

“THE GLASS THAT DECORATES:’ THE HISTORY, DESIGNERS, AND
STAINED-GLASS OF THE CHURCH GLASS AND DECORATING COMPANY OF
NEW YORK”

by

Amber L. Wingerson
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DEDICATION

This is dedicated to my family, friends, and everyone who has been supportive and helpful in this process.

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ABSTRACT

“‘THE GLASS THAT DECORATES:’ THE HISTORY, DESIGNERS, AND STAINED-GLASS OF THE CHURCH GLASS AND DECORATING COMPANY OF NEW YORK”

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George Mason University, 2017

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In operation between 1899 and 1914, the Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York manufactured a variety of decorative and stained-glass windows for various churches, academic institutions, and other private and public buildings. One of several stained-glass companies that emerged during this time period, the firm produced opalescent glass windows in addition to being the sole American agent for John Hardman and Company, a well-known English stained-glass firm. Additionally, Church Glass and Decorating Company produced what the firm described as “ornamental windows,” which consisted of non-figural stained-glass window designs of opalescent glass and colorless glass with intricate leading patterns, which were marketed to hotels, public buildings, and private homes. In studying the history of the Church Glass and Decorating Company, a more complete picture and understanding of the turn-of-the-century American Stained-Glass Movement can be found as well.

INTRODUCTION

The Church Glass and Decorating Company's history coincided with a period of remarkable growth in the number of religious congregations in American cities. These movements ignited a period of religious building expansion, which created new markets for ecclesiastical decorations and stained-glass windows in religious and secular settings. To meet the demand, the Church Glass and Decorating Company emerged as one of several stained-glass companies during this time period, though current scholarship focuses on the founders of the American stained-glass movement: Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933) and John LaFarge (1835-1910).

In operation between 1899 and 1914, the Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York manufactured a variety of stained-glass windows for churches, academic institutions, and other private and public buildings. As one of several stained-glass companies established at the turn of the century, the firm produced opalescent stained-glass windows in addition to being the sole American agent for John Hardman and Company (1838-2008), a well-known English stained-glass firm. Additionally, Church Glass and Decorating Company produced what the firm described as "ornamental windows." Typically marketed to hotels, public buildings, and private homes, these windows are characterized as non-figural stained-glass window designs of opalescent glass or colorless windows with intricate leading patterns.

Similar to the employment culture of contemporary stained-glass companies, the founders and artists of the Church Glass and Decorating Company worked for numerous stained-glass companies during their careers and often had trained in other artistic mediums. For example, Edward Peck Sperry (1850-1925), the firm's secretary and chief designer, trained as a painter before becoming one of Tiffany's most celebrated designers, specializing in memorial stained-glass window design. While company president, Caryl Coleman (c. 1846–1930), recruited new artists for Tiffany's firm as part of the company's Church Department from 1889-1899. He was also an ecclesiologist with extensive knowledge of Christian symbolism and previously employed by Gorham Manufacturing Company (1831-2009). Their backgrounds coupled with contemporary tastes in American stained-glass dictated the Church Glass and Decorating Company's decision to design opalescent stained-glass windows. The company recruited artists, such as Violet Oakley (1864-1961) who completed a number of stained-glass windows early in the Church Glass and Decorating Company's history, while more well-known as an illustrator and muralist.

The growing taste for English, or Gothic Revival, stained-glass windows in the United States at the turn-of-the-century also prompted the Church Glass and Decorating Company to expand their business practices and become a retailer for John Hardman and Company. International exhibitions sparked the rising American interest in Gothic Revival, stained-glass windows, which different religious sects preferred over opalescent stained-glass windows. Coleman's previous experience with Gorham Manufacturing Company (1831-2009) likely educated the company president on the benefits of

partnering with an English stained-glass firm, because Gorham had been the American agent for the British stained-glass company, Heaton, Butler and Bayne (1862-1953) during his time with the company. The range of talent and experience by the firm's founders and associated artists coupled with contemporary tastes in American stained-glass dictated the company's decision to create and retail a diverse range of figural and ornamental stained-glass windows. The Church Glass and Decorating Company's willingness to expand production beyond the figural opalescent window combined with the skills of various designers resulted in several large and well-known commissions.

In examining the Church Glass and Decorating Company, there will be three chapters. Chapter one will look at the firm's design as well as the manufacturing of their windows, which was likely contracted to the Calvert and Kimberly Company. Additionally, this section will appraise the firm's participation in exhibitions of varying sizes and numerous office locations in New York, New Jersey, and Chicago. The chapter will then assess the Church Glass and Decorating Company's practice of not signing their windows or including their artists in copyright petitions and how this led to misattributions during their time as well as now. Finally, the chapter will examine the American Stained-Glass Movement of the late nineteenth century and how the Church Glass and Decorating Company fit into the landscape. Chapter two will focus on the designers and artists of the Church Glass and Decorating Company. Divided into sections about the company founders and freelance designers, this chapter will examine how the founders came to establish the stained-glass firm after careers with other stained-glass and decorative art firms as well as some of their commissions, which appear significant

in the firm's history. Since many of the Church Glass and Decorating Company's designers were freelance, the proven artists who created known commissions and participated in the firm's exhibitions are discussed in detail. Chapter three will discuss the company's relationship with John Hardman and Company as well as the firm's production of ornamental windows. Both of these aspects of the company's business expanded their business, allowing the firm to enter larger and varied markets that were emerging for stained-glass during this time period.

Current scholarship on the Church Glass and Decorating Company is limited. The most accurate secondary source, Jean Farnsworth's *Stained Glass in Catholic Philadelphia*, includes a short synopsis of the company and some of their windows, but does not include complete company dates. Among other secondary publications, few mention the Church Glass and Decorating Company's relationship with John Hardman and Company, and no sources have studied the company's range of stained-glass production. Therefore, the majority of research on the Church Glass and Decorating Company required the use of existing company documents, correspondence, church records, newspaper and journal articles, and other primary sources to uncover the story behind this stained-glass company.

The stained-glass windows of the Church Glass and Decorating Company are found in the same churches that include windows designed by Tiffany Studios (1880-1937), John La Farge (1835-1910), William and Morris Company (1875-1940), and J. & R. Lamb Studios (1857-present), and other leading stained-glass producers of the turn of the century. Contemporary accounts describe the Church Glass and Decorating

Company's windows as being of equal quality when compared to Tiffany Studios. However, the stained-glass windows of Tiffany and La Farge dominate the existing scholarship on the time period and overlook the success of the Church Glass and Decorating Company. My thesis on the Church Glass and Decorating Company focuses on the history, designers, and works of this particular company, but also offers insight into the under-researched American stained-glass movement of the early twentieth century.

CHAPTER ONE: CHURCH GLASS AND DECORATING COMPANY OF NEW YORK

Founded in 1899, the Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York produced and retailed stained-glass windows and ecclesiastical decorations during a period of remarkable growth in the number of religious institutions in the United States. As a designer of opalescent stained-glass windows and other ecclesiastical decorations in addition to retailing English, Gothic-Revival stained-glass, the firm's known surviving advertisements, letters, and company literature primarily revolved around stained-glass commissions completed during their fifteen-year tenure. The Church Glass and Decorating Company was one of several firms of their size emerging to meet the demands of the growing need to outfit religious institutions as well as the elaborate interiors of the Gilded Age elite. On numerous occasions, the firm competed for the same commissions as Tiffany Studios and John La Farge's companies. Unfortunately, several of their stained-glass windows were misattributed for the Tiffany's firm as early as 1903. In examining the company's history, production, and designers, a more complete history of the American stained-glass movement emerges through the lens of the Church Glass and Decorating Company's operations, commissions, and exhibitions. This chapter examines who the firm was and where they operated, their range of their designs and production, reasons why their windows are often mistaken for the works of their competitors, and how they fit into the larger American stained-glass community.

What Did the Church Glass and Decorating Company Design?

Operating in New York and New Jersey from 1899 to 1914, the Church Glass and Decorating Company was a stained-glass and ecclesiastical decoration company. The company designed and sold a range of products, while focusing on opalescent stained-glass designs by their American artists who managed the firm as well as a range of freelance designers. The company was also the sole agent for John Hardman and Company and retailed the English firm's Gothic Revival stained-glass windows throughout the United States. Chapters two and three will provide a more in-depth examination into these aspects of the Church Glass and Decorating Company's history and operation. While the Church Glass and Decorating Company did not specify how their window designs were manufactured, the firm partnered with the Calvert and Kimberly Company of New York to produce several commissions during the first years of their tenure. However, the firm created a wide range of products that were not included in other sections of this thesis. The firm's ecclesiastical decorations linked them to competitors such as J. and R. Lamb as well as reflected the religious studies and decorative arts background of the company's founder, Caryl Coleman. In addition to fashioning windows for ecclesiastical buildings, the firm also specifically advertised decorative arts and ornamental windows for secular interiors. Furthermore, since the Church Glass and Decorating Company did not leave behind a clear history of their company or a series of archives or records to confirm aspects of the firm's operations, some confirmed commissions have presented more questions than answers.

Officially established on February 3, 1899, the Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York was created when the firm filed for their corporate certificate in

New Jersey.¹ There are currently no known records to ascertain the day the company closed. However, the company had definitely closed before 1915, when another firm had to install their 1913 stained-glass design at Wayne State University, a case which will be discussed later in Chapter one and in more detail in Chapter two. The American artists of the Church Glass and Decorating Company produced opalescent stained-glass windows, which according to stained-glass historian, Virginia Raguin was, “the hallmark product of artists’ studios at this time, seen in thousands of installations throughout the United States.”² In addition to their opalescent stained-glass, the firm was also the sole American agent for John Hardman and Company, an English stained-glass company, which is discussed in Chapter three. This allowed the Church Glass and Decorating Company to appeal to a wider American ecclesiastical market, which necessitated varied styles in stained-glass windows.

While the Church Glass and Decorating Company specifically advertised opalescent stained-glass window designs created by American artists and English Gothic Revival windows through their connection with John Hardman and Company, one commission completed by the company claimed the firm produced a “painted” window. During this time period, a “painted” window often indicated that the window was not produced through opalescent glass, which sought to eliminate painting on glass outside of the faces and hands of figures. The alumni of Erasmus Hall High School commissioned a forty-one panel stained-glass window for the school’s auditorium that featured scenes

¹ New Jersey Department of State, *Corporations of New Jersey: List of Certificates* (Trenton, N.J: MacCrellish & Quigley, 1914), 131.

² Virginia Chieffo Raguin, *Stained Glass: From Its Origins to the Present* (New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2003), 234.

from the life of Erasmus, the Dutch Renaissance theologian, teacher, and priest for whom the school is named.³ The article about the dedication of the window specifically described the window as painted, but it is unclear what the author meant. Without further documentation and close observation, the details of the window's construction and use of paint is not known. However, it is the only known instance in which the Church Glass and Decorating Company was recognized in contemporary sources for producing a "painted" stained-glass window.

In addition to stained-glass, the Church Glass and Decorating Company also produced a series of church decorations that included "various objects and decoration employed in ecclesiological and domestic embellishment."⁴ This aspect of the firm's production included doors, lamps, memorial tablets in bronze and mosaic, mural decoration, altars, and other decorations for both secular and religious interiors. On some occasions, the company also created complete rooms. One in particular was the chapel at Pelham Manor, which is discussed in Chapter two. It is difficult to trace and attribute these works in modern times, due to lack of documentation, period newspaper articles, signed works, and company advertising. Also, such commissions do not appear to be the bulk of the Church Glass and Decorating Company's production. However, some of these objects were featured prominently in their catalogs and advertisements, allowing for some attributions. A sanctuary lamp featured in the firm's 1905 catalog with its church name and location was found still hanging in the All Saint's Church of Lakewood, New

³ "Alumni Window at Erasmus To Be Dedicated Sunday Afternoon With Simple But Impressive Service," *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 16, 1911.

⁴ "Fine Arts. American Decorations in Church and Domestic Windows at Pratt Institute—Drake Sale Begins," *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, February 25, 1907.

Jersey in 2015 (fig. 1).⁵ Slightly obscured by a ceiling fan in the 2015 image, the church's representative confirmed that the lamp matched the 1905 catalog illustration, which specified the Lakewood church (fig. 2).

Other examples of Church Glass and Decorating Company decorations can be found in contemporary newspaper accounts, such as the Broome tablet that was presented to Broome County, New York in 1906.⁶ Celebrating historic career of Lieutenant John Broome, for whom Broome County was named, the tablet and the event it commemorated were covered in detail in the newspaper article, but no designer was confirmed for the commission. Outside of stained-glass windows, known period sources rarely credited the designers. This made it unclear whether the artists responsible for these examples of the Church Glass and Decorating Company's production were the same designers of the firm's stained-glass windows. In another example, the company created a brass cross and two flower vases in memorial for Mrs. John B. Kieffer for the Nevin Chapel of Franklin and Marshall College. An article in the *Reformed Church Messenger* described the cross in detail including the engraved inscription; however, the article only notes that the Church Glass and Decorating Company completed the commission.⁷

While there are currently no known examples or commissions, one advertisement by the Church Glass and Decorating Company reflects the demand for decorative arts in the high-end interiors of the Gilded Age and their inclusion in the firm's production. In a

⁵ Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York, *Artists in English and American Glass, Mosaics, and Metals* (New York, NY: Church Glass and Decorating Company, 1905).

⁶ "City Honors Broome: Tablet in Memory of Colonel Unveiled at Binghamton," *New-York Tribune*, September 20, 1906.

⁷ "A Memorial to Mrs. Kieffer," *Reformed Church Messenger*, May 3, 1906.

1907 issue of *The Church Standard*, the firm concluded their one page advertisement stating that the company, “also undertakes all the branches of interior decorative art, and offers the advantage of a wide experience in the embellishment of residences of the highest class.”⁸ To what level the Church Glass and Decorating Company accomplished this is currently unknown. Whether the firm emulated Tiffany’s Associated Artists and worked as interior designers for wealthy clients, or simply produced a line of furnishings, it is not included in known period newspaper accounts or published examples of the Church Glass and Decorating Company’s works. However, this statement illustrates that the firm was branching into secular interior decorations at the same time that they were advertising secular ornamental windows. Both aspects of the company’s production were advertised from their 28 West 30th Street address, which they occupied from 1904 to 1909. While the Church Glass and Decorating Company’s interior decorations are currently a mystery, their ornamental windows are described with illustrations in Chapter three.

The Church Glass and Decorating Company’s advertisements illustrate the range of products pursued outside of stained-glass windows and their continual inclusion in the company’s marketing efforts note their importance. For instance, in a 1905 advertisement in *The Advance*, the firm stated, “The Church Glass and Decorating Company has with its organization artists and others of acknowledged authority in these various lines, hence are well fitted to produce all forms of memorials: mural paintings, pulpits, rails, etc., etc.”⁹

⁸ Church Glass and Decorating Company, advertisement, *The Church Standard*, Volume 92 (March 30, 1907).

⁹ Church Glass and Decorating Company, advertisement, *The Advance*, July 6, 1905.

Through larger fonts and more text, the advertisement highlights the firm's stained-glass window production, specifically memorial windows. They also mention the Thompson Memorial Chapel of Williams College commission, discussed in more detail in Chapter three, which was completed in partnership with John Hardman and Company. However, the advertisement also states that the firm created all forms of memorials such as murals and pulpits, acknowledging their other products and their importance within the Church Glass and Decorating Company's production. What information was not included in contemporary sources by or about the firm was the explanation, process, or contractor that manufactured the wide-range products of the Church Glass and Decorating Company, beyond the windows provided by John Hardman and Company.

Who Made the Window Glass and Constructed the Windows?

In the known publications put forth by the Church Glass and Decorating Company, there is little to no information on how the company's windows were constructed and produced. Sources about the business relationship between the firm and John Hardman and Company confirmed that their windows were sent to the Church Glass and Decorating Company in an unleaded state and assembled in the United States, but currently there is only speculation about how the American window designs were executed.¹⁰ The Calvert and Kimberly Company of New York (1899-1905) published several Church Glass and Decorating Company windows in their 1904/1905 catalog, which raises a new set of possibilities and questions. Many of these windows are documented as Church Glass and Decorating Company designs through period

¹⁰ Michael J. Fisher, *Hardman of Birmingham: Goldsmith and Glasspainter* (Derbyshire, England: Landmark Publishing, Ltd., 2008), 151.

newspaper articles, church records, company catalogs, and, in some cases, company signatures on the windows. So why would the Calvert and Kimberly Company claim Church Glass and Decorating Company windows as “specimens of our work”?¹¹ One possible explanation is that the Calvert and Kimberly Company manufactured the stained-glass designs on contract for the Church Glass and Decorating Company.

Of the thirty-one commissions listed in the 1904/1905 Calvert and Kimberly catalog, half of these stained-glass windows are included in known catalogs and sources on the Church Glass and Decorating Company. To further confirm that the commissions were Church Glass and Decorating Company designs, many of them are listed with the artist as well as the church name and location, which is consistent with company sources. Some of the most well-known stained-glass windows included in the Calvert and Kimberly Company catalog have been confirmed to be Church Glass and Decorating Company designs through a variety of sources. These include: “The Ascension” in the Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago by William Fair Kline, the windows of All Angels Church by Violet Oakley, Armour Memorial Window of the Armour Institute of Chicago by Edward Peck Sperry, two windows in the First Church of Plymouth, Massachusetts also by Sperry, and the Avery Memorial Window in the Avery Memorial Church of Groton, Connecticut.¹²

Unlike the Church Glass and Decorating Company, the Calvert and Kimberly Company referenced glass production, window construction, and the fact that they

¹¹ Calvert and Kimberly Company, New York, *O Ye Heavens and the Earth, Praise Ye the Lord* (New York, NY: Calvert and Kimberly Company, 1904/1905).

¹² Calvert and Kimberly Company, New York, *O Ye Heavens and the Earth, Praise Ye the Lord* (New York, NY: Calvert and Kimberly Company, 1904/1905).

employed the “most skillful artisans and craftsmen in the world” in their advertisements.¹³ In addition to these references in the 1904/1905 catalog, the firm provided a list of stained-glass windows listed at various locations in the United States and Canada as well as the names of specific designers for many of the windows. No other products were included in the catalog. To further confirm that the Calvert and Kimberly Company exclusively produced stained-glass, in the official catalog of the 1904 St. Louis World’s Fair Exposition, the Calvert and Kimberly Company registered themselves solely as makers of stained-glass windows.¹⁴ Other exhibitors listed a wider product range. Further evidence can be found in the Annual Report of the Factory Inspector of the State of New York. While the Church Glass and Decorating Company was not included in the publication, Calvert and Kimberly Company as well as Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company are included, listing factory statistics such as the numbers of male and female employees as well as the hours of labor by the company.¹⁵ At the time of this publication at the end of 1900, the Church Glass and Decorating Company had been in operation for over a year and produced some well-known commissions already. No known publication by the Church Glass and Decorating Company mentioned glass manufacturing. Therefore, if the company did not produce glass or employ craftsmen to assemble their window designs, they would have needed to partner with a separate company.

¹³ Calvert and Kimberly Company, New York, *O Ye Heavens and the Earth, Praise Ye the Lord* (New York, NY: Calvert and Kimberly Company, 1904/1905).

¹⁴ *Official Catalogue of Exhibitors, Universal Exposition, St. Louis, U.S.A. 1904: Division of Exhibits For the Committee on Press and Publicity* (St. Louis, MO: Official Catalogue Company, Incorporated, 1904), 30.

¹⁵ *Annual Report of Factory Inspectors of the State of New York for the Year Ending November 30, 1900* (New York, NY: Argus Company, printers, 1901), 290, 461.

Phyllis Partridge explored and confirmed the theory that the Calvert and Kimberly Company partnered with the Church Glass and Decorating Company to produce the firm's stained-glass designs in her 2009 article in *The Stained Glass Quarterly*. Examining sources in the Violet Oakley papers in the Smithsonian Archives of American Art, Partridge documented a connection between the two companies for the Oakley commissions of "Faith" and "Charity."¹⁶ Furthermore, Partridge collected a number of publications by the Calvert and Kimberly Company as well as its later rendition, the Duffner and Kimberly Company as part of her personal research into a childhood lamp. In her article, she noted that in one of the catalogs, the Calvert and Kimberly Company specifically referenced a stained-glass window as "executed in glass for the Church Glass and Decorating Co. of New York."¹⁷ This statement cemented the relationship between the two companies and why the names of Church Glass and Decorating Company commissions are found in the catalogs of Calvert and Kimberly Company. However, it is unclear if the Calvert and Kimberly Company was the only company to fabricate the window designs of the Church Glass and Decorating Company or how long the relationship between the two companies lasted.

Exhibitions

The Church Glass and Decorating Company exhibited their stained-glass windows, cartoons, and designs at various institutions during their fifteen-year history.

¹⁶ See Phyllis Partridge, "Whodunit? Or, When is a Tiffany Not a Tiffany?" *The Stained Glass Quarterly*, Volume 104, Issue 4, Winter 2009. p. 296. This thesis author is not clear as to whether these designs are related to the commission at All Angels' Church, New York City or to a separate commission.

¹⁷ See Partridge, "Whodunit? Or, When is a Tiffany Not a Tiffany?" *The Stained Glass Quarterly*, Volume 104, Issue 4, Winter 2009, 292. The publication which confirms this relationship has not been seen by the author.

While their exhibition at the Pratt Institute was the only one to clearly state what the firm included in their display, the exhibitions of their works likely garnered attention that led to commissions and enhanced public opinion. Additionally, the choices of the specific exhibitions that the Church Glass and Decorating Company participated in appeared to be well thought-out events that would appeal to specific audiences as well as further the goals and ideals of the company president, Caryl Coleman. In choosing to participate in the United Crafts' Arts and Crafts exhibition of 1903, the company identified with the Arts and Crafts movement in America. The Pratt Institute was known for developing burgeoning artists and had ties to Tiffany's company, who also held a solo exhibition at the school almost one year prior. These exhibitions were opportunities for the Church Glass and Decorating Company to present a variety of their best works in the various styles of stained-glass and ornamental windows to large and focused audiences.

