

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY

Monday, May 13, 2002

Impressionist Still Life Motorcoach Trip

Join us for the day as we visit the Gibson House and the MFA Boston for this impressive exhibit.

Wednesday, May 29, 2002

Annual Meeting

Jeannette Denning: The Life and Times of Martha Gray Davol

Developed through months of reading Miss Davol's private correspondence, this program provides a perceptive look at a privileged girl's life during Fall River's "Golden Age."

JUNE

Date to be announced.

Victorian Tea in the Historical Society Garden

Join us in this beautiful atmosphere for tea in the grand tradition of the nineteenth century.

JULY/AUGUST

Date to be announced.

Robin Lane: Isabella Stewart Gardner - Queen of the Back Bay

Come and enter the world of the "eccentric grande dame of Boston and her talented circle."

WELCOME TO NEW CORPORATE MEMBERS

The Historical Society would like to extend thanks to the following for responding to our recent Corporate Membership Drive. Your support is greatly appreciated!

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A VERY SPECIAL THANKS to Jeannette D. Denning, copy editor of this newsletter and a frequent contributor of fascinating material to its pages. Affectionately known by the staff as "Dr. Betty Nettie," she often goes "beyond the call of duty" in order to be of help. Her expertise and assistance is invaluable and greatly appreciated. As she is unaware of this acknowledgement, any proof errors in it are the responsibility of the other contributing editors!

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

- ❖ **Citizens-Union Savings Bank**, for its very generous contribution of \$2,000. The funds were generated from the sale of their historic Fall River calendar sold at bank branches throughout the city. Special thanks go to Society director **Julie Raposa** for her assistance in this matter.
- ❖ **Jim Souza of New Boston Bakery**, for creating, once again, the magnificent centerpiece that graced the dining room table during the Victorian Holiday Open House. The confectionary masterpiece was studded with nuts and decorated with candy, the whole being surmounted with a peppermint pig, a traditional symbol of good fortune during the Victorian era. Jim also donated the delicious pastry enjoyed by guests at the reception for members on December 8th. Many thanks, Jim!
- ❖ **Mr. & Mrs. William Masterton**, for their continued interest and support in the work of the Society.
- ❖ **JoAnne Brault**, for acting as hostess and greeting visitors to the museum in period costume during the holiday season.
- ❖ **Dr. & Mrs. Paul Dunn**, for their gift of shares of Eaton Vance Utilities (Fd Class A), which realized a value of \$2050. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

CURRENT QUESTION:

- Q.** What part of what street was once called Exchange Street?
- A.** According to Arthur Sherman Phillips History of Fall River, Exchange Street was an early name for the lower portion of Rock Street.

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Spring 2002
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The Fall River Historical Society Report

"BABIES"

This past winter, while the Historical Society was closed for the season, a considerable amount of time was spent cataloguing the vast newspaper collection. The thousands of hardcopy newspapers are tremendously important and historically valuable assets to the archive, especially since it was discovered that in many cases they are not on microfilm at the public library and are the only copies known to be extant. With this in mind, the painstaking process of restoration and preservation of these fragile periodicals was begun.

Old newspapers are filled with invaluable information and virtually present the reader or researcher with a snapshot of any particular day or time. When working with these papers, it is almost impossible not to be drawn in by the headlines and we find that, as Jeannette Denning titled her article in the Society's last newsletter, "the more things change, the more they stay the same." That holds true for one topic in particular: babies. Just as today many are charmed by the looks and antics of the infants of our species, so, too, were our nineteenth-century counterparts, as is evidenced by the preponderance of articles on all aspects of babyhood to be found in papers of the day.

The fascination with babies can be no better expressed than in an article published in the *Fall River Daily Evening News* of March 31, 1877. The dateline: Cincinnati, Ohio; the subject: The Baby-ological Exposition. The descriptions throughout the text are so vivid they may cause the reader to cringe, imagining what it must have been like during the two-day event. The show was a financial success; how could it lose? No mention is made as to what the cost of admission was, but much is said of the show: "Oh, the show, the beautiful show, two hundred babies all in a row, or rather in a double row, for that is the way in which they were arranged around the sides of Greenwood and



Fall River's answer to the Baby-ological Exposition at McWhirr's circa 1900.

Mozart halls, a grand mistake in the management, for in the tremendous crowd but few could see the babies....Babies, babies, everywhere; and not a baby to be seen, but plenty to be heard. The monkey house at the zoo was silence itself in comparison. For four mortal hours, both Monday and Tuesday afternoons, thousands crowded into the two halls to see the babies on exhibition." One can only imagine what it was like in a crowded hall, surrounded by double rows of babies at every wall. Many love the fresh, clean scent of a newly-bathed baby - but what of 200 of them, diapers and all! What if one began to cry and another, being communicated a message by the first in a language not understood by the adult ear, followed suit? Baby wailing in a domino effect could produce a sound level previously unheard of in Cincinnati prior to this expo.

