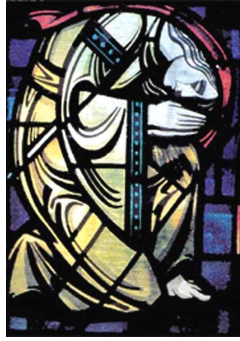


Missouri Leaded Glass

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October 17, 2011

We, at Missouri Leaded Glass, present the following PDF file to help illustrate the importance that old stained glass windows can mean to those that have an attachment to such works of art. It is not that stained glass is that much different than other modes of artistic expression; it's just that given then inherent nature of the art form the visual impact can linger for many decades and become indelible to those that are affected even at a very early age. Our story begins "It is the evening of April 20th 1883. And, according to newspaper reports, the temperature was delightful and there was nearly a full moon with only an occasional cloud."

The ending has yet to be completed and yet it has a positive and optimistic outlook despite the trials and challenges encounter by the main character of your story.

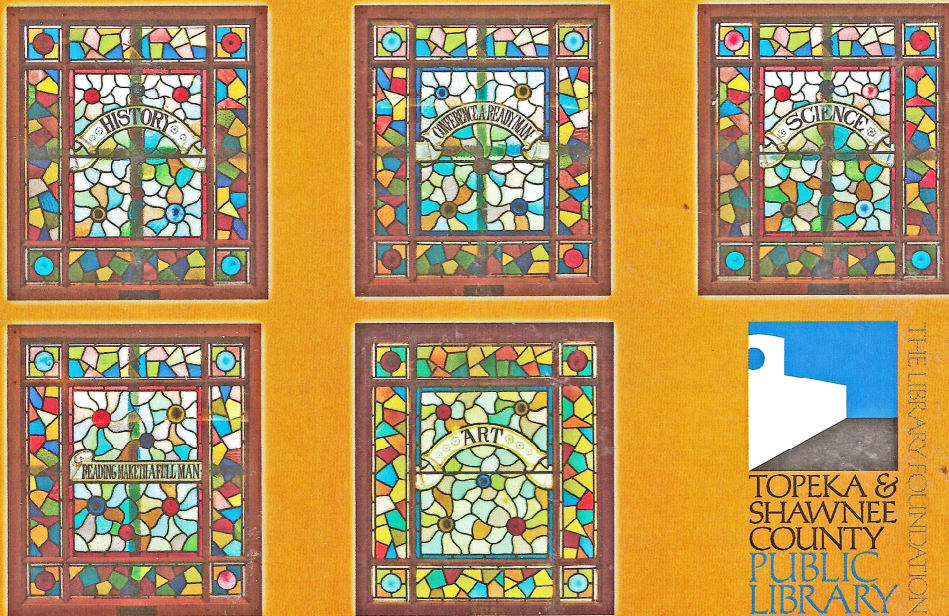
Her name was Connie Menninger. She was the late wife of Dr. William Walter Menninger; the third generation of one of America's leading medical families. The family established the world renowned Menninger Foundation and Clinic in Topeka, Kansas in 1925. It is currently based in Houston, Texas and is still considered one of the premier treatment centers for behavioral disorders in the US.

"She is especially remembered for the wit and infectious energy she brought to her community work and the compassion that lay behind her zealous advocacy."

The following is, in part, her story of how she wanted to preserve a childhood memory that was housed in a collection of stained glass windows she valued as a young patron of her public library in Topeka.

I hope you find this journey in time interesting.

a Reunion that's been a long time in the making



**Original Library Stained Glass Windows
Restoration Project Plan
-Sherry Best
Alice C. Sabatini Gallery**

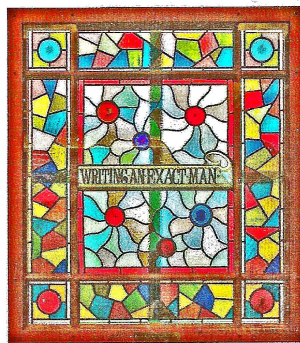
The reunification of the six stained glass windows from the original library building, designed by Henry Hobson Richardson, has provided an opportunity for the conservation of six important historic objects which are displayed at the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library.

Connie Menninger began this project some years ago, when she recognized a window in the collection of the Menninger Foundation as being one of the windows from the old library. Destroyed in 1966, the windows had been sold at auction to several different buyers. At Connie's urging, the Menninger Foundation made a gift of that window – "History" to the library. Connie worked diligently to track down the other five windows, with the idea of unifying them once again in the new library building. She was able to obtain five of them: "History", "Science", "Art", "Reading Maketh a Full Man", and "Conference a Ready Man" in time for the renovation of the library building. Those five windows were part of the library's design, each in its own window, in the Adult Reference area. The last window, "Writing an Exact Man", was owned by a collector in Detroit. He stated at the time that he did not want to part with the window, as it was built into an area of his home.

