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Summer Sitings

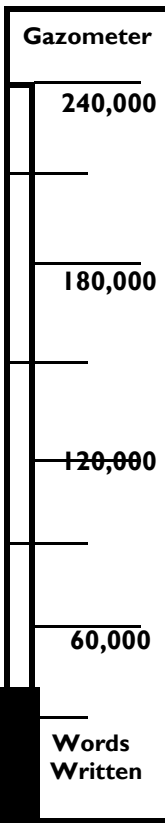
We do see life, here on the Gazetteer—in the last few months I've been to Ilfracombe, Barnstaple, Southend, Hastings, Weston-super-Mare, Liverpool, Southport, Carlisle, Greystoke (think Tarzan), Chesterfield, Derby, Ashbourne, all over East Staffs on the TACS trip, around Bedfordshire on one amazing Sunday which took in at least half a dozen churches, two museums and more besides, and around Ironbridge during the AGM. The most revelatory trips have been to Bedfordshire (seeing a medieval pavement and its Victorian descendant) and Ilfracombe, as reported on the right. Of course, all guidebooks are out of date the moment the presses begin to roll, but the sheer wealth of previously undiscovered tiling out there does take one's breath away. Even Cleethorpes, visited a day or so ago, turned out to have a wealth of porch tiling.

Apart from site visits, the writing-up process continues apace, and has now reached Cumbria and Devon. With site-spotting volunteers now in many parts of the country, there are only a few problem areas remaining, of which London is one. Such is the density of sites there that photos of any sites anywhere are much appreciated; I'd rather be told about a site ten times than not at all. Pembrokeshire is another county with great potential—I've spotted several Godwin pavements, some with armorial bearings and the like, so if anyone is able to give Pembrokeshire the time its ceramics deserve, I'd like to hear from them!

Lynn Pearson, Gazetteer Editor

Delightful Devon

Last month, on what began as a non-tiles related trip to Ilfracombe, I came across what seemed like an entire street full of butcher's shops. A Craven Dunnill facade and interior picture panel at one end of the High Street, a complete shop interior (1896) plus stall riser by one of the Barnstaple potteries at number 47 (left), a few doors away an excellent Dewhurst's with at least ten examples of the Carter's Farmyard series, and finally yet another complete interior—the only one to have ceased being a butcher's—with a pair of lozenge-shaped picture panels, manufacturer as yet unidentified but probably not local. In addition, the only site known beforehand was a string of Minton Hollins picture tiles along the upper part of a terrace of promenade shops. Then I found a chemist's with all the original fittings and a good geometric floor, a modern commemorative plaque down by the harbour, and all sorts of unlistable ceramic remnants from when the resort's growth was at its peak. Not forgetting the tiled street names, including some new replacements showing the acorn sign of the south-west coast path. And the white bricks of the new Landmark Theatre..... I wonder how many other towns full of ceramic sites there are yet to be discovered?



North Devon Art Pottery

And after Ilfracombe came Barnstaple, in search of the makers of the tiles in the Ilfracombe butcher's mentioned above. The best known North Devon art pottery, Brannam's, is still in existence—although not at its decorative original premises (right)—but the tile output of these mainly late 19th and early 20th century potteries has been rather overlooked. Certainly it seems clear from their advertising material and other items in the excellent collection at the Barnstaple and North Devon Museum that Brannam's and at least one other works, Lauder's Decorative Art Pottery, manufactured a significant number of tiles. Yet another butcher's shop, in Barnstaple this time, had an unusual pictorial panel with an iridescent glaze (left); perhaps this was a local product. And many of the everyday Barnstaple terrace houses display decorative tiles on their facades, especially near Brannam's works. There is more to be discovered about the North Devon Art Pottery tile output.



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Database Site Count

Date	Number of Sites in Database
August 2001	4385
November 2000	3899
July 1999	2571
March 1997	1443

Cambridgeshire—Extracts from the first draft of the Gazetteer

Introduction

Although there are interesting church tiles, from medieval examples to a Victorian maze, throughout Cambridgeshire, most of the county's ceramic highlights are in Cambridge. The splendid Morris & Co overmantel at Queens' College must rank first among the city's sites, but also well worth seeing are All Saints Church, a Tractarian gem, and the octagonal tiled banking hall at Lloyds Bank. The most unusual site in Cambridgeshire, however, is the delightful Adam and Eve medieval tiled pavement at Ely, a location of national importance. Suggested reading: TACS Tour Notes *Cambridge* (1996); Jane Cochrane, 'Medieval Tiled Floor Patterns', *TACS Journal* 5, 1994, pp11-19.

NB This extract excludes Cambridge, which will appear in the final Gazetteer entry!

