

Giddings Investigates Relics Of Eskimo, American Indian

by MIRCEA MANICATIDE

The snow which blanketed Providence yesterday is a familiar sight to Dr. J. Louis Giddings, Professor of Anthropology. The director of Brown's Haffenreffer Museum of the American Indian, Giddings has done extensive work in the field of Arctic anthropology and Eskimo origins.

Coming to Brown with two years' experience as associate professor, curator of the University Museum and director of archeological research at the University of Alaska, and five years as Assistant Professor of Anthropology and assistant curator of the American Section of the University Museum at the University of Pennsylvania, Giddings was well qualified to become Brown's first faculty anthropologist.

Immediately upon being appointed, Giddings began the major task of classifying, cataloguing and displaying one of the world's largest private collections of Indian relics, which Brown had acquired in 1955 along with the Haffenreffer Museum. This task is still in progress. Giddings has made the Museum serve as an instructional aid and experimental center for Brown and Pembroke students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

In addition, Giddings plans to add to the Museum's holdings by encouraging able students and staff members to collect materials while studying and carrying on surveys in various parts of the world. Joel Teitelbaum '61, has already displayed the household and dooryard of a family of the Kamba Tribe of East Africa in the Tribal Arts Room of the Haffenreffer. Giddings himself has opened a small Arctic Room which illustrates aspects of his own work on the cultures of Western Alaska.

Since 1938, Giddings has been interested in and carried on anthropological work in Alaska and the Arctic region. Known to Europeans and Americans for little over a century, the area serves as a home for peoples known to us as Eskimos, who are almost certainly descendents of the early men who wandered in over the "land bridge" now submerged below the shallow Bering Strait. Studying the Eskimos and the region's earlier inhabitants, Giddings has added much knowledge and formulated new ideas in anthropology. Among them are the Beach Ridge Dating Process and the idea of random spread of ideas even with static populations.



J. LOUIS GIDDINGS, professor of anthropology, examines a piece from the collection of diagonally-notched points his party discovered in a single cache last summer at Cape Krusenstern.