

## ENGLISH MEDIEVAL EMBOSSED TILES

By J. B. WARD PERKINS

Embossed tiles are but one of the many forms of decorative flooring that were employed by the medieval builder ; and although they were made in considerable numbers in some parts of England, they never achieved the popularity of the more familiar red and yellow inlaid tiles, which are found in such confusing variety throughout the country south of the Humber. For that reason, however, they admit of survey as a class ; and it is possible not only to establish certain general facts about their origin, date and distribution, but to throw some light upon the conditions which controlled their manufacture, and hence the manufacture of all classes of floor-tile.

A word of definition is perhaps necessary. The manufacture of inlaid tiles, which was introduced from France in the first half of the thirteenth century, involved three distinct processes.<sup>1</sup> The design was first impressed upon the moist clay by means of a moulded stamp upon which the pattern appeared in relief. Pipeclay was then spread into the resulting hollows, and on the level surface thus produced could be laid the metallic oxide employed in the third and final process of glazing. Not infrequently, however, the second process, the insertion of pipe-clay into the hollows of the design, was omitted. The London Museum possesses two tiles from London which were probably both made with the same potter's stamp. The first is an ordinary inlaid tile, whereas, whether from shortage of pipe-clay or perhaps influenced by the existence of true embossed tiles, the potter has in the second instance omitted the filling and produced what is in reality only a defective inlay-tile. Tiles of the latter type are not uncommon. The essence of the embossed tile proper, however, is that the design

<sup>1</sup> By far the best account of the technical processes involved is that, based on personal experiment, given by Loyd Haberly in *English Medieval Paving-tiles* (1937). It is with the earlier of the processes there

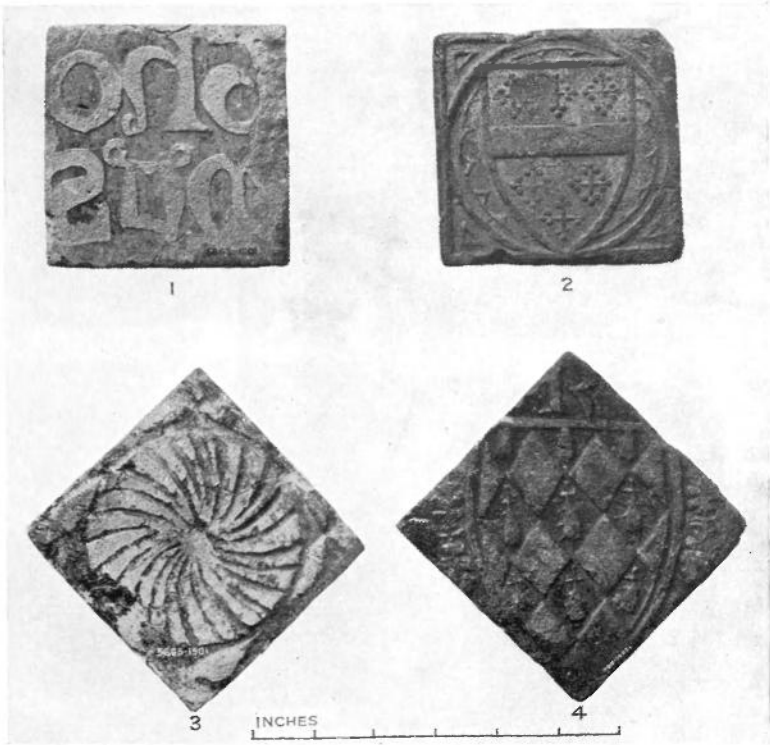
described, that of inlay proper, that we are here concerned. An earlier, but useful, summary is that given by Ponsonby, 'Monastic Paving Tiles, in *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, lxxv, 19-64.



EMBOSSD TILES OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

- 1-3. From Swineshead Abbey
- 4. From St. Albans Abbey

*(Photo : British Museum)*



EMBOSSED TILES FROM THE BAWSEY KILN  
FOURTEENTH CENTURY

*(Photo : Victoria and Albert Museum)*

itself should appear in relief against a flat, sunken background. Upon some of the later examples the design is simply projected forward in flat, outline relief, but on the finer thirteenth-century tiles, to which the term 'embossed' is particularly appropriate, *e.g.* those at N. Berwick or Butley, the surfaces are modelled and present gradations of relief which are often of a considerable complexity.

For the dating of these tiles one is dependent almost entirely upon internal evidence. They are rarely found in a dateable context, and it is upon stylistic features such as types of foliage or forms of lettering that any chronology must rely. Heraldry is of a certain value; but it suffers from the absence of tinctures and from the frequent use of some simple devices in a purely decorative sense. Nevertheless, it is possible to establish certain general features which distinguish the earlier embossed tiles from those which succeeded them.

The earliest tiles, such as those at Butley or Whitland, can hardly be later than the middle of the thirteenth century, and they are thus roughly contemporary with the earliest English inlay-tiles. They are in the main larger than the later examples, ranging from  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in. at Butley to  $10\frac{1}{2}$  in. at Bangor. The relief is bold, and there is often considerable modelling in the round. They must have been very uncomfortable underfoot, and a fine specimen from Butley (*Arch. Journ.* xc, 1933, Pl. ix, 2), which owes its state of preservation to having been relaid upside down in the nave-floor, is no doubt an indication of the reasons which prevented the embossed tile from attaining any widespread popularity in England. Abroad, indeed, they were more commonly than not employed to decorate walls; but, with one exception,<sup>1</sup> there is no indication that any of the English tiles were so used, and the majority were undoubtedly used for pavements.

In the fourteenth century the tiles rarely, if ever, exceed  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in. or 5 in. The relief is slighter and there is a tendency to abandon modelling for a flat relief-design standing out against a flat background. In

<sup>1</sup> St. Albans (*e*).

general the artistic quality is markedly inferior to that of the earlier tiles.

Between the tiles of the fourteenth and fifteenth century there is no noticeable technical difference, and it is not improbable that the industry had largely died out before the introduction of new types towards the close of the latter century. In Scotland,<sup>1</sup> and less commonly elsewhere (*e.g.* at Keymer and Hurstpierpoint, *Sussex Arch. Coll.* xvi, 126-137) tiles in the French Renaissance style are not uncommon in the sixteenth and seventeenth century; and in London and elsewhere the early years of the Tudor period saw the introduction of embossed stove-tiles from the Rhine and the Low Countries. The latter, however, although directly descended from the same industry as had earlier given rise to the English medieval tiles, are so different in character that there can be no confusion between the two. But in the West Country the medieval industry enjoyed a considerable posthumous prosperity. Pl. iii illustrates four typical examples of these tiles which are found in numbers on sites bordering the Bristol Channel from Gloucestershire to Cornwall.<sup>2</sup> The presence of specimens at Hayles Abbey and at Frithelstock Priory (*Proc. Devon Arch. Expl. Soc.* ii, 1935, 198) indicates that these tiles were being made as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Tudor Rose is a common motif; but specimens were also being made as late as 1708, and isolated examples of a similar period are to be found elsewhere in England. Although the technique of these West Country tiles is very similar to that of the English medieval examples, they do not link on naturally to that series whose western distribution (see Fig. 1) is sporadic, coastal and early. They are in fact probably the result of a fresh introduction of the technique from some region with which the merchants of Bristol were then in contact. It is not impossible that documentary evidence bearing on this matter may exist, and here it is only suggested that the closest continental parallels

<sup>1</sup> Richardson, *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, lxiii, 1928-29, 307-9. At Dirleton, Tantallon, Morham and Linlithgow.

