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THE WORLD OF MARITIMES FOLKLORE

- Edward D. Ives -



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THE WORLD OF MARITIMES FOLKLORE

Edward D. Ives

It was early September in 1958, and Bobby and I had just arrived in Newcastle, New Brunswick, where I was to be a judge at Louise Manny's inaugural Miramichi Folksong Festival. I had no idea what I was in for. What was a judge supposed to judge, for instance? But no matter. Somehow when Louise asked you to do something you just naturally wound up doing it. She was that kind of person. And since she had said we were to come to supper that evening, we were on our way.

As usual, guests were gathered on Louise's wonderful back porch with its panoramic view of the Miramichi (I was to spend so many days and sleep so many nights there that it will always be a magical place in my mind). Present was Ken Homer, who was to be the emcee (and what a wonderful job of it he was to do!); Bert Clarke, with whom Louise shared her home; and Clara MacLean, Louise's housekeeper, cook and majordomo (if that word can be feminine, and I guess it can). All of these were friends from former years, but there was one person I didn't recognize, a woman sitting off to one side who was putting in time before supper hemming a skirt. "And this is Helen Creighton," Louise said, "She's collected a thousand songs, and she'll

be judging with you." Somehow I already knew that that's who it was, although I'd never seen a picture of her, and I remember remarking to myself how often people you've looked up to as ancestor figures turn out to be just people. I remember drinking beer with William Carlos Williams one night, and he reminded me very much of my Uncle Lew, who sold insurance in a small upstate New York town. But if anyone qualified as an ancestor figure for me in this folksong collecting game I had recently entered, it was Helen Creighton, and there she was, hemming a skirt. It seemed exactly right.

The next night at the Festival both of us set up our recorders on a special table right down front under the stage. After all, we were the judges, weren't we? But I was still puzzled. "What are we supposed to judge singers on?" I asked my colleague. "I'd never thought of singing as being particularly competitive, unless it was to see who knows the most songs, and we certainly won't have time for that. Any ideas?" Helen laughed. "I don't know either," she said, "but we'll think of something before we're through." And we did. Ten-dollar bills went to the oldest singer, youngest singer, singer from farthest away, singer of the longest song, and so on. It worked out just fine.

It was fun working with her that year and all the succeeding years we did the job for Louise. I was always impressed at how she not only recorded each song but took it down in an abbreviated longhand as well; and of course we spent hours during the daytimes out on that back porch talking about collecting and songs. We became extremely good friends, even did one book together, and she was always generous with me, often coming up with material she felt I might find helpful even before I'd asked for it. The last time I spoke with her was by phone; I can't remember what the occasion was, but since we'd both grown rather deaf the conversation degenerated into a series of shouted whats, which set us giggling, and we decided to take care of whatever it was by letter. She said it was nice to hear from me, though, and that was that. Like I said, she was a good friend, and I miss her.

An interesting point here. In all the years I knew her, I never heard Helen refer to herself as a folklorist or assume a single expertise she did not have. She was a collector, a damned good one, too. Her job was to go out and find the songs and stories,

record them carefully, and put them where they would be available to anyone who wanted to use them. She loved her work, and how she loved it when someone found use for what she had treasured up, be that user a composer, a playwright, an author, or a scholar. Issues of popularizing and matters of theoretical perspective interested her not at all. Helen went out and got the data, and we are all in her debt. Some of you will recall that passage in her autobiography where she tells how, at a very anxious moment in her life, her old friend and singer Ben Henneberry, who had died some years before, appeared to her and said, "You're doing very well; just keep it up." Perhaps this series of lectures in her memory that I am deeply honoured to have been asked to inaugurate tonight can be our way of saying to her, "Helen, you did very well. You kept it up. And now it's our job to move ahead."

It was suggested to me that an appropriate topic for my talk would be an overview of what's going on in folklore study here in the Atlantic Provinces today, and I accepted that charge, although I have modified it in two related ways. First, I will limit myself to the Maritime Provinces, leaving out Newfoundland. There is simply so much going on there with Memorial University's folklore graduate program that its inclusion here would be overwhelming. Besides –and this is more important – I see Newfoundland as a separate cultural area. "Newfoundland tradition and Maritimes tradition come from the same seed sown on similar soils," I said in Joe Scott, "but their development has been ecotypic." And that leads me to my second modification: I will include the State of Maine, because I have always seen it (with the exception of the extreme southeasterly sections) as culturally more a part of the Maritimes than it is of the rest of the United States. Besides, I live there, and I'm giving this lecture, and if those aren't reasons enough, the offended party can explain to me the error of my ways after the show, so long as they'll buy the beer.

