

Chester Dudley Tripp



Born July 25, 1882; died December 22, 1974

That Chester Tripp was born in Chicago and died in Chicago makes him a simon-pure Chicagoan. Counting his many years in Evanston, he lived out his long life here. As a matter of statistics, one can mention his graduating in 1903 from Yale's Sheffield Scientific School and his varied career as a mining and metallurgical engineer and as an industrial consultant. He had many business interests. His great success in these activities enabled him to follow his highly educated tastes and to use his technical skills in appraising, appreciating and acquiring the works of art which always surrounded him. He was literally a patron of the arts, active in the affairs of the Art Institute and, of course, of the Oriental Institute. He was a generous donor to many institutions. Up to his last years he gave to the Art Institute richly of Chinese and other Far Eastern ceramics. Among other donations he gave to the Oriental Institute the rich and significant collection of Hellenistic Roman gold jewelry, which has been on display since 1953.

But beyond this bare outline of his services and donations, which omits more than it lists, it is well to emphasize the characteristics of the mind and taste of the man himself. As a metallurgist, he knew metals; as a mining engineer he was wise in minerals. In collecting jades, bronzes, medieval enamels, and gems, he put these skills to singularly good use. Beyond that, he was truly a universal man, with a wide grasp of history and an intense interest in all phases of civilization. He was equally cognizant of the arts of the remote past, of the Middle and Far East, and of pre-Spanish America. He was a

connoisseur of painting, prints, and drawings. His range of interest was vast. You could see on a table in his library a Mycenaean gem seal, a bit of early Limoges enamel, and an ornament of Maya jade, each a prize of its class, and all harmonizing with their surroundings. On the walls of home and office hung paintings, such as a Titian portrait, and a rich display of prints and drawings. With his taste and knowledge, he acquired the best of each category.

With this background he was a vastly stimulating companion. To be with him in a great museum or amid the stock of an art dealer was to get an education in bronzes, sculpture, pottery, jades, or whatever else caught his interest. His mellow sense of humor never failed. His incisive comments and his vast historical and aesthetic background were a constant delight to his friends. His mind and memory were keen to the very end. He traveled constantly and widely. His death prevented a cruise he was about to take. He got more from life than is given to most. He will be sadly missed.

NORMAN S. PARKER

Norman S. Parker, member of the Oriental Institute and a former member of the Visiting Committee, was a long-time friend of Mr. Tripp's.