PATRIOTIC STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS

AND THE MANIFESTATION OF

AMERICAN CIVIL RELIGION

by

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ABSTRACT

Stained-glass windows are a mechanism through which abstract ideas are communicated, often benefitting from their association with European Gothic cathedrals. When church windows include patriotic iconography, the patriotic themes conceivably benefit from this association. Between 1890 and 1950, many stained-glass windows were created for American churches that contain patriotic symbols and images associated with American nationalism. Insufficient research has been published regarding this phenomenon. This dissertation attempts to fill that gap by arguing that these patriotic images represent a manifestation of American civil religion. Over forty churches and cathedrals were surveyed using a methodology based on Erwin Panofsky's framework, which incorporates cultural influences into the analysis of the artistic design. Window themes align with various aspects of America's foundational moments, including those associated with the Pilgrims and Puritans, the War for Independence and the Founding Fathers, America's westward expansion, and the nation's wars.

America's civil religion, as discussed by Robert Bellah, includes a set of beliefs, ceremonial rites, and symbols connecting a community that endow a transcendent value on those items. Race, religion, and national identity are foundational elements of that civil religion and are explored here as potential influences in the design process. American civil religion is also typically embraced during times of trial. Therefore, issues of immigration quotas, Indian removal policies, economic turmoil, and military conflicts are considered as well.

The windows under consideration here embraced American civil religion, while often whitewashing and sacralizing a view of American history that ignored many of its cultural complexities.

CHAPTER ONE

PATRIOTIC STAINED GLASS AND AMERICAN CIVIL RELIGION

Stained Glass in America 1870–1950

As the 1870s ushered in America's Second Industrial Revolution, the mix of immigrant laborers, capitalism, and discretionary wealth fueled an unpredictable economy. The gospel of economic growth, defined as progress, was firmly embraced by the country. Large-scale philanthropy gilded the country, masking appalling social problems, discrimination, and injustice. In that same decade, according to the ninth census of the United States, immigrant laborers flooded into the country.[1] While the first wave of European immigrants arrived before official documents were kept during the 1820s, they were mostly from the British Isles.[2] Irish and German Catholics dominated the second wave of immigrants arriving during the 1840s and 1850s.[3] Chinese nationals also made their way to the mines in California, Colorado, and Montana, and they were a critical labor force for the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869. The massive influx of immigrants provided cheap labor during this "golden age" of industrial titans with names like Rockefeller, Carnegie, Vanderbilt, Stanford, Daly, and Clark. Massive numbers of immigrants arrived in America during the four decades spanning 1881 to 1920. In total, it is estimated that over 20 million immigrants entered the United States during this time, ushering in an era of "qualitative immigration" controls where

certain categories of immigrants were deemed undesirable and were barred from entering the country.[4] Concerns about job security, public health, and public safety prompted Congress to pass laws such as The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, barring future immigration of what was then termed "alien" labor into the United States.[5] It was the first legislation, according to immigration specialist Susan Martin, that barred a whole nationality from immigrating to America.[6]

On the other hand, wealthy tycoons fortified by America's obsession with progress and consumption, turned philanthropic. They poured their newfound prosperity into university buildings, public libraries, and, more importantly, to the topic at hand: into ornate churches and cathedrals. Gothic cathedrals began gracing the American skyline complete with spires and stained-glass windows. Both Protestant and Catholic congregations commissioned enormous stained-glass window programs during this period dating from approximately 1870 to 1950. Many of the American windows installed during this timeframe are encased in traditional European Gothic tracery and arches and often depict heavily leaded biblical figures and scriptures just like their European predecessors.

It was also during this time, then, that a rather unconventional and nontraditional kind of civil religious stained-glass window began appearing in the United States. The windows reflected a growing appreciation for America's Founding Fathers, various historical events, and patriotism. This coincided with the evolution of what author Robert Bellah calls American civil religion.[7] Bellah argues that American civil religion is something that Americans gravitate to during a "time of trial"—which would align with

the economic and cultural anxieties that likely worsened during this third wave of massive immigration mentioned earlier.[8]

American civil religion, according to Bellah, celebrates familiar patriotic figures and symbols and often complements what he refers to as the "religious tradition." He explains, "The American civil religion was never anticlerical or militantly secular. On the contrary, it borrowed selectively from Christian religious traditions in such a way that the average American saw no conflict between the two."[9] This combined theology blends a mutual respect and reverence for the genesis of the country, its seemingly ordained Puritan foundation, its scriptural documents of independence and justice leading to new life on earth, and even its justifiable aggression at times to defend inalienable rights, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. While Bellah's work has sparked plenty of lively discussion regarding America's "elaborate and well-institutionalized" national faith,[10] little, if any of that scholarly work has explored how America's ecclesiastical stained-glass windows might reflect this phenomenon. This dissertation begins the discussion regarding that gap.

This dissertation will explore how select stained-glass windows in American churches and cathedrals portray patriotic images representing a tangible manifestation of civil religion. The stained-glass windows discussed represent an artistic style that so deftly weaves the civil religion symbolism into the biblical tapestry that little, if any, attention has been directed toward this obscure manifestation and artifact. Depicted in the cobalt blues and sapphire reds of traditional Gothic stained glass, America's patriotic colors complement the façade so well that the comingling of the Founding Fathers or

other mythical heroes with the biblical saints is almost undetectable. Only the careful observer fully appreciates the anomaly and the skillful blending achieved by the artist.

While the tradition of installing stained-glass windows in Gothic cathedrals and churches is centuries old, medieval windows were intended to reflect biblical stories to often-illiterate audiences. They typically reflect biblical images such as Old Testament parables and prophets or New Testament Gospels or Christ's miracles. When the cathedral windows are illuminated with natural light, these stained-glass windows seem to dance. Ethereal angels, holy saints, and martyrs convey the virtues of The Good Samaritan or the trials and tribulations of The Prodigal Son. Both European and American ecclesiastical windows tell familiar stories and included secular representations in the guise of biblical figures. However, the American windows also incorporate secular stories depicting the genesis of a country that took as a primary principle the constitutional separation of church and state. They include American martyrs like Abraham Lincoln. They also tend to relay stories of well-known national events, often of mythical proportions. For example, windows that will be discussed include a Plymouth, Massachusetts, church window titled *The Pilgrims Signing the Mayflower Compact*, a New York window portraying *The Founding Fathers Signing the Declaration of Independence*, and a Virginia cathedral's *Robert E. Lee Memorial Window* honoring the confederate leader.[1]

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[1] As noted below, very little scholarship has been dedicated to examining these windows. Bruce Feiler, for instance, mentions the windows in New York City's churches without elaborating on them. See his *America's Prophet: Moses and the American Story* (New York: William Morrow, 2009), p. 141.

It must be said at the outset of this study that some of the images and historical descriptions of windows and archival documents presented throughout this discussion and in subsequent chapters may contain potentially offensive imagery, language, and opinions that are not my own. For example, while the Pilgrims supposedly embraced religious tolerance (at least in their early years in Plymouth), eventually they, too, along with the other Puritans that followed, were intolerant of others. Their colonization led to ruthless and often violent consequences for the Indigenous people. By no means do I intend to marginalize the impact of those activities on the Native communities. In presenting various window images or archival documents for discussion, the hope is that they might prompt a broader discussion about the importance of these windows as microcosms of American beliefs during that time. The designs reflect attitudes, ideas, and norms from a different era and reflect their power to institutionalize ideas that are increasingly found to be inappropriate, even offensive. My goal is to describe the images and their cultural function during the long era of Reconstruction that followed the Civil War. To be clear, my main argument is that these windows represent tangible evidence of American civil religion; not that I am a proponent for that civil religion or necessarily believe in it.

In an unorthodox and sometimes rebellious manner, these American cathedral windows often embrace political themes. Characters, such as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson, can be found in windows across the United States. As many of the windows are artistically embellished with other religious figures and symbolism along with their Gothic framing, the integration of

American myth and symbol into the window designs often goes unnoticed. My argument is that these windows not only tie into the foundation of the myths that many Americans held sacred at the turn of the twentieth century, but that they also institutionalized the civil religion phenomenon in the US.

Background

For readers who are unfamiliar with the theoretical construct of civil religion, the starting point for any discussion of the concept must begin with sociologist Robert Bellah. In his seminal article titled "Civil Religion in America,"[11] Bellah provides the catalyst for much ensuing debate regarding his concepts defining American civil religion. However, little, if any, of this resulting literature mentions patriotic stained-glass window iconography as discussed in this dissertation. In fact, no evidence was found connecting the windows to American civil religion. This work begins that dialog.

What is civil religion? Peter Gardella's book *American Civil Religion: What Americans Hold Sacred* catalogs the many American monuments, texts, patriotic images, and rituals in the country's culture that reflect civil religion values.[12] Gardella explains:

> The word "religion" derives from the Latin *ligo* which means "I bind," and religion has to do with what is binding or obligatory. Religions are not philosophies or sets of beliefs, but systems of symbols, actions, and ideas that purport to bind together groups of people, or people and gods, or even the elements of nature. Religions may be explained or defended by reason, but they do not gain their power from reason any more than a piece of music or a work of visual art does.[13]

He argues that it is a matter of devotion to a set of values and that these values hold a community together. However, Gardella argues, "most Americans have not come to these values through reason. They have learned to value liberty, democracy, peace, and

tolerance through the monuments, texts, and images of American civil religion."[14] Therefore, it would stand to reason that if stained-glass windows examined in this dissertation indeed represent American civil religion, they would contain images depicting those same values. But how would an artist portray abstract concepts such as liberty or democracy?

Perhaps that artistic challenge is not as difficult as one might first imagine. Art historian and visual-culture expert, W. J. T. Mitchell, in his article, "What Is an Image," provides this insight. He explains:

> [O]ur "theoretical" understanding of imagery grounds itself in social and cultural practices, and in a history fundamental to our understanding, not only of what images are, but of what human nature is or might become. Images are not just a particular kind of sign, but something like an actor on the historical stage, a presence or character endowed with legendary status, a history that parallels and participates in the stories we tell ourselves about our own evolution from creatures "made in the image" of a creator to creatures who make themselves and their world in their own image.[15]

The creators and artists of the American windows noted in the following chapters had an appreciation for what Mitchell refers to as history fundamental to our understanding. These artists worked closely with various sponsors and clergymen to hone the images their windows portray. Indeed, the characters depicted in their windows have achieved legendary status. And that legendary status serves to endow rich American stories of mythical proportion. Americans at the dawn of the twentieth century were familiar with those early experiences. For example, a few of those stories include the Mayflower and the Pilgrims, the independence declared by the colonists, the contributions of the Founding Fathers, the Lewis and Clark expedition, and even tales of buckskin-clad

individuals like Daniel Boone, the settler colonists once called pioneers, covered wagons, and Native Americans.

A great number of scholarly works exist covering the topics of civil religion, art history, and American Studies to support research into the legends that many Americans hold sacred. That literature provided the foundation to distill the relevant aspects of my primary documentation and fieldwork. Archival documents, such as studio job-logs and preliminary drawings or watercolor designs, also informed this study. Those drawings usually accompanied letters between the artist, the clergy, and sometimes even the sponsors. A large number of those documents are archived at local churches, while others can be found at libraries and historical societies. The transformation of window designs and images depicting concepts of liberty or democracy indeed reflect a dynamic process of multiple influences and interactions between sponsor, artist, and clergy.

Similar to their European stained-glass counterparts, the American windows also tend to embrace a male perspective. They were designed for men in positions of power. Even so, these artifacts present a compelling perspective of American history relevant today. As art historian E. H. Gombrich succinctly argues, “There really is no such thing as Art. There are only artists.”[16] The windows reflect political concerns of the day, and they document American myths that have been passed down from generation to generation. These American myths, as presented in the medium of stained-glass art, are quite compatible with other religious parables and biblical images. Again, visual-culture expert, Mitchell, explains that images were useful “for a priesthood concerned with the education of an illiterate laity,”[17] and they also encouraged devotion. However, he

cautions, "the distinction between the spiritual and material, inner and outer image was never simply a matter of theological doctrine, but was always a question of politics…."[18]

Through the ages, art has certainly not been immune from politics and propaganda. Stained glass is no different. For example, one window discussed later depicts George Washington in uniform, kneeling and praying at Valley Forge. In front of his figure is an emblem with stars and stripes. Obviously, the gravity of going into battle and the underlying politics of the situation are related by the scene. But the artist takes this one step further, completing Washington's somber profile with the printed names of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Framed in this manner, there appears to be a sanctification of a political mission. The entire rose-like window design reminds the viewer of another kneeling and praying figure—Christ kneeling in the Garden of Gethsemane.

In similar fashion, many of the patriotic windows discussed in the following chapters reflect political concerns. They incorporate and share visual space with Christian saints, symbols, and Apostles. This visual proximity and framing in the context of sacred scriptures, saints, and Christian patriarchs provides a sanctifying correlation between the political, the patriotic, and the religious. As visual-culture expert, Mitchell, again succinctly points out, often the images depict social movements in disguise, by employing what he calls "doctrinal vocabulary" to rationalize what is "essentially a political conflict."[19] One such example of America's doctrinal vocabulary is Manifest Destiny (covered in more detail in a later chapter). Political leaders in the middle of the

nineteenth century used this doctrine to justify Indian removal policies and to further other expansionist agendas.

What other political conflicts besides massive immigration and expansionism troubled Americans at the turn of the twentieth century? What were the window patrons, artists, and clergy trying to convey? Civil-religion authorities like Bellah have argued that, during times of crisis or conflict, civil religion reunites and reassures a country. For example, Bellah points to early Americans fighting for independence, the issue of slavery that divided the country, and then a trial of his generation and a cause of much apprehension and discord in the United States—the Vietnam war. For Bellah, this most recent time of trial reflected a "problem of responsible action in a revolutionary world, a world seeking to attain many of the things, material and spiritual, that we have already attained."[20]

However, during the early years of the twentieth century, Americans were grappling with many additional conflicts, political unrest, and anxieties. The whole country was dealing with an expanding federal government, imperialism, urbanization, industrialization, as well as a whole plethora of modernizations and technological advances. Electricity, cameras, telephones, and even the speed of travel were racing toward a different cultural norm as factories were pumping out new products due to vast innovations. At the same time, enormous propaganda machines were employed to promote consumption and distractions from civil unrest. Huge exhibitions, or world's fairs, were being deployed, displaying a country's prominence on the world stage. Undoubtedly, the economic uncertainty and cultural volatility in the country contributed

to this civil-religion revival and the panacea it offered of familiar stories and myths of America's beginning. Civil religion reaffirmed that Uncle Sam was still white and that what Americans held sacred remained valid.

By sanctifying American history and its genesis, the stained-glass windows discussed in this dissertation were tangible and reassuring signposts to the congregations. These artifacts reflect the evolving phenomenon of civil religion in the United States. Previous scholars in Art History, American History, and American Studies have all debated issues close to the evolution and significance of American civil religion as well as American stained-glass designs. But few, if any, have made the connection of these patriotic windows to the phenomenon of American civil religion. Perhaps this is due to the quasi-private nature of many American churches and cathedrals (and their respective archives). Nevertheless, these windows reflect what Gardella calls sacred myths and are closely tied to a civil-religion initiative, uniting congregations during a time of trial and uncertainty in the country.

Anxious Americans were compelled to revisit these sacred myths and ideals as portrayed in the stained-glass windows. Congregations were eager to revisit the venerated ideals of independence, liberty, and democracy. Based on those ideals, the chapters that follow are divided into familiar themes of American history. They include the Pilgrims, Puritans, and Religious Freedom; Independence; the American Frontier, and, finally, War Memorials.

Given the semi-private nature of American church buildings, archival work using church records can be challenging. I have found no in-depth scholarly work connecting

civil religion with the windows highlighted in this dissertation. Nevertheless, scholarly work does exist in related areas. That work illuminates possible motivation for the inclusion of secular symbolism into specific window designs. That foundational work provides context as well as a theoretical framework regarding cultures and communities. They explore political conflicts and cultural shifts that likely influenced artists, patrons, and clergy typically spearheading the ecclesiastical designs. Scholarship about stained glass and the history of medieval art also helps in appraising the artistic medium, its traditions, and its iconography. Familiarity with the history of the art and with traditional European designs is essential for appreciating how the images depicted in the American windows differ from the Gothic or European norm. All of these scholarly perspectives are necessary for the work at hand.

Scholarly Perspectives on Civil Religion

All scholars who discuss America's civil religion cite Robert Bellah's 1967 seminal article in *Daedalus* titled "Civil Religion in America." Bellah presents a "religious dimension" that has its own "seriousness and integrity and requires the same care in understanding that any other religion does."[21] Bellah explains that there are common religious elements shared by a great majority of Americans that have played what he calls, "[a] crucial role in the development of American institutions."[22] He clarifies this point by explaining, "This public religious dimension is expressed in a set of beliefs, symbols, and rituals that [he calls] American civil religion."[23] He borrows from Jean-Jacques Rousseau's earlier definition of civil religion and its "simple dogmas" including "the existence of God, the life to come, the reward of virtue and the

punishment of vice, and the exclusion of religious intolerance."[24] This civil religion, Bellah explains, obligates one to carry out God's will on earth.

Early American political leaders, such as George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, have become linked with certain biblical archetypes, events, and moral obligations. For example, cultural geographer, Wilbur Zelinsky, explains how the charismatic George Washington became a national hero and was deified by Americans. He notes:

> Quite fortuitously, by one of those seemingly miraculous strokes of fate, the right man appeared at just the right time. George Washington, whatever his intellectual limitations, was equipped with those precise qualities of personality, character, and mind prescribed for the maker of the first new nation, and he exercised them most judiciously.[25]

The author explains how, for Washington, this glorification began almost immediately "upon his appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army" and "in every possible medium from 1775 onward."[26] Abraham Lincoln joined the group of Zelinsky's demigods (such as Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson, to name a few) as more of a "martyred Christ of democracy's passion play" and, therefore, his "immediate transfiguration to sainthood."[27] In making his point, Zelinsky reminds the reader that Lincoln was "[a]ssassinated on a Good Friday in the very last hours of a struggle in which the Union was redeemed through a great blood sacrifice, the multitudes instantly perceived the fallen leader as a Christlike figure."[28] In similar fashion, other American demigods have become linked to religious dogmas. Their activities begin to blend with other biblical topics including the Exodus, God's chosen people, the Promised Land, New Jerusalem, sacrificial death, and rebirth. In this linkage,

civil religion is the conduit whereby even foreign volunteers, like Lafayette (whom Zelinsky calls an "accidental symbol"), initially attained a level of divinity, became American heroes, and were glorified.[29] In this way, America's civil religion has its own prophets and its own martyrs, its own sacred events and honored places, even its own solemn rituals and symbols. As Bellah explains, this civil-religion dogma is centered on the idea that American society should be as perfectly in sync with the will of God as men could possibly make it. Furthermore, within America's civil religion, according to Bellah, America should be "a light to all the nations."[30]

Bellah also relates characters such as George Washington to Moses and highlights certain sacred places and rituals that contribute to this civil-religion theology. He utilizes both presidential inaugural speeches and farewell addresses to support his argument. For example, he points out that Kennedy referenced God four different times in his inaugural speech and that, in Washington's farewell address, the outgoing president noted religion and morality as indispensable supports for political prosperity. However, they do not mention Christ. Therefore, Bellah separates civil religion from Christianity. He also argues that civil religion was never intended to replace or substitute Christian theology.

America's civil religion and Christianity, however, both hold certain documents as sacred. For civil religion, Bellah regards the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States as two such documents. The Civil War, too, contributes to the civil-religion theology. It was a pivotal point in the country, a time of blood sacrifice and testing. Bellah connects this event with similar redemptive concepts taught in the New Testament. According to Bellah, the Civil War and Reconstruction eras more

than any other time in American history, vindicated the nation's civil religion. He explains:

> With the Civil War, a new theme of death, sacrifice, and rebirth enters the civil religion. It is symbolized in the life and death of Lincoln. Nowhere is it stated more vividly than in the Gettysburg Address, itself part of the Lincolnian "New Testament" among the civil scriptures.[31]

Bellah outlines the other trappings and rituals of this new Americanized religion. He explains how it developed its own set of symbols and rituals including battlegrounds, cemeteries, Memorial Day proceedings and parades, along with other well-known patriotic monuments. American civil religion symbols, relics, and rituals, such as July 4th celebrations, have become a sacred part of tradition through a process referred to as sacralization. According to anthropologist Francesca E. S. Montemaggi, sacralization occurs when individual religious actors bestow value to ideas and practices, which then become recognized as a legitimate part of tradition. In turn, that value shapes a shared identity by codifying common values, customs, beliefs, myths, and rituals. Through the sacralization process, political ideologies are established, and they acquire a religious dimension.[32]

In addition to this constructed sacralization process, proponents of America's civil religion also borrowed selectively from other traditional religious ceremonies so that, as Bellah explains, "the average American saw no conflict between the two."[33] And, while Bellah is sometimes criticized for his narrow scope, especially regarding slavery, African Americans, and other marginalized groups, such as women, he does acknowledge the shameful treatment of Native Americans throughout history, which, as Bellah explains, is often defended while connecting America to biblical Israel.

Critics of Bellah, such as historian Leilah Danielson, dispute the concept of civil religion entirely. Danielson argues that the term nationalism is better suited for this American phenomenon. The term nationalism presents its own set of challenges, though. It is far from universal, and it is a concept that Danielson says reflects an exclusivity by religion. By setting the "terms of the debate," she feels that his argument regarding civil religion as a facilitator of expanded democracy and extended liberty is "historically inaccurate" and was promoted by "mythmakers."[34] She explains:

> Insofar as proponents of civil religion are themselves prophets of their own religion, they are not historians, but rather mythmakers…As Bellah's contemporaries observed, and as critics have pointed out since, the notion that Americans had been unified by a common civil religion until the 1960s was a nationalist myth that erased the history of coercion, conquest, and exploitation that have often been at the center of U.S. nation formation and U.S. religious history.[35]

Danielson concludes her critique of Bellah by cautioning readers about imagined solidarities. She challenges historians to be "cognizant of the power claims they are making in the stories they tell (and sell)."[36] Yet, imagined solidarities or communities do often tend to share common beliefs, myths, divine power, or rituals that serve to justify exploitation. It seems that, in this regard, her critique may fall a bit short.

Other critics of Bellah, such as Leo Pfeffer, argue that civil religion indeed competes with Christianity. And because of this competition, one of the two necessarily becomes what he calls the "lowest common denominator faith."[37] In Pfeffer's commentary on Bellah's essay in *The Religious Situation: 1968*, Pfeffer points out that the "Constitution specifically forbids prescribed religious oaths for office…indeed, nowhere in the Constitution is the word 'God' to be found, an omission which was not

inadvertent but deliberately reflective of a universal consensus among the constitutional delegates."[38] It is also worth noting that the presidential oath of office as originally set forth in Article II, Section 1, Clause 8 of the U.S. Constitution did not include the phrase "so help me God."

Pfeffer's strongest disagreement with Bellah seems to be with Bellah's "espousal of the use of civil religion as an instrumentality to achieve national goals."[39] He concludes by criticizing the use of civil religion and its rituals to promote "narrow nationalism and military power," noting that "corruption results when religion, traditional or civil, allows itself to become the handmaiden of national purposes."[40]

Still, other critics prefer to expand Bellah's concept of civil religion. Author Phillip Hammond, for example, seems to agree with Bellah that Christianity and civil religion run parallel to each other. Hammond, however, attributes public education and organized sports as the training ground for this ideology of civil religion. "Competitive sports, student elections, and other 'fair play' activities institutionalized in public schools may well be, then, crucial social structures for the transmission and maintenance of America's civil religion."[41] Hammond concludes by observing:

> Americans are still free to hold whatever cognitive ideologies they choose. However, precisely because they have that freedom, they have had to develop a new supernatural political ideology which can articulate their pluralism. The outcome has been a "civil religion" in America. Free public education has been vital in training citizens to this religion, and the judiciary is vital in orchestrating the inevitable conflicts.[42]

Scholarly Perspectives on Nationalism and American Exceptionalism

Bellah and his critics allude to the ability of America's civil religion to create a sense of community. Yet, how did this sense of community evolve and survive during times of extreme conflict and growth in America, including times characterized by labor unrest and industrialization? Political scientist and historian Benedict Anderson addresses similar questions in his 1983 book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Anderson explains that a sense of belonging comes about from several variables that contribute to a sense of community, but he explains that one in particular, what he calls print capitalism, was especially important during the formative years in America. The printed word connects communities, he argues, and in early America, a printing revolution took place.[43] Anderson explains, "Between 1691 and 1820, no less than 2,120 'newspapers' were published, of which 461 lasted more than ten years."[44]

Of course, the character of Benjamin Franklin and his famous printing press comes to mind. But print capitalism, according to Anderson, was especially key, and was a phenomenon unique to the early American colonies. Printing was no longer reserved just for ecclesiastical output, as it was in Europe. Anderson argues that, when printers discovered the revenue potential of the newspaper, printer-journalists materialized. Their early newspapers united readers, connecting them to current events, thereby creating a sense of community. The early papers informed communities as to what ships were coming into various ports, what those ships were carrying, and other cultural events such

as marriages and political appointments. As Anderson explains, "the printer's office emerged as the key to North American communications and community intellectual life."[45]

Anderson highlights other contributing factors to America's growing national sense of culture and community. These factors are the hallmark of modern nations making it possible for "rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways."[46] For example, like Hammond mentioned earlier, Anderson credits state-controlled education and texts, along with expanding political or state bureaucracies as key contributors. He also attributes the loss of Latin, once considered a superior language, as contributing to the sense of community in the developing country. Latin, he explains, was not suited to the nineteenth century for various commerce and businesses, the expanding print capitalism, or for American literature.[47]

Anderson goes on to describe how colonists began to reject the English monarchy's right to rule in tandem with their developing sense of nationalism that became inseparable from their political consciousness. Their new sense of belonging due to print capitalism continually facilitated and fed this consciousness. Anderson argues:

> Out of the American welter came these imagined realities: nation-states, republican institutions, common citizenships, popular sovereignty, national flags and anthems, etc., and the liquidation of their conceptual opposites: dynastic empires, monarchical institutions, absolutisms, subjecthoods, inherited nobilities, serfdoms, ghettoes, and so forth.[48]

Quite amazingly then, out of these diverse immigrants, a seemingly organized nation-state was evolving. Furthermore, museums, maps, and the census served to

validate and quantify a common history and framework. From that framework, national consciousness began to evolve. According to Anderson, this consciousness then materialized in republican institutions with their own set of symbols and rituals such as flags, holidays, and anthems. Yet, as Anderson concludes, it was still an imagined reality. In actuality, the American population did not really know each other beyond the confines of their local and often close-knit groups. It was an imagined community held together by common myths, familiar stories, and symbols shared by many. America became a country of relative strangers, many quite different and distant from each other.

How did Americans continue to make sense out of a confused mess, the welter as Anderson describes it? How did they develop into a republic that would cohere, with the exception of the Civil War, for more than two hundred years? Wilbur Zelinsky examines these issues in *Nation into State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundations of American Nationalism,* noting how various symbols, myths, and a sense of communal spirit are instrumental to building a republican institution. For Zelinsky, nationalism actually becomes a kind of institutionalized civil religion. He explains that, during the eighteenth century, there was an increase in skepticism toward traditional or "supernatural religion," especially in the upper classes. As he puts it, there was a "crackup of the system of belief" and this crackup created an "unnatural void for religious emotion and worship."[49] Zelinsky continues, "Nationalism more and more offered what religion once had, a vision of heaven, though this time an earthly heaven."[50] And the symbols and myths that provided this common denominator for the community are critical to this nationalism.

Zelinsky argues that we humans live by symbols and are conditioned to recognize them as a part of our culture.[51] The myth and symbols of a culture become an underlying web of familiar connections that help a community function as well as contribute to a sense of community. They are just as important, he argues, as other variables such as political systems, economics, or technologies. For a community to operate with any sense of efficiency, he contends, myth and symbols are not only necessary, they are central. Modern societies depend on them and whomever controls the myth and symbol of a community holds the power to control them. [52]

Zelinsky provides an exhaustive list of common American symbols and myths in *Nation into State*, providing insights into what he calls America's communal spirit. An American communal spirit includes what he refers to as a "pantheon" of heroes or eidolons, ideal figures that are human but possess mythic properties.[53] His list of American eidolons is quite extensive, but some noteworthy historical characters include George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and Christopher Columbus (the last of whom he points out never even "set eyes on the territory of the United States").[54] But, in order to be effective public eidolons, Zelinsky explains that the characters require "simplification, purification and idealization."[55] For example, he categorizes George Washington as an eidelon that stands so far aloft other contemporary heroes and who happened to appear for the country at just the right time. And even though Washington had intellectual shortcomings, he was nevertheless equipped with the exact qualities necessary for the new nation. He was diplomatic, possessed sound judgement, and inspired devotion while suppressing divisiveness among

the thirteen early colonies. Zelinsky contends Washington's symbolic import was that of deification, not only as a "mere figure of speech but as a soberly realistic assessment."[56]

While Washington's image may have dimmed to a certain extent after the martyrdom of Abraham Lincoln, Zelinsky claims that his place in the "American firmament is fixed and eternal."[57] Even foreign heroes such as the Marquis de Lafayette are accepted as an

> acclaimed member of a corps of ideologically motivated French, German, and Polish army officers who rallied to the rebel cause…his identification with the Revolution shows how his image reveals much about American concern for the republican experiment and the American mission.

And as an emissary of liberty, he became "an accidental symbol."[58]

In addition to accidental symbols, Americans have also embraced their revolutionary heroes, such as Betsy Ross, as well as frontier heroes, such as Daniel Boone and Davy Crocket. Even discredited stories, such as Betsy Ross "creating the first American flag and doing so at the personal behest of General Washington," which Zelinsky argues has been thoroughly debunked, still have amazing staying power.[59] To make his point, Zelinsky cites a college survey conducted by Michael Frisch at SUNY-Buffalo where hundreds of students were asked to "list up to ten names—*excluding* major public officers and military leaders—that you think of when I say 'American History from its beginning through the Civil War.'" The most frequently cited was Betsy Ross. Frisch contends that if George Washington is "indeed, God the Father, the iconography of Betsy Ross is unmistakable: she is the Blessed Virgin Mary of our civil religion…"60

Into a similar category of unlikely venerated heroes, Zelinsky includes defeated military leaders who, according to him, make no logical sense. For example, he mentions

Robert E. Lee and George Armstrong Custer. As to Robert E. Lee, Zelinsky explains, "As the military commander of an anti-statist cause," he won the place in many hearts as the "archetypal martyr—the steadfast, chivalrous, sorrowful, compassionate leader of a losing cause."[61] Custer, he continues, was a "consummate loser" with "sheer boneheadedness."[62] Zelinsky's point is that American myths can be "infinitely flexible and absolutely constant."[63]

On the other hand, one constant myth that does make sense to Zelinsky is Abraham Lincoln. Calling him a supreme myth, Zelinsky argues that Lincoln offers the "richest symbol in the American experience."[64] He argues that Lincoln is a Christ-like figure and his assassination on Good Friday provided the martyrdom that instantaneously accelerated his "transfiguration to sainthood."[65]

Another contributing factor to America's nationalism was mobilized in no small part, according to Zelinsky, by the many world's fairs that occurred around the turn of the twentieth century. During the 1880s and 1890s, Zelinsky explains, "old fashioned imperialism attained its maximum virulence."[66] The 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago reflected just how passionate Americans were for their nation, their democratic policies, and their affinity for whiteness. As Zelinsky stresses, Americans were proud of their new currency, their new flag, and their new White House, as well as their white Capitol Buildings and white memorials such as the Washington Monument.[67]

World's fairs not only mobilized national sentiment, but, as Zelinsky explains, they also "had theological implications…promoting the doctrine of progress and salvation through technology and all that is wished for in the national community, it is the

most elaborate, sophisticated expression of the national ideology."[68] Quoting historian Robert Rydell, Zelinsky continues:

> The fairs provided visitors with a galaxy of symbols which cohered into "symbolic universes." The constellations, in turn, ritualistically affirmed fairgoers' faith in American institutions and social organization, evoked a community of shared experience, and formulated responses to questions arising about the ultimate destiny of mankind in general and of Americans in particular.[69]

Zelinsky also provides a comprehensive analysis of how Americans have utilized nationalized place-names for streets, cities, and other "reverently embalmed" nationalistic names such as Union, Liberty, Independence, Constitution, Eagle, or Federal. More than 25% of the 3,066 county names in America are derived from patriotic terms (compared to only 6.5% in Canada).[70] These patriotic terms and names, Zelinsky argues, support a common pool of memories fostered and sustained by the many museums and monuments in the country. Even sports contributed to this sense of community. In fact, he argues, American sports became a genuine form of religion of their own accord; "a mode of worship that, for the majority of the inhabitants of the modernized world, is more meaningful and satisfying than the traditional theologies."[71]

Both Zelinsky and Danielson credit and blame historians and American public education with playing a crucial role in perpetuating the myths that seem so vital to America's nationalism.[72] But, according to Zelinsky, those patriotic historians virtually disappeared from universities and "were replaced by academics deeply critical of the past, government policies, and greed."[73] However, he emphasizes that the thousands of monuments in America are durable artifacts providing linkage to an "era of uninhibited national glorification."[74]

The American flag is also considered by many to be a sacred object. Zelinsky stresses that it is a symbol of our nation-state and its "civil religion" and has "preempted the place, visually and otherwise, of the crucifix in older Christian lands."[75] It is so ubiquitous, he says, that we may not even notice it, "the flag, shield, and red-white-and-blue motif—are so omnipresent in such numbers that perceptual saturation may have set in."[76] He suggests that all of these factors likely combine to contribute to the existence of Americanism or nationalism as a civil religion. This American civil religion, he notes, has become a "dominant faith of the contemporary world, and further, that we cannot dissociate this notion from the latter-day ascendancy of nationalism and statism."[77] As a country, he says, Americans built an "unseen world around the eternal past and the everlasting future of one's nationality."[78] It is a fully constituted religion, Zelinsky claims, even with missionaries:

> Thus there is literally no aspect of a fully constituted supernatural church that lacks its direct counterpart in the American civil religion. This is true even in the realm of missionary effort. In terms of cash, personnel, and number of establishments, no nation-state has been more active, or hyperactive, in sending church missions beyond its borders than has the United States. Whether they intend to do so or not, the missionaries, be they Catholic or Protestant, preach not only the Christian gospel but also, implicitly, that of the American civil religion smuggled within the technological, cultural, and other precepts dispensed to their flocks.[79]

Historian Michael Kammen also explores observations regarding American culture and national identity. Kammen's focus, however, is on America's selective memory, its patriotism, and how the spiritual crisis of the Gilded Age led to the core of civil religion. In his book *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture*, Kammen analyzes what is embodied in many of the American

traditions and rituals and how a collective memory of the past can be distorted, documented, illustrated, and either accepted or debunked. He disagrees "[with] social psychologists and anthropologists who believe that the foundations of nationalism and patriotism are 'more or less universal.'"[80] Kammen also associates America's civil religion directly to a "surge of patriotism"[81] at the start of the twentieth century. Rather than argue that Bellah's civil religion is the same as nationalism, or that nationalism becomes civil religion, Kammen argues that, through the mystic chords of memory, Americans sated their hunger for tradition, albeit with a dose of amnesia. He maintains, "Americans *believed* that they knew much more about the past than they actually did."[82] Kammen, too, mentions cases where the myth is glorified even when defeat and failure surround that myth, again highlighting characters such as Robert E. Lee and Custer. But rather than calling the myths simply flexible, Kammen reasons, "we arouse and arrange our memories to suit our psychic needs."[83]

American exceptionalism, it could be argued, evolved to meet one of those psychic needs. American narratives and memories were arranged, and rearranged, to promote the idea that the country was founded on a series of exceptional events and that those events profited from Divine Providence and intervention. American exceptionalism embraces the idea, therefore, that many of the great events in American history profited from God's sovereign influence. In the case of American exceptionalism, many focus solely on the country's successes, its constitution, progress, and guiding political democracy, along with other principles that have helped to preserve the sovereignty of the United States. However, this perspective of American exceptionalism is myopically

focused and utilized selective memories, dismissing acts of violence required to achieve progress and power. Religious freedoms are also associated with the myth of America's exceptionalism, especially concerning the legacy of the Pilgrims and Puritans arriving to the "Promised Land." Yet, this exceptionalism can be dangerous when a country exaggerates or is boastful as to its morality, superiority, and power above other nations. As historian and journalist Godfrey Hodgson points out in his text, *The Myth of American Exceptionalism,* exaggerating one's morality for political gain is simply "bad history."[84] It results in an oversimplification and distorted historical narrative of the American experience, and underrepresents the faults and violence that occurred.