When I began, I thought I had a pretty good idea of the Maritimes folk scene, but I knew there was too much detail for me simply to go it alone. Therefore I got letters off to many friends, and since they did not fail me I'd like to thank them here. So thanks to Harry Baglole, Clary Croft, Gwen Davies, Mike Kennedy, Ron Labelle, Richard MacKinnon, Jim Morrison, Brendan O'Grady, Neil Rosenberg and Marge Steiner for wonderful and informative letters. There is no way I can use all the material they sent to me, nor, I am sure, does anyone here either expect or want me

simply to recite a long list of all Maritimes folklore activity past and present, although we can all agree that such a list in published form could be extremely useful. All I plan to do here is to talk about patterns I observe, and to cite significant examples to illustrate those patterns as best I can.

One of the first and most important patterns is the move away in fieldwork from the collecting of items of folklore (songs, stories, beliefs, whathaveyou) for their own sake - the very sort of work Helen Creighton did so well for so long - to the collecting of those items in their social and cultural context. That would mean, for example, that the young academic can no longer beat the bushes all summer and return to campus with seven new versions of five Child ballads in time to pick up his academic promotion. What will be expected is information on why those songs were sung and not others, what part did singing play in everyday life, who did the singing, who listened, and so on.

I say no new thing here, of course. Carole Henderson Carpenter and others made the point years ago in regard to Canadian folklore studies (as a matter of fact, much of tonight's address can be seen as footnotes to Carpenter's work). Horace Beck's 1952 dissertation "Down East Ballads and Songs", pretty much a straight collection, probably wouldn't have made it in Academia today, while Martha MacDonald's 1986 thesis "Group Identity in Social Gatherings: Traditions and Community on the Iona Peninsula, Cape Breton" might not even have been considered folklore at midcentury. This is not to say that straight collections no longer appear. They do, but they are certainly not on the cutting edge of folklore study, and a book like Edward Ives's 1989 Folksongs of New Brunswick can be seen as almost (I said almost) pure atavism. One of the results of this item-to-context shift has been a blurring of the disciplinary borders. Community studies and individual life histories become extremely important to folklore study and vice versa. In fact it is rather difficult sometimes to draw a definitive line, and I think most of us present would thank God for the confusion.

Let me give one anecdotal example here. Back in 1959 I came into possession of the autobiography of a man named Fleetwood Pride, who spent most of his life in the Maine woods. I was excited about it, but as the circumspect Editor of Northeast Folklore I solicited the opinion of Richard Dorson, then head of Indiana University's folklore program, as to whether or not I should publish it. His answer was an unequivocal no, because such a work published in a folklore journal would only serve

to blur the distinction between folklore and other disciplines. It was eight years before I got up the nerve to go contrary to my former mentor's opinion, but Northeast Folklore has since published a whole series of such life histories and autobiographies, with nothing but approval from the folklore community. In fairness to Dick, by the time these volumes began to come out, he was both supportive and approving of such work.

Three movements have contributed heavily to this blessed confusion, the first being the burgeoning of oral history, especially as that technique shifted during the early seventies from concern only with recording the memoirs of people who had had some significant part in the major events of the time (that is, from history as it is usually conceived) to reaching out into the great silences of everyday life, so that its many voices may be heard. Nothing has been more important in popularizing this thrust than the so-called Foxfire movement, in which thousands of students have been encouraged to take a tape recorder and interview their grandparents or neighbors; and while I have not been able to find any Foxfire projects in the Maritimes, it has been important in encouraging many small local organizations to carry out similar projects. It would be impossible for me to cover all these local projects, or even just the ones I happen to know about, but I will refer to them from time to time, because they have a tremendous potential value to the study of folklore.