<sup>2</sup> The four specimens reset in the

chancel at Waddesdon (Bucks) are exceptional. It is possible that they are recent strays.

seem to lie with the tiles of Denmark (notably the collection in the National Museum at Copenhagen), where tiles of a similar character, developed ultimately no doubt from the same sources as the English medieval tiles, are abundant in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. These West-Country tiles therefore are in



all probability less closely related to the English medieval series than their form would suggest, and upon these and upon chronological grounds they are here omitted from further consideration.

The distribution in England of the medieval embossed tiles suggests at first sight a diffusion from a

single focus on the Wash. In that case the distributing agent would undoubtedly have been the tiles made at Bawsey, near King's Lynn (see pp. 152-3, and Pl. ii), for examples of this highly characteristic fabric have been found as far afield as London and Lilleshall (Shropshire). But the Bawsey series, however late it may run, cannot begin before the fourteenth century. Upon that point the lettering employed, the form of shield and certain stylistic features are alike decisive. They cannot, therefore, be regarded as the agents for the diffusion of a technique which had in many places been employed at least half a century before. They are of interest chiefly for the light which they throw upon the possibilities of production in bulk to serve a considerable area and upon the important part which water-transport played in that service. In the same way in the case of medieval inlay-tiles, it was only in those areas, such as the Thames and Severn valleys, which offered facilities for this cheap form of transport, that large-scale production became commercially possible.

For the origins of the manufacture of relief-tiles in England Fig. 1 is more significant.<sup>1</sup> This shows the distribution of those tiles to which a thirteenth-century date can reasonably be assigned, and it will at once be seen that, except for a certain amount of inland penetration, which could well be explained in terms of the rivers Thames and Trent, it is essentially a coastal distribution. It belongs, moreover, in the main to the east coast, although there are outliers in the south and west which require explanation. This is perhaps forthcoming from a comparison of this map with that compiled by Mr. Dunning (Fig. 2) to illustrate the distribution in England of the roughly contemporary polychrome pottery, which apparently reached England in connection with the Bordeaux wine-trade.<sup>2</sup> The Welsh specimens of this ware have all been found on the sites of the royal castles which the Welsh wars called into being. And it is no doubt

<sup>1</sup>To the sites marked should be added Hertford, Great Eaton and Mapledurham. To Fig. 3 add Denston and Lewes.

<sup>2</sup>This map, which is reproduced

through the kindness of Mr. G. C. Dunning, is a more recent version of that which he published in *Archæologia* lxxxiii, 117, Fig. 8.

similarly in terms of the local political conditions of the time and the external connections of the various monastic houses that the presence of these stray relief-tiles in Wales is to be explained.



FIG. 2

The distribution of polychrome pottery in England accords well enough with an origin in south-western France. That of the contemporary relief-tiles is, the isolated western examples excepted, strikingly different.



It can hardly be doubted that the focus lies at some point north of the straits of Dover, either upon the East Coast or upon that part of the continent which faces it.

Of these alternatives the former is not easily



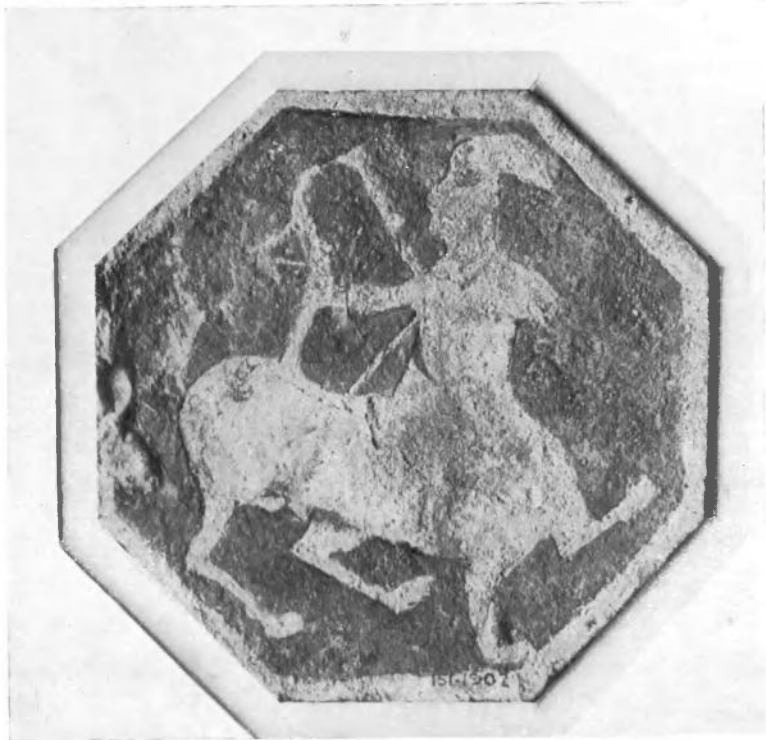
tenable ; for apart from the general technical resemblances already noted, there is very little in common between the tiles preserved at the different sites. Those at Leiston are identical with those at Butley ; while at Castle Acre and West Dereham in Norfolk have been found single examples closely imitating



POST-MEDIEVAL EMBOSSED TILES FROM THE WEST COUNTRY

- 1 & 3. Exact source unknown.
- 2. From Bitton.
- 4. From Gloucestershire.

*(Photo : Victoria and Albert Museum)*



EMBOSSÉD TILES FROM ST. FIDES, SCHLETTSTADT, *c.* 1160 A.D.  
(22½ cm. high, yellow-brown glaze)

(Photo : Victoria and Albert Museum)

Butley designs. Tiles of the St. Albans type are recorded from Hertford and from Mapledurham. The Revesby tile is of the same design as one of those found in the kiln at Repton. These, however, are the only instances of the reappearance of the same design or even of two closely similar designs at two different sites; and it is, therefore, hardly possible to envisage the diffusion of the craft of embossed tile-making from any one of the English sites where such tiles have been discovered.

It was in fact from abroad that the new technique was introduced, perhaps at a variety of dates and from a variety of related sources. The manner of this introduction, too, may have varied from place to place. The unsurpassed excellence of such tiles as the earliest specimens from Butley suggests the possibility in some cases of a migration of craftsmen analogous to that which later undoubtedly took place for the manufacture of the embossed stove-tiles of the Tudor period. But the discovery of kilns at Bawsey, at North Berwick and at Repton, and the long series of embossed tiles at Butley show that in many places the craft became naturalised; and it can hardly be doubted that the majority of the English embossed tiles are of native, and in all probability of local, manufacture.

In the absence of any full publication of the continental material it is hardly possible to indicate in detail the sources from which the English relief-tiles were derived. Certain general features are, however, clear. Relief tiles of pre-Renaissance date have a narrowly restricted range in North-Western Europe. Most common along the upper waters of the Rhine, in Alsace and in North Switzerland, they spread thence north-eastward and north-westward, and scattered examples are to be found throughout southern and western Germany, in N. Holland and in Denmark.<sup>1</sup> In

<sup>1</sup> The best general account of the German tiles is still to be found in Forrer, *Geschichte der Fliesenkeramik* (Strassburg, 1901). Fichtner, *Die Geschichte des Fussbodenbelages in Deutschland und in seinen Grenzgebieten* (Dresden, 1929) contains some information of value. For information

as to the Dutch examples the writer is indebted to the late Professor F. W. Hudig of Amsterdam and to Dr. Boeles of Leeuwarden, and to the authorities of the National Museum at Copenhagen for photographs and information with regard to the Danish tiles.