Michael Kammen relates American exceptionalism to the newness of traditions that occurred in America, particularly as compared to English culture and society. He points out that it was not just the Americans that acknowledged or aggrandized their "exceptionalism." Foreign critics of American politics and culture contributed to the concept by exaggerating America's distinctive culture and traditions. "Comparisons and acknowledgement of American evolving traditions and its exceptionalism," he says, "were not necessarily always that narrow-minded or limited in scope." Certainly some differences existed, but as Kammen argues, those "myths and legends [can] flourish despite the accessible bodies of factual information that contradict them."[85] He says this was particularly true at the turn of the century, when large numbers of immigrants arrived in the country with preconceived notions about the Land of Promise while, at the same time, Americans were "depoliticizing the past in order to minimize the uncomfortableness of the conflicts, for example, the rupture of the Civil War."[86]

Like previously mentioned scholars, Kammen evaluates how America's patriotic zeal led to this worship of ancestors and the multitude of monuments that were installed between 1870 and 1910.[87] He speaks to the unifying aspect of civil religion during times of crisis. He points out that "history in general became the core of civil religion during the spiritual crisis of the Gilded Age."[88] This "renaissance of patriotism in the 1880s,"[89] he argues, helped shape the country. But Kammen takes his argument to another level regarding art, even mentioning stained glass, if very briefly, and American stained-glass artist John La Farge. Kammen explains that venerated ancestors are often reflected in art and he specifically mentions cathedrals. Kammen even mentions the George Washington Memorial Chapel, discussed at length in this dissertation. The Memorial Chapel was built in 1903, at a time when American society was being transformed. Kammen explains: "Americans of all sorts had to confront new economic order with a stock of assumptions deeply rooted in preindustrial society…their self-image was polarized between innocence and power."[90] Kammen deserves credit for being one of the few authors to connect patriotic stained-glass windows to civil religion. He writes:

> When the Washington Memorial Chapel was designed for Valley Forge at the start of the century, the sanctuary received two matched narrative series of thirty-six stained-glass windows. One set depicts scenes from the life of Christ while the other side of the chapel has scenes from the life of George Washington. Comparable individuals, after all. Because Abraham Lincoln had been assassinated in 1865 on Good Friday, and various other coincidences swiftly ensued, they elicited all sorts of analogies between Jesus and the martyred President: and an elaborate religious mythology developed during the following decades…These manifestations of civil religion related directly to the surge of patriotism.[91]

While Kammen is one of the few authors to briefly mention stained glass in the context of civil religion, it is unfortunately a rather brief and passing comment in his

otherwise comprehensive discussion of patriotism, national identity, cultural history, and civil religion.

Kammen also comments on the role the world's fairs played in America's nationalism and sense of community. In his section that begins "Ambiguities of Tradition," he talks about how "interest in the past began to flourish despite the presence of conflicting views of tradition and residual ambivalence about the social uses of memory."[92] These big expositions, he notes, "occurred with rhythmic regularity between 1876 and 1915 [and] revealed an ongoing obsession with progress that swiftly became, in the minds of many, a Tradition of Progress."[93]

Finally, Kammen's section titled "Memory is What We Now Have in Place of Religion" speaks to America's changing moral values, the implications of Darwinism, extreme patriotism, and a departure away from what he terms revealed religion. "History," he writes, "turned out to be a vital component in American civil religion." His example is significant:

> Thomas Jefferson anticipated this tendency in November 1825 when he gave to his grandson, Joseph Coolidge, Jr., the portable desk on which he had written a draft of the Declaration of Independence. Jefferson provided the following affidavit to accompany that small mahogany piece inlaid with a narrow band of satinwood: "Politics as well as Religion has it's [sic] superstitions. These, gaining strength with time, may one day, give imaginary value to this relic, for it's [sic] association with the birth of the Great Charter of our Independence." Indeed it would, when more than half a century later the superstitions of some became the cherished myths of their progeny.[94]

Kammen explains how this "ancestor worship enhanced a person's feeling of rootedness"[95] and that

> national symbols derived from history became increasingly noticeable, ranging from the name given to the presidential yacht, called the Mayflower, to the formation of organizations, like the Mary Washington Association of America…that led to the writing of numerous memoirs that we might otherwise not have.[96]

Furthermore, this Americanized style of ancestor worship, according to Kammen, "was more comprehensively racist than merely Negrophobic."[97] He argues there was a potent theme of white supremacy that began in the 1840s, reaching its peak during the 1885–1915 timeframe, and used ancestor worship more to promote their own status rather than to honor the dead, while at the same time marginalizing those they deemed inferior.[98] In other words, at a time of mass immigration and labor unrest, cohesion (and exclusion) became the desired outcome. But these constructed versions of the ancestor worship often evoke problematic narratives, complicated perspectives, and controversy when considering America's sacred artifacts and memorials.

Scholarly Perspectives on the Gothic Revival, Stained Glass, and World's Fairs

Religious historian and American Studies professor, Peter Williams, provides insight into how Americans came to terms with their history through his examination of churches. Williams explains that Americans, in "provocative fashion," built environments where the "church had become a museum, and the museum a church."[99] In his 1999 article, "The Iconography of the American City; Or, a Gothic Tale of Modern Times," Williams describes the evolution of church building in the US and how the religious-built environment went from a classical Puritan meetinghouse to the more formal Gothic church at the turn of the twentieth century. During this "heyday of the American

city…the age of New Immigration and massive industrialization," the city's elites transitioned from what he calls a "Gilded Age preoccupation with simply spending money on a large and conspicuous scale" to one of "influencing the course of public affairs through a combination of material benevolence and civic influence."[100]

The Gilded Age was an age of American imperialistic outreach and, according to Williams, Americans were "eager to claim comparable status with their European predecessors."[101] Wealthy American Protestants connected with the Gothic-styled cultural movement and found it more current and acceptable, not necessarily oppressive. As Williams explains, this cultural shift during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries came at a time when the "notion of a cathedral, official or figurative, was coming into vogue."[102] Architects like Ralph Adams Cram began designing American churches that embraced a more cohesive collaboration between the various designers, sculptors, muralists, and stained-glass artists. Cram was the architect of many ecclesiastic buildings in the US and is recognized as a key participant in Boston's Arts and Crafts movement.[103] Cram worked closely with stained-glass artist Charles Connick. Connick, according to Williams, "revived the glassmaking techniques of the medieval cathedrals,"[104] departing from earlier American opalescent-styled windows like those created by American artists Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933) and John La Farge (1835–1910).

Williams also points out that, in 1893, Congress finally granted a charter to the Episcopal Church to establish a cathedral in Washington, DC, now known as the National Cathedral.[105] He argues that this cathedral building in large cities like Washington, DC,

and San Francisco harmonized well with the concerns of "contemporary urban elites" who felt the need to "foster a sense of national unity that would transcend the ethnic and social class divisions that they perceived to be imperiling the fabric of the social order of the Republic."[106] Williams notes that both window programs in the National Cathedral in DC and Grace Cathedral in San Francisco have rather eclectic and almost confusing collections of stained glass. He explains, "The iconographic scheme of the [National] cathedral is complex and inclusive, even to the point of confusion."[107] Williams refers to these nontraditional window programs using terms such as "populist revision" and "an attempt at creating a canon of secular saints," as well as a "blurring of sacred and secular categories, characteristic of the liberal Protestantism of the earlier twentieth century."[108]

A major strength of Williams's work is the acknowledgment of these untraditional secular window programs. Unfortunately, his analysis of this blurring of sacred and secular categories only scratches the surface. Nonetheless, his work draws attention to the fact that "these architectural, religious, and cultural monuments have been essential to the lives of the great American cities."[109] He encourages further exploration by social and architectural historians noting, "these buildings retain the power to move us. May they long continue to enrich our lives as citizens of the democratic republic."[110]

Stained-glass expert and art historian, Virginia Raguin, would likely agree with Williams's assessment of America's "populist revision" regarding many of the stained-glass windows in American churches at the turn of the twentieth century. In her comprehensive text, written with a contribution from Mary Clerkin Higgins on the glassmaking and construction of the windows, *The History of Stained Glass: The Art of*

Light Medieval to Contemporary, Raguin reviews the cultural and spiritual history of stained-glass windows within their architectural context. Her medieval survey covers the beginning of the art from the "first great architectural ensembles of stained glass in the twelfth century"[111] through contemporary windows commissioned in the United States through the Gilded Age and the dawning of the twentieth century. Raguin also draws attention to some of the nontraditional iconographical schemes of American "religious" windows. She mentions the *Pilgrim's Progress* window by Frederick Crowninshield (1845–1918) at Emmanuel Church, Boston,[112] noting the windows are "highly original."[113] Raguin explains how early structures like Augsburg Cathedral in Germany (built around 1110) contained windows that were "designed as part of the architectural ensemble, not as an added embellishment merely to decorate the building."[114] Her engaging narrative, more importantly, examines the impact of an image and how stained-glass windows are not only beautiful, but important for the messages they convey regarding the "political and religious tenets of their time," retaining "an ability to make present the past."[115]

Raguin provides an extensive overview of the art. She covers the terminology and materials of the trade, various technical and chemical compositions used to make the glass, and the techniques used to paint or stain the glass. She outlines the patrons, churches, artists, and parallel political and religious events influencing the process of making stained-glass windows. According to Raguin, "in most regions, Church and state were linked to one another, and populations, although economically diverse, were

ethnically monolithic."[116] The windows represent the culture. And, as she points out, that culture interpreted biblical themes. She explains:

> There was almost never a direct correspondence between the written text and the image…[T]he windows were not constructed to illustrate words. They were designed to encourage reflection, through multiple viewings, on timeless truths in the same manner that a text could be read again and again with ever deepening—and differing—results.[117]

She uses European Gothic windows, such as those in the Reims Cathedral, France, to illustrate her point. The window's iconography endorses the "legitimizing secular power" of the day as Reims was the site used for the coronation of French Kings.[118]

Raguin explores this concept of legitimizing secular power in her section on the *Transformation of the Narrative*. She mentions the profound influence society can have on ecclesiastical designs:

> Artists do not work in a vacuum but are influenced by intellectual, economic, religious and political forces. Changes in European society in the later Middle Ages, therefore, profoundly influenced the development of stained glass…Economically and politically, the rise of the merchant class transformed artistic patronage. No longer were church buildings and their decoration determined by ecclesiastical taste. Indeed, the Reformation of the early sixteenth century which challenged the hegemony of the papacy, also challenged the very meaning and usefulness of the image.[119]

The rise of the merchant class in Europe, like the Industrial Revolution in the US, greatly influenced art. The social aspect of vastly wealthy patrons in America, who Raguin explains were eager to "validate their newly found status through a conspicuous display of culture,"[120] commissioned many of the American opalescent windows being produced by artists such as Tiffany and La Farge.

While Raguin does not connect the nonbiblical/nontraditional iconography in the American windows to the phenomenon of civil religion, she does provide an extensive inventory and an in-depth historical analysis. Her focus is on the artistic styles and religious movements that influenced stained glass. This includes what she calls, "the Second Gothic Revival, which began in the United States about 1910, [which] championed medieval inspiration as the only appropriate style of windows."[121]

Prior to 1910, however, another art movement had been under way in Europe. Stained-glass expert and author, Peter Cormack, covers this nineteenth-century artistic development in *Arts & Crafts Stained Glass* (2015). Cormack tracks the initial group of artists emerging during the last three decades of the nineteenth century and explains how key artists often reinvented and invigorated stained-glass designs. These artists rejected simply adopting existing medieval designs and were critical of many divisions of laborers in the larger studios that produced "repetitious and derivative stained glass that was, in effect, mass-produced."[122] Cormack stresses the pioneers of this era with notable research and extensive commentary about the Arts and Crafts forerunner, Christopher Whall (1849–1924). However, Cormack's section titled *The Transatlantic Adventure in Light and Colour*[123] sets the author apart from other stained-glass historians in how he specifically notes the originality of American artists, such as Charles Connick, who is covered extensively in this dissertation.

The European regeneration of stained glass from the 1870s onward, as Cormack and Raguin characterize it, catalyzed a similar Gothic Revival in the US. This timeframe also coincides with the many world's fairs or international expositions that occurred with

regularity around the turn of the twentieth century. These fairs helped promote stained-glass windows to a broader audience and displayed the latest artistic styles. American artist John La Farge won a gold medal in the 1889 Paris World's Fair. La Farge also exhibited in the 1893 Chicago's World's Fair and the 1900 Exposition in Paris.[124]

Author Jasmine Allen, in *Windows for the World: Nineteenth-Century Stained Glass and the International Exhibitions, 1851–1900*, covers the stained-glass windows displayed at eleven of the world's fairs. She begins with London's Crystal Palace in 1851 and continues on through the Paris World's Fair in 1900. Allen's comprehensive knowledge of stained glass enlightens her presentation of the cultural, economic, and imperialistic influences these fairs had on the iconography depicted in the stained-glass windows exhibited at the fairs. She also connects their relationship to ecclesiology and how the exhibits straddled "the often-polarized spheres of art and industry" while simultaneously contributing to the "visualizations of industrial and imperial progress of the nineteenth-century."[125] According to Allen, several windows depicted "new iconographic subjects on the themes of industrial progress and imperial expansion [that] transformed the art of stained glass in the nineteenth century."[126]

Where the windows should be displayed and judged proved to be quite a challenge. Fair organizers often disagreed on how to classify the stained-glass windows. Nevertheless, beginning with the "Great Exhibition" in London in 1851 (later dubbed the Crystal Palace Exhibition), viewers were provided with the world's first large-scale public display of stained-glass work from around the world. A chromolithograph from Dickinson's *Comprehensive Pictures of the Great Exhibition* (1852) (see below) gives a

visual impression of the sheer magnitude of the 250m-long and 7m-wide stained-glass gallery.[127] In this clerestory-like gallery, ecclesiastical windows were exhibited, according to Allen, by "twenty-seven British exhibitors and more than twenty foreign exhibitors [that] were displayed along-side their secular counterparts, and arranged 'sans distinction de nationalite' (without national distinction)."[128]



Figure 1.1. Stained-glass Gallery, *Dickinson's comprehensive pictures of the Great Exhibition of 1851, volume 4*, used with permission, ©The Victoria and Albert Museum.

Allen's text explains that, at almost all of these exhibitions between 1851 and 1900, "stained glass was classed as a manufactured glass product rather than a fine art."[129] By displaying the windows in this secular context, the exhibitions promoted new

design avenues and industry diversification. Unlike previously mentioned authors, Allen draws a fine point as to the "blending of the sacred and the secular during this period."[130] She argues that the "presence of religious texts in these windows, to reinforce the educational message and the value of art and labour, demonstrates the convergence of ecclesiastical and secular influence upon stained glass during this period."[131] Furthermore, this secularization of stained-glass images represented what Allen refers to as a "democratization of the medium" that led to "new stylistic expressions across the world from the 1870s onwards."[132]

Allen's chapter on "Stained Glass as Propaganda" examines stained glass as an ideal medium for "visualizing complex national, international, and imperial identities" at the international expositions. The fairs were utilized as a vehicle to articulate and "mark territory" while affirming the "political presence of ruling oligarchies."[133] Allen argues that, like other forms of art, stained glass played an important role in promoting and shaping the visualization of a national consciousness while simultaneously "propelling political and imperial regimes in the nineteenth century."[134] Yet, little scholarly literature exits exploring these developments and how stained glass was used for this national expression. Allen also touches on the sense of community fostered by the fairs, noting Benedict Anderson's work, and how the fairs brought diverse groups together under the notion of peace.

Allen's work skillfully presents the "various complex visualizations of national identities, political relations, and colonial allegiance"[135] revealed in the windows displayed at the world's fairs. For example, she highlights a war memorial window titled

The Battle of Bouvines that was displayed at the 1889 Paris Exposition. According to Allen, the Battle of Bouvines windows were designed to represent a national symbol of French victory during a time of adversity. The window program was made up of many windows that were designed to depict various scenes from the battle while propagandizing the event as a Christian and moral victory for France where justice prevailed.[136] The creation of the Bouvines windows selected from the group for exhibition in the 1889 Paris Exposition, however, took place long after the historical battle in 1214 took place.[137] The windows represent a reimagining of the various military scenes that were used to promote French nationalism at the exposition while validating contemporary political and military initiatives during a particularly patriotic era in France at the end of the nineteenth century.[138]

The world's fairs windows also celebrated imperialism.[139] Their iconography reflected a "new definition of empire," and Allen explains that stained glass's ability to "illuminate ideas and disperse information…[provided] an important means of visualizing empire"[140] to the masses. The windows also provided a vehicle for propaganda. Allen notes, "as a medium strongly associated with Christianity, stained glass was an important form of European imperialist propaganda."[141]

Finally, Allen elaborates that the world's fairs "undeniably influenced the global stylistic development and consumption of stained glass."[142] Unfortunately, significant gaps still exist in the historiography of stained glass. Allen advocates for further research to enable "unprecedented cultural, political, economic, and art-historical reassessments of stained glass in relation to international, nineteenth-century political affairs, trade,

individual and national identity, commerce, and empire."[143] Allen's wide-ranging text provides a formative contribution toward this expanded understanding of stained glass that was exhibited on the international stage. Her work offers an understanding of the evolving art and culture surrounding these Victorian-era "windows for the world" and how they reveal cultural attitudes during the last half of the nineteenth century.

As countries grappled with the new age of the Industrial Revolution, the fairs not only displayed prominent art and culture, they also became ideological government weapons. They provided both distraction and infatuation with commodities, commerce, and shiny new machines employed to stabilize both economies and communities. According to historian and author, Robert Rydell, in his text *World of Fairs: The Century-of-Progress Expositions*, these exhibitions were considered "pilgrimages to the commodity fetish" and "rites of passage for American society which made possible the full acceptance of a new way of life, new values and a new social organization."[144] Rydell adds, they represented a "gospel of empire and abundance."[145]

The later fairs that occurred between 1933 and 1939, according to Rydell, were "cultural icons for the nation's hopes and future."[146] Also known as the depression-era fairs, these events were both political and economic vehicles used to stabilize order in response to labor unrest in America. As Rydell points out, the later fairs "represented a drive to modernize America by making it an ever more perfect realization of an imperial dream world of abundance, consumption, and social hierarchy based on the reproduction of existing power relations premised on categories of race and gender."[147]

Another key aspect of these fairs, relative to this dissertation and civil religion, was their ability to incite patriotism. And, like Allen's *Windows for the World* text, Rydell explains how the Century-of-Progress fairs roused "patriotic fever."[148] They also deified science.[149] For example, Rydell points out that the main Hall of Science at one fair was expressly religious, touting science as the "new holy trinity for the modern age."[150] "Through scientific methods," Rydell explains, "exposition designers hoped to adjust Americans to a political culture increasingly dominated by corporations."[151]

Like the Victorian-era fairs covered by Jasmine Allen, the Century-of-Progress fairs also utilized propaganda. The fairs became, according to Rydell, "massive public relations campaigns."[152] Both government and industry utilized the captive audiences to endorse initiatives such as expansive highway systems to support American manufacturing and to promote the sales and personal use of automobiles across America. But, as Rydell points out, the fairs had a dark side. "Increased immigration to the United States combined with increased labor radicalism made "race-degeneracy" seem an immediate threat to Anglo-Saxon purity and upper-class dominance of the American body politic."[153] He notes that fairs conveyed "scientific racism from intellectual elites to millions of ordinary Americans"[154] and promoted ideas such as eugenics and categorization of certain groups as socially and genetically inferior.[155]

In the end, imperialism was touted as a fundamental component to modernity at the Century-of-Progress fairs.[156] There was a deep concern during this time regarding the loss of traditional values in the United States. Americans looked to a reinvention of traditions to bring back familiar values. "Integrity, character and liberty," as Rydell

explains, were values "once assumed to be at the core of American political culture."[157] Integrity, character, and liberty are also, as pointed out by several of the authors mentioned earlier, ideological constructs deeply connected to concepts of American civil religion.

Historian Charles Wilson is one of the few scholars to make a connection between stained glass and "tangible evidence that southerners had made a religion out of their history."[158] Wilson argues that Southern civil religion assumed a special meaning within American civil religion.[159] Similar to previous authors, Wilson explains religion as the "existence of a sacred symbol system and its embodiment of ritual"[160] noting that the Civil War provided a new theme of sacrifice and renewal to American civil religion.[161] He explains:

> Southern Protestant churches have been sparse in iconography, but the southern civil religion was rich in images. Southern ministers and other rhetoricians portrayed Robert Edward Lee, Thomas Jonathan ("Stonewall") Jackson, Jefferson Davis, and many other wartime heroes as religious saints and martyrs. They were said to epitomize the best of Christian and southern values…An explicit link between Confederate images and religious values was made in the stained-glass windows placed in churches to commemorate Confederate sacrifices…St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Richmond, which had been the wartime congregation of many Confederate leaders, established a Lee Memorial Window, which used an Egyptian scene to connect the Confederacy with the stories of the Old Testament.[162]

Wilson goes on to explain that this Southern variant of America's civil religion had its own set of hymns, heroes, monuments, and pilgrimages to holy shrines. He notes, "preachers converted the innumerable statues dotting the southern countryside into religious objects, almost idols, that quite blatantly taught Christian religious and moral lessons."[163] But, he explains that the Southern rituals were different from those that

existed as part of the American civil religion. Both religions, he notes, "confronted the precariousness and instability of collective life. They were ways for communities to help their citizens meet their individual fears of death."[164] Reaffirming identity was a spiritual and psychological quest for both religious dimensions. By "repetition of ritual," Wilson argues, civil-religion followers "recreated the mythical times of their noble ancestors and paid tribute to them" while simultaneously trying to "overcome their existential worries and to live with their tragic sense of life."[165]

While previous studies in civil religion, nationalism, exceptionalism, world's fairs, and Gothic Revival stained glass have touched on issues raised in this dissertation, rare indeed is the literature that explores the connection between American civil religion and the stained-glass windows produced between 1870 and 1950. The few scholars who have delved into this area have not fully investigated the phenomenon of patriotic iconography depicted in religious stained-glass windows in the United States. Nor do they connect the two regarding America's developing civil religion at the turn of the twentieth century. This study nonetheless builds on their foundational work and uses their theoretical framework regarding nationalism and civil religion to begin a dialog contributing new knowledge to fill that gap.

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CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Iconography-Iconology

It is remarkable that so little scholarly work has been written connecting early American patriotic stained-glass windows with America's civil religion. While much has been published regarding memorials, symbols, and public rituals (Blight, 2002; Zelinsky, 1988; Anderson, 1983), little work has been published connecting these patriotic window designs to that of the ideological concepts embraced in aspects of American culture including civil religion, exceptionalism, and nationalism. To further explore these ideologies and why window designers detoured from conventional biblical themes, this dissertation focuses on cultural influences that may have been a catalyst for that change. By employing a methodology familiar to art historians, I have attempted to explore some of those cultural influences. This methodology was introduced by Erwin Panofsky in his 1924–1925 text *Die Perspektive als* "*symbolische Form.*" Panofsky's methodology is often more commonly referred to as iconography-iconology.

According to author and art historian, Donald Preziosi, in *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*, Panofsky provides a solid foundation for critically evaluating artistic images by building on the previous work of more formalistic art historians. Two of those historians include Alois Riegl and Heinrich Wölfflin who looked primarily at the techniques used by various artists and evaluated their evolving style(s). Panofsky,

however, felt they neglected cultural associations and potential artistic sentiments implied by the images conveyed in their paintings, sculptures, or other artistic endeavors. Panofsky not only advocated for analyzing the distinctive styles, he also argued for incorporating a subjective exploration as to what certain images might mean. This contemplation or interpretation of the potential cultural implications or meaning(s) added valuable context to artistic analysis.[1] A comprehensive methodological approach, as noted by Preziosi, was a way of using a "nested set of meanings" to appreciate an artifact.[2] It also provides a framework for correlating visual imagery in art with written texts or literature. In this way, Preziosi continues, "cultural information that would be pertinent to the proper reading of traditional imagery" can be teased out.[3] Notably, cultural stories and myths, either depicted or implied in the artistic images, now become relevant to a discussion about a piece of art. And, as advocated by Panofsky, this methodology is further enhanced by informed intuition about what the artist intended, given the specific culture in which the art was created.

Panofsky's approach is therefore well situated for analyzing images portrayed in stained-glass windows. For example, knowledge of American myth and symbol, as well as civil-religion ideology, can be explored and utilized to enhance the analysis of artistic artifacts. This Panofskian context, when applied to stained-glass window iconography might evaluate various cultural considerations as follows:

- First, one would make a general assessment of the window's image. This mode of analysis would be concerned primarily with the artist's painting technique, as well as the manner in which the window is fabricated (leaded

came verses a copper foil technique, figurative or abstract, opalescent glass or traditional cathedral/antique glass). It might also compare and contrast the window's style and technique relative to other stained-glass windows based on one's knowledge of art and stained-glass windows in general. Panofsky often refers to this aspect as "pre-iconographical" or the artistic motif.

- Second, one would rely on previous literature about the art and craft of stained glass. This mode of understanding is iconographic. It is concerned with traditional concepts or historical conditions around the art. For example, the history and creation of religious or secular stained-glass windows would be of particular interest. Panofsky refers to this aspect of evaluation as simply "iconography." One would, therefore, need to draw on stained-glass experts and scholars such as Raguin and Cormack mentioned earlier.
- Finally, Panofsky argues for the application of "synthetic intuition," or the utilization of interpretation regarding the potential meaning(s) that may be intrinsic to a design. It is hoped that a deeper appreciation through context, cultural norms, and societal influences enhances the evaluation of a specific piece of art and what it might represent. As an example, Panofsky referenced Leonardo da Vinci's famous painting of the Last Supper. He points out that it was not intended to just depict a gathering of a group of men sharing a meal. If we supplement traditional analysis and context of a piece of art with attention toward the intrinsic meaning of symbolic representations, the interpretation process can build on previous levels of understanding. The

> iconography provides insight towards a work's layered meaning and allows for an appreciation of the intrinsic meaning of the piece. One might ask: "What else was going on in America that may have influenced this paradigm shift in design away from the typical and traditional European biblical images?" Or, "Were these new designs reflective of newly accepted cultural norms?" Or, perhaps the more important question, "What was actually going on in the culture during this time that may have prompted this apparent paradigm shift?" Panofsky's term for this final mode is "iconology." And his well-known example of the then ubiquitous societal gesture of a man tipping his hat to another encapsulates this final mode. He uses the simple expression of this greeting as a sign (to another individual approaching the man), and how this action requires a certain degree of cultural knowledge regarding societal norms in order to be appreciated. It is the gesture that has an underlying meaning (representing a cordial greeting). Panofsky's point is that the gesture is culturally specific.

Gestures depicted in images of stained-glass windows can, therefore, be analyzed using this methodology as well. The images can indeed relay a deeper meaning to the view due to influences of Western culture at that time.

In this way, the art historian following Panofsky's iconography-iconology framework can incorporate important culturally recognizable information into their analysis of the images reflected in the artwork. Preziosi explains that Panofsky's methodology in this way remains a foundational starting place

> pertinent to the proper reading of traditional imagery…guided by an assumption that every image "contained" a certain amount of hidden or "symbolic" matter that could be elicited by a close reading of the image and some knowledge of the referential context of the work.[4]

To sum up, Panofsky's approach and framework can be beneficial to the analysis of the stained-glass window images presented in this dissertation. For example, one window in the Washington Memorial Chapel depicts a family standing at attention with their hands held over their hearts. Panofsky's methodology prompts the art historian to analyze not only the style of the painted glass, the painted images, various subjects, window fabrication, and the artistic technique, but also to include consideration of various cultural aspects during the time of the window's commission. All of these variables may have influenced the work. Even with limited knowledge of Western-American traditions, one would likely appreciate that this family, with their hands on their hearts, and a large American flag fluttering in the background, is probably depicting the ritual of saying the pledge of allegiance or of the family singing the national anthem. Many might also recognize the activity as a ritual connected to patriotism in the US. Either way, it is this component of the synthetic intuition that Panofsky argues is necessary. He urges art historians to introduce deeper cultural appreciations that may be embedded in the artistic image.

Synthetic intuition, however, has its own challenges. Panofsky argues it should be balanced by existing literature or historical knowledge and should be tempered by an understanding of societal conditioning, culture, education, and traditions. As art historians Michael Hatt and Charlotte Klonk note in *Art History: A Critical Introduction to its Methods*, Panofsky maintains that our knowledge of American history, and of its

cultural symptoms or "symbols," provides us with these important insights into the "essential tendencies of the human mind expressed by the specific themes and concepts"[5] presented in the images.

While Renaissance paintings and their images were the principal focus of Panofsky's work, his methodology transfers well to the analysis of the stained-glass window designs discussed in this dissertation because both Renaissance paintings and stained-glass windows contain religious, political, historical, and classical subject matter. For example, William Truettner, historian and curator of the exhibition *The West As America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820–1920*, angered some politicians and rocked some formalist art historians back on their collective heels. In his book of the same name, he calls attention to white expansionist agendas and the artists that helped propagate it. Truettner calls this a staged fiction to "convince the reader [and viewer] that the passage from past to present was inevitable, beneficial, and above all, peaceful."[6] Truettner had the pluck to question what was previously considered unadulterated art. Specifically, he exposed a willing complicity of artists to perpetuate the political expansionist agenda of that time. "The wide-ranging belief persists that myth represents what actually was," according to Truettner. This narrow perspective becomes problematic when historians neglect the existence of multiple cultures "dealing only selectively with history and imposing on historical events a certain convenient interpretation."[7]

Limitations of Iconography-Iconology

In a similar vein to Truettner's, Hatt and Klonk identified a related weakness of Panofsky's methodology. Noting the work of art historian Christopher Wood, they found that Panofsky seemed unable or unwilling to acknowledge the plurality of cultures.[8] Furthermore, cultures can be quite arbitrary and irrational; but, as Wood pointed out, "Panofsky was unwilling to perceive a divergence of symbolic systems, to suffer a culture with 'faults.'"[9] The main criticism of the iconography-iconology methodology centers on the subjective nature of the iconology mode, or the cultural assessment advocated by Panofsky. However, this weakness can also be a strength in looking past the immediate image, to question why that image and not another was chosen by the artist—or in the case of a stained-glass window commission—the clergy or the sponsor/patron. My interpretation is based on not just one culture, but many. This is supported by previous scholarly work beyond traditional art historians and includes scholarly work from areas beyond art history, including cultural perspectives from the disciplines of history, sociology, geography, American Studies, and biographical texts from the artists themselves. Despite its weaknesses, Hatt and Klonk maintain that Panofsky's methodology at least makes "certain aspects salient and in so doing gives us a perspective we might not have otherwise had. Its coherence forces us to test our own viewpoints against it, and so it brings out ambiguities in our assumptions and leads us to reconstruct our position."[10]

Data Analysis

I used a qualitative method design while employing Panofsky's tripartite methodology, as noted above. Roughly following Panofsky's approach and framework, I conducted brief pre-iconographical reviews to document various aspects about select windows (artist, technique, style, and church denomination and location). Secondly, I utilized conventional subject matter experts, available texts, or literature about the images depicted in the stained-glass windows and evaluated their potential symbolic intent or allegorical representations in general terms. I then documented recognizable figures and symbols. Finally, I considered potential intrinsic meanings, perspectives, or events that may have had an influence on the artistic design and commissioning process.

To better understand the art of stained glass, I relied on the work of previous stained-glass experts.[11] I also considered scholarly work from American Studies regarding American cultures (and cultural plurality) and societal concerns between 1870 and 1950.[12] Previous work by civil-religion scholars and others that inform on concepts such as nation building, nationalism, and American exceptionalism, are also incorporated into the narrative toward a deeper analysis of the window iconography.[13]

Following the advice of Hatt and Klonk, who caution "that it is the scholar who must ensure that the interpretation does not become subjective or irrational,"[14] I utilize primary documents throughout this dissertation to better understand the windows' iconography. While primary materials were scarce, I utilized as many as I could find from both church/cathedral archives, vestry minutes and notes, studio logs, as well as other documents from various historical societies and digital libraries. Of particular

interest were the studio job-logs that often recorded the various evolutions of window commissions. They were often informative as to how particular images were included, excluded, and frequently modified from the beginning proposal to the final window installation. These job-logs also provided context with artist's handwritten notes that prompted specific iconography modifications regarding symbols used for designs.

Sampling and Selection of Windows

To date, I have surveyed windows in approximately forty churches located in ten different states. Nearly half of those churches were located in Montana. Then for comparison I visited three cathedrals in France and three in Germany.

When church archives were available, I requested permission to review their documents. As one pastor explained, in the early days, the churches in America were the main repositories of official records. Births, deaths, marriages, baptisms, confirmations, etc., were all documented and maintained by local churches. I searched for vestry records regarding either "building committee" records or letters/correspondence related to the commissions with artists for their stained-glass windows. Often, I was given permission to copy many of the documents. The archival documents provided additional insight into why certain images were commissioned and often modified, if that image was proposed by the artist or desired by the sponsor, and what influence the clergy or Dean had on the commission. For example, archivist Ann L. Jones provided records regarding a commission for a large window at St. John's Cathedral (also known as The Cathedral of the Wilderness). The artist, Charles J. Connick, originally proposed a "YOUTH

WINDOW" based on the King Arthur legend with "the Holy Grail…[incorporating] the 'Boy Scouts' pledge." This design concept was then modified to become the "Great Commission Window," and later was renamed the "Modern Heroes" window. Archival documents reflect additional changes to the "Modern Heroes" such as the name of George Washington for one of the images scratched out with a line through it, and "Florence Nightingale" handwritten in its place in the section titled "Latest arrangement of subjects."[15]

Typically getting permission to access a church was straightforward. On one occasion I used an introduction from a local Episcopal deacon due to the controversial situation regarding Confederate symbolism in a Virginia church. Often, I was then referred to either an archivist, an affiliated Foundation, an author, or a specific church member who was considered their local stained-glass window expert. I located and contacted several cathedral and church archivists. I secured an approved Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocol from Montana State University (MSU), anticipating that I might be interviewing archivists. However, the nature of my visits with the archivists ended up being more informative and educational. They were not interviewed as to their feelings regarding stained-glass windows, but provided archival documents that they thought would be beneficial to my investigation. Without exception, the depth of knowledge of every archivist I met with impressed me. With the exception of the Onondaga Historical Society, which seemed to be particularly concerned about copyright laws, they allowed me to take unrestricted photographs, encouraging the dissemination of their information.

The next step in my research process led me to organize the windows according to their thematic content. While each step presented its own set of challenges, I became more familiar with the stained glass of this period, the artists themselves and the various techniques they used, and the vast hidden symbols and emblems incorporated into their designs throughout installations across the United States. Initial visits led to knowledge of other installations based on my conversations with archivists. This then led to additional fieldwork and, thus, my sample size of convenience grew.

By utilizing Panofsky's iconography-iconology framework during this fieldwork and beyond, I was able to analyze in more depth how select windows embedded various themes and topics central to America's civil religion. A deeper dialog emerged. By considering cultural concerns that may have been influential when the windows were created, a more comprehensive understanding evolved regarding the nontraditional window designs. Archival documents informed that dialog. They provided valuable insights that I was not able to glean from the published literature. However, since most stained-glass scholars to-date have tended to focus primarily on the formalistic style of these window programs, by utilizing the Panofsky methodology and incorporating cultural influences, a more robust analysis became possible. Furthermore, by questioning the nontraditional ideology and symbolism contained in these patriotic windows, this exploration fills a gap from previous work and provides new perspectives that may prompt further research into this topic.

Archival Documents

Most archival material I located tended to be correspondence between the artists and the various church personnel, usually the clergy. In some cases, studio invoices, job-logs, and correspondence regarding the artistic proofs were available. I also looked for letters and memos indicating correspondence between building committees, clergy, architects, and the various artist studios. Preliminary designs or watercolors were intriguing (and beautiful), but they did not really convey information pertinent to the analysis. I wanted to specifically locate documents that could help explain why certain images or designs were selected. Often, the studio job-records did just that. They frequently reflected the fabrication process and the myriad modifications to the original designs. Most of the job-logs tended to be typed. Later on, they were revised with handwritten notes. I found that these handwritten modifications to the job-logs revealed both major and minor design alterations. These handwritten notes directed what images and colors were requested after the original design proposal was submitted to the church, along with profit and price changes, color modifications, dimensions from architects, anticipated delivery dates, and sometimes even a change in what a specific window should be called.

Several cathedral archivists also shared copies of other documents, including newspaper clippings and hand-written notes, documenting the progression and evolution of various stained-glass window installations. This supporting documentation provided valuable context. Indeed, as Hatt and Klonk pointed out earlier, this primary documentation supplied meaningful context and insight into the “tendencies of the human

mind."[16] But with stained-glass windows in religious settings, one should also be cognizant of the tendencies of the divine.

Cathedral stained-glass windows regularly convey an association with the divine. They seem to possess a spiritual power from not only their ecclesiastical homes, but also from transmitted sunlight through the artifact unconnected to the physical world. This ethereal quality and the systematic activation by light fosters their connection to divinity. It was intended to have a mesmerizing, almost tangible, effect on the viewer. This dynamic and divine personality of stained-glass windows contributes to their mystique and, if the windows include secular images, the association with the divine serves to meld the secular with the divine.

Photographs

During my fieldwork, I took hundreds of personal photographs. For each church or cathedral visit, I tried to follow the same procedure to methodically capture and remember the location of the various windows I was interested in. I would usually begin photographing at the far back left corner of the nave or sanctuary (if facing the altar). This was helpful in recalling the location of particular windows. It was also a good method to recall certain aspects and context regarding specific windows and their neighboring windows. I was specifically interested in photographing the nontraditional or patriotic stained-glass windows if I could find them.

