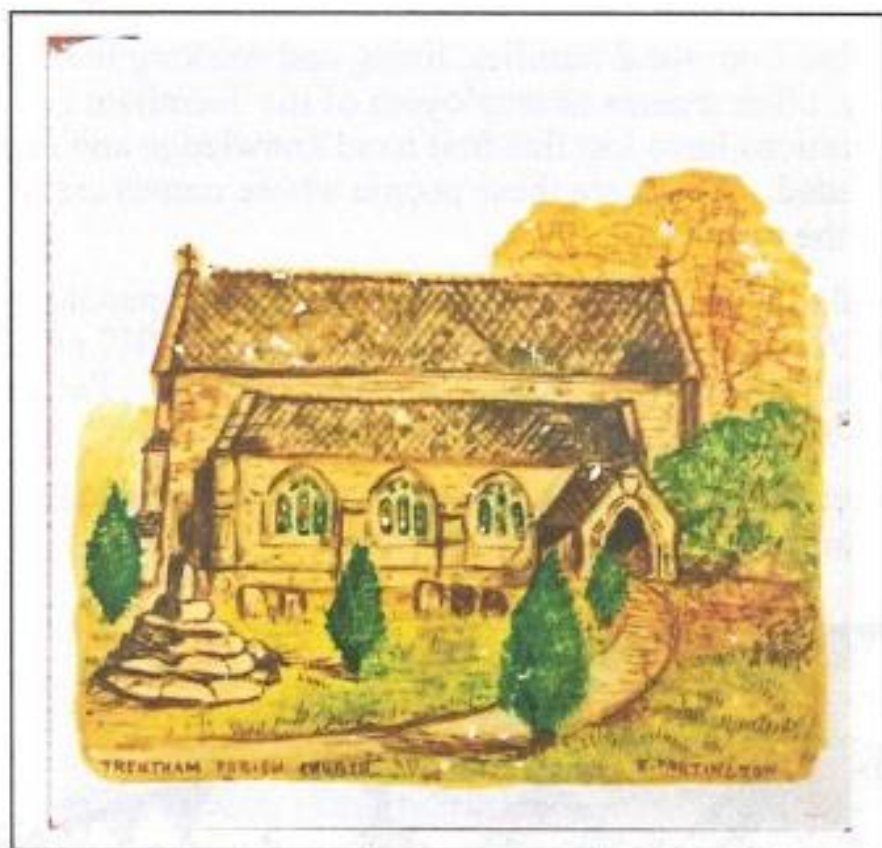


# St Mary and All Saints, Trentham

## On the Tiles



A Glimpse into the Life and Times of  
Those Remembered on the North Wall

## The Trentham Memorial Tiles Project

“On 22nd October 1860, the tiles in the north wall of the church were put up by Mr Minton’s workmen. The tiles, it seems, were purchased by individual families as a way of remembering those who had lived in the area”. This quotation from June Steed’s book (Trentham- A Church Through History) relies on information from a scrapbook kept by Revd Edward Edwardes, who was vicar from 1841-1885. In 1860, the names would have been well known to the vicar and many of the parishioners. Those represented were from local families, living and working in the local community, often tenants or employees of the Trentham Estate. Later generations have lost this first hand knowledge and memories have faded. Who were these people whose names are inscribed on the wall?

We decided to find out more about the tiles and the people they represent. A project group was formed in January 2017 consisting of Linda Barton, Ann George, Elisabeth Newman, Pamela Sambrook, June Steed, Esther Stone and Rose Wheat.

This booklet was produced in connection with a talk given by Pamela Sambrook on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2018.



## Who Were the People on the Tiles?

St Mary and All Saints is by no means the only church to have Minton memorial wall tiles; probably the first was Holy Trinity Church in Hartshill. The tiles at Trentham, however, are special. At Hartshill, the memorials are dedicated mainly to church officials and middle class individuals who served the church. At Trentham, by contrast, the memorials are largely of 'ordinary' families. True there are leaders of the parish (eg. head clerks to the estate) but as we can see from the table on pages 13-14 there are also five labourers and many other manual workers and tradesmen. Though some were obviously comfortably off financially and, as we know from probate records, left behind them substantial savings, many people like the lodge porter and his wife who brought up three boys in a cramped two-roomed cottage always had to watch their pennies. The tiles of Trentham, therefore, give a glimpse of the village structure from the respectable base upwards.

