FAMILY LIFE IN EARLY 20TH CENTURY SANTA MONICA:
THE SPENCER HOUSE SITE.

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ABSTRACT
Recent excavations in Santa Monica uncovered a garbage pit dating from the first quarter of the 20th century. Documentary research linked the deposit with the residence of Ernest W. Cordes, a Santa Monica policeman from 1919 to 1936. The artifacts recovered from the site (LAn-1403), have provided a unique view of family life in early 20th century Santa Monica. In particular, the family's health problems, alcohol consumption, children's activities, ethnic and regional backgrounds were studied.

INTRODUCTION
The Spencer House Site (LAn-1403) is located in a residential area of Santa Monica, California (Figure 1). The excavated portion of the site, consisting of a waste disposal pit, was discovered by the owner of the property, Mr. Steve Spencer, when he was building an addition onto his house. The extent of the entire site, however, is unknown. It is likely that other features are spread throughout additional lots in the area.

Mr. Spencer, not wishing to destroy the site, requested it be excavated. Dr. Paul Farnsworth, Curator of Archaeology at UCLA's Museum of Cultural History, Stuart Smith and Christopher R. DeCorse of UCLA's Archaeology Program undertook the excavation, which was coordinated by UCLA's Institute of Archaeology and partially funded by the Santa Monica Historical Society. The attraction of this particular site lay in its potential to provide insights on the inhabitants of Santa Monica during an important time of its expansion.

The pit is located at 2427 Second St. in Santa Monica on lot 25 (Figure 1) of the Vawter Ocean View Tract. This lot was one of four owned (23, 24, 25 and 26) by Louis K. Lorbeer in 1902 (LACAR 96 1/2). In 1906, lots 23 and 24 were sold to Charles W. Luce (Figure 1) and lots 25 and 26 were sold to Mary E. Vejar. Luce did not hold his lots long, but also resold them in 1906 to Louis F. Denoranville. These lots were sold by Denoranville in
Figure 1. A: Site Location (Lot 25); B: Lot ownership.
1913 to Southern California Home Builders (LACAR 328). At that time, the single story beach house which now straddles lots 23 and 24 was built and then sold to Mr. Ernest W. Cordes in 1914.

Mary Vejar held lots 25 and 26 until the 22nd of November 1917 when she sold them to a George Tourant (LACAR 96 1/2). During this time, improvement and land taxes were paid on these properties, but the amounts of these taxes, as well as the subsequent transactions with the land, seem to indicate that whatever structures were on the properties, they did not include houses.

In 1920, Ernest W. Cordes bought lots 25 and 26 from Tourant. Cordes now owned the four lots originally held by Lorbeer. Cordes held these four lots, 23, 24, 25, and 26 from 1920 until his death in 1936. At that time ownership of the property was held by his widow, Katherine Cordes. Katherine kept the land until she died in 1953, when her daughter, Margaret Jeschke, became executor of the property until she was able to sell it in 1956 (LACAR 328).

During the Cordes' ownership of these lots, there were significant peaks in improvement taxes. On lots 23 and 24, the lots with the original house built on it in 1913, the improvement taxes started a steady decline with exceptions only from 1920-25. This trend did not reverse itself until 1957 when it was under new ownership (LACAR 328). It is interesting to note that the Cordes' second daughter, Margaret, was born in 1921, corresponding to the increase in improvement taxes from 1920-25 on lots 23 and 24. It is reasonable to speculate that her eminent arrival called for some new arrangement in the house (LACMC 1522:237). From 1921-25, land improvement taxes rapidly increased on lot 25 (the present location of Mr. Spencer's house) from $0 to $540. Subsequent improvement taxes decline until 1947 when they rose slightly and continued to do so until 1957 (LACAR 328). The greatest amount of activity in terms of improvement values was for lot 26. In 1923 improvement values on this lot shot up from $0-$1220 and stayed at this rate for another year before slowly beginning to decline. While further research may reveal exactly the nature of what was built in 1923 on lots 25 and 26, it does not seem unreasonable to suspect it may have been a second home of some sort, a carriage house or other form of out building. Since lot 25 was unoccupied before it was bought by the Cordes, the disposal pit is believed to have been linked with them.