Yet, all the while, visitors continued to marvel at the infants. The babies were divided into Classes A through F: 6 to 12 months; 12 to 18 months; 18 to 24 months; 2 to 3 years; twins; and triplets. Prizes of gold pieces were awarded in various denominations with the exception of the first prize, a \$25 walnut bedstead, awarded to the winner of the 6 to 12 month category. An "Extra Class," with babies under 6 months, was added, with a special premium prize, a "\$5 Greenback."

"Besides the two hundred odd single babies, twenty-two pairs of twins and two sets of triplets were entered for the prizes. A quartette and quintette were 'counted out' by the 'Returning Board,' on the constitutional plea of too much presentation - not of children so much as of families. The little babies got tired of the show long before the big ones did. The first day they behaved themselves very well, considering that they were being pinched and punched and handled in all ways, and a constant stream of strange faces was passing their demoralized line of vision. But the second day they made up for all the shortcomings of the first, for such a howling and yelling and kicking as they kept up! Whew! A whole menagerie; - yes, two or three of them, -at feeding time.... But the end came at last. *Tempus fugit-ed* and five o'clock, the hour for giving out prizes...but the absorbing question among the mammas was who was going to get her just rights. The point was soon settled, (by the committee, at least,) and the disappointed ones, 'by a large majority,' took up their babies and walked, not one of them, however, convinced that the prize did not rightfully belong to her cherub. -Such is life! Every mother thinks her baby the best, the prettiest, &c., &c. So much for the exposition of *biped genus homo*."



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Just as it is doubtful that there would be a baby-logical exposition of this nature at the local convention center in this day and age, so too is it doubtful that the "Baby Jumper" (*see illustration*), would be available for parents of today. This bizarre contraption, from which a baby can be suspended, is composed of a framework through which a series of straps are mounted. These straps can then be passed under the baby's arms and from there it could dangle indefinitely. The device, a "new and highly useful article for the management of Children, in which a child of three months old can be left for hours, with perfect safety and to the great delight of mother and child" would doubtfully find itself on store shelves in these safety-conscious times.



Advertisement from the Fall River Weekly News, August 26, 1848.

On a slightly peculiar note comes this tale from the *Fall River Weekly News* of December 25, 1850. The headline of the story, "Astounding Freak of Nature," would more than likely be found today spread across the front page of the type of newspaper generally found in supermarket check-out lines. It tells of an elderly lady, "aged 81 years," who "died at Lawrenceville of a disease of the bowels. A few days prior to her death, it was discovered that a tumor existed in her abdomen" and "immediately after her death, a post mortem examination was held, and a bony substance of an oval shape was removed." Once this egg-like object was opened, it was found to contain a "fully developed female child!" and "from facts afterwards learned, the woman must have carried that infant for forty years!" According to a niece, the woman recollected that "at one time her aunt believed herself to be *enceinte*" but "to the astonishment of all, the infant was never born."

"About this time her husband died, and from that period until her death her general health was good, and she experienced no inconvenience from the presence of the tumor....The most astonishing part of the whole story is, that a highly respectable physician assures us that the child bore signs of, at least, a probable recent living existence!"

That stories of this type found their way to the front pages of nineteenth-century newspapers is not surprising. Along with the fascination for things unknown, especially the mysteries of the human body and medical science, was a persistent, and almost obsessive, interest in death. In an era named for a queen who, following her husband's death remained a recluse, never changing a thing in his room for the rest of her lifetime, this behavior is hardly surprising. The strict manners that were to be adhered to regarding the practices of mourning were such an integral part of the nineteenth-century lifestyle that, rather than being considered a morbid fascination, they were more an acceptance of the reality of mortality and the inevitability of death.

This is especially true when considering infant mortality which, because of the various epidemics which so often affected children, was so high at the time and affected more families than not. Evidence of this was the essay which was run on the front page of the *Fall River News* on December 4, 1856, entitled "The Baby is Dead." The repetition of this phrase throughout the article creates a mournful cadence as the author describes a family bereft.

"A long black scarf, trimmed with broad, white ribbon, hangs upon the door knob. A death-like stillness pervades the entire mansion; all within moving with the softest tread, and speaking in softest whispers, as if fearful of disturbing the repose of some loved one. Those passing along the street observe the somber scarf, and

the instant change in the countenance betrays the thought, "The baby is dead!"

The widespread acceptance of the symbols of mourning is understood as the loss is said to have been felt by, "not only those who have been familiar with [the baby's] sparkling eyes, but the stranger who received the intelligence solely from the scarf on the door." The intensity of grief is described throughout the essay, where the home is said to have been "robbed of a precious idol," whose "prattling has ceased forever, and...once laughing eyes are closed in an eternal sleep." The sorrow of the mother, who "clings to the lifeless form...as she imprints the last fervent kiss upon its cold cheek," and the father, who "weeps like a child as he bends over the corpse of his lost one," is impervious to expressions of sympathy because "sympathy, at other times consoling, is now of no avail, and the hearts of both suffer the deepest anguish."