In 1903, the Church Glass and Decorating Company was one of four stained-glass exhibitors at the Syracuse Arts and Crafts exhibition, which also included works by Charles J. Connick (1875-1945), Margaret Redmond (1867-1948), and J. and R. Lamb (1857-present).¹⁸ United Crafts (1900-1904), Gustav Stickley's firm known for pioneering Arts and Crafts furniture and decorative arts in the United States, supported the exhibition, hosting the event at the Craftsman's Building in Syracuse, New York. The Arts and Crafts movement in America developed in response to the British Arts and Crafts movement, which was connected to the works of A.W.N. Pugin, William Morris, and John Ruskin. Intricately linked to the British movement, the American movement

¹⁸ Cleota Reed, edited, *Henry Keck Stained Glass Studio 1913-1974* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1985), xix.

focused on the works of individuals such as William Morris and Charles Robert Ashbee, as well as the ideals of handicraft. Stickley's firm coupled with *The Craftsman*, his publication dedicated to disseminating the ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement, promoted honest construction, simple lines, and quality material in design. The purposes of the Arts and Crafts exhibition were to demonstrate an "adequate representation of the actual state of American handicraft. It has excited sufficient interest and comment to make the organization which conceived and executed it a center for furthering and fostering the decorative and industrial arts."¹⁹ Church Glass and Decorating Company's inclusion in the exhibition likely stemmed from Coleman's published articles in *The Craftsman* as well as lectures which focused on art education and handicraft in the United States. In a lecture in Delaware in 1902, Coleman spoke about the "value of handicraft" and about how "art teachers are the ones to spread correct knowledge of color, form, etc., and to restore hand work."²⁰ The Church Glass and Decorating Company's participation in the exhibition therefore reflects the relationship that Coleman had forged with *The Craftsman* and United Crafts coupled with the company president's own philosophy on art education and handicraft.

Known articles about the Syracuse Arts and Crafts exhibition do not mention the Church Glass and Decorating Company's display, or those of the other stained-glass exhibitors who were present. Articles simply noted that the exhibitors presented stained-glass windows as well as cartoons. Instead, the sources focused on the importance of the

¹⁹ Irene Sargent, "A Recent Arts and Crafts Exhibition," *The Craftsmen*, Volume IV, No. 2 (May 1903), 69.

²⁰ "Talk to Teachers: an Address by Miss Mary C.I. Williams About Art Instruction," *The Morning News* (Wilmington, DE), May 15, 1902.

event to the Arts and Crafts movement in the United States and the variety of the works exhibited, which included examples of metal and leather work, cabinetmaking, bookbinding, book covers, book plates, ceramics, textiles, basketry, designs for letters and lettering, printing, jewelry, and needlework.²¹ Period articles also stated that the event drew visitors from “distant” universities as well as studios and workshops throughout the country, without naming specific persons, studios, or universities. At the conclusion of the exhibition, the event relocated to Rochester, New York for a second showing.²²

Between February 19 and March 2 of 1907, the Pratt Institute’s Department of Fine and Applied Arts hosted a solo exhibition of Church Glass and Decorating Company works that included colored glass windows, cartoons, and sketches provided by company president, Caryl Coleman.²³ Founded in 1887, the Pratt Institute’s Fine and Applied Arts department hosted a variety of exhibitions on fine and decorative arts ranging from paintings to antique textiles to bookbinding in the same calendar year as the stained-glass firm’s exhibition. Additionally, Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company held their own solo exhibition for the Pratt Institute in 1906.²⁴ According to a brief press release in the *New York Times*, the Church Glass and Decorating Company exhibition featured works by company vice-president, Russell Sturgis Foot, Violet Oakley, G.A. Bridgeman, Clara Miller Burd, Dunstan Powell, and E.W. Ahrens.²⁵ The remainder of the article noted that

²¹ Mabel Tuke Priestman, “History of the Arts and Crafts Movement in America,” *House Beautiful* (Oct/Nov 1906), 14.

²² Priestman, “History of the Arts and Crafts Movement in America,” 14.

²³ *Annual Report of the Pratt Institute Free Library* (New York, NY: Pratt Institute, 1903), 9.

²⁴ “Pratt Institute,” *American Art Annual, Volume 6* (1908), 212.

²⁵ “Local Art Notes,” *New York Times*, February 24, 1907.

the company had commissions in some of the larger cities in the United States and the commissions included religious and secular stained-glass. A second article in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* expanded upon the contents of the exhibition noting,

Among the works exhibited are: Violet Oakley's design for Adoration," for an American window; part of a cartoon for a window for St. Andrew's Church, Pittsburgh, Pa.; cartoon for a window in the Armour Institute, Chicago; V. Oakley's designs for a window for a music room; cartoon for a Sunday school window made for Mrs. Clarence Mackay; C.M. Burd's color sketch for the above; G.B. Bridgeman's design for a window; Dunstan Powell's sketch for a window in Vassar College library; a landscape window for a Presbyterian church in Brooklyn; preliminary sketch of a chancel window in Trinity Cathedral, Cleveland, O.; also a color sketch for a domestic window, by R.S. Foot; color sketch of a medallion window, Church of the Epiphany, Manhattan, and a color sketch by E.W. Ahrens, for the cathedral in Covington, Ky.²⁶

While this list did not include all the works displayed at the Pratt Institute exhibition, the article illustrated the types of stained-glass that Coleman likely deemed some of the company's best works. Additionally, many of these windows were some of the Church Glass and Decorating Company's most well-known and publicized works as well as commissions that will be highlighted in later chapters.

While the Church Glass and Decorating Company participated in exhibitions that included several of their works in one showing, the firm specifically exhibited Violet Oakley's "The Epiphany" window, her first commission with the company, at two locations, including the firm's showrooms. As further explained in Chapter two, Caryl Coleman contracted Violet Oakley to create "The Epiphany" window without remuneration and without a specific commission. The company president then displayed

²⁶ "Fine Arts. American Decorations in Church and Domestic Windows at Pratt Institute—Drake Sale Begins," *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, February 25, 1907.

the stained-glass window at the Church Glass and Decorating Company's 3 West 29th Street location showrooms for several weeks.²⁷ Following this, the Philadelphia's Academy of Fine Arts included Violet Oakley's "The Epiphany" window as part of a varied exhibition that included a series of sketches by former Academy pupils, including pastels by Everett Shinn and paintings by Byam Shaw.²⁸ While "The Epiphany" window was the only known window created without a known commission, it may have been one of several windows created over the company's fifteen tenure to be displayed in the company showrooms of their offices. Additionally, since the Church Glass and Decorating Company participated in exhibitions, the firm may have seen local exhibitions of other stained-glass windows as a form of advertising and a chance to improve their stature in the stained-glass community.

New York Offices

The Church Glass and Decorating Company had four known New York City addresses during the fifteen years they were in operation. Due to the little written evidence and lack of photographic evidence of the spaces that the firm occupied, it is unclear why the company moved every few years. Only in the case of the first address, can one assume that the company left quickly for a better, and possibly larger, space. The Church Glass and Decorating Company's first address was 9 West 29th Street, New York.²⁹ Found in the New York City directories, no other known literature by the firm listed this address likely because the firm only spent weeks in this location. An

²⁷ "The World of Art: The Shinn Pastels to Come to the Academy—Philadelphians at the Society Exhibition—A New English Show," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 25, 1900.

²⁸ "At the Academy: Displays That Form an Exhibition of More Than Ordinary Interest," *The Times*, April 17, 1900. Page 6

²⁹ *New York City Directory*, 1899/1900, New York Public Library, 216.

advertisement by the Church Glass and Decorating Company on March 30, 1899 listed their address as 3, 5, 7, West 29th Street, New York.³⁰ The firm was established in February of the same year.

The Church Glass and Decorating Company stayed at the second address until 1904. The firm completed some of their most well-known commissions while at this location, including Violet Oakley's All Angels' Church commission and the Philip D. Armour Memorial at the Armour Institute of Chicago. Additionally, the company also produced a pamphlet for at least one of their commissions, the figural windows, "Civil Liberty" and "Religious Liberty" at the First Church in Plymouth, Massachusetts.³¹ Of the known and surviving literature produced by the Church Glass and Decorating Company, this is the earliest and the only example with this company address. Furthermore, it appeared that the Church Glass and Decorating Company had exhibition space at this new address. As previously noted, Violet Oakley's first stained-glass commission, "The Epiphany," was displayed at the firm's 3, 5, and 7 West 29th Street location showrooms for several weeks.³²

The Church Glass and Decorating Company's third New York address was 28 West 30th Street, which can be found in the New York City directories through 1909 as well as the majority of the known literature published by the firm. While no references have been found regarding exhibition spaces, or size, or why the company changed their location, the firm appeared to have the most success while at this location. Three known

³⁰ Church Glass and Decorating Company, advertisement, *New York Evangelist*, March 30, 1899.

³¹ Church Glass and Decorating Company, "New Society of Brooklyn, N.Y., December 21, 1902, First Church, Plymouth, Mass.," Brooklyn to Plymouth, December 21, 1902.

³² "The World of Art: The Shinn Pastels to Come to the Academy—Philadelphians at the Society Exhibition—A New English Show," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 25, 1900.

catalogs were published at this location, including: *Artists In English and American Glass, Mosaics, and Metals*; *The Glass That Decorates, But Does Not Destroy Light*; and a self-titled catalog with extensive photographs of opalescent, John Hardman and Company windows, and ornamental and figural stained-glass windows among other various church decorations produced by the firm. While *The Glass That Decorates, But Does Not Destroy Light* and the self-titled catalog illustrate many of the styles of stained-glass windows produced by the company during this time period, the catalog *Artists In English and American Glass, Mosaics, and Metals* specifically listed the types of products and windows created by the firm as well as specific locations of commissions.³³ At this point during the Church Glass and Decorating Company operations, the firm produced stained-glass windows for institutions and churches throughout the United States.

By July 1909, the Church Glass and Decorating Company had moved once again to 32 East 28th Street, New York. Similar to the other locations, there was no known explanation for the firm to switch addresses or information about the size or layout of the new office. The address appeared in New York City directories as well as an advertisement in *The Churchman*.³⁴ The company appeared to have continued success at this new location as evidenced by a full-page advertisement in *The Parish Messenger* in December 1912.³⁵ Featuring an image of a stained-glass window from the firm's

³³ Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York, *Artists in English and American Glass, Mosaics, and Metals* (New York, NY: Church Glass and Decorating Company, 1905).

³⁴ Church Glass and Decorating Company, advertisement, *The Churchman*, Volume 100 (July 24, 1909), 116.

³⁵ Church Glass and Decorating Company, advertisement, *The Parish Messenger*, Volume 17, No. 3 (December 1912).

commission in Saint Ignatius' Church, the Church Glass and Decorating Company touted their continued relationship with John Hardman and Company as well as their opalescent stained-glass windows. Furthermore, the firm noted in the advertisement, "we have received orders from some of the most cultured people in the United States."³⁶ While this may have been true, the abundance of company literature and advertisements did not seem to match that of the previous location. There were several advertisements, pamphlets, and a few catalogs from previous years of the Church Glass and Decorating Company's tenure, but this full-page advertisement is one of only a few known advertisements by the firm during this time. No other types of company literature from this location are currently known.

New Jersey Office

Through the process of confirming the Church Glass and Decorating Company's New York office addresses for the years 1911 to 1913, a new address for the firm surfaced, placing the stained-glass company in Jersey City, New Jersey in 1914. In a list of state corporations released by the New Jersey Department of State in 1914, the department cited the Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York's location and principal office as 1 Montgomery Street, Jersey City.³⁷ This address is not found on any known advertisements, newspaper articles, or catalogs by the firm and the publication did not specify when the company moved to this address. Additionally, while the list of corporations was originally published in 1914, they covered New Jersey companies that

³⁶ Church Glass and Decorating Company, advertisement, *The Parish Messenger*, Volume 17, No. 3 (December 1912).

³⁷ New Jersey Department of State, *Corporations of New Jersey: List of Certificates* (Trenton, NJ: MacCrellish & Quigley, 1914), 131.

were in business as of December 31, 1911. Despite this, the publication did contain the disclaimer, “It will be noted that reference is made in this list to a considerable number of corporations organized by Special Acts of the Legislature. Inasmuch as there is nothing on file or of record in this Department to show whether or not these corporations are still in existence, we have deemed it wise to place them in the list of existing corporations.”³⁸ Therefore, the state department distributed the information about the Church Glass and Decorating Company according to their latest records. Also, the New Jersey Department of State did not include the firm in publications for the years prior to and after 1914. Therefore, there was a significant chance that the company was still in operation in 1914 at a new office in New Jersey.

Prior to this discovery, the last known address of the Church Glass and Decorating Company was 32 East 28th Street, New York. As previously mentioned, the firm released a full-page advertisement in *The Parish Messenger* in December 1912 from that location, which confirmed their New York address as well as their continued business relationship with John Hardman and Company and their opalescent stained-glass and memorial windows.³⁹ While mostly based in New York, throughout the time they were in business, the Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York was a New Jersey corporation. The firm was initially incorporated in Trenton, New Jersey in 1899 with a capital of \$100,000.⁴⁰ Also, the New Jersey State Board of Assessors recorded taxes that the Church Glass and Decorating Company owed the state on the firm’s capital

³⁸ New Jersey Department of State, *Corporations of New Jersey: List of Certificates* (Trenton, NJ: MacCrellish & Quigley, 1914), 3.

³⁹ Church Glass and Decorating Company, advertisement, *The Parish Messenger*, Volume 17, No. 3 (December 1912).

⁴⁰ “General Trade Notes,” *China, Glass and Lamps*, February 16, 1899. Corning Archives

stock in 1905.⁴¹ The firm's first four recorded addresses for the years 1899 to 1912 were in New York City directories before any known mention of the company operating in New Jersey and, currently, there are no known advertisements for the Church Glass and Decorating Company in 1913. Therefore it is unclear if the company moved their principal office to Jersey City during 1913 or 1914.

The address of 1 Montgomery Street, Jersey City was the only known New Jersey address for the Church Glass and Decorating Company. While the discovery of this address suggests that the company was in business until 1914, the firm had definitely closed by 1915. As further discussed in Chapter two, company president Caryl Coleman designed a window for Wayne State University in 1913, which faced several unspecified delays in awaiting installation. In 1915, the original Church Glass and Decorating Company window was installed in the Martindale Normal Training School building of Wayne University under the Montague Castle-London Company.⁴² By this time, the Church Glass and Decorating Company was no longer officially in business and therefore could not install the stained-glass window.

Chicago Office

Currently, there is only one known confirmation of a Chicago office, despite the significant number of stained-glass windows designed by Church Glass and Decorating Company in the Chicago area. In a letter from company president, Caryl Coleman, regarding the *Great Window* in the Thompson Memorial Library of Vassar College, the

⁴¹ New Jersey State Board of Assessors, *Annual Report of the State Board of Assessors of the State of New Jersey, Part II* (Paterson, NJ: 1905), 93.

⁴² "The Harriet Maria Scott Memorial Stained Glass Window," <http://coe.wayne.edu/about/scott-memorial.php>, accessed October 1, 2013.

letterhead includes, “Chicago Office/ Fine Arts Building/ 203 Michigan Avenue.”⁴³

However, this address was crossed out with six diagonal lines, likely by Coleman, who also crossed out the company’s New York address. The company president updated the New York address to “28 West 30th Street” at the top of both pages. Since this is the only known recording of the Chicago office of the Church Glass and Decorating Company, it is unknown as to how long the firm kept an office in the Chicago area or what led to its closure.

Two events, which will be discussed in more detail in later chapters, may have resulted in the company’s departure from the Windy City, but, currently, it is simply speculation. The first event was the departure of designer and company secretary Edward Peck Sperry in 1904.⁴⁴ Sperry designed a large number of commissions for the Church Glass and Decorating Company in all areas of the country where the firm’s windows can be found, including Chicago. This loss of a major designer and part of the administration only five years into the company’s tenure could have resulted in a reexamination of the company’s need or ability to keep regional offices. Secondly, the commission of the “Ascension” window of the Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago appeared to be a subject of controversy for the Church Glass and Decorating Company. In a letter from John La Farge to Russell Sturgis Foot, La Farge claimed that William Fair Kline plagiarized one of his designs for the “Ascension” commission. While no detail was provided to indicate a legal dispute, La Farge does note that “a lot of rather nasty

⁴³ Caryl Coleman to unknown, September 21, 1904, Archives of Vassar College.

⁴⁴ Paul F. Norton, “The ‘American Window Department’ of the Gorham Manufacturing Company,” *Nineteenth Century*, Volume 23, No. 1 (Spring 2003), 12.

exposure took place last year (1903),” because of the claim.⁴⁵ While the decision to close the Chicago office may have simply resulted from a reevaluation of company resources, these two events occurred within months of the closing.

Crediting Their Designers and Signing Their Works

The Church Glass and Decorating Company and their founders continuously promoted their works through journal articles, advertisements, catalogs, and newspaper articles throughout the company’s tenure. However, the firm was often mistaken both during their own time, as well as in modern times, for more well-known competitors and current stained-glass research often contains little information about the company. One of the biggest reasons for this issue, despite contemporary efforts by the firm, was because the Church Glass and Decorating Company did not credit their designers in copyright petitions or through their catalogs and illustrated advertisements. Furthermore, the firm rarely signed their stained-glass windows, and almost never included an artist’s signature. In neglecting these aspects in their stained-glass windows, the Church Glass and Decorating Company and their designers are often not accorded the credit due to their works.

While John Hardman and Company frequently included signatures in their works for the American market, the Church Glass and Decorating Company rarely included company signatures on their stained-glass windows. In doing so, the firm left a series of stained-glass windows unidentifiable for later viewers who did not have access to other methods of confirming the works’ provenance. Additionally, due to the transient nature

⁴⁵ John La Farge to Russell Sturgis. April 20, 1904, Yale University Library, Manuscript and Archives.

of some of the contemporary stained-glass artists who worked for more than one firm during their careers, company misattributions are more common, because, even if an art historian can identify the designer of a stained-glass window, this does not reveal what firm the designer was working for at the time. For instance, in the case of the figural stained-glass windows of the First Church of Plymouth, Massachusetts, Edward Peck Sperry completed all but one of these windows while employed by the Church Glass and Decorating Company. Sperry designed the central chancel window, the “Signing of the Compact,” while he was still working for Tiffany’s firm in 1897.⁴⁶ Due to the popularity of Tiffany Studios in art history and the similarities in the stained-glass window, which were all designed by the same artist, the First Church believed that their windows were all completed by Tiffany. What makes this misattribution unique was the Church Glass and Decorating Company signature on the proper right chancel window (fig. 3 and fig. 4). The signed window at the First Church in Plymouth, Massachusetts is one of only three signed windows by the firm known thus far, but it is also not the only signed window to be misattributed to Tiffany’s firm.

In researching the connection between the Church Glass and Decorating Company and the Calvert and Kimberly Company, Phyllis Partridge found a similar situation of a signed window being misattributed to Tiffany’s firm.⁴⁷ She acquired a research paper by Barbara Gallati, who, with representatives of Christie’s, examined one

⁴⁶ “Architectural League Exhibition,” *The Baltimore Sun*, February 20, 1897, 7.

⁴⁷ See Partridge, “Whodunit? Or, When Is a Tiffany Not a Tiffany?” in *The Stained Glass Quarterly*, Volume 104, Issue 4, Winter 2009. Partridge found a connection between the firms: the Church Glass and Decorating Company and the Calvert and Kimberly Company. In this article, she concluded that the Church Glass and Decorating Company contracted with the Calvert and Kimberly Company to manufacture their stained-glass windows designs. This argument is presented with further evidence to support her argument in the last section of Chapter 1 of this thesis.

of the Violet Oakley stained-glass windows made for her commission in the All Angels' Church of New York before the removal of the windows and subsequent demolition of the church. According to Gallati's observations, "direct inspection of the windows revealed that the Tilford/Simeon window was signed Church Glass and Decorating Co., New York on the glass itself in the lower left corner. When this was pointed out [to a Christie's representative he] explained that [this] was a corporate name used by Tiffany Studios at the time of the commission. Yet Edith Emerson [Oakley's long-time companion and biographer] has emphatically stated that Oakley had never worked with Tiffany."⁴⁸ Even in the case of signed stained-glass windows, the Church Glass and Decorating Company was often overlooked in order to tie their opalescent stained-glass to Tiffany's firm. While the willingness of persons and institutions to impose Tiffany attributions may not have been affected even by company signatures, the lack of consistency in the signed windows by the Church Glass and Decorating Company created a small group of one-offs rather than identified works. Therefore, such unique examples could be misconstrued as experiments or commissions of departments of larger firms such as Tiffany. With more consistent signatures, comparisons within stained-glass scholarship as well as neighboring institutions would have been more likely. As stated by Partridge, "How easy it is for 'possibly Tiffany' to become 'probably Tiffany' and finally 'our Tiffany'" without clear evidence otherwise?⁴⁹

The "Ivanhoe" window is the only known stained-glass window by the Church Glass and Decorating Company that is signed by the designer to be discovered thus far.

⁴⁸ Partridge, "Whodunit? Or, When Is a Tiffany Not a Tiffany?" 296.

⁴⁹ Partridge, "Whodunit? Or, When Is a Tiffany Not a Tiffany?" 296.

Formally titled the “Frank Dickinson Bartlett Memorial Window,” the “Ivanhoe” window was designed by Edward Peck Sperry for the Bartlett Gymnasium of the University of Chicago (fig. 3).⁵⁰ Inspired by Sir Walter Scott’s novel *Ivanhoe*, the stained-glass window contains more than 15,000 pieces of glass and was originally located in the building’s stair hall. Signed and dated by Sperry, the window is unique in that it was one of a select group of windows for which the company included a date and designer signature. Currently stored in a crate at the University of Chicago, stained-glass consultant Julie L. Sloan examined and photographed the stained-glass window to confirm the existence of the signature.

