

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

"For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given; the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Ever-lasting Father, Prince of Peace. There shall be no end to the increase of His government or to the place upon the throne of David and upon His kingdom, in that it is firmly established and supported in justice and righteousness from now on and forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall do this."

Isaiah 9: 6-7

This is the prophecy of Isaiah which foretells the coming of a Messiah. Isaiah (740-701 B.C.), represented here, is the eighth study in a series on stained glass windows in Orleans County churches. This outstanding window is located in the nave of Christ Episcopal Church in Albion. Isaiah is placed in a pseudo Gothic baldachino. He is dressed in a white robe which represents light, faith, joy, life and religious purity. Over this is draped a dark violet mantle which signifies suffering, love and truth. Its lining is a rich ruby which denotes love. A border of gold suggests the goodness of God. A halo surrounds Isaiah's head which symbolizes a sentiment of veneration and glory surrounding such an idealized personage. In one hand he holds a scroll which states: "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." A scroll, rather than a book, is used since Isaiah is from the Old Testament. In his other hand he holds a saw which is the traditional symbol associated with this great prophet. Reputedly, Isaiah met his death by being sawn asunder. This violet mantle suggests this as well, since it is the color sometimes worn by martyrs. Isaiah himself, is depicted as an old man with a long white beard. Such a visage and overall character portrays great wisdom. I believe in the background surrounding this prophet are small Pomegranate trees. The Pomegranate, was an ancient symbol of hope, immortality and the future. This alludes to the scriptural text in Galatians "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace," which relates to the overall theme here.

In the base of the window appears a facsimile of a church where a Gothic arch frames what is thought to be a Passion flower which, as legend has it, symbolizes the passion of Jesus and His crucifixion. Above this is the memorial inscription which states: "In memory Zephaniah Clark born A.D. 1794. Died A.D. 1888". A scroll farther down notes: "A founder & 42 years Vestryman & Senior Warden of the Parish, Patriot, Soldier, Churchman."

Zephaniah Clark was born in Williamstown, Mass. on Sept. 21, 1794 and worked on his father's farm until age 17 when he went to Troy, N.Y. to learn printing. Later he was mustered into service and served one campaign in the vicinity of New York during the War of 1812. In 1817 he bought the TROY BUDGET newspaper and published it until 1828, when he sold out and engaged in the book trade in Troy. In 1844 he moved to Albion, N.Y. where he built a most outstanding Greek Revival residence on Main Street. This later became Birdseye Laboratories and was demolished in 1971. Mr. Clark helped organize Christ



Episcopal Church in 1844 and in 1846 was chosen a vestryman which position he held until 1853. He then became Senior Warden and held that position until his death on August 19, 1888. His children were Edward H. Clark of New York, Franklin Clark, an Albion druggist and bookstore owner, Mrs. Francis Forbes and Mrs. J.W. Cornell of Albion.

In 1889 Christ Church underwent extensive decorative improvements. These include a new arched wooden ceiling, interior painting and stenciling and two memorial windows. This one of Isaiah, given by the children of Zephaniah Clark, was dedicated to his memory in November 1889. It is one of the very few figurative windows in the county which depicts a person from the Old Testament. Most of the biblical scenes and figures in local churches are of a New Testament origin.