

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

Khan, Kate, 2004. Catalogue of the Roth Collection of Aboriginal Artefacts from North Queensland, volume 4. Items collected from Nassau River, Night Island, Palmer River, Peak Point Electric Telegraph Office, Princess Charlotte Bay, Staaten River, Starcke River, Tinaroo, Tully River, Vanrook and Weipa (Embley River), in 1896–1903. *Technical Reports of the Australian Museum* 18: 1–112. [4 February 2004].

doi:10.3853/j.1031-8062.18.2004.1372

ISSN 1031-8062, ISBN 0-7310-1178-3 (set), ISBN 0-9750-4761-2 (v4)

Published by the Australian Museum, Sydney

nature culture **discover**

Australian Museum science is freely accessible online at
www.australianmuseum.net.au/publications/
6 College Street, Sydney NSW 2010, Australia

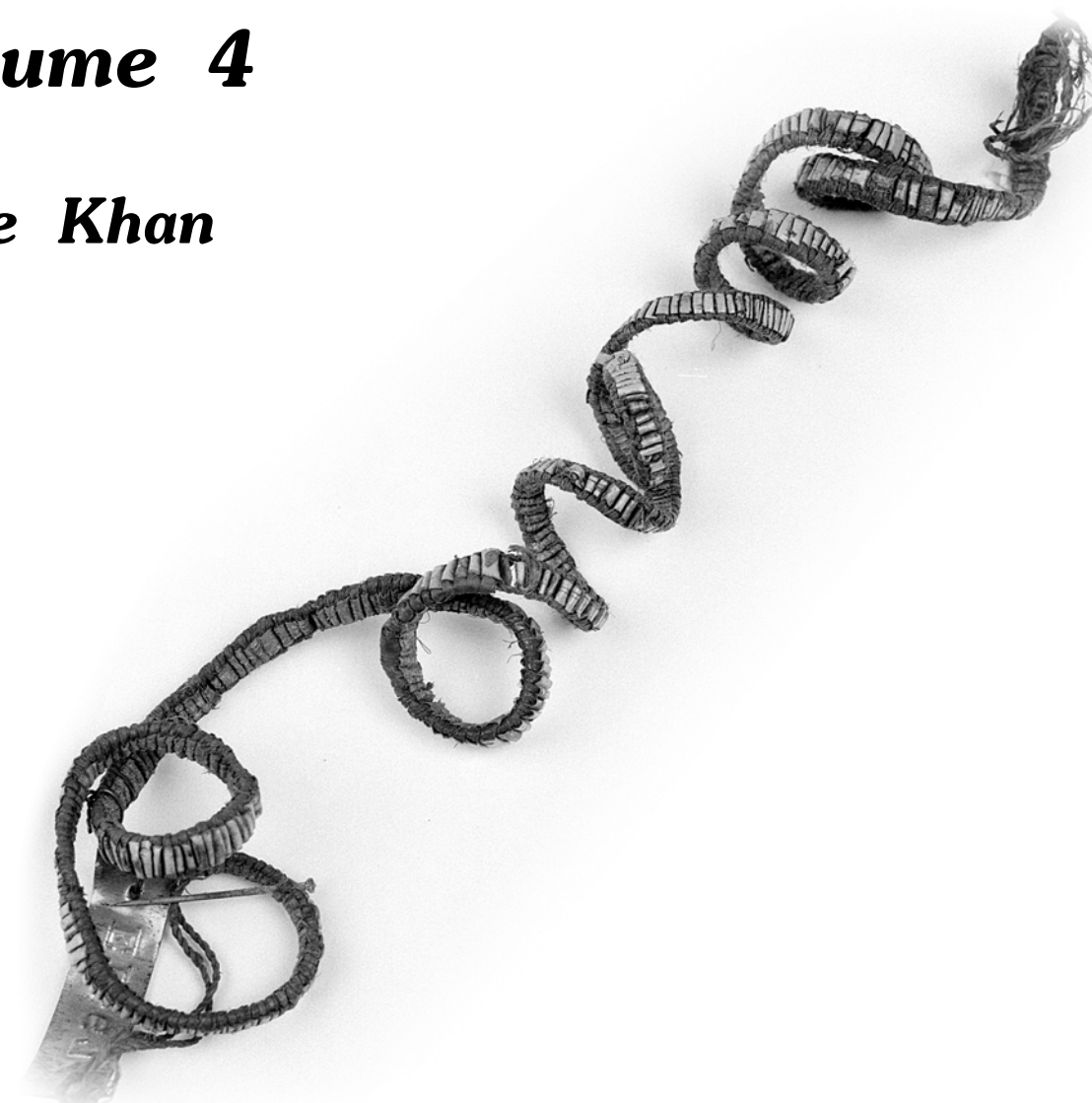


ISSN 1031-8062
ISBN 0 7310 1178 3 (set)
ISBN 0 9750 4761 2 (v4)

Catalogue of the Roth Collection of Aboriginal Artefacts from North Queensland

Volume 4

Kate Khan



TECHNICAL REPORTS OF THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM 2004

Khan • Roth Catalogue—Volume 4

**A
M**
AUSTRALIAN
MUSEUM

Publications may be purchased at the Australian Museum Shop or online at:
www.amonline.net.au/shop/

***Technical Reports of the Australian Museum
Number 18***

TECHNICAL REPORTS OF THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM

Editor: Shane F. McEvey

Editorial Committee:

S.T. Ahyong (INVERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY)
V.J. Attenbrow (ANTHROPOLOGY)
D.J. Bickel (INVERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY)
G.D. Edgecombe (PALAEOLOGY)
S. Ingleby (VERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY)
J.M. Leis (VERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY)
S.F. McEvey (INVERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY)
J.R. Specht (ANTHROPOLOGY)
F.L. Sutherland (GEOLOGY)

Chair: G.D.F. Wilson (INVERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY)

The Australian Museum's mission is to research, interpret, communicate and apply understanding of the environments and cultures of the Australian region to increase their long-term sustainability. The Museum has maintained the highest standards of scholarship in these fields for more than 175 years, and is one of Australia's foremost publishers of original research in anthropology, geology and zoology.

The *Records of the Australian Museum* (ISSN 0067-1975) publishes the results of research on Australian Museum collections and of studies that relate in other ways to the Museum's mission. There is an emphasis on Australasian, southwest Pacific and Indian Ocean research. The *Records* is released annually as three issues of one volume, volume 55 was published in 2003. Monographs are published about once a year as *Records of the Australian Museum, Supplements*. Supplement 28 (ISBN 0-7347-2313-X) was published in November 2001. Catalogues, lists and databases have been published since 1988 as numbered *Technical Reports of the Australian Museum* (ISSN 1031-8062). *Technical Report* number 16 was published in May 2002. *Australian Museum Memoirs* (ISSN 0067-1967) ceased in 1983.

These three publications—*Records*, *Supplements* and *Technical Reports*—are distributed to libraries throughout the world and are now uploaded at our website six months after they are published. Librarians are invited to propose exchange agreements with the *Australian Museum Research Library*. Back issues are available for purchase direct from the *Australian Museum Shop*.

Authors are invited to submit manuscripts presenting results of their original research. Manuscripts meeting subject and stylistic requirements outlined in the *Instructions to Authors* are assessed by external referees.

www.amonline.net.au/publications/

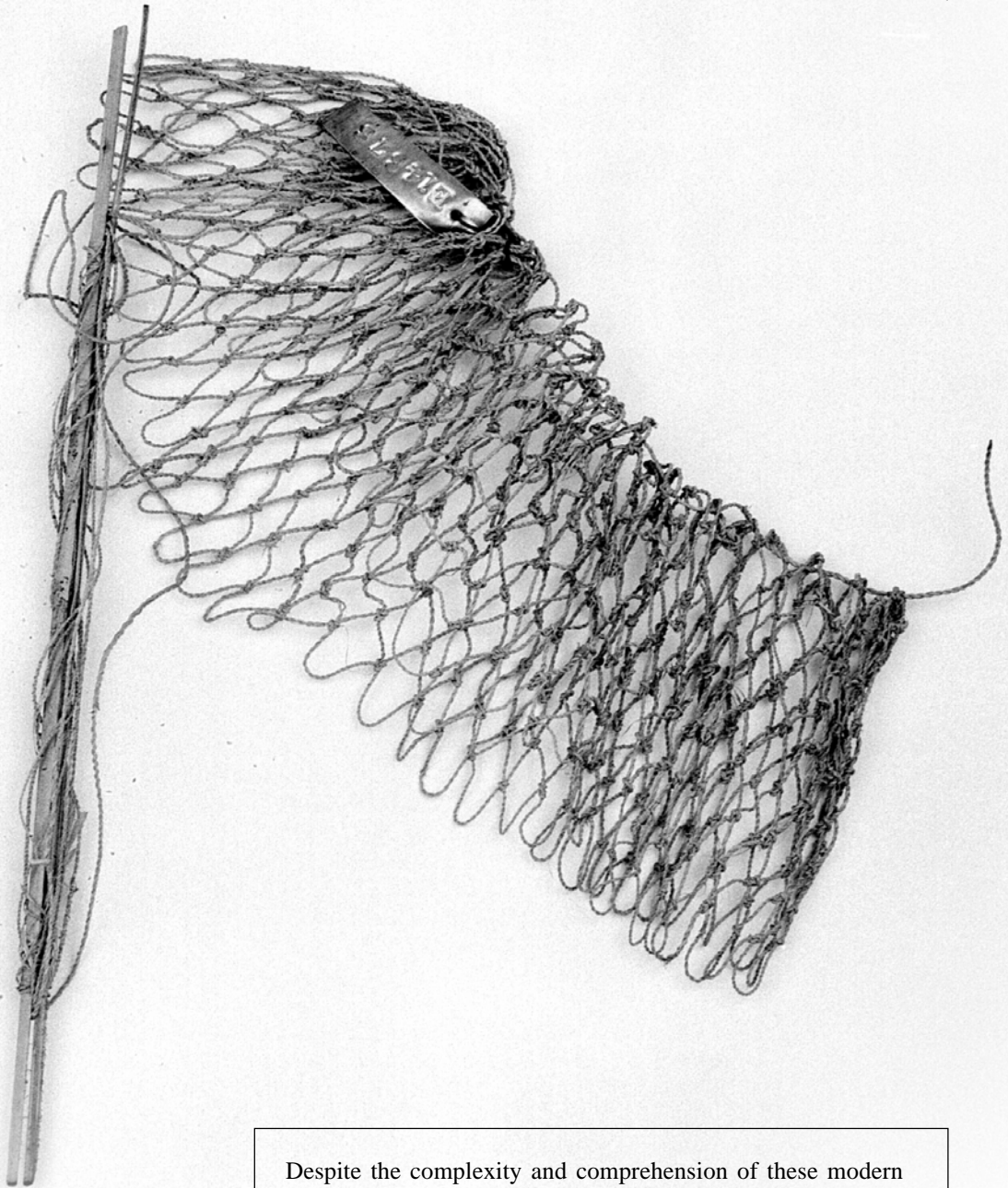
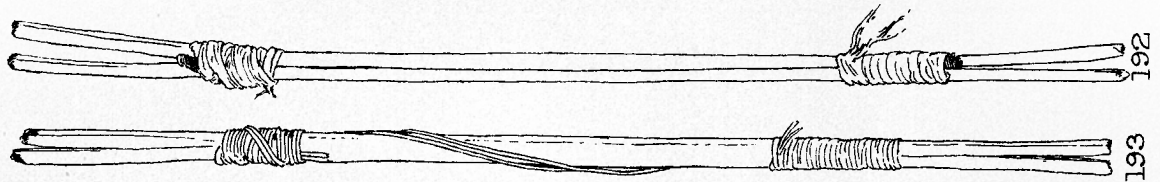
Back issues may be purchased at the Australian Museum Shop or online at

www.amonline.net.au/shop/

© 2004 Australian Museum
The Australian Museum, Sydney
No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission of the Editor.
Published 4 February 2004
Recommended retail price: AU\$50.00
Printed by RodenPrint Pty Ltd, Sydney
ISSN 1031-8062
ISBN 0 7310 1178 3 (set)
ISBN 0 9750 4761 2 (v4)

The **cover image**—an orchid belt collected from the Embley River, Cape York Peninsula, and carefully preserved at the Australian Museum for more than 100 years (Registered E.14674). Roth noted that people living around the Pennefather, Lower Batavia (now the Wenlock) and Embley Rivers made bright yellow waist and shoulder belts from the prepared outer layer of the rock lily orchid, *Dendrobium bigibbum*... women made the belts by overcasting two strands of fibre twine stretched between two sticks, or between one stick and the big toe... Roth's detailed illustrations are reproduced in the present work on p. 103.

Australian Museum Scientific Publications is committed to open access to the scientific literature and, since 1999, our three serial titles have been released as PDF files, free of charge, at our website. These and many other works may also be purchased as bound issues from the Australian Museum Shop.



Despite the complexity and comprehension of these modern studies, therefore, it is ironic that the old ethnographers, Curr, Roth and Howitt contain more specific ethnographic detail on some matters than most of them... There are academic virtues in concentrating upon nineteenth century data.

D.J. Mulvaney, 1976.
The Chain of Connection: The Material Evidence.
In *Tribes and Boundaries in Australia*, ed. N. Peterson, p. 74.
Social Anthropology Series 10. Canberra: AIAS.

**Catalogue of the Roth Collection
of Aboriginal Artefacts from North Queensland**

Volume 4

**Items collected from Nassau River, Night Island,
Palmer River, Peak Point Electric Telegraph Office,
Princess Charlotte Bay, Staaten River, Starcke River,
Tinaroo, Tully River, Vanrook and Weipa (Embley River),
in 1896–1903**

KATE KHAN

Australian Museum, 6 College Street, Sydney NSW 2010, Australia

katek@austmus.gov.au

KHAN, KATE, 2004. Catalogue of the Roth Collection of Aboriginal Artefacts from North Queensland, volume 4. Items collected from Nassau River, Night Island, Palmer River, Peak Point Electric Telegraph Office, Princess Charlotte Bay, Staaten River, Starcke River, Tinaroo, Tully River, Vanrook and Weipa (Embley River), in 1896–1903. *Technical Reports of the Australian Museum* 18: 1–112.

Contents

Preface	5
Introduction	5
Who was Dr Roth and why is his collection important?	10
Complete list of Roth Bulletins and other publications	13
Places in Cape York where Roth collected the artefacts	16
Regional catalogues	16
Nassau River	17
The people	17
Weapons	17
Night Island	19
The people	19
Containers	18
Palmer River	21
The people	22
Charms	22
Containers	24
Death Pointers	28
Dress and ornament	28
Fire sticks	32
Fishing equipment	33
Raw materials	35
Tools	35
Spindles	38
Weapons	39
Peak Point Telegraph Station	41
The people	41
Containers	42
Princess Charlotte Bay	43
The people	44
Containers	44
Dress and ornament	45
Fishing equipment	46
Tools	48
Weapons	55
Staaten River	57
The people	57
Containers	58
Death pointer	65
Dress and ornament	66
Fishing equipment	73
Mourning objects	74
Raw material	75
Tools	75
Weapons	77
Starcke River	81
The people	81
Containers	81
Raw material	84
Secret/sacred object	84
Tinaroo	85
The people	85
Weapons	86
Tully River	87
The people	88
Dress and ornament	88
Message stick	91
Raw material	91
Tools	92
Traps	93
Weapons	94
Vanrook	95
The people	95
Dress and ornament	95
Weipa and the Embley River	97
The people	98
Dress and ornament	99
Fire making equipment	104
Food	104
Tools	105
Weapons	106
References	107
Index	109

Preface

This is the fourth and final catalogue in this series on the Roth collection of Aboriginal artefacts from Cape York Peninsula, held at the Australian Museum. These catalogues will make it easier for people to gain access to this material which was gathered together over 100 years ago.

Information presented here is from both the objects and the 18 Roth Bulletins and Reports published between 1898–1910. Like most 19th and early 20th century writings, the Bulletins are written in a manner that is at times, difficult to understand, and there is no index. Production of these new regional catalogues by the Australian Museum should make the older works easier to understand and 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 Photography Section of the Australian Museum, Ric Bolzan, Carl Bento and Stuart Humphreys. The catalogues were designed by the late 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.

The first volume was produced in 1993 as part of the Museum's participation in the International Year of the World's Indigenous People.

Ian Loch of the Malacology Division of the Australian Museum and Philip Colman, previously of the Malacology Division, but now Research Associate of the Australian Museum, kindly checked scientific names of shells mentioned in the Roth Bulletins. Peter Hind of the National Herbarium, Royal Botanical Gardens, Sydney was most helpful in checking botanical names. Dr Betty Meehan made

many helpful suggestions when the project was in the conceptual stage. Geoff Wharton, consultant historian has offered critical advice. Staff of the Australian Museum Library gave invaluable assistance when I was pursuing obscure references.

A special thanks to Drs Jim Specht and Val Attenbrow in the Branch of Anthropology at the Australian Museum who spent long hours over the manuscript and offered many useful comments and constructive criticisms, and to Dr Shane McEvey for his editorial assistance.

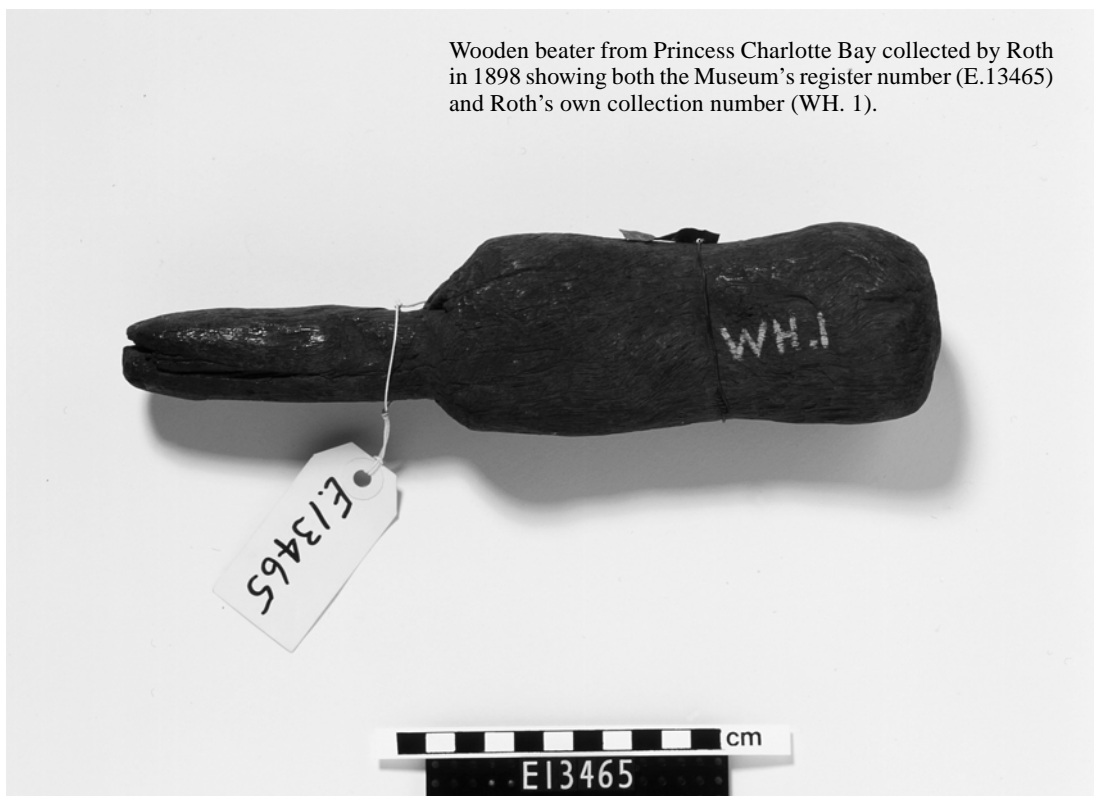
Introduction

These catalogues are about the Roth collection from Cape York Peninsula—a collection of Aboriginal artefacts gathered together by the First Protector of Aboriginals in north Queensland, Dr Walter Edmund Roth between 1898 and 1904.

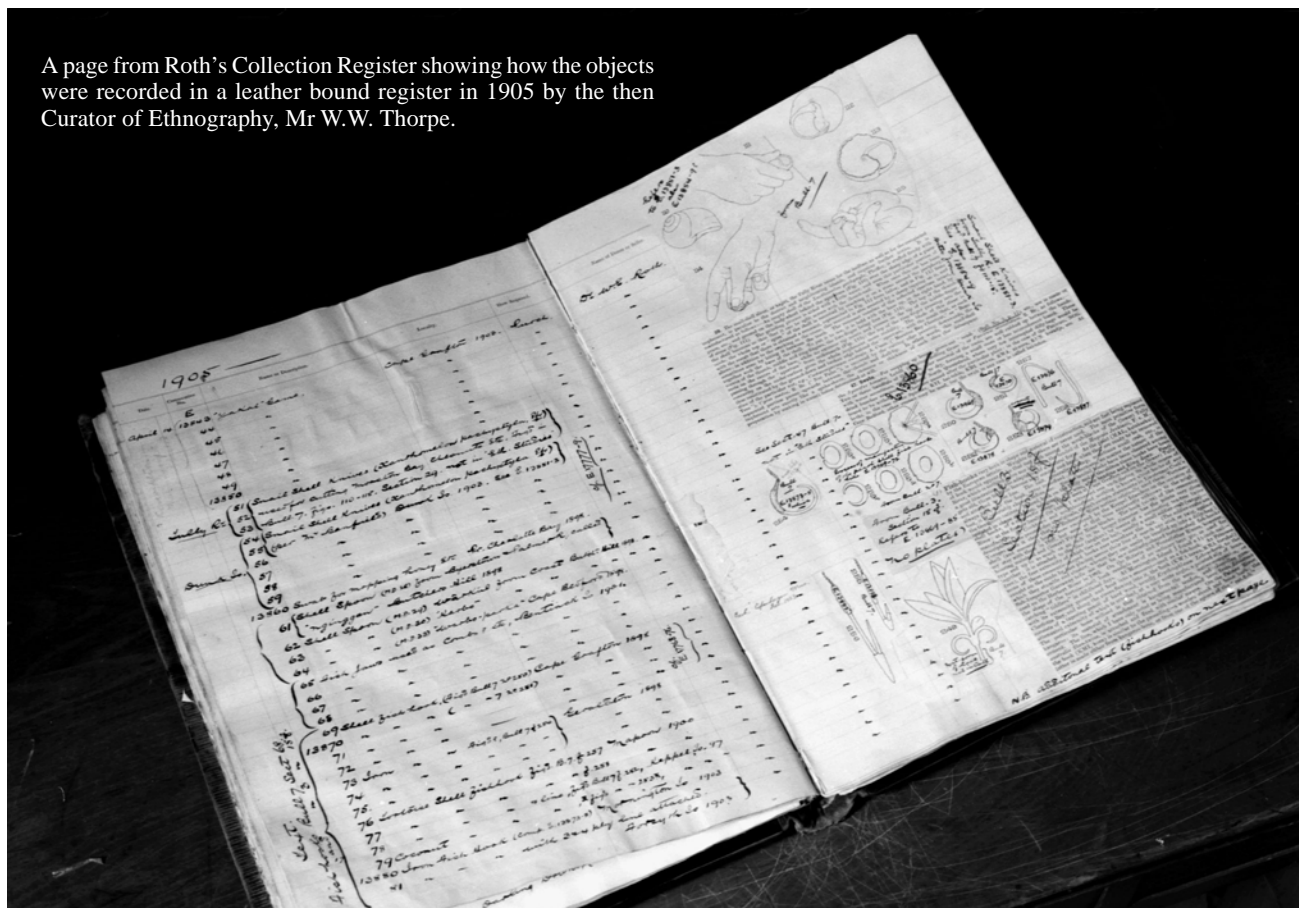
Some 2000 artefacts (from Queensland, the Northern Territory, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania) and 308 photographic negatives were purchased by the Australian Museum from Dr Roth on 25 February 1905 for 450 Australian pounds. The Museum also holds other north Queensland material collected by Roth which was either donated or sold to the Museum on other occasions. These artefacts also have been included in the Cape York Peninsula catalogues.

When artefacts arrive at the Museum they are given registered numbers. This number is written on the object in permanent black or white ink and painted over with a coat of clear varnish to protect it. The same number, along with descriptive and locational information, is written in a large, leather bound register, on catalogue cards, and 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 after the Museum registration number in the Collection information section.



A page from Roth's 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.



List of registered artefacts collected by Roth

- A Major purchase 25 February 1905
 E.13317–E.13656 Queensland
 E.13683–E.15154 Queensland
 E.13657–E.13658 New South Wales
 E.13659–E.13665 Victoria
 E.13668–E.13682 Victoria
 E.13666–E.13667 Tasmania
 E.15275–E.15316 Tasmania (stone tools)
 E.15155–E.15274 Skeletal material, which is not included in this regional catalogue (see Museum policy on skeletal remains)
 V.2077–V.2316 Photographic negative collection held by the Photography Section, Australian Museum.
 V.2530–V.2597
- B Purchases and donations made at other times, additional to the major Roth collection purchase of 1905.
- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|---|
| December 1899 | E.8825–E.8885 | Queensland (mainly ochres and examples of edible shellfish) |
| January 1900 | E.8972–E.8980 | |
| | E.8982–E.8987 | |
| February 1900 | E.8996–E.9033 | |
| August 1900 | E.9482–E.9483 | |
| January 1901 | E.9722–E.9755 | |
| September 1901 | E.10173 | |
| December 1901 | E.10405–E.10419 | |
| October 1905 | E.15725 | Queensland (canoe and paddle) |
| February 1907 | E.16395–E.16397 | Skeletal material (not included in this catalogue) |
| August 1920 | E.26065–E.26124 | Tasmania (stone tools) |

Museum policy on skeletal remains

The Museum actively supports the return of Aboriginal skeletal remains to Aboriginal communities for reburial. Nearly all skeletal material collected by Roth collection has been returned to communities for reburial. This repatriation programme is run by the Museum's Aboriginal Heritage Unit.

Museum policy on secret/sacred material

Secret/sacred material is not collected by the Museum unless specific legitimate requests are received from Aboriginal communities to store material on their behalf.

The secret/sacred material held by the Museum is housed in a separate keeping place which has restricted access. The secret/sacred material in the Roth collection is stored here.

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

How to find the Roth material in this catalogue

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 (AIATSIS), Canberra. Artefacts in the 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. The objects and places included in each of the four volumes are summarized later in this introduction.

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 over a 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.

There is a separate section on each region. The information has been organized 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 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.

4 Collection information. Here in numerical order is listed all the information to be found in the Museum registers, catalogue cards and the computerized database, including measurements and descriptions of objects. This

REG. NO.: E.13335	DATE: 21 MAR. 1905	ITEM: BI-CORNUAL BARK BASKET
GEOG. AREA [VALIDATION]: AThERTON, NTH. QUEENSLAND		
		ATAS AREA: Y
DON/PURCH/COLL/EXCH: WALTER EDMUND ROTH, 25 MARCH 1905		
COLLECTOR: W.E. ROTH	COLL. DATE: 1898	COLL. NO.: W.T. 12
MAKER/S:	AGE:	M/F LANG. GP.:
LOCAL NAME - LANGUAGE:		
FUNCTION/USER(S): USED TO CARRY WATER AND HONEY.		
ARCHIVES: R2, R.6/1905/PURCH. SCH.6/1905		
REFERENCES: W.E. ROTH, <u>NTH. QUEENSLAND ETHNOGRAPHY</u> , Bulletin. 7, pp. 13-14, 30, 1904.		
OBJECT HISTORY:		
REMARKS: FOUND ONLY WHERE SIMILARLY SHAPED WOVEN BASKETS WERE MADE, I.E. HERBERT RIVER, CARDWELL, CAIRNS, AThERTON.		

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

Both sides of a catalogue card used today to record the known information about an object, including a photograph.

information is especially useful if you wish to visit the Museum to look at a particular object. You can ask to see 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 photograph from the Museum’s Photographic Section.
- 6 **Useful written information.** This lets you know where all the written information for the object in this catalogue can be found.
- 7 **Scientific names of materials used.** Scientific names used by Roth for the plants and animals he wrote about are listed here so the reference can be located in the Bulletins, together with the name in use today if it has changed.

Plants and animals are given a name by scientists. Each plant or animal is given a unique scientific name consisting of two parts: the genus and the species. The “genus” is a name shared by closely related species. The second name is the “species” name. This name identifies a specific plant or animal in a group of related plants or animals. Here is an example: *Eucalyptus tetradonta*, *Eucalyptus* is the group or generic name. There is a group of related species of tree collectively called *Eucalyptus*. The *Eucalyptus* tree being referred to here is the one called *tetradonta* or more precisely *Eucalyptus tetradonta*.

Sometimes (but not always) reference is made to the scientist who described and named the plant or animal. So “*Eucalyptus tetradonta* F.v.M” was originally recognized as a distinct species and named by Ferdinand von Mueller.

Sometimes scientific names change as more information becomes available. The most common change results from the mistake of giving a name to a species that has already been named. When synonyms (two different names for the same plant or animal) are discovered international convention normally rules that the older name should be used.

The same name should be used consistently around the world. Therefore scientific names (e.g., *Melo amphora*) are valuable because they are internationally consistent unlike non-scientific names (e.g., a melon shell). A scientist in Russia, South America or Iceland will know exactly what *Melo amphora* is but they might think about different shells if the name “melon shell” is used.

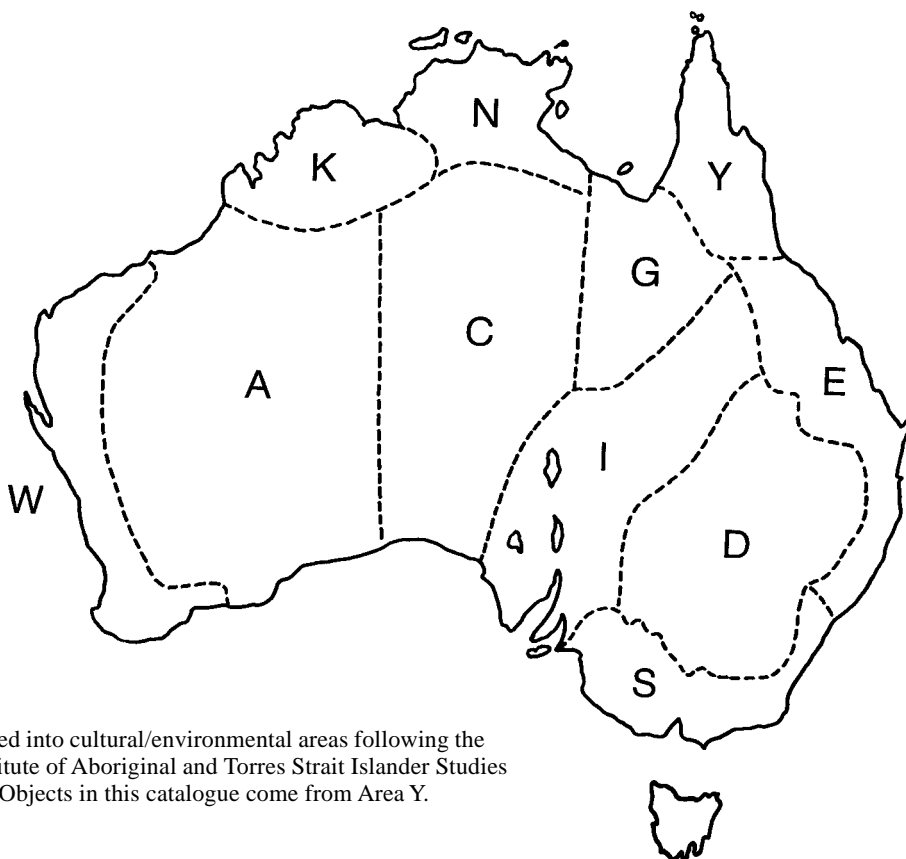
How to get help

If you want to visit the Australian Museum to look at the collection, borrow objects, order photographs or use the Library to read Roth’s publications, you should contact the Collection Manager (phone 02 9320 6195) or the Aboriginal Heritage Unit (phone 02 9320 6192). If you wish to contact the Photography Section direct, the telephone number is 02 9320 6133. The direct line to the Museum Library is 02 9320 6164. The Museum switchboard number is 02 9320 6000. The Anthropology Division fax number is 02 9320 6040. General information also can be obtained by referring to the Museum’s website, www.austmus.gov.au. Please ring or write first if you want to look at the collections some of which may not be on public display.

As well as Aboriginal Project Officers and an Aboriginal Heritage Unit, there is always an Aboriginal representative on the Board of Trustees, appointed by the Museum Trust. Communities are welcome to give the Museum their opinion or advice on the management of collections from their areas.

If you have information about artefacts and the people who made them, and would like to have this information recorded at the Museum for future generations to learn about the rich cultural heritage of Aboriginal people, we would like to hear from you.

If you want to visit us, the Museum’s address is The Australian Museum, 6 College Street, Sydney NSW 2010.



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

Addresses of institutions

If you wish to do further research on Aboriginal material culture or history of north Queensland, the following institutions may be able to help you

Canberra

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)

Acton Peninsula
Lawson Crescent
ACTON ACT 2601
GPO Box 553
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Phone 02 6246 1123 or fax 02 6257 5216
Reference Library
Phone 02 6246 1175, fax 02 6246 1113
deveni@aiatsis.gov.au
The audiovisual archives can be accessed through
audiovisual@aiatsis.gov.au
Print material can be accessed through
ref@aiatsis.gov.au or phone 02 6246 1182.

The National Museum of Australia,

Acton Peninsula
Lawson Crescent
ACTON ACT 2601
GPO Box 1901
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Phone 02 6208 5000
Library: phone 02 6208 5112

The Museum now houses the large collection of Aboriginal material culture formerly held in the Institute of Anatomy, Canberra. This includes material from north Queensland collected by F.D. McCarthy in the 1960s.

The National Library of Australia

Parke Place
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Phone 02 6262 1111, fax 02 6257 1703
infoserv@NLA.gov.au

A good place to search for early documents and photographs.

Sydney

The Mitchell Library

State Library of New South Wales
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Phone 02 9273 1414, fax 02 9273 1255.

A good source of documents of early settlements, sketches, photographs, newspaper cuttings, books by explorers, some of W.E. Roth's original manuscripts on microfiche.

The National Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney

Mrs Macquarie's Road
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Phone 02 9231 8155

The botanists will help identify plants used in making artefacts.

Brisbane

The Queensland Museum

corner Grey & Melbourne Streets
SOUTH BRISBANE QLD 4101
PO Box 3300
SOUTH BRISBANE QLD 4101
Phone 07 3840 7635, fax 07 3846 1918

The Museum holds about 300 objects collected by Roth, as well as other material from north Queensland.

The State Library of Queensland

South Bank Building, Level 2
SOUTH BANK QLD 4101
PO Box 3488
SOUTH BANK QLD 4101
Phone 07 3840 7666, fax 07 3846 2421.

The John Oxley Library

South Bank Building, Level 4
SOUTH BANK QLD 4101
PO Box 3488
South Bank QLD 4101
Phone 07 3840 7880, fax 07 3846 2421.

Both libraries have good reference material on early settlement of north Queensland. Excellent resource centres for early photographs documents and letters.

Queensland State Archives

435 Compton Road
RUNCORN QLD 4109
PO Box 1397
SUNNYBANK HILLS QLD 4109
Phone 07 3875 8755

Good source of early documents on north Queensland.

Queensland Herbarium

Meiers Road
INDOOROOPILLY QLD 4068
Phone 07 3896 9326.

The botanists will help identify plants used in making artefacts.

Townsville

James Cook University of North Queensland

Angus Smith Drive
TOWNSVILLE QLD 4811
Phone 07 4781 4111

The History Department has an interesting collection of tapes made by Aboriginal people talking about the early days in north Queensland.

Adelaide

The Lutheran Church Archives Office

101 Archer Street
NORTH ADELAIDE SA 5006
Phone 08 8267 1737, fax 08 8267 7310

The Lutheran Church Office holds early records and photographs of mission history in north Queensland.

The South Australian Museum

North Terrace
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Phone 08 8207 7500

The Museum has N.B. Tindale's notes and photographs of early work in north Queensland. It also holds some material of Ursula McConnel who worked in north Queensland in the 1930s.

Who was Dr Roth and why is his collection important?

In 1905, the Australian Museum bought the Roth collection of approximately 2000 objects. For its time it was one of the most well documented and diverse collections of Aboriginal artefacts ever gathered together by one person.

Walter Edmund Roth was born in London on 2 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 Aborigines...

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 Roth 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 fulfilment 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...



Walter Edmund Roth in outback northern Queensland.
Roth negative, Australian Museum collection.

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...

from Papers of A.G. Stephens, vol. 7.
R.-Y. Mitchell ref. A.2303.
[Stephens was the editor of *The Bookfellow*.]

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 by bringing to their attention 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 using packhorses as his sole means of transport, his industry was remarkable. He was able to write to W.E. Parry-Okeden, Police Commissioner of Queensland, 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 Mulun from Cape Bedford in May 1898, translated, reads:

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: 32.

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

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 accounts 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 make up the cultural life of a people.

The first three of his north Queensland 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 1902 he wrote:

The time has, in my opinion, now arrived when it is imperative that various areas in the extreme Western and Gulf districts be dedicated wholly and solely to the natives. A reserve half full of occupation licences (i.e., annual leases held by private occupiers) will not answer the purpose. The whole question resolves itself into one of either sacrificing many human lives, or losing a few pounds derived from rents. So long as the land can be taken up at a few shillings per square mile, and no provision made for the dependent blacks who can and are being hunted off it, there will be trouble. The stockowner naturally does his best for his cattle—one cannot for a moment blame him—while I do the best I can for my blacks. The value of one human life, not matter the colour of skin which clothes it, is more to me than that of all the cattle in creation.

W.E. Roth. 1903. Annual Report of the Northern Protector of Aboriginals for 1902. p. 23. Brisbane: Government Printer.

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 sold a quantity of ethnological specimens, the property of the Queensland government, to the Australian Museum in Sydney.

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

The Dr Roth Scandal—Ruptions 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 Pomeroy 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 in 1928 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.

While some of his actions and terms used when writing about Aboriginal people would be unacceptable now, Dr Roth was a man ahead of his time. In an age when Aboriginal people were being exploited and killed he was busy defending their rights, protecting them from unscrupulous employers, trying to change attitudes of officials who had close dealings with Aboriginal people and recording what he saw as a rich culture of a people under threat.

Ethnographer and physician, Roth was a pioneering humanitarian in territory renowned for “boong bashers”, exploitation of Aboriginal labour and even worse. It is forever to be regretted that his suggestion for a reserve on the east coast of the Peninsula (about Princess Charlotte Bay and inland to Breeza Plains) was never implemented. While Aboriginal communities on the west coast now thrive and expand, the linguist or anthropologist must reconstruct the situation in the east as best he is able, taking account of records such as Roth left behind... Roth's well-documented case was lost, and we are richer, not in humanity, but at least in the impotent documentation.

Bruce A. Sommer, 1976. W.E. Roth's Peninsular Vocabularies. In *Languages of Cape York*, ed. P. Sutton, p. 127. Australian Aboriginal Studies. Research & Regional Studies No. 6, AIAS, Canberra.

Roth was Honorary Member of the Anthropological Societies of Berlin and Florence, 1902; President of the Anthropological Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Hobart, Tasmania, 1902; Honorary Fellow, Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, 1932; Honorary Fellow, American Anthropological Association, 1932, and was awarded the Clarke Medal from the Royal Society of NSW for original researches in Natural Sciences.

References

Further information on north Queensland at the turn of the century can be obtained from these books. This is not an exhaustive list.