The Church Glass and Decorating Company did not list their designers in their copyright petitions, advertisements, or in the firm’s catalogs. This practice was in direct conflict with Tiffany’s firm, which was also the previous employer of Caryl Coleman and Edward Peck Sperry. In the firm’s copyright petitions, the Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company continually credited designers, such as Edward Peck Sperry, even after the designer’s departure from the company in 1899.⁵¹ Why the Church Glass and Decorating Company did not include the designers names in the copyright petitions is unclear. Newspaper articles and exhibitions touted the names of various designers employed by the firm throughout its tenure. Images of the Church Glass and Decorating Company’s most well-publicized works were used in catalogs and other literature published by the firm throughout the company’s history, but the designers were not credited in these

⁵⁰ Erne R. Fruch and Florence Fruch, “The Ivanhoe Window,” *Stained Glass Quarterly*, Volume 77, No. 2 (Summer 1982), 130.

⁵¹ Copyright, “Peter’s Confession of Faith,” Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company, April 21, 1899, No. 27580.

instances. For instance, the copyright for Violet Oakley's commission of "The Epiphany" did not include her name, yet the window was exhibited at the Philadelphia Academy of Art and the showrooms of the Church Glass and Decorating Company.⁵²

Early Misattributions

Misattributions of Church Glass and Decorating Company stained-glass windows began while the company was still in business and, at times, only a few years after the window was installed. Due to a lack of copyrights, signatures, and typical poor quality of church records, period and contemporary attributions of the firm's stained-glass windows relied on local memory, newspaper accounts, and any remaining records at the institutions in question. Unfortunately, this system failed early and often in the case of less established companies, like the Church Glass and Decorating Company. In the cases of two early public misattributions, it was currently unknown whether either of these was publicly or privately corrected by the Church Glass and Decorating Company or Tiffany Studios during the period. At a time when there were several newer, small companies in the stained-glass market competing with Tiffany Studios, such a quick misattribution of a window suggested that Tiffany's company benefited early and often for attributions of other company's windows due to name recognition despite the practice of Tiffany Studios signing their commissions.

One early misattribution of one of the firm's windows was the Clapp memorial window located in Clapp Mortuary Chapel in the Pittsfield Cemetery of Pittsfield, Massachusetts (fig. 6). In an extensive article that included the story of the chapel, a

⁵² Copyright, "The Epiphany," Church Glass and Decorating Company, April 10, 1900, Class D, No. 7542.

description of the interior, and the dedications made, *The Evening Journal* expanded upon earlier mentions in the dedication of the chapel's stained-glass windows. Fully describing the window, its inspiration and coloring, the article stated, "the window was designed by E.P. Sperry one of the best known artists in colored glass and executed by the Church Glass and Decorating Co. of New York, an associating [sic] of artists who have made every form of glass work their special study."⁵³ This article coupled with the inclusion of the stained-glass window in the company's 1905 catalog should have verified the attribution of the window to the Church Glass and Decorating Company. However, since the window is not signed or included in known company copyrights, the possibility of misattribution became likely and happened less than five years after its installation. In an article on July 2, 1903, the *Pittsfield Sun* reported the stained-glass window of the Clapp Chapel as "one of Tiffany's best, modest but very beautiful."⁵⁴ The chapel was dedicated less than three years prior to this article and the Church Glass and Decorating Company was still in business. Due to the greater reputation of Tiffany Studios and their long-term association with American opalescent stained-glass beginnings and popularity, it appeared that period sources opted to err with a Tiffany attribution of an unsigned window.

The Philip memorial window was installed in the Main Building of the Armour Institute of Technology of Chicago, now the Illinois Institute of Technology, in 1901 (fig. 7). In a 1903 school publication, *The Integral*, the window is credited to Mr. Edwin P.

⁵³ "Today's Dedication: Services at Clapp Mortuary Chapel at Cemetery," *The Evening Journal*, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, October 17, 1900.

⁵⁴ "The Pittsfield Cemetery and the Edwin Clapp Memorial Chapel: a Chapter of History—Location of the Chapel and Reasons Therefore—Memorial Hill," *Pittsfield Sun*, July 2, 1903.

Sperry (presumably a misidentification of Edward P. Sperry) who once worked for Mr. L.C. Tiffany, and created the window as a part of the Church Glass and Decorating Company.⁵⁵ The publication continued to illustrate the three-panel window, which was placed at the top of a grand staircase, as well as explain the symbolism in the window design in light of the subject, Philip D. Armour. The author noted that the stained-glass window utilized over one million pieces of glass in the design. The window was also featured in at least two catalogs distributed by the Church Glass and Decorating Company for years after the commission, with a full page dedicated to the stained-glass window in the larger publication.⁵⁶ However, by 1905, a publication on the Armour Mission recognized Tiffany's company as the designer of the stained-glass window.⁵⁷ What led to this misattribution in what appears to be an Armour Institute publication is unclear. Furthermore, the Church Glass and Decorating Company was still in business at this time and had only recently closed their Chicago office. By itself, this could be viewed as a simple mistake by an Armour Institute writer, because the window is not signed, and it is unknown how available and well-known the *Integral* publication would have been at the time. However, coupled with the misattribution of the Clapp Memorial, it appeared that there was a complacency to attribute windows to a more well-known, established stained-glass company, such as Tiffany Studios, even in the early decades of the twentieth century.

⁵⁵ "The Memorial Window," *Integral*, 1903, Archives Illinois Institute of Technology.

⁵⁶ Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York, *Stained-Glass Catalog* (New York, NY: Church Glass and Decorating Company, 1907).

⁵⁷ *An Illustrated Historical Sketch of Armour Mission, Containing Also a Directory of the Sunday School and Its Tributary Organizations*, 1905, Archives Illinois Institute of Technology.

Confusing Church Glass and Decorating Company with Tiffany Today

Throughout this author's research into the stained-glass windows of the Church Glass and Decorating Company, there have been several instances of institutions misattributing their windows to Tiffany without evidence to support these claims. In light of some of the early twentieth-century misattributions of Church Glass and Decorating Company stained-glass, one cannot be quick to judge this method, due to the frequent lack of signatures and provenance information left by the firm. However, there is often no evidence for these institutions to declare their windows to be the product of Tiffany's company. The most common instance of misattribution involves stained-glass windows composed of opalescent glass with no signature or known provenance that churches designate as "Tiffany," because utilizing the Tiffany name, a well-known company, provides a high level of prestige for their stained-glass. The First Church of Plymouth, Massachusetts, upon learning that their windows were published in catalogs and pamphlets by the Church Glass and Decorating Company, stated "So, is the "loss" of the Tiffany name important? To some, I imagine. Tiffany is sexy. Church Glass and Decorating Company is not."⁵⁸ With this statement and the common practice of attributing opalescent stained-glass to Tiffany's firm, it appears that for many an "unknown" company does not hold the same level of artistic prestige as Tiffany's company. This thought process is unfortunate, because in the case of the First Church in Plymouth, Edward Peck Sperry was the designer of all the figural windows in the

⁵⁸ "When is a Tiffany Window not a Tiffany Window?" First Parish Meetinghouse Restoration Newsletter—Winter Edition (March 2015), 2.

church.⁵⁹ The difference lies solely that in the case of three of the windows, Sperry was part of the Church Glass and Decorating Company rather than Tiffany's firm. However, as more scholarship emerges on companies such as Church Glass and Decorating Company, a more complete story of the American stained-glass movement at the turn-of-the-century may provide more interest and value to such windows that were previously thought to be made by Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company.

The American Stained Glass Movement of the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

The American stained-glass movement at the turn-of-the-century can trace its roots to the invention of opalescent glass in the last quarter of the nineteenth century by Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933) and John La Farge (1835-1910). The two men were experimenting in New York glasshouses during the same time period and there is much debate over who created opalescent glass first. Tiffany initially produced opalescent glass at the Heidt Glasshouse, where he had been working among other glassmakers including La Farge.⁶⁰ La Farge, who trained and also practiced as a painter, had been experimenting with glass since 1876 in his Washington Square studio.⁶¹ Opalescent glass came out of a period of endless experimentation by the two artists and the glass had a "milky, opaque, and sometimes rainbow hue" which gave it an iridescent look while still allowing light to shine through it.⁶² While it is unclear which artist created opalescent glass first, both men

⁵⁹ Church Glass and Decorating Company, "New Society of Brooklyn, N.Y., December 21, 1902, First Church, Plymouth, Mass.," Brooklyn to Plymouth, December 21, 1902.

⁶⁰ Robert Koch, *Louis C. Tiffany's Glass, Bronzes, Lamps*, (New York, NY: Crown Publishers, 1971), 32.

⁶¹ Robert Koch, "Louis C. Tiffany: Rebel in Glass," *Louis C. Tiffany: The Collected Works of Robert Koch*. (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 2001), 42.

⁶² Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, *Louis Comfort Tiffany at the Metropolitan Museum*, (New York, NY, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998), 29.

received patents on variations of the technique, with Tiffany receiving two patents on opalescent technique variations in 1881.⁶³ The artists immediately incorporated the glass into a new form of stained-glass production, creating painterly scenes that relied on the varied colorations of the glass rather than paint. Stained-glass windows were “designed with small, intricately cut pieces of glass, some of which were superimposed in layers to create richly colored and textured pictures. This exuberant use of materials led to such a radical aesthetic departure that it was christened the ‘American school of stained glass.’”⁶⁴

The invention of opalescent glass in the 1880s coincided with a religious revival in the United States that launched a substantial increase in the building and decorating of religious structures. By 1888, there were four thousand church buildings under construction in the United States.⁶⁵ This increase in construction resulted in a demand for craftsmen and artisans as well as architects. During this time, leaded windows were considered an essential architectural element of a religious building, and the amount of construction coupled with the advent of a new American form of stained-glass created new markets.⁶⁶ Additionally, the advent of new industries and wealth that sparked the American Gilded Age generated an abundant interest in decorative arts and highly

⁶³ Alastair Duncan, *Tiffany Windows*, (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1980), 12.

⁶⁴ Lindsay R. Parrott, “‘Unimaginable Splendours of Colour’: Tiffany’s Opalescent Glass,” in *Louis Comfort Tiffany and the Art of Devotion* (New York, NY: Museum of Biblical Art, 2012), 88.

⁶⁵ Alastair Duncan, “Stained Glass: Secular Windows and Ecclesiastical Settings,” *Masterworks of Louis Comfort Tiffany*. (New York, NY: Harry Adams, Incorporated, 1993), 122.

⁶⁶ Virginia Chieffo Raguin, *Stained Glass: From Its Origins to the Present* (New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2003) 237.

ornamented interiors, which also created new markets for secular stained-glass windows.⁶⁷

While Tiffany and La Farge forged their way into the new markets as the pioneers of opalescent glass, the burgeoning markets for stained-glass in religious and secular settings of the period resulted in a growing number of stained-glass designers and studios to meet the new demands.⁶⁸ Similar to the Church Glass and Decorating Company, many of the emerging stained-glass producers and studios of the time were initially trained in other artistic mediums, employing a number of well-known artisans who began their careers in painting and in other fine arts, or with Tiffany Studios. For instance, David Maitland Armstrong (1836-1918) trained as a painter before becoming a designer for Tiffany Studios from 1881-1887. The occupation of stained-glass developed as an occupation in the opalescent era, making this transition from painter or fine artist to designer seamless. The designer did not need experience in cutting glass or leading windows in order to compete in the field. The concept of this developing profession is expanded upon in Chapter two. Following his employment with Tiffany's firm, Armstrong designed stained-glass independently and then created his own firm, Maitland Armstrong and Company of New York (1887-unknown).⁶⁹ This career trajectory was common at the end of the nineteenth century. Armstrong was one of many artists who formed their own studios and designed stained-glass independently after working for Tiffany Studios. As previously mentioned, the Church Glass and Decorating Company

⁶⁷ Raguin, *Stained Glass: From Its Origins to the Present*, 224.

⁶⁸ Raguin, *Stained Glass: From Its Origins to the Present*, 233.

⁶⁹ Raguin, *Stained Glass: From Its Origins to the Present*, 232-233.

traced their stained-glass roots back to Tiffany's firm. As will be discussed in Chapter two, some of the freelance designers employed by the firm also had Tiffany connections.

Louis Comfort Tiffany and Tiffany Studios played a considerable role in the development and style of the American stained-glass movement, but not every artist and firm followed their example. Frederick Stymetz Lamb (1862-1928) of J. and R. Lamb Studios (1857-present) was largely influenced by the work of John La Farge.⁷⁰ Initially trained as a painter, Lamb began his career in fine arts working with artists such as George Inness (1825-1894), an American landscape painter and one of the most influential American artists of the nineteenth century. Later joining his father and uncle's stained-glass and ecclesiastical decoration company, Lamb's firm was considered the first American company "to specialize in all facets of ecclesiastical design," creating stained-glass and religious decorations for a larger market.⁷¹ This business concept of providing all elements of church design was one that the Church Glass and Decorating Company incorporated into their own business model. As previously mentioned earlier in Chapter one, the firm also created various ecclesiastical decorations, such as doors, altars, lanterns, and at least one private chapel.

J. and R. Lamb Studios and the Church Glass and Decorating Company were also linked through their inclusion and connections to the American arts and crafts movement. As previously mentioned in Chapter one, both firms participated in the United Crats Arts and Crafts Exhibition, which sought to showcase the progress and works of Arts and

⁷⁰ Raguin, *Stained Glass: From Its Origins to the Present*, 233.

⁷¹ Raguin, *Stained Glass: From Its Origins to the Present*, 233.

Crafts in the United States. Both company founders published articles in Gustav Stickley's magazine, *The Craftsman*.⁷² Caryl Coleman published at least two articles for *The Craftsman* in 1903, including his article "A Mark of Honor" considered one of the leading articles in the October issue of the magazine.⁷³

Not every church in the United States favored opalescent stained-glass and corresponding decoration in their religious spaces creating space for competing styles. Gothic Revival, popularized in England under A.W.N. Pugin (1812-1852) in the mid-nineteenth century as well as by individuals such as William Morris (1834-1896) in the later nineteenth century, was particularly popular among American Episcopalian congregations. Owing their roots to the Church of England, the English Episcopal Church witnessed a revival in liturgically-rich worship, celebrating their beginnings in the Middle Ages.⁷⁴ The American Episcopal Church followed their example. Shunning the opalescent designs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Episcopal churches favored Gothic Revival stained-glass. Therefore, the Church Glass and Decorating Company's decision to partner with John Hardman and Company widened their market for stained-glass windows to reflect the contemporary ecclesiastical tastes.

⁷² Raguin, *Stained Glass: From Its Origins to the Present*, 234.

⁷³ See, "Magazine Notes," *Star Tribune* (Minneapolis Minnesota), November 1, 1903. Another article was completed for *The Craftsman* the same year titled "The Halo in Art," which was published in the October 1903 edition of *The Craftsman*, see "With the October Magazines," *The Indianapolis News*, October 3, 1903.

⁷⁴ Raguin, *Stained Glass: From Its Origins to the Present*, 233.

CHAPTER TWO: THE DESIGNERS BEHIND THE WINDOWS

The Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York was founded in 1899 by a group of New York-based artists and designers who were previously associated with stained-glass companies such as Tiffany Studios, Gorham Manufacturing Company, and J. and R. Lamb Studios. Many of these individuals, such as Edward Peck Sperry, were well-known in the stained-glass and ecclesiastical art community before the company's founding. The windows designed by these individuals quickly increased the firm's esteem and the same churches that sought commissions from Tiffany Studios, John La Farge, William Morris & Company, and J. and R. Lamb began to seek windows by Church Glass and Decorating Company as well. The firm's designers ranged from the company president to freelance designers—who produced for several companies—to newcomers in stained-glass. The two most well-known designers with clearly documented ties to the firm were Edward Peck Sperry (1851-1925) and Caryl Coleman (c.1846-1930). Both men worked for Tiffany Studios for several years before founding the Church Glass and Decorating Company with Russell Sturgis Foot (b. 1868). Other individuals who worked as freelance designers included two women, Violet Oakley (1874-1961) and Clara Miller Burd (1873-1933), who each designed stained-glass for several companies throughout their careers in addition to working in other artistic mediums. Similar to other stained-glass companies of the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many of the Church Glass and Decorating Company's designers were

trained in a variety of mediums before applying their skills to stained-glass design. For instance, Burd, Oakley, and William Fair Kline (1870-1931) trained and worked as illustrators before completing stained-glass windows for the firm. The company employed several individuals, known and currently unknown, to design and create windows for the Church Glass and Decorating Company over their fifteen-year tenure. These designers typically created opalescent stained-glass windows that reflected the contemporary trends in American stained-glass of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Founding Members of the Company as Designers

Caryl Coleman (c.1846-1930) was the president and founder of the Church Glass and Decorating Company as well as the only known individual associated with the company from its beginning in 1899 until the doors closed in 1913. Born in Buffalo, New York, the fame of his older brother, Charles Caryl Coleman, frequently overshadowed the younger Coleman sibling. Though the status of Charles's paintings often outshined his artistic career, Coleman studied, wrote, and lectured widely on religion while continuously being associated with the decorative arts community of New York City. Coleman's documented studies in ecclesiology were printed in *The Catholic Encyclopedia and Its Makers* as part of a biography that noted his position with Tiffany Studios and the Church Glass and Decorating Company as well as several articles he had written for the publication.⁷⁵ Coleman studied ecclesiology in Europe from 1875 to 1876 and returned for further study in England and Belgium in 1888. In between these studies,

⁷⁵ *The Catholic Encyclopedia and Its Makers* (New York, NY: Encyclopedia Press, 1917), 32.

Coleman was an agent and designer for Low's Art Tiles of New York.⁷⁶ In 1885, he left Low's in order to begin a new career, but it is unclear how or why the position with the tile company ended. After his departure from Low's, Coleman started his own journal entitled, *Art and Decoration*. He only published the journal for eighteen months and the venture ended in 1886.⁷⁷ While this venture was short-lived, Coleman continued to lecture and publish articles on religious figures, Catholicism, and religious interiors throughout his career in outlets such as *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Furthermore, Coleman managed to combine his decorative arts background, ecclesiastical studies, and passion for religious interiors throughout the next stages of his career.

Although neither his position nor the dates of his employment were specified, one of Coleman's publications from November 1888 listed Coleman as part of the Ecclesiastical Department of Gorham Manufacturing Company.⁷⁸ Due to the date of his employment, Coleman likely dealt specifically with silver and glass vessels. The Gorham stained-glass department did not open until 1904, but the company produced small glass vessels and, in 1886, contracted to become the American agent for the British stained-glass firm of Heaton, Butler, and Bayne.⁷⁹ It is unclear how long Coleman had been a part of Gorham, what products or services the department offered, if he was involved in the retailing of the British stained-glass windows, or whether he retained this position during his studies in Europe in 1888. During this time period, Gorham released a catalog

⁷⁶ "The Supplement," *The Art Amateur*, Volume 3, No. 2 (July 1880), 44.

⁷⁷ Doreen B. Burke, *In Pursuit of Beauty: Americans and the Aesthetic Movement* (New York, NY: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1886), 410.

⁷⁸ "New Publications," *The Catholic World, a Monthly Magazine of General Literature and Science*, Volume 48 (November 1888).

⁷⁹ Norton, "The 'American Window Department' of the Gorham Manufacturing Company," 12.

promoting their position as agent for the stained-glass firm, emphasizing the “worldwide reputation of the English firm.”⁸⁰ However, the following year, Coleman opened the Church Department of Tiffany Studios, where he remained the head of the department until 1899.⁸¹

This was Coleman’s first known position associated with stained-glass production and he displayed a high level of passion for the medium as well as for the American interpretation and production of stained-glass. In an 1894 article titled, “American Stained Glass,” Coleman described American stained-glass artists as colorists and proclaimed that, “in comparing American with European stained glass, there is a sparkle, breadth, and originality of handling in the work of the American artists that is quite unknown to the art as produced in Europe.”⁸² Whether Coleman knew or studied stained-glass design before his tenure with Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company was not mentioned nor is it evident in his previous employment. However, Coleman further criticized European artists for failing to understand the merits and use of color in glass. He further praised Tiffany and La Farge for their work in stained-glass and how far they had increased the prestige of the medium. Additionally, Coleman’s background in religious studies shone in a later passage of the article, when he stated that, “the future field for colored glass windows will be largely an ecclesiastical one, and it behooves the artists to consider this, and study the principles that govern Christian art, if he wishes to

⁸⁰ Norton, “The ‘American Window Department’ of the Gorham Manufacturing Company,” 12.

⁸¹ *The Catholic Encyclopedia and Its Makers* (New York, NY: Encyclopedia Press, 1917), 32.

⁸² Caryl Coleman, “American Stained Glass,” *The Decorator and Finisher*, Volume 24, No. 2 (May 1894), 55.

reach the highest point.”⁸³ In light of this statement and the name he choose for his own company five years later, Coleman likely believed that stained-glass windows were specifically meant for religious interiors and ecclesiastical purposes. While at a large and established company such as Tiffany Studios, Coleman’s sole projects likely followed such purposes as part of the company’s Church Department. However, as the head of a new and smaller stained-glass company, Coleman appeared to be more dynamic in the styles of stained-glass and types of windows produced by the Church Glass and Decorating Company than those lauded in his publication on the medium.

Caryl Coleman founded the Church Glass and Decorating Company in 1899 after leaving Tiffany Studios. While he was consistently listed as the company president in every known advertisement released by the company, only two sources specifically acknowledged Coleman as the designer for a stained-glass window or other commission. The first instance is a private chapel in Martin J. Condon’s Pelham Manor of Westchester, New York, which was described in an article by Coleman in the 1905 *Architectural Record*.⁸⁴ In the article, Coleman disclosed that he was given full decorative control of the space and continued to describe what elements he included such as: an altar, stained-glass, electric lights, wood paneling, and a tabernacle door. Coleman defined the stained-glass windows as representative of the child life of Christ and “innumerable of stained and splendid dyes.”⁸⁵ Coleman also went into detail about why he made specific choices in the religious iconography and why specific decoration was

⁸³ Coleman, “American Stained Glass,” 56.

⁸⁴ Caryl Coleman, “A Private Chapel in Westchester,” *Architectural Record*, Volume 18 (July-December 1905).

⁸⁵ Coleman, “A Private Chapel in Westchester,” 303.

chosen. In light of his ecclesiastical studies and his time employed in the church departments of both Gorham and Tiffany, such explanations added to the education and meaning behind his choices. No other Church Glass and Decorating Company designers were mentioned in the article.