The author describes the intensity of the loss of an infant in these closing words:

"Orators may announce a nation's loss in the death of patriot's great and true, and poets sing in touching strains the memory of the dead who have accomplished mighty things - none but the angels of heavenly birth will record the life so pure and beautiful, so early lost."

A recent acquisition in the Society's collection, donated by Joanna Arruda Sunderland, is a memorial piece that stands as testament to the overwhelming sorrow felt by the family for the loss of a young child.

When Valerio Andrade da Ponte and his wife, Maria Candida (Abreu) Andrade da Ponte, immigrated to the United States from Madeira circa 1903, they were drawn, no doubt, like countless others, to the guarantee of a better life in a country where, one heard, "the streets were paved with gold." Settling in Fall River, they began a new life in a city where they found the streets paved, not with a precious metal but with cotton. Their labor, coupled with that of thousands of others, transformed that cotton into gold, but profits, alas, were to be reaped by others. Yet even with the difficulties of making a new life in a foreign city, there were opportunities unavailable to them in their homeland and with hard work and perseverance life would be better. They both found work in the mills of their adopted city, Valerio also working for a time as a mason on the Washington Bridge in Providence, Rhode Island. Of an adventurous nature, he traveled to California sometime in the years prior to World War I seeking work, remaining there about two years before returning to Fall River. Valerio and Maria were to be the parents of seven children, three of whom were to die in childhood: Valerio in 1914, Artur five years later, and Arlindo in 1921. The subject of this memorial piece, Artur, passed away in 1919, not yet two years old, the cause of his death unknown, and he was interred on June 21st in a plot purchased in Notre Dame Cemetery. Is it possible that the child died, like so many others, as a result of the influenza epidemic that then swept the world? Or was it one of the countless childhood maladies that wreaked havoc among that era's progeny? It is unlikely that we will ever know. It was for Artur that a unique memorial was created, found many years later by the donor in the basement of a family home.

Most likely assembled by the grieving parents of the deceased child using materials readily available, the shadow-box-style frame is assembled from rough-cut wood that appears to have been recycled from a packing case. In order to disguise the roughness of the wood, the sides are appropriately lined in black crepe paper, a material long associated with mourning. Lovingly mounted onto a large photographic image of the child is an assemblage of funeral souvenirs including casket mounts and flowers, retained as lasting mementoes of the fleeting nature of life. Mounted onto each corner of the image are four elaborate but crudely cast silver-plate casket handles, touchingly embossed with the words "Our Darling." They are affixed to the piece with an odd assemblage of screws and hairpins, the latter likely belonging to the mother of the deceased child. Secured to the lower center of the piece is a crucifix, cast

From The President

Dear Gentle Members,

A new year is once again upon us, and our garden project is nearing completion. We hope to have a grand opening for the final phase sometime later this year! We shall keep you posted as to when.

To all our friends and supporters who contributed to the Relieve the Debt fund, a heart-felt thanks! Support such as yours allows us to keep moving forward, and doesn't the paint job just look terrific??

We have many programs planned for this year, and I hope to see you at many of them. A really interesting bus trip to the MFA is coming up in May, and there will be other events throughout the year. We have some great new items in the gift store, as well as a "home decor" table, with many materials and items we can order for you. Be sure to stop in and see it!

The garden at the Historical Society is coming into bloom and looking green. Be sure to stop in and enjoy it!

Your President,

Elizabeth Wells Denning

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Patricia Abdallah; Linda A. Beaupre; Barbara Bresslen Brough; Dr. Lynne Byers, DMD; Mrs. Dorothy Cabral; Gary J. Carreiro; Cathy & Dan Croan; Maureen Doerrler; Michael & Anne Duarte; Paul Dumais, Jr.; Mrs. Mary Gagnon; Angie Gastall; Nicole L. Harrington; Michael Keane; Pricella Levine; Renee Looker; Nancy Lown; Atty. & Mrs. Robert Marchand; Donald J. Miranda; Carol & Joseph Mlynek; Rose Moniz; Mike Neronha; Barbara Owen; Maria Pacheco; Beverly Pavao; Mrs. Marjorie Pavao; Donna Perreault; Stella Louise Perry; Barbara & Earl Posey; Kenneth Rego; Lois B. Reitzas; Marilyn Morin Roderick; Mrs. Evelyn B. Sacknoff; Mrs. Lori A. Silva; Joanne Souza; Georgette Tavares; Patricia Texeira; Janice Warren; Patricia Wood

CONGRATULATIONS to Society member and benefactor **Earle Perry Charlton II** on the publication of *The Charlton Story: Earle Perry Charlton 1863 - 1930*. This long-awaited work speaks volumes about the life and continued legacy of the legendary philanthropist. Well done!