In 2007, that collector passed away. His heirs, remembering Connie's goal in reuniting the windows, contact the library to see if we were still interested in obtaining it. With a generous gift from Walt and Connie Menninger, the library purchased the window and shipped it back to Topeka.

As can happen during shipping of fragile objects, the window suffered some damage in transit. David MacArthur of Missouri Leaded Glass made a full restoration of the window, replacing any broken glass pieces, matching the colors to the other windows, and constructing a wood frame to match the other windows. The sixth window was installed with the others in 2008. The phrases in the windows form a quote of a passage in Francis Bacon's "On Studies", from his Essays in the late 16th century. The quote would have had significance to the library founders, as a statement of the benefits of reading and education. The library moved the "Art" window to a display area outside the Sabatini Gallery.

the Sixth window is home



The Library Foundation and the Alice C. Sabatini Gallery invite you to celebrate the reunion of all six stained glass windows from Topeka's original public library, 1883-1961.

We honor the late Connie Menninger for her vision and efforts in reuniting the windows.

The following is a prepared discourse on the very beginning of this story.

STAINED GLASS WINDOW DEDICATION

February 21 2009

Brief remarks about Connie:

It is fitting that we should recognize Connie today. She was an ardent community organizer and activist.

I knew her best through our work together on the boards of the Shawnee County Historical Society and Railroad Days. In the course of her work with the Santa Fe archives at the Kansas State Historical Society she was instrumental in discovering a glass slide travel presentation created by the public relations office of the Santa Fe railroad. She wanted to recreate the program in the VHS format with sound commentary. I was the one she asked to narrate. It was a wonderful experience. She loved the library and worked diligently for our success. It was always a joy to see her here. Her effort in helping to find the stained glass windows from the old library on the State House grounds and urging their restoration to their proper place here will always be one of her greatest legacies.

Now I would like to set a scene for you. It is the evening of April 20th 1883 (nearly 126 years ago). And, according to newspaper reports, the temperature was delightful and there was nearly a full moon with only an occasional cloud.

This was encouragement enough to bring out young and old for the dedication of the new library building on the north east corner of the State House grounds. The building was opened at 7:00 p.m. for inspection and at 8:00 p.m. a program in the second floor hall was to be given.

A writer in the Commonwealth newspaper reported that, “the dedication of the building was accomplished in an easy and very appropriate manner, after vast numbers of our citizens had availed themselves of the opportunity to make an inspection of the building and contents...the library and art hall were thronged with ladies and gentlemen and boys and girls. Many were the approving words and pleased expressions, and when the hour for the opening of the exercises arrived the audience, which numbered fully five hundred, were in harmony with the occasion and prepared to thoroughly enjoy the pleasant programme.”

After an “inspiring” overture by Heck’s orchestra, welcoming words by Mr. Edward Wilder and a lengthy invocation by Rev. H. C. Dunham and many other remarks by prominent citizens and more music, the extended program was concluded with an oration by General C. W. Blair, of Leavenworth, “the silver-tongued orator of Kansas.” General Blair delivered a speech of “matchless eloquence” on Kansas and the habits of Kansas people. Included in his thoughts were ideas on art and its “refining influences, science, poetry and literature of all classes.” The reporter thought the speech was in General Blair’s best and happiest vein, “and received the strictest attention of the audience, many of whom were occupying uncomfortable positions. “Gen. Blair closed his remarks by dedicating the building in formal and eloquent phrase.”

And so concluded an exciting evening, in which a wonderful structure of learning and art was given to the people of Topeka, the Free City Library.

In all of the superlative words written in the Topeka papers describing the new building in matchless rhetoric there is not one mention, that I could find, describing the stained glass windows. I believe that because this type of window was so popular during Victorian times, and rather common, it was not felt necessary to point them out.

And so, for some 70 years, they cast their brilliant glow up on all who used the resources of the library. And, hopefully, were viewed with pleasure by those who had occasion to see them.

They did, however, make an impression upon one young lady of Kansas. The story was told to Arthur Caruth Jr., who wrote the well-known "Whispering Willow" column for the Topeka State Journal for many years, by Mrs. Elsie Howard Pine, a retired instructor from the library school at Emporia. Mr. Caruth relayed the story in his column on March 31, 1956. I would like to share it with you today.

"I was told recently of an incident concerning the old Topeka Public Library on the State House grounds which bears repeating and thinking about. Mrs. George Nettles, a citizen of Pittsburg, Kansas, now active as a library trustee, says that as a little girl she went with her family on business and shopping excursions to the capital city. One of her happiest memories of those visits centers around a stained glass window in the old library building. As she passed along Eighth Street, she remembers how the sun lighted up the window, and illuminated the statement imbedded in the glass: "Reading maketh a full man." The words took hold of the child's imagination and made a lasting impression.

