

A CHURCH RECORD

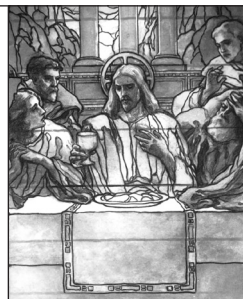
PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE TIFFANY STUDIOS ECCLESIASTICAL DEPARTMENT

O B J E C T G U I D E

IN 1889, CHURCH DEMAND FOR DECORATIVE ART was so great that Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848–1933) designated an entire department to create “all forms of church decoration and instrumenta ecclesiastica.”

This department boldly advertised its “large and practical knowledge of religious art” and the claim

that it was “well equipped to undertake both the design and execution of all forms of church work in glass, fresco, metal, stone or wood.”



The offerings included “metal work altars, candlesticks, crosses, desks, railings, etc.” and in wood or stone “altars, panels, symbols, figures of saints, mural decorations, medieval needlework, medieval tiles, liturgical books from the press of the Society of St. John the Evangelist, and all manner of ecclesiastical supplies.” Tiffany kept a photographic record of completed ecclesiastical commissions. These records—which include interior schemes, window designs, and such varied objects as memorial stones and baptismal

fonts—constitute an important part of the Morse Museum’s Tiffany Studios Study Photograph Collection. The images from both surviving and lost churches provide a behind-the-scenes look at the creative efforts at Tiffany Studios during the height of religious construction in America. The Museum recently completed an extensive multi-year conservation effort to stabilize the glass-plate negatives in this study photograph collection and to produce exhibit-quality images from those negatives. A selection of these is presented here. Work is ongoing for the prints in the collection, which represents one of the Museum’s most significant archival resources.

Above: DETAIL, CUTLINE FOR THE LAST SUPPER WINDOW, c. 1890–1930. *Photographic print from a glass-plate negative (2001-042:121).*

Unless otherwise noted, the photographs in this exhibition are reproduced from the Museum's Tiffany Studios Study Photograph Collection. The commissions were carried out by Louis Comfort Tiffany's company, known as the Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company (1892–1900) or Tiffany Studios (1902–32) during the Ecclesiastical Department's most active period.

I WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION, CHICAGO, 1893

The 1893 Chicago world's fair, known as the World's Columbian Exposition, celebrated the four-hundredth anniversary of Christopher Columbus's expedition to America. Louis Comfort Tiffany used this exhibition to showcase the skills and creative range of his relatively new ecclesiastical department, and the fair successfully established the Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company as a preeminent designer of religious decoration. Divided into three sections, Tiffany's display at the exposition included the celebrated chapel interior now on exhibit at the Morse, as well as numerous examples of memorial windows and individual objects used for church services.

Left to right:

Chapel electrolier, c. 1900

Duplicate image from a mounted photograph (1998-028:015)

Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company's pavilion in the Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893

Duplicate image from a mounted photograph (2007-002:083)

Cartoon for *The Entombment* window, c. 1893

Photographic print from a glass-plate negative (2001-042:057)

Ante-pendium (altar hanging), c. 1893

Photographic print from a glass-plate negative (2001-042:061)

Mitre (ecclesiastical hat), c. 1893

Duplicate image from a mounted photograph (65-030:0014:01:01)

Ante-pendium (altar hanging), c. 1893

Duplicate image from a mounted photograph (65-030:0259:02)

II FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA

Established in the eighteenth century, the First Presbyterian Church counted President James Buchanan (1791–1868) and Congressman Thaddeus Stevens (1792–1868) among the influential parishioners in its congregation. Over the following decades, the historic church commissioned ten windows from Tiffany Studios. Two of these were recorded in Tiffany's study files.

Left to right:

CASE:

Tiffany Studios, Ecclesiastical Department

Illustrated brochure

New York: Tiffany Studios, c. 1921 (1999-073)

Tiffany Studios workshop with outline for *The Sower* window, c. 1921

Duplicate image from a mounted photograph (2000-001)

Cartoon for *The Sower* window, c. 1921

Photographic print from a glass-plate negative (2001-042:128)

Outline for *The Risen Christ* window, c. 1909

Photographic print from a glass-plate negative (2001-042:044)

III ST. AGNES CHAPEL, NEW YORK CITY

Built between 1890 and 1892, St. Agnes Chapel was an Episcopal church plant from Trinity Church in Lower Manhattan. Located on the Upper West Side at 121–147 West Ninety-first Street between Amsterdam and Columbus avenues, St. Agnes was considered a gem of ecclesiastical design. Tiffany designed the marble pulpit, which was inspired by the thirteenth-century marble work at San Lorenzo in Rome. The church, never enjoying a large congregation, was demolished in 1943.

