern art in churches has ceased to be the scandal it was considered in the 1940s and 1950s'.[16] Amidst all these liturgical and other changes, what happened to ceramic decoration?

For the Catholic church, the most significant postwar ceramicist was Adam Kossowski (1905-86), a Polish artist and refugee from the Russian labour camps, who came to Britain in 1942. He was soon invited to join the Guild of Catholic Artists and Craftsmen, which had been founded in 1929 as part of the centenary celebrations of Catholic emancipation; it is now known as the Society of Catholic Artists. Although firstly a mural painter, he showed some ceramic figures at the Guild's 1947 exhibition, and through the Guild was introduced to the Carmelite Priory - now the Friars - at Aylesford in Kent.[17] He was initially commissioned to produce a series of paintings depicting the history of the Carmelite order, and then asked to make a Rosary Way (1950) in ceramics. At that time Kossowski was relatively inexperienced in ceramics, and had only a small kiln in his studio, but after some hesitation he accepted the commission, and worked with the Fulham Pottery which could fire the large pieces that comprised the final Scapular Vision shrine (1951).[18]

Over the next few years Kossowski progressed technically with his ceramics and began to use a wider range of glazes; by 1953 he had a studio, with a large kiln, in the Old Brompton Road. Meanwhile, the Main Shrine at the Friars was being built, mostly by the brothers themselves. This, along with St Anne's Chapel, was decorated internally by Kossowski in the mid 1950s. Both have sgraffito work on the walls, and the unusual floor tiles with their tree motif in St Anne's Chapel were fired at Aylesford's own pottery. Next, in 1962, came the Relic Chapel and the eleven foot high reliquary, which has a concrete core. The Carmelite Saints' Chapel of 1964-5 used the Carmelite colours of brown and white, with tiny oblong tiles made of white clay covered in liquid gold as a background for the statue. In the English and Welsh Martyrs' Chapel of 1965-7 only red glaze was used, the colour of martyrdom, on the blue-black clay body. The altar depicts the murder of St Thomas Becket, and the side panels St John Fisher and St Thomas More. Finally came St Joseph's Chapel, decorated during 1966-71 (Fig. 3). The green background symbolises the universal church, the plaques show episodes from the life of St Joseph and other themes from both Old and New Testaments, and the sgraffito tiles show the symbols of the evangelists (Fig. 4). In 1971, following the completion of work on the chapel, Kossowski had

Figure 3

Figure 4

to abandon his studio. Although he later worked from his Fulham home, he produced no more ceramics; he died in 1986 and was buried at Aylesford.

He was a prolific artist, and Aylesford was only a part of his huge ceramic and other output over the period 1955-71, which included seven ceramic sets of

Stations of the Cross and the 1958 tympanum of St Thomas Becket at Rainham in Kent (Fig. 5). Inside the church are two chapels with ceramic decoration, which

Figure 5

are not mentioned in the comprehensive catalogue of his works published in 1990. The baptistery wall relief of 1961 at St Aidan's Church in Ealing shows two pairs of angels and a dove representing the Holy Ghost. One of his greatest works is the gigantic *Last Judgement* tympanum of 1963 at St Mary's Church in Leyland, Lancashire; Christ the Judge is depicted in the centre, with the saved to his right and the devils and the condemned to his left (Fig. 6).

Figure 6

He also worked on a large scale in sgraffito, the best example being in London at St Benedict's Chapel, Queen Mary College (1964). Of course all these works were being carried out while he was still occupied with the Friars. The Blessed Sacrament Chapel of St Aloysius in Camden, for instance, dates from 1968, while he was still working on St Joseph's Chapel at Aylesford. His final ceramic work seems to have been at Milnthorpe in Cumbria, where the construction of Christ the King had been financed by a local family who were personal friends of his. They commissioned several works from him for the church, including this 1970 plaque of *Christ the King* and the 1971 mural the *Way of the Cross*, which links the twelve Stations of the Cross in one long composition, its shape defined by the form of its subject (Fig. 7).