Today both lots 25 and 26 are single lot properties, the others are two lot properties. Both Mr. Spencer's and his neighbor's houses are relatively recent, probably built in the late 1950's after the properties left the Cordes' ownership. The pit was covered by a garage from an unknown date until 1979. With the exception of a cement fence post through its middle and the excavation attempts of Mr. Spencer, the site was undisturbed.
THE EXCAVATION

Three areas (Figure 2) were investigated using trowels, brushes and dental picks. All material was screened through 1/8" screen. The first area (unit A) was a 1 meter square unit encompassing the pit. The area directly adjacent to the pit was also marked as a 1 meter square (unit B). Both units butted against the cement footing of a wooden fence, therefore the corner post footing was used as the datum point of the site. Material was collected from the surface of these two areas by screening the backdirt of Mr. Spencer's digging. Excavation of unit A demonstrated that the disposal pit was localized to this unit and further investigation of Unit B was discontinued. Artifacts found elsewhere in the yard led to the excavation of a third unit, C. However, the concentration of modern building materials and a 1971 Lincoln head penny mixed with the other artifacts led to the conclusion that the artifact scatter was the result of landscape grading rather than additional archaeological deposits. This was confirmed during analysis when fragments of the same item were found in units A and C. Unit C was excavated in three arbitrary levels of 10 centimeters each before undisturbed natural strata were encountered.

The major thrust of the excavation was directed at unit A. The soil, a dark brown sandy loam, was taken down at intervals of 10cm for the first two levels. Mr. Spencer had already excavated to a depth of 55cm, so excavations to that depth were focused upon finding the walls of the pit and excavating those areas Mr. Spencer had not disturbed. At a depth of 28cm (the bottom of level 3) the original walls of the pit were clearly discernible. Excavation continued around Mr. Spencer's uneven pit until the excavation could finally be leveled at 75cm. Level 10, at a depth of 75-85cm, represents the first full level below Mr. Spencer's pit that was excavated. Large amounts of material were found at levels 10 (Figure 2) and 11, including bottles, ceramics and metal items. In level 12, at a depth of 99cm, a consolidated dark brown soil was encountered which was interpreted as the lowest limits of the feature.

ARTIFACT ANALYSIS

Despite the relatively small size of the excavation, the Spencer pit yielded a wide cross section of material culture representing daily existence and activities in the early 20th Century. Due to this diversity of material, the analysis categorized the collection according to functional activity groups as opposed to lumping items according to the material of their manufacture. This paper will focus upon the health and hygiene; children's toys and alcoholic beverage containers functional groups. For a discussion of the other functional groups, see Wilkie (1988).
Figure 2. A: Mr. Spencer's backyard; B: Plan view, Unit A, level 10; C: Profile, Unit A, North wall.
Health and Hygiene

Medicine bottles comprise the largest portion of this group. A total of 39 of these bottles were recovered (Table 1). Included among these were 10 prescription bottles: 4 Philadelphia ovals; 3 Prima ovals; 1 Ideal oval; 1 French square, a screw top vial, and 1 Square shouldered round. The Prima oval prescription bottles have been identified as semi-automatic machine-made. This would indicate their date of manufacture as falling between 1899 and 1913 (Miller et al. 1984:85; Newman 1970:72). The 1899 date reflects the beginning of mass production for this method of manufacture, not the date of its invention. With the exception of the French square bottle, which was amber, all of these bottles were of clear glass. This difference in glass color may reflect the nature of the bottle's contents.

Thirteen more bottles in the collection were four-paneled bottles with no embossing. Of these, 11 were clear glass and 2 were aqua glass. Label remains were found on 2 of the clear bottles. Legible on the first are the words "flavored extract", on the second an orange sunburst design is visible at the top of the label. Neither of these has been identified as of yet.

The most informative bottles in the collection are the embossed medicine bottles. Not only do these bottles provide information about their contents and manufacturers, but also serve as a valuable dating tool. The collection contains 16 embossed bottles representing 12 different products. All of the embossed bottles in this collection are a variation of the four-paneled bottle.