A second movement has been the continued broadening of the scope of folklore studies. Back in Helen Creighton's time, folklore was pretty much old ballads, legends, folktales, superstitions and the like. No-one was doing work on country/western music, auctions, horses, or such aspects of material culture as houses and barns or boat design; yet all these have been subjects of recent theses and dissertations at Memorial. Folklorists elsewhere have been studying tattoo artists, office xerox lore, and car and motorcycle customizing. All this is healthy, I'm sure, but it is sometimes a bit bewildering for us old ranch-hands, though such bewilderment is nothing compared to that brought on by the widespread application to folklore of theories from other disciplines like sociology, linguistics, cultural anthropology, psychology, and now (God save the mark!) literary criticism - and all of these frequently replete with arcane vocabularies and even formulae. Some of this work is exciting, but much of it leaves me cold and feeling very much like an outsider in

my chosen discipline. Frankly, I'm ready to allow that a portion of this anomie is self imposed, a stubborn crochet of incipient old age. But not all, dammit, Not all!

A third and final confusion has been caused by the movement of professional folklore activity outside the groves of Academe and into the public sector. In the United States, individual states and even cities now have folklorists on their payroll whose job it is, among other things, to assist various ethnic, religious, and occupational groups to maintain and present themselves through well-researched festivals, exhibits and other forms of public presentation. Most of this American activity has been bankrolled by the Folk Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts, but I am unfamiliar with how far this movement has gone in Canada or what part the SSHRC may play in it. However, at the recent joint American Folklore Society/Canadian Folk Studies Association meetings in St. John's, Newfoundland, there were nearly as many public sector folklorists present as there were academicians.

All these developments make for problems, then, in deciding what should be included in any survey of folkloric activity, but in the present instance I will work out my salvation in two ways. First, there are those activities that in some way announce themselves as folkloric or else have a kind of general acceptance as such. In other words, if something claims to be work in folklore it is work in folklore, a stance that could be problematic but in fact won't be. Second, there are those activities that, while not calling themselves folklore, are in my judgement simply too important not to mention. Certain oral history projects, for example, are included for this reason. And now, before I can think of another qualification, let us take a look at the folklore scene in Maine and the Maritimes.

I'll begin with Nova Scotia, partly out of deference to Helen, partly because that's where we are at the moment. However, I'm going to consider Cape Breton separately, which means that for our purposes, Nova Scotia extends from Yarmouth to Canso Strait - and I know Cape Bretoners who've never thought of it any other way! The story of folklore collecting in mainland Nova Scotia begins, of course, with the work of two pioneers: W. Roy Mackenzie and Helen Creighton. Mackenzie's work was the earlier, preceding Helen's by almost twenty years. A native of River John, he pursued

graduate work in literature at Harvard, and spent most of his life teaching at Washington University in St. Louis. But he did most, if not all, of his collecting along the north shore in the years before the First World War, bringing out his remarkable study, The Quest of the Ballad in 1919, to be followed by Ballads and Sea Songs from Nova Scotia in 1928, the very year Helen began her collecting work around Halifax Harbour. But of course there's no need to review her lifetime's work here now. I should also mention Arthur Huff Fauset's 1931 publication of Afro-American lore.

What has followed from such promising beginnings? I'm reminded of what a young friend of mine said when I asked how it was with her and her boyfriend. "Well," she said, "we're still something but not much." Yet there are a couple of somethings well worth mentioning. First, in the late sixties and early seventies, Richard Tallman developed a very successful Foxfire-type collecting project with his high school students in Kings County, the only problem being that it was so low-budget that I may have the only "published" (read dittoed) copy. This did lead Dick, however, to become the first folklore Ph.D. from Memorial in 1974, his dissertation being a magnificent collection and study of the stories of Robert Coffil of Blomidon - and if someone else doesn't publish it, I may just have to do it myself! Second, in the summer of 1987, JoAnn Watson, James Moreira and Katherine Belzer, under the aegis of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, developed a substantial collection of songs and supporting interviews with the late Fred Redden, one of Helen's former singers. And third, based on fieldwork he had carried out, in 1972 Richard Bauman published a theoretical article, "The La Have Island General Store: Sociability and Verbal Art in a Nova Scotia Community," which is now pretty much required reading for advanced students in folklore anywhere.