- Franklin, K., 1994. *Records Guide Volume 1: A Guide to Queensland Government Records Relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples*. Brisbane, Queensland: State Archives & Dept. of Family Services & Aboriginal & Islander Affairs. Hesperian Press, 1984. Facsimile of Roth's Bulletins under the title *The Queensland Aborigines*, 3 vols.
- Lees, W., 1902. *The Aboriginal Question in Queensland: How It Is Being Dealt With*. Brisbane: The City Printing Works.
- Loos, N.A., 1974. Dutch relations in North Queensland. 1606–1756. *Queensland Heritage*, November, 3(1): 3–8.
- Loos, N., 1982. *Invasion and Resistance. Aboriginal-European Relations on the North Queensland Frontier 1861–1897*. Canberra: ANU Press.
- Reynolds, B., 1988. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Vol. 11, pp. 463–464. [Entry on W.E. Roth].
- Reynolds, H., 1982. *The Other Side of the Frontier: Aboriginal Resistance to the European Invasion of Australia*. Victoria: Penguin Books.
- Reynolds, H., 1987. *Frontier, Aborigines, Settlers and Land*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.
- Reynolds, H., 1989. *Dispossession. Black Australians and White Invaders*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.
- Roth, W.E., 1903. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 5. Superstition, magic and medicine. Brisbane: Government Printer, pp. 1–42, photography 1–41.
- 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. Brisbane: Government Printer, pp. 1–23.
- Roth, W.E., 1904. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 7. Domestic implements, arts, and manufactures. Brisbane: Government Printer, pp. 1–34, pls. 1–16.
- Roth, W.E., 1905. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 8. Notes on government, morals, and crime. Brisbane: Government Printer, pp. 1–12, pls. 1–4.
- 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 [of the *Records of the Australian Museum*]. (Footnote, Bulletin 9, 1907, p. 1)
- Roth, W.E., 1907. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 9. Burial ceremonies, and disposal of the dead. *Records of the Australian Museum* 6(5): 365–403, pls. 68–74. (Walter E. Roth was now Magistrate of the Pomeroun District, British Guyana).
- Roth, W.E., 1908. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 10. Marriage ceremonies and infant life. *Records of the Australian Museum* 7(1): 1–17, pls. 1–3.
- 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* 7(2): 74–107, pls. 17–21.
- Roth, W.E., 1909. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 12. On certain initiation ceremonies. *Records of the Australian Museum* 7(3): 166–185, pls. 50–56.
- Roth, W.E., 1909. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 13. Fighting weapons. *Records of the Australian Museum* 7(4): 189–211, pls. 58–61.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 14. Transport and trade. *Records of the Australian Museum* 8(1): 1–19, figs. 1–13, pls. 1–7.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 15. Decoration, deformation and clothing. *Records of the Australian Museum* 8(1): 20–54, figs. 14–30, pls. 8–10.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 16. Huts and shelters. *Records of the Australian Museum* 8(1): 55–66, figs. 31–42, pls. 11–17.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 17. Postures and abnormalities. *Records of the Australian Museum* 8(1): 67–78, figs. 43–51, pls. 18–24.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 18. Social and individual nomenclature. *Records of the Australian Museum* 8(1): 79–106, pls. 25–31.
- In 1984 Hesperian Press, Carlisle, Western Australia, published a facsimile edition of the Roth Bulletins and his *Ethnological Studies among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines* under the title *The Queensland Aborigines*, volumes I–III, Aboriginal Studies Series 2–4, edited by K.F. MacIntyre.

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. Brisbane: Government Printer, pp. 1–15, pls. 1–19.
- 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. Brisbane: Government Printer, pp. 1–35.
- Roth, W.E., 1901. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 3. Food: its search, capture and preparation. Brisbane: Government Printer, pp. 1–31, figs. 1–23.
- Roth, W.E., 1902. North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 4. Games, sports and amusements. Brisbane: Government Printer, pp. 1–24, pls. 1–38.

Other Publications of Walter Edmund Roth

- Roth, W.E., 1888. *Theatre hygiene*. Report of the First Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, Sydney August–September, vol. 1. Proceedings Section H: 514–525.
- Roth, W.E., 1897. *Ethnological Studies among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*. Brisbane: Government Printer. p. 199.
- Roth, W.E., 1897. Letter to A.G. Stephens, 22 December 1897. Papers of A.G. Stephens, vol. 7, R.-Y. Mitchell Library, Sydney.
- Roth, W.E., 1897–1900. Reports on Aborigines of Queensland. n.p. 1897–1900. Uncat. MS. Mitchell Library, Sydney. [Report to the Commissioner of Police, Queensland] *The Initiation Ceremony of the Kiko-Yimidir-speaking Aborigines* (Cooktown Vicinity). Cooktown, 20 June 1889.
- Report [to the Commissioner of Police, Queensland] The Aborigines of the Rockhampton and surrounding coast districts. Also included is a list of Aboriginal words of the Gilbert River District drawn up by H. Stuart-Russell around 1894–95. Cooktown, 6 July 1898.
- Report [to the Commissioner of Police, Queensland]. Some Ethnological notes on the Atherton Blacks, with vocabularies. Cooktown, October 1898.
- Report [to the Commissioner of Police, Queensland]. Some of the plants of economic value to the coastal aborigines of North East Queensland, with notes on their preparation, uses, native names etc. Cooktown, December 1898.
- Report [to the Commissioner of Police, Queensland] on the Aborigines occupying the hinter land (sic) of Princess Charlotte Bay, together with a preface containing suggestions for their better protection and improvement. Cooktown, 30 December 1898.
- Letter [to the Commissioner of Police, Queensland] from Magdalen Mulum of the Cape Bedford Mission [she is speaking Koko-yimidir—the local Cooktown language. W.E.R.]. Cooktown, 23 March 1899.
- Report [to the Commissioner of Police, Queensland]. The Rock Paintings of Clack's Island. Cooktown, 11 April 1899.
- Report [to the Commissioner of Police, Queensland]. An account of the Ko-Ko-minni aborigines occupying the country drained by the (Middle) Palmer River. Cooktown, 12 May 1899.
- Report [to the Commissioner of Police, Queensland] on the Aborigines of the Pennefather (Coen) River District and other coastal tribes occupying the country between the Batavia and Embley Rivers [visited by the Minister during his last trip]; with vocabularies and anthropometric charts. Cooktown, 8 January 1900.
- Scientific Report [to the Under Secretary, Brisbane] on the natives of the (Lower) Tully River: with an appendix. Cooktown, 19 September 1900. Appendix to the Report on the natives of the (Lower) Tully River. 1901. Cooktown, 7 December 1900.
- Report of a Visit to the Wellesley Islands from 11–27 June 1903. 10 pp., typescript.
- Roth, W.E., 1898. Notes on Social and Individual Nomenclature among certain North Queensland Aborigines. *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Queensland* 12: 39–50.
- Roth, W.E., 1898. Note on an Queensland Aboriginal Drill. *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Queensland* 13: 87.
- Roth, W.E., 1899. Vocabulary list of the Obarindi tribe. MS. Queensland State Archives. Col. ?A.19899.
- Roth, W.E., 1900. *Report of the Northern Protector of Aborigines for 1899*. Brisbane: Government Printer, pp. 1–15.
- Roth, W.E., 1901. *Annual Report of the Northern Protector of Aborigines for 1900*. Brisbane: Government Printer, pp. 1–9.
- Roth, W.E., 1901. *The Carpenteria Blacks: the Wellesley Islands visit by Dr Roth*. Reproduced by Dr P. Memmot. Aboriginal Data Archive, Univ. of Queensland, Brisbane, pp. 1–6.
- Roth, W.E., 1901. *The Food of Aborigines*. *Queenslander*, 9 Nov. p. 882; 30 Nov. p. 1012; 28 December 1228. (Not cited)
- Roth, W.E. n.d. Catalogue of Australian Tokens. “A copy of a manuscript catalogue of Australian tokens prepared by Dr W.E. Roth in connection with a proposed work on the currencies of Australia in which I was collaborating with Dr Roth. The original was lent to Mr W. Astley (Price Warning) but never returned by him” signed: A.F. Bassell Hull.
- Roth, W.E., & A.F.B. Hull. Colonial Currency. “This is a copy of some rough drafts of manuscript prepared by Dr W.E. Roth and myself in connection with a proposed work on the currencies of Australia” signed: A.F. Bassell Hull.
- Roth, W.E., 1902. *Annual Report of the Northern Protector of Aborigines for 1901*. Brisbane: Government Printer, pp. 1–19.
- Roth, W.E., 1903. *Annual Report of the Northern Protector of Aborigines for 1902*. Brisbane: Government Printer, pp. 1–25.
- Roth, W.E., 1902. The Food of the Aborigines. *Queenslander* 4 Jan. p. 12; 11 Jan. pp. 57–58; 25 Jan. p. 171; 8 Feb. p. 294. (Not cited).
- Roth, W.E., 1903. Notes on Savage Life in the Early Days of West Australian Settlement (based on reminiscences collected from F. Robert Austin, Civil Engineer, late Assistant Surveyor, W. A, late Sergeant-at-Arms, Parliament of Queensland, discoverer of the Kimberley Goldfields, W.A.). *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Queensland* 17(2): 45–69, pls. V–VI. (Not cited).
- Roth, W.E., 1903. Report to the Under Secretary, Dept. of Public Lands. Cooktown, 27 June, 11 pp. Typescript.
- Roth, W.E., 1904. *Annual Report of the Chief Protector of Aborigines for 1903*. Brisbane: Government Printer, pp. 1–27. [From this date on the Annual Report was no longer “Northern Protector” but had changed to “Chief Protector”]
- Roth, W.E., 1905. Report of the Royal Commission [Dr Roth] on the Condition of the Natives of Western Australia. Perth (not cited).
- Roth, W.E., 1905. *Annual Report of the Chief Protector of Aborigines for 1904*. Brisbane: Government Printer, pp. 1–23.
- Roth, W.E., 1905. A visit to the people of a little known island. *Bulletin of the American Geographic Society* 37(8): 492–493.
- Roth, W.E., 1906. *Annual Report of the Chief Protector of Aborigines for 1905*. Brisbane: Government Printer, pp. 1–32.
- Roth, W.E., 1908. The Native of the “Never Never”. *World Wide Magazine* 20(120): 556–565.
- Roth, W.E., 1908. Cratch[sic]-cradle in British Guiana. *Revue des Etudes Ethnographiques et Sociologiques*, Paris, April–May 1908: 1–7.
- Roth, W.E., 1908. Australian canoes and rafts. *Man, Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 8: 161–162.
- Roth, W.E., n.d. Old Time Indians. Their Manners and Customs. *Timehri, the Journal of the Royal Agricultural and Commercial Society of British Guiana*: 1–14.
- Roth, W.E., 1909. Some Technological Notes from the Pomeroun District, British Guiana. Part I. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* January–June 1909, XXXIX: 26–34, pls. 1–X.
- Roth, W.E., 1909. Australian Huts and Shelters. *Man, Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 9: 49.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. Some Technological Notes from the Pomeroun District, British Guiana. Part II. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* January–June 1910, XL: 23–38, pls. 1–XIV.
- Roth, W.E., 1911. Some Technological Notes from the Pomeroun District, British Guiana. Part III. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* January–June 1911, XLI: 72–82, pls. V–XIX.

- Roth, W.E., 1912. Some Technological Notes from the Pomeroon District, British Guiana. Part IV. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* January–June 1912, XLII: 529–540, pls. XXXVII–LXV.
- Roth, W.E., 1911. Narcotics and stimulants of the Guianese Indian. *British Guiana Medical Annals*. (Not cited).
- Roth, W.E., 1912. On the Native Drinks of the Guianese Indians. *Timehri* 2. (Not cited).
- Roth, W.E., 1915. An Inquiry into the Animism and Folk-lore of the Guiana Indians. *Accompanying Paper to Thirtieth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* 1908–1909: 103–386.
- Roth, W.E., 1921. Some Examples of Indian Mimicry, Fraud and Imposture. *Timehri* 7. (Not cited).
- Roth, W.E., 1922–1923. Richard Schomburgk's "Travels in Guiana and on the Orinoco, 1835–1839". Translated by W.E. Roth, 1922–1923. (Not cited).
- Roth, W.E., 1924. An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts and Customs of the Guiana Indians. *Thirty-eighth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, 1916–1917: 25–745. [publication delayed due to World War II]
- Roth, W.E., 1929. Additional Studies of Arts, Crafts and Customs of the Guiana Indians, with special reference to those of Southern British Guiana. *Bulletin, Bureau of American Ethnology* 91: 1–110.
- Roth, W.E., 1930. Netcher's History of Guiana. Translated by W.E. Roth, Georgetown.
- Roth, W.E., 1935. *Ethnopornographia*. In *Venus Oceanus (Anthropological Studies in the Sex Life of the South Sea Natives)*, ed. R. Burton, New York: Oceanica Research Press 1935, pp. 365–411.

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

Volume 1 (1993)

Archer River	15 artefacts
Atherton	40 artefacts
Bathurst Head	22 artefacts ¹
Bloomfield River	112 artefacts
Butcher's Hill	28 artefacts

¹ Four artefacts, E.13935–8 are shown in the Roth register as having no locality. However a check of a photocopy of the Roth collection numbers W.80a, b, c, d, relating to these E. registered items are shown they came from Bathurst Head. The entry reads “W.80a, b, c, d. 4 shell hafts ready to put on the womerahs. Bathurst Head, 1899.” The handwriting could have been Roth's but is more likely Robert Etheridge, the Curator. At the bottom of each page is written “OK.RE.” W.W. Thorpe's initials are on the cover page, written “Registration. WWT.” Did W.W. Thorpe forget to transfer the information to the Roth register? The total number of artefacts from Bathurst Head should read 26 artefacts.

Two samples of pigment were collected by Roth and given to the Australian Museum. They were registered on 30 January 1900, and so do not form part of the major Roth collection purchase of 1905. E.8977, yellow pigment, and E.8978, red pigment, were given to the Port Warnambool Museum, Victoria in October 1900.

Volume 2 (1996)

Cairns	32 artefacts
Cape Bedford	74 artefacts ²
Cape Grafton	61 artefacts ³
Cape Melville	3 artefacts
Cardwell	8 artefacts
Clump Point	9 artefacts
Coen	5 artefacts
Cooktown	33 artefacts ⁴
Dunk Island	6 artefacts
False Cape	1 artefact
Flinders Island	11 artefacts
Hambledon	1 artefact
Herberton	8 artefacts
Hinchinbrook Island	1 artefact
Ingham	1 artefact
Innisfail	3 artefacts
Johnstone River	4 artefacts
Kuranda	1 artefact

² Roth collected some white pigment from Cape Bedford and gave it to the Australian Museum. It was registered on 30 January 1900, and so does not form part of the major Roth collection purchase of 1905.

³ E.13451. Roth's collection number C.6. A model outrigger canoe as used at Cape Grafton, Cairns, etc. Made at Yarrabah, 1897. This item was omitted from the Cape Grafton section in Vol. 2 of the Roth Catalogues. Cape Grafton should read 62 artefacts.

The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes “model canoe as used at present at Cape Grafton, Cairns, etc.” Location Yarrabah. Roth's collection number

is C.6. Roth made the model canoe E.13450. Did he also make this one? The squared off canoe is 32.4 cm long, 4 cm wide and 4.8 cm deep. The outrigger is 31 cm long, 1.2 cm wide and 1.6 cm deep. A harpoon is attached to the model canoe. It is 29 cm long, with a barb tied to the tip. It is attached to the canoe with fine handspun fibre string. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4020M, frame 134. There is a reference in the register to Queensland Watercraft, Article 88, Man, JRAI, xxxv, p. 56 et seq.

⁴ Roth collected some edible clay from Cooktown and gave it to the Australian Museum. It was registered on 30 January 1900, and so does not form part of the major Roth collection purchase of 1905.

Volume 3 (2003)

McDonnell Electric Telegraph Office .	1 artefact
McIvor River (p 15)	2 artefacts
Mapoon, the Pennefather River and the Wenlock River (p 17), called the Batavia River by Roth	232 artefacts
Maytown (p 65)	15 artefacts
Mentana (p 71)	1 artefact
Mitchell River	13 artefacts
Morehead River	1 artefact
Moreton Electric Telegraph Office	8 artefacts
Musgrave	5 artefacts

pp 1–33 = www.amonline.net.au/pdf/publications/1371_part_a.pdf
pp 34–68 = www.amonline.net.au/pdf/publications/1371_part_b.pdf
pp 69–106 = www.amonline.net.au/pdf/publications/1371_part_c.pdf

Volume 4 (current volume)

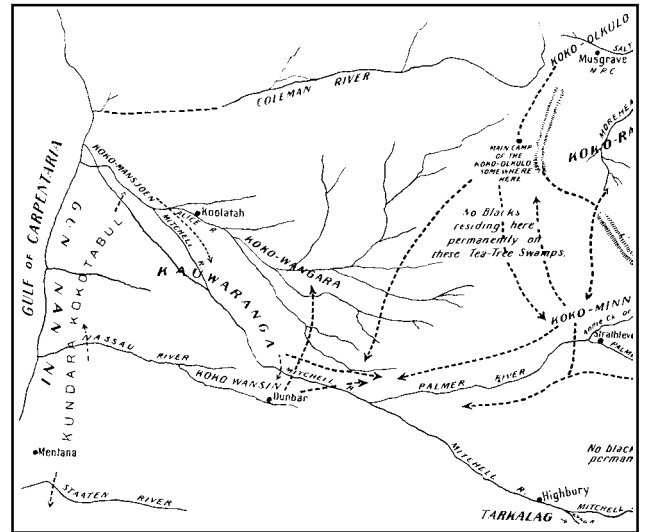
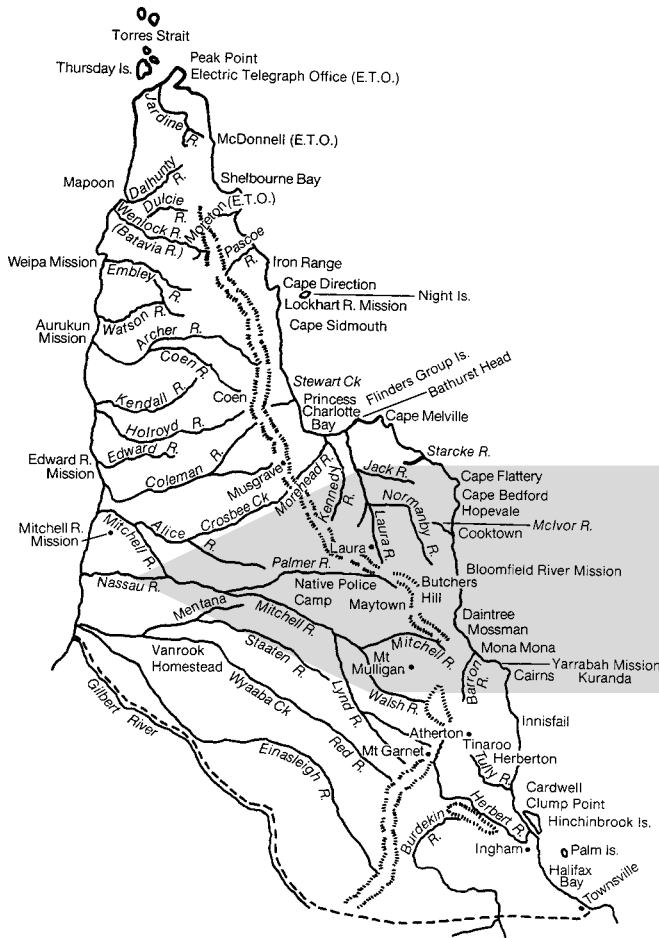
Nassau River	1 artefact
Night Island	1 artefact
Palmer River ⁵	48 artefacts
Peak Point Electric Telegraph Station	2 artefacts
Princess Charlotte Bay	24 artefacts
Staaten River	124 artefacts
Starcke River	6 artefacts
Tinaroo	1 artefact
Tully River	13 artefacts
Vanrook	2 artefacts
Weipa and the Embley River	21 artefacts.

www.amonline.net.au/pdf/publications/1372_part_a.pdf
www.amonline.net.au/pdf/publications/1372_part_b.pdf
www.amonline.net.au/pdf/publications/1372_part_c.pdf

⁵ Often referred to as the Palmer River Native Police camp by Roth.

E.13935 to E.13938 are pieces of *Melo* shell used as hand grips on spearthrowers. Roth gave no location.

There are four shells Roth collected with the locality given as north Queensland. They were registered on 5th February 1900: E.8996 *Macra obesa*; E.8997 12 *Melo diadema* shells, now known as *Melo amphora*; E.8998 19 *Ostrea glomerata*; and E.8999 *Pinna menkei*.



Nassau River

Contents

The people	17
Weapons	18
Spearthrower	18

The people

Two important Gulf tribes... are the Gunanni and the Kundara. The Gunanni are coast-blacks running between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers; they certainly cross the Mitchell and on the south may proceed to the Gilbert River to meet the Kundara whose territory extends down to Normanton; while to the eastwards they do not go further than Dunbar. The main camp of the Gunanni is believed to be in the close proximity of Topsy's Waterhole, not very remote from the New Mitchell River Aboriginal Reserve. The Kundara exercise rights over the coast country between the Nassau and Staaten Rivers. Mentana Station which is in the close neighbourhood of their main camp is called Ngabengamadam.

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 18: 95.

Tindale refers to the Gunanni as the Kokopera people. The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia calls these people living in the low-lying country between the Mitchell and

Nassau Rivers, Koko-bera. They are neighbours of the Yir-Yiront, Kunjen and Koknar peoples. The Kunjen are the people living between the Coleman and Staaten Rivers.

Tindale refers to the Kundara people as the Kwantari. The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia refers to them as the Koknar people.

The Nassau River was originally named the Nassau Revier by the Dutch explorer Jan Carstenszoon on 26 April 1623.

Reference

Horton, D., ed., 1994. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*, pp. 556, 565, 566. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.

Jack, R.L., 1922. *Northmost Australia: Three Centuries of Exploration, Discovery and Adventure in and around the Cape York Peninsula, Queensland*. Melbourne: George Robertson & Co., 295 pp.

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 18: 95.

Tindale, N.B., 1974. *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia. Their Terrain, Environmental Controls, Distribution, Limits and Proper Names*, pp. 177, 179, 277, 286. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Spearthrower.
Collected Lower Nassau River, 1903.
50.2 × 2.7 cm (max.).



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14388

Weapons

Spearthrower

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote that Aboriginal people he identified as the Gunanni, living down the Gulf coast-line between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers called spearthrowers yur-nganya. He made no further reference to spearthrowers used by people living around the Nassau River.

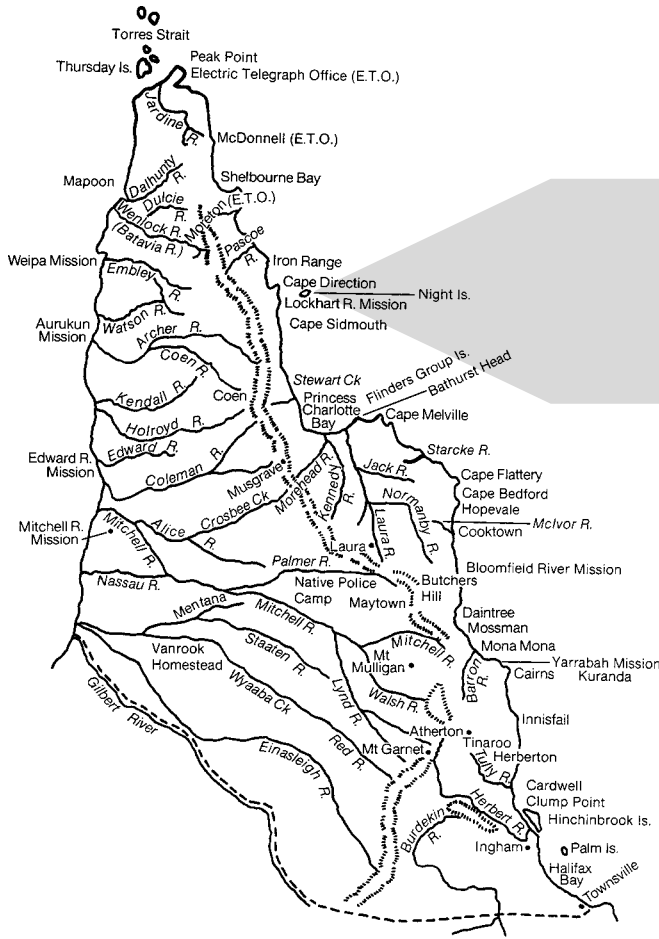
Collection information. There is one spearthrower, collected from the Lower Nassau River by Roth in 1903. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "primitive type".

E.14388 Roth's collection number is W.99. Length of wood with a wooden peg inserted in a split at one end and secured with a length of red and white European cloth. It is 50.2 cm long and 2.7 cm at the widest part.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4137M, frame 1071.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1909. Bulletin 13: 197.



Night Island

Contents

The people	19
Containers	20
Bark knot	20

The people

Roth does not appear to have written anything about the Aboriginal people living on Night Island. Tindale and Thomson refer to them as the Kawadji and state that they live on the Island and the coast opposite, using double-out-riggered wooden canoes as transport. The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia refers to these people as the Uutaalnganu. There are two main groups of Uutaalnganu, the Cape Direction people and the Night Island people.

References

- Horton, D., ed., 1994. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*, p. 1123. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Thomson, D.F., 1972. Kinship and Behaviour in North Queensland. *Australian Aboriginal Studies* No. 51, AIAS, Canberra, map 1, p. 3.
- Tindale, N.B., 1974. *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia. Their Terrain, Environmental Controls, Distribution, Limits and Proper Names*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bark knot container.
Collected Night Island, 1901.
32.6 × 16.6 cm. Mouth 22.6 × 21.3 cm.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13321

Containers

Bark knot container

Information from Roth's Bulletins. This container was made from the gnarled outgrowth that formed on the butt of certain species of *Eucalyptus* trees. The bulging knot was removed from the tree by first hacking around at its base and then using a pointed stick to loosen its edges. The rough interior of the carrier was charred with fire and scraped with shell and stone to smooth it out. Any cracks, splits or holes were repaired with adhesive to make it waterproof. The vessel could be carried about by a handle made of string which was threaded through holes drilled on opposite sides of its free edge. Roth, writing in 1904 said it was comparatively rare to see one. At this time he had seen this type of container in use by Aboriginal people living along the coastline from the Bloomfield River to the northern limits of Princess Charlotte Bay. The largest ones he saw were about 37 cm high and 38 cm wide. Roth said the name given to this container was the same as that from

the tree used. One of his informants, Thomas Petrie, told him containers such as these were used by Aboriginal people living around Brisbane. They were made by men and used to carry honey.

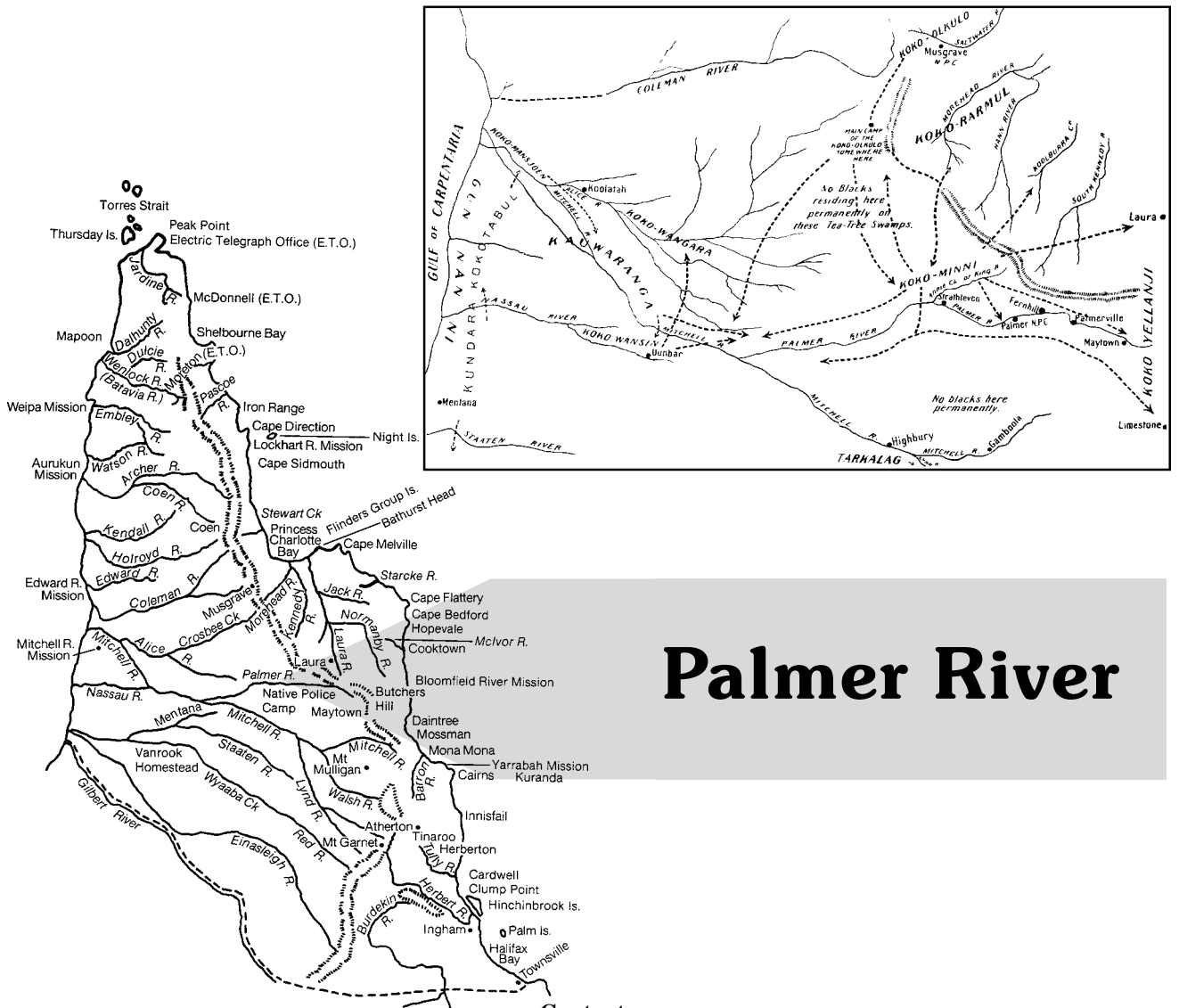
Collection information. There is one bark knot container from Night Island, collected by Roth in 1901. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "water carrier".

E.13321 Roth's collection number is WT.25. Squat, with a rounded base and a flared mouth. Inner surface shows signs of charring, rough scraping and pitting. It is 32.6 cm long and 16.6 cm deep. Mouth 22.6 by 21.3 cm.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4000M, frame 5.

Reference

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



Palmer River

Contents

The people	22
Charms	22
Charm to cause sickness	22
Charm to cause madness	23
Charm to avenge a death	23
Charm to protect a person or possession	24
Containers	24
Woven bags	24
Woven baskets	27
Death pointers	28
Dress and ornament	28
Pandanus armbands	28
Shell chest ornaments	29
Cockatoo feather head ornament	30
Skirts	30
Waist belt	32
Fire sticks	32
Fishing equipment	33
Fish club	33
Fish hook	33
Non-folding oval-frame fishing net	33
Raw materials	35
Pigments	35
Resin	35
Tools	35
Fly-flicks	35
Stone hammers	36
Stone scraper	37
Spindles	38
Weapons	39
Spearthrower	39

The people

The Middle Palmer River District is of interest especially in that the Koko-minni, who occupy it... form the means of communication between natives on the Gulf and East Coasts. These blacks have their main camp, at the head of the King River at a spot known as Irrangga; their country south of the Palmer River they call Churamada, while that which lies north of it is Oninta. They speak of Mt. Daintree as Konongo, Fernhill Mountain as Mo-yeraka, and Strathleven country as Arthau. In 1896 their estimated number was over two hundred. They have a large circle of friends and acquaintances, and visit the Koko-yerlantchi natives on the Laura River, at Maytown which they speak of as Walpom, and Palmerville known to them as Koron. Their fighting expeditions take them westwards down to the junction of the Palmer and Mitchell Rivers, to a locality known as Antalba where they fight the Kauraranga. When after food they travel via Maytown to Limestone—yams being very plentiful on this route—and there come into contact with the Hodgkinson (Union Camp) Blacks, etc. Nowadays they never go in a southerly direction, having been hunted from Gamboola and Highbury. For purposes of trade they travel northwards to meet the Koko-warra, Koko-rarmul, and Koko-olkulo people.

Roth, W.E., 1910, Bulletin 18: 95.

In 1872 a Queensland government expedition led by William Hann found traces of gold on the Palmer River, a tributary of the Mitchell. In September 1873 J.V. Mulligan reported a find of rich alluvial gold, and the biggest gold rush since gold was discovered in NSW and Victoria was under way. It became a time of chaos and conflict.

In late October 1873, a troop of Native Police led 130 miners inland towards the Palmer. On 5 November, their camp "Battle Camp" was attacked by the Guugu-Yimidhirr, who were decimated. They had no hope against the massive influx of miners to the goldfields (15,000 Europeans and 20,000 Chinese in three years).

In January 1874 the wet season trapped 1000 men at the diggings, several hundred more were marooned along the road, and 5000 were waiting at the port of Cooktown for the swollen river to subside. Those at the Palmer had run out of provisions, and as well as fevers, dysentery and typhoid, attacks by Aboriginal people increased. There were riots on the Cooktown waterfront as people fought to get aboard steamers heading south.

The Chinese, following the custom of occupying goldfields abandoned by Europeans who tended to ignore small particles of gold, now took over the Palmer goldfields. By April 1877, there were 17,000 Chinese adult males on the Palmer, but by 1880 the Chinese population had dropped to 3000.

Aboriginal people had, by this time turned the frontier conflict situation to their advantage. They had adapted European articles to meet their needs. Knives were made from beaten bits of hoop iron, wagon lynch pins were beaten into axes and headbands were made from leather bridles.

The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia notes:

The Kokomini formed part of the trading route between the east and West coasts, but that link was broken, dramatically and brutally, by the Palmer gold rush, which polluted rivers, frightened game and introduced drugs and disease. Often the miners simply shot the Kokomini. After the gold rush was

over, pastoralists, needing labour... began enticing people to come in, offering food and tobacco the future of the survivors lay in the cattle stations and towns of inland Cape York. (Horton, 1994: 556)

As Roth collected many artefacts from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, a year before the force was abandoned, a note on the Native Police Force may be helpful. In 1859, Queensland separated from NSW, and one of its responsibilities was the Native Mounted Police Force. Each detachment was led by a senior European officer, who by 1864 was called sub-inspector, sometimes with a subordinate acting sub-inspector, a camp sergeant and about six Aboriginal troopers.

Patrols would be deployed across the frontier districts, travelling about 40 km a day, providing squatters with protection and intimidating Aboriginal people who had no chance of retaliation. The Native Police had superior mobility, European weapons and support of powerful allies in the squatters and thus virtually unchecked power. The Native Police had such an appalling reputation for violence that the government was forced to disband it in 1900.

References

- Bolton, G.C., 1970. *A Thousand Miles Away. A History of North Queensland to 1920*. Canberra: ANU Press.
- Horton, D., ed., 1994. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Holthouse, H., 1967. *River of Gold: The Story of the Palmer River Gold Rush*. Sydney: Angus & Robertson.
- Holthouse, H., 1970. *Up Rode the Trooper*. Adelaide: Rigby.
- Loos, N., 1982. *Invasion and Resistance. Aboriginal-European Relations on the North Queensland Frontier 1861–1897*. Canberra: ANU Press.
- Rosser, B., 1990. *Up Rode the Troopers: The Black Police in Queensland*. St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press.
- Sheehy, D.J., 1991. *A Century at the Top. A History of Telecommunications on Cape York Peninsula in Far North Queensland 1887–1987*. Telecom Australia, July 1987. Revised July 1991. Queensland: Government Printer.

Charms

Charm to cause sickness

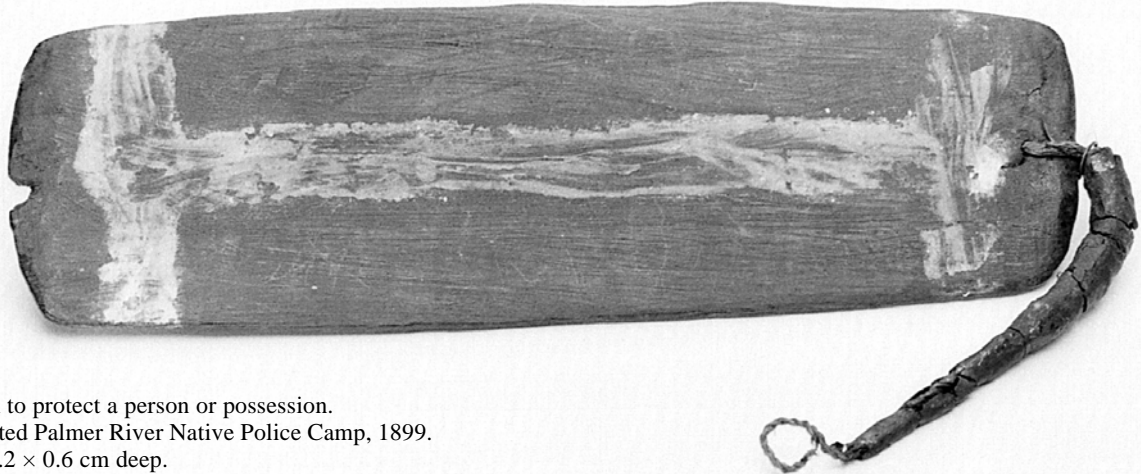
Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth said the Kokomini people living around the Palmer River used a charm called Ti or Eti, to cause someone living a distance away to become ill. Hair, urine or excrement of the victim was placed in the lower part of a shin bone or piece of bamboo, one end covered with adhesive, and the whole lot wound round with twine and wrapped in paperbark, *Melaleuca* sp. The charm was then burnt to make the victim sick. Roth said the two charms he obtained (E.13691–2) showed signs of having been charred.

A medicine man could affect a cure by taking the victim's spear and woven bag to the waterside where they were eaten by a supernatural snake called Opo-ira. He could also throw charcoal-looking pellets into the air to ascertain the direction of the threat.

Collection information. There are two charms from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899. Neither object carries a Roth collection number. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Ti or Eti, death charms of the Kiko-minni tribe. Fig'd. Bull. 5, figs. 22–23".

- E.13691 It is 19.9 cm long, 5 cm wide and 5.4 cm thick. The charm is wrapped in paperbark and bound with handspun bark fibre twine.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13711



Charm to protect a person or possession.
Collected Palmer River Native Police Camp, 1899.
16 × 5.2 × 0.6 cm deep.

E.13692 It is 14.8 cm long, 6.2 cm wide and 5.9 cm thick.
The charm is wrapped in paperbark and bound with
handspun bark fibre twine and human hair string.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs
are available for both charms:

E.13691 negative sheet 4050M, frame 374.
E.13692 negative sheet 4050M, frame 375.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1903. Bulletin 5: 31.

Charm to cause madness

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote about
collecting the charm he called *Marra*, from the river below
Palmerville. He said these elongate charms, formed of
lengths of possum string, coloured red, and wrapped in tea-
tree bark, *Melaleuca* sp., were not made here. They were
brought from Union Camp via Limestone (?NT) and were
much feared. It was believed that if this charm touched one's
body, food or water, that person would go mad.

Collection information. There is one *Marra* charm from
the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in
1899. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated
1905 includes "*Marra* charm for producing madness".

E.13690 It is 30.2 cm long, 4.5 cm wide (max.) and 3.5 cm
thick (max). Possum string lengths bound
together with long strips of paperbark.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph
is available, negative sheet 4050M, frame 373.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1903. Bulletin 5: 32.

Charm to avenge a death

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote that on
the Middle Palmer River a male out to avenge the death of
a relative would wear an ornament called *lin-ji-ila* either
around his forehead to hang over the nape of the neck or
else over the forearm. The elongate, bulbous shaped
ornament, about 15.5 cm long, had at its centre a lump of
black adhesive. The narrower upper end was bound with
kangaroo fur string, the lower end studded with red berries.
These red berries could be either the poisonous *Abrus*

precatorius or from *Adenanthera abrosperma*. When berries
were not available, then kangaroo fur string was used. This
ornament was never worn by a woman.

Collection information. There are five of these death
avenging charms from the Palmer River Native Police
Camp, collected by Roth in 1899. The Australian Museum's
Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Ornament (*ling-
ila* of the Koko-minni tribe) worn at the back of the neck by
any male member when on way to avenge a murder etc."

E.13730 It is 16.5 cm long, 3.2 cm wide and 2.5 cm thick.
Looped handspun bark fibre string is 19 cm long.
Cigar-shaped lump of adhesive, one end decorated
with red berries, the other end bound round with
yellow kangaroo fur string. Handspun bark fibre
string is looped through holes bored at this end.

E.13731 It is 21 cm long, 3 cm wide and 2.7 cm thick.
Looped handspun bark fibre string is 22 cm long.
Cigar-shaped lump of adhesive, one end decorated
with red berries, the other end bound round with
yellow kangaroo fur string. Handspun bark fibre
string is looped through holes bored at this end.

E.13732 It is 14 cm long, 1.9 cm wide and 1.5 cm thick.
Looped handspun bark fibre string is 26 cm long.
Cigar-shaped lump of adhesive bound round with
yellow kangaroo fur string. Handspun bark fibre
string is looped through holes bored at the narrow
end.

E.13733 It is 15 cm long, 1.5 cm wide and 1.4 cm thick.
Looped handspun bark fibre string is 26.8 cm long.
Long, thick strip of adhesive, bound with greenish
coloured kangaroo fur string. Handspun bark fibre
string is looped through holes bored at the narrow
end.