France, save in the extreme north-east, they are almost unknown before 1500.

Moreover, it is clear that it is in the region of the upper Rhine that the earliest examples are to be found. None of the tiles in the National Museum at Copenhagen seem to be earlier than the late thirteenth century; and with a single exception (see below, p. 138) the same is apparently true of the known Dutch examples. As a class, therefore, the embossed tiles of Denmark and Holland are too late to have served as the parent stock of the English series. They are in all probability cousins of the English tiles, both being derived from the upper Rhine, where already in the twelfth century the craft of making embossed tiles was well established.

The Victoria and Albert Museum contains a series of tiles from the church of St. Fides at Schlettstadt in Alsace.<sup>1</sup> Two of these are shown on Pl. iv. The tall conical helmet and the long tapering shield with protruding boss indicate unmistakably a date in the twelfth century;<sup>2</sup> and the tiles are probably part of the original fittings of the church, which was completed in 1150-60. Fig. 4 shows another tile, from Odiliensberg, near Schlettstadt, which can be little, if at all, after 1200. Closely related again are the tiles from Alt-Strassberg near Büren, Canton Bern.<sup>3</sup> So striking are the similarities that it can hardly be doubted that all these tiles derive directly from a common source. That that source lay in Alsace rather than in North Switzerland is upon historical grounds probable, but the point is here hardly material and there is not yet sufficient evidence to admit of a definite conclusion. In any case it is clear that by the early years of the thirteenth century the manufacture of embossed tiles was established in both regions. Elsewhere on the continent embossed tiles of thirteenth-century date have hardly been recorded, and it is hard to avoid the

<sup>1</sup> Forrer, *Fliesenkeramik*, Pl. ii, Pl. iii, 1-4. Others are stated still to exist at Schlettstadt itself.

<sup>2</sup> Helmet and shield are very closely paralleled upon the enamelled tablet of Geoffrey Plantagenet (ob. 1150) at Le Mans (Stothard, *Monumental*

*Effigies*, Pl. 2). The shield-boss appears upon the first, but not upon the second, Great Seal of Richard I; and helmet and shield alike were in this form obsolete by 1200.

<sup>3</sup> Forrer, *Fliesenkeramik*, Figs. 129-131.

conclusion that it was from the upper Rhine that the technique was introduced into England during the first half of the thirteenth century.

Such a conclusion would accord well enough with the distribution of the earlier embossed tiles in England.



FIG. 4. EMBOSSED TILE FROM ODILIENSBERG  
(After Forrer, *Fliesenkeramik*, pl. iii, 5)

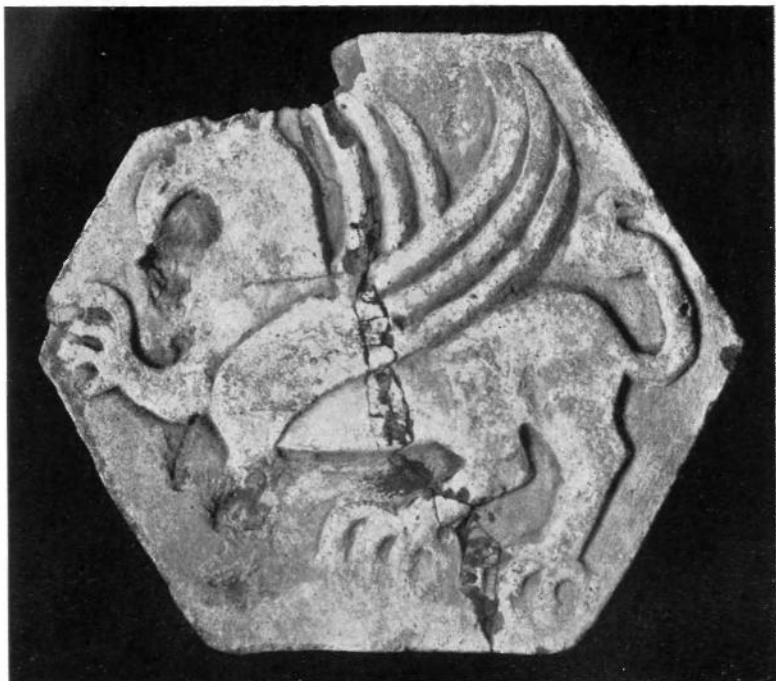
It might, however, be expected in that case that intermediate examples would have been found in Holland and on the lower Rhine, a region through which any influence would inevitably pass on its way from Alsace to the East Coast. In this connection the tile illustrated

on Pl. v is of especial interest. This is one of several bearing identical designs which are now in the Rijksmuseum at Amsterdam. It is not known where they were found, but some similar tiles in the Lambert v. Meerten Museum at Delft are said to have come from Friesland.<sup>1</sup> A close technical and stylistic relationship is apparent between these and the Schlettstadt tiles (see especially Forrer, *Fliesenkeramik*, Pl. iii, 4), and it is tempting to assign to the former a date early in the thirteenth century and to see in them the link between the tiles of Alsace and those of England. Only further investigation, however, can show whether they are in reality unique in Holland; and until then the precise relations between the English tiles and their continental prototypes must remain undefined.

A further obstacle in the way of any such definition is the surprising absence from Alsace and N. Switzerland of any embossed tiles which can be assigned to the first half of the thirteenth century. In the latter half of that century on the other hand there was produced in N. Switzerland an enormous quantity of embossed tile-work. The *Sankt-Urbaneramik*, as it is termed, is found in profusion on sites ranging in date from 1246 to 1316<sup>2</sup>; but although it has been exhaustively studied locally, its immediate ancestry has remained an unsolved problem. So, too, in Alsace and S. Germany there is a complete lack of early thirteenth-century material, although here the absence in the second half of the century of any such highly developed and easily recognisable group of tiles as the *Sankt-Urbaneramik* renders the contrast less striking. And yet in both regions embossed tiles were already established by the close of the twelfth century. It is scarcely conceivable that in the intervening half-century no tiles of this type were produced, nor that from such simple beginnings as the tiles at Schlettstadt and Alt-Strassburg there should have grown without any intermediate development an art so facile and sophisticated as was that of the *Sankt-Urbaneramik*.

<sup>1</sup> Vis and de Geus, *Althollandische Fliesen*, ii, 4. These are the only Dutch medieval relief-tiles known to these authors.

<sup>2</sup> Forrer, *Fliesenkeramik*, 63-68, Pl. xiv; Zemp, in *Festschrift zur Eröffnung des schweizerisches Landesmuseums in Zurich* (1898), 109-170.



EMBOSSSED TILE FROM FRIESLAND

*(Photo : Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam)*





EMBOSSSED TILE FROM S. URBAN, SWITZERLAND

After Zemp, *Festschrifte zur Eröffnung des schweizerisches Landesmuseums in Zurich*, Pl. vi.

In N. Switzerland at least, and perhaps also in Alsace, the lack of early thirteenth-century tiles must surely be attributed to the hazards of discovery, coupled no doubt with the destruction entailed in that intense rebuilding activity in the latter half of the century of which the *Sankt-Urbaneramik* is itself the product.

