



John La Farge

Stained Glass Windows

at the Thomas Crane Public Library

ANGEL AT THE TOMB 1892 *top portion*, 1907 *bottom portion*
Designed as a memorial to Benjamin Franklin Crane, the younger son of Thomas Crane, this is a plated glass opalescent window with multiple minute parallel borders and mitered joints. The base panel enclosing a dedicatory inscription was probably added in 1907 when the Aiken ell was built. The resulting window is more than twice as large as the original, including an ornamental border that unites both panels into a single composition.

Size: 50" x 60"

Location: The top portion of the window measuring 30" x 40" was originally set on the front wall of the building next to the entrance door. The new setting is in the south wall next to the fire place.

Restoration: Cohoes Design Glass Associates, Schenectady, NY (Fall 2009)





OLD PHILOSOPHER 1882

La Farge's most successful example of cloisonné glass, unique in its execution. Glass is fused together without the use of lead, by joining the glass with thin filaments of metal fused to the glass and plated on the underside with clear glass. Contains thousands of minute pieces of glass and some stained glass paint which was fired in a kiln for permanency.

Size: 33" x 16" overall; central image of old philosopher 29" x 10"

Location: Originally, when the library opened in 1882, this glass was part of a large five-bay window located directly opposite the entrance in the back wall of the Richardson Building. No interior photographs prove this, but this exterior photo shows the bay.



The wall enclosing this window opening was removed in 1907 to make way for an ell housing book stacks and a (lower level) Children's Room designed by the architect William M. Aiken. The glass originally in the wall was then dispersed, some being set in the wall at the end of the new ell, while the La Farge panels were integrated into a four-bay window opening along the front wall of the reading room.

Restoration: Jack Cushen Studio of Hoboken, NJ (Fall 1988)

Theft: On May 1, 2001, during an inspection of renovations of the Richardson Building, it was discovered that the Old Philosopher window was missing. Although the State Police and the FBI were alerted, the window was actually recovered May 9 when the library director received an anonymous phone call that led her to Mount Wollaston Cemetery, where the window was found wrapped in brown paper, undamaged except for small cracks which were

ALPHA AND OMEGA WINDOWS 1882

White opalescent glass accented by tiny pieces of antique mouth blown pot metal glass. The Alpha and Omega symbols are framed with a wreath of dark green glass and small circular glass jewels. The top and bottom sections exhibit borders made of "Confetti" glass, an experimental glass created by La Farge.

Size: 33" x 16" each

Location: The two windows were originally located with the Old Philosopher directly opposite the entrance, in the back wall of the Richardson Building. After the triptych's relocation around 1907 the Alpha window was removed, probably in 1939 when the library's Coletti wing was added. The window remained missing for almost 60 years, when it was discovered, packed between two clear leaded glass panels, in the back of a closet. It was then restored and placed with the other two windows.

Restoration: Serpentino Stained Glass, Needham, MA (1988, *Alpha window*)