I took copious notes about the windows based on information provided by the cathedral archivists or guide. When available, I collected brochures about the window

programs making additional notes for future reference. These guides were typically located right at the entrance to the sanctuary, or I found information online and printed it in preparation for my visits.

Even though I took hundreds of photographs, only a fraction of them were of decent quality as stained-glass windows are notoriously difficult to photograph. Clerestory windows are typically so high up that the image becomes naturally skewed or distorted, especially in some of the soaring windows of cathedrals such as Grace Cathedral in San Francisco. Too much light, such as using a flash or on a brilliantly sunny day, is not ideal. The resulting images tend to reveal dull grey figures depicting mostly the leading or lines of the window similar to a washed-out jigsaw puzzle. Too little light, and all of the facial and other features run together. The best light is actually an overcast sky. The indirect light diffuses the glass sufficiently to provide optimal visibility of the vivid colors and the delicately painted images.

Organic Process

As my research progressed, I found that prosperous Episcopalian parishes appeared more likely to commission this type of work than other denominations I surveyed. Scholars such as Peter Williams seem to agree.[17] It also became apparent that two stained-glass artists, Charles Connick (1875–1945) and Nicola D'Ascenzo (1871–1954), emerged as two of the most prolific producers of these patriotic windows in the United States. Each artist created huge patriotic window programs for American churches and cathedrals during their lifetimes. These projects kept their studios gainfully employed

while others struggled during the Great Depression. While I continued to survey various denominations and churches, I also began to hone my efforts, searching out Connick and D'Ascenzio windows. I referred often to The Charles J. Connick Stained-glass Foundation website (https://www.cjconnick.org/) and began stopping by as many Episcopalian churches as possible.

I also did extensive research on church websites. This allowed me to email or call church personnel to visit their sanctuary and photograph their windows. Once a visit was scheduled, I then did as much preliminary research as possible, looking up the artist of their windows if possible. This allowed for more efficient use of my time while onsite and ensured I did not miss a window that I might be particularly interested in. Almost without exception, I received a warm welcome and was allowed to photograph the stained-glass windows extensively.

Given the significant number of windows I was able to locate and photograph I began to question if these windows might actually represent a tangible manifestation of civil religion as described by Bellah and others mentioned earlier. And, if the windows did indeed represent American civil religion, nationalism, and/or American exceptionalism, then what images, symbols, themes, heroes, and patriotic figures might be represented to confirm that hypothesis?

To answer that question, I referred back to the work of Bellah, Zelinsky, Blight, Anderson, Kammen, and others. Furthermore, if the windows did contain some form of this iconography, the analysis of the artifact would certainly benefit from Panofsky's methodology of iconography-iconology, pulling in context regarding cultural aspects. By

incorporating cultural traditions, rituals, memorials, heroes, and myths, a more comprehensive picture is possible than our current understanding of civil religion.

Methods

The windows I surveyed were then further evaluated for their iconography-iconology. Certain people, symbols, places, and events were assessed. The following table incorporates many of the attributes discussed by civil-religion specialists discussed in Chapter One.

Individuals & Groups	Symbols & Songs	Places/Things Memorials	Events
Pilgrims & Puritans	*Mayflower*	Plymouth Rock	Mayflower Compact
Native Americans	Teepees, Feathers	Reservations	Trail of Tears
George Washington	American Flag, Star-Spangled Banner	Valley Forge, Washington Memorial	Revolutionary War
Thomas Jefferson	Military Insignia, Eagles, Red, White & Blue, Stars & Stripes	Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights	President's Day
Lewis & Clark, Daniel Boone, Davy Crocket		Western Frontier	Louisiana Purchase
Benjamin Franklin	Currency, The Great Seal and Dollar Bill	Liberty Bell	
Slaves			Martin Luther King Day
Abraham Lincoln		Lincoln Memorial, Mount Rushmore	Civil War

Individuals & Groups	Symbols & Songs	Places/Things Memorials	Events
Robert E. Lee	Confederate Flag	Arlington National Cemetery	Gettysburg Address
Jefferson Davis		Richmond, Virginia (Confederate Capital)	

Table 1. Attributes Discussed by Civil-Religion Specialists Continued

Interpreting the Windows

As I organized the window photographs into the categories above, that exercise began shaping the material for four different chapters. In turn, each of these four chapters began to resonate with familiar key myths in American history. It became apparent that those myths help tell American stories. But, certainly not every story. Nor, every side to every story. However, they are stories of mythical importance familiar to many Americans. Again, I do not mean to imply it is the only story in a pluralistic country with infinite stories. And, I certainly recognize that many marginalized groups and cultures are not reflected in the windows I will discuss. Their absences, in fact, reveal many of the assumptions of dominant white American culture, especially the anxieties about mass immigration that prompted the creation of these windows in America's Gilded Age.

Biblical stories provide foundational tropes for American myths centered around concepts of progress, Manifest Destiny, and the settling of the American Frontier. Therefore, the secular and patriotic windows are often surrounded by biblically themed windows. This close association conveys divine meaning to the overall scheme or

window program. These large window programs, therefore, appear to support the ideology of civil religion by exploiting their context and by conveying a seemingly ordained story. By teasing out this civil-religion iconography, this dissertation fills a gap in the existing scholarly literature. And, this novel analysis provides the foundation for further research and discourse on the topic of civil religion.

Conclusion

Perhaps it is not so remarkable that little has been written connecting the stained-glass windows discussed in this dissertation to the literature regarding civil religion in the United States. Locating and accessing these windows posed no small challenge. Due to the quasi-private nature of American churches, many are simply inaccessible. And, unless the stained-glass windows become controversial, such as the windows in the National Cathedral in Washington, DC, containing conspicuous Confederate flags and symbols, they seem generally to have fallen from both public and scholarly view. In Europe, the large cathedrals are a main tourist attraction and are open to the public; believers and non-believers. But in America, many sanctuaries are closed except to members of their respective faith communities. So, unless academics are exposed to the nontraditional iconography of certain stained-glass windows, they are understandably understudied. Certainly, experts in America's civil religion gave no real recognition of their existence. Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, a senior research associate at Trinity College and psychology professor, offers one plausible reason for the paucity of scholarly work around these artifacts. He explains,

> Academics, especially eminent ones, turn out to be quite irreligious. This is especially striking for academics in the United States, where a culture which is manifestly the most devout among First World nations has produced a sub-culture which is a mirror image of itself.[18]

Adding to this observation, a Pew survey was conducted in 2009 of over 2500 members of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). According to that survey, 41% of the AAAS scientists self-identified as atheists. Perhaps there is some merit in this explanation. But another might have to do with lack of training many Americanists have in art history. In the past ten years, only four articles about American art with the term "art" in their title have appeared in the *American Quarterly*, the profession's journal of record. More likely, the lacunae in scholarship are a result of multiple factors coalescing simultaneously. The naturalization process of religious ideology incorporating civil religion images that are then sacralized and integrated into the traditional biblical templates, has become so homogenized that those who subscribe to the beliefs associated with America's civil religion and those who criticize these beliefs have simply "overlooked" the fabricated ideology the windows represent. American civil religion is so deftly woven into the various aspects of American lives that the integration of myth and symbol are almost taken for granted. This is manifest in public monuments, American ancestor or hero worship, and the reassuring stories we tell ourselves by way of memorials and monuments in the public sphere. Civil religion ideology functions with a subtle but evocative power on the collective shoulders of American myths and symbols. The civil religion ideology naturalizes the ways we think about the works of art so that we have become accultured to these images. They transition

from myths to nationalized and naturalized assumptions about America's foundational stories, culture, and society, including who and what those stories ought to reflect.

It takes some effort, therefore, to rise above and step outside of the collective ideology and the sanctification at work in these images. They provide an alternative text of sorts that provides insights into an evolving cultural vocabulary that, at that time, likely resulted from a tectonic shift in political and economic conditions. Cultural studies scholar Raymond Williams explores these evolutions of vocabulary in his text *Culture & Society: 1780–1950*. He explains that there is an organic nature to these transitions that take place in culture and society and that this change is reflected in literature, political thought, and society.[19] Stained-glass windows, too, are capable of portraying adopted vocabularies of sociopolitical ideologies. They are intended to be "read," initially by the illiterate public during Medieval times and, later, by anyone contemplating the illuminated images. Therefore, regardless of the reasons for the dearth of scholarship on the subject, these windows present a compelling story; one that seems to be unique to the United States, and one that needs to be understood.

My methods were also somewhat organic. My sample size of convenience began evolving into a more intentional approach once I learned more about the artists and denominations involved in creating the windows I was researching. The documents present a compelling argument; that the windows provide tangible representation of civil religion in America that I have yet to find in existing literature. The quasi-private nature of churches mentioned above also was an issue. It made it much more difficult to investigate certain windows. For another example, one church in Butte proved to be

exceptionally difficult to access. I was interested in a specific window supposedly created by Louis Comfort Tiffany and connected to one of the Copper Kings, William Clark. On multiple occasions, I knew I was going to be in town and I tried contacting someone at the church. I left several voicemails and never heard back. Each time I was in Butte, I made an attempt to get into the church, even though I did not have an appointment. The church was consistently locked up tight. No one was around. These attempts took place over several months. Finally, I was again scheduled to be in Butte and decided to stay an extra night with the intent of attending their Sunday service the next morning, just to see the windows! Fortunately, there was a service. Sitting in the pew and taking in their incredible windows was worth the persistence. I was given permission to photograph their windows.

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[9] Erwin Panofsky, *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, trans. Christopher S. Wood (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 24.

[10] Ibid., 118.

[11] Including work by: Virginia Raguin, Jim Cheshire, Peter Cormack, Jasmine Allen, Peter Sturm, Julie Sloan, Diane Ney, Elody Crimi, Cleota Reed, Ann Jones, Irene Scheidecker, Ken Swingley, Deborah Swingley, Jean Farnsworth, James Fraser, Jane Hayward, Henry Holiday, Charles Connick, and Elizabeth De Rosa.

[12] Including work by: Robert Rydell, Diane Fischer, Peggy Pascoe, Robert Post, Eric Foner, Rebecca Solnit, Richard Pells, William Truettner, Rebecca Edwards, Joan Hoff, Leo Marx, and Henry Nash Smith, to name a few.

[13] Including: Robert Bellah, David Blight, Wilbur Zelinsky, Benedict Anderson, Leo Pfeffer, Herbert Richardson, Kirk Savage, John Wilsey, Leilah Danielson, Michael Kammen, and Peter Gardella, to name a few.

[14] Ibid., 108.

[15] Charles J. Connick to Very Reverend Paul Roberts, D.D., Dean, 10 June 1953, *Modern Heroes Window* commission papers, St. John's Cathedral archives.

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CHAPTER THREE

PILGRIMS, PURITANS, AND RELGIOUS FREEDOM

The dawn of the twentieth century was indeed a time of great change in America. Dramatic urbanization and industrialization fractured the country in the aftermath of Reconstruction. Civil unrest and industrial violence spread while mass immigration seemed to threaten America's perceived social homogeneity. American nationalism gained traction during this time as did both domestic and foreign imperialism.[1]

This was also an era characterized by artistic trends that followed the War of 1812 when the restoration of the burned Capitol building launched a rather lengthy process of rebuilding and securing new artwork for the rotunda interior. Initially, four paintings were secured that centered around the theme of independence. These paintings were followed by four more commissions also centered on American history, but this time with themes of early exploration and discovery. The winning commissions included *Landing of Columbus* by John Vanderlyn, *Discovery of the Mississippi* by William Powell, *Baptism of Pocahontas* by John Chapman, and *Embarkation of the Pilgrims* by Robert Weir. According to cultural historian Francis V. O'Connor, they were the first monumental, mural-like, public displays of art in the country, set into the walls in huge carved frames and intended to be viewed beneath Charles Bulfinch's lower hemispherical dome.[2] Their images not only reacquainted, but reframed, the American genesis story while refocusing and endorsing expansionist agendas. They also served to diffuse

sectional conflict by exploiting key historical events and characters such as the Pilgrims. The mid-century murals, according to art historian William Truettner, were an "artistic strategy utilized by wealthy elites" and were simply "institutionalized forms of communicating to the public expansionist policies."[3] They had the effect of whitewashing a great deal of violence in America's recent history that was being directed against Native and African Americans. These murals were an attempt by men in power, according to Truettner, to turn back the clock using "themed-patinas that were hard to crack, or contest," thereby cementing social status for some, while marginalizing others.[4] For example, in *Embarkation of the Pilgrims*, Weir depicts the passengers onboard the Speedwell praying for a successful voyage to the new country (they eventually transferred to the Mayflower). The implied message is clear. It was a religious mission, or pilgrimage, to the New World; but the armor in the foreground foreshadows the violence that would likely be necessary to achieve their ordained mission. The Pilgrims' precipitation of war with the Native Americans was "neither peaceful nor ordained" as romantically portrayed by artists such as Weir.[5] Additionally, his *Embarkation of the Pilgrims* essentially launched the national myth of the Pilgrim's founding, one that Abraham Lincoln would cement into America's civil religion when he officially declared in 1863 that the fourth Thursday in November would become a national Thanksgiving holiday.

As Truettner argues, works of fine art have a special advantage in that they can "support ideological arguments" and rarely openly advocate for a contemporary political

initiative such as territorial expansion, commercial opportunity, or dispossession of native races. As he explains:

> They are not broadsides; they never "expose" contemporary life. Instead, they turn back the clock and present their arguments as part of a distant past in which they gain time-honored legitimacy. The stylistic vocabularies employed by each artist also rely on the past. Classical vistas, old master compositions, and antique figures reoccur time and again. Subjects and styles create a patina hard to penetrate. To do so, one has to doubt the authority of the past as well as the legitimacy of a political experiment held aloft as the premier American virtue.[6]

Artists continued to draw on Pilgrims and Puritans for legitimacy toward the end of the nineteenth century. For example, in 1885, artist John Quincy Adams Ward created a *Pilgrim* bronze for Central Park in New York. In 1889, the *Pilgrim Monument* at Plymouth, Massachusetts, was dedicated. This was followed in 1899 with a statue by August Saint-Gaudens titled *The Puritan* for Springfield, Massachusetts. St. Gauden's *Puritan* was so well received, that he was asked to make a replica for Pennsylvania. Rather than make a copy, he modified his earlier sculpture, only this time calling it *The Pilgrim.* Not surprisingly, stained-glass artists followed suit and studios began depicting discovery narratives as well with Pilgrims and Puritans and early colonial characters such as William Penn.

America's preoccupation with its national identity and ancestors, such as Penn, fed an artistic movement at the turn of the twentieth century often referred to as the American Renaissance. During this time, artists embraced a romanticized version of American colonization activities. As historian Dianne Pilgrim points out, this American artistic renaissance was not so much about the style as it was about mood.[7] American artists embraced an attitude that contradicted strict European parameters for their

compositions. This included artists who designed ecclesiastical stained-glass windows. Artists began incorporating patriotic iconography and American ancestors into their designs. Like the Capitol paintings, these window designs bolstered American foundational myths. Wealthy sponsors embraced this platform to reassert their status in society and civil religion began appearing in American stained-glass windows in churches.

These "invented traditions" acted as a balm for this time of upheaval in the country, ministering to a select group of wealthy white-elites by providing a sense of community (if an imagined one), by reasserting their right to be giving direction to society, while excluding others.[8] By elevating the status of American ancestors like the Pilgrims, they simultaneously elevated their own standing. At the same time, they were ostracizing others—the millions of new arrivals—who were increasingly perceived as economic and political threats to their comfortable way of life. As Donna Curtain, executive director of the Pilgrim Hall Museum in Plymouth, Massachusetts, points out, "A lot of mythology about the Pilgrims comes out of the early twentieth century, when Americans were once again recreating their identity at a moment of great cultural upheaval."[9]

Despite their recently contested history and meaning, stories about the Pilgrims and Puritans and their supposed pursuit of religious freedom are a point of entry for many Americans when it comes to thinking about the "founding" of America before the American Revolution. The process of embedding the Pilgrims in artistic designs as proponents of religious freedom had begun before the Civil War and picked up

momentum after the war as warfare between social classes became a growing characteristic of American life. Similar to the Capitol rotunda paintings, stained-glass windows were becoming a medium of choice for carrying ideals and ideologies about religious freedom forward into the twentieth century.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, when most of the stained-glass windows examined in this chapter were commissioned, the United States seemed to be in dire need of narratives of national history to blur the lines of class division. Arrival images anchored American history to overarching narratives of religious freedom that all but obliterated counter-narratives of enslavement and dispossession. Several examples of this phenomenon in stained-glass window designs are presented below. They represent a manifestation of early American civil religion by depicting arrival themes that incorporate dominant beliefs about the freedom of religion, religious tolerance, and the separation of church and state.

The stained-glass window arrival themes that were commissioned by many churches during this time included representations of early Pilgrims such as John Carver (1576–1621), William Bradford (1590–1657), and Priscilla Mullin-Alden (1602–1680). The window designs prompt viewers to remember (or re-member) the historical events and even myths that have shaped the country. The design creators obviously felt compelled to commemorate these individuals while informing modern viewers about the past.

By depicting these foundational myths and characters, these windows have functioned as a social cement, to borrow Rousseau's terminology regarding civil religion.

During the Gilded Age—a time of bewildering industrial change—the windows helped to stabilize, at least psychologically, the elite's understanding of their modern state. After a brutal civil war, the windows presented viewers with a nationalistic ideology rooted in civil-religion messages. American exceptionalism also played a role in window designs. It connected the biblical story of the Israelite's exodus into the Promised Land with that of the early Pilgrims. As Americanist Heike Paul argues, this American religious narrative

> was turned into a cultural myth by reconfiguring the ingredients of the biblical story—human suffering under slavery, God's sympathy for the oppressed, divine providence, a sacred journey to a Promised Land, and claims of God-given entitlement—into a potent narrative of American beginnings, which constitutes a core foundational myth of the United States.[10]

This foundational myth about the Pilgrims has become a core component of American civil religion. While recent scholars have largely debunked the storybook version of the Pilgrims and their peaceful Thanksgiving dinner, other aspects of their arrival myths remain entrenched. For example, there were earlier pilgrims before the Mayflower Pilgrims who are largely ignored. They were French Huguenots and they, too, fled religious persecution. They arrived approximately fifty years before the Mayflower, landing in what is now Florida. The Huguenot leader, Jean Ribault, was ridiculed as a "Lutheran" by his Spanish adversary Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, who ordered Ribault's head to be chopped into four pieces and posted on pegs in the public space for everyone to see.[11]

Stained-glass windows reflect how a national narrative about religious freedom, religious tolerance, and separation of church and state took shape in the United States.

The first group of windows analyzed here are called *Freedom Windows*. They are located in Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, New York. They depict Huguenots, Pilgrims, and William Penn. Then, my analysis shifts to windows that framed national narratives about Thomas Jefferson and James Madison regarding the separation of church and state, especially in the *Statesmen Window* found in the Washington National Cathedral in Washington, DC.

Huguenots, Pilgrims, and Arrival Myths

Early arrival myths have demonstrated an amazing staying power. Violence, disease, and massive deaths of early immigrations take a back seat to the romanticized versions of congenial relationships and religious freedoms. These myths also airbrush the eventual consequences of that settler colonialism and the dispossession of lands from Indigenous peoples. Until relatively recently, these narratives have been left out of the dominant narratives regarding American history, and the arrival myths were largely accepted at the turn of the twentieth century when many American stained-glass windows were created. Influential vestries, wealthy donors, and stained-glass artists all contributed to this mythologizing process.

America's fascination and commemorative frenzy of arrival myths, nationalism, and progress continued into the early twentieth century. Like Weir's composition in the Capitol, Pilgrims such as William Brewster with an open Bible on his knees or Governor Carver with his head bowed in prayer became acceptable artistic images for stained glass. As Americanist Heike Paul argues, foundational narratives like Weir's became quite popular and accepted by many during this time as it represented a mission of morality.

The implicit violence was mythologized and deemed necessary for achieving progress. By catering to the political currents of the day, artists such as Weir had propelled Pilgrims and Puritans into the limelight where, according to Paul, they quickly "achieved a national dimension."[12] Furthermore, as historian Vivien Fryd explains, artistic contributions to the capitol during this time portrayed America's supposedly "divine right to disseminate democracy within its continental boundaries and even beyond."[13] Bloodshed was, therefore, justified for this divine mission that carried a more pure form of the Word (by enlightened Pure-itans) to the supposedly unenlightened.

These discovery and arrival themes had incredible staying power with some communities. For example, the stained-glass windows commissioned for the Pilgrim Church in Brooklyn, New York, were completed during the first quarter of the twentieth century and are referred to as the *Freedom Windows*. They reflect a renewed commitment to commemorating early arrival myths. They depict Pilgrims, Puritans, and early Founding Fathers, and their designs demonstrate how stained-glass artists at that time also had a mutability to contemporary issues similar to those portrayed in other artistic mediums such as oil paintings and sculptures.

One of the *Freedom Windows* is titled *Evening Prayer: The Huguenot – The Carolinas*. It was created and installed around 1908 by the J. & R. Lamb Studio. According to the Library of Congress, the J. & R. Lamb studio is

> one of the oldest decorative arts firms and multi-media guilds in continuous operation in the United States and preceded the studios of both John LaFarge and Louis C. Tiffany. Two brothers—Joseph Lamb (1833–1898) and Richard Lamb (1832–1909)—founded the studios in 1857 in New York City after leaving Lewisham, England.[14]

The J. & R. Lamb Studios created many windows at the turn of the twentieth century. The Lamb Studio was well known and had been chosen by the U.S. Government to represent America in the Paris International Exposition of 1900, where they won several prizes. Their *Huguenot* window in Plymouth Church depicts four men and two women praying as they gather around an open Bible. The window is dedicated to the Starr family; Margaret Rose Starr, Frederick Bradley Starr, and Emma Blanch Starr. And while the window clearly depicts a religious activity, there are no conspicuous crosses or crucifixes or other Christian iconography or biblical inscriptions typically found in other ecclesiastical stained-glass windows.



Figure 3.1. *Evening Prayer: The Huguenot—The Carolinas*, Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, NY, artist J. & R. Lamb Studio, ca 1907–1909, photograph by the author, December, 2021.

Early Huguenots such as those depicted were typically French Lutherans or Calvinists. The Huguenots finally received their full rights of English citizenship on March 10, 1697, after having struggled in this endeavor for some time.[15] Other immigrants were suspicious of the Huguenots, largely due to religious views and their French origins. As this window depicts, one group of Huguenot émigrés settled in South Carolina, over a century after their initial foray to America in what is now Florida. While perhaps less well-known today, the story of the Carolina Huguenots was likely more familiar to turn-of-the-twentieth-century audiences (when the windows were installed) than it is today.

It is also interesting that the window designs in the Brooklyn church are, as a whole, not overly decorated with Christian or traditional biblical symbols and characters, such as angels, crosses, halos, or doves, to name a few. Yet, they do reflect religious beliefs (Puritanism and Lutheranism) and conflicts among people claiming to be Christians.

As was the case with the Huguenots, conflict, religious or otherwise, typically accompanied many of the early immigrants to America. This was no less true fifty-five years after the Huguenot massacre when the Mayflower arrived. Conflict simmered on board between the Separatists and the others they called “Strangers.” Ambiguity as to who had the right to control and govern the new colony was at the center of this conflict. Pilgrim leaders quickly realized they needed to address this issue once it was understood they would be landing far north of their intended destination and were entering land that was not controlled by the Virginia Colony. This resulted in heated debates and the Mayflower Compact was quickly drawn up. It advocated for self-government and order

and its authorship is typically attributed to the educated minister on board, William Brewster (1568–1644).[16]

Many, but not all, passengers signed the Mayflower Compact. By doing so, they took an oath "under God" to adhere to the terms of the agreement and to be governed by its proclamations. The document began with "in the name of God, Amen" and set a religious tone to the nature of governance for the new colony; although, in reality, they were unauthorized to land where they did and had no right to settle in Plymouth Bay. The Mayflower Compact acted as a political and social contract whereby signors were agreeing to become a "civic body politick" responsible for mutually enacting laws and ordinances that would benefit the colony as a whole. According to Peter Gardella and others, the Mayflower Compact represents foundational aspects of a polity having voice in its own governance to some degree and, by the Gilded Age, was considered to be the precursor of future concepts utilized in the Declaration of Independence and considered one of the main "sacred" texts or "scriptures" of American civil religion.[17]

The original Mayflower Compact has been lost, but William Bradford had recorded a copy of it in his journal. He begins:

> In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwriten…haveing undertaken, for the glorie of God and advancemente of the Christian faith, and honour of our king & countrie, a voyage to plant the first colonie in the Northerne parts of Virginia, doe by these presents solemnly & mutualy in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant & combine our selves togeather into a civill body politick, for our better ordering & preservation & furtherance of the ends aforesaid: and by vertue hearof to enacte, constitute, and frame such just & equall laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, & offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meete & convenient for the generall good of the Colonie, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. (November 11, 1620).[18]



Figure 3.2. *Signing of the Compact on Board the Mayflower*, Plymouth Church, ca 1907–1909, J. & R. Lamb Studios, photograph by the author, December, 2021.

After drawing up the Compact, the Mayflower passengers proceeded to elect John Carver as their first governor.[19] He is often included as one of the central figures, along with William Brewster and Pricilla Mullen. Although women onboard the Mayflower were not allowed to sign the Compact, Pricilla is often portrayed in depictions of the event. She is typically shown seated to the righthand side of the other figures and later became Pricilla Alden after marrying one of the Mayflower crew, John Alden. Other signers of the Mayflower Compact who are typically depicted include William Bradford (second governor after Carver), William Brewster (minister), Myles Standish (Mayflower Captain and military officer hired by the Separatists), and Edward Winslow. Mayflower Compact windows can be found not only in Brooklyn, New York, but also in Plymouth, Massachusetts, and Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.

It is noteworthy that, for each of the three different window compositions of the signing of the Compact, different denominations housed them and three different studios were utilized to create them. First Parish in Plymouth is a Unitarian church with windows by Tiffany. The George Washington Memorial Chapel is an Episcopalian church with windows by Nicola D'Ascenzo. And, the Plymouth Church with windows by the Lamb Studios, is a Congregationalists church. While the window designs may differ in style, they were all installed around the beginning of the twentieth century depicting events that happened nearly 300 years earlier, not accidentally at precisely the moment millions of immigrants were arriving in the United States with their own histories and memories. Could they be incorporated into America's national story? Were some immigrants

considered more desirable? What exactly was that national story? These were questions that the windows tried to answer.

The day after signing the Mayflower Compact, the Pilgrims disembarked. They landed near the current city of Plymouth, Massachusetts. This event is depicted by one of the *Freedom Windows*. Local church historian, Lois Rosebrooks, provides the background story for this window titled *The Landing of the Pilgrims*. She explains that the three central characters, similar to the windows depicting the signing of the Compact, represent early colonial structure; Governor Carver signifies early government, Brewster represents early Protestant religion, and Pricilla Mullen-Alden was included to suggest the importance of family.[20]



Figure 3.3. *The Landing of the Pilgrims*, Plymouth Church, ca 1907–1909, J. & R. Lamb Studios; (left to right: John Carver, William Brewster, and Priscilla Mullen, photograph by the author, December 5, 2021.

In 1620, when they landed in America, Brewster would have been around 52. Priscilla, who lost her entire family on the voyage to America had just turned 18. John Carver would have been about 44 years old. Carver was a merchant from London who had belonged to the Leiden congregation of Separatists for several years.[21] He would not live past the Pilgrim's first harsh winter in America and was quickly replaced by William Bradford. Bradford's early journals were eventually published in 1897 in a manuscript titled *Of Plymouth Plantation*.[22] This document chronicled many of the early events in Plymouth. It remains one of the few historical documents regarding the Pilgrim's early activities. It is one of the few sources of early events, albeit from a Calvinist perspective,[23] and undoubtedly influenced the artists, donors, and vestry members who commissioned the church windows. Of the eighteen different *Freedom Windows*, however, most are largely void of other direct Christian symbols or characters even though they are prominently located on two levels of the church sanctuary. The windows also provide an interesting counterpoint to the historical space in the basement of the church. That space was a sanctuary of a different kind. As a stop on the Underground Railroad, it hid many runaway slaves in the 1830s and 1840s.

Religious Plurality, The Peace Movement, and William Penn

Another window installed around 1910 in the Pilgrim Church depicts the Quaker founder of the Pennsylvania Colony, William Penn (1644–1718). Quakers, also known as the Religious Society of Friends, were known for their avoidance of creeds, rituals, and hierarchical structures like those associated with, and enforced by, the early Church of

England. Like the Separatists, Quakers too had been fined and imprisoned for various infractions. Penn was also arrested prior to immigrating to America. He was imprisoned for preaching outside a London meetinghouse.[24] His experiences in England undoubtedly influenced his ideology regarding religious liberties, the importance of community, and the resulting structures he established for his colonial communities in America.

Penn's model, according to historian Deborah Haines, resulted in tighter-knit communities centered around townships and farms that were rectangular and smaller in size. His community design allowed for spacing of houses approximately one quarter of a mile apart along a central road fostering tighter-knit communities. Penn's *Frame of Government* document served as a guiding constitution that enabled those communities to elect their own local representatives and worship freely. Haines argues that this model eventually became a sort of template or framework for later American communities facilitating the development of early democratic practices.[25] Not only Quakers, but immigrants of other persuasions arrived to take advantage of Penn's form of religious plurality. He dubbed his design his "Holy Experiment" regarding the more liberal acceptance of diverse religious affiliations from Europe.[26] And they came by the hundreds. The first ship to arrive in Penn's colony was on August 14, 1682, roughly sixty years after the Plymouth Pilgrims. Thereafter, a total of seven ships arrived by the end of that month, five ships followed in September, another five in October, and three more in December.[27] All told, an estimated two thousand immigrants arrived that first fall seeking a new beginning in America.[28]

Penn's early views went beyond mere tolerance for divergent religious views. He knew that he needed to promote and recruit economic diversity as well. He therefore recruited immigrants and investors from Germany, France, Holland, Scotland, Ireland, and England. They included members of the Lutheran, German Reformed, Anglican, Quaker, Catholic, Mennonite, Presbyterian, and Baptist churches, as well as a number of Jews.[29]

The extent to which William Penn came to signify religious freedom became clear in the William Penn Peace Movement window, designed by the J. & R. Lamb Studios, for the Plymouth Church between 1907 and 1909. The *William Penn Peace Movement* window depicts Penn pointing to a stack of documents, likely his 1681 Charter from King Charles II that grants Penn absolute power to divide and develop his settlement in America, and captured the prevailing belief that Penn had been committed to freedom of conscience and to establishing amicable relations with Native Americans.[30] The window also attested to another theme that would become paramount in America's civil religion: the separation of church and state.



Figure 3.4. *William Penn Peace Movement Pennsylvania*, Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, MA, 1907–1909, J. & R. Lamb Studios, photograph by the author December 6, 2021.

Separation of Church and State in America: Jefferson and Madison Windows

Thomas Jefferson and James Madison's advocacy of the separation of church and state in America is well known. Both men advocated against state support for any particular religion. They felt that the government's preferential treatment of one particular religion, if left unchecked, could lead to a form of tyranny. They argued that religious beliefs were a matter for one's private conscience and should not be a component of public policy.[31]

The *American Statesmen* W*indow* in the National Cathedral in Washington, DC, captured these sentiments. Created in 1946 by American artists William Burnham (1887–1974) and Joseph G. Reynolds, Jr. (1886–1972), the window commemorates the contributions of both Jefferson and Madison and underscores how their ideas about religious toleration are embedded throughout the cathedral. While the *Statesmen Window*'s central theme is religious toleration, it also depicts Madison's and Jefferson's commitment to the separation of church and state.

Washington National Cathedral, officially *The Cathedral Church of St. Peter and St. Paul*, was authorized as an Act of Congress in 1893 and has maintained a close connection to the political activities of Washington, DC, for over one hundred years. Bishop Henry Yates Satterlee, the cathedral's founding bishop, envisioned a *Westminster Abbey*-like edifice back in 1896. He wanted the cathedral to be built for the American capital, and he wanted it to be situated high on a hill overlooking the city. In a very real sense, he wanted it to be located above the capital, metaphorically and geographically,

overlooking the government of the people. He felt people conducting America's business and political activities should sense this close proximity of the Cathedral and appreciate its presence like a "national beacon."[32] Mount St. Alban became the site. According to historians Diane Ney and Elody Crimi, the cathedral was also intended to be an institution of "learning for the promotion of religion and education and charity" and was to be open to all people.[33] The cornerstone was laid in 1907 and was observed by more than ten thousand people, including President Theodore Roosevelt.[34] Today, the cathedral showcases over two hundred stained-glass windows created by twenty different artists, including one titled the *American Statesmen* window.[35]

Both Jefferson and Madison opposed governmental support going to religious institutions. Jefferson's religious freedom act was, in essence, a declaration of independence from the powerful Church of England. The *American Statesmen Window* references this connection by a panel with the inscription of "Religious Liberty (the 'Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom')." As historian Edwin Gaustad argues, this was the natural second step to America's independence, a "separation of the civil from the ecclesiastical order…[however], [t]he notion of a civil society, and a brand-new one at that, launching out on its own without the support and sanction of an official church was frightening, if not irresponsibly reckless"[36] for the time when it was proposed.

