

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

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Catalogue of the Roth Collection of Aboriginal Artefacts from North Queensland

Volume 1

**Items collected from Archer River, Atherton, Bathurst Head,
Bloomfield River and Butcher's Hill, 1897 – 1901**

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Preface

This is the first in a series of catalogues being prepared on the Roth collection of Aboriginal artefacts held at the Australian Museum.

These catalogues will let Aboriginal people know about this north Queensland material which was gathered together nearly 100 years ago. It will make it easier for everyone to use this valuable collection and will save the delicate objects, registers and original documents being handled too much by people wishing to study the artefacts.

The original 18 Roth Bulletins are full of information. Unfortunately, like much 19th century and early 20th century writings, they are written in a manner that is difficult to understand. The lack of an index makes it hard to find information. Production of these new regional catalogues by the Australian Museum will make the older works easier to use.

The regional catalogues were compiled with the assistance of John Day and Bridget Ohlsson (photographers), and Fiona Duncan, Sara Knuckey, Tania Cleary, Jane Bible and Kelly Bona (cataloguers). Additional photographs have been taken by staff of the Photographic Division of the Australian Museum. The catalogues were designed by Brian Bona of Studio B.

Funding support for the project was provided by both State and Federal Governments. During the 1984 financial year \$45,855 was received from the Commonwealth Employment Programme (CEP) towards the cost of employing some of the above people. From 1985 to 1992 the Australian Museum gave \$22,100 from its Consolidated Revenue Funds towards this project. It is with additional support of the Royal Australian Historical Society and the Academy of the Humanities that the regional catalogues are being published for use by Aboriginal people and the community at large. The first volume is being produced as part of the Museum's participation in the International Year of the World's Indigenous People.

Philip Colman of the Malacology Section of the Australian Museum kindly checked scientific names of shells mentioned in the old Roth Bulletins.

Staff of the National Herbarium, Royal Botanical Gardens, Sydney, were most helpful in checking all botanical names.

Library staff of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra were generous in their assistance, especially with the Bibliography.

Dr Betty Meehan of the Australian Heritage Commission, Canberra, looked carefully at the manuscript and made many helpful suggestions, as did Dr Jim Specht, Dr Val Attenbrow and colleagues in the Divisions of Anthropology and Education at the Australian Museum.

Grateful thanks also are offered to Carol Gartside from the National Parks and Wildlife Service, and member of the Museum's Aboriginal Advisory Committee. Thanks also go to Aboriginal communities at Atherton, Babinda, Innisfail and Cairns who helped Carol field test the Atherton section in the first volume.

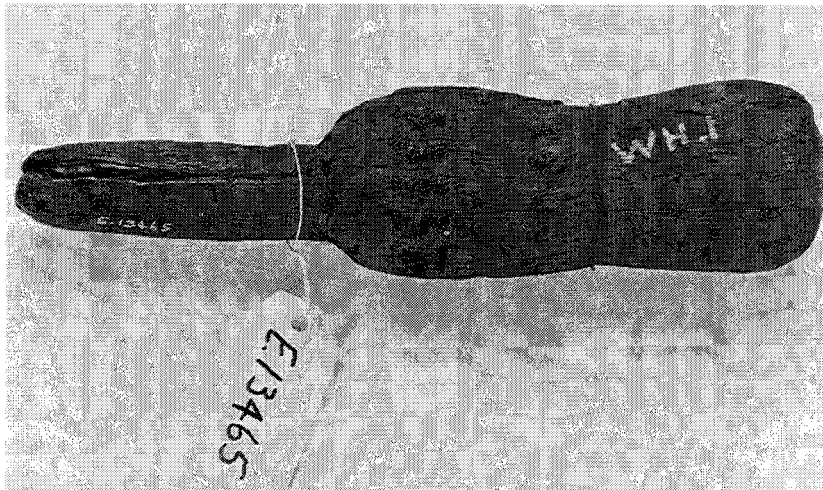
Introduction

These catalogues are about the Roth collection – a collection of Aboriginal artefacts gathered together by the First Protector of Aborigines in north Queensland, Dr Walter Edmund Roth. The catalogues have been written to let as many people as possible know about this collection.

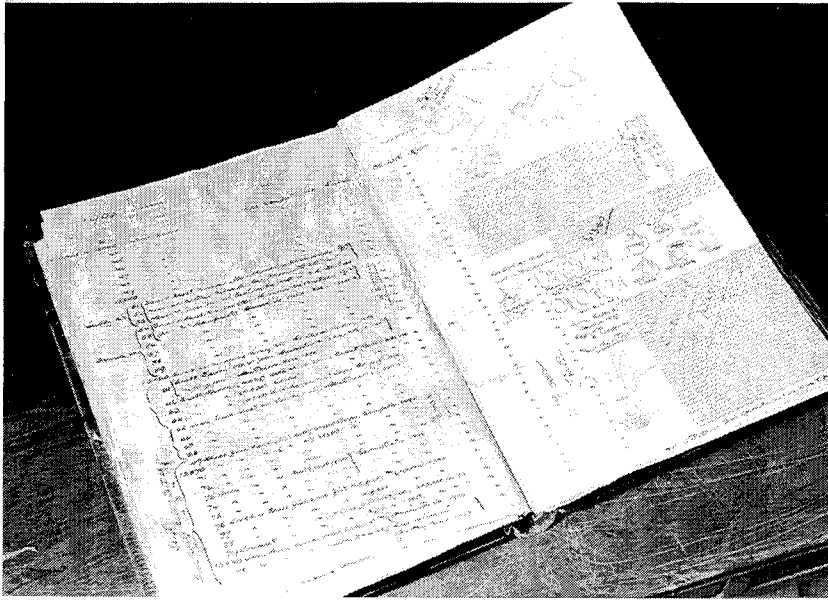
Some 2000 artefacts and 308 photographic negatives were purchased by the Australian Museum from Dr Roth on 25 February 1905 for what was then 450 pounds (about \$900). The Museum also holds other north Queensland material collected by Dr Roth and either donated or sold to the Museum on separate occasions. These artefacts also have been included in the catalogue.

When artefacts arrive at the Museum they are given registered numbers. This number is written on the object in permanent black ink and painted over with a coat of clear varnish to protect it. The same number is written in a large, leather bound book called a register, on catalogue cards, and eventually into the computer database. From then on, when this artefact is in storage, on exhibition, being conserved, or on loan, its whereabouts can be traced through its personal number.

Collectors often give their own numbers to objects while they are collecting them in the field. Where Roth did this, his own collector's number is shown in brackets after the Museum registration number.



Wooden beater from Princess Charlotte Bay collected by Roth in 1898 showing both the Museum's registered number E.13465 and Roth's own collection number WH.1.



A page from the Museum's Roth Collection Register showing how the objects were recorded in a leather bound register in 1905 by the then Curator of Ethnography, Mr W.W. Thorpe.

E.13335	21 MAR 1905	BI-CORNUAL BARK BASKET
AREA [AUSTRALIA] ATHERTON, NTH. QUEENSLAND		
Y		
WALTER EDMUND ROTH, 25 MARCH 1905		
W.E. ROTH	COLL. DATE: 1898	COLL. NO.: W.T. 12
LOCAL NAME & LANGUAGE:		
FUNCTION/USE: USED TO CARRY WATER AND MONEY		
ACQ. BY: R2, R.6/1905/PURCH. SCH. 6/1905		
REFERENCES: W.E. ROTH, NTH. QUEENSLAND ETHNOGRAPHY, Bulletin 7, pp.13-14, 30, 1904.		
OBJECT HISTORY:		
REMARKS: FOUND ONLY WHEAT SIMILARLY SHAPED WOVEN BASKETS WERE MADE, i.e. HERBERT RIM, CAIRDWELL, CAIRNS, ATHERTON.		

NEG. NO.: Neg. Sheet 4002M, No. 19.	
DIMENSIONS: Height: 32cm; Diam. at mouth: 12cm x 24cm.	
DESCRIPTION: MADE FROM INNER BARK OF A LAUREL TREE, CALLOPHYLLUM tomentosum	
Wght: OUTER SURFACE OF INNER BARK IS INNER SURFACE OF BASKET. BARK FOLDED IN HALF AND SEWN TOGETHER WITH STRIPS OF LAUYER CANE, CALAMUS SP., AND SEALED WITH GUM CEMENT OR BEESWAX. CANE HANDLES BROKEN.	
INVENTORY CHECK: A3, 6/92 [oc]	
COMPILER: K. Khan, 16/2/1991.	

Both sides of a catalogue card in use today to record all the information on an object, including a photograph.

List of Registered Artefacts collected by Roth

A. Original purchase 25 February 1905 (not all objects come from Queensland).

E.13317 to E.13656	Queensland
E.13683 to E.15154	
E.13657 to E.13658	NSW
E.13659 to E.13665	Victoria
E.13668 to E.13682	
E.13666 to E.13667	Tasmania
E.15275 to E.15316	Tasmania (stone tools)
E.15155 to E.15274	These numbers refer to skeletal material, which is not included in these regional catalogues. The Museum has a policy of returning skeletal material to Aboriginal communities for reburial
V.2077 to V.2316	Photographic negative collection held by the
V.2530 to V.2597	Photography Section, Australian Museum

B. Purchases and donations made at separate times, additional to the original Roth collection purchase of 1905.

E.8825 to E.8885	Queensland (mainly ochres and examples of
E.8972 to E.8980	edible shellfish)
E.8982 to E.8987	
E.8996 to E.9033	
E.9482 to E.9483	
E.9722 to E.9755	
E.10173	
E.10405 to E.10419	
E.15725	Queensland (canoe and paddle)
E.16395 to E.16397	Skeletal material (not included in this catalogue)
E.26065 to E.26124	Tasmania (stone tools)

Museum Policy on Skeletal Remains

The Museum actively supports the concept of returning Aboriginal skeletal remains to Aboriginal communities for reburial. Nearly all skeletal material in the Roth collection has been returned to communities for reburial. This programme is under the guidance of the Museum's Aboriginal Heritage Officer.

Museum Policy on Secret/Sacred Material

Secret/sacred material is not collected by the Museum unless specific legitimate requests from Aboriginal communities are received to store material in our keeping place.

The secret/sacred material we have is housed in a separate keeping place in the Museum. The area has restricted access. The objects are stored in such a way that they cannot be seen accidentally by people from other communities.

Repatriation of secret/sacred material is supported by the Museum, to either the community of origin or an appropriate person or persons in cases where rights under Aboriginal customary law can be established.

How to Find the Roth Material

Aboriginal artefacts at the Australian Museum are stored according to cultural areas set up by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra (AIATSIS). Artefacts in the first series of catalogues come from culture area Y (Cape York) and have been put together in alphabetical order starting with Archer River and ending with Weipa. In some places, Roth collected only one or two objects, in other places, 30 or more objects.

Roth's way of spelling the names of local Aboriginal groups and the names they gave to objects, plants and animals have been kept as he used them. Information in these catalogues is drawn solely from Roth's writings, as a record of events as seen by one man nearly 100 years ago. Sometimes he has a lot of information on how to make an object, sometimes hardly anything. It may reflect what interested him at the time, or maybe people were too busy with daily life to stop and chat. His visit may have been quick, sudden and unexpected, or long, leisurely and enjoyable to both the local Aboriginal community and to Roth himself.

The section on each region has been written as a separate booklet. The information has been organised in the following way.

1. The People. Comments made about the people of each community by Roth or others in the 1890s-1900s are gathered together here. Roth's spelling of the tribal/language names is given, together with the names used today by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in Canberra.

2. The Objects. These items are listed in alphabetical order at the beginning of each section with page numbers for quick and easy reference.

3. Information from Roth's Bulletins. All the information that Roth wrote about each object, scattered through the 18 Bulletins has been gathered together under this heading. It deals with such things as how the object was made, who made it, what it was used for, and what it was called by local Aboriginal people in his day. This is useful information about what was happening 100 years ago.

In many places in this catalogue you will see a sentences printed in a dark block like this

Owing to the rapidly-increasing quantity of scientific material which, in accordance with the Home Secretary's instructions, has been collected since my appointment as Northern Protector of Aboriginals, it has been deemed

advisable to publish, in the form of Bulletins, those of my reports which may be considered fairly complete in themselves and up to date so far as the subject matter with which they deal.

This shows that these are the actual words that Roth or his colleagues wrote many years ago. Some of his phrases are strange to us today, and he often spelled the words Aborigines or Aboriginals with a small “a”. Today the Museum follows the form of a capital “A” when referring to Aboriginal people.

4. Collection Information. Here in numerical order is listed all the information to be found in the Museum Registers and catalogue cards, including measurements and descriptions of objects. This information is especially useful if you wish to visit the Museum to look at a particular object. You can ask for it by its own registered number.

5. Photographic Information. This lists the negative sheet and frame number of each photograph, which is useful if you want to order a special photograph from the Museum’s Photographic Department.

6. Useful Written Information. This lets you know where I have found all the written information for the object being written about in this book, so you can check it for yourself if you wish.

7. Scientific Names of Materials Used. Scientific names used by Roth for the plants and animals he wrote about are listed here, together with the name in use today.

How to get Help

If you want to visit the Museum to look at the collection, borrow objects, order photographs or use the Library to read Roth’s books, you should contact the Aboriginal Collection Manager (telephone (02) 339-8246) or the Aboriginal Heritage Officer (telephone (02) 339-8192). If you wish to contact the Photography Division direct, the telephone number is (02) 339-8133. The direct line to the Museum Library is (02) 339-8185. Please ring or write first if you want to look at the collections which may not be on public display.

The Museum’s guiding principle is that consultation with Aboriginal people about Aboriginal heritage and culture is essential.

As well as an Aboriginal Collection Officer and an Aboriginal Heritage and Liaison Officer on staff, an Aboriginal Heritage Advisory Committee has been appointed by the Museum Trust with wide ranging duties. Communities are welcome to give the Museum their opinion or advice on the management of collections.

If you have things you know about artefacts and the people who made them, and would like to tell the Museum about it for future generations to learn about the rich cultural heritage of Aboriginal people, we would like to hear from you.

The Museum’s address if you want to visit us is

The Australian Museum
6-8 College Street, Sydney, NSW 2000.

The Division of Anthropology at the Australian Museum will be happy to help with any questions. We can be reached by writing to

The Division of Anthropology, The Australian Museum
PO Box A285, Sydney South, NSW 2000.

The general switchboard telephone number is (02) 339-8111; Aboriginal Collection Manager – (02) 339-8246; Aboriginal Heritage/Liaison Officer – (02) 339-8192; the fax number is – (02) 360-4350

Addresses of Institutions

CANBERRA

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)
Acton House, Marcus Clarke Street,
Acton ACT 2601
Telephone: (06) 246-1111

The National Museum of Australia,
Lady Denman Drive,
Yarramundi Canberra ACT 2601
Telephone: (06) 256-1111

The National Library of Australia,
Parkes Place,
Canberra ACT 2601
Telephone: (06) 262-1111

SYDNEY:

The Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales,
Macquarie Street,
Sydney NSW 2000
Telephone: (02) 230-1414

The National Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens,
Mrs Macquarie's Road,
Sydney NSW 2000
Telephone: (02) 231-8111

The Australian Museum,
6-8 College Street,
Sydney NSW 2000
Telephone: (02) 339-8111

BRISBANE

The Queensland Museum,
Queensland Cultural Centre,
South Bank Qld 4101
Telephone: (07) 840-7635

The State Library of Queensland,
Queensland Cultural Centre,
South Bank Qld 4101
Telephone: (07) 840-7666

The John Oxley Library,
Queensland Cultural Centre,
South Bank Qld 4101
Telephone: (07) 840-7880

Queensland State Archives,
162 Annerley Road,
Dutton Park Qld 4102
Telephone: (07) 844-3215

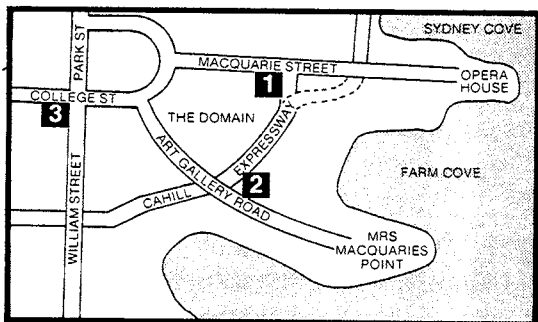
TOWNSVILLE

James Cook University of North Queensland,
History Department (Oral History),
Townsville Qld 4811
(also the Material Cultures Unit)
Telephone: (077) 814-111

ADELAIDE

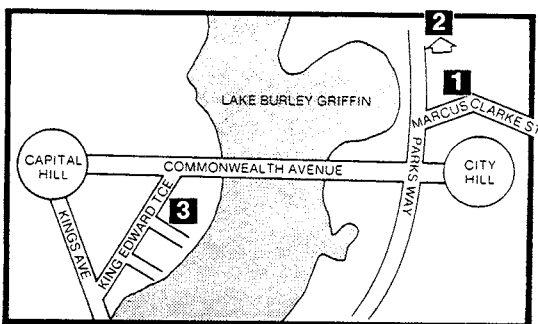
The Lutheran Church Archives Office,
101 Archer Street,
North Adelaide SA 5006
Telephone: (08) 267-1737, (08) 267-4922

The South Australian Museum,
 North Terrace,
 Adelaide SA 5000
 Telephone: (08) 223-8911



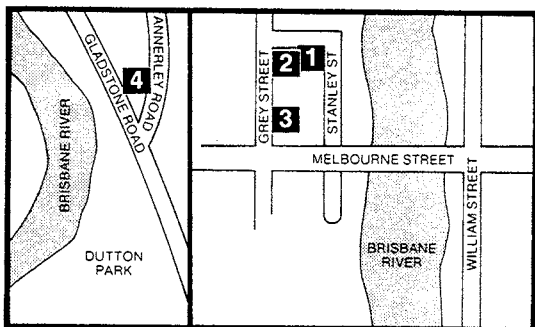
SYDNEY

- 1** The Mitchell Library, which is a wing of the State Library of NSW., Macquarie Street, Sydney.
- 2** The National Herbarium, which is in the Royal Botanical Gardens, just past the Art Gallery of NSW in Lady Macquarie's Road, Sydney.
- 3** Australian Museum, corner of College and Park Streets, Sydney.



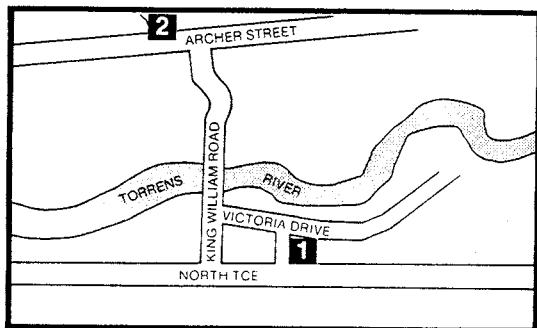
CANBERRA

- 1** The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (known as AIATSIS), Acton House, Marcus Clarke Street, Acton, A.C.T.
- 2** The National Museum of Australia, Lady Denman Drive, 7 kms from city, Canberra, ACT.
- 3** National Library of Australia, Parkes Place, Canberra, ACT.



BRISBANE

- 1** Queensland Museum.
- 2** State Library of Queensland.
- 3** John Oxley Library.
- 4** Queensland State Archives, 162 Annerley Road, Dutton Park. 4102.

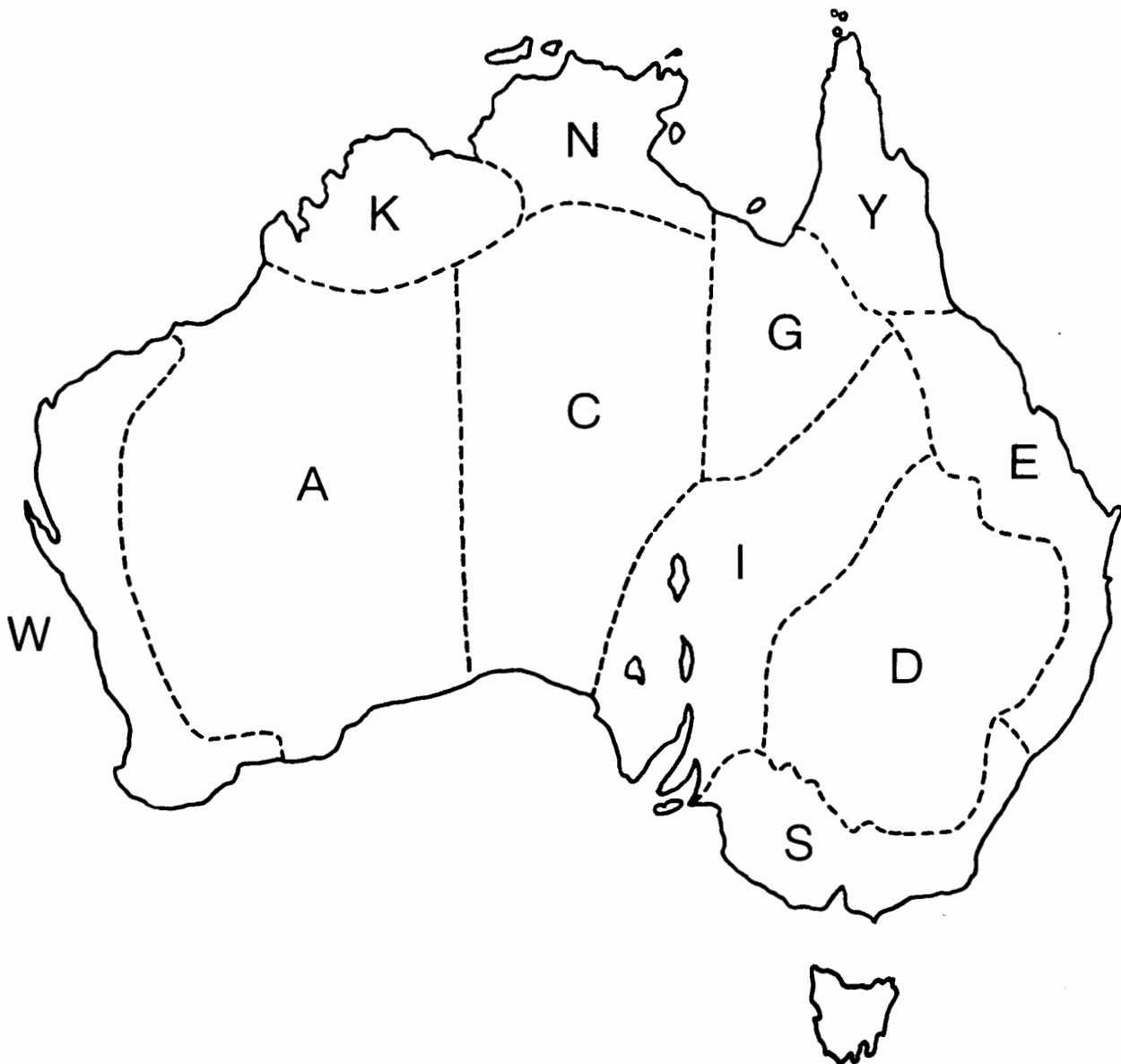


ADELAIDE

- 1** South Australian Museum, North Terrace, Adelaide.
- 2** Lutheran Church State Archives Office, 101 Archer St., North Adelaide.

Series of small maps showing how to get to the institutions mentioned – ‘a potted Gregory’s Guide’.

AUSTRALIA DIVIDED INTO CULTURAL AREAS FOLLOWING THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDIES CLASSIFICATION. OBJECTS IN THIS CATALOGUE COME FROM AREA Y.



Australia divided into cultural areas following the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Classification. Objects in this Catalogue come from Area Y.

Who was Dr Roth and Why is his Collection Important?

In 1905, the Australian Museum bought one of the most complete collections of Aboriginal artefacts ever gathered together from one area. The collection of approximately 2000 objects became known as the 'Roth Collection.'

Walter Edmund Roth was born in London on 2nd April 1861. He first came to Australia in 1884, but returned to England in 1890 to further his study in medicine. Dr Roth, MRCS, LRCP came back to Australia in 1894 at the age of 33, and took up the appointment as Medical Officer/Surgeon to Boulia, Cloncurry and Normanton hospitals in north-west central Queensland. During the few years he worked here he developed a real and intense interest in the Aboriginal people of the region. This resulted in the publication in 1897 of his first book *Ethnological Studies among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*. In the preface he stated

**...I look forward to the day...when...Queensland will be proud of her
Aboriginals...**



Walter Edmund Roth in outback northern Queensland. Roth neg. Australian Museum collection.

This book brought him to the notice of officials as a person interested in Aborigines and their culture. The following year he was appointed Protector of Aborigines for the Northern District of Queensland under 'The Aborigines Protection and restriction of the sale of Opium Act, 1897.'

In explaining the duties of this new appointment, W.E. Parry-Okeden, the Queensland Commissioner of Police, under whose jurisdiction he then came, wrote to Roth from Brisbane on 4 January 1898,

Although your selection for the position of Protector of Aborigines under the new Act has been largely owing to the fact that the enthusiastic interest in the welfare of the blacks you have displayed, gives great promise of the proper performance of the humanitarian work implied, in the fulfillment of the duties of a Protector and that you possess eminent qualifications for the prosecution of scientific investigation in connection with the ethnology and anthropology of the aborigines, it is nevertheless to be borne in mind that your appointment is even more due to the fact that you are a Surgeon and Doctor of Medicine, which enables the Government to give effect to the recommendation made in my "Report on the North Queensland Aborigines and the Native Police", that it would be a blessing if a doctor were appointed by the Government whose time would be devoted to work among the aborigines...

Directly you have proper and sufficient equipment you should proceed to Cooktown, make all possible inquiry concerning local aborigines, numbers, disease, present condition, measurements, photographs etc. Collect all information re their "walkabouts" and trade routes so as to learn the boundaries of their territories, gather all particulars concerning friendly and hostile neighbours, making from time to time such local collection of ethnological and anthropological interest as is possible...

Roth himself wrote in a letter to Mr A.B. Stephens:

...I hope to get the opportunity of spending the next 10 to 15 years of my life in working out the anthropology of the whole northern district of the colony...

This letter can be found in the Mitchell Library, Sydney in A.G. Stephen's papers; look for Volume 7, R-Y, under the number A/23031.

Roth immediately moved to Cooktown and began to travel by packhorse over the vast territory he was to look after. This took in the whole of Cape York Peninsula as far as the southern shore of the Gulf of Carpentaria and included the Channel country on the west. On the east coast he travelled as far south as Rockhampton.

His appointment had special significance for Aboriginal people living in the rainforest region of north Queensland. This area had been left alone by Europeans until the 1860s-1870s. At about this time gold was discovered in the Palmer River and at Mulgrave, close to Cairns. Tin was found in the Atherton Tablelands. Suddenly some 35,000 Europeans and Chinese rushed to the goldfields, pushing local Aboriginal people to one side. Permanent settlements and ports were set up. European diseases such as measles and influenza caused many deaths in Aboriginal

communities. There was wholesale murder. Christy Palmerson, a pioneer prospector, ambushed a group of the Mamu people who had gathered together for a ceremony. He shot all the adult males, except for a small number who escaped. Chinese employers often paid Aboriginal workers in opium rather than money.

A lot of fighting went on between Aboriginals and these new arrivals. Members of many Aboriginal families were seen as trouble-makers and were sent to Palm Island by the Government of the day. Some were never allowed to return to their homeland or their families.

Missions were set up, but the missionaries did not always help Aboriginal people, and often worked to destroy their culture.

However, the new settlers did not have it all their own way. There were many reports in local newspapers of the times about Aboriginal communities fighting back. At Herberton, European settlers signed a petition saying they could not protect themselves and asked for help to drive Aboriginal people from the district. Similar problems were reported at Port Douglas and Cairns.

In 1890 the government of the day stepped in to halt this warfare over traditional land ownership and food resources. Aboriginal people said they would stop raiding crops and killing cattle if they could be compensated and had food and blankets given them.

When Roth took up his job as Protector of Aboriginals in 1898, he was shocked by the way they were being treated. Publicans employed Aboriginal people and paid them in alcohol. Aboriginal men working on coastal vessels were not articulated, and often were cheated of their pay. The boats which went fishing for the highly prized sea-slugs, also called beche-de-mer attracted special criticism. Deliberate quarrels would be picked with Aboriginal crew members, who, frightened, would jump overboard and swim for shore. The boat would wait 48 hours before docking, and then claim the men had deserted, which meant they received no money at all. At the end of most trips, men would be dumped many kilometres from home, instead of being returned to their homes at the ship owners' expense.

Roth also tried to change attitudes of the local officials to the rich cultural history of the Aboriginal people around them. In a letter to the Police Commissioner of 11 March 1898 he wrote:

...with regard to Aboriginal weapons I have about a dozen or more things to forward you as soon as the next escort goes down. To get the various police officials etc. to take an interest in collecting these, I have distributed among them some dozen copies of my book, and would only be too glad were you to suggest to the Home Secretary that copies be sent to all the officers in charge of stations (in Northern and Central Districts) and make Cooktown the depot for arranging, sorting and labelling them.

Considering the distances Roth had to cover and the extremely primitive mode of transport he must have been forced to adopt, his industry was remarkable. He was able to write to W.E. Parry-Okeden, Police Commissioner, only four months after starting work, as follows (letter dated 15 April, 1898):

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that I have this day forwarded you per parcel post, a Report on the Ethnology of the Cape Bedford Aboriginals.

My photography has improved to the extent that the negatives turn out much better now than they did at first: I still am very bad at the printing,

and am not certain as yet whether the fault lies in the light, the chemicals, the climate, or in my own ignorance.

During the following six years Dr Roth covered an enormous area of north Queensland in great detail and became a close personal friend of many Aboriginal people. A letter written to him by a young Aboriginal girl, Magdalen Mulu in May 1898, translated, read:

We were pleased you came to stay with us, and treated us in a friendly way. You also had a smile for us, and called us quickly to have a talk with you. You are indeed a friend. We therefore in return cannot (may not) forget you, but bear you in mind. We say you are our friend, and do not know another white-man like you. You spent three nights with us and shewed[sic] us games. So in return we shewed[sic] you (how to play) "cat's cradle" with the hands. You will of course come again by-and-by (won't you?). By that time you will perhaps understand our language.

This letter can be found in W.E. Roth's book, Bulletin 2, 1901, page 32.

With the help of friends like this he gathered the huge collection now held at the Australian Museum.

One of Walter Roth's sons, Vincent wrote in his memoirs:

'Now a word about Dad's "Museum" which was used also as his office and study. The walls were occupied by many shelved cupboards which contained, each well docketed and described, the large collection of Aboriginal artefacts, tools, toys, weapons, and household goods he had amassed during his time in North Queensland, and included a large black canoe which was kept slung up to the roof of the short verandah outside the museum.'

(Extract from Vincent Roth's memoirs as given to Michael Bennett, Vincent Roth's son-in-law. Personal correspondence between M. Bennett and K. Khan, 8 August 1967).

These collections include not only many types of weapons, tools, plait work, basketry and such like, but also objects at various stages of manufacture, together with an account of how they were made. He also took down information Aboriginal people told him about their daily life, how to collect food, about birth, marriage and death, languages and all things that made up the cultural life of a people.

The first three of his North Queensland Ethnography Bulletins were published by the Queensland government in 1901, and the following five Bulletins between 1902 and 1906. The Australian Museum published the remaining ten Bulletins between 1907 and 1910.

However, trouble was brewing for Dr Roth. His humane treatment and respect for Aboriginals was viewed in a hostile light by local business interests. In 1905 he was appointed Royal Commissioner to look into the conditions of Aboriginal people in Western Australia. During his absence a public meeting was held in Cooktown to try and stop him working in Queensland and to protest against his re-appointment as Protector of Aboriginals.

The main objections thrown at him were that his job was unnecessary and that he overruled

decisions made by local police. They claimed he stopped needed changes in the law and that he did not contact Aboriginal people or treat them medically.

It is interesting to note that the most vocal trouble-makers were two parliamentarians, one of whom was the head of the Brisbane office of one of the coastal shipping firms that Roth had complained about. Local businessmen involved in the coastal shipping trade, especially the sea-slug or beche-de-mer trade, did not want Roth re-appointed. They were backed by a publican of a hotel owned by a local shipping firm, and by a solicitor.

Among accusations, Roth was supposed to have acted immorally, taken indecent photographs, and of selling a quantity of ethnological specimens, the property of the Queensland government, to the Australian Museum in Sydney.

The headline in the 'Sydney Truth' of 26 November 1905 screamed:

The Dr Roth Scandal - Ructions in Parliament - Sale of Aboriginal Specimens to the Sydney Museum.

Roth replied in the Report on the subsequent Parliamentary investigation:

I am well aware that the general opposition to my administration, and to myself personally, is mainly due to my interference with what has for many years past been considered a vested interest in the flesh and blood of the native. As a matter of fact, the opposition exhibited on these grounds is one of the greatest compliments that could have been paid me, and my happiest satisfaction lies in the knowledge that I have invariably treated all employers of aboriginals' labour alike, without fear or favour.

The Under Secretary for Public Lands, in the same document, concluded that:

Nevertheless, I came to know from my conversations with the police magistrate, the clerk of petty sessions, the subcollector of Customs, and others, that there is a strong element in Cooktown favourable to Dr Roth and his work, and that I had encountered the whole strength of the antagonistic opinion.

The Parliamentary investigation found he was innocent of all charges. Nevertheless, Roth decided to leave Australia, even though pressure was put on him to stay. In 1906 he became Government Medical Officer, Stipendiary Magistrate and Protector of the Indians in the Pomeroon district of what was then British Guyana, in South America. While he was working there he collected artefacts and information for the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, United States of America.

He retired from the Civil Service at the age of 67 and was appointed Curator of the Georgetown Museum, British Guyana, and Government Archivist. He died there on April 5, 1933. The Museum has been renamed in his honour.

While some of his actions and terms used when writing about Aboriginal people would not be acceptable now, Dr Roth was a man ahead of his time. In an age when Aboriginal people were being exploited and killed he was busy drawing, taking notes and collecting what he saw as a rich culture of a people under threat. The material he collected nearly a century ago remains today so that future generations may know and understand something about the way the Aboriginal people of north Queensland lived 100 years ago.

Books to Read

Further information on north Queensland at the turn of the century can be obtained from these books.

- N. Loos - *Invasion and Resistance. Aboriginal-European Relations on the North Queensland Frontier 1861-1897.* ANU Press, Canberra, 1982.
- H. Reynolds - *The Other Side of the Frontier.* Penguin, Ringwood, 1982.
- H. Reynolds - *Frontier, Aborigines, Settlers and Land.* Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1987
- H. Reynolds - *Dispossession. Black Australians and White Invaders.* Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1989.

Complete List of Roth Bulletins

Owing to the rapidly-increasing quantity of scientific material which, in accordance with the Home Secretary's instructions, has been collected since my appointment as Northern Protector of Aborigines, it has been deemed advisable to publish, in the form of Bulletins, those of my reports which may be considered fairly complete in themselves and up to date so far as the subject matter with which they deal.

By the issue of two or three such Bulletins annually, I trust that within the next eight to ten years the ethnography and anthropology of the North Queensland aboriginal will be a little better understood by the general public than they are at present.

Walter E. Roth

Cooktown, 1st January, 1901 (from the preface to Bulletin 1, 1901)

- Roth, W.E., 1901. North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.1. String, and other forms of strand: basketry-, woven bag-, and net-work. Government Printer, Brisbane, pages 1 to 15, plates 1 to 19.
- Roth, W.E., 1901. North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.2. The structure of the Koko-Yimidir language. With the assistance of Revs. G.H. Schwarz and W. Poland, Lutheran Missionaries at Cape Bedford Mission Station. Government Printer, Brisbane, pages 1 to 35.
- Roth, W.E., 1901. North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.3. Food: its search, capture, and preparation. Government Printer, Brisbane, pages 1 to 31, figures 1 to 23.
- Roth, W.E., 1902. North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.4. Games, sports and amusements. Government Printer, Brisbane, pages 1 to 24, plates 1 to 38.
- Roth, W.E., 1903. North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.5. Superstition, magic, and medicine. Government Printer, Brisbane, pages 1 to 42, photography 1 to 41.
- Roth, W.E., 1903. North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.6. An elementary grammar of the Nggerikudi language. By the Rev. N. Hey, Superintendent of the Presbyterian Mission, Mapoon, Batavia River, North Queensland, revised and edited by Walter E. Roth. Government Printer, Brisbane, pages 1 to 23.
- Roth, W.E., 1904. North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.7. Domestic implements, arts, and manufactures. Government Printer, Brisbane, pages 1 to 34, plates 1 to 16.
- Roth, W.E., 1905. North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.8. Notes on government, morals, and crime. Government Printer, Brisbane, pages 1 to 12, plates 1 to 4.

Bulletins 1-8 inclusive were presented to both Houses of Parliament in Brisbane (see Queensland Parliamentary Papers 1901-1906), and subsequently printed and published by the Government Printer (George Arthur Vaughan). The collections, on which much of the matter contained in these "Bulletins" depends, having now passed into the possession of the Trustees of the Australian Museum, Dr Roth's notes will from time to time appear in the "Records". – Editor.

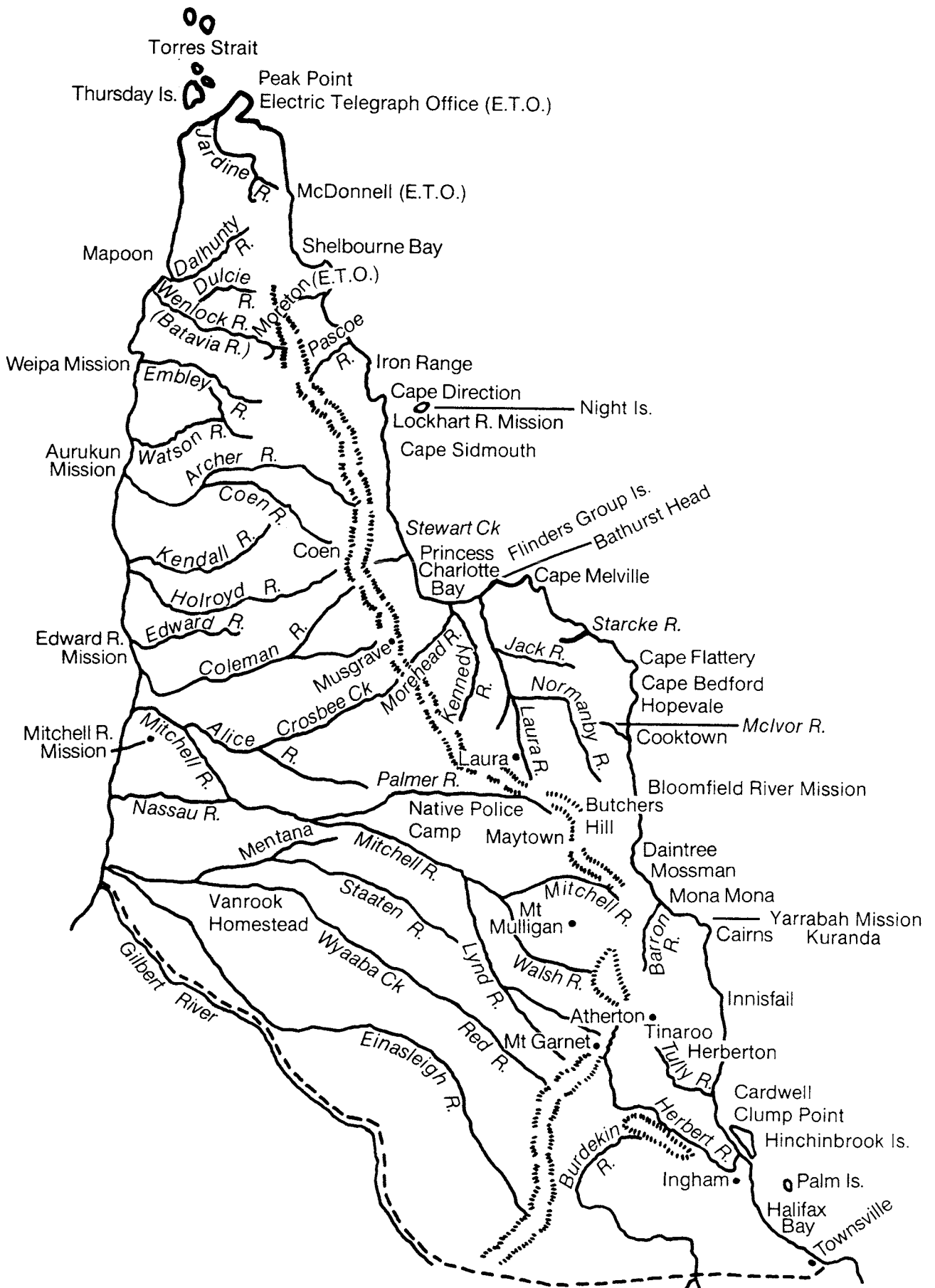
(Footnote, Bulletin 9, 1907, page 1).

- Roth, W.E., 1907. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no.9. Burial ceremonies, and disposal of the dead. Records of the Australian Museum, Swift Printing Co., Sydney, volume 6, number 5, pages 365 to 403, plates 68 to 74. (Walter E. Roth was now Magistrate of the Pomeroon District, British Guyana).
- Roth, W.E., 1908. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no.10. Marriage ceremonies and infant life. Records of the Australian Museum, F. Cunninghame & Co., Printers, Sydney, volume 7, number 1, pages 1 to 17, plates 1 to 3.
- Roth, W.E., 1908. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no.11. Miscellaneous papers. 1. Tabu and other forms of restriction. 2. Counting and enumeration. 3. Signals on the road; gesture language. 4. Progressive Koko-yimidir exercises. Records of the Australian Museum, F. Cunninghame & Co., Printers, Sydney, volume 7, number 2, pages 74 to 107, plates 17 to 21.
- Roth, W.E., 1909. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no.12. On certain initiation ceremonies. Records of the Australian Museum (publisher not given), Sydney, volume 7, number 3, pages 166 to 185, plates 50 to 56.
- Roth, W.E., 1909. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no.13. Fighting weapons. Records of the Australian Museum, F. Cunninghame & Co., Printers, Sydney, volume 7, number 4, pages 189 to 211, plates 58 to 61.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no.14. Transport and trade. Records of the Australian Museum (no publisher or place given), volume 8, number 1, pages 1 to 19, figures 1 to 13, plates 1 to 7.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no.15. Decoration, deformation and clothing. Records of the Australian Museum (no publisher or place given), volume 8, number 1, pages 20 to 54, figures 14 to 30, plates 8 to 10.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no.16. Huts and shelters. Records of the Australian Museum (no publisher or place given), volume 8, number 1, pages 55 to 66, figures 31 to 42, plates 11 to 17.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no.17. Postures and abnormalities. Records of the Australian Museum (no publisher or place given), volume 8, number 1, pages 67 to 78, figures 43 to 51, plates 18 to 24.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no.18. Social and individual nomenclature. Records of the Australian Museum (no publisher or place given), volume 8, number 1, pages 79 to 106, plates 25 to 31.
- Walter Edmund Roth also published a book when he was Surgeon to the Bouliia, Cloncurry and Normanton hospitals, before taking up his appointment as Northern Protector of Aborigines, north Queensland:
- Roth, W.E., 1897. Ethnological studies among the north-west-central Queensland Aborigines. Government Printer, Brisbane, pages 1 to 199, plates 1 to 23.