E.13734 It is 14.2 cm long, 2.2 cm wide and 2.4 cm thick.
Looped handspun bark fibre string is 29 cm long.
Cigar-shaped adhesive, bound with a red and cream
coloured fabric. Handspun bark fibre string is
looped through holes bored at the narrow end.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs
are available for all five ornaments

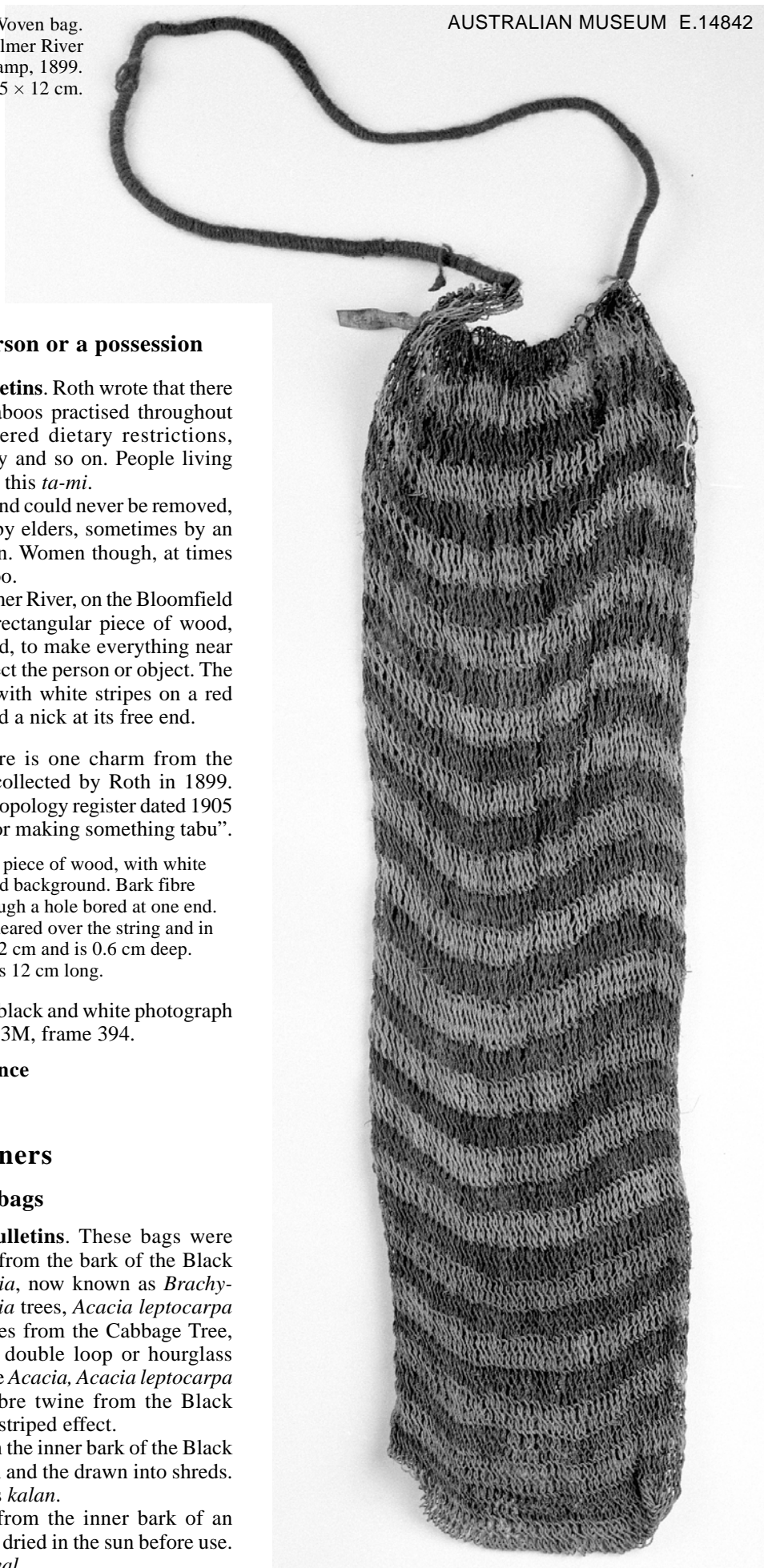
E.13730 negative sheet 4055M, frame 413.
E.13731 negative sheet 4055M, frame 414.
E.13732 negative sheet 4055M, frame 415.
E.13733 negative sheet 4055M, frame 416.
E.13734 negative sheet 4055M, frame 417.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1907. Bulletin 9: 370–371.

Woven bag.
Collected Palmer River
Native Police Camp, 1899.
45 × 12 cm.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14842



Charm to protect a person or a possession

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote that there were certain prohibitions or taboos practised throughout north Queensland. They covered dietary restrictions, personal relationships, property and so on. People living around the Palmer River called this *ta-mi*.

Some taboos were constant and could never be removed, others could be released only by elders, sometimes by an individual, but never by women. Women though, at times had the power to declare a taboo.

People living around the Palmer River, on the Bloomfield River and elsewhere, hung a rectangular piece of wood, with a bark fibre string attached, to make everything near or under it taboo, and thus protect the person or object. The charm was usually decorated with white stripes on a red background, and sometimes had a nick at its free end.

Collection information. There is one charm from the Palmer Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "'Arandal', a charm for making something tabu".

E.13711 It is an oblong shaped piece of wood, with white lines painted over a red background. Bark fibre twine is threaded through a hole bored at one end. Adhesive has been smeared over the string and in the hole. It is 16 by 5.2 cm and is 0.6 cm deep. The bark fibre string is 12 cm long.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4053M, frame 394.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1908. Bulletin 11: 75.

Containers

Woven bags

Information from Roth's Bulletins. These bags were woven from fibre twine made from the bark of the Black Kurrajong, *Sterculia diversifolia*, now known as *Brachychiton populneus*, certain *Acacia* trees, *Acacia leptocarpa* and *Acacia lysiphloea*, or leaves from the Cabbage Tree, *Livistona australis*, using the double loop or hourglass pattern. Red fibre twine from the *Acacia*, *Acacia leptocarpa* often was used with white fibre twine from the Black Kurrajong to give a horizontal striped effect.

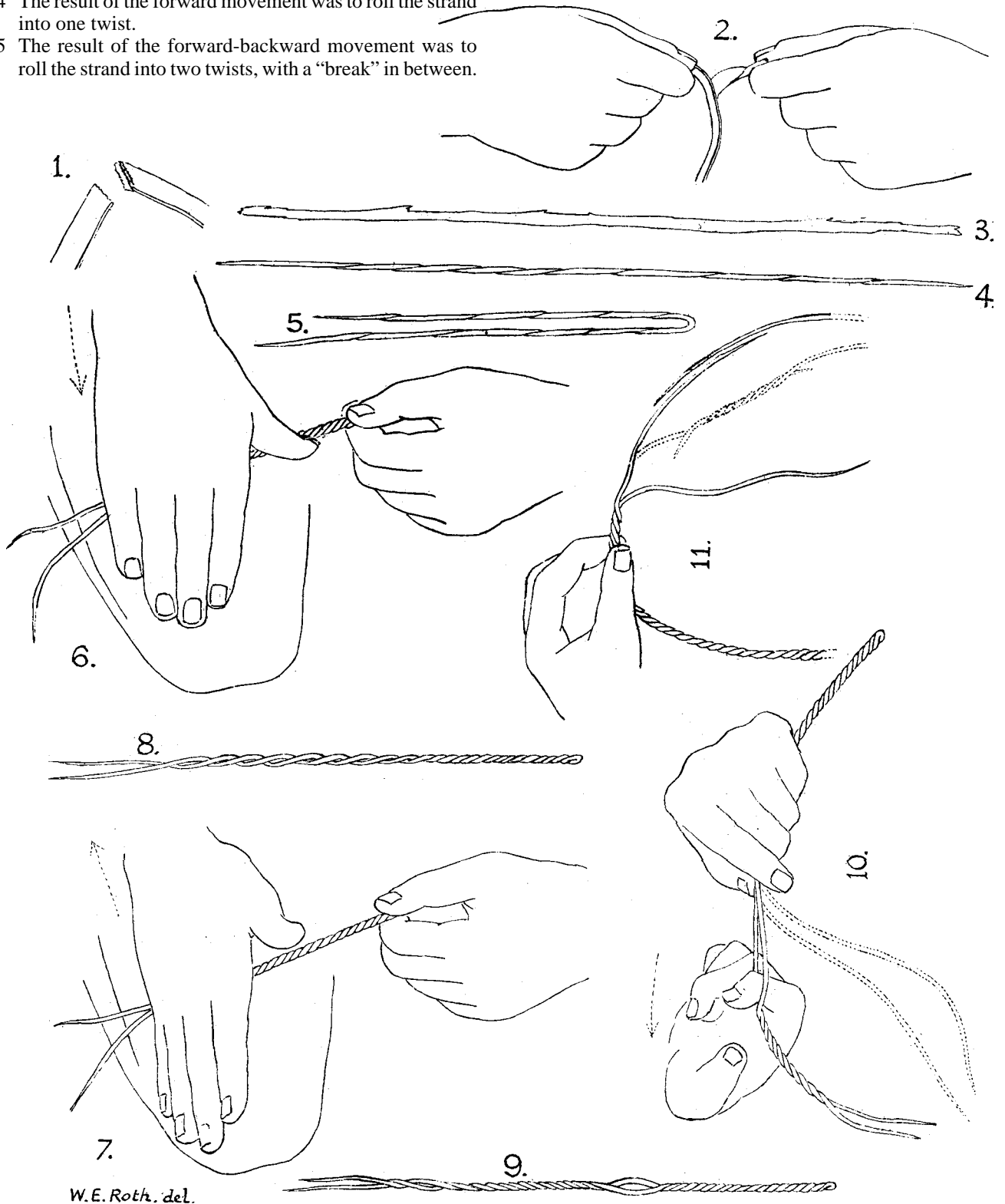
White fibre twine made from the inner bark of the Black Kurrajong, was dried in the sun and the drawn into shreds. Palmer River people called this *kalan*.

Red fibre twine, obtained from the inner bark of an *Acacia*, was washed in water in dried in the sun before use. Local people called this *i-wa-wal*.

Turning fibre into twine was done in the following way, the person squatting on the ground.

- 1 The strip of fibre was rolled with the open hand, forward on the outer thigh. This produced a slight tension, and made the strand stronger.
- 2 The strand was folded in two, and the "bend" held between the left thumb and forefinger.
- 3 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.
- 4 The result of the forward movement was to roll the strand into one twist.
- 5 The result of the forward-backward movement was to roll the strand into two twists, with a "break" in between.

- 6 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.
- 7 As soon as one end of the strand had been reached, another strand was fixed to it by rolling forwards. Roth, in Bulletin 1, plate ii clearly illustrates these steps.



When these bags were woven using the double loop or hourglass pattern, Roth said the local Palmer River people called them *an-ora*; if a netting stitch was used, then they were called *nu-ina*. Roth's drawings, in Bulletin 1, plate x, show how these patterns were made.

Roth said these baskets were found just about everywhere—Normanton, Gilbert River, Cooktown, Cape Bedford, Cape Melville, the Morehead, Musgrave and Middle Palmer Rivers, at Bloomfield River and possibly Rockhampton.

Collection information. There are seven woven bags from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899.

- E.14825 The rectangular bag is 49.5 by 19.5 cm. The handle is 21 cm long. The fine bark fibre handle is bound over with a narrow strip of European fabric. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "dilly bag (double loop or hourglass) *kalan* white fibre".
- E.14826 The rectangular bag is 46 by 16 cm. The handle is 24 cm long. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "dilly bag (double loop or hourglass) *ivarwal* red".
- E.14827 The rectangular bag is 41.5 by 14 cm. The handle is 23 cm long. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "dilly bag (double loop or hourglass). *Iwarwal* = red fibre. *Kalan* = white". An old Museum gallery label gave the local name as *aln-yira*.
- E.14828 The rectangular bag is 45 by 22 cm. The handle is 29 cm long and is bound over with red European wool. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "dilly bag (double loop or hourglass)".

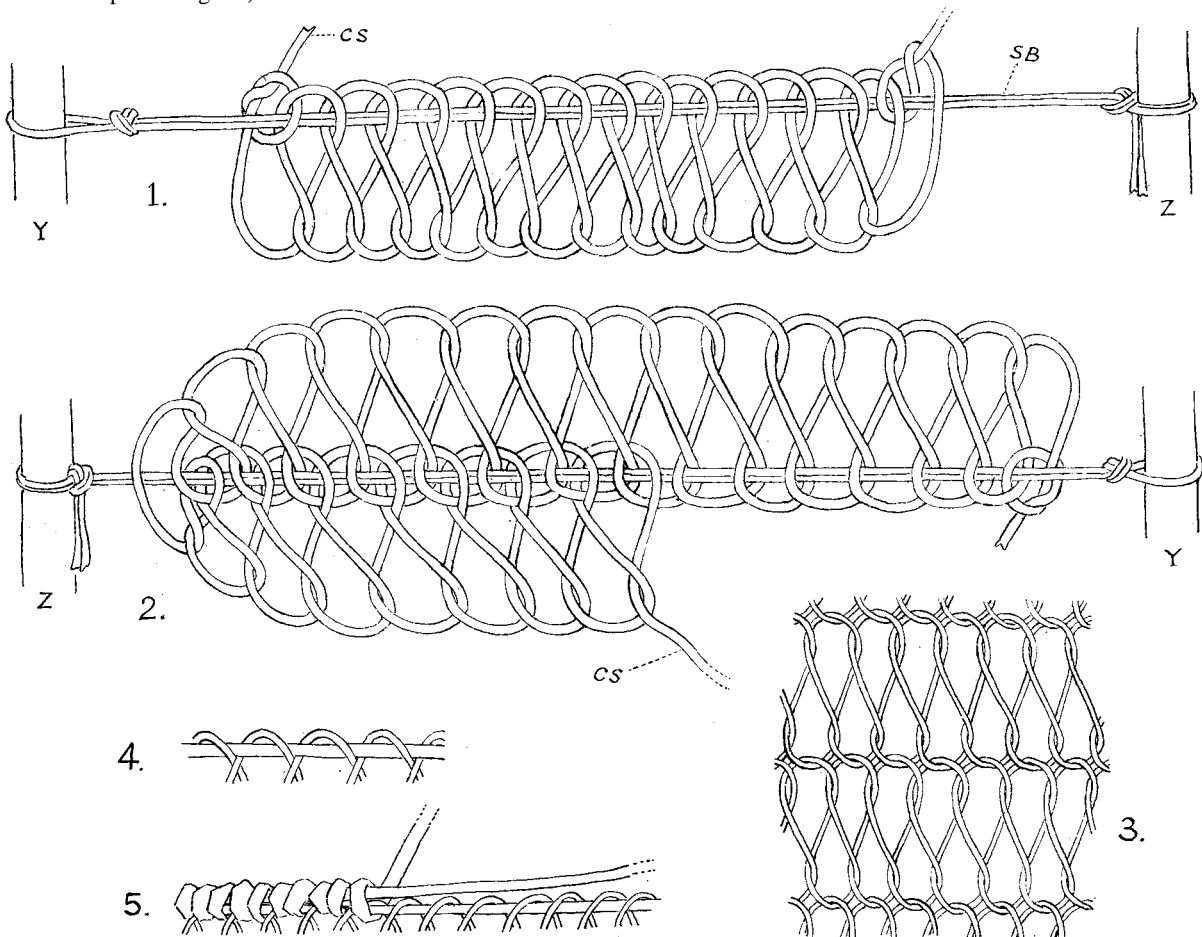
- E.14840 The rectangular bag is 35 by 20 cm. The handle is 33 cm long. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "dilly bag (double loop or hourglass) *kalan* fibre". An old Museum gallery label gave the local name as *aln-yira*. According to Roth, this bag was made from the bark fibre from the Black Kurrajong.
- E.14841 The rectangular bag is 37 by 15 cm. The handle is 24 cm long, and is bound with strips of white and black patterned European fabric. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "dilly bag (double loop or hourglass) Cabbage tree fibre, *Livistonia* sp."
- E.14842 The striped rectangular bag is 45 by 12 cm. The handle is 23 cm long. The bark fibre string handle is bound with red European fibre. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "dilly bag (double loop or hourglass). *Iwarwal* = red fibre. *Kalan* = white fibre".

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all seven bags:

- E.14825 negative sheet 4192M, frame 1509.
- E.14826 negative sheet 4192M, frame 1510.
- E.14827 negative sheet 4192M, frame 1511.
- E.14828 negative sheet 4192M, frame 1512.
- E.14840 negative sheet 4194M, frame 1524.
- E.14841 negative sheet 4194M, frame 1525.
- E.14842 negative sheet 4194M, frame 1526.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 8–10, 12.
- Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 28.



W.E.Roth. del
 Plate X. Basketry, &c.—Made with one continuous strand: basal strand straight: hour-glass double-loop pattern.

Woven baskets

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. The baskets were named after the plant used and could be made from *Pandanus* called *anjo-ana* by local Palmer River people, the hairy *Spinifex*, *Spinifex hirsutis*, now known as *Spinifex sericens*, called *awa-ra*, or the blood root, *Haemodorum coccineum*, called *an-to*.

These baskets 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. However, Roth noted that people living in the Palmer River district used a slightly different method. Here they knotted the two continuous strands together some distance from their ends and held them between the left thumb and forefinger. The middle of one base strand was placed in the fork of the knot, and the two continuous strands were twisted around it and pressed in with the fingers. Another base strand was fixed as before and the process continued, always working from left to right. Roth illustrates this in Bulletin 1, pl. xvi, fig. 2. A certain number of base strands having been included, the two horizontal strands made a sharp double twist round the last inserted base one, which was simultaneously bent at an acute angle. The length, so far made, was turned round, so that the section furthest removed from the knot was held in the operator’s left thumb and forefinger, while the second row of chain twist was made by picking up from left to right each base strand in regular rotation. The operation was continued and repeated, as shown in Bulletin 1, pl. xvi, fig. 3.

Where *Pandanus* was used to make sieve baskets, the young leaves, sometimes soaked in water for a short time, were split into widths. If the blood root was used the dried leaves were moistened just before use, when they were split into thin strips with the finger-nails. Other sieve baskets were made from the stems of the *Spinifex*.

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

According to Roth, in places where true traditional strainers were not made, they were replaced by certain baskets which were called sieve baskets or bags and were used solely as sieves or colanders. In a sense, they also were true traditional strainers for this area.

Collection information. There are three woven baskets from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899.

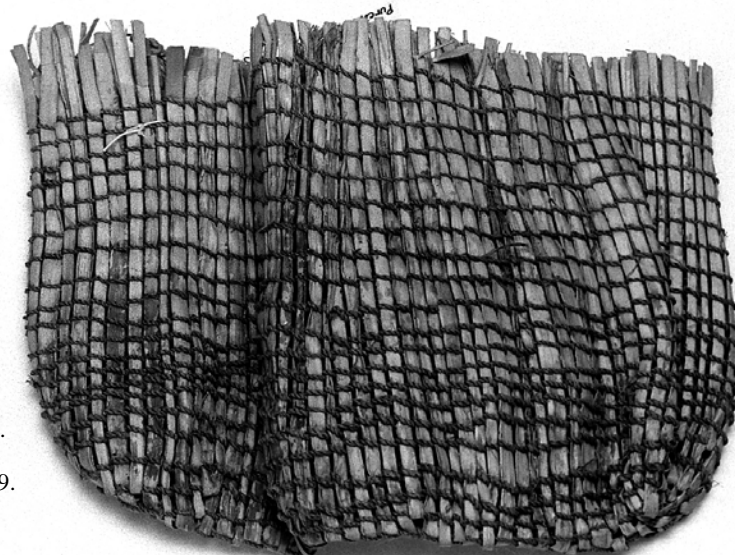
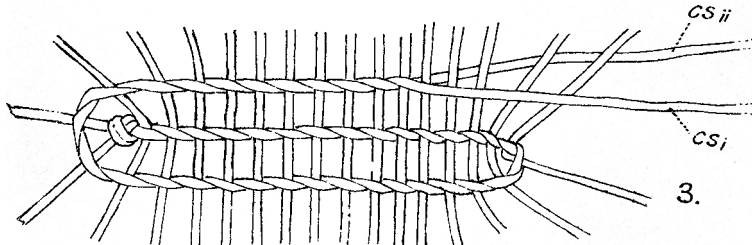
- E.14888 Unfinished woven basket, 16.8 by 24.5 cm. The Australian Museum’s Anthropology register dated 1905 includes “sieve bag made of *Pandanus* = Anjoana from the Palmer Native Police Camp (a similar bag of *Pandanus* strips is said to be made on the Annan R.)”
- E.14928 Unfinished woven basket, 39 cm long, diameter of mouth 15 cm, length of rim fringe 4.5 cm. The Australian Museum’s Anthropology register dated 1905 includes “*Haemodorum coccineum*. Sieve basket”. A label attached to the basket reads “anto”.
- E.14929 The woven basket is 38.5 cm long, diameter of mouth 13 cm, length of handle 25 cm. the Australian Museum’s Anthropology register dated 1905 includes “*Spinifex hirsutis* = Koko-minni tribe (calls it) awarra, sieve basket”.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all three woven baskets:

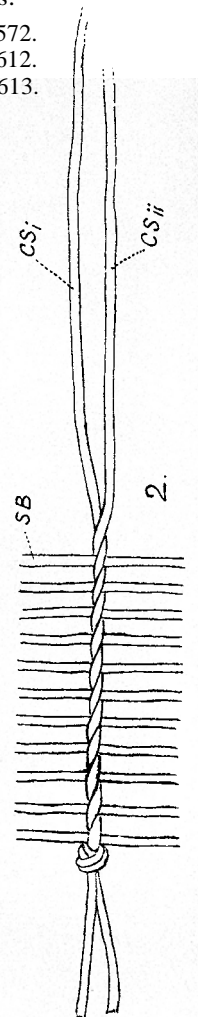
- E.14888 negative sheet 4200M, frame 1572.
- E.14928 negative sheet 4205M, frame 1612.
- E.14929 negative sheet 4205M, frame 1613.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 8–10, 14.
- Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 27–28.



Unfinished woven basket.
Collected Palmer River
Native Police Camp, 1899.
16.8x24.5 cm.



Death Pointers

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Because of the sensitive nature of these objects, information will only be given to those people who have a right to know. The Aboriginal Heritage Officers in the Museum should be able to help in this matter. Their telephone numbers are 02 9320 6192 and 02 9320 6186.

Collection information. There are five death pointers or bone charms from the Palmer River, collected by Roth in 1899. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "death bones of the Koko-minni tribe".

- E.13715
- E.13716
- E.13717
- E.13718
- E.13719

Dress and ornament

Pandanus armbands

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 or 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 did not say how and when the sharp barbs on the sides and centre of the *Pandanus* leaf were removed.

Roth's illustrations in Bulletin 1, pl. iv, figs. 1-5, 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. 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 time, on the Gulf coast as far down as the Staaten River, and on the east coast to the Bloomfield River. Roth made special mention of the way armbands were split and tied at Cape Bedford, the Musgrave, Morehead and Middle Palmer Rivers, and at Maytown.

On the Middle Palmer River, Roth said the armband was called *anjo-ana*, which is also the name given to the *Pandanus* from which it is made.

Collection information. There are two *Pandanus* armbands from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899.

- E.14725 Roth's collection number is G.146. The armband is 8 cm in diameter and is 3.5 cm wide.
- E.14726 Roth's collection number is G.147. The armband is 8 cm in diameter and is 3.6 cm wide.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both *Pandanus* armbands:

- E.14725 negative sheet 4179M, frame 1409.
- E.14726 negative sheet 4180M, frame 1410.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 11.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 43.



Pandanus armband.
Collected Palmer River
Native Police Camp, 1899.
Diameter 8 cm long, 3.5 cm wide.

Shell chest ornaments

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Most chest and back ornaments were made from part of a pearl shell (which Roth did not identify), a *Nautilus* shell, *Nautilus pompilius*, or a baler shell, *Melo diadema*, now known as *Melo amphora*. 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 at 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.

Roth said that people living around the Middle Palmer River, at Cape Bedford, Bloomfield, Laura and the Endeavour River, would wear a *Nautilus* shell, either between the shoulders of men or between the breasts of women. Because the *Nautilus* shell was fragile, Roth did not see any regular bartering of this shell very far inland. Pearl shell ornaments were popular along the coast and were rarely traded. *Melo* or baler shells were more commonly found inland than on the coast and were generally worn by inland peoples.

Roth said the local Palmer River people called this ornament *trila-elpan*, which is the same term applied to the pearl shell.

Collection information. There are two shell chest ornaments from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899.

E.14519 Roth's collection number is G.132. Long rectangular piece of pearl shell, with a remnant of black thread attached to a hole drilled at one end. It is 9.8 by 2 cm. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "*Tri-la-el-pan*"

E.14520 Roth's collection number is G.133. Oval shaped piece of *Nautilus* shell with bark fibre string which is bound with red European fabric, threaded through a hole drilled at one end. It is 7.4 by 5 cm. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "*Tri-la-el-pan*".

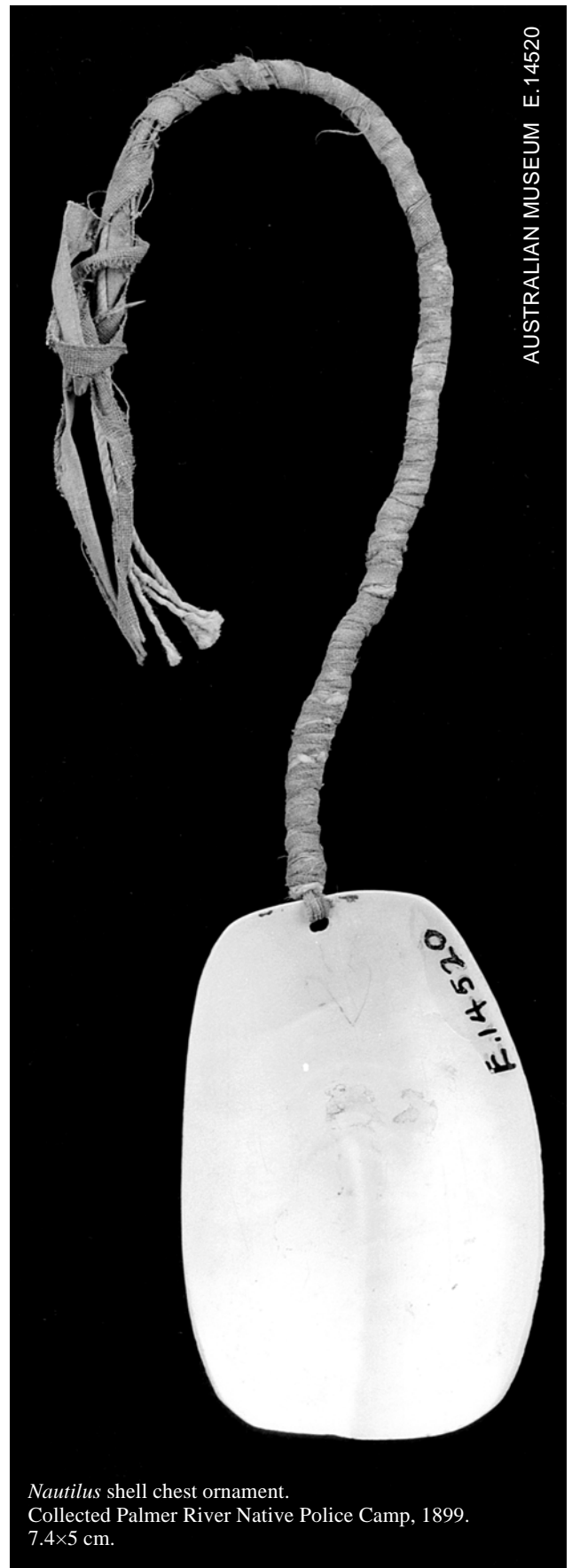
Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both shell chest ornaments:

E.14519 negative sheet 4154M, frame 1203.

E.14520 negative sheet 4154M, frame 1204.

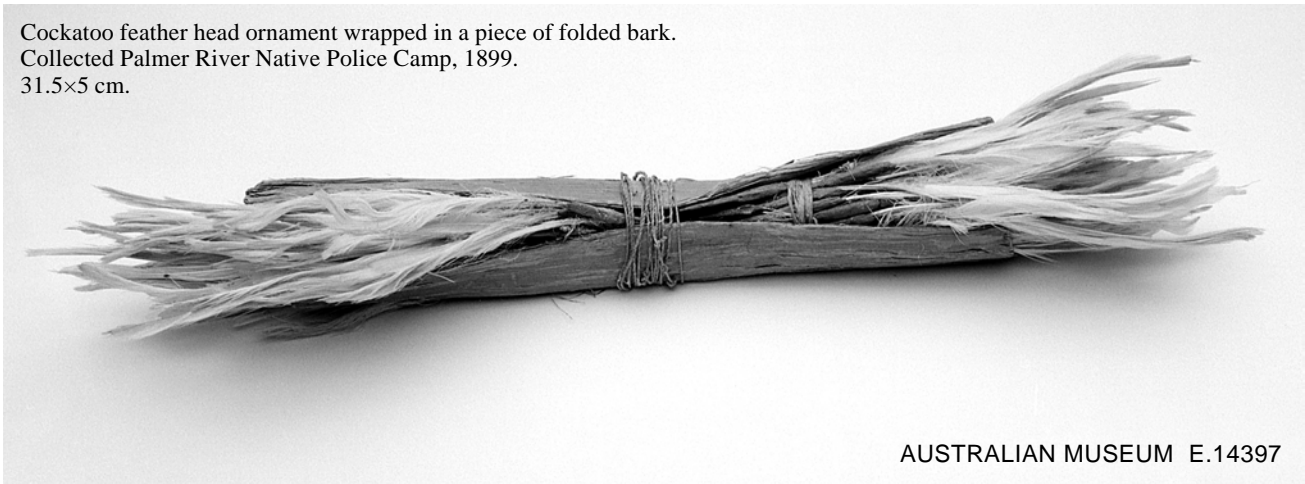
Reference

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 35–36.



Nautilus shell chest ornament.
Collected Palmer River Native Police Camp, 1899.
7.4×5 cm.

Cockatoo feather head ornament wrapped in a piece of folded bark.
 Collected Palmer River Native Police Camp, 1899.
 31.5×5 cm.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14397

Cockatoo feather head ornament

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. Roth wrote that these white cockatoo feather tufts from the sulphur-crested cockatoo, *Cacatua galerita*, were worn by people living throughout north Queensland. The Middle Palmer River people obtained the ornament, called by them, *kwa-chil*, by trade with the Musgrave and Saltwater River peoples of the eastern coast of Cape York Peninsula.

Collection information. There is one feather head ornament from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899.

E.14397 Roth’s collection number is G.139. It consists of two bundles of yellow cockatoo feathers wrapped in a piece of folded bark. The quills of the feathers have been smeared with an adhesive and painted red. Handspun bark fibre string has been used to tie the bundle together. It is 31.5 by 5 cm. The Australian Museum’s Anthropology register dated 1905 includes “Cockatoo top knot head ornament (*kwa-chil*) as carried about.”

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4138M, frame 1080.

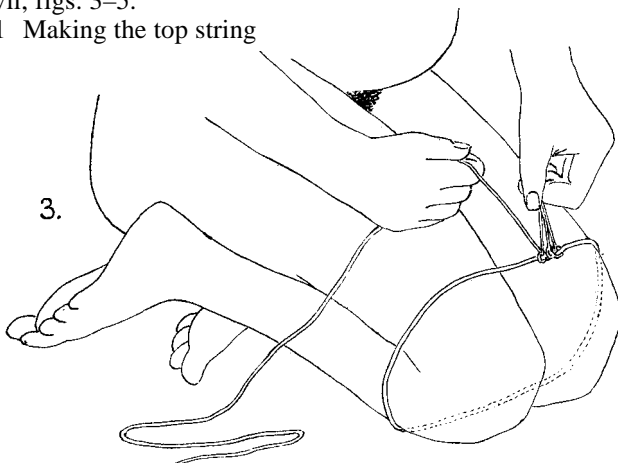
Reference

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 24.

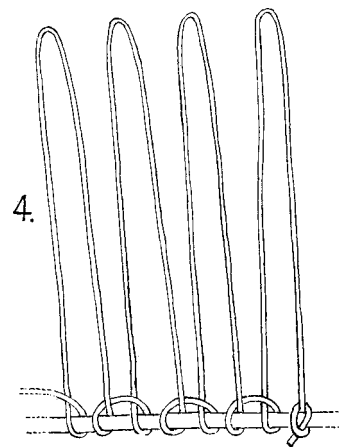
Skirts

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. According to Roth there were three stages in making a handspun bark fibre skirt as shown in Roth’s illustrations from Bulletin 1, pl. vii, figs. 3–5.

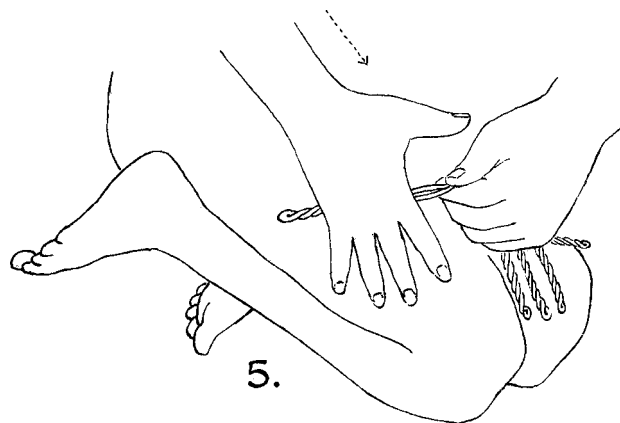
1 Making the top string



2 Forming the loops. The top string was stretched between two sticks



3 Rolling each loop on the outer thigh to form a tassel



This way of fixing the loops to the top string was found only among people living around the Middle Palmer River, Princess Charlotte Bay, Cape Bedford, Cooktown and Maytown.

Roth said the local Palmer River people called this skirt *mi-na*. In his Bulletin he refers to it as a waist-circler. The ones with fringes attached were worn only by women in the Middle Palmer River and as Roth states, “Cape Bedford, etc.”

The circler was usually made on a core of handspun human hairstring overcast with kangaroo or possum hair

Skirt.
Collected Palmer River Native Police Camp, 1899.
The skirt is 35.5 cm long.
Each tassel is 8 cm long.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14692

twine using the soft down from the belly of these animals. Roth watched a man making some possum twine with a spindle, on the same lines as making human hairstring, but the spindle was rolled forwards, not backwards. He said the local people called this twine from either animal, *aln-jo*.

The tassels composing the fringe were often made of a handspun bark fibre string from the *Careya australis*, now known as *Planchonia careya*. This string also was used in making mourning strings and for tying up corpses in bark troughs.

Collection information. There are two skirts from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899.

E.14692 The total width of the skirt is 35.5 cm. The tassel section is 18 cm long. Each tassel is 8 cm long. It is made of a combination of handspun human hairstring, bark fibre twine, possum fur string and

a small length of red European wool. the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "apron waist belt '*mi-na*'".

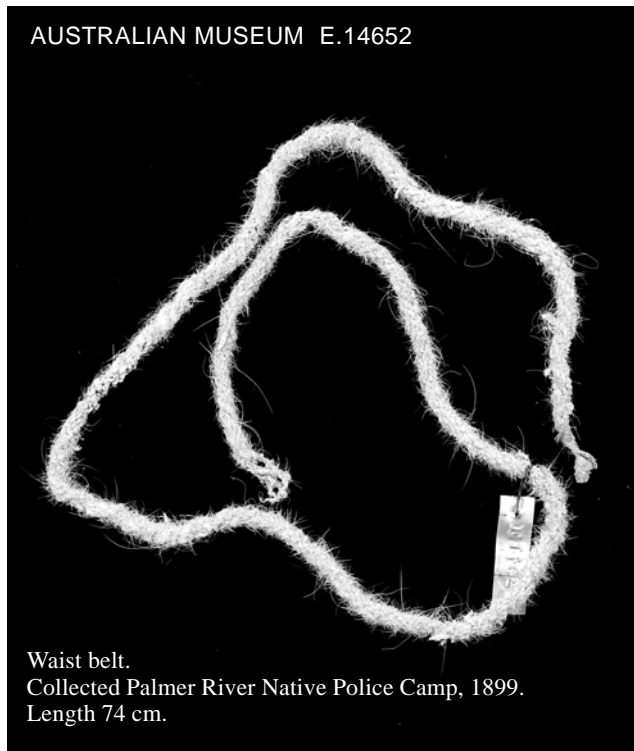
E.14693 The total width of the skirt is 35 cm. It is without tassels, and is made of a combination of handspun human hairstring and possum fur. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "apron waist belt '*mi-na*', without fringe."

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both skirts:

E.14692 negative sheet 4175M, frame 1376.
E.14693 negative sheet 4175M, frame 1377.

References

Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 8–9, 12.
Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 38–39.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14652

Waist belt.
Collected Palmer River Native Police Camp, 1899.
Length 74 cm.

Waist belt

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. Roth wrote that waist belts could be fixed either in front or behind, but that fixing the waist belt in front was extremely rare. The only example he knew was that worn by the local Middle Palmer River men. The ends were attached by means of a knot passing through a loop at one end. These waist belts were made of either possum or kangaroo fur twine made from the soft down from the belly of either animal. It was called by the name given to the fur twine, *aln-jo*.

Collection information. There is one waist belt from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899.

E.14652 The waist belt is 74 cm long. There is evidence of knotting at one end. The Australian Museum’s Anthropology register dated 1905 includes “kangaroo string belt, *Aln-jo* of the Koko-minni tribe”.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4170M, frame 1336.

References

Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 8.
Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 37.

Fire sticks

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. Fire was made by twirling a thin stick into a hole in a flattened piece of softwood. Tinder of dried grass, placed around the hole would start to smoulder due to the heat caused by the friction. 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 hole was made in the softwood board 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. Thin fire sticks were usually from 60 to 120 cm long.

The working end of a fire stick was protected by a special cap or cover, also referred to as a matchbox by Europeans of the time. This cap was sometimes made of two pipes of light pithy wood, the pith having been removed by a bone pin or awl. The hollowed pipes were then bound together and closed at one end with beeswax. Occasionally, two pieces of bamboo could be used as a cap. The cap was decorated with poisonous red Jequirity seeds, *Abrus precatorius*, stuck into the beeswax at the end of the cap. On the Palmer River, Roth noted that the people here also used the seed of *Adenantha abrosperma*, called *roko-warra*.

Thin fire sticks could be made from various timbers, the most common being grass trees, *Xanthorrhoea arborea*, now known as *Xanthorrhoea johnsonii*, which was used wherever available.

Collection information. There is one pair of firesticks from the Middle Palmer River, collected by Roth in 1899.

E.13776 Roth’s collection number is F.12. Two rounded, charred sticks with a bamboo cap. There is a black strip of beeswax at the uncharred end of both sticks. Total length is 139.3 cm. The sticks are 137.5 cm long and the cap is 13 by 3 cm.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4061M, frame 459.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 10–11, 14.

One pair of firesticks with cap.
Collected Middle Palmer River, 1899.
Total length 139.3 cm.
The firesticks are 137.5 cm long and the cap is 13×3 cm.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13776

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.15022

Fish club.
Collected Palmer River
Native Police Camp, 1899.
62×8.8 cm.



Fishing equipment

Fish club

Information from Roth's Bulletins. People living around the Palmer River used a similar fish club to that used by those living along the Gulf coast of Cape York Peninsula. That is, a spatulate shaped piece of wood with sharpened edges, but the Palmer River implement had a squared, rather than rounded end and a wider blade, and was made of ironwood. In both, the handle was nicked or coated with an adhesive to prevent it slipping from the fisherman's grasp.

The fish club was used when fishing at night. Men would go into the water, and by holding high a torch, would attract the fish to the surface and then club them.

Roth said the local Palmer River people called this fish club *an-gora*.

Collection information. There is one fish club from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899. It is illustrated in Roth's Bulletin 7, 1904, figure 248.

E.15022 Roth's collection number is SW.16. Spatulate shaped with bark fibre twine wrapped round the handle and smeared with adhesive. The rest of the club is smeared with a fine coating of red pigment. It is 62 by 8.8 cm.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4217M, frame 1706.

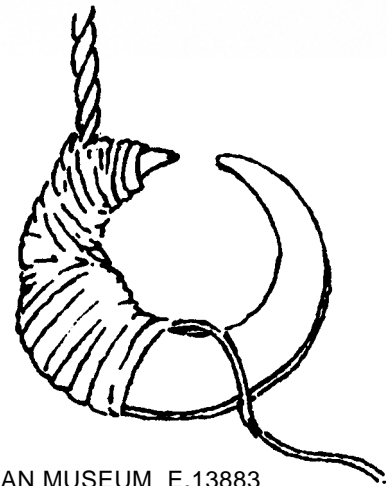
Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 33.

Fish hook

Information from Roth's Bulletins. People living around the Palmer River used a fish hook, known as *kora*. It was a wooden shank and a bone barb, similar to that used around Princess Charlotte Bay. A piece of kangaroo bone or one of the spines from what Roth identified as a "catfish" were used to make a hook.

Roth described the fish hook from Princess Charlotte Bay as a pointed piece of bone, attached at an acute angle to a tapering stick of hardwood from *Erythrophloeum laboucheii*, now known as *Erythrophloeum chlorostachyum*. Kangaroo tail tendon and resin from the roots of young beefwood trees, *Grevillea striata*, held the bone hook firmly in place. The line,



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13883

made of fibre twine from the Cabbage Tree Palm, *Livistona australis*, was attached in a similar way.

Roth wrote that by 1904, bone fish hooks were being replaced by European ones. Weights and sinkers were never used.

Collection information. There is one fish hook from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899.

E.13883 The object cannot be located at present. the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "bone-pointed fish-hook and line. The *Ko-ra* of the Koko-minni tribe. Fig'd. Bull. 7, fig. 253."

Photographic information. No photograph is available.