Once granted the former existence of such tiles, it is not hard to see something of their character. The lions of North Berwick in their circular medallions suggest a simple and less ornate version of the *Sankt-Urbaneramik* beasts illustrated by Forrer (*op. cit.*, Pl. xiv). The foliate ornament which appears upon some of the English tiles, e.g. at St. Albans and Revesby (Figs. 7. 1, 2, 4 and 5), while recalling the corner-palmettes of the Odiliensberg tile (Fig. 4), bears a striking resemblance to that on an early specimen of the *Sankt-Urbaneramik* now at Zurich (Pl. vi).<sup>1</sup> Further precision is hardly possible, but certain of the earlier English embossed tiles do seem to fall naturally into place between the late twelfth-century Swiss tiles and those of the second half of the thirteenth; and it is not unreasonable, therefore, to suggest that it was in fact from missing prototypes in this region that they were directly or indirectly derived. Upon this hypothesis some at least of the English tiles would have to be dated before 1250, for the stylistic developments embodied in the *Sankt-Urbaneramik* do not seem to have affected the English series. But it must also be remembered that the *Sankt-Urbaneramik* was strongly local in its distribution, and that elsewhere the earlier traditions may well have lingered somewhat later. For the present, pending the discovery of precise continental analogies, the dating of the English series must continue to rest upon the internal evidence afforded by the individual tiles.

The source whence the manufacture of relief-tiles was originally introduced into north-western Europe is only of indirect concern to the study of the English tiles. That it lay in the Islamic world is highly probable. Decorative work in relief, notably in stucco, was a characteristic feature of oriental architecture

<sup>1</sup> Zemp, *op. cit.* Pl. vi, no. 55.

from the Sassanian period onward; and both the architectural character of the earliest European relief-tiles and many of the motifs employed strongly suggest some such derivation.<sup>1</sup> It must, however, be remembered that with the diffusion of oriental stuffs, ivories and metal-work many of these motifs were becoming a part of the stock-in-trade of western artists and do not in themselves imply a direct oriental derivation for the objects upon which they appear. Pl. vii represents on the left one of the medallions on an ivory casket in the Victoria and Albert Museum, on the right a thirteenth-century tile from Butley Priory. The similarity seems too striking to be accidental. The casket belongs to a group of Siculo-Arabic ivories that were produced in the Norman Sicilian kingdom in the latter part of the twelfth century (c. 1130-1200) and found their way in large numbers to the courts and cathedral-treasuries of north-western Europe.<sup>2</sup> Animals in circular medallions, often in combination with sprays of vegetation (cp. the tiles from North Berwick and from Butley), are another common decorative feature of these caskets. The political contacts of Sicily at this time render it a peculiarly likely centre for the diffusion of oriental ideas; and the distribution of the earliest relief-tiles in north-western Europe, viewed in relation to the political situation, shows plainly that it is from Sicily, if at all, rather than from Spain that any such oriental influence must in this case be derivative.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Basil Gray, whom the writer consulted on this matter, points out the strongly oriental character of the beast on the tile now at Amsterdam (Pl. v). The appearance of the elephant on tiles of the *Sankt-Urbankeramik* (Pl. vi; cp. Forrer, *Gesch. d. Fliesenkeramik*, Fig. 137; from Grossdietwil) and on Danish tiles provides another clear instance of a tendency for which many examples could be cited.

<sup>2</sup> Perry B. Cott, 'Siculo-Arabic Ivories in the Museo Cristiano,' *Art Bulletin* xii (1930), 131 f. See especially the caskets from Wurzburg (*op. cit.*, Fig. 17), Veroli (Fig. 21) and Trento (Fig. 24). The Sicilian

foliate motifs are, as Mr. Cott has kindly pointed out to me, based upon the split palmette and thus, in their underlying treatment, differ radically from those upon the Butley tiles, which are based upon the interlace. Such a change of treatment would, however, be natural enough if the lozenge was one of patterns rather than of craftsmen. No more is here suggested than that, in view of the remarkable, if superficial, similarities displayed in the designs employed, the craftsmen who made the earliest north-west European relief-tiles may well have borrowed much from the various products of Siculo-Arabic workshops with which they were brought into contact.



1



2

1. MEDALLION UPON A SICULO-ARABIC IVORY CASKET

(Photo : Victoria and Albert Museum)

2. EMBOSSED TILE FROM BUTLEY PRIORY, SUFFOLK (size,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in. square)



EMBOSSED TILES OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Left. From Tlemcan, Morocco.

Right. From Troyes, France.

(Photo : Victoria and Albert Museum)

Whether the art of making tiles in relief was derived fully developed from the Islamic world, or whether it was invented in Alsace under the influence of Islamic decorative methods and motifs cannot here be decided. Certainly at a later date there are isolated instances of direct borrowing. Of the tiles illustrated on Pl. viii, that on the right is from Troyes in France, that on the left from Tlemcan in Morocco.<sup>1</sup> The French tile, which belongs presumably to the fourteenth century, can find no place in the ordinary European series. On the other hand, the striking similarity of the details of the design and of technique leaves little doubt of its close relationship to the Tlemcan tile. The fact is suggestive. It may well be that Islamic prototypes can likewise be found for the first tiles that were made in Alsace two centuries before.

## APPENDIX

## LIST OF MEDIEVAL RELIEF-TILES

The following lists contain all the examples of medieval relief-tiles known to the writer. They are inevitably incomplete, but they are probably sufficiently full to be representative. Their compilation has involved much trouble to others, and the writer wishes to record his indebtedness to the many who have helped him: His Grace the Duke of Rutland, Mr. P. B. Chatwin, Mr. R. McN. Rushforth, Mr. A. Herbert, Mr. W. H. Plommer, Mr. G. C. Dunning, Mr. H. L. Bradfer-Lawrence, Dr. Tancred Borenius, Mr. J. Charlton; and to the curators and staff of the following museums for their assistance and in many instances for permission to reproduce tiles; The British Museum; the Victoria and Albert Museum; the Guildhall Museum, London; the Guildhall Museum, Boston; Moyse's Hall, Bury St. Edmunds; the City Museum, Stoke-on-Trent; the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; the Castle Museum, Colchester; the City Museum, Winchester; the Sussex Archaeological Society's Museum, Lewes; also to the Librarian of Lichfield Cathedral, and to many others.

In the lists the following abbreviations are used:

Forrer, *Fliesenkeramik* = R. Forrer, *Geschichte der Europäischen Fliesenkeramik*, Strassburg, 1901.

Renaud, *Tiles* = Dr. F. Renaud's four M.S. volumes of tile-drawings preserved in the library of the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House.

<sup>1</sup> Both tiles are in the Victoria and Albert Museum. They measure 4 in. square.

Compton, *Tiles* = Lord Alwyne Compton's M.S. volume of tile-tracings preserved in the same library.

The best bibliographies are to be found in Haberly, *English Medieval Paving-tiles* (1937) and Ponsonby, *Monastic Paving Tiles* (Sussex Arch. Coll. lxx, 62-4); but only in a few instances do these refer to relief-tiles.

RELIEF-TILES OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Abbey Dore (Herefordshire). In the chancel.

Fig. 6, 2. Glaze green or brown. The lozenge-shaped form of these tiles recalls that of the Schlettstadt tiles (Forrer, *Fliesenkeramik*, Pl. iii, 1-2). Mr. Rushforth suggests with probability that they formed part of the fittings of the original thirteenth-century church. Compton, *Tiles*, 65.

Bangor (Caernarvonshire). Victoria and Albert Museum. From the cathedral.