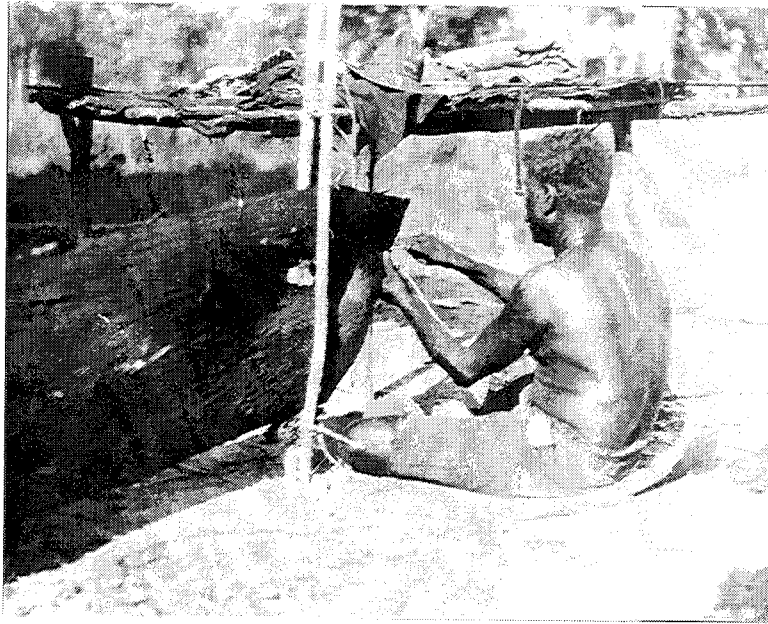
Places in Cape York (Area Y) where Roth collected the Artefacts

This is only an estimate of the numbers of artefacts from each area, as not all the places and artefacts have been closely checked to date.

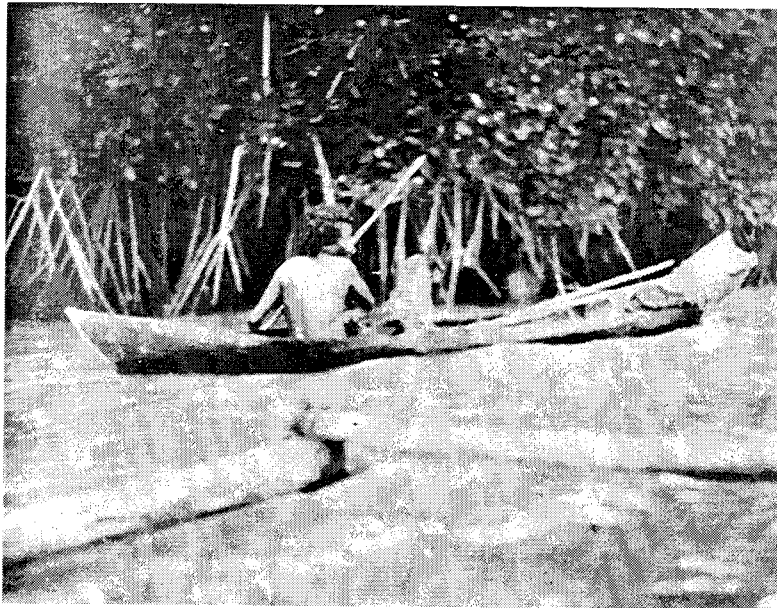
1. Archer River (15 artefacts)
2. Atherton (40 artefacts)
3. Bathurst Head (22 artefacts)
4. Bloomfield River (112 artefacts)
5. Butcher's Hill (28 artefacts)
6. Cairns (32 artefacts)
7. Cape Bedford (75 artefacts)
8. Cape Grafton (23 artefacts)
9. Cape Melville (3 artefacts)
10. Cardwell (7 artefacts)
11. Clump Point (6 artefacts)
12. Coen River. Roth called it the Pennefather River (21 artefacts)
13. Cooktown (28 artefacts)
14. Dunk Island (6 artefacts)
15. False Cape (1 artefact)
16. Flinders Island (11 artefacts)
17. Geraldton (3 artefacts)
18. Hambledon (1 artefact)
19. Herberton (5 artefacts)
20. Hinchinbrooke Island (1 artefact)
21. Ingham (1 artefact)
22. Johnstone River (4 artefacts)
23. Kuranda (1 artefact)
24. McDonnell Electric Telegraph Office (1 artefact)
25. McIvor River (2 artefacts)
26. Mapoon and the Wenlock River, called the Batavia River by Roth (194 artefacts)
27. Maytown (14 artefacts)
28. Mentana (1 artefact)
29. Mitchell River (13 artefacts)
30. Morehead River (1 artefact)
31. Moreton Electric Telegraph Office (8 artefacts)
32. Musgrave (5 artefacts)
33. Nassau River (1 artefact)
34. Night Island (1 artefact)
35. Palmer River, often referred to as the Palmer River Native Police camp by Roth (46 artefacts)
36. Peak Point Electric Telegraph Station (2 artefacts)
37. Princess Charlotte Bay (23 artefacts)
38. Staaten River (123 artefacts)
39. Starcke River (5 artefacts)
40. Tinaroo (1 artefact)
41. Tully River (12 artefacts)
42. Vanrook Homestead (2 artefacts)
43. Weipa and the Embley River (23 artefacts)



Archer River



Sewing the prow of an Archer River bark canoe with cane and wallaby bone stiletto.



Archer River woman in a bark canoe with dog and her husband's spears, paddling along the mangroves.

Both photos from: Ursula McConnel. Native Arts and Industries on the Archer, Kendall and Holroyd Rivers, Cape York Peninsula, north Queensland. Records of the South Australian Museum, Vol. 11, No. 1, May 8, 1953, plate 1, figs b & c.

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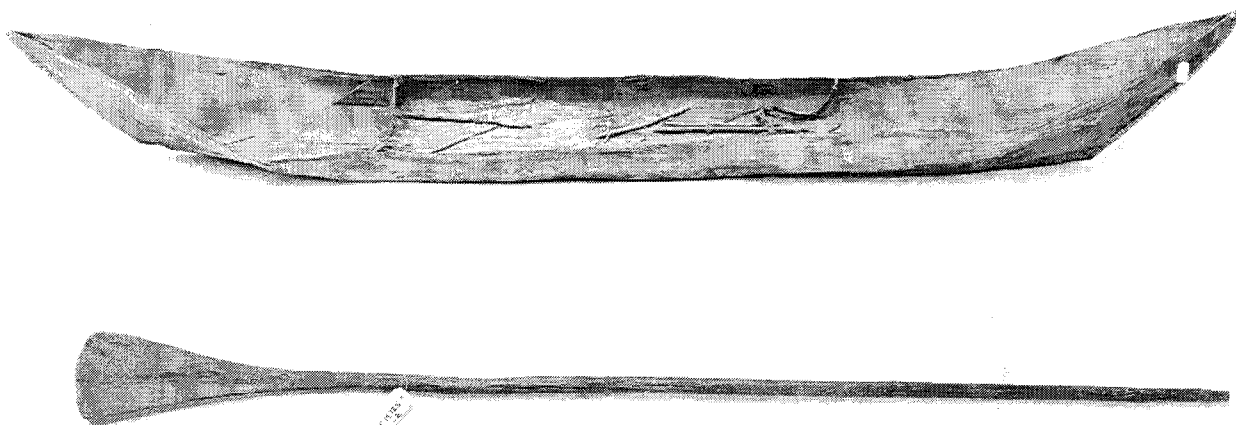
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The People

Roth apparently did not spend much time on the Archer River as he did not write about the people living in this area. In his book, Bulletin 18, 1910, page 83, he wrote:

**I propose referring only to those few where, during the past thirteen years
I have lived with the natives on terms of fairly personal intimacy...**

Bark Canoe and Paddle



E.15725-1 and E.15725-2. Single sheet bark canoe and paddle from the Archer River. No collection date given. Canoe 450 x 45 centimetres. Height of bow and stern is 75 centimetres. Paddle 184.5 centimetres long.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth described the making of a single sheet bark canoe in some detail.

1. The wood was usually taken from a eucalyptus tree at the end of the wet season, when the sap was rising, as this made the bark sheet easier to remove. One end of the bark sheet was then heated over a fire to make it pliable. The whole length of the bark was then folded longways with the outside of the bark facing out.

2. The end of the bark which had been heated was clamped in a vice. The vice was made of two switches, tied tightly together below around a stiff bundle of grass or bark, so as to form a fork. The leg of the vice was pushed firmly into the ground, and the arms were tightly tied over the length of the bark.

3. A short piece of timber, acting as a spreader or stretcher, was jammed into position to outline the future shape of the canoe. It also acted as a guide when cutting off the end sticking out beyond the vice to make the bow.

4. The end was cut with a strong sharp-edged shell from below, upwards, the cutter cutting towards himself.

5. The bow end was shaped and overcast with a split strip of lawyer cane, through holes drilled with a pointed piece of wallaby bone. When sewing up the cut ends, overcasting started at the centre, worked down first and then the upper section was finally sewn.

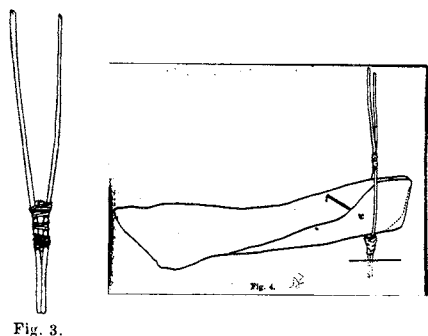


Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

6. When the sewing had been completed, the clamp was opened, and the other end of the bark length was similarly treated to form a stern. Usually by the time the stern was ready to be clamped, it had been standing in the sun long enough to make it pliable. If not, it was heated over a fire. The stern and bow of these canoes was much the same.

7. Unlike canoes on the eastern shores of Cape York Peninsula, these canoes had no gunwales or ribs. To keep the sides in place, two bluntly pointed pieces of stick, as spreaders or stretchers, were put in the canoe. They were balanced by two to three ties of twisted vine, fixed into opposite sides of the canoe and stretched by two forked sticks placed crosswise, their bases resting on an extra piece of bark.

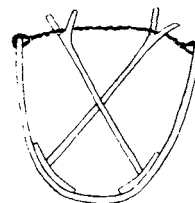


Fig. 7.

8. A final task was to make a hole at the top of the canoe, a little to one side of the bow. A heavy stone was tied to a rope which was fixed through this hole. This was the anchor.

These canoes had long sloping ends, and lasted a long time providing they were kept out of the sun. If cracks appeared, they were repaired with bark, sewn, and covered with beeswax, and sometimes gum cement.

When in use, the occupant sat and paddled himself along with a paddle made from the root of a tree. The paddle was held in both hands and used on one or other side as required to propel the canoe along. Gulf coast canoes such as these rode higher in the water than east coast ones.

Roth noted that Aboriginal people could balance well in these canoes and even stand up and throw a spear at fish.

The canoe was made in differing sizes to carry from one to six people. There was usually a shell bailer in the canoe and often a fire, or the material for making a fire.

These canoes were used on the Gulf coast of Cape York Peninsula from the Wenlock and Dulcie Rivers down to the Archer River. They were used mainly on rivers, but could be taken to sea when the water was calm.

A canoe Roth saw being made took just over a day to build, and this included stripping bark from the tree.

Collection Information

Roth collected one single sheet bark canoe and paddle from the Archer River.

E.15725-1 Bark canoe

E.15725-2 Paddle

This bark canoe and paddle were bought by the Museum from Dr Roth who had received them from a Mr G Gross. No date is given. These objects were registered on 9 October, 1905, and do not form part of the original Roth collection purchase.

The canoe is 450 centimetres long and 45 centimetres wide. The height of the bow and stern is 75 centimetres. The paddle is 184.5 centimetres long.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available, negative sheet 8457M, frame 1 (paddle); negative sheet 8168M, frame 16 (canoe).

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 9.
 Bulletin 14, 1910, pages 6 to 9.

A.C. Haddon and J. Hornell. The Canoes of Melanesia, Queensland, and New Guinea, 1937. B.P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu, special publication number 28, volume 2, pages 179 to 183. Haddon and Hornell draw attention to Roth's Bulletin 14 where plate 4, figure 1 is wrongly identified as a Gulf coast canoe.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Bark used to make the canoe: eucalyptus tree, *Eucalyptus tetradonta* F.v.M.

The paddle was made from either the root of *Bruguiera rheedii* Blume, now known as *Bruguiera gymnorhiza* (L.Savigny), or from *Ceriops candolleana* Arn, now known as *Ceriops tagal* (Perr) C. Robinson.

Shark Backbone Necklace



E.14431. Shark bone necklace. Collected Archer River, 1901. Length 17.7 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth wrote nothing on how this necklace was made, and very little on necklaces at all.

Collection Information

This is the only shark backbone necklace in the collection that Roth obtained from the Archer River.

E.14431 The necklace was collected in 1901. It is 17.7 centimetres long. The length of the average piece of backbone is 0.9 centimetres by 0.4 centimetres. Eighty one shark backbone pieces have been threaded on handspun bark fibre string. Some have faint traces of red ochre on them.

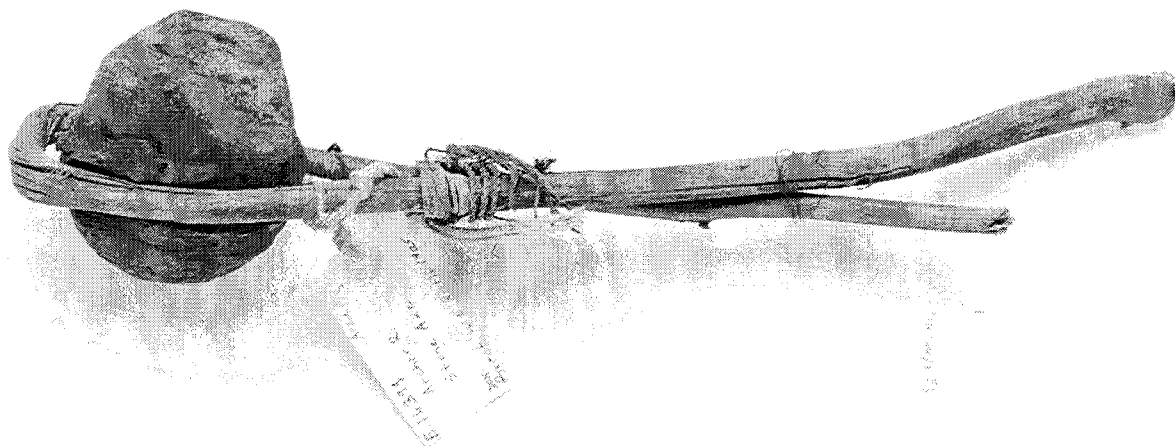
Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4143M, frame 1115.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 15, 1910, page 34.

Hafted Stone Axes



E.16399. Hafted stone axe, Archer River. No collection date given. Axe head 10 x 6 centimetres. Hand grip 70 centimetres long.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth did not mention axes from the Archer River, but did write about them from the Batavia River (now called the Wenlock River) and the Pennefather River (now called the Coen River) as being wedge-shaped. They could be used as an axe or an adze by altering the angle of the handles on the axe.

He said that although stone axes were no longer being made in Queensland in his time, when he visited Mapoon he had seen iron axe heads being used as an axe or adze by changing the handle grip, in the traditional manner.

Collection Information

Roth collected two hafted stone axes from the Archer River. They do not form part of the 1905 Roth Collection. Both axes were donated, and became part of the Museum's registered collection on 26 February 1907. Only one stone axe remains in the collection, the other was sent to the Auckland Institute and Museum, Auckland, New Zealand.

- E.16398 This edge-ground hafted stone axe is no longer in the collection, having been exchanged with the Auckland Institute and Museum, New Zealand in August 1917. The Auckland Museum's registered number for this axe is 8979, accession number 92/17. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'same type for Batavia River which are figured Roth Bull.VII, figs., 56-57, text 25, see E.13580-1.'
- E.16399 Roughly shaped edge-ground stone axe head, with gum cement at one end, is held in a pincer-like grip with a thin sapling, bent over to form a handle. The legs of the handle are held together with fine strips of bark and handspun bark fibre string. The note in the Australian Museum's register for the above axe also refers to this

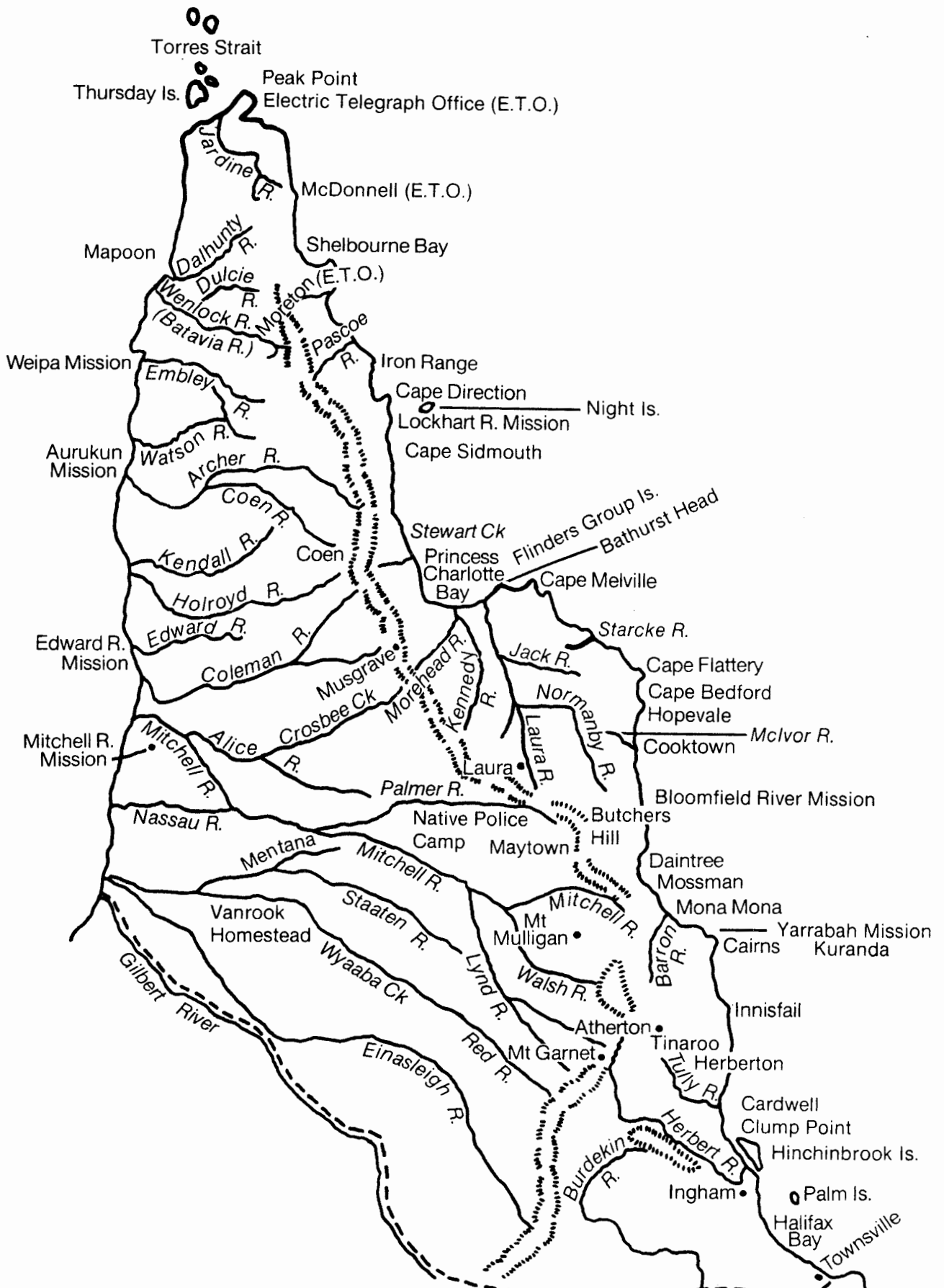
axe. The axe head is 10 centimetres by 6 centimetres. The length of the hand grip is 70 centimetres. The axe weighs 498.7 grammes.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 8457M, frame 11.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 18 to 19.



Atherton



“Panorama of Atherton Tablelands” [Taken from “Tablelands of North Queensland, Atherton and Evelyn Tablelands”.] M.L. Ref.Q.984.6/Q. Published with kind permission of the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.

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The People

In Bulletin 18, 1910, pages 91 to 92, Roth wrote about the Aboriginal people he met in the Atherton area, and said:

At Atherton, the natives to be met with, as well as in the neighbourhood, belong to three groups or tribes speaking different dialects – the Chirpal-ji, Ngai-kungo-i, and Ngachan-ji who speak chirpal, ngaikungo, and ngachan respectively. The Chirpalji have their main camp in the vicinity of Carrington at Scrubby Creek (Ku-rongul), travelling to Atherton (Kar-kar) and the Herberton Ranges (Urang-undi). The Ngaikungo-i with their home at Atherton go on “walk-about” to Watsonville (Ilanbare) passing on the way the heads of the Walsh River, country which they speak of as Balkin. The remaining group have their main camp (in 1898) at Putt’s Selection, two miles above the Cairns-crossing, on the Upper Barron River (Takkara-il country), whence they wander to the head of the Upper Russell River (Ku-par country). The Tinaroo Ranges are spoken of locally as Mun-gija.

Some of Roth’s tribal and language names are spelled differently today. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra uses this spelling:

Roth’s Chirpal is now spelled Dyirbal

Roth’s Ngaikungo is now spelled Ngaygunyu

Roth’s Ngachan is now spelled Ngajan.

Carol Gartside, whose family live at Atherton, took the Atherton section of the catalogue home to Atherton to ask the people what they thought about it and whether they had any suggestions to make it more useful for Aboriginal people and others to use. This is a little of what she wrote in her report when she was Senior Aboriginal Liaison Officer at the Museum in 1989.

The Past:

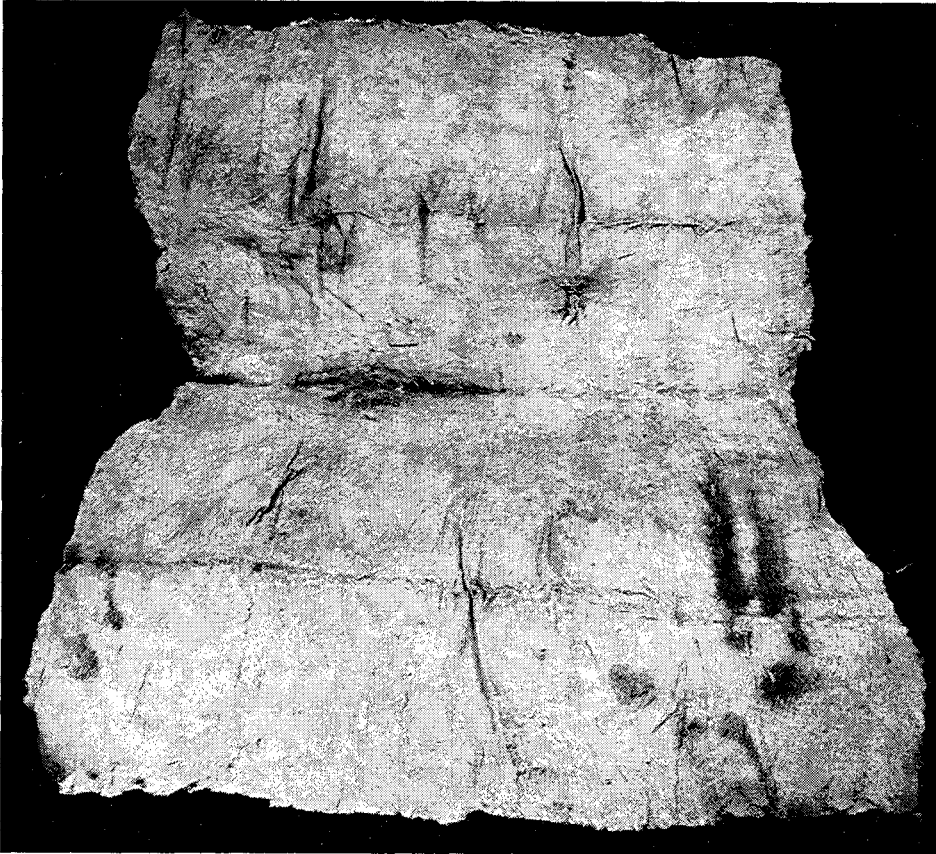
Like most Aboriginal people all over Australia, people from the Atherton area were dispossessed of their land, driven from the traditional grounds and rounded up and put on government reserves. The first reserve was on the outskirts of Atherton known as Nyletta. Tin and gold were discovered not far from this location and again Aboriginal people were moved this time to a location known as pinnacle surrounded by thick rain forest and seven hills (extinct volcanoes) known as the seven sisters with the Barron River flowing on the outskirts acting as a natural border.

This place affectionately known to Aboriginal people as pinnacle pocket, was also known to whites and missionaries as ‘Bethal’ (House of God) Mission. This place was managed by missionaries who were sent in to save the souls of these (poor harmless child-like people) heathen savages. Again like a lot of Aboriginal communities white man’s religion was taught and the practice of traditional life was forbidden. However, regardless of the treatment suffered at white hands, the spirit of Aboriginal people was not broken and stories and language were told and passed on.

Today:

Like most Aboriginal communities in remote areas priorities now are housing, health, employment and education, and Atherton is no exception. However, Aboriginal people in Atherton not only are aware and concerned about heritage, but are very, very proud of their heritage.

Bark Cloth Blanket



E.13520. Bark blanket. Collected Atherton, 1898. 120 x 78 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

To make a bark blanket, a sheet of bark was peeled from a fig tree and the outer bark was torn off using the sharp edge of a broken piece of shell from the candle nut tree. Roth said this took a long time to do, and needed a great deal of skill.

Next the inner piece of moist bark was put over a root or branch of a tree and hammered with a wooden mallet shaped like a narrow cricket bat. This made the bark softer and thinner and increased its size. The blanket was doubled over and hammered repeatedly until it folded into a package about 30 centimetres square. This was a good size to fit into a woven bag or basket.

The blanket was then opened and left in the sun to dry out the remaining moisture. Roth saw this bark cloth blanket being made, and noted that it took about five to six hours to make a well beaten, soft sheet of bark.

The Ngai-kungo-i (now known as Ngaygunyu) called this blanket wo-nian, the Chirpalji (now known as Dyirbal) and Ngatchan-ji people (now known as Ngajan) called it kambilla. The fig tree was called kar-pi by local Aboriginal people.



Fig. 307.

Roth said that bark blankets were made only at Cairns, Cardwell, Atherton and the Tully River.

It is possible that they were made and used in other places, but by the time Roth was in the area, government blankets had been given out to local Aboriginal people. In fact, throughout the 1890s Atherton was a government blanket distribution centre.

Collection Information

Roth collected one bark cloth blanket from Atherton.

E.13520 Roth collected this blanket in 1898 (his collection number is G.121). It is 120 centimetres by 78 centimetres. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'made in the presence of Dr Roth.'

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4029M, frame 203.

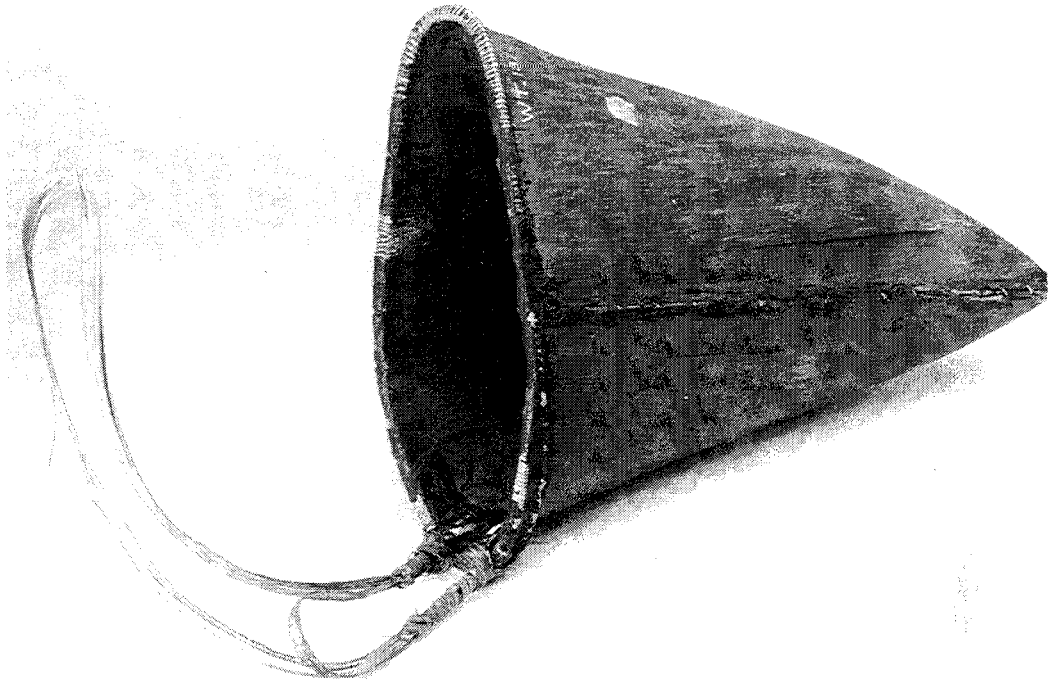
Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 15, 1910, pages 52 to 54.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Bark used to make blankets: banana fig tree, *Ficus pleurocarpa*, F. Muell. The candle nut tree: *Aleurites moluccana*, Willd.

Crescent-shaped Bark Baskets



E.13336. Crescent-shaped bark basket. Collected Atherton, 1898. Height 38.4 centimetres. Mouth 30 x 10 centimetres. Handles 36 centimetres long.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Baskets such as these were made from an inner bark strip taken from a laurel tree. The outer surface of the inner bark became the inner surface of the basket.

1. The bark was folded in half, the edges were trimmed, and sewn together with strips of lawyer cane. The widest part of the mouth of the basket was always at right angles to the base of the basket.

2. A thin piece of lawyer cane was attached to the outer edge of the mouth of the basket by overcasting it with a finer strand of lawyer cane. On the side where the handle was to be attached, a second piece of lawyer cane was sewn in to strengthen this side. Handles of split lawyer cane were fixed close together to the outside of the basket.

3. Sewn sections of the basket were strengthened by smearing them with gum cement or beeswax. The gum cement came from either the doughwood tree or the pencil-wood tree.

Gum from the doughwood tree could be prepared fairly quickly by removing gum oozing out from the bottom of a new split in the tree. It was then warmed and hammered between two stones. To make the gum even more tough, it was finally mixed with charcoal and again heated and hammered before use.

Gum from the pencil-wood tree was prepared in a similar manner, but it took much longer.

Gum could be taken from any old split in the tree. It was heated and hammered with stones, but no extra charcoal was deliberately added to the final gum cement.

Beeswax was roasted over a fire, squeezed a few times in the hands, and warmed and hammered until soft.

These baskets, sewn and sealed watertight, were used to carry honey or water.

Roth said these crescent-shaped baskets were found only where similar shaped, woven baskets were made, around the Herbert River, at Cardwell, Cairns and at Atherton.

According to Roth, the Ngaikungo people (now known as the Ngaygunyu) called these baskets tokobal. Chirpal (known today as Dyirbal) people called them nu-pa.

Collection Information

There are four of these firm crescent-shaped bark baskets in the Roth collection from Atherton.

- E.13335 The basket was collected by Roth in 1898 (his collection number is WT.12). It is 32 centimetres high. The mouth of the basket is 22 centimetres by 15 centimetres. The handles are broken. A large tear in the bark basket has been repaired with lawyer cane stitching and gum cement.
- E.13336 Roth collected this basket in 1898 (his collection number is WT.13). It is 38.4 centimetres high. The mouth of the basket is 30 centimetres by 10 centimetres. The handles are 36 centimetres long.
- E.13337 The basket was collected by Roth in 1900 (his collection number is WT.20). It is 51 centimetres high. The mouth of the basket is 32 centimetres by 19 centimetres. The handles are 36 centimetres long.
- E.13338 The basket was collected by Roth in 1900 (his collection number is WT.21). It is 32.2 centimetres high. The mouth of the basket is 22.6 centimetres by 11 centimetres. The handles are 43.5 centimetres long.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all baskets.

- E.13335 negative sheet 4002M, frame 19.
 E.13336 negative sheet 4002M, frame 20.
 E.13337 negative sheet 4002M, frame 21.
 E.13338 negative sheet 4002M, frame 22.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 13 to 14, and 30.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Bark used to make bark baskets: laurel tree, *Callophyllum tomentosum* Wight. The lawyer cane is known as *Calumus* sp.

Trees whose gum was used to make the baskets watertight: doughwood tree, *Melicope australasica* F.v.M. now known as *Melicope octandra* (F. Muell) Druce, pencil-wood tree, *Panax murrayi* F.v.M., now known as *Polyscias murrayi* (F. Muell.) Harms.

Crescent-shaped Woven Baskets



E.14910. Crescent-shaped woven basket. Collected Atherton, 1898. Height 23.6 centimetres. Mouth 15 x 13 centimetres. Outer handle 37 centimetres long. Inner handle 9 centimetres long.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

These baskets were made from strips of split fish-tail lawyer cane. This cane could not be used to make baskets until the sharp prickles were rubbed off with a stick. Prickle-free stems were held in one hand while the ring of leaves was pulled down and twisted sharply so both leaves and outer prickly layer were removed. Strips of lawyer cane now could be broken off by biting and chewing. Finally they were split into fine lengths with a thumb nail or shell, and scraped smooth with shells or stones. The prepared cane was taken back to camp and woven into baskets. Lawyer cane was not collected until needed, as the cane had to be used within five days of cutting. After this time the lawyer cane could no longer be made pliable by soaking in water.

Baskets were made by weaving two continuous strands of cane with several straight base canes, which went the entire length of the bottom of the basket.

The curved shape at the base of the basket was made by using a split piece of lawyer cane, strung like a bow, top-stitched to the inside of the basket. Roth's drawing shows the beginning of this basket.

Baskets also were strengthened by top-stitching rings of lawyer cane inside the basket as it was being made. This can be seen in the photographs of both finished and unfinished baskets.

Two handles, one small and one long, were fitted to the mouth. They were held there by tightly woven thin strips of split lawyer cane.

The long handles were looped over the wearer's forehead and the basket hung between the shoulder blades. In addition to carrying foods women had collected, such as roots, eggs and seeds, the basket had many other uses.

Moreton Bay chestnuts were placed in these baskets and soaked overnight in running water. This washed away the poison and made the nuts less bitter and safe to eat.

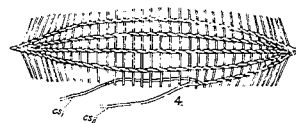
When rivers were in flood, women used to dangle the baskets into the water to catch fish in the baskets, as great shoals of fish travelled upstream close to the river banks.

Babies were carried in very large baskets, often by men.

Small baskets, some with an ochred design, carried mens' personal and ceremonial items.

Roth said that these baskets were used by both men and women. In one place he says that anyone could make a basket although some were more skilled than others. He contradicted himself in another passage by stating that only men made these baskets.

According to Roth, the Chirpalji (known today as Dyirbal) people called this basket bokol.



Collection Information

There are six of these finely woven baskets in the Roth collection from Atherton.

- E.14910 Roth collected this basket in 1898. It is 23.6 centimetres high. The mouth is 15 centimetres by 13 centimetres. The long handle measures 37 centimetres and the inner handle 9 centimetres long.
- E.14911 This basket was collected in 1898 by Roth but is unable to be located at present.
- E.14912 Roth collected this basket in 1898 and it is on display in the Museum's Gallery of Aboriginal Australia.
- E.14913 Roth collected this basket in 1898. It is 27 centimetres high. The mouth is 21 centimetres by 17 centimetres. The long handle measures 40 centimetres and the inner handle is 11 centimetres long. There is a red ochred pattern on the outside

of the basket.

- E.14914 Roth collected this basket in 1900. It is 34 centimetres high. The mouth is 21 centimetres by 23 centimetres. The long handle measures 45 centimetres. The smaller looped handle is broken.
- E.14915 Roth collected this basket in 1898. It is 35 centimetres long. It is an unfinished basket showing how the weaver made the half moon shape at the bottom of the basket.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all baskets.

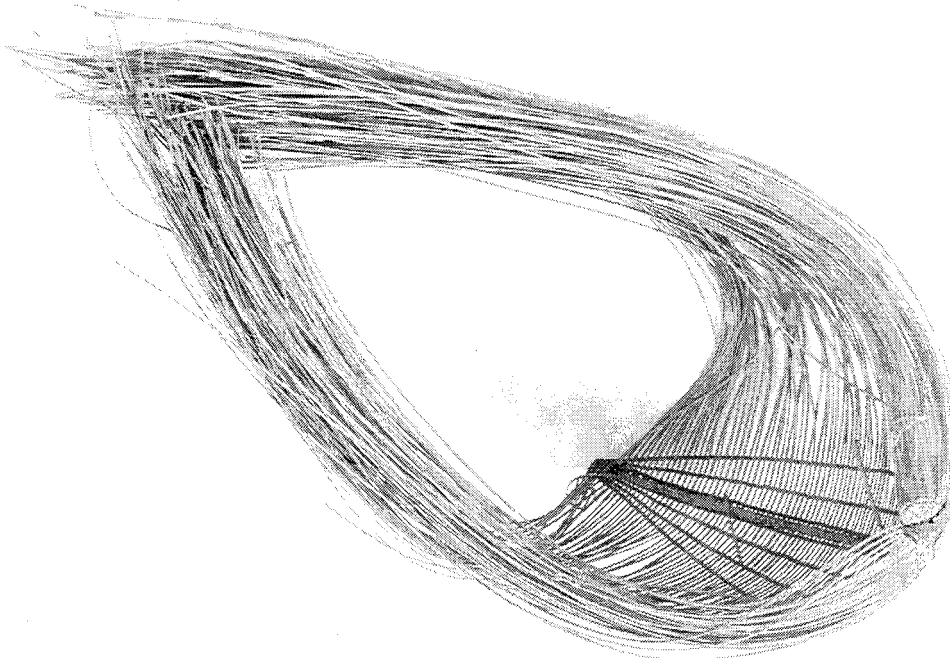
- E.14910 negative sheet 4203M, frame 1594.
 E.14911 negative sheet 4203M, frame 1595.
 E.14912 negative sheet 4203M, frame 1596.
 E.14913 negative sheet 4203M, frame 1597.
 E.14914 negative sheet 4203M, frame 1598.
 E.14915 negative sheet 4203M, frame 1599. See also Roth's photograph V.2208, negative sheet 5976, frame 5.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, pages 13 to 15.
 Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 27 to 28.

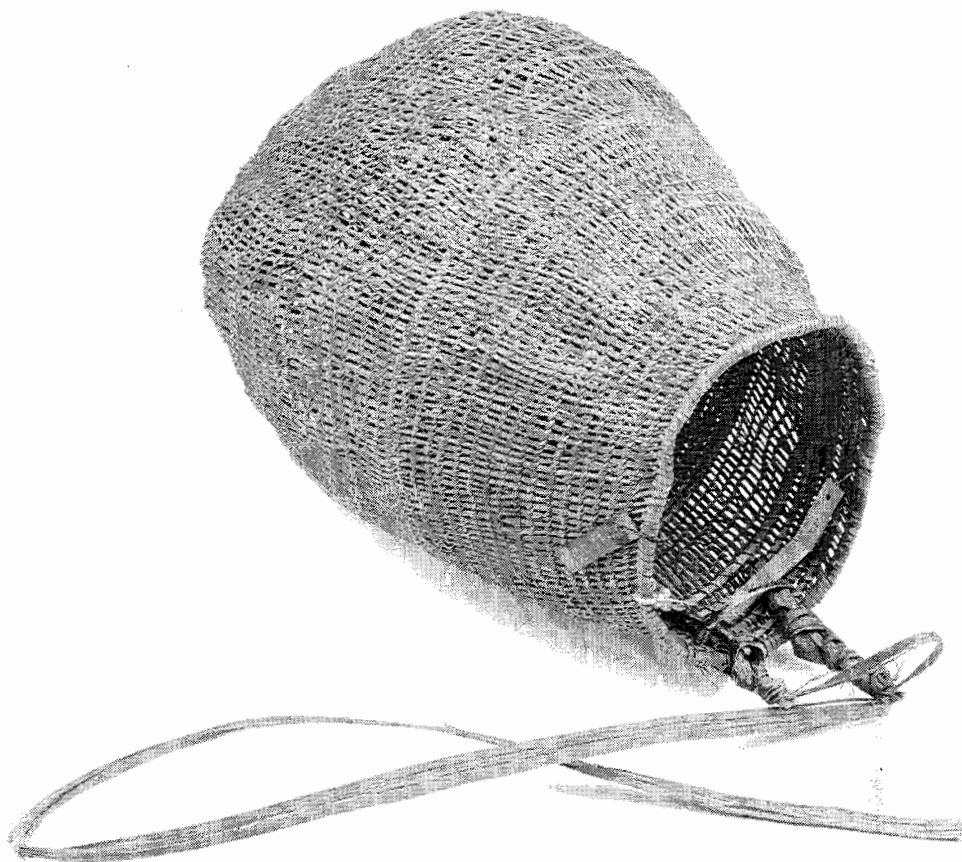
Scientific Names of Materials Used

Fish-tail lawyer cane, also known as the small lawyer cane, used to make baskets: *Calamus caryotoides* Mart.



E.14915. Partially completed crescent-shaped woven basket. Collected Atherton, 1898. Length 35 centimetres.

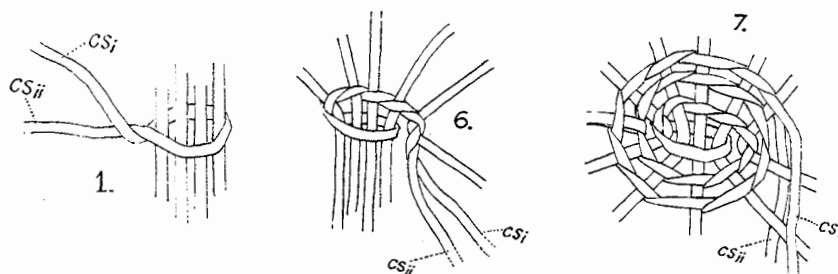
Woven Baskets



E.14925. Woven basket. Collected Atherton, 1898. Height 27.5 centimetres. Mouth 15 x 11.3 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Spiny-headed mat rush grass was used to weave these baskets, using two continuous strands and several base strands. The two continuous strands were twisted into a chain, and the ends of the straight base strands were left free. The chain twist was the weft, the straight base strands, the warp. Roth's drawing shows how the basket was begun.



Baskets like this were generally firm, unlike soft dilly bags. The only way the baskets varied from each other was in the way the first base strands were started. These baskets usually

were finished by either binding the rim with strips of mat rush grass, or burning the unwoven ends of the canes in ashes.

Roth said these baskets were made only by women.

The baskets were used as sieves when soaking *Zamia* nuts to make them safe to eat. They were found in use from Cairns to Cape Bedford.

Collection Information

There is only one of these baskets in the collection, possibly from Atherton.

E.14925 This basket was collected in 1898. It is 27.5 centimetres high. The mouth of the basket is 15 centimetres by 11.3 centimetres. The handles are broken. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'location where made is doubtful.'

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4205M, frame 1609.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, pages 14 to 15.
Bulletin 7, 1904, page 28.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Spiny-headed mat rush grass used to make the baskets: *Xerotes longifolia* R.Br.
Zamia nuts: *Cycas media* R.Br.

Feather Head-dresses



E.14392. Cockatoo feather headdress. Collected Atherton, 1898. Height 16.8 centimetres by 9.2 centimetres at its widest part.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

The first head-dress, E.14392, was made from the top-knot feathers from the sulphur-crested cockatoo and white fluffy feathers. They were bound together at the quills with red-ochred handspun bark fibre string and held firmly with beeswax.