Reckless or not, Jefferson's bill ensured that the new government would not get involved with formulating laws about religion, or establishing and endorsing new state religions. Jefferson and Madison both felt that a powerful church entity could potentially meddle with political activities, especially if that church entity was connected to public

funds. Furthermore, government interference on behalf of one particular church might be at odds with religious beliefs of other citizens, instituting laws and forcing their particular religion on others.[37] Jefferson knew these governmental activities could thereby lead to future difficulties repeating the oppression that had "brutalized people throughout history," prompting people to flee to America in the first place.[38]

The next portion in the *Statesmen Window* below the "Religious Liberty" section reflects Jefferson's establishment in 1819 of the University of Virginia (UVA). It was a bold experiment—a public university established to educate leaders and cultivate an informed citizenry. As a secular university, it challenged the conventions of the time as it was not tied to any particular religious denomination.[39] Jefferson considered UVA one of his top three accomplishments along with drafting the Declaration of Independence and authoring Virginia's Statute for Religious Freedom.[40]

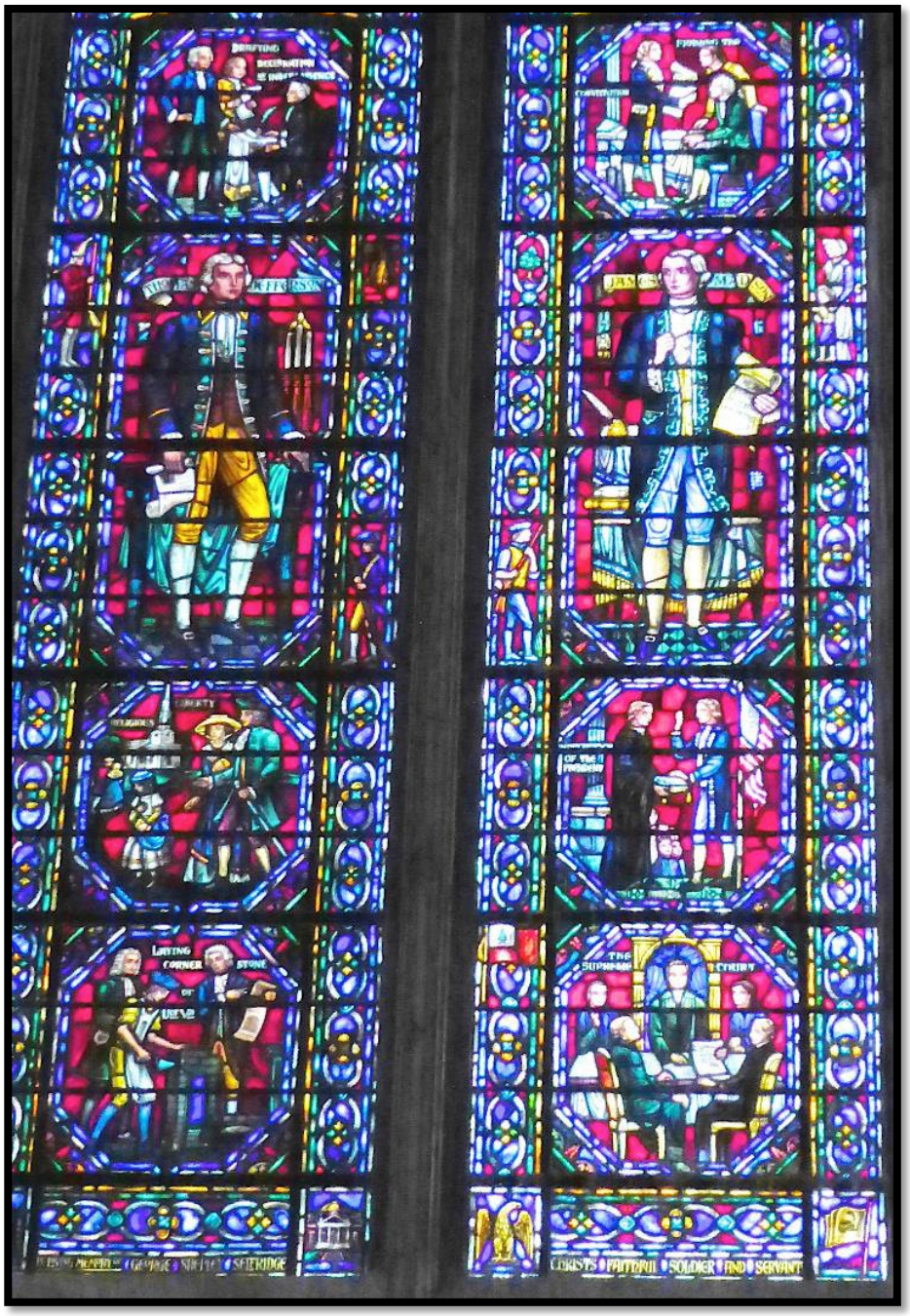
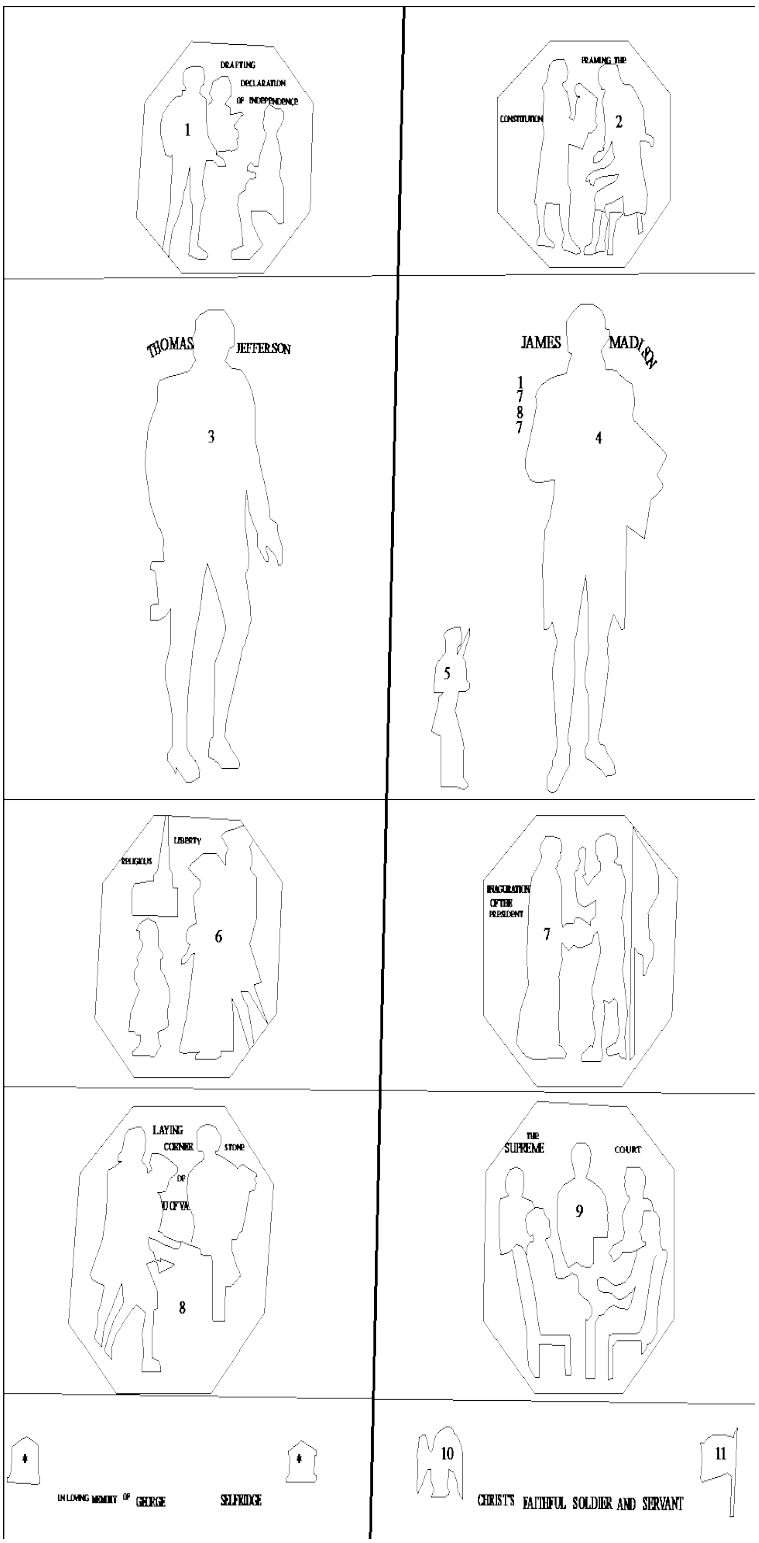


Figure 3.5. *American Statesmen Window*, Washington National Cathedral, Wilbur Burnham and Joseph Reynolds, Jr., artists, 1946, Photograph by the author, October, 2017.



Key: *American Statesmen Window*

1. Declaration of Independence
2. Framing Constitution
3. Thomas Jefferson
4. James Madison
5. Minuteman
6. Religious Liberty
7. Inauguration of President
8. Laying Cornerstone U of VA
9. Supreme Court
10. Eagle
11. Flag

* Government Buildings

Figure 3.6. Key: American Statesmen Window

The Madison side of *Statesmen Window* illustrates perfectly how the American state became enshrined as a civil religion. This side of the window contains three panels representing Madison's contributions to America's form of government. The legislative branch is represented in the upper righthand side with the inscription "Framing Constitution." Below that is a medallion reflecting the executive powers vested with the President and the ritual of inauguration. This section can be identified by the inscription, "Inauguration of the President." The third judicial branch of power is represented by a panel titled *The Supreme Court*. The red, white, and blue coloration, hardly accidental, reinforced the patriotic messaging of the window's narrative as well as the sacralization of what was emerging as an American creed.

While the Pilgrims and colonial figures depicted in the Plymouth Church *Freedom Windows* might at first reading appear to be an exception that tests the rule regarding how other American civil religion windows occurred at the turn of the twentieth century as a reaction to the vast numbers of immigrants entering the country (and perhaps an ostracizing of those individuals) during this "time of trial," they do not necessarily contradict how ancestor worship and founding myths have been sacralized in American civil religion stained-glass windows. The Plymouth Church *Freedom Windows* represent and promote religious tolerance, religious plurality, and the separation of the Pilgrims from the English church. However, the Plymouth Church windows also function to sanctify the separatists in a patriotic-like fashion, while simultaneously whitewashing the colonization that followed. And, even though the windows are void of traditional biblical characters like Moses or Jesus, the windows are still contextualized among other

religious trappings including an alter with a cross, choir stalls, a baptismal fount, pews, and a pulpit. The evocative, collective message the windows present regarding America's religious freedoms and foundation, and the underlying political ideology, harkens again to American exceptionalism. Early colonial figureheads, and the myths they inspired, resulted in significant American civil religion rituals. One only needs to contemplate the elaborate celebrations and honored traditions associated with the Thanksgiving holiday, to appreciate the magnitude and transcendent authority these artfully depicted individuals portray as they greet their contemporary church visitors in living-color and at eye level.

What is more striking about the windows and the legacy of Plymouth Church with its underground railroad historical connections, is that, in all of the windows throughout the sanctuary and beyond, the lack of images of African Americans is strikingly obvious. Even the infamous child-slave Pinky who was auctioned in the church to secure her freedom, is noticeably absent from the images in the stained glass. Instead, images of religious protagonists like William Brewster, John Robinson, and William Penn are presented as one passes by the piece of Plymouth Rock encased in plexiglass. Under the rock is an inscription: "The door-stone of American Liberty." The combination of the Pilgrim windows, the Plymouth Rock, and the church setting prompts one to contemplate this narrative and to recall that, for those early Pilgrims, faith was their politics, their civil religion. The two were not easily divided. Not until Jefferson and Madison crafted the Constitution and the Bill of Rights did that separation of church and state begin to materialize.

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CHAPTER FOUR

INDEPENDENCE

Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge

Robert Weir's rotunda painting of the Pilgrims in the Capitol rotunda told one foundational story about America's mythic origins, but it paled in comparison with the veneration shown George Washington across the decorative arts. Washington was considered by many to be the founding father of the United States and his image has been plastered on millions of commemorative souvenirs, on street signs and county maps, enormous monuments, and of course on the one-dollar bill. As Americanist Karal Ann Marling explains in her text *Washington Slept Here: Colonial Revivals and American Culture, 1876–1986*, his image and symbolism have been ubiquitously depicted across the globe. His image has also been utilized for patriotic purposes both in America and abroad.[1] A wealth of material culture was produced and disseminated commemorating his legacy, serving as a link for many individuals, connecting them to a culture and tradition that was embraced by many. This connection runs deep and was not only perpetuated, but reinforced, at many of the world's fairs that occurred in the United States and abroad around the turn of the twentieth century. A pervasive effort was undertaken by those in power to elevate the heroic nature of Washington's contributions at a time when Americans were grappling with economic depressions, financial uncertainties, rampant consumerism, and perceived foreign threats. The mass production of George

Washington commemorative items functioned almost like a talisman for many, providing a sense of cohesiveness and unity for the country during the uncertain times.

After his death in 1799, there was a tremendous outpouring of grief in the country, and the myth of the man continued to reach new heights. The artist Constantino Brumidi painted a large fresco of Washington, titled *The Apotheosis of Washington*, for the dome of the Capitol rotunda in 1865. Apotheosis, or deification, accurately reflects Washington's status in the popular imagination, but his activities at Valley Forge in the winter of 1777 were largely neglected in mainstream historical accounts for many years. Some have argued this oversight was due to the negative connotations associated with Valley Forge and the dissention and demoralizing conditions that the soldiers and Washington experienced. This was a difficult phase of the American Revolution that seemed better left alone.[2]

Early historians on the Revolution were prone to be selective in what they chose to write about, especially if the topic had the potential to negatively impact national unity.[3] According to historian Barbara Powell, events like the dismal winter of 1777–78 at Valley Forge, that might even hint at defeat, were ignored. She argues that early Revolutionary historians felt that "faction, the internal splintering of society into selfish and competing political groups, was the chief enemy of republican society."[4] In addition, she notes that Washington actually had

> many critics and enemies, and their non-cooperation and harassment of him was never worse than during the period of the Valley Forge encampment. This would have been an awkward and embarrassing reality to face after 1799 [his death] when Washington was glorified.[5]

Between 1819 and 1825, four large paintings were installed in the Capitol rotunda in Washington, DC, by the artist John Trumbell. They depicted four revolutionary scenes including *The Declaration of Independence*, *The Surrender of General Burgoyne*, *The Surrender of Lord Cornwallis*, and *General George Washington Resigning His Commission*. They romanticized those events and coincided with a crop of historians who were becoming more enamored with writing about heroic personalities, faith, courage, and conquering adversities. Washington's encampment at Valley Forge fit the profile. Valley Forge slowly gained recognition as an event that embodied many of those heroic traits and was subsequently mythologized. As Powell explains, when the winter at Valley Forge did eventually enter into the historical record, "the temptation to mythologize proved insurmountable for these 'romantic' historians."[6] Many of the hardships and activities were quite exaggerated, and often repeated, such as their descriptions of "crimson blood upon the virgin snow" and Parson Weems's account of Washington praying in the woods at Valley Forge. As Marling points out, Weems was the "inventor" of the "I cannot tell a lie" fable of little George and the cherry tree. The prayer-in-the-snow story first appeared in an article Weems wrote for *The Federalist* in 1804, and proved so arresting that the author incorporated the incident into the eighth edition of his perennially popular *Life of George Washington, with Curious Anecdotes Equally Honorable to Himself and Exemplary to His Young Countrymen*.[7]

As these stories became more popular, they cast an aura of near holiness over Washington as well as the entire encampment at Valley Forge and the fortitude displayed by the Continental Army while sheltering there. Patriotic myths of Valley Forge grew to

epic proportions representing a moral triumph in the history of the nation. These romanticized myths suited contemporary agendas toward nationalization and imperialistic notions regarding colonizing activities like those that were unfolding in the Philippines. Yet the myths were embraced by many. They have become firmly entrenched in the ideology of the country and have been utilized to justify other grandiose ideas including those of American exceptionalism.[8]

Reverend Dr. W. Herbert Burk of Norristown, Pennsylvania, was one of the individuals who embraced this nationalized rhetoric surrounding the winter encampment at Valley Forge. After chaperoning a group of choir boys to the site in 1902, Burke was disappointed that no memorials or commemorative plaques were to be found, only open fields. He began dreaming of a chapel to memorialize Washington and the Continental Army. Burke was an avid amateur historian and an extremely patriotic individual.[9] Within a short period of time, Burke began raising funds for the chapel and Milton B. Medary, Jr. was selected to be the architect. However, Burke was not an effective fundraiser. He also suffered several nervous breakdowns trying to raise the funds while dealing with issues of insolvency. Eventually, the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania intervened and appointed Charles Custis Harrison, provost of the University of Pennsylvania, to take over. Harrison, a well-connected fund raiser, who constructed a total of 19 campus buildings during his administration, became dedicated to the project and was able to secure sufficient funding to complete the Chapel's exterior in 1917.[10]

Burke's idea of combining history and religion at a site such as Valley Forge represented a broader Americanization movement in the country at that time. As Barbara

Powell points out, the Valley Forge commemorative project was symptomatic of a particularly strong current in American culture."[11] She explains that Burke wanted to create a worship space that was decorated in patriotic trappings to address a prevailing movement in the country at that time—what she refers to as a syncretistic initiative blending protestant Christianity and the national or civic religion of the democratic society. This fusion of Protestant faith in God and in the country, Powell argues, "found institutional expression in the Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge."[12]

The fusion of God and country in the Washington Memorial Chapel is all encompassing. For example, there is a Patriot's Hall, a Porch of the Allies, Pews of the Patriots, Roof of the Republic, and a Cloister for the Colonies with thirteen different bays to complete the Gothic structure. The sanctuary displays a handle from Washington's coffin, and a strong box used by Robert Morris, who helped finance the Revolutionary War, is prominently displayed. However, it is the stained-glass windows that most effectively connect God and country in the chapel.

The stained-glass windows are patriotic to the core, alternating in predominantly red or blue and interspersed with white Indiana limestone. All the windows in the sanctuary were designed by Italian-born Nicola D'Ascenzo (1871–1954). During his lifetime, D'Ascenzo created around 7,800 windows for over 3,900 different commissions; most of them installed during the first half of the twentieth century.[13] He was a successful artist from Philadelphia, well known and respected for his work.[14] His style was quite different from other artists of his time, such as Charles Connick or Louis Comfort Tiffany. His windows tend to contain many more vigorous lead lines with

smaller sized glass pieces lending them a mosaic-like composition in jewel-tones. D'Ascenzo admired twelfth-century French stained-glass masters and his style reflects that preference.[15] Most of the initial windows created for the Washington Memorial Chapel were installed between 1917 and 1921. They were the product of a collaborative effort between the artist and Reverend Burke, including one enormous window program containing thirty-six panes to depict the life of George Washington from birth to retirement.

D'Ascenzo's *George Washington Window* is situated directly above the main entrance to the chapel. The window was a gift from the Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). Its various panels depict three key phases of Washington's life with two tall columns of the window for each phase. On the left, *Washington the Virginian* begins with a depiction of his baptism in 1732 in the upper lefthand corner and ends with his departure in 1775 for the Continental Congress. The middle columns, *Washington the Patriot*, cover the period of his life from 1775 to 1783, when Washington commanded the American army. The final columns on the righthand side, titled *Washington the American*, depict the timeframe beginning with the 1787 Constitutional Convention, his presidency, and ends in the bottom righthand corner with Washington in retirement at Mount Vernon.[16]

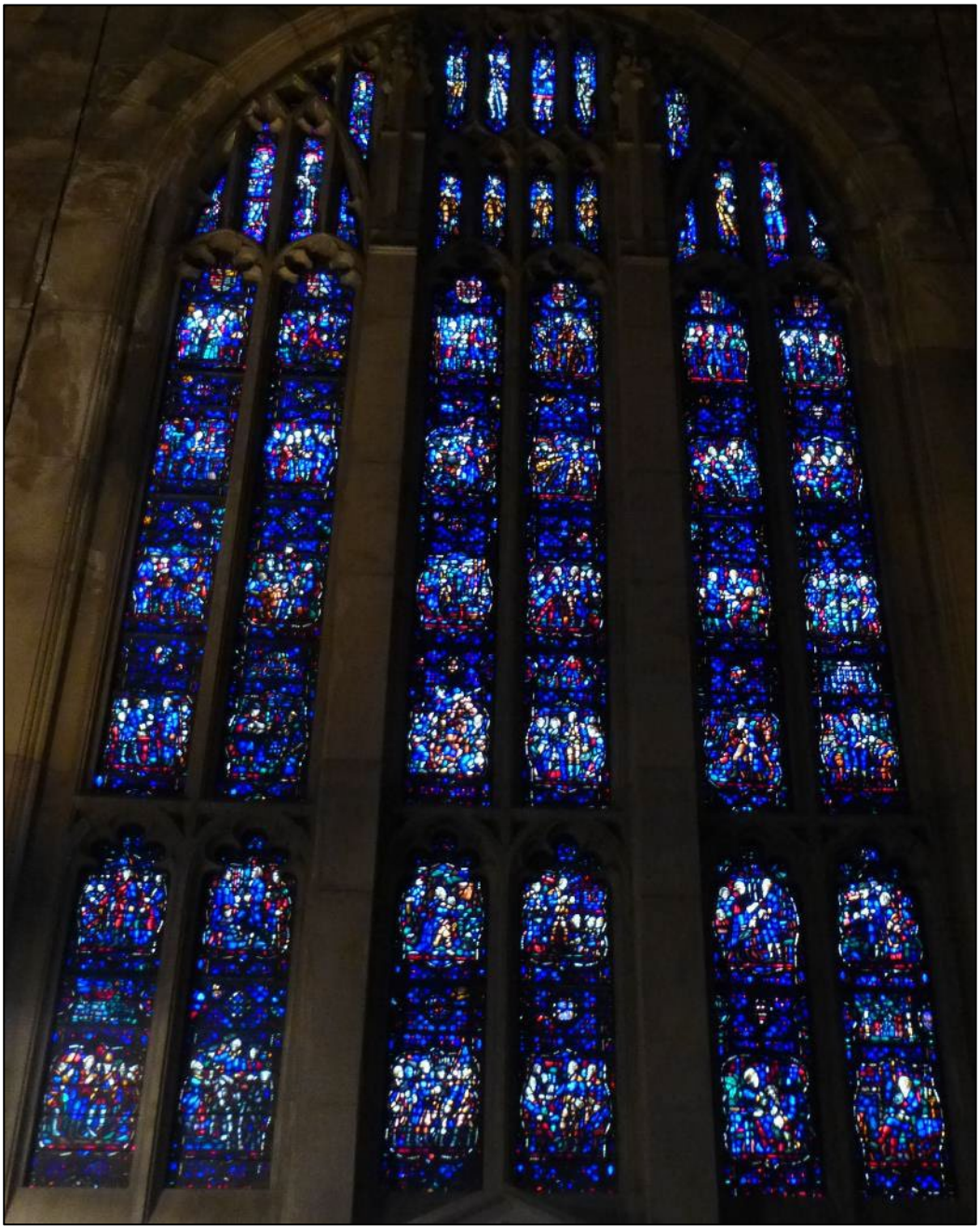


Figure 4.1. *The George Washington Window*, Washington Memorial Chapel, Valley Forge, PA, Nicola D'Ascenzo, 1917, Photograph by the author, October, 2017.

The Chapel also has another window that reflects Parson Weems's narrative of Washington kneeling in the snow at Valley Forge and praying.

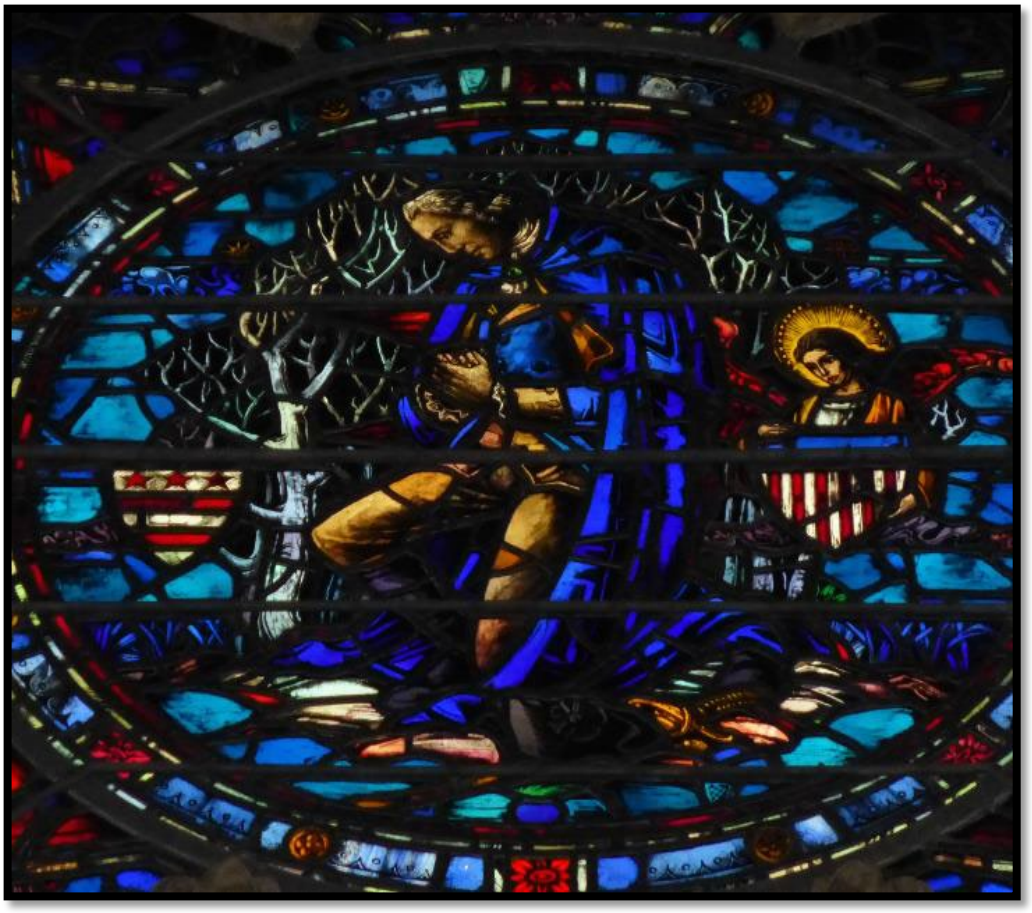


Figure 4.2. *George Washington in Prayer at Valley Forge*, Washington Memorial Chapel: *The National Patriots' Bell Tower*, Nicola D'Ascenzo, 1953. Photograph by the author, October, 2017.

It is located in the *National Patriots' Bell Tower* that also contains a carillon of 58 tuned bronze bells, representing the states and US territories. The stained-glass window is located above an exact replica of the Liberty Bell that was cast in 1915. The window is also by D'Ascenzo and is titled *George Washington in Prayer at Valley Forge*.

Washington is depicted kneeling, his hands clasped in prayer, and his head bowed. A barren tree is in the background representing the cold winter of 1777–1778 at Valley Forge. Two distinct emblems bracket Washington. On the left is the Washington family coat of arms and on the right, an icon representing the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) who sponsored the window.

The *Washington-in-Prayer* window not only depicts the praying general, it also has the names of the Apostles Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John inscribed around the perimeter of the window. This is consistent with Burke's conviction that Washington was a Christian who believed in a God that could answer prayers and intervene on behalf of humankind. This was contradictory to what many others thought, who felt that Washington was a deist. They felt that he did believe in a supreme being and creator, just not one that intervenes in human activities. On Washington's birthday in 1903, Burke alluded to his personal convictions regarding Washington's faith. He not only announced his intentions to build the chapel, but argued that the chapel should be "the Nation's Bethel for all days to come, where the American patriot might kneel in quest of that courage and that strength to make all honorable his citizenship here below, and prove his claim to that above."[17] The debate about Washington's faith continues to this day; more certain is that faith in Washington became central to America's civil religion.

To honor the contributions of the French to the Revolutionary War, the chapel also contains commemorative objects and stained-glass windows. There are two large flags, made in Paris in the 1920s for the Chapel, that are predominantly displayed at the front of the church, one white and one blue with large fleur-de-lis lilies.[18] They

commemorate an important alliance that was pivotal to the outcome of the war. According to church historians Pearson and Reisner:

> In February 1778 the Treaty of Alliance with France, the culmination of months of negotiation by Benjamin Franklin and others, was signed. Word reached Washington at Valley Forge in May of that year and was justifiably the cause of great celebration. Not only was France the first major power to recognize the American struggle as a war for independence and not merely a rebellion, thereby bestowing international legitimacy, but it also promised much needed funds, French naval support and French troops to aid our cause. In fact, when Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown three years later there were 11,000 American troops present and 8,000 French troops.[19]

Besides the French flags, the chapel contains many references to the role that the Marquis de Lafayette (1774–1807) played in the war and his close relationship with George Washington. There is a large *Lafayette Window* that has as its main theme the "settlement" of America.[20] Lafayette stayed with Washington at Valley Forge where the two forged a lifelong friendship. The chapel celebrates this connection with France every year on French Alliance Day. The service includes an address by a representative from the French Embassy and, according to Pearson and Reisner, there is a "laying of a wreath honoring the French and American soldiers and sailors who died in the cause of American independence."[21] Interestingly, the Washington Memorial Chapel was not the only church with a stained-glass window that commemorated the friendship and the alliance between the two countries. Another window, this one by Charles Connick, is located in Paris along the left bank of the Seine on the Quai d'Orsay.

The American Church in Paris dates to 1814. It was begun as an Episcopalian church and boasts of visits from several American presidents, including Ulysses S. Grant, Teddy Roosevelt, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Woodrow Wilson. While the church, in its

early days, may have had a large proportion of American members in the congregation, today's mix is no more than half. The remaining members come from over forty different countries and have diverse religious backgrounds. Throughout the last two centuries, according to church brochures, the American Church in Paris has been a "spiritual home through both world wars" and major events. After outgrowing a previous structure, the current sanctuary on the quai d' Orsay was begun in 1926. It was also designed in the Gothic style and contains a large stained-glass window program to complement its architectural style.

In addition to two Louis Comfort Tiffany windows that were transferred from the previous structure, the church also has a large row of Charles J. Connick windows. They wrap around the entire upper level of the sanctuary. Connick worked with Joseph W. Cochran, who was the pastor of the church at that time, to develop the themes for the windows. The design program contains both biblical and patriotic themes arranged in chronological order. It begins with Old Testament patriarchal figures, such as Abraham, followed by windows with New Testament apostles, including John the Baptist. Next, religious reformers, such as Martin Luther and John Calvin, are portrayed, and the final window is titled the *French-American Alliance/War Memorial Window*, containing images of Washington and Lafayette.

In total, there are four central characters depicted in the *Alliance Window*, all wearing military uniforms. Reading from left to right, the first pane depicts an anonymous U.S. soldier from 1918. Connick, in one of his scrapbooks, refers to this window as the *A. E. F. Window*, which would indicate that this window commemorates

the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) that joined the French in World War I. Next is General George Washington, who is turned and facing the Marquis de Lafayette standing next to him. Finally, another anonymous soldier is depicted, this time a soldier in French uniform with the date of 1777 inscribed, commemorating the date of Valley Forge. The canopies above the soldiers depict their respective coats of arms. Below the main characters, again from left to right, are illustrations of a camouflaged American war ship; then an illustration of men ringing the Liberty Bell on July 4, 1776; then the fall of the Bastille on July 14, 1789. Finally, in the lower righthand corner, there is an image of the French war vessel, *Admiral de Grasse*. In Connick's black-and-white cartoon for the window design, the images of William Penn and Abraham Lincoln are included above the American soldiers. Then, on the French side, the artist has included images of Saint Martin and Saint Louis. Finally, across the bottom of the entire window is the inscription, "They loved not their lives unto the death."[22]

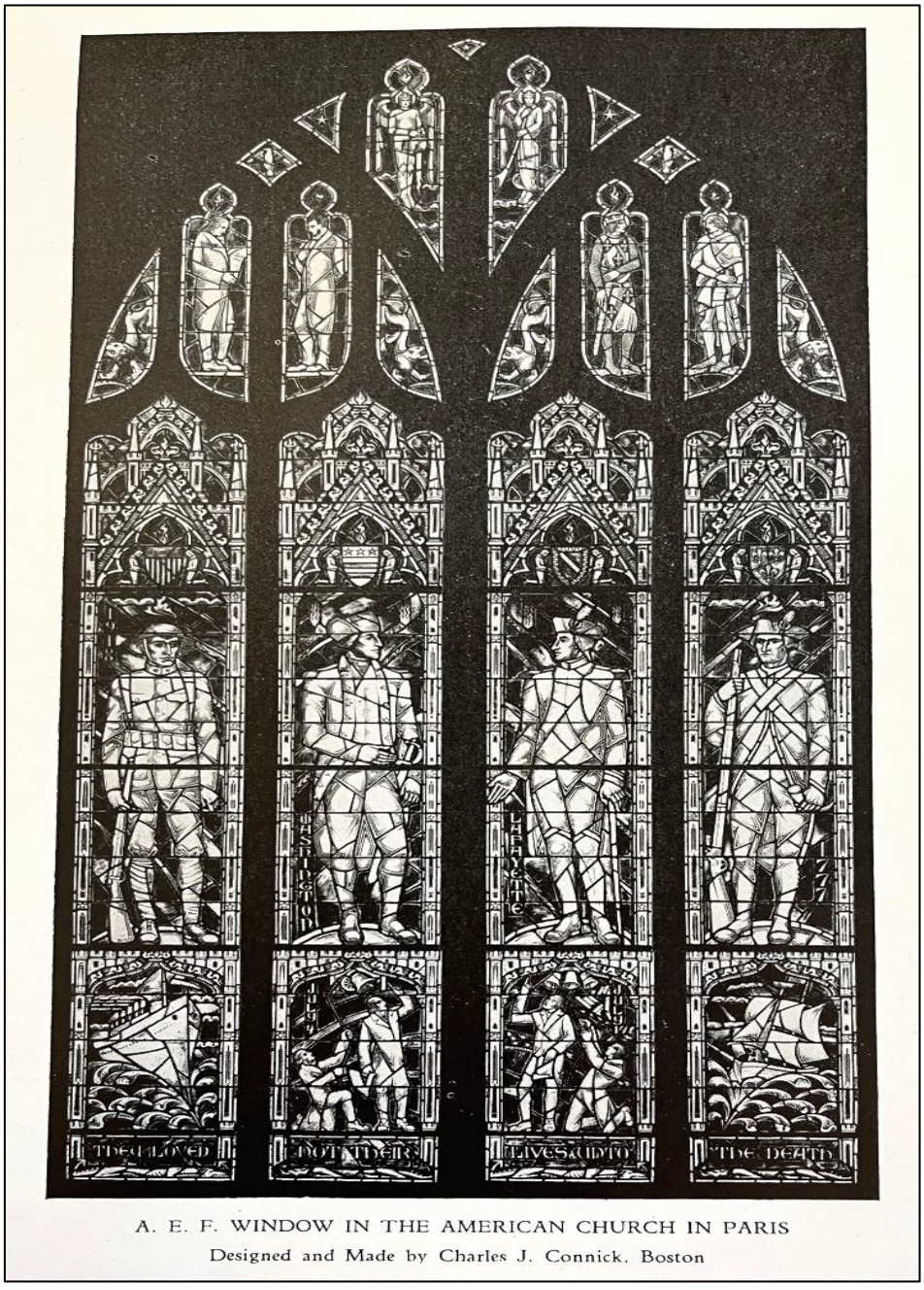


Figure 4.3. Charles Connick Artist Cartoon, *A. E. F. Window in the American Church in Paris*, Charles Connick Archives, MIT Rotch Library Special Collections

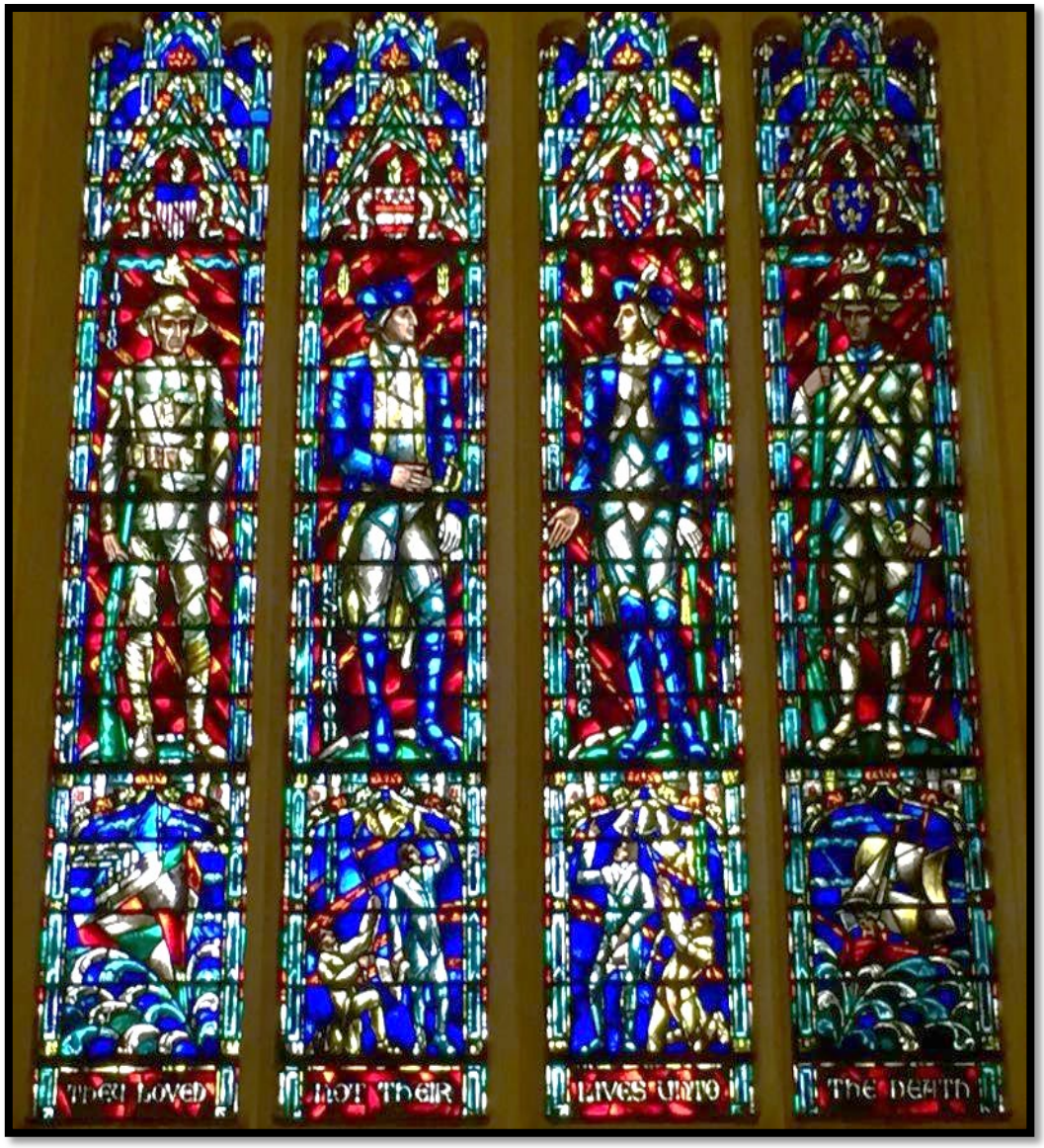


Figure 4.4. *French-American Alliance/War Window*, American Church in Paris, Paris, France, artist Charles J. Connick, 1931, photograph by the author, May, 2019.

