



PARDEE HOME MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

Oakland City Landmark, 1975
National Register of
Historic Places, 1976
California Historical Landmark, 1998

NOVEMBER 1999

Exhibits at Three Northern California Museums Highlight Treasures of Pardee Home Collections

Three temporary exhibits now open at museums in San Francisco and Ukiah feature objects lent by the Pardee Home Museum. *Ghirardelli: Portrait of a Family: 1849-1999*, showing at the Museo ItaloAmericano in San Francisco until January 9th, includes a painting by Christian Jorgensen; *Drawing from Nature: Early Northern California Landscapes*, at the Grace Hudson Museum in Ukiah until January 23rd, highlights a painting by Raymond Yelland; and *California: 1900 . . . on the Threshold of a New Century*, at the California Historical Society in San Francisco includes one photograph and three documents from our impressive archival holdings.

The Ghirardelli exhibit illustrates some striking parallels between Domingo Ghirardelli, founder of the world-famous chocolate company, and our own Enoch Pardee. Domingo was born in 1817, ten years before Enoch, in Rapallo, Italy; at the age of 21, he emigrated to Lima, Peru and probably would have stayed there if not for word of gold in California. He came to San Francisco in 1849, three years before Enoch arrived from Michigan to seek his fortune. He founded his business, which manufactured and sold candies, sugar loaves, spices, and coffee, as well as chocolate, on Portsmouth Square in 1852, approximately one year before Enoch also established himself, as an oculist, at Portsmouth Square.

Ten years before Enoch built his grand Oakland home, Ghirardelli built, in 1859, a house that might have been far grander than the Pardee Home. The grounds covered an entire city block (the Pardee Home covers one-half a city block), between 2nd and 3rd and Jefferson and Clay, and they featured a fountain and statues of Count Cavour, Giuseppe Garibaldi, Benjamin Franklin, and George Washington! The grounds were open to the public until 1874, when Ghirardelli went bankrupt, and everything — the house, its contents, the fountain, and statues — were auctioned off. The house burned to the ground some years later.

The Ghirardelli and Pardee homes remind us that, from the days of the Gold Rush to the present, successful and affluent San Francisco businessmen and professionals have chosen to live in Oakland and surrounding communities. Besides the first house mentioned above, Ghirardelli, his widow, their children, and one grandchild could claim ten other addresses in Oakland and Piedmont, many of them close to the Pardee Home. Ghirardelli's widow died at 1227 Chestnut; one son lived at Market and 19th; another lived at 1147 Poplar, and a daughter lived at Union and 14th.

The painting lent by the Pardee Home to the Ghirardelli exhibit is a Yosemite view, *The Twins*, by the renowned painter Christian Jorgensen, which normally hangs in the main parlor of this house. The guest curator of the Ghirardelli exhibit,
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The Ebell Society and the Pardees at Forefront of Oakland Culture

In 1876, when Enoch Pardee was mayor of Oakland, the second oldest women's cultural society in the U.S. was founded here. Dr. Adrian Ebell, a leading feminist (male) educator, traveled to Oakland from New York and met with a handful of Oakland women at the historic First Congregational Church to organize the second chapter of the International Academy for the Advancement of Women — only New York had a chapter before Oakland — and to recruit women for the academy's primary program, study-abroad tours of Europe. The next year

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The Ebell Society Club House, which stood at 1440 Harrison Street from 1907 to 1959.



Eleanor, or "Nellie," Pardee



Emily Elliott Pardee

How Palo Alto's Pardee Park Came to Be: A Strange and Little-Known Saga

Amid the lovely homes of central Palo Alto stands Eleanor Pardee Park, a large open space with a modest playground in one corner and little else to command a visitor's attention. Its current state of benign neglect belies the fascinating tales of who Eleanor Pardee was and why this park was named in her honor — tales which, of course, lead right back to our Pardee Home in Oakland.

Visitors to the Oakland home will definitely remember two Mrs. Pardees who lived here — Mary Pardee, wife of Enoch Pardee and mother of George, who died in 1870 at the age of 40, one year after the family moved into this house from San Francisco; and Helen Pardee, George's wife, who presided over this house for fifty years before her death in 1947 at the age of 89 years. However, visitors may not have heard so much about another Mrs. Pardee — Emily Elliott Pardee, Enoch's second wife and mother of Eleanor Pardee, eponym of the Palo Alto park.

In 1879, some nine years after the death of his first wife, Mary, and four years after being elected mayor of Oakland, Enoch Pardee remarried. His new wife was Emily Elliott, an

Oakland school teacher, whose family had moved from Kane County, Illinois, to a farm north of Stockton, when she was six years old. A graduate of the State Normal School in San Jose, Emily had taught school in Oakland for six years when she married Enoch. She was 26 at the time; he was 52, and many people, particularly Enoch's 22-year-old son George, were appalled. Regardless, two years later, in 1881, Emily gave birth to her only child, Eleanor.

In 1896, Enoch died after a protracted and painful illness, at the age of 69. Four months later his daughter Eleanor, or "Nellie," died at the age of 15 from typhoid fever. At this point all hell broke loose between Emily and her stepson George, regarding the settlement of Enoch's sizable estate, estimated at \$275,000. Their bitter dispute became quite the cause célèbre, thoroughly reported in the newspapers of Oakland and San Francisco. To summarize, just as the whole matter was about to go to court, and just as Emily was telling reporters that George was about to accuse her of having a torrid affair with Enoch's male nurse as he lay dying (!), they settled out of court,

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