

The Tile Friezes

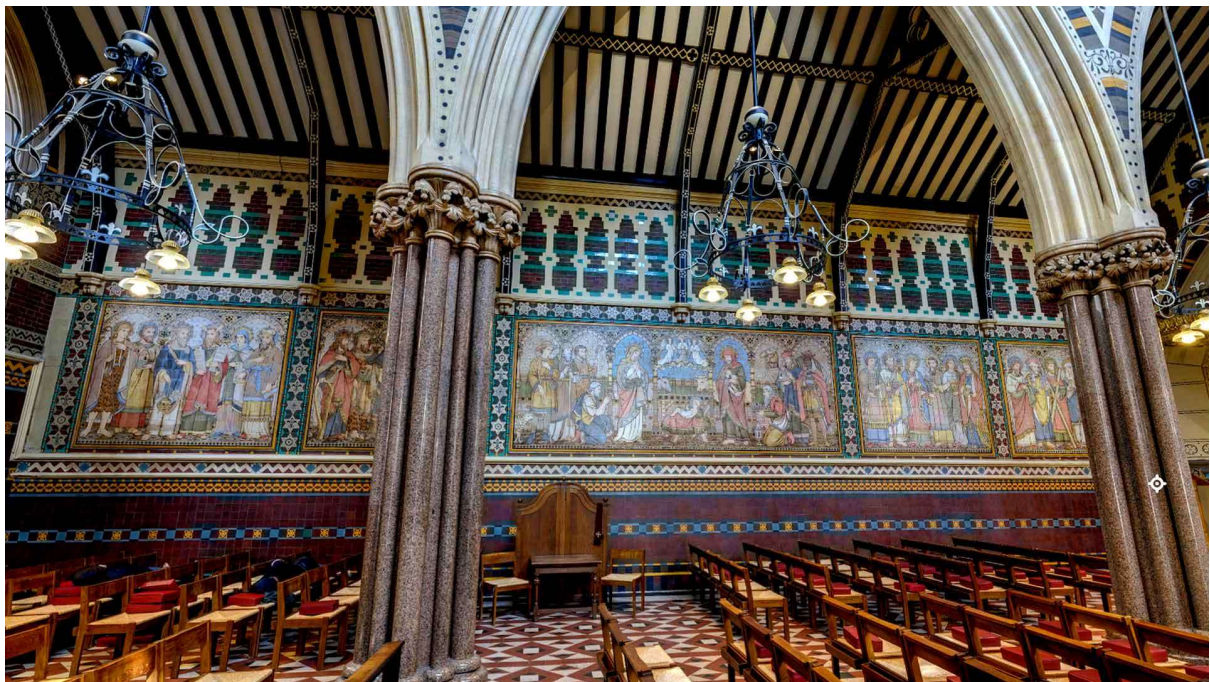


ALL SAINTS
MARGARET
STREET

The Tile Friezes in All Saints Margaret Street

Tiling plays an important part in the decoration of the nave. The vast tiled panels on the north wall were erected in 1873, at a cost of £1,100 in memory of Upton Richards, the first vicar. The tiles were designed by Butterfield to replace his original geometric patterns. They were painted by Alexander Gibbs and manufactured by Henry Poole and Sons, and the panels depict a variety of scenes from the Bible and the Early Church.

The panels represent a sort of timeline of humanity's relationship with God and owe much to the theological doctrine of Typology, in which the people and events of the Old Testament are said to prefigure the coming of Christ to save the fallen world. In the first panels, Jewish Old Testament prophets foretell the Messiah; the central panel depicts the Holy Nativity of Jesus; and in the later panels, the Gospel is spread by the Saints and Martyrs of the Early Christian Church.



First panel

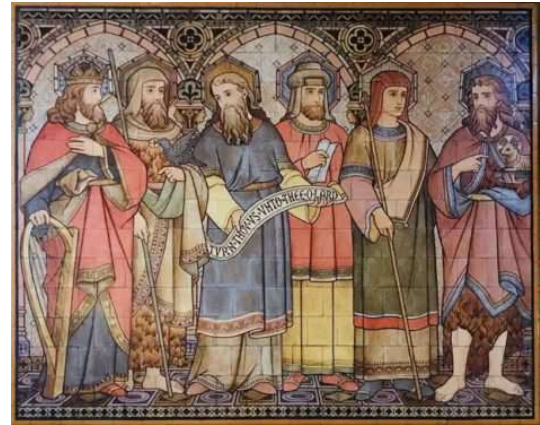
Figures from the Old Testament: Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Miriam and Aaron look forward to the promised Messiah.



Second panel

King David, the prophets Elijah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel prefigure the coming of the Christ.

Finally, St John the Baptist points the viewer towards the next panel, signalling the birth of Jesus.



Third panel



The double-width central panel depicts the Nativity of Christ, with Mary and Joseph, flanked by the Shepherds and the Magi of the Christmas story.

Fourth panel

The establishment of Christ's Church is represented by early Christian Saints and Martyrs: St Stephen, St Paul, St John, St Bartholomew, St Mary Magdalene and St Catherine.



Fifth panel

More Saints and Martyrs from the early Church are shown: St Luke, St Peter, St Andrew, St Margaret, St Boniface and St Lawrence.



The West End Panels



The panel beneath the great west window dates from 1889, and depicts three Old Testament scenes: Moses lifting up the serpent (which symbolises the Crucifixion); Abraham offering his only son Isaac (as God gave his Son for our sins); and Melchizedek, priest of God.



The panel on the north wall of the tower depicts the Ascension. At the bottom is a verse from Acts 1:11: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner" and a dedication to the memory of churchwarden Henry Wood. Completed in 1891, this was the last section of tilework to be added by Butterfield.