Figure 7

Altogether Kossowski's is a magnificent body of work, but it is hard to say how influential his ceramics were; they were generally figurative when abstract art had become popular, they were located throughout Britain and thus hard to find and received little publicity, they were seen perhaps as being relevant only to the Catholic church, religiously inspired and not gallery art or high art. There is an excellent monograph on Kossowski, and his papers are held by the V&A's Archive of Art and Design, but his work is not widely known or appreciated.

The remaining major manufacturers were also producing tiles and mosaics for churches in the postwar period, although given that both Carter's and Pilkington's appear have been doing a lot of this type of work, rather less survives than might be expected. In 1960 the Pilkington's house magazine boasted that the firm's chief artist George Ormrod was 'renowned for his religious works that adorn many churches'.[19] In 1962 the same magazine showed a prototype drawing of *The Herald Angels*, a tile panel from which developed fourteen Stations of the Cross tile panels for a local church, exact location unknown.[20] A number of large-scale tile, mosaic and faience works are mentioned in the Carter Archive as having been carried out for churches and similar locations, but no exact details are given for many of these. The designer Ivor Kamlish, who joined Carter's in 1955, was reported to have produced designs for decorative hand-painted tile panels for churches throughout the country.[21] However, no locations are known.

There are three extant examples of Carter's church work at Rochester, Hounslow and in central London. St John Fisher Church, Rochester, was designed by the architect H. S. Goodhart-Rendel and opened in 1955. He favoured tile decoration because of its durability, and commissioned Carter's to produce a ceramic reredos. The design work was undertaken by Joseph Ledger (b1926), who carried out this type of commission for Carter's from the early 1950s. The hand-painting for all these commissions was done by Phyllis Butler in a special section set up by Carter's, and the St John Fisher reredos depicts the figure of St John Fisher surrounded by other saints significant in Rochester's history. Ledger also designed the reredos for Goodhart-Rendel's Church of St Mary the Virgin, Hounslow, completed 1955, and in 1966 the east wall decoration of the same architect's Church of Our Lady of the Rosary,

Marylebone. Rather than a reredos, this comprised fifteen individual hand-painted tile panels depicting the *Mysteries of the Rosary* mounted between the narrow lancets of the east wall. Carter's also supplied the geometric-patterned blue and grey glazed tiling for the chancel dado. Carter's did many smaller faience panels, for instance their St Michael (1959) at Hamworthy Church, which was probably designed by Harold and Phoebe Stabler, and another St Michael (1956) at the Church of St Michael and All Angels in Bromley.

However, most church tilework from end of the fifties was by individual artists rather than the major firms, for instance at St Aidan's Church (1957-9) in Leicester, where the potter William Gordon (1905-c93) designed a large stoneware mural depicting scenes from the life of St Aidan, as well as two smaller evangelist panels on a door (Fig. 8). Gordon was originally based in

Figure 8

London, but had gone to Chesterfield in 1939 with the aim of reviving the nearby Walton Pottery, which dated from the end of the eighteenth century. He served in the Army during the war, but afterwards succeeded in producing saltglazed wares until the pottery closed in 1956, when he was reported to be returning to the south, 'to take up work on a new type of ceramic tile which he has developed'.[22] It seems he then went directly to work with Carter's, carrying out the 1958 Basildon Bus Station mural (now lost) and the Thames & Hudson steps near the British Museum. The Basildon mural is mention in the Carter Archive, but Leicester is not; however, there are strong similarities in the style and colour of the tiles, so perhaps the St Aidan's mural was also produced in Poole to Gordon's design.

The artist Don Potter (1902-2004) is well known for his stone and wood carving, but also for teaching ceramics at Bryanston School in Dorset, where he taught art during 1940-84 while continuing with his own sculptural work; this included several commissions from the architect Anthony Lewis for London churches.[23] St Matthew's Church, Bethnal Green, was rebuilt in 1958-61 by Lewis, who asked several young artists to produce work for its interior. Potter was

responsible for the ash-glazed stoneware Stations of the Cross, which were fired in the wood-burning kiln he built at Bryanston.

The ceramic designer Robert Brumby (b1934) trained at the Royal College of Art, then set up his own studio in York. His church work includes a statue of the *Madonna and Child* in the Lady Chapel of Liverpool's Catholic Cathedral, and the *Christ in Majesty* at the Holy Family (1965) in Pontefract. What appears to be a later version of this work is the massive *Christ in Glory* reredos at St Augustine's (1967-8), just south of Manchester city centre.