Reference

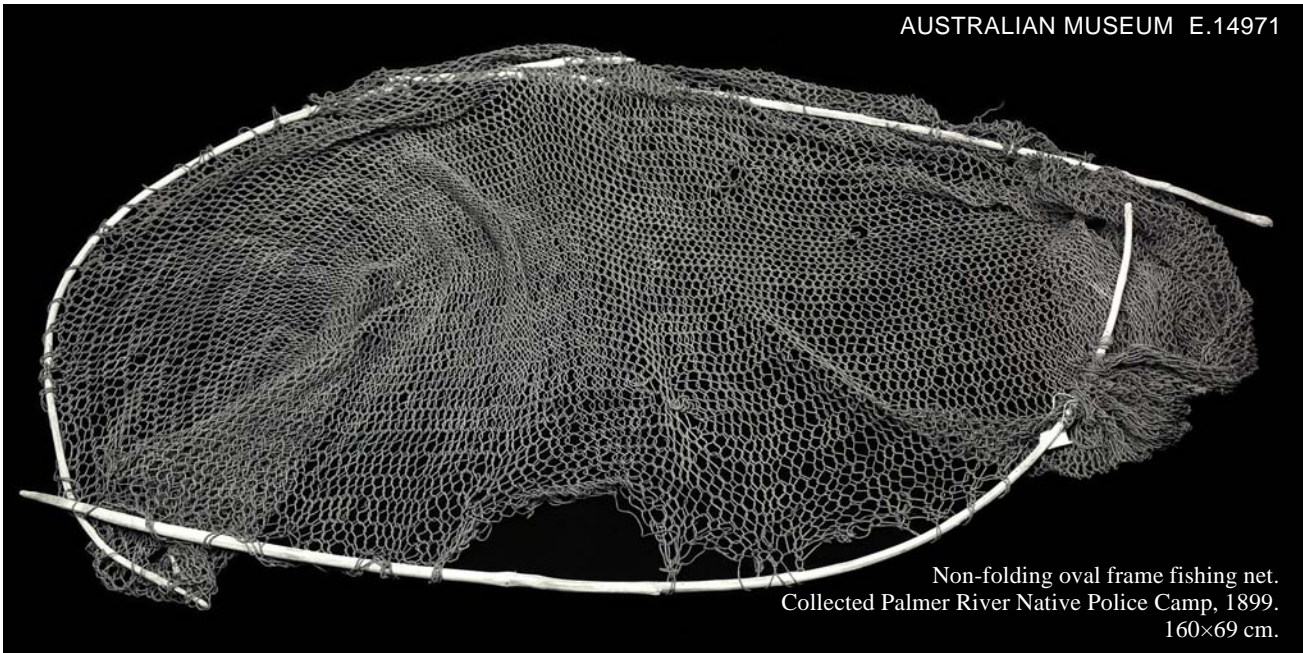
Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 20–21.

Non-folding oval-frame fishing net

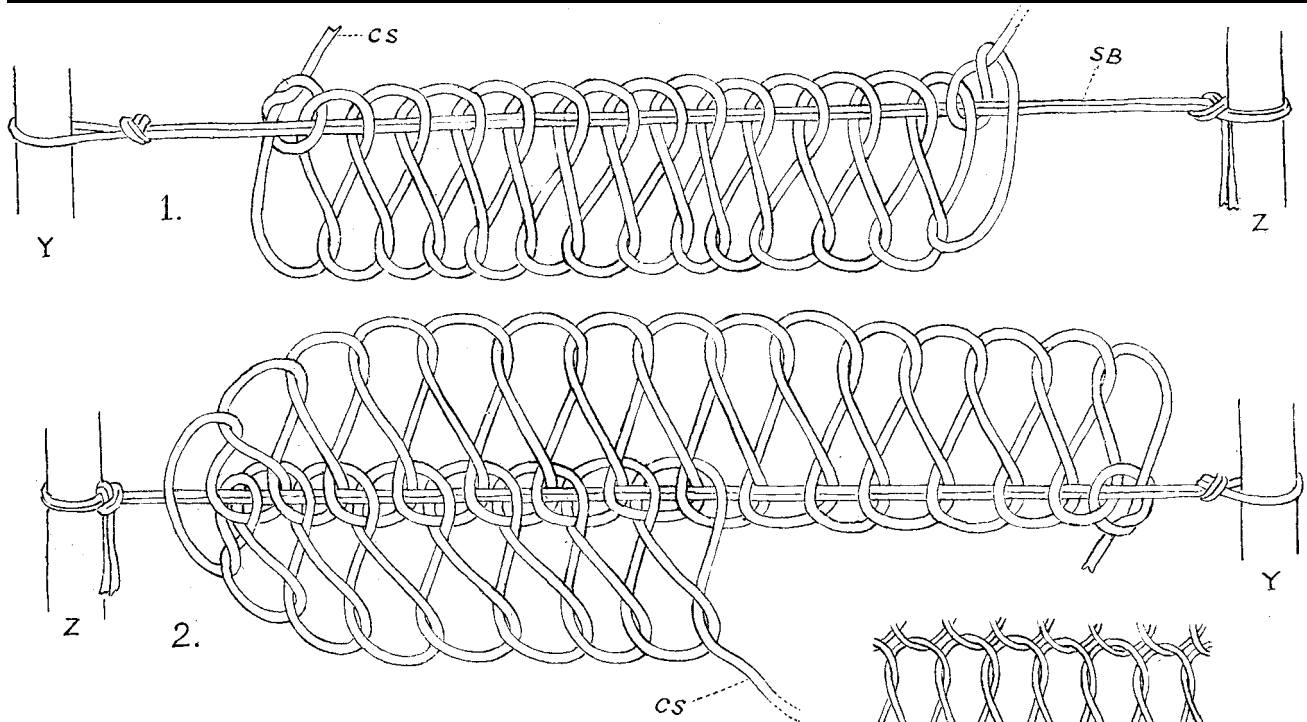
Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth said non-folding oval-frame fishing nets with the net woven on an hourglass pattern were used only by the people living on Cape York Peninsula. He saw them being made and used on the Palmer, Morehead, Musgrave, Normanby, Pennefather, Wenlock (Batavia) and Embley Rivers, and at Laura.

The net was woven on an hourglass or double loop pattern with one straight base strand and one continuous strand. The weaving was very loose on fishing nets, unlike baskets

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14971



Non-folding oval frame fishing net.
Collected Palmer River Native Police Camp, 1899.
160×69 cm.



using the same pattern. Roth's illustrations from Bulletin 1, p. 10, figs. 1, 2, 3 show this weaving pattern.

On the Palmer River the people made this net of bark fibre string from the inner bark of an *Acacia leptocarpa*, known locally as *i-wa-wal*. The bark was washed in water and dried in the sun before use. The fishing net had a comparatively large frame and was borne along in the water more or less vertically by two fishermen. Their friends moved in front of them, acting as beaters, to drive the fish into the net.

Collection information. There is one non-folding oval-frame fishing net from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899.

E.14971 Roth's collection number is p. 24. The lawyer cane frame is made of four overlapping pieces shaped to an oval and bound with handspun bark fibre string. The frame is threaded through the net in several places. It is 160 by 69 cm. The cane is 1.3 cm thick. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "fig'd. Bull. 3, fig. 8".

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4210M, frame 1655.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 13.
Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 3: 22–23.
Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 22.

Raw materials

Pigments

Information from Roth's Bulletins. White pigment, called kaolin, pipe-clay or hydrous silicate of alumina, was found around the Palmer River. Local people called it *charba*. It was widely spread, being found also on the Keppel Islands, the Embley, Wenlock and Pennefather Rivers, at Cape Bedford, Cooktown, the Bloomfield River, and on Mornington and Forsyth Islands. Roth noted that people living around Cooktown and the Bloomfield River ate it as a food and as a medicine.

People living around the Palmer and Pennefather Rivers used the white pigment as they found it, without any preparation. Palmer River people also reduced it to a fine powder by hammering it between stones, mixing it with water, and drying it in the sun.

Red pigment, an oxide of iron called haematite, was obtained by adding burnt ferruginous clay, that is, clay containing iron. Local Palmer River people called it *norda*. They could use it straight away without any special preparation.

Occasionally dry pigments were used, but they also could be mixed with spittle or water and sprayed over an object or person to make a spotted pattern.

Collection information. There are three samples of pigments which Roth collected from the Middle Palmer River and gave to the Australian Museum. They were registered on 30 January 1900, and so do not form part of the major Roth collection purchase of 1905.

- E.8974 Red pigment. Given to Port Warnambool Museum, Victoria in October 1900.
- E.8975 White pigment. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 30 January 1900 includes "white paint obtained from mud. Pounded up with water". Given to Port Warnambool Museum, Victoria in October 1900.
- E.8976 White pigment. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 30 January 1900 includes "white paint as found naturally".

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 14–15.

Resin

Information from Roth's Bulletins. To get resin from the beefwood, *Grevillea striata*, roots of a young tree were dug up, and pieces of root were cut away. These were heated over a fire and the outer sticky bark was scraped off with a sharp-edged stone. The scraped-off chips were tied in a sheet of tea-tree bark, and the bundle was baked for ten minutes or so. It was then opened and the sticky bits removed and pressed together with the fingers and hands to make them stick together. This sticky mass was then pounded between two stones. After hammering, the mass of resin was then stuck onto a convenient stick, and held over a fire. It was again hammered and heated for a considerable time, until the required consistency was reached. It was regarded as the strongest and most durable of adhesives. The local Palmer River people called it *otwala*.

Collection information. There are two lumps of resin from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "gum cement 'otwala' of the Koko-minni, from the gum of *Grevillea striata* R. Br. (beefwood)."

E.14770 The lump of resin is 12.5 by 9.3 by 3 cm.

E.14771 The lump of resin is 3.3 by 3 by 1.7 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both lumps of resin:

E.14770 negative sheet 4185M, frame 1454.

E.14771 negative sheet 4185M, frame 1455.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 12–13.

Tools

Fly-flicks

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote that people living on the Palmer, Mitchell, Nassau and Staaten Rivers and at Cape Bedford made fly-flicks with emu feathers to keep the flies away during the hotter months. These fly-flicks resembled feather dusters with their quills being bound together onto a short handle. The fibre string binding was strengthened with adhesive. The Kokomini people

Emu feather fly-flick.
Collected Palmer River Native Police Camp, April 1899.
60.5×5.9 cm.



called this emu feather fly-flick *ata-angka* or *ariva*, *ata-angka* being the name for emu. The emu's scientific name is *Dromaius novaehollandiae*.

Women living around the Palmer River district used fly-flicks made of human hair twine tassels, each formed of a loop twisted on itself. These tassels were bound together at one end without any wooden handle. Roth said they were called *wai-yir* by the Kokomini.

Thick skirts also were rolled up and used as fly-flicks. Smoke from burning timber was effective in driving the flies away. Sandalwood was burnt on the Palmer River and grass tree stumps set on fire at Cape Bedford.

Collection information. There are three fly-flicks (two made of emu feathers and one of human hair) from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899. The emu feather fly-flicks were collected in April of that year.

- E.13512 Roth's collection number is FF.3. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "fly flick or fan (emu feathers) *ata-angka*". The quills are bound to a short wooden handle with fibre string and smeared with adhesive. It is 60.5 by 5.9 cm.
- E.13513 Roth's collection number is FF.4. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "fly flick or fan (emu feathers) *ata-angka*". The quills are bound to a short wooden handle with fibre string and smeared with adhesive. The wooden handle is broken. It is 52 by 7.3 cm.
- E.13515 Roth's collection number is FF.5. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "fly flick or fan (human hair) *wai-yir*". The lengths of human hair are wrapped around a small central core of fibre string. It is 32 by 3 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all three fly-flicks:

- E.13512 negative sheet 4028M, frame 195.
E.13513 negative sheet 4028M, frame 196.
E.13515 negative sheet 4028M, frame 198.

Reference

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

Stone hammers

Information from Roth's Bulletins. The head of a stone hammer was made from a sub-angular pebble, without any shaping by flaking or grinding. The worn end often showed how the tool was used. The pebble was fixed into its handle in the same angle as the head of a stone axe, when it was to be used as an axe. It was fixed to the handle in a similar manner too, with handspun bark fibre twine and adhesive as shown in Roth's illustrations from Bulletin 7, pl. xxviii, fig. 151 and Bull. 7, pl. xix, figs. 152–154.

The stone hammer was used to tap on bark when a sheet was removed from a tree trunk. Removal of bark from a tree was usually done at the end of the wet season when the sap was up, and the bark slipped easily. When a sheet of bark was required, one long and two transverse cuts were made on the tree trunk. The bark was removed by tapping on the sheet with stones or a stone hammer. Hammering helped loosen the bark from the sub adjacent tissues after cuts had been made.

Stone hammers also were used to break open some of the harder nuts, like that from the *Pandanus*.

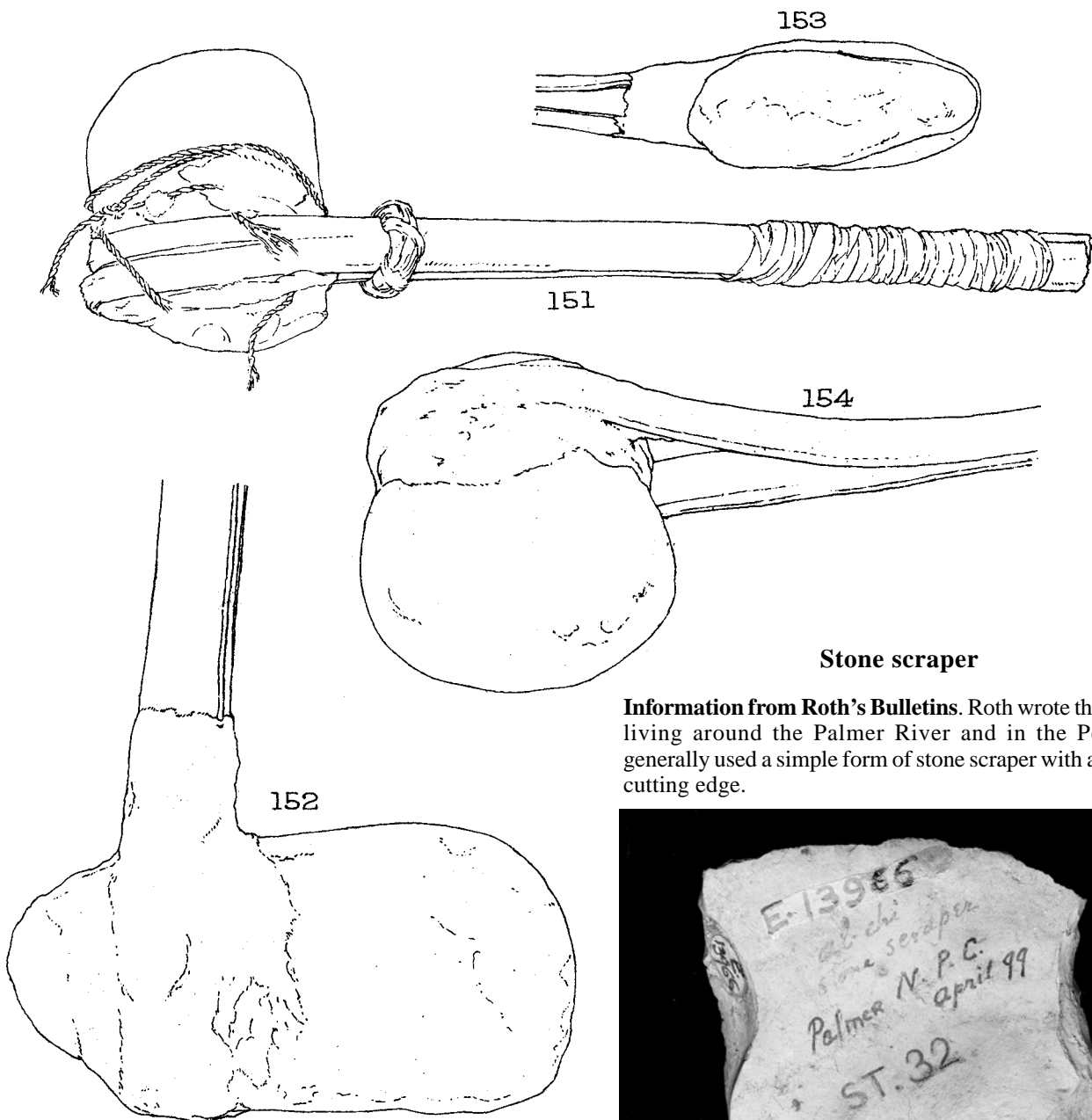
Roth found stone hammers being used by people living in the Princess Charlotte Bay hinterland in 1898, and again on the Palmer River in 1899. He also commented that stone hammers could have been used in the making of stone axes. According to Roth the local Palmer River people called this stone hammer *no-ra*.

Collection information. There are three stone hammers from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899.

- E.13654 Roth's collection number is SH.5. The heavy hammer consists of an oval shaped stone, blunt and flattened at both ends, inserted into a wooden handle looped over the stone, and held in place with handspun bark fibre twine and adhesive. The ends of the handle are held together with adhesive. The handle is 29 cm long. The stone hammer head is 13 cm long, 9 cm wide and 3 cm thick. It is illustrated in Bulletin 7, figure 54.
- E.13655 Roth's collection number is SH.6. The heavy hammer consists of an oval shaped stone, blunt and flattened at both ends, inserted into a wooden handle, and held in place with handspun bark fibre twine and adhesive. Bark fibre twine is also wound round the base of the stone and coated with adhesive. This pulls the ends of the handle together. The handle is 31 cm long. The stone hammer head is 12.5 cm long, 8.5 cm wide and 3 cm thick. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "*no-ra*".

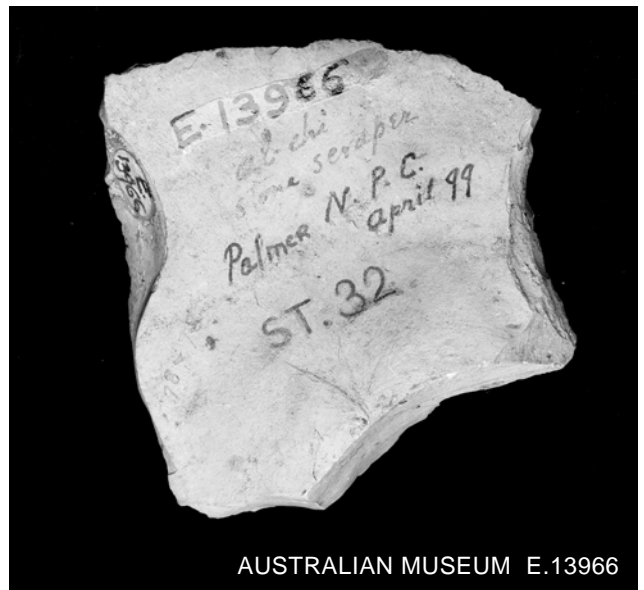


Stone hammer.
Collected Palmer River Native Police Camp, 1899.
Handle (broken) is 25 cm long.
Stone hammer 18×9×3 cm thick.



Stone scraper

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote that people living around the Palmer River and in the Peninsula generally used a simple form of stone scraper with a chipped cutting edge.



Stone scraper.
Collected Palmer River Native Police Camp, 1899.
7×7.7×2 cm.

E.13656 Roth's collection number is SH.8. The heavy hammer consists of an oval shaped stone, blunt and flattened at both ends, inserted into a wooden handle, and held in place with handspun bark fibre twine and adhesive. Bark fibre twine is also wound round the base of the stone and coated with adhesive. This pulls the ends of the handle together. The handle, broken at the ends, is 25 cm long. The stone hammer head is 18 cm long, 9 cm wide and 3 cm thick.

Photographic information. Photographs are available for all three stone hammers:

- E.13654 negative sheet 4045M, frame 337.
- E.13655 negative sheet 4046M, frame 338.
- E.13656 negative sheet 4046M, frame 339.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 23.

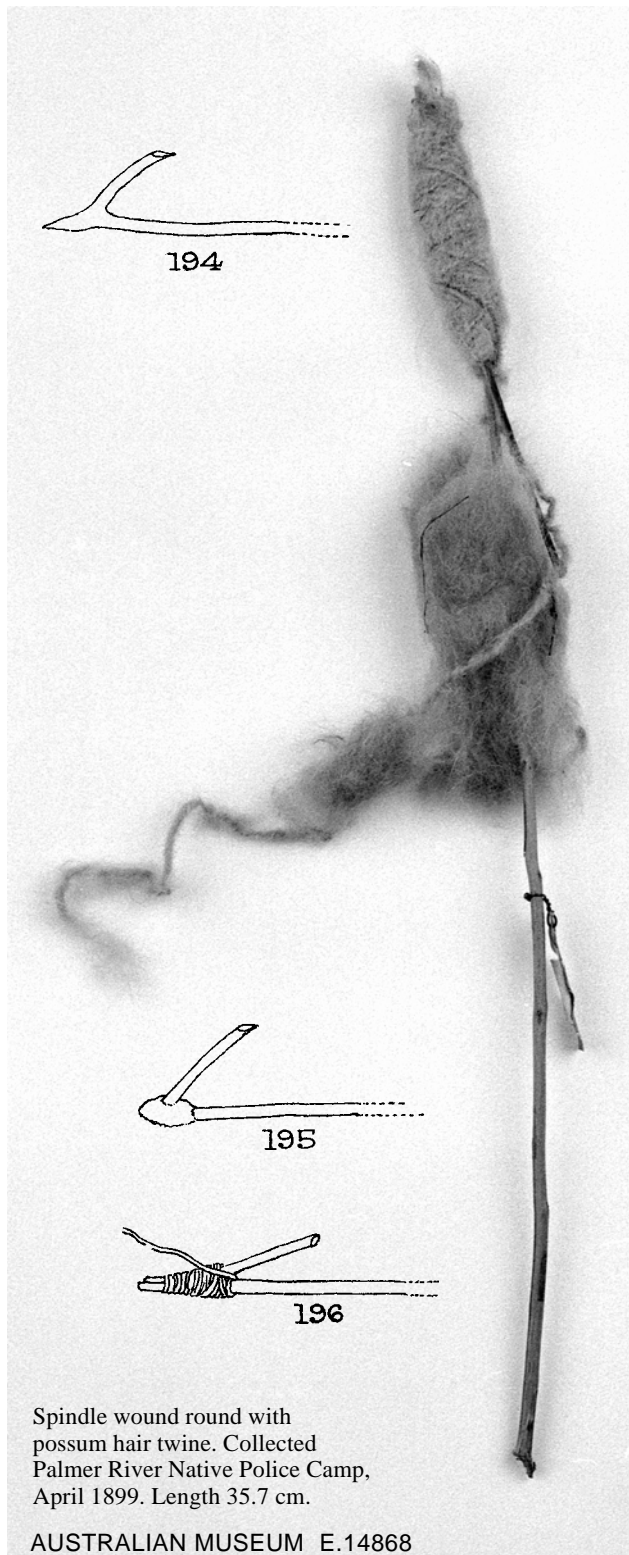
Collection information. There is one stone scraper the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899. It was illustrated in Bulletin 7, figs. 78 & 78a.

E.13966 Roth's collection number is ST.32. Stone with chipped and flaked edges. It is 7 by 7.7 by 2 cm.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4085M, frame 649.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 20.



Spindles

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote that the most common spindle used for making twine was a fine twig with a projecting branch cut short as illustrated by Roth in Bulletin 7, pl. xxii, fig. 194. He thought it came from a particular shrub which was not liable to split, or had some other quality he was not aware of because he had seen bundles of these spindles when he visited Barclay Downs, and surmised they were used as barter. If a forked twig was unavailable, a hook was attached with adhesive or handspun bark fibre twine to serve a similar purpose as illustrated in Bulletin 7, pl. xxii, figs. 195–196.

Collection information. There are two spindles from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in April 1899. Both spindles carry the same Roth collection number, MD.50. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "spindles with opossum hair attached (latter) called *al'njo*. 2 specimens only. Bull. 7, figs. 194–196".

- E.14867 Roth's collection number is MD.50 A thin twig wound round with possum hair twine. It is hard to see how the projecting hook is attached because the possum hair is covering the end, but it looks like it was a forked twig. It is 33 cm long.
- E.14868 Roth's collection number for this spindle is also MD.50. A thin twig wound round with possum hair twine. It is hard to see how the projecting hook is attached because the possum hair is covering the end. It is 35.7 cm long.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both spindles:

- E.14867 negative sheet 4197M, frame 1551.
- E.14868 negative sheet 4197M, frame 1552.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 27.

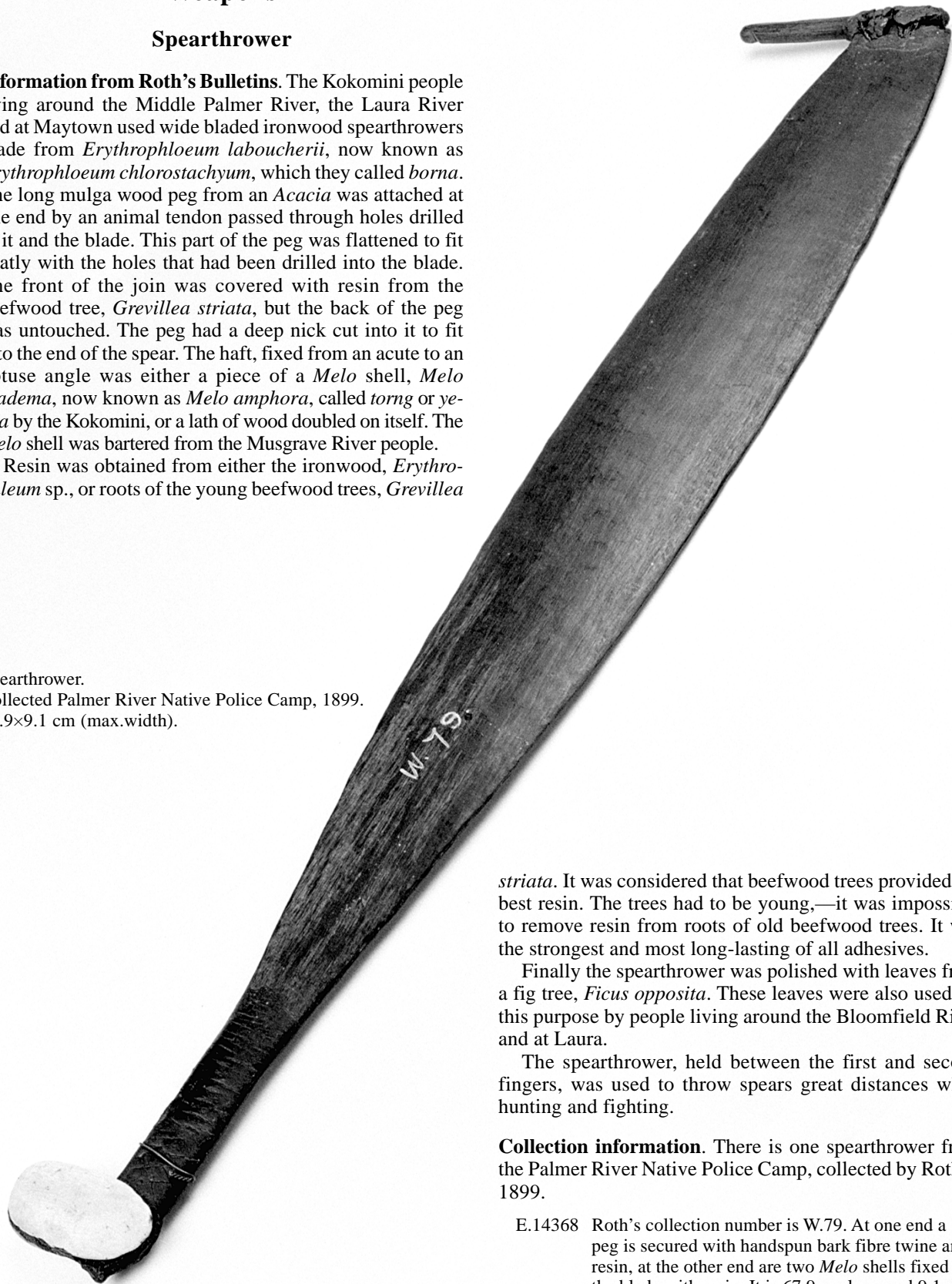
Weapons

Spearthrower

Information from Roth's Bulletins. The Kokomini people living around the Middle Palmer River, the Laura River and at Maytown used wide bladed ironwood spearthrowers made from *Erythrophloeum laboucherii*, now known as *Erythrophloeum chlorostachyum*, which they called *borna*. The long mulga wood peg from an *Acacia* was attached at one end by an animal tendon passed through holes drilled in it and the blade. This part of the peg was flattened to fit neatly with the holes that had been drilled into the blade. The front of the join was covered with resin from the beefwood tree, *Grevillea striata*, but the back of the peg was untouched. The peg had a deep nick cut into it to fit into the end of the spear. The haft, fixed from an acute to an obtuse angle was either a piece of a *Melo* shell, *Melo diadema*, now known as *Melo amphora*, called *tornng* or *ye-cha* by the Kokomini, or a lath of wood doubled on itself. The *Melo* shell was bartered from the Musgrave River people.

Resin was obtained from either the ironwood, *Erythrophloeum* sp., or roots of the young beefwood trees, *Grevillea*

Spearthrower.
Collected Palmer River Native Police Camp, 1899.
67.9×9.1 cm (max.width).



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14368

striata. It was considered that beefwood trees provided the best resin. The trees had to be young,—it was impossible to remove resin from roots of old beefwood trees. It was the strongest and most long-lasting of all adhesives.

Finally the spearthrower was polished with leaves from a fig tree, *Ficus opposita*. These leaves were also used for this purpose by people living around the Bloomfield River and at Laura.

The spearthrower, held between the first and second fingers, was used to throw spears great distances when hunting and fighting.

Collection information. There is one spearthrower from the Palmer River Native Police Camp, collected by Roth in 1899.

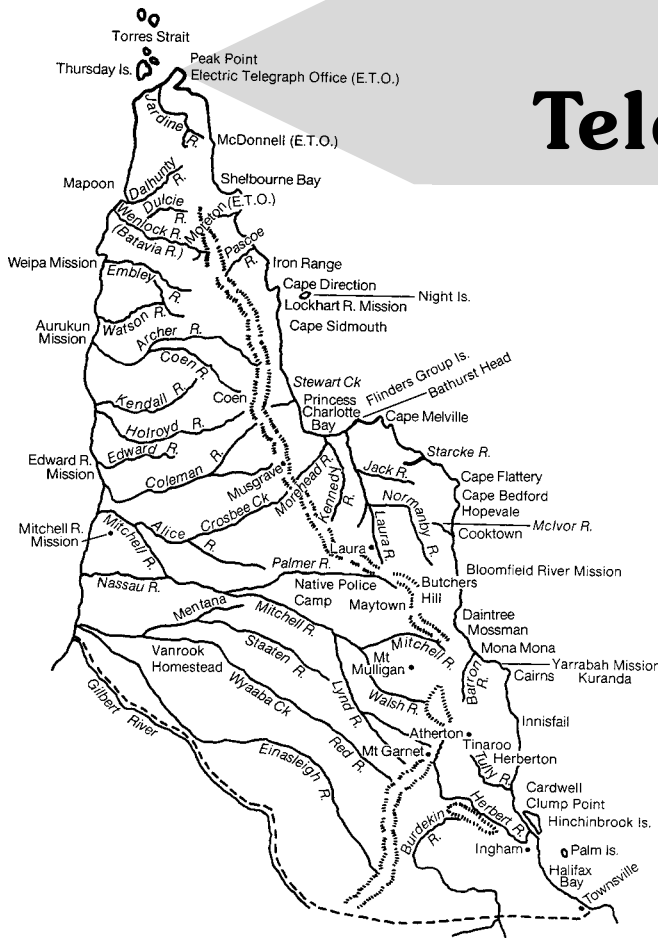
E.14368 Roth's collection number is W.79. At one end a peg is secured with handspun bark fibre twine and resin, at the other end are two *Melo* shells fixed to the blade with resin. It is 67.9 cm long and 9.1 cm maximum width.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4135M, frame 1051.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 9.
Roth, W.E., 1909. Bulletin 13: 198–199.

Peak Point Telegraph Station



Contents

The people	41
Containers	42
Palm leaf containers	42

The people

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. Roth did not specifically write about people living around Peak Point Telegraph Station at the very top of Cape York Peninsula. These are probably the Yadhaigana people referred to in the Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia. They had a fearsome reputation and were left alone by coastal traders. Gribble writing a history of the Electric Telegraph in Queensland mentioned that in June 1894 the line was opened from Peak Point to Thursday Island via Horn Island at a cost of five thousand eight hundred and seventy five pounds.

Sheehy, writing about the history of telecommunications on Cape York Peninsula said that in the 1870s–1880s many telegraph repeater buildings were erected in far north Queensland for the then Colonial Government. The one at Paterson, was erected in 1886 and by November the line from Paterson to Thursday Island was completed. Paterson Electric Telegraph Office was officially opened on 25th August 1887. In 1894, after technical troubles, a new route

to Thursday Island was selected near Peak Point, at Punsand Bay and went via Horn Island. The new Electric Telegraph Office was opened in August 1894, and renamed Cape York. All stations were built like forts with gun turrets and iron shutters on all windows to protect the staff and equipment from the “wild blacks”.

The old Cape York (Peak Hill) Station was finally closed on 14 September 1960.

References

- Gribble, P.J., 1981. *What God Hath Wrought. The Story of the Electric Telegraph—Queensland*, pp. 80–81, 320. Brisbane: Telecom.
- Horton, D., ed., 1994. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*, p. 1213. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Sheehy, D.J., 1991. *A Century at the Top. A History of Telecommunications on Cape York Peninsula in Far North Queensland 1887–1987*. Telecom Australia, July 1987. Revised July 1991. Queensland: Government Printer.

Containers

Palm leaf containers

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth said that containers made from palm leaf sheath stalks were either punt or scoop shaped. He said the punt shaped ones were used by people living around the Moreton and Ducie Rivers, whereas the scoop shaped one were used by people living around the Palmer River, as well as on the Tully and Endeavour Rivers and at Bloomfield, Cape Bedford and on the Starcke River.

The punt shaped containers were distinctive in that the two smaller folded sides were top-stitched, as shown in Bulletin 7, pl. xxv, fig. 236.

Collection information. There are two punt shaped containers from Peak Point Telegraph Station, collected by Roth in 1900.

- E.13349 Roth's collection number is WT.18. Palm leaf sheath stalks are rolled at the ends and top-stitched with handspun bark fibre twine. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "water carrier (leaf scale)". It measures 27.9 by 15 cm and is 14.8 cm deep.
- E.13350 Roth's collection number is WT.19. Palm leaf sheath stalks are rolled at the ends and top-stitched with handspun bark fibre twine. The

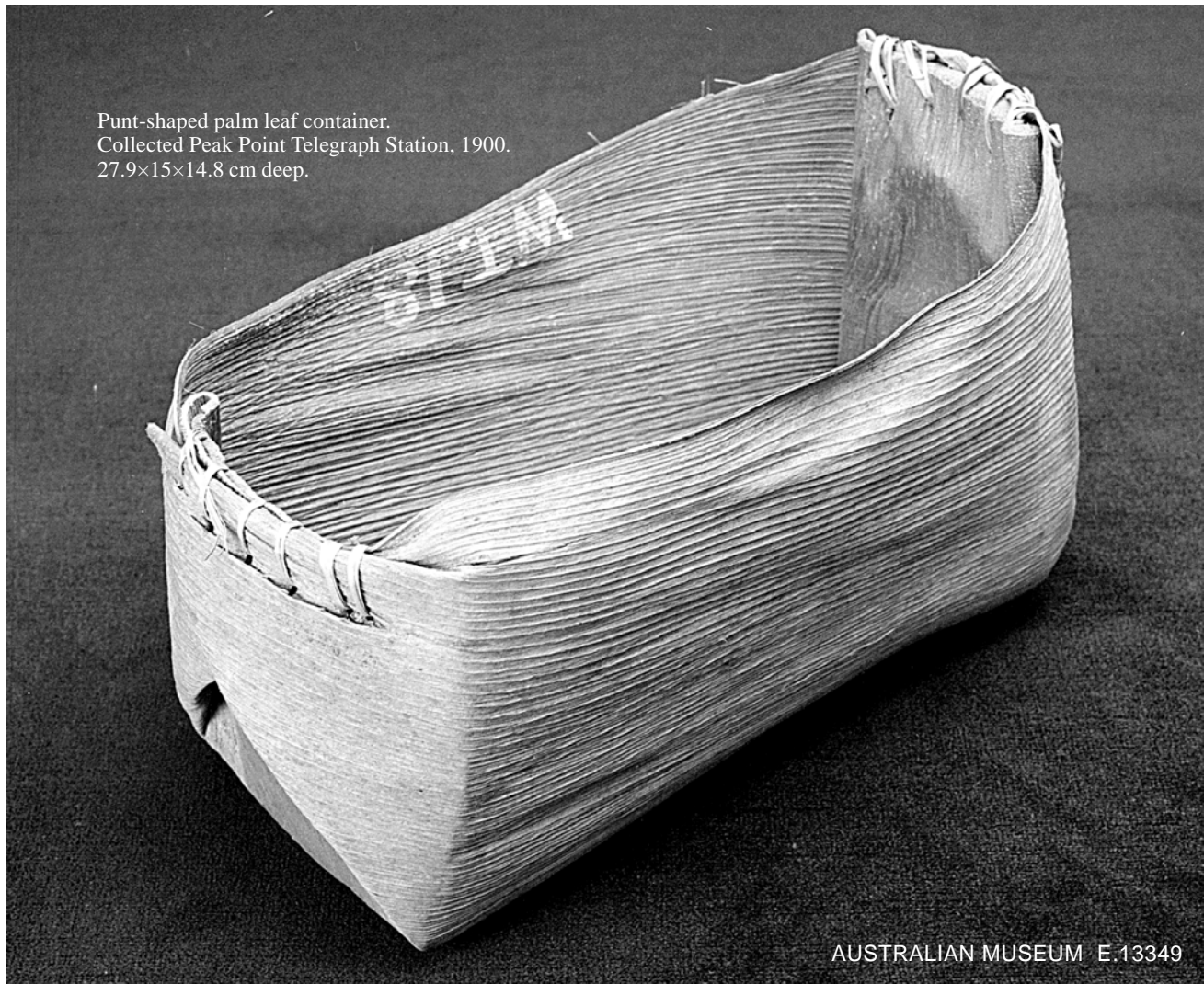
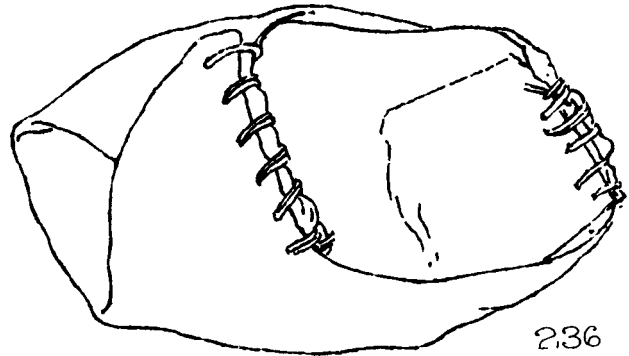
Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "water carrier (leaf scale)". It measures 31.1 by 15.1 cm and is 19 cm deep.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both punt shaped containers:

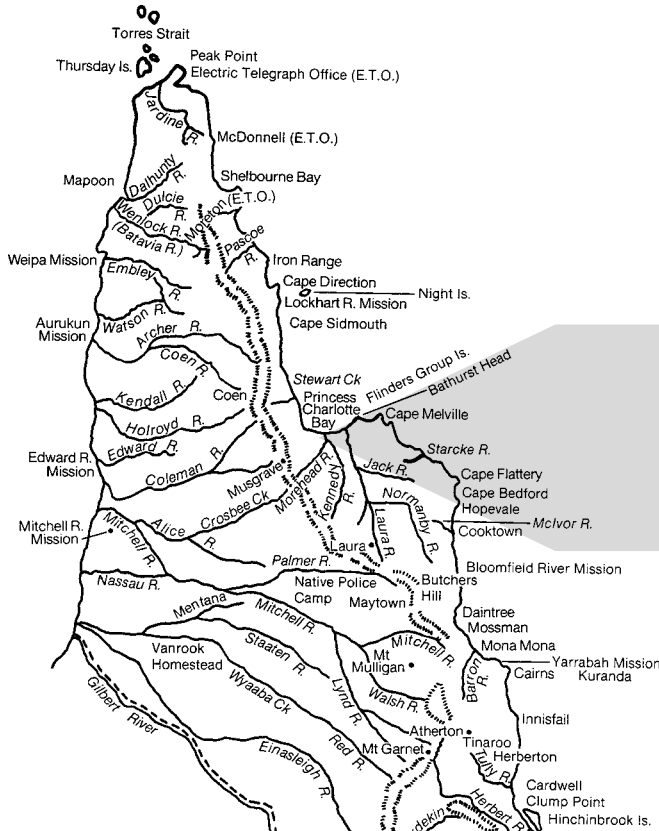
- E.13349 negative sheet 4004M, frame 33.
- E.13350 negative sheet 4004M, frame 34.