Pulpit with mosaics, c. 1907

Duplicate image from a mounted photograph (2007-002:017)

IV MADISON SQUARE CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY

In the 1890s, the Madison Square Presbyterian Church in Lower Manhattan sought a new location for its church facilities after the Metropolitan

Life Insurance company acquired its property. The move to the opposite corner of Madison Square provided an opportunity for the church to build a suitable modern building and to exploit the talents of its artistic congregation. Louis Comfort Tiffany, a member of the church and officer of the building committee, secured McKim, Mead, and White as architect and provided his firm for interior design. Ledgers in the Morse archives provide a view of the construction throughout 1905. The church was finally dedicated in October 1906 but only survived thirteen years before development claimed it as well.

Left to right:

Three interiors, c. 1906

Duplicate images from mounted photographs (2007-002:094, 093, 099)

CASE:

Tiffany Studios ledger, 1905–30

Notated book

Entry No. 108: *Madison Sq. Church, N.Y. City* (1999-067)

V. ST. MICHAEL'S PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY

St. Michael's, founded in 1807, replaced its original frame church in 1890 with the present Romanesque- and Byzantine-style building at 225 West Ninety-ninth Street. As the city's population moved uptown in Manhattan, a new class of parishioner began to attend. In 1895, the church commissioned Louis Comfort Tiffany to create *The Celestial Hierarchy* window, which depicts "St. Michael's Victory in

Heaven." The five interior lancets are leaded glass and the two outside panels are mosaic. Between 1891 and 1920, the Tiffany Ecclesiastical Department designed several more windows as well as interior elements in the apse—including the dome, altar, mosaic reredos, and pulpit.

Left to right:

Two cartoons for *The Celestial Hierarchy* window, c. 1908

Photographic prints from glass-plate negatives (2001-042:051, 052)

CASE:

Memorials in Glass & Stone

Illustrated book

New York: Munder-Thomsen Company, 1913 (71-009:02)

VI SAINT LOUIS CATHEDRAL, MISSOURI

The building of the Byzantine- and Romanesque-style Cathedral of Saint Louis began in 1907 and continued for eighty years. Tiffany Studios built two mosaic-and-marble chapels on the west side of the cathedral, the Virgin's Chapel and All Saints Chapel. Both were designed by Aristede Leonori (1856–1928), an Italian architect from Rome. The building held its first mass in 1914 but remained under construction until 1988. In 1997, Pope John Paul II designated it as a Cathedral Basilica.

Left to right:

Three sketches for interiors, Virgin's Chapel, c. 1913

Photographic prints from glass-plate negatives
Architect: Aristede Leonori, Italian, 1856–1928 (2001-042:105, 168, 205)

CASE:

Tiffany Studios ledger, 1905–32

Notated book

Orders 20328 and 13608: *St. Louis Cath.* (1999-065)

VII MISCELLANEOUS PRODUCTION

The Ecclesiastical Department achieved great commercial success within the Tiffany decorative-arts empire and was active for almost fifty years. The variety of production was astounding. No complete written record exists of the department's work, making the Tiffany Studios Study Photograph Collection at the Morse one of the best accounts of the versatility of its designers.

Left to right:

Memorial with mosaic, c. 1890–1930

Duplicate image from a mounted photograph (2003-033:064)

Baptismal font displayed at Tiffany Studios, c. 1890–1930

Photographic print from a glass-plate negative (2001-042:038)

Cartoon for window displayed at Tiffany Studios, c. 1890–1930

Photographic print from a glass-plate negative
(2001-042:043)

Baptismal font displayed at Tiffany Studios, c. 1890–1930

Photographic print from a glass-plate negative
(2001-042:067)

Outline for *The Last Supper* window, c. 1890–1930

Photographic print from a glass-plate negative
(2001-042:121)

Cartoon for *The Good Shepherd* window, c. 1890–1930

Duplicate image from a mounted photograph
(1998-028:005)

