

Pardee Home Museum Newsletter

Fall 1994

Volume 1 Issue 2

Collection Spotlight

“The Witching Weed” Pardee exhibit features family’s collection of pipes and smoking artifacts

On exhibit through January 1995 are over 75 objects illustrating tobacco use by the Pardee family, their employees and by other societies from around the world. The items include pipes, cigar cases, matchbooks, and snuff boxes collected by Mrs. Helen Pardee between 1875 and 1947. They range from English clays and briars to a long Turkish chibouque and an Oriental water pipe. A Chinese opium pipe with its paraphernalia is also shown along with a postcard of a smoker from a San Francisco Chinatown opium den showing how the pipe was used.

When these objects were used or collected health concern about the effects of smoking were minimal, and little social stigma existed to the degree we know today. The Pardee’s medical books have no mention of any deleterious effects.

Tobacco smoking was considered an enjoyment shared equally by people of all social standings and all around the world. Yet references to what were then little understood effects of smoking do exist. As far back as Elizabethan times a writer had referred to tobacco as the “witching weed” insinuating the aspects of tobacco’s “seductive” properties and the frequent addiction that ensued.

The exhibit is divided by those objects collected for their aesthetic and ethnographic value, and those objects actually used by the family and their employees. Also in the collection are smoking-related advertisements.

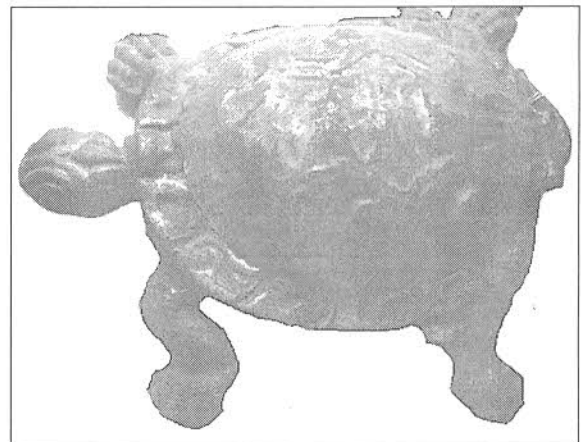
The ethnographic pipes feature a Maori example from New Zealand and a brass pipe from the Philippines. Tobacco smoking came relatively late to the Eskimo, and the ivory, wood, and metal pipes are in sharp contrast to the *steatite*, soapstone, pipes made by California Native Americans.

American-made pipes are represented by figural clays, including an early redware, possibly depicting George Washington, and three presidential campaign pipes from the 1840’s and 50’s. Hand-carved and corncob pipes suggest “Yankee ingenuity,” a craft from the unavailability of more standard materials.

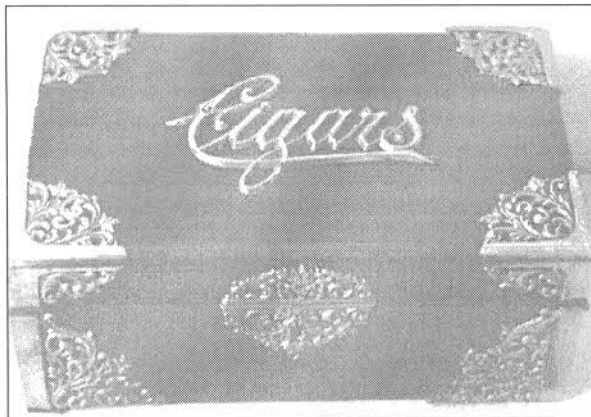
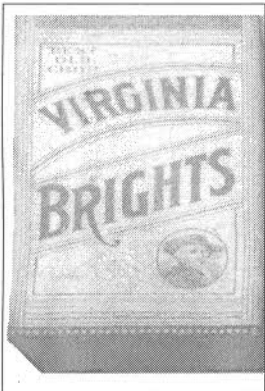
A group of objects show tobacco advertising and its influence on everyday life in the U.S. The Pardee daughters even collected the strikingly printed cigar bands in scrapbooks, including one honoring Governor Pardee. That smoking was considered a relatively innocent pleasure is evidenced by two candy containers in the form of cigars, and others that imitated snuff cans.

Pipes served a function as souvenir items as well —the tomahawk pipe is a tourist piece, possibly purchased at one of the World’s Fairs visited by the Pardee family. No evidence exists of smoking by Enoch Pardee but George smoked cigars until the Depression era, hand-rolling his own like the majority of smokers at that time. His daughter, Helen, also took up smoking when it became acceptable for women in the 1920’s. Employees smoked and chewed tobacco, as evidenced by cigarette boxes and pipes that were discarded in the barn. The two turtle-shaped spittoons that were kept in the worker’s areas are shown in the photo above right. When the turtle’s head is stepped on, the back “shell” flips up where the chew could be spit.

-H.C.



Cast iron turtle spittoon in the Pardee collection



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(510 444-2187)

JOIN US IN OCTOBER FOR A SPOOKY EVENING OF EDGAR ALLAN POE & HOUSE TOURS. See page 4 for details....

Archives Spotlight

Dr. Enoch Pardee (1827-96) served in several political offices locally and statewide, including California State Assemblyman (1871-72), Mayor of Oakland (1876-78), and State Senator (1879-82).

The following is an exchange between a reporter and Dr. Pardee during his campaign for State Senator. This is from a newspaper clipping in a scrapbook in the Pardee collection. The exchange is amusing when contrasted with present day interviews of political candidates. I find Dr. Pardee's barbs at the reporter to be quite striking, but while things have changed, they have also remained the same—there was, and still is, an adversarial relationship between politics and the media. But as Enoch demonstrates here, he clearly had the upper hand.

