

Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin County Historian

Vol. XIV

7-16-92

No. 28

LUMINARIES IN THE FIRMAMENT

Luminaries In The Firmament (Gen 1:15) or A Guide To Stained Glass Windows In Orleans County, a publication to be released this fall by the Cobblestone Society is progressing along on schedule. Dr. James Orr has completed most of the picture taking with both color and black and white photos for the book. Over twenty churches with exceptional figural windows will be represented. To do justice to the subjects, such a volume must have color prints. Full color printing being costly, the Cobblestone Museum is therefore, seeking patrons to offset printing costs. Category listing of individual names in the book will appear under Silver Patron, Gold Patron and Platinum depending on the amount of the contribution. Patron donation forms with information are available by writing to The Cobblestone Society, Box 363, Albion, NY 14411 or can be picked up at the Cobblestone Museum, Swan Library or by calling 716-589-9013. Your interest and support in this project is needed.

The book will basically be in two parts. The first grouping will consist of windows with action which tell a story. These will be arranged in chronological order according to the life of Jesus. The second part will also contain religious subjects including allegorical interpretations of Jesus, saints not found in the Bible and ethereal imagery.

One such action window that will be included is shown here. It is located in St. Joseph's R.C. Church in Albion which was dedicated in 1896. It is based on the following text found in Matt. Chapt. 2 verses 13-15.

...an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise! Take the child and the mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child in order to murder Him." So he got up at night, took the child and His mother and departed into Egypt where he remained until Herod's death, so that the Lord's word through the prophet became fulfilled. Out of Egypt I called my Son."

I think it's interesting that according to an obscure legend, Mary laid the tired Jesus down to sleep between the paws of the Great Sphinx on their trip to Egypt.

This window therefore, is entitled *The Flight Into Egypt*. The left lancet depicts Joseph with a staff walking beside a donkey which is carrying both Mary and Jesus as shown in the right lancet. Mary is wearing red and blue denoting love and truth respectively, while Jesus is dressed in white suggesting purity and light. We note in this illustration the rather atypical halos over both Joseph and Mary which appear to be rings rather than the more traditional circles of light. And while Jesus would normally be embossed with a separate halo



to denote his sacred nature, no halo specifically appears for Him. We can only deduce that Mary and Jesus are thus sharing the same halo.

In the base of the window it states: "In Memory of Daniel McCarthy." The 1887-88 Orleans County Directory lists a Daniel McCarthy in Barre. With no other information available on him at this time I can only assume he may have been a local farmer.