The only specific stained-glass window commission completed by Coleman was installed in the College of Education at Wayne State University. The university retained documents that identify Coleman as the designer of the Harriet Maria Scott Memorial Window, *Teta Instructs Lioba* (fig. 8).⁸⁶ The commission for this window came in 1911, just two years before the company liquidated. By this time, many of the founding designers of the company appeared to no longer be associated with the business. The impending financial issues of the company coupled with the departure of specific designers may have prompted Coleman to create the design. On the other hand, after more than twenty years with various stained-glass companies, the memorial window may have been one of several projects completed by the company president. Regardless, the opalescent glass design featured an allegorical scene of the Education of Women and was to be installed in the Norman School. Several issues delayed the installation of the commission, which resulted in the window needing to be installed by a different company than the Church Glass and Decorating Company. In 1915, under the Montague Castle-London Company, the original Church Glass and Decorating Company window was

⁸⁶ "The Harriet Maria Scott Memorial Stained Glass Window," <http://coe.wayne.edu/about/scott-memorial.php>, accessed October 1, 2013.

finally installed in the Martidale Normal Training School building of Wayne State University.⁸⁷

This delay of the Harriet Maria Scott Memorial Window outlived the Church Glass and Decorating Company, which closed in 1913. It is unclear if the postponement was due to issues such as the business problems of the firm at this time or their inability to find a glass manufacturing company to produce the window. As noted by a John Hardman and Company executive, Roger Watt, the Church Glass and Decorating Company's closure was due to poor business knowledge on the part of Coleman himself.⁸⁸ Ironically in light of this statement, at the time of the window installation, the Montague Castle-London Company was Coleman's new employer and the new American agent for John Hardman and Company.⁸⁹ Whatever the reasons for the Church Glass and Decorating Company closing, other stained-glass companies continued to employ Coleman in the New York stained-glass community.

Another founding member of the Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York, as well as a prolific stained-glass designer, was Edward Peck Sperry (1851-1925), who created and copyrighted stained-glass designs throughout his career for several companies. Born in New Haven, Connecticut, Sperry began his formal art education in 1875 when he attended the Yale School of Fine Arts to study painting. Like many American artists, he continued his training overseas in Paris and Rome before pursuing

⁸⁷ "The Harriet Maria Scott Memorial Stained Glass Window," <http://coe.wayne.edu/about/scott-memorial.php>, accessed October 1, 2013.

⁸⁸ Michael J. Fisher, *Hardman of Birmingham: Goldsmith and Glasspainter* (Derbyshire, England: Landmark Publishing, Ltd., 2008), 152.

⁸⁹ Fisher, *Hardman of Birmingham: Goldsmith and Glasspainter*, 154.

his artistic career in America.⁹⁰ This path was common for many American artists throughout the nineteenth century due to the reputation of European art academies versus those in America. Additionally, like many painters of the time period, Sperry began to work in glass upon his return to the United States. In 1883, he commenced a long and successful career as a stained-glass designer for Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company, which would last for more than fifteen years.⁹¹ During his tenure with Tiffany, Sperry created countless window designs, many of which were copyrighted under both his and the company's names. Tiffany's firm was known for their opalescent stained-glass and this was reflected in Sperry's designs throughout his career. While the reasons for his departure are unknown, in 1899, Sperry parted ways with Tiffany's firm to form the Church Glass and Decorating Company with fellow Tiffany employee, Caryl Coleman.⁹²

While it is unclear of Sperry and Coleman's exact date of departure from Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company, Tiffany copyrighted Sperry's design, "Peter's Confession of Faith," on April 21, 1899.⁹³ This was the last surviving copyrighted Tiffany design in the United States Copyright Office under Sperry's name. While it may not have been his absolute final design for the firm, Tiffany copyrighted large numbers of designs in several mediums and consistently added the artist's name to the copyright petitions. Nevertheless, Sperry completed his first documented commission for the Church Glass and Decorating Company later that year. Five memorial panels, which represented "five scenes in the life of the Savior," were placed in St. James's Church of

⁹⁰ Albert M. Tanner, "Sperry, Edward Peck (1850-1925)," Pittsburgh History and Landmarks, 2002.

⁹¹ Norton, "The 'American Window Department' of the Gorham Manufacturing Company," 13.

⁹² Norton, "The 'American Window Department' of the Gorham Manufacturing Company," 13.

⁹³ Copyright, "Peter's Confession of Faith," Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company, April 21, 1899, No. 27580.

New York and dedicated on November 1 for All Saint's Day.⁹⁴ While at Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company, Sperry excelled in memorial window design, a skill which he maintained during his time with the Church Glass and Decorating Company. However, these were not the only type of windows Sperry designed for either company.

Furthermore, Sperry's duties expanded upon the founding of the new company. In the 1901 Trow's Business Directory, Sperry was listed as the company secretary.⁹⁵ This was a big change for the artist, who had not previously been responsible for administrative or company business. Additionally, in a publication regarding his design for a memorial window in the Armour Institute of Technology, the author referred to Sperry as the "artist-in-chief," while describing the three-panel stained-glass window (fig. 7).⁹⁶ While this publication is the only known instance for this enhanced title, Sperry completed a significant number of commissions during his time with the Church Glass and Decorating Company.

One of Sperry's designs and one of the best publicized projects for the Church Glass and Decorating Company was the Hobart Memorial Window of the Church of the Redeemer in Patterson, New Jersey.⁹⁷ The window memorialized the deceased daughter of Garrett A. Hobart, the twenty-fourth vice-president of the United States. This prestigious commission brought Sperry and his new company onto the national stage because they were chosen over competitors such as Tiffany and J. and R. Lamb.

Additionally, the project demanded a reproduction of Leonardo da Vinci's red chalk

⁹⁴ "All Saints Day Observed," *New York Times*, November 2, 1899.

⁹⁵ *The Trow Copartnership and Corporation Directory of the Boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx City of New York* (New York, NY: Trow Directory, Printing and Binding Co., 1901), 90.

⁹⁶ "The Memorial Window," *Integral*, 1903, Archives Illinois Institute of Technology.

⁹⁷ "A Memorial Window," *New York Evangelist*, March 29, 1900.

drawing representing the Redeemer, which contemporary artists struggled to reproduce in any medium. While Sperry did not produce a true replica of the celebrated work, critics praised the impression of the Redeemer as the “crowning achievement...because of its many splendid qualities.”⁹⁸ The project did not advance the Church Glass and Decorating Company to the same prestige as Tiffany or Lamb, but such projects did result in commissions that would have typically been secured by established competitors. For instance, in the case of a stained-glass window for the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia in 1901, a donor of a stained-glass window decided to proceed with a design from the Church Glass and Decorating Company over one by Tiffany. In a letter to church officials, the donor stated, “I can furnish you with a number of testimonials to the effect that this last named company [Church Glass and Decorating Company] is equal to that of the other [Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company].”⁹⁹ While it is unknown which Church Glass and Decorating Company artists designed the church’s window, the reputation and designs by Sperry clearly amplified the new company’s prestige in the stained-glass community. Through the efforts of Sperry and other artists within the company, the Church Glass and Decorating Company began competing for commissions on a national scale only two years after the company was formed.

Despite his success at the Church Glass and Decorating Company, Sperry resigned from the company and accepted the chief designer position at Gorham Manufacturing Company’s newly formed American Window Department on January 28,

⁹⁸ “A Memorial Window,” *New York Evangelist*, March 29, 1900.

⁹⁹ Samuel R. Shipley to Secretary John P. Croasdale, October 15, 1900, First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia Archives.

1904.¹⁰⁰ There are no known records that explain the circumstances behind the career change and his initial contract with Gorham has since been destroyed. One can only speculate that Sperry may have opted for a more artistic and less administrative role than the one he had with the Church Glass and Decorating Company, or to perhaps have more artistic control in a new department that may have lacked seasoned stained-glass designers. The stained-glass department at Gorham initially focused on opalescent stained-glass designs, which Sperry excelled at and was likely a reason for his employment. However, the position did not last long. The company dismissed Sperry on July 20, 1906 and changed their focus from opalescent glass windows to Gothic Revival or English-style stained-glass windows made with antique glass.¹⁰¹ Whether or not this stylistic change in the stained-glass design was a factor in Sperry's dismissal is unknown, but Sperry soon moved on to his next venture in stained-glass production. By January 1908, *The Churchman* magazine advertised Sperry's newly formed company, Edward P. Sperry Company. Returning to the forms that garnered the most recognition for him throughout his career, Sperry advertised that his company completed memorial windows, tablets, and decorations.¹⁰²

Further evidence also suggests that Sperry did not sever ties with the Church Glass and Decorating Company after his departure. The Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, Maryland, commissioned a memorial window from the Church Glass and Decorating Company, which commemorated John and Sarah

¹⁰⁰ Norton, "The 'American Window Department' of the Gorham Manufacturing Company," 13.

¹⁰¹ Norton, "The 'American Window Department' of the Gorham Manufacturing Company," 13.

¹⁰² Advertisement, *The Churchman*, Volume 97 (January 1908), 4.

Amidon who were members of the parish (fig. 9). While the records do not indicate when the window was commissioned or installed, church historians credited Edward Peck Sperry with the “I Am the Vine” window design, which has a company signature on the bottom right-hand corner (fig. 10).¹⁰³ The memorialized individuals died in 1906 and 1913 as noted by their dates on the window. While the window may have been installed during Sperry’s tenure with the Church Glass and Decorating Company, there was also a possibility that Sperry designed this window as a freelance designer after his departure from Gorham. Regardless, Sperry’s time with the Church Glass and Decorating Company greatly impacted the initial success of the company’s early years. The Brown Memorial Church boasts several large-scale Tiffany stained-glass windows as well as windows by Gorham and Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company. The Church Glass and Decorating Company’s inclusion was an accomplishment won through the efforts of Sperry and other highly talented artists that designed for the company.

The other two founding members of the Church Glass and Decorating Company were Russell Sturgis Foot (b. 1868), who served as Vice President, and Frank Coenen (dates unknown), the company treasurer. To date, little is known about these individuals and their roles within the Church Glass and Decorating Company. There is correspondence between Coenen and Violet Oakley about her All Angels’ Church commission and payment schedule, but there is no known evidence to suggest that he was also an artist like the other co-founders.¹⁰⁴ Research on Russell Sturgis Foot shed light on

¹⁰³ Joan S. Feldman, *Sacred Glass: Stained Glass Windows* (Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, Maryland), 15.

¹⁰⁴ Bailey Van Hook, *Violet Oakley: An Artist’s Life* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 71.

to his role and artistic background. Consistently listed as the vice president of the Church Glass and Decorating Company, Foot was also a company designer and director.¹⁰⁵ The only source that listed his role as director was published in 1911, so it is unclear whether he held this title throughout the company's fourteen years or if it was earned at the end of the company's tenure. Additionally, it is unknown what the position of director entailed. However, designs by Foot were included in the Pratt Institute exhibition in 1907, which included designs by other well-known Church Glass and Decorating Company designers, like Violet Oakley.¹⁰⁶

Correspondence from John La Farge to Foot provides further evidence of Foot's presence in the artistic scene, while also suggesting some distance or controversy between the Church Glass and Decorating Company and Foot. In a letter dated April 20, 1904, La Farge wrote to Foot as if he is a longtime friend and laments throughout that he is unable to attend a lecture that Foot was giving.¹⁰⁷ Unfortunately, La Farge does not specify the subject of Foot's lecture or artistic interest. However, as the letter continues, La Farge accuses William Fair Kline of plagiarizing one of his designs in his Church Glass and Decorating Company window in the Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago. La Farge continued with remarks that the window in question was approved and made by "our late lamented friend Coleman, the ex-jesuit [sic], who you know was with the Tiffany Co. and then has started the Ecclesiastical glass manufacturing of his own."¹⁰⁸

Considering Foot's position with the Church Glass and Decorating Company, which was

¹⁰⁵ *Directory of Directors in the City of New York* (New York, NY: Directory of Directors Company, 1911), 200.

¹⁰⁶ "Local Art Notes," *New York Times*, February 24, 1907.

¹⁰⁷ John La Farge to Russell Sturgis, April 20, 1904, Yale University Library, Manuscripts and Archives.

¹⁰⁸ John La Farge to Russell Sturgis, April 20, 1904, Yale University Library, Manuscripts and Archives.

listed as vice president throughout all of the latest advertisements released by the firm, it is unclear of La Farge's motives in writing the letter the way he did. Or it could be suggested that Foot may have agreed with his complaints, since the response is currently unknown. Regardless, as evidence by this letter and his inclusion in the Pratt Institute exhibition, it can be suggested that Foot joined the Church Glass and Decorating Company as an artist in addition to Coleman and Sperry.

Freelance Designers for Church Glass and Decorating Company

While the Church Glass and Decorating Company's administration included known stained-glass designers and individuals that had worked for other stained-glass firms, many of the known designs by the company were completed by freelance artists. These individuals typically created designs for several companies and often came from a variety of artistic backgrounds that included stained-glass design. Likely the most well-known and celebrated female artist employed with the Church Glass and Decorating Company was Violet Oakley (1874-1961). Born in New Jersey to parents Arthur Edmund Oakley and Cornelia Swain, Oakley's artistic life was foreshadowed by the more than one dozen family members that were considered professional artists. This included both her grandfathers, who were members of the National Academy of Design. While seemingly erratic, Oakley studied illustration and painting at several institutions, including the Arts Student League, the Académie Montparnasse in Paris and with Charles Lasar in England.¹⁰⁹ Her opportunities in France and England were the result of a family trip abroad and, Oakley's sister, Hester, joined Violet in these academic pursuits.

¹⁰⁹ Arpi Ermoyan, *Famous American Illustrators* (Switzerland: Rotovision, 1997), 208.

Unfortunately, her studies abroad were unexpectedly canceled due to her father's rapidly failing health. Upon her return, Oakley enrolled in the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts before entering Drexel Institute, where she studied under Howard Pyle (1853-1911), an illustrator who would become one of the greatest influences in her artistic career.

Oakley studied for only a short period at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts before enrolling in Drexel Institute in 1896 to study under Howard Pyle. Pyle was responsible for training several late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century illustrators, such as Frank E. Schoonover and Jessica Wilcox Smith, as well as completing a wide range of prestigious illustration commissions.¹¹⁰ Students including Oakley found Pyle to be a passionate and practical teacher, who often left a lasting impression and influence on their artistic careers. Oakley only studied under Pyle for one year, but her compositions continually displayed similarities to Pyle's work throughout her career. Historian Patricia Likos explained, "Like him [Pyle], she defined her 'characters' with a bold outline and placed them in a dramatic movement."¹¹¹ While aspects of her work channeled her instructor, Oakley acquired a unique style separate from Pyle and other illustrators at Drexel through the combined use of watercolor, crayon, and ink. Her boldly outlined figures created depth and separation in her compositions, which were often completed on textured paper. As Oakley's artistic style developed, Pyle inspired the trajectory of Oakley's career by encouraging her to work in larger formats, including murals and stained-glass.¹¹² Pyle likely based this advice on his own experiences and knowledge of

¹¹⁰ Patricia Likos, "Violet Oakley (1874-1961)," in *Philadelphia Museum of Arts Bulletin*, Volume 75, No. 325 (June 1979), 4.

¹¹¹ Likos, "Violet Oakley (1874-1961)," 4.

¹¹² Ermoyan, *Famous American Illustrators*, 208.

fields outside of illustration. While known and celebrated for his work and teaching in illustration, Pyle also completed commissions in stained-glass. A freelance designer for the Decorative Stained Glass Company of New York (dates unknown), Pyle was one of several artists, including John La Farge and Frederick Wilson, trained in a variety of artistic mediums that contributed to the stained-glass company.¹¹³ Therefore, Pyle understood the unique challenges and skills needed to design and execute a stained-glass window without having specific training in stained-glass design. Indeed, a commission that Pyle gave Oakley in 1897 resulted in widespread interest from the stained-glass community and provided her with new career options.

While Oakley only studied under Pyle for one year, she clearly impressed the professor and artist. In 1897, Pyle offered Oakley and Jessica Wilcox Smith, a former student and prolific illustrator, a combined commission for Houghton Mifflin Company to illustrate Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem, *Evangeline*.¹¹⁴ This illustration highlighted Oakley's use of bold outlines and the partnership with Smith, who was already well-known for illustrations, garnered national attention. The commission fueled her potential in her given field and prompted professionals in other artistic mediums to take notice as well. One such artist was Augustus Vincent Tack (1870-1949). Known for his paintings, Tack was currently working for a stained-glass company in New York when he contacted Oakley about the *Evangeline* illustrations. He suggested that the "quality of her line had possibilities for stained glass" and placed her in contact with

¹¹³ Robert O. Jones, *D. Maitland Armstrong: American Stained Glass Master* (Tallahassee, FL: Sentry Press, 1999), 133.

¹¹⁴ Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee, *A Sacred Challenge: Violet Oakley and the Pennsylvania Capitol* (Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee, 2003), 22.

Caryl Coleman, who was the head of the Church Department at Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company.¹¹⁵ While their first interaction did not result in any commissions or promises for future work, Coleman contacted Oakley only months later, after he resigned from Tiffany's firm to form the Church Glass and Decorating Company.

After forming the Church Glass and Decorating Company in 1899, Coleman offered Oakley a commission to design her first stained-glass window the same year. Despite her inexperience in stained-glass, Coleman granted Oakley full creative control of the project. She was responsible for the entire window design as well as painting the faces and hands of the figures directly on the glass.¹¹⁶ Allowing Oakley to paint directly on the glass before firing was an uncommon and rare exception in most stained-glass commissions, because this step was typically completed by the glass house, not by the designer. Interestingly, in light of the Church Glass and Decorating Company's association with the American arts and crafts movement which was discussed in Chapter one, the practice of stained-glass designers being involved in more areas of stained-glass production was a concept taken from the English arts and crafts movement. There, arts and crafts stained-glass manufacturing practice dictated that the designer must "either perform or at least supervise every stage of the making of that window, right through from the initial sketch, drawing up the full-size cartoon, choosing and painting the glass, to firing, and perhaps even fixing the finished work."¹¹⁷ To what degree English manufacturers followed this guide varied, and it is unknown whether this theory guided

¹¹⁵ Violet Oakley papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

¹¹⁶ Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee, *A Sacred Challenge*, 25.

¹¹⁷ Martin Harrison, *Victorian Stained Glass* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, Ltd., 1980), 63.

Coleman's decision to offer Oakley the chance to paint the glass of her windows designs. The offer may have been an incentive or simply confidence in Oakley's abilities, but it was unclear why this option was included.

Despite Coleman's lists of enticements in the commission, the circumstances were not ideal for Oakley. According to friend and contemporary Edith Emerson, "Coleman...told Violet Oakley she had an aptitude for stained-glass window design and on his suggestion, she designed an Epiphany window, which the company executed and put on display. There was no remuneration for this."¹¹⁸ Oakley was initially reluctant to undertake the commission due to the lack of pay, but Coleman persisted with the promises of future assignments. Despite large amounts of praise, the "Epiphany" window was destroyed several decades ago and no records mentioned whether it was ever installed outside of the display at the company's 3 West 29th Street address. Nevertheless, Coleman held true to his promise of future paid work and commissioned Oakley for her most famous assignment for the Church Glass and Decorating Company in 1900.

Frequently hailed as her most important stained-glass commission with the Church Glass and Decorating Company, Oakley completed five lancet windows, two large murals, and a glass mosaic altarpiece at All Angels' Church of New York (fig. 11).¹¹⁹ While this period saw a series of women who designed stained-glass for other companies, most notably Clara Driscoll and Agnes Northrop of Tiffany Studios, Oakley's commission was sizable for both the Church Glass and Decorating Company and her. Hiring Oakley over other artists, such as Edward Peck Sperry, who was the company

¹¹⁸ Violet Oakley papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

¹¹⁹ Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee, *A Sacred Challenge*, 25.

secretary at the time of the commission, displayed immense confidence in the young female artist. Oakley dedicated herself to the project and declined a commission for the *Collier's* cover illustration due to the intensity and span of the assignment.¹²⁰ To eschew such a significant commission as the magazine's cover early in her career was a risk for the young artist. However, the commission for the All Angel's Church included a variety of decoration and several opportunities to publicly showcase her artistic abilities to a larger audience. Oakley did not disappoint and, in an article in the *New York Times*, the author raved,

This is the most important work Miss Oakley has attempted and does her great credit, for the difficulties of so large and complicated a composition with color added are easily imagined. She has steered very clearly between realism and too much conventionalism giving her work the stamp of individuality without suggesting portraiture in any of the faces. The lines into which the figures fall show that she feels the necessity of large masses suitable to decorating on a big scale, which is to tell from a distance.¹²¹

While the All Angels' Church commission secured Oakley new levels of praise throughout the art world, the project did not result in a career specifically as a stained-glass designer. She continued to design stained-glass at various intervals of her career, but it is unclear of how many. One design included the memorial window "Easter Morning," produced for the Church Glass and Decorating Company, executed by the Calvert and Kimberly Company, and installed at St. Leonard's Academy of Sharon Hill,

¹²⁰ Sarah Burns, *Inventing the Modern Artist: Art and Culture in Gilded Age America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 66.

¹²¹ "Mosaic for All Angels': Chance, Decorations by Miss Violet Oakley for the Church on West End Avenue," *New York Times*, December 31, 1901.

Pennsylvania.¹²² Oakley continued to vary her artistic talents through exhibiting mural paintings and illustrations at various worlds' exhibitions as well as at least one stained-glass window, "The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri," at the Panama-Pacific Exposition in 1915, for which she won a gold medal.¹²³ However, no known sources cited other windows or projects completed for the Church Glass and Decorating Company. Rather, the success of the church murals resulted in the largest assignment of Oakley's career—the decoration of the Governor's Reception Room and the murals for the Pennsylvania State Capitol.¹²⁴ The murals and reception room at the Pennsylvania State Capitol coupled with several illustration projects are the focus of research on Oakley, because they dominated the artist's accomplishments. Regardless, Oakley's stained-glass designs benefitted her career overall as well as the reputation of the Church Glass and Decorating Company.