A debt of gratitude goes to the following individuals who have volunteered their services in so many ways over the past several months. These very special people who have made the day-to-day operation of the museum much easier deserve a very special thanks.

Nancy Arruda, Shirley Bergeron, JoAnne Brault, Kathy Carey, Therese Chicca, Kathy Croan, John W. Cummings, Janice Curry, Jeannette Denning, Brittany Eckstrom, Anne Fayan, Shelby Ferreira, Alma Foley, Cindy Harrington, Nicole Harrington, Bob Kitchen, Cathy Kitchen, Marilyn Martins, Connie Mendes, Tina Pacheco, Rebecca Robinson, Joan Rosario, David Roseberry, Ellen Shea, Ann Rockett-Sperling, Fern White

"RELIEVE THE DEBT"

The Historical Society would like to thank the following individuals for their generous response to the "Relieve the Debt" campaign.

UP TO \$50

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Sarah Davol Test
M. Jane Welsh

UP TO \$2000

Elizabeth Wells Denning & Jeannette Denning
Grimshaw-Gudewicz Charitable Foundation
Betty M. Welch

Curator's Corner

Victorian Homes Magazine Visits Society

Thanks to the efforts of Cheryl Galvin, a freelance writer whose work frequently appears in the pages of *Victorian Homes* magazine, the Society will be featured in an upcoming issue. Ms. Galvin was very much taken with the museum interiors, especially so during the annual Victorian Holiday Open House, and brought the story to the attention of her editor. The result was an extensive photo shoot in December, the images to appear in a feature article on the Society in the Christmas 2002 issue of that publication. It is hoped that the Society's magnificent fourteen-foot Christmas tree with its forty-one-hundred lights will grace the cover of this prestigious periodical. *Victorian Homes* is the bible of all those fascinated by Victoriana and with its large circulation will give the Society valuable media exposure. It is expected that the 2002 holiday season should be a banner one for the museum.

An Unpleasant Media Experience

A film crew and the cast of the popular MTV series *The Real World* visited the Fall River Historical Society on October 3, 2001, to view the Borden exhibit. The concept of the show is to take a group of young adults of both sexes from various social and ethnic backgrounds, put them together for a period of several months in what is usually a fabulous house, assign them a few projects, and record it all with live cameras in nearly every room. The result is a "live" soap opera with the expected clash of personalities, romances, intrigues and tales of woe. The cast that visited the Society was to have gone to Europe but due to the tragic events of September 11th was rerouted to New England, being assigned the task of collecting materials for a storytelling session they were to present to the public. Needless to say, the cast appeared none too happy about the change of plans, exhibiting all the haughtiness and self-adulation one would associate with some silent-screen prima donna. Arriving nearly two hours late and very much caught up in the fact that they were appearing on television, the "stars" of the show proceeded to exhibit their boredom in every way possible, their visit being cut short by the curator who had had enough. Fame is fleeting and it is hoped that when the inevitable happens and their "stars" descend, our guests do not find life in *"The Real World"* too difficult.

Scrapbook Preservation

An important preservation project was begun in the archive during the winter hiatus and will likely continue for some time. Among the most valuable reference articles in the museum collection are a large number of scrapbooks compiled by Fall River and area residents during the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries. Containing all sorts of clippings pertaining to local history on a myriad of subjects, from obituaries to wedding announcements and defalcations to mayoral addresses, they are, due to their ephemeral nature, disintegrating at an alarming rate. In order to halt this deterioration, the curatorial staff has begun the time-consuming and delicate process of removing the fragile clippings from the decaying album pages in order that they may be transferred to a more stable acid-free environment. It is expected that this work will take many months but is of extreme importance so as to insure their continued preservation.

Massachusetts Electric Co. Grant

A grant in the sum of \$1,006.84 was received from the Massachusetts Electric Company as part of its Small Commercial Lighting Survey Program. Administered by RISE Engineering of Cranston, Rhode Island, the grant provided the funds necessary to install new energy-efficient lighting and bulbs in the archival area. The Society is indebted to Todd Blanchard of RISE Engineering for his courteous assistance in this matter.

Hometown Tourism Weekend

Working with Southcoast Development Partnership and a number of attractions in the Fall River and New Bedford area, the Society took part in the Hometown Tourism Weekend, October 11-14, 2001. Several hundred visitors toured the museum building and grounds, resulting in much favorable comment and generous museum shop sales. The Society will once again take part in this cooperative effort, scheduled this year to take place in May.