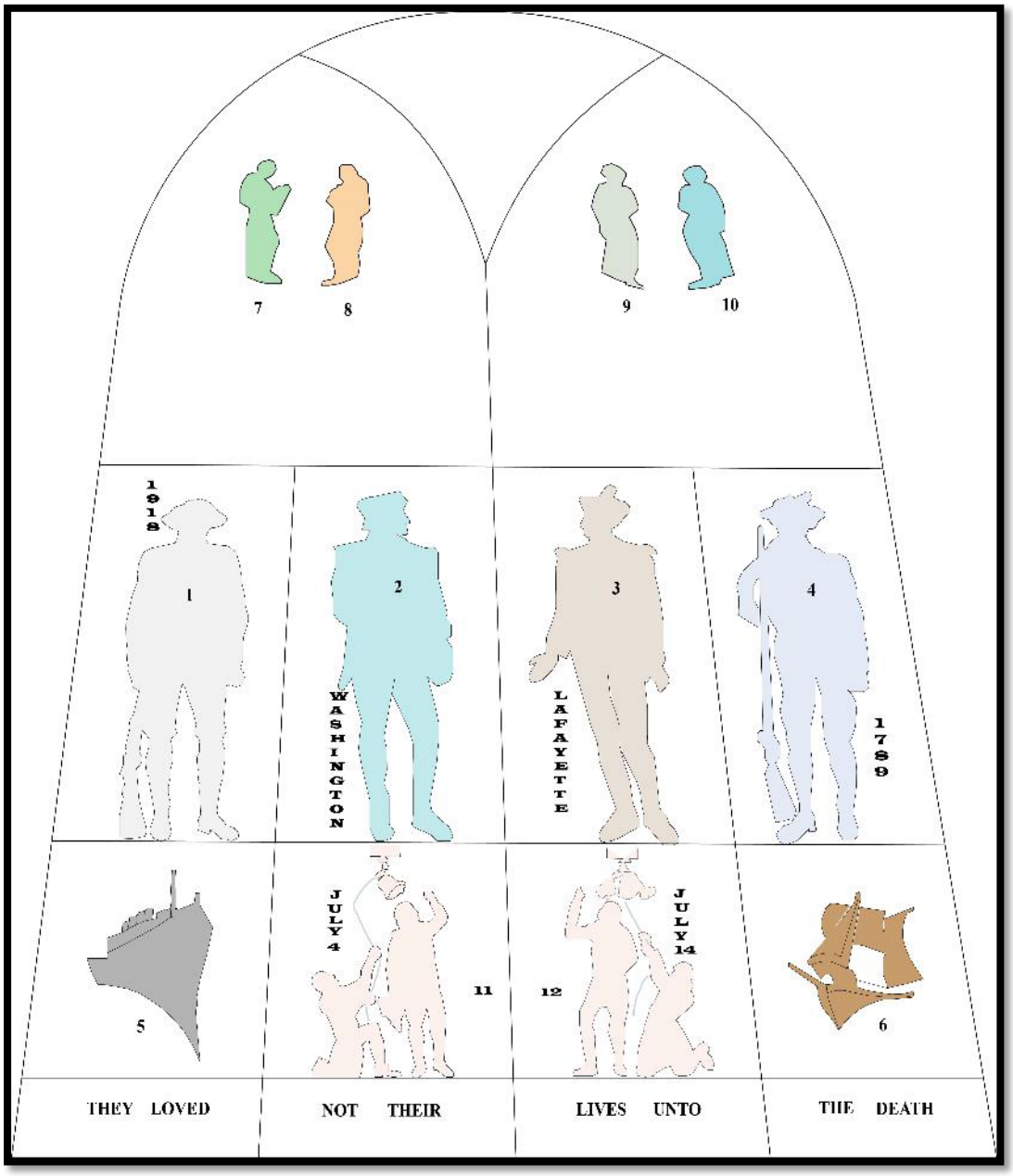


Figure 4.5. Key *French-American Alliance/War Window*, American Church in Paris, Paris, France, artist Charles J. Connick, 1931. 1. American Soldier 1918; 2. George Washington; 3. Marquis de Lafayette; 4. French Soldier; 5. American war ship; 6. *Admiral de Grasse* ship; 7. William Penn; 8. Abraham Lincoln; 9. Saint Martin; 10. Saint Louis; 11. Liberty Bell ringing; 12. Fall of the Bastille.

Clergymen Burke and Cochran were not the only patriotic enthusiasts during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Americanization efforts had reached epic proportions in the country. As Wilbur Zelinsky points out:

> The zeal of the self-appointed guardians of Americanism reached a climax of near-hysteria in the 1910s and 1920s with the inauguration of "Americanization" programs aimed principally at immigrants and their offspring through the public schools. Spurred on by the war effort, scores of patriotic organizations labored strenuously to assimilate the newcomers into their system of values as promptly as possible.[23]

But Americanization did not stop at the U.S. borders.

The American Church in Paris is just one example of how an extension of Americanization had reached foreign soil. As cultural historians Robert Rydell and Rob Kroes point out in their text *Buffalo Bill in Bologna: The Americanization of the World, 1869–1932*, the American government effectively used mass cultural methods during this time to export traditional American products while affirming its hierarchical significance on the world stage. One particularly efficient mechanism for this deemed export was through the world's fairs that started occurring with rapid-fire intervals both in Europe and in America. The Paris World's Fair of 1900, for example, was one such event that not only disseminated American culture to a French mass audience, it also facilitated the flow of economic stimulus to production and construction teams at the fairs both at home and abroad.

Through these events, historians have observed how many Europeans demonstrated a fascination with American products and culture. They attended not only world's fairs but also other mass entertainments such as Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. While Europeans were often critical of American mass-produced products and could be

hesitant about attending what might be considered low-brow or crass entertainments suitable for only lower-classes, the perceived authenticity of Cody's production appears to have been too enticing and eventually alleviated the bulk of their concerns. Impressive European crowds flocked to these productions and even royalty attended the shows. Yet, if one were to peel back the proverbial onion skin by just a layer or two, the potential aim and impact of this dissemination of Americana was a bit more Machiavellian. According to Rydell and Kroes:

> Over the course of the next century, it would become fairly routine practice for American mass cultural exports to serve as weapons for accomplishing specific U.S. foreign policy objectives. In the Victorian era, this use of mass culture was still being nurtured and the Wild West was one of the key incubators.[24]

Selling the American way of life and products was good business for a capitalistic country. Corporate America needed to expand its customer base, but to do so, it also needed cheap labor for increased production. This resulted in an interesting love-hate relationship with the many diverse immigrants entering the country during the early twentieth century. While the businesses needed the cheap labor of these newcomers, concerns deepened about an immigrant workforce that would be drawn to radical political organizations. Worries deepened about immigrants' ethnicity as well. As historian Mark Whalan points out:

> Between 1901 and 1910, almost nine million immigrants arrived in the United States; the subsequent decade saw close to six million…In 1910, 14.7 per cent of the population had been born overseas. These were different migrants from the typical nineteenth-century influx; rather than hailing from Ireland, Germany and Scandinavia, these new migrants were largely from eastern and southern Europe, and many of them were Jews fleeing persecution and poverty.[25]

Stained-glass windows demonstrated the wealth and status of their sponsors. And, while they may not have been seen by many of these new immigrants, they certainly were intended to fortify the myths and civil religion that unified America's upper and middle classes and projected a show of cultural prowess to foreign audiences.

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[5] Ibid., Powell, 36.

[6] Ibid., Powell, 38–43

[7] Karal Ann Marling, *George Washington Slept Here: Colonial Revivals and American Culture 1876–1986*, (Cambridge, MA, 1988), 3.

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[19] Ibid., Pearson and Reisner, 2015, 19.

[20] Gardiner Pearson, "The Lafayette Window," Washington Memorial Chapel, (April, 2020), http://wmchapel.org/2020/04/the-lafayette-window

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[23] Wilbur Zelinsky, *Nation into State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundations of American Nationalism*, (Chapel Hill and London, 1988), 150.

[24] Robert Rydell and Rob Kroes, *Buffalo Bill in Bologna: The Americanization of the World, 1869–1922*, (Chicago, IL, 2005) 108.

[25] Mark Whalan, *American Culture in the 1910s*, (Edinburgh, 2010), 28.

CHAPTER FIVE

FRONTIER MYTHS

The "Promised" Land

Daniel Tuttle was a young man of thirty years from New York with a penchant for butter when he headed to the frontier in 1867. His goal was to reach Virginia City in what was then Montana Territory. Tuttle, however, was not like other opportunistic men of that time. Tuttle was assigned to the frontier by the Episcopalian headquarters on the East Coast. Even though he was a Columbia University graduate, he readily admitted to being woefully ignorant of the Western frontier and its geography. His fluency in Greek and Latin did little to prepare him for the many river crossings or overturned stagecoaches he experienced. He nevertheless navigated them both, the latter twice. Nor did his advanced education in the classics prepare him for traveling more than 40,000 miles in those various stagecoach cabins and rough wagons called "jerkies." Tuttle's memoir, *Missionary to the Mountain West: Reminiscences of Episcopal Bishop Daniel S. Tuttle, 1866–1886*, relies heavily on the many letters he wrote during this time and provides insight into his life and the Western communities he visited.[1]

When Tuttle accepted his assignment in 1867, it is unlikely that he envisioned his legacy being memorialized in a stained-glass window. Yet, in 1933, St. Peter's Episcopal Cathedral in Helena, Montana, commissioned artist Charles Connick to do just that. *The Bishop Tuttle Memorial Window* not only commemorates Tuttle, it also reflects dominant

attitudes about America's expansion into the frontier and conveys a seemingly divine ordination of America's expansion into the West. The window also perpetuates the frontier myth of America's pioneer "spirit" while simultaneously whitewashing the violence that occurred during this expansion. The *Bishop Tuttle Window*, officially referred to as the *Smith Memorial Window* because it was donated by the family in memory of prominent parishioner Albert Smith, blended ecclesiastical and secular elements into a story that sacralized America's expansion into the West as a crucial component of America's civil religion.

The windows reflect how compelling and pervasive the frontier theme is in American culture and how it has been used to build faith in America's civil-religion ideology around issues of race, religion, and cultural identity. By romanticizing the wilderness experience and the country's expansion into the West, civil-religion stained-glass windows convincingly sacralize that component of American history. Yet the concept and mythologization of the frontier masked the underlying political agendas at work displacing Indigenous Peoples and exploiting natural resources needed for the expanding country.

This chapter will present several stained-glass windows that represent similarly romanticized frontier themes. Like the *Bishop Tuttle Window*, these windows provide complementary evidence about ecclesiastical stained-glass windows that told a prophetic story about America's westward expansion as a divinely ordained process of civilization that entailed violence when the ordained encountered resistance.

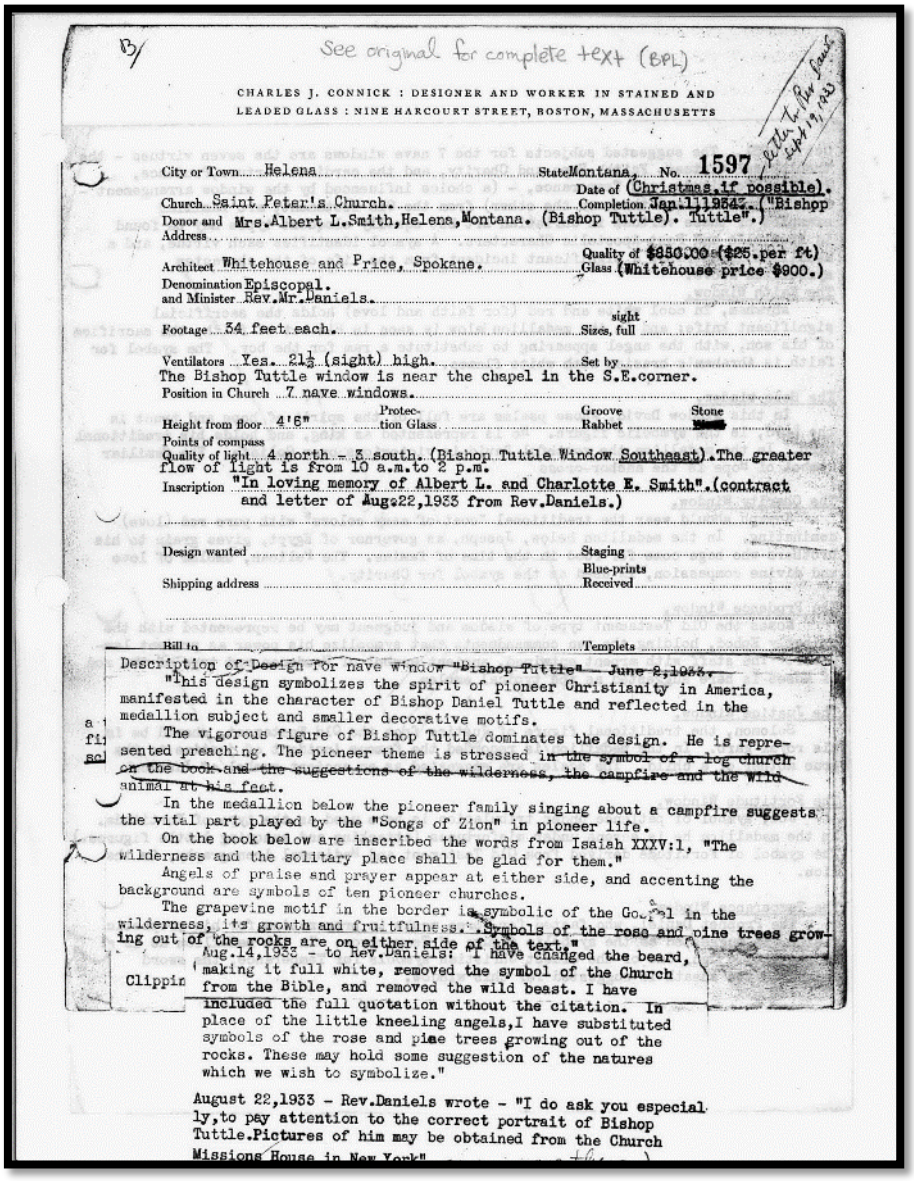
Expansion

The idea that America was an exceptional society evolved overtime. Central to this concept was the idea that the country was inherently established on a different set of values including its Pilgrim and Puritan past, its democratic form of representational government, its religious freedoms, and its laissez-faire economic system. These ideas fed the beliefs of many Americans and Europeans to think of American values and geography in exceptional terms. For example, French traveler Alexis de Tocqueville described the country as "quite exceptional, and it may be believed that no other democratic people will ever be placed in a similar one."[2] As an exceptional place with an exceptional democratic culture, expansion into the western frontier also entailed a higher duty, namely to spread the Christian faith. For the Episcopal Church, this duty included church building, culminating in cathedrals like St. Peter's Cathedral in Helena, Montana.

The first stained-glass windows for St. Peter's were designed by Charles J. Connick and installed in 1933 during the Great Depression. According to Connick's studio job-logs and correspondence with Reverend Henry H. Daniels in 1933, the *Bishop Tuttle Window* was also to be a memorial to Mrs. Albert L. Smith's husband and their daughter Charlotte. However, Connick simply refers to the window as the "*Bishop Tuttle Window* Southeast." The cost estimate for the window of $850.00–$900.00 would amount to approximately $17,000–18,000 in 2020 dollars.[3]

The original Connick documents provide insights into what the artist, clergy, and sponsor intended with the window's frontier iconography. Connick's studio log states that the design was to symbolize pioneer Christianity in America as manifested by the

character of Bishop Daniel Tuttle. While Tuttle dominates the central portion of the window, smaller images depict the pioneer theme, including the family depicted in the smaller medallion singing around the campfire. Connick notes that this was to reflect the vital role of faith by the "Songs of Zion" the pioneers are singing.[4] Connick's logs also contain multiple additions and revisions to his notes reflecting the various revisions as the window design evolved. For example, one comment from August 14, 1933, in his note to Reverend Daniels, he points out that the artist understood the need to make Tuttle look more rugged, making his beard fuller and less tidy as would be expected on the frontier. As with most windows, the evolution of the design and who advocated for various components of the window becomes a collaborative process. Sometimes, the design is changed but is not always attributed to one party or the other. For example, the log includes a comment noting that the Bible verse for the window should come from Isaiah 35:1 (Authorized KJV), which speaks to the romantic notion of the wilderness that was to be communicated by the composition. The verse states, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them…." This would imply that the intent of the window was to represent a more rustic and pastoral scene including the ten, small, log-cabin-type pioneer churches that Tuttle is credited with starting on the frontier. Often, however, it is difficult to ascertain precisely who is driving the design or underlying themes—the artist, the clergy, or the financial sponsor.[5] Either way, it is evident that one goal was to romanticize the pioneer scenario and commemorate Tuttle's role in establishing the various churches on the frontier while whitewashing the dispossession of the Native Americans in the process.



See original for complete text (BPL)

CHARLES J. CONNICK : DESIGNER AND WORKER IN STAINED AND LEADED GLASS : NINE HARCOURT STREET, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

City or Town Helena State Montana No. 1597
Church Saint Peter's Church. Date of (Christmas if possible). Completion Jan. 1 1934. ("Bishop
Donor and Address Mrs. Albert L. Smith, Helena, Montana. (Bishop Tuttle). Tuttle".)
Architect Whitehouse and Price, Spokane. Quality of Glass $850.00 ($25. per ft) (Whitehouse price $900.)
Denomination and Minister Episcopal. Rev. Mr. Daniels.
Footage 34 feet each. Sizes, full sight
Ventilators Yes. 21½ (sight) high. Set by
The Bishop Tuttle window is near the chapel in the S.E. corner.
Position in Church 7 nave windows.
Height from floor 4'6" Protection Glass Groove Rabbet Stone
Points of compass
Quality of light 4 north - 3 south. (Bishop Tuttle Window Southeast). The greater flow of light is from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Inscription "In loving memory of Albert L. and Charlotte E. Smith". (contract and letter of Aug. 22, 1933 from Rev. Daniels.)
Design wanted Staging
Shipping address Blue-prints Received
Bill to Templets

Description of Design for nave window "Bishop Tuttle" - June 2, 1933.

"This design symbolizes the spirit of pioneer Christianity in America, manifested in the character of Bishop Daniel Tuttle and reflected in the medallion subject and smaller decorative motifs.

The vigorous figure of Bishop Tuttle dominates the design. He is represented preaching. The pioneer theme is stressed in the symbol of a log church on the book and the suggestions of the wilderness, the campfire and the wild animal at his feet.

In the medallion below the pioneer family singing about a campfire suggests the vital part played by the "Songs of Zion" in pioneer life.

On the book below are inscribed the words from Isaiah XXXV:1, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them."

Angels of praise and prayer appear at either side, and accenting the background are symbols of ten pioneer churches.

The grapevine motif in the border is symbolic of the Gospel in the wilderness, its growth and fruitfulness. Symbols of the rose and pine trees growing out of the rocks are on either side of the text."

Clippin

Aug. 14, 1933 - to Rev. Daniels: "I have changed the beard, making it full white, removed the symbol of the Church from the Bible, and removed the wild beast. I have included the full quotation without the citation. In place of the little kneeling angels, I have substituted symbols of the rose and pine trees growing out of the rocks. These may hold some suggestion of the natures which we wish to symbolize."

August 22, 1933 - Rev. Daniels wrote - "I do ask you especially, to pay attention to the correct portrait of Bishop Tuttle. Pictures of him may be obtained from the Church Missions House in New York"

Figure 5.1. Connick Studio Job-log #1597: Helena, Montana. Saint Peter's Church, Courtesy of the Trustees of the Boston Public Library/Fine Arts.



Figure 5.2. Bishop Tuttle Memorial Window (Smith Window), St. Peter's Cathedral, Helena, MT. Charles J. Connick, 1933. Photograph by the author, 2015. Key: 1. Bishop Tuttle; 2. Female pioneer; 3. Male pioneer; 4. Covered wagon and horse; 5. Campfire.

Tuttle arrived in Montana at the same time the nation's mining frontier was expanding into the territory. However, what he appreciated were the vast number of pine trees, the fresh clean water from the Montana streams, and, oddly enough, butter. Like others who made the similar transition to the West, he seemed rather content with his new pioneer situation and his letters home likely prompted others to follow suit. To his wife he wrote:

> Montana pleases me more than the other territories for these two special reasons. First, there are trees here, many of the mountains and nearly all the ravines being plentifully covered with mountain pine. Secondly, there are plenty of living springs and streams of water, the freshest, coolest, purest, sweetest in the world. This is the best country for butter-making that can be found. Only here, since I left Otsego County, have I found sweet, delicious butter.[6]

Pine trees, fresh air, and sweet butter appear to have been sufficient assets relative to the liabilities of frontier life. Tuttle, no doubt, faced many challenges in the mining towns he visited on the frontier. However, prior to his daily interactions with the individuals and miners in the Rockies, Tuttle would take what he called his "morning constitutions." These mountain hikes not only helped Tuttle craft his sermons; they also kept him in shape. As Rev. Daniels explained to Connick more than 50 years later, the *Tuttle* stained-glass window would benefit from depicting a hardy and "vigorous figure," not a refined, trim-bearded preacher like those the artist would find in New York or Boston. Connick, who obviously appreciated the need to depict more rugged attributes in his artistic composition, which was a metaphorical blend of Moses and a New York Episcopalian priest, conceded the point and replied, "I have changed the beard, making it full white."[7]

Connick was keenly aware of how the southeastern light would animate the figure of Tuttle in the spot designated for the window. Joanne Maynard, local church historian and author of St. Peter's pamphlet on its stained-glass windows titled *The Stained-glass Windows and Decorative Symbols of St. Peter's Cathedral*, explains that Charles Connick had confidence in stained-glass windows to be radiant and bring "spiritual regeneration" to a church. She quotes Connick as saying, "Beauty can preach as very few men with bundles of words can preach. I want men to hear my windows singing…."[8]

Connick was confident his designs and colors would convey rich "spiritual significance," and designed St. Peter's windows specifically for their southern or northern exposures. The southern-facing windows would get direct sunlight illuminating those windows while the north-facing windows would get indirect light providing a different experience for the viewer. Light not only provides the stained-glass artists with a necessary dimension for their medium, it also results in an optical phenomenon whereby impurities in the glass scatter or refract the light into vivid tapestries of color. The light transforms the art giving it a spiritual dimension that changes throughout different hours of the day. Maynard points out that Connick attributed both religious and cultural understanding into his designs. An accentuation of sorts would be achieved, thereby connecting the viewer to contemporary ideals and modern values.[9] For instance, the deep blue of Tuttle's robe, according to Maynard, was intended to portray both humility and the divine that would lead men such as Tuttle to sacrifice his personal comforts and conveniences of city life for bringing the gospel to others located on the frontier.[10] The passage in the bottom portion of the Tuttle window also embraces these

values and modern ideals, such as American political agendas regarding expansion. The rose had been established as a symbol of blossoming for the country. The window, therefore, connects this iconography with that concept in a very subtle way, especially when combined with the biblical passage. The full biblical quote from Isaiah states: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."[11]

In this way, the windows commissioned for St. Peter's, including the *Tuttle Window*, were romanticizing and connecting Tuttle's image to other Christians of apostolic time, to Tuttle's activities in Montana.[12] Tuttle, no doubt, embraced being a pioneer, even a heroic one. For example, there was a devastating fire in Helena two years after Tuttle's arrival in Montana. Tuttle, along with "Bitterroot Bill" and "Gentle Joe," scaled the rooftops of burning homes and buildings carrying water to put out the fire. While Tuttle downplays this in his autobiography, Maynard explains that Tuttle was thereafter recognized as a local "hero" for the courage he displayed fighting the Helena fire.[13]

The medallion below Tuttle's towering figure depicts a pioneer family gathered around the campfire singing. According to the studio logs, this is in reference to Psalm



Figure 5.3. Detail of Bishop Tuttle Memorial Window (Smith Window), St. Peter's Cathedral, Helena, MT. Charles J. Connick, 1933. Covered wagon and horse.

137:4 (Authorized KJV), "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"[14] The medallion also depicts another frontier image that is almost lost in the large window; the pioneer's covered wagon. Singing hymns and campfires and covered wagons romanticized and glossed over the violence that actually occurred throughout this expansion. The settlers, trespassers on the lands of Indigenous people, were often active players in the violence that occurred during the westward expansion. The wagon depicted in the stained-glass window represents the hundreds of thousands of pioneers who made their way to various destinations on the frontier, often in search of gold or independence, and almost always in an attempt to find a better way of life.

American exceptionalism provided the justification for their encroachment. This, too, is subtly endorsed by the iconography of the *Bishop Tuttle Window*. American

expansionist policies endorsed the idea of bringing the gospel to the frontier and how this fruitful activity would civilize and save souls. A grapevine motif, therefore, frames the



Figure 5.4. Detail of Bishop Tuttle Memorial Window (Smith Window), St. Peter's Cathedral, Helena, MT. Charles J. Connick, 1933. Grapevine border.

entire stained-glass design. It symbolizes the fruitfulness of the Gospel and how the Christian faith was brought to new territories like Montana on the Western frontier.[15]

The *Tuttle Window*, therefore, represents a frontier story that is/was familiar to many. Those descendants of earlier settlers, who knew the stories about wagon trains heading west in American history, may well have felt a shared sense of community that those pioneer images invoked. As Wilbur Zelinsky suggests, the United States began with a novel ideology that included unique aspects of the frontier. This facilitated a profound transformation in the nature of the American community. Since the country did not necessarily have a common religion, it embraced a profound but gradual connection to the frontier as part of its identity and culture.[16]

Settler-colonists like Tuttle certainly embodied this novel frontier ideology. They experienced the western expansion into the frontier first-hand. Their narratives provide a significant contribution to the frontier myths contributing to this idea of a "new nation" and a sense of independent nationalism that evolved over time. The American myth of pioneer adventurers and frontier independence lingers today, long after the frontier was supposedly closed in 1890, at least according to historian Frederick Jackson Turner. Bishop Tuttle's experience and those of others like him have contributed to the romanticized myth. Wilbur Zelinsky argues that there really is no need to revisit the controversy created by Turner's thesis since it is part of a composite image of the frontier that is already well embedded in the American character, and that it is "linked in the most profoundly meaningful way with the civil religion of the United States."[17] Indeed, the *Bishop Tuttle Window* underscores how people were conditioned to visualize the frontier with a romanticized version of this expansion based on the premise of American exceptionalism. Sentimentalized versions of these activities thus anesthetized the collective memories of the violence actually precipitated by what was at the very core political agendas.

The Doctrine of Discovery and Manifest Destiny

Approximately six hundred years ago, the Doctrine of Discovery's beginnings sounded surprisingly familiar to the principles of what is now commonly called exceptionalism. Explorers conquered new lands for resources, justifying their activities under the auspice of bringing "civilization" to the uncivilized. Native populations were

considered inferior and, therefore, could be completely controlled and ruled by the explorers that "found" the new lands. Land was considered an entitlement of the discovery. As historian Larry Len Peterson points out in his text, *American Trinity: Jefferson, Custer, and the Spirit of the West*, several rudiments of control were embedded in this Doctrine of Discovery:

> From the fifteenth century on, as Europeans and Americans explored and plundered new lands, in their minds they were justified under this philosophical policy. They based their principles on religious and ethnocentric beliefs that their culture, religion, and race were superior to all others. When European imperialists headed to the New World, the doctrine provided automatic, immediate full control of property rights along with governmental, political, and commercial rights over native peoples without their knowledge or consent.[18]

The Doctrine of Discovery provided the necessary rationalization for prying the land away from the Native Americans. It also had the moral backing of the Catholic Church based on the belief that the world was theirs to Christianize. This comported well with the beliefs of Protestant American politicians, who, according to Peterson, "hated Catholics" and transferred that power to American leaders to "control the lands of the American West and its people."[19]

By the 1830s, another ideological construct, Manifest Destiny, added its heft to the Doctrine of Discovery. Manifest Destiny, according to Peterson,

> was the American-born Christian doctrine that the West was the new Eden waiting for Christians to populate it and move aside nature's people and its wildlife…[it was an] American predestination. Minds were overflowing with the wealth that the West represented. Prosperity brings all sorts of empowerments, just as poverty denies them.[20]

Journalist John Louis O'Sullivan (1813–1895) coined the phrase in 1845 in promoting the annexation of Texas into the United States. As an expansionist, he lobbied

for annexation of lands belonging to Mexico and Native Americans, arguing that Providence was on the side of the American people to rightfully occupy the continent. His early essay of 1839 was titled "The Great Nation of Futurity." It was published in *The United States Magazine and Democratic Review* and urged upon Americans the "common duty of Patriotism to the Country."[21] Polk argued that it was "time for common sense," and that it was at the "express invitation" of Mexico, for Americans to expand beyond the existing borders.[22] O'Sullivan was convinced that annexation would also be a protective measure. In a subsequent article in the same paper titled "Annexation," O'Sullivan emphatically lobbied against "further agitation of the waters of bitterness and strife" and the threat of

> hostile interference against us, for the avowed object of thwarting our policy and hampering our power, limiting our greatness and checking the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions.[23]

In other words, Providence was not only on the side of frontier missionaries like Daniel Tuttle, it was also exploited as justification for less benevolent activities such as the actions of the early frontier settlers and miners.

Divine Providence is also implied on another level in the St. Peter's *Tuttle Window.* Connick depicts the settlers singing the "songs of Zion" in front of their covered wagon. Connick was adept at depicting abstract religious concepts into his designs. As architectural historian Albert Tannler points out in his book *Charles J. Connick: His Education and His Windows in and near Pittsburgh*, Connick was able to "demonstrate a marriage of ancient materials and techniques with contemporary abstraction."[24] He used both lead and paint to "create dynamic thrust" that emanated from his stained-glass



Figure 5.5 Detail of Bishop Tuttle Memorial Window (Smith Window), St. Peter's Cathedral, Helena, MT. Charles J. Connick, 1933. Red roses.

windows and, in the St. Peter's *Bishop Tuttle Window*, that "thrust" is portrayed by the settlers singing songs around the campfire, connecting the American frontier to the biblical Zion. Baldwin again provides keen insights into America's expansionist policies and political rhetoric regarding Mount Zion and the Promised Land as conveyed in the Old Testament. He states:

> At the peak of congressional debate over the Oregon country, elder statesman John Quincy Adams also drew strength from the higher law in the holy writ. If America wished to claim the Northwest lands, he said, it was de facto the right thing to do. The Hudson's Bay Company of England was guardian of the area in name only and could no longer be permitted to stand in the way of thousands of American settlers moving by wagon train into the Willamette valley. Pausing in his peroration before the House of Representatives, Adams asked the clerk to read into the record a passage from the ancient Second Psalm of David: "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." The verses bore witness to the current American imperative. "Well, sire," Adams concluded, "our title to Oregon stands on the same foundation…to make the wilderness blossom as the rose.[25]

It is noteworthy, then, that a stained-glass studio artist could deploy art to capture the economic processes of national expansion and translate process into an ideology. Manifest Destiny, blossoming roses, and references to the biblical Zion harmonize in perfect pitch to sing expansionist ideology when the light enlivens Connick's stained-

glass designs. This tangible representation of civil religion dynamically performs its dance with light projecting its subtle endorsement of America's expansionist ideology. The *Tuttle Window*'s pioneer composition fits neatly and congruently with Tuttle's towering, rugged, and religious identity.

The symbolic elements contained in the *Tuttle Window* provided appealing connections to familiar pioneer stories for those worshiping at St. Peter's. The images represent a "shared" memory for viewers in 1939 and contributed to a shared sense of community that author Benedict Anderson writes about in his book, *Imagined Communities*. The worshipers at St. Peter's may not have had a direct connection to actual colonial settlers, but they could imagine sharing in the seemingly heroic pioneer trek to Montana.

This begs the question then: If one did not claim a pioneer as a relative, just how did this shared community evolve? In a section of Anderson's book titled "Cultural Roots," he portrays for the reader a connection that developed for Americans as they read the daily newspaper. This simple task created an "extraordinary mass ceremony" whereby the participants were "well aware that the ceremony he performs is being replicated simultaneously by thousands (or millions) of others of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion."[26] Eventually, Anderson argues, this "fiction seeps quietly and continuously into reality, creating that remarkable confidence of community in anonymity which is the hallmark of modern nations."[27]

It was also this confidence of community fed by Manifest Destiny that has become inseparably woven into American culture and America's civil religion. As both

Anderson and Bellah argue, that sense of imagined community becomes increasingly important during times of trial such as the Great Depression mentioned earlier. Consequently, it is understandable that many of the images depicted in the *Tuttle, Adams,* and *Thomson* Windows contribute to this sense of shared community. After all, stained-glass windows functioned, and were intended, to inspire and fill audiences with a sense of wonder.

The *Thomson Window* in St. John's Episcopal Church in Butte illustrates this point, albeit with an unusual focus. The window was designed by the artist studio of J. & R. Lamb and is a memorial to Francis Andrew Thomson (1879–1951). Thomson was president of the Montana School of Mines (later known as Montana Tech). What makes it distinctive is that, while it honors President Thomson, the *Thomson Window* commemorates the miners of the surrounding area. It is an ecclesiastical window that includes secular themes that resonated within the local community of miners and their surviving relatives by acknowledging the miner's economic contributions to the expanding nation. As historians Ellen Crain and Lee Whitney explain, Butte's rapid rise in copper production was linked to the industrial revolution, electricity, and the need for copper wire to transmit electrical currents.[28] Between 1880 and 1910, Butte's population grew significantly as five major railroads connected not only workers to the mines, but travelers, fashions, and products from all over the world to Montana. Relationships between people often developed out of necessity due to the danger of the working environments in the mines, which resulted in many accidents and deaths. Some have even argued that these labor relations cultivated tightly-knit and loyal communities within the

working-class miners of Butte. Local historians like Ellen Crain have gone so far as to contend that the pluralistic nature of Butte's mining population resulted in a more equitable society than one might suppose. She argues, "Equalitarianism was the norm in Butte, a true democracy in which social parity and respect for the individual within the community was as important as the community as a whole…Regardless of size, intellect, or wealth, people in Butte mattered."[29] However, the many unmarked Chinese graves that dot the landscape of some Montana cemeteries shed light on just how limited some of those egalitarian efforts may have been.

By the dawn of the twentieth century, Butte was providing the vast quantities of copper necessary for a country becoming increasingly dependent on electricity. Sophisticated engineering techniques were utilized to construct approximately 3,000 miles of tunnels and shafts, including prominent headframes (also called "gallows") used to raise and lower the miners. Fourteen of the tall headframes remain in Butte and images of those headframes are now used as logos for businesses. They have also been incorporated into the iconography of stained-glass windows.

St. John's Episcopal Church is recognized as the oldest standing church in Butte. Built in 1881, the church required extensive renovations almost forty years later due to a devastating fire.[30] Yet, the grey stone exterior and the Norman styled arched windows survived and look much the same today as they did in 1881. William A. Clark, one of Butte's notorious Copper Kings, worshiped at St. John's. Over the years, Clark contributed to the stained-glass window program for the church and the windows are still intact today.

While scant archival documents remain providing historical details regarding St. John's stained-glass windows, the *Francis Andrew Thomson*'s memorial window merits attention. It reflects respect for the miners who not only worked hard but risked their lives every day for their livelihood. The window's theme is stated in its middle, with the inscription; "God is my Light." The Bible verse, an adaptation of Psalm 27:1 (Authorized KJV), actually states, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?" This theme regarding divine light begins at the top of the window with a shining miner's lantern along with a bright star. Off to the right of the Bible verse is a depiction of an oil lamp that was carried by the early miners before the invention of the smaller carbide lamps that were attached to the miner's hat.



Figure 5.6. Detail of *Francis Thomson Window*, St. John's, Butte, MT, J. & R. Lamb Studio.

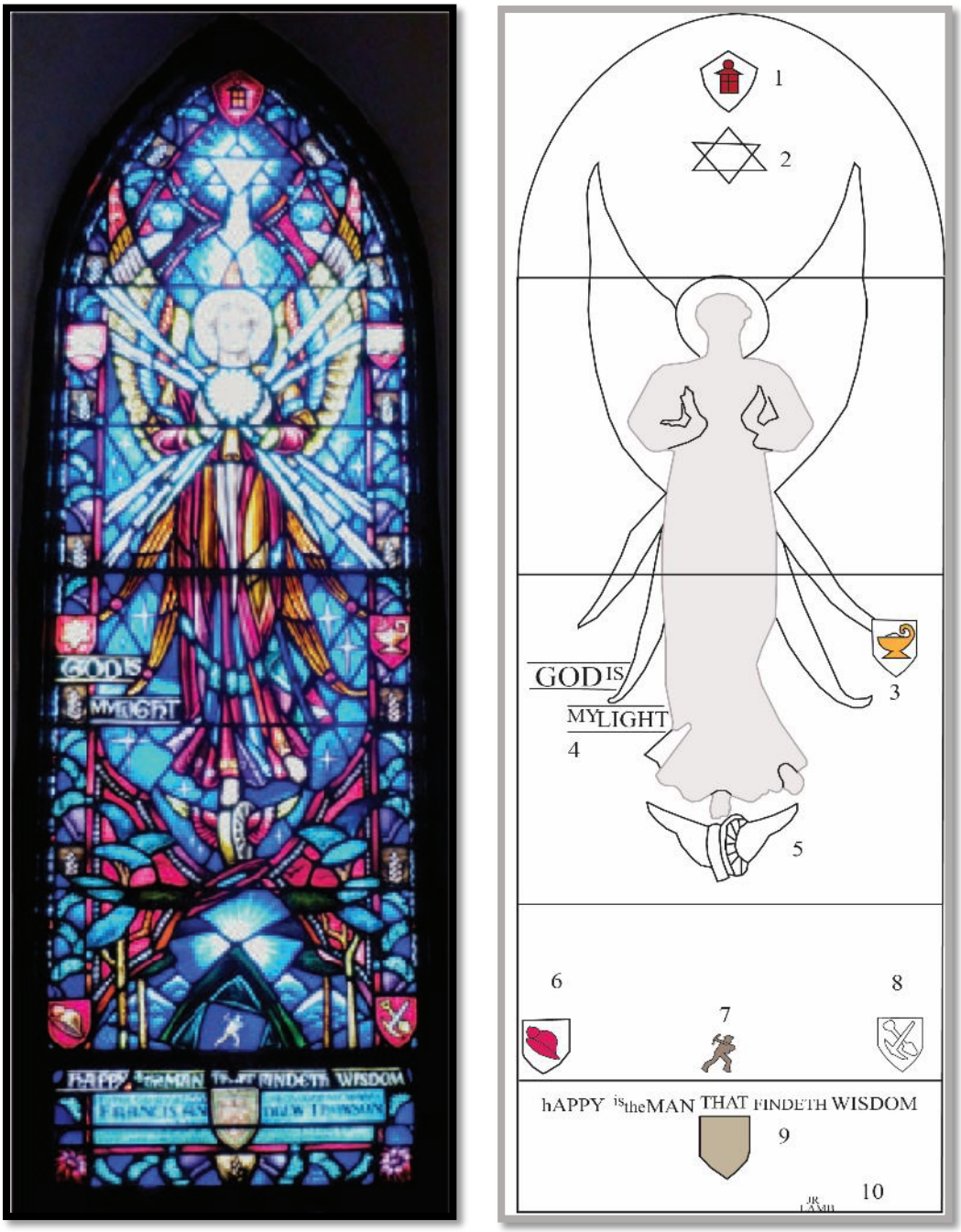


Figure 5.7. *Francis Thomson Window*, St. John's, Butte, MT, J. & R. Lamb Studio. Key: 1. Miner's lantern; 2. Star; 3. Oil lamp; 4. Window's theme; 5. Headframe wheel; 6. Miner's hat w/carbide lamp; 7. Miner; 8. Pick and shovel; 9. MT Tech symbol; 10. Studio signature.