Another artist, of which there is little documentation, is William Fair Kline (1870-1931). Another designer associated with Tiffany Studios, Kline was a painter who studied under John La Farge and created illustrations for Tiffany's firm.¹²⁵ Like Violet Oakley, Kline's training in illustration seamlessly translated to stained-glass. Kline designed "The Ascension" and "The Five Scourges" windows on the east façade of the Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago, Illinois, which also boasts stained-glass by Tiffany Glass and Company, Edward Burne-Jones of William Morris & Company, and Healy and

¹²² Calvert and Kimberly Company, New York, *O Ye Heavens and Earth, Praise Ye the Lord* (New York, NY: Calvert and Kimberly Company, 1904-1905).

¹²³ Violet Oakley papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

¹²⁴ Ermoyan, *Famous American Illustrators*, 208.

¹²⁵ David Bernard Dearing, *Paintings and Sculpture in the Collection of the National Academy of Design: 126-1925* (Easthampton, MA: Hudson Hills, 2004), 120.

Millet (fig. 12).¹²⁶ As previously mentioned in discussing correspondence between La Farge and Russell Sturgis Foot, this commission resulted in a period of drama in the stained-glass community. La Farge claimed that Kline's design for the Ascension window was a variation of a design that La Farge had created for a separate commission and therefore a forgery. The letter, however, does not confirm what painting the La Farge charged Kline with plagiarizing. In relation to his 1889 mural painting, "The Ascension," there are few similarities beyond the theme (fig. 13). In Kline's window, winged angels completely surrounded Jesus, while La Farge chose the disciples to watch Jesus from the ground as he is surrounded by angels above them. Regardless of this and without a full recollection of events, La Farge simply noted in his letter to Foot that "around this fact a lot of rather nasty exposure took place last year."¹²⁷ How nasty the press was or to what effects this altercation was between the Church Glass and Decorating Company and La Farge is currently unknown. La Farge made no reference to a legal dispute between himself and the Church Glass and Decorating Company, but the firm did close their Chicago office around this time with no known explanation. Furthermore, it is not currently known whether the windows for the Second Presbyterian Church were Kline's only stained-glass commissions, or one of several, but his artistic career continued. Kline exhibited oil and mural paintings at the 1904 St. Louis Exposition, but no mention is made of stained-glass designs at this or any other known exhibitions in which he participated.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ "Window Gallery," <http://2ndpresbyterian.org/arhistory/windows/>, accessed October 21, 2013.

¹²⁷ John La Farge to Russell Sturgis, April 20, 1904, Yale University Library, Manuscripts and Archives.

¹²⁸ *Official Catalogue of Exhibitors: Universal Exposition, St. Louis, U.S.A. 1904*, Division of exhibits, Department B. Art (St. Louis, MI: Official Catalogue Company, Inc., 1904), 31, 41.

An illustrator and prolific stained-glass designer, Clara Miller Burd (1873-1933) was employed by the Church Glass and Decorating Company as well as Tiffany Studios during her career.¹²⁹ Considered a freelance designer for several companies, Burd created opalescent stained-glass designs similar to those of other artists associated with Tiffany Studios. While the exact details and dates of her employment with the Church Glass and Decorating Company are unclear, Burd created two windows for the company for St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Highland Park, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1908 and 1911 (fig. 14 and fig. 15).¹³⁰ Additionally, an article in the *New York Times* from February 1907 describes an exhibit at the Pratt Institute of Brooklyn of "sketches and cartoons for colored windows and with examples of stained glass," which included Burd's work.¹³¹ While the article is extremely short and does not identify what type of work or how many of Burd's designs were included, she was one of only six designers mentioned in a list that included Violet Oakley, Russell Sturgis Foot, and Dunstan Powell, grandson of A.W.N. Pugin. Additionally, the dates indicate a continuous relationship with the Church Glass and Decorating Company as well as Coleman's ongoing inclusion of female artists and designers. While it is unlikely that Burd and Oakley worked for the company during the same period, Oakley's success with "The Epiphany" window and All Angels' Church, coupled with the known successes of female artists at Coleman's previous employer, Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company, allowed Coleman to confidently pursue female designers throughout the company's history.

¹²⁹ Charles H. Dorr, "The Art of Making a Stained Glass Window, With Notes on the Work of Clara M. Burd," in *The Architectural Record*, February 1914, 168.

¹³⁰ Albert M. Tanner, "Clara Miller Burd (1873-1933), New York," Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation.

¹³¹ "Local Art Notes," *New York Times*, February 24, 1907.

Adding to the number of women Coleman employed in stained-glass design, Ellen Wetherell Ahrens (dates unknown), a Philadelphian painter known for her miniatures, designed at least two stained-glass window for the Church Glass and Decorating Company. In 1905, the artist designed a memorial window for the Asylum Hill Congregational Church in Hartford, Connecticut.¹³² The other stained-glass design she created was included in the Pratt Institute exhibition by the Church Glass and Decorating Company and simply listed in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* as a window for cathedral in Covington, Kentucky.¹³³ It is currently unclear how many windows Ahrens designed for the Church Glass and Decorating Company or if she designed for other stained-glass companies throughout her career. Most of her exhibited and known works centered on miniature paintings, such as a set of four portraits on ivory included in the 1896 “Catalogue of the Ninth Annual Exhibition of Water Colors, Pastels, and Miniatures” at the Art Institute of Chicago.¹³⁴ While Ahrens is thus far the only known miniature painter that created large stained-glass designs for the Church Glass and Decorating Company, her training in an artistic medium outside of stained-glass design is typical of the designers employed by the firm.

Two previously unknown designers for the Church Glass and Decorating Company that emerged from the Calvert and Kimberly Company catalog are George Haushalter (1862-1943) and the Misses Cowles, who are each credited with a Church Glass and Decorating Company stained-glass window design. Similar to other stained-

¹³² “Two Memorials: Gifts to Asylum Hill Congregational Church,” *Hartford Courant*, November 6, 1905.

¹³³ “Fine Arts. American Decorations in Church and Domestic Windows at Pratt Institute—Drake Sale Begins,” *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, February 25, 1907.

¹³⁴ *Catalogue of the Seventh Annual Exhibition of Watercolors, Pastels, and Miniatures By American Artists, April 16 to June 7 1896* (Chicago, IL: Art Institute of Chicago, 1896), 11.

glass designers employed by the Church Glass and Decorating Company, Haushalter was primarily a painter prior and during the time that he designed stained-glass, specializing in tempera methods.¹³⁵ Prior to exhibiting his works in the United States and France, he studied in Boston, New York, Paris, Madrid, Florence, Rome, Munich, and London. According to the Calvert and Kimberly Company catalog, Haushalter designed the “Resurrection,” chancel window in St. Andrew’s Church of Rochester, New York.¹³⁶ No other information is provided by the catalog and, thus far, no known newspaper sources, confirm this commission. However, Haushalter was later included in the 1911 American Art Annual for two window commissions in Rochester, New York.¹³⁷ Each of the commissions, St. Andrew’s Church and St. James’ Church, are listed simply as “windows” with no names, company, or specific number of windows, details which are included for some of the other designers listed in the publication. The “Misses Cowles” refers to a group of four sisters, all of whom worked with stained-glass design and easel painting, while two of the women were also muralists and three of them were illustrators.¹³⁸ Unfortunately, since all four women worked in stained-glass design, it is not clear which of the four women created stained-glass designs for the Church Glass and Decorating Company or if they created multiple designs for the firm. The Calvert and

¹³⁵ *Exhibition of Paintings by George Haushalter, February 8 to February 27, 1910* (Chicago, IL: The Art Institute of Chicago, 1910).

¹³⁶ Calvert and Kimberly Company, New York, *O Ye Heavens and the Earth, Praise Ye the Lord* (New York, NY: Calvert and Kimberly Company, 1904/1905).

¹³⁷ “Mural Paintings in the United States,” *American Art Annual*, Volume 9 (1911), 29.

¹³⁸ Regina Armstrong, “Representative Women American Illustrators: The Character Workers—II,” *The Critic*, Volume 32 (August 1900), 131-141.

Kimberly Company catalog credited the “Miss Cowles” with the “Choir Boys” stained-glass window of the Honor Room of the Grace Church of New York City.¹³⁹

Due to the lack of scholarship on the Church Glass and Decorating Company, coupled with other factors, such as the limited duration of the company’s tenure, there are several unknown and under-researched designers associated with the company. The Church Glass and Decorating Company did not list their designers in the copyright petitions or in their catalogs. Even Violet Oakley’s name does not appear in the copyright notice for the Epiphany window or the mosaics at the All Angels’ Church commission of 1900.¹⁴⁰ Newspaper articles, personal accounts, and other period sources were needed to confirm attributions, because the Church Glass and Decorating Company did not provide this evidence. This lack of detail differed greatly from Tiffany’s company, which often credited designers such as Sperry and Frederick Wilson in their copyright petitions. However, in the Calvert and Kimberly Company catalog of 1904/1905, the firm listed different designers for many of the windows, including Violet Oakley, William Fair Kline, and Edward Peck Sperry. The listing of designers in this catalog led to the discovery of George Haushalter and the “Misses Cowles,” who would have otherwise remained unknown.¹⁴¹ The press announcement for the 1906 Pratt Institute exhibition of Church Glass and Decorating Company designs also revealed the names of artist G.A.

¹³⁹ Calvert and Kimberly Company, New York, *O Ye Heavens and the Earth, Praise Ye the Lord* (New York, NY: Calvert and Kimberly Company, 1904/1905).

¹⁴⁰ Copyright, “The Epiphany,” Church Glass and Decorating Company, April 10, 1900, Class D, No. 7542.

¹⁴¹ Calvert and Kimberly Company, New York, *O Ye Heavens and the Earth, Praise Ye the Lord* (New York, NY: Calvert and Company, 1904/1905)

Bridgeman, who cannot currently be found in other known sources on the Church Glass and Decorating Company.¹⁴²

The successes of the Church Glass and Decorating Company are directly linked to the quality of artists and designers associated with the stained-glass business. Despite the brief life of the company, Coleman managed to commission high level artists that also designed for the most prestigious stained-glass companies of the period. Coleman, Sperry, Oakley, Burd, and Kline all worked for Tiffany's firm at some point in their careers, while some of these individuals' experiences extended to their own business as well as to Gorham and J. and R. Lamb. The company continually received positive press due to the skillful and creative execution of window designs throughout the United States. As a result, the Church Glass and Decorating Company was often offered prestigious commissions that typically would have gone to more seasoned stained-glass firms. The artists and designers of the company are the reason why the Church Glass and Decorating Company windows are found in the same churches that own commissions by Tiffany and La Farge, who pioneered the stained-glass styles of this time period. While many designers have yet to be discovered, uncovering the designers behind some of the windows has proved to be one of the most important parts of understanding the history and successes of the Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York.

American Stained-Glass Artists: A New Profession

While there was stained-glass production in the United States prior to the success of Louis Comfort Tiffany and John La Farge, the invention and popularity of opalescent

¹⁴² "Local Art Notes," *New York Times*, February 24, 1907.

stained-glass coupled with the religious expansion of the time period created a larger stained-glass industry than America had previously experienced. Furthermore, the large-scale houses of the wealthy of the Gilded Age increased the demand for decorative arts of all variations, including domestic stained-glass. In expanding the field of stained-glass designers, firms often employed designers who trained and, in some cases still practiced, in fine arts mediums. While Tiffany Studios and other stained-glass firms employed full-time designers, the Church Glass and Decorating Company commissioned artists from a variety of mediums to create their stained-glass designs. Observed by contemporary authors, Harry W. Desmond and Herbert Croly noted this trend in their book, *Stately Homes*, “The most encouraging aspect of the existing situation is the extent to which men, trained exclusively in the fine arts, are, owing to the demand for certain kinds of decorative art, taking up various branches of interior decoration. Not only, of course, is the number of mural painters and number of painters who design glass increasing every year in order to keep pace with the demand for this kind of work.”¹⁴³ In the case of the Church Glass and Decorating Company, every known designer began their career in other artistic medium, before designing stained-glass.

While the increase in the Gilded Age generated the demand artists and artisans for decorative arts and highly ornamented religious and secular interiors, the opalescent era also encouraged the academically trained artists to design for glass. This included artists such as Edward Peck Sperry, who fully transitioned to stained-glass design as well as individuals such as Violet Oakley, who completed commissions throughout a career in

¹⁴³ Harry W. Desmond and Herbert Croly, *Stately Homes in America: From Colonial Times to the Present Day* (New York, NY: D. Appleton and Company, 1903).

illustration and mural paintings. This concept of an “out-of-house designer” or freelance designer emerged during the opalescent area of stained-glass as the production became more specialized. In addition to the design work of windows becoming the sole application of separate artists, the glass studios created jobs specifically for glass cutters, painters, and fabricators. Even the most famous stained-glass artists of the period, such as La Farge, Tiffany, and David Maitland Armstrong (1836-1918) simply provided the designs and concepts of their stained-glass windows, a separate artisan cut the glass, painted the faces, and constructed windows¹⁴⁴ Hence, why it was such a novelty for Violet Oakley to paint the faces and hands of “The Epiphany” window. This part of stained-glass production was rarely completed by any designer of the time period, let alone a new artist to the medium.

While contemporary sources commented on the number of artists changing or expanding their career paths to include stained-glass, some period sources also observed the increasing numbers of female artists involved in stained-glass design as well. In an article about Violet Oakley’s All Angels commission, a Philadelphian newspaper noted, “The art of staining glass, although of recent development in America, has made notable progress, and colored glass windows of real artistic value and decorative importance are being produced. It is an art, too, in which women, with their natural color grasp qualified to succeed.”¹⁴⁵ Not all women artists received the recognition of the men in the growing stained-glass field, but some sources noted their presence and their artistic success.

¹⁴⁴ Raguin, *Stained Glass: From Its Origins to the Present*, 230.

¹⁴⁵ “Breakfast Chat,” *The Times* (Philadelphia, PA), April 10, 1900.

Additionally, a large number of artists associated with the Church Glass and Decorating Company were women and, at times, were in charge of large and well-known commissions for the firm.

CHAPTER THREE: BEYOND THE OPALESCENT GLASS WINDOWS: PARTNERSHIPS AND NEW VENTURES

During initial research of the Church Glass and Decorating Company, sources often compared the firm's designs to that of Tiffany Studios, due to the prevalence of their opalescent stained-glass windows. Indeed American artists and designers associated with the Church Glass and Decorating Company were known for their opalescent stained-glass windows and several of them produced designs for various companies as discussed in the previous chapter. This explains why many commissions by the company are reminiscent of Tiffany's famous creations and why churches and owners are often content to attribute them to the more famous stained-glass company. However, these opalescent stained-glass windows do not account for the entirety of the company's window production. At some point during the company's production, though the exact time period is unknown, the Church Glass and Decorating Company produced color and colorless ornamental windows. The colorless windows featured intricate leading patterns in which the firm sought to emulate historical window designs and patterns as well as expand their market to include clients who typically eschewed colored glass. The color glass ornamental windows often featured floral designs that offered a secular option for opalescent stained-glass windows. Additionally, the company was the sole American agent for the English stained-glass firm, John Hardman and Company (1838-2008). John Hardman and Company was an English stained-glass firm that manufactured Gothic

Revival designs that emulated the works of A.W.N. Pugin (1812-1852), an English architect, designer, and artist who forged the Gothic Revival style in England. These styles, especially those by John Hardman and Company, represented a striking difference from the opalescent stained-glass windows for which the Church Glass and Decorating Company is generally known. Additionally, these variations expanded the company's clientele and, therefore, may be one of the keys to understanding how they competed with competitors such as Tiffany, La Farge, and Gorham. The Gothic Revival and ornamental glass windows provided by the Church Glass and Decorating Company reveal the unexpected diversity of an organization that is often unfairly stereotyped as just another Tiffany-style stained-glass company.

Sole American Agent for John Hardman and Company

While the Church Glass and Decorating Company's American designers chiefly manufactured opalescent stained-glass windows, the company was the exclusive American agent for the English stained-glass firm, John Hardman and Company, which specialized in Gothic Revival stained-glass windows. In business for 170 years, John Hardman Jr. established the company in 1838 to produce church metal work based solely on the designs of A.W.N. Pugin, the famed English architect, designer, and artist who became renowned for his Gothic Revival commissions such as the Palace of Westminster. By 1845, the company expanded their business to include stained-glass windows centered on Pugin's studies of English and European stained-glass.¹⁴⁶ The personal connections between Hardman and Pugin resulted in various prestigious

¹⁴⁶ Michael J. Fisher, "John Hardman and Company: Pugin's Glasspainters," *The Magazine Antiques* (April 2009), 84.

commissions throughout England during the company's history. The Gothic Revival style that Pugin championed flourished throughout England during this time period, but it was not initially popular in the United States. However, by the late nineteenth century, an influx of British architects instigated a widespread interest in the aesthetic and, at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, Americans discovered the stained-glass of John Hardman and Company. Their exhibition display included a large stained-glass window, which portrayed Jesus in the house of Mary and Martha at Bethany, which was designed by John Hardman Powell.¹⁴⁷ This window sparked the interest among an array of American architects, clergymen, and church builders, who immediately started seeking commissions from the English company. Though the company initially dealt directly with American clients, by the end of the nineteenth century, John Hardman and Company aligned with an American stained-glass company in order to better promote their windows.

While American clients always had the option to order stained-glass directly from John Hardman and Company, the firm selected the Church Glass and Decorating Company be their sole American agent in 1899.¹⁴⁸ The circumstances of how the two companies entered in a partnership are unclear, but John Hardman and Company was consistently listed on the company advertisements for the entirety of the firm's tenure. Even in small advertisements that offered little space or information, the Church Glass and Decorating Company listed "English Stained Glass Windows From the Studios of

¹⁴⁷ Fisher, "John Hardman and Company: Pugin's Glasspainters," 84.

¹⁴⁸ Church Glass and Decorating Company, advertisement, *The American Ecclesiastical Review: a Monthly Publication for the Clergy*, Volume 21, (1899).

John Hardman & Co., Birmingham and London” alongside of “American Mosaic Glass Windows.”¹⁴⁹ This continuous inclusion of the English firm in the Church Glass and Decorating Company advertisements indicated that the stained-glass windows of John Hardman Company were a considerable part of the firm’s business. As will be discussed, there were several full-length advertisements by the Church Glass and Decorating Company about their English commissions as well as several large and noteworthy projects completed. Furthermore, according to John Hardman and Company historian, Michael Fisher, from 1904 to 1913, the Church Glass and Decorating Company imported the majority of the John Hardman and Company stained-glass windows that were installed in all American churches.¹⁵⁰

Though the partnership proved to be a successful one, the choice of the Church Glass and Decorating Company is a rather perplexing one in light of past publications by the company president, Caryl Coleman. Before the formation of the Church Glass and Decorating Company, Coleman published articles on the superiority of American or opalescent stained-glass, while working for Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company. In the 1894 article, he specifically targeted European stained-glass producers and criticized that “more attention is paid to the drawing than to the color of the glass, the glass being used simply as a background, on which to paint a picture. This mode of work makes the windows unduly prominent, hard, opaque, and heavy...the shadows and lines produced with enamels are therefore disproportionally preponderant.”¹⁵¹ Coleman wrote this early

¹⁴⁹ Church Glass and Decorating Company, Advertisement, *New York Evangelist*, June 21, 1900, 13.

¹⁵⁰ Fisher, *Hardman of Birmingham: Goldsmith and Glasspainter*, 150.

¹⁵¹ Coleman, “American Stained Glass,” 55.

in his stained-glass career, during a time period in which the introduction of opalescent stained-glass sparked new interest in the craft, and while employed under one of the pioneers of the opalescent glass movement in America. Therefore, the article may have been a reflection of the passion and pride he experienced as an employee of the most famous American stained-glass firm rather than a lasting judgement. Additionally, Coleman's employment with Gorham Manufacturing Company coincided with the company's partnership with Heaton, Butler, and Bayne, an English stained-glass firm. As a result, Coleman would have been keenly aware of how different religious sects of this time period typically preferred one style of stained-glass over the other regardless of his aesthetic and ecclesiastical preferences. However, the confirmed Church Glass and Decorating Company's American stained-glass designers worked specifically in opalescent stained-glass styles. While it is uncertain whether Coleman's pursuit of the John Hardman and Company agency was a business decision or a change in aesthetic opinion, the partnership with the English stained-glass company benefited from the Church Glass and Decorating Company immensely.

Some of the largest and most well-known commissions by the Church Glass and Decorating Company were projects completed through John Hardman and Company. Most notably were a series of windows installed in the Thompson Memorial Chapel of Williams College as well as *The Great Window* in the Thompson Memorial Library at Vassar College. Consisting of four large-scale windows, the Thompson Memorial Chapel was the subject of a catalog for the Church Glass and Decorating Company as well as two extensive advertisements. While the catalog was not dated, a 1906 advertisement in the

Congregationalist and Christian World specifically featured the west and east transept windows seen in the company's catalog (fig. 16).¹⁵² This publication offered images of each of the windows completed by John Hardman and Company as well as the location, title, and accompanying bible verse(s). This concerted marketing effort by the Church Glass and Decorating Company touted their affiliation with the English company. Furthermore, this system of company advertisements and catalogs based on specific commissions through John Hardman and Company extended to *The Great Window* of the Thompson Memorial Library of Vassar College.

Although it was also the subject of a catalog and substantial advertisements, the marketing efforts for *The Great Window* varied greatly from that of the Thompson Memorial Chapel. While the chapel's catalog featured pages of images with small amounts of text, the story behind *The Great Window* design demanded explanation and the catalog has one image (fig. 17). Donated by Mary Clark Thompson in memory of her husband Frederick Ferris Thompson, the stained-glass window memorializes the first doctorate granted to a woman.¹⁵³ Lady Elena Lucretia Cornaro-Piscopia earned her Doctor of Theology degree from the University of Padua in 1678, despite previously being denied from finishing her education due to her gender. Vassar College prided itself as an institution dedicated to the educational opportunities of women and this inspirational window ideally suited their mission. Additionally, the designer of the window represented John Hardman and Company's beginnings and their connections to

¹⁵² Church Glass and Decorating Company, advertisement, *Congregationalist and Christian World*, September 1, 1906.