-M.R.

DR. PARDEE INTERVIEWED

REPORTER—Dr. that you are a candidate for office, it is but right that the people should know of you and your antecedents. Will you please give me a brief synopsis of your life, that it may be published in the "TIMES."

ENOCH—I tell you my dear fellow, there are two or three things in this world that I very much dislike, and the one thing that I most abominate is to have a reporter apply the pumphandle to my stomach and lift the sediment that has been deposited there during the last half century and have a chemical analysis made, so that the dear people may know the elementary principles of which I am made up. I believe that you reporters have the power to psychologize the poor victims that you may wish to devour, by first getting them under your control and then you are masters of the situation, for you are determined to make a man say just what you want him to say. Surely, it must be quite interesting and amusing to you gentlemen, to imagine what the next stroke of the pumphandle will bring forth. With all due respect to you, I have no doubt but you pay Mr. Wyman for the privilege of doing this little piece of pleasantry. Let us change the position for a moment, and I become reporter, and you candidate for State Senator, and would ask you to open your mouth so that I could ram down your esophagus my probe, and then with a dexterous movement of the hand pull it out, and place it to my olfactory, and tell you what you had eaten for breakfast, how would you like it?

REPORTER—Dr. that puts the handle on the other side of the "jug" and—

ENOCH—Yes but it gives me the opportunity of knowing what the contents of the jug are, without paying any regard to your feelings and, much less

care for the side the handle is on. And again if you don't treat me decently I'll slip in an ambiguous word that will make the better cause appear the worst.

I say, are you the same individual that applied the prod and the cork-screw to Tucker, Burnham, McElrath, and Foote, and a whole lot of candidates on this "good Lord, good devil," ticket.

REPORTER—I am the same individual.

ENOCH—My dear fellow, you are a remarkable man; with those gentlemen you are master of the situation; you have a power that you do not understand yourself, and do not appreciate; it is yet undeveloped; it is remarkable I must admit. You are the only man that I ever met, that had the power of making a man spew the whole contents of his stomach without giving ipecac or tartar emetic.

REPORTER—I say Dr. where were you born?

ENOCH—I was not born at all, if so I don't remember it though my father was a revolutionary sire, and my great grandmother, before her marriage was a heroine in both the wars of 1776 and 1812.

REPORTER—Little more Roedener if you please.

ENOCH—By purchase this is a bottle of old Roedener, the best brand of all the champagnes. I am so glad to be honored with your company.

REPORTER—Now Dr. Pardee, I trust that you will grant me a favor, where was you—

ENOCH—I say my dear fellow you have a large amount of magnetism, and I begin to feel your influence, and I beg you to excuse me, and if you see anything in my house that you would like as a keepsake, help yourself.

REPORTER—I feel both miserable and happy—because I have got what I did not expect, and miserable because I haven't got what I expected. A mutual good-bye and a warm shaking of the hand, the reporter going out of the front door and the Doctor out of the back door, as good friends as was Damon and Pythias. So ended the interview of a sensitive and sensible man.

"I believe that you reporters have the power to psychologize the poor victims that you may wish to devour...for you are determined to make a man say just what you want him to say."

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Special thanks to **Prime Copy & Prints**, Richmond for donating the printing of this newsletter

MUSEUM NEWS

PARDEE HOME RECEIVES MUSEUM GRANTS:

In August, the Museum received the second installment of a four-year grant from the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation in Midland, Michigan. This \$78,000 grants supports the museum's Archives Access Project to help catalog objects on the computer and improve storage facilities.

Pardee Home has been granted \$1,500 from the City of Oakland's Cultural Arts Division for Technical Assistance. Funds will pay for a consultant to help the Museum complete a Development plan for future fundraising efforts.

Pardee Home Museum staff, along with consulting architects, have just completed a four-month study of the adaptation of the historic Carriage House into a space for changing exhibits, lectures, classroom instruction for local schools, and other programs. More information about this project will be forthcoming in the next newsletter.

NEW DOCENT CLASS BEGINS THIS FALL

The Pardee Home Museum needs more docent volunteers! Docents attend four training sessions with museum staff and then are scheduled to give museum tours about once a month and help out at events. Training is scheduled for four mornings 9:30-11:30 on Saturdays, Sept. 24, October 1, 8, & 15 or on Fridays, Sept. 23 & 30, Oct. 7 & 14. Please call the museum if you are interested in being a part of the next docent class. (510) 444-2187.

Volunteers are also needed to help out with office work, computer input, and to help at events. Please call for more information.

ARE YOU A MEMBER YET?

Join Friends of the Pardee Home

The Pardee Home is an Oakland City Landmark and is listed on the National Register for Historic Places...but we are not owned by the City of Oakland! The museum is owned and operated by the Pardee Home Foundation, a non-profit foundation created by Helen Pardee. Even with a bare bones budget, historic homes are very expensive to maintain. We do have a small endowment fund, but it covers about a third of our annual budget. Please help us maintain this proud relic of Oakland history by becoming a member of FRIENDS OF THE PARDEE HOME. Your annual membership will contribute to our continued operation, our programming, and our educational outreach efforts. In return you will enjoy free admission throughout the year, reduced admission to special events, a 10% discount on our gift shop merchandise, and you will continue to receive this newsletter which we hope you have enjoyed.

Donations are tax deductible. Please make checks payable to the Pardee Home Foundation. Mail to: Friends of the Pardee Home, 672- 11th Street, Oakland, CA 94607.

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 \$ 10 Student/senior \$ 50 Donor \$500 Mayor's Circle
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_____ **I am interested in volunteer opportunities. Please contact me with more information.**