The main figure, an angelic miner, is balancing on what appears to be a winged pulley wheel of a mine's headframe. The lower third of the window under the main



Figure 5.8. Detail of *Francis Thomson Window*, St. John's, Butte, MT, J. & R. Lamb Studio.

character depicts a miner's hat with a carbide lamp off to the lefthand corner. Then an illuminated miner with a headlamp occupies the center portion, along with a pick and shovel shown off to the right.

Directly under this mining iconography is another shortened adaptation of a verse from Proverbs 3:13–14 (Authorized KJV), "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom." Again, the full version of the Bible verse ties it all together: "Happy is the man that



Figure 5.9. Detail of *Francis Thomson Window*, St. John's, Butte, MT, J. & R. Lamb Studio. Miner's hat w/carbide lamp; Miner; Pick and shovel; MT Tech symbol.

findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold." Finally, under the Proverbs verse is the seal of the Montana School of Mines recognizing Thomson's service to the school.

Wave after wave of settlers of mixed ethnicities flooded into frontier towns like Butte. Elliot West, in *The Last Indian War: The Nez Perce Story*, addresses the sheer magnitude of this western migration. He estimates that the 1843 exodus of white-Anglo men, women, and children to the frontier would have represented approximately 30% of the entire Cayuse population. A human flood of similar magnitude, he says, would be like the immigration of 28,000 western Indians passing through the city of Boston heading toward the Cape. What kind of alarm bells would have been raised if these same Native Americans then announced to the people of those communities that they were just the tip of the iceberg. How would the Bostonians have felt if they then learned that many, many more were coming, and were actually already on their way?[31] West argues, "In fact, the news that wagons could roll all the way to the Pacific was like unstoppering a bottle. In 1844, more than half again as many settlers came than the year before, and the next year the number rose to about twenty-five hundred."[32] It is no wonder, then, that America's westward movement acquired mythic status; but the wonder that stained glass bestowed on this enterprise is what needs fuller comprehension.

As stained-glass expert and art historian Virginia Chieffo Raguin points out, even small panels communicated new concerns and often did so in novel or "highly seductive" ways.[33] Raguin explains,

> Recent analysis of literature and art has encouraged the study of the larger story embedded in a single image. The relationship of the story to the spectator can change when different classes of individuals look at a work of art…creators of stained glass, like those for any other art form, construct "coded messages" that built new meanings for their audiences, even in familiar stories.[34]

She also points out that, historically, stained-glass windows have vividly reflected the "social, religious, civic, and aesthetic values of the eras in which there were made."[35] They were works of art that, according to Raguin, engaged spectators "through rituals of passage."[36]

America's frontier expansion was a rite of passage, a ceremony marking an important transitional period for the country. The United States was no longer a backwater colonial society. It had transitioned through the frontier into an imperial power. In this way, the frontier window iconography provided audiences with a common and contemporary "ritual of passage" narrative. As art historian Donald Preziosi argues, some art certainly conveys "more information about their sources than others" and objects can be "time factored: that is, they contain legible marks of the artifact's historical genealogy."[37] The frontier themes of the stained-glass windows convey this genealogy and portrayed "legible marks" not unlike Panofsky's analogy of the man tipping his hat to another man in greeting. The stained-glass images of covered wagons, singing settlers, and pine trees, represented a familiar "gesture" conveying a powerful and perhaps even "highly seductive" message. The message, like Tuttle's full beard, was intentional—America had graduated to a new world status. This message provided a reassuring and recognizable cultural narrative during a time of trial.[38] It was a narrative that was carefully orchestrated. The frontier window's carefully curated narrative is

projected through sunlit images echoing America's genesis and exodus story back to modern day viewers, precisely as intended.

Prior to Tuttle's assignment to Montana in 1867, other missionaries had made their way to the frontier. However, not all of them shared the same assessment of their reception by the Native Americans as Tuttle relayed to his wife in his letters. As West explains, when the Presbyterian missionary Marcus Whitman and his wife Narcissa originally settled among the Cayuses on the frontier, they found both the Nez Perce and Cayuse to be friendly and "clamoring for attention."[39] Nonetheless, tension and trouble were not far behind. West clarifies that "the essential problem, however, was the gap between what Nez Perces and missionaries expected of each other. With their evolving, inclusive spirituality, the Nez Perces hoped to incorporate new sacred connections so they might heighten their own spiritual power."[40] And, West continues, for these frontier missionaries, "soul saving reached past spirit to the material."[41] The missionaries wanted the Indians to embrace "the ethic of hard work" (i.e., farming) and, according to West, they were told to "forsake collective ownership of land and things in favor of private property and the accumulation of wealth."[42] In other words, the missionaries were endeavoring to make a nation in the image of themselves; white Anglo-Protestants. West also argues that early missionaries like Whitman did not easily separate church and state. The missionaries, he claims, "saw little or no distinction between converting Indians and adopting them into the national family. Nor did the officials back in Washington. The line between church and state was fuzzy in many areas of the youthful republic."[43]

Furthermore, West maintains, "the missionaries' work was shifting strongly toward the project of national expansion."[44]

National expansion, like the rose of the *Tuttle Window*, was in full bloom. By the time Whitman was making one of his return trips to the frontier mission in 1843, he found a party of between "eight hundred and a thousand persons, about to embark with three to five thousand head of cattle and horses. The families were packed into more than 120 wagons."[45] These settlers made it west with Whitman's guidance. But, as West perceptively points out, the Cayuses and Nez Perces witnessing this massive immigration through their territory were sufficiently alarmed.

Frontier expansion through American Indian territory, therefore, remained a prominent political, social, and economic agenda well into the last half of the nineteenth century. As cultural historian and poet Neil Baldwin points out in his book *The American Revelation: Ten Ideals that Shaped Our Country from the Puritans to the Cold War*, when the eleventh and youngest American president, James K. Polk, took office on March 4, 1845, "One of his first official actions that day was to endorse an annexation invitation regarding the Lone Star Republic."[46] Baldwin quotes the endorsement of Polk's action in the *New York Morning News*, "From the time that the Pilgrim Fathers landed on these shores to the present moment…pioneer settlers have rolled forward in advance of civilization…This is the natural, unchangeable effect of our position on this continent."[47] Baldwin points out that this action was the first of many steps taken by the American government to increase and acquire "more than 1.2 million square miles of territory, over one-third of the area it occupies today."[48] In other words, the Doctrine of

Discovery and Dominion Mandate suited early American expansionists well in their quest to obtain land from the American Indians. But, in the end, it was not enough. Pioneers and immigrants continued to pour into the frontier.

Indigenous Encounters, Disease, and Cultural Disasters

Next to the *Tuttle Window* in St. Peter's Cathedral is another window depicting a similarly commanding figure. The towering form of Abraham, the Old Testament patriarch, complements its neighboring window portraying Tuttle's embodiment of the frontier. And like the *Tuttle Window*, *The Window of Abraham* depicts frontier themes. It was installed in 1939, a few years later than the *Tuttle Window*. Like Tuttle, Abraham wears a full beard. Again, the beard was problematic. Correspondence to Connick dated March 8, 1939, from Reverend Daniels of St. Peter's states:

> Pardon me for saying so, but the figure of Abraham is hardly that of a vigorous pioneer who left his father's house to go to a new country. He looks rather like an emaciated, medieval saint. I shall be glad if we can have a vigorous, robust personality who looks as if he is just coming into the new land rather than one who is worn out by his travels. You might look up in the Bible the time that Abraham left his father's house. I suggest this because I wonder if it is necessary to portray him as an old man. Why may he not be a man in the prime of life? I think that he should be.[49]



Figure 5.10. *Holter Memorial Window* (Abraham), St. Peter's Cathedral, Helena, Montana. Charles J. Connick, 1939. Photograph by the author, 2015.

Author Deborah Swingley attributes *The Abraham Window* to the well-known Holter family of Helena.[50] The Holters were immigrants from Norway and the window commemorates their nationality as well as the arrival of similar pioneers to the Rocky Mountain territory. Swingley highlights for the reader several small insignia that are



Figure 5.11. Detail of the *Holter Memorial Window* (Abraham), St. Peter's Cathedral, Helena, Montana. Charles J. Connick, 1939. Photograph by the author, 2015. Key: 1. Abraham; 2. Bison; 3. Bear; 4. Medical Caduceus; 5. Bitterroot flower.

almost lost to the viewer in the composition. They include a small bison depicted to the left of Abraham's leg. This image was included as a tribute to the bison found in the



Figure 5.12. Detail of the *Holter Memorial Window* (Abraham), St. Peter's Cathedral, Helena, Montana. Charles J. Connick, 1939. Bison and bear.

Rocky Mountains and, as Swingley explains, because of their great importance to Montana's Indigenous people.[51] A small bear can also be located to the right side of Abraham and represents other wildlife found in Montana.

In the upper righthand corner, by Abraham's shoulder, is a caduceus. This medical insignia depicting two snakes coiled around a winged staff is traditionally associated with healing. Complementing the window's pioneer theme in the border, are



Figure 5.13. Detail of the *Holter Memorial Window* (Abraham), St. Peter's Cathedral, Helena, Montana. Charles J. Connick, 1939. Bitterroot and Caduceus

several bitterroot flowers. The bitterroot is the state flower of Montana.[52] The bitterroot was voted the Montana state flower in 1894 and has remained the state flower ever since.[53]

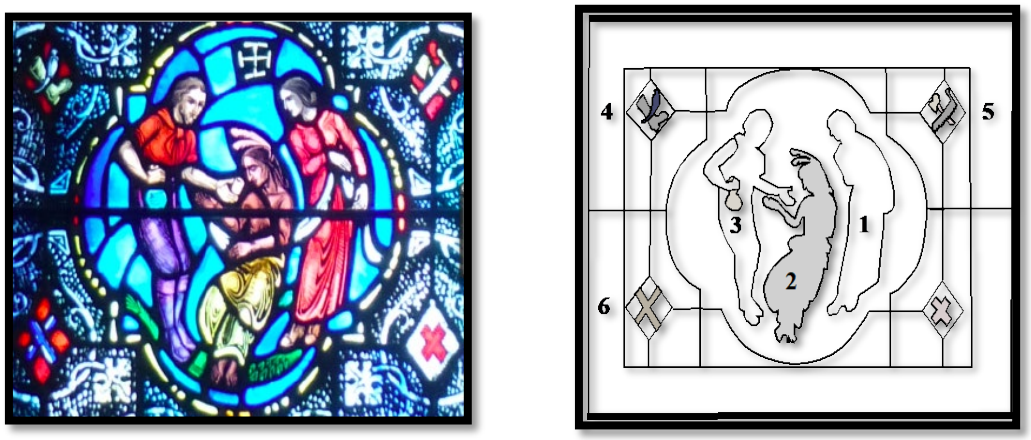


Figure 5.14. Detail of lower section *Holter/Abraham Window* medallion, Charles J. Connick, 1939. Photograph by the author, 2015. Key: 1. Female pioneer; 2. American Indian; 3. Male pioneer with medicine; 4. Boot and awl; 5. Saw and Axe; 6. Cross of Norway.

The central medallion depicts two pioneers providing medicine to an ailing American Indian. In addition to the main theme of medical assistance, other symbolism is

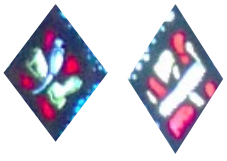


Figure 5.15. Detail of lower section *Holter/Abraham Window* medallion, Charles J. Connick, 1939. Boot and awl, saw and axe.

depicted. The boot and awl to the left of the medallion symbolizes the leather industry that was important to the frontier. And the saw and axe, off to the righthand side, commemorates the lumberman and carpenters that helped develop and build many of the Montana towns. In the bottom left, the flag of Norway with its red background pays homage to the nationality of the Holters.[54]

The *Abraham Window* portrays an aspect of pioneer life that was often a component of missionary service. Many missionaries also provided medical assistance to the American Indians. Thirty years prior to Tuttle's adventures out west, early missionaries, like Henry Spalding (1803–1874) and Marcus Whitman (1802–1847), mentioned earlier, traveled through what is now Montana and Northern Idaho. Like Tuttle, Whitman was from New York and was college-educated. He was also a physician. During his time on the frontier, Whitman was known to have treated many sick individuals, including fur trappers, the Nez Perce, and Cayuse Indians.

As the country struggled to understand the culture and customs of the Indigenous people, their impressions of them changed over time. Their opinions of the Indian often vacillated wildly. They were often categorized as noble and proud; or, they would be viewed as vengeful and savage. Bellah argues this assessment was only the beginning of America's "failure to see the Indians in their own terms" and was a denial of their humanity and culture.[55] Furthermore, as author Julie Schimmel argues in her essay "Inventing 'the Indian,'" the image of the American Indian shifted over time. "Whether from the sphere of religion, politics, commerce, or ordinary walks of life, white Americans perceived Indians through the assumptions of their own culture."[56] The author

also provides a poignant example in her text by quoting a fur trader named Henry A. Boller, from 1859.

> I could "paint" you, were it not for the constant interruptions…two pictures: The one would represent the bright side of Indian Life, with its feathers, lances, gayly dressed & mounted "banneries," fights, buffalo hunting &c. The other, the dark side, showing the filth, vermin, poverty, nakedness, suffering, starvation, superstition &c. *Both would be equally true—neither exaggerated, or distorted*; *both totally dissimilar!*[57]

However, Schimmel is quick to point out that it was not until the mid-1800s, when gold was discovered, that expansion into the western frontier exploded, resulting in increased conflicts, raiding, and massacres. As historian Jake Page explains in *In the Hands of the Great Spirit: The 20,000 Year History of American Indians*,

> The American West was turning out to be a big problem. Well before the Civil War erupted far to the east, the notion began to penetrate minds in Washington, D.C., that the old policy of moving Indians into territories west of the Mississippi was no longer functional. The West had its own Indians and the entire continent was now open to white settlers swarming westward…The so-called Indian problem was by no means solved.[58]

Page explains that, with the 1849 gold rush, some "forty thousand gold seekers arrived in San Francisco by ship, another forty thousand came by wagon from the East over the California Trail, and thousands of others straggled in."[59] Literally tagging right along with those white settlers were their diseases. The American Indians had yet to form immunities to those strange new infectious diseases such as smallpox, cholera, and measles. And as Page points out, there were a whole host of other "respiratory and venereal diseases" that killed the American Indians as "omnipresent stalkers."[60] Another author, Elliott West, paints an even more dire picture of the situation—a perfect storm of sorts—regarding the white settler's transmission of diseases:

> Immigrants moved along trails that could hardly have been better designed to transmit disease. Persons from across the nation and the Atlantic world converged in crowded, filthy bivouacs, then moved along restricted travel corridors, sharing the same water sources and camping in each other's waste and refuse. By an appalling coincidence, the great rush of 1849 coincided with a national epidemic of Asiatic cholera, a terrifying disease that kills by diarrhea dehydration and soaring fever. Perhaps five thousand overlanders died of cholera that year, but the toll among plains Indians was far worse. Entire bands of the Cheyennes disappeared in what the survivors called the Year of the Belly Ache.[61]

While much has been made of the claims that Americans had purposefully spread disease among the American Indians, West points out:

> There is no evidence to back up the recurring claims of germ warfare—not one credible case in the nation's history of whites intentionally passing smallpox to Indians. To the contrary, authorities frequently tried to prevent or stop epidemics…The first whites wanted to bring Indians into their orbit, to use and exploit them, not kill them.[62]

Physician and author, Larry Len Peterson, however, seems to contradict West. Peterson argues that, given the right conditions:

> Virus-containing skin scabs and desiccated droplets can remain viable for up to two years…There are very few recorded cases of direct orders occurring because officials probably avoided written documentation that could get them in trouble later…Millions of Native Americans died after the introduction of smallpox in the New World, and their civilizations were changed so dramatically that their populations have never recovered. More than war, more than broken promises and treaties, more than social Darwinism, or eugenics, smallpox has burned into the moral memory of generations of Indians a distrust in the white man that may never be forgotten.[63]

One, obscure, Montana stained-glass window, then, depicting a pioneer family ministering to a sick American Indian, reflects a rather complicated historical reality. The window, and its iconography, replaces pain and suffering with aesthetics and romance.

Romanticized iconography of the American frontier stories presents a rather distorted bucolic narrative while simultaneously reinforcing the myth. Images of the West, including covered wagons and American Indians, as art historian William Truettner explains, were reinterpreted to reflect how "artists built into their images of the expanding frontier a relentless optimism."[64] This art, however, did not necessarily capture history. Rather, as Truettner points out, it "created myth."[65] Myth, as religious studies' expert Bradley Onishi argues, then "becomes reality through ritual, when its story is dramatized and its adherents brought to collective participation in it."[66] As Onishi explains, "collective memory is not concerned with historical accuracy; its preoccupation with the past is based on a desire to mobilize a vision for the present and create a prospect for the future."[67] Collective memory, civil religion, and the romanticized version of the frontier, all worked in tandem to obscure the reality of the brutal activities that were mobilized by propaganda such as Manifest Destiny and the Dominion Mandate. As historian John Wilsey explains, "proponents of manifest destiny in the antebellum period commonly called on the dominion mandate to justify the taking of lands worked and used by Native Americans" equating "democracy with Christianity."[68] There was a fatal flaw to this argument, though, according to Wilsey. "Christianity," he explains, "does not affirm any inevitable order of advancement from human barbarism to perfection. Nor does Christianity affirm that any single nation-state will usher in some sort of utopia."[69] Advocates for Manifest Destiny, like O'Sullivan, according to Wilsey,

> appropriated only those aspects of Christianity that could be used to advance a nationalistic agenda. The result was an arbitrary civil religious system, a cherry-picked construction that ultimately militated against both Christianity and the Declaration of Independence.[70]

The idea of Manifest Destiny, nevertheless, was accepted by many and was effective in perpetuating expansionist rhetoric and prompting missions like those of Daniel Tuttle.

Like Tuttle, Marcus Whitman is memorialized in a stained-glass window in the *Temperance* section of the Heinz Memorial Chapel discussed in an earlier chapter, near the window depicting John Adams. While the Whitmans initially found the Cayuse to be friendly, according to Elliot West, the missionaries were eventually accused of purposefully introducing diseases and poison in a plot to kill the Indians.[71] The Cayuse thought the Whitmans were intent on eliminating them, taking their lands, and then stealing their horses. As West explains, the benevolence and medical assistance provided by the Whitmans, like the benevolence reflected in the Helena stained-glass windows, inadvertently escalated the suspicions of the Cayuse and "the situation snapped on November 29, 1847."[72] West describes a gruesome scene of almost apocalyptic proportions. Marcus Whitman was "tomahawked" and shot. His wife, Narcissa, along with a dozen other men, were also murdered. Many others were taken captive. "After lying around for two days," West explains, "the bodies were buried by a French-Canadian employee of the mission. Narcissa had been decapitated and, when the remains were exhumed in 1897, it was found that the heads of both husband and wife had been cut in half with the doctor's surgical saw."[73]

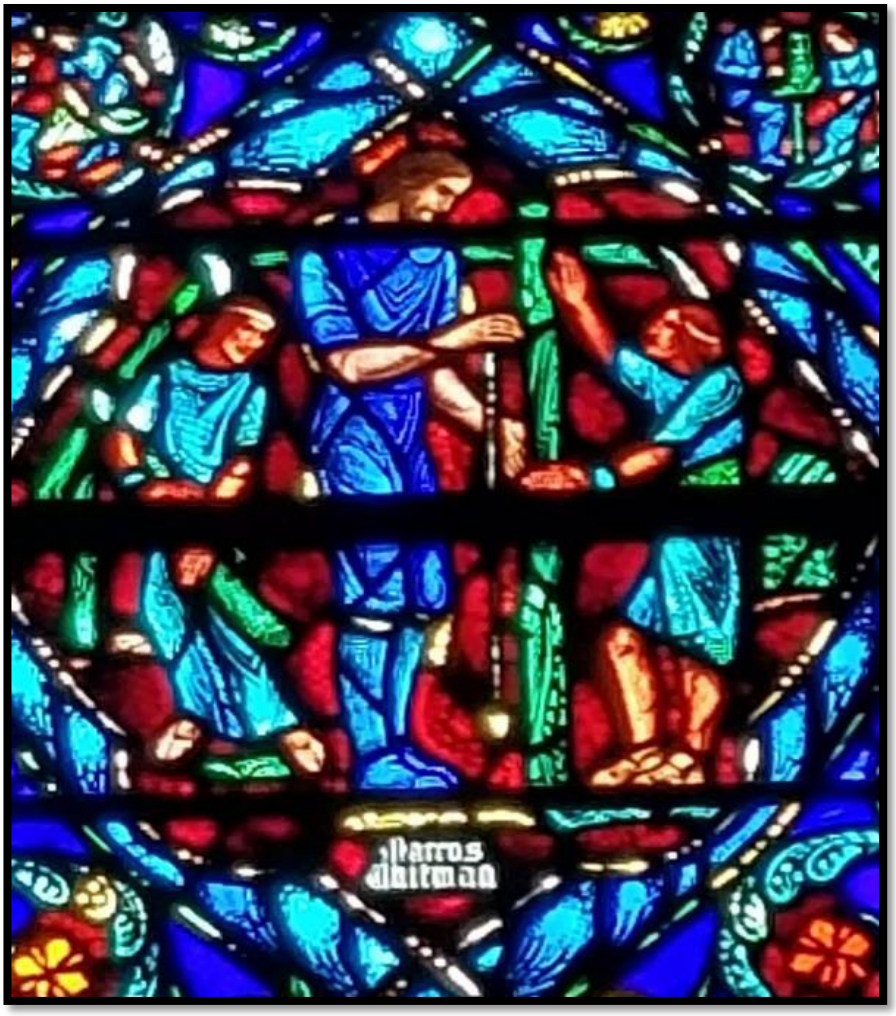


Figure 5.16. *Marcus Whitman Window*, Heinz Memorial Chapel, artist Charles Connick. Photograph reproduced by permission from Heinz Memorial Chapel.

The Heinz Memorial stained-glass window, like the Montana frontier windows, depict Whitman amicably working side-by-side with the Cayuse. The *Whitman Window* images seem disconnected from the brutal reality of the violence that took place. It is another artistic version of the frontier that has been reimagined. The window iconography joins the ranks of other western art that William Truettner argues has

> perpetuated the myth that the settling of the West was peaceful, when in reality it was bitterly contested every step of the way...capitalists in the East…rushed the process of expansion, abusing people and nature, contributing to an atmosphere of violence in the West that was the antithesis of what most images represent.[74]

Conclusion

Stained-glass window images like those depicted in the *Whitman* and *Tuttle* designs possess an impressive ability to communicate, contributing to American myth, symbol, and rituals with their romanticized iconography. By evaluating their images and narratives, we can appreciate how they blended secular agendas like Manifest Destiny with other religious or divine images. The stained-glass windows reflecting components of this ideology portrayed a romanticized and anesthetized version of the frontier experience that was both constructed and then framed in the civil-religion context for contemporary viewers.

While the claims of divine providence may have been "constructed," they were nevertheless embraced by both the clergy and the artists. Connick's artist's pallet fluidly combined metaphorical pigments of both the divine and the mundane. So subtly did he incorporate the expansionist rhetoric into the window iconography that it likely goes unappreciated by the less discriminating viewer. Yet, the politically charged rhetoric seems to easily transition into tradition as a type of quasi-religious culture that is thereby fully embraced and canonized by various religious actors. Scholars refer to this transformation of culture as sacralization.[75]

According to sociologist Francesca Montemaggi:

> Sacralization is the process whereby individual religious actors bestow value to ideas and practices and recognize them as [a] legitimate part of tradition. The sacred derives from this process and is that which religious actors consider of value and distinctive of their religious tradition. The sacred, therefore, is always constructed in reference to a specific religious culture.[76]

For example, Manifest Destiny was constructed as a political agenda that acquired a religious dimension. The religious actors in the sacralization process may have included political powerhouses like Adams and O'Sullivan, but they were followed by a whole host of other influential elite Episcopalians. In his article, "The Gospel of Wealth and the Gospel of Art: Episcopalians and Cultural Philanthropy from the Gilded Age to the Depression," historian Peter Williams provides an extensive list of influential Episcopalian laymen at the turn of the century, including Astor, DuPont, Firestone, Ford, Frick, Gardner, Mellon, Morgan, Procter, and Vanderbilt, to name a few.[77] Williams highlights that, when J. P. Morgan died in 1913, he was the richest man in the world. During his lifetime, Williams notes, Morgan was also one of the most "influential laymen in the Episcopal church."[78] As a youth, Morgan had even followed the proceedings of the Episcopalian national conventions and collected autographs of the bishops.[79] These wealthy elites were well aware of the changing cultural landscape of their day. As Williams explains, the flood of immigration at the turn of the century had "dramatically changed the character of life," and the wealthy elite were striving to reconstruct and revive a "knowledge of the values that had supposedly reigned when the nation had been a more ethnically and religiously homogeneous society."[80]

Williams also characterizes the Episcopal Church as "an institutional mediator of cultural transition" through "legitimizing the realm of the material in religious, moral,

and cultural life."[81] It was a transformation that blended "sturdy Protestant virtues of honor and service" with an "appreciation of beauty, all of which could be embodied in cultural institutions that, in their eyes at least, helped transfigure an otherwise crassly commercial urban culture."[82] It was also a transfiguration that resulted in a widening of the cultural gap and, therefore, elevating their social status. Historians Lawrence Levine and Lizabeth Cohen also refer to this sacralization process as a "redrawing of cultural categories so that what was once a shared public culture became the property of the most privileged and educated in American society."[83]

Ultimately, this sacralization of America's expansionist history and the romanticized art depicting the settlement of the West resulted in a construction of whitewashed narratives of the frontier. It is a glorified and anesthetized version of a conflict-ridden and tragic reality. Contemporary viewers appreciated this sacralized version of the frontier narrative, especially during the difficult decades of the 1930s and 1940s when the stained-glass windows were commissioned. The romanticized window images provided a shared sense of community to viewers during a period that Bellah would refer to as a "time of trial" for the country. Even today, the tiny red roses winking from their beds of sapphire blue glass in the frontier images afford insights into understanding how art became instrumental in advancing America's civil religion.

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CHAPTER SIX

WAR MEMORIALS

According to historian Juliette MacDonald, "War memorials and popular heroes are among the most effective and vigorous symbols of nationalism. They signify abstract ideals in a tangible form and can evoke a strong patriotic response."[1] In her article, "Myth and Meaning in the Stained Glass of the Scottish National War Memorial," MacDonald argues that war-memorial windows can instruct the present about the past through their imaginative fusion of folk heroes, biblical characters, and historical events.[2] They can also connect ideas of death and sacrifice, with those of valor and salvation. This included those on the defeated side. One example is that of the Confederate Army. A Southern Lost Cause variant of America's civil religion evolved that sacralized Confederate war-dead and elevated a righteous cause that, in their minds, was totally separate from issues of slavery. It was about their culture. American war-memorial windows, like those presented in this chapter, also reveal political and cultural sentiments regarding various historical narratives and myths that have been embraced by multiple branches of American civil religion.

The war-memorial windows presented in this chapter are actually not that different from other statues or three-dimensional war memorials displayed in public parks and centers. Like many of those monuments, dominant ideas about race that functioned hegemonically to encourage white Americans to unite, regardless of class difference, at the expense of people defined by dominant society as "others." To be sure, ideas about

democracy, liberty, patriotism, sacrifice, and freedom were embedded in these windows, but not for all Americans. Patriotic symbols and military emblems evoke a strong sense of white nationalism and sense of racialized communities. Their significance seems magnified when the images are portrayed within an ecclesiastical setting. Additionally, the windows reviewed in this chapter tend to employ ancestor worship while connecting themes of valor and honor with one's "ultimate sacrifice" for their country.

War-memorial windows from four different churches in New York, Montana, Virginia, and Washington, DC, are discussed. Each installation represents slightly different aspects regarding American civil religion and themes of liberty, freedom, democracy, military honor, and martyred leaders. The chapter also introduces the concept

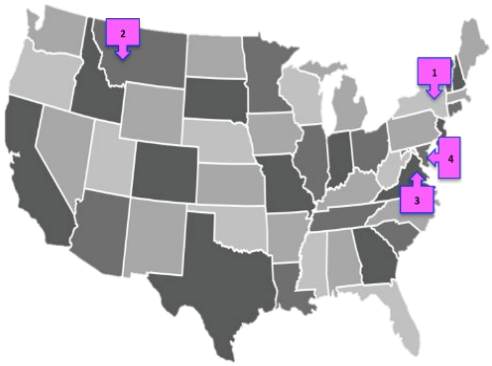


Figure 6.1. War Memorial Windows: 1. *The Liberty Window,* Amsterdam, NY; 2. *Ashworth Memorial Window,* Butte, MT; 3. *Robert E. Lee* and *Jefferson Davis Memorial Windows*, Richmond, VA; 4. *Freedom I Window*, Washington, DC.

of a Southern Lost Cause myth that is better understood as a particular denomination in the broader set of beliefs that constituted America's civil religion. The first window to be discussed is *The Liberty Window*, located in Amsterdam, New York. Next, the *Ashworth*

Memorial Window in Butte, Montana, is reviewed. This is followed by an evaluation of two different sets of Confederate war-memorial windows, the *Robert E. Lee* and *Jefferson Davis Memorial Windows* located in Richmond, Virginia. The final war-memorial window investigated is titled the *Freedom I Window* and is located in the National Cathedral in Washington, DC.

The *Liberty Window*

Stained-glass war-memorial windows not only commemorate images and ideas about the death and sacrifice of individuals, they promote belief systems of those in positions of power. They give visible form to key abstractions like liberty and democracy that entered into the explanatory systems and rationalizations for war. *The Liberty Window* in St. Mary's Catholic Church in Amsterdam, New York, is one such war memorial. The window is a comprehensive patriotic mural, rich with integrated and underlying political ideology. Its design deftly blends biblical characters like Moses and Christ with secular images such as marching soldiers and Founding Fathers. Images of watershed events, such as the signing of the Declaration of Independence, are embedded right alongside those of Jesus Christ and Moses. Images central to promoting America's civil religion are woven into an artistic narrative intended to give meaning to the violence of war.

The Liberty Window is enormous. It measures 15 feet tall and 9 feet wide, and was installed in St. Mary's in 1945. The Henry Keck Stained-glass Studio in Syracuse, New York, received the commission. The comprehensive design for the window was a collaborative effort between Keck Studio's chief designer, Stanly Elmore Worden (1905–1994) and Father Edward Walsh (1880–1964) of St. Mary's.[3] The window's theme, as its name implies, revolves around various concepts of liberty and freedom and the military defense of those ideals on a national scale. Its central inscription reads, "This Liberty Window is dedicated in memory of St. Mary's heroes that fought that the freedom of our country be forever preserved."

Images in *The Liberty Window* connect biblical stories to American civil religion. Marching soldiers, eagles, swords, and even guns are depicted along with familiar characters from both the Old and New Testaments. These include images representing God, Mary, and Moses. Art historian Cleota Reed's *Henry Keck Stained-glass Studio, 1913–1974* explains that it was Father Walsh of St. Mary's who played a major role in the eclectic composition. Walsh developed a close relationship with artist Stanley Worden of the studio. Due to this collaboration, Worden was able to craft the images based on the priest's adventurous imagination while still navigating the restrictions of the stained-glass craft. Their joint effort "created memorable results"[4] according to Reed, while emphasizing what she refers to as the "modernity of traditional worship, the broadness of Christianity's appeal, and its Old Testament roots."[5]

The Liberty Window thus became a memorial to the American military in general; especially to the men and women who fought in World War II. Father Walsh was keen to

emphasize the history of liberty; not just the victory of the allied forces.[6] Therefore, the window incorporates eight secular figures that Walsh considered to be "liberators." These figures, such as Joan of Arc, are scaled-down but depicted in the central row amongst the biblical figures of Mary and Moses. Mary's image is labeled "Queen of Peace" while Moses on the right is titled "Moses Liberator." Walsh felt his liberators were those who stood against tyranny or foreign domination, and he was keenly aware of blending this secular imagery with biblical references.[7] The upper third of the window program depicts the traditional Christian iconography found in many ecclesiastical stained-glass designs. It includes a depiction of an overseeing God along with angels. The bottom two thirds of the composition, on the other hand, depicts various watershed moments of democracy and liberty that, in the words of Father Walsh, invested his design with "a touch of sheer secular or profane significance."[8]

The large central biblical characters are by themselves notable and artistically depicted. However, what catches one's eye upon entering the sanctuary is the lower portion of the window that is at eye level. A prominent patriotic eagle hovers beneath the feet of Christ. It is an adapted version of the eagle from the Great Seal of the United States. Its wings are spread wide. In the talons on one side are thirteen arrows, representing the original 13 colonies, while in the other an olive branch, representing peace. Also in this section are two crossed swords to the left by the eagle's beak, balanced on the right with a "plowshare." This iconography suggests the hope for a peaceful future when swords will be turned into plowshares.[9] The eagle also hovers over the image of a lion lying next to that of a lamb; a biblical reference to Isaiah 65:25,

referring to the promise of a future time of world peace. Combined, the images give one pause to consider the cartoon-like flow of the images. It takes time to take it all in. According to Reed, this is what Walsh hoped would happen to the viewer. The priest felt the church was an ideal place for this type of comprehensive war memorial. Walsh believed the ecclesiastical setting prompted contemplation of the intended message rather than what might happen in a public space, where one would likely rush past in what he referred to as "vulgar indifference."[10] Indeed, one needs more than a quick drive-by to grasp the cast of characters, epic events, and stylized iconography that *The Liberty Window* presents. With that in mind, given the extensive cast of characters and symbols, the following table is provided as a guide and correlates to the window's key following the photograph of the memorial window.

#	Figure	Significance / Walsh Justification (from Cleota Reed)
1	God	Yahweh
2	Jesus	Blood Sacrifice – New Testament, "ascending figure of Christ"
3	Virgin Mary	"Queen of Peace"
4	Moses	"The Liberator"
5	Judith	"Contributor to the history of freedom"
6	Esther	"Contributor to the history of freedom"
7	Joan of Arc	"Contributor to the history of freedom"
8	St. Catherine of Siena	"Contributor to the history of freedom"
9	David	"Conquest of the Philistines"
10	St. George	"Removal of the English Dragon (symbolic Diocletian)"
11	Don Juan of Austria	"Victory at Lepanto; freedom from the Muslim hordes of Islam"
12	Christopher Columbus	"Freeing the early American settlers from barbaric paganism and leading them into the freedom and light of the children of the true God."

13	King George	Signing of the Magna Carta, "Traditionally the origin of the institution of liberty in the modern world."
14	Lamb of God	Blood Sacrifice – Old Testament
15	Thomas Jefferson	Signing of the Declaration of Independence, "Symbolic act that created an entire nation from the concept of liberty."
16	George Washington	Continental Army
17	"Marching Waves, Wacs, Nurses and Marines"	"A modern conception of the defense of liberty…"
18	Inscription	"This Liberty Window is dedicated in memory of St. Mary's heroes that fought that the freedom of our country be forever preserved."
19	Eagle of the United States	"…adapted from the Great Seal of the United States of America…it proclaims America as the home of liberty."
20	Lion & Lamb	Reference to the era of peace talked about in the book of Isaiah when "swords would be turned into ploughshares and the lion come to lie down with the lamb."
21	"Marching Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Fliers"	"A modern conception of the defense of liberty…"
22	Liberty Bell	Famous symbol of American Independence/Freedom

Table 2. Significance/Walsh Justification Table

As noted above, nearly twenty different symbolic and iconographical images are incorporated into *The Liberty Window* program. The window's narrative depicts familiar scenes portraying democracy, including the signing of the Magna Carta on the left complemented by the signing of the Declaration of Independence on the right. Visually, these political activities are sanctified by the upper portion of central characters drawn from the Bible.

