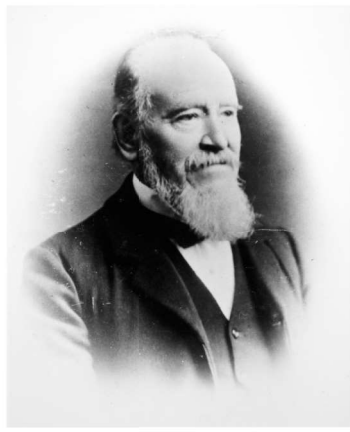




DAVID PARR HOUSE



Frederick Richard Leach (1837 – 1904)



Workforce of F R Leach & Sons c. 1882

ON THE TRAIL OF FREDERICK LEACH

A walk around some of the most beautifully decorated churches in Cambridge.

Frederick Richard Leach started the firm F R Leach & Sons in 1862 and it was to become one of the leading church decorating firms of the time.

During the Victorian era there was a resurgence in building and decorating churches in the neo-gothic style – a style that harked back to the highly decorated pre- reformation churches of the medieval era. Cambridge played host to some of the leading architects and designers of this movement including William Morris, George Bodley and Charles Kempe. Their ideas and designs for wall painting, stained glass and stone carving were carried out by Frederick Leach and his highly skilled workforce.

Photos by Hannah Boatfield except St Peter's and St Edward's



1 – Museum of Cambridge, Castle Street
The museum has a rare collection of four 19th century pub signs painted by Richard Hopkins Leach, father of Frederick Leach. (www.folkmuseum.org.uk for opening times and admission fee)



2 – St Peter's, St Peter's Street
Stained glass by the Leach Company made in their City Road premises. Date unknown.



3 – St Clement's, Bridge Street
East wall mural painted by Leach in 1872. This shows a spectacular representation of figures from the New Testament paying honour to Jesus as the divine head of the church; Frederick included himself at the bottom right of the scene. (access may be limited)



4 – All Saints', Jesus Lane
Highly decorated neo gothic church with walls and ceiling decoration by Leach to designs by Bodley and Morris 1864 – 1879. In 1870, the Cambridge Chronicle wrote that "Great praise must be given to Mr F R Leach, our fellow townsman, who is carrying out these works, for it is no small credit these days to be able to work out such details in free hand drawing... the whole of the nave roof having been decorated by Mr Leach, at his own cost."



5 – Jesus College Chapel, Jesus Lane
Ceiling decoration by Frederick Leach for George Bodley under direction of William Morris 1866-9. In November 1866, Bodley wrote to the Dean of Jesus College stating that "Morris finds Leach a very capable and able executant. The design and the exact shades of the colours are all done according to the directions given to him. Nothing of that kind is left to him. He is doing it quite as well as Morris' men would." (access may be limited at certain times)



6 – St Michael's, Trinity Street
Walls and ceiling painted by Leach who did not accept any payment for doing this work. Frederick also painted the reredos in 1872-4 to a design by George Gilbert Scott.



7 – 3 St Mary's Passage
The showrooms for F R Leach and Sons. External decoration designed by the firm. Tiles in the fireplace are the same as those found in the firms workshops on City Road.



8 – St Edward King and Martyr, St Edward's Passage
Coloured decoration of chancel roof done by Frederick Leach in 1895.



9 – St Botolph's, Trumpington Street
The chancel, roof and the organ loft were painted by Frederick Leach to Bodley designs in 1872.



10 – Queens' College Old Hall & Chapel, Silver Street
1875 Frederick Leach charged £345 18s 2d for the painting of the roof and walls of the Dining Hall including 885 lead cast and gilded roof ornaments. (access may be limited)

A FREDERICK LEACH TRAIL IN CENTRAL CAMBRIDGE