The other feather head-dress, E.14396, was made from white wing feathers from the sulphur-crested cockatoo. These were tied to a wooden handle with handspun bark fibre string and beeswax.

The beeswax was prepared by roasting over a fire. It was then squeezed a few times in the hands, and warmed and hammered until it was soft enough to use. When cold, it made a hard fixative.

These head-dresses were found all over north Queensland. They were worn for ceremonies and fighting.

A property owner, Mr R. Hislop of Bloomfield River, told Roth that when combat was underway the leader wore a cockatoo top-knot feather tuft headdress. This made him stand out in the group of warriors.

Collection Information

Two different feather head-dresses were collected from Atherton in 1898.

- E.14392 This head-dress is 16.8 centimetres high and is 9.2 centimetres at its widest point. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'for corroboree.'
- E.14396 This head-dress is 28.2 centimetres high and is 32 centimetres at its widest point. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'made of white cockatoo wing feathers stuck on back of head.'

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for both head-dresses.

- E.14392 negative sheet 4138M, frame 1075.
E.14396 negative sheet 4138M, frame 1079.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 14.
Bulletin 13, 1909, page 211.
Bulletin 15, 1910, pages 24 to 25.

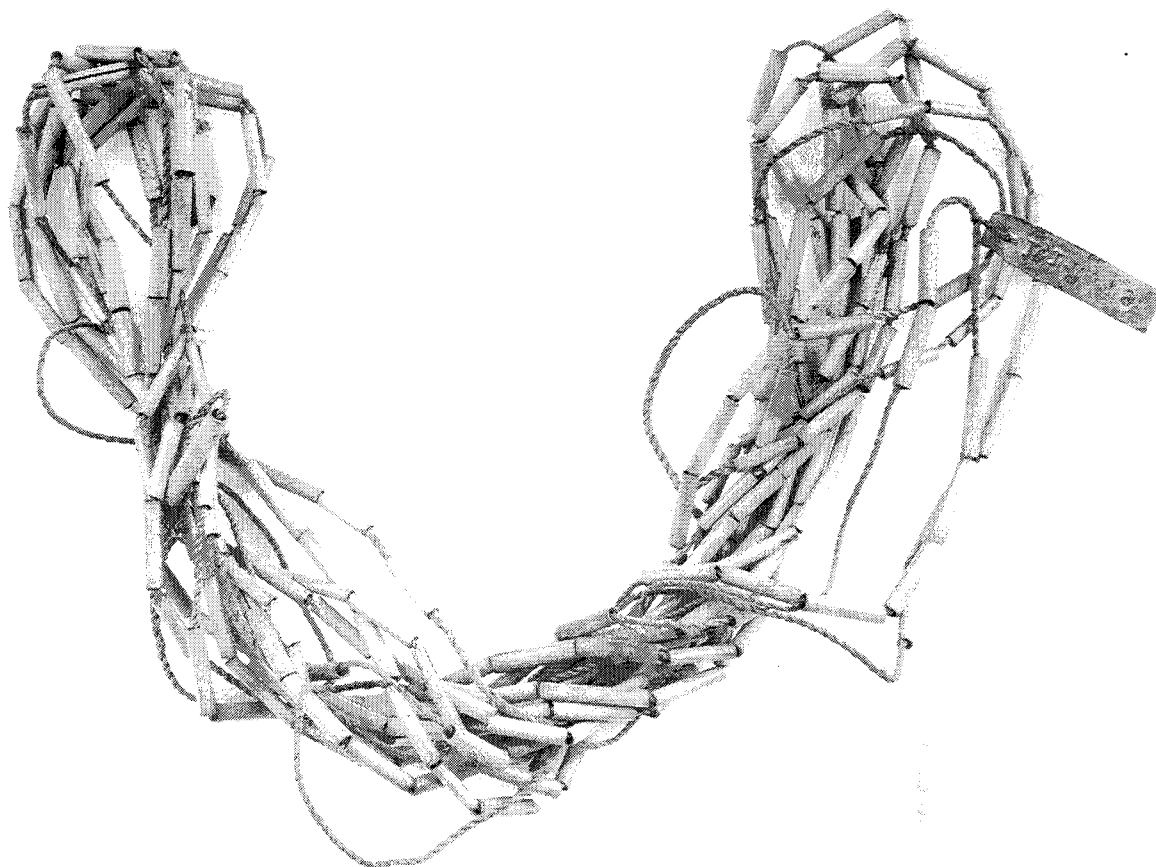
Scientific Names of Materials Used

Sulphur-crested cockatoo: *Cacatua galerita*



E.14396. Cockatoo feather headdress. Collected Atherton, 1898. Height 28.2 centimetres by 32 centimetres at its widest part.

Grass Reed Necklaces



E.14479. Grass reed necklace. Collected Atherton, 1898. Length 302 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

The necklaces were made from hundreds of small lengths of grass reeds which were cut to size with the sharp edge of a mussel shell or stone knife. They were then threaded on handspun bark fibre string. On the east coast of Cape York Peninsula they were usually threaded on one continuous length of string. This style of necklace was found from north of the Endeavour River to as far south as Keppel River.

Roth said the necklaces were made and worn by women.

Collection Information

There are four grass reed necklaces in the Roth collection from Atherton, collected by Roth in October 1898. His collection numbers are G.114 to G.115 which he used for the four necklaces.

- E.14479 The necklace is 302 centimetres long. The length of the average grass reed segment is 1.3 centimetres by 0.5 centimetres.
- E.14480 The necklace is 160 centimetres long. The length of the average grass reed segment is 0.5 centimetres by 0.5 centimetres.

- E.14481 The necklace is 133.8 centimetres long. The length of the average grass reed segment is 2.3 centimetres long by 0.5 centimetres wide.
- E.14482 The necklace is 267.5 centimetres long. The length of the average grass reed segment is 1.6 centimetres by 0.5 centimetres.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all grass reed necklaces.

- E.14479 negative sheet 4149M, frame 1163.
- E.14480 negative sheet 4149M, frame 1164.
- E.14481 negative sheet 4149M, frame 1165.
- E.14482 negative sheet 4149M, frame 1166.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 15, 1910, pages 33 to 34.

Possum String Necklace Tassel

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth did not write about this necklace in his Bulletins except for a footnote in one which said 'in the Atherton Scrub, I have seen a mother thus wearing the heart of her dead infant.'

Collection Information

There is one possum string necklace tassel in the Roth collection from Atherton.

E.14429 Roth collected this necklace in 1898. It is 64 centimetres long. The tassel is 16 centimetres long.

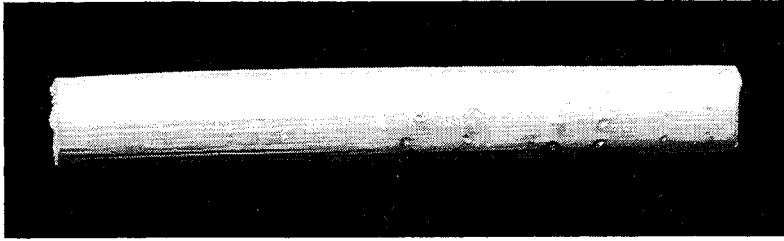
Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4142M, frame 1113.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 9, 1907, page 389 (footnote).

Reed Nose Pin



E.14427. Reed nose pin. Collected Atherton, 1898. 7.3 x 1.3 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth did not write much about nose pins. He said they were common all over Queensland, and were worn by both men and women.

The local name for a nose pin at Atherton was yimpala.

Collection Information

There is one reed nose pin in the Roth collection from Atherton.

E.14427 Roth collected this nose pin in 1898 (his collection number is G.117). It is 7.3 centimetres long and 1.3 centimetres wide.

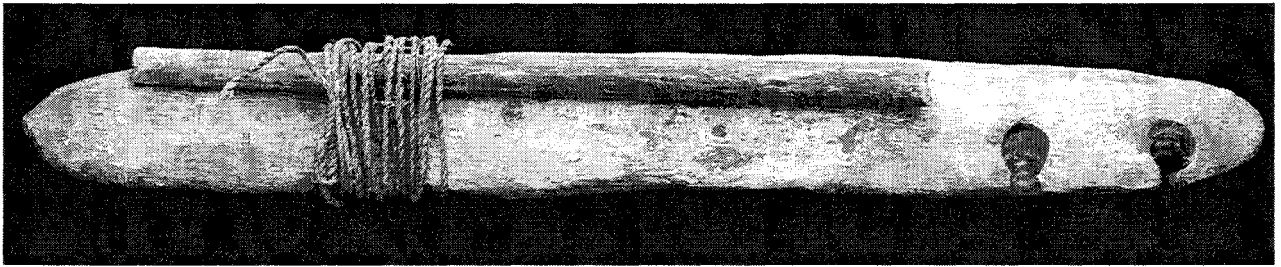
Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4142M, frame 1111.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 15, 1910, pages 29 to 30.

Fire Making Tools



E.13794. Fire stick and board. Collected Atherton, 1898. Board 35.9 x 4.7 centimetres and 2.6 centimetres thick. Twirling stick 23 x 1.4 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

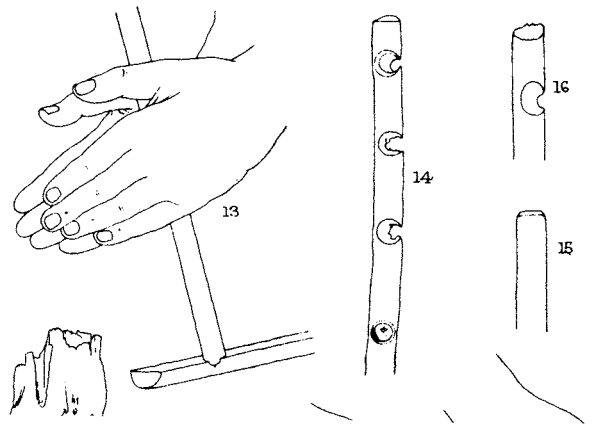
Fire was made by twirling the thin stick from the cotton tree into a hole in a flattened piece of softwood. Tinder of dried grass was placed around the hole to catch the spark caused by the friction. When the spark was made, the tinder was whipped up quickly, usually with a bunch of dried grass, swung round in the air, perhaps blown upon and so made to burst into flame.

A new hole was started by hitting the board with a sharp piece of stone, so the stick had a firm place to begin the twirling action. If the hole was new, some charcoal dust was often placed in it. Old holes were used many times, until a hole was completely burnt through.

When not in use the fire stick and board were wrapped in bark. Men carried these in handspun bark fibre string bags.

This type of fire making equipment was found in Roth's time from the Endeavour River to the Herbert River and inland to Atherton. He did not know its southern limits because of recent European settlement.

The Ngatchan (now known as Ngajan) people at Atherton called the thin twirling stick *wunda*. They called the flattened board of wood *marba*.



Collection Information

There is one fire stick and board in the Roth collection from Atherton.

- E.13794 The fire stick and board were collected in 1898 (Roth's collection number is F.9). The oval shaped board is 35.9 centimetres long and 4.7 centimetres at its widest part. It is 2.6 centimetres thick. The twirling stick is 23 centimetres by 1.4 centimetres. Both are tied together with handspun bark fibre string 198 centimetres long.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4063M, frame 477.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 10-11.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Wood from the cotton tree used to make the twirling fire stick: *Hibiscus tiliaceus* Linne.

The softwood fire board could be made from one of the following: Murray's Laurel, *Cryptocarya murrayi* F. Muell., *Mollinedia subternata* Bail., now known as *Tetrasynandra pubescens* (Benth) Perk., or a split length of lawyer cane, *Calamus* sp.

Food – Shell from Edible Mollusc

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth said most shellfish were roasted in the ashes, but a few were eaten raw. The Ngaikungo, Ngatchan and Chirpal people (now known as the Ngaygunyu, Ngajan and Dyirbal people) at Atherton called this shellfish kau-al.

Collection Information

There is one shell from Atherton.

E.9755 A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1901 states this shell was collected from "Atherton Queensland Blacks." Roth's collection number is 124. The shell was given to the Museum by Dr Roth. It does not form part of the original Roth collection purchase of 1905.

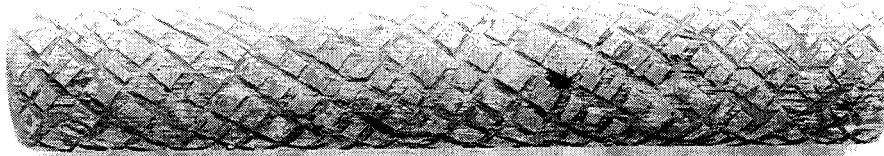
Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 3,1901, pages 17 to 18.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Charles Hedley, who was at this time the Conchologist, or shell specialist at the Museum, and a close friend of Roth, identified the shells for him. He called this shell *Thirsites bipartita* Ferus. It is now known as *Hadra bipartita* (Ferus)

Message Sticks



E.13410. Message stick. Collected Atherton, 1898. 15 x 2.7 centimetres and 2.8 centimetres thick.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth did not write about how message sticks were made, but commented on their use. He was convinced that the marks on message sticks did not carry a message in the ordinarily accepted way. He said the message was taken by word of mouth, the message stick was to show the messenger had been given permission to carry the message and could be trusted. Roth reached this view because he saw that the same message could be taken with different sticks, and some sticks had no markings at all. If the messenger was known to both parties, no message stick was sent.

Collection Information

Roth collected two message sticks from Atherton in 1898.

- E.13410 (Roth's collection number is S.43). The message stick is 15 centimetres long, 2.7 centimetres wide and 2.8 centimetres thick, and has criss-cross markings cut into the wood. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states, 'stick made by "Paddy" the son of the "boss" of Atherton blacks, telling other mobs in the neighbourhood to come to Atherton.'
- E.13411 (Roth's collection number is S.44). The message stick is 13.3 centimetres long and 1.8 centimetres wide. Half the stick has criss-cross markings cut into the wood, the rest has zig-zag lines and straight lines. There is red ochre in some of the cuts. A note in the Australian Museum's register for 1905 states, 'stick made by "Paddy", son of the "boss" of Atherton blacks, telling other mobs in the neighbourhood to come to Atherton.'

Photographic Information

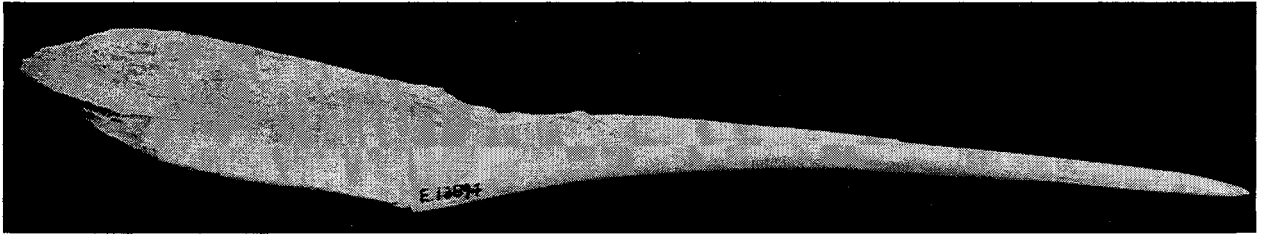
Black and white photographs are available for both message sticks.

- E.13410 negative sheet 4011M, frame 94. There is also a photograph of this message stick in Bulletin 8, 1906, plate 2, figure 4.
- E.13411 negative sheet 4011M, frame 95. There is also a photograph of this message stick in Bulletin 8, 1906, plate 2, figure 3.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 8, 1906, page 10.

Bone Needle



E.13894. Kangaroo bone needle. Collected Atherton, 1898. Length 21.2 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth said the bone used usually came from a kangaroo, wallaby or emu. It was ground to a point while the bone was fresh, and the grinding could either be done wet or dry.

He saw bone needles (which he called bone stiletos) being used in the following ways:

1. To remove the outside layer from the cabbage tree leaf before making it into twine (Musgrave River)
2. To assist in hollowing out of ear-ring tubes (Pennefather River, now called the Coen River)
3. To pick off bark when making some water-carriers and bark blankets (Atherton)
4. To bore a hole in a spearthrower to fix a peg at one end (Endeavour River)
5. To pierce the edges of bark before threading them when making canoes (Tully and Pennefather (now Coen) Rivers)
6. To pierce the nose
7. To pick kernels from nuts
8. In the early days, to pierce possum skins to sew them into cloaks (Brisbane)

Collection Information

There is one bone needle in the Roth collection from Atherton.

E.13894 This kangaroo bone needle was collected by Roth in 1898 (his collection number is BD.6). It is 21.2 centimetres long and is shaped to a point at one end.

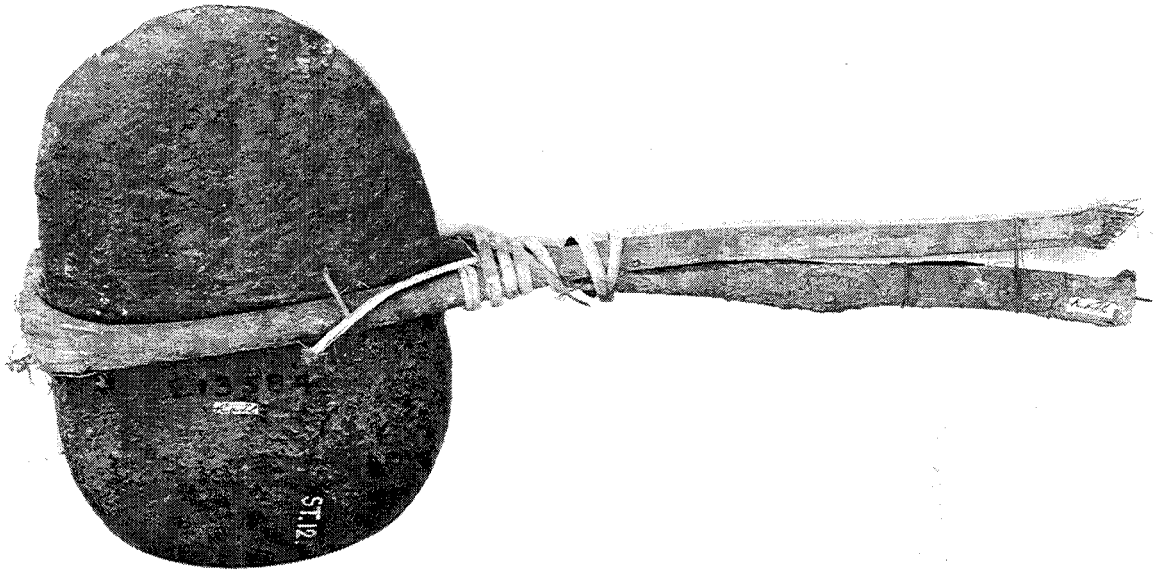
Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4076M, frame 577.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 11 and 25.

Stone Axes



E.13584. Edge-ground stone axe with cane handle. Collected Atherton, 1898. Axe head 28 x 15 centimetres. Cane handle 42 x 1.5 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth commented that in his day the making of stone axes was a lost art in Queensland. In all his travels he never found any axe grinding grooves.

Collection Information

There are two stone axes in the Roth collection from Atherton, one with a cane handle, one without.

- E.13584 This large edge-ground stone axe with a cane handle was collected by Roth in 1898 (his collection number is ST.12). The axe head is 28 centimetres by 15 centimetres at its widest part. The cane handle which is bent around the axe head is 42 centimetres long and 1.5 centimetres wide. No gum was used and there is no sign of any grooving on the axe. When the cane handles are held tightly together the stone axe is held firmly in place. The axe weighs 2470 grammes.
- E.13611 Roth collected this grooved axe head in 1900 (his collection number is ST.47). It is 12 centimetres by 15 centimetres at its widest part. The axe weighs 1077.2 grammes.

Photographic Information

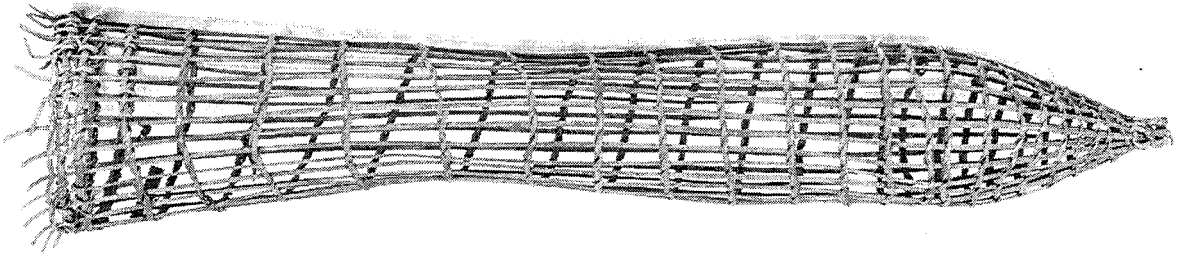
Black and white photographs are available for both axes.

- E.13584 negative sheet 4037M, frame 267.
E.13611 negative sheet 4040M, frame 294.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 19 to 20.

Fish Traps



E.15011. Lawyer cane fish trap. Collected Atherton, 1900. Length 108.7 centimetres. Mouth 21 centimetres wide.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

The lawyer cane was prepared in much the same way as that used in making the crescent-shaped baskets (see page 39).

Fish traps were made with two continuous strands of lawyer cane and several straight base strands twisted into a chain twist pattern. This was done by twisting in a chain the two continuous strands. Roth's drawings may make this easier to understand.

Wallaby traps also were woven in this manner in the Atherton and Cairns areas.

1. When making a fish trap, lawyer cane strips were sorted into groups of the same length.
2. Three to four strands were bent to form the pointed end of the trap.
3. They were fixed by weaving the strands in and out.
4. This chain twist weaving was continued, making an attractive spiral, finishing at the mouth. Additional strands were added as required.

When the mouth of the trap was reached, the free ends of the base strips were cut and bent outwards, as shown in Roth's drawing.

Roth said these traps took three to four hours to make.

Basket traps were fixed into position with rocks, in a shallow part of the creek, with the mouth facing upstream. Plenty of fine water grass lined the inner surface of the basket trap.

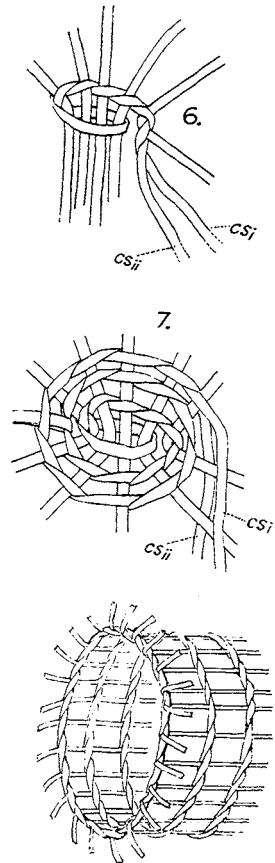
Going out from the mouth of the trap a fence was made with sticks and grass so that the fish had nowhere to go but into the trap.

Fish were driven downstream and into the traps as hunters splashed water around them. These traps also were used to catch eels.

Collection Information

There are two lawyer cane fish traps in the Roth collection from Atherton.

E.15011 This trap was collected in 1900 (Roth's collection number is P.25). It is 108.7



centimetres long. The mouth is 21 centimetres wide.

- E.15012 Roth collected this trap in 1898. It is 97 centimetres long. The mouth is 18 centimetres wide.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for both fish traps.

- E.15011 negative sheet 4216M, frame 1695.
E.15012 negative sheet 4216M, frame 1696. There is a photograph of this trap in Bulletin 3, 1901, figure 7.

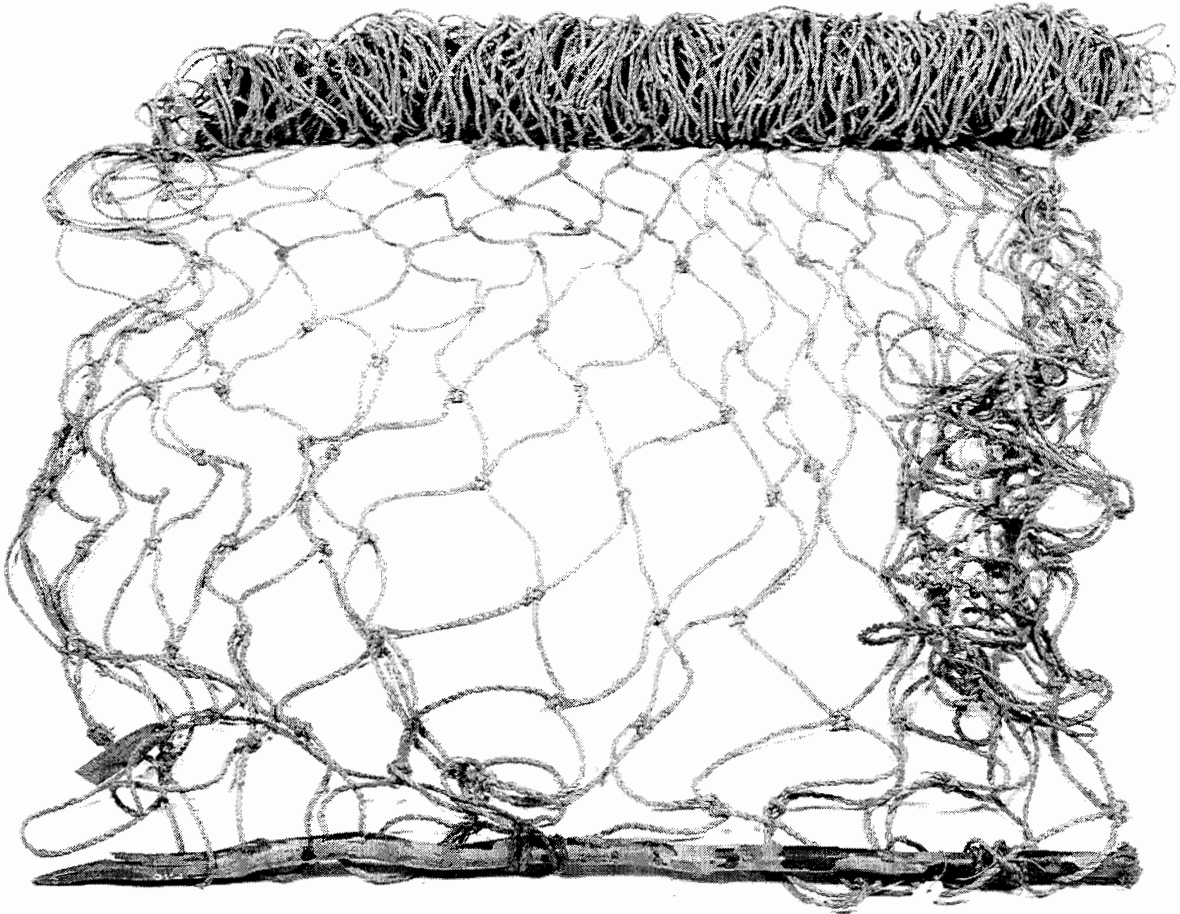
Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Some ethnological notes on the Atherton Blacks. Report to the Commissioner of Police, Brisbane, Cooktown. 16 pages (unpublished papers, Mitchell Library, Sydney).
W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, page 15
Bulletin 3, 1901, pages 21 to 22.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Lawyer cane: *Calamus* sp.

Kangaroo Net



E.14988. Bark fibre string kangaroo net. Collected Atherton, 1898. 911 x 266.5 centimetres.

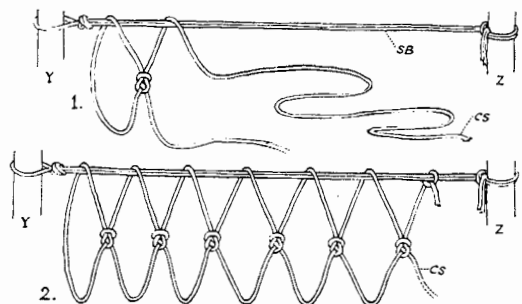
Information from Roth's Bulletins

This net was woven on a loose netting stitch pattern, like that of a fishing net. Handspun bark fibre string from the prepared bark of the peanut tree was used double-ply. The netting stitch was made with one continuous strand of string, with the base strand straight. Roth's drawings show how the netting stitch was begun.

Roth did not actually see a kangaroo net being made, but said a kangaroo net he collected (probably this one) took the whole camp three weeks to make.

As shown by the drawing, the body of the net ran on a top and bottom string, attached by slip knots to two strong side supports. These wooden supports were placed firmly in the ground with three or four other wooden poles on the front and back to keep the net upright.

Nets were fixed across tracks leading from the mountains to water holes. Kangaroos, driven headlong by shouts of hunters became entangled in the meshes and were killed by spears.



When the net was not in use, it was rolled round the two wooden side supports and carried by a stout cord, looped at each end. The cord was usually slung over the shoulder, or sometimes held in the hand.

Kangaroo nets were fairly common over the whole of Cape York Peninsula.

The Ngaikungo and Chirpal people (now known as the Ngaygunyu and Dyrbal people) at Atherton called the bark fibre string pu-kuru. The Ngatchan (now known as Ngajan) people at Atherton called it ke-wan.

Collection Information

There is one kangaroo net in the Roth collection from Atherton.

E.14988 This large loosely woven net was collected by Roth in 1898 (his collection number is P.16). It is 911 centimetres long and 266.5 centimetres wide. Wooden poles at each end are 103.4 centimetres long and 24 centimetres wide. The average size of the mesh is 20 centimetres by 24 centimetres.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4212M, frame 1672.

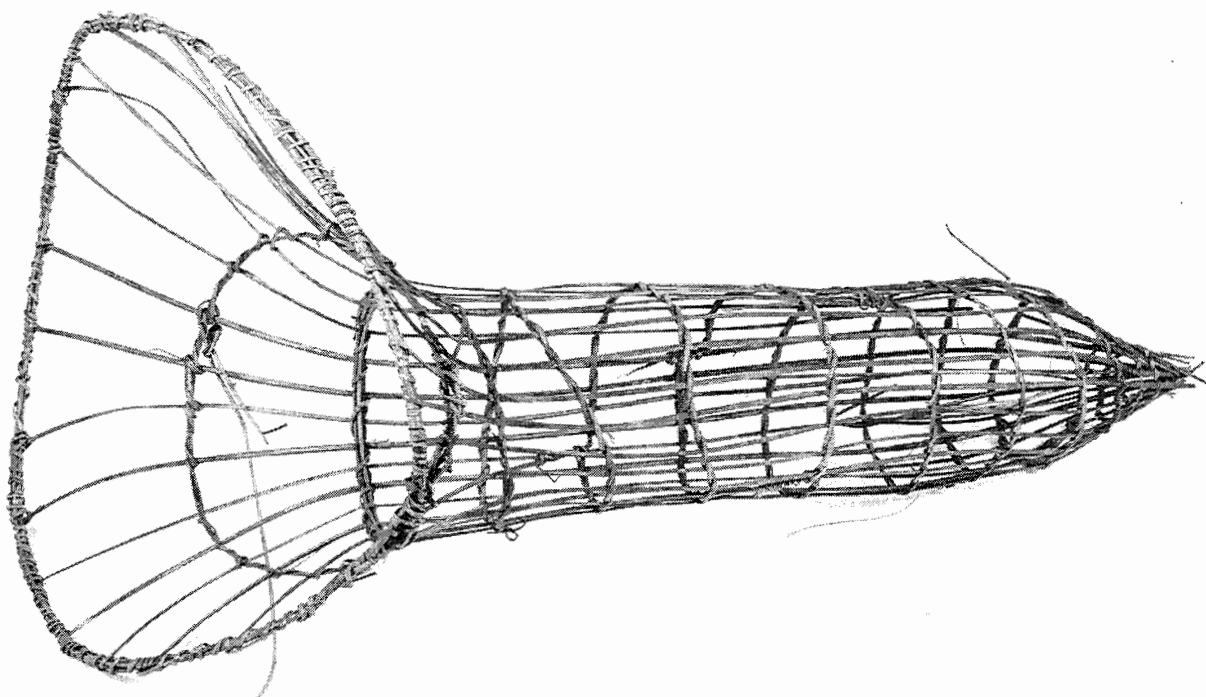
Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, page 13.
Bulletin 3, 1901, pages 28 to 29.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Peanut tree: *Sterculia quadrifida* R. Br.

Wallaby Traps

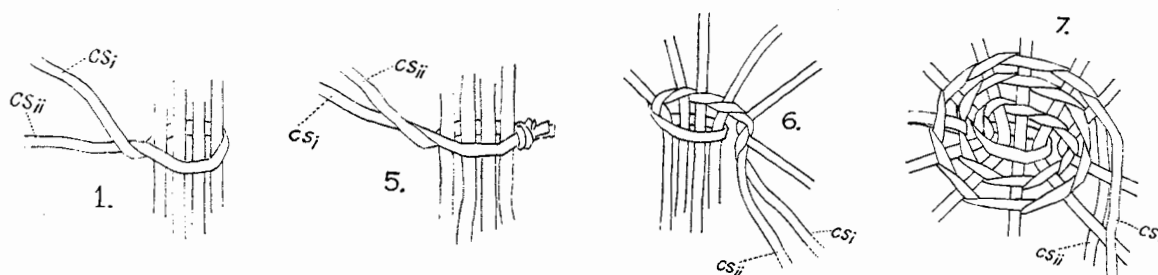


E.15015. Lawyer cane wallaby trap. Collected Atherton, 1898. Length 110 centimetres. Mouth 53 x 53 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

The lawyer cane was prepared in much the same way as that used in making the crescent-shaped baskets (see page 39).

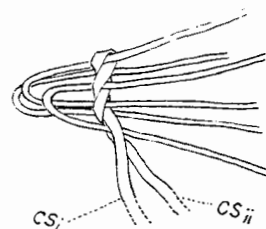
These basket traps were made with two continuous strands of lawyer cane and several straight base strands twisted into a chain twist pattern. This was formed by twisting in a chain of the two continuous strands, as shown in Roth's drawings.



When making the wallaby traps, lawyer cane strips of the same length were used.

1. Three or four lawyer cane strips were bent to form the pointed end of the trap. They were fixed by the chain twist weaving of the two continuous strands, in and out, as shown in this drawing.

2. When the mouth was reached, cane strips sticking out at the bottom of the mouth of the trap were cut off and bound firmly with cane.



3. Cane strips sticking out at the top and sides of the trap were trimmed to form a hood or funnel. This was strengthened with strips of lawyer cane binding.

According to Roth, a wallaby trap took three to four hours to make.

When hunting for wallabies, up to ten traps would be laid along known wallaby tracks, with the funnels up, hidden with bushes and pieces of bark. Women and children would beat the scrub nearby, making the wallabies panic and run straight into the traps. The men then finished them off with spears and clubs.

Collection Information

Four lawyer cane wallaby traps were collected by Roth at Atherton in 1898.

- E.15013 The wallaby trap is 122.8 centimetres long and has a wide flared mouth 64 centimetres by 52 centimetres.
- E.15014 The trap is 139 centimetres long and has a wide flared mouth 58 centimetres by 58 centimetres.
- E.15015 The trap is 110 centimetres long. The large flared mouth is 53 centimetres by 53 centimetres.
- E.15016 The trap is 124 centimetres long. The large flared mouth is 62 centimetres by 62 centimetres.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all wallaby traps. According to a note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905, photographs 22 and 23 in Bulletin 3, could refer to any one of these four wallaby traps.

- E.15013 negative sheet 4216M, frame 1697.
- E.15014 negative sheet 4216M, frame 1698.
- E.15015 negative sheet 4216M, frame 1699.
- E.15016 negative sheet 4217M, frame 1700.

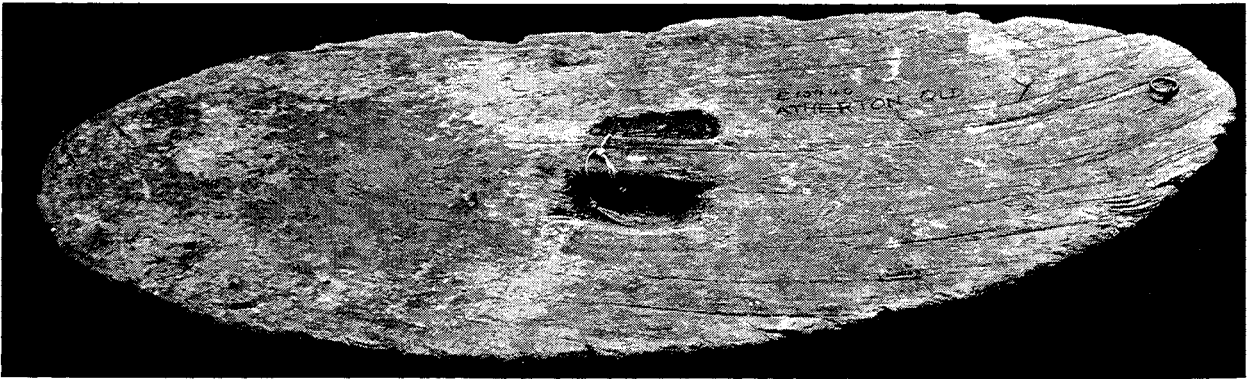
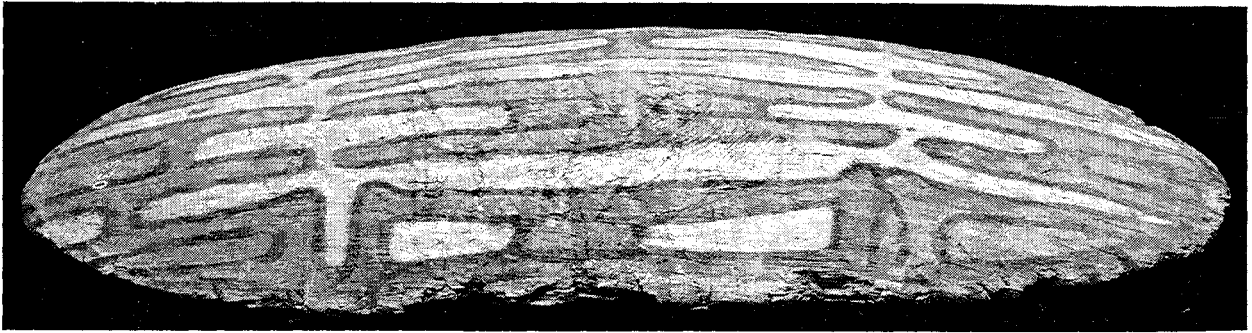
Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, pages 14 to 15.
Bulletin 3, 1901, page 29.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Lawyer cane: *Calamus* sp.

Shields



E.13440. [Two photographs showing] Front and back of shield. Collected Atherton, 1898. 82.2 x 35.8 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth's description of how these shields were made was based on seeing those made by Aboriginal people on the Lower Tully River.

1. Two curved cuts were made in the buttress of a fig tree, about the length of a shield. The sides were chipped, hammered and pushed out. The shape depended on the curve of the buttress.

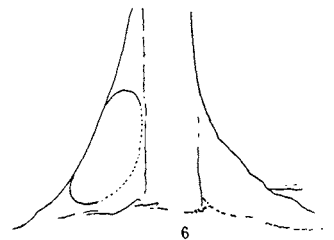
2. The wood was chipped away on both sides, leaving the centre of the roughed out shield untouched. This left a raised boss in the centre of the shield.

3. At the back of the shield a hand grip was made in the centre by chipping and burning a cavity with cinders.

4. The shield was lightened in weight by being soaked for a few days in water. It was then placed in the sun for a few days, slowly dried in shady scrub for a further couple of days, and again placed in water.

5. After a second soaking, the shield was tied to an overhanging bush, so that it hung flat, about 30 centimetres above the water. It was left there for two to three weeks.

6. The wood was finally rubbed down with a light, rough stone to give a smooth surface. A striking design was painted on the outer side of the completed shield.



6

Roth said he could find no meaning for the painted designs on the shields. Of all the shields in the Roth collection, no two have the same design.

These shields were found only where the large swords were used, from the Bloomfield and Endeavour Rivers south to below Cardwell, and along the inland mountain ranges, including Atherton.

Roth noted that by 1898 these kidney-shaped shields were not being used much, and were made, if at all, by very old men.

Collection Information

There are four painted, kidney-shaped softwood shields in the Roth collection from Atherton.

- E.13439 Roth collected this shield in 1898 (his collection number is S.29). It is 91 centimetres long and 37.5 centimetres at its widest part. On the front of the shield is painted a white design outlined in black on a red background.
- E.13440 Roth collected this shield in 1898 (his collection number is S.30). It is 82.2 centimetres long and 35.8 centimetres at its widest part. On the front of the shield is a design in black, white and red paints. The back of shield is painted red. There are cuts and spear-point holes in the shield.
- E.13444 Roth collected this shield in 1900 (his collection number is S.34). It is 85.5 centimetres long and 41 centimetres at its widest part. On the front of the shield is a red painted design outlined in black on a white background. There are patches of red ochre on the back of the shield. A large lump of wood is missing from one edge of the shield and there are many holes all over the shield.
- E.13445 Roth collected this shield in 1900 (his collection number is S.35). It is 78.3 centimetres long and 37.5 centimetres at its widest part. On the front of the shield is a black line design on a yellow painted background. This is the only shield in the Roth collection that uses only yellow and black in the design.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all shields.

- E.13439 negative sheet 4017M, frame 123.
 E.13440 negative sheet 4017M, frame 124.
 E.13444 negative sheet 4018M, frame 128.
 E.13445 negative sheet 4018M, frame 129.

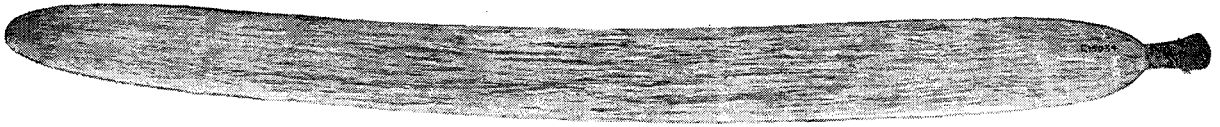
Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 9
 Bulletin 13, 1909, pages 203 to 205.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Fig tree: *Ficus* sp.

Single Handed Swords



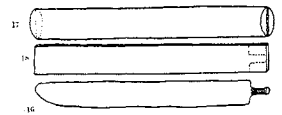
E.15034. Single handed hardwood sword. Collected Atherton, 1900. 156 x 13.5 centimetres. Handgrip 9.2 x 5 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth's description of how these swords were made was based on a visit to the Lower Tully River where he watched Aboriginal people making them. They were made in the same way at Atherton.

1. A hardwood tree was cut down and a length of wood about 120 centimetres to 170 centimetres long was chopped off. This was split down the centre, and one of the slabs of wood was chipped into shape. The straighter the tree, the straighter and better the sword.

2. To shape the short handle, a cut was made in both sides of the slab of wood, and then split. Handspun bark fibre string was wound round the handle and covered with beeswax which had been warmed over a fire. When cold this made a hard fixative. Roth's drawings make the operation easier to understand.



3. If the sword was curved, the outer edge was sharper and used in battle. If the weapon was straight, both edges were sharp and could be used.

4. Often the blade would be coated with red paint, fixed to the surface of the wood with blood.

Roth said these swords were used with one hand stretched over the shoulder, the weapon hanging behind the back. It was brought forward with a sudden jerk, to strike the enemy.

Swords were found only where the painted, kidney-shaped shields were used, from the Bloomfield and Endeavour Rivers, south to below Cardwell, and inland along the mountain ranges, including Atherton.

By 1898, only a few old men were making these swords, and then only rarely.

Collection Information

There are two heavy hardwood swords in the Roth collection from Atherton.

E.15034 Roth collected this sword in 1900 (his collection number is SW.17). It is almost straight and is 156 centimetres by 13.5 centimetres. The small handgrip is 9.2 centimetres by 5 centimetres, and is bound with handspun bark fibre string and beeswax. The sword weighs 2266.3 grammes.