BOURN

Beneath the west tower of the church of **St Helen and St Mary** is a rectangular maze in the form of a pavement of red and black tiles, measuring 15' by 12' and constructed in 1875; its design was based on the Hampton Court hedge maze of 1690, a plan much repeated elsewhere. Since ancient times, the maze or labyrinth had been seen as a symbol of pilgrimage to the Holy Land. George Gilbert Scott included a black and white stone maze pavement in his 1870 restoration of Ely Cathedral; its path length is the same as the height of the west tower, beneath which it situated. It would appear likely that the Ely maze was the inspiration behind the Bourn maze, installed when the entire church floor was being relaid.¹

ELY

Difficult as it is to divert one's attention from the preposterous octagon which dominates **Ely Cathedral**, there are tiles worth seeking out, firstly in the choir, where the pavement is a mix of marble and Minton's tile tesserae, installed in 1851 during restoration by George Gilbert Scott.² Bishop West's Chantry, a small chapel at the east end of the cathedral, has an encaustic tile pavement dating from 1868.³ It includes depictions of a cockerel, part of the rebus (in its entirety a cockerel above a globe) of one of those who endowed the chapel. Most of the yellow enamel which originally covered the buff inlay of these Minton tiles has worn away.⁴

There are also relaid fourteenth-century line-impressed tiles (normally covered) in the south transept, whose door leads out into the cloister and thence **Prior Craudene's Chapel**; its key may be obtained

from the Cathedral. The chapel, built by Prior John de Craudene for his private prayers and directly connected to his study (now demolished), was probably completed around 1324; it may even have been designed before the octagon. Entry into this perfect little medieval world is via a small doorway and stairs in a tiny turret, which deposit the visitor into a wonderfully elegant, light space, originally full of colour from frescoes and gilding, painted glass and glazed tiles. Little of the frescos and glass remain, but the tile pavement is one of the most important and complex *in situ* survivals in the country.⁵ Initially the loss of

glaze makes it difficult to read the opus sectile shapes by the altar, but soon the main image emerges: Adam and a rather apprehensive Eve grappling with the serpent (which has a female head) and the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. The picture was glazed in yellow, green

and brown, while the background was black; although all is now almost reduced to monochrome, the dulled colours do not diminish its impact. Either side of Adam and Eve are tiles depicting lions, while the nave is paved with plain mosaic tiles, some with line-impressed decoration, in a pattern based on interlocking circles arranged in three long strips defined by borders.⁶

The chapel has had a difficult history, at one time being used as a laundry, and was in a ruinous condition by 1846. The tiles have suffered, although rather less than its other decorative features, but the nave pavement is very worn and sixteen tiles were stolen from around the altar in the late 1980s. Manufacture of replacements was undertaken in 1990 by Diana Hall, who used a mixture of clays to obtain the colours and textures required to match the patination (rather than the original appearance) of the remaining tiles.⁷

Cambridgeshire Roundup

The Old Butcher's Shop at **Barnack** has two stall risers with pictorial tile panels, while there are Minton floor tiles at the Church of St James, **Newton**, near Wisbech. The R. C. Church of Our Lady and St Philip, Newmarket Road, **Kirtling**, stands next to Kirtling Tower, which is dominated by the twin-towered gatehouse of 1530 remaining from the mansion demolished in 1801; the church (1877, architect C. A. Buckler) has interesting patterned floor tiling. The entrance hall of the ancient Bishop's Palace, **Peterborough**, was rebuilt in 1864-5, when the handsome Minton encaustic tile pavement was installed.⁸ Pig, sheep and bull pictorial panels feature on the shop which was formerly Anderson's the butcher in The Waits, **St Ives**. There is tilework by the architect William Butterfield at St Giles Church, **Tadlow**, which he restored in 1860; the sanctuary wall shows his typical plain and encaustic tile patterning. The church of St James the Great, **Waresley**, was designed by William Butterfield and built in 1855-7; in the chancel is an excellent polychromatic display including geometrical stencilling in pink, buff and green, and tiling in red, green and yellow. Much-altered St John's Church, **Waterbeach**, was enlarged in 1878, when a large opus sectile reredos was bought from Powell's of Whitefriars; two Powell's opus sectile panels, designed by Charles Hardgrave, were added to the pulpit in 1883.⁹ The entrance hall of **Wimpole Hall** (NT), near Arrington, has a spectacular pavement of Maw & Co encaustic tiles made at their Benthall works, Broseley, around 1880; in addition, there are Wedgwood tiles in the dairy.

References

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3. Nikolaus Pevsner, *Cambridgeshire* 2nd ed. Buildings of England (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1970).
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