



The History and Memorial

Noted artist John La Farge crafted two windows in 1883 for Elizabeth Winthrop and Ellen and Ida Mason. These memorials were dedicated to their deceased sisters, eight-year-old Anna and twelve-year-old Clara. The windows were installed in the Mason family chapel on Brattle Street in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and were described in the July 5, 1883 edition of the Boston Evening Transcript:

“... the warm rich colors of the La Farge windows are easily recognizable by their deep tones ... indescribably beautiful and touching.”

This chapel, now the chapel of the Episcopal Divinity School, underwent renovations in 1917. The donors granted permission to move these windows to an Episcopal mission church in the shoe manufacturing town of Whitman.



For almost a century, the Mason Memorial Windows have greeted the parishioners of All Saints' Parish, as well as residents enjoying the Whitman Town Park near the church.



The Artist's Unique Artwork

The Mason Memorial Windows are not only beautiful memorials, but they also hold a great deal of artistic and historical significance. John La Farge, discoverer of a new stained glass technology, patented the opalescent glass manufacturing process in 1880. By mixing bits of various materials into the molten glass, La Farge was able to produce unique



visual effects. Through the use of opalescent, ripple and confetti glass in these windows the distinctive genius of John La Farge shines through. Glass jewels add to the artistic effects. Some of the glass used in these windows was experimental in nature. The angels' robes in one window consist of a purple confetti glass which is believed to be one-of-a-kind.

In addition to his new glass designs, La Farge used heavy plating and lead lines of various widths as well as very sophisticated mitering. These techniques give a depth and a three-dimensional aspect to the windows that other artists could not achieve. La Farge's unique execution is especially noticeable in the maroon robe of the Clara Mason Memorial Window, where the plating is three to four layers thick.