E.15035 Roth collected this sword in 1900 (his collection number is SW.18). It is almost straight and is 147.3 centimetres by 11.8 centimetres. The small handgrip is 9 centimetres by 5 centimetres, and is bound with handspun bark fibre string and

beeswax. The sword weighs 2087.8 grammes.

Photographic Information

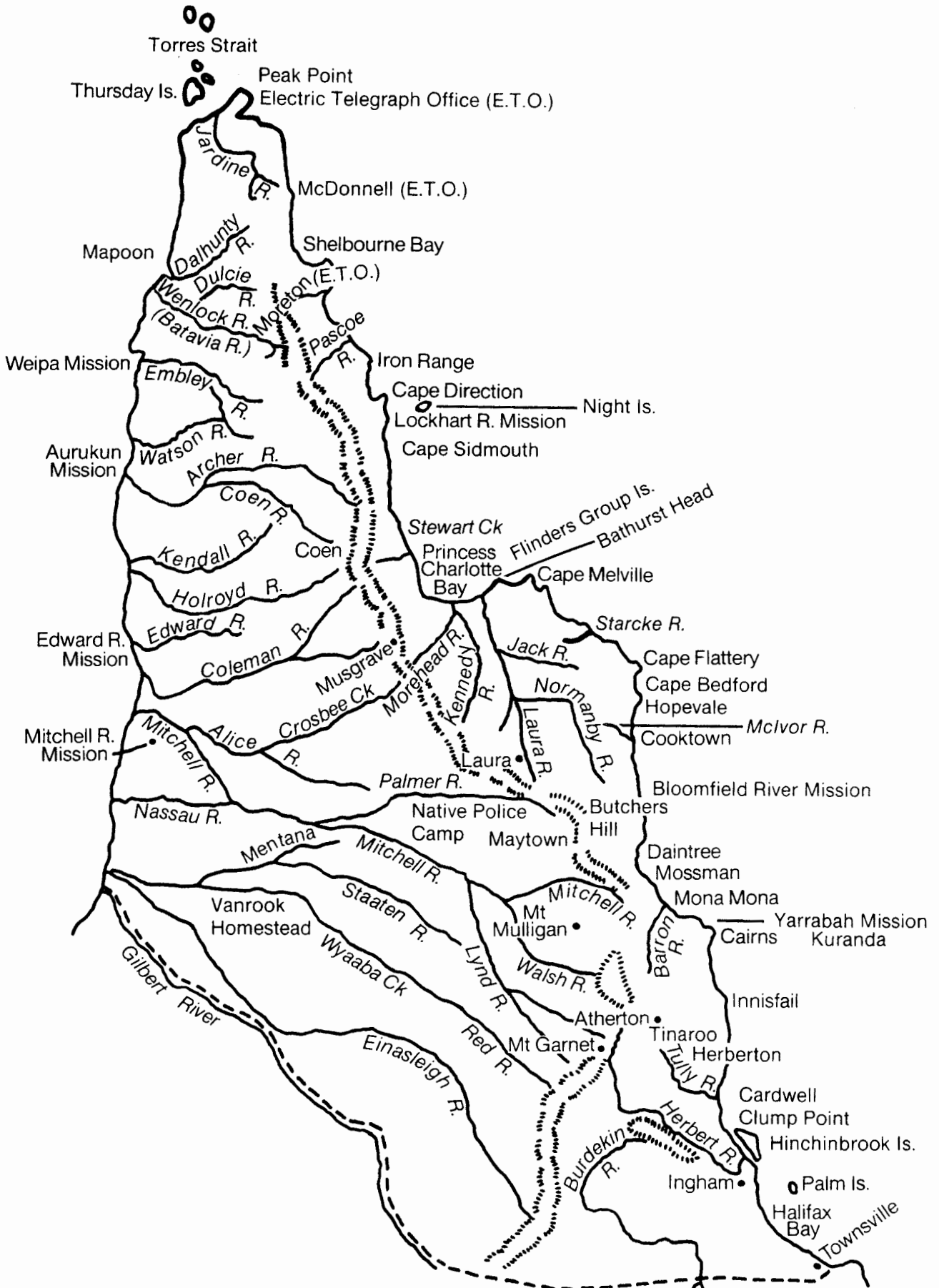
Black and white photographs are available for both swords.

E.15034 negative sheet 4219M, frame 1718.

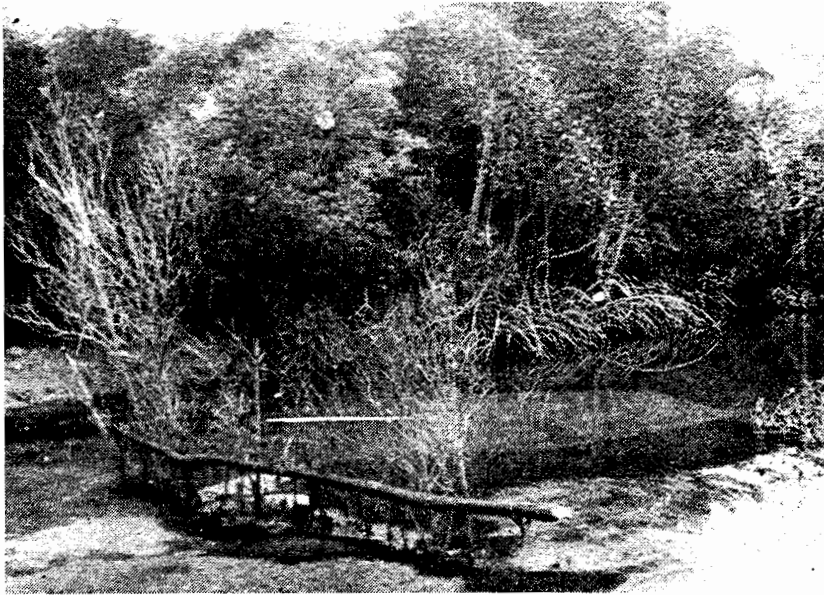
E.15035 negative sheet 4219M, frame 1719.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 13, 1909, pages 210 to 211.



Bathurst Head



Bush fish trap in a creek at Bathurst Head.



Walaeimini shelter, Bathurst Head.

Both photos from: H.M. Hale and N.B. Tindale. *Aborigines of Princess Charlotte Bay, north Queensland*. *Records of the South Australian Museum*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1933, p. 110, fig. 132, and Vol. 5, No. 2, 1934, p. 129, fig. 164.

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The People

Roth did not write specifically about the people living at Bathurst Head, but he did write about those living close by.

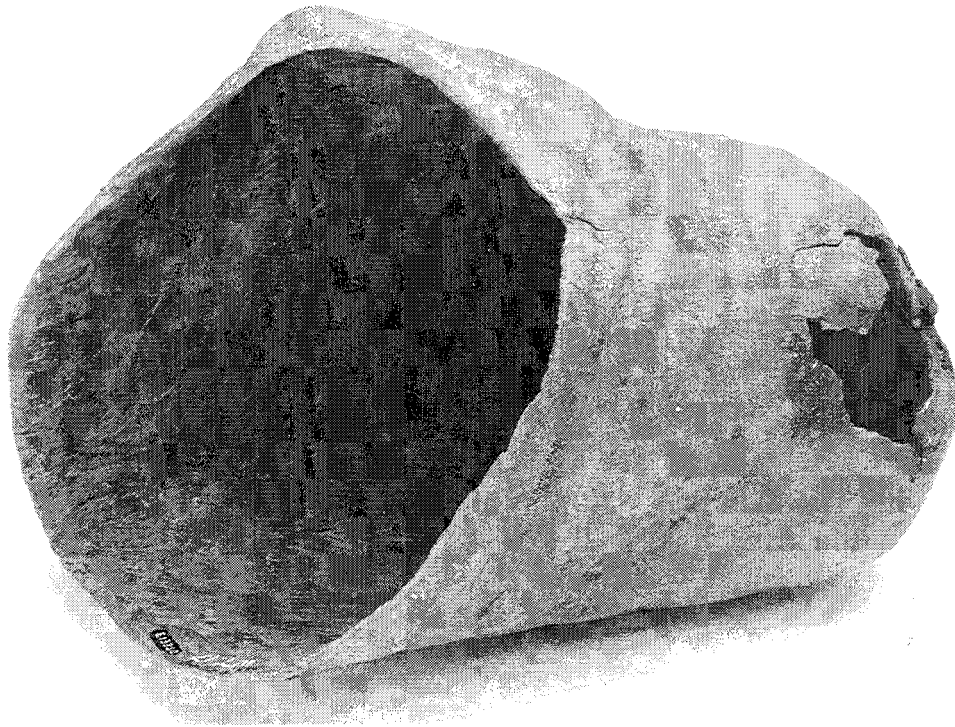
In Bulletin 18, page 94 Roth wrote:

...The Koko-lamalama have their main camp in the vicinity of the mouth of the Bizant River and Jeannette's Tableland; primarily, they are thus coastal blacks...

He said the Koko-warra people who lived in the Princess Charlotte Bay district called Bathurst Head Aring-u.

The Koko-lamalama people are known today as the Lama-Lama, and the Koko-warra are known as the Gugu-Warra people.

Bark Knot Container



E.13320. Bark knot container. Collected Bathurst Head, 1898. Height 38 centimetres. Mouth 26.4 x 20.8 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

The bark knot container was made from the gnarled outgrowth which formed on the butt of some eucalyptus trees. The knot was hacked around its base and a pointed stick was used to loosen its edges. The hollow bark knot was removed in one piece. Its inside was charred with fire and scraped with a piece of shell or stone to give it a smooth surface. Any cracks or holes were repaired with gum cement.

This container was often carried around by a handspun bark fibre string handle, strung through holes at opposite edges.

The Koko-warra (now known as the Gugu-Warra) people called this bark knot container ru-an. The same name was given to the tree from which it was cut. The Koko-lamalama (now known as the Lama-Lama) people called it wappam.

Roth said that in his time this type of container was rare. It was found along the coastline from Princess Charlotte Bay south to the Bloomfield River, and was generally no bigger than 38 centimetres high and 39 centimetres wide. A friend of Roth's, Thomas Petrie, said he had seen these containers, called nyugam, used by local Aboriginal people in Brisbane. Petrie said they were made by men and were used to carry honey.

Collection Information

There is one bark knot container in the Roth collection from Bathurst Head.

E.13320 Roth collected this bark knot container in 1898 (his collection number is WT.17). It is 38 centimetres high. The mouth is 26.4 centimetres by 20.8 centimetres.

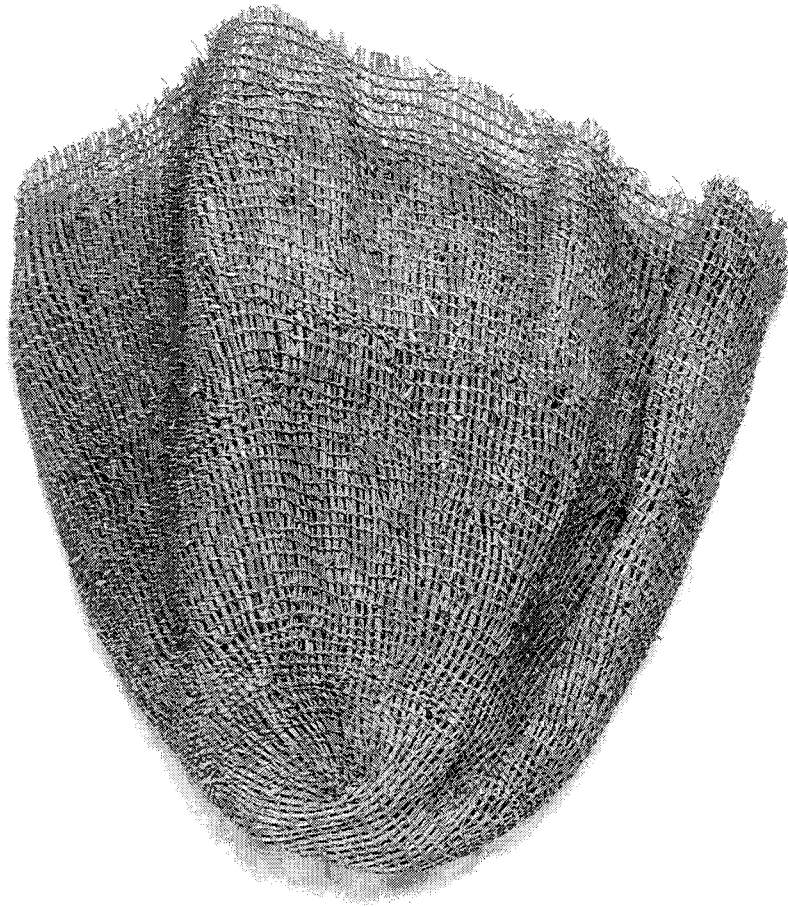
Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4000M, frame 4.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 29.

Woven Baskets



E.14935. Unfinished woven basket. Collected Bathurst Head, 1899. 34.5 x 29 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

The baskets were made from strands of cabbage tree palm fibre. The Koko-warra (now known as the Gugu-Warra) people of Princess Charlotte Bay called it alki-an.

Roth has a good series of drawings to show how the shredded palm fibre was turned into twine.

1. Young, unopened leaf shoots from the cabbage tree palm were cut off as low as possible and tapped firmly on a log. This made the shoot unfold, and made it easier to split it along its natural folds.

2. The next step was to strip off the outer layer of each piece of leaf with a finger or a finely pointed ironwood pointer or pin, or with a sharp kangaroo-bone needle. These pointers or needles could be up to 20 centimetres long. If made of wood, they were thrown away after use. Roth referred to these tools as stilettoes.

- 3,4,5. These outer strips were laid in the sun to dry and then rolled ready to be turned into twine. This fibre string was used to make bags and fish nets in most of northern Queensland.

6. The shred of palm fibre was rolled with the open hand, forwards on the outer thigh, the person squatting on the ground. This produced a slight tension, and made the strand stronger.

7. The strand was folded in two, and the 'bend' held between the left thumb and forefinger. The rest of the string was rolled, under great pressure, with the palm of the right hand slowly forwards, and sharply backwards, without removing the pressure. When rolling forward, pressure was on the thumb side of the hand. When rolling backwards, the pressure was on the other side of the hand.

8. The result of the forward movement was to roll the strand into one twist.

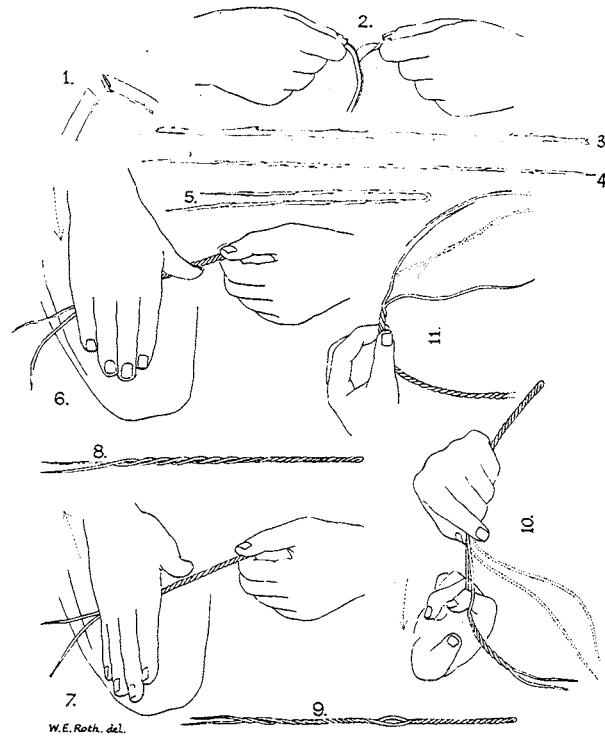
9. The result of the forward-backward movement was to roll the strand into two twists, with a 'break' in between..

10. To get rid of the break, the section just above it was held between the left thumb and forefinger to prevent the twine untwisting. The right forefinger was placed in the 'break' and it was pulled firmly but carefully outwards. At the same time the two ends of the strand were freed. While the left hand still held its section, the two freed ends of strand were rolled again with the right hand once backwards and forwards.

This process was repeated again and again. All fibre twines were thus made of two-ply.

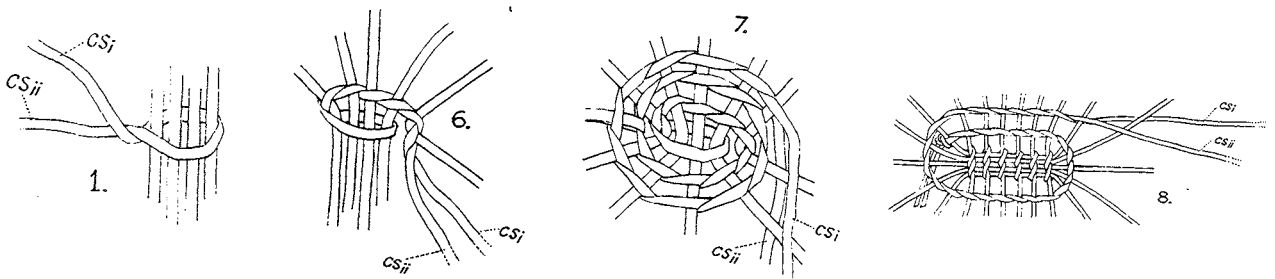
11. As soon as one end of the strand had been reached, another strand was fixed to it by rolling forwards.

These bags were woven on a chain twist pattern, with two continuous strands and several straight base strands. The two continuous strands were twisted into a chain and the ends of the base strands were left free. The chain twist was the weft, the straight base strands, the warp. Roth's drawing shows the way the basket was begun.



W.E. Roth, del.

Plate II. The Manufacture of Fibre Twine.



Baskets like this were generally firm, but could also be made of soft fibre twine. The only way they varied from each other was in the way the first base strands were started.

The baskets were used as sieve bags to soak *Zamia* nuts in water to leach out the poison so they were safe to eat.

Roth said these baskets also were found at Cooktown, Cape Bedford and the Middle Palmer River.

Collection Information

There are two woven baskets in the Roth collection from Bathurst Head.

- E.14935 This basket was collected in 1899, and is unfinished. It is 34.5 centimetres high and is 29 centimetres across the mouth.
- E.14936 This basket was collected in 1899. It is 46.5 centimetres high and is 23 centimetres across the mouth.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for both baskets.

- E.14935 negative sheet 4206M, frame 1619.
- E.14936 negative sheet 4206M, frame 1620.

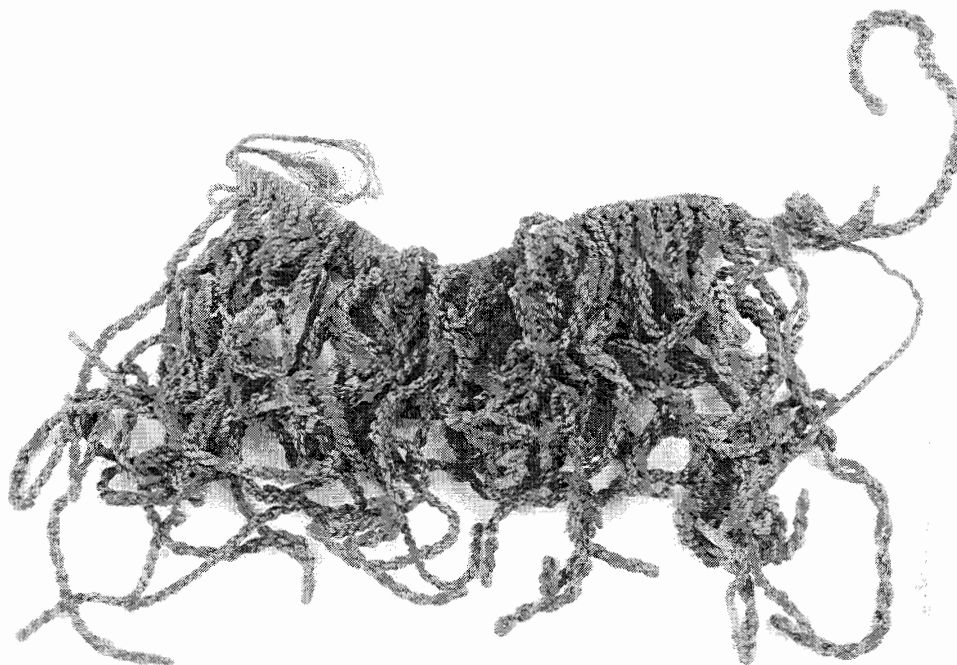
Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, pages 9 to 14.
Bulletin 3, 1901, pages 13 to 14.
Bulletin 7, 1904, page 25.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

- Cabbage tree palm: *Livistona australis* Mart.
Zamia nuts: *Cycas media* R.Br.

Skirt

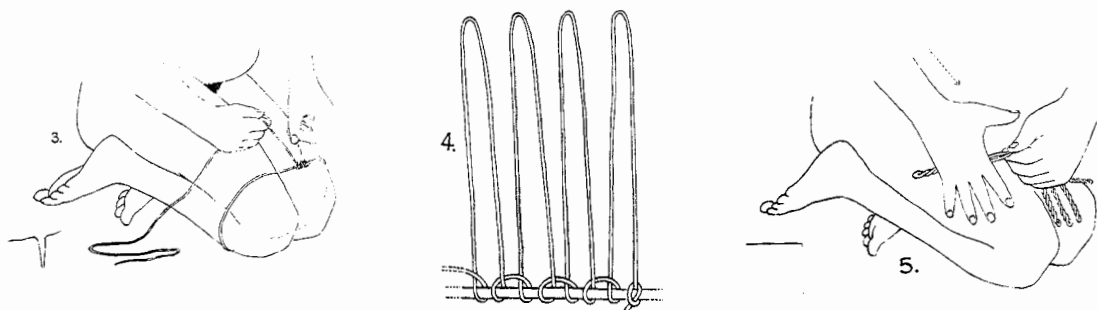


E.14701. Unfinished fringed skirt. Collected Bathurst Head, 1899. Length 29 centimetres. Each tassel 7 centimetres long.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

According to Roth there were three stages in making a handspun bark fibre skirt, which he called an apron belt. He did not write about skirts from Bathurst Head, but his illustrations of a Cape Bedford skirt clearly show these steps.

1. Making the top string (fig.3)
2. Forming the loops. The top string was stretched between two sticks (fig.4).
3. Rolling each loop on the outer thigh to form a tassel (fig.5).



This way of fixing the loops to the top string was found only at Cooktown, Maytown, Princess Charlotte Bay and the Middle Palmer River.

Going by Roth's comments for other regions, these skirts were worn only by women.

Inland from Princess Charlotte Bay (the closest locality to Bathurst Head) these skirts were made of vegetable fibres from one of three plants.

1. The roots of the yakooro tree were used. The thick outer layer was sliced off in strips and the exposed white shreddy fibre was pulled off. This was washed and rubbed for a few minutes in water (which became milky) and then dried in the sun. When dry, it was split into shreds ready for use.

2. The kapok tree was used, but Roth did not give any details.

3. The bark of the crowash tree was used. The thin outer covering of the bark was scraped off with a sharp mussel shell or a piece of glass. The exposed green fibre layer was stripped off in narrow lengths of from 45 centimetres to 60 centimetres. Each green strip was chewed for two to three minutes to soften it. Then it was split into fine strips with a finger nail. When fresh, the twine had a greenish colour.

Collection Information

There is one fringed skirt in the Roth collection from Bathurst Head.

E.14701 The skirt was collected from Bathurst Head in 1899. It is 29 centimetres long. The tassels measure 11 centimetres across the skirt and each is about 7 centimetres long. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states the skirt is 'incomplete'.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4176M, frame 1385.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, page 12.
 Bulletin 15, 1910, page 39.

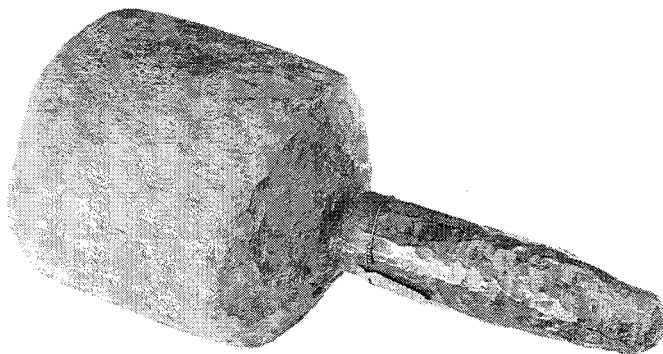
Scientific Names of Materials Used

Yakooro tree: *Barringtonia racemosa* Gaud. It is now known as *Barringtonia racemosa* (L.) Spreng (authority).

Kapok tree: *Bombax malabaricum* De Cand. It is now known as *Bombax ceiba* L. var. *leiocarpum* Robyns.

Crowash tree: *Malaisia tortuosa* Blanco. It is now known as *Malaisia scandens* (Lour.) Planchon.

Food Pounders



E.13467. Ironwood food pounder. Collected Bathurst Head, 1899. Length 26 centimetres. Handle 13.5 x 3.5 centimetres. Diameter of head 11.5 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

According to Roth, the ironwood food pounders at Bathurst Head had circular heads and were shorter and stumpier than those found in the Princess Charlotte Bay region.

This heavy implement was carried round from camp to camp, and not discarded. As far as Roth could work out, it was mainly used by women to break up roots and pound certain food such as nuts.

Collection Information

There are two ironwood food pounders in the Roth collection from Bathurst Head.

E.13467 This food pounder was collected by Roth on the coastline of Bathurst Head in 1899 (his collection number is WH.3). It is 26 centimetres long (the handle being 13.5 centimetres long by 3.5 centimetres). The diameter of the head is 11.5 centimetres. The food pounder weighs 2380.5 grammes.

E.13468 This food pounder was collected by Roth on the coastline of Bathurst Head in 1899 (his collection number is WH.4). It is 25.5 centimetres long (the handle being 13 centimetres long by 4 centimetres). The diameter of the head is 10 centimetres. The food pounder weighs 1540.5 grammes.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for both food pounders.

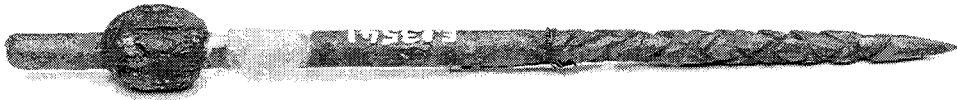
E.13467 negative sheet 4022M, frame 150.

E.13468 negative sheet 4022M, frame 151.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 23 to 24.

Harpoon Darts



E.13541. Iron harpoon dart. Collected Bathurst Head, 1899. 23.5 x 2 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth did not write about Bathurst Head harpoon darts. However he did describe how they were made on Flinders Island, which is not too far away from Bathurst Head.

He said there were three parts to a complete, barbed harpoon: the barbed head, the shaft and the connecting line.

1. The barbed head was a rounded piece of wood, gradually tapering from base to tip, and could be from 20 centimetres to 35 centimetres long.

2. One end of the shaft was flattened and an elongate opening was bored at this end.

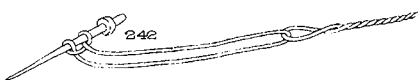
3. The connecting line was made of handspun bark fibre string.

When the harpoon was in use, the base of the barbed head, with its dampened coil of handspun bark fibre twine, was jammed tightly into the socket. The coil of fibre could be replaced by one or two wooden pegs which wedged the head into position. As well, just above the base was a ring of gum cement which stopped the head being pushed too far into the socket and helped stop the rope from slipping.

According to Roth, in the 1890s the wooden head was being replaced by an iron rod, filed to a sharp point at one end. A metal head was good in that it pierced the shell of the turtle, but because it had no barbs the hunter could not get a strong pull on the rope. It was often necessary to dive in and seize the animal.

Men hunted turtles, trevally and dugong. When hunting for dugong, the head of the dart was changed to one similar to the head of a multiple-pronged fishing spear. The barbs usually were iron wires.

Harpoons were used all along the coast. Places Roth mentioned included Keppel Island, Whitsunday Passage, Cape Bedford, Bloomfield, Flinders Island (near Bathurst Head), Batavia River (now called the Wenlock River) and the Endeavour River.



Shows a handspun bark fibre line fixed into a special loop, attached to the barked head by a clove hitch

Collection Information

There are two harpoon darts in the Roth collection from Bathurst Head.

- E.13540 Roth collected the wooden harpoon dart in 1899 (his collection number is H.7). It is 23.5 centimetres long and 2 centimetres wide (max.)
- E.13541 Roth collected the iron harpoon dart in 1899 (Roth's collection number is H.8). It is 23.5 centimetres long and 2 centimetres wide (max.).

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for both harpoon darts.

- E.13540 negative sheet 4031M, frame 223.
- E.13541 negative sheet 4031M, frame 224.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 31 to 32.

Message Stick



E.13412. Message stick. Collected Bathurst Head, 1899. 13 x 1.7 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth did not write about how message sticks were made, but commented on their use. He was convinced that the marks on message sticks did not carry a message in the ordinarily accepted way. He concluded that the message was taken by word of mouth, the message stick was to show the messenger had been given permission to carry the message and could be trusted. Roth reached this view because he saw that the same message could be taken with different sticks, and some sticks had no markings at all. If the messenger was known to both parties, no message stick was sent.

Collection Information

There is one message stick in the Roth collection from Bathurst Head.

E.13412 Roth collected this rectangular, carved message stick in 1899 (his collection number is S.45). It is 13 centimetres by 1.7 centimetres, and has incised lines, cross-hatching and crosses.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4012M, frame 96. There is a photograph and description of this message stick in Bulletin 8, 1906, plate 1, figure 5.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 8, 1906, pages 9 to 10.

Mourning Emblem

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth described the mourning practices of the local Princess Charlotte Bay people, an area close to Bathurst Head.

He said if the dead person did not in some way let his relations know who had killed him, they took some hair from his head and spun it into hairstring. As the hairstring was being made, by rolling it back and forwards on the thigh, names of suspected persons were called out. The name at which the hairstring broke was the guilty person. If the guilty person lived in another district, the hairstring bundle was sent to a nearby relative. This relative avenged the death, and then sent the hairstring back to the immediate family.

Collection Information

There is one mourning emblem in the Roth collection from Bathurst Head.

E.13758 Roth collected this mourning emblem in 1899. It is 22.7 centimetres long. It is a paperbark sheath containing long strands of human hair. Some strands have been spun into hairstring and ochred. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Human hair mourning emblem. The hair of the corpse is wound into skeins etc. and carried about by the brother, friend etc. until death is avenged. When this consummation is obtained it is buried (same custom at Cooktown).'

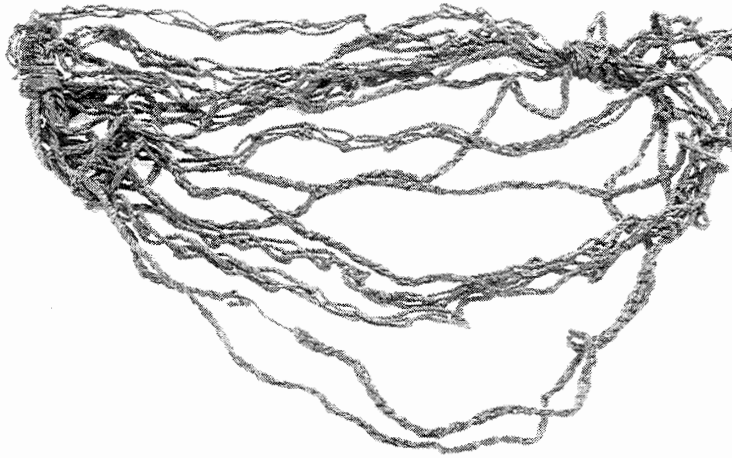
Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4058M, frame 441.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 9, 1907, page 371.

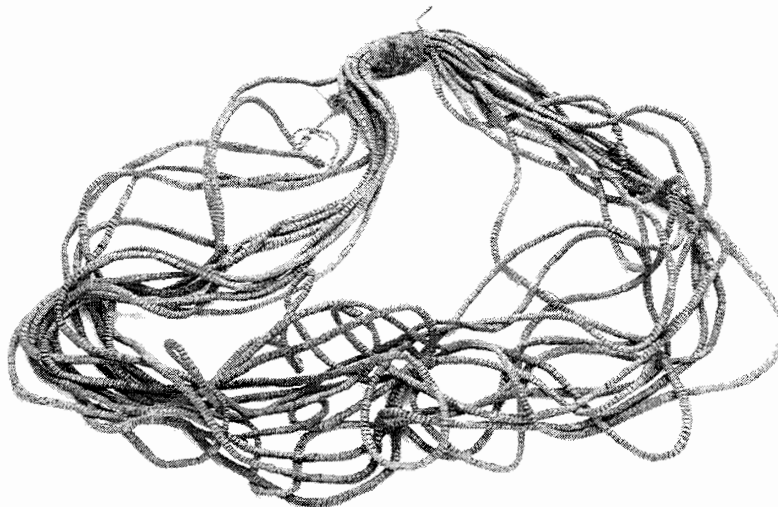
Mourning Strings



E.13755. Chainwork mourning string. Collected Bathurst Head, 1899. Length 28.6 centimetres.



E.13759. Straight mourning string. Collected Bathurst Head, 1899. Length 40.2 centimetres.



E.13766. Bound over mourning string. Collected Bathurst Head, 1899. Length 44.2 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth did not write about mourning strings from Bathurst Head, but did so for Princess Charlotte Bay, where chain-work mourning strings were made.

The string chains were made of handspun bark fibre twine and could be several metres long, each link being about 2 centimetres long. Roth's drawings show how the first loop was fixed either in a knot (a) at the beginning of the string or twisted between the two plies of string (b). The knot at the other end (z) stopped the chain unravelling.

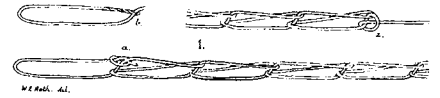


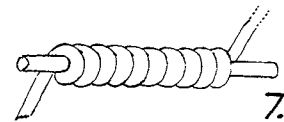
Plate II. Chain-work

Two of the Bathurst Head mourning strings were made in this way (E. 13755 and E. 13756).

The chain mourning strings were worn either over one shoulder, across to, and under the opposite armpit, or else around the neck. One person could wear three different sets at the same time. In Bulletin 1 Roth states the mourning chains could be worn by both men and women. Later in Bulletin 9, he says they were worn only by women. Mourners also covered themselves with white clay.

These chain mourning strings were worn by Aboriginal people at Princess Charlotte Bay, Cooktown and Cape Bedford.

Another Bathurst Head mourning string (E. 13766) was similar to those from Maytown and the Middle Palmer River. The core or centre of the string was bound over with handspun bark fibre twine.



[called 'winding' by Roth]

Collection Information

There are six mourning strings in the Roth collection from Bathurst Head. They were all collected in 1899.

- E.13755 The chain-work mourning string is 28.6 centimetres long. It is an ochred, seven-stranded string of handspun bark fibre twine made of a combination of large, loose chains and small, close chains.
- E.13756 The long fine chain-work mourning string has broken into five pieces. Together they are 400 centimetres long.
- E.13759 The handspun bark fibre mourning string is 40.2 centimetres long. The sixteen strand looped string is tied at one end with short lengths of handspun bark fibre twine. Beeswax has been smeared over the binding.
- E.13760 The handspun bark fibre mourning string is 31.3 centimetres long. The string is looped and kept in place by strips of handspun bark fibre twine wound around the string in two places, making ten strands each side.
- E.13761 The handspun bark fibre mourning string is 41.5 centimetres long. The string is looped with twelve strands each side of a clay and beeswax binding.
- E.13766 The bound over, handspun bark fibre mourning string is 44.2 centimetres long. It is looped and held at the centre with handspun bark fibre twine and beeswax.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all mourning strings.

- E.13755 negative sheet 4058M, frame 438.
- E.13756 negative sheet 4058M, frame 439.
- E.13759 negative sheet 4059M, frame 442.
- E.13760 negative sheet 4059M, frame 443.
- E.13761 negative sheet 4059M, frame 444.
- E.13766 negative sheet 4059M, frame 449.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, pages 11 to 12.
Bulletin 9, 1907, pages 371 to 372.

Gum Cement

Information from Roth's Bulletins

To get this gum cement roots of a young ironwood tree were dug up, and pieces of root were cut away. The outer sticky covering on the root was stripped off by pulling a piece of bark straight up the piece of root. The collected sticky mass was roasted over a fire and hammered between two stones until soft. It was then left to cool and harden. When cold, it set very hard, but could easily be softened in a fire.

Roth saw this gum cement being used on the Endeavour, Laura and Palmer Rivers, along the Princess Charlotte Bay coastline, and on the Gulf coast, between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers.

Collection Information

There is one sample of gum cement in the Roth collection from Bathurst Head.

E.14772 The gum cement was collected by Roth in 1899. It is 10.2 centimetres by 8.7 centimetres by 2.4 centimetres.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4185M, frame 1456.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 12.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Ironwood tree: *Erythrophloeum laboucheii* F.v.M. It is now known as *Erythrophloeum chlorostachyum* (F. Muell.) Hennings ex Tamb.

Pigments

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth did not write much about pigments from Bathurst Head, except to say that the red pigment found there probably was the material used on the rock paintings on Clack Island (one of the Flinders group of islands, near Bathurst Head). He said it required no special preparation before use.

Yellow pigment was mixed with clay and sand at Bathurst Head.

He made no mention of white pigment at Bathurst Head.

Collection Information

There is a sample of yellow, red and white pigment from Bathurst Head. Two of the samples are no longer in the collection.

E.8977 Roth gave this piece of yellow pigment to the Australian Museum in 1900. It does not form part of the original Roth collection purchase. The entry in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1900 shows the registered number crossed off and a note states 'Pt. Warnambool Museum 10. 1900.'

The pigment is no longer in the Museum collection.

E.8978 Roth gave this piece of red pigment to the Australian Museum in 1900. It does not form part of the original Roth collection purchase. The entry in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1900 shows the registered number crossed off and a note states 'Pt. Warnambool Museum 10. 1900.'

The ochre is no longer in the Museum collection.

E.14777 Roth collected this piece of white pigment in 1899 (his collection number is G.158). It is 7.7 centimetres by 2 centimetres. The pigment is wrapped in a small bundle of paperbark and tied with handspun bark fibre string and European cotton.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4186M, frame 1461.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 14 to 15.

Shell



E.14414. Unworked shell for nose pin. Collected Bathurst Head, 1899. 25.6 x 4 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth did not write much about making shell nose pins except to say that when working with shell, the material must be fresh. If it was 'dead' it had to be soaked in water before use. One of the problems was that the line of fracture in a dead shell did not follow from the place where the shell was hit.

At Princess Charlotte Bay, near Bathurst Head, women sometimes had their noses pierced. Men always had their noses pierced. It was done using a pointed piece of bone or hardened wood. A short piece of soft wood was used immediately after the operation to keep the wound open for a few days. The wood was finally replaced with a proper nose pin. Roth said that in this region the wearing of nose pins had nothing to do with initiation ceremonies.

Collection Information

There is one piece of unworked shell from which a nose pin was made in the Roth collection from Bathurst Head.

E.14414 The piece of shell was collected by Roth in 1899 (his collection number is G.156). It is 25.6 centimetres by 4 centimetres. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'shell in the rough from which nose pin is made (used to be made at Cooktown).'

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4141M, frame 1097.

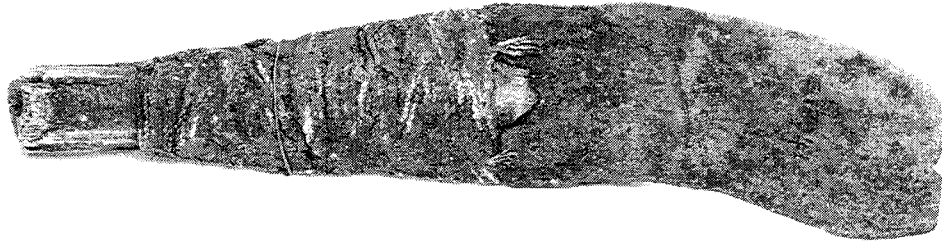
Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 11.
 Bulletin 15, 1910, pages 29 to 30.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Shell: *Syrinx aruanus* (Linne).

Scraper



E.13941. Iron scraper. Collected Bathurst Head, 1899. 25.2 x 5 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth said that with the advance of European settlement, iron was rapidly replacing stone as a material for tools. On both the east and Gulf coasts of Cape York Peninsula and on the Wellesly Islands, the piece of iron was wedged into the split end of a straight wooden handle. This was tightened with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement. The iron could be anything from a piece of barrel-hoop to a ground-down rasp.

The iron scraper was gripped with both hands and was used for hollowing out canoes and for general scraping tasks.

Collection Information

There is one iron scraper in the Roth collection from Bathurst Head.

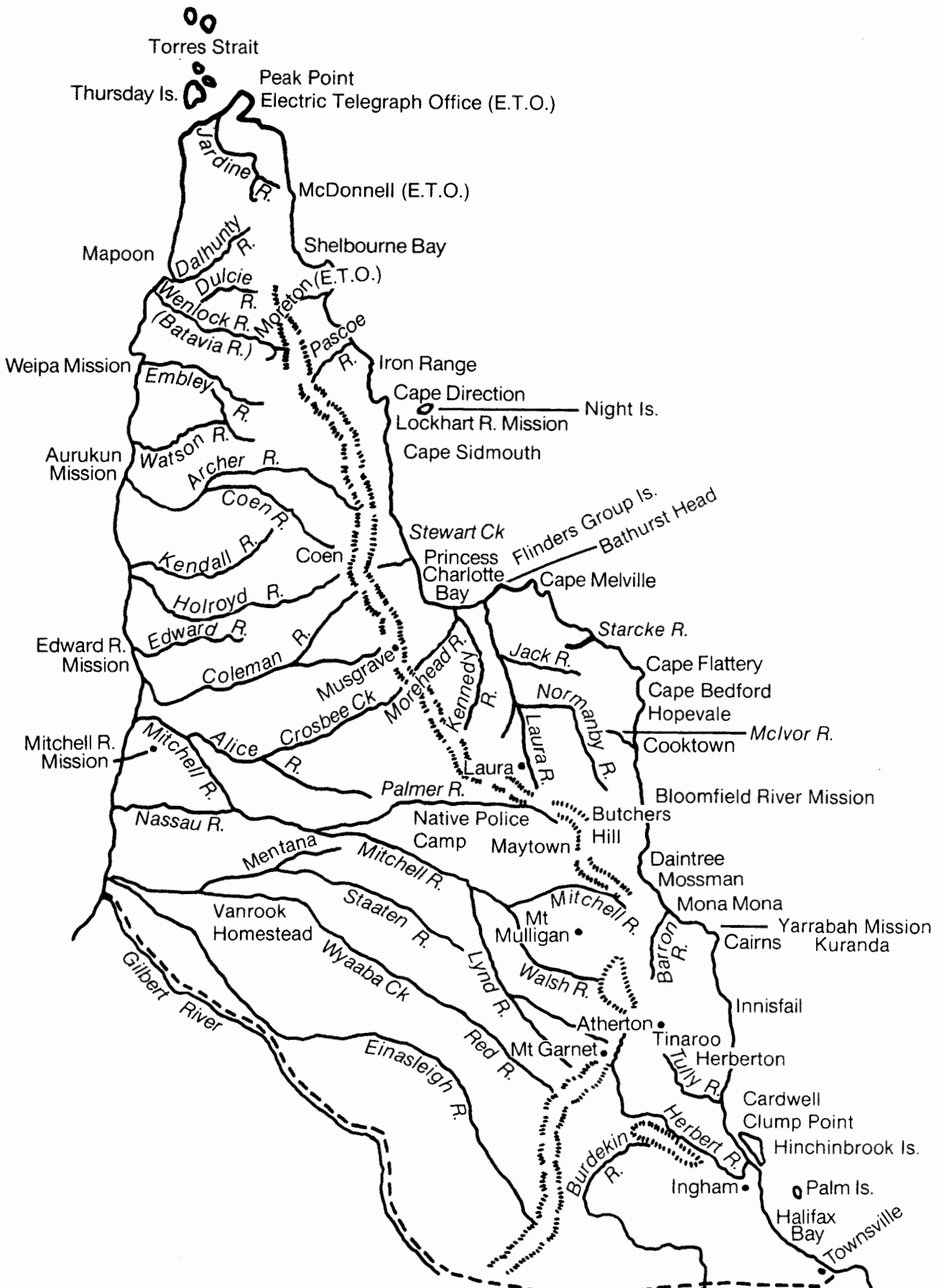
E.13941 Roth collected this iron scraper in 1899 (his collection number is IR.7). It is 25.2 centimetres by 5 centimetres. The curved piece of iron has been fitted into a handle made of two pieces of flat ironwood. Handspun bark fibre string is wound around the wood. The iron blade has gum cement on its surface. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Iron spokeshave and knife combined.'