Reference

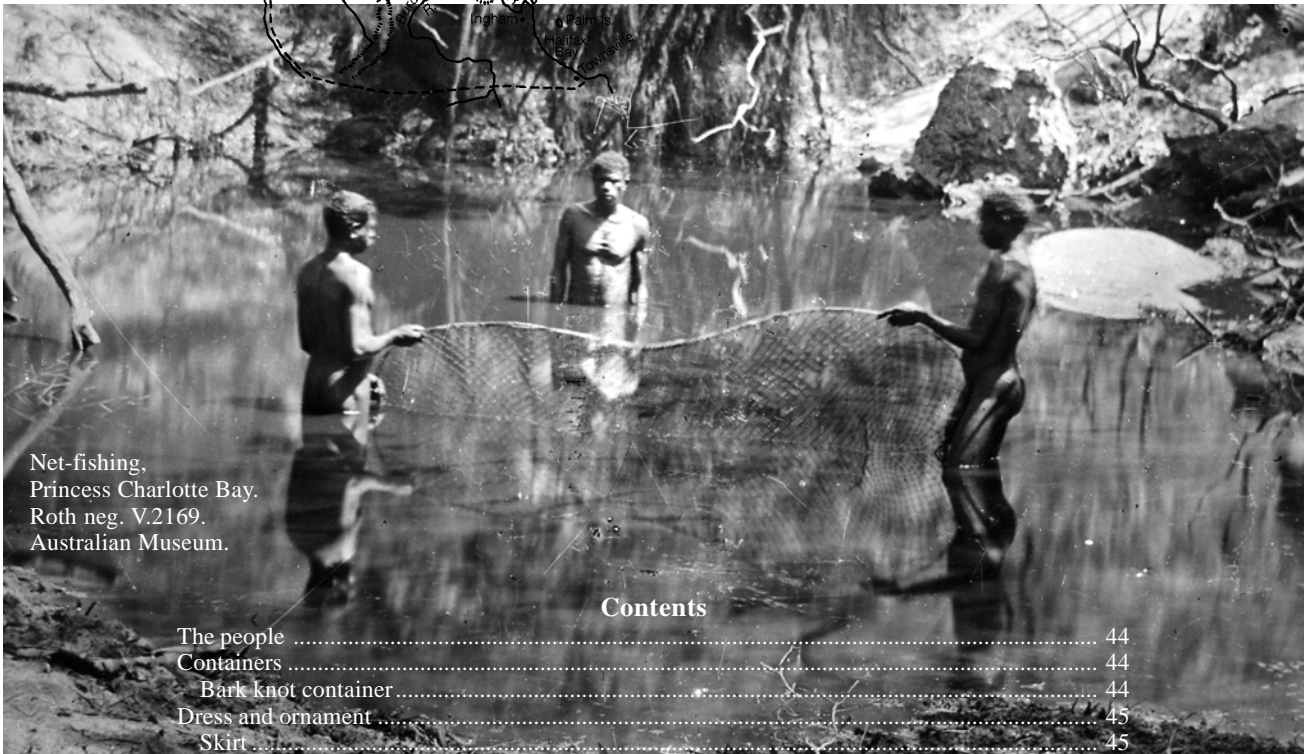
Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 31.



Punt-shaped palm leaf container.
Collected Peak Point Telegraph Station, 1900.
27.9×15×14.8 cm deep.



Princess Charlotte Bay



Net-fishing,
Princess Charlotte Bay.
Roth neg. V.2169.
Australian Museum.

Contents

The people	44
Containers	44
Bark knot container	44
Dress and ornament	45
Skirt	45
Fishing equipment	46
Fish hooks	46
Folding oval-frame fishing net	46
Tools	48
Awl	48
Drills	48
Food collecting sticks	49
Food collecting swab	49
Head pad	50
Stone hammer	50
Mallets	52
Wooden needle	52
Cane prodder	53
Iron scraper	53
Smoothing boards	54
Weapons	55
Spearthrowers	55

The people

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote about the main groups of people living around Princess Charlotte Bay. He called them the Koko-warra, the Koko-lamalama, the Koko-olkulo (also spelled Koko-olkoolo) and the Koko-rarmul. He said Koko-lamalama was the language spoken on the eastern half of Princess Charlotte Bay, Koko-rarmul the language spoken around the Morehead River and Koko-olkoolo the language spoken west of the Saltwater River—Report [to the Commissioner of Police, Queensland] on the Aboriginals occupying the “hinter land” of Princess Charlotte Bay, together with a preface containing suggestions for their better protection and improvement. Cooktown 30 December 1898: 8.

In the Princess Charlotte Bay District..., the main original camp or home of the Koko-warra... is in close vicinity to Balser's Knob. They follow the Normanby and Deighton Rivers as far as the Laura Settlement, they travel up Station and Sandy Creeks to the Morehead River, and westwards they wander over Jeannette's Tableland. In the course of their travels southwards, these Koko-warra come into communication with the Koko-minni from the Middle Palmer River. 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... In days gone by, the Koko-olkulo had their “home” at the water-holes in the neighbourhood of what is now the Musgrave Native Police Camp. At the present time (1899) they “walkabout” along the higher portions of Saltwater River, and across to the upper reaches of the Hann and Morehead Rivers, while in a northerly direction they wander up to Port Stewart, etc. the Koko-rarmul, the last of the more important of the Princess Charlotte Bay Tribes are somewhat limited in their peregrinations along Saltwater and Morehead Rivers.

Bulletin 18, 1910: 94.

B. Sommer in *W.E. Roth's Peninsular Vocabularies* (p. 131) says Roth's geography was not always right. Jeannette's Tableland was not west of Balser's Knob, but was due north, but mostly Roth was pretty accurate. In the same publication, p. 132, Sommer recorded that “the last known speaker of Gogo-Alwangara—or Mba Rarmul as the Lamalama called it—died early in 1973”.

R.L. Jack, re-tracing Kennedy's 1848 expedition to Saltwater Creek, which flows into Princess Charlotte Bay, wrote:

My track from the Hann River to Saltwater Creek, on 4th September 1879, probably coincided with Kennedy's. Near the explorer's camp of the 6th October, a NATIVE CAMP was inspected in the absence of its owners. There were seven or eight conical huts built of saplings and lined inside with woven strips of bamboo and covered outside with palm leaves. It was obviously a camp designed to keep out rain in the wet season. In the huts were stone ovens, fishing-nets, and pieces of BOTTLE-GLASS.

Jack, R.L. 1922. *Northmost Australia: three centuries of exploration, discovery and adventure in and around the Cape York Peninsula, Queensland*, p. 220.

Hale and Tindale visited the area in 1927 and described Princess Charlotte Bay as shallow and muddy, and lined with a dense fringe of mangroves. Several large rivers flowing into the Bay formed swamplands, lagoons and mud flats. Rich food resources here both supported a high population density and acted against migration to other areas.

Roth's main contacts here were with the Kokowarra people who lived inland from Princess Charlotte Bay.

References

- Hale, H.M., & N.B. Tindale, 1933. *Aborigines of Princess Charlotte Bay, North Queensland. Records of the South Australian Museum* 5(1): 63–116.
- Jack, R.L., 1922. *Northmost Australia: Three Centuries of Exploration, Discovery and Adventure in and around the Cape York Peninsula, Queensland*. Melbourne: George Robertson & Co.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 18: 94.
- Sommer, B.A., 1976. W.E. Roth's Peninsular Vocabularies. In *Languages of Cape York*, ed. P. Sutton, pp. 127–136. Australian Aboriginal Studies. Research & Regional Studies No. 6, AIAS, Canberra.

Containers

Bark knot container

Information from Roth's Bulletins. The bark knot container was made from the gnarled outgrowth that forms on the butt of some *Eucalyptus* trees. The knot was hacked from around its base and a pointed stick was used to loosen its edges. The hollow bark knot was then 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 adhesive. The container was often carried around by a handspun bark fibre string handle, strung through holes at opposite edges. Roth said it was used to carry water.

Bark knot container.
Collected Princess Charlotte Bay, 1898.
23.4×22.5 cm in diameter.



He wrote that in his time this type of container was rare. It was used by people living along the coastline from Princess Charlotte Bay south to the Bloomfield River, and was generally no bigger than 38 cm high and 39 cm in diameter. Thomas Petrie, a friend of Roth, said he had seen these containers 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 from Princess Charlotte Bay, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13319 Roth's collection number is WT.15. It is 23.4 cm long and 22.5 cm in diameter. The inner surface has been blackened by charring, and adhesive has been used to repair cracks. Two holes have been drilled at opposite sides of the mouth. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "water carrier. Fig'd Bull. 7, fig. 218".

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4000M, frame 3.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 29, pl. xxv, fig. 218.

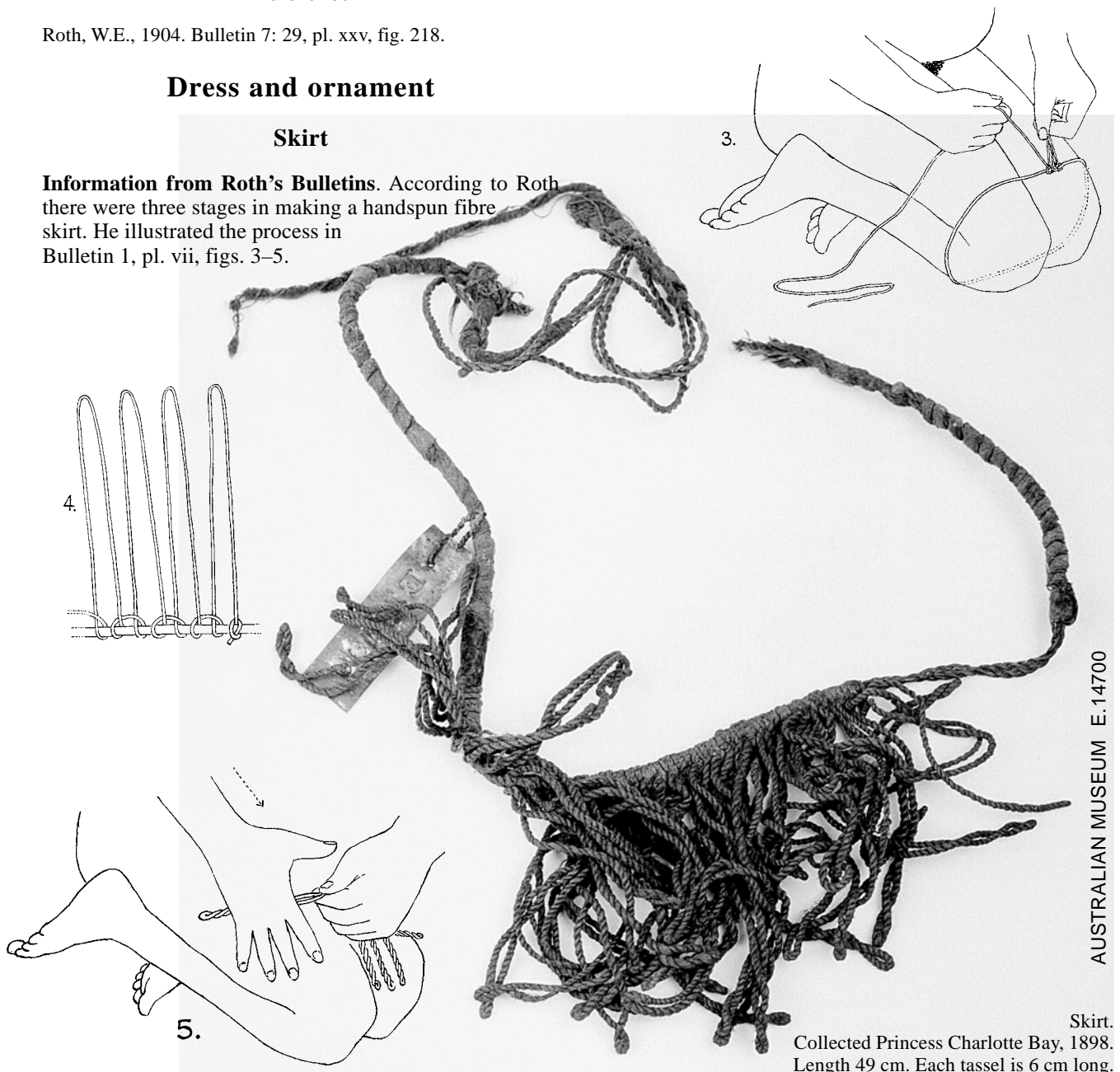
Dress and ornament

Skirt

Information from Roth's Bulletins. According to Roth there were three stages in making a handspun fibre skirt. He illustrated the process in Bulletin 1, pl. vii, figs. 3–5.

- 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 a method used only by people living around Princess Charlotte Bay, the Middle Palmer River, Maytown, Cooktown and Cape Bedford. Roth said in the hinterland of Princess Charlotte Bay only women wore these skirts, and he had on occasion seen skirts worn around their necks. The fibre string came from three sources. The roots of *Barringtonia racemosa* could be used after preparation. The cortical layer was sliced off in strips from the under surface of which the white shreddy fibre was pulled off. This was washed and rubbed for a few minutes in water and then dried in the sun. After drying it was split into the required shreds, ready for use. Other sources of fibre string came from the Kapok tree, *Bombax malabaricum*, now known as *Bombax ceiba* var. *leiocarpum*, and the Crow Ash, *Malaisia tortuosa*, now known as *Malaisia scandens*. This



Skirt.
Collected Princess Charlotte Bay, 1898.
Length 49 cm. Each tassel is 6 cm long.

produced a greenish twine when first made. The thin outermost covering of bark was scraped off with a sharp mussel shell or glass when available. The underlying greenish fibrous layer was removed in narrow strips from 45 to 60 cm long. Each green strip was then put in the mouth and chewed for about two minutes. This made the strips suitable to be split with the nails into shreds of the fineness required for the skirts.

Collection information. There is one skirt from Princess Charlotte Bay, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.14700 The total width of the skirt is 49 cm. Each tassel is 6 cm long. It is made of a combination of handspun fibre string and European fabric. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Apron belt (fibre string incomplete)".

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4176M, frame 1384.

References

Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 10.
Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 39.

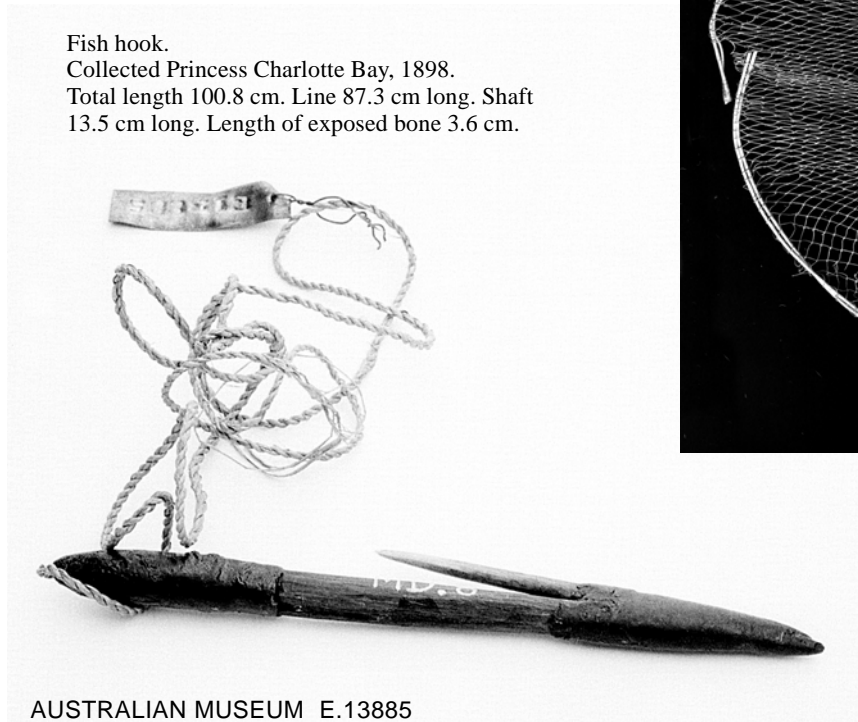
Fishing equipment

Fish hooks

Information from Roth's Bulletins. People living around Princess Charlotte Bay made a distinctive fish hook, called by Roth an angular bone-bearded hook. The hook was a thin tapering stick of hardwood from *Erythrophloeum labouchei*, now known as *Erythrophloeum chlorostachyum*, to which a pointed piece of bone was attached at an acute angle. The bone was tied on with a length of tendon from a kangaroo tail and held fast with adhesive. The sliver of bone came from an emu, native companion or kangaroo. A handspun fibre line made from the Cabbage Tree Palm, *Livistona australis*, was similarly attached at the other end of the hook.

Roth said the Kokowarra people called the hook *tarwa*, while the Kokorarmul referred to it as *tarubal*.

Fish hook.
Collected Princess Charlotte Bay, 1898.
Total length 100.8 cm. Line 87.3 cm long. Shaft 13.5 cm long. Length of exposed bone 3.6 cm.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13885

Collection information. There are two fish hooks from Princess Charlotte Bay, collected by Roth in 1898. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Bone pointed fish hooks with *Livistona* twine attached. Hook made from Emu, Native Companion or Kangaroo bone. Koko-rarmul tribe calls them *tarubal*; Koko-warra tribe calls them *tarwa*".

E.13884 Roth's collection number is MD.7. Total length is 118.3 cm. The line is 100 cm long. The length of the shaft is 18.3 cm and the length of the exposed bone is 3.2 cm.

E.13885 Roth's collection number is MD.8. Total length is 100.8 cm. The line is 87.3 cm long. The length of the shaft is 13.5 cm and the length of the exposed bone is 3.6 cm. It is illustrated in Bulletin 7, pl. xxvi, fig. 256.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both fish hooks:

E.13884 negative sheet 4074M, frame 567.
E.13885 negative sheet 4074M, frame 568.

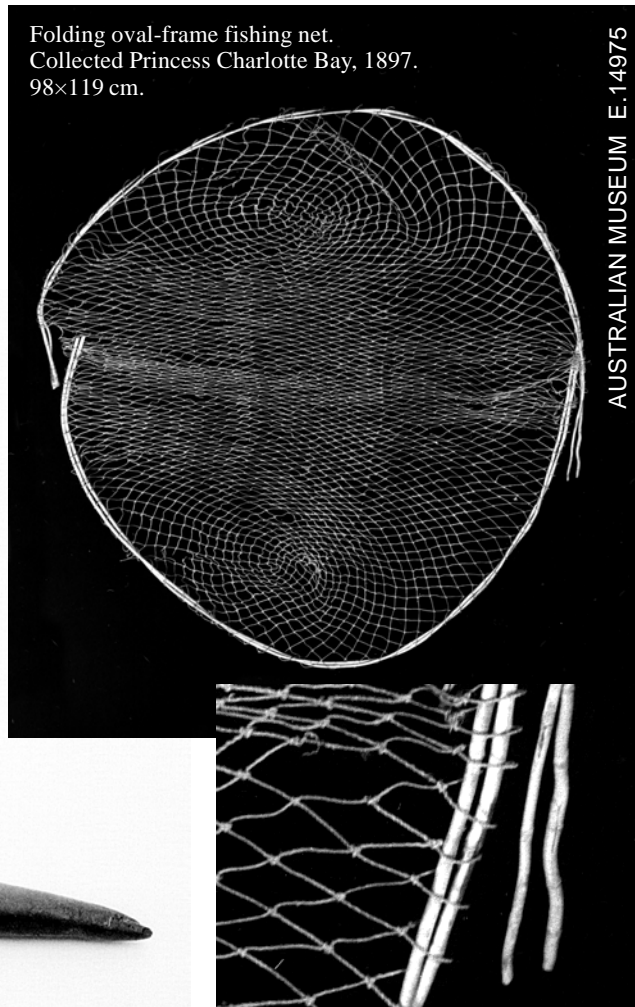
References

Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 3: 21.
Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 33.

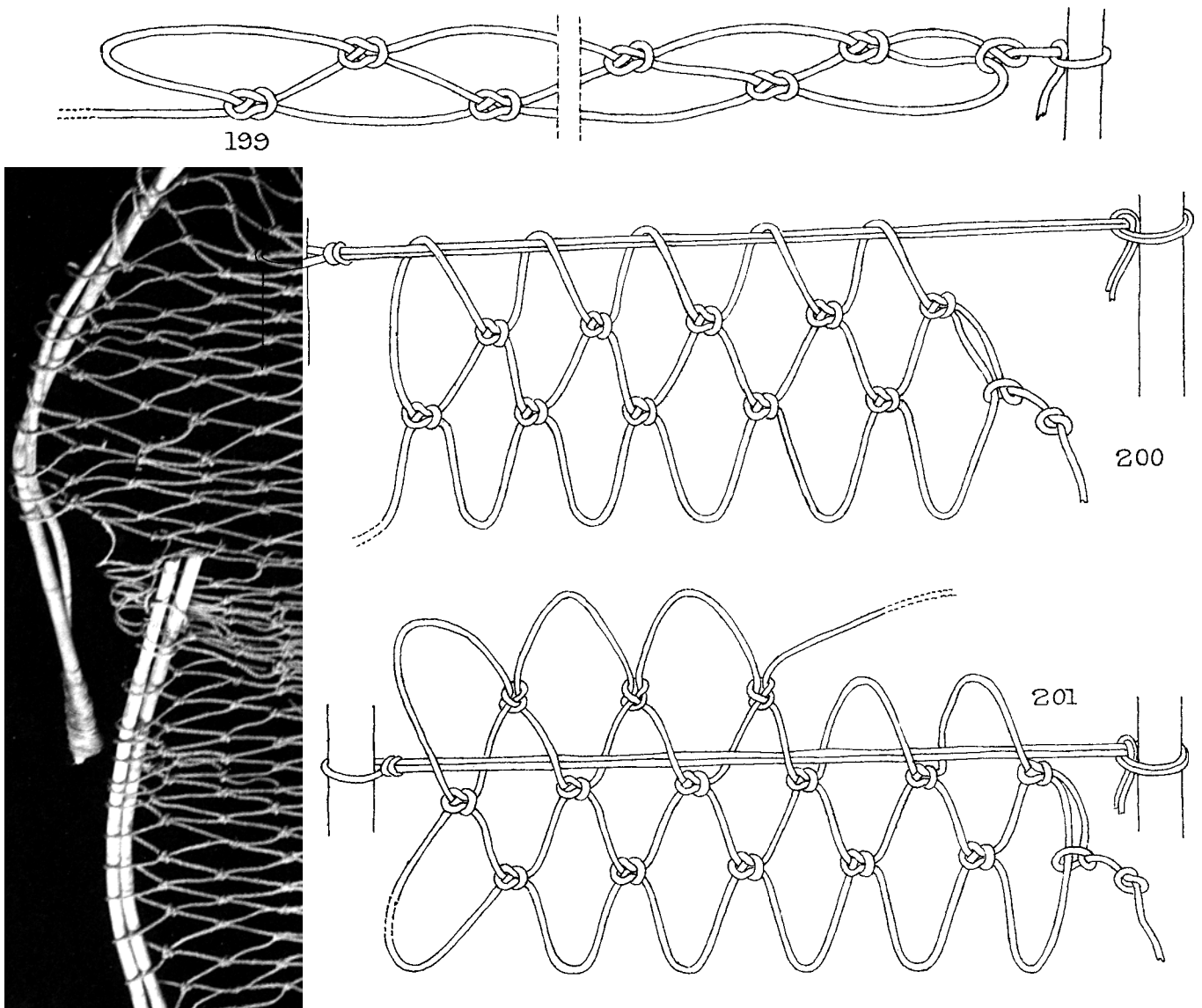
Folding oval-frame fishing net

Information from Roth's Bulletins. According to Roth, these folding oval-frame fishing nets woven on the netting stitch pattern replaced the non-folding oval-frame ones used further north in the Peninsula, especially on the Morehead,

Folding oval-frame fishing net.
Collected Princess Charlotte Bay, 1897.
98x119 cm.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14975



Musgrave, Normanby, Laura, Palmer, Embley, Pennefather and Batavia (now known as the Wenlock) Rivers.

Roth initially described this netting stitch pattern in Bulletin 1 with a full page illustration, but made a correction in Bulletin 7. Having made a further study of the netting stitch he said it was commenced with a continuous strand before it was attached to the base strand. Roth illustrated the process in Bulletin 7, pl. xxiii, figs. 199–201.

After fixing it to an upright stick stuck in the ground, the continuous strand was knotted on itself into a number of meshes, depending on the width of the net to be made. This continuous strand was then removed and a straight base strand was passed through the top row of meshes and tied, as usual, between two sticks. These sticks could be up to 150 to 180 cm apart depending on the size of the fishing net to be made. The meshes already made thus became stretched at right angles, and the netting stitch continued from left to right in the ordinary manner.

The frame was made from lawyer cane, *Calamus* sp. The handspun bark fibre twine was made from the bark of either *Malaisia tortuosa*, now known as *Malaisia scandens*, or *Sterculia caudata*, now known as *Brachychiton diversifolius*.

These folding fishing nets were carried along the water, more or less vertically, by two men, with their friends in front, acting as beaters. When the fish were caught the net

was folded up like a purse. The two halves of the cane frame had bark fibre twine hinges. Smaller folding oval-frame fishing nets could be managed by one person in shallower water holes with the fishing net held in front or at his side. The larger ones could measure from 30 to 150 cm in at the longest diameter and were quite difficult to fold underwater. Roth said the larger ones were used by the Lamalama people and those he referred to as the “true coastal people of Princess Charlotte Bay”. The Lamalama people called these nets *warte-a*.

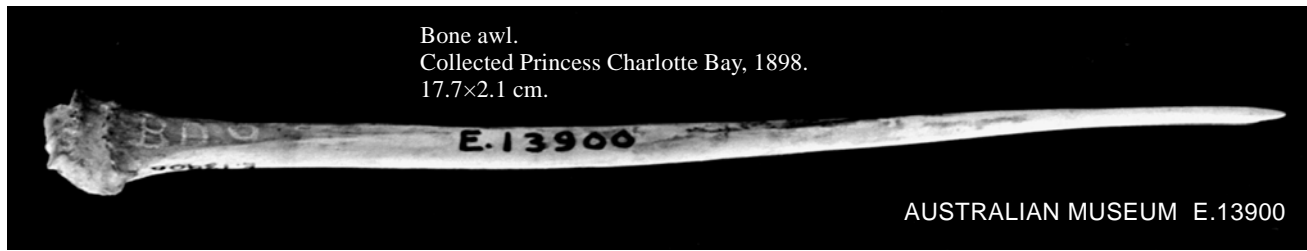
Collection information. There is one folding oval-frame fishing net from Princess Charlotte Bay, collected by Roth in 1897.

E.14975 Roth's collection number is p. 17. It has a netting pattern stitch net attached to an oval cane frame. It is 98 by 119 cm.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4211M, frame 1659.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 12–13.
 Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 3: 19, 22.
 Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 27.



Tools

Awl

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 hand-held end 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.

Men used these bone awls and carried them in their handspun bark fibre bags.

Roth said the Kokorarmul people called the bone awl *tang*, the Lamalama people called it *al-pur* and the Kokowarra referred to it as *an-gaina*.

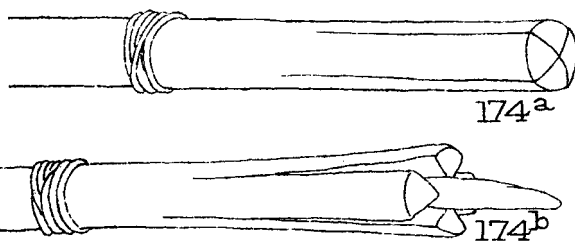
Collection information. There is one bone awl from Princess Charlotte Bay, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13900 Roth’s collection number is BD.9. A long, slender cylindrical bone from a kangaroo, wallaby or emu, shaped to a point. It is 17.7 cm long and 2.1 cm wide.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4076M, frame 583.

Reference

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



Drills

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. Tooth drills used by people living around Princess Charlotte Bay were made from an incisor of one of the larger species of kangaroo. To fix the tooth into the short wooden handle, one end of the piece of wood was sliced in four, using a piece of shell. A length of bark fibre twine was then tied around the handle, a little way beyond the cuts to prevent these splits from extending. The base of the kangaroo tooth was now inserted in the wedge as shown in Bulletin 7, pl. xxi, figs. 174 a–b, strong bark fibre twine was wound round and covered with adhesive. Roth referred to the adhesive as “ironwood cement”, which probably means he was referring to *Erythrophloeum labouchei*, now known as *Erythrophloeum chlorostachyum*. The string was no longer required after the adhesive had set, and was removed. This tool was used to drill the holes in spearthrowers so that the peg could be fixed to one end. It also was used to drill holes in pieces of shell to make a necklace.

Collection information. There are two kangaroo incisor tooth drills from Princess Charlotte Bay, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13908 Roth’s collection number is BD.8. The total length is 37.5 cm. The diameter of the wooden handle is 1.4 cm. The tooth is 2.5 cm long.

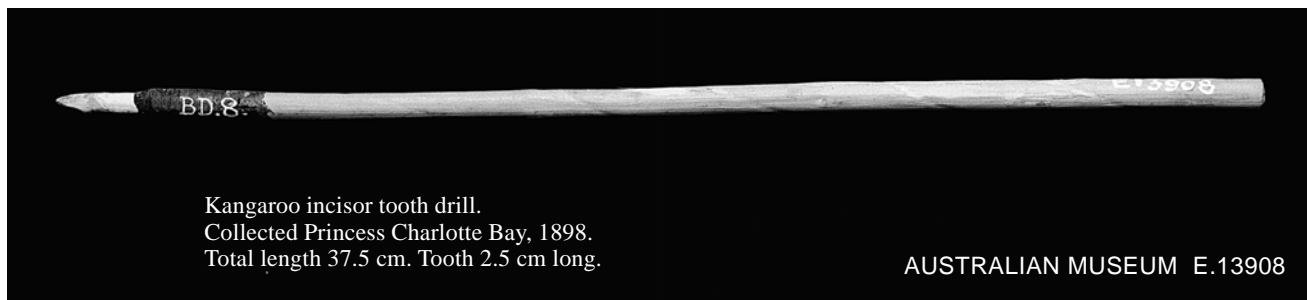
E.13909 Roth’s collection number is BD.7. The total length is 31.5 cm. The Diameter of the wooden handle is 1.3 cm. The tooth is 2.2 cm long.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both kangaroo incisor tooth drills:

E.13908 negative sheet 4077M, frame 591.
E.13909 negative sheet 4077M, frame 592.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 24.



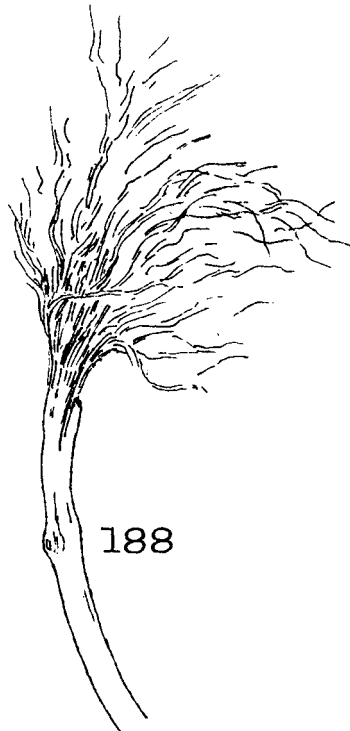
Food collecting stick.
Collected Princess Charlotte Bay, 1898.
Length 86 cm.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14994

Food collecting sticks

Information from Roth's Bulletins. A long slender branch of the Crow Ash tree, *Malaisia tortuosa*, now known as *Malaisia scandens*, was used throughout northern Queensland to mop up honey and green ant "mush". The ends of the sticks were prepared by being well chewed and then dried, so as to become frayed as illustrated in Bulletin 7, pl. xxii, fig. 188. The stick was poked up into a hole in a tree where a bees' nest had been established, so that the honey stuck to the frayed end. It was then pulled out and sucked by the hunter. Such branches were usually carried from camp to camp and named after the plant from which they came. used. According to Roth, the Kokowarra people called it *ko-adam* or *ari-luar*, the Kokorarmul people called it *dingalka*, and the Lamalama referred to it as *ku-la*.



188

Collection information. There are two food collecting sticks from Princess Charlotte Bay, collected by Roth in 1898. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "swab, the sugar bag stick".

E.14994 Roth's collection number is MD.24. It is 86 cm long.

E.14995 Roth's collection number is MD.25. It is 73.3 cm long.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both food collecting sticks:

E.14994 negative sheet 4213M, frame 1678.

E.14995 negative sheet 4213M, frame 1679.

References

Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 9.

Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 3: 17.

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

Food collecting swab

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth reported that when honey, preferably from young bees, was found, mops, sponges or swabs of grass were used to get the honey out and soak it up. It saved cutting the timber away to get at the honey. Two types of grasses could be used, the hairy spinifex, *Spinifex hirsutus*, now known as *Spinifex sericens*, and the cockatoo grass, *Panicum semialatum*, now known as *Alloteropsis semialata*. The sponges were made by rubbing handfuls of grass between the hands, sometimes with water. The wads or sponges were then left to dry. These dried sponges were in common use throughout north Queensland. Roth commented that very few woven bags would be without one.

Food collecting swab.
Collected Princess Charlotte Bay, 1898.
10.8×4×1.4 cm.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13860

Collection information. There is one food collecting swab from Princess Charlotte Bay, collected by Roth, in 1898.

E.13860 A rolled wad of grass, 10.8 by 4 by 1.4 cm.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4071M, frame 543.

References

Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 3: 17.

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

Head pad.
Collected Princess Charlotte Bay,
no collection date given.
Diameter 24×3.3 cm thick.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13521

Head pad

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Head pads were made of strips of bark from a paper bark tea tree, *Melaleuca* sp., bound round into a thick ring and placed on the head so as to distribute the weight when anything extra heavy was being carried that way. Roth said it was in 1898 that he first saw these head pads being used by people living around the upper reaches of Birthday Creek, a stream running into Princess Charlotte Bay. Subsequently he saw them being used by people living at Cape Bedford, in the Palmer River camps and on the Gulf coast around the mouths of the Mitchell and Norman Rivers.

Collection information. There is one head pad from Princess Charlotte Bay, but no collection date is given.

E.13521 Strips of *Melaleuca* bark, bound into a thick ring and bound round with fibre string. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "head pad made of *Melaleuca* bark, used for distributing the weight of a burden carried on the head. Not on Dr Roth's list? Fig'd. Bull. 7, fig. 190." It is 24 cm in diameter and 3.3 cm thick.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4029M, frame 204.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 26, pl. xxii, fig. 190.

Stone hammer

Information from Roth's Bulletins. The head of a stone hammer was made from a sub-angular pebble, without any shaping by flaking or grinding. The worn end often showed how the tool was used. The pebble was fixed into its handle in the same angle as a stone axe head when used as an axe. It was fixed to the handle in a similar manner too, with

handspun bark fibre twine and adhesive as shown in these illustrations from Bulletin 7, pl. xviii, fig. 151 and pl. xix, figs. 152–154.

The stone hammer was used when a sheet was removed from a tree trunk. Removal of bark from a tree was usually done at the end of the wet season when the sap was up, and the bark slipped easily. When a sheet of bark was required, one long and two transverse cuts were made on the tree trunk. The bark was removed by tapping it with stones or a stone hammer. Hammering helped loosen the bark from the sub-adjacent tissues after the cuts had been made.

Stone hammers also were used to break open some of the harder nuts, like that from the *Pandanus*.

Roth found stone hammers being used by people living in the Princess Charlotte Bay hinterland in 1898, and on the Palmer River in 1899. He also commented that stone hammers could have been used in making stone axes.

Roth said the Kokowarra people called them *ambianga*, the Kokorarmul people called them *ngo-mon*, and the Lamalama people called them *wu-ru*.

Collection information. There is one stone hammer from Princess Charlotte Bay, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13652 Roth's collection number is SH.4. An oval-shaped stone, flattened at both ends, is held in place with a hand grip looped over one end, and bound with handspun bark fibre string and adhesive. The hand grip is bound with *Pandanus* palm strips just under the stone and at the end to keep the ends of the hand grip tightly bound together. The complete hammer is 32.5 cm long. The stone is 10.2 by 7 cm. It weighs 676.3 g.

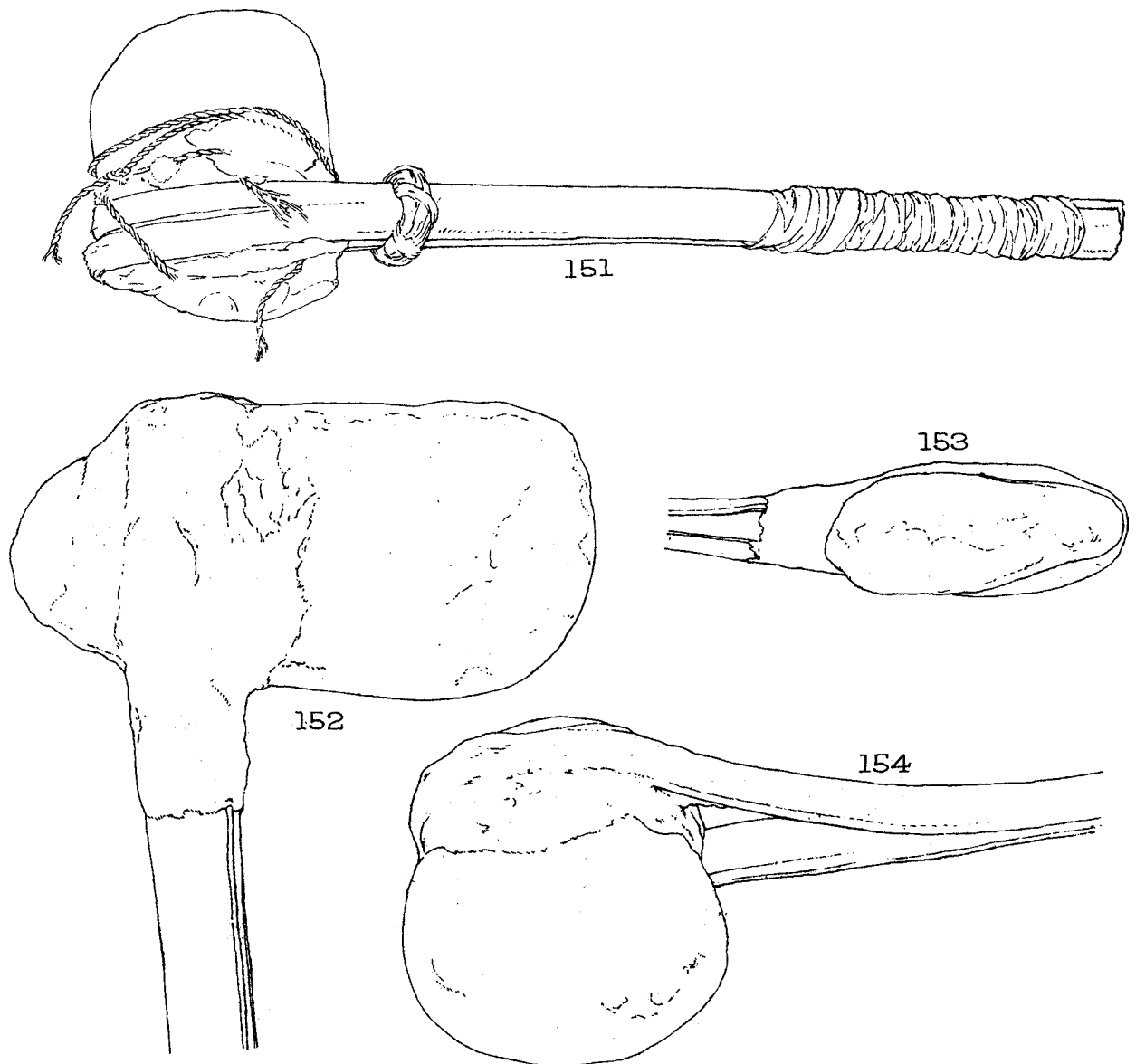
Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4045M, frame 335.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 9, 23.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM, E.13652

Stone hammer.
Collected Princess Charlotte Bay, 1898.
Length 32.5 cm. Stone 10.2×7 cm. Weight 676.3 g.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13466

Wooden mallet.
 Collected Princess Charlotte Bay, 1898.
 Total length 36 cm. Handle 7 cm long.
 Head 8 cm wide. Weight 1114 g.



Mallets

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. Roth wrote that people living in the hinterland of Princess Charlotte Bay made hardwood mallets with an elongate flattish head and a shorter circular handle. They reminded him of the shape of cricket bats. These mallets were similar, he said, to the model of an implement made by an old man living in the Atherton scrub country, who showed Roth the “old-time” method of making a bark blanket by hammering flat a sheet of bark.

The wooden mallets, carried from camp to camp and used by Kokowarra, Kokorarmul and Lamalama people were heavy and were from 27 to 35 cm long. They were used to break up nuts, pound foodstuffs and other articles. As far as Roth could ascertain, they were essentially a woman’s implement. According to Roth, the Kokowarra called it *ngau-al*, the Kokorarmul, *angkurti-in*, and the Lamalama, *mulum*.

