

## Tam Kung Temple Relics

Relics of the former Qing dynasty (1662 -1912 AD), the era of the Guangxu Emperor (b.1871 - d.1908). Guangxu reigned from 1875 to 1908, so the relics were dated according to his reign. For example, Relic 6, the cast iron bell, inscribed “Guangxu 13<sup>th</sup> year”, means 1875 + 13 year = 1887. The cast iron bell is dated 1887. Note: 1875 is Year 1.



### Relic 1.

Tam Kung statuette (c.1860s) was brought to Victoria by a Hakka gold seeker. When the Hakka man left for the Fraser River / Cariboo region to mine gold, he placed the statuette in a wooden niche near the mouth of the Johnson Street ravine for his countrymen to pay homage. The Tam Kung Temple was established in 1876, and the wooden statuette has remained in this location for almost 150 years.

### Relic 2.

A wooden table façade (1897) carved with theatrical scenes and gilded.



**Relics 3,4,5**

**Bronze censers:**  
**(3) 1887 (left)**  
**(4) 1894 (centre)**  
**(5) 1906 (right)**



**Relic 6**

**1 cast iron bell (1887) covered with black lacquer suspended on a stand with a drum on top.**





**Relic 7.**

**1 stone censer (1903) with engraved characters on one side. Used for wine offering.**



**Relic 8.**

**A five-piece altar set of pewter: 2 vases, 2 candle sticks, and 1 censer. The censer (1897) is inscribed.**



**Relic 9. Tam Kung deity horizontal plaque, no date but matches the 1894 scripts for Relics 10 & 11.**

**Relic 10. (Right side of Relic 9). Vertical couplet on wood, "Gallantry subdues the frontier". Dated 1894.**

**Relic 11. (Left side of Relic 9). Vertical couplet on wood, "Blessings cover the neighbourhood and favor harmony". Dated 1894.**

**Relic 10 (Dated 1894)**

威鎮邊疆 咸欽地利

**"We are established in a distant land;  
All enjoy the potential of the region"**

**Relic 11 (Dated 1894)**

恩垂梓里 共仰人和

**"Our residences are blessed;  
Everyone honours social harmony."**

[Note: 1980 Tam Kung Temple fire destroyed many artefacts including a priceless silk Buddhist “lo-sun” and various banners. One of the lanterns hanging on the ceiling dates back to 1870 – 1880s. It is not dated, and might have been destroyed in the fire.]

Relic source: Chinese in Northwest America Research Committee, CINARC

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5. Tam Kung Horizontal Plaque



7. Pewter Altar Set, 1897



1, 6, 10. L-R: Censers. 1887, 1894, 1906



9. Stone receptor for wine offering, 1903



2. Cast Iron Bell, 1887



Bell Stand with Drum and Bell



2. Date on Back of Bell:  
"Guangxu 13th Year"

Objects with Early Dates, Tam Kung Temple, Victoria.

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Object</u>	<u>Reading in English</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Donors (names in Pinyin)</u>
1	1887	Bronze censer with two taotie masks as handles, smallest but oldest of the three	"Made in Canton by Yongsheng"	光緒十三年孟秋月吉旦譚公仙聖爺沐恩弟子駱拔陞, 何申靖, 鄧維紹, 福綿堂, 魏泗, 徐清华, 等敬造省城小半甫永盛造	Luo Basheng, He Shenjing, Deng Weishao, Fumian Tang, Wei Si, Xu Qinghua
2	1887	A cast iron bell covered with black lacquer suspended on a stand with a drum on top. Foshan foundry style.	No maker's name	譚公仙聖爺光緒十三年孟秋月吉旦沐恩弟子駱拔陞, 何申靖, 鄧維紹, 福綿堂, 魏泗, 徐清华, 等全敬造國泰民安風調雨順	Same as above
3	1894	(R side) Vertical couplet on wood	"Gallantry subdues the frontier"	威鎮邊疆咸欽地利. 光緒二十秋旦	
4	1894	(L side) Vertical couplet on wood,	"Blessings cover the neighborhood and favor harmony"	恩垂梓里共仰人和. 咸水埠人和公司敬奉	Ren Wo Co., Vancouver (Xianshuibu, Renhe Gongsi)
5	No date 1894?	Horizontal plaque. (style matches the 1894 couplets)		譚公仙聖. 陳樂三敬書	Chen Lesan
6	1894	Bronze censer with two taotie masks as handles,	"Made in Hong Kong by Liang Jinsheng"	光緒二十年仲秋吉旦立譚公仙聖沐恩弟子蕭觀妹敬造香港梁晉盛造	Xiao Guanmei Li Qi & wife
7	1897	A five-piece altar set of pewter: vases, candle sticks, censer. Only the censer is inscribed		譚公仙聖. 光緒二十三年仲秋口沐恩弟子李期口口口口	Li Qi & wife
8	1897	A table façade carved with theatrical scenes and gilded.	"Made in Lianxing Street, Guangzhou by Xu Sanyou"	粵東省 聯興街光緒二十三年仲冬立許三友造	
9	1903	A stone censer with engraved characters on one side		光緒癸卯年立譚公仙聖賴日芳. 陳金生敬送沐恩弟子	Lai Rifang, Chen Jinsheng
10	1906	Bronze censer with two taotie masks as handles and a separate scalloped base, the largest and latest of the three	"Made in Guangzhou by Jucheng"	丙午年仲春穀旦譚公仙聖沐恩弟子劉敬堯敬獻省城天平街鉅成造	Liu Jingyao

Data on Tam Kung history come from an article by David Chuenyan Lai, "Tam Kung Feted" in [Victoria] Times-Colonist 23 May 2004 p D12

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