They led her inside the library where she became acquainted with the wonderful world of books. Best of all, she was privileged to choose from the shelves books which she was allowed to take home and read. From this childhood experience grew a habit of reading and a regard for books and learning which have resulted in great personal satisfaction."

How lucky we are to have these words of remembrance. And today, as we look upon that window and the others too, we can remember that April night in 1883 and marvel at the journey they have made, knowing they have come full circle and we happily say, welcome home.

For those that think stained glass is frivolous and inconsequential to a structure they apparently have never experienced what Connie Menninger and others like her, such as Mrs. George Nettles, felt when in the presence of these works of art...despite the omission of Gen. Blair remarks on dedication day. The impact lasted, for Connie, all through the rest of her life.

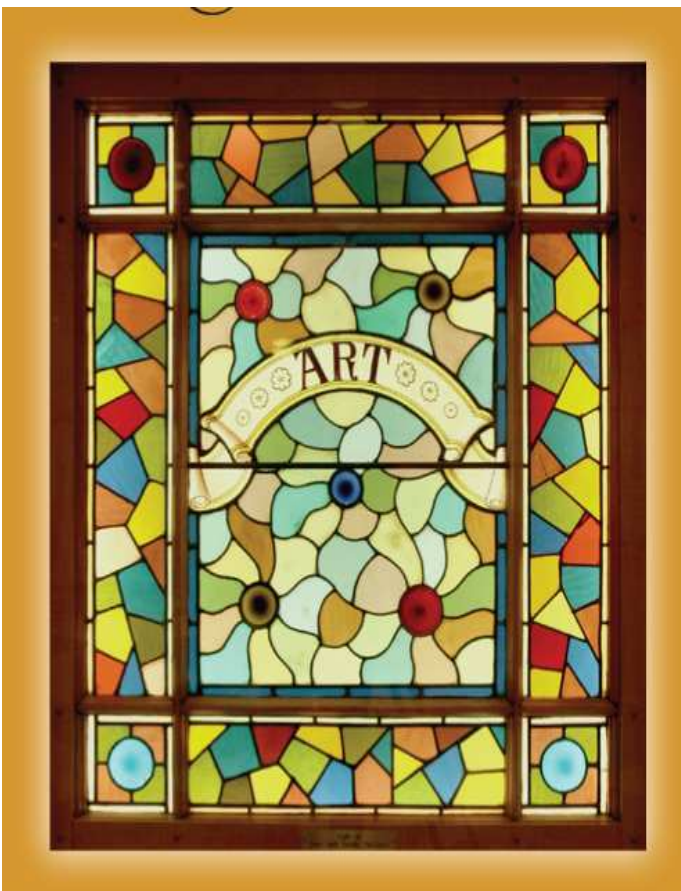
I hope you enjoyed this isolated story about a collection of stained glass windows in a small mid-western town over a century ago.

