

DIGNITARY WITH GROOM AND HORSES. *Attributed to Chao-T'izu-Ang (end of 13th century). Colours on silk. 12¼ in. x 28½ in. Kent Collection.*

A notable event during the year to lovers of Chinese art was the transference of the Chinese collection to the Kent Gallery. This fine display at the entrance of the National Gallery ensures that each visitor must glimpse at least something of the art of the most intelligent and beauty-loving of peoples.

The collection, although not large, ranks high in quality. It has been fortunate in generous donors, amongst the earliest of whom were the late J. T. Hackett and Dr. G. E. Morrison. But not until the return from the East of H. W. Kent, and his endowment of the people of Victoria with over 400 superb pieces, were we able to view Chinese ceramic art of the highest quality in the Chinese taste. This generous citizen remains as the honorary curator; and assisted by his advice and taste the Felton trustees have purchased further fine exhibits. Their far-sighted policy in so doing is now apparent with the total collection so readily accessible. The Howard Spensley bequest too has contributed good ware.

The range of Chinese art over at least 4,000 years is covered by the exhibits, some of which are in reserve. The earliest prehistoric ware, finely painted pottery of the late Stone Age, forms a well chosen group. Then come the Shang (1766-1122 B.C.) and early Chou bronzes, regarded as among the world's artistic treasures. Although our collection is as yet small there are several choice specimens, including a pair of famous cauldrons purchased by the Felton trustees.

Of the wares of the great Han dynasty (206 B.C.-226 A.D.) when the Chinese empire touched the Western world, and its silk was eagerly sought by Rome, there is a representative group of excellent quality, including early glazed and painted wares, tomb-figures, and a fine wall tile from the Kent collection with lively animal and human motifs.

After a period of warfare and subdivision, China was again united under the T'ang dynasty (618-906) and once more in free contact with the West. Now ceramic forms are almost Elizabethan in their opulence, reflecting an outward-looking, tolerant and naturalistic age. An excellent series of tomb-figures is exhibited, including magnificent Bactrian horses from the Kent collection, and other fine wares glazed, or decorated with unfired pigment.

In the period of the Sung emperors (960-1279), a time of withdrawal, inward-looking and self-culture, we are fortunate in a group of wares of superlative quality reflecting the scholarly Chinese taste in its most conservative aspects. The white Ting ware, and such celadons as the fine mallet-shaped vase in the Kent collection and the exquisite small tripod purchased by the Felton trustees reflect this taste. The more romantic outlook is represented by the Tzuchou ware.

The Ming wares (1368-1644) display a return to the romantic taste of the T'ang dynasty. Now comes the age of blue and white porcelain and multi-coloured decoration. Choice early blue and white is finely represented by Felton purchases, and this bequest has also secured rare examples of the early polychrome wares. The so-called three-coloured ware is well shown in Kent and Felton groups, and the large blue monochrome dish of the Felton bequest is a notable piece.

With the Ch'ing dynasty (1644-1912), until its time of artistic decadence in the late 18th Century, we reach an age of exquisite craftsmanship. Now all things seem possible to the potter. The Kang-hsi (1662-1722) blue and white, red and other monochromes; the green, yellow and black families, are all represented, as are the simpler, often more archaic forms of Yun-chen (1723-1735), and the rose family and other remarkable wares of Chien-lung (1736-1795). The exhibits are finely chosen, although this age would permit of further amplification in the collection.

There are also finely carved hard stones, such as the Shang and Chou jades purchased by the Felton trustees; and a small group of statuary of which the Kuan-yin, also a Felton purchase, is of the highest quality.

The Chinese treasure their paintings perhaps beyond all else. These are represented, although as yet we have not obtained examples of their exquisite early works. Perhaps some day opportunity will come to us.

Meanwhile our citizens may congratulate themselves on a collection which is first-class.

LEONARD B. COX.

HORSE. *Mortuary ware; pottery, unglazed, painted with unfired pigments. Han Dynasty (B.C. 206-220 A.D.). Height 12 in. Kent Collection.*