What emerges is the fact that Trentham was a 'close village' and parish, firmly in the grip of the powerful family of the Dukes of Sutherland. We think fifteen to twenty of the sixty-five individuals mentioned worked directly on the estate, as outdoor or clerical servants and craftsmen, though there is one valet. There was also a servant to the Vicar of St Mary and All Saints and one man who was choirmaster. Three schoolmistresses worked in the village but were paid by the Sutherlands. We found eleven who were tenants of the estate who also ran their farms or other businesses, providing employment for both male and female workers. Most of the rest would be just tenants or subtenants. Even though an individual had an independent trade (eg. Thomas Ford Hulme, sen. and jun., coopers) if they lived in the village they were still in thrall to their landlord from the big house, as well as working as contractors to the estate. This was not limited to Trentham and Ash Green. Two other settlements in the parish were also in the grip – Hanford supplied work in the brickyard as well as housing, both owned by the Sutherlands and Hanchurch was a dormitory settlement for workers on the estate, both those of high status, (eg. William Henney, head clerk to the estate) and those more lowly (eg. James Sheldon, labourer)

Most of the tenanted cottages and farms were inspected by the Trentham agent or his clerks annually and remarks about state of overcrowding, cleanliness and maintenance were recorded. Taking lodgers was very common, especially important for providing accommodation for youngsters from the outlying areas who were attending the Trentham schools and for unmarried workers. Rents were collected by the agent or the head clerk, Randal William Kirkby, who was also parish clerk and overseer of the poor. Issues of soup and bread were given out to the poor at the porter's lodge by the porter and his wife – Charles and Elizabeth Kirkby. A savings bank was set up by the Sutherlands to encourage thrift, open for business on Saturday mornings in the estate office, manned and run by the estate clerks. What price privacy in such a community? But for the widows of the parish, taking in lodgers could be a life-saver (eg Elizabeth Beech), as was helping out at the big house as a laundress (eg Sarah Hollins, wife of Thomas).

Many of the Trentham families had a tradition of service and loyalty to the Sutherlands going back for centuries. John Penson, for example, park ranger for some forty years, was a well-known, rough-hewn character in the village and the terror of its children. He himself had ten children, nine of whom worked on the Trentham estate, the tenth on the family's estate at Lilleshall in Shropshire. Two of his sons were killed in accidents relating to their work. Such families – the Pensons, the Hemmings, the Peakes, the Bennisons and others - intermarried over generations to an extent which is sometimes bewildering to the family historian. Into this mix were added occasional incomers from other parts of the county or further afield. From the remote moorlands of Northumberland, for example, came a trio of brothers, the Kirkbys, all of whom worked as clerks and porters, one of whom became a very powerful figure in the estate and parish.

We found that the sons and daughters of many of the tile families did very well, climbing up the occupational ladder. Of the carpenter's two sons, one became a builder and clerk of the works to the Trentham estate, whilst another became the chief agent of the Sutherland's Lilleshall estate. The gamekeeper's son became a civil engineer, and the pottery engraver's son rose to become a pot bank manager.

The porter had three sons; one became a painter at Mintons and eventually curator at the Minton China Works, another a surveyor and architect in London, and the third a schoolmaster.

We have found no certain evidence as to who paid for the tiles, sometimes long after the individual's death. It may well have been their families. Twenty-one of the forty-four tiles were dedicated to people who had died before 1860 when the first tiles were put up. In some cases, it must have been grandchildren who wanted their long-dead forbears to be remembered and were prepared to pay for the privilege. One of the tiles, commemorating a schoolmistress who had no family, was dedicated by her scholars.

There is one tile which stands out because so little could be found about the person to whose memory it was dedicated. All we know about Thomas Anson was that he lived at Kings Wood Bank on the estate, and died in 1869, aged 18. He was almost certainly no relation of the Ansons of Shugborough. But how did he die so young? Who paid for the tile? Was it the vicar who had it inscribed with such an enigmatic quotation from the bible? Strangely, perhaps the full quotation can stand for the whole collection of individuals, high and low, good or bad, who are here represented. In the New International Bible version it reads:

'...as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; through glory and dishonour, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; **beaten, and yet not killed**; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.' 2 Corinthians, ch. 6, v 9. St Paul to the Corinthians.

