

sulphite pulp using an acid solution to dissolve the binding of wood chips, and the sulphate process using an alkaline solution. Mechanical pulp production had commenced in 1912 with hand-fed, three-pocket Jenkes grinders using sandstone grindstones, some of which remain on the site as landfill. These machines delivered 150 tons of pulp a day which was wet pressed and packaged for shipment. When new capital took over and extensive redevelopment took place in 1917 the number of Jenkes grinders was increased. There were no major modifications to the groundwood plant until a modernization in 1967 when the Jenkes grinders were replaced with seven two-pocket Koehring-Waterous Great Northern grinders.

Initially only the sulphite process was to be added in 1917, but it was decided this would be uneconomic and therefore the sulphate or kraft process was also installed. Three sulphite digesters were installed between 1918 and 1923 and operated until the chemical plant closed in 1967. The sulphate plant had four digesters, which were replaced in 1936 with larger units, and in 1946 one digester was again replaced, as were the other three in 1948. The numerous ancillary operations also underwent modifications but generally were not of major significance, with the exception of the introduction of zinc hydrosulphide bleaching for groundwood pulp. This process had been developed by I.H. Andrews at Powell River, B.C., during the early 1930s and worked particularly well on hemlock pulp, which if unbleached had a slightly reddish cast.

Four paper machines were installed in 1917. A fifth machine, a "Yankee" for specialty paper, was installed in 1926. These machines initially ran at 650 feet per minute, and most improvements to the machines have been the result of efforts to increase the speed, eventually to 1450 feet per minute. This was necessary since Ocean Falls was competing with modern plants with machines that operated at 3500 feet. With the closure of the chemical plant in 1967 paper machines 3, 4, and 5 were shut down while the "wet ends" of 1 and 2 were completely rebuilt. The dryer units, however, remained virtually unchanged from 1917 except for the improvements to increase speed. The finishing or packaging room was also automated about 1967. The majority of the buildings have remained unchanged from 1917 though the chemical plant is now in a serious state of disrepair.

This quick review reveals that although a number of modifications were made the plant in general remained significantly unchanged for a period of fifty years. The modifications instituted were enough to permit the company to continue operating until the whole plant eventually reached a state of such obsolescence that it was no longer feasible to continue without a major capital investment. It is from this point that we expect we will be able to go back and trace some of the details of the plant. In the 1930s, for example, the Taylor syphon was developed at Ocean Falls

to remove condensate from the paper machine dryer cylinders, and these syphons were still in use in 1980 when the plant closed. As yet we do not know the importance of such modifications to the plant, and there are probably many other seemingly minor innovations that may in total equal a significance beyond their individual worth. It is these changes we next hope to document.

Robert Griffin  
James Wardrop

## Material History Sources in Eighteenth-Century Nova Scotia Newspapers

This past summer, the Nova Scotia Museum undertook to continue and adapt a project originally conceived and carried out by the Newfoundland Museum in 1979. (See V. Dickenson and V. Kolonel, "Computer-Based Archival Research Project: A Preliminary Report," *Material History Bulletin* 10 [Spring 1980]: 31-61) The original project attempted to record for computer retrieval the commodities (goods and services) available to Newfoundland in the nineteenth century from the advertisements of extant newspapers. In Nova Scotia, newspapers, which were first published in Halifax in 1752, represent one of a few continuous sources of historical documentation for the latter half of the eighteenth century. Thus, this period became the logical point of departure for this project.

The original scope of the project was expanded to reflect a broader understanding of material history in keeping with the increasing sophistication of collection documentation and research requirements. Consequently, a comprehensive classification and indexing of all advertisements and announcements was undertaken with the exception of government proclamations which are already included in conventional government records. This resulted in 1,400 records, approximately half of the potential material for the period between 1752 and 1800. Of these, 42 per cent were specifically product advertisements of imported and local goods for sale or the occasional request for goods to purchase, 20 per cent were land transactions, and the remaining 40 per cent included announcements of services, stray property (lost, stolen or wandering in the case of livestock), descriptions of runaway slaves, apprentices, and

wives (often with detailed costume descriptions), and announcements of social events and society meetings.