New Addition to Museum Shop

In response to visitors' inquiries as to the source of a number of items used in the period restorations throughout the museum, we have added a "Custom Order Department" to the museum shop. The shop can now offer its customers a fine selection of magnificent Scottish lace panels woven on nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century looms in styles ranging from Victorian to Arts-and-Craft. In addition, there is an extensive collection of very fine quality tapestries, throws and pillows guaranteed to delight the most discerning palette. What nineteenth-century parlor was complete without a bell-pull in tapestry or needlepoint - but where to find one? We can offer a diverse selection of many examples from which to choose. Whether you would like tassels and passementerie or magnificent tapestries, the museum shop can help you to create a "well-dressed" interior. Lighting is also available through the firm of Dale Tiffany, purveyors of quality lighting in various art-glass forms at prices far below those of the originals. Please do stop in and view the examples offered or peruse the catalogues available for your pleasure. As a Historical Society member, your purchases are discounted 10% which also applies to any custom order.

CEMETERY WALK PLANNED FOR FALL

This autumn, the Fall River Garden Club, the Fall River Historical Society and the Little Theatre of Fall River, in a joint effort, will be presenting a historical cemetery walk entitled "History Underfoot." The walk will take place in Oak Grove Cemetery, where characters will come "alive" and will tell you about themselves and their part in Fall River history.

The Garden Club is being represented by Claire Melanson, the Historical Society by Kathy R. Carey, and the Little Theatre by Pat Taylor. This Steering Committee has had several meetings to discuss logistics, finances and committee appointments. They have also met with the Park Commission. Many visits have been made to Oak Grove Cemetery in order to develop a walking tour that is interesting and not too long, and can be conducted on safe paths that are not in disrepair. The result of these meetings is a tour that the committee feels will be a success.

Little Theatre is being asked to supply actors for the portrayals and to help with costumes and props. The actors will be given biographies of their characters and will write their own script, bringing each individual to life. Tentative portrayals include: Louis McHenry Howe, Grace Hartley Howe, Lizzie Borden, Earle P. Charlton and Cornelia Otis Skinner. Volunteers will be in charge of transporting the cast as well as assisting in any necessary prop deliveries to the gravesites. The Historical Society will assist by researching the characters. The Garden Club will be responsible for the preparation of the cemetery; they will also host a lecture - Victorian Mourning Customs by Susan Galligan - the Friday night before the tour.

Tour guides will lead groups of 15 to 20 people at a time to portrayal stops, pointing out interesting markers and symbols along the way. A date for the tour has yet to be determined.

Anyone wishing to assist, either as a guide or in transporting individuals and props, can contact Kathy Carey at the Historical Society (508-679-1071).

en-suite with the handles and intended, no doubt, to guard the soul of the deceased and lend visible comfort to the mourners, granting them the certainty that the child was in a better place, safe and protected. A reference to the child's youth and purity is evidenced in the two bouquets of white flowers flanking his image. The flowers include the ever-present funeral calla lily and carnations made of paper and waxed fabric, the green ivy-like leaves symbolic of life, even in death. The artificial blossoms were likely plucked from floral tributes displayed at the funeral and fastened, posy-like, with lead foil of the type once commonly found in cigarette packages. The whole is framed with a wide molding of gessoed wood, finished faux-bois to resemble an expensive burl. The photographer is so far unidentified, but the image can be attributed on the basis of style to Antonio M. Estrella, a Portuguese photographer active in Fall River from 1903 to 1921.

It is difficult for the contemporary observer to contemplate how such a morbid testament to the death of a child could lend comfort to the family of the deceased. While one usually associates this type of funeral souvenir with the Victorian period, this memorial to Artur Andrade da Ponte clearly demonstrates the continuance of the custom well into the twentieth century by people of European heritage.

There is an interesting, somewhat touching, postscript to this story. In 1970, upon the death of Maria da Ponte's husband, a lot was purchased at St. Patrick's Cemetery, where he was buried. She, however, always said that it was her "fervent wish" to be "buried in the same cemetery where she had laid to rest three children." Maria da Ponte often talked about the four children she lost (the three in childhood and a fourth, also named Artur, who, while enlisted in the U.S. Navy during World War II, was declared "Missing in Action" at sea). On May 16, 1979, she passed away, her funeral arrangements being made by her granddaughter, Joanna. Mrs. da Ponte had always believed that the plot she had purchased in Notre Dame Cemetery in order to bury her children had been lost to her as she was unable, like so many others, to keep up with the payments during the Great Depression. Determined to fulfill her grandmother's wish to be buried with her children, she began her search. According to Joanna:

"While [I was] making arrangements at Rogers Funeral Home for my grandmother's interment, the elder Mr. Roger Sr., after hearing my story, informed me to research the old books at Notre Dame and search for the grave site before anything else. All I needed was to find one name and the others would fall into place. He informed me that, although so very many plots were resold under the ordinance of the bishop at that time, that the new bishop had put a stop to it."

Joanna was able to locate the plot and arranged for perpetual care. "It was a bitter sweet moment for me, so sad at the loss of my grandmother and so gleeful at the discovery of her grave," she wrote. "I only wish that she could have known before dying that she would be laid to rest with her three children."

