

TACS Gazetteer News

May 2000

Special Double Issue — Dorset

Issue 6

A Brief Guide to Dorset

First, congratulations and thanks again to all the TACS volunteer data collectors — as you can see from the database count, we have been accumulating over one hundred new sites a month over the last year, quite an achievement. News about seeing these sites by means of the much-expanded Gazetteer web site is in the article alongside.

But although we can describe the contents of the Gazetteer, search the database via the web, and even go to visit real sites, it still may be difficult to visualise the end product of the Gazetteer project, namely the book itself. In previous issues I have tried to describe what the printed pages of the Gazetteer might look like, but this special issue of *GazNews* contains four full pages (two plus two reduced, to be exact!) of an extract from the draft of the county of Dorset, complete with illustrations.

Of course, final word on all design matters rests with the publishers, but I hope this gives you a feel for what the Gazetteer may eventually become. Each county will have its own introduction, covering local manufacturers and important sites, along with a map, but this extract plunges straight into Bournemouth before visiting Poole and Weymouth. Illustrations within the text will be in black and white, but there will also be a central colour section. I hope you like it — comments welcome!

Lynn Pearson, Gazetteer Editor

World Wide Web — Surf'n Research The TACS Database goes online!

Now is the moment to turn your browsers to the Gazetteer web site, address www.gosforth3.demon.co.uk because the entire database went online just before Easter. Our web site is now much expanded, and includes many more links as well as a publications page, a 'hit counter' (which registered 32 visits in the first few days) and the 'Search the Database' facility, which enables the user to browse through the sites by county. The Database lists are illustrated by thumbnail colour photographs, which enlarge with a click, and additional pages for especially important sites will be added; at present there are four site pages, covering Hartshill Church (Staffs), St Augustine's Church (Kensington), St James the Great, Morpeth and St George, Newcastle upon Tyne (Northumberland). The structure of the database is explained in the Database Reference page. Don't worry that sensitive ceramic sites will be over-publicised by this approach; the online Database has already been stripped of all potentially difficult locations. Updating of the web site, adding newly-discovered ceramic sites and new pages, will take place around every two weeks.

Although the TACS Database is one of the first databases to go 'live', there is a wealth of information out there in the ether for the ceramic surfer. Tiled Victorian baths in Swindon and Dunfermline, previously unknown to TACS, were discovered by the Gaz Editor on a web site devoted to Victorian Turkish baths, while the Ecclesiological Society's huge site contains links to a multitude of churches. One of these, the Thomas Coats Memorial Church in Paisley, turns out to have very grand Doulton toilets! See the Gazwebsite for links to the above sites.

Now, real ceramic sites: new finds in these last few months include a splendid little memorial panel from Ditchet Cemetery, Berkshire, dated 1924, probably Iberian in origin, still extant but not generally visible (right), and the brilliantly striped Minton chancel dado of Foxholes Church, North Yorkshire (left). See all these and more on the Gazwebsite!



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Database Site Count

Date	Number of Sites in Database
April 2000	3637
January 2000	3485
April 1999	2287
March 1997	1443

TACS GAZETTEER—DORSET (A SHORT EXTRACT)

BOURNEMOUTH

Bournemouth's centre is **THE SQUARE**, where the town's delightfully spacious gardens swoop down to meet its imposing shops, most noticeably the unusual curved facade of **Debenham's**. The appearance of the store, which bounds The Square on its west side, results from piecemeal development during 1900-20. However, the dreadful Debenham's canopy makes a mockery of the stylish Edwardian Baroque facade with its white faience set into red terracotta. **OLD CHRISTCHURCH ROAD** runs east of The Square, passing **Dingles** store, with its impressive 1920s (maybe 1930s?) Art Deco faience facade including coloured, vaguely Egyptian, motifs.