Collection information. There are two wooden mallets from the hinterland of Princess Charlotte Bay, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13465 Roth’s collection number is WH.1. The total length is 26.5 cm. The handle is 10 cm long and the head is 6.5 cm wide. It weighs 586.5 g. It is illustrated in Bulletin 7, 1904, pl. xx, fig. 165.

E.13466 Roth’s collection number is WH.2. The total length is 36 cm. The handle is 7 cm long and the head is 8 cm wide. It weighs 1114 g. It is illustrated in Bulletin 7, 1904, pl. xx, fig. 166.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both wooden mallets

- E.13465 negative sheet 4022M, frame 148.
- E.13466 negative sheet 4022M, frame 149.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 24.

Wooden needle

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. Roth called this implement a stiletto because it reminded him of the tool used by European women to make eyelet holes when sewing. He said stilettoes were usually from 15 to 22 cm long and made of kangaroo, wallaby or emu bone, or of hardwood. If made of wood it was discarded after use. Wooden needles were used to pierce softer materials than that of bone needles, for example, for top-stitching leaf scale water carriers or mending accidental splits.

Collection information. There is one wooden needle from Princess Charlotte Bay, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13904 Roth’s collection number is MD.19. A piece of hardwood which has been shaped to a point. It is 16.6 by 1.1 cm. The Australian Museum’s Anthropology register dated 1905 includes “wooden stiletto for getting the fibre off the cabbage tree palm-leaf in making twine. *Livistona australis* Mart”.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4077M, frame 587.

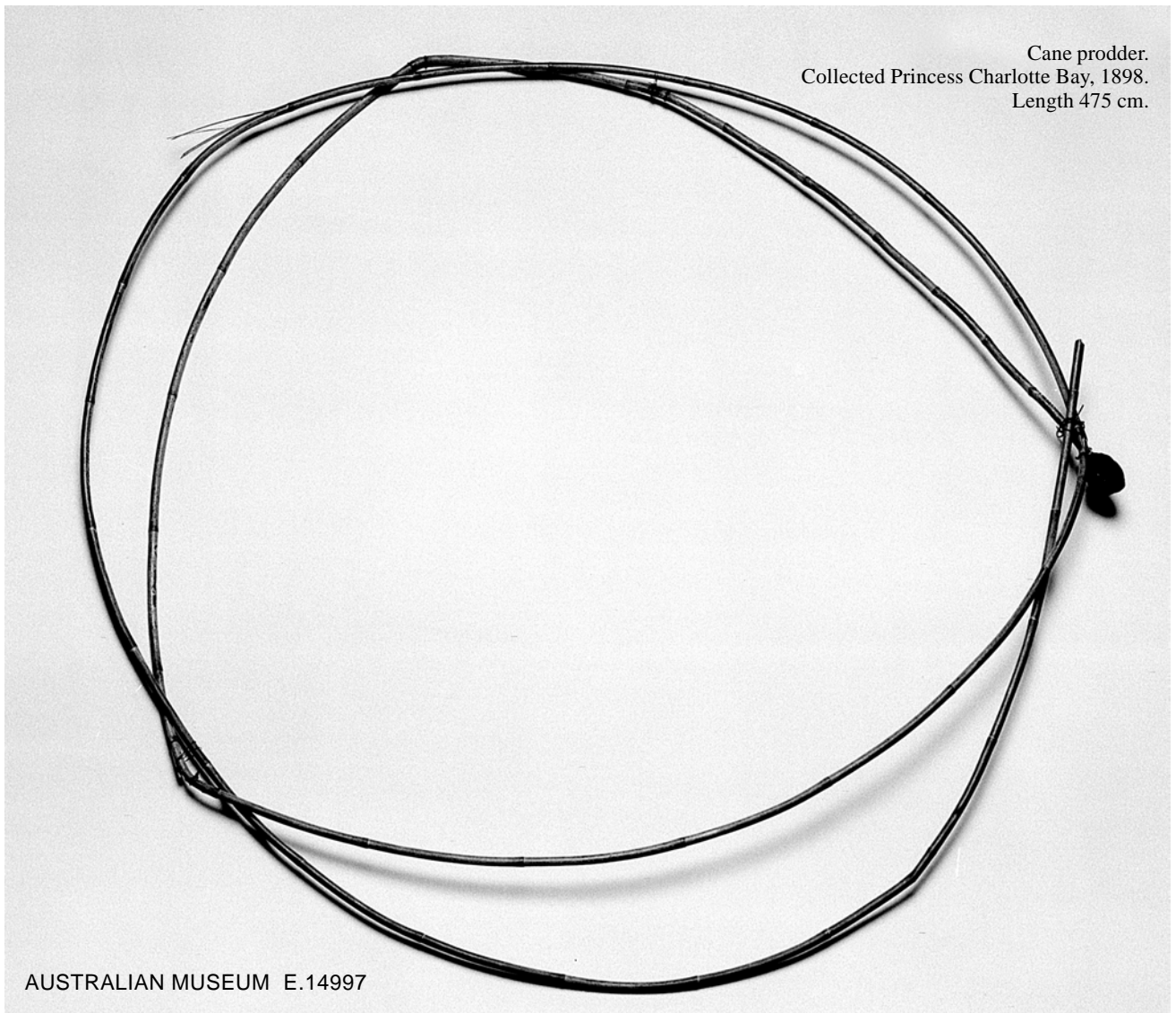
References

- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 9.
- Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 25.



Wooden needle.
 Collected Princess Charlotte Bay, 1898.
 16.6×1.1 cm.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13904



Cane prodder.
Collected Princess Charlotte Bay, 1898.
Length 475 cm.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14997

Cane prodder

Information from Roth's Bulletins. The prodder was a strip of lawyer cane, *Calamus* sp., some 300 to 360 cm long, with the prickles removed and a knob of beeswax attached at one end. It was inserted into holes in trees and the ground where the wax would pick up any fur against which it was pressed. In an unpublished note, Roth noted that it could also pick up snake scales. It both confirmed the presence of an animal and its position in the tree, hole or log, and saved unnecessary labour. The cutting away or digging at the right spot was reduced to a minimum. Men from the Princess Charlotte Bay area carried it wound round and round in a coil and slung over their shoulder. Roth does not mention the lawyer cane prodder being used anywhere else. At Rockingham Bay, they used a similar length of lawyer cane to seek out grubs from tree butts, but instead of a lump of beeswax at one end, a lawyer cane prickle was left there to stick into the grub.

Roth said the Kokowarra people called this prodder after the name of the material used, *aru-ya*.

Collection information. There is one cane prodder from Princess Charlotte Bay, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.14997 Roth's collection number is MD.36. A length of coiled lawyer cane with a lump of beeswax at one end. It is 475 cm long.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4213M, frame 1681.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1898. Report [to the Commissioner of Police, Queensland] on the Aborigines occupying the "hinterland" of Princess Charlotte Bay, together with a preface containing suggestions for their better protection and improvement. Cooktown 30 December 1898: 26.
Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 26.

Iron scraper

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth used the term scraper to include a number of artefacts which could be used as spokeshaves, gravers, adzes, gouges, chisels, scrapers or knives. He said the material used was usually stone, shell or tooth, and the implement was invariably drawn towards the operator.

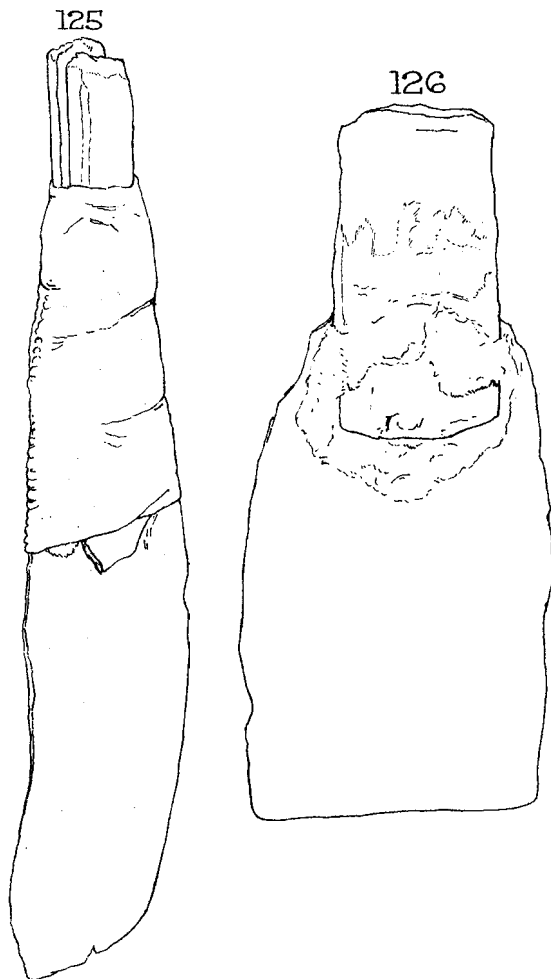
With the advent of European contact, the use of scrap iron, filed or ground down, rapidly gained favour. Roth reported that people living in the hinterland of Princess Charlotte Bay and around the Palmer River area fitted a ground or filed down piece of iron from a barrel hoop or spade into a wooden handle. The handle was made of two flat pieces of wood with the iron blade in between, the whole lot tied round with handspun bark fibre twine and covered with adhesive as illustrated in Bulletin



Iron scraper.
Collected Princess Charlotte Bay, 1898.
19.3×3.7 cm.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13940

7, pl. xvi, figs. 125–126. The iron scraper was used to sharpen spear-tips. According to Roth the Kokowarra people called it *kanina*, the Kokoramul, *telmemuka* and the Lamalama, *lalanu*.



Collection information. There is one iron scraper from Princess Charlotte Bay, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13940 Roth's collection number is IR.6. A rectangular piece of iron is fitted between two pieces of wood, bound round with handspun bark fibre string and coated with adhesive. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "iron spokeshave". It is illustrated in Bulletin 7, pl. xvi, fig. 124. It is 19.3 by 3.7 cm.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4081M, frame 623.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 20–22.

Smoothing boards

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 adhesive in the making of tools and weapons. Blobs of the sticky adhesive often were found stuck to the surface of the board after the job was done. The board, always greased with forehead perspiration before use, was held in the right hand, while the left one turned the object being stuck together.

Roth found these smoothing boards being used by men living around Princess Charlotte Bay, and on the Bloomfield, Endeavour, Palmer and Mitchell Rivers.

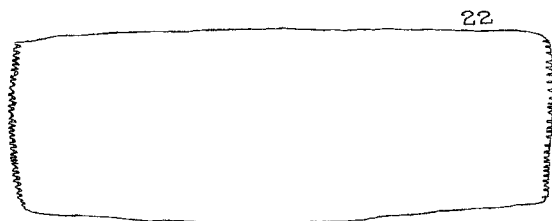
Smoothing board.
Collected Princess Charlotte Bay, 1898.
19.4×6 cm.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13947

Smoothing boards also were used by men living on the lower coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Roth said men living around Princess Charlotte Bay also used another form of the smoothing board, with the shorter ends being straight and finely serrated to comb out a certain vegetable fibre that was being used to make fibre twine as illustrated in Bulletin 7, pl. iii, fig. 22.



On the Endeavour River, Roth often saw 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 are four smoothing boards from Princess Charlotte Bay, collected by Roth in 1899.

- E.13947 A flat, rectangular piece of wood with a blob of adhesive at one end. It is 19.4 by 6 cm. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "blob of cement. Fig'd. Bull. 7, fig. 21".
- E.13948 A flat, rectangular piece of wood with serrated ends. It is 22.5 by 8.5 cm. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "serrated. Fig'd. Bull. 7, fig. 22".
- E.13953 A flat, rectangular piece of wood. It is 22.4 by 7 cm.
- E.13954 A flat, rectangular piece of wood. It is 21.1 by 6.2 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all four smoothing boards:

- E.13947 negative sheet 4082M, frame 630.
 E.13948 negative sheet 4082M, frame 631.
 E.13953 negative sheet 4083M, frame 636.
 E.13954 negative sheet 4083M, frame 637.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 14.

Weapons

Spearthrowers

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Ironwood spearthrowers used by men living around Princess Charlotte Bay had blades longer than those used further south by people living around Cape Bedford. They were wide at the centre and narrower at the hand-held end, with the shell haft fixed at any angle. At the other end of the spearthrower a long wooden peg was attached. If holes were drilled at the end to hold the peg in place it was then only partly covered with adhesive. If the peg was only tied on, then it was totally covered with adhesive.

Roth noted that northwest of Princess Charlotte Bay, men used a spearthrower that was comparatively short and wide

with a peg made of beefwood, *Grevillea striata*. The peg was tied on, never drilled, and its back was covered with resin from the beefwood tree. With this kind of spearthrower, a very short spear, about 180 cm was used.

Roth said the Koko-rarmul people called the spearthrower *bo-un*, and the Koko-warra, *alvau-ul*.

Roth described spears from Princess Charlotte Bay as being lateral stingray barbed, quartz-tipped, and multiple pronged fishing spears with wooden barbs. He said men in Princess Charlotte Bay also had a special spear made with a hand-held end of bamboo (bartered from the Hann and Kennedy Rivers people), and the other end from *Acacia* wood.

Collection information. There are two spearthrowers from Princess Charlotte Bay, collected by Roth in 1898.

- E.14365 Roth's collection number is W.76. It is 90 cm long and 7.2 cm at its widest part. The peg is attached at one end with adhesive and bark fibre twine. The shell hand-grip is missing.
- E.14366 Roth's collection number is W.77. It is 87.3 cm long and 6.8 cm at its widest part. The peg is tied to one end by means of handspun bark fibre being passed through holes drilled in the peg and secured with adhesive. Only one of the two shell halves forming the hand grip is present. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "*Melo*".

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both spearthrowers:

- E.14365 negative sheet 4134M, frame 1048.
 E.14366 negative sheet 4135M, frame 1049.

References

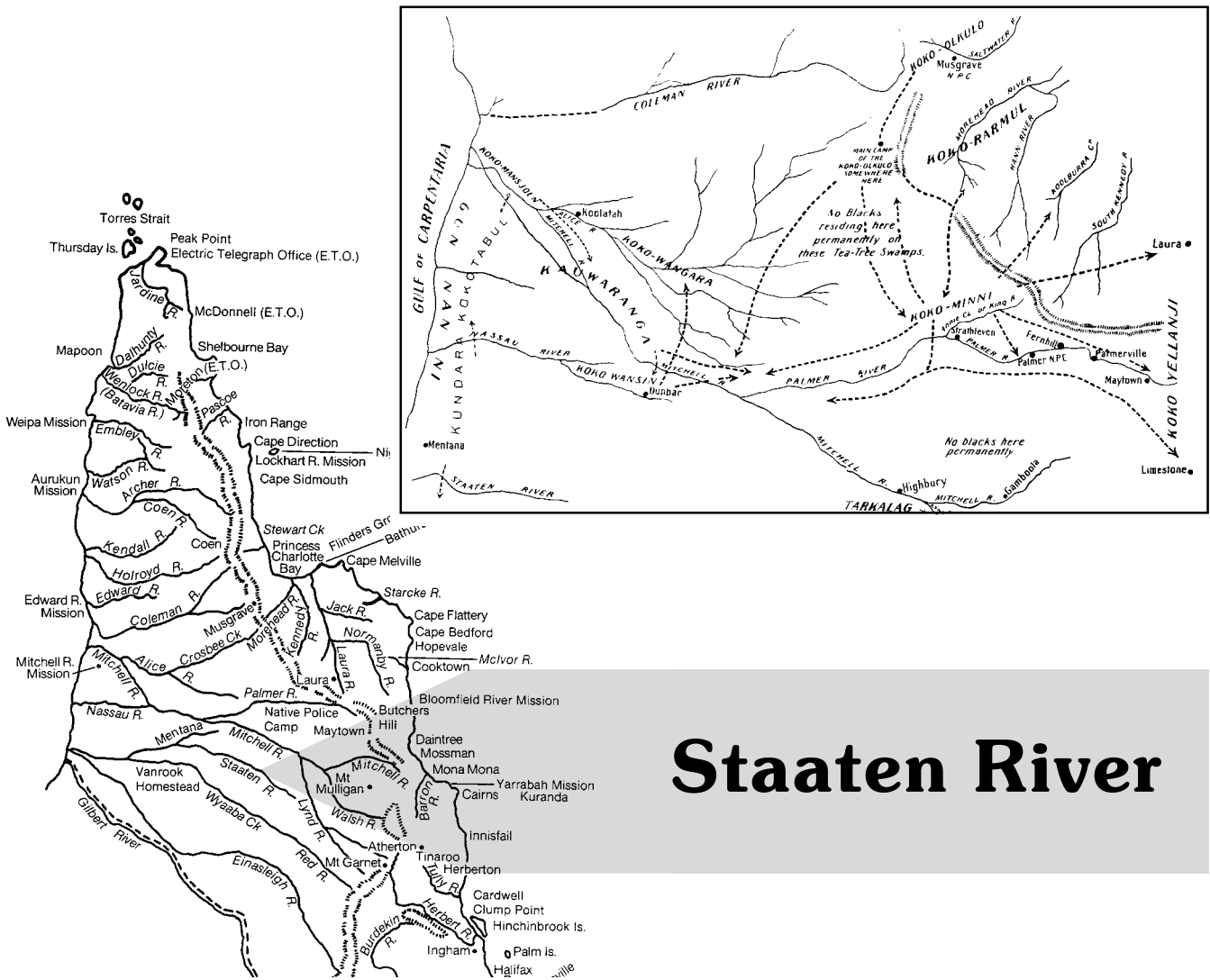
- Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 13.
 Roth, W.E., 1909. Bulletin 13: 193, 200.

Spearthrower.
 Collected Princess Charlotte Bay, 1898.
 87.3×6.8 cm (max.width)



Woven bag—netting stitch pattern.
Collected Staaten River, 1903.
30.5×23.5 cm.





Staaten River

Contents

- The people 58
- Containers 58
 - Woven bags—netting stitch pattern 58
 - Woven bags—loop and twist pattern 60
 - Woven bags—double loop or hourglass pattern 62
- Sieves 64
- Sieve bags 65
- Death pointer 65
- Dress and ornament 66
 - Emu fathered string armband 66
 - Pandanus* leaf armband 67
 - Pearl shell chest ornaments 67
 - Melon shell chest ornament 68
 - Forehead circlets 69
 - Feather tuft hair ornament 69
 - Grass reed necklaces 69
 - Possum string necklaces 70
 - Shell necklaces 71
 - Nose pins 71
- Fishing equipment 73
 - Fishing nets 73
- Mourning objects 74
- Raw material 75
 - Pigments 75
- Tools 75
 - Stone axe head 75
 - Netting needles 75
 - Smoothing board 76
- Weapons 77
 - Sharks' teeth knives 77
 - Stick spearthrowers 78
 - Straight spearthrowers 79

The people

Roth wrote about people he called the Gunanni who were coastal people living between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers in western Cape York Peninsula. He said they travelled as far south as the Gilbert River where they met the Kundara people. The main camp of the Gunanni was near Topsy's Waterhole, not far from what was then known as the New Mitchell River Aboriginal Reserve.

The Kundara people lived on the coast between the Nassau and Staaten Rivers. Mentana Station, called Ngabengamadam, was close to their main camp.

In 1864 an expedition led by the Jardine brothers set out to overland cattle from Rockhampton to Somerset on the tip of Cape York Peninsula. They first met Aboriginal resistance on the Staaten River. From this point on they were confronted by hostile Aboriginal people and were frequently attacked.

The Gunanni people are today known as the Koko-bera. The Kundara people are now referred to as Koknar people.

References

- Horton, D., ed., 1994. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*, pp. 565–566. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Loos, N., 1982. *Invasion and Resistance. Aboriginal-European Relations on the North Queensland Frontier, 1861–1897*, p. 21. Canberra: ANU Press.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 18: 95.
- Tindale, N.B., 1974. *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia. Their Terrain, Environmental Controls, Distribution, Limits and Proper Names*, pp. 177, 179, 277, 286. Berkeley: University of California Press.

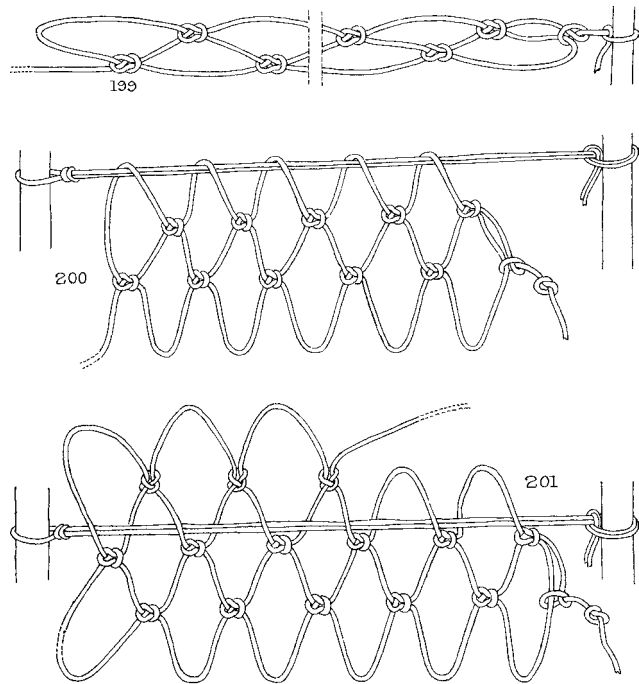
Containers

Woven bags—netting stitch pattern

Information from Roth's Bulletins. People living along the Gulf coast from the Mitchell to the Flinders Rivers and across the Peninsula to the east coast, made handspun bark fibre string bags woven with one continuous strand, with a straight base strand, and used either a loop and twist, double loop or hourglass, or netting stitch pattern (see p. 56). Roth did say that an exception was that the loop and twist pattern seemed to be used only by people living in the country north of the Gilbert River and west of the junction of the Mitchell and Palmer Rivers.

Roth said that women made the netting stitch bags using a netting needle (see the section on needles, Staaten River). The Gunanni people called this bag *kaljo-ma*.

Roth initially described the netting stitch pattern in Bulletin 1, with a full page illustration, but made a correction in Bulletin 7. Having made a further study of the netting stitch he said it was commenced with a continuous strand before it was attached to the base strand. Roth illustrated the process in Bulletin 7, pl. xxii, figs. 199–201. After fixing it to an upright stick stuck in the ground the continuous strand was knotted on itself into a number of meshes, depending on the width of the net to be made. This continuous strand was then removed and a straight base strand was passed through the top row of meshes, and tied as usual, between the two sticks. The meshes already made thus became stretched at right angles to that just made, and the netting stitch continued from left to right in the ordinary manner. This mesh was used in making both bags and fishing nets.

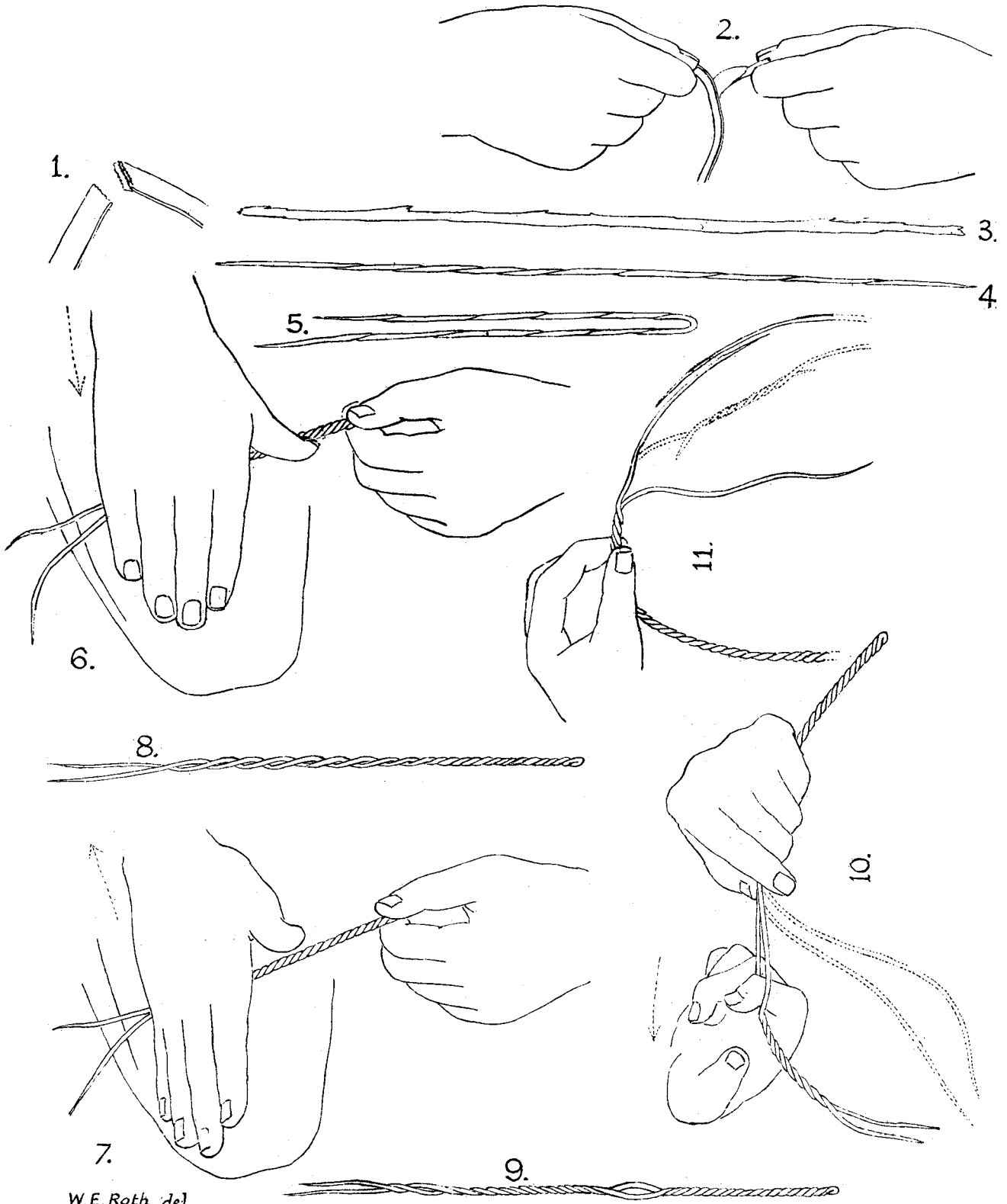


Turning fibre into string was done in the following way, the person squatting on the ground. The inner bark, generally from the trunk of trees, occasionally from roots, was that from which most twine was made.

- 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.
- 2 The strand was folded in two, and the "bend" held between the left thumb and forefinger.
- 3 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.
- 4 The result of the forward movement was to roll the strand into one twist.
- 5 The result of the forward-backward movement was to roll the strand into two twists, with a "break" in between.
- 6 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.
- 7 As soon as one end of the strand had been reached, another strand was fixed to it by rolling forwards. This can be seen in Roth's illustration from Bulletin 1, pl. ii, figs. 1–11.

Collection information. There are 18 netting stitch woven bags from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "netting stitch pattern".

- E.14789 The bag is 26 by 18 cm. The handle is a length of handspun bark fibre string threaded through half the loops at the mouth of the bag and knotted in two places. The handle is 23 cm long. The width between the knots is 3 cm.



- E.14790 The bag is 30.5 by 23.5 cm. The handle is a length of handspun bark fibre string threaded through half the loops at the mouth of the bag and knotted in two places. The handle is 32.5 cm long. The width between the knots is 6 cm.
- E.14791 The bag is 55 by 19 cm. The handle is a length of handspun bark fibre string threaded through half the loops at the mouth of the bag and knotted in two places. The handle is 23 cm long. The width between the knots is 2.5 cm.
- E.14792 The bag is 57 by 37 cm. The handle is a length of handspun bark fibre string threaded through half the loops at the mouth of the bag and knotted in two places. The handle is 25 cm long. The width between the knots is 5 cm.

- E.14793 The bag is 44 by 35 cm. The handle is a length of handspun bark fibre string threaded through half the loops at the mouth of the bag and knotted in two places. The handle is 27 cm long. The width between the knots is 3 cm.
- E.14794 The bag is 36 by 21 cm. The handle is a length of handspun bark fibre string threaded through half the loops at the mouth of the bag and knotted in two places. The handle is 24.5 cm long. The width between the knots is 3 cm.
- E.14795 The bag is 55 by 20 cm. The handle is a length of handspun bark fibre string threaded through half the loops at the mouth of the bag and knotted in two places. The handle is 25.5 cm long. The width between the knots is 2 cm.

- E.14796 The bag is 57 by 26 cm. The handle is a length of handspun bark fibre string threaded through half the loops at the mouth of the bag and knotted in two places. The handle is 12.5 cm long. The width between the knots is 3.5 cm.
- E.14797 The bag is 51 by 38 cm. The handle is a length of handspun bark fibre string threaded through half the loops at the mouth of the bag and knotted in two places. The handle is 22 cm long. The width between the knots is 7.5 cm.
- E.14798 The bag is 43 by 22 cm. The handle is a length of handspun bark fibre string threaded through half the loops at the mouth of the bag and knotted in two places. The handle is bound over with a length of bark fibre string. The handle is 26 cm long. The width between the knots is 3 cm.
- E.14799 The bag is 44 by 27 cm. It is unfinished.
- E.14800 The bag is 37.5 by 16 cm. It is unfinished.
- E.14801 The bag is 38.5 by 17 cm. The handle is a length of handspun bark fibre string threaded through the loops at the mouth of the bag and knotted in the middle. The handle is 24 cm long.
- E.14802 The bag is 33.5 by 37 cm. It is unfinished.
- E.14803 The bag is 63 by 39 cm. The handle is a plaited length of handspun bark fibre string threaded through half of the netting stitch loops at the mouth of the bag and knotted in two places. It is 19 cm long. The width between the knots is 5 cm.
- E.14804 The bag is 12.5 by 16.3 cm long. It is unfinished.
- E.14805 The bag is 33 by 10.5 cm. It is unfinished.
- E.14879 The bag is 6.8 by 4 cm. It is unfinished. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Dilly bag (fish net stitch under construction)".

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all 18 netting stitch woven bags:

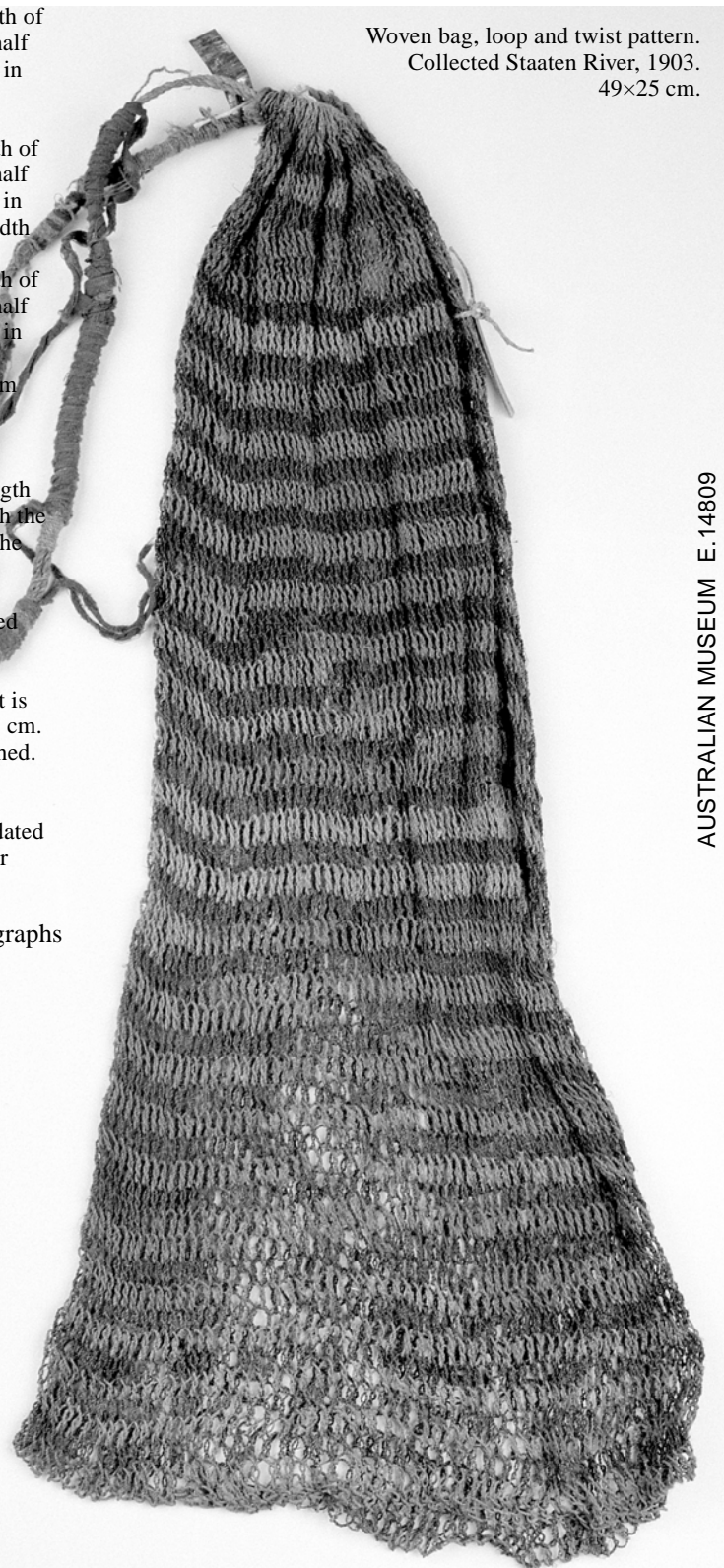
- E.14789 negative sheet 4187M, frame 1473.
 E.14790 negative sheet 4188M, frame 1474.
 E.14791 negative sheet 4188M, frame 1475.
 E.14792 negative sheet 4188M, frame 1476.
 E.14793 negative sheet 4188M, frame 1477.
 E.14794 negative sheet 4188M, frame 1478.
 E.14795 negative sheet 4188M, frame 1479.
 E.14796 negative sheet 4188M, frame 1480.
 E.14797 negative sheet 4188M, frame 1481.
 E.14798 negative sheet 4189M, frame 1482.
 E.14799 negative sheet 4189M, frame 1483.
 E.14800 negative sheet 4189M, frame 1484.
 E.14801 negative sheet 4189M, frame 1485.
 E.14802 negative sheet 4189M, frame 1486.
 E.14803 negative sheet 4189M, frame 1487.
 E.14804 negative sheet 4189M, frame 1488.
 E.14805 negative sheet 4189M, frame 1489.
 E.14879 negative sheet 4199M, frame 1563.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 8, 12, 13.
 Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 27, 28.

Woven bags—loop and twist pattern

Information from Roth's Bulletins. People living along the Gulf coast from the Mitchell to the Flinders Rivers and across the Peninsula to the east coast, made woven bags with one continuous strand, with a straight base strand, and used either a loop and twist, double loop or hourglass or netting stitch pattern. Roth did say the exception was that the loop and twist pattern seemed to be made only by women living in the country north of the Gilbert River and west of the junction of the Mitchell and Palmer Rivers. They used no netting needle to make these woven bags.

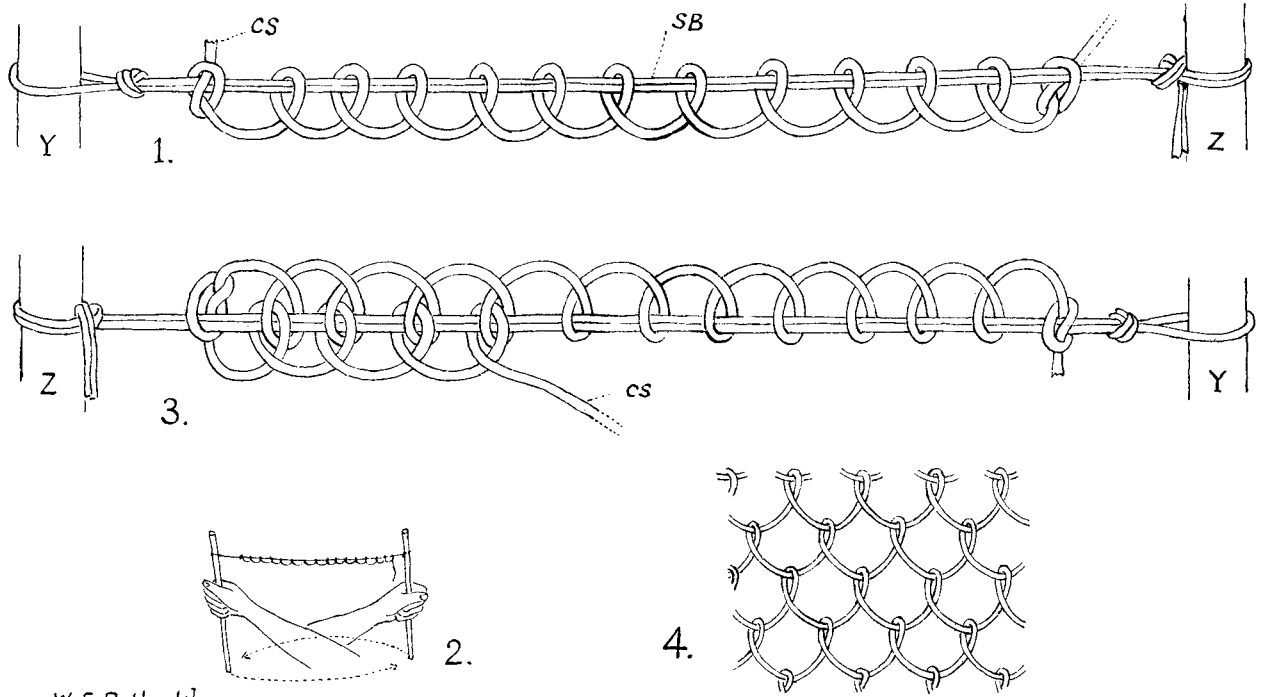


Woven bag, loop and twist pattern.
 Collected Staaten River, 1903.
 49×25 cm.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14809

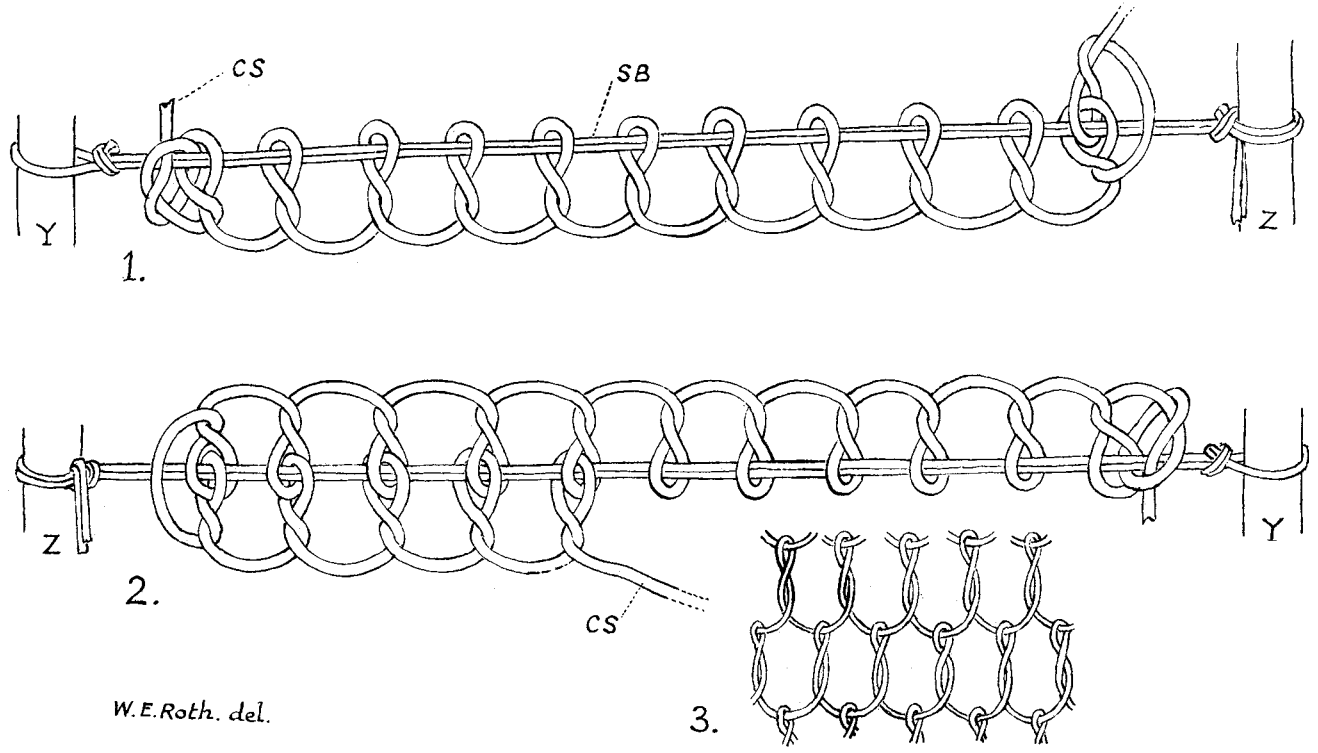
The loop and twist mesh was made on similar lines to the simple loop pattern (compare Bulletin 1, pls. viii and ix).

