

Reconstructing a Victorian period tile from Goods Corner

Use this worksheet to put together your own Patterned tile!

Goods Corner: Urban Excavation in the City of Edinburgh

Goods Corner*, Liberton, a present day suburb of Edinburgh was, during the turn of last century, actually on the edge of the city. Recent excavations in 2016 by **NG Archaeological Services** have shown, alongside historical records and photographs, that at this time it was a bustling hub of activity with buildings that functioned as both domestic dwellings and shops, as well as an associated joiners yard.

Among the large number of ceramics and artefacts uncovered during the excavation were a number of decorated tiles. Tiles became increasingly popular during the reign of Queen Victoria and would have been used to decorate building entrances where they would have been more visible. As time went on and tiles became more affordable they were used to decorate fireplaces and bathrooms.

The design you see here is known as a 'Patterned' tile, incorporating more than a single colour to create a distinctive design. These were more expensive to produce than monochromatic tiles that would have been placed alongside each other in a combination of colours to create a repeating 'Geometric' patterned floor.

*so named because it was owned by the local 'Goods' family.

Putting the pieces together

When they were first uncovered, (right), the tile fragments are incomplete but obviously make up the same pattern of tile.



Knowing that the patterning of the tile is symmetrical, the overall form can be re-created, as seen here on the right.



Making your own Patterned tile

- 1 Use the actual size image to the right to create your own tile. Take a steel ruler and scalpel and carefully cut out the image. Now mount it upon thick card or foam-board so that it has a more robust feel.
- 2 Using the steel ruler and scalpel, again carefully slice up the tile in a random fashion so as to emulate the various sherds of the shattered tile. If you find it helpful you can first trace pencil lines that you can then use as a guide.

You now have your very own tile puzzle to create and keep!