Just east of Dingles is **St Peter's Church**, **ST PETER'S ROAD**. This is a visual feast, with a wonderfully colourful interior where it seems almost every surface is painted. The church was built by G. E. Street in 1855-9 (nave) and 1864 (chancel). Pass through the crossing arch, covered by a Clayton and Bell fresco of 1873, and then the adjacent openwork stone arch (shades of Wells Cathedral), to reach the sanctuary and a reredos with mosaic panels dating from 1899; these replaced an earlier decorative scheme including tiles by William Morris. The original tiles were the first of only three church commissions for tilework obtained by Morris. Two east wall panels, showing processing angels, were designed by



Morris himself, while four panels on the north and south walls were New Testament scenes by Burne-Jones. However, soon after their installation around 1866 the panels began to disintegrate, and they were removed in 1899.¹ The present mosaics, whose subjects - angelic wings to the fore - matches the originals - were designed by Arthur Bloomfield and made by Powell & Sons; below the mosaics are red and white glass tiles, probably also by Powells. These tiles were made by crushing fragments of flint glass, contaminated by clay, and then fusing the resulting powder to create opaque glass; this material could then be

shaped and used just as a normal ceramic tile, but one having only the tiniest clay content.² They were often used in the context of decorative schemes including glass mosaic and opus sectile work. ◀ There is, indeed, a multicoloured opus sectile panel at the east end of the north aisle wall. It shows Christ preaching and bears the inscription 'In memory of Walter Scott Evans for more than 30 years churchwarden of this parish Jan 10th 1908'. The addition of gold mosaic makes this a lively panel, but there is no sign of its designer.

Leaving the churchyard, wherein lies the heart of Percy Shelley, further east is 'Joseph's Terrace', ▶ 222-6 **OLD CHRISTCHURCH ROAD**, developed by Joseph Cutler around 1880, and bearing one and a half portraits of the bearded developer in painted circular panels on green glazed tile pilasters with floral ornament. These primitive but endearing images were probably produced by the Architectural Pottery. Across the roundabout at the end of Old Christchurch Road rises the unlikely tower of **The College** (Lansdowne College), Christchurch Road. A floor mosaic outside its entrance carries the date 1910, while inside are extensive floor mosaics including a coat of arms.

Back in central Bournemouth and west of The Square, the superb **Branksome**



Arms on **POOLE HILL**, built around 1909, displays a brightly coloured tiled advertisement for Eldridge Pope's Dorchester Ales in its porte cochere; ◀ the brewer's arms lie within a green oval on a yellow ground, surrounded by ornate scrollwork. The pub's main facade is an exuberant combination of green glazed brick with pale grey Carter's 'ceramic marble' dressings. Just south in **WEST HILL ROAD** is the **Pembroke Arms**, now the Goat and Tricycle, which was

built about 1900 by the architect C. T. Mills. Its pleasingly fishy green faience facade was produced by Carter's; note the beady-eyed fish on either pilaster.³

BROWNSEA ISLAND

St Mary the Virgin Church was built in 1853-4 by Colonel William Petrie Waugh of Branksea Castle, who bought the island in 1852 hoping to exploit its resources of china clay. In the chancel are a few strips of single tiles, but in the room beneath the tower - a private family pew - is a superb decorative Minton tiled fireplace.



It stands beneath a timber ceiling taken from Sir John Crosby's house in the City of London, which was built in 1466. The

ceiling was removed in the early nineteenth century and the house demolished around 1906. Adjoining the private pew is another private room containing a chest tomb supporting the recumbent effigy of a later owner of the island, Charles van Raalte. Altogether, this is a most unusual church in a most unusual situation.

A Poole Pottery tile panel was installed in the kitchen of Brownsea Castle in 1999 as part of ongoing restoration work. The panel, around 2 ft high by 4 ft long, shows the castle in a rural scene complete with peacock. It was the first time the Pottery had done this type of work for many years; a copy is displayed at the Pottery.

DORCHESTER

Dorchester South Station, opened in 1986, was sponsored and built for British Rail by the local brewers Eldridge Pope & Co, whose ornate brewery may be seen from the train. On platform 1 is a hand-painted 'Welcome to Dorchester' tile panel, showing a town scene combined with the words 'Home of Eldridge Pope & Co plc'; the panel, which has a semicircular top, is about 4ft high by 2ft wide. On the station's exterior is a circular terracotta commemorative plaque,



dated 1986. Nearby, at Eldridge Pope's Dorchester Brewery (the Thomas Hardy Brewery since 1997), WEYMOUTH AVENUE, there is much attractive polychromatic brickwork, some terracotta ornamentation and tiles in the segmental blanks above two windows. The Dorchester Brewery was largely built in 1880, although some of the associated buildings date from the mid-1880s and the brewhouse was rebuilt after a fire in 1922. The highly decorative nature of the brewery arose from Eldridge Pope's decision to employ brewers' architects Scamell & Colyer, known for their ornate structures, in combination with the Weymouth architect G. R. Crickmay, best known for his work on local churches.