Several of the window's inscriptions, when considered as a whole, add weight to the window's encasement of civil religion. In the middle of the window, a scrolling banner intertwines the panels and visually connects the three windows or lancets. The

inscription reads, “Where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty.” Below this banner are the Latin words, “Via veritas vita,” meaning “the way and the truth and the life.” “Agnus Dei” is also included, the Latin term for “Lamb of God,” which is inscribed over the image of praying soldiers who are balanced on the opposite side with a kneeling George Washington under the words “Dona Nobis Pacem” or “Give us peace.” As Cleota Reed points out, the larger scrolling inscription “not only divides the window into its sacred and secular parts but also acts as a unifying element, its style echoed in subsidiary inscriptions above and below.”[11]

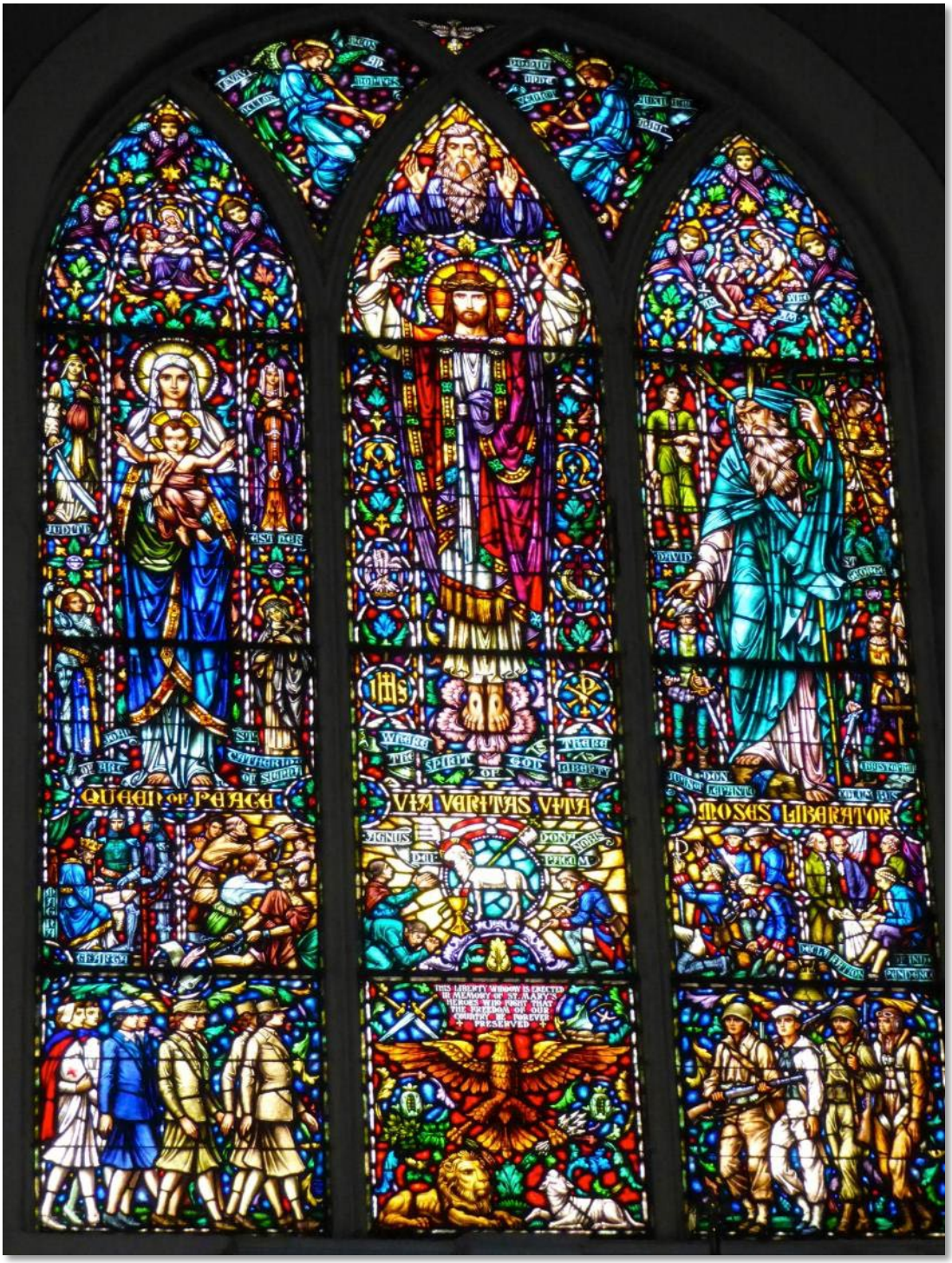


Figure 6.2. *The Liberty Window*, Stanley Worden (designer), Keck Studios, St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, Amsterdam, New York, 1945. Photograph by the author, 2015.

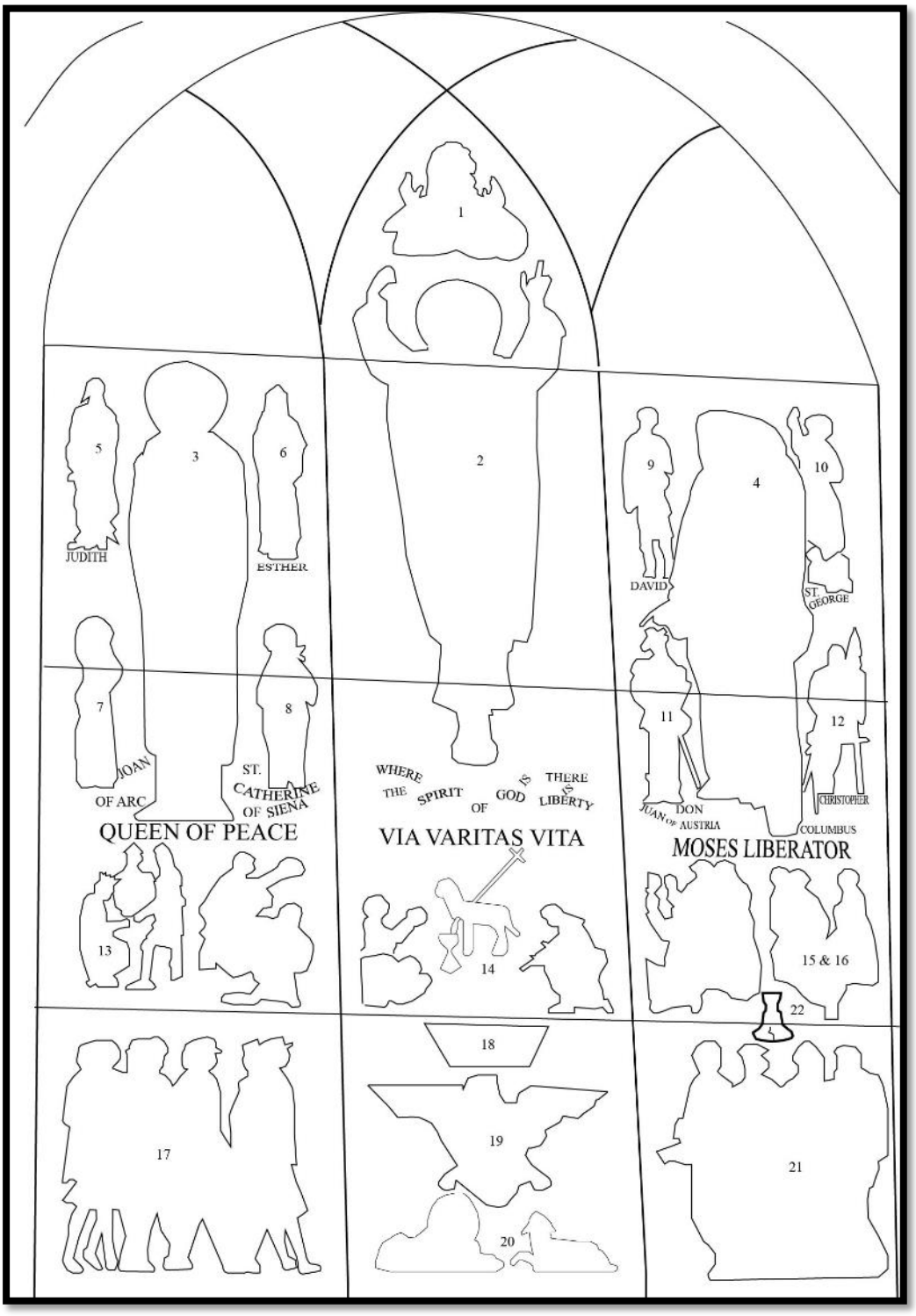


Figure 6.3. Key to *The Liberty Window*, see next page for legend.

#	Figure	Significance / Walsh Justification (from Cleota Reed)
1	God	Yahweh
2	Jesus	Blood Sacrifice – New Testament, "ascending figure of Christ"
3	Virgin Mary	"Queen of Peace"
4	Moses	"The Liberator"
5	Judith	"Contributor to the history of freedom"
6	Esther	"Contributor to the history of freedom"
7	Joan of Arc	"Contributor to the history of freedom"
8	St. Catherine of Siena	"Contributor to the history of freedom"
9	David	"Conquest of the Philistines"
10	St. George	"Removal of the English Dragon (symbolic Diocletian)"
11	Don Juan of Austria	"Victory at Lepanto; freedom from the Moslem hordes of Islam"
12	Christopher Columbus	"Freeing the early American settlers from barbaric paganism and leading them into the freedom and light of the children of the true God."
13	King George	Signing of the Magna Carta, "Traditionally the origin of the institution of liberty in the modern world."
14	Lamb of God	Blood Sacrifice – Old Testament
15	Thomas Jefferson	Signing of the Declaration of Independence, "Symbolic act that created an entire nation from the concept of liberty."
16	George Washington	Continental Army
17	"Marching Waves, Wacs, Nurses and Marines"	"A modern conception of the defense of liberty…"
18	Inscription	"This Liberty Window is dedicated in memory of St. Mary's heroes that fought that the freedom of our country be forever preserved."
19	Eagle of the United States	"…adapted from the Great Seal of the United States of America…it proclaims America as the home of liberty."
20	Lion & Lamb	Reference to the era of peace talked about in the book of Isaiah when "swords would be turned into ploughshares and the lion come to lie down with the lamb."
21	"Marching Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Fliers"	"A modern conception of the defense of liberty…"
22	Liberty Bell	Famous symbol of American Independence/Freedom

Table 3. Significance/Walsh Justification Table (2)

The Walsh and Worden collaboration connected quite a comprehensive list of both biblical and secular characters, incorporating tangible and intangible symbolism indicative of American civil religion. The window's iconography incorporates three key concepts associated with America's civil religion as identified by Bellah and other scholars such as Wilsey and Gardella. They include liberation (Moses "The Liberator"), peace (Mary the "Queen of Peace"), and freedom (Joan of Arc, "Contributor to the history of freedom"). Sacred national texts, such as the Declaration of Independence, are also included. Below these historical scenes are Continental Army soldiers, military women and nurses, the American eagle, and, finally, the marching men carrying rifles and parachutes. This depiction of various service men and women was quite intentional, according to Reed. Worden and Walsh wanted the window to depict the lives of everyday modern Americans from different walks of life, not just military heroes and leaders.

The social realism of the design, according to Reed, was influenced by mural paintings of the 1930s and 1940s.[12] She admits that, to some, the composition of *The Liberty Window* may be considered "simplistic and jingoistic."[13] Yet, it was the New Deal Works Progress Administration (WPA), a Depression-era work-relief program to employ artists, that had supported the visual arts in the decades prior to the collaboration of Walsh and Worden on *The Liberty Window*. WPA artists were charged with sticking to compositions that depicted the "American scene"[14] and their artwork was installed in many public spaces, such as libraries and post offices, all across the United States. Walsh and Worden were most likely exposed to many of those endeavors as many of the WPA commissions went to New York artists. With over 2,566 murals and 35,000 poster

designs by the WPA,[15] it is understandable that the design for *The Liberty Window* would likely have been influenced by these "American scene"-type mural designs.

It is important to note that, when the window was installed, there had been a near doubling of immigrants entering the country in the years prior to WWII.[16] There was yet another doubling of that number between 1951 and 1960. As significant as that might seem, it paled in comparison to the new arrivals to the United States at the start of the twentieth century. Close to 8.8 million immigrants came to America during the first decade alone.[17] Historian Michael Kammen speaks to the impact of these numbers and what that meant for American war memorials. He argues that how Americans honored their military dead may have had more to do with this immigration landscape during the first half of the twentieth century than simply honoring dead soldiers. He suggests that Americans used "ancestor worship" primarily to enhance the prestige of the living, more than to memorialize the dead. Ancestor worship was employed by the wealthy elite to marginalize or exclude those newly arrived immigrants whom, as he notes, were considered by many to be "less 'desirable' inhabitants."[18] Those in positions of power presumed the immigrants had no ancestors of note in their new country and would, therefore, be unfamiliar with many American ancestors. This unfamiliarity would in turn serve to stratify the different groups. As Kammen argues, this ancestor worship, therefore, served to make those wealthy patrons of society (typically those in power with ample resources to sponsor the memorials) feel more homogeneous and cohesive as a group.[19]

The iconography of *The Liberty Window*, with its religious rituals depicted throughout, including the kneeling and praying figures of soldiers in Continental Army uniforms, reinforced dominant themes of America's civil religion. The mural-like composition presents a compelling choreography of tangible and intangible patriotic and religious concepts advocating liberty, freedom, and peace. At the same time, that choreography provides a powerful underpinning of political initiatives that endorse the use of war as a means to protect those democratic values and assure the survivors that the loss of life was necessary and honorable. It is no coincidence that those same values of liberty, freedom, and peace are also central to the main ideology of American civil religion—an ideology that became increasingly central to American culture with the dawn of the Cold War.

The *Ashworth Memorial Window* in Butte, Montana

In many ways, the next war-memorial window parallels the symbolism of *The Liberty Window* but on a smaller, more compact scale. The *Ashworth Memorial Window* in Butte, Montana, also uses extensive patriotic symbols and military emblems. It commemorates the death of Thomas Ashworth, Jr., who was the son of the rector of St. John's at that time. The young Ashworth was a navy aviator who died in the line of duty during World War II. "Ash," as many called him, crashed in the Pacific Ocean while trying to land on an aircraft carrier on October 21, 1941. The J. & R. Lamb Studios of New York designed and crafted the *Ashworth Memorial Window*. Established in 1857, the J. & R. Lamb Studios is one of the oldest continuously operating stained-glass studios

in the United States. As a result, many of their studio documents have been archived and preserved. An original sketch, or cartoon, for the *Ashworth Memorial Window*, along with a watercolor "proposal" has been archived and is now part of the digitized documents in the Library of Congress. This is fortuitous as St. John's leaders were not able to provide original documentation regarding their stained-glass windows. The archived cartoon by the J. & R. Lamb studio was very detailed and provided key information regarding the symbolism used for the window.

Flight is the main theme depicted in the iconography used in the *Ashworth* window. This is accomplished by depicting wings, doves, angels, and even flying fish. The top portion of the window begins with a crowning eight-pointed star, and directly below the star is an image of an illuminated dove. According to the Lamb studio archives, the Dove of the Spirit is presented on The Great Cross of Light beneath the eight-pointed star.[20] Below this image is the Rainbow of Promise that arches over the insignia of Naval Aviation Wings. This winged-symbol appears to take the form of an eagle, but upon closer inspection is instead a shield of stars and stripes fronting a ship's anchor with a set of extended wings in the background.

The main figure of the memorial window is an angel, also with its wings spread wide. The artist has labeled this image a Winged Figure of Aspiration for Sacrifice. This angelic character has its arms raised, palms up, and is gazing toward heaven. Two additional aviator-related symbols are also depicted beneath the upraised arms. Beneath the angel's right arm is a V-formation of military planes, and under the left arm is a cloud symbol.[21] The military iconography seems to reinforce the central symbol of the Great

Seal of the United States and the two inscriptions noted below. The top inscription above the eagle's head reads, "E Pluribus Unum" (out of many, one—the motto of the US). Then, "They Shall Mount up with Wings as Eagles" from Isaiah 40:31 (Authorized KJV) is inscribed below. The Great Seal's olive branch and thirteen arrows are depicted in the talons of the eagle (similar to those depicted in *The Liberty Window* mentioned earlier). This patriotic collage-like image shares the central focal point with the angel above. What is less obvious is the inclusion of a symbol for rain. The Lamb studio artist simply notes, Indian rain symbol.[22] One has to wonder if this was a subtle acknowledgement of the artist regarding the fact that the window was headed to a church in Montana. Either way, the symbol appears at eye level with the Great Seal and is balanced on the righthand side of the window with a related weather symbol depicting lightening.

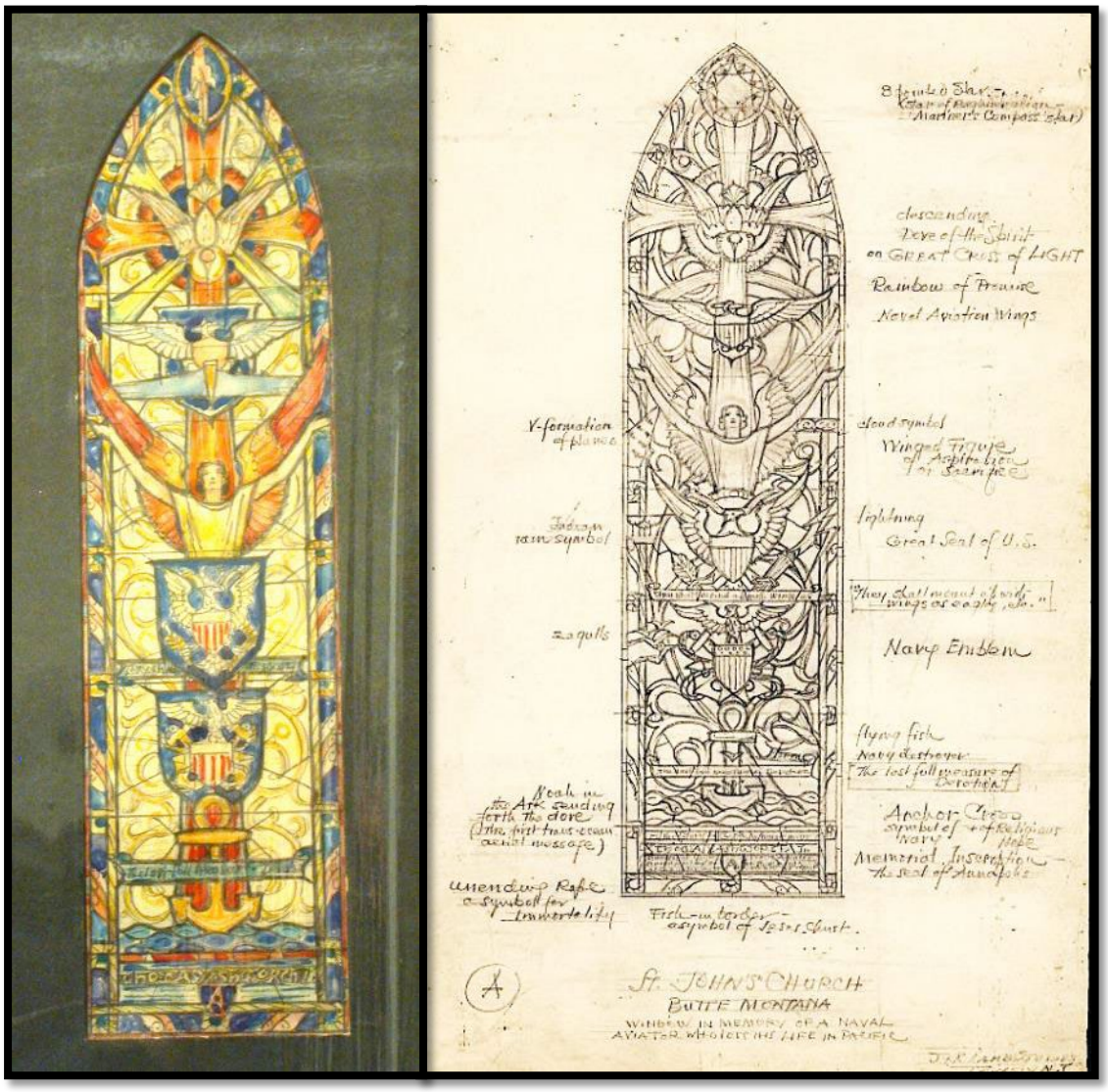


Figure 6.4. J. & R. Lamb Studio, artist watercolor (by Katherine Lamb Tait) and pencil drawing of *Ashworth Memorial Window*, St. John's Episcopal Church, Butte, Montana. Library of Congress, undated.

While the artist's rendering does not provide further information as to the inclusion of these weather symbols, their connection to aviation is apparent. If the window is "read" from the bottom up, Ashworth's death and his "ultimate" sacrifice for his country appears to lead to a better place illuminated by stars. If read from the top

down, the star and winged dove direct the eye to the Winged Figure of Aspiration for Sacrifice, implying military valor. Either way, the use of winged figures and emblematic eagles, seagulls, and flying fish contribute to the perception of flight, salvation, and an afterlife in heaven. Taken as a whole, the window seems to present not only military valor but biblical renewal as well—some form of resurrection and better life for the dead soldier being memorialized.

The design fluidly transitions the viewer's gaze from the religious to the patriotic and back. Repetition of patriotic colors is also utilized. In this way, American civil religion is woven into the fabric of the window. Beneath the patriotic red, white, and blue of the Great Seal of the United States is the insignia of the U.S. Navy. Like the Great Seal, the Navy emblem contains a bald eagle with open wings, this time standing on a shield, again with thirteen stars and stripes in red, white, and blue. The Navy insignia includes swords, twining rope, and a large ship anchor, rather than the olive branch and arrows found in the Great Seal. Flanking the Navy emblem are flying seagulls and swirling waves.

It is clear this composition is meant to imply hope. The stars and stripes and military insignia throughout the window, combined with the upper cross and dove, make a bold statement regarding Christian belief and hope. This theme is also subtly endorsed by the presence of Noah's ark in the lower section of the window. The Lamb Studio artist used the symbol of an Anchor Cross, and inserted a depiction that includes Noah's Ark. Noah appears on the deck sending forth a tiny dove. In the pencil drawing for this portion of the window, the artist notes, "the first trans-ocean aerial message." This imagery

connects Noah's ocean voyage with modern-day Naval operations and transatlantic communication. The drawing also reveals that the artist intentionally blended the sacred with the secular, noting that the Anchor Cross represents symbolism blending the "Navy" with "religious hope."[23]

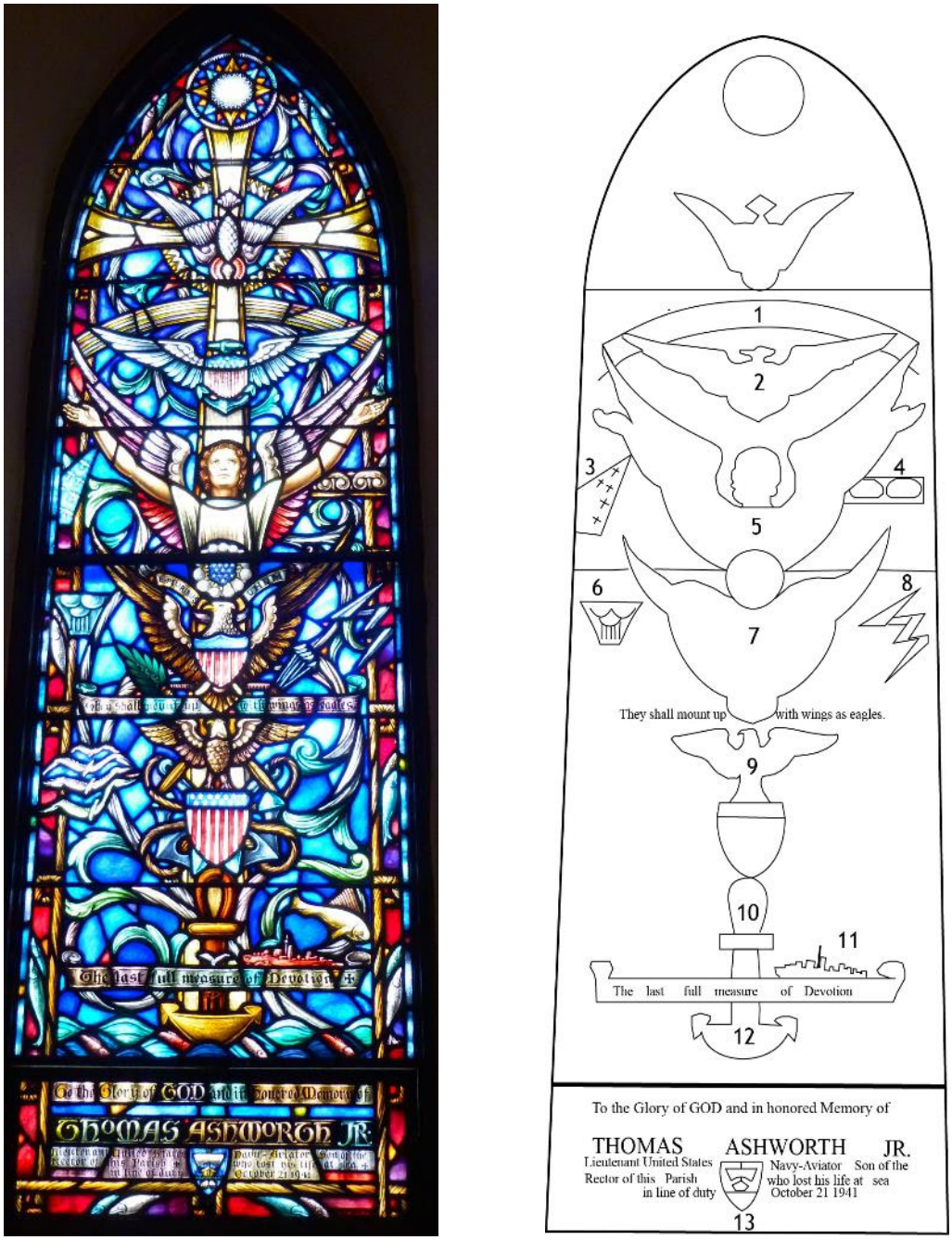


Figure 6.5. *Ashworth Memorial Window*, J. & R. Lamb Studios, St. John's Episcopal Church, Butte, Montana. Photograph by the author, August, 2018. Key: 1. Rainbow of Promise; 2. Naval Aviation Wings; 3. V-Formation of Planes; 4. Clouds; 5. Winged Figure of Aspiration for Sacrifice; 6. Indian Rain Symbol; 7. Great Seal of the United States; 8. Lightening; 9. Navy Emblem; 10. Anchor Cross; 11. Navy Destroyer; 12. Noah and Dove; 13. Memorial Inscription/Seal of Annapolis.

The lower portion of the window contains a Navy destroyer to the right of the Anchor cross. The inscription directly beneath the destroyer reads, “The last full measure of Devotion.” This inscription evokes Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address and implies that sacrificing one’s life for their country is the highest honor one can achieve. In both color and images, then, the *Ashworth Memorial Window* links patriotism to a belief that there is indeed hope for one’s heavenly life after death. It suggests that the religious and military endeavors of the country coexist and are entwined, shielding the nation from external threats during the years following World War II.

As the Lamb Studio artist clearly documents in his cartoon, this amalgamation of secular and religious imagery is continued even in the border that frames the window. More red and blue glass is utilized to portray an unending rope twining around the window’s frame. The unending rope (a symbol of immortality) also winds around more fish (the Christian symbol of Jesus Christ). Finally, at the bottom of the window, an inscription commemorates the birth and death of Lieutenant Ashworth, Jr., “son of the Rector of this Parish, who lost his life at sea in the line of duty, October 21, 1941.” Ashworth was only 33 years old.

The Cathedral of the Confederacy

Robert Bellah argues that the Civil War was a pivotal moment for American civil religion. He maintains that it was a time of testing for the country, specifically regarding slavery. But what about the American South? How could it be reintegrated into the framework of a national civil religion after its defeat in the Civil War? The answer lay in the myth of the Lost Cause.

Historian Charles Wilson provides keen insight into this set of Southern beliefs that emerged after the war. In *The Religion of the Lost Cause: Ritual and Organization of the Southern Civil Religion, 1865–1920*, Wilson explains that the majority of the Lost Cause rituals and traditions originated from an overwhelming psychological need felt by Southerners to "reaffirm their identity" after their defeat in the Civil War. Wilson further argues that this identity came to have "outright religious dimensions."[24] Each Lost Cause Southern ritual became manifest in their efforts to make a "religion out of their history," thereby giving sway to their belief that they were justified in their actions. One effective route was to sanctify the military valor of their ancestors' actions, thus justifying their participation in what they considered to be a worthy cause to preserve states' rights.[25] This Lost Cause is a prime example of how memorials can symbolically link political activities through their images and inscriptions with a religious sacralization. The two sets of memorial windows discussed in this section reflect this linkage. They contributed to the whitewashing of an oppressive and offensive proslavery culture. At their core, these Confederate memorials are not benign historical memorials or commemorations to lost loved ones. They are artistic endeavors to veil the racist political sentiments they embody, and they do so shamelessly, cloaked with religious sentiments.

One church in particular stands out regarding these types of stained-glass memorials. It is located in Richmond, Virginia, the city that was formerly the capital of the Confederacy. St. Paul's Episcopal Church in downtown Richmond had attracted an unusually high-profile group of Confederate worshipers during the Civil War. Prominent Confederate generals often occupied the pews in St. Paul's. These included such notables

as Robert E. Lee. Lee's Richmond home was within walking distance of St. Paul's[26] Jefferson Davis, the president of the Confederacy, also worshiped at St. Paul's. Both men and their families paid a "subscription" for dedicated pews in the church (a practice that was common during the nineteenth century).

On one Sunday in March of 1864, fourteen prominent Confederate generals attended the services at St. Paul's.[27] It was also during one of St. Paul's Sunday services in April, 1865, that Jefferson Davis received the message that General Lee could no longer hold the lines at Petersburg and that Richmond would soon fall.[28] This message prompted the simultaneous evacuation of the Confederate government from Richmond. Because of this history, along with the Confederate memorials and plaques peppering St. Paul's sanctuary, the church has often been referred to as the Cathedral of the Confederacy. Large, memorial stained-glass windows dedicated to notable confederates like Lee and Davis, among others, also add to this reputation.

With Lee's death in 1870, memorialization of the Confederate dead took on new steam. Twenty-five years after the evacuation of Richmond, Lee's death prompted two sisters, Lucy and Annie Stewart from St. Paul's, to commission the stained-glass windows commemorating Robert E. Lee. The windows were installed in 1892 directly across from the pew that Lee occupied during the war.[29] The *Robert E. Lee Memorial Windows* were designed and crafted by stained-glass artist Henry Holiday (1839–1927). Both windows were installed on the eastern wall of the church; one on the lower level, the other directly above it on the second level.

As one enters the sanctuary, all of the windows of St. Paul's are eye catching, even today. The contrast of the cool white marble floors and walls, white columns and a high white ceiling all seem to frame and set off the long vertical banks of brilliantly hued stained glass that line the outer walls. The effect of the vivid colors and sparkling glass is more dramatic than typically found in somber dark cathedrals. The additional effect of the trees directly outside and behind the windows of St. Paul's adds an animating effect to the images. As the light passes through the glass, billowing folds of robed angels and other individuals seem to come to life. The fluttering tree leaves literally seem to animate the characters and even the feathered wings of the angels. It is a striking aspect of the window program and is unique to St. Paul's given the church's location and stark white interior design.

The *Robert E. Lee Memorial Windows* benefit from this animation. They are located directly adjacent to pew #111, a pew that still bears the brass nameplate with Lee's name etched on it. The lower Lee window uses the story of Moses to memorialize Lee and commemorates his birth. The window depicts a younger image of Moses, whereas the upper window shows an older version of Moses and commemorates his death. Both windows are accessible and can be viewed up close and at eye level. The lower window's inscription reads: "By faith Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's Daughter choosing rather to suffer affliction with the Children of God for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. In grateful memory of Robert Edward Lee born January 19, 1807."

According to historian Calder Loth, in *Windows of Grace, A Tribute of Love: The Memorial Windows of St. Paul's Episcopal Church*, artist Henry Holiday traveled to Richmond to meet with the Stewart sisters and to investigate Lee's life and character. Holiday learned that Lee had initially been offered the command of the Union forces, but subsequently refused. Instead, Lee aligned his military efforts with his native Virginians and chose to lead the Confederate army. Holiday, therefore, chose to relate and depict Lee's decision by utilizing the biblical story concerning a similar decision made by Moses regarding the Egyptians. The daughter of Pharaoh had adopted and raised Moses, preparing him to one day be an Egyptian leader. However, Moses was conflicted watching the treatment of the enslaved Israelites, as found in Exodus 2:11–15 (Authorized KJV).

Holiday used this familiar biblical story for the *Robert E. Lee Memorial Window.* He depicted Moses as a young man turning in dissatisfaction to leave the house of Pharaoh. Like Lee's refusal to lead the northern military, Moses, too, is shown rejecting the advantageous position regarding Pharaoh, his high office, and his wealth. The window depicts Moses throwing down his staff or "wand of office." This action implies the decision by Moses to align himself with the afflicted and enslaved Israelites. It was a choice reflecting his loyalty to his birthright rather than staying with the Egyptians and a life of comfort that he had come to know as the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter.[30]

The inscription at the bottom of the window clearly indicates that the window is a memorial to Robert E. Lee. Even though Moses is depicted in Egyptian clothes and is standing on the steps of the Egyptian court, the connection to the decisions made by both

Lee and Moses are clear. St. Paul's location and reputation also contribute to the significance of the commemorative windows. This context is important regarding the window's representation of Lee as a deified character in the Southern Lost Cause. It is also noteworthy that the Israelite slaves are not depicted in the window. Initially, Holiday contemplated including them in the design. However, as historian Dana Cline points out, the portrayal of Jewish slaves working under Pharaoh was too controversial and the vestry of St. Paul's demurred.[31] Perhaps church leaders were not quite ready to engage the issue of slavery. Indeed, in an artful way, the window suggests that Lee/Moses is leading the chosen people (in this case white Southerners) to a promised land of white supremacy. As Cline argues, the combining of political and religious visualizations in the *Robert E. Lee Memorial Window* embodies a "Southern civil religion of the Lost Cause."[32]

Holiday's second memorial window to Robert E. Lee is located on the upper level. It, too, is connected to Moses, but this depiction is of a much older Moses. He is

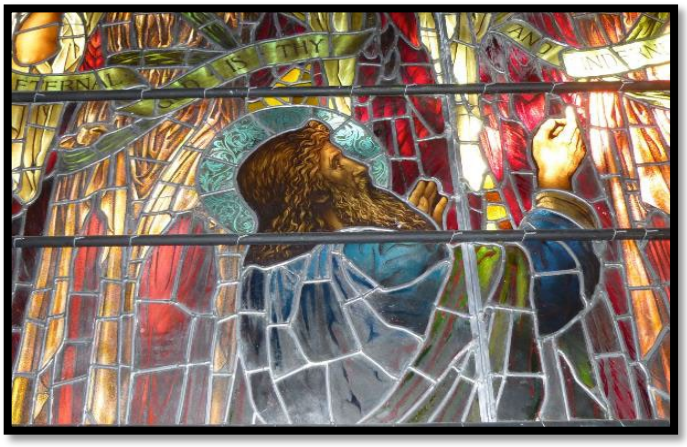


Figure 6.6. Detail of upper *Robert E. Lee Memorial Window*, artist Henry Holiday, 1892. Photograph by the author, October 2017.

portrayed kneeling on Mount Nebo looking up into heaven. Again, the connection of Lee to Moses and of both individuals being physically and metaphorically closer to heaven in the upper window design is unmistakable. Like Lee toward the end of the Civil War, Moses is fully bearded. He is also draped in a green robe. As Calder Loth explains, the green may be intentional as it has historically been used as a symbol for "victory" and to the "hope for immortality."[33] The inscription below the upper window reads, "In grateful memory of Robert Edward Lee Died October 12th 1870."



Figure 6.7. *Jefferson Davis Memorial Window* (upper), St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Tiffany Studios, 1898. Photograph by the author, October, 2017.

Directly across the aisle from the *Robert E. Lee Memorial Windows* in St. Paul's are two comparable *Jefferson Davis Memorial Windows*. Louis Comfort Tiffany designed

the Davis windows in 1898,[34] and the commission was financed by general subscriptions and donations.[35] Like the Lee windows, the lower Davis window also portrays a biblical story. This time, Tiffany artist Frederic Wilson used the story of Paul pleading his case before Agrippa. Paul's story was utilized to convey how many Southerners felt Jefferson Davis was mistreated after the war. For example, in the biblical story, Paul was imprisoned for two years; as was Jefferson Davis. In Paul's case, a newly appointed procurator, Pontius Festus, had determined that there were insufficient grounds to keep Paul as a prisoner. Consequently, when Herod Agrippa learned about this injustice, he asked that Paul be brought before him. The *Jefferson Davis Memorial Window* portrays this scene of Paul pleading his case and informing the court as referenced in Acts 25–26 (Authorized KJV), that he is innocent.