## Memorial Tiles Key

1 3 5 7 9 11 13 15 17 19 21 23  
2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24

25 27 29 31 33 34 35 37 39 41 \* 43  
26 28 30 32 \*\* 36 38 40 42 \* 44

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Thomas Hughes - Jane his wife                                    | 25. William Rhead - Mary his wife                |
| 2. Richard Peake - Elizabeth his wife                               | 26. John Brough - Anne his wife                  |
| 3. Samuel Lakin - Sarah his wife                                    | 27. Thomas Powner - wife Mary                    |
| 4. James Sheldon - Jane his wife                                    | 28. Mary Harris<br>- Henry Seymour Harris        |
| 5. James Beech - Elizabeth his wife                                 | 29. Joseph Chatterley                            |
| 6. Thomas Bould   | 30. Thomas Ford Hulme<br>- Mary Anne Hulme       |
| 7. John Penson - Elizabeth his wife                                 | 31. Thomas Ford Hulme                            |
| 8. Sarah Hissey   | 32. Thomas Anson                                 |
| 9. Charles Kirkby   | 33. Sarah, wife of<br>Thomas Ford Hulme          |
| 10. Thomas Elliott  | 34. Mary Bennison                                |
| 11. Elizabeth Kirkby  | 35. Reuben Penson                                |
| 12. Nathaniel Crisp - Henry Crisp<br>- John Swift - Frederick Swift | 36. Enoch Bloore - Sarah relict                  |
| 13. Thomas Hollins  | 37. William Henney                               |
| 14. Charlotte Swift   | 38. Richard Topping - Wife Ruth                  |
| 15. James Powner  | 39. Mary Anne Penson                             |
| 16. Sarah Woolley   | 40. Robert Wright - Wife Sarah                   |
| 17. Simpson Stevenson   | 41. Anne Timmis                                  |
| 18. Randal William Kirkby   | 42. John Hassells                                |
| 19. Mary Healey   | 43. William Day Kirkby                           |
| 20. Richard Stannaway<br>- James Stannaway                          | 44. John Mackrory - Esther, wife<br>- Edwin, son |
| 21. Samuel Hemmings   |  |
| 22. Eliza and Maria (Hodson)  |  |
| 23. Jemima Hulme  |  |
| 24. John Wright   | ** - Niche * - Organ Screen 116                  |



## Some of the Stories from the Tiles

### Tile 9: Charles Kirkby 1786 - 1854

#### Summary of family

**Born** 1786, Kirkhaugh, Northumberland, father Thomas Kirkby, Rector of Kirkhaugh Church, mother Hannah Craig, he was one of four brothers who came to Trentham from Kirkhaugh in the early 19th century. All were part of a large family of 13, 4 of whom were by the rector's first wife who died in 1777. The Trentham Kirkbys were all from the second family.

**Married** Elizabeth Peake, banns read, on 17 July 1823, at Trentham. Witnesses Randall William Kirkby (brother) and Robert Peake.

#### **Children**

Thomas, baptised 1826; Charles, baptised 1827; James, baptised 1831.

**Death** Charles Kirkby died in the summer of 1854

#### Summary of career

Charles Kirkby was lodge porter in the service yard at Trentham from around 1810 until his death aged 68. He lived in lodgings until his marriage in 1823 when the Sutherlands' agent allotted him a small cottage in Ash Green for which he paid £5 a year rent. He was an ideal tenant and employee, trustworthy, steady, keeping his cottage in good condition, though with only two small bedrooms and three growing lads the house must have been cramped, but it had the advantage of enough garden to allow the family to keep a cow. In 1838 they moved to a larger cottage. His wage was £40 a year plus £12 a year for board wages (in lieu of meals in the servants' hall), free coal, beer, milk and vegetables whenever he wanted. He used the Trentham Savings bank to accumulate small sums and after his death his widow told the census she was 'proprietress of railway shares'.

As the first person to greet visitors and check goods in to Trentham, Charles was immensely important in the daily round of house and estate, in effect a security guard. One of his jobs at the lodge was the distribution of food doles to the poor of the parish and the travelling poor so he was well known in the parish.

Charles' sons were all successful in different ways, despite the fact they had no prolonged formal education. The eldest, Thomas, became a painter at Minton's. One of his notebooks was an Italian manual on colour grinding and mixing which he translated into English. He ran singing and instrumental classes for children in the parish and himself played the violin. In later life, his title was Curator of Minton China Works.

Charles junior was trained locally as a carpenter, probably on the estate, but left as a young man to find his fortune in London. He was successful, for he became a surveyor and architect, living in Islington. He had 3 children by his first wife who died in 1860 and 4 more by his second marriage to a daughter of one of the Trentham tenants. On his death he left a personal estate of some £800.