Memorial tablet, c. 1903–30

Photographic print from a glass-plate negative
Inscribed: *HENRY STIMSON LOOMIS. / ENTERED INTO LIFE DECEMBER 16TH 1894, AND INTO LIFE ETERNAL MARCH 14TH 1903. / GIVEN TO GOD IN BAPTISM IN THIS CHURCH, OCTOBER 25TH 1895.*
(2001-042:136)

Model for memorial tablet, c. 1890–1930

Duplicate image from a mounted photograph
(2003-033:032)

Casket monument, c. 1890–1930

Photographic print from a glass-plate negative
(2001-042:132)

CASE:

Examples of Recent Work from the Studios of Louis C. Tiffany

Illustrated booklet

Author: Ethel Syford, American, dates unknown

Reprinted from *The New England Magazine*

New York: Tiffany Studios, c. 1912
(1998-062)

VIII ECCLESIASTICAL DEPARTMENT ARCHIVAL MATERIAL

Surviving trade catalogs, correspondence, and other artifacts from the Ecclesiastical Department supplement the visual record of its design work and help complete our understanding of the vast creative output and activity of the department over many decades. All of the following are from the Morse Museum's archives.

Center case:

- 1) ***Activities of Tiffany Studios, c. 1926***
Illustrated booklet
New York: Tiffany Studios
(2007-027:02)
- 2) ***Tributes to Honor: Suggested Types of Memorials by the Ecclesiastical Department of the Tiffany Studios, 46 West Twenty-third Street, New York***
Illustrated booklet
New York: Tiffany Studios, 1925
(77-031)
- 3) ***Ecclesiastical Department workshop, c. 1890–1930***
Photographic print
(2009-007:002)

- 4) **Memorial Windows / AD 1896**
 Illustrated booklet
 New York: Tiffany Glass and
 Decorating Company, 1896
 (1998-048)
- 5) **Memorial Tablets: Ancient and Modern,
 Honorary and Mortuary, in Bronze,
 Brass, Mosaic and Marble**
 Illustrated booklet
 New York: Munder-Thomsen
 Company, 1896
 (1998-057)
- 6) **Fragment of correspondence to
 churches from Edwin Stanton George,
 second vice president and manager,
 on Ecclesiastical Department, Tiffany
 Studios letterhead, February 6th, 1929**
 (1999-031:001)
- 7) **Correspondence to buyers regarding
 the Tiffany Studios bankruptcy sale
 from Percy A. Joseph, auctioneer, on
 Ecclesiastical Department, Tiffany
 Studios letterhead, June 4th, 1937**
 (2009-001:002)
- 8) **Study for a figure, c. 1890-1930**
 Mounted photograph
 (65-030:0823)



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- 9) **Silver medal from the Pennsylvania
 Museum School of Industrial Art,
 Philadelphia, 1889**
 Awarded to the Tiffany Glass Co. for
 ecclesiastical windows
 Cast silver
 Obverse inscription: *VIRTUE /
 LIBERTY / INDEPENDENCE /
 PHILADELPHIA /
 THE PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM-
 AND SCHOOL-
 OF INDUSTRIAL ART /
 FOUNDED A.D. 1876*
 Reverse inscription: *AWARDED
 TO / The Tiffany Glass Co. / FOR
 EXHIBIT OF / FIGURE OR
 ORNAMENTAL / WINDOWS /
 FOR ECCLESIASTICAL
 PURPOSES / 1889 / EXHIBITION
 OF AMERICAN ART INDUSTRY*
 Gift of Louis T. Lusk
 (68-025)
- 10) **Out-of-Door Memorials: Mausoleums,
 Tombs, Headstones, and All Forms of
 Mortuary Monuments**
 Illustrated booklet
 New York: Tiffany Glass and
 Decorating Company, 1898
 (1998-053)
- 11) **Business card, c. 1930**
 Ecclesiastical Department, Tiffany
 Studios
 (1999-077)
- 12) **Out-of-Door Memorials: God's Acre**
 Illustrated booklet
 New York: Tiffany Studios, 1903
 (1998-059)
- 13) **Character and Individuality in
 Decoration and Furnishings**
 Illustrated book
 New York: Tiffany Studios, 1913
 (71-004:01)