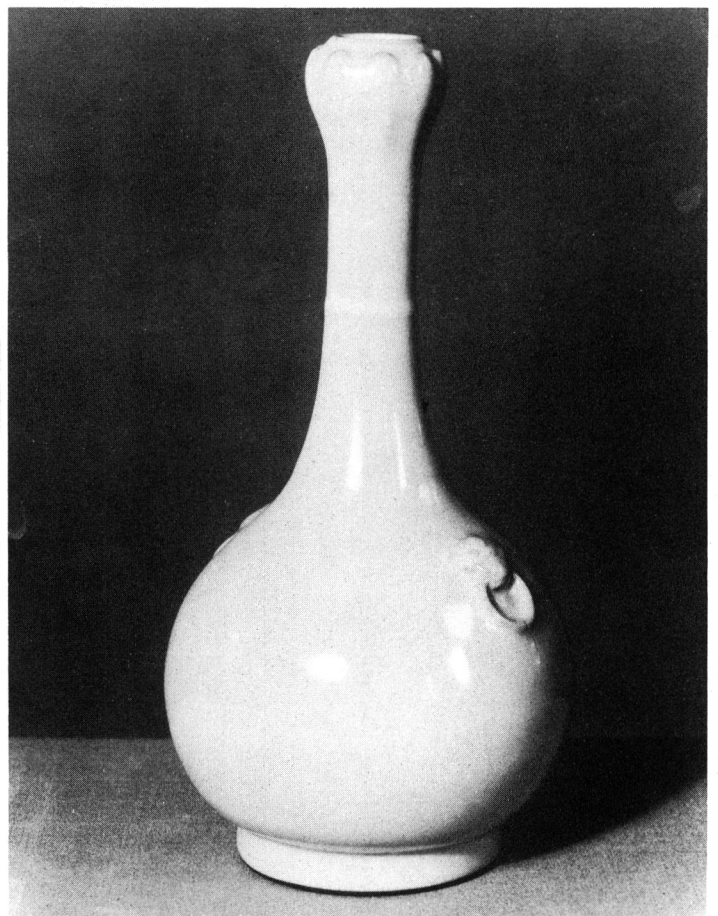


TRIPOD CALDRON (TING). *Bronze. First Stylistic Phase; Shan Yin Period (B.C. 1766-1122). Height 12 in. Felton Bequest.*



VASE. Pottery, baluster form, design of figures, pine trees and house carved under purple, yellow and blue glazes. Ming Dynasty (1358-1644). Height 11 in.

Kent Collection.



VASE. Porcelain, bottle shape, with slender neck, Clair-de-lune monochrome, Yung Ching Period (1723-1735). Imperial mark. Height 13 in.

Kent Collection.



NEOLITHIC JAR. Pottery, decorated in dark and light brown on buff ground. Yan Shao Dynasty (Circa B.C. 3500-2000). Height 15 in.

Felton Bequest.



PLATE. Porcelain, with flower design under Celadon glaze. Northern ware. Sung Dynasty (960-1279). Diameter 7½ in.

Kent Collection.



WILLIAM FORD (18?-1880). *Picnic Party at Hanging Rock, near Mount Macedon*. Oil on canvas, 30 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. x 45 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. Purchased, 1950.

Very little is known of William Ford except that prior to coming to Australia from England in 1870, he exhibited at the Royal Academy between 1848 and 1864. He settled in Melbourne and lived in Inkerman Road, St. Kilda, and became a friend of Louis Buvelot. Presumably he was a teacher of painting, as it is known that he was Rupert Bunny's first master and that he painted in enamels and made designs for paisley shawls. William Ford, as the picture shows, was a very competent painter and it is regrettable that apart from "A Madonna and Child" in All Saints Church, St. Kilda, and a few minor watercolours and drawings, no other works by him are known. It is hoped that the future will bring others to light by this extremely interesting and little known painter.

This work which depicts an incident in Victorian country life of the 1870's, apart from its charm and aesthetic qualities as a work of art, is of great historic interest as it shows us the costumes worn in the period against its delightful rural setting of Hanging Rock.



LLOYD REES. *Omega Pastoral*. Oil on canvas, 31 in. x 42 in.

Felton Bequest, 1950.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS TO THE ART GALLERY INCLUDE:

OILS

Picnic Party at Hanging Rock, near Mt. Macedon	William Ford	Purchased
Reclining Nude	William Frater	Purchased
Durack Range	Sidney Nolan	Purchased
Boy in Costume	Justin O'Brien	Allan R. Henderson Donation Fund
Irrigation Lake, Wimmera	Arthur Boyd	Purchased
The Mariachis (Street Singers)	Raymond Glass	Purchased
Santa Chiara, Assisi	Ena Joyce	Purchased
Canal, Chartres	Harold Greenhill	Purchased
Omega Pastoral	Lloyd Rees	Felton Bequest
Still Life	A. M. Plante	Purchased
Apples and Pears	David Strachan	Purchased

WATERCOLOURS

Wet Day, Pimlico	John S. Loxton	Purchased
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DRAWINGS

Flemington Hill, 1865	T. S. Gill	Purchased
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ART MUSEUM

Wall Mirror, Carved and gilded, William and Mary Period (1688-1702)		Felton Bequest
Nine pieces of English Glass		Felton Bequest

GENEROUS DONATIONS TO THE NATIONAL GALLERY AND ART MUSEUM INCLUDE:

The Blind Beggar	Peter Purves-Smith	Presented by the artist's wife
Landscape with Horse	James Stark	Bequeathed by W. C. C. Cain
The Land of the Golden Fleece	Sir Arthur Streeton	Bequeathed by W. C. C. Cain
Paisley Kashmir Shawl; Late 18th Century		Presented by Mrs. E. E. Bartlett
Cased Watch, Gold and jewelled, by Joseph Johnson, of Liverpool (fl. 1796-1830)		Presented by D. A. Beath, Esq.
Needlework Sampler, 1849		Bequeathed by Maria Jane Dunlop

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Front Cover — SEATED KUAN YIN *Wood, polychromed. Sung Dynasty (960-1280 A.D.). Height, 47 in. Felton Bequest.*

Back Cover — TILE *Pottery, relief of plants and birds, hunter and tiger, lion's head holding a ring. Han Dynasty (B.C. 206-220 A.D.). 18 in. x 14¼ in. Kent Collection.*