

with the idea that eventually there would be inflation "managed or otherwise," and as a result of his wisdom the invested capital of the Society increased four-fold. Yet to him funds were but a means to an end. Never once in the twenty years during which he paid the bills which I, as librarian, incurred, was there a breath of difference between us. From my first day in Worcester I found that I had in him an ally and a hearty supporter of every library project which I advanced. "Choose your professional executive carefully, then take his advice as to his business and support him to the hilt" was Chandler's motto in all of his directorships.

During the last decade of Chandler's life he was an example of courage which shamed the rest of us. Almost blind, quite feeble, he nevertheless went to his office regularly, and attended meetings when the weather kept young men home. Of course it was the determination of his wife, Mabel (Richardson) Bullock, that he should do what he wanted to do, which made his late activity possible. He died as he would have wished, shortly after returning from a busy day in Boston. He is survived by Mrs. Bullock, their four daughters, and many grandchildren.

C. K. S.

JOHN W. HIGGINS

In the death of John Woodman Higgins, the city of Worcester lost one of its leading citizens. He was born in that city on September 1, 1874, the son of Milton Prince and Katharine (Chapin) Higgins. His father was a college professor who left the classroom to found manufacturing industries which have been largely responsible for the tremendous growth of Worcester. His childhood there was a happy one; its high light was a bicycle race in which he established a record which still stands. In 1896 he graduated from Worcester Polytechnic Institute and immediately entered

one of the businesses founded by his father, the Plunger Elevator Company, where he drew a salary of eleven dollars for a fifty-nine hour week. His first work was to install an electrical system in the plant. For a decade he served as superintendent and secretary to the corporation, but when the business was merged with the Otis Elevator Company in 1905, he moved to what is now the Worcester Pressed Steel Company, with which he had been associated since its foundation. He served as treasurer until 1912, president until 1951, and thereafter as chairman of the board.

Part of the reason for the success of the Higgins family industries has been their belief that in their products beauty should be a part of function. Art in functional metal work always appealed to John Higgins. While in Europe shortly after his graduation he bought his first suit of armor. Finding later that it was a fake, he made himself a master of the history of the armorer's art. When in 1911 his collection outgrew his home, he transferred it to the building of the Worcester Pressed Steel Company, but by 1931 it had grown to the point where he had to build a special gothic wing to house the Armory. He had been greatly impressed by the industrial museums of Europe before there were any in this country, and he always preached the doctrine that every business should maintain its own historical collection so that the workmen, the engineers, and the public could see its growth and function. The history of industry was better written, he thought, in three-dimensional objects than on the pages of books, although he himself wrote a score of articles on his hobby. The Armory has become one of the important museums of the nation. It is best known for its display of well over a hundred suits of armor, but it covers the entire history of metal working. Mr. Higgins once took me aside to see a beautifully polished automobile engine and said, "This is the present culmination of all that art in metal,

but not so romantic to our generation." He was himself very much a romanticist. As a child he had loved *Ivanhoe*; as a collector he marshaled his army of knights.

The Armory was only the greatest of Mr. Higgins' many interests. He was a member of no less than five archaeological societies, and among others, a director of the First Iron Works Association and of the Early American Industries Association, and a president of the Business History Society. His first connection with the American Antiquarian Society was a voluminous correspondence with Mr. Vail in regard to the bibliography and auction sales of armor. He was elected to the American Antiquarian Society in 1934, but at that time we had to compete with his interest in trying to revive jousting as a sport. In his later years he attended our meetings as regularly as the demands of his other organizations would permit. He was one of the pillars of the social service institutions of Worcester. As a young man he was a Sunday School superintendent, and for seventy-five years, many of them as president, he was active in the Y.M.C.A. Naturally he earned many honors, some of them from foreign organizations, but he seemed most pleased with the degree of Doctor of Engineering which he received from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in 1953. He attended our last annual meeting and seemed to enjoy himself particularly well. He died quietly at home the next morning. He is survived by his wife, the former Clara L. Carter, and by three children, Carter C. Higgins, Bradley C. Higgins, and Mary Louise (Mrs. Charles F. B.) Wilding-White. His will provides for the perpetuation of the Armory.

C. K. S.

EDWARD ALEXANDER PARSONS

The death of Edward Alexander Parsons in New Orleans on February 19, 1962, deprives the Society of a colorful and faithful member.

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