Photographic Information

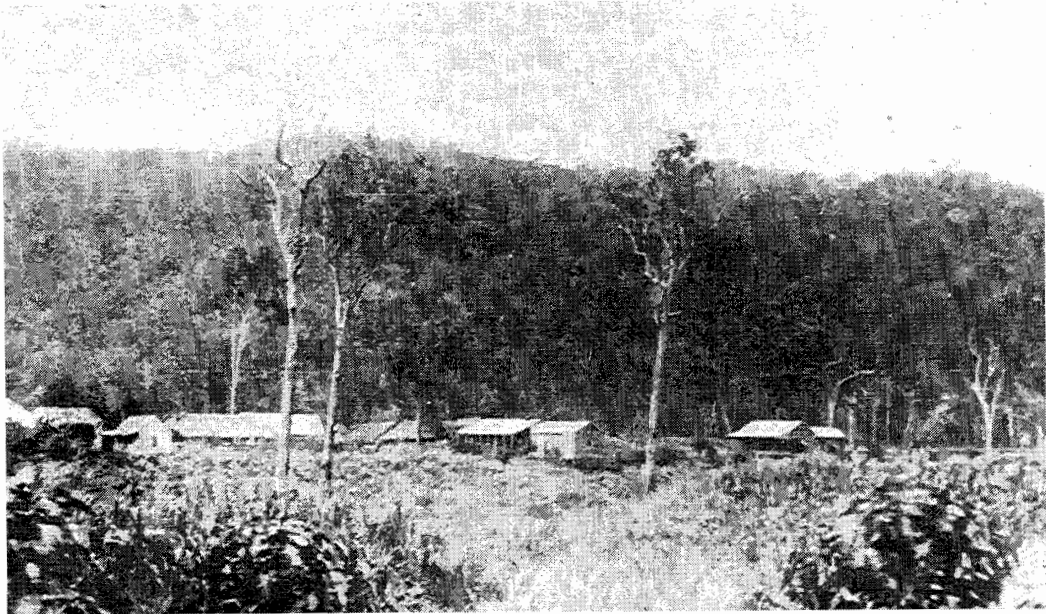
A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4081M, frame 624.

Useful Written Information

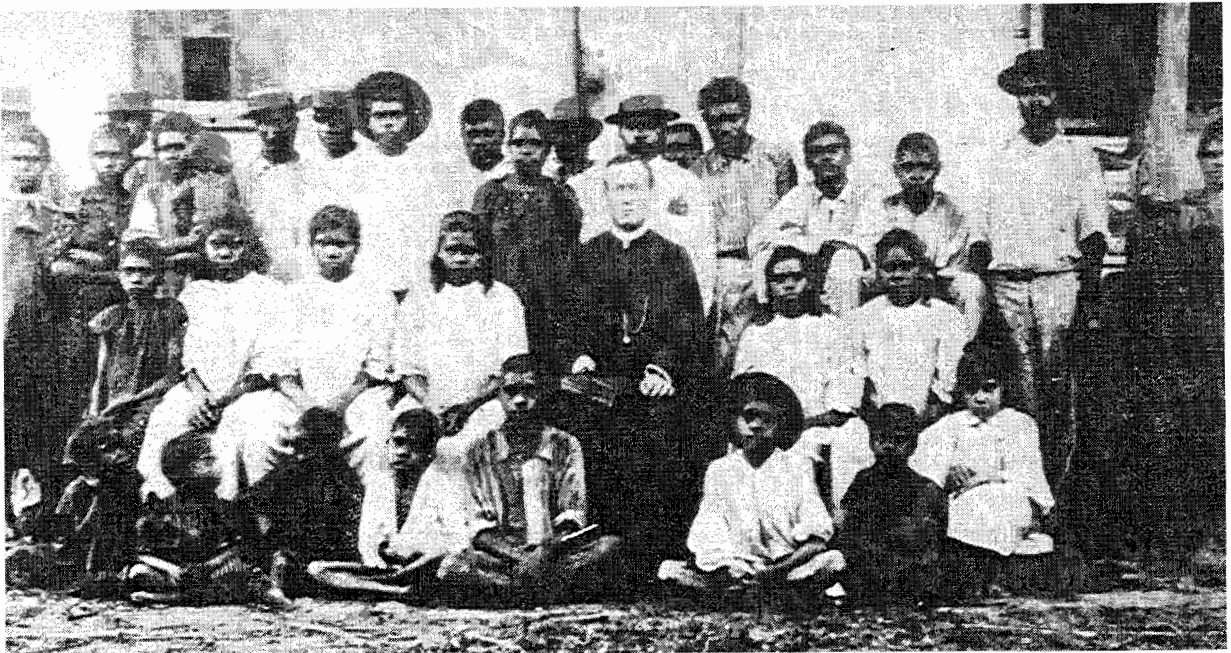
W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 21 to 22.



Bloomfield River



Bloomfield, 1901.



Sebastian Horlein, Bloomfield.

Both photos from: K.E. Evans. Marie Yamba, Bloomfield and Hope Vale: The Lutheran Missions to the North Queensland Aborigines, 1886-1905. Queensland Heritage, Vol. 2, No. 6, May 1972, pages 28 and 30.

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The People

Bloomfield River, 80 kilometres south of Cooktown was a quiet place until timber-getters, in 1874, started to clear the scrub. This opened the area for European settlement.

In 1886, despite opposition by local settlers, an Aboriginal mission was opened there by the Lutheran Church. It was granted by the government 180 square miles of land, and a further 50 square miles of hunting land.

The missionaries thought the settlement would become a prosperous farm, growing tea, coffee and tropical fruits for the market down south. But the land was only fertile in patches, and the government would not send the mission any rations to keep them going until the good times came.

Local Aboriginal people did not welcome the missionaries. The mission staff were not always the best people for the situation that confronted them. There were frequent staff changes. One missionary was dismissed because he took bribes to provide labour for the sea slug or beche-de-mer trade, and often was drunk.

In 1892, six years after the mission opened, the government took back half the hunting land. Local businessmen had successfully pressured the government to take this action.

On 15th February 1898, the newly appointed First Protector of Aboriginals for north Queensland, Dr W.E. Roth, wrote to the Commissioner of Police:

... re my visit to Bloomfield. I am particularly anxious to see this area as soon as possible. There is no doubt that young Hislop [owner of the property Wyalla] knows a great deal concerning the habits, customs, etc., of the local blacks, and I trust to obtain a deal of scientific information from him...

Following his first journey to the Bloomfield River district in 1898, together with information given to him by Mr R. Hislop, Roth said he was able to account for 287 Aboriginal people living there.

He noted that Banna-billa was the name of the country at the mouth of the Bloomfield River, where a Mr Osmundsen had a farm. The local Bannabillara people were joined here by some who had come from Bailey's Creek (Gangaji), and from Tchul-gur, a little north of the Bloomfield River, where a Mr Cochrane now had a farm.

From their chief home at the mouth they travel along the river as far as the heads (Banna-yirri ie, water-falls); southwards, they visit Bailey's Creek. In former times they used to travel up the northern coast along Cedar Bay to Archer Point, a distance about midway between the Bloomfield and Endeavour Rivers; nowadays they very rarely come north of their river home; they speak Koko-baldji.

Hislop's farm, Wyalla, known as Wai-al-al, was regarded as a head-camp.

it is the resting-place for natives from Ku-na (Mt. Finlayson, ?Finnegan), from Wu-lu-mu-pan (a tract north of Bauer's Gap), from Wol-pa (the big range lying westwards from Mt. Romeo), and from Yalmpa (the district between Wyalla north-eastwards and the sea); they speak Koko-yerla-n-tchi here.

The people living at Wudjal-wudjal, now the Mission Reserve, and at Borru, now Connemara where a Mr Baird had a farm,

come from the country (Nu-ru) at the head of Granite Creek (the northern branch of the Bloomfield River), from the district (Mu) between Granite Creek and the Bloomfield River, from The Springs [Cook's farm] (Bul-pan) from west (Mulujin) of [Baird's farm] whence they travel to Mareeba (and so get in touch with the Cairns and Atherton District) and from the country (Gan-gu) along the eastern branch of the Daintree River; they all speak Koko-baldja like the Banna-billara.

In the Rossville, Helenvale and Mt Romeo regions lived:

Aboriginals from Tandi (King's Lake country and heads of the Middle and East Normanby Rivers) from Chokon (district comprising Mt. Romeo, the Tablelands, Slaty Creek, etc., and perhaps Mt. Amos), and Tau-al-tau-al (country west of King's Lake to the Normanby River).

The Wulbur-ara people:

travel from the head of the Mossman River to Byerstown and Maytown; the head-camp of those on the Daintree River would appear to be at [Fischer's farm].

Hislop told Roth that on the Bloomfield River dilly bags, spears, spearthrowers, fighting sticks, gum cements and red ochre were made for trade and barter. Edible pipe-clay used to be brought in, but now the Bloomfield River people had enough to export it themselves.

In the 1800s shields and swords also were made for trade, but by the late 1800s, they were being brought in rather than made in the Bloomfield River region.

There were apparently no restrictions on trade. Anyone could make arrangements with a person they wished to trade with at any time. The best time was during the wet season from September to February, when there was a good food supply.

Hislop told Roth

On the Bloomfield, the year is divided into three seasons, the bu-lur or cold-weather (from about end of April to August), the wokara or time when the "turkeys" begin to lay which includes the major portion of the wet season (September to February), and the Kara when the grass is all long and the yams are growing (February to April): the natives thus speak of such and such a time as being at or just before the one or the other, but have no idea of a year.

Ursula McConnel, writing in 1939, said that around 1898-1900, on the Bloomfield, Daintree and Mossman Rivers, Aboriginal people were suddenly deprived of their hunting rights.

They live in camps near the townships, supply labour for white settlers and are addicted to opium. It was with difficulty that I disentangled their history sufficiently to record the local tribes... Roth's Koko-baldja are the Koko-yanyu (Lower Bloomfield), Koko-yalunyu (Upper Bloomfield and Daintree) and Koko-

yalung (Lower Daintree)...At Bailey's Creek is a small isolated group known as the Koko-kai-kai.

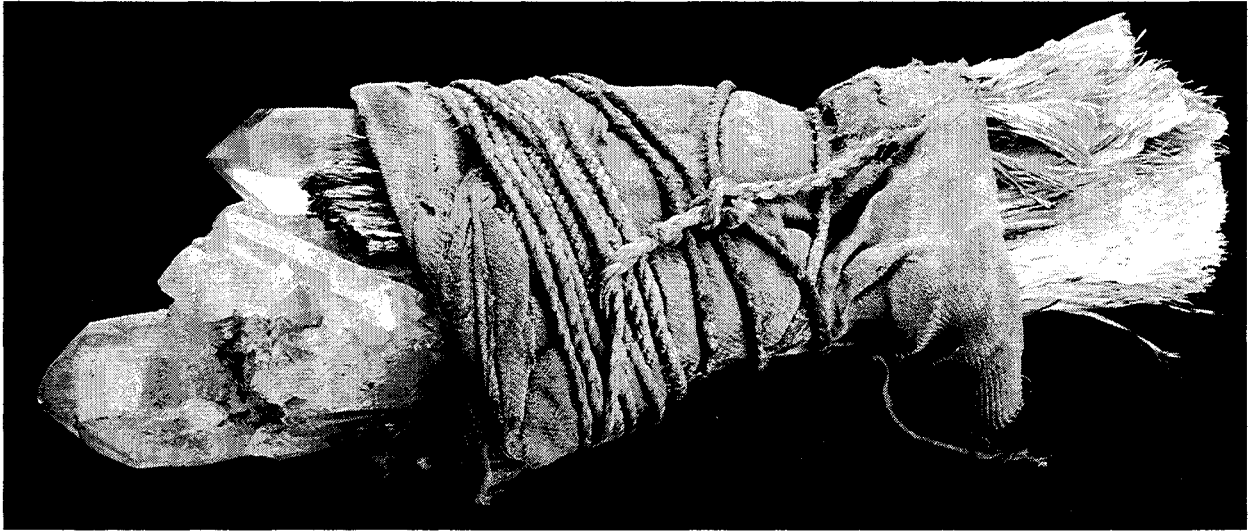
By 1900, the Lutheran Church had abandoned the Bloomfield River Mission, following a damning report on the settlement by Roth. The President of the Lutheran Church in Queensland in the 1930s, Dr Otto Thiele, said that in the 16 years they had been at the Bloomfield River Mission, they had not baptised a single Aboriginal.

They had failed to take into account the strength and closely knit relationships in Aboriginal society.

Books to Read

- N. Loos Invasion and resistance. Aboriginal-European relations on the north Queensland frontier 1861-1897. ANU Press, Canberra, 1982, page 93.
- K.E. Evans Marie Yamba, Bloomfield and Hope Vale:the Lutheran Missions to the north Queensland Aborigines. 1886-1905. Queensland Heritage, May 1972, volume 2, number 6, pages 26 to 35.
- W.E. Roth Some ethnological notes on the Aborigines of the Bloomfield River district. (Report to Commissioner of Police, Brisbane), Cooktown, 1898. Unpub. mss. Mitchell Library.
- W.E. Roth Bulletin 18, 1910, pages 92 to 93.
- W.E. Roth Bulletin 14, 1910, pages 17 to 18.
- L. Allen & B. Borey Annotations to publications by W.E. Roth, Cultural & historical records of Queensland, number 3, 1984, page 78.
- U.H. McConnel Social organisation of the tribes of Cape York Peninsula, Oceania, 1939, volume 10, number 1, page 66.

Crystal Hunting Charms



E.13703. Crystal hunting charm. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. 24 x 9.5 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

On the Bloomfield River, if a man wanted his dog to be an expert hunter, he would rub him over every morning with a special piece of quartz crystal.

Collection Information

There are two crystal hunting charms in the Roth collection from the Bloomfield River.

- E.13688 This opaque, quartz crystal charm was collected by Roth in 1900 (his collection number is TA.69). It is 18 centimetres long and 4 centimetres wide. It has a blunt point at one end and is roughly squared off at the other end.
- E.13703 This charm was collected by Roth in 1898 (his collection number is TA.20). It is 24 centimetres long and 9.5 centimetres wide. The quartz crystal is wrapped in paper bark and red cloth and tied with handspun bark fibre string and plaited string. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'quartz crystal luck charm (kangaroo hunting), not figured.'

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for both hunting charms.

- E.13688 negative sheet 4050M, frame 371.
E.13703 negative sheet 4052M, frame 386.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 5, 1903, page 27.

Bark Knot Container



E.13318. Bark knot container. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. Height 22.5 centimetres. Mouth 25.7 x 33.6 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

The container was made from the knot which formed on the butt of some eucalyptus trees. A pointed stick was used to loosen the edges around the base of the knot to remove the bark shell. The inside of the container was usually charred and then scraped smooth with a piece of shell or stone.

These containers were often carried around with a handle of handspun bark fibre string threaded through holes drilled in opposite sides of the container.

A friend of Roth's, Thomas Petrie, said he had seen local Brisbane Aboriginal people using these containers to carry honey. In the Brisbane region they were made by men.

Roth said that in 1904, these bark knot containers were rare. They were found along the coastline from the Bloomfield River, north to Princess Charlotte Bay. The only other bark containers in the Roth collection come from Night Island (E.13321), Flinders Island (E.13317, E. 13322, E.13323), Princess Charlotte Bay (E.13319) and Bathurst Head (E.13320).

Collection Information

There is one bark knot container in the Roth collection from the Bloomfield River.

E.13318 Roth collected this bark knot container from the Bloomfield River in 1898 (his collection number is WT.8). It is 22.5 centimetres high and the mouth is 25.7 centimetres by 33.6 centimetres wide. A hole near the base of the water carrier has

been stopped with a banksia cone, string, and some hessian fabric.

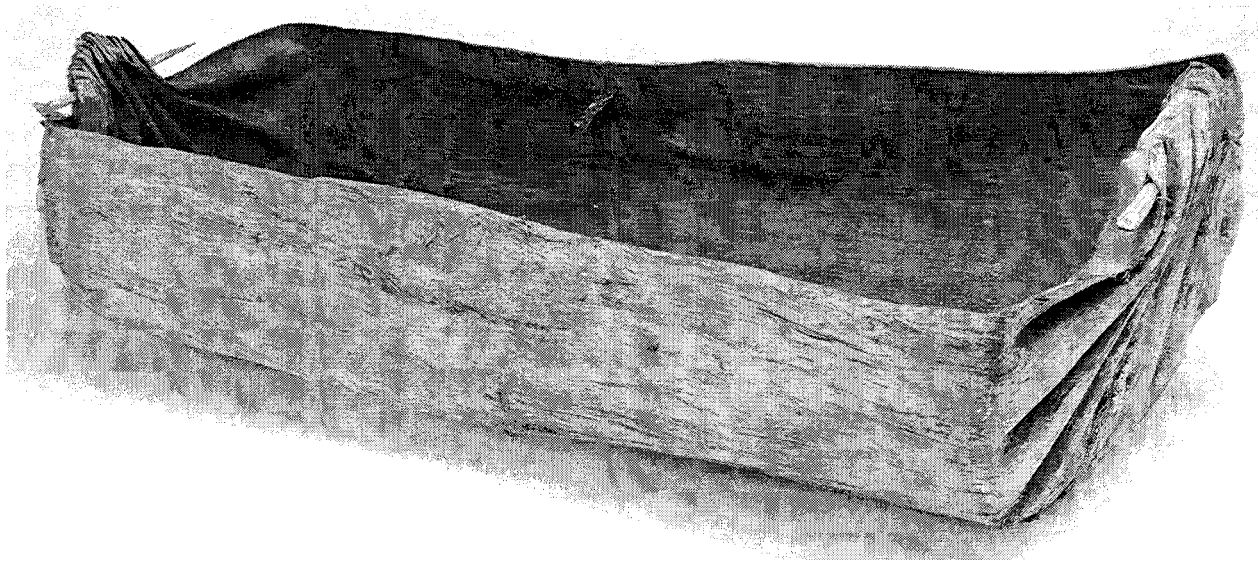
Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4000M, frame 2.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 29.

Pleated Bark Containers



E.13326. Pleated bark container. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. 99 x 30 centimetres, and 21.5 centimetres deep.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

These containers were made from a rectangular sheet of bark, usually cut from a eucalyptus tree. The ends of the container were made ready for pleating by thinning down the thickness of the bark using a sharply pointed bone skewer. The ends were then warmed over a fire. Two fine cuts were made across the inside of the bark to allow the folds to be pleated. After a second heating, the ends were now ready for pleating. A curved, sharply pointed ironwood peg was pushed through the pleats to hold them in place. Sometimes handspun bark fibre string also was wound around the pegs.

These containers were very useful. They held honey as well as water. They were used as a container when preparing food. Babies and other objects were carried across creeks in them by being pushed along in front of a swimmer. Larger ones were used to carry corpses during certain burial ceremonies.

The spiked pleated containers were used on the eastern coastline from Bloomfield River to north of Princess Charlotte Bay, and from the Palmer River to the Moreton Telegraph Station. On the Gulf coast they were used from Pera Head to the Wenlock River (formerly the Batavia River).

The Koko-yellanji (now known as the Gugu-Yalanji) people from the Bloomfield River called this water carrier tu-bal.

Collection Information

There are three pleated bark containers from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13325 (Roth's collection number is WT.9). The bark container is 58.3 centimetres long, 25 centimetres wide and 19.5 centimetres deep. One end of the pleated bark was fixed in place by a wooden peg and handspun bark fibre string. At the other end,

- two wooden pegs have been used to hold the bark in place.
- E.13326 (Roth's collection number is WT.10). The bark container is 99 centimetres long, 30 centimetres wide and 21.5 centimetres deep. The outside pleated ends have been painted white and there are signs of red ochre on the long sides of the container. The wooden pegs have been painted white.
- E.13327 (Roth's collection number is WT. 11). The bark container is 62.6 centimetres long, 32.3 centimetres wide and 18.3 centimetres deep. The pleated ends are fixed in place with twigs.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all bark containers.

- E.13325 negative sheet 4001M, frame 9.
E.13326 negative sheet 4001M, frame 10.
E.13327 negative sheet 4001M, frame 11.

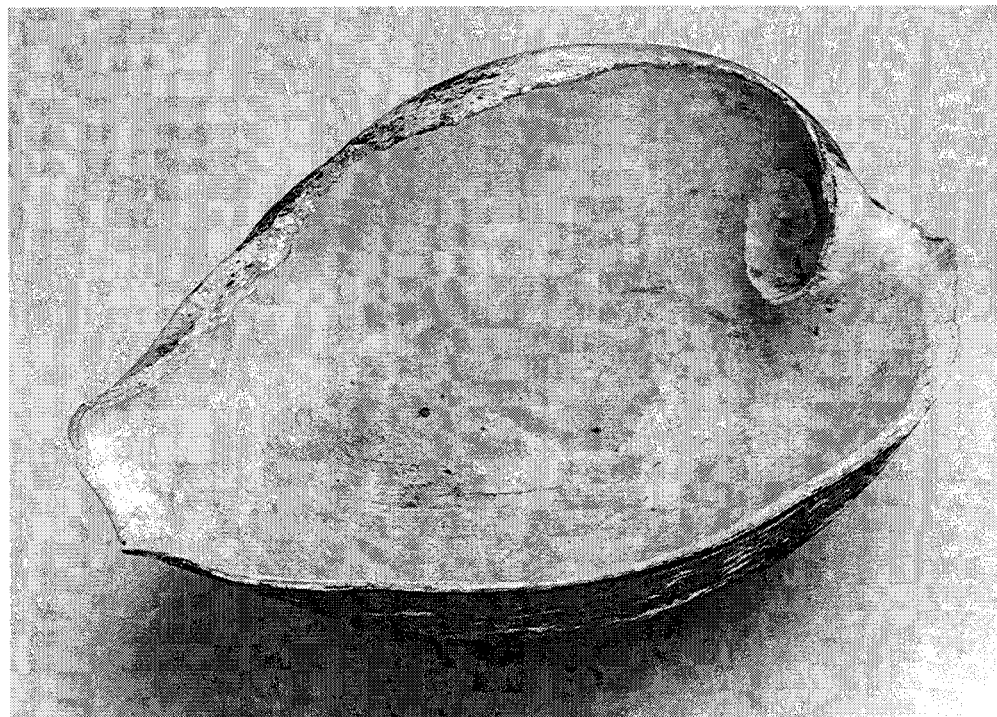
Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 30.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Bark came from either the red bloodwood tree: *Eucalyptus corymbosa* Sm., now known as *Eucalyptus gummifera* (Gaertn.) Hochr., or *Eucalyptus tetradonta* F.v.M.

Shell Water Carrier



E.13342. Melon shell water carrier. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. 33.8 x 17.5 centimetres, and 16.5 centimetres deep.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

If the shell was fresh, a large section of the shell was chipped out immediately, using a sharp piece of hard stone. Otherwise the shell was soaked in water for three to four days before having the inside chipped out. The chipped edge was often ground smooth with a stone.

On the Whitsunday Islands, a large part of the shell was removed to make a handle. On the Gulf coast from the Wenlock River (formerly known as the Batavia River) to the Mitchell River, and on the Wellesley Islands, the upper curve of the shell was pierced so that it could be carried with one's thumb hooked through the hole.

As well as being used as a water carrier, it also was used to boil water over a fire.

In Roth's time, this shell water carrier was found from Bowen north to Cape Bedford and the Cooktown area, on the coast and inland around Princess Charlotte Bay, and on the Whitsunday Islands. On the Gulf coast it was found from the Wenlock River down to the Mitchell River, and on the Wellesley Islands. Roth said it was traded from the eastern seaboard many kilometres inland.

Collection Information

There is one shell water carrier in the Roth collection from the Bloomfield River.

E.13342 This shell water carrier was collected in 1898 (Roth's collection number is MD.27). It is 33.8 centimetres long, 17.5 centimetres wide and is 16.5 centimetres deep. The

outside of the shell is blackened, probably by fire.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4003M, frame 26.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 29.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Melon shell, *Melo diadema* Lamk., now known as *Melo amphota* (Lightfoot).

Woven Bags



E.14833. Woven bag. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. 31 x 23 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

These bags were made from two-ply handspun bark fibre string spun from strips of bark from the fig tree. The weaving pattern was that of hourglass or double loop, using two-ply continuous strands, building on one straight strand tied to two sticks in the ground.

Roth said that when these string bags were used by men they were regarded as sacred, including everything put in them. When used by women, the bags held ordinary family objects and food.

The bags were found everywhere, from the coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria on the west, to the eastern side of Cape York Peninsula from Cape Bedford to Rockhampton.

According to Roth, the local Koko-yellanji (now known as the Gugu-Yalanji) people at Bloomfield River called these baskets ngon-yan. The woven string from the fig tree was called either warur or tchul-bal.

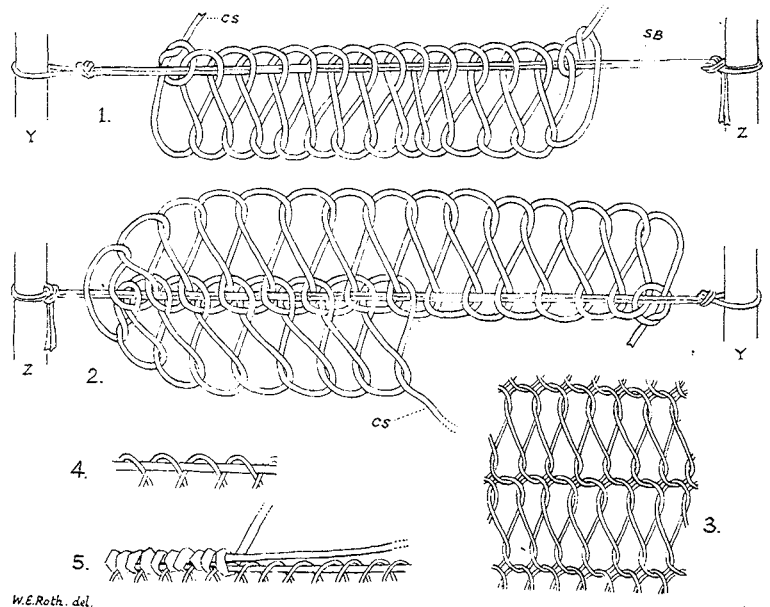


Plate X. Basketry, etc. Made with one continuous strand: basal strand straight: hour-glass pattern.

Collection Information

There are three rectangular woven bags from the Bloomfield River collected by Roth in 1898.

- E.14833 (Roth's collection number is D.71). The bag is 31 centimetres long and 23 centimetres wide. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'dilly bag, double loop or hourglass.'
- E.14846 This bag is 47 centimetres long and 30 centimetres wide. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states, 'dilly bag, double loop or hourglass... probably made at Laura.'
- E.14847 This bag is 70 centimetres long and 44.3 centimetres wide. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states, 'dilly bag, double loop or hourglass - very large...probably made at Laura.' [This bag seems to have a thicker thread and tighter weave than the other two bags].

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all woven bags.

- E.14833 negative sheet 4193M, frame 1517.
 E.14846 negative sheet 4195M, frame 1530.
 E.14847 negative sheet 4195M, frame 1531.

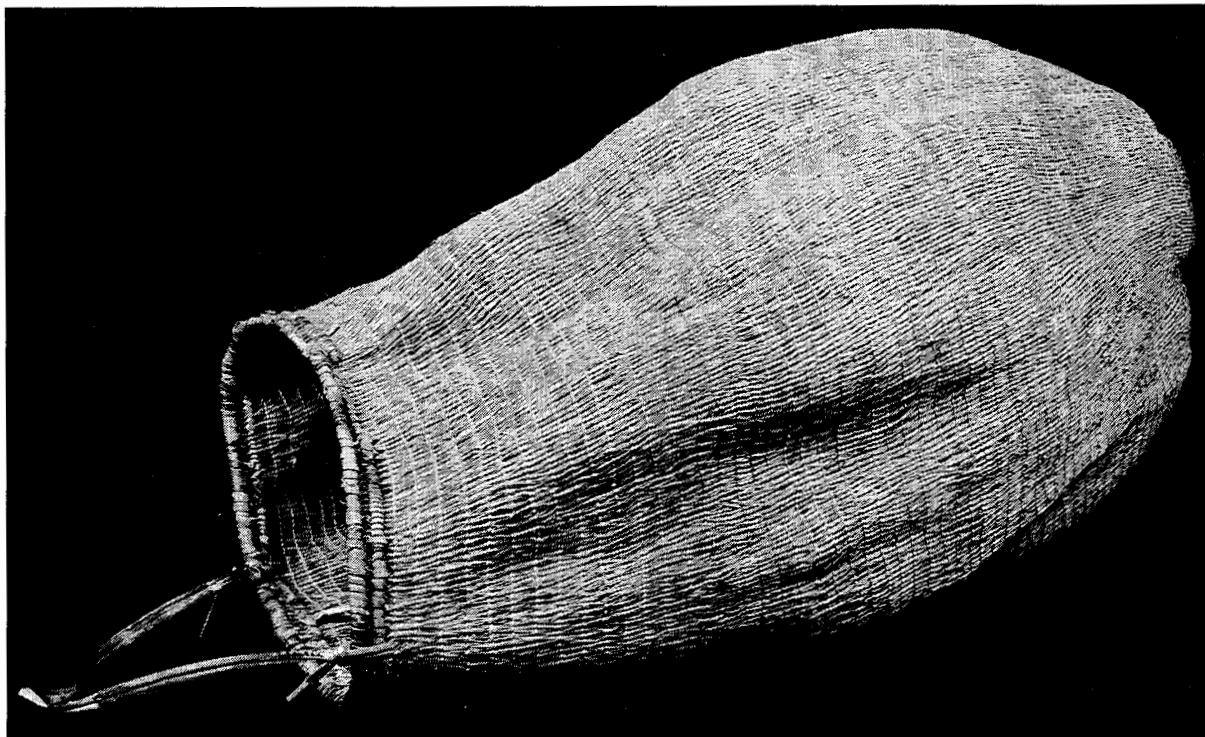
Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, page 13.
 Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 27 to 28.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Fig tree: *Ficus* sp.

Woven Baskets



E.14946. Woven basket. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. Length 60 centimetres, mouth 22.5 x 25.7 centimetres, handle 22.3 centimetres.

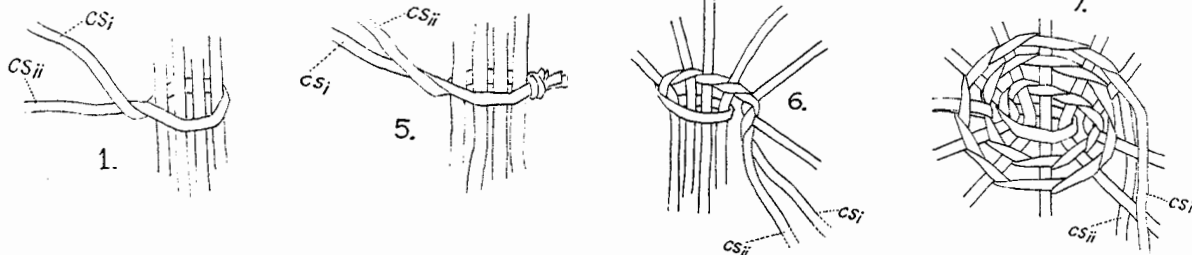
Information from Roth's Bulletins

The firmly woven baskets were usually made of fibre strands from the black palm. Each strand was teased out separately and cleaned by being pulled through the thumb and finger-nail.

Dried leaves from the blood root also could be used. The leaves were moistened just before use, and then split into thin strips with the finger nails. The Koko-yellanji (now known as the Gugu-Yalanji) people called this ma-tun.

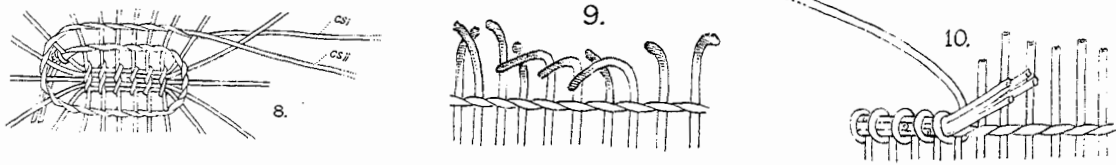
A narrow leafed form of the spiny-headed mat rush, called tan-di by the Koko-yellanji (Gugu-Yalanji people) was another vegetable fibre used to make baskets.

1. These baskets were woven using two continuous strands of fibre string and several base strands.
2. The two continuous strands were twisted into a chain, and the ends of the straight base strands were left free.
3. The chain twist was the weft, the straight base strands, the warp. Roth's drawing shows how the basket was begun.

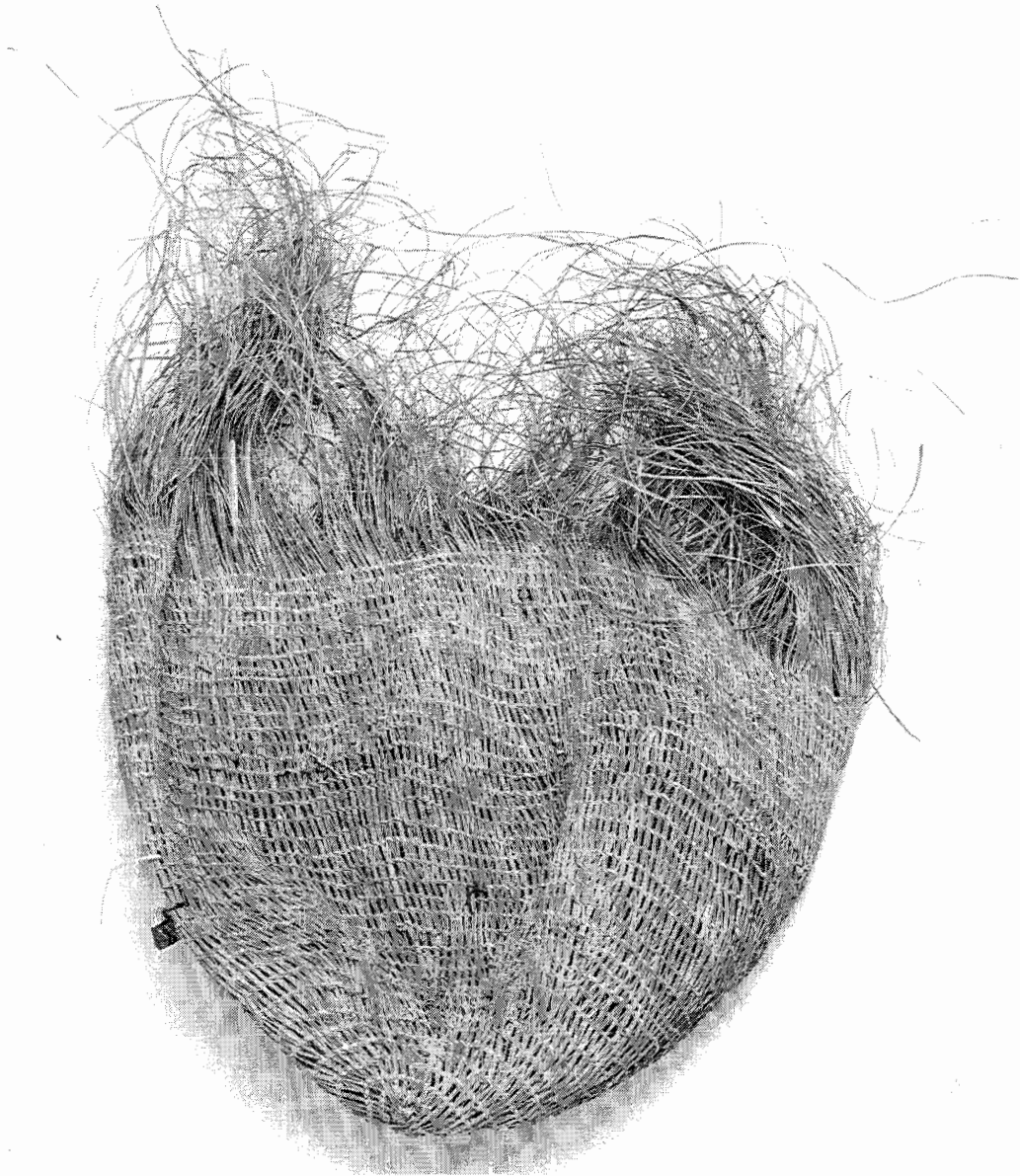


Baskets like this were generally firm, unlike soft handspun bark fibre bags. The only way baskets varied from each other was in the way the first base strands were started.

At the Bloomfield River, Cape Bedford, Middle Palmer River and inland from Princess Charlotte Bay, base strands of the baskets were tied into a sort of bundle, as shown in Roth's drawing.



These baskets were usually finished off by either binding the rim with strips of cane or burning the unwoven ends of the canes in ashes.



E.14954. Unfinished woven basket. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. Length 72.5 centimetres.

A fine handle was made by looping a strand of fibre just under the border of the mouth.

Roth said these baskets were used by women as sieves for preparing *Zamia* nuts by leaching out the poison in water to make the nuts safe to eat.

The baskets were used at Cooktown, Cape Bedford, Middle Palmer River and Princess Charlotte Bay, as well as the Bloomfield River.

This type of weaving also was used to weave mats by people living around the Wenlock (formerly the Batavia River) and Coen (formerly called the Pennefather River) Rivers on the Gulf coast. People at Atherton and Cairns wove their fish and wallaby traps in this way.

Collection Information

There are nine woven baskets in the Roth collection from the Bloomfield River region.

- E.14946 This basket was collected in 1898. It is 60 centimetres long, and the mouth is 22.5 centimetres by 25.7 centimetres. The handle is 22.3 centimetres long. The width between the handle bases is 20 centimetres. The basket has been strengthened by a second rim.
- E.14947 Roth collected this basket in 1898. It is 35.6 centimetres long and the mouth is 16.2 centimetres by 10.5 centimetres. The handle is broken. The width between the handle bases is 11.5 centimetres. The basket has been strengthened by a second rim.
- E.14948 This basket was collected in 1898. It is 32.2 centimetres long and the mouth is 13.6 centimetres by 16.8 centimetres. There is no handle. The basket has been strengthened by a second rim.
- E.14949 This basket was collected in 1898. It is 23 centimetres long and the mouth is 14.7 centimetres by 13 centimetres. The handle is 27 centimetres long and the width between the handles is 12.5 centimetres. The basket has been strengthened by a second rim.
- E.14950 This basket was collected in 1898. It is 33 centimetres long, and the mouth is 17 centimetres by 23 centimetres. The handle is broken. The width between the handle bases is 14 centimetres. The basket has been strengthened by a second rim. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'dilly basket called "Karkan" by the "Koko JellANJI" tribe. Used for preparing *Zamia* nuts. Made from "black palm" fibre.'
- E.14951 This basket was collected in 1898. It is 31.5 centimetres long and the mouth is 18.3 centimetres by 15 centimetres. The length of the handle is 33 centimetres. The width between the handle bases is 10 centimetres. The basket has been strengthened by a second rim. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'dilly basket called "Karkan" by the "Koko JellANJI" tribe. Used for preparing *Zamia* nuts. Made from "black palm" fibre.'
- E.14952 This basket was collected in 1898. It is 43.5 centimetres long and the mouth is 18 centimetres by 20 centimetres. There is no handle. The basket has been strengthened by a second rim. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'dilly basket called "Karkan" by the "Koko JellANJI" tribe. Used for preparing *Zamia* nuts. Made from "black palm" fibre.'

- E.14953 This basket was collected in 1900. It is 30 centimetres long and the mouth is 12 centimetres by 17.8 centimetres. The length of the handle is 23.5 centimetres and the width between the handle bases is 10.7 centimetres. The basket has been strengthened by a second rim. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Karkan (of black palm).'
- E.14954 This basket was collected in 1898. It is unfinished. The length is 72.5 centimetres.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all baskets.

- E.14946 negative sheet 4207M, frame 1630.
E.14947 negative sheet 4207M, frame 1631.
E.14948 negative sheet 4208M, frame 1632.
E.14949 negative sheet 4208M, frame 1633.
E.14950 negative sheet 4208M, frame 1634.
E.14951 negative sheet 4208M, frame 1635.
E.14952 negative sheet 4208M, frame 1636.
E.14953 negative sheet 4208M, frame 1637.
E.14954 negative sheet 4208M, frame 1638.

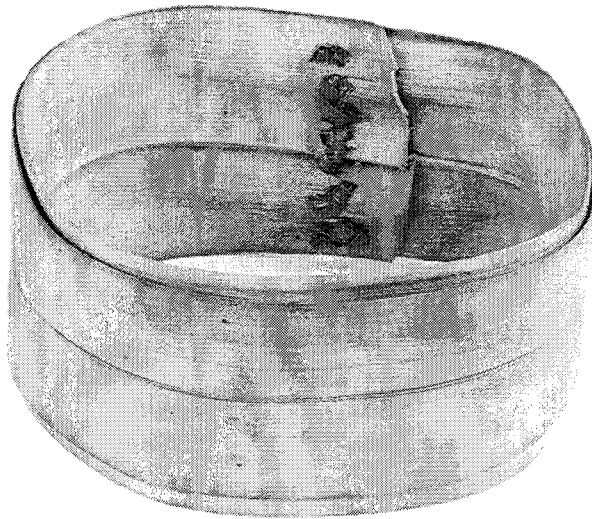
Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, pages 12 to 15.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Black palm: *Drymophloeus normanbyi* F.v M., now known as *Normanbyi normanbyi* (W. Hill) L.H. Bailey.
Blood Root: *Haemodorum coccineum* R. Br.
Spiny-headed mat rush: *Xerotes longifolia* R. Br.
Zamia nut: *Cycas media* R.Br.

Pandanus Palm Armbands



E.14731. Pandanus palm armband. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. Diameter 10.5 x 7.5 centimetres. Width 6 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

To make an armband

1. A strip of pandanus leaf was cut straight at one end and at an angle at the other.

2. The angled end was split into four to six strips.

3. The straight end was rolled over the hand a couple of times, then removed and held between the thumb and first finger.

4. Some small holes were made through the two to three thicknesses of leaf with a sharply pointed stick.

5. Each strip was pulled through its own hole and each pair knotted underneath with a 'granny knot', and their ends trimmed off. It was fairly easy to pull the strips through because the main strip has been cut at an angle so as to give a fine point to the tags.

Roth's drawings show how these armbands were made. Sometimes, said Roth, it was too much trouble to make an armband properly, so the ends of the strips would just be tied together.

