

the advancement of material culture? Do museums possess the resolve and the resources to undertake sophisticated research projects? What research methods, models and techniques are most effective in artifact analysis? Are scholars paying enough attention to systematic, verifiable fieldwork?

The jury is still out on these and other questions which pertain to the long-term impact of material culture studies on humanistic scholarship. Henry Glassie was, of course, correct in his final exhortation to conference

delegates. The next decade must bring forth more fieldwork and additional case studies. Moreover, to have any cumulative effect, this work must be published both in books and exhibitions. This constitutes the material culture studies agenda. Its broad outlines are already well established. It is a strategy that will blossom in the next few years and lead to substantive conclusions about the intellectual power of the artifact.

Gregg Finley

Atlantic Canada Newspaper Survey

Readers of *Material History Bulletin* will find the Atlantic Canada Newspaper Survey of interest. The objective of the survey is the creation of a database of information contained in advertisements for goods and services appearing in selected newspapers of Atlantic Canada before 1900. Fields exist for ten commodity classifications based upon Statistics Canada's "Trade of Canada Classification." Additional fields identify the source and date of the advertisement, the advertiser, place of business, details of vessel for imports, and related information plus cataloguers' remarks. The database is useful for the documentation of museum objects, but in addition it can support a wide range of studies in regional urban, economic and material history.

The Canadian Museum of Civilization has sponsored the survey since 1982, working in collaboration with the Canadian Heritage Information Network, and at various times the Newfoundland Museum, the New Brunswick Museum, the Nova Scotia Museum, the Prince Edward Island Museum and Heritage Foundation, plus the Gorsebrook Institute of St. Mary's University and the University of New Brunswick. Using resources obtained through the federal government's summer employment schemes for students, survey organizers fielded nine to eighteen researchers each summer. The result after more than five years of work is the completion of approximately 30,000 documents, of which one half has been entered onto the mainframe computer of the Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN). The newspaper survey has been the subject of two articles in *Material History Bulletin* – number 10 (spring, 1980) and number 20 (fall, 1984). A Guide for Users has also just been prepared.

Several initiatives have been taken this year to broaden the survey's financial base and to make it more accessible

to the university community. The chief development was the award of Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council grants to the University of New Brunswick and to the P.E.I. Museum and Heritage Foundation for 1986-1987 as part of its Research Tools Program. Information on these two projects may be obtained from the Material History Co-ordinator, Division of Humanities and Languages, University of New Brunswick, P.O. Box 5050, Saint John, N.B. E2L 4L5, and Curator of Collections, P.E.I. Museum and Heritage Foundation, 2 Kent Street, Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 1M6.

Access to the database may be made in several ways. Direct on-line service is available through the 140 participating institutions of CHIN or via datapack for those having a datapack identification number. Users in the Ottawa local call area may access CHIN without using a datapack. There is no charge for use of the database except the communications cost which the user must bear. CHIN will also transfer a portion of the database to a floppy disk or the complete database to another mainframe at the user's expense. Enquiries regarding access to the Atlantic Canada Newspaper Survey database should be directed to ACNS Project Officer, Canadian Heritage Information Network, National Museums of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0M8 (613-992-3333).

Survey of a representative group of newspapers for all of Atlantic Canada for the period to 1900 is an ambitious undertaking. Work has progressed at different rates in each of the four provinces. Enough has now been done, however, to make the survey an important reference and research tool. Information on it may be obtained by contacting the Atlantic Provinces Historian, History Division, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0M8 (819-994-6049).