More unusual are two ceramic screens: inside Altrincham Methodist Church, which opened in 1968, was a faience mural by Shaws of Darwen; then at the former Convent of Our Lady of Sion (Fig. 9), near Portobello Road, is a large

Figure 9

external ceramic screen by the potter Eileen Lewenstein (1925-2005) which dates from the late 1960s. Lewenstein was one of the joint founders of the Briglin Pottery in 1948, but she left in 1959 and by the mid 1960s was producing abstract stoneware forms. It was following an exhibition of her stoneware that she gained the commission for the Convent screen.

Decorative brickwork was also used in the church context, notably by the sculptor Walter Ritchie (1919-97) of Kenilworth, who worked with Eric Gill and Don Potter. He initially saw brick simply as a more economic material for large architectural sculptures, but soon came to like it as bricks were easily carved and there were so many different types of brick available. However, it was not popular with most architects and over thirty years he made only four brick sculptures against hundreds in other materials.[24] One local architect who was enthusiastic about brick was Brian Rush, who commissioned Ritchie in 1966 to produce a Crucifixion mural in the porch of Our Lady of the Wayside, Solihull, and again in 1971 with Flight into Egypt at St Joseph's, Leamington.

Mosaic remained popular in the postwar period, with work on the interior of Westminster Cathedral continuing from the early 1950s until 1965, although it then ceased until 1999. In the early part of this period mosaics were used as

cladding on offices and public buildings, and often carried out in a modern style disliked by traditional mosaic artists.[25] Examples of postwar church mosaics include the rebuilding of Tettenhall Church in the early 1950s, when the Hungarian-born painter and mosaicist George Mayer-Marton (1897-1960) contributed a round font decorated with mosaics; in 1956 at the Holy Ghost in Netherton, Liverpool, he was commissioned by the architect to design a large Pentecost mosaic panel.[26] This was moved to the Catholic Cathedral in 1988-9 just before the Holy Ghost was demolished.[27] Notre Dame de France in Soho was built in 1953-5; it has a circular plan with the altar on the east side of the circle. Its artworks include a mosaic by Boris Anrep (1883-1969) on the altar front, which was hidden for many years beneath one of the murals painted by Jean Cocteau in 1960, and only revealed during a reordering in 2003.[28]

Carter's also did mosaic work after the war, from the early 1950s onward; examples are the full mosaic scheme for the sanctuary of St Etheldreda's in Fulham Palace Road, completed 1958, and the mosaic cross made in 1960 for Christ the King at Bitterne in Southampton. One of Carter's subsidiary firms, Art Pavements & Decorations, was responsible for the superb 1959 mosaic scheme inside Holy Cross Church at Bidston, on the Wirral.[29] This was one of around a dozen mostly postwar churches in the Wirral and Merseyside areas designed by the Liverpool-trained architect Francis Xavier Velarde (1897-1960).[30] Although it was not the last of his church designs, it was the last he was able to complete himself; his war memorial church, the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes (1955-7) in Blackpool, also has a colourful mosaic interior.

St Boniface German Church (1959-60) in Tower Hamlets is partly clad externally in mosaics, its incumbent priest having been advised on the design by a German architect. At St Paul's Church (1959-61) in Harlow the east wall is completely covered by a mosaic by the artist John Piper (1903-92) representing the Madonna and child (Fig. 10). Piper designed much stained glass for churches,

Figure 10

and occasional murals in mosaic or fibreglass for secular sites, but this appears to be his only church mural. At St Jude's in Wigan, dominating the fan-shaped

interior is a huge east wall mosaic of the Crucifixion designed by Hans Unger and carried out in 1965 by the mosaicist Eberhard Schulze; it is signed 'Unger/Eber'. The two German artists worked together from the early 1960s, notably for London Transport, and were commissioned by the architect of the church.

