

# **EXHIBIT HALL ARTIFACT IDENTIFICATION**

Below are descriptions of the unidentified photographs from the museum Visitors Center Artifact Search. Where were they found? Who owned them?

**1.) Pocket Watch-** Pocket Watches were the most common way to tell time during Thomas Wolfe's life. Rather than being worn around the wrist like watches are today, pocket watches were attached to a chain and kept in a man's vest or suit jacket pocket. Wolfe's brothers had jobs as newspaper delivery boys and salesmen for the *Saturday Evening Post* magazine. This particular watch was a gift from to Fred Wolfe. Do you have a favorite gift that you have received for a job well done?

**2.) Glass Bottle-** Most liquids were produced and sold in glass bottles. This Coca- Cola bottle from the early 1900's was found by archaeologists at Wolfe's home! How many different containers can you buy a soda in today?

**3.) Ink Well-** Writing pens were produced and sold without ink already in them. Ink wells were containers that held the liquid ink that the pens would be dipped in to write. Can you imagine how long writing a letter would have taken someone? Both the glass bottles and the ink well are among a large collection of items that were found in the cistern behind the Wolfe family's boarding house. The cistern was a type of underground well that collected rain water. The cistern was eventually closed up when plumbing was added to the house making it an archeologists' gold mine!

**4.) Stone Cutting Tools-** Thomas Wolfe's father was a stone cutter and he made many things such as grave markers and monuments. His tools

were made of iron and other metals to be able to withstand working with the hard rock. While some smaller tools may still be used today, most stone cutting and engraving is done with very modern machinery!

- 5.) **Safe-** Keeping money in banks back in Thomas Wolfe's day was not as common as it is today. Banks did not have as much security as they do now so people would often have their own safe in their home to keep money and other valuables under their own supervision. Do you have something that you keep in a safe and secret spot?
  
- 6.) **Glass Dishes-** At this time in history, the uses of plastic and similar durable materials was not common for dinnerware. That is why most dishes from Thomas Wolfe's apartment in New York were glass and ceramics. They were often chipped and broken. How often does your family use ceramic plates?
  
- 7.) **Cabinet Radio-** Radios were used a lot more when Thomas Wolfe was living than they are today. They were often great sources of entertainment and information through broadcasting music and news. In what ways does your family entertain themselves? What are some of your favorite things to do in your spare time?
  
- 8.) **Type Writer-** Type writers are a very early form of the computer. They had keys that would stamp letters onto a piece of paper one-by-one. There was no such thing as a backspace button, so people using them would have to be very careful, or they'd have to type it all over again. Can you imagine only contacting people through a hand written or typed out letter? What problems may arise in waiting for a response to a letter?