BABIES IN CONTRAST

At the close of the last century, the city of Fall River was the largest producer of cotton cloth in the entire world and boasted a population in excess of one hundred thousand. Families of various nationalities and from a myriad of socio-economic backgrounds all had one common denominator: the baby. From tenements in Mechanicsville to mansions on the hill, these babies were loved by their families and photographed as a means of capturing the fleeting nature of childhood. The following photographs were chosen from the large collection of images in the Society's possession.

Manuel Ferreira & Verneranda (Paiva) Camara immigrated to the United States from Capallas, Sao Miguel, Azores in 1902,

bringing with them their children, Mary, Victoria, Manuel, Adelaida and Florence, and a few precious possessions. Unable to afford a doll for their youngest daughter, Florence, they gave a small stoneware bottle swaddled in a piece of discarded fabric to the child for comfort on their journey to America; this makeshift "doll" is still owned by one of her grandchildren. Settling in the city of Fall River they found work in the textile mills with Mrs. Camara supplementing the family income by taking in washing and boarders, and baking bread. They later opened a small variety store. Of the children born to the family in America two survived infancy, John being the only male. The child has evidently been well groomed for the photographer with



John Camara, photographed by Antonio M. Estrella, Fall River, Massachusetts, ca. 1905.

his hair neatly combed and a small ribbon bowknot lovingly tied as an ornament around his right wrist. On the middle finger of his right hand can be seen a tiny gold ring, typical of those worn by Portuguese children of the period. The heavily starched white cotton eyelet garment worn by the child was most likely the best piece of children's clothing owned by the family, appearing once again in a photograph taken several years later of the child's sister. Of peculiar note is the fact that the child wears no underclothes, the frilly eyelet garment appearing in sharp contrast to the curious lack of a diaper. John's life, alas, was to be brief, the child dying of an unknown cause shortly after this photograph was taken.

Norman Salisbury Easton, a Fall River educator and member of a family prominent in the textile industry, married Lillian M. Phillips in 1899. The couple resided in the Easton family residence on High Street and were the parents of two daughters: Doris Sherman, born in 1901, and Marion Phillips, born in 1903. The lives of the Easton children were to be comfortable ones, brought up in a close family circle with many privileges. Mrs.



Mrs. Norman S. Easton with her daughters, Doris and Marion, photographed by Winona M. Gay, Fall River, Massachusetts, 1903.

Easton with her two daughters, as photographed by Gay, epitomizes the comforts enjoyed by wealthy Fall River families during the Edwardian era. The children are beautifully attired in garments of neatly ironed cotton lawn, ornamented with a variety of pleats, lace-trimmed ruffles and satin bowknots, no doubt the height of fashionable children's wear for the period. Under the loving gaze and embrace of their mother, Marion seems content chewing her fingers while Doris appears somewhat startled, perhaps on the verge of tears. Following her education in Fall River and at the Knox School in Tarrytown, New York, Doris married Edward King Thompson and was the mother of one child. Marion followed in her father's footsteps by becoming a teacher and was an active member of several social clubs and organizations. Unmarried, she was a lifelong Fall River resident until the time of her death in 1989.

Acquisitions

REMINGTON TEA AND COFFEE SERVICE

Recently acquired by the Society is an elaborate mid-nineteenth-century silver-plated tea and coffee service. The service was once the property of Mrs. Robert Knight Remington and was used in the museum building when the Remington family was in residence for eight years, beginning in 1870. Having descended in the family for four generations, it was donated to the museum by Christine M. Plante, a great-great-granddaughter of Mrs. Remington.

The six-piece service is comprised of a hot water urn, coffee pot, teapot, sugar bowl, creamer and a waste bowl and was manufactured by a so-far unidentified firm. Cast in a typically exuberant Victorian form, the service is hand-engraved with various decorative devices and elaborate floral garlands. Centering each piece is a cartouche engraved with the initials EAR, the monogram of Mrs. Remington.



Remington silver service

Elizabeth Allen Thatcher was born in Middleboro, Massachusetts, on November 12, 1832, the daughter of Allen C. & Elizabeth Rounselle (Pierce) Thatcher. Born a member of Middleboro's most prominent family, her life was to be a privileged one. She received a thorough education in her native town at Pierce Academy, an institution founded by her grandfather. In 1850, she became the second wife of Robert Knight Remington, a prominent Fall River businessman and founder of the chemical firm of Borden & Remington. The couple was to be the parents of six children, all of whom were to survive into adulthood, an unusual distinction during an era with a very high child mortality rate. She soon became active in the social life of her new home, quickly becoming recognized as a prominent society hostess. In 1869, her husband purchased the former residence of Andrew Robeson and, having the building disassembled and



Mrs. Robert Knight Remington, circa 1890.

