

November 28th, 1950.

The President and Board of Trustees,
The City Library Association,
Springfield, Massachusetts.

Gentlemen:

It is with a keen sense of regret that I tender my resignation as director of the George Walter Vincent Smith Art Museum to become effective January 1st, 1951. It is one solution which may give some relief to our serious financial situation.

If it meets with your approval I should like to remain for the present as curator, working only part time, as there are things to be done which only I am informed on, work begun which I should like to see completed or at least well under way, work which the multitudinous demands upon the director have made impossible of accomplishment in a museum as active as ours.

January will mark the close of my forty-seventh year as an employee of this Association. The something more than twenty years in which I have served as curator and director have fallen within a ten year depression, the Second World War, and the post-war inflationary years. In fairness to myself and for your information a brief review of accomplishments would seem to be in order at this time.

In 1930, when I became director our building was badly in need of repairs and was completely unorganized for the work of a modern museum. This was due to fact that funds were totally inadequate until the Smith endowments became available. We lacked such working tools as desks and suitable chairs, lockers, etc. The basement was filled with materials which the fire department officials declared a fire hazard. Physical changes were necessary. New skylights were built throughout the second floor of the main building, new air vents on the roof, windows in the sculpture hall re rebuilt, heating equipment was modernized, The lack of storage space has been partially met by developing mezzanine floors where ceiling heights made it possible. The library has been reorganized and new metal stacks installed. These are but a few of the many developments.

Despite the fluctuations from feast to famine in our budget, we have put to public use one third more of the floor area of the building. This includes the children's workshop, the jade gallery with its beautiful, simple cases, the loan exhibition gallery, craft room, and the lower corridors.

The educational work was started by the writer in 1915 and has continued to develop to the point where we now serve, not only the children but the adults as well. The museum is active both day and night with as many as four or five activities going on simultaneously on a single night. In 1930

we established the policy of bringing loan exhibitions to the city. Musicals, lectures, film programs were added next. Co-operation with the public schools began in 1915. An educational collection of objects was started during Mr. Smith's life and has continued to grow.

Not being able to add to the Smith Collections, loan exhibits have been an important factor in keeping the museum alive and in touch with contemporary trends in the art field. We have brought many outstanding exhibits to the city and have promoted a policy of presenting promising young artists. Our international salon of photography ranks among the top salons of the world and has given us a world wide reputation. We have published numerous catalogs for exhibits, the most important one being that for the Inness exhibition celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of this museum. For seventeen years we have published a bulletin. Within the last few years numerous objects from our collections have been published in important new art books. Several others are to appear within the next year.

Early in my directorship all the paintings were cleaned, revarnished, and in some instances relined. This work should be done again to preserve the paintings. The collection of Japanese arms and armor and kindred objects were cataloged by an expert, as were the lacquers and some other items. This is in manuscript form and I desire to recheck it and transfer to cards. The Chinese porcelains have been examined by Ralph Chait of New York, and in accordance with his suggestions I wish to rearrange them to give them the importance their due and which they merit. There is considerable data dealing with the contents of the museum which should be put into permanent form, data which only I am cognizant of due to my long association with the museum and Mr. and Mrs. Smith. Hence my desire to remain as curator for a while.

The director has had the training of staff members. Here the over-
turn has been considerable in times of stress due to the fact that we have been unable to pay adequate salaries. The staff has had no benefit of "cost of living" increases. The fact that we can employ only older men past their prime has placed a greater burden on the director and the women of her staff. Despite these conditions staff members have been unbelievably loyal and devoted.

May I express my sincere appreciation for your confidence in me and the freedom of action always accorded me within the limitations of our budget. I have loved my work and have endeavored to give the best that was in me.

Respectfully submitted,

Curator and Director.