James, the youngest of the brothers, became schoolmaster at the Trentham boys' school. He lived in the large school house, providing accommodation for a few boarders at the school. In 1874 he married a sister of his brother Charles' second wife. Like Charles he left over £800 at his death.





### **Tile 3: Samuel Lakin 1794 - 1858**

Samuel Lakin was a yeoman farmer. In 1851 he was farming 120 acres at Northwood. He and his wife Sarah had six children, three of whom died within two weeks of each other in 1833 and a fourth child died the following year. His son Joseph took over the farm, which continued in the family. A conveyance dated 1952 shows that Thomas Lakin, a descendant, sold the land on which Hanchurch Village Hall was erected. Through their surviving son Joseph, the legacy of Samuel and Sarah Lakin is still with us today.

### **Tile 20: Richard Stannaway 1808 - 1857**

Richard Stannaway was a stonemason who died suddenly aged 49. His son James, also on tile 20, died as a child. "Richard Stannaway went in the morning (Dec 5th) to chisel afresh the lettering on his father's gravestone, in the Cemetery yard, and returned in the evening and died at his fireside." (Quote from Parish Magazine)

### **Tile 10: Thomas Elliot 1773 - 1837**

For most of his working life, Thomas Elliot was gamekeeper to Trentham, living in a tied cottage, rent free. He was well paid, his salary being increased by a complex system of allowances or 'perquisites', such as £30 for horses and saddler. When he died, Thomas left bequests to his staff and "bequeathed to Rev Edwards £50 to be distributed as he should think fit in clothing the children of Trentham and Ash Green." His son Liddle was the main beneficiary and he added the dividend from 16 shares in the Staffordshire Waterworks Company to the Clothing Fund as a memorial of his affection for his father's memory. (Brass plaque, Trentham Parish Church)

#### **Tile 41: Anne Timmis 1802 - 1877**

Anne Timmis spent much of her life in the household of Rev. Edward Edwardes, Perpetual Curate of Trentham at the Parsonage. This large house with grounds, later known as the Priory, was situated behind the Mausoleum.

Anne was born in Stone on 17<sup>th</sup> June 1802. By 1851 she was one of six servants at the Parsonage. In 1861 the extensive household comprised Edward Edwards, his wife and five children, aged between 4 and 15 years, plus 8 servants - Governess, Cook, Ladies Maid, Under Nurse, Nurse, Laundry Maid, House Maid and Butler. Anne is given the occupation of Nurse. Anne is still there in 1871 although she is now nearly 70 and the children are grown up.

Anne died in 1877. She was buried on February 5<sup>th</sup> at St Mary and All Saints with the ceremony performed by Edward Edwards. We could speculate that the memorial tile was placed in the church by the Edwards family as a tribute to a long serving and valued nurse to their children.

#### **Tile 14: Charlotte Swift 1797 - 1887**

Charlotte Swift lived in Trentham for 51 years. Born in Lincolnshire about 1797, we do not know what brought her to Trentham, but her first husband was Nathaniel Crisp, innkeeper of the old Trentham Inn on Stone Road. After his death in 1838 she married John Swift and they continued to live at the old Trentham Inn, where John was both innkeeper and farmer.

Widowed again in 1851, Charlotte took over the inn and the farm, until the inn closed in 1867. In 1871 she is described as a widow aged 74, farming 98 acres with the help of three labourers and a boy. Her daughter Fanny was the housekeeper. Her sister Rosetta Bailey lived with them, also two boarders and two servants.

Before her death in 1887, Charlotte and Fanny had moved to Southport, where Fanny kept a lodging house. Clearly the women of this family valued their independence and were willing to work for it.

#### **Tile 42: John Hassells 1805 - 1876**

John Hassells is the only person on the tiles whose occupation relates to local manufacturing industry. He was an engraver, probably employed in the pottery industry. This was a highly-skilled role which involved the production of chrome/copper etched master plates from which tissue paper prints were made. These were used to carry the design/colour on to the pottery body – part of the early mass production process started in the 18th century. .

By 1861 he had moved from Trentham to Ricardo Street, Longton. At the time of interest many of its occupants were employed in the pottery industry – named trades, not general labourers. Some of the wives were housekeepers and some of the menfolk clerks and shopkeepers. This suggests generally skilled people.

When John Hassells died in 1876 he left effects of under £800 to his son, George Daniel, who was a pottery manager.