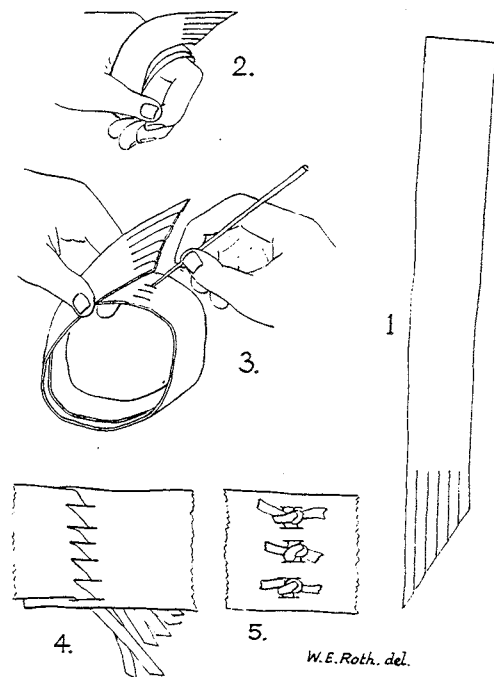


Plate IX. The manufacture of the simple Pandanus armband

These armbands were made and worn by men only, for decoration and when attending ceremonies.

Pandanus strip armbands were found all over Cape York Peninsula in Roth's day, down to the Staaten River on the Gulf coast and the Bloomfield River on the east coast.

Collection Information

There are two pandanus palm armbands from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1899.

E.14731 The armband is 10.5 centimetres by 7.5 centimetres in diameter and is 6 centimetres wide.

E.14732 The armband is 8 centimetres by 9 centimetres in diameter and is 3 centimetres wide.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for both armbands.

E.14731 negative sheet 4180M, frame 1415.

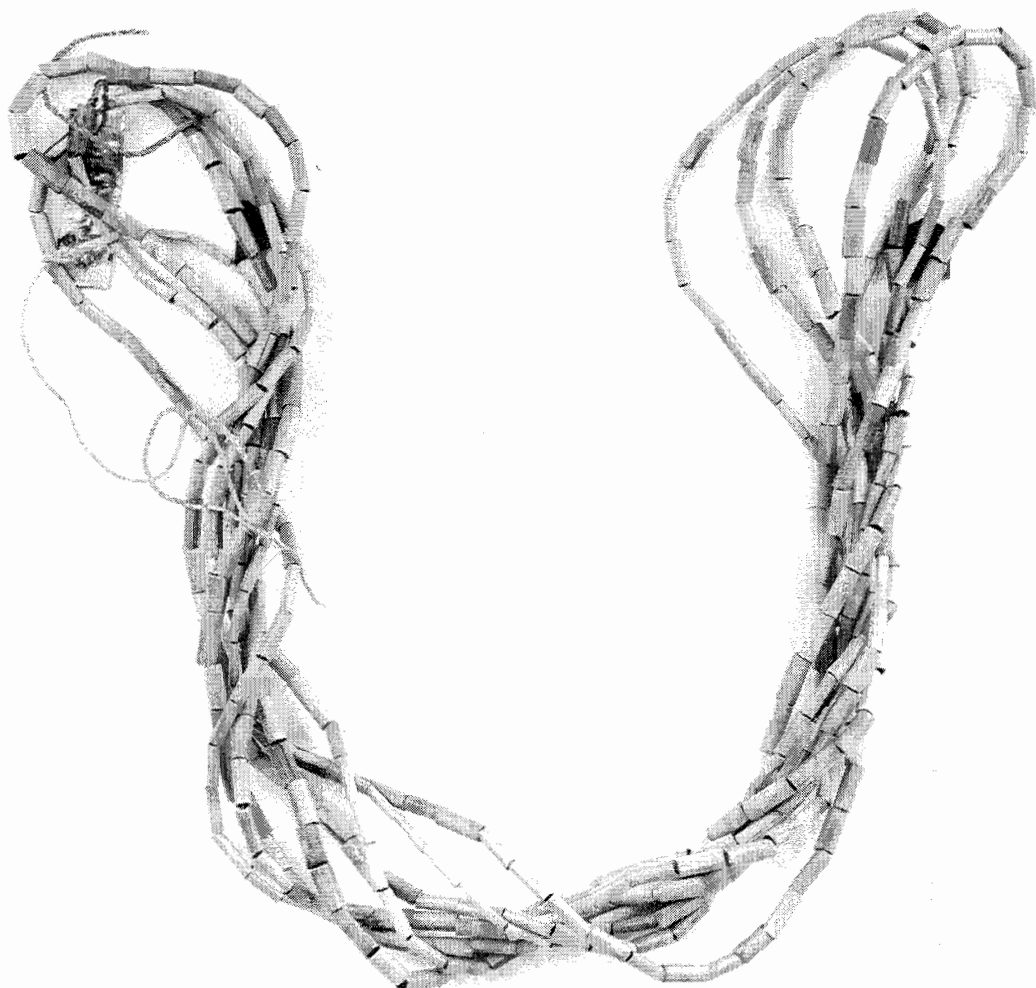
E.14732 negative sheet 4180M, frame 1416.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, page 11.

Bulletin 15, 1910, pages 43 to 44.

Grass Reed Necklaces



E.14476. Grass reed necklace. Collected Bloomfield River, 1900. Length 411.4 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

These necklaces were made of hundreds of lengths of grass reeds threaded on handspun bark fibre string and tied at the ends. The necklaces could be from 360 centimetres to 480 centimetres long. Each grass reed was cut into pieces about 1.25 cm long, using the edge of a sharp mussel shell or a stone knife.

Long necklaces could either be worn, wound round and round the neck, or else rolled into a thick loop and worn with their ends tied with string. Sometimes grass reeds were threaded on a number of shorter handspun bark fibre strings and a tying string was attached at either end so it could be worn as a single string necklace.

Roth said that these necklaces were made all over Queensland. On the east coast, from the Endeavour River to as far south as Keppel Island, they were made as one long string of beads. On the Gulf side of Cape York Peninsula they were made in necklaces of many strands.

The necklaces generally were made and worn only by women, except at the Tully River, where Roth said both men and women wore them. Thomas Petrie, a friend of Roth's living in Brisbane

at the time, said that these necklaces also were made by local Brisbane Aboriginal people. Usually the old men and women made them, but they were mostly worn by men. The necklaces had no ritual significance.

Roth said the local Koko-yellanji (Gugu-Yalanji) people called these necklaces yirko.

Collection Information

There are three grass reed necklaces from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1900. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Wanggar of Koko-yellanji tribe.'

- E.14475 (Roth's collection number is G.216). The necklace is 466 centimetres long. Each grass reed is about 1 centimetre long and 0.4 centimetres wide.
- E.14476 (Roth's collection number is G.217). The necklace is 411.4 centimetres long. Each grass reed is about 0.9 centimetres long and 0.5 centimetres wide.
- E.14477 (Roth's collection number is G.218). The necklace is 399.5 centimetres long. Each grass reed is about 0.6 centimetres long and 0.5 centimetres wide.

Photographic Information

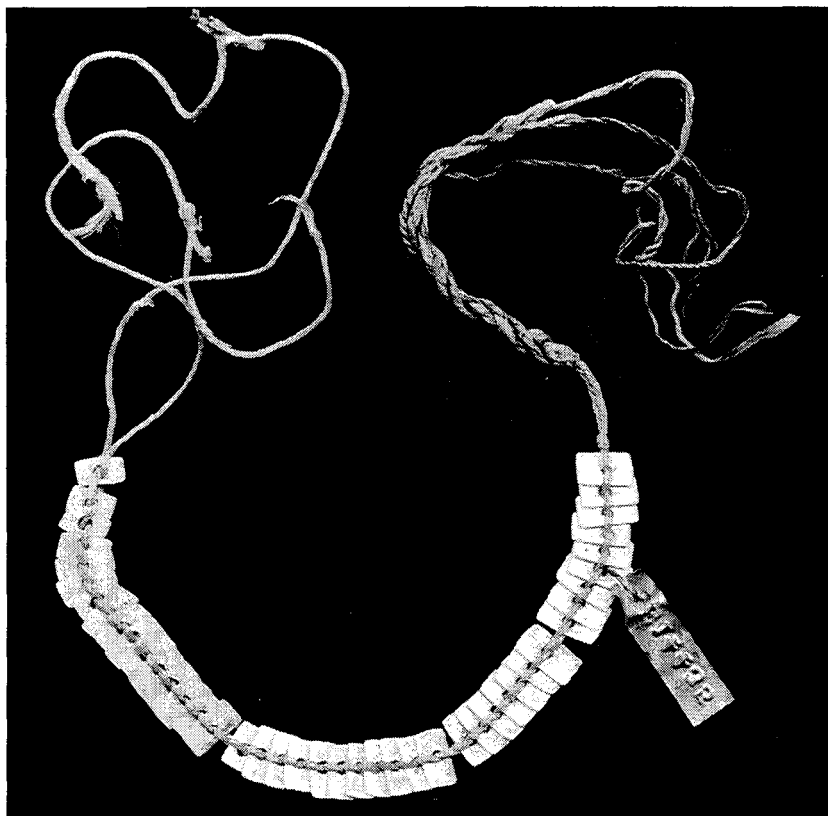
Black and white photographs are available for the grass reed necklaces.

- E.14475 negative sheet 4148M, frame 1159.
- E.14476 negative sheet 4148M, frame 1160.
- E.14477 negative sheet 4148M, frame 1161.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 15, 1910, pages 33 to 34.

Shell Head and Neck Band



E.14435. Nautilus shell head and neck band. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. Length 74 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

When working with shell, it was important that it was fresh. If it was an old shell, it had to be soaked in water, otherwise it would not split in a clean fracture.

The little rectangular pieces of pearl shell in the head or neck band each had a small hole drilled through the centre. A double strand of handspun bark fibre string was woven into a fine chain. This was threaded through the holes to link all the pieces of shell together.

According to Roth, men wore them around their heads and women wore them as necklaces, at the Bloomfield River, Cape Bedford and at Princess Charlotte Bay. He said the Koko-yellanji (Gugu-Yalanji) of the Bloomfield River region called these shell bands jil-nga.

Collection Information

There is one Nautilus shell head and neck band in the Roth collection from the Bloomfield River.

E.14435 Roth collected this shell band in 1898. It has 43 pieces of shell making up the band. It is 74 centimetres long, and each rectangle is about 1 centimetres long.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4143M, frame 1119.

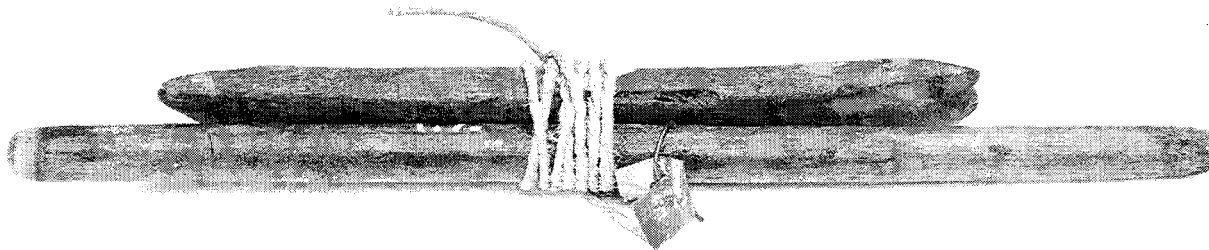
Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 11.
 Bulletin 15, 1910, pages 27 to 28.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Nautilus shell: *Nautilus pompilius* Linne.

Fire Stick and Board



E.13793. Fire stick and board. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. Firestick 23.8 x 1.1 centimetres. Board 16.9 x 2 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Fire was made by twirling a thin stick from the cotton tree into a hole in a flattened piece of softwood. Tinder of dried grass was placed around the hole to catch the spark caused by the friction. When the spark was made, the tinder was whipped up quickly, usually with a bunch of dried grass, swung round in the air, perhaps blown upon and so made to burst into flame.

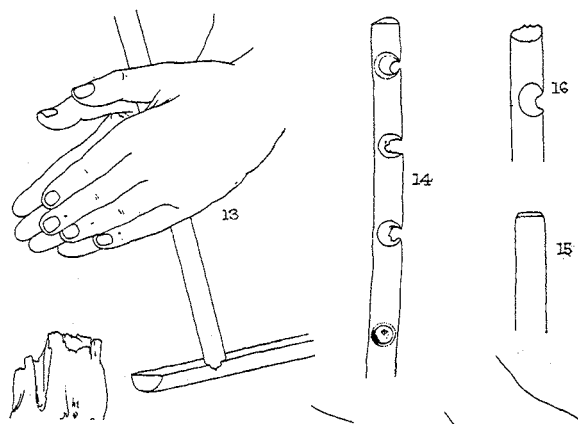
A new hole was started by hitting the board with a sharp piece of stone, so the stick had a firm place to begin the twirling action. If the hole was new, some charcoal dust was often placed in it. Old holes were used many times, until a hole was completely burnt through.

When not in use the fire stick and board were wrapped in bark. Men carried these in handspun bark fibre string bags.

This type of fire making equipment was found in Roth's time from the Endeavour River to the Herbert River and inland to Atherton. He did not know its southern limits because of recent European settlement.

One of the early settlers on the Bloomfield River, Mr R. Hislop of Wyalla, told Roth that in the early 1800s, Aboriginal women living around the Bloomfield River area used to carry firesticks on hunting trips. This was the only time that women ever carried fire sticks.

Roth said the Koko-yellanji (Gugu-Yalanji) people on the Bloomfield called these fire sticks tchi-mal.



Collection Information

There is one fire stick and board from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13793 (Roth's collection number is F.7). The fire stick is 23.8 centimetres long and 1.1 centimetres in diameter. The board is 16.9 centimetres by 2 centimetres wide.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4063M, frame 476.

Useful Written Information

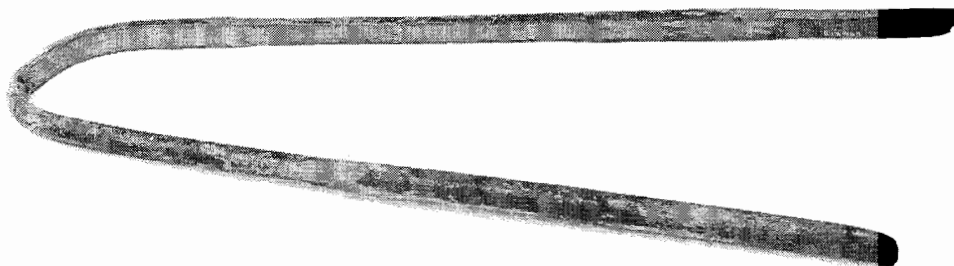
W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 10 to 11.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Cotton tree: *Hibiscus tiliaceus*, Linne.

The fire board could be made from: Murray's laurel: *Cryptocarya murrayi* F. Muell., or from *Mollinedia subternata* Bail., now known as *Tetrasynandra pubescens* (Benth) Perk., or a split length of lawyer cane, *Calamus* sp.

Fire Tongs



E.13965. Lawyer cane fire tongs. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. Length 46.6 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Fire tongs were made of split pieces of lawyer cane, bent double.

They were used for picking up hot ashes and stones when baking food in the ground.

Collection Information

There are two fire tongs from the Bloomfield River region, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13964 (Roth's collection number is MD.9). The fire tong is 34.6 centimetres long.

E.13965 (Roth's collection number is MD.10). The fire tong is 47.4 centimetres long.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for both fire tongs.

E.13964 negative sheet 4084M, frame 647.

E.13965 negative sheet 4084M, frame 648.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 10 to 11.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Lawyer cane: *Calamus* sp.

Food – Shells from Edible Molluscs

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth said most shellfish were roasted in the ashes, but a few were eaten raw.

Collection Information

Roth collected 11 shells from the Bloomfield River region. This collection of shells does not form part of the original Roth collection purchase of 1905. The shells were given to the Museum by Roth and registered on 5 February 1900.

Charles Hedley, who was at this time the Conchologist, or shell specialist at the Museum, and a close friend of Roth, identified the shells for him.

- E.9005 A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1900 states these shellfish were 'used as food by natives of N.E. Queensland.' (Roth's collection number is 58). He said these shells were found at the Bloomfield River and Cape Bedford. The Koko-yellanji (Gugu-Yalanji) of the Bloomfield River called them bu-e. Its scientific name was *Arca scapha* Chemnitz. It is now called *Anadara antiquata* (Linne).
- E.9014 (Roth's collection number is 89). He said the Koko-yellanji (Gugu-Yalanji) people called them jonaron. Its scientific name was *Melina cumingi* Reeve. It is now called *Isognomon ephippium* (Linne).
- E.9017 (Roth's collection number is 71). He said the local Bloomfield River people called it ngara-kadja. Its scientific name is *Nerita lineata* Chemnitz.
- E.9020 (Roth's collection number is 74). The shells were found at the Bloomfield River and at Cape Bedford. The local Bloomfield River people called them ngolo-moko. Its scientific name was *Cytherea gibbia* Lamk. It is now called *Gafrarium tumidum* (Roding).
- E.9022 (Roth's collection number is 76). The local Bloomfield River people called it gal-gil. Its scientific name was *Arca semitorta* Lam. It is now called *Trisidos semitorta* (Lam).
- E.9023 (Roth's collection number is 77). The local Bloomfield River people called it gir-bar. Its scientific name was *Asaphis deflorata*. It is now called *Asaphis violascens* (Forskal).
- E.9024 (Roth's collection number is 78). The local people called it bung-on. Its scientific name was *Cassis areola* Linne. It is now called *Phalium areolum* (Linne).
- E.9026 (Roth's collection number is 80). The Koko-yellanji (Gugu-Yalanji) called it yalubabbinja. Its scientific name was *Auricula aurisjudae* Linne. It is now called *Ellobium aurisjudae* (Linne).
- E.9027 (Roth's collection number is 81). Its scientific name was *Mytilus horrida* Dunker. It is now called *Stavelia horrida* (Dunker).
- E.9030 (Roth's collection number is 85). The Koko-yellanji (Gugu-Yalanji) called it mokodara. The scientific name for this shell is *Nerita planospira* Anton.

- E. 9031 (Roth's collection number is 86). The Koko-yellanji (Gugu-Yalanji) called it gi-run or marbo. Its scientific name was *Ostrea mordax* Born. It is now called *Saccostrea echinata* (Quoy & Gaimard).

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 3, 1901, pages 17 to 18.

Fly Flick or Fan



E.13511. Cassowary fly flick or fan. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. Length 46.6 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth said that in most camps during hot weather, the wing of a large bird such as a Native Companion or Plain Turkey was often used as a fly flick or fan. Cassowary feathers were used on the Bloomfield. Smoke from fires also helped drive flies away.

Collection Information

There is one cassowary fly flick or fan from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1898. E.13511 (Roth's collection number is FF.1). The fan is 46.6 centimetres long. The quills were bound on a wooden handle with handspun bark fibre string and held with gum cement.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4028M, frame 194.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 26.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Cassowary: *Casuarius casuarius*.

Medical String



E.13684. Medical string. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. Length 207.7 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

A medical or healing string was used to draw bad blood from a sick person. It could be made of handspun bark fibre string, human hair string or possum string. On the Bloomfield bark fibre string was used, and the operation was generally carried out by old women.

The patient held one end of a length of bark string to the sick part of his or her body. The old woman took the other end which had a piece of beeswax stuck to it, and put it in her mouth, rubbing it over her lower lip to make it bleed. She mixed this blood with water and spat it out, drawing the bad blood from the sick person.

Sometimes both ends of the string, with beeswax attached, were put on the sick part of the patient's body. An old woman or medicine man drew blood on their lips with the centre of the string.

Roth said this form of medicine to cure sickness was used on both coasts of Cape York Peninsula, and down the east coast to Brisbane in the old days.

Collection Information

There is one medical or healing string from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1898. E.13684 The thick bark string, with beeswax stuck to both ends, is 207.7 centimetres long. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'sucking string for drawing blood out of patient.'

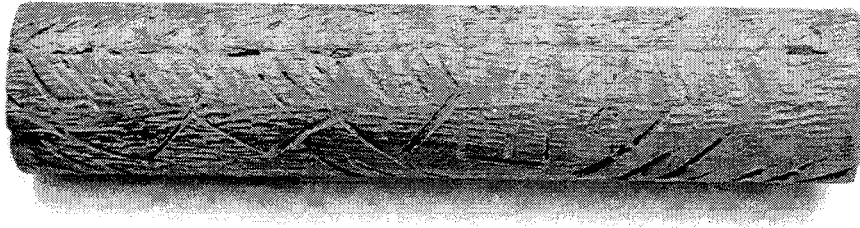
Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4049M, frame 367.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 5, 1903, page 38.

Message Stick



E.13408. Message stick. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. 12.6 x 3.2 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth did not write about how message sticks were made in the Bloomfield region, but wrote about their use. He was convinced that the marks on message sticks did not carry a message in the ordinarily accepted way. He said the message was taken by word of mouth, the message stick was to show the messenger had been given permission to carry the message and could be trusted. Roth reached this view because he saw that the same message could be taken with different sticks, and some sticks had no markings at all. If the messenger was known to both parties, no message stick was sent.

Collection Information

There is one message stick from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13408 (Roth's collection number is S.41). This is a large, round stick with squared end, and is 12.6 centimetres by 3.2 centimetres. It is covered with incised markings. There is a faint trace of red ochre.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4011M, frame 92.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 8, 1905, pages 9 to 10.

Trumpets

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Mr R. Hislop, owner of the property Wyalla on the Bloomfield and a friend of Roth said this music instrument had been brought to the Bloomfield from the Gulf country by the Koko-warra (Gugu-Warra) speaking Aboriginals, via Laura. This was long before the oldest living Aboriginal on his property was born. Hislop must have been talking about the early 1800s. By 1898, it was found in the areas around Cooktown, Laura, Palmerville, Maytown, Byerstown, and on the Bloomfield, Daintree and at Cape Grafton.

The Yiki Yiki used on the Bloomfield was a hollow hardwood sapling about 244 centimetres long which tapered from 10 centimetres at one end to about 5 centimetres at the mouth. The sapwood was cut off leaving a shell about 1 centimetres thick. When a few years old, the trumpet had a polished surface because of the grease from players' hands.

Yiki Yikis used to be carefully looked after because they took some time to make. However, when iron tomahawks came to the Bloomfield, it was easy to chop down and shape a hollow sapling. As they were now easy to make and nuisance to carry about from camp to camp, they were often left behind. This meant they were burnt by the first bush fire that came along.

Another reason not many Yiki Yikis were collected was that young boys played them in the camp day and night until an adult, fed up with the noise, smashed the trumpet.

To play the trumpet, the larger end was supported on a forked stick or on the roof of a hut. The musician blew through the smaller end for hours at a time.

On the Bloomfield, playing of the Yiki Yiki was taught at initiation ceremonies, but it could be played in public at any time.

Collection Information

There were two trumpets, called Yiki Yiki in the Roth collection from the Bloomfield River. They were given to Roth in 1898 by an early settler, Mr R. Hislop, who lived at Wyalla, on the Bloomfield River. Only one is still in existence.

- E.13825 (Roth's collection number is 0.15). This Yiki Yiki was destroyed in 1948 because it had fallen to pieces.
- E.13826 (Roth's collection number is 0.16). It is 279 centimetres long and 5.5 centimetres in diameter.

Photographic Information

No photograph is available as the trumpet is not at present in the collection.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 4, 1902, pages 23 to 24.

Paddles



E.13458. Paddle. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. 111.3 x 7.8 centimetres wide at paddle end.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

These paddles were used with dug-out canoes, and, said Roth, showed a Papuan influence. The dug-out canoes were sea-going craft, and were used on both shores of Cape York Peninsula. On the Gulf coast they were used only at the Wenlock River (called the Batavia River by Roth), and on the east coast, they were not used further south than at Cape Grafton. If any dug-outs were found below Cape Grafton, Roth said they were not locally made.

Bloomfield River dug-out canoes differed from the Cape Bedford and Flinders Islands ones, in that they had no wash-boards.

The paddle was used with both hands, on either side of the canoe.

Collection Information

There are four paddles from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1898.

- E.13458 (Roth's collection number is C.7). It is 111.3 centimetres long, and 7.8 centimetres wide at the paddle end.
- E.13459 (Roth's collection number is C.8). It is 116.8 centimetres long, and 9.5 centimetres wide at the paddle end.
- E.13460 (Roth's collection number is C.9). It is 112 centimetres long, and 8.9 centimetres wide at the paddle end.
- E.13461 (Roth's collection number is C.10). It is 114.5 centimetres long and 8.2 centimetres wide at the paddle end.

Photographic Information

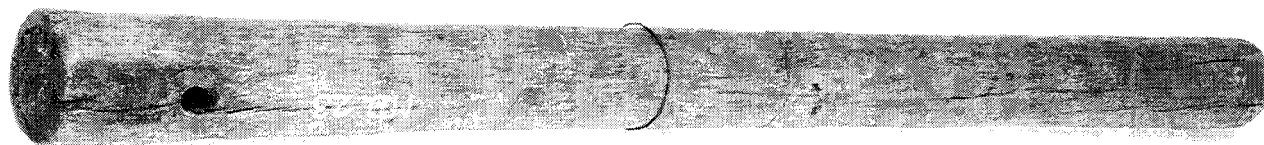
Black and white photographs are available for all paddles.

- E.13458 negative sheet 4021M, frame 141.
- E.13459 negative sheet 4021M, frame 142.
- E.13460 negative sheet 4021M, frame 143.
- E.13461 negative sheet 4021M, frame 144.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 14, 1910, pages 11 to 17.

Tobacco Pipe



E.13502. Bamboo tobacco pipe. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. Length 62.1 centimetres. Diameter 4.7 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

When European pipes and tobacco were scarce, pieces of bamboo were used. One end was closed with beeswax, if necessary, and a small hole was drilled at the side. Tobacco smoke was blown in the open end and inhaled through the drilled hole by each smoker in turn. This could be reversed - blow the smoke in the smaller end and inhale at the larger end. The bamboo pipe also could be sealed at both ends and a hole drilled at each side to let the smoke in and out.

This way of smoking meant several people could enjoy one pipeful of tobacco.

Collection Information

There is one bamboo pipe from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13502 (Roth's collection number is MD.23). The pipe is 62.1 centimetres long and has a diameter of 4.7 centimetres. One end of the pipe has been closed. The sides of the pipe are decorated with designs cut into the surface. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'tobacco pipe, bamboo?'

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4026M, frame 185.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 3, 1901, page 31.

Gum Cement

Information from Roth's Bulletins

In the Bloomfield River area dry lumps of gum were gathered from the brown cedar or mackay cedar tree and either wrapped in leaves and baked, or just warmed before a fire. The gum was then pounded between stones until soft enough to use. To stop the melted gum from sticking to the stones or hands, both were rubbed with grease. The Koko-yellanji (Gugu-Yalanji) of the Bloomfield River called this gum tchaln-ji.

Other resins like the semi-opaque one from the Queensland elemi tree, were traded. When this gum cement was melted and then cooled it set like transparent glass. It was a soft resin which melted quickly and was easy to work with. The Bloomfield River people called this gum yikari.

There was another gum cement called kalbuwur by the local people, but little was known about it.

These gum cements were used when making spears, to stick the haft and shaft together. Mr R. Hislop, an early settler on the Bloomfield, said in the 1800s these gum cements were used to fix stone axe blades into their handles.

Collection Information

There are 13 samples of gum cement (one registered number has eight samples) from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1898.

- E.14760 The gum cement is 8.1 centimetres by 5.2 centimetres and is 1 centimetre thick. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Tchalnji or gum cement in the rough state, exuded from *Canarium australasicum* F.v.M.'
- E.14761 The gum cement is 5.5 centimetres by 4.8 centimetres and is 0.8 centimetres thick. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Tchalnji or gum cement in the rough state, exuded from *Canarium australasicum* F.v.M.?'
- E.14762 The gum cement is 9.2 centimetres by 5.2 centimetres and is 2.5 centimetres thick. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Tchalnji or gum cement after preparation. Exuded from the *Canarium australasicum* F.v.M.?'
- E.14766 Eight pieces of gum cement were collected by Roth when visiting the Bloomfield River people. He said the gum cement had originally come from the head of the Daintree River. The largest piece is 5.3 centimetres by 5.3 centimetres and is 2.8 centimetres thick. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Kalbuwur gum cement completed, obtained at the head of the Daintree River, from a tree like a Shea Oak, it passes under the same name at Cooktown, Daintree and Butcher's Hill, at Bloomfield it is known by the general name of "Chakki" = any gum (per R. Hislop).'
- E.14767 The gum cement is 9.3 centimetres by 5.3 centimetres and is 1.4 centimetres thick. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Yikari completed gum cement from *Canarium muelleri* tree (per R. Hislop)?'
- E.14768 This piece of gum cement is at present missing from the Roth collection. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Yikari completed gum cement, from *Canarium muelleri* tree (per R. Hislop).'

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all but the last listed gum cement.

- E.14760 negative sheet 4184M, frame 1444.
- E.14761 negative sheet 4184M, frame 1445.
- E.14762 negative sheet 4184M, frame 1446.
- E.14766 negative sheet 4185M, frame 1450.
- E.14767 negative sheet 4185M, frame 1451.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 11 to 14.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Brown or mackay cedar tree: *Canarium australasicum* F.v.M., now known as *Canarium australasicum* (Bailey) Leenh.

Queensland elemi tree: *Canarium muelleri* Bailey.

In 1904, Mr Henry G. Smith, F.C.S. of the then Museum of Technology, Sydney, identified the gum resins for Roth. He said he did not know where the gum cement called kalbuwur came from, but thought it was similar to a red grass-tree resin.

Secret/Sacred Objects

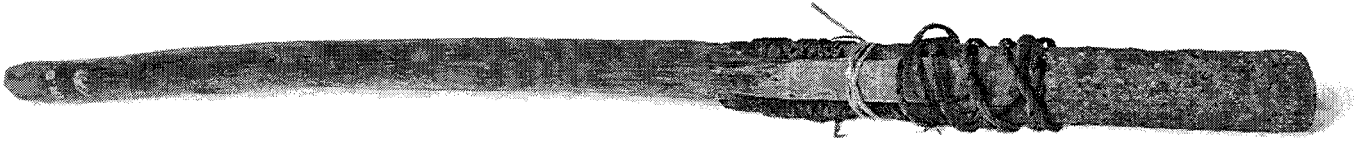
Because of the sensitive nature of these objects, we will only give information to those people who have a right to know. The Aboriginal Collection Manager or the Aboriginal Heritage Officer in the Museum should be able to help in this matter. Their telephone numbers are (02) 339-8246 and (02) 339-8192.

Collection Information

E.13522 to E.13528 Collected by Roth at the Bloomfield River in 1898.

E.13532 Collected by Roth at the Bloomfield River in 1898.

Iron Adze



E.13487. Iron adze. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. Length 84 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

By the time Roth visited Bloomfield River, iron had replaced stone scrapers.

On both the east and the Gulf coast of Cape York Peninsula, and on the Wellesley Islands (especially Mornington and Forsyth), a piece of iron was wedged into the split end of a straight wooden handle. The piece of iron could be anything from a bit of barrel hoop to a ground-down rasp. The iron was held in the split wood handle with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement.

Larger tools, gripped with both hands, were used to hollow out canoes. Roth saw this happening on the Endeavour and Bloomfield Rivers.

Collection Information

There is one iron adze from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13487 (Roth's collection number is IR.5). The total length is 84 centimetres. The length of iron is 33 centimetres.

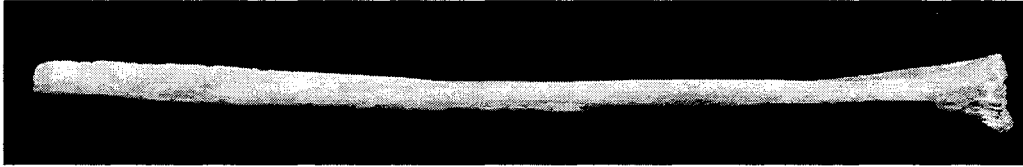
Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4024M, frame 170.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 21 to 22.

Kangaroo Bone Awl



E.13892. Kangaroo bone awl. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. 18.5 x 1.6 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

An awl could be made from a rib, leg or wing bone of a mammal or bird, ground and chipped to shape on a piece of stone.

It was a very useful tool, found wherever spears were made. The awl was used to scrape out wood when fitting the shaft into the butt part of a spear, and to hollow out the cavity at the base of a spear, so it could be thrown with a spearthrower. Sockets of harpoons, after charring, were dug out with a bone awl.

Bone awls were used only by men who carried them in their handspun bark fibre bags.

Collection Information

There is one bone awl from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13892 (Roth's collection number is BD.1). The awl has a rounded, flattened tip, and is 18.5 centimetres long and about 1.6 centimetres wide.

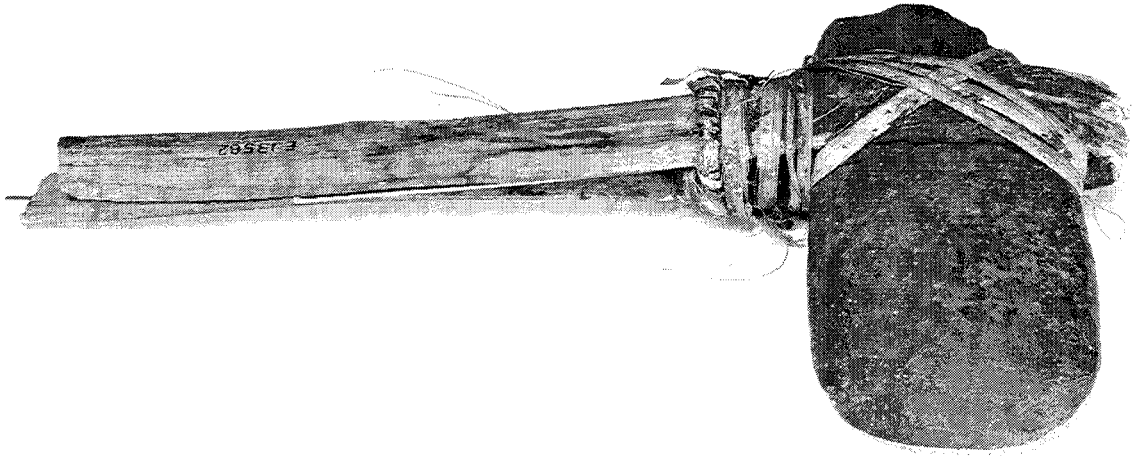
Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4075M, frame 575.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 25.

Stone Axes



E.13582. Edge ground hafted stone axe. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. Axe head 17 x 8.5 centimetres. Handle below axe head 24.5 x 3 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth said stone axes were all made in much the same way. The axe head was shaped by rough pecking and grinding, and the cutting edge was ground smooth. In 1904 he wrote that the making of stone axes in Queensland was 'a lost art.'

Roth said the Koko-yellanji (Gugu-Yalanji) of the Bloomfield River called the stone axe jangkawabi.

Collection Information

There are three edge-ground stone axes in the Roth collection from the Bloomfield River, but only one is hafted. Roth collected these stone axes in 1898.

- E.13582 (Roth's collection number is ST.23). It is a wide edge-ground axe, narrowing to a well-worn butt. The axe is held with beeswax and cane to a handle made from a strip of wood bent in the middle. The two handles are bound with cane and tightly tied just below the blade. There are traces of red ochre on the axe head. The axe head is 17 centimetres by 8.5 centimetres. The length of the handle from below the axe head is 24.5 centimetres by 3 centimetres.
- E.13601 (Roth's collection number is ST.22). The edge-ground stone axe head is 10.5 centimetres by 21.5 centimetres.
- E.13623 (Roth's collection number is ST.9). The edge-ground stone axe head is 7.5 centimetres by 13.5 centimetres.

Photographic Information

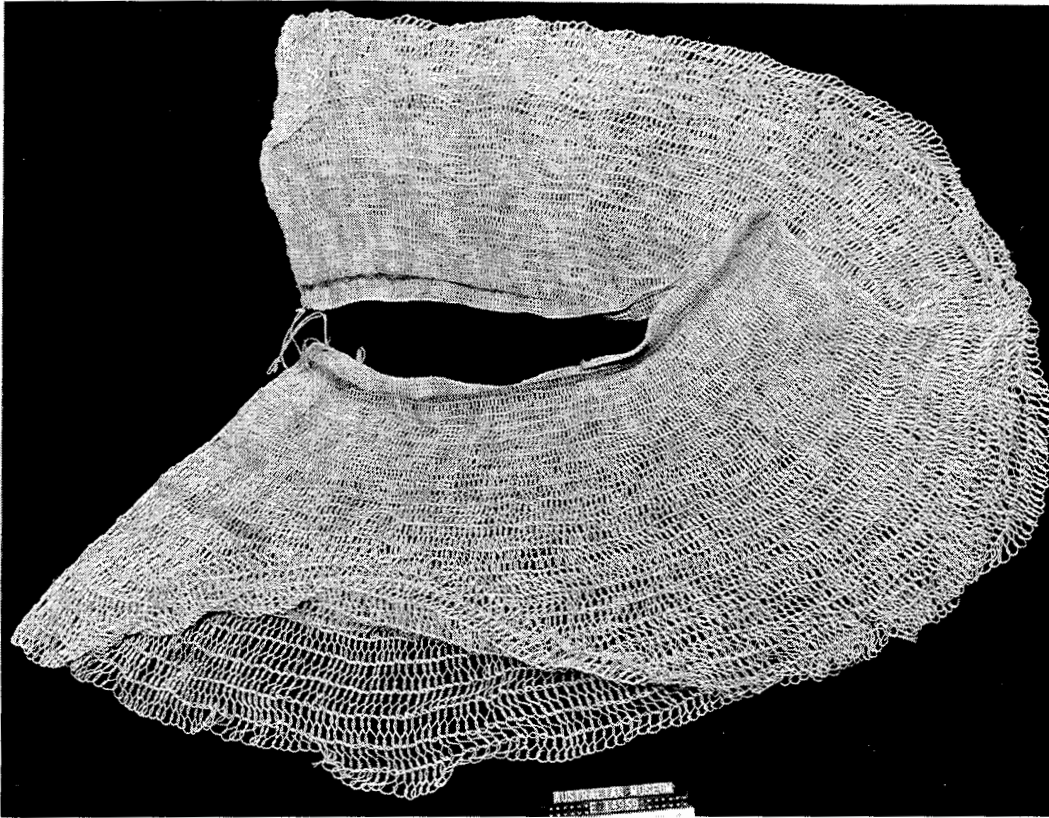
Black and white photographs are available for all axes.

- E.13582 negative sheet 4036M, frame 265.
E.13601 negative sheet 4039M, frame 284.
E.13623 negative sheet 4042M, frame 306.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 18 to 20.

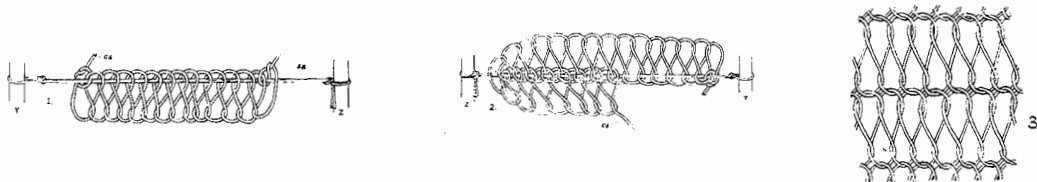
Non-Folding Oval Frame Fishing Net



E.14959. Non-folding oval frame fishing net. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. 137 x 45 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

The net was woven on an hour-glass or double loop pattern with one straight base strand and one continuous strand. The weaving was very loose on fishing nets, unlike baskets using the same pattern. Roth's drawing shows this weaving pattern.



Handspun bark fibre twine used to make these nets came from either a wattle tree or a cabbage tree palm.

To make string from the wattle, the inner bark of the tree was removed and soaked in water all morning. During this time it turned red. The bark was then dried in the sun and split into shreds ready to be spun into string.

Roth has a good series of drawings to show how the shredded palm fibre was turned into twine.

1. Young, unopened leaf shoots from the cabbage tree palm were cut off as low as possible and tapped firmly on a log. This made the shoot unfold. It was now easier to split it along its natural folds.

2. The next step was to strip off the outer layer of each piece of leaf with a finger or a finely pointed ironwood pointer or pin, or with a sharp kangaroo-bone needle. These pointers or needles could be up to 20 centimetres long. If made of wood, they were thrown away after use. Roth called these tools stiletos.

3,4,5. These outer strips were laid in the sun to dry and then rolled ready to be turned into twine. This fibre string was used to make bags and fish nets in most of northern Queensland.

6. The shred of palm was rolled with the open hand, forwards on the outer thigh, the person squatting on the ground. This produced a slight tension, and made the strand stronger.

7. The strand was folded in two, and the 'bend' held between the left thumb and forefinger. The rest of the string was rolled, under great pressure, with the palm of the right hand slowly forwards, and sharply backwards, without removing the pressure. When rolling forward, pressure was on the thumb side of the hand. When rolling backwards, the pressure was on the other side of the hand.

8. The result of the forward movement was to roll the strand into one twist

9. The result of the forward-backward movement was to roll the strand into two twists, with a 'break' in between.

10. To get rid of the break, the section just above it was held between the left thumb and forefinger to prevent the twine untwisting. The right forefinger was placed in the 'break' and it was pulled firmly but carefully outwards. At the same time the two ends of the strand were freed. While the left hand still held its section, the two freed ends of strand were rolled again with the right hand once backwards and forwards.

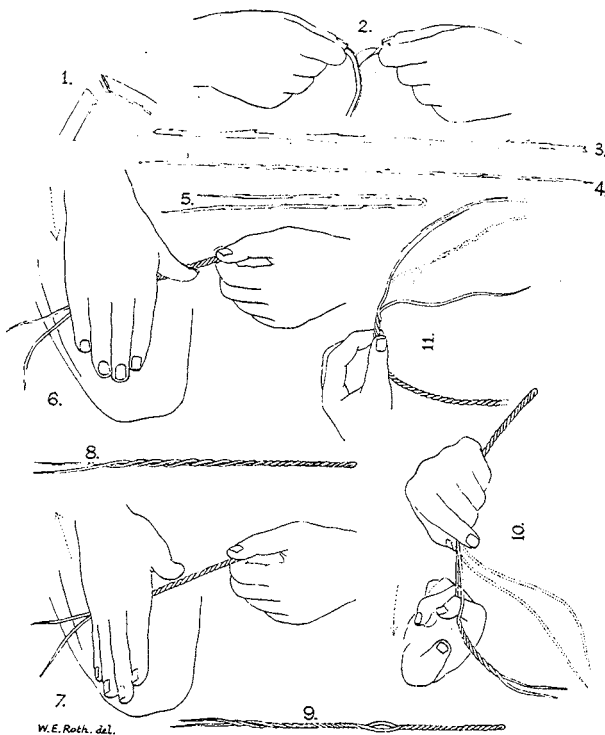
This process was repeated again and again. All fibre twines were thus made of two-pplies.

11. As soon as one end of the strand had been reached, another strand was fixed to it by rolling forwards.

The non-folding oval frame of the fishing net was made of two to three pieces of lawyer cane firmly lashed together.

The net was moved through the water, held almost straight up in the water. It was worked by two men, with their friends walking in front, acting as 'beaters' to drive fish towards the net.

According to Roth, fish nets were not used on the Bloomfield or Endeavour Rivers. The nearest place to them where nets were used was Laura (100 kilometres inland), Princess Charlotte Bay



(to the north) and Cape Grafton (to the south).

He further stated that non-folding oval frame fishing nets with the net woven on the hour-glass pattern were found only on Cape York Peninsula. He saw them on the Morehead, Musgrave, Normanby, Laura, Palmer, Embley, Pennefather (now the Coen) and Batavia (now the Wenlock) Rivers. The largest of these nets were found inland from Princess Charlotte Bay.