¹⁵³ Church Glass and Decorating Company, *The Great Window in the Memorial Library Building at Vassar College* (New York, NY: Church Glass and Decorating Company, 1906).

A.W.N. Pugin, the idealized figure of the Gothic Revival. Dunstan Powell, A.W.N. Pugin's grandson, designed *The Great Window* for Vassar College as part of John Hardman and Company.¹⁵⁴ Created in the Gothic Revival style that his grandfather promoted throughout his life, *The Great Window* contained five lights with tracery and brilliant colors.

The Great Window at Vassar College was not Powell's only connection to the Church Glass and Decorating Company, despite working specifically for John Hardman and Company. An article in the *New York Times* from February 1907 described an exhibit at the Pratt Institute of Brooklyn of "sketches and cartoons for colored windows and with examples of stained glass," which included Powell's work.¹⁵⁵ While the exhibit may have simply included the designs for *The Great Window*, Powell was listed among Violet Oakley and Clara Miller Burd, who had designed large commissions for the company as well as Russell Sturgis Foot, who was the firm's vice president. No other John Hardman and Company designers were included in the short article and Caryl Coleman was likely heavily involved in deciding what work would be on view at this exhibition. As the company president, Coleman would have wanted to show off the Church Glass and Decorating Company's best work and potential to possible clients in the same venue that had hosted an exhibition by Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company just one year prior to their exhibit.¹⁵⁶ Therefore Powell's inclusion in the exhibition highlighted the success of the partnership between the Church Glass and Decorating Company and John Hardman

¹⁵⁴ Fisher, "John Hardman and Company: Pugin's Glasspainters," 86.

¹⁵⁵ "Local Art Notes," *New York Times*, February 24, 1907.

¹⁵⁶ "Pratt Institute," *American Art Annual*, Volume 6 (1908), 212.

and Company as well as a possible change in Coleman's overall attitude toward European stained-glass styles.

The partnership between the Church Glass and Decorating Company and John Hardman and Company is significant due to the range of production and success of the English firm. As noted in 1988 by the British Society of Master Glass Painters, "at the peak of the Gothic Revival period, the company provided stained-glass, mosaics, metalwork, and other ecclesiastical decorations all over the world."¹⁵⁷ The growing popularity of the Gothic Revival style and architecture in the United States created new markets and partnering with an American firm had been successful for other English stained-glass firms. As previously mentioned, Heaton, Butler, and Bayne retained Gorham Manufacturing Company as their sole American agent starting in 1886. This particular arrangement, however, dissolved in 1908 when it was discovered that Gorham sold some of the English company's window designs labeled as Gorham, therefore claiming credit for some designs that were not theirs.¹⁵⁸

The arrangement between the Church Glass and Decorating Company and John Hardman and Company functioned differently than the relationship between Gorham and Heaton, Butler, and Bayne, with little threat of misattribution between the two companies' designs. First, the two companies solely produced window designs of two very distinct stained-glass styles that were both popular during this time period.

¹⁵⁷ The British Society of Master Glass Painters, "John Hardman Studio: The First 150 Years," *The Journal of Stained Glass* (Autumn 1988).

¹⁵⁸ Norton, "The 'American Window Department' of the Gorham Manufacturing Company," 15.

Secondly, John Hardman and Company exported their windows to the American firm in cut pieces, in an unleaded state likely with cartoons to be leaded and completed on site.¹⁵⁹

This process seemed to be confirmed in newspaper articles of the time. In an article about the “Adoration of the Magi” window in the Immanuel Church of Little Falls, New York, the stained-glass window is immediately recognized as a Hardman window in the title and first paragraph. However, at the conclusion of the article, the window is described as “the work of the Church Glass and Decorating Company.”¹⁶⁰ The process by which Hardman windows were installed in American churches through the Church Glass and Decorating Company was confirmed by Michael Fisher through his research on the English firm. However, the wording of this article suggests that the Church Glass and Decorating Company took credit for the installation of the English stained-glass windows. Furthermore, while this process was a good idea in theory, it appears that the wrong measurements were sent to the English firm in at least one case. A John Hardman and Company window in the Trinity Episcopal Church of Hartford, Connecticut saw part of the company signature on the bottom right hand corner of the window cut off (fig. 18). It appears that the measurements were overestimated and the Church Glass and Decorating Company had to make adjustments on-site.

Lastly, from known John Hardman Company correspondence, the relationship between the two companies appeared to be a mutually beneficial business relationship that was based on trust. After the Church Glass and Decorating Company closed in 1913, Hardman executive Roger Watt noted, “We have never impugned Mr. Coleman’s

¹⁵⁹ Fisher, *Hardman of Birmingham: Goldsmith and Glasspainter*, 151.

¹⁶⁰ “The Hardman Memorial Window,” *New York Observer and Chronicle*, December 20, 1906.

personal integrity, but his business capacity was about as rotten as it very well could be.”¹⁶¹ Despite how this Hardman executive felt about Coleman’s business knowledge, after the closing of the Church Glass and Decorating Company, John Hardman and Company transferred to the Montague Castle-London Company, which was Coleman’s new employer. It is unknown if Coleman was instrumental in this decision to partner with another American company, rather than opening their own American office.

Ornamental Glass Windows

While the focus of the Church Glass and Decorating Company remained the production and retail of opalescent and Gothic Revival stained-glass windows throughout its tenure, the company expanded their production to include ornamental windows in colored glass as well as intricately leaded colorless glass designs. The production of secular stained and decorative glass windows expanded in the late nineteenth century to include architectural installations in train stations, banks, courthouses, libraries, and public auditoriums.¹⁶² Additionally, the Gilded Age desire for highly ornamented interiors resulted in an increase in stained-glass used for domestic spaces and wider markets. In time, stained-glass architectural elements occupied middle class homes with glass for entranceways, breakfast nooks, and transom lights as well as public institutions such as banks, theaters, railroad stations, and courthouses.¹⁶³

The Church Glass and Decorating Company included their colored glass ornamental windows in a large catalog released by the company that included varied

¹⁶¹ Fisher, *Hardman of Birmingham: Goldsmith and Glasspainter* (Derbyshire, England: Landmark Publishing, Ltd., 2008), 152.

¹⁶² Raguin, *Stained Glass: From Its Origins to the Present*, 239.

¹⁶³ Raguin, *Stained Glass: From Its Origins to the Present*, 241.

examples of the company's commissions. However, with the exception of a short mention in their 1905, the Church Glass and Decorating Company advertised the colorless ornamental windows in a separate catalog titled, "Glass That Decorates, But Does Not Destroy Light."¹⁶⁴ The company marketed these colorless windows specifically to hotels, public buildings, and private homes that wished to include elaborate windows, but could not sacrifice the loss of light. The colored ornamental windows, being secular in nature and decorative, were likely produced for similar audiences that still desired opalescent glass designs. While domestic and ornamental windows were far from novel in American stained-glass production, the Church Glass and Decorating Company likely sought to include these types of windows in their repertoire as a way of expanding their clientele in order to compete with larger firms. The ornamental windows produced by the Church Glass and Decorating Company diversified the styles of stained-glass they were willing to design, allowing the company to expand past its ecclesiastical roots.

Colored Ornamental Windows

American stained-glass companies produced domestic and ornamental stained-glass windows for years before the Church Glass and Decorating Company was founded in 1899. In 1885, J. and R. Lamb advertised "Household Work" among their memorial windows, while several other companies in New York and Philadelphia included "domestic" and "ornamental" windows in their advertisements for ecclesiastical stained-glass.¹⁶⁵ On the same page of announcements, two companies boasted ornamental,

¹⁶⁴ Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York, *Glass That Decorates, But Does Not Destroy Light* (New York, NY: Church Glass and Decorating Company).

¹⁶⁵ See, Advertisement, *The Decorator and Furnisher*, Volume 6, No.4 (July 1885), 129. The other companies that advertised "ornamental" or "domestic" windows in this edition of *The Decorator and*

“stained-glass substitute,” which from the photographs included in the advertisements was likely a combination of colorless and colored glass.¹⁶⁶ Therefore, by the beginning of the twentieth century, when the Church Glass and Decorating Company was including such examples in their catalogs, ornamental windows had long been part of stained-glass production in the United States. Founders such as Caryl Coleman and Edward Peck Sperry would likely have been aware of the trend of domestic stained-glass during this time period, despite working primarily within ecclesiastical side of production. While the company did not promote ornamental windows in their earlier known advertisements and catalogs, eight full pages of their largest and most heavily illustrated catalog focused on colored ornamental windows.

Titled “Suggestion for an Ornamental Domestic Window,” each of the eight, colored, ornamental stained-glass windows featured in the Church Glass and Decorating Company’s catalog followed the same basic pattern.¹⁶⁷ There was a thick, patterned outer border that appeared to function as a frame for the window with a solid, thin, colored border outlining each side. The catalog’s example patterns for this section of the window included leaves and vines, different types of floral patterns, and geometric patterns that included sections of colorless glass (fig. 19 and fig. 20). The large, central panel of the ornamental windows offered a similar selection of styles. The windows illustrated

Furnisher were Otto F. Falck of New York, Alfred Godwin & Co. of Philadelphia, J. and R. Lamb of New York, and Eureka Stained Glass of New York, who advertised as stained-glass but called their products a stained-glass substitute.

¹⁶⁶ See, Advertisement, *The Decorator and Furnisher*, Volume 6, No. 4 (July 1885), 129. It is currently unclear to the author what exactly stained-glass substitute was versus stained-glass at this time. Observation based on photographs included in the July 1885 advertisements of “Eureka Stained Glass” of the C.L. SEIB Manufacturing Company of New York and the “Stained Glass Substitute” of W.C. Young of Philadelphia.

¹⁶⁷ Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York, *Stained-Glass Catalog* (New York, NY: Church Glass and Decorating Company, 1907).

included elaborate geometric patterns, stylized floral patterns, landscapes, floral and foliage examples, and even one example that included a whimsical spider web emerging from the lower left-hand corner (fig. 21).¹⁶⁸ None of the windows designs featured offer any further information as to the location of such windows, how many the company produced, or if these windows were a significant portion of the company's production. However, each of the designs does include a note that they were copyrighted in 1906.¹⁶⁹

Since the domestic ornamental window was part of American stained-glass production throughout the end of the nineteenth century by several companies, it should not be surprising that a firm such as the Church Glass and Decorating Company included this window form in their production. However, in light of past publications by the company president, Caryl Coleman, it is surprising that his firm promoted such windows in their catalogs. Coleman's assertion that future stained-glass production would be "largely an ecclesiastical one" in 1894 coupled with the company's name and early known projects suggest that the firm focused and specialized specifically on ecclesiastical work.¹⁷⁰ The inclusion of colored ornamental windows in the Church Glass and Decorating Company's production came after the company appeared to have closed their Chicago office in 1904. However, the windows were included in the largest known catalog produced by the company. Therefore, it is unclear whether the windows were produced as an expansion to the company's production during a time of prosperity or due to their inability to stay in business by solely providing ecclesiastical windows.

¹⁶⁸ Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York, *Stained-Glass Catalog* (New York, NY: Church Glass and Decorating Company, 1907).

¹⁶⁹ Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York, *Stained-Glass Catalog* (New York, NY: Church Glass and Decorating Company, 1907).

¹⁷⁰ Coleman, "Stained Glass," 56.

Regardless, the fact that the ornamental windows featured so prominently in the company's catalog that boosted some of the firm's most well-known works implies that the colored ornamental windows were or were thought to be a significant facet in the Church Glass and Decorating Company's production.

"Clear" Glass Windows

Combined with their production of colored ornamental domestic windows, the Church Glass and Decorating Company also produced a line of colorless ornamental windows which were specifically advertised for hotels, public buildings, and private homes in their own separate catalog. These windows created decorative schemes through an array of elaborate leading patterns and "clear" glass of varying textures in order to promote a line of ornamental windows that did not obscure light.¹⁷¹ Touting the merits of the style, the company's publication stated: "The Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York have made careful study of the subject, and of late have produced windows of this nature, closely following historic motives, combining leads with clear glass of varying textures, thus emphasizing the leaded pattern without obscuring the light."¹⁷² Featuring four distinct window designs, the Church Glass and Decorating Company claimed inspiration, designs, and titles from historical designs and inspiration. The windows featured on the cover of the catalog, titled "Library Windows, Motive of A.D. 1565," was a demi-lune shaped window with an elaborate floral design surrounding a

¹⁷¹ See, Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York catalog, *Glass That Decorates, But Does Not Destroy Light* (New York, NY: Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York). In their catalog, the firm used the term "clear" to describe the glass used for the windows advertised. In using the term "clear" rather than the accepted "colorless" used by decorative arts historian, I am conforming to the published period texts of the Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York.

¹⁷² Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York, *Glass That Decorates, But Does Not Destroy Light* (New York, NY: Church Glass and Decorating Company).

central roundel (fig. 22).¹⁷³ No further explanation was provided outside of the window design's title, so it is unclear whether the window was a copy of a sixteenth century design or if the firm simply used the title to imply a level of historicism to their design.

The names of other three windows also emphasized a level of historical influence of these colorless windows. Additionally, two of the window designs are reminiscent of the colored ornamental windows. The windows described as "of the time of" Francis I and Louis XV each have a central panel, which is then surrounded by a section of decoration that creates a frame around the outside of the window.¹⁷⁴ The Louis XV example has a very simple central panel with an elaborate floral and shell motif outer frame. The Francis I design has a much more elaborate central panel with a geometric and stylized floral frame (fig. 23). The final example, named "Grolier," refers to a decorative style of bookbinding that used interlaced leather straps and gilded ornamental scrolls (fig. 24).¹⁷⁵ The sections of the window meant to illustrate the leather straps of the bookbinding technique are textured, so to stand out in the illustration with some sections appearing to be either tinted or thicker to appear shaded.

In addition to dedicating an entire catalog to these colorless glass designs, this style also received a short mention in the Church Glass and Decorating Company's first known catalog in 1905. However, the firm did not include the ornamental window in other known publications or advertisements. There are no specific dates for when or how

¹⁷³ Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York, *Glass That Decorates, But Does Not Destroy Light* (New York, NY: Church Glass and Decorating Company).

¹⁷⁴ Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York, *Glass That Decorates, But Does Not Destroy Light* (New York, NY: Church Glass and Decorating Company).

¹⁷⁵ Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York, *Glass That Decorates, But Does Not Destroy Light* (New York, NY: Church Glass and Decorating Company).

long these windows were produced for the company, because the firm did not date the catalog and no other known sources collaborate a production period. The only evidence of when the Church Glass and Decorating Company produced this type of ornamental window lies in the company address of the catalog. The Church Glass and Decorating Company had three known addresses during its fourteen years. The location listed on the catalog, 28 West Thirtieth Street, was the firm's third address as well as the one listed in their 1905 and 1907 publications.¹⁷⁶ Unfortunately, to date, there has yet to be a definitive time frame of when the company moved to or away from this address. Nevertheless, this address marked what appeared to be the most successful portion of the company's existence. The Church Glass and Decorating Company generated two catalogs as well as the publication on colorless glass windows and a pamphlet about the Thompson Memorial Chapel of Williams College and the Thompson Memorial Library of Vassar College commissions from their West Thirtieth Street location.¹⁷⁷ To date, these are the only known surviving catalogs produced by the company. Therefore, it can be assumed that the company began producing the colorless glass windows in an attempt to expand into a larger market during a prosperous time period.

The exclusion of the colorless ornamental windows from other publications and advertisements suggested that the colorless glass windows were either a small portion of their production for a specific audience or, perhaps, not a successful venture for the Church Glass and Decorating Company. They also may not have been unique to the

¹⁷⁶ Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York, *Artists in English and American Glass, Mosaics, and Metals* (New York, NY: Church Glass and Decorating Company, 1905).

¹⁷⁷ Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York, *Thompson Memorial Chapel* (New York, NY: Church Glass and Decorating Company).

overall stained-glass field of the early twentieth century. In 1901, *The Church Militant* of Boston Massachusetts published an article that called for decorative windows that did not obscure light, and sounded very similar to the colorless windows produced by the Church Glass and Decorating Company. The author argued why colorless ornamental windows would be beneficial as well as how they could be achieved without the use of colored glass:

A window is made primarily, if not solely, for the sake of admitting light, anything which unduly restricts such use cannot be wholly beautiful. Where, then, one needs absolutely all the light possible, clear glass is necessary. But in this case one may give another element of beauty, if not that of color, in using lead divisions for the window instead of wooden ones. With lead one can introduce panes of charming designs, and so have the beauty of form, if not of color.¹⁷⁸

The idea of creating a decorative window without colored glass, but through decorative leading is exactly what lead to the Church Glass and Decorating Company's version of this ornamental window. Whether or not the idea for such a window was the result of this article, another source, or an interpretation of an ornamental window already on the market is unclear. The firm installed John Hardman and Company memorial windows into Trinity Church's Lady Chapel, so the firm's executives may have been aware of this publication. However, the idea for a colorless ornamental window whose designs was created with lead divisions was clearly already within the public's consciousness.

While the Church Glass and Decorating Company will likely continue to be associated most closely with Tiffany and other opalescent stained-glass producers, their

¹⁷⁸ Sarah W. Whitman, "The Memorial Windows in Trinity Church," *The Church Militant* (January 1901), Archives of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

production and commissions were much more extensive. The Gothic Revival windows of John Hardman and Company increased the company's business and potential in the stained-glass market of the early twentieth century. As previously mentioned, different religious sects opted for different styles of stained-glass for their houses of worship and the Church Glass and Decorating Company could therefore appeal to a larger market due to this increase in offerings. Additionally, the extensive marketing efforts and continuous mentions of their affiliation with John Hardman and Company substantiated the significance of the English firm to the Church Glass and Decorating Company. While the ornamental windows did not garner the same amount of publicity as the Gothic Revival stained-glass, their production and inclusion in catalogs signified the company's willingness to expand into new markets. Whether or not this venture was successful has yet to be determined. Regardless, these enterprises define and differentiate the Church Glass and Decorating Company from their contemporaries and provide new avenues of scholarship on the stained-glass firm as well as the American stained-glass movement of the turn of the twentieth century.

CONCLUSION

In examining the Church Glass and Decorating Company, one can learn about this firm's place within the broader stained-glass community, well-known designer they employed, a range of products that a stained-glass company produced, and the place of John Hardman and Company in the United States. This thesis sought to examine several aspects of the Church Glass and Decorating Company's known operations, people, and commissions in order to understand how the firm related to other firms, especially Tiffany Studios. Moreover, the company trends and partnerships within American stained-glass production and how the Church Glass and Decorating Company fit. The firm was not unique in their production of ornamental windows, but it is still unclear how common their colorless ornamental windows were in contemporary markets. The aspects of the Church Glass and Decorating Company that continued to stand out in light of the greater American stained-glass movement were: the range of the firm's ecclesiastical and secular based production and the specialization and culture of the stained-glass designer. Founded by a veteran of the New York decorative arts community, Coleman's published views on stained-glass stated, "the future field for colored glass windows will be largely an ecclesiastical one," but the firm created a market for themselves by producing a range

of products that are comparable to some of the more well-known stained-glass companies of the period.¹⁷⁹

As the founder of the Church Glass and Decorating Company, Caryl Coleman is a contradictory figure in how he ran this firm in light of his published opinions on stained-glass. The company president's history of ecclesiastical studies coupled with his previous employment in the church departments of two decorative arts companies suggests that he would have solely focused on religious commissions. Coleman's company even had "church" in the name. However, the Church Glass and Decorating Company produced a diverse selection of stained-glass, church decorations, and other decorative arts. As noted in one known advertise released by the company, the firm even furnished entire interiors for elite homes. The range of products, especially ornamental glass windows, likely made the company more competitive. It also suggests a flexible and innovative leader, but John Hardman and Company executives blamed the firm's failure on the president. While this may have been a rash judgement with no foundation, Coleman was not able to keep many of the designers responsible for many of the Church Glass and Decorating Company's most famous commissions. Whether it was a lack of business savviness or perhaps the lack of credit given to artists for their designs, it is currently unknown why the company failed. However, Coleman's firm produced windows that were compared favorable to and misattributed for Tiffany's throughout the Church Glass and Decorating Company's history and ever since.

¹⁷⁹ Coleman, "American Stained Glass," 56.

The history of the Church Glass and Decorating Company and the opalescent glass era reveals the specialization of the position of stained-glass designer at the turn-of-the-century. The invention of opalescent glass created a new role for the trained artist to work in stained-glass without the technical skills previously needed. Additionally, by the time the Church Glass and Decorating Company formed, this evolution in the craft was well-developed, and the firm appeared to only employ designers of stained-glass windows and other decorative arts. The company functioned by employing their principal staff members as designers, while commissioning freelance artists. If there are any full-time employees that were hired specifically as designers, this information is not available thus far. Moreover, the concept of freelance designers and the separation of design and production had also started to experience some push-back through the English Arts and Crafts Movement by the time of the Church Glass and Decorating Company operations. While it is unclear how developed these concepts were in the United States, the English movement wanted stained-glass designers to be fully involved in the entire process of producing a window. As part of the American Arts and Crafts Movement, Coleman did incentivize Oakley's painting of the faces and hands of "The Epiphany" window, but this is the only known instance of this thus far. However, of the known Church Glass and Decorating Company figural windows, there are differences in the handling of the painted aspects of the windows. This could be due to a number of artisans and glasshouses contracted by the firm, or due to the other designer involvement. Currently, there are no other sources to confirm this theory, but, considering the Sperry signature on

the Bartlett Memorial window, it is a possibility that the artists were more involved in different stages of window production.

This period witnessed a great number of stained-glass artisans leaving established firms, such as Tiffany Studios, to create their own companies. Church Glass and Decorating Company was just one firm in a group that included Calvert and Kimberly, and Maitland Armstrong and Co., of New York, whose top employees initially worked for Tiffany Studios. While each firm and employee likely held differing personal reasons for their departures, this trend suggests several things. The expanding field of stained-glass in the religious and secular architecture offered more opportunities, a theme discussed in my thesis. Also, these employees likely had more artistic control in smaller firms than as one of many Tiffany employees. Tiffany accepted and rejected designs by top artists, such as Edward Peck Sperry, based on the aesthetic he desired for his company. However, as chief designer for Church Glass and Decorating Company, and later Gorham, Sperry dictated his own aesthetic rather than conforming to an approved artistic strategy. While this is speculation, the numbers of seasoned stained-glass designers breaking with large companies to form their own suggests a combination of opportunity and a desire for creative control.