moved three-quarters of a mile north to Rock Street, created a home that was to become a showplace among the grand estates on "the hill." Invitations to social events held in the Remingtons' elegant mansion on Rock Street were sought after and, when obtained, prized by their fortunate possessors. Although she was interested in many local charitable and religious works, Mrs. Remington was not an active worker in any of these organizations, preferring instead to give generous financial contributions. She and her family resided on Rock Street until 1878

when financial reverses caused their relocating to a new home, built for Mr. Remington on June Street. Tragedy came in 1885 when Agnes, the Remingtons' youngest daughter became ill while on a trip to visit school friends in Michigan and Ohio. She was stricken at the residence of friends in Cleveland, her parents being summoned and "at once hastened to her bedside, arriving after vexations and delays." Upon their arrival, they found their daughter beyond all hope of recovery and were with her at the end, which came swiftly. Their return journey to Fall River, with the remains of their beloved daughter, must have been heartrending. Tragedy struck again the next year when Mr. Remington passed away after a brief illness at the age of sixty. Following the death of her husband in 1886, Mrs. Remington donated "Remington Hall," an auditorium in the new Y.M.C.A. building, then under construction. Mr. Remington had been deeply interested in religious work and, in particular, the Young Men's Christian Association and this gift of his widow was both a generous and fitting tribute to her late husband. Her life, however privileged, was neither devoid of tragedy nor immune to scandal. According to the *Fall River Daily Herald* for January 26, 1881, the venerable citizens of Fall River were "agog this morning by the news that Warren Barker, late assistant city clerk and a well-known young sport, had eloped with Miss Alice K. Remington, daughter of R. K. Remington, an esteemed citizen" and that "all sorts of gossip was indulged in." The scandal that so titillated Fall River society soon blew over and the popular young couple, who were soon to be the parents of two children, were happily married for nearly fifty years. A nuptial scandal of even larger proportions occurred in 1897, this time centered on Mrs. Remington herself. Word of her impending engagement to her son-in-law, Charles Frederick Borden, widower of her late daughter, Annie L. Remington, leaked out and was soon openly discussed in the city's most fashionable drawing rooms. Fall River gossip mongers delighted in this romantic tale of a sixty-five-year-old matron and her forty-three-year-old beau and watched closely as events unfolded at both the Remington and Borden residences on June Street. Statements issued by the family were anxiously awaited but the impending event was, alas, not to be, Massachusetts state law prohibiting marriage between in-laws. Mrs. Remington quietly spent the rest of her life surrounded by her extensive family and many friends, dividing her time between Fall River and her summer residence at Westport Harbor. Following several years of declining health, she died at her Fall River residence on March 15, 1914, at the age of eighty-two.

Mrs. Remington's silver service is an important addition to the Society's holdings, allowing us to better interpret the lifestyle enjoyed by her family when in residence on Rock Street. The particulars of events discussed around the tea table on which this service resided are lost to us, including, no doubt, fascinating tales of romance, scandal and sorrow. It stands as silent witness to the life of the woman whose monogram it bears.

"A WEE DOCK-AN-DORRIS"

Thanks to the generosity of a Society member and the wonders of EBay, that mecca for on-line antiquing, an interesting shot glass has been added to the collection of Fall River advertising.

The diminutive "shot" is of clear glass with a gilt band applied around the rim. It is etched with the portrait bust of an unnamed man, above which is the phrase "A Wee Dock-An-Dorris," and below which is "Compliments of Jim Campbell, Hotel Reo, Fall River, Mass."

Little is known about the life of "Jim" Campbell. James H. Campbell is first listed in the Fall River City Directory in 1900 as an employee of the Globe Street Railway. Working as a conductor, he continued in that capacity for this, and other railway companies, in Fall River until 1909, when he made a drastic change of occupation to that of clerk at the McKinley Hotel.

Employment there lasted just one year, at which time he was employed as a clerk for a Turner Street concern. It was not until 1911 that Campbell again returned to the hotel business, this time, with only one year's experience behind him, as manager of the Hotel Reo.

Located at 122-126 Third Street, the building which housed the Hotel Reo was constructed ca. 1897 and was known as the Peckham Block until 1938 when it was changed to the Giesow Building. The building contained office and commercial space and was home to three short-lived hostelryes: The Langford from 1903-1907, the Savoy Hotel from 1908-1910, and the Hotel Reo from 1911-1917. The building still stands and many will remember it as home for many years to Lizzie's restaurant.

James Campbell served as hotelier at the Reo, an establishment about which very little is known. It is evident that the hotel contained a bar which accounts for the promotional shot glass. Much can be ascertained from a brief history of the building left in note form by Mrs. Richard C. Brigham in which she states of the Reo, "I have heard this was a shady place." Advertisements of the period state that the hotel was on the European plan and that it offered large, moderately priced rooms. An ad dating to 1913 notes that the Reo was "The leading theatrical house," which may well account for its tarnished reputation.

The building ceased to house a hotel in 1917, after which there is no record of either the Reo or its proprietor. One has to wonder just how "shady" a place it was and what its colorful history must have been.