Fig. 6, 5. High lumpy relief, dark brown glaze.

Buckfast Abbey (Devonshire). Duke of Rutland Collection.

This tile is stated to be of thirteenth century date.

Butley Priory (Suffolk). In the possession of Dr. M. J. Rendall.

*Arch. Journ.* xc (1933), 269, Fig. 5, 1-6.

Canterbury (Kent). St. Augustine's Museum, from the Abbey.

Fragment of a large relief-tile, high relief, brown glaze. Size and relief suggest a thirteenth-century date.

Castle Acre Priory (Norfolk). Castle Museum, Norwich.

Relief-tile very closely resembling a tile from Butley (*Arch. Journ.* xc (1933), 269, Fig. 5, no. 6). It is however from a different stamp and faces to the right.

Church Lawton (near Kids Grove, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs.). Found beneath the chancel and now preserved in the church.

Fig. 7, 3, taken from Renaud, *Tiles*, no. 83. The reading of the inscription which he gives is clearly corrupt; and the Rector of Church Lawton, who kindly examined the tiles for the writer, was unable to verify for certain the date, 1250.

Dale Abbey (Derbyshire). Duke of Rutland Collection.

The design is stamped in low relief, in part by separate applications of the same stamp. In this respect it resembles the tile from Glenluce (*b*), and both are to be compared with a small group of similar continental tiles of which examples are to be found from Strassburg (Forrer, *Fliesenkeramik*, Pl. viii, 4), from near Abbeville, Somme (Richardson, *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, lxi, 304, Fig. 20, 2), and from the monastery of Ste. Colombe at Sens, Yonne (Amé, *Les carrelages émaillés du moyen âge*, ii, 3-12; Forrer, *op. cit.*, Fig. 52). Amé claimed that these tiles at Sens date from 853. The circumstances of their discovery, however, stratified beneath a thirteenth-century pavement of inlaid and mosaic tiles, do not warrant any such ascription. They need be no earlier than Abbot Theobald's church, which was completed in 1164, and the group dates presumably from the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.

B.F.A.C., *Gothic Art in Europe*, 1936, no. 158, Pl. 51.

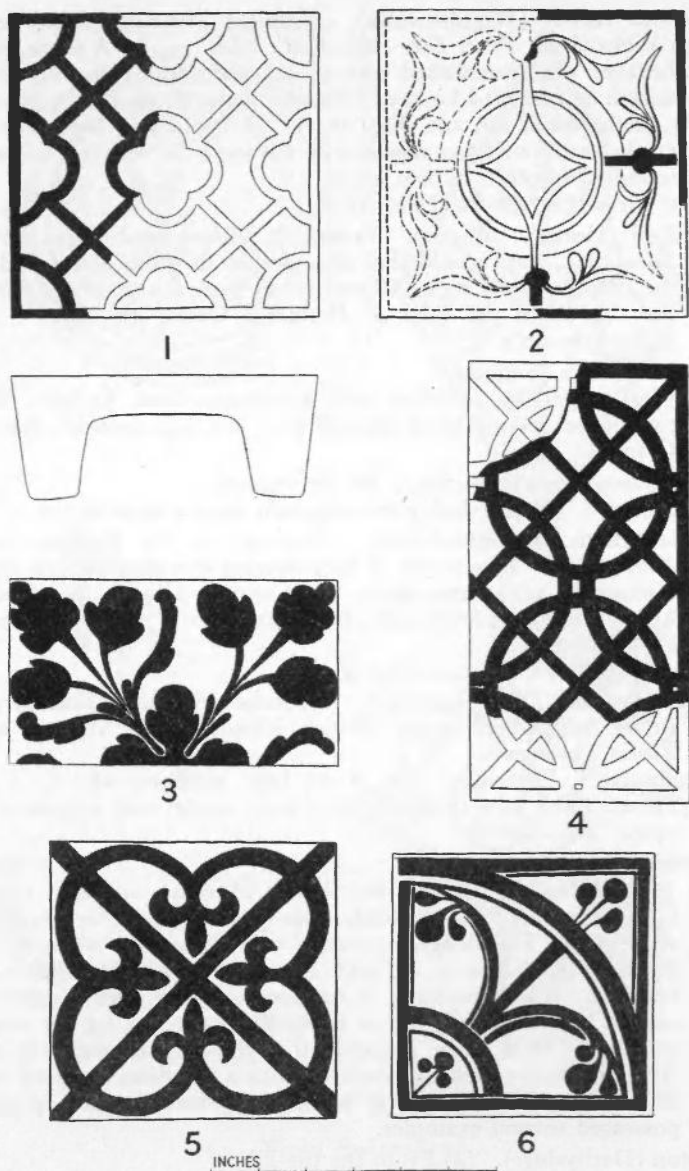


FIG. 5. EMBOSSED TILES OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

- 1-4. From St. Albans (3 also from Mapledurham)
- 5. From Winchester
- 6. From Lillingstone Dayrell



Glenluce Abbey (Wigtownshire). National Museum, Edinburgh.

(a) Richardson, *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, lxiii, 304. 'A large half-hexagon tile ornamented with an oak-leaf and acorn design, set within an indented border.' For the shape cf. pl. v.

(b) Richardson, *loc. cit.*, Fig. 20, 1. A horse and horseman of crude form four times repeated on the same tile within a coarsely indented border. Green glaze.

For these tiles see *s.v.* Dale Abbey.

Hertford (Herts.). Wigram (*Trans. St. Albans and Herts. Arch. Soc.*, 1924, 40) records that tiles similar to those discovered in the chapter house at St. Albans Abbey were found on the site of the church of St. John at Hertford, which was one of the Monastery cells.

Leiston Abbey (Suffolk).

Several relief-tiles identical with specimens from Butley. The two houses were related through their common founder, Ranulf Glanvill.

Lillingstone Dayrell (Bucks.). In the chancel.

Fig. 5, 6. High relief, glaze originally deep green-brown.

Mapledurham (S. Oxfordshire). Formerly in the Rectory, now disappeared. Fragments of tiles bearing the same design were discovered while excavating the Chapter House, St. Albans Abbey, in 1920 (*Trans. St. Albans and Herts. Arch. Soc.* 1924, Pl. opp. p. 40).

Fig. 5, 3, after Compton, *Tiles*, 47.

North Berwick (East Lothian). National Museum, Edinburgh, Royal Scottish Museum, British Museum and Victoria and Albert Museum.

Richardson, *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, lxiii, 1928-29, 281 f., Figs. 15-19. The kiln, in which they were made, was excavated in 1928.

Reading (Berkshire).

A relief-tile in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which is stated to have come from Reading, has perhaps been erroneously attributed. The design is that of one of the tiles made at N. Berwick (Richardson, *op. cit.*, Fig. 15, 5), and the fabric is identical. The possibility of transport over so great a distance cannot be eliminated, but it is hardly borne out by the other evidence. It is more probable that the original entry in the Jermyn Street catalogue confused with a tile from Reading one of the N. Berwick tiles, of which the Museum then already possessed several examples.

Repton (Derbyshire). (a) From the tile-kiln.

Two relief-tiles, one identical with that from Revesby, *Reliquary*, viii, 137.

Renaud, *Tiles*, 175. Fig. 7, 4.

(b) From Repton Priory.

Fig. 8. Renaud, *Tiles*, 174. Green glaze, crowned monogram of the Virgin.

