

GazNews

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TACS Gazetteer News

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Wonderful Waterbeach!

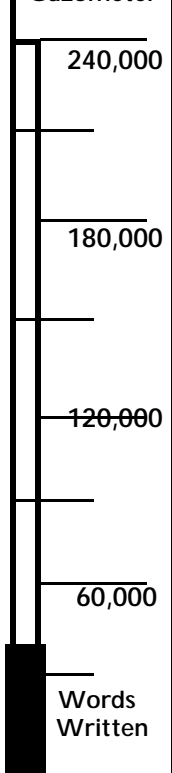
St John's Church at Waterbeach in Cambridgeshire turns out to be packed with interesting tiles. At first I only suspected the existence of a Powell's opus sectile panel (courtesy of Dr Dennis Hadley's list of Powell's locations), but with assistance from the Vicar of Waterbeach and a trio of TACS members, we now have details of a large area of stunning dado tiling (left) signed W. H. Constable, Cambridge, 1879 (perhaps local stained glass manufacturers?), two splendid Powell's opus sectile panels (1878) and an unusual encaustic pavement. Thanks to all concerned.

Good News for Gaz!

I'm pleased to say that we were recently able to fulfil the criteria set by the Pilgrim Trust, who made us a significant financial award back in 1999, and have been able to claim the grant. This now ensures that our projected travel and office expenses for completing work on the Gazetteer are fully covered. On behalf of TACS I should like to say a very grateful thanks to the Pilgrim Trust, not forgetting the other funding bodies who have contributed so much to the project (see right).

Work on the county drafts is continuing, with the next big task being to put together a draft of the Biographical Directory of Artists, Designers and Manufacturers, which forms a large appendix. Finally, just as an experiment, this edition of Gaznews is available in a colour version online—see the website!
Lynn Pearson, Gazetteer Editor

Gazometer



Have you got your copy yet?

Yes, have you got your free copy of the TACS report for the Cumming Ceramic Research Foundation on **Minton Tiles in the Churches of Staffordshire**? It recounts the Society's research on the tiles donated by Herbert Minton to churches throughout the county and beyond, has masses of full colour illustrations, and was issued in August 2000. If you have a computer and an internet connection, it's easy to get yourself a copy—click on to the TACS website at www.tilesoc.org.uk then go to the **What's New** page, where you'll see directions for downloading a copy which you can either read on-screen or print out. Don't delay, read it today!

The Tiles and Architectural Ceramics Society would like to thank the following organisations for supporting the Gazetteer Project:

**School of Art & Design,
University of Wolverhampton**

**The Pilgrim Trust
The Manifold Trust
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Database Site Count

Date	Number of Sites in Database
December 2001	4448
November 2000	3899
July 1999	2571
March 1997	1443

Cumbria—Extracts from the first draft of the Gazetteer

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. 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. 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. The ceramics manufacturers may have been Craven Dunnill, who were the leading suppliers of ceramics for turkish baths, or possibly Pilkington's.

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. 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. (continues.....)

Mystery Photo

Any offers for the designer or manufacturer of this inn sign? It's the Rising Sun pub by the quay at Warsash in Hampshire, on Southampton Water. Maybe 30s or 50s, even later? It doesn't appear in the list of Carter's sites held by Poole Museum, but that doesn't rule them out.



Visit the TACS website at www.tilesoc.org.uk