As for on-going projects, Dr. Neil Rosenberg of Memorial has been interested in and working with a Nova Scotia country/western singer and composer, Don Miller, and for some time has also had a project going on the place of the five-string banjo in the music of the South Shore. One of Rosenberg's students, Jock MacKay, is completing his dissertation on another country/western musician from Stellarton, Art Fitt. Clary Croft continues his yeoman efforts: a monthly CBC radio segment on folklore, an Elderhostel course on Maritimes Folklore at Mount Saint Vincent University, and his continued work on the Creighton Collection in the Public Archives. (That Archives, by the way, seems to be doing a splendid job, given its limited funds, of making itself the repository for provincial folklore materials). Finally, the Helen Creighton and Fred

Redden Foundations are ready to go and looking about for good work to do. That is excellent news for us all. And that's about it for the mainland. It's time to move on to Cape Breton.

Friends back home returning from vacation trips to Cape Breton often regale me with accounts of its beauties, only to be dismayed when I tell them I've never been there. "You've never been there?" they say. "Nope," I say with a sheepish grin, usually adding something like, "but we're planning to go up next summer." But when we'd head for the Maritimes the next summer we'd wind up on Prince Edward Island instead. Silly, but I feel better about it when I recall that Helen had been collecting songs for sixteen years before she ever got there! Besides, with the exception of Newfoundland, no place in the Atlantic Provinces less needs another junketing folklorist from the States.

There are two centres of Cape Breton folklore: University College and the Beaton Institute, both in Sydney. At University College, Richard MacKinnon teaches courses in folklore, museum studies and vernacular architecture; recently, a Micmac Studies program was established, many of whose students work on folkloric projects. The collections and papers they produce are deposited in the Beaton Institute's archives, augmenting what is already a substantial body of material there. Recently, the Institute commenced a major collecting effort called "The Steel Project," under the direction of Elizabeth Beaton, to document via video and tape recordings many of the older processes of steelmaking; many of the results of this work will be used in a three-part film now being completed by the National Film Board. In addition to his teaching, MacKinnon is doing research on both local log architecture and Island nicknaming traditions.

In addition to work coming out of these two local institutions, students from Memorial have been busy on Cape Breton. I have already mentioned Martha MacDonald's study of ceilidh traditions on the Iona Peninsula, and in a similar vein there is Natalie MacPherson's "Talk, Narrative, and Social Interaction in a Cape Breton General Store" (notice that neither study is a collection per se, and both are contextual). Elizabeth Beaton Planetta's 1981 thesis was on sorcery, beliefs and oral tradition in Cheticamp, and Ian MacKinnon's (1989) was a discography and study of

recordings made by Cape Breton fiddlers. To conclude this rather impressive list, Ron Caplan did a Master's at St. Mary's, which was a study of Cape Breton obituary verse, concentrating on the work of one man: my opinion of it should be obvious when I say that I hope Northeast Folklore will be its publisher one of these not too distant days.

No account of folklore activities on Cape Breton would be complete without mention of Caplan's remarkable and very successful publishing venture, Cape Breton's Magazine. Each issue's filled with wonderful interviews with all kinds and conditions of Cape Bretoners, the words and music to local songs, historical accounts, and Lord knows what—all else. With its newsprint format, it has managed not to become a slick tourist rag, but is very much not only a magazine about Cape Breton but for Cape Bretoners. It has been appearing quarterly for twenty years, and all I can say is I hope it keeps on forever just about as it is now. It is an archives in itself.

All of which can be taken to show that the pioneer work of people like Major Calum MacLeod, who established Celtic Studies at St. Francis Xavier University (Antigonish) and was extremely active in the Gaelic revitalization movement throughout Cape Breton; like Charles W. Dunn, whose book Highland Settler (1953) is the starting place for anyone interested in the area; and of course like Helen Creighton, who together with Major MacLeod brought out an extensive collection, Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia, in 1964 - all of this pioneer work is being well followed up. Finally, it is only fitting to mention Pere Anselme Chiasson, who did splendid collecting work among the Cape Breton Acadians around Cheticamp and elsewhere. Folklore study on Cape Breton seems to me to be in pretty good shape.