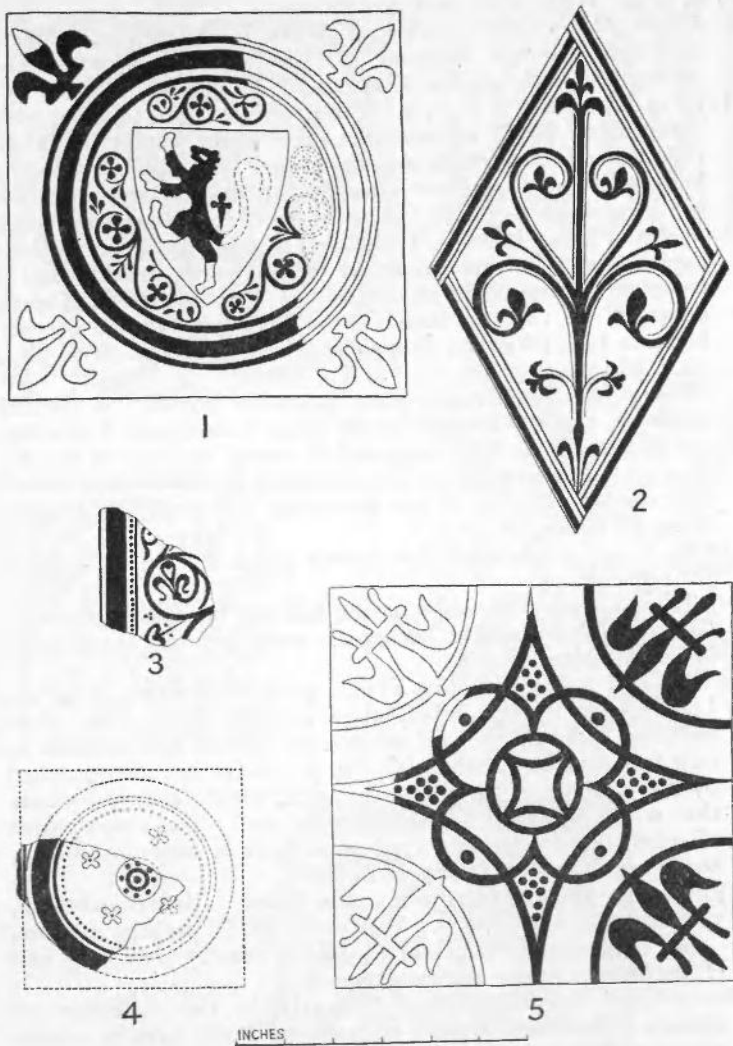


FIG. 6. EMBOSSED TILES OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

1. From Swineshead
2. From Abbey Dore
- 3-4. From St. Albans
5. From Bangor

Revesby Abbey (Lincolnshire). Guildhall Museum, Boston.

Fig. 7, 4. High relief, olive green glaze.

St. Albans Abbey (Hertfordshire). A few in the Abbey. Others in Herts. County Museum, British Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum, London Museum.

(a) Fig. 7, 1, 2 and 5, Pl. i, 4. These three designs, together with a fourth of which no examples seem to be extant in public collections, form a single series, and they have obvious affinities both with the tiles from Revesby and Repton and with the continental series (cf. Pl. vi). The relief is high and the glaze brown or green-brown. Those now in the chancel are modern copies, but a few are preserved in the North transept and a complete portion of pavement showing alternate panels of nine, separated by running borders, was uncovered in the chapter house in 1920 (Wigram, *Trans. St. Albans and Herts. Arch. Soc.*, 1924, plate opp. p. 40).

(b) Fig. 6, 4. High relief, glaze green to brown. A further fragment, recently brought to the writer's attention, shows that the square border here suggested is wrong, and that it formed the centre of a large vesica-shaped design similar to those found associated with tiles of the preceding group in the chapter house (Wigram, *loc. cit.*).

(c) Fig. 6, 3. High relief, light brown glaze, cf. Fig. 6, 1, from Swineshead.

(d) Tiles of the same design as the half-tile from Mapledurham (Fig. 5, 3) and a related border-tile were found in the chapter house (Wigram, *loc. cit.*).

(e) Fig. 5, 1 and 4. Portions of two geometric designs, from the Lady Chapel. High relief, glaze dark brown on the raised portions, pale green on background. Such bi-coloration is only found in St. Albans, and Fig. 5, 1 is further distinguished by the presence of flanges on the back, which seem to indicate that it was intended for architectural use. The employment of relief-tiles to decorate vertical surfaces is common abroad, but is not otherwise known in England.

(f) Fig. 5, 2. Portions of a tile of similar fabric. Glaze deep brown, pale brown and pale green. Very poorly made, perhaps a waster.

(a), (b), (c) and (d) are of thirteenth century date. (e) and (f) perhaps belong to the same period.

Stoke-on-Trent (Staffordshire). Formerly in the collection of Messrs. Minton and Hollins of Stoke-on-Trent, present whereabouts uncertain.

Renaud, *Tiles*, p. 340.

Swineshead Abbey (Lincolnshire). British Museum.

Pl. i, 1-3, Fig. 6, 1. High relief, glaze yellow-green and brown.

Whitland Abbey (Caermarthenshire). National Museum of Wales, Cardiff; Victoria and Albert Museum; Duke of Rutland Collection.

Lloyd, *A History of Caermarthenshire*, Vol. i, suppl. note.

B.F.A.C., *Gothic Art in Europe*, 1936, no. 171, Pl. 50.