This project was undertaken in collaboration with the National Museum of Man's Atlantic Provinces historian, Peter Rider, and funded through both the National Museum of Man and the Canada Employment and Immigration Centre under the Career-Oriented Summer Employment Programme (COSEP). Five students were employed for a period of 18 weeks. An index to this material is in progress for eventual data entry and computer retrieval, and a more detailed account of the project will follow in the next issue of the *Bulletin*.

Claudia Haagan

## History of Alberta Quilts

A research project was begun in June 1982 to develop an exhibition on the history of Alberta quilts. This project is being undertaken jointly by Sandra Morton, Curator of Social History, Provincial Museum of Alberta, Edmonton, and Elyse Eliot-Los, Curator, Muttart Gallery, Calgary. The exhibition will open at the Muttart Gallery on 11 September 1984, and will travel to various institutions within Alberta, ending at the Provincial Museum of Alberta in June-July 1985. It is hoped that it will continue on a national tour after that time. A bilingual catalogue will accompany the exhibition.

The exhibition will consist of approximately thirty quilts, 60 per cent historical and 40 per cent contemporary. As the history of immigration and settlement is so recent in Alberta compared with eastern Canada, quilts made as late as 1950 are being considered historical. The contemporary quilts in the exhibit will consist of both recent quilts done in traditional patterns as well as modern quilts of unique design, fabricated by Alberta artists.

An exhibition research grant from the Museum Assistance Programmes of the National Museums of Canada is assisting the documenting and photographing of quilts in the various geographic regions of the province. This phase of the project should be completed by December 1983, after which the quilts will be selected for the exhibition. Research is underway on quilts in several local Alberta museums as well as those in private hands. The various quilters' guilds in the province have assisted in locating many important quilts.

The earliest Alberta-made quilt located was made from felt pieces traded with the Indians at Fort Edmonton, ca. 1870. Some "crazy quilts" date from the 1870s as well. These were made from men's silk ties, grandma's wedding petticoats, and an assortment of other odd scraps such as silk cigar bands, prize ribbons, labels, and badges. Crazy quilts, a fashion of the Victorian era, were characterized by irregular shapes of luxury fabrics such as silk, satin, velvet and brocade stitched to a heavy cotton foundation. The seams between patches were embellished with elaborate embroidery.

An extremely popular pattern dating from the early 1900s to the late 1930s in Alberta was the Signature Quilt. These generally consisted of large squares, often of two alternating colours. These quilts have also been dubbed "Friendship" or "Family" quilts, since they were often composed of embroidered signatures of a family tree, or of schoolgirl classmates. They were sometimes made as fundraisers for church raffles and other charities, whereby each person paid to have his or her name embroidered on the quilt.

Oral histories have revealed that during the 1930s many quilts were made of appliquéd fruit basket or animal motifs. The Depression also heralded quilts made of flour sacks, sugar sacks, unbleached cotton squares, dish towels, and even old policemen's uniforms.

In recent years there has been a revival of quilting traditions, partly due to the invention of the light-weight

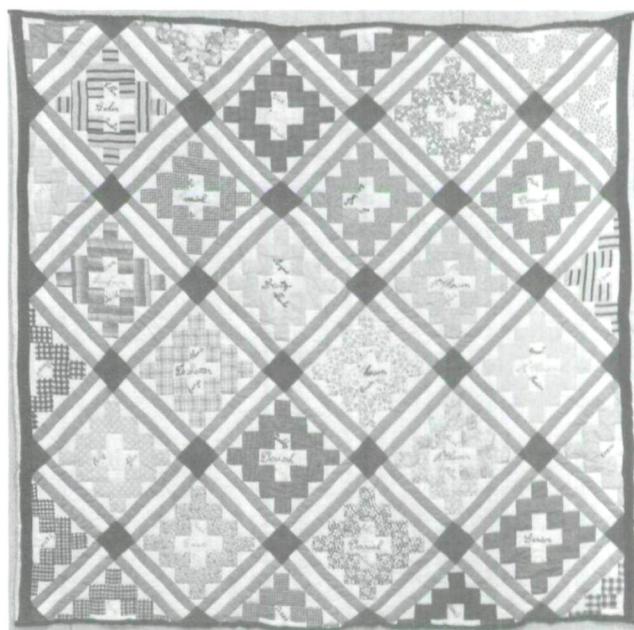


Fig. 1. Signature quilt from private Edmonton collection, ca. 1940. (Photo: Ellis Bartkiewicz.)