Unfortunately, Roth did not say how the fishing net he collected at the Bloomfield River came to be there.

The Koko-yellanji (Gugu-Yalanji) people living at Laura called this fishing net yikan-ikan.

Collection Information

There is one non-folding oval frame fishing net from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.14959 (Roth's collection number is P.15). A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'made at the Laura or Deighton.' It is 137 centimetres long and 45 centimetres wide. The string loops are 9 centimetres long. The oval frame is missing.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4209M, frame 1643.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, pages 9 to 12.
 Bulletin 3, 1901, page 22.
 Bulletin 7, 1904, page 25.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Two types of wattle used in making twine: *Acacia latifolia* Benth and *Acacia leptocarpa* A. Cunn.

Cabbage tree palm: *Livistona australis* Mart.

Lawyer cane: *Calamus* sp.

Fighting Pole



E.15007. Fighting pole. Collected Bloomfield River, 1897. 118.6 x 4.3 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth did not write about fighting poles, except to say they were used by women on the Middle Palmer River, Princess Charlotte Bay and at Rockhampton.

Collection Information

There is one fighting pole from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1897.

E.15007 (Roth's collection number is FP.9). The fighting pole is 118.6 centimetres long and is 4.3 centimetres at its widest point. It is decorated with a row of blue dots from the rounded head to the middle of the pole. There is a black band about one third of the way from the handle. The tip of the handle is painted white. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states "female". He has identified it as a fighting pole used by women.

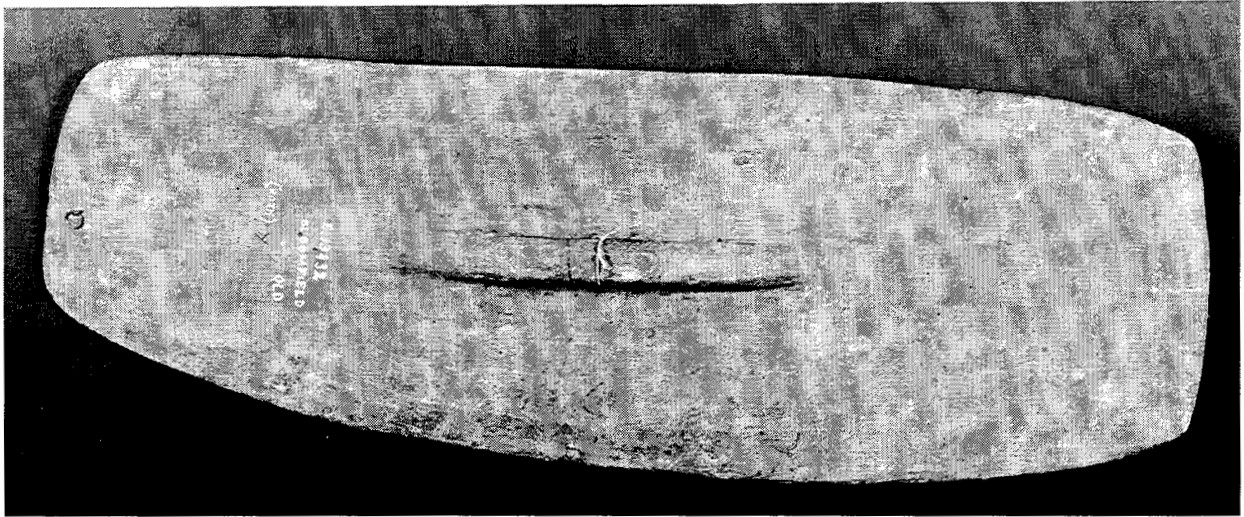
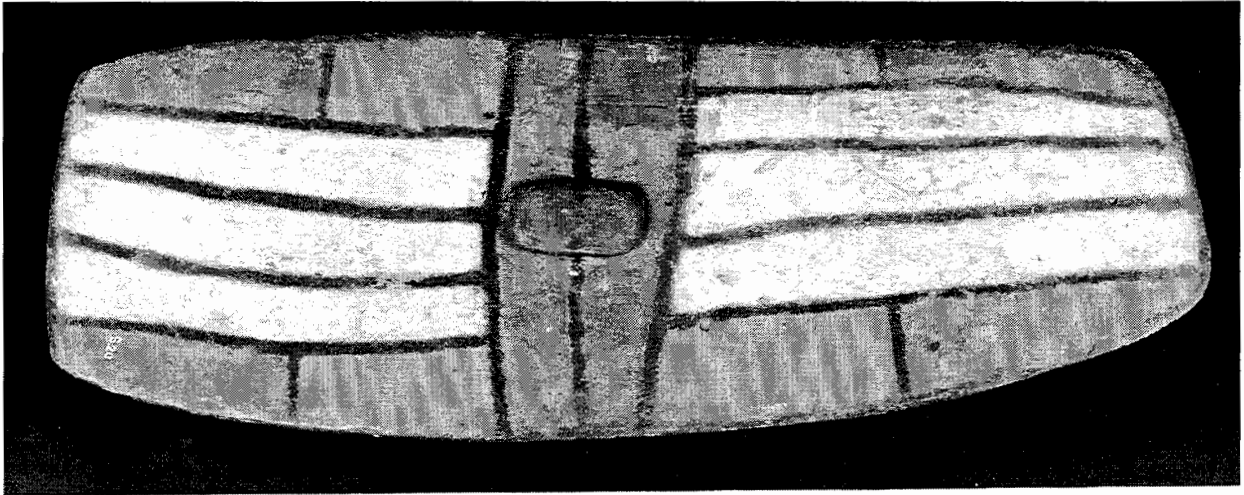
Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4215M, frame 1691.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 13, 1909, page 209.

Shield



E.13432. Softwood shield. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. 109 x 39.9 centimetres.

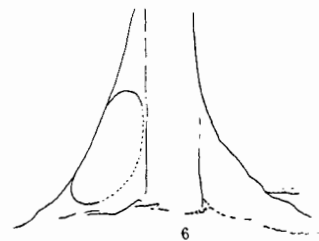
Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth's description of how these shields were made was based on seeing those made by Aboriginal people on the Lower Tully River.

1. Two curved cuts were made in the buttress of a fig tree, about the length of a shield. The sides were chipped, hammered and pushed out. The shape depended on the curve of the buttress.

2. The wood was chipped away on both sides, leaving the centre of the roughed out shield untouched. This left a raised boss in the centre of the shield.

3. At the back of the shield a hand grip was made in the centre by chipping and burning a cavity with cinders.



4. The shield was lightened in weight by being soaked for a few days in water. It was then placed in the sun for a few days, slowly dried in shady scrub for a further couple of days, and again placed in water.

5. After a second soaking, the shield was tied to an overhanging bush, so that it hung flat, about 30 centimetres above the water. It was left there for two to three weeks.

6. The wood was finally rubbed down with a light, rough pumice stone to give it a smooth surface. A striking design was painted on the outer side of the completed shield.

Roth said he could find no meaning for the painted designs on the shields. All the shields in the Roth collection have different designs.

These shields were found only where the large swords were used, from the Bloomfield and Endeavour Rivers south to below Cardwell, and along the inland mountain ranges, including Atherton. He said the Bloomfield River shields were more rectangular and larger than those found on the Tully River. The local Bloomfield River people called this shield kun-juri.

Roth noted that by 1898 these kidney-shaped shields were not being used much, and were made, if at all, only by very old men.

Collection Information

There is one painted, kidney-shaped softwood shield from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1898.

E. 13432 (Roth's collection number is S.20). The shield is 109 centimetres long and 39.9 centimetres at its widest part. On the front of the shield is a red, yellow and white painted design outlined in black. The back is red ochred.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4015M, frame 116.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 9.
 Bulletin 13, 1909, pages 203 to 205.

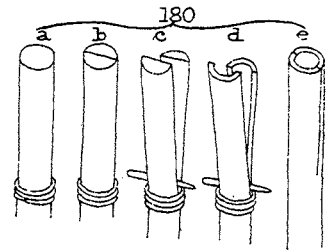
Single Barbed Spears

E.15062. Single barbed spear. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. Length 291.5 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth explained how a spear was made in the Bloomfield River, Princess Charlotte Bay, Cape Bedford and Middle Palmer River regions. He said the time it took to make a spear depended on the sort of timber used.

1. First the wood was cut from the tree and shaped into the desired width and length. Some handspun bark fibre string was then tightly tied around the butt end of the spear about 10 centimetres from the end. This end was split open with a piece of shell. The wedge was kept open with a peg. Roth's drawings help make these steps easier to understand.



2. Using a bone awl (a bird or animal leg bone 15 centimetres to 30 centimetres long, chipped and ground into shape), the wood was scraped out on each side of the split. This left a circular hole when the peg and twine were removed. Roth's drawings show how this was done.

3. The shaft part of the spear was now fixed into the butt with gum cement and the join bound round and round with either handspun bark fibre string or, better still, kangaroo tendon. This was held in place with more gum cement and finally smoothed over with a smoothing board. This was a thin, oval piece of ironwood, about 15 centimetres long, a comfortable size to be held in the right hand. It was like a putty knife. It was used to smooth over the warmed gum cement on spears. The smoothing board was always greased with forehead perspiration before being used.

4. The butt end of all spears thrown with spearthrowers, except bamboo ones, were bound with handspun bark fibre string and coated with gum cement. Once this was done, the bone awl was used to make the hole to receive the spearthrower peg.

Mr R. Hislop, an early settler on the Bloomfield, told Roth oil from the candle nut tree was used to fix ochre on spears.

The general name for spears in these areas was *kalka*.

Collection Information

There are five of these spears in the Roth collection from the Bloomfield River.

E.15051 A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states that this spear was probably collected in 1898 (Roth's collection number is SP.88). The black palm spear is 274.7 centimetres long. The entry in the register gives the location

as 'Bloomfield ? Black palm.' The length of the barb is 4 centimetres. The butt end of the spear has been hollowed out to take the peg of a spearthrower. The spear weighs 333.8 grammes.

- E.15062 The spear was collected by Roth in 1898 (his collection number is SP.85). A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Black palm.' The black palm spear is 291.5 centimetres long. The length of the wooden barb is 14 centimetres. The butt end of the spear has been hollowed out to take the peg of a spearthrower. The spear weighs 290 grammes.
- E.15063 A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states that this spear was probably collected in 1898 (Roth's collection number is SP.87). The entry in the register gives the location as 'Bloomfield? Black palm.' The black palm spear is 289 centimetres long. The length of the wooden barb is 11 centimetres. The butt end of the spear has been hollowed out to take the peg of a spearthrower. The spear weighs 294.6 grammes.
- E. 15065 A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states that this spear was probably collected in 1898 (Roth's collection number is SP.90). The entry in the register gives the location as 'Bloomfield? Black palm.' The black palm spear is 284.5 centimetres long. The length of the wooden barb is 9 centimetres. The end of the spear is split. The spear weighs 261.4 grammes.
- E.15070 A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states that this spear was probably collected in 1898 (Roth's collection number is SP.89). The entry in the register gives the location as 'Bloomfield? Black palm.' The black palm spear is 292 centimetres long. The length of the wooden barb is 11 centimetres. The butt end of the spear has been hollowed out to take the peg of a spearthrower. The spear weighs 301.2 grammes.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all but one spear.

- E.15051 negative sheet 4221M, frame 1735.
 E.15062 negative sheet 4222M, frame 1746.
 E.15063 negative sheet 4222M, frame 1747.
 E.15070 negative sheet 4223M, frame 1754.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Some ethnological notes on the Aborigines of the Bloomfield River district. 1898. (Report to the Commissioner of Police, Brisbane), Cooktown. Unpublished manuscript in the Mitchell Library, NSW State Library, Macquarie Street, Sydney.
- W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 11, 15 and 25.
 Bulletin 13, 1909, pages 190 to 194.


Scientific Names of Materials Used

Black palm: *Drymophloeus normanbyi* F.v.M., now known as *Normanbyi normanbyi* (W. Hill) L.H. Bailey.

Gum cement from tree: *Canarium australasicum* F.v.M., now known as *Canarium australasicum* (Bailey) Leenh.

Candle nut tree: *Aleurites moluccana* Willd.

Three-pronged Fishing Spear



E.15129. Three-pronged fishing spear. Collected Bloomfield River, 1900. Length 96.7 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Information on how to make a spear can be found under the entry on single barbed spears in this catalogue on the Bloomfield River.

If the shaft or tip end of the spear had many points, such as a fishing spear, the separate barbs were joined together as one. To give 'springiness', many small wood shavings were wedged in the base before the barbs were bound up.

Roth said that on the Bloomfield, these three or four-pronged fishing spears were made of light grass-tree wood, with either a wooden or bone barb on each tip. The Bloomfield River people called them yirmba.

The spears were thrown at fish or pushed into muddy water to try and stab a fish.

An early settler, Mr R. Hislop of Wyalla, Bloomfield River said these spears were made in the district for some time before 1885. Roth thought they had been brought in from somewhere else. They were used from Princess Charlotte Bay to the Bloomfield River and around the Middle Palmer River.

Collection Information

There is one of these spears from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1900.

E.15129 (Roth's collection number is SP.51). The length of this spear is 96.7 centimetres. The length of the prongs is 44 centimetres. White painted bands decorate the spear. The prongs are painted red. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'fish spear (3 barbed points, broken and fragmentary) to show method of fixation of barbs.' The spear cannot be weighed as it is not at present in the collection.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4230M, frame 1813.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Some ethnological notes on the Aborigines of the Bloomfield River district. 1898 (Report to the Commissioner of Police, Brisbane) Cooktown. Unpublished manuscript in the Mitchell Library, NSW State Library, Macquarie Street, Sydney.

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 11, 15 and 25.
 Bulletin 13. 1909, pages 190 to 194.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

. Light grass-tree: *Xanthorrhoea* sp.


Gum cement from: *Canarium australasicum* F.v.M., now known as *Canarium australasicum* (Bailey) Leenh.

Candle nut tree: *Aleurites moluccana* Willd.

Stingray-barbed Fishing Spears



ED.15079. Stingray-barbed fishing spear. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. Length 293 centimetres.



E.15097. Stingray-barbed fishing spear. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. Length 291 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Information on how to make a spear can be found under the entry on single barbed spears in this catalogue on the Bloomfield River.

These stingray-barbed spears had a long lightwood grass-tree butt and a short shaft of black palm, wattle or bloodwood. The spear shaft was often painted red, black and white. Many stingray barbs, placed one behind the other, and pointing backwards were tied to the spear shaft with handspun bark fibre string, or kangaroo sinew, and fixed with gum cement. The butt end of the spears was hollowed out with a bone awl to take the peg of a spearthrower.

Roth said the spears were used from Princess Charlotte Bay to the Bloomfield and inland to the Middle Palmer River.

The local Bloomfield people called this spear dikara.

Collection Information

There are five of these spears from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1898. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'lateral row of stingray barbs.'

- E.15079 (Roth's collection number is SP.6). The spear is 293 centimetres long. There are nine stingray barbs each about 8 centimetres long. The head of the spear is painted with bands of red and white pigment. The end of the spear has been hollowed out to take the peg of a spearthrower. The spear weighs 210.4 grammes.
- E.15081 (Roth's collection number is SP.12). The spear is 296 centimetres long. There are eight stingray barbs each about 8 centimetres long. The head of the spear has been painted black and has three narrow white stripes and two larger red stripes. The end of the spear has been hollowed out to take the peg of a spearthrower. The spear weighs 328.2 grammes.
- E.15084 (Roth's collection number is SP.13). The spear is 270.5 centimetres long. The three stingray barbs are about 9 centimetres long (there were four but one is missing).

The end of the spear has been hollowed out to take the peg of a spearthrower. The spear weighs 206.6 grammes.

- E.15090 (Roth's collection number is SP.11). The spear is 304.5 centimetres long. The five stingray barbs are about 11 centimetres long (there were six, but one is missing). White paint has been put on the binding around the stingray barbs. The end of the spear has been hollowed out to take the peg of a spearthrower. The spear weighs 316.4 grammes (with a splint attached to prevent damage to the spear).
- E.15097 (Roth's collection number is SP.9). The spear is 291 centimetres long. This spear is slightly different to the others in that it has a single stingray barb at the tip of the spear and two stingray barbs bound behind. The barbs are 14 centimetres long. A white band has been painted on the spear. The end of the spear has been hollowed out to take the peg of a spearthrower. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'painted with single stingray spine and two lateral barbs.' The spear weighs 271.2 grammes.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all spears.

- E.15079 negative sheet 4224M, frame 1763.
 E.15081 negative sheet 4224M, frame 1765.
 E.15084 negative sheet 4224M, frame 1768.
 E.15090 negative sheet 4225M, frame 1774.
 E.15097 negative sheet 4226M, frame 1781.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Some ethnological notes on the Aborigines of the Bloomfield River district. 1898 (Report to the Commissioner of Police, Brisbane) Cooktown. Unpublished manuscript in the Mitchell Library, NSW State Library, Macquarie Street, Sydney.
- W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 11, 15 and 25
 Bulletin 13, 1909, pages 190 to 194.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

- Light grass-tree wood: *Xanthorrhoea* sp.
 Black palm: *Drymophloeus normanbyi* F.v.M., now known as *Normanbyi normanbyi* (W. Hill)
 L.H. Bailey.
 Wattle: *Acacia* sp.
 Bloodwood tree: *Eucalyptus* sp.
 Gum cement from: *Canarium australasicum* F.v.M., now known as *Canarium australasicum* (Bailey) Leenh.
 Candle nut tree: *Aleurites moluccana* Willd.

Quartz-tipped Spears



E.15110. Quartz-tipped spear. Collected between the Bloomfield River and Maytown 1900. Length 367 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Information on how to make a spear can be found under the entry on single barbed spears in this catalogue on the Bloomfield River.

Roth described a quartz-tipped spear as having a short shaft and a long butt. Small white quartz flakes were stuck into gum cement in two rows along the side of the spearhead. The smaller pieces of stone were stuck in towards the tip of the spear. It reminded Roth of teeth in a comb. Roth said that by 1900 the stone chips were being replaced by glass.

These spears were used on the Bloomfield, the Middle Palmer River and at Princess Charlotte Bay, but Roth did not say what they were used for.

Roth said the local Bloomfield people called this spear ku-yan.

Collection Information

Roth collected these three quartz-tipped spears between the Bloomfield River and Maytown and a collection of 53 quartz and glass chips for spears on the Bloomfield River, in 1900. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'with chips of stone etc. inserted in two lateral rows, in gum cement.'

- E.15108 (Roth's collection number is SP.52). It is 319 centimetres long and has a hardwood head or shaft inserted into a softwood butt and held with gum cement. Remains of quartz chips are stuck in gum cement along the head which is painted in bands of red and white. Both ends of the spear are broken. The spear weighs 395.5 grammes.
- E.15109 (Roth's collection number is SP.53). This spear cannot be found in the collection.
- E.15110 (Roth's collection number is SP.54). It is 367 centimetres long, and has a hardwood head or shaft inserted into a softwood butt and held with lawyer cane and gum cement. Chips of stone are stuck into gum cement along the head of the spear which is painted with red and white bands. The tip is broken. The end of the spear has been hollowed out to take the peg of a spearthrower. The spear weighs 352.7 grammes.
- E.13886 This is a collection of 53 quartz and glass chips for spears, which Roth collected at the Bloomfield River in 1898. The average chip is 2 centimetres long, 1 centimetre wide and 0.4 centimetres thick. There are three large chips 4 centimetres long, 4 centimetres wide and 1 centimetre thick.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for three of the registered objects.

- E.15108 negative sheet 4227M, frame 1792.
E.15110 negative sheet 4228M, frame 1794.
E.13886 negative sheet 4075M, frame 569.

Useful Written Information

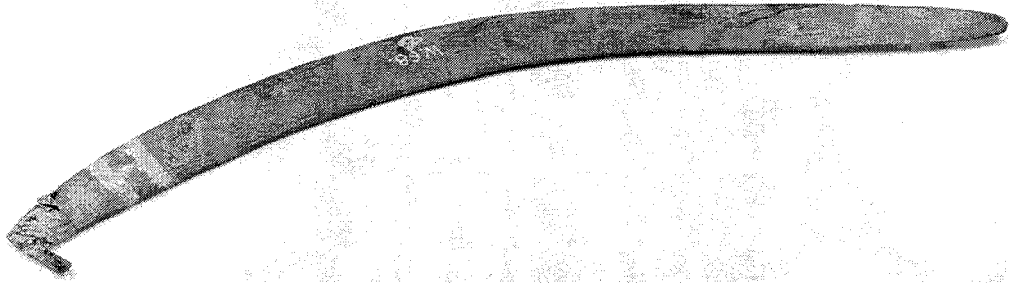
- W.E. Roth Some ethnological notes on the Aboriginals of the Bloomfield River district. 1898
(Report to the Commissioner of Police, Brisbane) Cooktown. Unpublished
manuscript in the Mitchell Library, NSW State Library, Macquarie Street, Sydney.
W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 11, 15 and 25.
Bulletin 13, 1909, pages 190 to 194.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Gum cement from: *Canarium australasicum* F.v.M., now known as *Canarium australasicum*
(Bailey) Leenh.

Candle nut tree: *Aleurites moluccana* Willd.

Curved Spearthrower



E.14357. Curved spearthrower. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. 72 x 5.6 centimetres (at widest part).

Information from Roth's Bulletins

These spearthrowers were fairly short and light. They were usually decorated with red and white paint. Unfortunately Roth did not say what wood was used, or how they were made.

A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'the bent or boomerang woomerah is used for propelling spears directly up or down, not in throwing straight out from the person.' Roth said this at a lecture he gave at Sydney University on 19 January 1906.

These spearthrowers were used for spearing fish and birds at close quarters. They were used differently to all other spear throwers in that the blade rested between the thumb and first finger, instead of between first and second finger.

They were used all along the Bloomfield River and along the coast between Bloomfield and Cape Grafton.

Roth said people living outside these places did not know about the curved spearthrowers. He said sometime in 1897 one of these curved spearthrowers was washed up on the beach at Cape Bedford (about 48 kilometres from Bloomfield) and brought to Reverend G.H. Schwarz, a Lutheran missionary at Cape Bedford Mission. He had never seen one before and, wanting to know more about it, asked the local Aboriginal people what it was. They told him they didn't know what it was called, and could not understand how it could be used.

The local Bloomfield River people called it ballur.

Collection Information

There are fourteen curved spearthrowers from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.14330 (Roth's collection number is W.41). It is 70.3 centimetres long and 5.9 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is tied on with handspun bark fibre string and held with gum cement. The spearthrower is decorated with red and white paint. The spearthrower weighs 339 grammes.

- E.14331 (Roth's collection number is W.42). It is 72 centimetres long and 5.2 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is missing. The spearthrower is decorated with red and white paint. The spearthrower weighs 256.9 grammes.
- E.14332 (Roth's collection number is W.43). It is 73.5 centimetres long and 5.6 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is tied on with handspun bark fibre string and held with gum cement. The spearthrower is painted red. The spearthrower weighs 291 grammes.
- E.14333 (Roth's collection number is W.44). It is 74 centimetres long and 5.4 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is held on with gum cement. The spearthrower is decorated with red and white paint. The spearthrower weighs 354.4 grammes.
- E.14336 (Roth's collection number is W.47). It is 81 centimetres long and 5.5 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is missing. The spearthrower is painted red. The spearthrower weighs 426.7 grammes.
- E.14339 (Roth's collection number is W.50). It is 73.9 centimetres long and 7.1 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is held on with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement. The spearthrower is decorated with red and white paint. The spearthrower weighs 524.4 grammes.
- E.14344 (Roth's collection number is W.55). It is 74.1 centimetres long and 6.3 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is held on with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement. The spearthrower is painted red. The spearthrower weighs 407.7 grammes.
- E.14346 (Roth's collection number is W.57). It is 81.8 centimetres long and 5.7 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is held on with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement. The spearthrower is painted red. The spearthrower weighs 454 grammes.
- E.14349 (Roth's collection number is W.60). It is 78.3 centimetres long and is 5.7 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is held on with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement. The spearthrower is painted red. The spearthrower weighs 307.2 grammes.
- E.14355 (Roth's collection number is W.66). It is 79.4 centimetres long and 6.4 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is held on with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement. The spearthrower is painted red, white and black. The spearthrower weighs 424.5 grammes.
- E.14357 (Roth's collection number is W.68). it is 72 centimetres long and 5.6 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is held on with gum cement. The spearthrower is painted red and white. The spearthrower weighs 285.5 grammes.
- E.14358 (Roth's collection number is W.69). It is 67 centimetres long and is 5 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is held on with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement. The spearthrower is painted red and has red and white painted stripes near the peg. The spearthrower is not in the collection at present, so cannot be weighed.
- E.14359 (Roth's collection number is W.70). It is 73 centimetres long and 6.3 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is tied on with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement. The spearthrower is painted red and has black and white painted stripes at one end. The spearthrower weighs 445.5 grammes.
- E.14361 (Roth's collection number is W.72). It is 77.8 centimetres long and 6.3 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is held on with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement. The spearthrower is painted red and has a white painted design near the peg. The spearthrower weighs 461.7 grammes.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all spearthrowers.

E.14330	negative sheet 4130M, frame 1013.
E.14331	negative sheet 4130M, frame 1014.
E.14332	negative sheet 4130M, frame 1015.
E.14333	negative sheet 4130M, frame 1016.
E.14336	negative sheet 4131M, frame 1019.
E.14339	negative sheet 4131M, frame 1022.
E.14344	negative sheet 4132M, frame 1027.
E.14346	negative sheet 4132M, frame 1029.
E.14349	negative sheet 4132M, frame 1032.
E.14355	negative sheet 4133M, frame 1038.
E.14357	negative sheet 4133M, frame 1040.
E.14358	negative sheet 4134M, frame 1041.
E.14359	negative sheet 4134M, frame 1042.
E.14361	negative sheet 4134M, frame 1044.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Some ethnological notes on the Aborigines of the Bloomfield River district. 1898 (Report to the Commissioner of Police, Brisbane) Cooktown. Unpublished manuscript in the Mitchell Library, NSW State Library, Macquarie Street, Sydney.
- W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 11 and 15.
 Bulletin 13, 1909, pages 199 to 200.

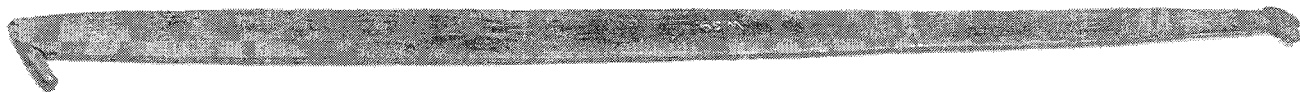
Scientific Names of Materials Used

Gum cement from the ironwood tree: *Erythrophloeum labouchei* F.v.M., now known as *Erythrophloeum chlorostachyum* (F. Muell) Hennings ex Tamb.

Gum cement from the bastard beefwood tree: *Grevillea striata* R.Br. The way these gums were prepared for use can be found in the next item on straight spearthrowers.

Candle nut tree: *Aleurites moluccana* Willd.

Straight Spearthrowers



E.14328. Straight ironwood spearthrower. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. 96.9 x 5.1 centimetres (at widest part).

Information from Roth's Bulletins

The ironwood spearthrower had a straight long blade and a short peg at one end with a slight nick in one side.

The peg was made from wood from the quinine bush. It was not flattened or drilled, but was tied on with animal tendon to two holes drilled in the blade. The peg was held secure with gum cement. Roth's drawings show how this was done.

The gum cement commonly used was from the ironwood tree. Gum from the bastard beefwood tree was preferred if available, as it lasted longer.

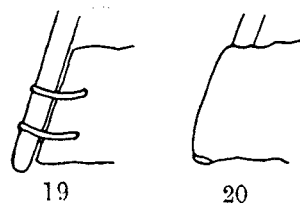
To get the ironwood gum cement, roots of a young ironwood tree were dug up, and pieces of root were cut away. The outer sticky covering on the root was stripped off by pulling a piece of bark straight up the piece of root. The collected sticky mass was roasted over a fire and hammered between two stones until soft. It was then left to cool and harden. When cold, it set very hard, but could easily be softened in a fire.

Roth saw this cement being used on the Endeavour, Laura and Palmer Rivers, and along the Princess Charlotte Bay coastline. On the Gulf coast, he saw it used by Aboriginal people living between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers.

According to Mr R. Hislop, an early settler on the Bloomfield, ironwood gum used to be made here in the old days (prior to the late 1800s). Before the piece of gum was cut away, it would be tested to see how sticky it was. A firestick was rubbed over it, to melt a bit of the gum from the root. If this piece of gum stuck to one's teeth, it was good enough to use. Further pieces of gum were then removed from the roots. A problem with this gum cement was that it was likely to crack.

The best gum cement was taken from the roots of young bastard beefwood trees. It was impossible to remove gum from the roots of old trees. Lengths of root 25 centimetres to 30 centimetres long were cut and carefully heated over a fire. The outer sticky bark was scraped off with a sharp-edged stone. These little scraped off chips were tied up in a sheet of tea-tree bark and the bundle was baked for about 10 minutes. When it was opened, the sticky bits were removed and pressed together with fingers and hands into a sticky lump. This lump was then ready to be pounded between two stones which had been greased with oil from a nut.

After the hammering the lump of gum was stuck onto any convenient stick, and held over a fire. It was again hammered and heated for some time, until it was soft enough to use. It was the strongest and most long-lasting of all gum cements.

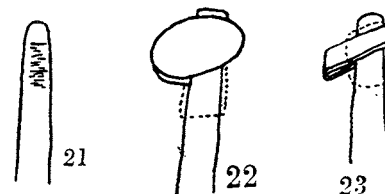


The hand grip end of the spearthrower was either left plain or else two pieces of baler or melon shell were stuck on with beeswax, and used as a hand grip. Sometimes a thin piece of wood, bent over and held in place was used instead of a shell. Roth's drawings show the different hand grips.

Finally the spearthrower was polished with leaves from a fig tree.

This spearthrower, held between the first and second fingers, was used to throw spears great distances when hunting and fighting.

Men used these spearthrowers at Cape Bedford, on the Endeavour and Bloomfield Rivers and at Butcher's Hill. Roth said spearthrowers were not found on the eastern coastal districts from Townsville to Rockhampton. According to a friend of Roth's, Thomas Petrie, spearthrowers were unknown in the Brisbane area, but Aboriginal people had spearthrowers at Charters Towers.



Collection Information

There are three straight spearthrowers from the Bloomfield River, collected by Roth in 1898.

- E.14327 (Roth's collection number is W.38). It is 99.1 centimetres long and 5.6 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is held with handspun bark fibre twine and gum cement. Gum cement is smeared at the end held in the hand but there is no hand grip. The spearthrower weighs 501.7 grammes.
- E.14328 (Roth's collection number is W.39). It is 96.9 centimetres long and 5.1 centimetres at its widest part. The grooved peg is held with handspun bark fibre twine and gum cement. The hand grip is made of two pieces of wood held on with handspun bark fibre twine and gum cement. The spearthrower weighs 361.7 grammes.
- E.14329 (Roth's collection number is W.40). It is 94 centimetres long and 3.7 centimetres at its widest part. The grooved peg is held with handspun bark fibre twine and gum cement. Gum cement is smeared at the end held in the hand but there is no hand grip. The spearthrower weighs 371.9 grammes.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all spearthrowers.

- E.14327 negative sheet 4130M, frame 1010.
 E.14328 negative sheet 4130M, frame 1011.
 E.14329 negative sheet 4130M, frame 1012.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Some ethnological notes on the Aboriginals of the Bloomfield River district. 1898. (Report to the Commissioner of Police, Brisbane) Cooktown. Unpublished manuscript in the Mitchell Library, NSW State Library, Macquarie Street, Sydney.
- W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 9, 11 to 14.
 Bulletin 13, 1909, pages 194 to 200.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Ironwood tree: *Erythrophloeum laboucheii* F.v.M., now known as *Erythrophloeum chlorostachyum* (F. Muell) Hennings ex Tamb.

Quinine bush: *Petalostigma quadriloculare* F.v.M., now known as *Petalostigma triloculare* Muell. Arg.

Bastard beefwood: *Grevillea striata* R.Br.

Oil rubbed on stones to stop the gum lump from sticking to them came from the nut of the *Calophyllum tomentosum* Wight.

Fig tree: *Ficus opposita* Miq.

The shell hand grip: *Melo diadema* Lamk., now known as *Melo amphota* (Lightfoot).

Single Handed Swords



E.15028. Single handed hardwood sword. Collected Bloomfield River, 1898. 127.6 x 14 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth's description of how these swords were made was based on a visit to the Lower Tully River where he watched Aboriginal people making them. They were made in the same way on the Bloomfield River.

1. A hardwood tree was cut down and a length of wood about 120 centimetres to 170 centimetres long was chopped off. This was split down the centre, and one of the slabs of wood was chipped into shape. The straighter the tree, the straighter and better the sword.

2. To shape the short handle, a cut was made in both sides of the slab of wood, and then split. Handspun bark fibre string was wound round the handle and covered with beeswax which had been warmed over a fire. Once cold this made a hard glue. Roth's drawings make the operation easier to understand.



3. If the sword was curved, the outer edge was sharper and used in battle. If the weapon was straight, both edges were sharp and could be used.

4. Often the blade would be coated with red paint, fixed to the surface of the wood with blood.

Roth said these swords were used with one hand stretched over the shoulder, with the sword hanging down the back. The sword was swung forward with a sudden jerk, to strike the enemy.

These swords were used only where the highly decorated kidney-shaped shields were used - on south-east Cape York Peninsula, in the Bloomfield and Cardwell districts, and down to Tully, and inland along the mountain ranges to Atherton.

Roth said that by 1898 these swords were made, if at all, only by very old men. The Kokoyellanji (Gugu-Yalanji) people called the swords worran.

Collection Information

There are two heavy hardwood swords in the Roth collection from the Bloomfield River. Roth collected the swords in the Bloomfield River district in 1898, but said these two swords were not made there or at Cooktown.

E.15027 (Roth's collection number is SW.9). It is 132.8 centimetres long and 13 centimetres at its widest point. The sword is not at present in the collection and cannot be

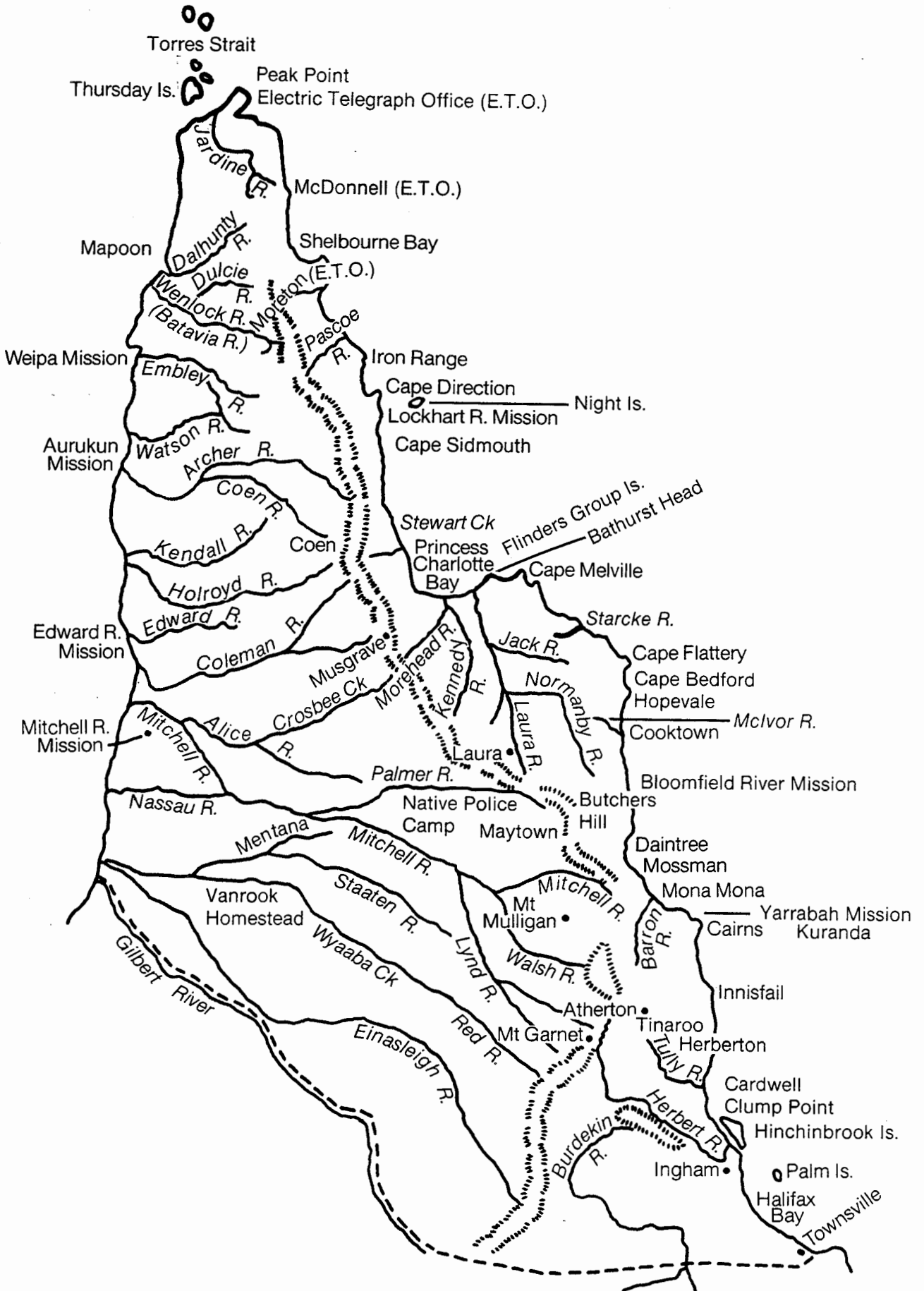
E.15028 weighed.
(Roth's collection number is SW.10). It is 127.6 centimetres long and 14 centimetres wide (it is fairly straight). The sword weighs 1643.9 grammes.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph of one of the swords, E.15028, is available, negative sheet 4218M, frame 1712.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 13, 1909, pages 210 to 211.



Butcher's Hill



Forest scene.

Photo from: Ian G. Sankey. Queensland in the 1860's. The Photographs of Richard Daintree - Queensland Museum Booklet No. 10, 1977, Brisbane, p. 101.

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The People

When Roth was working in north Queensland, there was the Boggy Creek Reserve for Aboriginal people on Butcher's Hill Station, south-west of Cooktown. The stretch of country was called Birbira by the local Aboriginal people. They used to travel to the head of the Daintree River, the Bloomfield River, Mt Windsor (Kalmbar), and sometimes the Laura River and Maytown (Wulburjurbur). However, according to Roth, in 1899 there was bad feeling between some groups and travel was limited.

In a letter Roth wrote to the Commissioner of Police, Brisbane, dated 6 June 1898, he said:

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that I returned yesterday with Mr Marrett from our trip to Butcher's Hill (Boggy Creek Aboriginal Reserve) and King's Plains.

Boggy Creek Reserve. We considered that this was not being worked to our satisfaction, and in view of the complaints made to us by the aboriginals, mentioned the matter to Mr Earle who explained that was feeding them from his own garden, and that considering the amount of Government subsidy, the blacks received sufficient: however, he understood to give them a larger meat-supply for the future.

There are about 50 blacks permanently residing on this Reserve, and camped about half a mile from Butcher's Hill homestead...

This letter can be found in the Queensland State Archives, Dutton Park, under the reference COL/142 [Z.1609]. It is published with kind permission of the Administrator, Crown Copyright and Intellectual Property, Queensland.

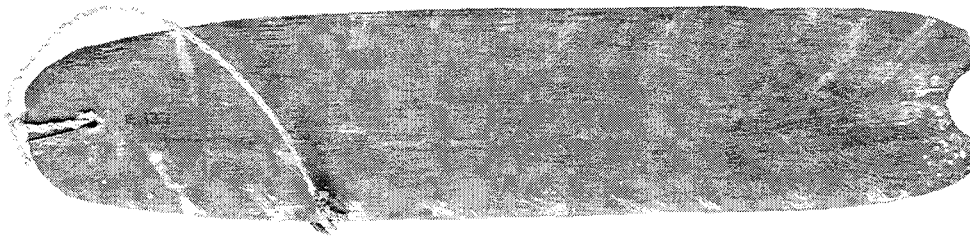
Roth said the local people at Butcher's Hill had been called Koko-yerla(n)-tchi but this had been changed to Koko-yellanji. In a later manuscript he sent from British Guyana to the Director of the Queensland Museum, he changed the spelling back to Koko-yerlantchi. Today the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in Canberra call the local people Gugu-Yalanji.

Books to Read

W.E. Roth Bulletin 18, 1910, pages 93 to 94.

L. Allen & B. Borey Annotations to publications by W.E. Roth. Cultural & historical records of Queensland, number 3, 1984, pages 5 to 6, and 90.

Charms



E.13712. Painted wooden charm, Butcher's Hill. No collection date given. 22.7 x 5.4 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

A painted wooden charm or whirler was hung in a breeze near a baby, so that it would spin around in the wind and protect the child. The colours used were red and white.

According to Roth, it was used at Butcher's Hill, Cooktown and the Bloomfield River. The local Aboriginal people called it jinna-juronggor.

Collection Information

There are two painted wooden charms or whirlers in the Roth collection from Butcher's Hill. No collection date has been given for these two charms.

- E.13712 (Roth's collection number is TA.30). The charm is 22.7 centimetres long and 5.4 centimetres wide. The handspun bark fibre string is 29 centimetres long. A white herringbone pattern has been painted on both sides of this oblong shaped piece of wood. There is a smear of gum cement at the end where the string goes through the hole.
- E.13713 (Roth's collection number is TA.29). The charm is 29.3 centimetres long and 8.3 centimetres wide. The handspun bark fibre string is 60.2 centimetres long. One edge on both sides of the wood is painted red. Both ends are painted white.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs of both charms are available.

- E.13712 negative sheet 4053M, frame 395. There is also a photograph of this charm in Bulletin 11, plate 20, figure 3. In the plate, this charm or whirler has been wrongly attributed to figure 2.
- E.13713 negative sheet 4053M, frame 396. There is also a photograph of this charm or whirler in Bulletin 11, plate 20, figure 1.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 11, 1908, page 75 and plate 20, figures 1 and 3.

Woven Bag



E.14823. Woven bag. Collected Butcher's Hill, 1898. 31.5 x 23.5 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

These bags were made from two-ply handspun bark fibre string spun from strips of bark from fig trees. If the bag was to be striped, then strips of bark from the burneyvine, wattle or peanut tree would be woven in to give horizontal red and white stripes.

To prepare the burneyvine, the thin outer covering of bark was scraped off with a sharp mussel shell or piece of glass. The green fibrous layer was stripped off in narrow lengths of about 50 centimetres to 60 centimetres. Each green strip was then chewed for two to three minutes. This softened the strips ready to be split with finger nails into fine shreds.

The inner bark of the wattle was removed and soaked in water all morning, until it became red. It was then dried in the sun and split into shreds.

Roth did not give a detailed description of how the bark from the fig or peanut trees was prepared.

Turning fibre into string was done in the following way, the person squatting on the ground.

1. The strip of fibre was rolled with the open hand, forwards on the outer thigh. This produced a slight tension, and made the strand stronger. (fig.6).