#### **Tile 26: John Brough 1790 - 1859**

John Brough spent all his life in Trentham. Born in 1790 he became a carpenter and then a wheelwright, following his father William into the trade. They worked near the blacksmiths at Hem Heath, providing services for the horse-drawn traffic of the time. John and his wife Anne had a son, John, who in 1841 was working as an apprentice wheelwright in Barlaston, but sadly died aged 17 so did not live to continue the family tradition.

Their son William became a Railway Porter at Trentham station and continued to live with his family at Hem Heath. His widow, Charlotte gives her address in the 1911 census as “Brough Lane”, Hem Heath. It seems the Brough family left their name as a legacy to Trentham.

## Where These People Lived Around Trentham

<b>Ash Green</b>	
BEECH James, Elizabeth CHATTERLEY Joseph FORD HULME Thomas, Mary Anne FORD HULME Thomas, Sarah HOLLINS Thomas HULME Jemima	KIRKBY Charles, Elizabeth KIRKBY Randall William KIRKBY William Day RHEAD William, Mary TOPPING Richard, Ruth WOOLLEY Sarah
<b>Dresden</b>	
HASSELLS John	
<b>Hanchurch</b>	
BENNISON Mary HODSON Eliza, Maria PEAKE Richard, Elizabeth PENSON Reuben, Mary Anne	POWNER Thomas, Mary, James SHELDON James, Jane STANNAWAY Richard ,James
<b>Hem Heath</b>	
BROUGH John, Anne	
<b>Longton</b>	
BLOORE Enoch, Sarah	
<b>Northwood</b>	
HEALEY Mary HUGHES Thomas, Jane	LAKIN Samuel, Sarah STEVENSON Simpson
<b>Tittensor</b>	
PENSON John, Elizabeth	
<b>Trentham</b>	
ANSON Thomas (Kings Wood Bank) BOULD Thomas CRISP Nathaniel, Henry ELLIOT Thomas HARRIS Mary, Henry Seymour HEMMINGS Samuel	HISSEY Sarah MACKRORY John, Esther, Edwin SWIFT John, Frederick, Charlotte TIMMIS Anne WRIGHT Robert , Sarah
<b>More than one address</b>	
HENNEY William lived at Ash Green and Hanchurch, then Lilleshall WRIGHT John lived at Stafford House London and at Trentham Hall	

## Occupations of Males Named (Where Known)

<b><i>Estate Servants</i></b>	
Footman, groom of the chambers, valet	John Wright
Porter, lodge keeper	Charles Kirkby
Porter, clerk to the Trentham Estate, Parish clerk and overseer of the poor, clerk to Trentham Savings Bank	Randal W Kirkby
Clerk to the Trentham Estate	William Day Kirkby
Clerk to the Trentham and Lilleshall estates, accountant of the Trentham Savings Bank.	William Henney
Office clerk	Edwin Mackrory
<b><i>Estate Groundsmen</i></b>	
Park keeper	John Penson
Assistant forester, Park keeper	Reuben Penson
Gamekeeper	Thomas Elliott
Groom	James Powner
Stud groom	Richard Topping
<b><i>Craftsmen (some on the estate)</i></b>	
Stonemason	Richard Stannaway
Bricklayer / Stonemason	Richard Peake
Bricklayer	Thomas Hughes
Blacksmith	James Beech
Plumber	Thomas Hollins
Wheelwright	John Brough
Cooper	Thomas Ford Hulme senior Thomas Ford Hulme junior
Tailor	Thomas Bould, Enoch Bloore,
Baker / Brewer	Robert Wright
Carpenter	John Mackrory

## Occupations of Males Named (Where Known) cont'd

<i>Agricultural</i>	
Farmer	Samuel Lakin, Simpson Stevenson
Labourer	James Sheldon, Samuel Hemmings, William Rhead, Thomas Powner, Joseph Chatterley
<i>Other</i>	
Innkeeper	Nathaniel Crisp
Farmer / innkeeper	John Swift
Engraver and cottage farmer	John Hassells

## Occupations of Females Named (Where Known)

<i>Occupation</i>	
Farmer	Jane Sheldon
Farmer, Provision dealer	Mary Bennison
Innkeeper, farmer	Charlotte Swift
Farmer	Mary Healey
Schoolmistress	Mary Harris
Schoolmistress	Sarah Woolley
Schoolmistress	Mary Anne Penson
Nurse to family of Rev Edwards	Anne Timmis

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## How the Tiles Were Produced

In 1820 the Marquis of Stafford, later the 1st Duke of Sutherland, and his wife visited the Minton factory and became patrons of Minton's work. Minton tiles were purchased for work on Trentham Hall during the 1830's and floor tiles, donated by Minton, were used in the rebuilding of the Church in the 1840's.