Sincerely,

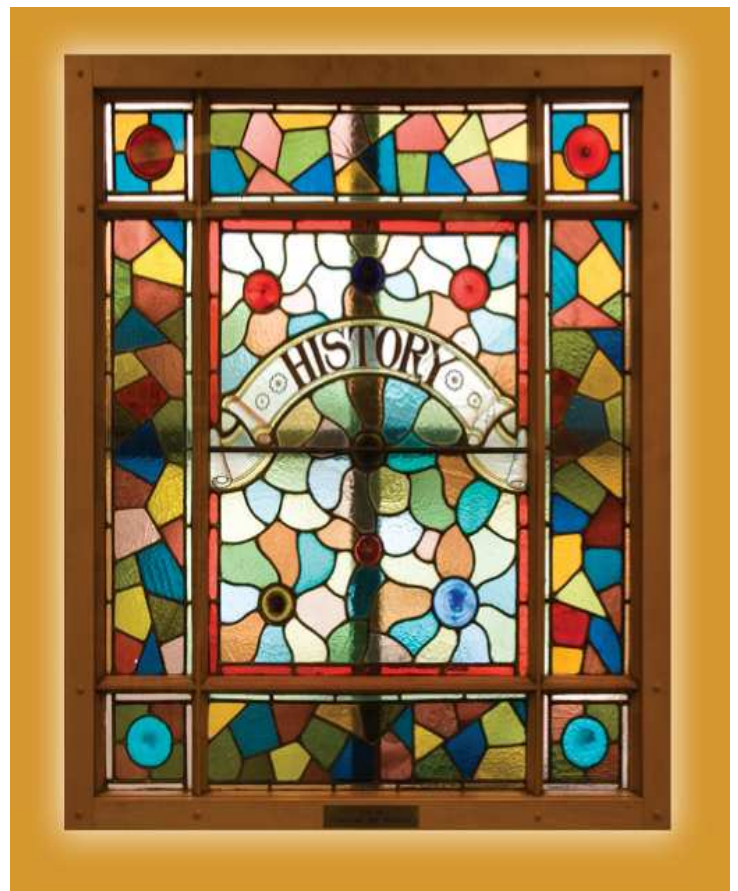


David A. McArthur / Missouri Leaded Glass

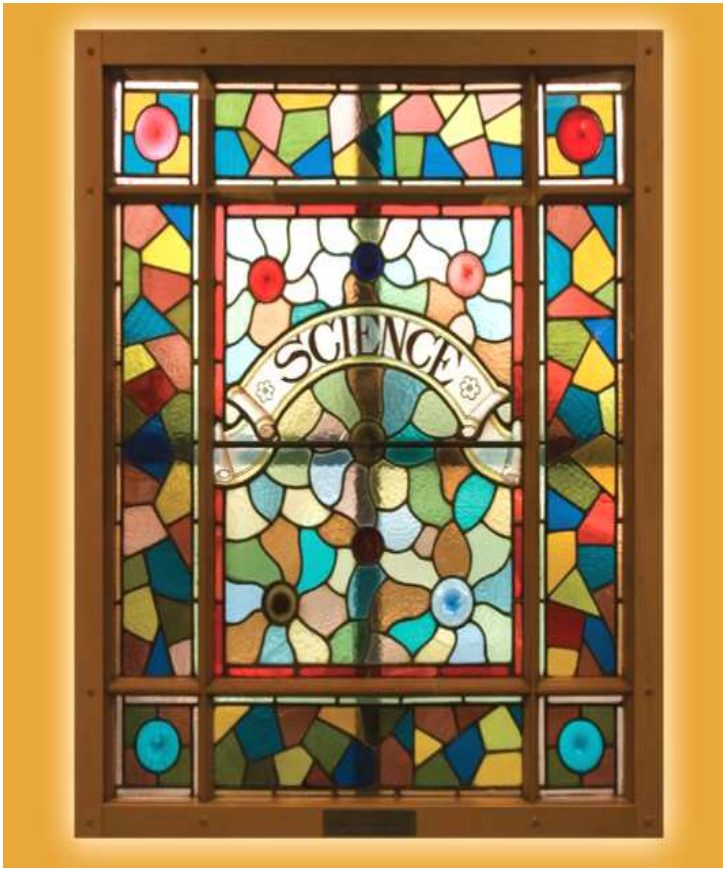
P.S. We have attached close ups of these remarkable windows.



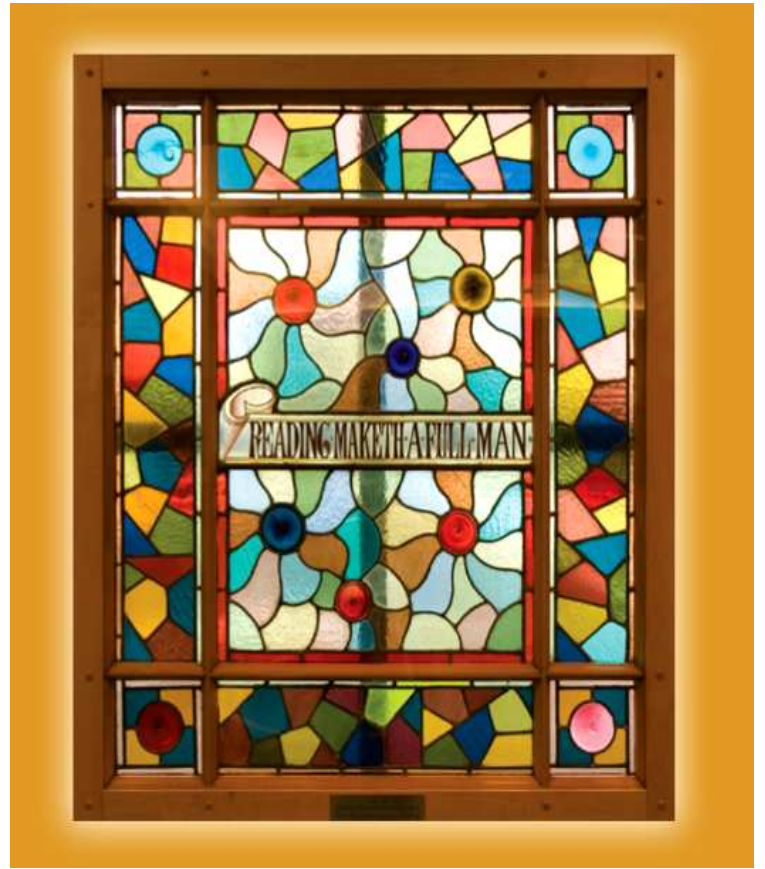
Art



History



Science



Reading Maketh A Full Man



Conference A Ready Man



Writing An Exact Man
(The sixth window)