In the 1890s, when the window was commissioned, many Southerners agreed that Jefferson Davis was innocent. They considered his two-year incarceration to be too long and a cruel punishment for following his convictions about states' rights. The inscription for the Davis window simply reads: "This Man Doth Nothing Worthy of Death or Bonds" Acts 26:31 (Authorized KJV).

Similar to the adjacent Lee windows, the set of *Jefferson Davis Memorial Windows* have a lower and an upper window. The *Upper Jefferson Davis Memorial Window* is more allegorical and simply depicts two angels. It is the inscription that again reflects the sentiment of the Southern Lost Cause. It reads, "Let Me Be Weighed In An Even Balance That God May Know Mine Integrity" Job 31:6 (Authorized KJV). According to Calder Loth, the upper Davis window was to lend "spiritual sanction to the

scene below [the lower Davis window]."[36] Loth argues the windows conveyed contemporary attitudes of the time and that Davis was considered to be a man of "noble fiber, who led his people in a virtuous cause against invaders."[37]

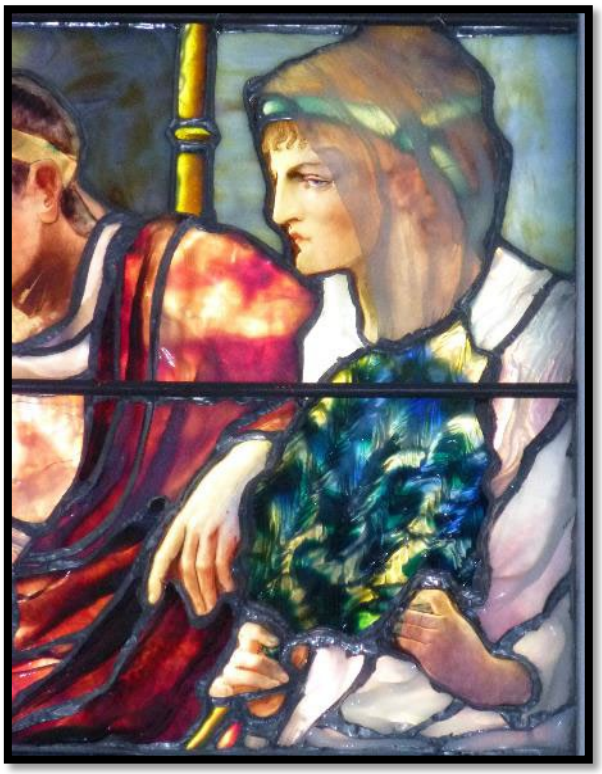


Figure 6.8. *Jefferson Davis Memorial Window* (Lower-detail), St. Paul's Cathedral, Louis Comfort Tiffany artist, 1898. Photograph by the author, October, 2017.

The artistry of the Davis memorial windows in St. Paul's is noteworthy. The studio of Louis Comfort Tiffany was known for its work with opalescent glass and for using this taffy-like textured glass to depict deep folds in clothing such as in robes and drapery. The studio was also known for constructing stained-glass windows using a technique called plating. Plating is a time-consuming technique where multiple layers of

stained glass are in essence sandwiched together. This gives a piece an almost three-dimensional perspective and depth. It also adds dramatically to the expense and value of a window. The amount of plating and hand-blown opalescent drapery glass in the lower Davis window, in particular, is noteworthy. The techniques are used extensively and to good effect. The quality and amount of deeply folded hand-blown opalescent glass is impressive. For example, in the design of the lower Davis window, Paul stands before Herod Agrippa and his sister Bernice.[38] Bernice is wearing a veil depicted with a second layer of thin glass plated over the side of her face. In other parts of the window, the scribe in the foreground holds a scroll, his robe is constructed with deeply folded ribbon glass that adds a sheen and depth to the entire window composition, a luster that Tiffany incorporated into other pieces of art as well. These attributes give the window a rich quality with an almost sculptural element to them. Nevertheless, the iconography of the memorial windows reflects a "text" that goes deeper than the art—one that reveals the myth of the Southern Lost Cause civil religion that deifies both Davis and Lee. To many, this Southern civil religion embraced the view that both Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis were innocent participants in the war, both disconnected from the issues of slavery and treasonous activities.

Lee and Davis are not the only Confederates memorialized in St. Paul's. Stained-glass windows commemorating other Confederate soldiers include:

- William H. Macfarland, (1799–1872), Virginia lieutenant governor and member of the 1861 Virginia Convention ratifying secession from the Union.

- John Brockenbrough Newton (1839–1897), Confederate surgeon who became an ordained minister.
- Charles Macgill, M.D. (1806–1881), military surgeon throughout the war.
- Richard L. Maury, (1840–1907), Civil War colonel of the 24th Virginia Regiment.[39]

St. Paul's Civil War memorials also include many other commemorative plaques to Confederates. They, too, represent various aspects of this Southern Lost Cause civil religion. More than the windows, these plaques depict Confederate iconography such as the "stars and bars" and the Confederate battle flag. The memorials expose a deeper cultural identity that held sway before, during, and after the Civil War. This fusion of religion and political rhetoric incorporated common myths and rituals that ultimately added force to their collective narrative in an effort to sustain their ideology regarding white supremacy—a belief system many white Northerners also shared. By sacralizing their past and their war dead, and specifically memorializing Lee and Davis, the windows suggested a panoply of heroes who could be incorporated into the cultural reconstruction of America after the Civil War.

The use of an ecclesiastical setting to cement these bonds was not new to the country after all. Manifest Destiny and American Exceptionalism, discussed earlier, are just two examples. To this end, Charles Wilson argues that the Lost Cause leaned heavily on the Christian faith, thus "tying churches and culture close together."[40] Historian Michael Kammen also reminds us that patriotism, hero worship, and religious services on American holidays have been closely linked for quite some time. Many different classes

of people embraced these traditions. Moreover, Kammen asserts, up until rather recently, it remained customary for families to go to church even on Thanksgiving morning.[41]

The Lost Cause myth served to enhance the white supremacist basis of America's civil religion as it developed after the Civil War. As Wilson argues, Southerners turned Lee, Davis, and other Civil War figures into religious saints and martyrs. To his credit, Wilson is one of the few historians who have linked Southern stained-glass Confederate memorials to civil religion, including those dedicated by a wartime congregation at St. Paul's.[42]

Wilson also describes how Southerners developed their own set of sacred artifacts: the Bible used to swear in Jefferson Davis, Southern hymns, commemorative days such as Confederate Memorial Day, symbols such as the confederate flag, and rituals such as dedicating Confederate monuments.[43] In a similar fashion relative to American civil religion, the Lost Cause employed ancestor worship. However, the Lost Cause had to confront what Wilson refers to as the "precariousness and instability of collective life" that began from a very different starting point than American civil religion. Furthermore, rather than focusing on the American nation as American civil religion does, the Southern Lost Cause civil religion focused on their Southern heroes, specific Southern rituals, and an honoring of their Southern Confederate leaders and soldiers that emerged from the Civil War. Nevertheless, they, too, attempted to sacralize their history, reformat the narrative, and use myth to make a revised version of history that was more palatable to the survivors. As Wilson contends, this Lost Cause became more of a "cult of the dead" who had fought in what they considered to be a "holy war,"

that was actually an attempt to "overcome their existential worries and to live with their tragic sense of life."[44]

Tragedy seems to go hand in hand with times of American civil-religion revivals. Civil religion becomes more apparent when Americans have had to deal with various tragedies, not only during the Civil War, but during Reconstruction as well. The sacrifice of American soldiers seems to have necessitated the political use of civil religion to either rally the troops or to justify the "last full measure of devotion" for American liberty and freedom. As discussed in the next section, the final war-memorial window centers on the patriotic theme of freedom. The window commemorates the value of democracy, emancipation, freedom from religious tyranny, military courage, and the ultimate victory and goal of good over evil.

The Sacralization of Freedom: *Freedom I Window*, Washington National Cathedral

The *Freedom I Window* in the Washington National Cathedral can be found within the smaller War Memorial Chapel, set off to the south side of the main cathedral. The window was designed by artist Joseph G. Reynolds, Jr. and was installed in 1953. As the name of the chapel implies, the windows contained in this space, including *Freedom I*, honor American military forces, as well as the sacrifices made for the sake of that freedom. According to Crimi and Ney, the images are intended to represent Christian and historic events connected to struggles for freedom while also "symbolically emphasizing their significance and relevance to the present day."[45]

At the top of the *Freedom I Window*, a ringing Liberty Bell begins the patriotic theme of the window's images below. The Liberty Bell is considered one of the sacred relics of American civil religion.[46] Each year, more than three million visitors stand in line and pass through various security checks to see the cracked bell that hung over the room where the Declaration of Independence was signed.[47] It is considered an American relic that has a near-religious element to it, according to Peter Gardella. He argues that the bell invites a sort of "personal confrontation" for Americans making their pilgrimage to Philadelphia.[48] That is likely because, typically, religious relics evoke an emotional response and often some sort of introspection on behalf of the viewer. Historically, sacred relics have usually represented an apparent holy remnant from a martyred saint, and they were housed in medieval cathedrals. These objects included such items as pieces of sacred robes allegedly worn by biblical characters, or in the case of St. Chappell's and Notre Dame in Paris, a representation of the crown of thorns worn by Christ at his crucifixion. Pilgrimages to view these artifacts were thought to elicit different types of spiritual experiences compared to simply visiting a historical site, building, or national park. It would stand to reason then, that the Liberty Bell represents a well-known American relic with an emotional history. In fact, according to Americanist Gary Nash in his book *The Liberty Bell*, the bell is America's greatest historical icon and has become a semisacred object.[49] As a famous patriotic relic, the bell elicits a sense of nationalistic devotion. It has been kissed by millions while traveling across the United States seven times.[50] The Liberty Bell connects viewers to the origins of America and its struggles while simultaneously evoking strong nationalistic sentiments. Even today, millions

continue to make the pilgrimage to Philadelphia to see the cracked bell. To many, even those in other countries, it represents a symbol of freedom and is a key artifact on par with the Declaration of Independence. The Liberty Bell continues to link modern viewers to historical events that led up to American liberty and freedom, and the sacrifices that were made for those rights, even if those rights were often denied to many and not equally shared by others.

As a potent relic of American civil religion, the Liberty Bell has been utilized by window designers to connect abstract concepts of freedom and liberty with the mythical components associated with history. The placement of the Liberty Bell atop the *Freedom I Window*, therefore, was likely done to convey a shared (even if mythical) experience regarding the attainment of that freedom, independence, and democracy, as well as utilized as a reminder of the country's ongoing struggles that have been deployed to maintain that liberty and freedom for its citizens.[51]

While the window in the National Cathedral is titled *Freedom I*, the various panels represent different efforts, and often struggles, encountered by individuals and groups, both in biblical times and in American history. Two key characters stand out in the window's design. The largest is George Washington on the righthand side. Washington is depicted in his military uniform holding a sword with a large battle flag flying in the background. He connects the viewer to the War of Independence and the implied freedom that was won from the tyranny of England, the church, and religious persecution.

The second key is Abraham Lincoln. He is depicted in a somewhat smaller panel on the lefthand side. The inscription in this part of the panel reads “Emancipation,” linking Lincoln to the Civil War and the freedom of slaves. But Lincoln stands in proximity to biblical characters such as St. Michael (and of course Moses), along with the Marines at Iwo Jima. This cast of characters is balanced on the righthand side beginning with images (from top to bottom) of Martin Luther, George Washington, Paul Revere, and then ends with a final panel depicting paratroopers jumping from the sky. As busy as it may seem, the window’s narrative provides an apt coda for understanding the relationship between stained-glass windows and America’s civil religion.

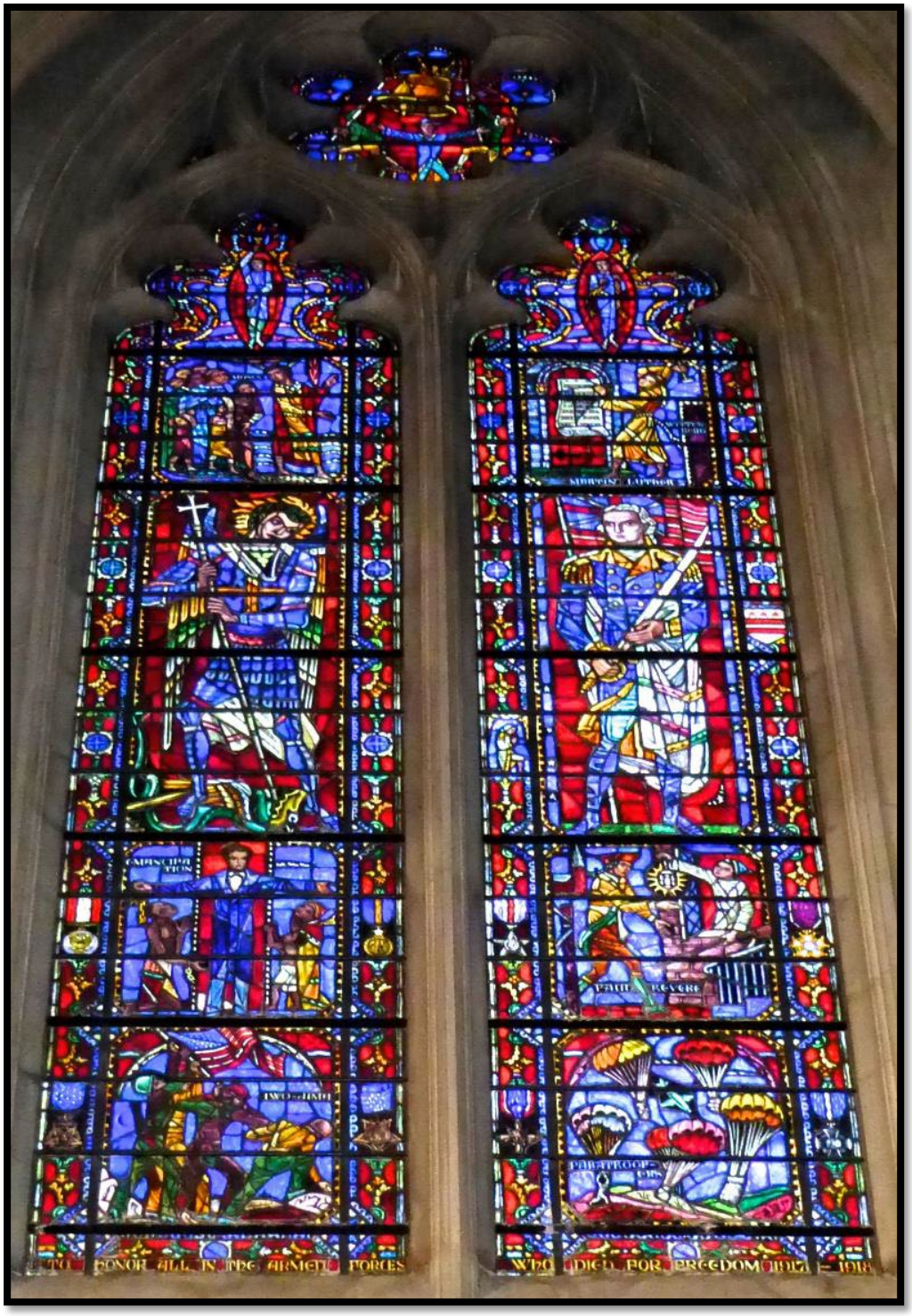


Figure 6.9. The *Freedom I Window*, Artist Joseph G. Reynolds, Jr., Washington National Cathedral, Washington, DC, 1953. Photograph by the author, October, 2017.

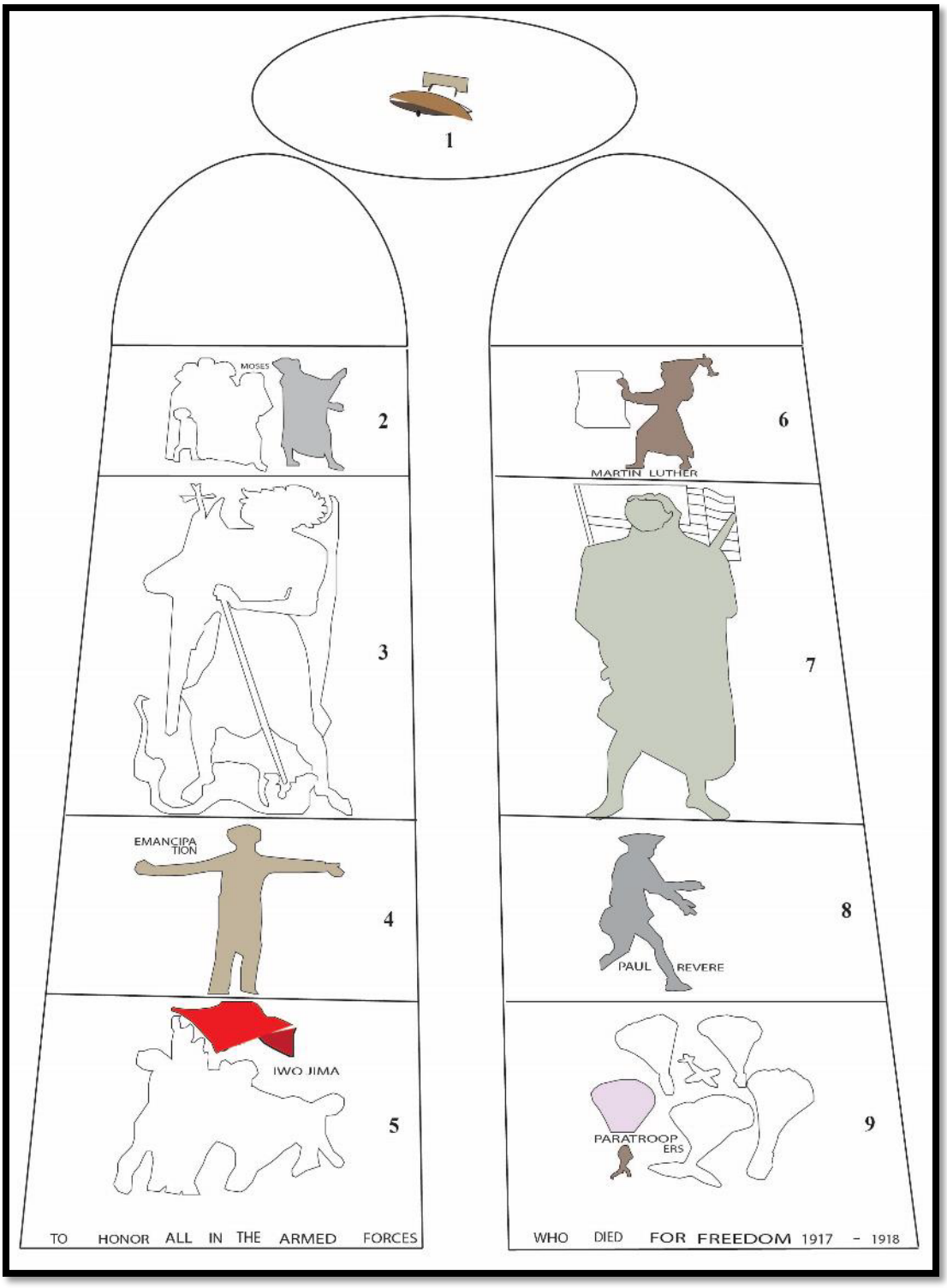


Figure 6.10. Key to *Freedom I Window*: 1. Liberty Bell; 2. Moses; 3. St. Michael; 4. Abraham Lincoln; 5. Iwo Jima; 6. Martin Luther; 7. George Washington; 8. Paul Revere; 9. Paratroopers.

To begin the analysis of the specific sections of the *Freedom I Window*, the following discussion tracks that top-to-bottom order beginning in the upper lefthand side with the exodus story of Moses. Each panel or section is set apart below with a heading reflecting that particular panel in the window's design.

Moses

Moses begins the window's freedom theme in the upper lefthand section. Again, the images depict familiar portions of the Exodus story from the Bible. As noted earlier in other window designs, Moses is chosen for his role as a liberator. He is credited with not only freeing the Jews from slavery, but is also recognized as a lawgiver, having delivered the Ten Commandments. This aligns with American civil religion and the laws articulated in the American Constitution. Another parallel bridging traditional religion and American civil religion is the idea of a Promised Land referred to in the Bible in the book of Exodus. Early Americans were familiar with this concept of a promised land and an escape from something evil, or from tyranny. This theme is continued with the panel directly below portraying the idea that good will conquer evil, thereby symbolically connecting events in American history to concepts of exceptionalism and civil religion at the same time.

St. Michael the Archangel

The artist, Reynolds, Jr., next incorporated an image of St. Michael, the Archangel, who is mentioned in multiple places in the Bible. St. Michael is often depicted in religious stained-glass windows symbolizing bravery, especially in battle, and

is typically shown as a winged character who is fighting a dragon (or Satan). The battle takes place in heaven with the Archangel Michael representing all that is good. He is usually shown with a protective coat of "mail," and usually has his angelic wings stretched wide, as is the case in the *Freedom I Window*. St. Michael's story is described in both the Old and New Testaments. But it is in the book of Revelations, chapter 12:7–17, where the dragon is connected to the idea of Satan and his battle with St. Michael. The conquered Satan is subsequently expelled from heaven and is cast out to earth. This symbolism also seems to link the idea of combat, or battle, as a necessary manifestation for achieving and maintaining the good—or, in other words, that war is the necessary price for freedom from evil forces and from tyranny.[52] Bellah, too, addresses this issue. He explains that America needed to atone for the stain of slavery, for the human bondage that tarnished the soul of the country. Therefore, the artists address this good and evil dichotomy followed by the outcome of emancipation for the slaves and incorporates the next panel depicting Abraham Lincoln below as that of the Archangel.

Abraham Lincoln

Directly beneath St. Michael's panel is a section portraying Abraham Lincoln. Slaves are shown with chains falling from their wrists. The emancipation of African-American slaves after the Civil War is a well-known component of Lincoln's legacy. Bellah argues that Lincoln was the symbolic Jesus of American civil religion.[53] Lincoln's assassination and martyrdom helped solidify this connection and the military casualties of the Civil War have been memorialized as those who gave the "last full measure they had to give.'" Another historian, Michael Angrosino, would agree. He notes:

> If Washington is the quasi-divine embodiment of American virtue, Lincoln may well be the American Christ figure. Assassinated on Good Friday, he was a sacrificial victim who in death succeeded in a way he never had as a living politician—in helping to heal the wounds of civil strife.[54]

Lincoln's role in American civil religion is closely aligned with the Christian concept of atonement. Slavery was the sin requiring atonement and, as Gardella points out, Lincoln spoke of the "new birth of freedom" for the country and how that new birth would promote an "increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion."[55] In this way, Lincoln's convictions regarding freedom and democracy dovetail with parallel concepts espoused by American civil religion.[56] Furthermore, during World War II, these same concepts of freedom and democracy were exploited in photographs in an attempt to garner financial support for the war effort. One photograph in particular garnered a broad national emotional response. It depicted the flag raising on Iwo Jima. It was received with resounding success and it is, therefore, not surprising that the image also found its way into the artist's design for the *Freedom I Window*.

Marines at Iwo Jima

Below the Lincoln panel is a more modern war image. It is a depiction of a pivotal and bloody battle that occurred during World War II. It took place on Iwo Jima in the Pacific. It replicates the Pulitzer-Prize winning photograph taken by Joe Rosenthal. This flag-raising episode on Iwo Jima was published in newspapers and magazines across the country in February of 1945. Again, many media outlets, editors, and publishers were hesitant to depict the true violence of the battles fought during World War II. Instead,

they selectively framed images using a more patriotic rendition of various battles. As historians Matthew Pressman and James Kimble have highlighted, the media's portrayal of the war and of the Iwo Jima photograph in particular, was more of a "notion of collective commitment to shared ideals" that was selectively presented.[57] And, apparently, the country needed to be pulled together for a collective commitment at that time. Around the time Rosenthal's famous photograph was published, Americans were fatigued by the war, but were being asked to give even more money for the war effort in the form of war bonds. The representation of the flag raising on Iwo Jima in the *Freedom I Window* sacralized this process and gave the flag-raising added significance within America's civil religion.

Martin Luther and George Washington and the Banners of Freedom

The top of the righthand side of the *Freedom I Window* features a panel depicting Martin Luther. It acknowledges America's Protestant heritage, representing the concept of freedom from religious tyranny. The window evokes memories of the Pilgrims and the centrality of the Reformation to the way many Americans thought about their history. Like Luther, George Washington is considered the founder, not of a religion, but of a civil religion. Perhaps due to the lack of a legally established, or state supported, religion in the early and later colonial times, it would appear that American civil religion arrived quite early in the country and began filling this religious void. Conceivably, Americans have even employed civil religion utilizing totemic iconography such as the Stars and

Stripes. For example, the Iwo Jima flag, or the Continental Army flag, shown billowing behind Washington's head, have been used throughout history to garner patriotic feelings for one's country. Stained-glass designers, such as Joseph Reynolds, Jr. in the 1950s, when the *Freedom I Window* was commissioned, likely appreciated this ability of flags to communicate and incorporate patriotic and nearly-sacred ideology during a time of high anxiety in the country due to the Cold War. If Reynolds, like many other artists and writers during this time, hoped to achieve any lasting success during the Cold War, it was in their best interest to adapt accordingly. There was a necessity to incorporate patriotic images and themes, rather than cynicism, as highlighted by Michael Kammen. This trend, according to Kammen, lasted for more than fifteen years following the end of World War II.[58] Communism represented a threat to America's spiritual resources and its freedom, as the title of this window indicates. The Cold War and the political-cultural shifts during the 1950s and 1960s resulted in an escalated state of anxiety. This anxiety, according to Kammen, "caused people to think wistfully about individualism, self-reliance, and other verities associated with the colonial period and the early republic…A quest for timelessness that would counterbalance the perplexities of change [that] provided comfort to some."[59] Characters like Washington and Revere, and their ringing Liberty Bell, depicted in the *Freedom I Window* were an effective way to communicate that connection while simultaneously making an ideological statement against communism.

Flags, too, provide an effective and efficient anti-communism tool in the *Freedom I Window*. The flags were likely included to elevate a perceived consensus around American domestic values. Furthermore, in the context of a stained-glass cathedral

window, the coexistence of American flags with other transcendent traditional religious symbolism, invokes a basis of legitimacy. As Kammen argues, Americans, during the Cold War, would "invoke the legitimacy of an artificially constructed past in order to buttress presentist assumptions and the authority of a regime."[60] In this way, Reynold's incorporation of a larger-than-life George Washington with the patriotic flag in the background would seem to provide a tangible representation of Kammen's argument. The window iconography was utilized by those in power to achieve "an illusion of social consensus."[61] The flags were part of this promoting of historical continuity and ancestor worship (sacralization) allowing the viewer to move fluidly between patriotic symbols and the Founding Fathers, including Paul Revere, who is depicted directly below Washington.

Paul Revere

Directly below the commanding figure of George Washington is a panel dedicated to Paul Revere, portraying his well-known midnight ride to alert the sleeping colonial militia in 1775. The panel reflects another instance of American ancestor worship and, thanks to Longfellow's poem, many are familiar with Revere's famous ride and his legacy. However, few may likely appreciate other important military contributions made by Revere that likely influenced the artists decision to include him in this *Freedom I Window*. Like many of the Founding Fathers, Revere was not only a patriot affiliated with early American independence and freedom; he was also an entrepreneur. His contributions to military endeavors and munitions were vast. He was especially concerned with the advancement of early naval operations. Besides honing a

process for rolling silver, he started a copper rolling industry, securing federal contracts to supply bolts, spikes, and rolled copper sheeting for the construction of American war ships. [62] He was a foundry operator, a bell maker, and an ordnance manufacturer. Over the course of his lifetime, Revere's production of military cannons and over 400 bells (many still in operation today) perhaps provides insight into why Reynolds included Revere in the *Freedom I Window*.[63]

Paratroopers

The final, lower righthand panel of the *Freedom I Window* is dedicated to the many unsung contributions provided by military paratroopers. During World War II, American media outlets gave the majority of their attention to the frontline amphibious missions at Normandy. However, there were other pivotal contributions provided by American paratroopers and their counterparts, the resupply gliders, going on behind the amphibious front. The paratroopers and their suppliers played critical roles in supplying and supporting the Normandy operation, especially during the week that followed the initial invasion. American paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division provided deep inland support- and resupply-missions. They were deployed to block the enemy from access to key roads and bridges.[64] Paratroopers successfully held those key points, including two bridges at Sainte-Mère-Église, while resupply gliders carried out their dangerous deliveries, including rations and artillery to those holding critical access points. It was a key component to the victory in France and the freedom that was secured with their efforts. The window's inscription runs along the bottom conveying the overall

theme of the window. It states, “TO HONOR ALL IN THE ARMED FORCES WHO DIED FOR FREEDOM.”

Finally, woven throughout the *Freedom I Window*’s iconography are depictions of various top military medals. The Purple Heart and the Distinguished Service Medal for Valor are depicted close to Abraham Lincoln. The Purple Heart dates back to 1782 and the American Revolution and is typically given for loss of life, or to those seriously wounded. Two other notable medals are depicted near Paul Revere. The Silver Star, for bravery under fire, and the Distinguished Service Cross, awarded for valor, are portrayed. Both medals stand out with their white and purple ribbons respectively. All told, eight top-ranking military decorations are represented throughout the design honoring the brave and those who gave their lives for the country. Like other patriotic symbols, the military medals provide yet another element of American civil religion, and they were likely included to represent the value that the country, as a whole, places on the service and devotion of the U.S. Armed Forces and the freedom they protect.

Conclusion

With the various battles fought between 1850 and 1950, many Americans experienced a shared history of military sacrifice that stained-glass artists captured and sacralized. Each military conflict discussed in this chapter fits Bellah’s paradigm regarding times of trial for the country. Violence and valor, loss and liberty, along with new threats to American freedoms, became common denominators that were experienced by large groups of Americans in this timeframe. Sacralized relics, like the Liberty Bell, the American flag, and even the Southern Confederate flag, continued to be identified

and sanctified by groups of white, elite Americans who were usually in positions of power. The commemorations, such as those reflected in the *Liberty Window*, the *Ashworth Memorial Window*, the *Robert E. Lee Memorial Windows*, the *Jefferson Davis Memorial Windows*, and the *Freedom I Window*, all depict a deep sense of reverence for American civil religion, and even an off-shoot of that ideology with the Southern Lost Cause civil denomination. American civil religion went through an evolution. After the Civil War, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address joined the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution as an American civil-religion sacred text. The collective civil-religion faith of this group of wealthy, white elites seems to endorse a stance for the country that military intervention was a necessary evil to fight an even worse enemy, such as Hitler in World War II. This prompted a sanctification of American military activities and a sacralization of sorts regarding military efforts of the United States and the resulting ultimate sacrifices.

Historian Raymond Haberski, Jr. summarizes this civil-religion evolution through shared experiences in *God and War: American Civil Religion Since 1945*. "Thus, the collective power of such experiences provided a moral standard by which to measure actions of the United States."[65] Haberski, however, cautions the reader about the "strong beast" of American civil religion that can "appear to mean almost anything to anyone at any time. As a hybrid of nationalism and traditional religion, civil religion has an ideological flexibility that is intoxicating because it is so evocative, elastic, and deceptively complex."[66] There is a dangerous downside to this ideology. It can endorse a superficial sense of confidence based on the potential myths, such as those of divine

providence or exceptionalism, rather than gravitate to informed morality and appreciation or consideration of power imbalances in a community and the potentially silenced or marginalized communities that are not invited to the table when the decisions are made for a country.

America's civil religion neatly incorporated many of the myths of the nation's past and adapted to a distinctive patriotic position regarding military encounters as presented in the war-memorial stained-glass windows. American civil religion evolved in the present to "create meaning" out of these violent times and trials of the past.[67] This position, though, is often considered to represent the whole—a collective moral standard. Yet, it is a collective moral standard that was, and often has been, considered above reproach in military engagements and other political activities. As Haberski warns, this evocative ideology of exceptionalism, or moral supremacy, is plagued with peril. He cautions the reader about this errant mixing of truth with myth noting, "there is a fundamental irony of American civil religion—the nation lives with a misbegotten confidence…[and] it is in war that the perils of civil religion's promises become acutely apparent."[68]

Nevertheless, this misplaced confidence is not so far removed from demanding colonial independence, or channeling one's voice to stand up against powerful religious institutions, or protesting against tyranny. The biblical images and themes of liberty and freedom, including Moses and the Promised Land, St. Michael's battle against the dragon, and even Martin Luther's battle with the Catholic Church, convey an overall political message regarding this conflict. Indeed, malevolent institutions of power like the

Nazi's control of Germany, military engagements, and war with those nefarious entities provided many Americans with a shared experience or, as Bellah puts it, times of trial. However, some have argued that America's lack of a sanctioned national religious doctrine likely facilitated this development of American civil religion, and eventually this ideology manifested itself in commemorative stained-glass windows.

These stained-glass windows presented an opportunity for artists, sponsors, and congregations to express various forms of this civil religion. By incorporating and depicting these rituals, such as raising and flying the American flag, along with other representations of ancestor worship, the windows reflect evidence of dogma. In this way, characters such as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Paul Revere appear as a natural progression in windows with military themes. Like the *Freedom I Window* situated in a side War Chapel, the various panels commemorate the sacrifices of a country that has been involved in the political aspect of wars. As historian Michael Angrosino succinctly argues:

> The democratic social contract has become a civil religious contract that embodies sacred principles to be enacted in the political order. The civil religion is sometimes difficult to apprehend because it is like a church with no buildings or membership statistics; moreover, it has appropriated so many of the symbols of Christianity and Orthodox Judaism that it is sometimes easy to forget that in the United States the image conjured up by the phrase "a land flowing with milk and honey" refers not so much to ancient Canaan as to America itself.[69]

However, what Angrosino arguably misses in his assessment, is that America's civil religion does have a membership and a physical manifestation. It is represented and manifested in the stained-glass windows discussed in this dissertation. Nonetheless, like the windows themselves, this civil religion is so deftly woven into the fabric of many

conventional and established transcendent religions and buildings that their significance is often missed. Even when the evidence is right before our eyes. Civil religious stained-glass windows represent a significant presence in many American religious buildings throughout the United States; they just have not been studied in any great detail. Their existence, and their commentary regarding America's past, and even its present, simply have not been fully appreciated until now.

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[5] Ibid., Reed, 69 & 75.

[6] Ibid., Reed, 75.

[7] Ibid., Reed, 78.

[8] Ibid., Reed, 78.

[9] Ibid, Reed, 79.

[10] Ibid., Reed, 78–79.

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[14] Jerry Adler, "1934 Picturing Hard Times," *Smithsonian*, 40, no. 3, (2009), 62.

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[30] Calder Loth, *Windows of Grace, A Tribute of Love: The Memorial Windows of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Richmond, Virginia*, (Richmond, VA: Teagle and Little, 2004), 16.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

Stained-glass windows have been used for centuries as a mechanism through which abstract ideas are given form and communicated to others. Between 1870 and 1950, many stained-glass windows containing patriotic symbols and images were created for American churches. Insufficient research has been conducted investigating the connection between the quasi-religious nature of this patriotic iconography in stained glass and its potential relationship to American civil religion. This dissertation begins to fill that gap, arguing that the patriotic images both manifest and shape American civil religion. Over forty churches and cathedrals were surveyed for this research, hundreds of photographs were taken and studied in detail, and five different archives were accessed to begin an analysis of this phenomenon in various American churches.

Four distinct aspects of America's evolution as a country came into focus in these windows. First, it became evident that Protestantism played a significant role in many foundational elements of American civil religion and iconography related to the early-arrival narratives regarding the Pilgrims and the Puritans. Their efforts to bring order and religious rituals to their settlements often reference the Mayflower Compact, and the signing of this document is often depicted as a foundational event.

Second, the principles of American independence fit easily with early Protestantism and related ideas of both the Protestant Reformation and the ongoing reformation of American political society that was often linked to how early colonialists

broke away from what they viewed as a corrupt government and the formal hierarchical power structures in England and within the Church of England. The signing of the document, and the document itself, have also come to represent an event of quasi-religious significance in America. The termination of European control and that government's objectionable ties to dynastic empires and monarchical institutions of power represented another event that became sanctified and recognized as a key component of civil religion identified by Bellah.

Third, stained-glass windows did more than follow America's westward expansion. They sacralized it by making it seem divinely ordained. America's westward expansion became a cornerstone in America's civil religion with the help of talented artists who enshrined its ideology in churches examined in this dissertation.

Fourth, some windows both reflected and shaped the nation's efforts to come to terms with the Civil War by avoiding issues of slavery and elevating Confederate leaders to heroic status. It is as if the windows became part of an effort to create a new denomination within America's civil religion, one dedicated to the myth of the Southern Lost Cause.

Taken as a whole, these windows became part of the sacralization of selected aspects of American history in the service of advancing America's civil religion. Their iconography celebrated and sanctified the rebirth of the American nation after the Civil War. As Erwin Panofsky argues, art is a function of the culture in which it is made. And these windows were the product of social, economic, and political stresses that had fractured America in the mid-1860s and threatened to do so again in the decades that

followed. Intended to inspire awe, the windows have not received the attention they deserve from scholars. This dissertation is a first step in that direction.

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