That brings us to Prince Edward Island, and while the scene there is not what we have seen for Cape Breton, it is nowhere near as bleak as it would have appeared, had I written this paper a quarter century ago, when I could speak of my own small Twenty-one Folk-songs from Prince Edward Island as the first published collection to be devoted entirely to P.E.I. True, there had been fieldwork done on French songs as far back as the twenties, but my work in the fifties and sixties can - and I do not say this for the sake of boast - be called pioneer. And that work was never intended to be comprehensive or even particularly exploratory; I was looking for material

relevant to songmakers Larry Gorman, Lawrence Doyle and Joe Scott, and I even described Twenty-one Folksongs as serendipitous, "the songs people sang me while I was looking for something else." Given, then, that the impetus to study Island folklore came from someone from away, it is interesting to see that the follow-up has been carried out almost entirely by Islanders.

In 1973, two collections of folksongs were published, one by Randall and Dorothy Dibblee, another by Christopher Gledhill, and in that same year Sterling Ramsay brought out a little volume called Folklore Prince Edward Island. From the folklorist's point of view, all of these were rather amateur productions, lacking any real critical apparatus or comparative notes; the same could be said for James and Gertrude Pendergast's marvellously unpretentious little volume, A Good Time Was Had By All - but there they are, and they have value. So does Clinton Morrison's Along the North Shore, a vast compendium (over six hundred small-print pages!) of materials relevant to Lot Eleven. George Arsenault has done splendid work in Acadian tradition, especially in his Complaintes acadiennes de L'Île-du-Prince-Édouard, and James Hornby has published Black Islanders, an account of the Afro-Island experience. Three off-Island universities have made or are making valuable contributions as well, inevitably Memorial accounting for two of them: Jim Hornby's study of Island fiddling, and John Cousins' "Horses in the Folklife of Western Prince Edward Island" (Northeast Folklore has already agreed to publish Cousins' work, by the way). The third is Michael Kennedy's work-in-progress among the Gaelic-speaking Scots of eastern P.E.I. for his thesis at the School of Scottish Studies, Edinburgh University.

Other relevant work is going on, much of it under the aegis of the Institute for Island Studies at the University of P.E.I., which plans to bring out three publications this year, all of them based on extensive oral history interviews with rural Islanders. In 1987 the Institute sponsored Dr. John Shaw's major study of Island Gaelic tradition in which he conducted taped interviews with over thirty people. Further oral history interviews (some forty-four hours worth) were conducted with farmers in connection with a report on sustainable agriculture. How much of this work is directly folkloric is hard to say, but Director Harry Baglole's statement that Institute policy is "to use every convenient opportunity to add to the store of taped information about Prince Edward island" speaks to the confusion of disciplines of which I spoke approvingly earlier. So does a recent initiative undertaken by Wendell Ellis of a local cable channel to mount a year-long project in which trained volunteers will videotape

interviews with senior citizens in their communities on local history and folklore.

Over the past decade there has been a veritable explosion of interest in traditional fiddling, and it is not surprising to see that reflected in what is getting attention on P.E.I. Jim Hornby's Master's thesis is our first case in point; Dr. Shaw's Gaelic explorations included much material on fiddling; and last year the Island Institute's lecture series was entitled: "The Island Fiddle." Several years ago Marian Bruce produced a five-part series for CBC Radio on "The Power of the Fiddle," based on twenty-five to thirty taped interviews with local fiddlers. But without any question, the most ambitious fiddling project is being carried out under the direction of Ken Perlman, an American ethno-musicologist. Sponsored by Earth Watch, the program began last summer and will continue this one. So far, about forty fiddlers, step-dancers and others have been video-taped, as well as several festivals and events.

As for local publications, while there is nothing specifically folkloric, articles of folklore interest do appear from time to time in The Island, an attractive semi-annual publication of the Prince Edward Island Museum and Heritage Foundation, and the same can be said of another semi-annual, The Abegweit Review, published by the University. In fact, three special issues (1983, 1985, and 1988, edited by Brendan O'Grady) were devoted entirely to articles on the Island's Irish. Beyond that, there is talk in at least one quarter of starting a P.E.I. version of Cape Breton's Magazine. Needless to say, I wish this proposal well.

