

# Bethinking of Old Orleans

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## STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

*"A builder builded a temple,  
He wrought it with grace and skill;  
Pillars and groins and arches  
All fashioned to work his will.  
Men said, as they saw its beauty,  
"It shall never know decay;  
Great is thy skill, O Builder!  
Thy fame shall endure for aye.*

*A Teacher builded a temple  
With loving and infinite care,  
Planning each arch with patience,  
Laying each stone with prayer.  
None praised her unceasing efforts,  
None knew of her wondrous plan,  
For the temple the Teacher builded  
Was unseen by the eyes of man.*

*Gone is the Builders temple,  
Crumpled into the dust;  
Low lies each stately pillar,  
Food for consuming rust.  
But the temple the Teacher builded  
Will last while the ages roll,  
For that beautiful unseen temple  
Was a child's immortal soul."*

Our stained glass subject for this week is the a Beckwith Keeney memorial window at the st Presbyterian Church in Albion. Her grandson lliam B. Hart of Ormond Beach, Florida writes follows:

"Ella Beckwith Keeney was the daughter of Mr. d Mrs. William W. Beckwith of Albion and the fe of Allen Keeney of LeRoy.

Born in 1847, Ella was a literary person practi- tly from childhood and a student all her life. At rious times she attended Oberlin, Vassar and yrnell.

She wrote stories and novels which were pub- lished by the National Presbyterian Society. When e and Allen Keeney were married in 1877, they mediately embarked for Europe where they ent six months travelling and steeping in the cul- ure of the Old World.

Their only child, Elizabeth (my mother) was rn in 1880. Less than two years later Ella fell sick d died. Her griefstricken husband returned to Roy, leaving his daughter in the care of her andparents where she lived until her own mar- ge to my father, E. Kirke Hart."

In 1911 Elazabeth Keeney Hart had this window stalled at the Presbyterian Church in memory of r mother. A little souvenir of its dedication dated ril 9 of that year has a short eulogy in it by Annet- L. Noble. Here are some excerpts:

"Many still among us remember Mrs. Keeney ... a strong force in this chruch and congregation, she was a woman of marked spirituality. She it only possessed far more than ordinary intellec- al attainments, but she had a large measure of e heavenly charity which gives help and sym- athy ... And most gratefully is her memory cher- ned by this church and congregation from the ct that Ella Beckwith, in her earliest womanhood arted and organized our Infant Department of e Sunday School. Because she "loved God and le children" she gathered them together and ecame the first teacher of many whose little ones e now profiting by the good and beautiful work e first established."

The total theme of this window is the embodi- ent of "She loved God and little children." The ree figures represented are ethereal in nature. hey suggest a quintessential relationship etween a teacher and her pupils. In the center a oman standing, holds in her hands an open scroll hich represents the roll of Holy Scripture. How- ver, on a more personal note it suggests here rs. Keeney's writing, teaching and scholarly abil- y as the figure points to the scroll while the child n the left reads from it. The other child sitting, stu- es another scroll which is open before her. The acher is dressed in a white robe suggesting puri- and a red mantle denoting love. The girl on the ght is wearing blue which symbolizes truth while e other girl wears a green tunic, a symbol of hope r the future. The artist's conception is certainly ppropriately that of a teacher instructing the



young in sacred truth. The figures are grouped under a Gothic canopy, partially covered with foliage, through which may be seen the heavenly sky and purple hills of a distant landscape. I'm sure Mrs. Elizabeth Hart must have felt this imagery was the epitome of her mother's work with children in the Sunday School. "For that beautiful unseen temple was a child's immortal soul."

Most of our figurative windows in Orleans County represent real people such as Jesus, saints or old testament prophets. This window is certainly much more personalized and different than most. It was made in the studios of the Pike Stained Glass Co. of Rochester which was founded by William Pike in 1908 following his apprenticeship at Tiffany Studios. This particular window was designed and built by Mr. Henry Keck, a glass painter who in 1913 opened a shop of his own in Syracuse where he gained quite a reputation. The robes on the figures are made of "drapery glass" in the Tiffany style. This varies in the thickness so as to emit various light shades through. In some portions two layers of glass are leaded over each other to achieve color and depth. Only the faces, arms, hands, legs and feet are painted. The linear quality in the central figure is derived from the Art Nouveau Style which was in vogue during the 1890's through the mid teens. This window is truly an outstatnding work of art in our county.