2. The strand was folded in two, and the 'bend' held between the left thumb and forefinger. The rest of the string was rolled, under great pressure, with the palm of the right hand slowly forwards, and sharply backwards, without removing the pressure. When rolling forward, pressure was on the thumb side of the hand. When rolling backwards, the pressure was on the other side of the hand. (fig.7)

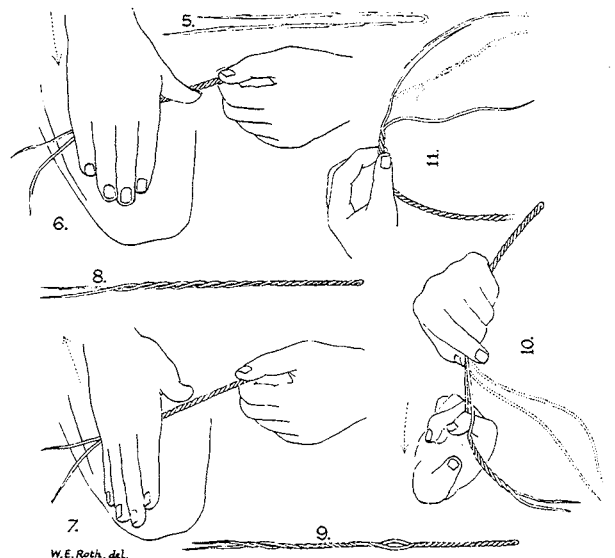
3. The result of the forward movement was to roll the strand into one twist. (fig.8).

4. The result of the forward-backward movement was to roll the strand into two twists, with a 'break' in between. (fig.9).

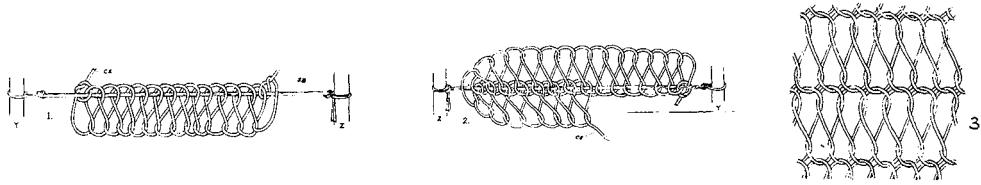
5. To get rid of the break, the section just above it was held between the left thumb and forefinger to prevent the twine untwisting. The right forefinger was placed in the 'break' and it was pulled firmly but carefully outwards. At the same time the two ends of the strand were freed. While the left hand still held its section, the two freed ends of strand were rolled again with the right hand once backwards and forwards. (fig.10).

This process was repeated again and again. All fibre twines were thus made of two-plys.

6. As soon as one end of the strand had been reached, another strand was fixed to it by rolling forwards. (fig.11).



These bags were woven on an hourglass or double loop pattern, using two-ply continuous strands, building on one straight strand tied to two sticks in the ground. Roth's drawings show how this was done.



Roth said women did not use a netting needle when weaving the hourglass pattern.

The bags were found everywhere, from the coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria on the west, to the eastern side of Cape York Peninsula from Cape Bedford to Rockhampton.

According to Roth, the local Koko-yerlantchi (Gugu-Yalanji) people called these baskets ngon-yan. The woven string from the fig tree was called either warur or tchul-bal.

Collection Information

There is one rectangular woven bag from Butcher's Hill, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.14823 This red and brown striped bag is 31.5 centimetres by 23.5 centimetres. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'dilly bag double loop or hourglass "Ngon-yin".' This is a different spelling to that given in the Bulletin.

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4192M, frame 1507.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, pages 8 to 13.
Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 27 to 28.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Fig tree: *Ficus* sp.

Wattle bark fibre string from: *Acacia flavescens* Cunn. ex Benth (authority).

Burneyvine: *Malaisia tortuosa* Blanco, now known as *Malaisia scandens* (Lour) Planchon.

Peanut tree: *Sterculia caudata* Hew.

Woven Baskets

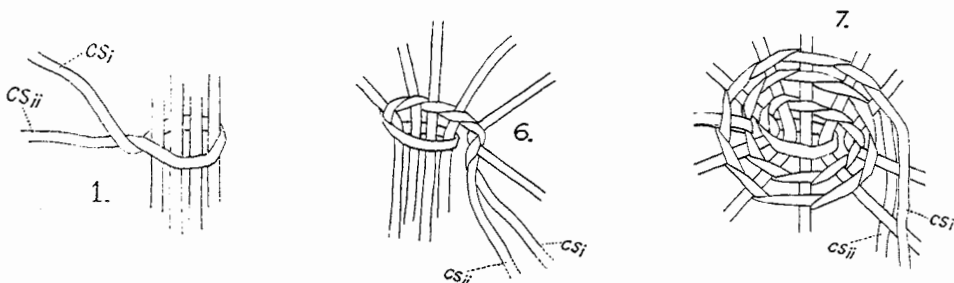


E.14938. Woven basket. Collected Butcher's Hill, 1898. Length 29 centimetres. Mouth 7.7 x 11 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

These baskets or sieve bags were woven from handspun bark fibre string from the blood root tree. Dried leaves from this tree were moistened just before use, when they were split into thin strips with the finger nails.

The weaving pattern was a chain twist. Baskets were woven using two continuous strands of string and several base strands, as shown in Roth's drawings. The two continuous strands were twisted into a chain, and the ends of the straight base strands were left free. The chain twist was the weft (the thread going across), the straight base strands, the warp (the thread going up and down).



Baskets like this generally were firm, unlike soft bags. The only way baskets varied from each other was in the way the first base strands were started. These baskets usually were finished by either binding the rim with strips of fibre string or burning the unwoven ends of cane in the ashes (see Roth's drawings).



Roth said the baskets were made by women only. Baskets were used as sieves when soaking zamia nuts, to make the nuts safe to eat.

These baskets were used from Cairns to Cape Bedford.

Collection Information

There are two woven baskets or sieve bags from Butcher's Hill, collected by Roth in 1898.

- E.14937 The basket is 22.3 centimetres long. The mouth is 7.7 centimetres by 8.9 centimetres.
There is no handle.
- E.14938 The basket is 29 centimetres long. The mouth is 7.7 centimetres by 11 centimetres.
There is no handle.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for both baskets.

- E.14937 negative sheet 4206M, frame 1621.
- E.14938 negative sheet 4206M, frame 1622.

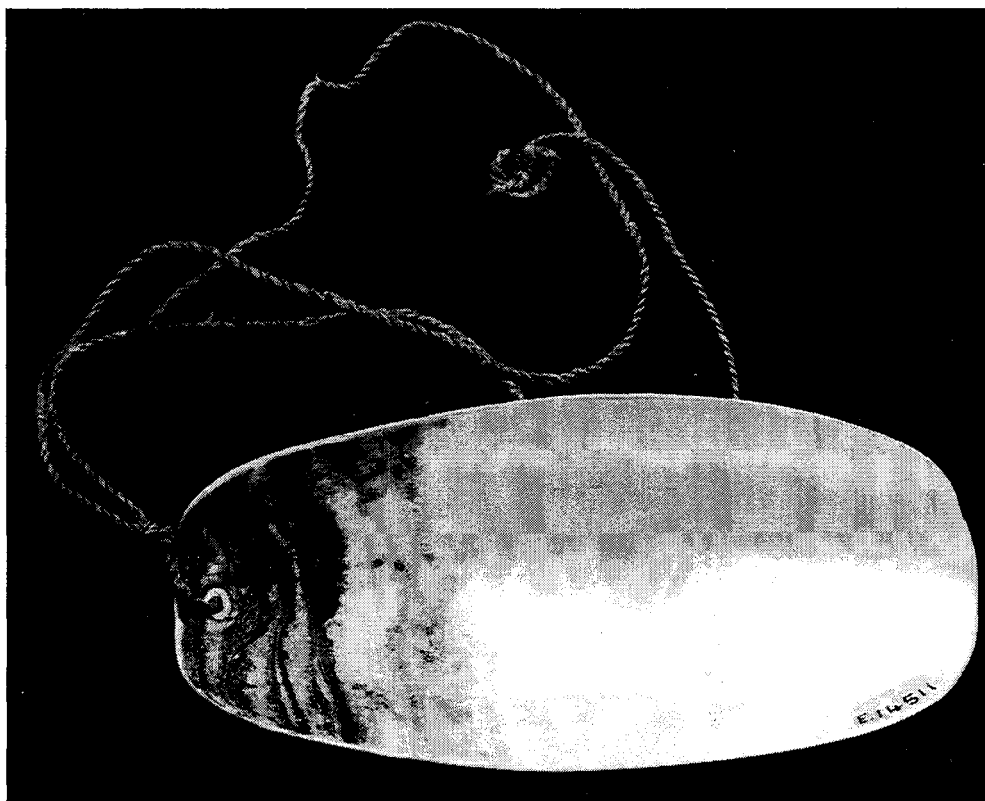
Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, pages 14 to 15.
Bulletin 7, 1904, page 28.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

- Blood root tree: *Haemodorum coccineum* R.Br.
Zamia nut: *Cycas media* R.Br.

Shell Chest Ornaments



E.14511. Shell chest ornament. Collected Butcher's Hill, 1898. Length 11 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Most chest and back ornaments were made from part of a pearl shell, *Nautilus* shell or baler shell. The outer layer of the shell was removed by putting it on the ground, face down, and covering it carefully with hot ashes. This made the surface easier to remove when it was ground on a stone and splashed with water.

When the grinding was finished, the shell had a hole drilled in one end. A length of handspun bark fibre string was passed through and knotted at the ends.

Roth did not say what was used to drill the hole in the shell. However he did talk of a kangaroo tooth drill from Princess Charlotte Bay. The incisor was stuck into a short handle and held there with handspun bark fibre string and ironwood gum cement. It was used to drill holes in pieces of shell for necklaces, as well as holes in spearthrowers for fixing pegs to the ends. Maybe a tool like this was used at Butcher's Hill.

Although Roth collected these shell chest ornaments at Butcher's Hill, he does not say whether they were made there as Butcher's Hill is not on the coast.

On the Endeavour River, at Bloomfield, Laura, on the Middle Palmer River and at Cape Bedford, a *Nautilus* shell was worn between the shoulders of men and between the breasts of women.

Pearl shell ornaments were popular along the coast, while baler shells were generally worn by inland peoples.

On the east coast, oval pieces of *Nautilus* and baler shells often were used as spoons. Roth had difficulty deciding whether to call them spoons or ornaments as they sometimes had a hole drilled at one end and a length of handspun bark fibre twine was threaded through and held with beeswax. This could be hung around the neck. The same difficulty remains today. Roth collected three 'shell spoons' from Butcher's Hill and these have been placed under 'Tools' in this catalogue.

Collection Information

There are two shell chest ornaments from Butcher's Hill, collected by Roth in 1898.

- E.14510 (Roth's collection number is G.72). The ornament is 11.7 centimetres long.
E.14511 (Roth's registration number is G.88). The ornament is 11 centimetres long. The handspun bark fibre string is 31 centimetres long.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for both ornaments.

- E.14510 negative sheet 4153M, frame 1194.
E.14511 negative sheet 4153M, frame 1195.

Useful Written Information

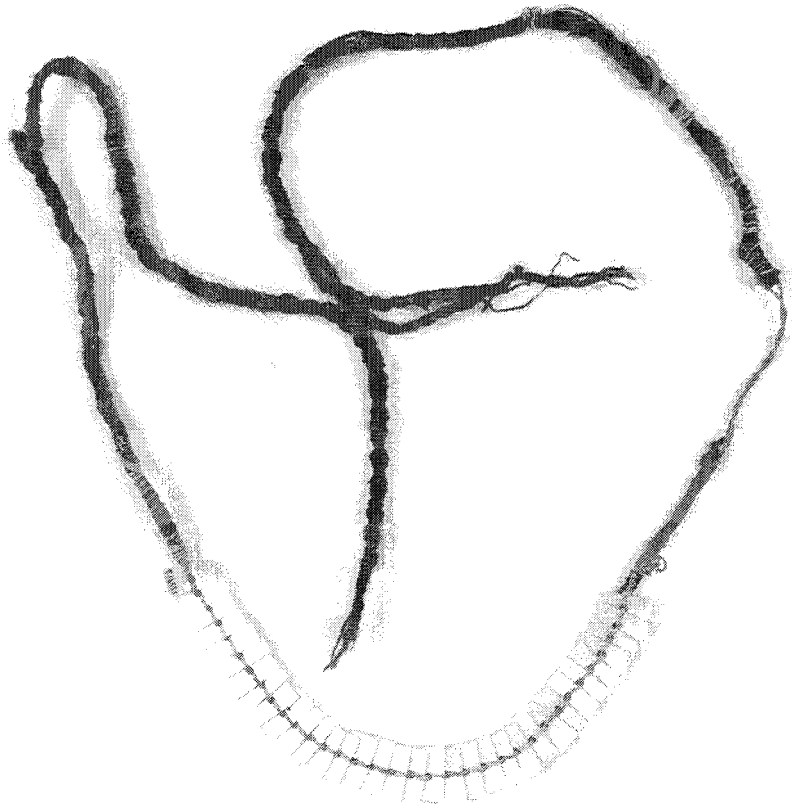
- W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 24 to 25, and 27.
Bulletin 15, 1910, page 35.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Nautilus shell: *Nautilus pompilius* Linne.

Baler or melo shell: *Melo diadema* Lamk., now known as *Melo amphota* (Lightfoot).

Shell Forehead Bands



E.14555. Nautilus shell forehead band. Collected Butcher's Hill, 1898. Length 123.8 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

A hole was drilled in the centre of each rectangular piece of shell. A double strand of handspun bark fibre string was threaded through, pulling the pieces of shell together so they overlapped.

Roth did not say what the people used at Butcher's Hill to drill holes in the shells. However he did talk of a kangaroo tooth drill from Princess Charlotte Bay. The incisor was stuck into a short handle and held there with handspun bark fibre string and ironwood gum cement. It was used to drill holes in pieces of shell making a necklace (as well as drilling holes in spearthrowers to fix the peg at one end). Maybe a tool like this was used at Butcher's Hill.

At the Bloomfield River, Cape Bedford and at Princess Charlotte Bay, these ornaments were worn as forehead bands by men, and as necklaces by women. By the time they had been traded to the Middle Palmer River area via the Musgrave River, they were worn by men and women as necklaces only.

Occasionally oval-shaped shell necklaces were found on the eastern coast at Cairns, Cardwell and on the Tully River, but Roth thought they had been traded in from the Gulf of Carpentaria via the Ranges and the Mitchell River.

Roth noted that the local Koko-yellanji or Koko-yerlantchi (Gugu-Yalanji) people called this forehead band jil-nga.

Collection Information

There are two shell forehead bands in the Roth collection from Butcher's Hill. They were collected in 1898. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Nautilus shell forehead band. The chib-ngar of the Koko-yellanji tribe. Used by men as forehead bands, by women as necklaces.'

- E.14555 The necklace or forehead band is made of 34 rectangular pieces of Nautilus shell and is 123.8 centimetres long. Each shell segment is 2 centimetres by 0.8 centimetres. The thread used to link the pieces of shell together is handspun bark fibre string, the ties at each end being woven into a chain twist pattern. Tied to this is finely plaited human hairstring and red cloth.
- E.14556 The necklace or forehead band is made of 59 rectangular pieces of Nautilus shell and is 119 centimetres long. Each shell segment is 1.8 centimetres by 0.8 centimetres. The thread used to link the pieces of shell together is handspun bark fibre string.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for both shell forehead bands.

- E.14555 negative sheet 4158M, frame 1239.
E.14556 negative sheet 4158M, frame 1240.

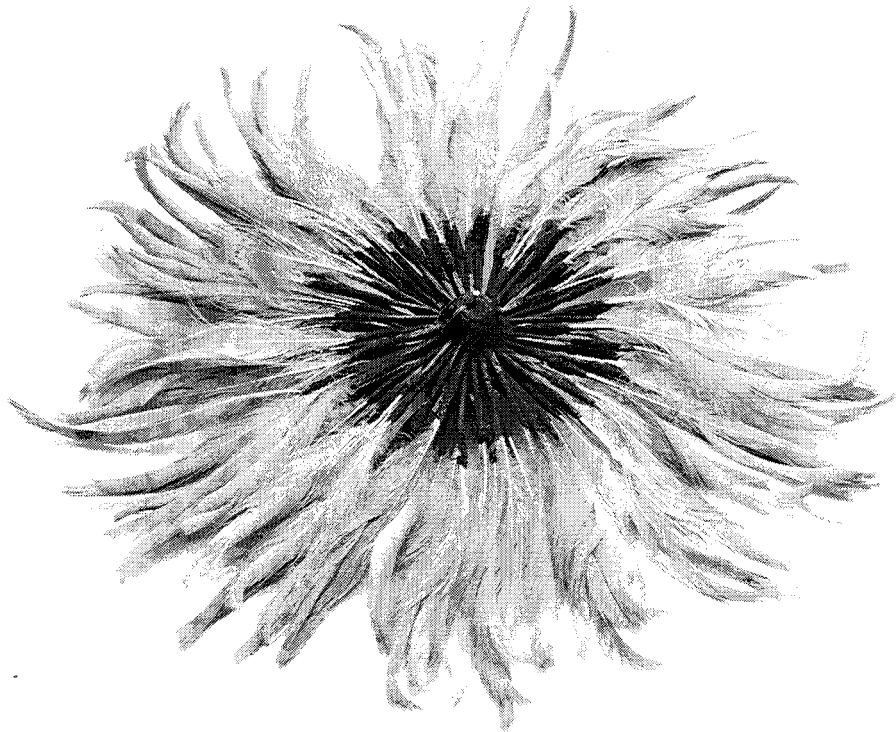
Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 24 to 25, and 27.
 Bulletin 15, 1910, pages 27 to 28.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Nautilus shell: *Nautilus pompilius* Linne.

Feather Head-dresses



E.14405. Cockatoo feather head-dress. Collected Butcher's Hill, 1898. Diameter 35.5 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth did not write about these circular head-dresses. He did refer to cockatoo feather tufts, made from a bird's 'top-knot' stuck into a large blob of wax and fixed to the back of a man's head. He said this made him look as if he had a yellow halo.

Feather head-dresses were worn by local Aboriginal people on the Endeavour and Bloomfield Rivers and as far south as the Tully River.

Mr R. Hislop, an early settler on the Bloomfield, told Roth that when men were preparing for combat one man, not necessarily the oldest, would take the lead and plan the attack. He would wear a cockatoo top-knot feather tuft head-dress. This made him stand out in the crowd of warriors.

Collection Information

There are three cockatoo feather head-dresses in the Roth collection from Butcher's Hill. The head-dresses were collected by Roth in 1898. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Cockatoo feather head-dress (radiating) worn by leaders in fighting, corroborees etc.'

E.14404 (Roth's collection number is G.93). The diameter of the head-dress is 31.5 centimetres. Three rows of cockatoo feathers have been set around a ball of wax.

- E.14405 (Roth's collection number is G.102). The diameter of the head-dress is 35.5 centimetres. Three rows of cockatoo feathers have been set around a ball of wax.
- E.14406 (No collection number). The diameter of the head-dress is 39.5 centimetres. One row of cockatoo feathers has been set around a ball of wax. The quills have been smeared with wax and painted with red ochre. Several of the feathers are missing.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all head-dresses.

- E.14404 negative sheet 4139M, frame 1087.
E.14405 negative sheet 4139M, frame 1088.
E.14406 negative sheet 4140M, frame 1089.

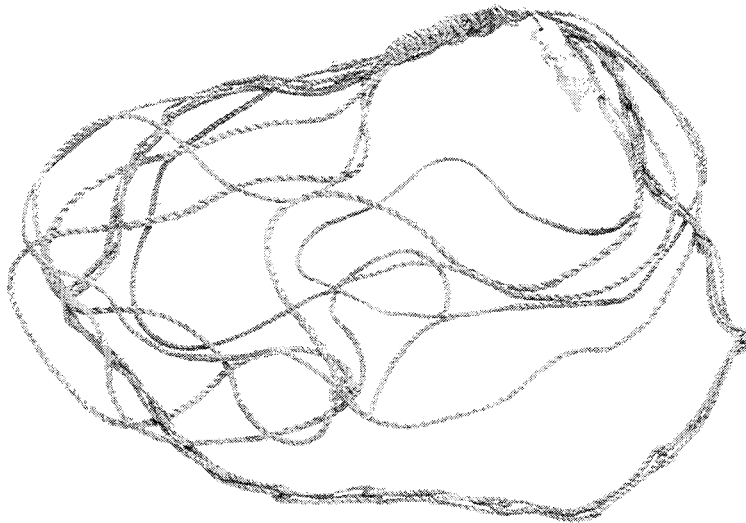
Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 15, 1910, pages 24 and 25, and 211.

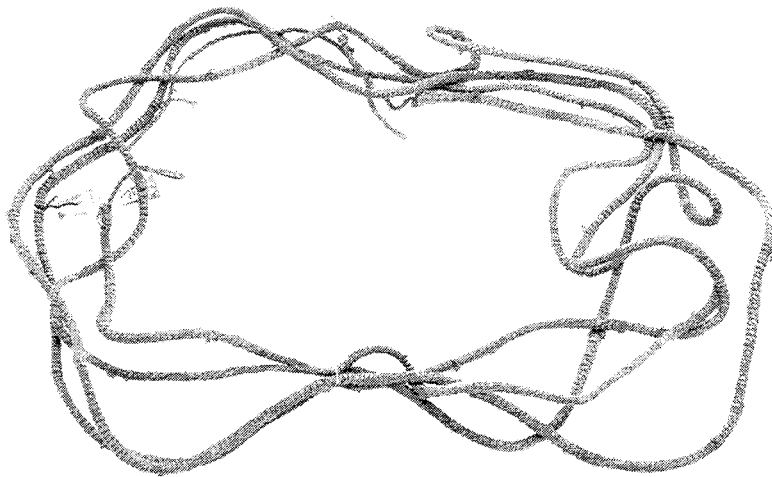
Scientific Names of Materials Used

Sulphur-crested cockatoo: *Cacatua galerita*.

Mourning Strings



E.13767. Looped mourning string. Collected Butcher's Hill, 1898. Length 30.3 centimetres.

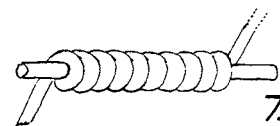
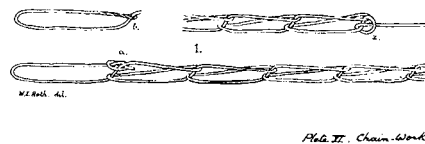


E.13770. Overcast mourning string. Collected Butcher's Hill, 1898. Length 161 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Roth did not write about mourning strings from Butcher's Hill, but did so for Cooktown, Cape Bedford and Princess Charlotte Bay. He said that when in mourning, men and women slept at, and cried over the grave. The men wore mourning belts, the women wore mourning strings, and covered themselves with white clay. The belts, made of possum or human hair, were worn around the waist. Mourning strings were worn either over one shoulder, across to, and under the opposite armpit, or else around the neck. A woman could wear three different sets at one time.

Mourning string chains were made of handspun bark fibre string and could be several metres long. Each link was about 2 centimetres long. The first loop was fixed either in a knot at the beginning of the string (see Roth's drawing figure 1a), or twisted between the two plies of string (figure 1b). The knot at the other end stopped the chain unravelling (figure 1z).



Collection Information

There are five mourning strings from Butcher's Hill, collected by Roth in 1898.

- E.13767 The mourning string is 30.3 centimetres long. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Mourning string (looped), the Marwar of Butcher's Hill.' Roth does not use the word Marwar in the Bulletins.
- E.13768 The mourning string is 38 centimetres long and has been overcast. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Mourning string (overcast), the Marwar of Butcher's Hill.'
- E.13769 The mourning string is 39.3 centimetres long, and has been overcast. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Mourning string (overcast), the Marwar of Butcher's Hill.'
- E.13770 The mourning string is 161 centimetres long, and has been overcast. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Mourning string (overcast), the Marwar of Butcher's Hill.'
- E.13771 The mourning string is 33.3 centimetres long, and has been overcast using some European wool. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Mourning string (overcast), the Marwar of Butcher's Hill.'

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all mourning strings.

- E.13767 negative sheet 4060M, frame 450.
 E.13768 negative sheet 4060M, frame 451.
 E.13769 negative sheet 4060M, frame 452.
 E.13770 negative sheet 4060M, frame 453.
 E.13771 negative sheet 4060M, frame 454.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, page 11.
 Bulletin 9, 1907, page 371.

Beeswax

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Beeswax was prepared for use by roasting it in a fire and squeezing it a few times between the hands. It was then warmed and hammered until it was soft enough to use.

It was used to stick body decorations in the hair and to stiffen the hair into shape for ceremonies. Cracks in wooden objects like wooden containers and spearthrowers were repaired with beeswax. Beeswax also was used to mend handspun bark fibre string.

Collection Information

There is one sample of beeswax in the Roth collection from Butcher's Hill. No collection date is given.

E.14769 This object is unable to be located at present. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Beeswax as used for blobs in fixing up the hair, and covering tendons; attaching peg to womerahs etc. "Burya-adja" or "Buradja" (Koko-yellanji of Butcher's Hill) and "?Ji-dal" (Koko-yimidir, Cooktown).'

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 14.

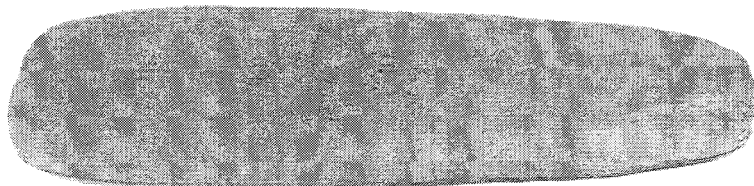
Secret/Sacred Object

Because of the sensitive nature of this object we will only give the information to those people who have a right to know. The Collection Manager or the Aboriginal Heritage Officer in the Museum should be able to help in this matter. Their telephone numbers are 02.339-8246 or 02.339-8192.

Collection Information

E.13693 Collected from Butcher's Hill by Roth in 1898 (his collection number is TA.9).

Smoothing Board



E.13952. Ironwood smoothing board. Collected Butcher's Hill, 1898. 19.4 x 5.9 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

The smoothing board was a flat, thin piece of ironwood shaped almost to an oval, and just wide enough to be held in the hand. It was used like a European putty knife.

The smoothing board was used by men to smooth over heated gum cement used when making tools and weapons. Blobs of the sticky gum cement were often found stuck to the surface of the board after the job was done. The board was held in the right hand, while the left one turned the object being stuck together. It was always greased with forehead perspiration before being used.

Roth found these smoothing boards in use on the Bloomfield and Endeavour Rivers, Princess Charlotte Bay, and on the Palmer and Mitchell Rivers. Smoothing boards also were found on the lower coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

On the Endeavour River, he had often seen a small piece of Pandanus leaf, greased with forehead perspiration, used as a smoothing board when a wooden one was not available.

Collection Information

There is one smoothing board from Butcher's Hill, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13952 (Roth's collection number is MD.14). It is 19.4 centimetres by 5.9 centimetres.

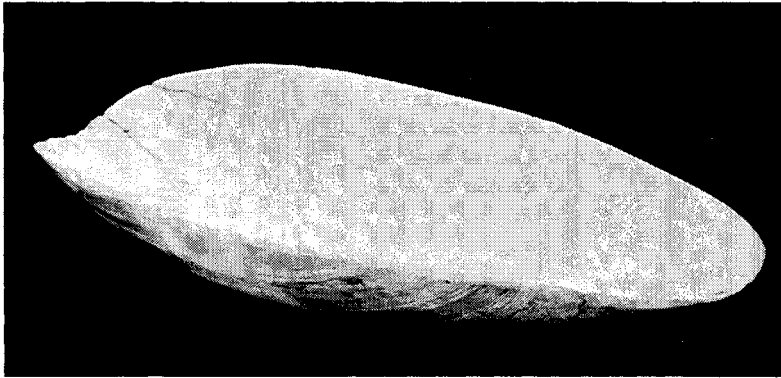
Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet number 4083M, frame 635.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 14.

Shell Spoons



E.13863. Nautilus shell spoon. Collected Butcher's Hill, 1898. 11.2 x 6.7 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

Oval pieces of Nautilus or melon (also called baler) shell were used as spoons on the east coast of Cape York Peninsula. Roth had difficulty deciding whether shell spoons found on the Bloomfield and at Cape Bedford should be called spoons or chest ornaments. The same difficulty exists today (see the entry on shell chest ornaments in the Butcher's Hill section in this catalogue). The spoons sometimes had holes drilled at one end, with handspun bark fibre string threaded through, fixed with beeswax, and hung around the neck.

Roth found these shell spoons in use also on the Laura and Middle Palmer Rivers. Freshwater mussel shells were often used as scoops, both on the coast and inland.

Collection Information

There are three shell spoons from Butcher's Hill, collected by Roth in 1898.

- E.13861 (Roth's collection number is MD.28). The spoon is 13.6 centimetres by 7.6 centimetres. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Shell spoon (MD.28) from Byerstown and Palmer R, called "nginggan." Butcher's Hill 1898.'
- E.13862 (Roth's collection number is MD.29). The spoon is 14 centimetres by 7.5 centimetres. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Shell spoon (MD.29) Warkul from coast Butch? Hill 1898.'
- E.13863 (Roth's collection number is MD.30). The spoon is 11.2 centimetres by 6.7 centimetres. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Shell spoon (MD.30) "Karbo" from coast ?Butch.Hill. 1898.'

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all the shell spoons.

- E.13861 negative sheet 4071M, frame 544.
 E.13862 negative sheet 4072M, frame 545.
 E.13863 negative sheet 4072M, frame 546.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, page 29.
 Bulletin 15, 1910, page 35.

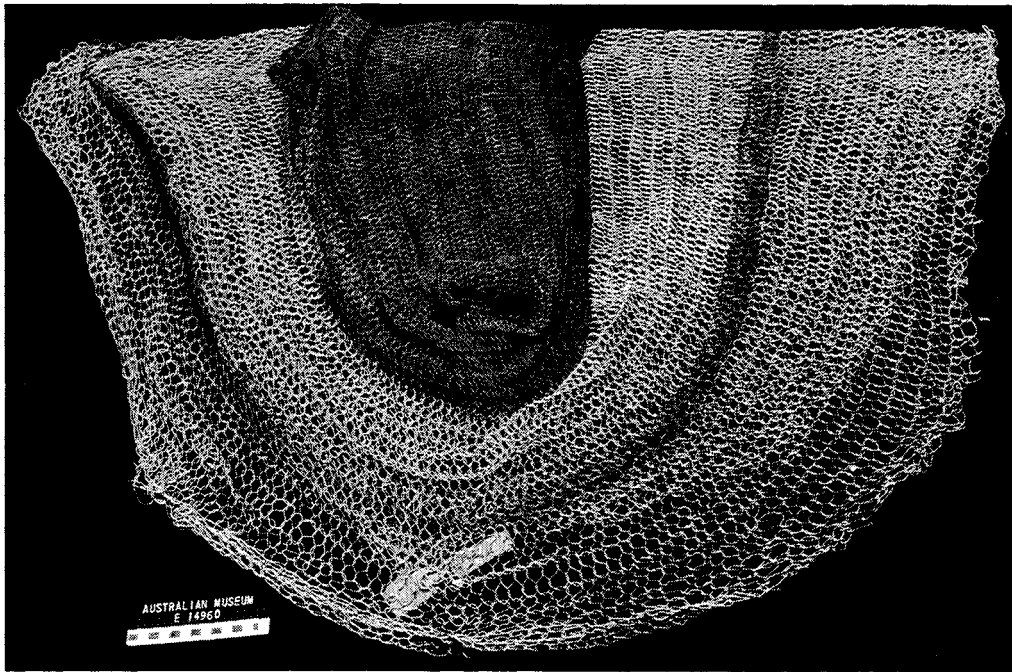
Scientific Names of Materials Used

Nautilus shell: *Nautilus pompilius* Linne.

Melon or baler shell: *Melo diadema* Lamk., now known as *Melo amphota* (Lightfoot).

Freshwater mussel shell: *Unio* sp., now known as *Velesunio wilsonii* Lea 1859.

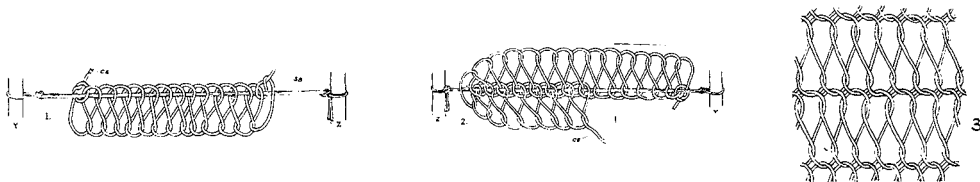
Non-folding Oval Frame Fishing Net



E.14960. Non-folding oval frame fishing net. Collected Butcher's Hill, 1898. 114 x 58 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

The net was woven on an hour-glass or double loop pattern with one straight base strand and one continuous strand. The weaving was very loose on fishing nets, unlike baskets using the same pattern. Roth's drawing shows this weaving pattern.



Handspun bark fibre twine used to make these nets came from either a wattle tree or a cabbage tree palm.

To make string from the wattle, the inner bark of the tree was removed and soaked in water all morning. During this time it turned red. The bark was then dried in the sun and split into shreds ready to be spun into string.

Roth has a good series of drawings to show how the shredded palm fibre was turned into twine.

1. Young, unopened leaf shoots from the cabbage tree palm were cut off as low as possible and tapped firmly on a log. This made the shoot unfold. It was now easier to split it along its natural folds.

2. The next step was to strip off the outer layer of each piece of leaf with a finger or finely pointed ironwood pointer or pin, or with a sharp kangaroo-bone needle. These pointers or needles could be up to 20 centimetres long. If made of wood, they were

thrown away after use. Roth called these tools stilettos.

3,4,5. These outer strips were laid in the sun to dry and then rolled ready to be turned into twine. This fibre string was used to make bags and fish nets in most of north Queensland.

6. The shred of palm fibre was rolled with the open hand, forwards on the outer thigh, the person squatting on the ground. This produced a slight tension, and made the strand stronger.

7. The strand was folded in two, and the 'bend' held between the left thumb and forefinger. The rest of the string was rolled, under great pressure, with the palm of the right hand slowly forwards, and sharply backwards, without removing the pressure. When rolling forward, pressure was on the thumb side of the hand. When rolling backwards, the pressure was on the other side of the hand.

8. The result of the forward movement was to roll the strand into one twist.

9. The result of the forward-backward movement was to roll the strand into two twists, with a 'break' in between.

10. To get rid of the break, the section just above it was held between the left thumb and forefinger to prevent the twine untwisting. The right forefinger was placed in the 'break' and it was pulled firmly but carefully outwards. At the same time the two ends of the strand were freed. While the left hand still held its section, the two freed ends of strand were rolled again with the right hand once backwards and forwards.

This process was repeated again and again. All fibre twines were thus made of two-pplies.

11. As soon as one end of the strand had been reached, another strand was fixed to it by rolling forwards.

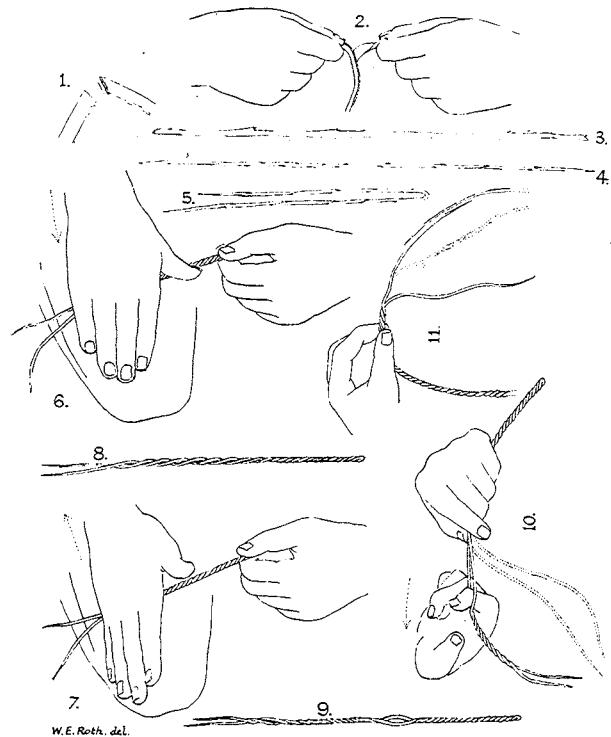
The non-folding oval frame of the fishing net was made of two or three pieces of lawyer cane firmly lashed together.

The net was moved through the water, held almost straight up in the water. It was worked by two men, with their friends walking in front, acting as beaters to drive fish towards the net.

According to Roth, fish nets were not used on the Bloomfield or Endeavour Rivers. The nearest place to them where nets were used was Laura (100 kilometres inland), Princess Charlotte Bay (to the north) and Cape Grafton (to the south).

He further stated that non-folding oval frame fishing nets with the net woven on the hourglass pattern were found only on Cape York Peninsula. He saw them on the Morehead, Musgrave, Normanby, Laura, Palmer, Embley, Pennefather (now the Coen) and Batavia (now the Wenlock) Rivers. The largest of these nets were found inland from Princess Charlotte Bay.

Roth did not say how this fishing net came to be at Butcher's Hill.



He said the Koko-Yellanji (Gugu-Yalanji) people at Laura called this fish net yikan-ikan.

Collection Information

There is one of these fishing nets from Butcher's Hill, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.14960 (Roth's collection number is P.14). It is 114 centimetres by 58 centimetres. A note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 states 'Yikan-ikan.'

Photographic Information

A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4209M, frame 1644.

Useful Written Information

W.E. Roth Bulletin 1, 1901, pages 9 to 13.
 Bulletin 3, 1901, page 22.
 Bulletin 7, 1904, page 25.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Two types of wattle were used in making twine: *Acacia latifolia* Benth, and *Acacia leptocarpa* A. Cunn.

Cabbage tree palm, also used to make twine: *Livistona australis* Mart.

Lawyer cane: *Calamus* sp.

Spearthrowers



E.14321. Ironwood spearthrower. Collected Butcher's Hill, 1898. 91.5 x 4.7 centimetres.

Information from Roth's Bulletins

The ironwood spearthrower had a straight long blade and a short peg at one end with a slight nick in one side.

The peg was made from wood from the quinine bush. It was not flattened or drilled, but was tied on with animal tendon to two holes drilled in the blade. The peg was held secure with gum cement. Roth's drawings show how this was done.

The gum cement commonly used was from the ironwood tree. Gum from the bastard beefwood tree was preferred if available, as it lasted longer.

To get the ironwood gum cement, roots of a young ironwood tree were dug up, and pieces of root were cut away. The outer sticky covering was stripped off by pulling a bark strip straight up the piece of root. The collected sticky lump was roasted over a fire and hammered between two stones until soft. It was then left to cool and harden. When cold, it set very hard, but could easily be softened in a fire.

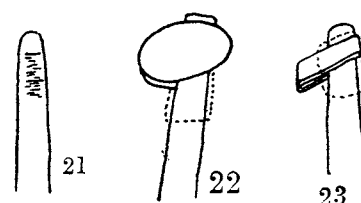
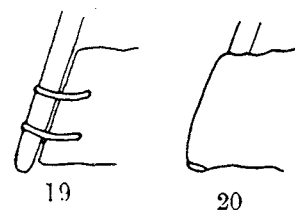
Roth saw this gum cement being used on the Endeavour, Laura and Palmer Rivers, and along the Princess Charlotte Bay coastline. On the Gulf coast, he saw it used by Aboriginal people living between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers.

The best gum cement was taken from roots of young bastard beefwood trees. It was impossible to remove gum from roots of old trees. Lengths of root 25 centimetres to 30 centimetres long were cut off and carefully heated over a fire. The outer sticky bark was scraped off with a sharp-edged stone. These little scraped off chips were tied up in a sheet of tea-tree bark and the bundle was baked for about 10 minutes. When it was opened, the sticky bits were removed and pressed together with fingers and hands into a sticky lump. This lump was then ready to be pounded between two stones which had been greased with oil from a nut.

After the hammering the lump of gum was stuck on any stick that was handy, and held over a fire. The gum was again hammered and heated for some time, until it was soft enough to use. It was the strongest and most long-lasting of all gum cements.

The hand grip end of the spearthrower was either left plain or else two pieces of baler or melon shell were stuck on with beeswax, and used as a hand grip. Sometimes a thin piece of wood, bent over and held in place was used instead of a shell. Roth's drawings show the different hand grips.

Finally, the spearthrower was polished with leaves from a fig tree.



Roth said that at Butcher's Hill, he saw spearthrowers made from a yellow-coloured timber called nga-til by the Koko-yellanji(Gugu-Yalanji) people but he never got it identified.

This spearthrower, held between the first and second fingers, was used to throw spears great distances when hunting and fighting.

Men used these spearthrowers at Cape Bedford, on the Endeavour and Bloomfield Rivers and at Butcher's Hill. Roth said spearthrowers were not found on the eastern coastal districts from Townsville to Rockhampton. According to a friend of Roth's, Thomas Petrie, spearthrowers were unknown in the Brisbane area, but Aboriginal people had spearthrowers at Charters Towers.

Collection Information

There are four spearthrowers from Butcher's Hill, collected by Roth in 1898

- E.14321 (Roth's collection number is W.32). It is 91.5 centimetres long and 4.7 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is held with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement. The hand grip is made of two pieces of wood held on with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement. The spearthrower weighs 322.4 grammes.
- E.14322 (Roth's collection number is W.33). It is 95.1 centimetres long and 4.4 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is held with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement. The hand grip is made of two pieces of wood held on with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement. The spearthrower weighs 293.5 grammes.
- E.14323 (Roth's collection number is W.34). It is 96 centimetres long and 5.6 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is held with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement. The hand grip is missing, but bark fibre string has been bound round the end and looped through a hole drilled near the end. The string is held with gum cement. The spearthrower weighs 378.6 grammes.
- E.14324 (Roth's collection number is W.35). It is 90.6 centimetres long and 5.9 centimetres at its widest part. The peg is held with handspun bark fibre string and gum cement. There is no handgrip, but the end is smeared with gum cement. The spearthrower is not in the collection at present, so cannot be weighed.

Photographic Information

Black and white photographs are available for all spearthrowers.

- E.14321 negative sheet 4129M, frame 1004.
 E.14322 negative sheet 4129M, frame 1005.
 E.14323 negative sheet 4129M, frame 1006.
 E.14324 negative sheet 4129M, frame 1007.

Useful Written Information

- W.E. Roth Bulletin 7, 1904, pages 9, 11 to 14.
 Bulletin 13, 1909, pages 194 to 200.

Scientific Names of Materials Used

Ironwood tree used in making spearthrowers and the gum cement: *Erythrophloeum labouchei* F.v.M., now known as *Erythrophloeum chlorostachyum* (F. Muell) Hennings ex Tamb.

Quinine bush: *Petalostigma quadriloculare* F.v.M., now known as *Petalostigma triloculare* Muell. Arg.

Bastard beefwood: *Grevillea striata* R. Br.

Oil rubbed on the stones to stop the gum lump from sticking to them came from the nut from: *Calophyllum tomentosum* Wight.

Fig tree leaves used to polish the wood: *Ficus opposita* Miq.

The shell used as a hand grip: *Melo diadema* Lamk., now known as *Melo amphota* (Lightfoot).

Books to Read

This is a list of books and articles for further reading on the regions in this catalogue - Archer River, Atherton, Bathurst Head, Bloomfield River and Butcher's Hill. It is by no means a complete list, but should give some idea of the information available at present.

All State libraries, University libraries and Museum libraries hold good reference material. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in Canberra provides an excellent library service. Local libraries can arrange inter-library loans with these institutions, so the book you want to read can be obtained through your local library.

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