

Judson Stained Glass studio now in its third generation

By Martha McClure and Karen Strickler

In the quiet days before the Industrial Revolution, craftsmen formed loose confederations called guilds in order to protect their trades. The Judson Stained Glass studio, now in its third generation, is a medieval guild secluded from a hectic modern world by the vine-covered building at 200 South Avenue 66.

"Here there is no rush," said Horace T. Judson, the secretary-treasurer of the stained glass guild. "We work slowly and for perfection as they did six centuries ago."

This studio, originally the art department of U.S.C., was founded by Mr. Judson's grandfather, William Lees Judson, a portrait painter, who emigrated from England in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Following his father's death in 1934, the present Judson, a lawyer, retired from active practice and took over the management of the studio.

Beautiful windows made by this

Highland Park studio are set in churches all over the United States. Examples of the expert Judson craftsmanship can be seen in the Highland Park Presbyterian church, at North Avenue 53 and Figueroa street; the La Jolla Bishop School for Girls, the First Congregational church in Los Angeles, Trinity church in San Francisco, and the Inglewood Park mausoleum. Numerous awards have been won by the studio for its flawless stained glass.

"The famous 'Last Supper' window at Forest Lawn is not real stained glass," stated Mr. Judson. "Its colors are attained by paint and true stained glass uses paint only for shading.

"Stained glass," he said, "originated from imitation costume jewelry worn by Egyptian women several centuries before Christ."

It has been proven that the ingredients used by the Judson studio in making glass are the same as those used at the time of the Roman invasion of England.

"Only when glass is held up to the light can the color be distinguished," Mr. Judson smiled. "It sounds like a lecture, doesn't it?"

Beginning as a purely commercial project, Mr. Judson's lectures on stained glass have developed into an educational feature. At present the tours will be confined to the Pacific coast, but later, if things "pan out," they will include the entire United States.

The room in which Mr. Judson talked with such friendly interest is called an "office." However, the wide, clear windows, the lovely old portraits, and the samples of stained glass, casting colored patterns on the floor, provide an atmosphere almost medieval.

Mr. Judson's hobbies are closely connected with his work. His collection of books on stained glass, started while attending Franklin high school, is the largest private collection in the country. Another avocation is photographing beautiful church windows in color.

"This World war," said Horace T. Judson in conclusion, "is giving us an opportunity to make America the center of an artistic civilization—virile and beautiful. Artistic refugees, swarming to this country, and the discontinuance of foreign domestic production gives promise of a very great future for the United States."