The weaver would sit on the ground with the straight base strand of handspun bark fibre string attached to two sticks in the ground. The continuous strand of bark fibre string would then be attached to the extreme left of the straight base strand, and the work would move from left to right as shown in Bulletin 1, plate viii, figure 1, except that the loop and twist mesh had an extra twist, as shown in plate ix. As soon as the right hand end of the straight base strand had been reached, the continuous strand was fixed in a loop. Then either the sticks were picked up and turned



W. E. Roth. del.

Plate VIII. Basketry, &c.—Made with one continuous strand: basal strand straight: simple-loop pattern.



W. E. Roth. del.

Plate IX. Basketry, &c.—Made with one continuous strand: basal strand straight: loop-and-twist pattern.

round so that the left became the right and vice versa, or the sticks were left in position and the base strand was slipped off and tied again in the reverse position. These two rows constituted the bottom of the bag. This practice of reversing the sticks was done each time the right hand end of the straight base strand was reached. The weaving of one continuous strand into the horizontal row of loops immediately above was continued until the desired depth of the bag was reached. The base strand was ultimately withdrawn.

Roth said the loop and twist pattern mesh was found in woven bags from Laura, Maytown, Highbury, Musgrave, Coen, Gilbert River, Delta and Normanton.

Collection information. There are six woven bags made on the loop and twist pattern from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "loop and twist pattern".

- E.14806 Rectangular with bands of dark brown. Some red European fibre is woven into the bag in several places. The handle is made of two strands of handspun bark fibre string threaded through the final row of the mesh. The handle is bound over with bark fibre string which makes it impossible to open the mouth of the bag more than 6 cm. The bag is 49 by 20.5 cm. The handle is 26 cm long. The width between the base of the handles is 3 cm.
- E.14807 Rectangular bag with irregular dark brown stripes. The handle is made of a strand of handspun bark fibre string threaded through the final row of the mesh. The handle is bound with possum fur string, and red and cream European cloth which makes it impossible to open the mouth of the bag more than 2.5 cm. The bag is 37 by 23 cm. The handle is 30.5 cm long. The width between the base of the handles is 2.5 cm.
- E.14808 Rectangular bag with irregular stripes made by twisting either cream or red European thread with a strand of handspun bark fibre string. The handle is made of strands of handspun bark fibre string threaded through the final row of the mesh. Three strands of the handle are bound with cream European thread, making it impossible to open the mouth of the bag more than 3.5 cm. The bag is 38.5 by 15 cm. The handle, which is broken, is 23.5 cm long. The width between the base of the handles is 2 cm.
- E.14809 Rectangular bag with regular dark and light brown stripes. There are small patches of red European thread woven into the stripes. The handle is made of strands of handspun bark fibre string threaded through the final row of the mesh. It is bound with lengths of red European cloth, fur string and European thread which make it impossible to open the mouth of the bag more than 9 cm. The bag is 49 by 25 cm. The handle is 27.5 cm long. The width between the base of the handles is 4 cm.
- E.14810 Rectangular bag with irregular dark and light brown stripes. The handle is made of strands of handspun bark fibre string threaded through the final row of the mesh. It is bound with bark fibre string, possum fur string and cream European thread making it impossible to open the mouth at all. The bag is 43 by 16 cm. The handle is 28.5 cm long. There is no space between the base of the handles.
- E.14811 Rectangular bag with irregular dark and mid brown stripes, some using possum fur string. The handle is made of strands of handspun bark fibre string threaded through the final row of the mesh, and bound with strips of red European cloth making it impossible to open the mouth of the bag more than 3 cm. The base of the handles are also bound together with small strips of red European cloth. The bag is 46 by 20 cm. The handle is 28.5 cm long. The width between the base of the handles is 3 cm.

There is one woven bag collected from the coast between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers by Roth in 1898. This bag (E.14848) is also listed in the Mitchell River section in Volume 3.

- E.14848 Rectangular woven bag. It is banded with vivid shades of green, yellow and red dyed hand spun bark fibre string with natural coloured layers between the coloured bands. Strands of European wool also were used. It measures 27 by 12 cm. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "dilly bag loop and single twist".

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all seven loop and twist pattern woven bags:

- E.14806 negative sheet 4190M, frame 1490.
 E.14807 negative sheet 4190M, frame 1491.
 E.14808 negative sheet 4190M, frame 1492.
 E.14809 negative sheet 4190M, frame 1493.
 E.14810 negative sheet 4190M, frame 1494.
 E.14811 negative sheet 4190M, frame 1495.
 E.14848 negative sheet 4195M, frame 1532.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 12–14.
 Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 27, 28.

Woven bags—double loop or hourglass pattern

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth said the double loop or hourglass pattern was woven by women only, without a netting needle using handspun bark fibre string. This mesh was used in woven bags made by people living around Normanton, Delta, Gilbert River, Cooktown, Cape Bedford, Cape Melville, Morehead, Musgrave and Middle Palmer Rivers, Bloomfield and perhaps Rockhampton. The double loop or hourglass fishing nets were used by people living around Laura, Maytown, Palmerville, Morehead and Musgrave Rivers, Pennefather, Embley and Wenlock (Batavia) Rivers. Roth did not mention the Staaten River.

The bag was woven initially in a similar way to the simple loop pattern already described but followed the pattern as shown in the illustration in Bulletin 1, pl. x, figs. 1–3. At least two methods were used to finish off the edge of the basket, as shown in the same plate: either a thread was passed through the last loop at the mouth of the bag (fig.4), or it was overcast (fig.5).

Collection information. There are three woven bags made on the double loop or hourglass pattern from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Dilly bag (double loop or hourglass)".

- E.14843 Rectangular bag with a length of handspun bark fibre string passed through the final loop at the mouth of the bag. The handle is made of four strands of bark fibre string. The bag is 48 by 14 cm.
- E.14844 Rectangular bag with cream, red and brown stripes. A length of handspun bark fibre string has been passed through the final loop at the mouth of the bag. The handle is made of three strands of bark fibre string bound together coarsely with dark bark fibre string. The bag is 39 by 17 cm.
- E.14845 Rectangular bag with brown and red stripes. A length of handspun bark fibre string has been passed through the final loop at the mouth of the bag. The handle is made of six strands of bark fibre string bound in parts with handspun human hair string. The bag is 50 by 16 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all three woven bags:

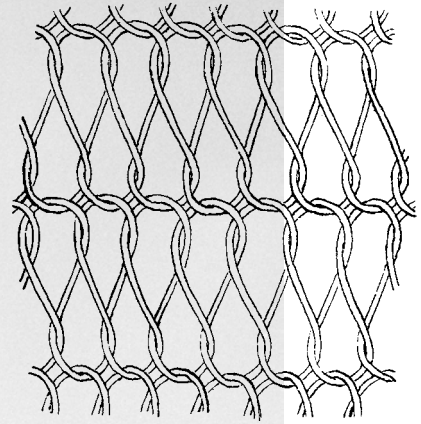
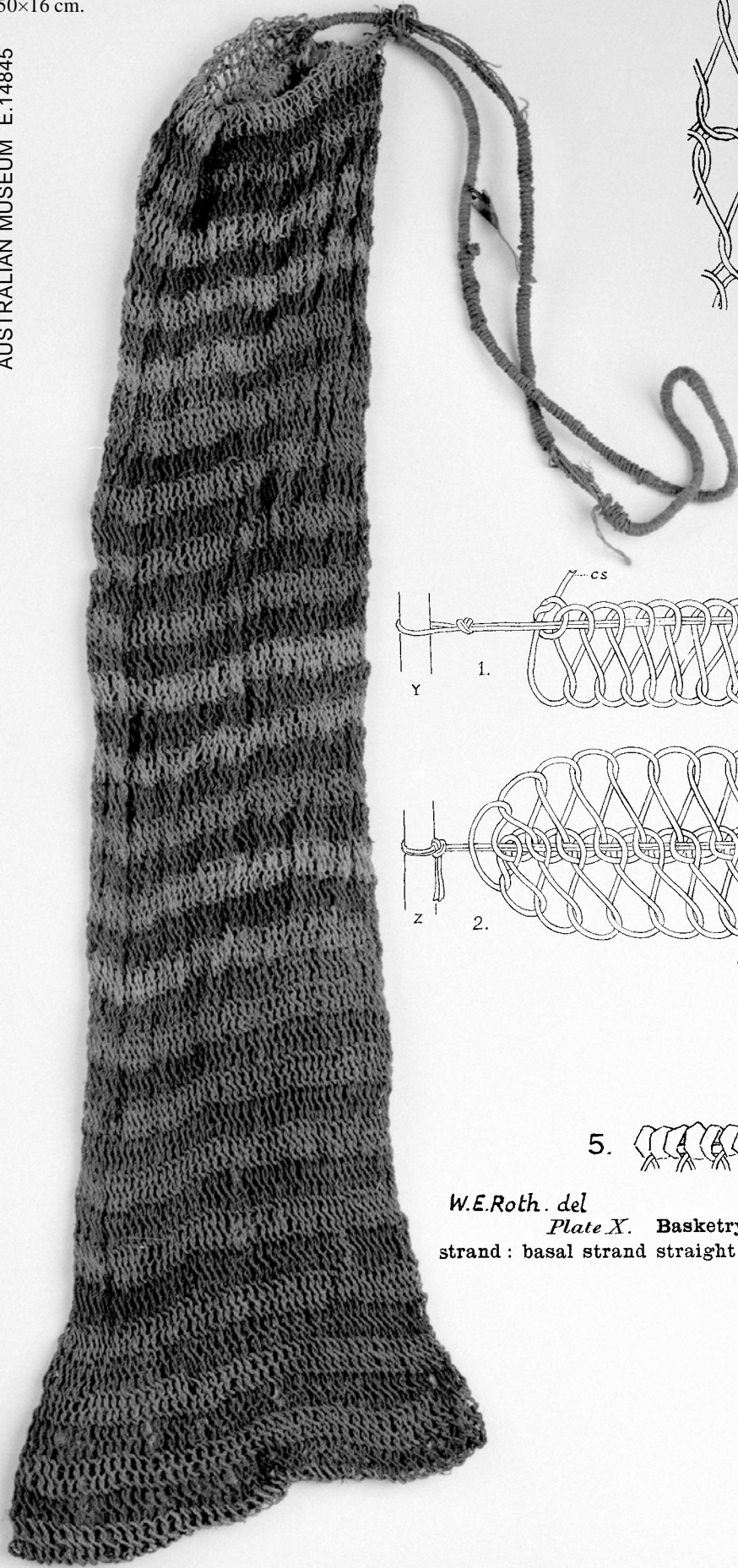
- E.14843 negative sheet 4194M, frame 1527.
 E.14844 negative sheet 4194M, frame 1528.
 E.14845 negative sheet 4194M, frame 1529.

References

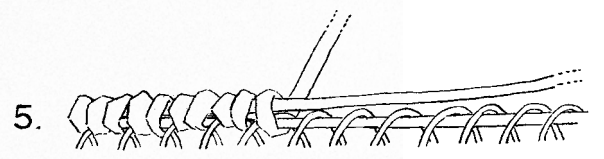
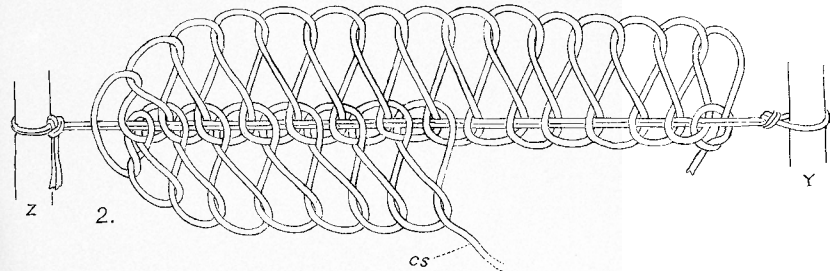
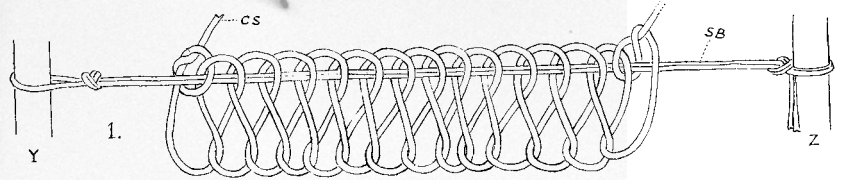
- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 12, 13.
 Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 28.

Woven bag, double loop or hourglass pattern.
Collected Staaten River, 1903.
50×16 cm.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14845



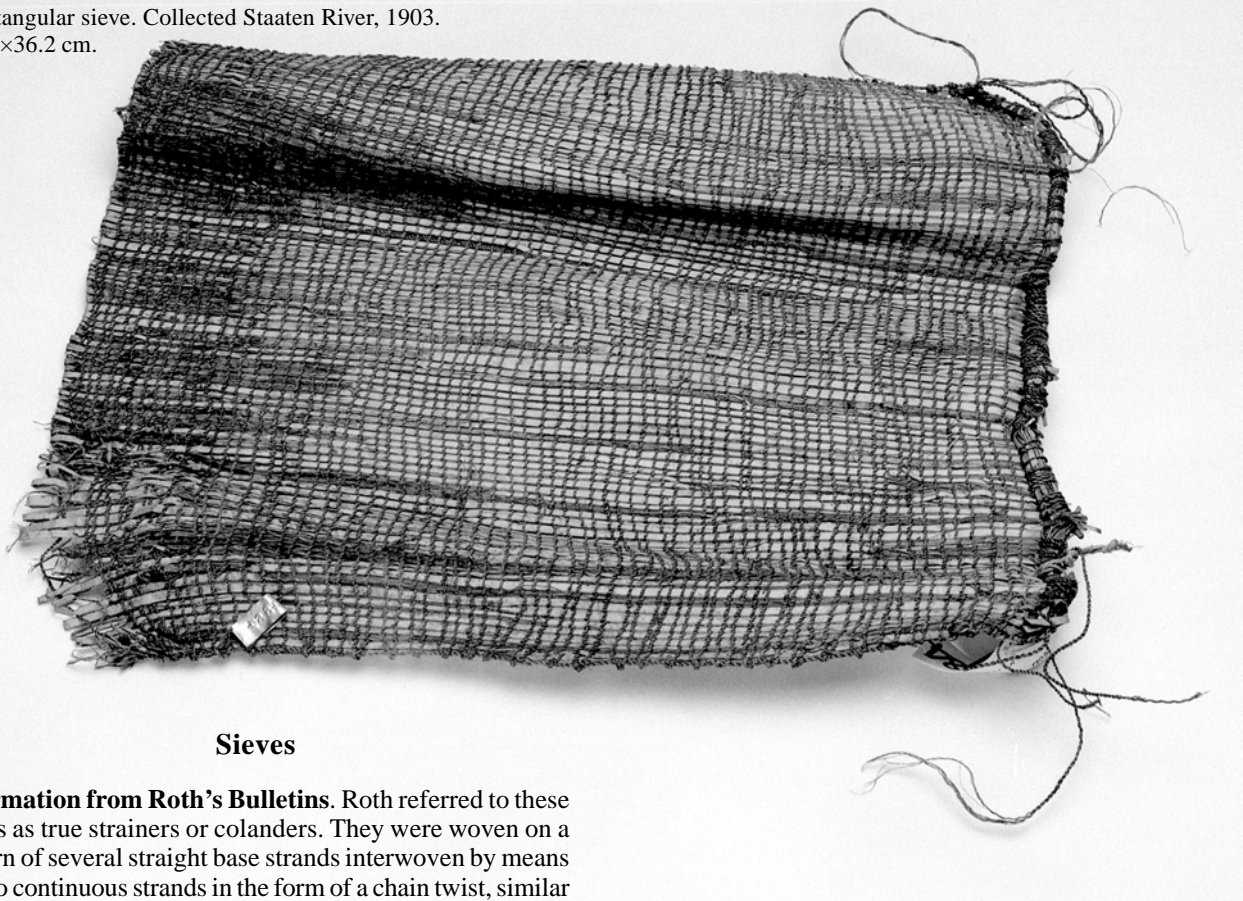
3.



W.E.Roth. del
Plate X. Basketry, &c.—Made with one continuous strand: basal strand straight: hour-glass double-loop pattern.

Rectangular sieve. Collected Staaten River, 1903.
40.8×36.2 cm.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14884



Sieves

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth referred to these sieves as true strainers or colanders. They were woven on a pattern of several straight base strands interwoven by means of two continuous strands in the form of a chain twist, similar to woven bags, but with one difference. The straight base strands were doubled over a border string attached to two sticks, which were discarded as soon as the straight base strands were fixed in position by the first row of the chain-twist. The border string went round three of the four side of the sieve when completed.



The sieve was made on the flat, the chain twist zig-zagging from side to side. Such a strainer, made from either the Cabbage Tree Palm, *Livistona australis*, or *Pandanus*, may be over 30 cm wide, longer in proportion. It was used stretched across the top of an elongate wooden trough, held between the knees of a woman. She would briskly rub or strain the yam or whatever food was being prepared, through the mesh work into the cavity below. This is shown in Roth's illustration from Bulletin 7, pl. xxii, fig. 198.

Young leaves of the Cabbage Tree Palm were prepared for use by first cutting off the young, unopened leaf shoots and smartly tapping them on a piece of log. The shoots then unfolded and were split along their natural folds. The outer cortex was then stripped off with a finely pointed ironwood needle, or else with a sharp kangaroo-bone drill. The strips were now left in the sun to dry, and then used to make fishing nets and bags.

Roth said that these strainers or sieves were made and used only by Gunanni women, and were called *tarbulanga*. This is the same name as that given to pliable baskets or sieve bags, also used by people living around the Gulf coast between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers.

Collection information. There are 10 sieves from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903.

- E.14884 Rectangular sieve, 40.8 by 36.2 cm.
- E.14885 Rectangular sieve, 52 by 46 cm.
- E.14886 Rectangular sieve, 44.5 by 38 cm. This sieve is torn and almost split into two pieces.
- E.14891 A sieve in the course of construction. It is 36.5 by 23.5 cm.
- E.14892 A sieve in the course of construction with fibres bound together in a bundle about 1 m long.
- E.14893 A sieve in the course of construction. It is 47 by 32.5 cm.
- E.14894 A sieve in the course of construction. It is 52 by 48.5 cm.
- E.14895 A bundle of fibre for making a sieve. It is 78 cm long.
- E.14896 A bundle of fibre for making a sieve. It is 55 cm long.
- E.14897 Strands of fibre for making a sieve, bound round a bundle of paperbark. It is 16.7 cm long.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all ten sieves

- E.14884 negative sheet 4200M, frame 1568.
- E.14885 negative sheet 4200M, frame 1569.
- E.14886 negative sheet 4200M, frame 1570.
- E.14891 negative sheet 4200M, frame 1575.
- E.14892 negative sheet 4201M, frame 1576.
- E.14893 negative sheet 4201M, frame 1577.
- E.14894 negative sheet 4201M, frame 1578.
- E.14895 negative sheet 4201M, frame 1579.
- E.14896 negative sheet 4201M, frame 1580.
- E.14897 negative sheet 4201M, frame 1581.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 9, 13, 14.
- Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 27, 28.

Sieve bags

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Pliable baskets or bags were also used as sieves or strainers by people living along the Gulf coast from the Mitchell to the Staaten Rivers, and were called by the same name as the flat sieves, *tarbulanga*.

These sieve bags were made by women using two continuous strands of *Pandanus* or Cabbage Tree Palm, *Livistona australis*, with several straight base strands on a chain twist pattern, formed by twisting the two continuous strands into a chain. Occasionally, in place of these two being separate and distinct, and tied with a knot, the one strand was bent on itself, the flexure replacing the knot and the two halves of the continuous strand. Roth illustrated this process in Bulletin 1, pl. xvi, figs. 1, 6, 7.

The straight base strands (the warp) were not attached to any sticks, but their ends left free. The chain twist was the weft. This pattern was used to make bags, mats and traps from many regions of north Queensland. Most of these items were generally non-pliable, using other fibres, but on the Mitchell/Staaten River coastline, the bags were made of pliable fibre twine.

The raw material used was the same as that for making sieves, that is, the leaf shoots of the Cabbage Tree Palm or split lengths of *Pandanus* leaves.

Collection information. There are two sieve bags from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903.

- E.14889 Rectangular sieve bag, with a thick handle bound to the rim and knotted in the middle. It is 30 by 24 cm.
- E.14890 Rectangular sieve bag with a thick handle bound to the rim. It is 20.5 by 12.5 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both sieve bags:

- E.14889 negative sheet 4200M, frame 1573.
- E.14890 negative sheet 4200M, frame 1574.

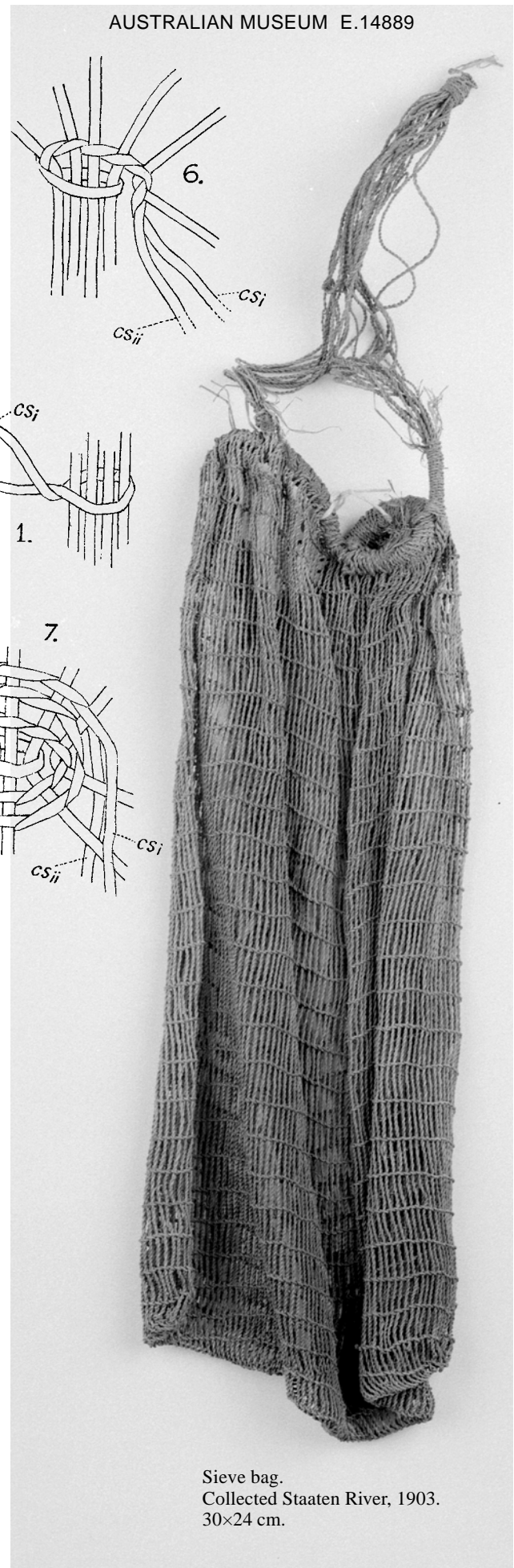
References

- Allen, L., & B. Borey, 1984. *Cultural and Historical Records of Queensland, no. 3. Annotations to publications by W.E. Roth*, pp. 17–18. Brisbane: University of Queensland Press.
- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 9, 13, 14.
- Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 27–28

Death pointer

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Among the Gunanni people living along the coastline between the Staaten River and Mitchell Rivers, the death pointer, made from a human leg bone, was called *banggorla*.

Collection information. There is one death pointer from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes the following manuscript note glued into the register which may be in Roth's handwriting. "Mss. notes: death bone—made from leg of blackfellow—used by men for 'pointing'—supposed to pass into body of victim where it remains, but can be extracted by a doctor by feeling etc.—passing into hole in fork of doctor's fingers, through doctor's body, and so out at the back—whence it is brought and shown to the assembled spectators. Worn attached by looped cabbage tree circlet—so as to hang over back of neck".



A similar note has been added by Roth in the Annotations to Publications by W.E. Roth.

E.13704 Long, slender, needle-like bone, with one end pointed, the other end smeared with gum cement. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Death bone 'Banggorla' Gunanni tribe". It is 16 cm long.

References

Allen, L., & B. Borey, 1984. *Cultural and Historical Records of Queensland, no. 3. Annotations to publications by W.E. Roth*, pp. 189-190. Brisbane: University of Queensland Press.
Roth, W.E., 1903. Bulletin 5: 32.

Collection information. There is one emu feathered string armband from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903.

E.14748 The emu feathered string, looped and knotted at one end is 170 cm long.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4182M, frame 1432.

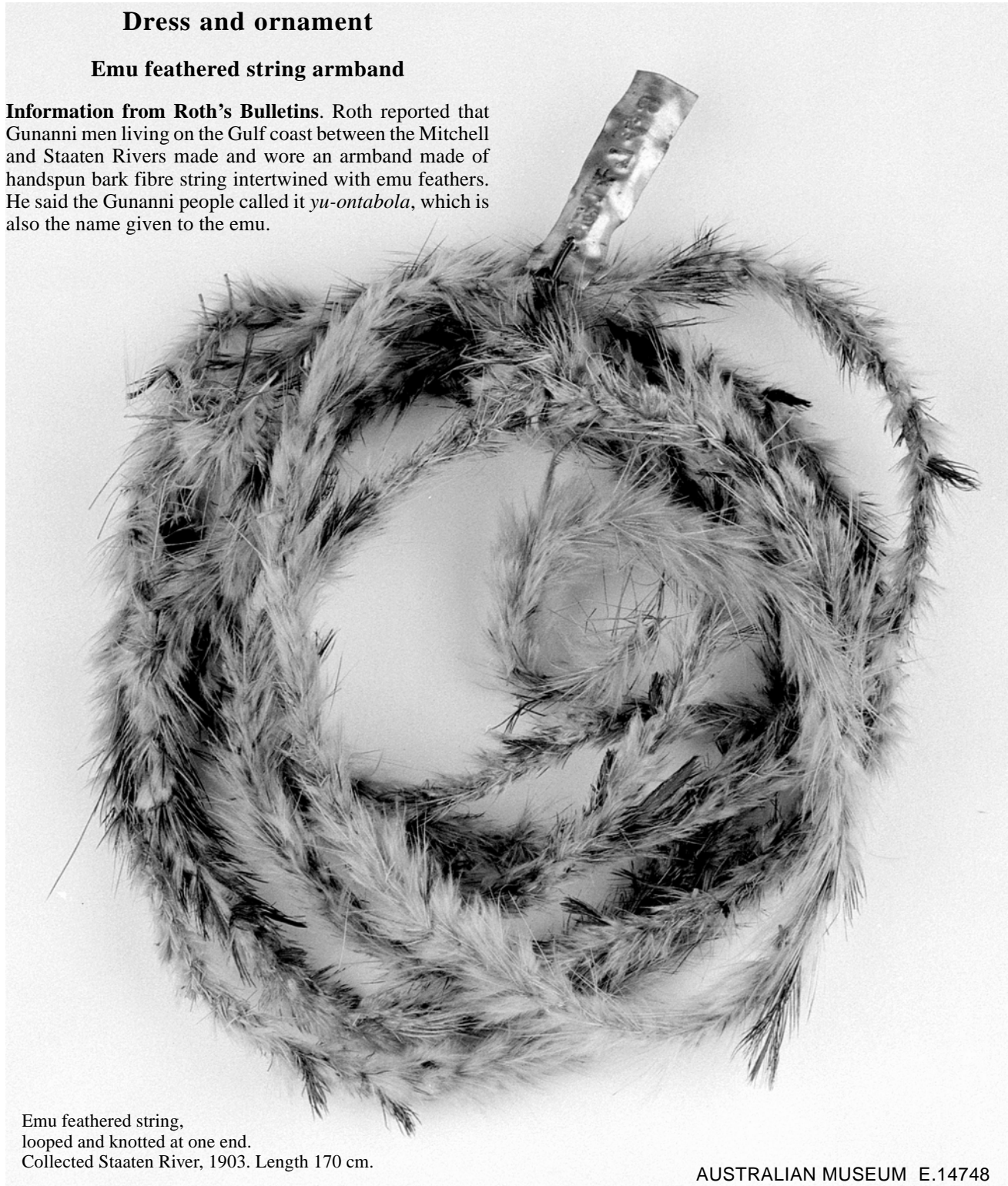
Reference

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 43.

Dress and ornament

Emu feathered string armband

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth reported that Gunanni men living on the Gulf coast between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers made and wore an armband made of handspun bark fibre string intertwined with emu feathers. He said the Gunanni people called it *yu-ontabola*, which is also the name given to the emu.



Emu feathered string,
looped and knotted at one end.
Collected Staaten River, 1903. Length 170 cm.

Pandanus leaf armband

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 had been cut at an angle so as to give a fine point to the tags.

Roth did not say how or when the sharp barbs on the sides and centre of the *Pandanus* were removed.

Roth's drawings from Bulletin 1, pl. iv, figs. 1–5 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.

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. Gunanni people living on the Staaten River called this armband *malle-anga*.

Collection information. Roth collected one *Pandanus* leaf armband from the Staaten River in 1903.

- E.14733. At present this armband cannot be located in the collection.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 43.

Pearl shell chest ornaments

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote that most chest and back ornaments were made from an unidentified pearl, *Nautilus* or melon shell, *Melo amphora*, with a hole drilled in one end to carry the string that suspended it over the chest. On the Gulf coast between the Staaten and Mitchell Rivers, these iridescent chest decorations were worn only by men. The Gunanni people had names for the shells, depending on the species, either *binje-la* or *pin-yertan*. According to an old Australian Museum gallery label found with E.14530, *pin-yertan* refers to a shell, *Meleagrina* sp., now known as *Pinctada* sp.

Collection information. There are two species of pearl shell chest ornaments from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903.

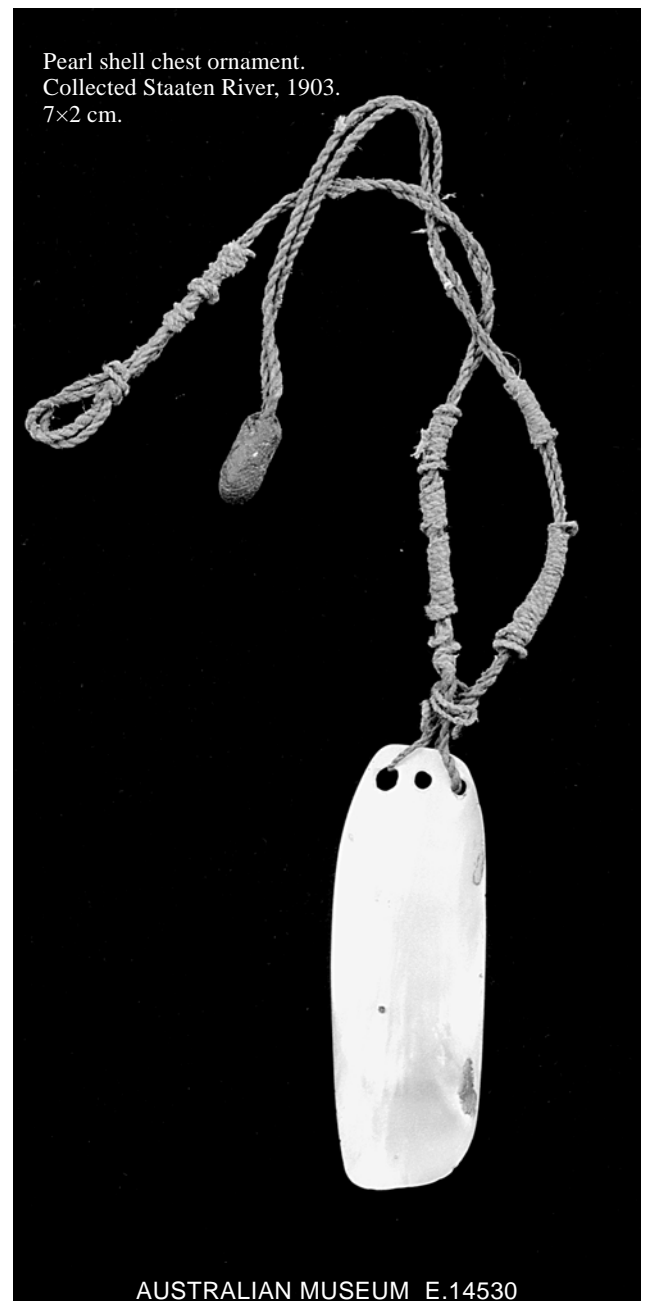
- E.14529 The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Pearl (?), chest ornament *binje-la*". There is a hole drilled in the apex of the shell. It is 7.1 by 1.5 cm.
- E.14530 The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Pearl (?), chest ornament *pin-yertan*". Three holes have been drilled at one end and handspun fibre string has been threaded through two of the holes. One end has a knotted loop, the other end a black lump of adhesive which acts as a clasp. It is 7 by 2 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both pearl shell chest ornaments:

- E.14529 negative sheet 4155M, frame 1213.
E.14530 negative sheet 4155M, frame 1214.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 35–36.



Melon shell chest ornament

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote that ornaments made from the Melon or Baler shell, *Melo diadema*, now known as *Melo amphora*, was worn more commonly by people living inland than on the coast. On the coast the iridescent pearl shell was more prized, and thus not exported inland to any great extent.

Roth traced the inland travel or trade of this shell from the Gulf coast between the Nassau and Staaten Rivers inland to Boulia. He said it was brought first to Normanton for the Nau-an (now called Ngawun) peoples at Mullangera and from there to the Upper Flinders and Cloncurry districts for the Wunamurra (now called Wunumari) and Maitakudi peoples. The Flinders people bartered it to the Yirandalli (now spelt Yirandali) people living around Hughenden. At the headwaters of the Diamantina River, at Kynuna, and at Hughenden, the Goa (now known as Guwa) people at Elderslie got it from three sources, and traded it down the river to Diamantina Gates and Cork, where it was brought, via Springvale, into the Boulia district where it was occasionally seen worn on the forehead like a kangaroo-tooth ornament. At Roxborough Downs, south of that station and elsewhere, Roth reported seeing this shell decoration imitated by chipping and grinding down broken chinaware.

Roth said the Gunanni people called this chest ornament *ro-anda*.

Collection information. There are 11 melon shell chest ornaments from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Melo shell chest ornament (*ro-anda*)".



Melon shell chest ornament.
Collected Staaten River, 1903.
The shell is 13.2×2.2 cm.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14540

- E.14531 An oval shaped piece of shell with handspun fibre string bound over with fur twine threaded through a hole drilled at one end. The shell is 11.3 by 1.7 cm.
- E.14532 An oval shaped piece of shell with handspun fibre string bound over with fur twine and a strip of red European cloth threaded through a hole drilled at one end. The end of one length of thread has been reinforced with adhesive, the other end has a lump of adhesive stuck on which acts as a clasp. The shell is 10.5 by 1.5 cm.
- E.14533 An oval shaped piece of shell with handspun fibre string bound over with fur twine and strips of dark brown leather threaded through a hole drilled at one end. The end of one length of thread is looped, the other end has a lump of adhesive stuck on which acts as a clasp. The shell is 12.4 by 1.8 cm.
- E.14534 An oval shaped piece of shell with handspun fibre string bound over with fur twine threaded through a hole drilled at one end. The end of one length of thread is looped. The shell is 10 by 2.5 cm.
- E.14535 An oval shaped piece of shell with handspun fibre string bound over with fur twine and some human hairstring threaded through a hole drilled at one end. The end of one length of thread is looped and the other end has a lump of adhesive stuck on which acts as a clasp. The shell is 11.2 by 1.8 cm.
- E.14536 An oval shaped piece of shell with handspun fibre string bound over with fur twine threaded through a hole drilled at one end. The shell is 8.9 by 1.5 cm.
- E.14537 A rectangular shaped piece of shell with handspun fibre string bound over with strips of red European cloth, threaded through a hole drilled at one end. The shell is 11.9 by 1.8 cm.
- E.14538 An oval shaped piece of shell with handspun fibre string threaded through a hole drilled at one end. The shell is 12 by 2 cm.
- E.14539 An oval shaped piece of shell with handspun fibre string threaded through a hole drilled at one end. The end of one length of thread is looped and the other end has a lump of adhesive stuck on which acts as a clasp. The shell is 9.9 by 0.9 cm. There is a note on Anthropology's blue index card which states "?replaced by replica".
- E.14540 An oval shaped piece of shell with handspun fibre string bound over with fur twine, threaded through a hole drilled at one end. The end of one length of thread is looped and the other end has a lump of adhesive stuck on which acts as a clasp. The shell is 13.2 by 2.2 cm.
- E.14541 A rectangular shaped piece of shell with handspun fibre string threaded through a hole drilled at one end. The end of one length of thread is looped and the other end has a lump of adhesive stuck on which acts as a clasp. The shell is 7.8 by 0.7 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all eleven melon shell chest ornaments:

- E.14531 negative sheet 4155M, frame 1215.
- E.14532 negative sheet 4155M, frame 1216.
- E.14533 negative sheet 4155M, frame 1217.
- E.14534 negative sheet 4156M, frame 1218.
- E.14535 negative sheet 4156M, frame 1219.
- E.14536 negative sheet 4156M, frame 1220.
- E.14537 negative sheet 4156M, frame 1221.
- E.14538 negative sheet 4156M, frame 1222.
- E.14539 negative sheet 4156M, frame 1223.
- E.14540 negative sheet 4156M, frame 1224.
- E.14541 negative sheet 4156M, frame 1225.

References

- Horton, D., ed., 1994. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*, pp. 444, 787, 1203, 1204. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 35–36.

Forehead circlets

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote that people living in the northwest districts of Queensland made forehead circlets consisting of four separate bands of possum fur twine bound together flat with four ties. This resulted in a band-like ornament over 30 cm long, made of eight closely opposed strands. The ends of this composite band were looped into two tying strings, to be knotted at the back of the head.

The possum fur twine had been spirally wound round a central human hair core. The ties were always made of handspun fibre string. The strands and ties were greased and coated with red pigment.

There were two varieties of possum string circlets—single and double, depending on whether the central human hair core around which the possum fur twine was bound, was thick or thin. If thin, then two circlets were fixed together with two ties, more or less opposite each other. Single possum fur string circlets were common along the lower Gulf of Carpentaria coastline where, as a general rule, they were left free of both pigment and fat. As usual everywhere else, these circlets were made only by men, but here, they were used only by men too. The Gunanni called them *minganda*.

Collection information. Roth collected two possum twine forehead circlets from the Staaten River in 1903.

- E.14596 The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "head circlet single opossum '*Minganda*' (= opossum)" of the Gunanni tribe". The circlet is now a mass of loose handspun bark fibre string, the result of insect damage.
- E.14597 The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "head circlet double opossum '*Minganda*' (= opossum)" of the Gunanni tribe. Destroyed by insects Jan. 1980."

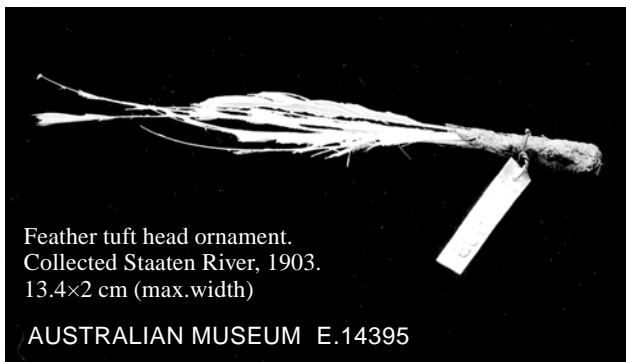
Reference

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 26–27.

Feather tuft hair ornament

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Feather tufts were made of bird feathers tied to a small twig. Such tufts were stuck indiscriminately into the hair. Single feathers also were worn in a similar manner. Feathers came from emus, white and other coloured cockatoos, eagle hawks, pelicans and turkeys.

White cockatoo feather tufts were worn by men all over north Queensland. Roth said they were worn for corroborees, for decoration and on fighting expeditions. He said Gunanni men living between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers wore the feather tufts upright on top of the head. They called these tufts *workai-a*.



Feather tuft head ornament.
Collected Staaten River, 1903.
13.4×2 cm (max. width)

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14395

Collection information. There is one feather tuft head ornament from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "cockatoo top-knot (*workai-a*) fixed to top of head".

- E.14395 Yellow-green cockatoo feathers held together with adhesive. 13.4 by 2 cm (max. width).

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4138M, frame 1078.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 24.

Grass reed necklaces

Information from Roth's Bulletins. These necklaces were made of hundreds of segments of grass reeds threaded on handspun fibre string and tied at the ends. The necklaces could be from 360 cm to 480 cm 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 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 these necklaces were made and worn 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 into necklaces of many strands.

Roth said that only women made and wore these necklaces, except for the northwest districts of Queensland and the Tully River region, where both men and women wore grass reed necklaces. According to Roth, Gunanni women of the Staaten River region used *ra* grass to make a necklace, and called it *maner-gora*.

Collection information. There are seven grass reed necklaces from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903.