HAMWORTHY

St Michael's Church, BLANDFORD ROAD was built in 1958-9 by Morley & Bolden of Poole. Inside this brick-built church is a colourful re-redis in the form of a semicircular Carter's panel showing a virile St Michael triumphing over a spectacular green dragon. It was probably designed by Harold and Phoebe Sta-



bler, who were then much influenced by the Della Robbia style, expressed most strongly in the cherubs around the panel's border. The Carter archives also suggest the presence of a panel in a niche above a doorway, showing 'The Good Shepherd'.⁴ Further along Blandford Road, near Poole Bridge, is Old Rope Walk, an early twentieth-century almshouse-style development by Carter's for their workers. Here the end cottage has a small triangular ceramic inset in its gable, showing a decorative cream 'C' with green scrollwork on a cream ground.

POOLE

One must surely begin at Poole Pottery itself, sited on THE QUAY, beside the huge and dramatic expanse of the harbour. The entrance to the Pottery displays one of the delightful 'Welcome to Poole' tubelined panels, showing yachts in Poole harbour, which once graced



local approach roads and the promenade ▲; at least one is extant in its original position (see Sandbanks).⁵ The panel, one of a series of town panels made by Carter's in the 1950s, was designed by Arthur Nickols. On the Pottery's Quay frontage is a ceramic panel showing highlights of Poole's history. ▼ It was made to commemorate the 50th anniversary of D-Day and unveiled on the 3rd June 1994 by the Mayor of Poole.

About five feet square, it was designed by Irene Reeve and made at Poole Pottery by Alan White. The colourful concoction shows Neptune, stylised waves, parachutists, and flags with assorted quotations, largely in pale blues and greens on a terracotta background. As to the Pottery building itself, ground and first floor level windows on the Quay front are set in bottle-green faience slabs, about 8 in square. There is a surprise at the rear entrance, where a long tile panel commands the yard; classical figures in buff, outlined in brown, strike incongruous poses above visitors leaving the Pottery.

Now head west for Poole Bridge to explore the quayside, passing the buff, brown and black glazed brick facade of the **Jolly Sailor**, which also has a good door canopy, in dark brown - almost lustrous - faience. Perhaps there may be two further ceramic panels in hiding on the facade, covered by later signage. Hurry along to the amazing **Poole Arms** whose facade, ◀ a massive emerald green faience gable end, shimmers in reflected light from the water opposite. Dark green dressings, a classical doorcase, a central panel with the pub's name in gold lettering,



and the town's coat of arms on yellow ground in a circular panel at the top of the gable make this a most memorable pub front. It is almost certainly the work of Carter's, who showed the pub's mosaic doorway panel in a catalogue dating from about 1908.

A slight deviation away from the quayside brings you to the Tourist Information Centre and **Waterfront Museum**, 4 High Street, where a Carter's plaque of the town arms is topped by a voluptuous figure of mermaid, supposedly based on the shapely local lass Ann Sidney, a one-time winner of the 'Miss World' contest. At the Quay's end, to the north stands the unexciting red and orange glazed brick facade (1911) of the **Queen Mary** public house in West Street. Of much greater interest is **Poole Bridge**, with large, high relief faience panels proudly showing the town's



coat of arms on the outside of each of its four piers; ▲ all are signed 'Carter, Stabler & Adams Ltd 1926'.

To explore the town itself, return to Poole Pottery and head inland along **OLD ORCHARD**, passing the **Swan Inn** (Murphy's in 1999). Still visible is the glazed brick facade in



lime and emerald green, with rich brown faience dressings and a startled green faience dolphin keystone above the door, ◀ but the fascia is covered. Beneath are two elegant tubelined swans, bearing decorative swags in their beaks, and a panel reading 'Marston's Poole Ales'. The dolphin refers to Marston's Dolphin Brewery, which stood nearby on Market Street.