To sum up, Prince Edward island has offered fertile ground for folklorists to work for a long time, but its potential is only beginning to be realized. Interesting things are happening. The Institute for Island Studies is doing an excellent job as a center and supplier of energy, but a stronger academic base would make a world of difference. I will come back to this point later, but now it is time to move back to the mainland and see how things are in New Brunswick.

In terms both of what has been and what is, the New Brunswick scene is disappointing, but it is not utterly blank or even bleak. There are two major bright spots, and we should start with them. The first is the University of Moncton, where not only does the Centre d'études acadiennes, under the direction of Ronald Labelle,

have an active research effort and a substantial folklore archives (a general description of its holdings is soon to be published), but two folklore courses have been regularly offered in the French Department. Labelle himself has recently edited and published a fine collection of Acadian songs entitled La Fleur du Rosier, taken from Helen Creighton's collection, a significant addition to the small group of Acadian collections already available in the work of scholars like Chiasson, Despres and Massignon. He has also edited and produced an LP record of Allan Kelly, a splendid Acadian singer from Miramichi.

The second folkloric bright spot is the work of the late Louise Manny along the Miramichi River. To begin with, Louise was not a folklorist so much as she was a force. Lord Beaverbrook told her to collect the folksongs he remembered hearing, she told people to come and sing folksongs for her in the local Legion Hall, and they came - and they sang! Then she started playing songs she had thus collected over the local radio, galvanizing a whole region to the old songs. Then in 1958 she set up the Miramichi Folk Song Festival, which she ran for ten years - and which is still going its way, even if that way is not exactly her way. She not only revived a whole song tradition, she created a new and vital venue. Then, along with musicologist James Wilson, she published Songs of Miramichi (1968), which stands as one of the best local collections in the business. Scholars like myself, Norman Cazden and at present, Margaret Steiner owe this remarkable woman a great debt.

Beyond these two bright spots, what else? Once again, there is Helen Creighton, who did a spate of fieldwork in the province, mostly in Albert County, which led to her book Folksongs from Southern New Brunswick (1971) - the only Maritimes folksong book to include an LP record insert, by the way. And there is my own Joe Scott: The Woodsman Songmaker (1978), a good portion of the fieldwork for which was carried out in New Brunswick, Scott himself being a native of the province. Catherine Jolicoeur has done substantial fieldwork on legends among the Acadians, and at one point Carole Spray of Fredericton did some fine English language collecting, a portion of which appeared in her book Will O'The Wisp. To the best of my knowledge, only one of Memorial's Master's essays was based on New Brunswick fieldwork; with the exception of Moncton, no college or university in the province offers folklore as a regular part of its curriculum. Mount Allison once hosted Dr. Herbert Halpert of Memorial as Visiting Professor in its Canadian Studies program, and at present Dr. Diane Tye, a recent Memorial graduate, is there on a post-doc.

Mount Allison, by the way, has one of the finest assemblages of folklore books and periodicals to be found anywhere in Canada in its library. As a final note, back in the summer of 1965, I taught a very successful course in folklore at the University of New Brunswick. And that's about it for New Brunswick.

Across the border in Maine there are two programs that I would draw to your attention. For over three decades now I have been teaching folklore at the University of Maine, in the English Department to begin with, but since 1967 in the Department of Anthropology. My obvious Maritimes research interest has colored everything I have done or am doing, including a regular course called "Folklore of Maine and the Maritime Provinces." Our Northeast Archives of Folklore and Oral History contains over two-thousand accessions, many of which stem from or are relevant to the Maritimes. The Northeast Folklore Society, a private corporation, was founded for the express purpose of paying attention to the folklore of Maine and the Maritime Provinces; its annual publication Northeast Folklore, now in its twenty-ninth year, shows that combined emphasis clearly. Northeast Folklore will soon join with Northeast Archives within the Maine Folklife Center, a new University organization recently approved by the Trustees, a change that will facilitate fund-raising for both without limiting the international scope of either. I do wish there were more grants available for cross-border projects, though! I think it is less important, however, that projects be specifically cross-border than that the Maine Folklife Center continue to demonstrate the same Maine-Maritimes unity already shown by both Northeast Folklore and the Northeast Archives. And so long as I am its Director, you can be sure that it will.