This collection includes a proportionally high number of medicines related to curing consumption (pulmonary tuberculosis): 2 examples of 'Shiloh's Consumption Cure', produced by S.C. Wells in Leroy, New York from 1906-09 (Devner 1968:86); 2 of 'Piso's Cure for Consumption' produced by Hazeltine & Co. in Warren, Pa. from 1864-1906 (Fike 1987:104); 'Valentine's Meat Juice' (Figure 3), produced in Richmond, Virginia from 1871 (Herskovitz 1978:16) and Slocum's 'Ozomulsion' (Figure 3). 'Ozomulsion', a Norwegian cod liver oil emulsion, was part of the Slocum System for consumption which also included 'Psychine', 'Ozojell', 'Lazy Liver Pills', 'Coltsfoote' and 'Expectorant' (Devner 1968:87). 'Ozomulsion' was first produced in the early 1880's, but did not become popular until it was the focus of an advertising blitz in 1905. The product was described as "destroying all poisonous bacteria in the blood, lungs, stomach and entire human organism . . . a flesh forming food medicine for thin women, emaciated men, worn out mothers and thin children" (Fike 1987:175). 'Ozomulsion' continued to be produced until 1915 (Devner 1968:87). Likewise, 'Valentine's Meat Juice', was advertised as being beneficial "In all forms of Fever, Extreme Exhaustion, Critical Conditions before and after operations, when other Food Fails to be retained..." It has also been suggested that Valentine's was one of many cures for 'social diseases'
# TABLE 1  
**MEDICINE BOTTLES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shape</th>
<th>Shoulder Height (in cm)</th>
<th>Finish</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Embossing</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Philadelphia Oval</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>prescription</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia Oval</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>prescription</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia Oval</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>prescription</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prima Oval</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>prescription</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prima Oval</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>prescription</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prima Oval</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>prescription</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal Oval</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>prescription</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Square</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>prescription</td>
<td>amber</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Square shouldered round</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>wide mouth</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>CLCCO D</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paneled ball neck</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>extract</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paneled ball neck</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>extract</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paneled ball neck</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>extract</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paneled ball neck</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paneled ball neck</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>oil</td>
<td>aqua</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>aqua</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root beer extract</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>prescription</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castoria</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>double bead</td>
<td>lt. green</td>
<td>Dr. S. Pitcher's Castoria</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caster oil</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>oil</td>
<td>aqua</td>
<td>Chamberlain's Cough Remedy/Chamberlain Med. Co.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin Panel</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>bead</td>
<td>aqua</td>
<td>Piso's Cure for Consumption/Hazeltine &amp; Co.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four panel</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>aqua</td>
<td>Shiloh's Consumption Cure</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four panel</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>aqua</td>
<td>Hamlin's Wizard Oil</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castoria</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>double bead</td>
<td>aqua</td>
<td>Compound Ext./Ayer's Sarsaparilla/Lovell Mass USA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarsaparilla</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>double bead</td>
<td>aqua</td>
<td>Dr. Miles New Heart Cure</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madison Panel</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>bead</td>
<td>olive</td>
<td>Dr. Miles Restorative Nervine</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paneled ball neck</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>bead</td>
<td>cobalt</td>
<td>Skootum Root/Hair Grower</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis Flat Extract</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>lt. green</td>
<td>Barry's/Tricopherous for the Skin and Hair/New York/See Directions in the Pamphlet</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paneled ball neck</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>extract</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis Flat Extract</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>...Santa Monica druggist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis Flat Extract</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>...&amp; Moore...Hotel Wadeaux...V.T. &amp; Co.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis Flat Extract</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>extract</td>
<td>amber</td>
<td>Ozomulsion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3. A: Valentine's Meat Juice; B: Ozomulsion; C: Miles' New Heart Cure.
Valentine's would appear to fill the same type of need as 'Ozomulsion'. Their presence in the Spencer assemblage suggests a long term illness.

Two other products found in the collection would also serve to relieve the symptoms of consumption: 'Dr. Miles' New Heart Cure' (Figure 3) and 'Chamberlain's Cough Remedy'. Miles was a druggist who introduced a variety of popular medicines from the headquarters of Miles' Medical Co. in Elkhart, Indiana, including sarsaparilla, nervine and a cactus cure, before retiring in 1904. Today, Miles' Labs are best known for their product 'Alka-Seltzer' (Fike 1987:102). Miles' New Heart Cure was sold between 1888-1919 before being changed to 'Heart Treatment' (Fike 1987:102) and hit its peak of popularity between the 1890's-1905 (Devner 1968:64). 'Chamberlain's Cough Remedy', produced by the Chamberlain Medical Co. in Des Moines, Iowa was marketed from 1882-1904 (Devner 1968:21).

