



Cecil And Ida Green, Philanthropists Extraordinary

Robert R. Shrock

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Cecil and Ida Green made a fortune almost by chance. In 1941 they bought a quarter share of a faltering oil exploration company; government contracts during the war led to the creation of a small instrumentation division that became Texas Instruments. In 1954 scientists at Texas Instruments created the first silicon transistor, and the rest is history. What is remarkable about the Greens, however, was their joint decision to share the fruits of their success as widely as possible. Their donations of more than \$150 million have left an indelible mark on American scientific and medical education. This warm, anecdotal biography by the Greens' longtime friend, MIT geologist Robert Shrock reveals the human impulses that led to their success, the unique combination of the analytical and the personal that they brought to their business decisions and to their investments in humanity's future. Shrock describes the early years of the Greens' life together in and around Texas, exploring for subsurface structures possibly containing oil and gas: fifteen years of hard field work followed by ten years as geophysical entrepreneurs. He follows the transformation of their first acquisition, a risky geophysical venture, into the wildly successful Texas Instruments. Their fortune made, Shrock details the decades in which the Greens imaginatively shared their wealth - funding academic buildings, hospitals, health care centers, libraries and other civic buildings; endowing professorships, fellowships, and scholarships in ten different schools and research institutions; assisting in founding two new colleges - at the University of Texas at Dallas and at Oxford - and an innovative educational audio-visual TV network in Dallas. In choosing their grantees, Shrock notes, they applied exactly those analytical skills that had paid off in business decisions: the Greens could be as hard-nosed in dealing with the cost-benefit aspects of redistributing wealth as in amassing it. At the same time their approach was always intensely personal and direct.

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