In addition to the seemingly frequent departures from large stained-glass companies, which led to the Church Glass and Decorating Company, further research into the firm is needed. In order to better understand several aspects of the company ranging from the management and operations of the firm to the full production and artistic development of their works. Moreover, was the Church Glass and Decorating Company

the unique in that the firm appeared to solely design rather than manufacture their products? Also, was this a new idea? While the factories of Calvert and Kimberly and Tiffany Studios were listed in publications of contemporary factory inspectors, other companies may have followed a similar model, and it is unclear how common stained-glass design was to stained-glass manufacturing.

Currently, many resources do not appear to be available or are still hidden in unknown archives, churches, and building records. For instance, the pamphlet or small publication that would have accompanied the 1907 Pratt Institute exhibition cannot be found in the Pratt Institute archives. It is currently unknown whether another archive owns a copy. Other obstacles for further research included churches and institutions that have closed or ones that have been demolished. The First Unitarian Church of Springfield, Massachusetts, which was included in the 1905 list of commission addresses, changed their location in the mid-twentieth century and sold all but one of their windows. The only remaining window owned by the church was designed by John La Farge, and there are no records of the locations or buyers of the other stained-glass windows. However, additional research could also require visiting the churches and institutions that have each of the known stained-glass windows or possible commissions. Record keeping is often not organized or easily available, but many previously unknown resources could be hiding within stacks of church records. For example, the publication about the Edward P. Sperry windows of the First Church in Plymouth, Massachusetts was found in their archives.

Outside of the opalescent and John Hardman and Company stained-glass windows, other works produced by the Church Glass and Decorating Company are extremely difficult to locate or authenticate. The sanctuary of All Saints' Church of Lakewood, New Jersey was a rare find, and was only found due to the period catalog's identifying information. In the case of ornamental stained-glass windows, no examples have been located by the Church Glass and Decorating Company, so it is unclear what percentage of the firm's business consisted of these products. The ornamental windows of the Church Glass and Decorating Company were not novel within the broader stained-glass field, but they do show how the firm adapted to the demands and new markets of the Gilded Age in order to diversify and expand their business. The illustrated ornamental windows could be incorporated in a range of buildings from ostentatious Gilded Age interiors to public building. Likely a prerequisite to ornamental windows found in middle class homes later in the twentieth century, the ornamental windows of the Church Glass and Decorating Company were featured in two of the three known catalogs released by the firm.

Additional research into the American stained-glass movement of the turn-of-the-century would also provide a fuller picture of the Church Glass and Decorating Company's place within the broader context of stained-glass community. In order to understand how the business operations of this firm related to companies like Tiffany Studios and J. and R. Lamb, more contemporary designers and companies of similar size and specialty require more research. While Tiffany and La Farge were known competitors for the Church Glass and Decorating Company, there were others that likely

have similar histories or beginnings to provide competition. Only one source thus far noted the names of several companies vying for one commission, which included: Tiffany; La Farge; Gorham; Heaton, Butlers, and Bayne; Duffner and Kimberly; and the Church Glass and Decorating Company.¹⁸⁰ Duffner and Kimberly won that competition, but it is unclear if this many submissions for one commission was typical or not. Furthermore, were these companies the “usual suspects” or were there several others competing for other commissions?

This thesis revealed a great amount of information about the previously unknown about the Church Glass and Decorating Company, their stained-glass, their designers, and their place within the greater stained-glass community. However, it also produced new questions. Although it seems quite certain that Calvert and Kimberly produced the firm’s windows through 1905, Calvert and Kimberly closed in 1905 and their reincarnation of Duffner and Kimberly competed against the Church Glass and Decorating Company for commissions years later. Therefore, in addition to the questions presented throughout this conclusion, it is also unclear what company produced the firm’s stained-glass and other products during the majority of their tenure. Questions such as these are a result of this thesis’s findings, which revealed a richer picture of the company’s history, production, and designers though incomplete. In uncovering this information and revealing new questions, there is a more complete blueprint set for new and more complex research avenues into the Church Glass and Decorating Company and their place within the American stained-glass movement of the period.

¹⁸⁰ Deborah Marie Carey, “From Behind the Shadow of Tiffany and La Farge: Jacob A. Holzer,” (master’s thesis, University of Chicago, 2012), 75.

FIGURES

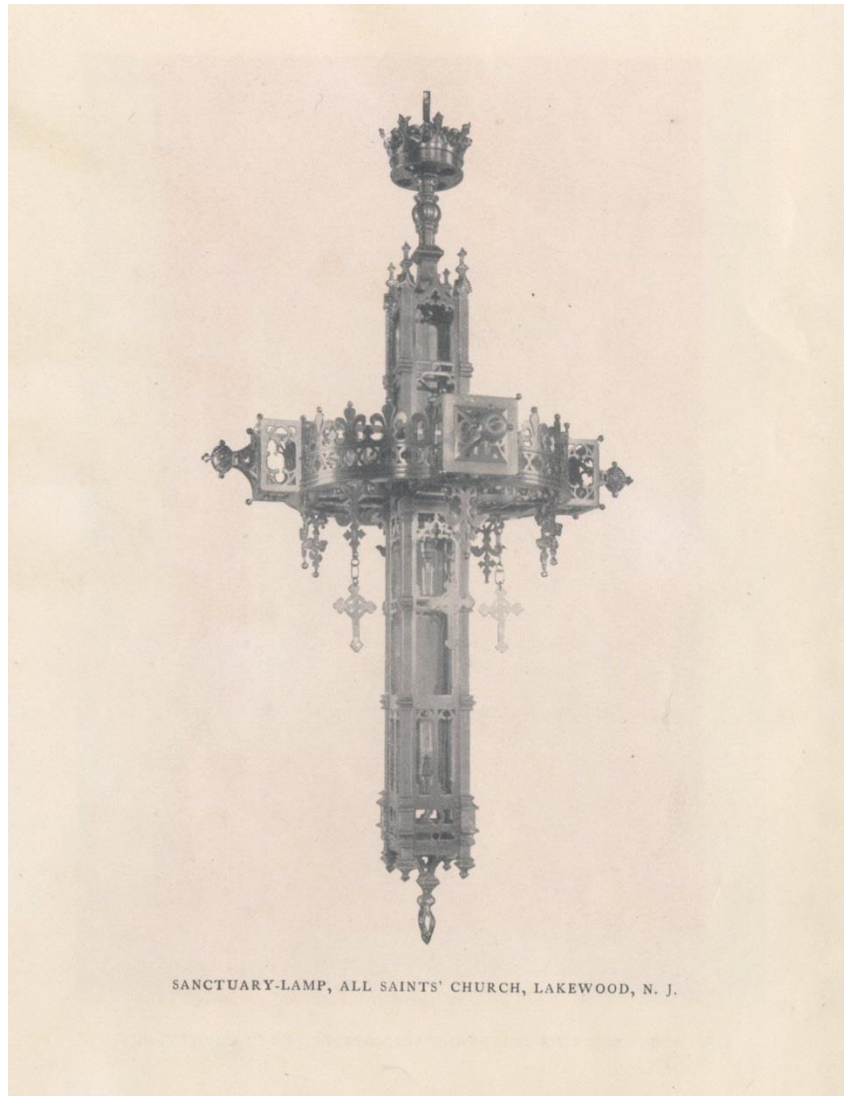


Figure 1: Catalog Illustration.

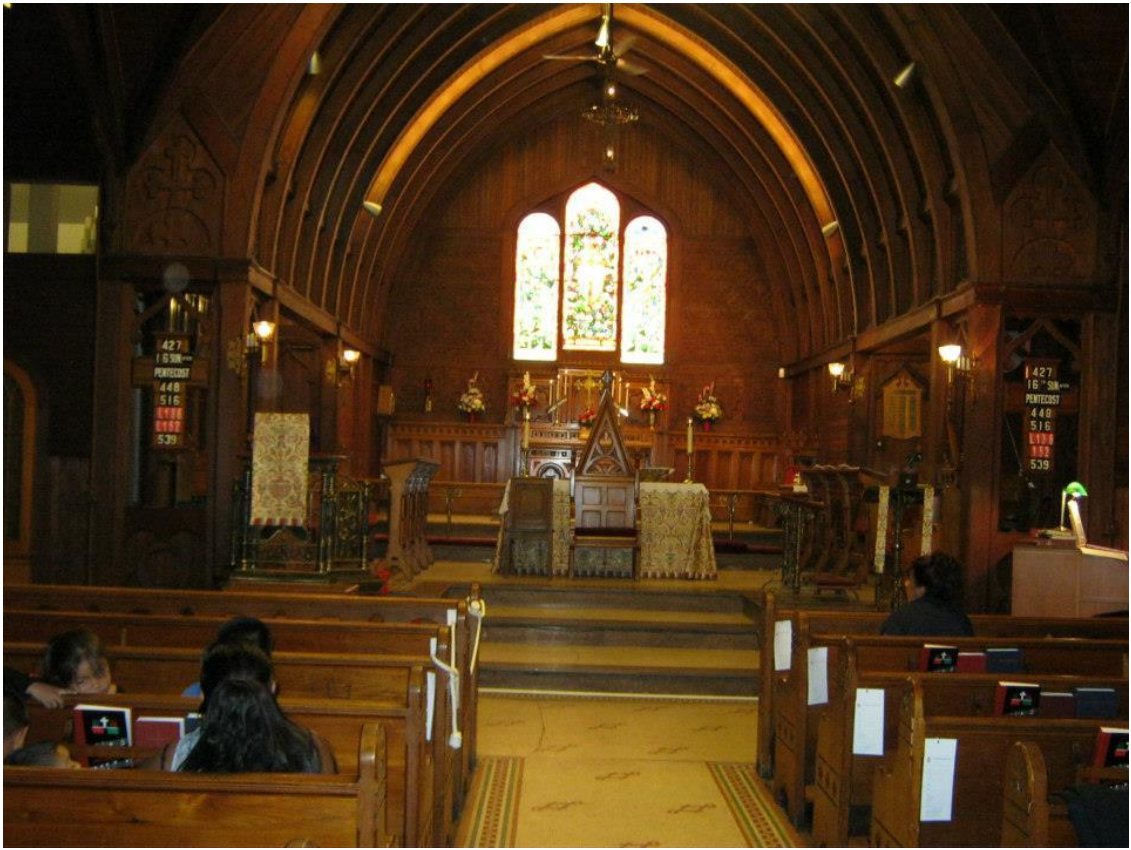


Figure 2: Church Interior, 2015. All Saint's Church, Lakewood, NJ.

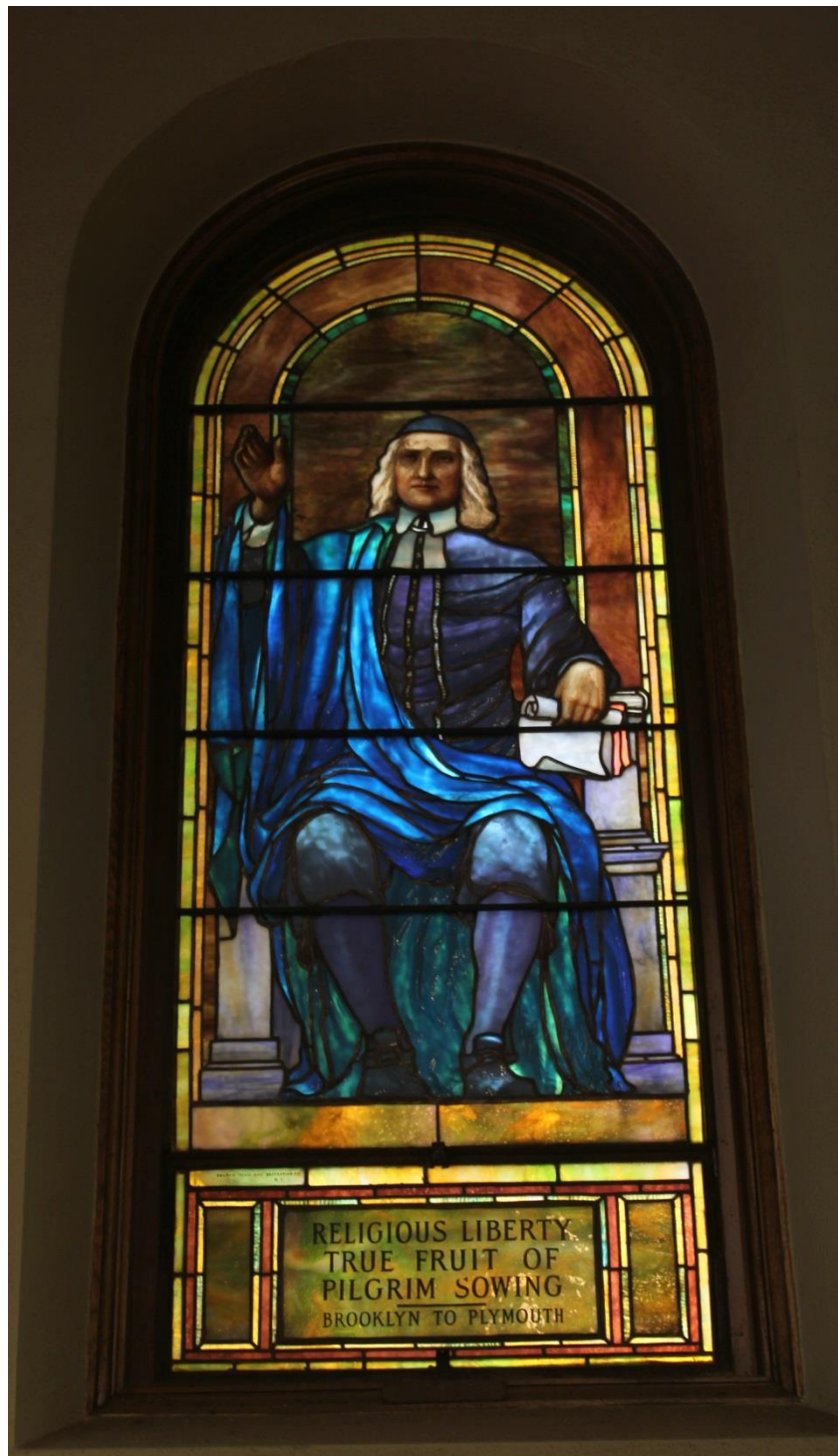


Figure 3: *Religious Freedom*, Edward Peck Sperry, 1902. First Church, Plymouth, MA.



Figure 4: Detail, *Religious Freedom*, Edward Peck Sperry, 1902. First Church, Plymouth, MA.



Figure 5: *Frank Dickinson Bartlett Memorial Window*, Edward Peck Sperry, 1903. University of Chicago, Chicago, IL.



Figure 6: *Clapp Memorial Window*, Edward Peck Sperry, 1900. Clapp Memorial Chapel, Pittsfield Cemetery, Pittsfield, MA.



Figure 7: *Philip D. Armour Memorial Window*, Edward Sperry, 1900. Armour Institute of Technology, Chicago, IL.



Figure 8: *Teta Instructs Lioba: Harriet Maria Scott Memorial Window*, Caryl Coleman, 1912. College of Education at Wayne State University, Detroit, MI.

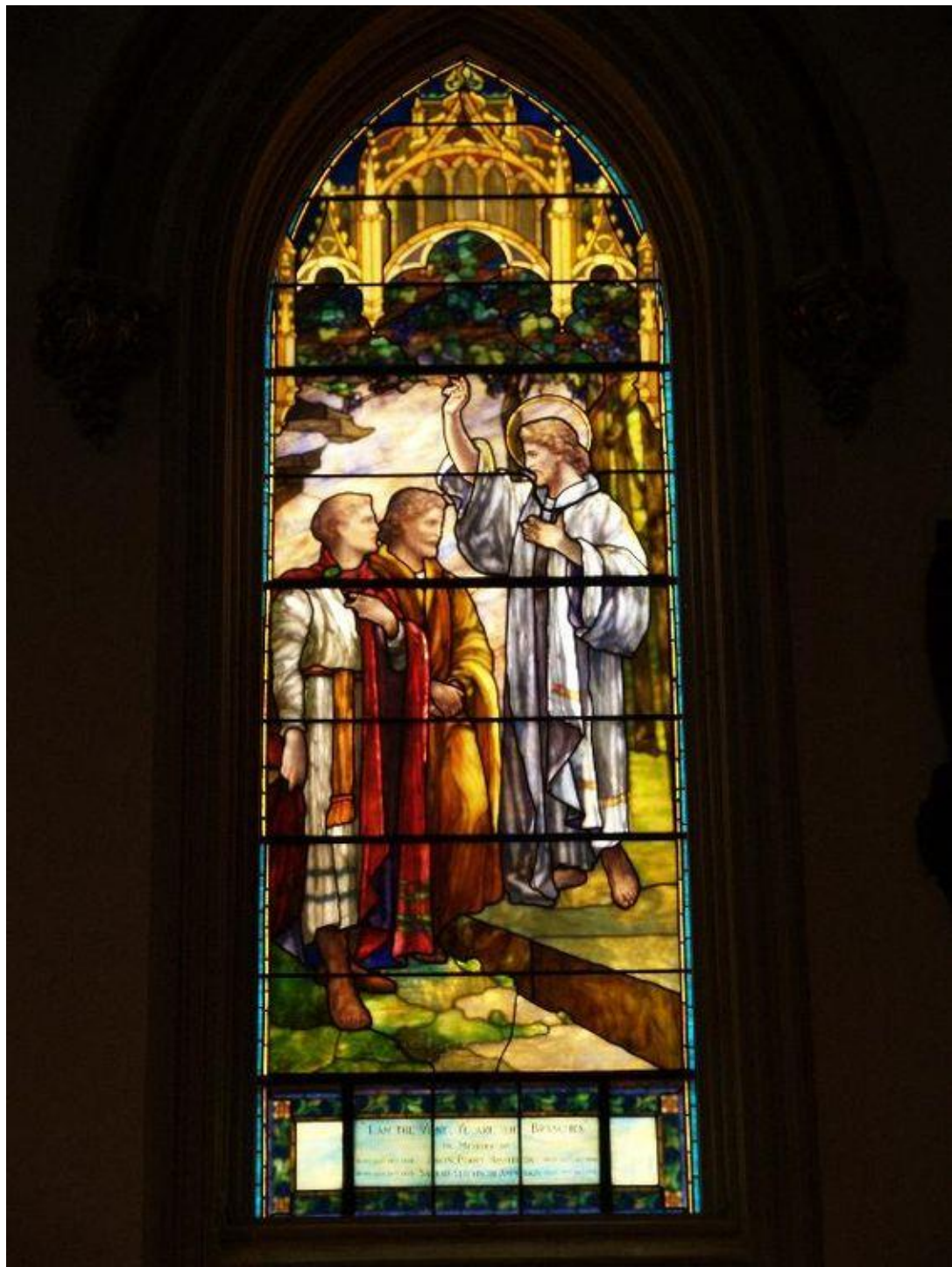
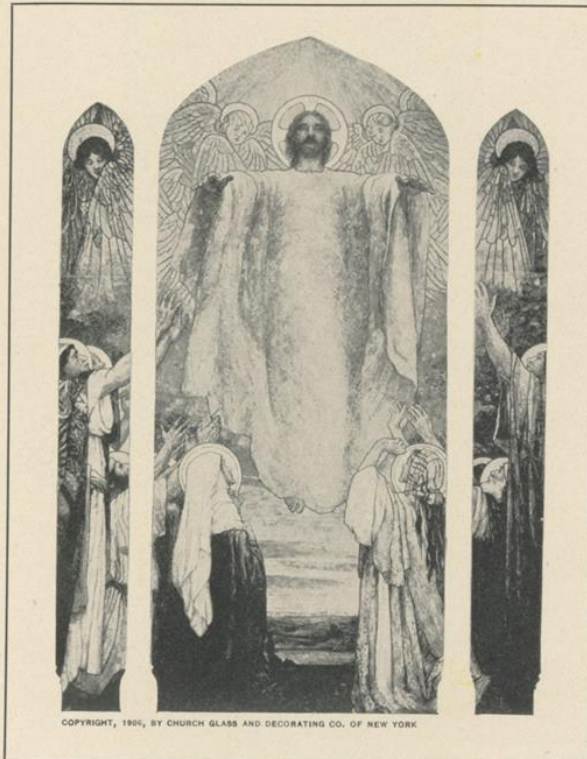


Figure 9: *I am the Vine*, Edward Peck Sperry. Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, MD.



Figure 10: Detail, *I Am the Vine*, Edward Peck Sperry. Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, MD.

CHVRCH GLASS AND DECORATING COMPANY
OF NEW YORK.



GLASS MOSAIC REREDOS
ALL ANGELS' CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY

TWENTY~EIGHT WEST THIRTIETH STREET.

Figure 11: Catalog Illustration of Glass Mosaic, Violet Oakley.