A characteristic of medicines during this time period was their guarantee to cure all ills. Several of these cure-alls are represented in the collection. 'Ayer's Compound Extract Sarsaparilla', produced in Lowell, Massachusetts, starting in 1860, promised to cure anything from scrofula (lymphatic tuberculosis), to ergotism (a condition resulting from the over consumption of parasite infested grain) to erysipelas (a streptococci infection) (Fike 1987:214). 'Dr. Miles' Restorative Nervine', marketed from 1882-1916 (Devner 1968:64), was touted as a remedy for epilepsy, hysteria, neuralgia, backache, sleeplessness, and alcohol habit (Devner 1968:64). 'Hamlin's Wizard Oil', a product that first gained popularity through traveling medicine shows in the mid-1800's, was advertised as a cure for rheumatism and for use with external and internal ailments (Fike 1987:plate 61). Part of the popularity of the product, which was manufactured by Hamlin Wizard Oil Co. and then the Consolidated Royal Company until 1983, was its high alcohol content. It was advertised as containing 65% alcohol in 1902 (Fike 1987:193). This could do much for any ill!

Two products found promised to restore health and thickness to damaged thin hair: 'Skookum Root Hair Grower' (Figure 4), introduced by the Hillside Chemical Co. of Newburgh, NY in 1895; and 'Barry's Tricopherous for Skin and Hair' (Figure 4), manufactured by the Barclay Co. from 1873 onwards (Fike 1987:122). Tricopherous was advertised as "guaranteed to restore hair to bald heads and to make it grow thick, long and soft" (Tibbitts 1969:83). The appeal of Tricopherous, is demonstrated by its longevity: Tricopherous was reported to be still on the market in 1982 (Fike 1987:122).

The last of the identifiable medicinal products in the collection is 'Dr. S. Pitcher's Castoria', "a gentle cathartic especially good for children," (Fike 1987:177) that was introduced by Samuel Pitcher in Barnstable, Massachusetts in
Figure 4. A: Barry's Tricopherous; B: Skookum Root.
1868. It was first billed as castoria in 1871 and continued to be produced by several companies until at least 1948 (Fike 1987:177).

The remaining examples of embossed medicine bottles in the collection are too incomplete to decipher. The first is from an unidentified Santa Monica druggist. The second appears to be from a "Hotel Nadeaux". Its contents are unknown, but are very likely to have been a tonic or the like that would be of use to a traveler. Embossed on the base of this bottle is the 'W.T.&Co. Patent Jan. 5 1892'. Whitall Tatum and Company was a New Jersey bottle manufacturer who used molds with interchangeable plates. This allowed them to stamp the bottles with the names of different businesses. In 1900 the company changed their name to the Whitall-Tatum Co. and probably changed their embossing at that time (DeCorse 1984:16-7).

While medicine bottles are the most abundant of the health related articles, several examples of hygiene practices were recovered from the disposal pit. A complete white semi-granite chamber pot was recovered and reconstructed. On its bottom it bears the image of a griffin and the initials CCTPCO. This mark was used by the CC Thompson Pottery Co. from 1890-1910. The East Liverpool, Ohio company began manufacturing toiletry items in 1889 and closed down production in 1939 (Gates et al. 1982:288). A second ironstone item, a wash basin, was also recovered. This particular example was white with a 38cm diameter and an everted lip.

A perusal of early 20th Century magazine advertisements serve as a testament to the popularity of enema use at that time. Given this, it is not surprising that a nearly complete enema kit including a syringe, hot water bottle and three different tips (Figure 5) were found. A similar kit, produced by the Goodyear Co. was described in the 1897 Sears Catalog: "a fountain syringe made from white rubber, with hard rubber fittings, three hard rubber pipes with patent shut-off" (Israel 1968:329). The example from the collection has a hot water bottle with a one-way valve attaching it via a length of tubing to a syringe pump. The pump also has a one-way-flow valve as it leaves the bulb. This attaches to the interchangeable pipes via another length of tubing.

Children's Toys
It is hard to draw conclusions about the presence, number or sex of the children at a given site based upon the archaeological record alone. In the case of toys, they can often be shared from child to child, or passed on from parent to child. Still other toys may not have functioned as toys at all. The best example of this would be the woman who keeps or collects dolls for display, and accidentally breaks one. Furthermore, despite traditional sex roles, a little girl is as likely to be interested in a tin soldier as a boy, especially if she lives with a household of
Figure 5. Enema Kit, including: A: Interchangeable rubber pipes; B: Hot water bottle; C, D, F: One-way flow valves; E: Bulb pump.
brothers. Lastly, the nature of male and female toys skews the probability of their occurring in archaeological deposits, especially during the period of this site.