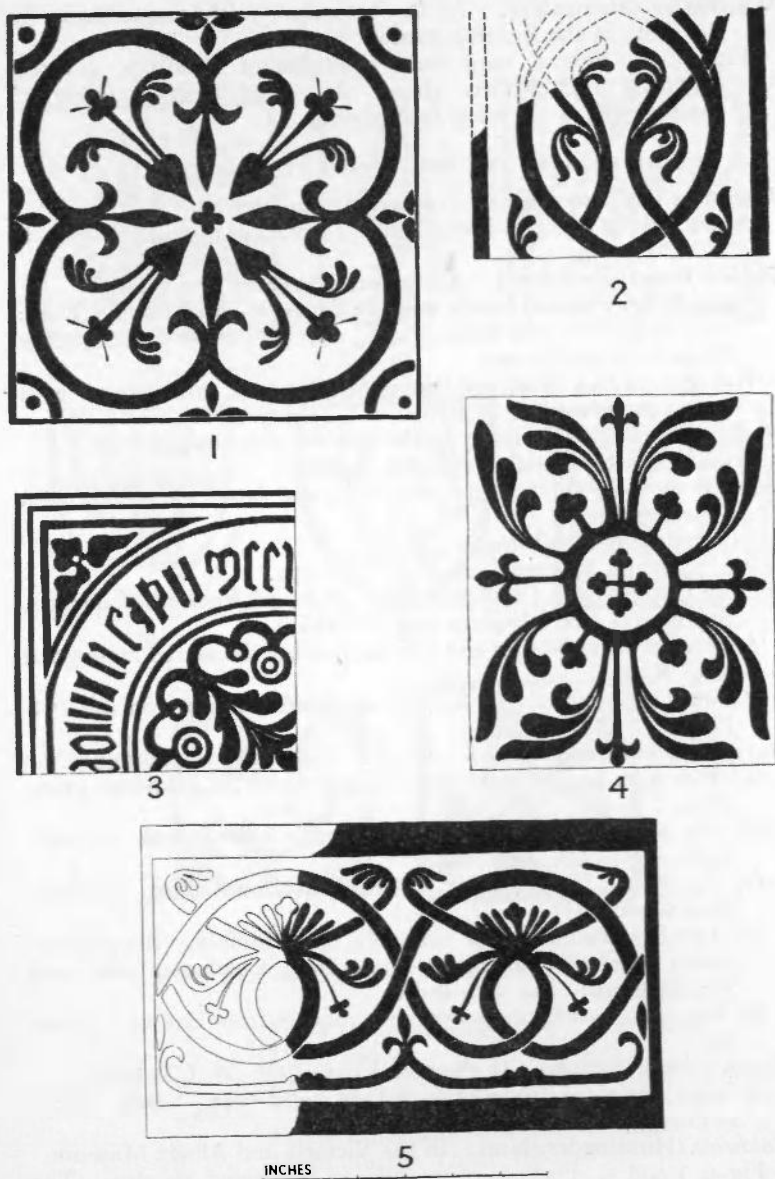


FIG. 7. EMBOSSED TILES OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

- 1, 2, 5. From St. Albans
- 3. From Church Lawton
- 4. From Repton and Revesby

Winchester (Hampshire). In the cathedral, relaid immediately to the south of the Beaufort tomb.

Fig. 5, 5. Several very worn examples of relief-tile, covered originally with brown glaze. A second design, clearly of similar type, is too worn for recovery.

RELIEF-TILES OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY OR LATER

Aylestone (Leicestershire). Formerly in the church.

A much worn tile with horseshoe and hammers in relief. Renaud, *Tiles*, no. 559.

Bagley Wood (Berkshire). Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

Tiles with extremely crude angular fleurs-de-lis in relief. These were found in 'Old Man's Piece,' a strip of copse bordering the Oxford-Abingdon road.

Haberly, *English Medieval Paving-tiles*, no. cxx, where however it seems to be wrongly regarded as a defective inlay-tile.

Burgate (Suffolk). Formerly in the church, now disappeared.

(a) Three crowns within a shield, Suffolk.

(b) A fleur-de-lis, perhaps akin to those from Colchester and Wormingford.

(c) A running-scroll design.

Fig. 8, 4 and 8, after Compton, *Tiles*, 172.

Burton Lazar House (Staffordshire). Duke of Rutland Collection, Stoke-on-Trent Museum and elsewhere.

A series of armorial tiles and one tile bearing the sacred monogram (Fig. 8, 6).

B.F.A.C., *Gothic Art in Europe*, 1936, 162, 166-7, 109 and 170, Pl. 51.

Bury St. Edmunds (Suffolk). Moyses's Hall, Bury St. Edmunds.

(a) Fig. 9, 2, from the Abbey. The arms of St. Edmund, green glaze.

(b) Fig. 8, 1, locality unknown but probably from Suffolk. A lion's head.

(c) Fig. 9, 8, from Suffolk. Greenish-yellow glaze. Perhaps from Coston.

(d) Locality unknown but probably from Suffolk. Several unglazed relief-tiles similar to those from Colchester and from Wormingford. Fig. 9, 4 and 6.

(e) Fig. 9.5., locality unknown but probably from Suffolk. Green glaze.

Butley Priory (Suffolk). In the possession of Dr. M. J. Rendall.

A large series of fourteenth-century relief-tiles. *Arch. Journ.* xc (1933), 265 ff., Fig. 5, 7-9 and Fig. 6.

Caldicote (Huntingdonshire). In the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 9, 1 and 3. Portions of two tiles in high relief, no glaze. The fabric is unusual and it is hard to assign a date to them.

Colchester (Essex). Castle Museum, Colchester.

(a) From St. Mary's church, Colchester. Seven tiles, all unglazed, bearing fleurs-de-lis of slightly differing forms in relief. They are very similar to those from Wormingford (Fig. 9, 4).

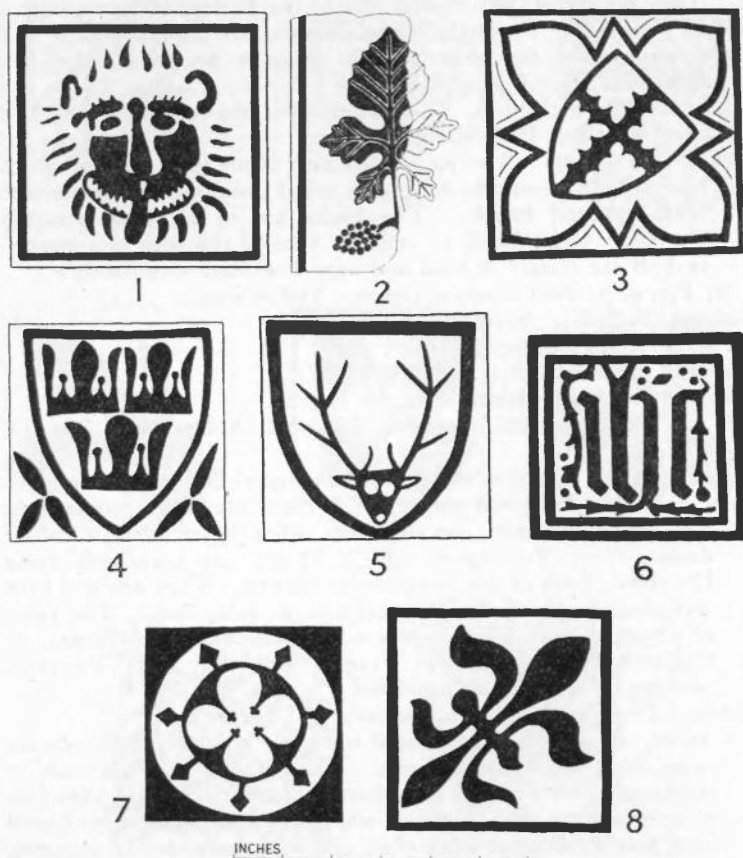


FIG. 8. LATER MEDIEVAL EMBOSSED TILES

1. From Suffolk (at Bury St. Edmunds)
2. From Orford
3. From Denston
- 4 and 8. From Burgate
5. From Lilleshall
6. From Burton Lazar House
7. From Burgate

(b) Locality unknown, but probably local. Tiles similar to the above with fleurs-de-lis or rosettes.

(c) Two small relief tiles in St. Botolph's, bearing the city arms. They are stylistically closely akin to the Bawsey tiles.

Coston (Norfolk). Formerly in the church, now disappeared.

Compton, *Tiles*, 69, records a tile of same design as Bury-St.-Edmunds (c). Fig. 9, 8.

Coventry (Warwickshire). Temporarily in the collection of Mr. Shelton, Little Park Street, Coventry.

(a) From the city. A series of extremely crude tiles, most of which bear simple geometric designs in relief sometimes in association with stamped motifs. The backs are in all cases roughly 'keyed.' Glaze black or yellow. One of the tiles is a waster, and all are clearly of local and very unskilled manufacture.

(b) Fig. 9, 7, from Gosford Green. Yellow glaze.

Denston (Suffolk). Formerly in the church.

Fig. 8, 3, after Compton, *Tiles*, 172.

Dureford (Sussex). See *s.v.* Lewes.

Great Eaton (Staffordshire). In the church.

A tile identical with one from Lilleshall Abbey (b). Renaud, *Tiles*, no. 343.

Lewes (Sussex). In the Sussex Archaeological Society's Museum.