In 1844, after the completion of Holy Trinity Church, Hartshill – the church that Minton had endowed, built and embellished with encaustic floor tiles (decoration throughout the body of the tile) and with majolica wall tiles (decoration on the surface of the tile) – Minton began donations of pavements of encaustic tiles to churches and other institutions. Trentham was one of the first two churches to receive a donation of pavement tiles.

The commemorative frieze of Minton wall tiles installed in St Mary and All Saints Church in 1860, is made of glazed tiles which are, in design and colour, majolica enamelled tiles. Majolica ware was produced by the Minton factory from 1840 onwards and in their 1889 tile catalogue this type of tile is extolled as being particularly suitable for decorative wall tiles.

After approximately the one and a half centuries since the commemorative wall tiles were made, it is difficult to say with certainty which methods were used for their production, inscription and installation. During the mid - nineteenth century the manufacture of decorated tiles was undergoing a period of rapid development and many companies, including Mintons, were experimenting with machinery, materials, production methods, design and decoration.

Assuming that all the tiles in the frieze were glazed at the Minton factory but that originally the central diamond shape was either left blank or had some decoration on it, a case could be made for each of several ways of achieving an inscription on a tile after it had been installed:

- (a) an undecorated diamond shape could have been inscribed by hand and lacquered not re-glazed;
- (b) a decorated diamond shape could have been covered with a transfer bearing the commemorative message and lacquered not re-glazed; and
- (c) the undecorated or decorated diamond shape could have been removed and replaced with an inscribed and re-glazed tile.

It is possible that all the above methods were used at some time over the years.

### Further Reading

Pearson, Lynn. 'Minton Tiles in the Churches of Staffordshire – A Report for the Tiles and Architectural Ceramics Society.' August 2000

Sambrook, Pamela 'The Servants' Story'

Steed, June. "Trentham, A Church Through History"

[www.tileheaven.uk](http://www.tileheaven.uk)

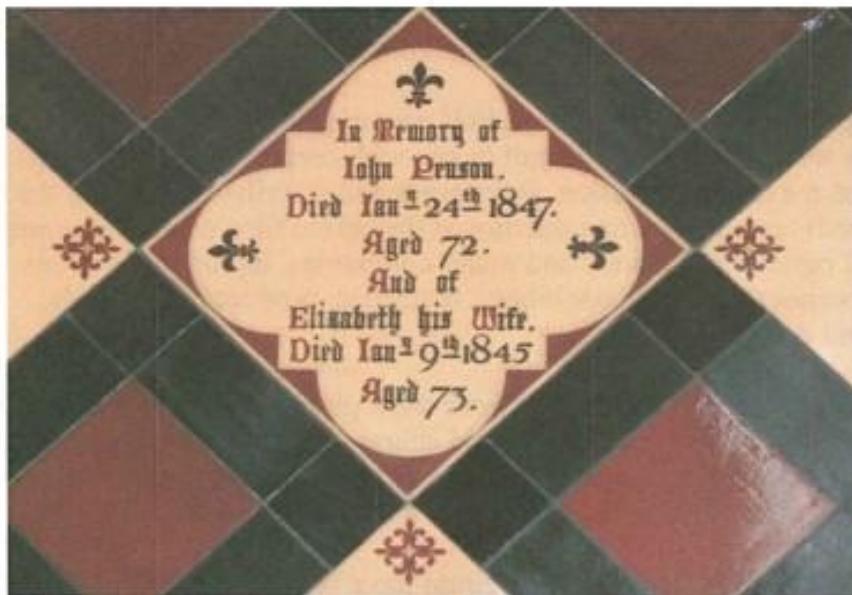
Minton China Works Catalogue c1885

### Further Information

There is a reference folder available on request at Trentham Parish Church containing all our research on the memorial wall tiles and on individuals who are named there.

Church Office: Tel 01782 658110

Website [www.trenthamchurch.org.uk](http://www.trenthamchurch.org.uk)



*Trentham parish has a deep and varied history that we glimpse through the tiles here at church. I commend this booklet to you and may it open up further enquiry into the heritage of this beautiful place and deeper understanding of the spiritual significance of the church at the centre of community. Rev Adrian Stone*