Girl's toys included china dolls, toy teaset and other household items in miniature. Manufacturers either believed the common stereotypes concerning the daintiness of little girls, or had seized upon a wonderful way to boost sales, for girl's toys were often delicate and easily broken. Girls often go through teaset after teaset in their childhood, forever stepping on, dropping and losing pieces. Even the most carefully handled china doll has a short life span when given constant love and attention.

At this time, boys' toys were usually made of wood or heavy metal. These toys are more likely to survive the perils of childhood, and thus are less likely to be present in the archaeological record. The toys most likely to be broken or damaged by male children would be those made of wood. Wood, however, seldom survives in the archaeological record. Thus, evidence for the presence of male children is scant and often indeterminate, while material evidence of little girls is often over represented, as seems to be the case for this site.

The Spencer site furnished evidence of female off-spring in the form of at least 2 white porcelain teaset, one of which is molded (Figure 6) and 5 dolls. The other items in this group are asexual: 2 marbles, 1 of white clay with green stripes, and 1 of brown clay (Figure 6), a school slate with engraved lines, a stylus and a copper bell. Marbles like the white striped one were produced in the United States beginning in 1884, and stopped by the end of World War I (Randall 1971:103). Given the nature of the archaeological data, the possibility of male off-spring can be neither confirmed or denied. Only historical data can provide this information.

All of the dolls in this collection are porcelain, 2 are complete heads (Figure 7), the other 3 represent varying degrees of completeness. The 2 complete faces both have white complexions with blonde hair and blue eyes. One is a German-made Herwight Co. doll distributed by Butler Brothers of New York City between 1900-1925. The doll originally had a cloth body with the U.S. Emblem on her chest and the names of the states on her arms and legs (Lavitt 1983:299). Two of the incomplete dolls have pink complexions. There is too little of one to recognize its identity, but it has '9.836 DEB' impressed on the back of its shoulders. The second of these dolls has her mouth intact, revealing 4 teeth that were manufactured as a separate piece of porcelain attached inside the mouth. This doll has 1906 and a horseshoe imprinted in its back. This mark was used by the German company Ernst Huebach (Cieslik and Cieslik 1984:122). The final incomplete doll, of white porcelain, consists only of a single shoulder fragment.
Figure 6. A-D: Porcelain toy teaset vessels; E-F: Clay marbles.
Figure 7. A: Bisque porcelain doll head; B: Ernst Huebach bisque doll head; C: Porcelain doll head; D. Herwight Co. doll head.
Alcoholic Beverages

A variety of alcohol containers were found at the site. Most prominent among these were whiskey flasks, comprising 9 of the 15 vessels. The favored flask shape was the picnic flask, of which there were 2 sizes in the collection, and which could be comfortably carried in one's pocket. The shoo-fly flask, however, seemed to be lacking in some important feature, for only 1 of these was present as opposed to 8 picnic flasks.

Wine bottles were the second most common alcohol container represented. Three wine bottles, each of different size and hue of green were recovered. One example was made in a three piece mold, giving it an approximate manufacture date between 1810-90 (Newman 1970:72). The other 2 were turn paste molds, indicating a manufacture date between 1880-1920 (Newman 1970:72).

An unusual item in the collection is a 'J. A. Gilka, Berlin' brown octagonal bottle (Figure 8) that once held a liqueur known as Kummel. Kummel was a German sweet, colorless, after dinner drink (Ferraro and Ferraro 1964:45). Pressed into the bottom of this bottle is a crest with two people on it. Gilka's signature appears on the front panel of the bottle. One example of this bottle was also found at Fort Bowie, Arizona, (Herskovitz 1978:11) but it was not dated. Ferraro and Ferraro (1964:46) believe the bottle to date from before the turn of the 20th Century. Remaining items include an amber beer bottle and an unidentified amber square bottle with "The contents of this bottle are guaranteed to be pure" embossed on one of its panels.

CHRONOLOGY

The mean date averages from different artifact classes in this site (Table 2) indicate a date sometime in the first decade of the 20th Century. Later material in the site would suggest the date of the pit's origin to be the first two decades of the 20th Century. This would be during the Cordes' residence. The pit is close to the Lot 24 property line. Even if the site were prior to the Cordes' ownership of Lot 25, there is no reason to believe they did not use the unoccupied lot to dump their trash.