But now there is a second Maine-based center, this one at the University of Maine at Fort Kent, the Archives acadiennes or Acadian Archives, headed up by Lisa Ornstein, its Director, and Nicholas Hawes, its Assistant Director. It was established by an act of the U.S. Congress, and as its name makes clear, will be devoted to the study of Acadian culture, especially as it is found in the upper Saint John Valley. The new Archives has pretty well completed the work of getting its physical setup in order, and is now beginning to move ahead on accessioning and conducting a field survey of the folk arts of the Valley. While there is nothing in its charter that specifically mandates activity in the Maritimes, one look at the geography of its

region should make it clear that it will be impossible for it to operate without such activity. Besides, since the Acadian community - or perhaps I should say the community of Acadians - is the result of a diaspora, Archives acadiennes will by its very nature be reaching out to other Acadian groups, not only in the Maritimes but in the United States as well, particularly in Missouri and Louisiana. As the newest arrival on the Maine-Maritimes scene, and already a very dynamic presence, we should all wish it well.

That completes our folklore tour of the Maritimes area. What conclusions can be drawn or what general observations can I make on the entire scene at this point? When I started out on this venture, I rather saw it as incumbent on me to make my peroration a cross between delivering a scolding to those in power for neglect of a precious heritage, and trumpeting "Excelsior" to those in the field, encouraging them to persevere. Well, I can still do both of those things, but only up to a point: obviously the situation is nowhere near as bad as I expected it would be. There is a great deal of activity going on, and the precious heritage is far from being neglected. Granted it is getting uneven treatment - a plethora of fiddle projects, for instance, and practically no-one carrying on ballad studies - but when was that ever not true? These things have a way of evening themselves out over time, as fashions in taste and scholarship change; besides, I don't know a single workable thing that can be done about it - or should be done about it.

Granted that an infusion of money to support various worthy projects would be helpful, but when was that ever not true? Times are tough, and we folklorists are going to have to fight harder than ever for our share of a seriously diminished boodle. All I can recommend in terms of ammunition is the time-honored tying-in of folklore study to the enrichment of tourism (without giving in to the purveyors of the cutesy and the quaint), to the advancement of multiculturalism through support of endangered aspects of the present scene, and, for the benefit of future generations, the expansion of the documentary record of what has already passed from that scene. Good luck to us all. We're going to need it.

All very well, but do I have any specific recommendations? Yes, I do. It is very noticeable that a preponderance of the scholarly activity in the Maritimes proper has

come from the outside - from Newfoundland, from the States, even from Scotland. There is really nothing terribly wrong with that, but it would be far better to have the impetus emanate from within. UCCB and Moncton already have such centers, and their areas are profiting from their presence, but I would also like to see folklorists on the staffs of places like Dalhousie, King's, St. Mary's, Mount Allison, U.N.B. and U.P.E.I. A look at the record will show that there is plenty of work to be done, and it is high time that these institutions came to recognize that folklore study has a legitimate place in Academia. The University of King's College, by supporting the Helen Creighton Foundation, has already recognized that place, and the Foundation itself can do a great service through backing good fieldwork and solid publication, thus encouraging other institutions to open their doors to folklore.

A second recommendation is the establishment of a few more folklore archives and a strengthening of those already in place and doing folklore work, like the Beaton Institute, the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, and the Acadian Archives at Moncton. To the best of my knowledge, there is no English-language repository in New Brunswick, and there is no repository of any kind on Prince Edward Island, even though a well thought-out plan for one has been around for at least five years. Since the burgeoning of computers has made centralization far less important, the burden of establishing such repositories can more easily be spread around, although that will make the development of compatible indexes and catalogs far more necessary than they are now. Every solution raises new problems, but I can assure you that help is on the way. Not this year, perhaps, nor maybe even next year, but definitely on the way.

Let me conclude by returning to Ben Henneberry, who came back to tell Helen Creighton, "You're doing very well; just keep it up." Our survey has shown us good work done, good work underway, and, Lord knows, good work waiting to be begun. As Ben said to Helen, then, I say to us all, "We haven't done half bad. Now let's stop talking and get back to work."

- Edward D. Ives

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