An heraldic tile, green-glazed, of presumably local provenance. The same museum contains two other relief tiles, a foliate design from Tortington and a knight on horseback from Dureford, both of the fourteenth century. They are not here included, for both designs reappear as inlay-tiles. The form of these, a red design upon a yellow ground, is unusual in England but common in France, and they may therefore perhaps be regarded as imported.

Lichfield (Staffordshire). In the cathedral library.

A series of tiles bearing simple designs, rosettes, fleurs-de-lis, lions, etc., now much worn. The design in each case is impressed and the tiles are therefore not true relief-tiles (see p. 128). In no case, however, are the same designs to be found used elsewhere upon inlay-tiles, and they were clearly designed to appear in their present form. The line of distinction becomes less sharp later than in the thirteenth century, e.g. at Bawsey, some of whose tiles these closely resemble.

Fig. 8, 7; Renaud, *Tiles*, no. 339.

Lilleshall Abbey (Shropshire). Victoria and Albert Museum.

(a) Fig. 8, 5.

(b) The implements of the Passion. Identical with the tile from Great Eaton.

Maxstoke Priory (Warwickshire). Duke of Rutland Collection.

A series of large 11 in. fourfold armorial tiles of workmanship identical with those from Burton Lazar House. The arms are stated to be those of Beauchamp, Clinton, Ferrers and Stafford. The crowned M of the Virgin and the Instruments of the Passion appear in the same series.

B.F.A.C., *Gothic Art in Europe*, 1936, 168: not illustrated.

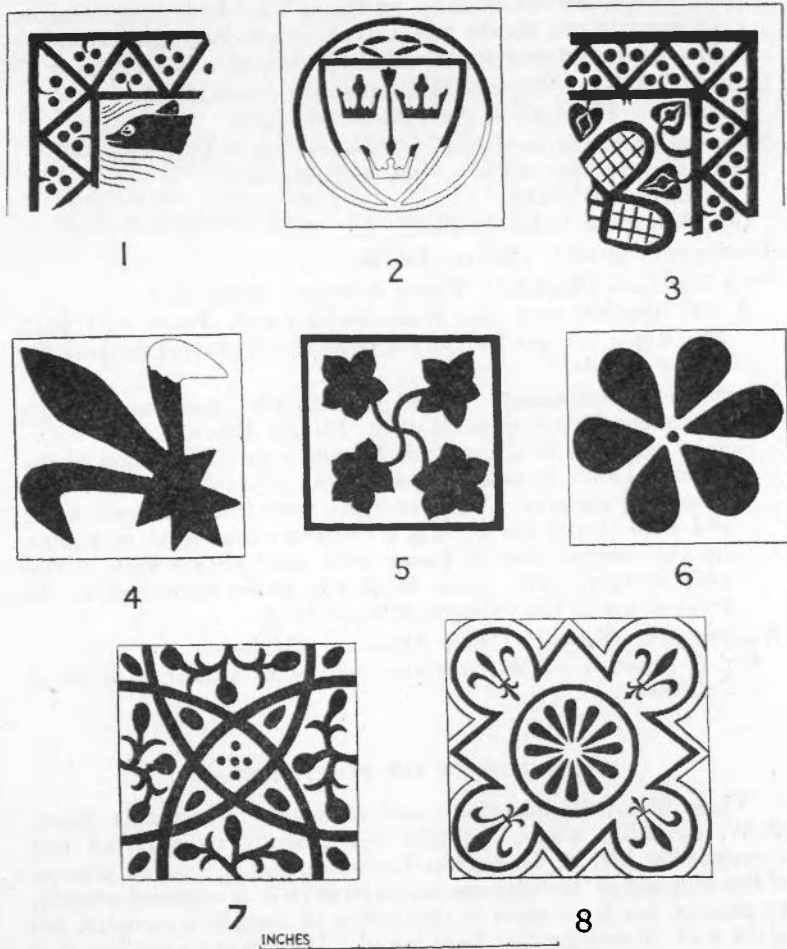


FIG. 9. LATER MEDIEVAL EMBOSSED TILES

- 1 and 3. From Caldicote
- 2. From Bury St. Edmunds
- 4 and 6. From Wormingford
- 5. From Suffolk (at Bury St. Edmunds)
- 7. From Gosford Green
- 8. From Coston



*Tr. Birmingham and Midland Inst.* v, 1874, 81. It is there suggested that these tiles, found at the west end of the infirmary, are those mentioned in the Cartulary, 27 Henry VI, 'Item pro pavimento in firmaria pro tegulis xxx s. . . . et pro carriagio earundem iij s. ijd.'; but they are hardly likely to be of so late a date.

Orford (Suffolk). Moyses's Hall, Bury St. Edmunds.

Fig. 8, 2. High relief, greenish-brown glaze.

Stoke-on-Trent (Staffordshire). Stoke-on-Trent Museum.

Two tiles, locality unknown but probably local.

(a) Birds and foliage.

(b) A leopard facing to right.

Tortington (Sussex). See *s.v.* Lewes.

West Dereham (Norfolk). Castle Museum, Norwich.

A tile identical with one from Butley (*Arch. Journ.* xc (1933), 269, Fig. 5, 8) save for the omission of the tendrils flanking the corner-trefoils.

Winchester (Hampshire). Found beneath the Broadway in 1937, within the former grounds of St. Mary's Abbey.

Several examples of a crude tile bearing a garbled version of the Paschal Lamb in relief, together with a number of tiles with impressed patterns. The two types were from the same firing and were clearly the work of a craftsman unused to such tiles, for the designs have in places been recut with a knife. Mid 14th century. The group is shortly to be published in the Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club.

Wormingford (Essex). Castle Museum, Colchester.

Fig. 9, 4 and 6. Plain, unglazed relief-tiles similar to those at Colchester.

#### RELIEF-TILES OF THE BAWSEY SERIES

These tiles were manufactured at Bawsey near Castle Rising (N.W. Norfolk), where the kiln was recently rediscovered and excavated by Mr. H. L. Bradfer-Lawrence, F.S.A. As an account of this kiln and of the tiles manufactured in it is expected shortly, no attempt has been made in this article to compile a complete list of the sites where they have been found. The following list, however (see distribution-map, Fig. 2), though not exhaustive, may fairly be regarded as representative. The additions to it will be found to lie for the most part in western Norfolk and north-west Suffolk.

Bawsey (Norfolk): British Museum.

Beachamwell (Norfolk): British Museum.

Bexwell (Norfolk): Norwich Museum.

Boston, Greyfrairs (Lincs.): Boston Museum.

Bury St. Edmunds, Babwell Friary (Suffolk): Moyses Hall, Bury St. Edmunds.

Castle Acre Priory (Norfolk): Victoria and Albert Museum, *in situ* there and elsewhere.

- Colchester, St. Botolph's (Essex): Clapham, *Beeleigh Abbey*, 80.  
Croyland (Lincs.): Victoria and Albert Museum.  
London: London Museum, Guildhall Museum; Forrer,  
*Fliesenkeramik*, Figs. 123-4.  
Lilleshall (Shropshire): Victoria and Albert Museum.  
Marsham (Norfolk): Compton, *Tiles*, 69.  
North Creake (Norfolk): *Arch. Journ.* vi, 178.  
Snettisham (Norfolk): In the church.  
Thetford (Norfolk): Renaud, *Tiles*, 207-14.  
Walpole St. Peter (Norfolk): King's Lynn Museum.  
West Walton (Norfolk): British Museum.