

FOREST S. PARKE

It was my pleasure to have known Forest S. Parke during the later years of his life since Mrs. Parke and he were members of a class which I taught at First Baptist Church. However it was at the Lansing Public Library where I came to know and appreciate him because of our frequent meetings and conversations.

The library was a vital and essential part of his world. Nearly every day he would walk from his West side home to the former public library building on Shiawassee Street where he would spend several hours in reading and browsing. His reading taste was unpretentious. He cared little for mysteries, westerns or romances but enjoyed stories which dealt with men, boys, dogs, families, clean humor and biography. Forest truly appreciated the fine treatment invariably afforded him by every person on the library staff. Because of his nearly complete loss of hearing our many conversations in the reading room were overly loud but these were always kindly overlooked.

Forest had a rare sense of humor. He was a staunch Republican and one of his little jokes was to accuse me, each time we met, of being an F.D.R. Democrat. Other times when we would meet on North Washington avenue he would greet me sternly but with a twinkle and state, "You go over to the other side of the street. Can't you see I'm working this side?"

Forest was a kind and gentle man of the old school. The lives of all who knew him were enriched because he passed this way.

Loy B. La Salle