St Boniface (1969), at Crediton in Devon, has mosaic Stations of the Cross by Arthur Goodwin, who was then Vice Principal of Exeter College of Art. There is also abstract stained glass, and a sculpture of the Virgin and Child carried out in cement and fibreglass. By the late 1960s there was much more experimentation with different materials, and this may be one reason why ceramic decoration became much less commonplace. At Clifton Cathedral (1970-3), Bristol's Catholic cathedral, the original intention of the architects regarding the Stations of the Cross was to find a sculptor who would make moulds of the designs, which would then be placed in the wall framework and cast in concrete, with the wall, in one operation. This proved impractical, and the artist William Mitchell was brought in to make the fourteen Stations, which were to appear as part of the walls. He used Faircrete, a concrete and fibreglass mix which can be moulded by hand for around an hour after pouring. Mitchell is well known for working in a huge variety of materials.

During the 1970s there were far fewer new churches built, and new ceramic installations became a rarity. Some of the few examples are at Our Lady of Lourdes (1974-6) in Milton Keynes. The circular exterior of the church hides a square interior, in which the furnishings - altar, font, pulpit and Stations of the Cross - are of sculpted glazed stoneware designed by the artist and mural painter Norman Adams (1927-2005) and made by his wife, the painter and ceramicist Anna Adams. The altar front shows the Resurrection, while the font design, *Living Water*, was based on waterfalls near the Adams's home and studio at Horton-in-Ribblesdale. These seem to be the only ceramic works attributed to Norman Adams, although he did large-scale paintings for other churches during the 1970s.

The chapel of Robinson College, Cambridge, has 1979 tiling by the artist-potter Geoffrey Eastop (Fig. 11). These unusual ceramic slabs form part of the

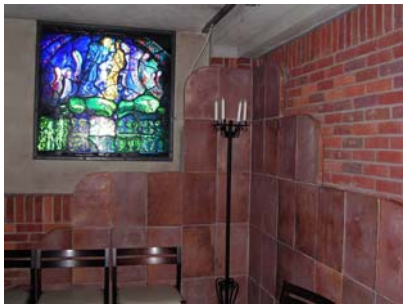

Figure 11

wall and floor of the ante-chapel, and are complemented by stained glass designed by John Piper. Piper and Eastop collaborated on a series of ceramic works from 1969 until the early 1980s. After the 1970s there are just occasional mosaics and other artworks, like at Our Lady of Compassion, Upton Park, reordered in 1991-3 with addition of new clay relief Crucifixion on east wall, the ceramic plaques by the potter Julia Carter Preston at various locations around Liverpool, the memorial panel by Maggie Angus Berkowitz at Milnthorpe, and the Jubilee ceramic bench at St Peter ad Vincula, Stoke.[31]

The story of postwar church ceramics is dominated by Kossowski's commissions for the newly-built Catholic churches. Large-scale mural work was being carried out in churches during the postwar period, but even at a time when murals generally used a wider range of materials and encompassed more abstract designs, these church murals tended to be relatively traditional wall paintings, like those of the muralist Mary Adshead.[32] In the secular context, large-scale tile and mosaic murals were often commissioned for corporate clients and the new shops and offices of the 1960s and 1970s.[33] Perhaps because of the popularity of such murals in the secular world, the ecclesiastical tile mural, which had flourished in the Victorian age, did not find favour in the late twentieth century church. The surviving large ceramics firms did try to interest churches in a rather conservative style of modern religious tilework, and according to their records, succeeded; maybe these works are still out there, waiting for us to find them.

What we can see now, however, is the renewed popularity of tiles in the latest generation of British mosques, which are generally much more visually attractive than their immediate predecessors. The Suleymaniye Mosque in Hackney is decorated with Iznik-style tiling of 1999 made by the Guven Cini factory in western Turkey. The firm has produced art tiles since 1940 and has supplied tiles for many recent mosques in Germany and Turkey. In Leeds is the Almadina Jamia Mosque (Figs. 12 and 13), built 2002-3, in buff stone with red

Figure 12

Figure 13

brick stripes and a series of dark blue and green ceramic horseshoe motifs. The four double-height spiral brick pillars support a large rectangular area of pale green glazed brick, on which is a ceramic panel with an Islamic inscription. It is good to see colourful tilework making a return to our religious buildings, and maybe mosques will provide more opportunities for our ceramicists in the future.

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