It is important to recognize factors that may result in discrepancies between the actual origin date of this particular disposal pit and its contents. In this case, historical evidence may more accurately pin-point the date of this site than the artifactual contents. Most of the datable items in this pit were ceramics or embossed bottles, the majority of these, medicine bottles. The mean ceramic date for this site was 1900.25. On average, ceramics survive long after the date of their manufacture, their life-span being inversely proportional to the amount of handling they receive. Given this, 'good china', or those place settings used for special occasions, can often last to be passed from generation to generation. It is reasonable to
Figure 8. J. A. Gilka Kummel bottle.
### TABLE 2

**CHRONOLOGY FOR THE SITE BASED ON CERAMIC MARKS AND GLASS EMBOSsing**

#### Dates of Production for Ceramic Manufacturers' Marks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Years Mark Used</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>No. Items</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>W.H. Grindly &amp; Co</td>
<td>1891-1914</td>
<td>1902.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mellor &amp; Co.</td>
<td>1893-1926</td>
<td>1909.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Bourne &amp; J.E. Leigh</td>
<td>1892-1912</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Wharf</td>
<td>1890-1894</td>
<td>1892</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burford Bro.</td>
<td>1881-1904</td>
<td>1892.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burgess &amp; Goddard</td>
<td>1870-1891</td>
<td>1880.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEPCO</td>
<td>1893-1910</td>
<td>1901.5</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>John Edwards</td>
<td>1891-1900</td>
<td>1895.5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCTPCO</td>
<td>1890-1910</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butler Bro.</td>
<td>1900-1925</td>
<td>1912.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average** 1900.25

#### Dates of Production for Medicinal Products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Years Manufactured</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>No. Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prima Oval</td>
<td>1899-1913</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shiloh's Cure</td>
<td>1906-1909</td>
<td>1907.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piso's Cure</td>
<td>1864-1906</td>
<td>1885</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ozomulsion</td>
<td>1905-1915</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles' Heart Cure</td>
<td>1888-1905</td>
<td>1896.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamberlain's Cough</td>
<td>1882-1904</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayer's Extract</td>
<td>1860-1980</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles' Restorative...</td>
<td>1882-1916</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlin's Wizard Oil</td>
<td>1860-1983</td>
<td>1921.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skookum Root</td>
<td>1895-1950</td>
<td>1922.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tricopherous</td>
<td>1873-1982</td>
<td>1927.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castoria</td>
<td>1871-1948</td>
<td>1909.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average** 1906.4
assume that those items in the archaeological record are older than the date of their disposal. Secondly, it may be reasoned that the older of those ceramic items were less frequently handled, and/or, more valued, for whatever reasons.

This same type of time lag can be associated with medicinal products. Most medicines are bought for a specific need at a specific time (one would not usually stock up on consumption medicines 'just in case'). Once the product has served its function, the remainder is put in the medicine cabinet in case it can be of service at a later date. It is not unusual to find obsolete medicines lurking behind newer acquisitions in bathroom vanities. Eventually, someone finally decides that room has to be made for different items, and a whole shelf of old medicine jars, tubes and bottles may be discarded at once. Thus, the medicinal products at this site are probably older than the pit itself. Medicine bottles, however, do not seem to last quite as long as ceramics. Their mean date at this site is 1906.4.

Despite these apparent hindrances to dating this site, in conjunction with historical data, it is possible to narrow the time frame for the site. The presence of selenium in several of the bottles, including whiskey flasks, gives a terminus post quem of 1915 (Muncie 1970:55).

Prohibition began in the United States in 1920. Whether whiskey flasks were made during this time for domestic sales is unknown. However, Cordes, as a Santa Monica Police Officer, would probably find it in his best interests to dump any alcohol related items at this time, thus, perhaps explaining the 10 whiskey flasks, 3 wine bottles and the Kummel bottle.

Another factor in determining the age of this site is the age of the Cordes' daughters. Even though the dated doll was manufactured as early as 1900, the oldest Cordes daughter, Irene, was not born until at least 1916. She was probably not given a doll until she was three, and probably not receive a teaset, with small, potentially windpipe blocking pieces, until she was old enough to be trusted not to eat her toys. This would place the date of the site, again, to the early 1920's.