On the corner of Old Orchard and **HIGH STREET** is Peri Ice Cream shop, once Yeatman's the florists, as suggested by two pretty tubelined Carter's panels of flowers in natural colours on black ground. ▶ The design of these six-inch tiles was by Reginald Till, and they were fixed on the Old Orchard facade in Decem-



ber 1949.⁶ Turn right into the pedestrianised area, soon reaching a well-preserved Dewhurst's at 135 High Street, with at least eleven Carter's pictorial four-tile panels from the pretty Farmyard series designed by E. E. Stickland around 1922; they were used in many Dewhurst shops until the 1960s. Just off the High Street in LAGLAND STREET the Norton Free Library (empty and sold in 1999) has red terracotta decoration and a discreet tile plaque in buff and brown worded 'These buildings were erected and presented to the Borough of Poole as a Free Library by John J. Norton Esq. Novr 19th 1887'.

On the northern edge of the town centre is a typically sprawling Arndale Centre, designed in 1963-9 by architects W. Leslie Jones & Partners, and now known as the Dolphin Shopping Centre. At first floor level inside the Centre is the Library, where readers



are greeted by a jolly full-height Carter's tubelined panel in black and white on pale blue depicting the architectural wonders of Poole. ◀ At the far end of the same floor is a brightly coloured mosaic of similar size showing a

breezy yachting scene; this is unsigned. Heading out of town on PARKSTONE ROAD we find Parkstone Court, a small block of flats built in 1999 with a pleasingly detailed decorative terracotta roundel in its gable showing the date and a galleon. Well outside the town at the end of Parkstone Road stands the Municipal Buildings, now Civic Centre, designed by L. Magnus Austin working under the Borough Surveyor E. J. Goodacre in 1931-2. It has decorative Moderne stonework reliefs of local scenes, and a coat of arms in Carter's faience above the main entrance. Just inside is a mosaic floor depicting the arms and an assortment of Poole landmarks.

Parkstone

The twin fishmonger's and butcher's shops behind the dark green and brown faience arcade at 7-8 Bank Chambers, PENN HILL AVENUE, are now one under the name of Banks Bistro, but the unique tiled fish mural (signed Carter & Co Ltd, Poole) and lettering survive in good condition. The shop, originally Jenkins & Sons, was built in 1923 by architects Lawson & Reynolds, while the delicately drawn fish panel, with its inevitable yachts,



was designed and painted by James Radley Young. ◀ Even the lettering, advertising cooked meats and family

butchers, on the butchery half of this double feature is unusual; the 'A' has what might be called a flying serif.⁷

Sandbanks

From Sandbanks a chain ferry runs across to South Haven Point (thence Swanage), while a smaller ferry crosses to Brownsea Island. Near the ferry terminal, at the junction with PANORAMA ROAD, a Carter's 'Welcome to Poole' panel - which happens to show Brownsea Castle - survives in situ. These town panels, also made for Swanage and Wareham, date from the 1950s and were designed by Arthur Nickols; the panels for each town all have the same design.

WEYMOUTH

Weymouth's intricate network of back lanes has many reminders of the wealth of ceramics which once cheered the urban scene. Opposite the railway station, on the corner of RANELAGH ROAD and Queen Street, is an ex-pub (now 'Discretion' book shop), with rich red faience slabs to dado level, and two (extremely fitting, in the circumstances!) ▶ cornucopia panels plus another decorative floral panel, all in pale olive-green. Continued.....



Notes and References

1. Richard Myers and Hilary Myers, *William Morris Tiles - The tile designs of Morris and his Fellow-Workers* (Richard Dennis, Shepton Beauchamp, 1996), see pp71-3.
2. Philip Brown & Dorothy Brown, 'Glass tiles', *Glazed Expressions*, (1994) 28, pp2-3.
3. Waterfront Museum, Carter Collection Catalogue (Poole, c1985 unpub) 2D 16.
4. *Ibid.*, 2D 27.
5. 'Tiles in Poole', *Glazed Expressions*, (1984) 7/8, pp13.
6. Waterfront Museum, Carter Collection Catalogue (Poole, c1985 unpub) 2C 14.
7. Michael Stratton, 'The future of tiling schemes in pubs, shops and railway stations', *Glazed Expressions*, (1992) 24, pp1-5, see p5.