

DR. HELEN CHAPIN, EXPERT ON ART, 55

Authority on Works of Far East Dies in Washington— Had Served Government

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, March 2—Dr. Helen B. Chapin, internationally known student of Far Eastern Art and Iconography, died yesterday at Doctors Hospital. She was 55 years old.

Dr. Chapin had been in ill health since her return a year ago from Korea, where she had served for two years as an Asiatic Art and Monuments specialist for the Department of the Army. Previously, she had served for four years in Washington as a research analyst in Chinese and Japanese for the Department of Justice.

A native of Wayne, Pa., Dr. Chapin was the daughter of the late George Walter Chapin, a Philadelphia textile merchant, and Mrs. Chapin. She attended Baldwin School and Bryn Mawr College, where she was graduated in 1914. She received her Master's degree in 1935 from Mills College, Calif., and her doctorate for work in the field of Oriental Languages and Literature from the University of California in 1940.

After leaving Bryn Mawr, Dr. Chapin worked for three years in the Boston Museum of Fine Art's Department of Chinese and Japanese Art. Later she served for a time as secretary to the American Consul at Shanghai, and subsequently as English secretary to the Japanese National Research Council in connection with the meeting held at Tokyo of the Pan Pacific Science Congress.

Dr. Chapin traveled in the Far East from 1929 to 1932 on a research fellowship from Swarthmore College, and in 1933 served as acting curator of the Japanese collections at the College University Library.

She was the author of many articles in learned journals, the most recent being, "Asian Horizon," "Artibus Asiae" and "Harvard Journal of Asiatic Study." Her books included, "Poems from the Chinese" and "A Collection of Translations," with a preface by the late Laurence Binyon. In 1937 the Eucalyptus Press published a collection of her poems, "Echoes." She also had edited a small periodical, "Leads From a Western Garden."

Shortly before her death, Dr. Chapin donated her library and collection of Oriental Art to Bryn Mawr College.

A sister, Mrs. Truxton Crave of 59 East Ninety-fifth Street, New York, survives.