A concentration of nails in the upper levels of the feature may correspond to the construction or renovations indicated in the Los Angeles County Assessor Records starting in 1921. Given these examples, it would seem more likely that the site dates to the later end of the spectrum indicated by the archaeological data.

THE HISTORY OF THE CORDES

Ernest W. Cordes was born to Ernest and Margaret Cordes in Eldred, Pennsylvania, January 24, 1874. His future wife, Katherine (Katie) Vetter, was born in Bon, Illinois on July 6, 1885. Both were the children of German immigrants. When they
married in Los Angeles, in 1909 on September 8th, Ernest was a resident of Rhyolite, Nevada and employed as a miner. They were married by Reverend Hugh K. Walker in the Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles. Mary Vetter, Katie's sister, and Rollin Stuck witnessed the ceremony (LACMC 1908-9:118 184).

In 1914, Ernest and Katie moved into their Santa Monica home on 2423 Main Street (which later became Washington Blvd., Lake Street and finally Second Street). In 1921, on August 12th, their daughter, Margaret, was born. The Cordes had at least one other child, a daughter, Irene, who now lives in Washington State. Irene was born around 1916 or 1917 (Priscilla Forsythe, classmate, personal communication, 8-14-88), and was several years older than Margaret.

Ernest became a Santa Monica City police officer in 1919. The Santa Monica Evening Outlook in 1922 reported Cordes' involvement in a shoot-out at a Bay area creamery between a group of safe-crackers and police (SMEO 1922). The culprits escaped arrest. Cordes' obituary in 1936, reveals that Ernest remained on this assignment and figured prominently in the sensational capture of the gang. During a gun fight with the desperados, the asserted leader of the gang was wounded fatally. Mr. Cordes also was wounded, but his life was spared when the bullet was deflected by a large metal belt buckle (SMEO 1936).

Nothing else of the Cordes' family history has been discovered until 1936. In late September of that year, Ernest Cordes died at the age of fifty-seven. The Santa Monica Evening Outlook stated his date of death as September 29th (SMEO 1936). However, his Los Angeles County Death Certificate was not filed until the 12th of November, 1936. It listed his age at time of death as "57 years, 8 months and five days" (LACDC 9163). This would correspond to the date given by the Outlook, however, the certificate also states that Cordes was autopsied September 26, 1936. If this was the case, it is no wonder he died three days later! It is most likely that this date is an error on the part of the county, for they also listed Ernest Cordes as a female. Cordes died of coronary artery sclerosis.

Two years after the death of her father, on June 25, 1938, Margaret, aged 16, married the 21 year-old F. Bertrand Espe (LACMC 1938). Espe's father was from Pennsylvania, his mother from Indiana. He was a structural assemblyman working for Douglas Aircraft (SMEO 1938). The young couple started their married life in Margaret's childhood home with her widowed mother. It is not known how long they stayed at that address. Katie Vetter, however, remained in the house in which she and her husband had lived until she died December 26, 1953 at her daughter, Irene's, home. Four days later, her remains were placed next to her husband's in the Santa Monica Woodlawn Mausoleum (LACDC 21029).
SYNTHESIS

It is all too easy for the archaeologist to treat his/her archaeological and historical data as two separate entities. To do so is to lose the advantages offered by the historical record and the insights it can provide on the inhabitants of a site.

The concentration of medicine bottles offering cures for consumption and other chest pains may indicate that Ernest Cordes' early mining career left him with a recurring lung irritation. The presence of 'Dr. Miles New Heart Cure' may also indicate that the heart disease that eventually killed Cordes had plagued him nearly twenty years before his death. This condition was probably further aggravated by the diet of the Cordes' family.

The consumption of canned and preserved foods is indicated by the large quantities of tin cans and sealers recovered. The archaeological data also reflects a fondness for condiments including relishes, capers and Worcestershire sauce. These foods are generally high in salt content. It would also appear, given the recovery of two crocks and five tableware bowls, that another mainstay of the Cordes' diet were stews and soups. A survey of the animal bones shows the preference of beef to chicken, lamb and pork almost exclusively. It is well known today that there is a strong correlation between high red meat content diets and heart disease. These foods also tend to have high sodium content, and would have contributed to Ernest's incipient heart disease.