The phrase etched on the glass is from a song of the same name written and made famous by the popular Scotch singer Sir Harry Lauder, early in the last century. It is his likeness which appears on the glass.

The man who was to become known worldwide as the "Laird of the Music Hall" was born Henry McLennan Lauder in Portobello, Edinburgh, Scotland on August 4, 1870. The son of George and Isabella Urquhart MacLeoud (McLennan) Lauder, he was to be the first of their eight children. A potter by trade, Harry's father died in 1882, at which time his widow moved her children to Arbroath, Scotland, to be near her family. In order to help his mother with much-needed finances, Harry secured a part-time job in a flax mill, working three days a week. At the same time, he attended school and, a born showman, entertained his delighted classmates with imitations of their teacher. The family was to move yet again, this time to Hamilton in Lanarkshire, where Harry and two of his brothers found work in the coalmines. In order to take his mind off this dangerous work, he began singing to himself and soon was doing the same for the entertainment of his fellow workers. With their encouragement, he entered a local talent contest winning second prize and, with it, the chance to perform in small music halls. Thus began a career that was to launch him to international fame and gain him a Knighthood.

On June 19, 1891, Harry married Annie Vallance. For him, it was a genuine case of "love at first sight" and he was devoted to her for the rest of her life. He christened his beloved wife "Nance," and in time wrote for her some of his most popular songs: "Queen Among the Heather", "She is my Rosie" and "She's the Lass for Me." The parents of one child, they saw to it that their son John had all the benefits that his father's successful career could afford. Educated at the prestigious City of London School, John Lauder went on to study at Cambridge University, intending to become a barrister. With the outbreak of World War I, he was called up and served with the 8th Argyll and Sutherland Highland Regiment with the rank of Captain. In December 1916, he was killed in action in France. Grieving for his son, Harry Lauder wrote what was to become one of his best-loved songs, "Keep Right On to the End of the Road."

Following his son's death, he tried to enlist for combat but, rejected due to his age, offered to serve his country entertaining the troops. His offer was readily accepted; performing in the trenches in France, he often came under enemy fire. He

raised huge sums of money touring and selling bonds for the war effort and at his own expense hired one hundred pipers to march throughout Scotland recruiting men. In recognition of his services to his country, King George V bestowed Knighthood on Harry Lauder and henceforth he and his beloved wife were known as Sir Harry and Annie, Lady Lauder.

As England's highest paid entertainer, Sir Harry was able to enjoy a very fine lifestyle at his "Laudervale" estate. Possessing ample funds with which to indulge his fondness for automobiles, he was able to insist upon owning "the best motor car in the world." Touring South Africa in 1920, he received what he called "the biggest cheque I have ever taken for a week's work" and earmarked it for the purchase of a new Rolls-Royce on his return home.

A great blow came on July 31, 1927, with the death of Annie, Lady Lauder. Despite the loss of his wife, the entertainer sincerely believed that "the show must go on" and, as he did following the loss of his son, returned to touring as an antidote for his grief.

In 1932, he purchased an estate at Strathaven, Lanarkshire, Scotland, and constructed a mansion named *Lauder Ha'* which, he said, was to be "a home for all the family." His niece, Margaret, moved in to assume the duties of lady of the house, acting as companion to her uncle for the rest of his life. During World War II, he served his country as he did during the first war and again raised enormous sums for the war effort.

Sir Harry Lauder died at *Lauder Ha'* on February 26, 1950, and was mourned by the nation. Among the funeral tributes were pieces from workmen to heads of state including his friends Sir Winston Churchill and Elizabeth, the late Queen Mother.

His image and a few lyrics from a popular song etched into a shot glass were enough to identify Harry Lauder early in the last century, giving one an idea of his fame. From the coal mines of Scotland to Carnegie Hall, he sang sentimental songs which endeared him to fans the world over. The following was one of his best-loved songs:

Wee Deoch an Doris

There's a good old Scottish custom that has stood the test o' time,
It's a custom that's been carried out in every land and clime.
When brother Scots are gathered, it's aye the usual thing,
Just before we say good night, we fill our cups and sing...

Chorus

Just a wee deoch an doris, just a wee drop, that's all.
Just a wee deoch and doris afore ye gang awa.
There's a wee wifie waitin' in a wee but an ben.
If you can say, "It's a braw bricht moonlicht nicht",
Then yer a'richt, ye ken.

Now I like a man that is a man; a man that's straight and fair.
The kind of man that will and can, in all things do his share.
Och, I like a man, a jolly man, the kind of man, you know,
The chap that slaps your back and says, "Jock, just before ye go..."

(It is difficult to understand the meaning of several unusual words but the following is helpful: "deoch an doris" is Gaelic for a drink at the door, sort of a last farewell drink; "aye" means always; "but a ben" is a two-room cottage; and "ken" is know.)