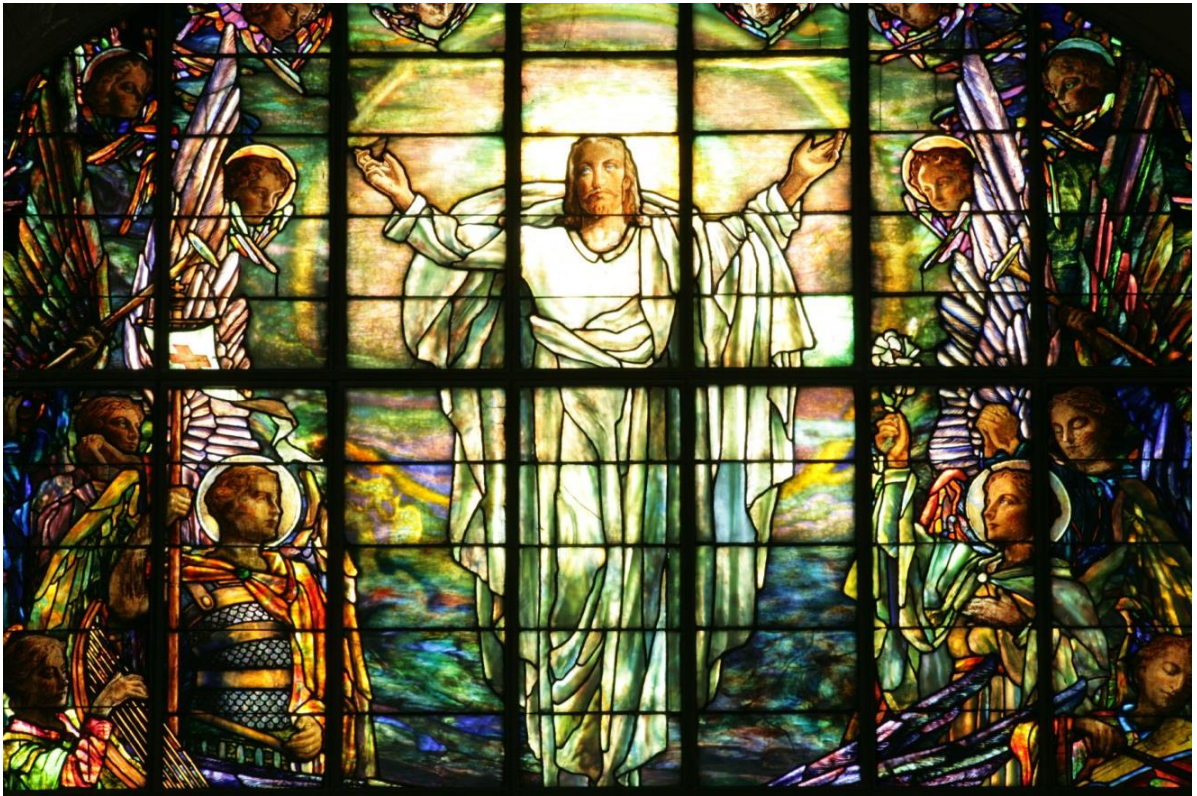


Figure 12: *Ascension*, William Fair Kline, 1905. Second Presbyterian Church, Chicago, IL.



Figure 13: *The Ascension*, John La Farge, 1889. Church of the Ascension, New York, NY.

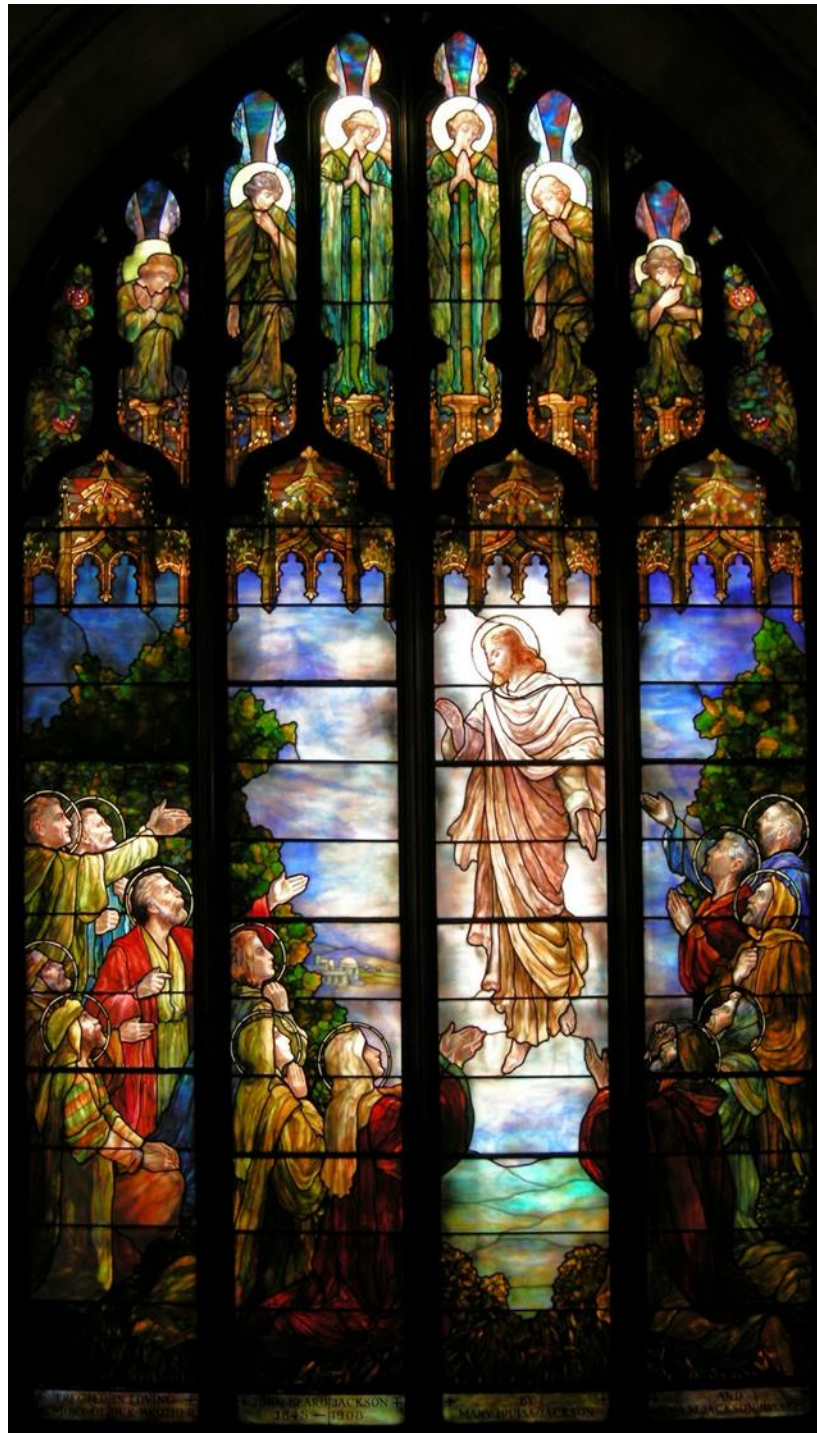


Figure 14: *The Ascension*, Clara Miller Burd. St. Andrew's Church, Pittsburgh, PA.



Figure 15: Clara Miller Burd. St. Andrew's Church, Pittsburgh, PA.

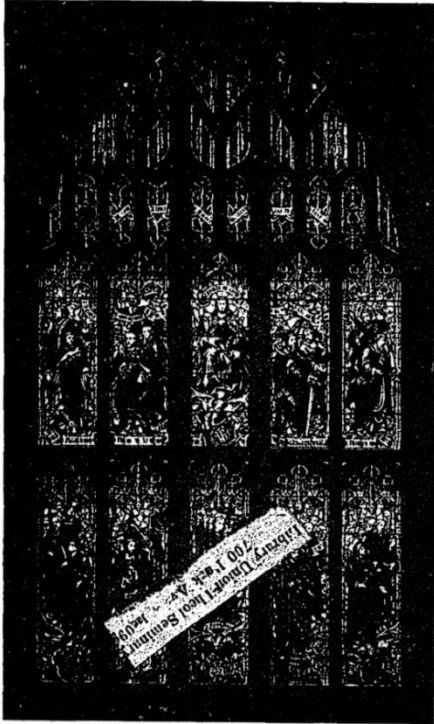
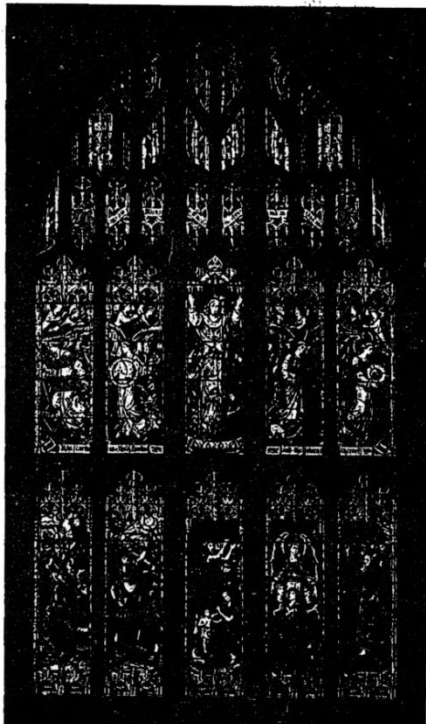
The Windows in the

Thompson Memorial Chapel

Williams College, Williamstown, Mass.

Were Furnished by

The Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York

THOMPSON MEMORIAL CHAPEL TRANSEPT WINDOWS, WILLIAMS COLLEGE.

WEST TRANSEPT WINDOW

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.—Matt. 28: 18-20.

EAST TRANSEPT WINDOW—THE NATURAL FORCES

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| Electricity | Motion | Heat | Light |
| 1 Kings, 19-21 | Joshua, 10, 12 | Isaiah, 3, 21 | Ex., 10, 22 |

Man rejoicing in the midst of created things.

THE CHURCH GLASS AND DECORATING COMPANY are makers of all forms of Memorials, Windows, Tablets, Altars, Pulpits, Lecterns, Rails, Lamps, Fonts, Alms-Basins, etc., etc. They are also mural decorators.

Sole agents for the Stained Glass Windows of John Hardman & Co., of Birmingham, England.

Correspondence invited; information given; designs and cost submitted.

✠ ✠ ✠

Church Glass and Decorating Company of New York
28 West 30th Street

Figure 16: Advertisement, 1906.

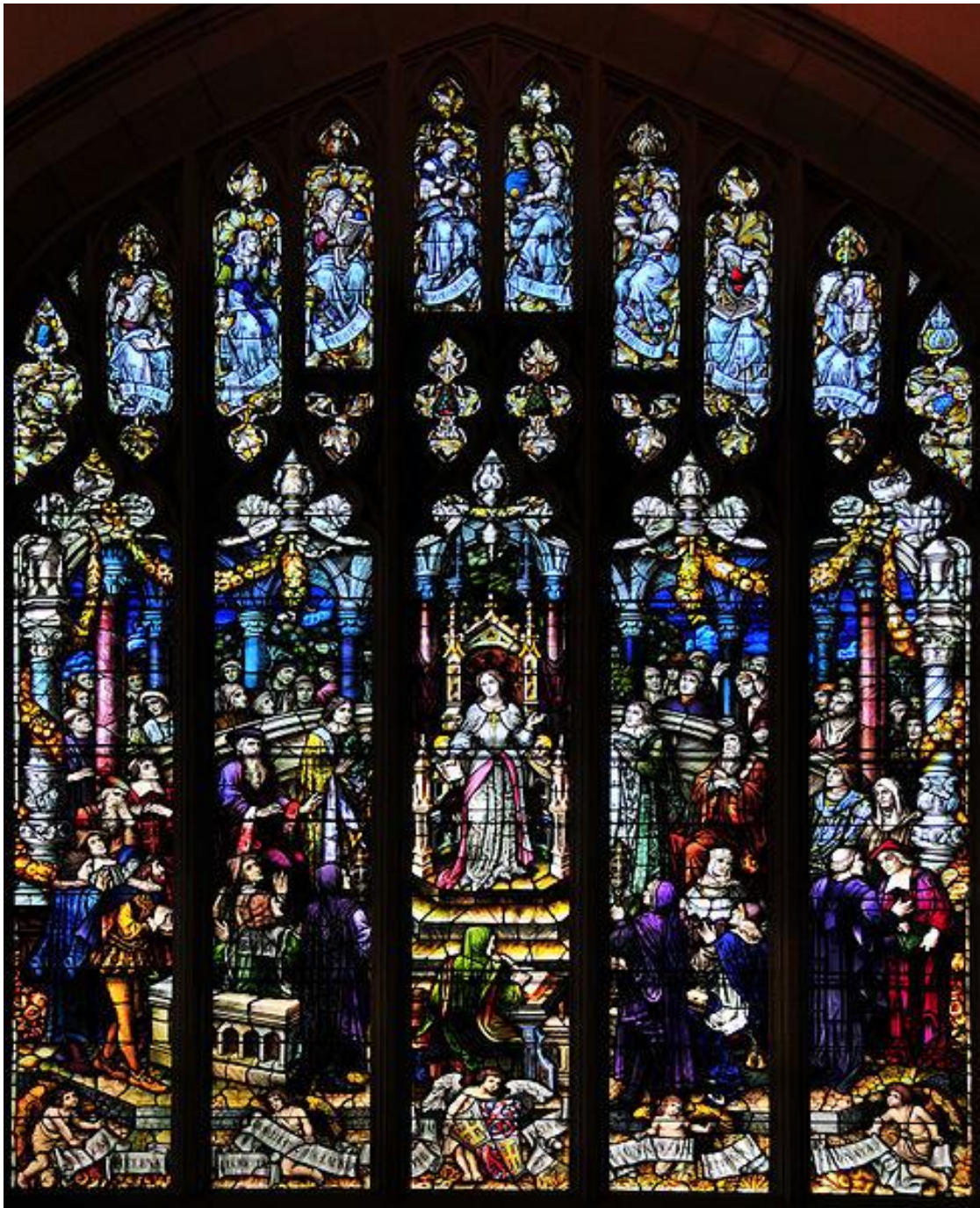
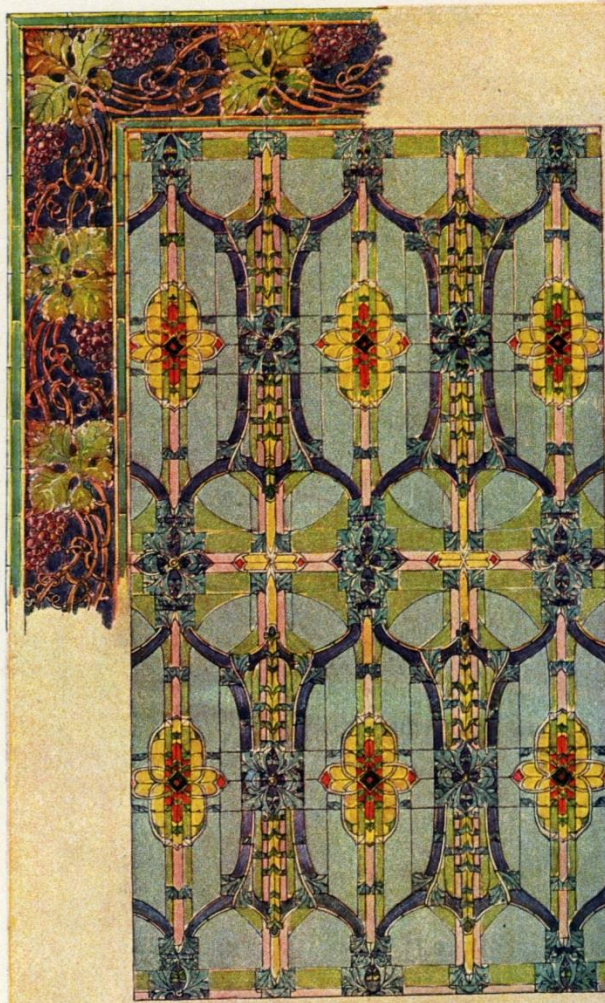


Figure 17: *The Great Window*, John Hardman and Company, 1906. Thompson Memorial Library, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY.



Figure 18: Window detail, John Hardman and Company. Trinity Church, Hartford, CT.

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SUGGESTION FOR AN ORNAMENTAL DOMESTIC WINDOW

TWENTY-EIGHT WEST THIRTIETH STREET.

Figure 19: Catalog Illustration of an Ornamental Window.

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SUGGESTION FOR AN ORNAMENTAL DOMESTIC WINDOW

TWENTY-EIGHT WEST THIRTIETH STREET.

Figure 20: Catalog Illustration of an Ornamental Window.



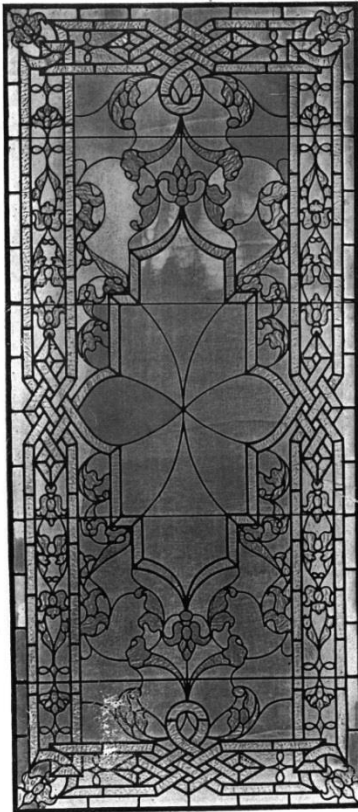
Figure 21: Catalog Illustration of an Ornamental Window.



LIBRARY-WINDOWS, MOTIVE OF A.D. 1565

Figure 22: Catalog Illustration, *Glass That Decorates, But Does Not Destroy Light.*

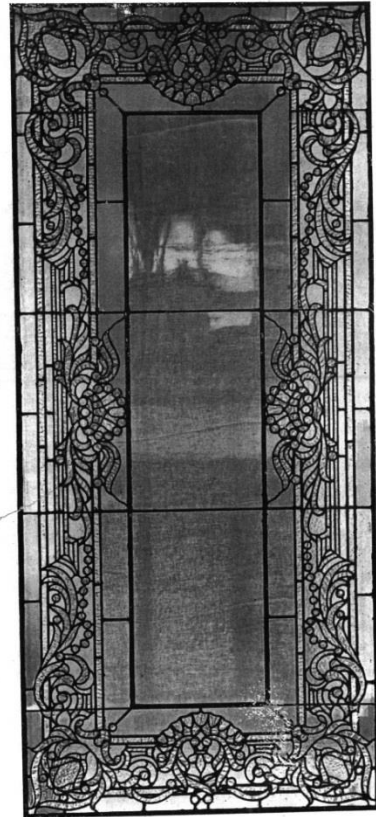
Church Glass & Decorating Company of New York



A DECORATIVE MOTIVE
OF THE TIME OF
FRANCIS I

Number Twenty-eight West Thirtieth Street, New York

Church Glass & Decorating Company of New York

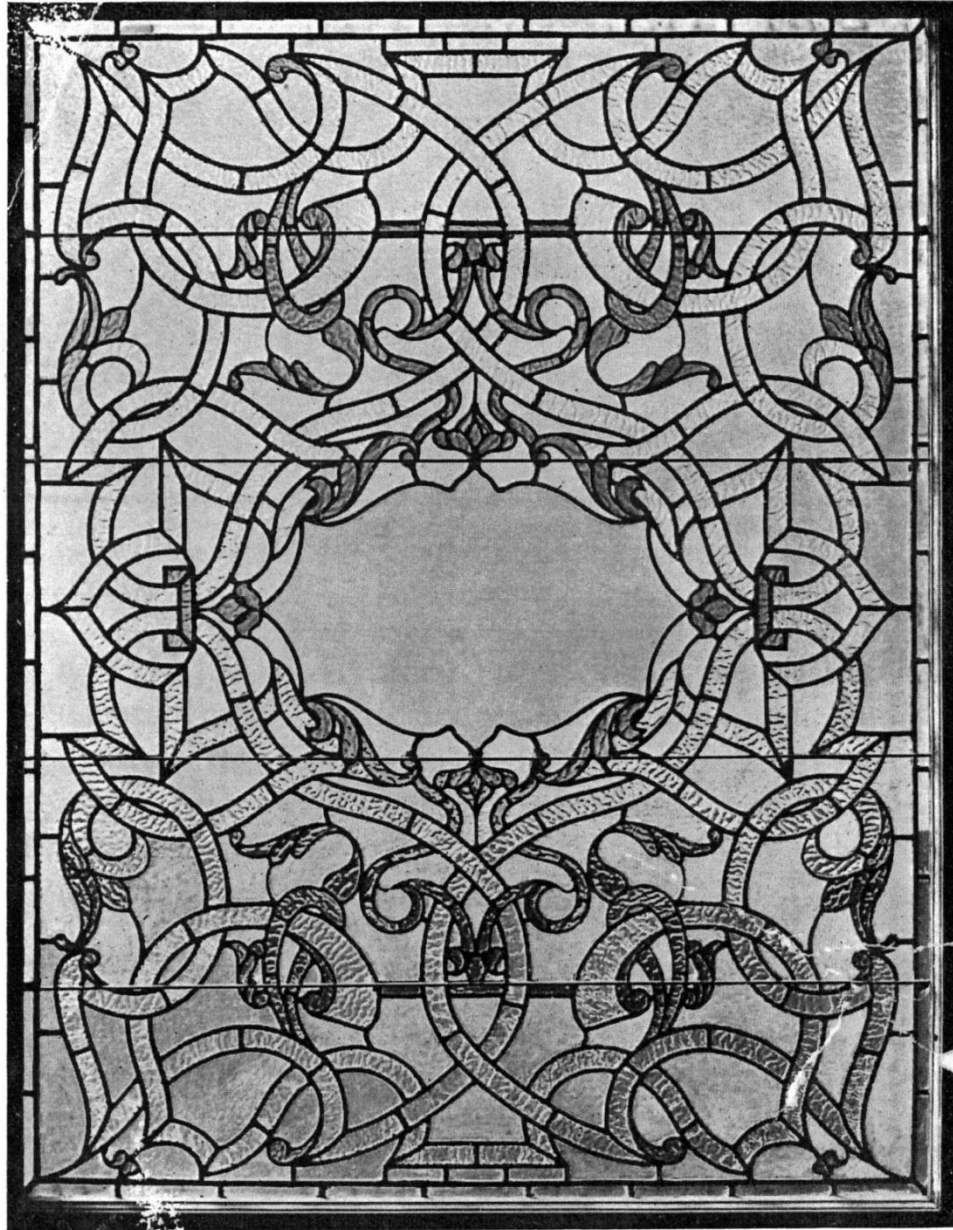


A DECORATIVE MOTIVE
OF THE TIME OF
LOUIS XV

Number Twenty-eight West Thirtieth Street, New York

Figure 23: Catalog Illustration, *Glass That Decorates, But Does Not Destroy Light.*

Church Glass & Decorating Company of New York



A GROLIER MOTIVE

Figure 24: Catalog Illustration, *Glass That Decorates, But Does Not Destroy Light.*

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