The site also contained a sizable quantity of liquor bottles. Even the reasonable consumption of alcoholic beverages can contribute to high blood pressure. A final factor to be considered in regards to Ernest's health, a position as an officer on the Santa Monica Police force would not be without great stress. This too would serve to weaken his heart.

'Ozomulsion' was discussed earlier as a medicine whose presence may be linked with a serious illness or weakened condition. While Ernest Cordes may have been nurturing his heart disease at the time this disposal pit was being used, he was by no means a sickly man requiring a 'food medicine'. His place in the Police Force assures that. However, in both 1916/7 and 1919, Katie Vetter had daughters. 'Ozomulsion' tooted itself as a remedy for 'emaciated mothers and thin children'. It is possible that either Katie had difficult deliveries, or one of the children became dangerously ill, possibly, with consumption. This, for the present, remains purely speculative. The only other medicine in the collection that may have been connected with Irene and Margaret, was 'Castoria', the 'gentle cathartic especially good for children.' It is also apparent from the medicine bottles that either Ernest was worried by his receding hair line, or Katie was troubled by what she perceived as too short or thin hair. Both 'Tricopherous' and 'Skookum Root',
products recovered, promised to restore vitality and thickness to thin hair.

The Cordes' East Coast and Midwest origins may explain the apparent preference for medicines from these areas despite the availability of similar West Coast products. During that time period, mass distribution was beginning to allow such consumer preferences. Miles Medical Company was located in Indiana; Chamberlain's Medical Company was in Iowa and Hamlin's operated out of Chicago, Illinois. S.C. Wells, Hillside Chemical Company and Barclay Company were all headquartered in New York. Ayer's was centered in Massachusetts, and Hazeltine operated in Ernest's home state of Pennsylvania. It is noteworthy that the consumption cures used by this family were all from the East coast. This would tend to suggest either that Ernest Cordes used the consumption cures himself, as earlier discussed, or that he chose the medicines for the family when there was a serious illness to be cured. The larger concentration of East coast products than of those the Midwest further support the idea that Ernest was the dominant medicine purchaser in the family. It may also indicate that Ernest was the hair conscious member of the couple, since both the products for hair restoration was from his native area.

Examples of retained ethnic cultural heritage for the Cordes can also be demonstrated in respect to their German background. The family either kept in close contact with other families of German descent, or stressed the importance of their heritage to their daughters, for Margaret married the son of German immigrants.

The German origins of the Cordes is also demonstrated in their material culture and the lifestyle it implies. A decorative majolica plate was of German origin (Marks 1983:85), as were the identifiable dolls and the Kummel. Kummel is considered by antique collectors as a rarity (Ferraro and Ferraro 1964:46). This makes the presence of Kummel significant in relation to the Cordes' ethnic heritage. The preference towards soups and stews, as indicated by the high proportion of bowls to plates, may be a further link to the Cordes' ethnic background; soups and stews play a central role in many European cuisines (Connell 1988:30-1). German immigrants were known in the United States for their strong attitudes towards education (Cooke 1973:278). Be it a result of German values or not, Ernest and Katie Cordes felt education was important for their children. Although Irene was probably no older than five years old at the time of this site, a broken school slate and stylus were recovered. Her parents must have introduced the concepts of reading and writing to her at an early age. How successful their attempts were, may be attested to by the broken slate.
If Irene were a sickly child when younger, as may be indicated by the medicinal products, she was also apparently a very active, if not destructive, child. If the date of 1920-1 is correct for this site, Margaret would be less than 2 years old and presumably given cloth rather than porcelain toys. If this is true, then Irene was responsible for the deaths of 5 dolls, and the destruction of major portions of 2 teasets, 2 child-sized mugs and 1 child-sized teacup. The mugs and teacups continued to be used after the handles were broken, thus suffering injuries twice at the small hands of Irene. To be fair, there are no known figures available for comparisons of the rate of doll demise. Irene may have represented the average child in the early 1900's. Given that this pit was one stratigraphic unit, however, there does seem to be a large number of broken ceramics and molded glassware, much more than even a very busy child could create.

At this time, more documentary evidence is needed to fill the remaining gaps in the archaeological record. Questions remain concerning the occupants of this site and how they fit into the society of their time. Do they represent the average Santa Monica inhabitant at this time of the city's development, or are they atypical? Further excavations dealing with the same time period in this city's history would provide data for the comparisons of life styles, diet, consumer preferences and economic status. Studies such as these can provide an accurate portrait of life in early Santa Monica.

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