

A Little Bit of History: Our Windows
Compiled by Peggy DeVane (for 2001 Heritage Sunday)

Our beautiful stained glass windows are lovely to look at and worthy of our pride. Several present members of the Elba United Methodist Church must be quite pleased to see their ancestors' names on them.

This information about the windows was written by Pattie Weiland and is from the Enterprise Ledger.

"In his book, Pea River Reflections, Coffee County Probate Judge, historian and author Marion Brunson tells of the story of Cordelia Lee Costello and the legacy she left. Mrs. Costello was the daughter of Charles and Elizabeth Lee, Coffee County pioneers who came to Elba from Georgia in the early 1800's. She married Pierre Costello, an Irishman who immigrated to this country from Limrock, Ireland.

Costello found his way to Elba, and after marrying Miss Lee, was elected the county's second probate judge. When the Civil War broke out Costello joined the Confederate Army. He was killed in Murfreesboro, Tennessee on January 4, 1863.

Following the death of her husband, Mrs. Costello continued to be visited by tragedy. None of her three children survived to adulthood. But she was a strong and courageous woman and she took it upon herself to see that the memory of her husband, as well as the other soldiers of the confederacy, would not be forgotten by the generations to come.

Brunson says after the war, most communities in the South managed to scrape together enough money to build monuments to their confederate soldiers. Mrs. Costello poured all her energy and resources into raising enough money to build a monument in the Elba Courthouse Square. She went door-to-door, begging pennies in order to fulfill her dream. However, the post-war poverty in Coffee County was so devastating, she could not raise the necessary funds to build the monument.

At the same time, the First United Methodist Church of Elba was under construction. With the approval of those who had contributed to the memorial fund and with the permission of the congregation, Mrs. Costello had a group of stained glass windows installed in the new church in honor of the Confederate Soldiers from Coffee County."

These stained glass windows have been tended to with care and affection. When the second story portion of the church was added, the two windows in the choir loft had to be moved. Boyd Murphree took on the responsibility of storing them for years. They remained in storage until Mary Morrow's children had one restored and placed between the Garrett-Dunaway Room and the Men's Bible Classroom. These are the words found on the plaque near this stained glass window: **"The restoration of this window made possible by the children of Mary Morman Morrow in recognition of their mother's love for and loyalty to the Methodist Church."** (photo not available of this window)



Many of the windows are in memory of our confederate dead

W.B. Perdue, Builder

When Mr. Murphree was asked what happened to the 2nd window that was removed from the choir loft, he said he couldn't remember. He said that maybe they used the two windows to restore the one that was renovated by the Morrow children.

Check out EUMC Website for more Homecoming information: www.elbaumc.org/
Website is updated weekly by Jim Gilmer, Webmaster. **HOMEcoming: Feb. 13**