- E.14486 Grass reed segments threaded on three separate strands of handspun bark fibre twine and looped together. The necklace is 27.5 cm long. Each segment is about 2 by 0.5 cm.
- E.14487 Grass reed segments threaded on five separate strands of handspun bark fibre twine and looped together. The necklace is 30.8 cm long. Each segment is about 1.6 by 0.6 cm.
- E.14488 Grass reed segments threaded on nine separate strands of handspun bark fibre twine and looped together. The necklace is 31.5 cm long. Each segment is about 2 by 0.5 cm.
- E.14489 This necklace is no longer in the collection. It was given to the Helsinki Museum in April 1926.
- E.14490 Grass reed segments threaded on a strand of handspun bark fibre twine. The necklace is 184.3 cm long. Each segment is about 2.3 by 0.5 cm.
- E.14491 Grass reed segments threaded on five separate strands of handspun bark fibre twine and looped together. The necklace is 34.8 cm long. Each segment is about 1.8 by 0.5 cm.
- E.14492 Grass reed segments threaded on eight separate strands of handspun bark fibre twine and looped together. The necklace is 30.4 cm long. Each segment is about 1.6 by 0.5 cm.



Grass reed necklace.
Collected Staaten River, 1903.
Length 31.5 cm.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14486

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for six of the seven grass reed necklaces:

- E.14486 negative sheet 4150M, frame 1170.
- E.14487 negative sheet 4150M, frame 1171.
- E.14488 negative sheet 4150M, frame 1172.
- E.14490 negative sheet 4150M, frame 1174.
- E.14491 negative sheet 4150M, frame 1175.
- E.14492 negative sheet 4150M, frame 1176.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 32–33.

Possum fur string necklaces

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth referred to these necklaces as circlets. Single possum string circlets were common along the lower Gulf of Carpentaria coastline, where, as a general rule, they were left free of both pigment and fat. They were made and worn by men only. The Gunanni called them *minganda*, the name for possum. A note on these possum string necklaces has also been included in the Mitchell River section.

Collection information. Three possum fur necklaces were collected between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers.

- E.14464 Roth's collection number is G.104. No collection date given. Necklace made of several strands of possum fur. It is 42 cm long.
- E.14465 Roth's collection number is G.105. No collection date given. Necklace made of several strands of possum fur. It is 52 cm long.
- E.14467 No collection number given, but it was collected in 1898 by Sub Inspector Garraway. The extremely bad condition of the object does not allow for a description or measurement. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Koko-kowarunga tribe. Opossum fur necklace".



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14464

Possum fur string necklace.
Collected between the Mitchell and
Staaten Rivers, no collection date given. Length 42 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for two of the three possum fur necklaces:

- E.14464 negative sheet 4147M, frame 1148.
- E.14465 negative sheet 4147M, frame 1149.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 27.

Shell necklaces

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote about the making of shell necklaces by people living in the Pennefather River area, but made scant mention of them on the Gulf coast. He noted three different shells were used to make necklaces by people living between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers. Oval shaped pieces of *Nautilus* shell, probably *Nautilus pompilius*, were made into necklaces on the lower Gulf shores. Oval ones were occasionally found around Cairns, Cardwell and the Tully River, but Roth thought they had been bartered from the Gulf coast via the ranges and the Mitchell River. On the east coast these necklaces were usually made of rectangular pieces of *Nautilus* shell.

Roth said these necklaces were made and worn only by men, and could be worn either as a necklace or a forehead band. The Gunanni people called them *binje-la*.

Another shell used to make necklaces here was the *Dentalium* shell, *Dentalium aciculum*. The shell was broken up into segments and strung together, like European glass bugle beads. The Gunanni people called this necklace *mandaba-daba* [sic].

A third shell, which was used to make a necklace by the Gunanni people and which they called *manggo-anda*, was the Olive shell, *Oliva australis*.

Collection information. There are four shell necklaces from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903.

- E.14451 Segments of *Dentalium* shell threaded on six separate strands of handspun fibre string and bound together with a strip of red European cloth. The Australian Museum's Anthropology's register dated 1905 includes "*Dentalium* necklace used and made by men (called *manda-badaba* [sic])". The necklace is 37.5 cm long. Each shell segment is about 1.8 by 0.5 cm.
- E.14452 About 26 Olive shells per strand are threaded on three separate strands of handspun fibre string and bound together at the ends. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "*Oliva* sp. shell necklace used and made by men (called *manggo-anda*)". The necklace is 67.2 cm long. Each shell is about 1.3 by 0.7 cm.
- E.14453 About 20 Olive shells per strand are threaded on three separate strands of handspun fibre string and bound together at the ends. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "*Oliva* sp. shell necklace made and used by men (called *manggo-anda*)". The necklace is 29 cm long. Each shell is about 1.3 by 0.5 cm.
- E.14454 The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Pearl shell(?) necklace used and made by men (called *Binjela*). Worn either as necklace or forehead band—holes used to be drilled with an opossum tooth". Nineteen oval shaped pieces of pearl shell threaded on handspun fibre twine threaded through a hole drilled in the centre of each shell. The twine is knotted at both ends. The necklace is 22.5 cm long. Each shell segment is about 1.8 by 0.4 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all four necklaces:

- E.14451 negative sheet 4145M, frame 1135.
- E.14452 negative sheet 4145M, frame 1136.
- E.14453 negative sheet 4145M, frame 1137.
- E.14454 negative sheet 4145M, frame 1138.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 32–33.

Nose pins

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote that both men and women living in northwest Queensland had their noses pierced. The implement used to pierce the nasal septum was either a pointed piece of bone or hardened wood. A short soft piece of "white wood" was used for a few days after the operation to keep the wound open, before it was finally replaced by a proper nose pin.

Nose pins came in many shapes, sizes and in materials used. Roth reported that as well as the usual wood, bone or shell, he had seen a flower stalk of a *Banksia*, a piece of bamboo and feather quills used in north Queensland.

The Gunanni people living between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers wore two types of nose pins. Men made and wore nose pins made of bone, and called them *rau-wor-injala*. Women used grass reeds, called *mo-banggir*. However three of the nose bones Roth collected from people living around the Staaten River were all made of shell, reminiscent of the half-moon shaped shell nose pins made by people living around the Pennefather River, further north. The shell used by the Pennefather River people was the false trumpet shell, *Megalactractus aruanus*, now known as *Syrinx aruanus*. Here, unless fresh, the shell was soaked for a few days in water before chipping out a section of shell with a stone tool, and grinding it into shape.

Collection information. There are four nose pins from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903.

- E.14415 Curved rim of a shell with rounded ends, and patches of red pigment. It is 11.2 by 1 cm.
- E.14416 Curved rim of a shell with rounded ends, and patches of red pigment. It is 12.6 by 1.2 cm.
- E.14417 Curved rim of a shell with rounded ends, and patches of red pigment. It is 9 by 1.4 cm.
- E.14418 Length of grass reed. It is 8.6 by 1 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all four nose pins:

- E.14415 negative sheet 4141M, frame 1098.
- E.14416 negative sheet 4141M, frame 1099.
- E.14417 negative sheet 4141M, frame 1100.
- E.14418 negative sheet 4141M, frame 1101.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 29–30.



Shell nose pin.
Collected Staaten River, 1903.
11.2×1 cm.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14415

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14451



Dentalium shell necklace.
Collected Staaten River, 1903.
Length 37.5 cm.

Pearl shell necklace.
Collected Staaten River, 1903.
Length 22.5 cm.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14454

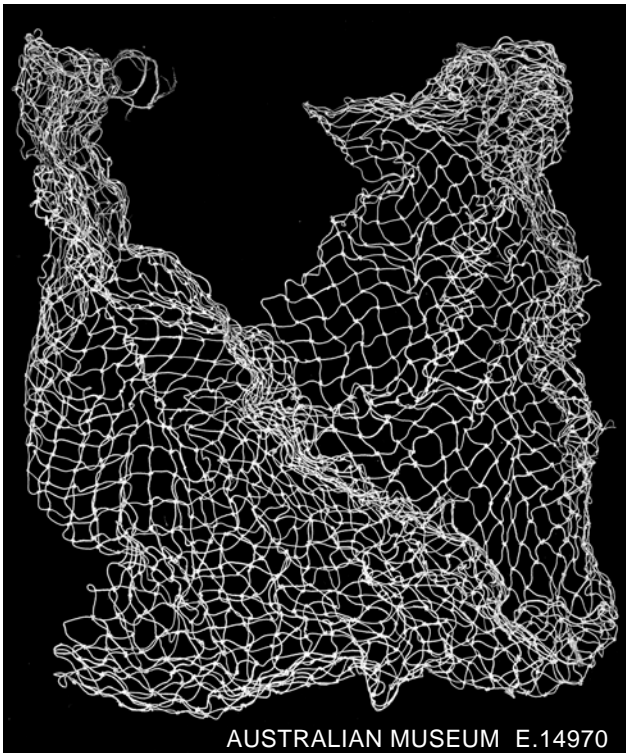
Olive shell necklace.
Collected Staaten River, 1903.
Length 67.2 cm.



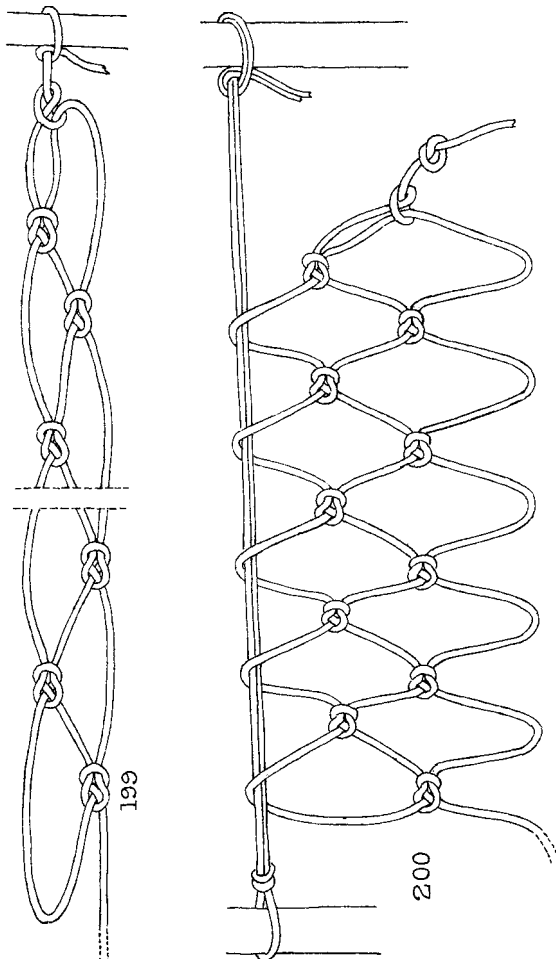
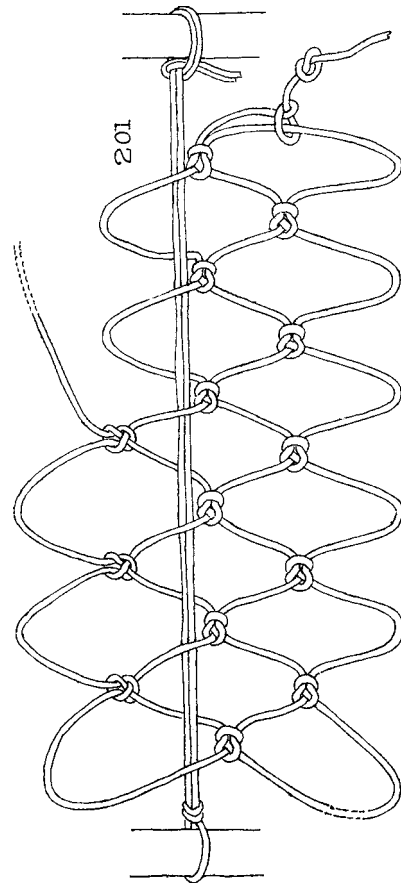
AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14452

Fishing equipment

Fishing nets



Fishing net.
Collected Staaten River, 1903.
237×84 cm.



Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth did not write much about fishing nets from the Staaten River, except to say that on the coastline between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers, they were made by men only and were called *malkanya* by the Gunanni people. This comment was not published until 1984 (see Allen & Borey's Annotations to publications by W.E. Roth). His handwritten note was included in the section dealing with large non-folding rectangular frame fishing nets from Boulia and Cloncurry, made on the netting stitch pattern.

Roth initially described the netting stitch pattern in Bulletin 1, with a full page illustration, but made a correction in Bulletin 7, illustrating the process in pl. xxiii, figs. 199–201. Having made a further study of the netting stitch he said it was commenced with a continuous strand before it was attached to the base strand. After fixing it to an upright stick stuck in the ground, the continuous strand was knotted on itself in a number of meshes, depending on the width of the net to be made. This continuous strand was then removed and a straight base strand was passed through the top row of meshes and tied as usual between two sticks. These sticks could be up to 150 to 180 cm apart depending on the size of the fishing net to be made. The meshes already made thus became stretched at right angles to that just created, and the netting stitch continued from left to right in the ordinary manner.

Roth described these nets being used in the Boulia region (Area G). They were about 180 cm long attached to four strong withes or twigs. He said several nets would be used at one time. Two men would start in the water from the river bank with the net between them, followed successively by another and another pair of men with a net between them. The men and nets formed a more and more enclosed space, overlapping the preceding couple. Beaters in front then drove the fish into the nets. It is assumed that the Staaten River nets may have been similarly used.

Collection information. There are two fishing nets from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "showing how increased depth is obtained".

- E.14969 Roth's collection number is p. 43. The handspun bark fibre fishing net is not attached to any wooden frame. It measures 250 by 98 cm.
E.14970 Roth's collection number is p. 44. The handspun bark fibre fishing net is not attached to any wooden frame. It measures 237 by 84 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both fishing nets:

- E.14969 negative sheet 4120M, frame 1653.
E.14970 negative sheet 4120M, frame 1654.

Mourning objects

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth said information on death and mourning customs among people living around the Lower Mitchell, Nassau and Staaten Rivers was almost non-existent because the people there were afraid of strangers, there were few European settlements and no interpreters were available. He did conclude (without giving reasons), that funeral ceremonies here were probably similar to those carried out by people living around the Pennefather River further north.

Collection information. All 11 mourning objects were collected from the Staaten River by Roth in 1903.

- E.13735 Mourning head band. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 accompanied by a sketch includes "*Mi-nganda* (= opossum skin) worn by men, women, boys and girls as sign of mourning. While worn the wearer does not eat wallaby, possum, kangaroo, native companion, emu, bandicoot etc.—but only iguana, snake, fish. Made by men. Made of opossum (*minganda*) string. Mourning decoration worn round head (tassel hangs down between shoulders), called *mi-nganda*. See ms notes". I assume the ms notes are the ones referred to above with illustration. Five loops of possum fur string coated with clay and

gathered into a loop. A possum fur string bound with a strip of red European fabric hangs from one end of the loop, a bunch of possum fur tassels hang from the other end. The looped head band is 24 cm long, the strand is 12.5 cm long and the tassel is 17 cm long.

- E.13736 Mourning neck band. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Mourning decoration called *mi-nganda*. Tied round neck, tassels hang down between shoulders. See mss. notes". A further note in the same register, accompanied by a sketch states "*Minganda* t...—but 'tied round'... worn by husband for wife and vice versa (made by men)". Suspended from the circler are eight tassels with a blob of wax at the end of each tassel. The tassels also are attached to the circler with wax. The tassels are 39 cm long. The circler has been badly affected by insects.

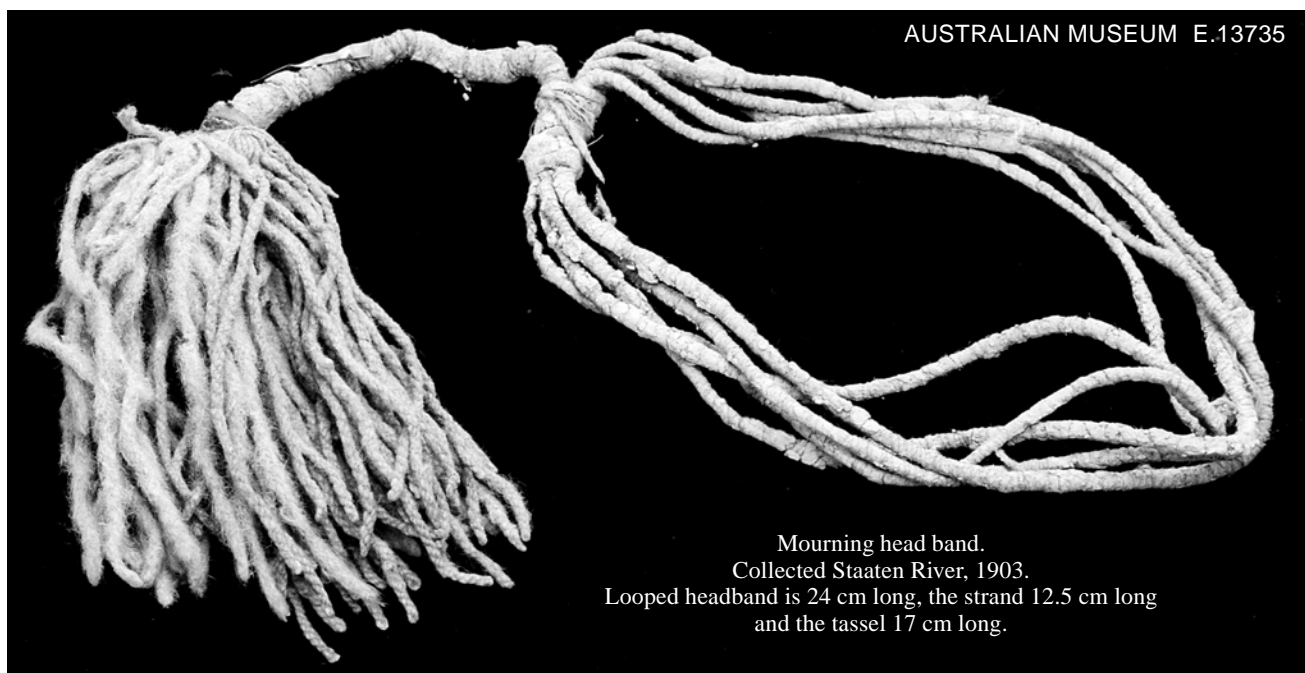
With reference to the following five forehead circlers The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Cabbage tree twine loops (a) forehead circlers (mourning). Made and worn by women only". The Cabbage tree palm fibre twine was made from the leaf cortex of *Livistona australis*.

- E.13737 It is 24.3 cm long.
E.13738 It is 26.6 cm long.
E.13739 It is 20.6 cm long.
E.13740 It is 26.5 cm long.
E.13741 It is 26.3 cm long.

The following refers to the two armlets listed below. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Cabbage tree twine loops (b) mourning armlets. Made and worn by women only."

- E.13742 It is 9 cm long.
E.13743 It is 8.4 cm long.

The following information refers to the two Cabbage Tree fibre strands listed below. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Cabbage tree twine loops worn across shoulder to opposite armpit. Made and worn by women for mourning". This is a bit puzzling because neither of the two following objects are long enough to be worn across the shoulder to the opposite armpit.



- E.13744 Double strand of cabbage tree fibre over which some possum fur twine is wound. It is 25.5 cm long.
- E.13745 Strands of cabbage tree fibre and European cloth. It is 28.4 cm long.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all 11 mourning objects:

- E.13735 negative sheet 4056M, frame 418.
 E.13736 negative sheet 4056M, frame 419.
 E.13737 negative sheet 4056M, frame 420.
 E.13738 negative sheet 4056M, frame 421.
 E.13739 negative sheet 4056M, frame 422.
 E.13740 negative sheet 4056M, frame 423.
 E.13741 negative sheet 4056M, frame 424.
 E.13742 negative sheet 4056M, frame 425.
 E.13743 negative sheet 4057M, frame 426.
 E.13744 negative sheet 4057M, frame 427.
 E.13745 negative sheet 4057M, frame 428.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 8.
 Roth, W.E., 1907. Bulletin 9: 370.

Raw material

Pigments

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth did not write much about the red and white pigment he collected in the Staaten River region. He said the Gunanni people of this region burnt a red pigment before using it. They called it *marela*. The white pigment, which the Gunanni called *mingguna*, Roth said was bartered from the Coen district further north.

Collection information. There are two packages of red pigment and one of white pigment from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903. With reference to the red pigment, The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "red pigment (packed for transport) called *ma-rela* found in ground and then burnt in fire".

- E.14785 Powdered red pigment in a plastic bag.
 E.14786 A small parcel of red pigment wrapped in paperbark and bound with handspun bark fibre string. The parcel is 12.8 by 2 cm.
 E.14787 White pigment. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "white pigment *nung-guna* bartered from Coen River district (name given is Staaten River) packed for transport". A parcel of white pigment wrapped in paperbark and bound with a single strand of grass fibre. The curved parcel is 21 by 4 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all three pigments:

- E.14785 negative sheet 4187M, frame 1469.
 E.14786 negative sheet 4187M, frame 1470.
 E.14787 negative sheet 4187M, frame 1471.

Reference

- Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 14–15.

Tools

Stone axe head

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".

Collection information. There is one questionable stone axe head from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903.

- E.13640 The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "stone celt? (doubtful)." The axe head cannot be located at present.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4044M, frame 323.

Reference

- Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 18–20.



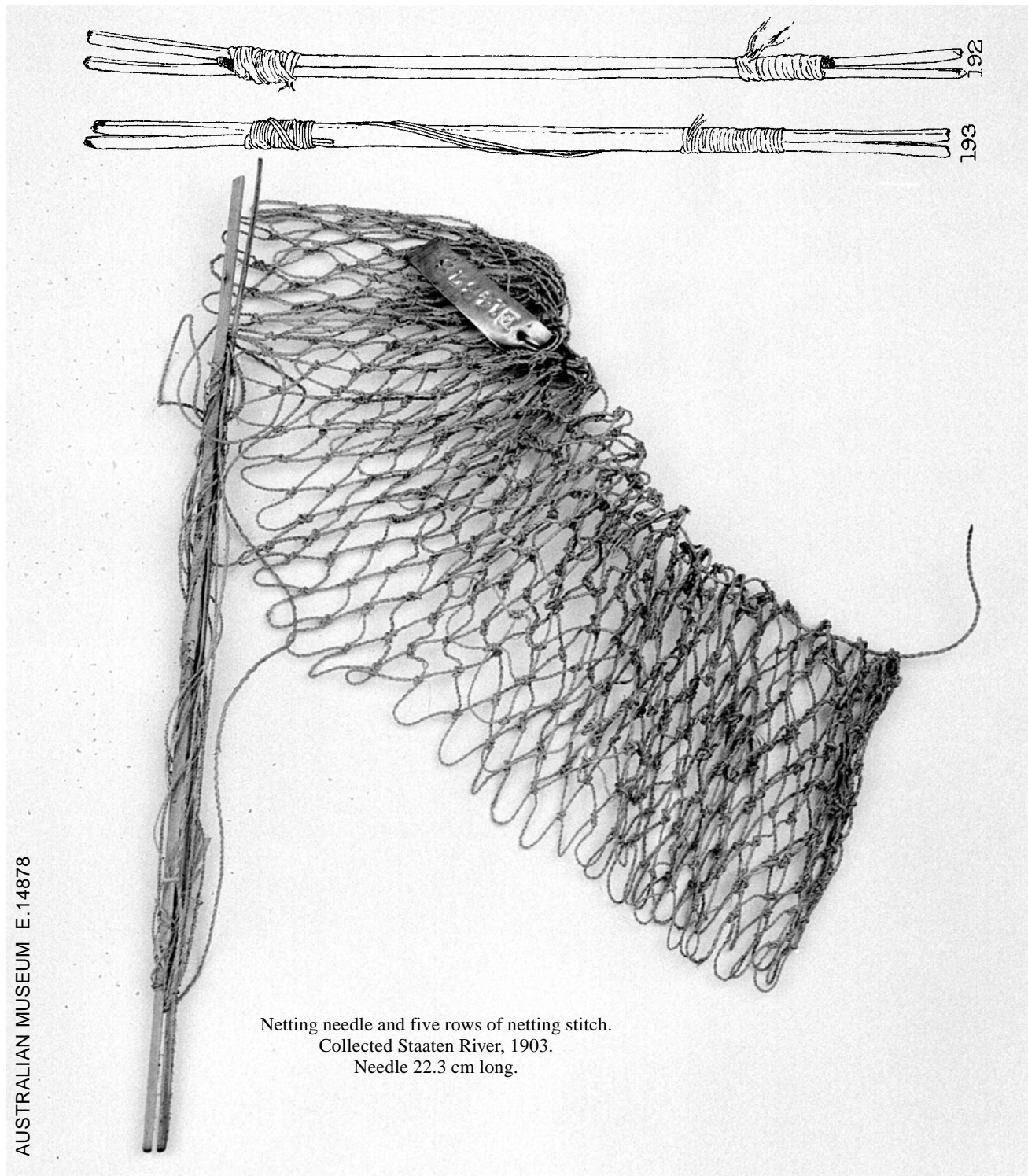
Netting needles

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote that the Gunanni people living along the coastline between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers used a true European form of netting needle to make fish nets and netting stitch bags. This needle could either be made of two pieces of stick, from say a Cabbage Tree Palm, *Livistona australis*, tied together near the ends as illustrated in Bulletin 7, pl. xxii, fig. 192 or a single piece split at the ends, with handspun bark fibre twine tied round each end to prevent the splits enlarging as shown in Bulletin 7, pl. xxii, fig. 193. Larger kinds, used for bigger meshes were often charred at the ends to harden them.

Roth said these netting needles were called *re-da*.

Collection information. There are three netting needles from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "netting needle used for fish net stitch in dilly bag making, called *re-da*".

- E.14876 A length of cane, split at each end and bound with fine fibre string at both ends. Fibre string also has been inserted into the splits. It is illustrated in Bulletin 7, 1904, pl. xxii, fig. 193. It is 18.8 cm long.
 E.14877 Two lengths of cane, with bark inserted in each end and bound with handspun bark fibre string at both ends. The ends have been charred. It is illustrated in Bulletin 7, 1904, pl. xxii, fig. 192. It is 22.5 cm long.



Netting needle and five rows of netting stitch.
Collected Staaten River, 1903.
Needle 22.3 cm long.

E.14878 This bag has an additional note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905, which states "and started bag attached". Two pieces of cane, bound at both ends with fine fibre string. Five rows of netting stitch have been completed on the bag. The needle is 22.3 cm long.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all three netting needles:

- E.14876 negative sheet 4199M, frame 1560.
- E.14877 negative sheet 4199M, frame 1561.
- E.14878 negative sheet 4199M, frame 1562.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 26–27.

Smoothing board

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 adhesive in making tools and weapons. Blobs of the sticky adhesive were often found stuck to the surface of the board after the job was done. The board, always greased with forehead perspiration before use, was held in the right hand, while the left one turned the object being stuck together.

Roth found these smoothing boards used by people living around the Bloomfield and Endeavour Rivers, Princess Charlotte Bay and on the Palmer and Mitchell Rivers.

Smoothing board.
Collected Staaten River, 1903.
26.6×5.2 cm.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13949



Smoothing boards also were found on the lower coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Collection information. There is one smoothing board from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903.

E.13949 It is 26.6 by 5.2 cm.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4082M, frame 632.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 14.

Weapons

Shark's teeth knives

Information from Roth's Bulletins. These knives were made of an elongate piece of ironwood with a slot in one side where eight to nine sharks teeth were inserted and fixed in position with adhesive. Adhesive also was found on the rounded and hand-held ends of the knife. It was at the hand-held end that handspun bark fibre string was looped and wound around and attached with adhesive. Roth said that when a man used this weapon, he first hid it from view, either in his left armpit, or hung it by a loop over his forehead so that it hung behind his neck and out of sight of his opponent. At close quarters the knife was brought out, and hacked into the victim's flank or buttocks. Roth reported seeing some of these weapons up to 20 to 23 cm long. He first saw one on the Palmer, where it had been obtained from a man who Roth identified as being a Kundara man living around the mouth of the Mitchell River. He said the man called it a *Kulkong* which he took to mean tooth. The knife was only used for fighting purposes, never for sawing

meat. Roth said the Gunanni people called it *kappatora*.

Roth noted that P.B. King had reported a similar weapon being used at King George Sound, Western Australia, in 1839. He said Robert Etheridge Jr. of the Australian Museum had also illustrated a weapon with shark's teeth in a 1902 article, but it was unlocalised.

Collection information. There are five shark's teeth knives collected from between the Staaten and Lower Mitchell Rivers coastline. There is no collection date. These knives also are included in the section on the Mitchell River in Volume 3.

- E.13930 Nine shark's teeth are fixed in a slit on one side with adhesive. Adhesive is also on the rounded end near the teeth. Handspun bark fibre string is wound round the hand-held end and attached with adhesive. This knife is figured in Roth, Bulletin 7, plate xvii, figure 143. At present two teeth are missing. The knife is 36.6 by 5.3 cm.
- E.13931 Twelve shark's teeth are fixed in a slit on one side with adhesive. Adhesive is also on the rounded end near the teeth. Handspun bark fibre string is wound round the hand-held end and attached with adhesive. Gaps suggest several teeth are missing. The knife is 35.7 by 5.7 cm.
- E.13932 Five remaining shark's teeth are fixed in a slit on one side with adhesive. Adhesive is also smeared all over the wooden surface of the knife. Handspun bark fibre string is wound around the hand-held end and attached with adhesive. Some teeth are missing. The knife is 32.7 by 5.2 cm.
- E.13933 Eight shark's teeth fixed in a slit on one side with adhesive. Adhesive is also smeared on both ends of the knife. At the hand-held end, a piece of white European cloth has been wound round the wooden knife and adhesive. The looped handle, of handspun bark fibre string and human hairstring, has been threaded through between this binding

Shark's teeth knife.
Collected from between the Staaten and
Lower Mitchell Rivers coastline.
There is no collection date. 25×5 cm.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13934

and the adhesive. The knife is 20 by 3.7 cm.

E.13934 Eight shark's teeth fixed in a slit on one side with adhesive. Adhesive is also smeared all over the wooden surface of the knife. Handspun bark fibre string is wound round the hand held end and attached with adhesive. The knife is 25 by 5 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all five sharks teeth knives:

- E.13930 negative sheet 4080M, frame 613.
- E.13931 negative sheet 4080M, frame 614.
- E.13932 negative sheet 4080M, frame 615.
- E.13933 negative sheet 4080M, frame 616.
- E.13934 negative sheet 4081M, frame 617.

References

Etheridge Jr., R., 1902. *Records of the Australian Museum* 4(5): 207, pl. xxxvi.
 King, P.B., 1839. *Intertropical and West Coasts of Australia*, II: 139.
 Roth, W.E., 1904. *Bulletin* 7: 23.
 Smyth, R., 1878. *Aborigines of Victoria*. I, p. 341, fig. 151.



Stick spearthrower

Information from Roth's Bulletins. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 refers to this object as a "Womerah (natural stick)". Roth did not write anything about this spearthrower.

Collection information. There is one "natural stick" spearthrower from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903.

E.14390 Roth's collection number is W.101. A section of a tree branch with lesser branches cut off, leaving the base sections. There are incised diagonal lines from the base to the mid shaft, and some file marks are evident. It is 59 by 2.2 cm.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4138M, frame 1073.



Stick spearthrower.
 Collected Staaten River, 1903.
 59x2.2 cm.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14342

Straight spearthrower.
Collected Staaten River, 1903.
84.3×6.8 cm (max.width).



Straight spearthrowers

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth said the local Gunanni people living down the Gulf coast between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers called these spearthrowers *yurnganya*. Spearthrowers that Roth saw being made around Mapoon appear to be similar to these.

The blade of the spearthrower could vary in width, the greater the width the larger the peg. According to Roth, greater width was not necessarily an advantage. To prevent the timber from splitting it was often buried in the ground for two to three months before use.

The spearthrower peg was a circular pencil of ironwood that projected a little below the lower edge of the blade, or main body of the weapon. It was fixed into the edge of the blade that had been split either with a shell or with the teeth. Two holes were drilled and handspun bark fibre string threaded through to tie the peg in position. The peg was held even firmer by a thick covering of resin from the ironwood tree, *Erythrophloeum laboucheii*, now known as *Erythrophloeum chlorostachyum*. Roth said the local Gunanni people living around the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers called this resin *aldema*.

To make this resin, first roots of the ironwood tree were dug out and cut into small pieces. The outer sticky covering on these pieces of root was scraped off with a bark strip. It was then roasted over a fire and hammered between two stones. The roasting and hammering continued until the material was quite soft, when it was ready for use. Any leftover resin was left to cool and harden, ready to be used at another time.

Henry G. Smith, F.C.S., the then Curator of the Technical Museum, Sydney in Roth's time (now the Powerhouse Museum) wrote about this resin as:

This sample of cement is a tongue-shaped homogeneous mass, almost black externally; it has a dull fracture, and the surface of the fracture is a vandyke-brown colour. In the mass the cement is very hard, and does not soften between the fingers. At 50 degrees C. it softens, but hardens at once when removed from the water. At a higher temperature it softens readily, especially in the flame. It burns readily, with a smoky flame, leaving 31.75 per cent of a very fine, soft, ferruginous clay. It seems to be

an excellent cement for the purpose for which it was made... The ash consists of a very fine clay, with scarcely any free quartz as sand... After the resin was entirely removed with alcohol, and the residue dried and afterwards boiled with water, only a very small amount was dissolved. The residue contained some admixed organic matter, with excess of carbon, which burns like tinder, and gives out an odour like burnt grass. Only a small amount (1.38 per cent) of a soft oily resin was soluble in petroleum ether. The principal resin is of a dark-brown colour, and is somewhat brittle, and melts at a low temperature; it ignites readily, and burns with a smoky flame, leaving an excess of carbon. It is readily soluble in alcohol, but less so in ether. It dissolves in concentrated sulphuric acid, with a crimson colour, best seen when the particles are drawn through the acid, and is precipitated as a brown precipitate on an addition of water... It is remarkable how closely the resin agrees in every respect with the resin obtained from Spinifex... The composition is—clay 31.78 per cent., brown resin 48.37 per cent. by difference, oily soft resin 1.80 per cent., soluble in water 1.75 per cent., admixed organic matter 16.30 per cent... (H.G. Smith)

The handle of the spearthrower was covered with the same resin to stop it slipping through the hand.

The shell haft was made of two oval cut pieces of *pera* or melon shell, *Melo diadema*, now known as *Melo amphora*, attached with beeswax. Roth said the angle at which the shell haft was fixed varied a great deal, and seemed to depend on individual taste.

The blade of the spearthrower was often covered with a mixture of resin and fat, giving it a polished or varnished appearance.

Collection information. There are twenty straight spearthrowers from the Staaten River, collected by Roth in 1903.

E.14334 Roth's collection number is W.45. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 87.5 by 5.8 cm (max. width).

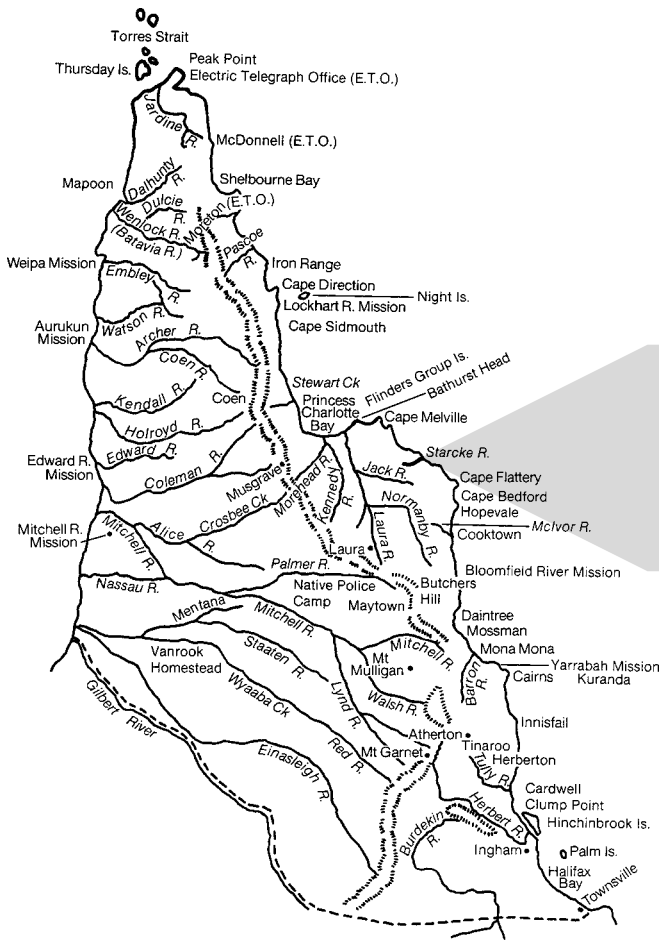
- E.14335 Roth's collection number is W.46. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 70.6 by 7.6 cm (max. width).
- E.14337 Roth's collection number is W.48. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 75 by 7.7 cm (max. width)
- E.14338 Roth's collection number is W.49. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 78.3×7.6 cm (max. width).
- E.14340 Roth's collection number is W.51. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 83.5 by 6.7 cm (max. width).
- E.14341 Roth's collection number is W.52. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. There is evidence of incised decoration and red pigment on the blade. It is 81.7×7.3 cm (max. width).
- E.14342 Roth's collection number is W.53. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 84.3 by 6.8 cm (max. width).
- E.14343 Roth's collection number is W.54. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 65.4 by 9 cm (max. width).
- E.14345 Roth's collection number is W.56. *Melo* shells are missing from the hand-held end of the spearthrower. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. There is a trace of red pigment on the blade. It is 77.6 by 6.7 cm (max. width).
- E.14347 Roth's collection number is W.58. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 92.3 by 6 cm (max. width).
- E.14348 Roth's collection number is W.59. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 87.8 by 6.5 cm (max. width).
- E.14350 Roth's collection number is W.61. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 82.9 by 7.6 cm (max. width).
- E.14351 Roth's collection number is W.62. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 87.3 by 7 cm (max. width).
- E.14352 Roth's collection number is W.63. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 92 by 7.5 cm (max. width).
- E.14353 Roth's collection number is W.64. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 73.5 by 6 cm (max. width).
- E.14354 Roth's collection number is W.65. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 69.3 by 7.2 cm (max. width).
- E.14356 Roth's collection number is W.67. One *Melo* shell remains attached to the hand-held end with beeswax, the other half of shell is missing. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 72.9 by 8 cm (max. width).
- E.14360 Roth's collection number is W.71. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 88.6 by 6 cm (max. width).
- E.14362 Roth's collection number is W.73. Two *Melo* shells are attached to the hand-held end with beeswax. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 82.8 by 6.4 cm (max. width).
- E.14380 Roth's collection number is W.91. The *Melo* shells are missing from the hand-held end. At the other end, the peg is held with resin and handspun bark fibre twine. It is 85 by 13.6 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all 20 spearthrowers:

- E.14334 negative sheet 4131M, frame 1017.
 E.14335 negative sheet 4131M, frame 1018.
 E.14337 negative sheet 4131M, frame 1020.
 E.14338 negative sheet 4131M, frame 1021.
 E.14340 negative sheet 4131M, frame 1023.
 E.14341 negative sheet 4131M, frame 1024.
 E.14342 negative sheet 4132M, frame 1025.
 E.14343 negative sheet 4132M, frame 1026.
 E.14345 negative sheet 4132M, frame 1028.
 E.14347 negative sheet 4132M, frame 1030.
 E.14348 negative sheet 4132M, frame 1031.
 E.14350 negative sheet 4133M, frame 1033.
 E.14351 negative sheet 4133M, frame 1034.
 E.14352 negative sheet 4133M, frame 1035.
 E.14353 negative sheet 4133M, frame 1036.
 E.14354 negative sheet 4133M, frame 1037.
 E.14356 negative sheet 4133M, frame 1039.
 E.14360 negative sheet 4134M, frame 1043.
 E.14362 negative sheet 4134M, frame 1045.
 E.14380 negative sheet 4134M, frame 1063.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 11–13.
 Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 13: 197–198.



Starcke River

Contents

The people	81
Containers	81
Woven sieve baskets	81
Leaf water carrier	82
Shell water carrier	83
Raw material	84
Resin	84
Secret/sacred objects	84

The people

Roth wrote:

The Starcke River Natives travel to the McIvor River, to Cape Bedford, and to Cooktown where they camp at the 2-Mile. Among their place names (these blacks speak Koko-yimidir) on the McIvor are the following—Gorton’s Selection, Parra; Thygeson’s Karm-bar; Bramighan’s, No-kal; Webb’s, Winbar-winbar. They speak of Barrow Point as Mo-yir; Look-out Point, Tan-yil; Cape Flattery, Yorro, and the country through which the Morgan and Jeannie Rivers run as Walmbar and Yorl-bun respectively. 1910. Bulletin 18: 93.

In 1901, he had recorded that the Koko-yimidir language was spoken along the coastline from the Annan and Endeavour Rivers to the northern side of Cape Flattery and was understood beyond these limits. The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia refers to them as the Guugu-Yimidhirr—peoples of the East Cape around Hopevale, on the Annan, Jeannie and Starcke Rivers. Their neighbours are the Mutumui, Kiki-Yalangji and Kokowarra peoples.

Reference

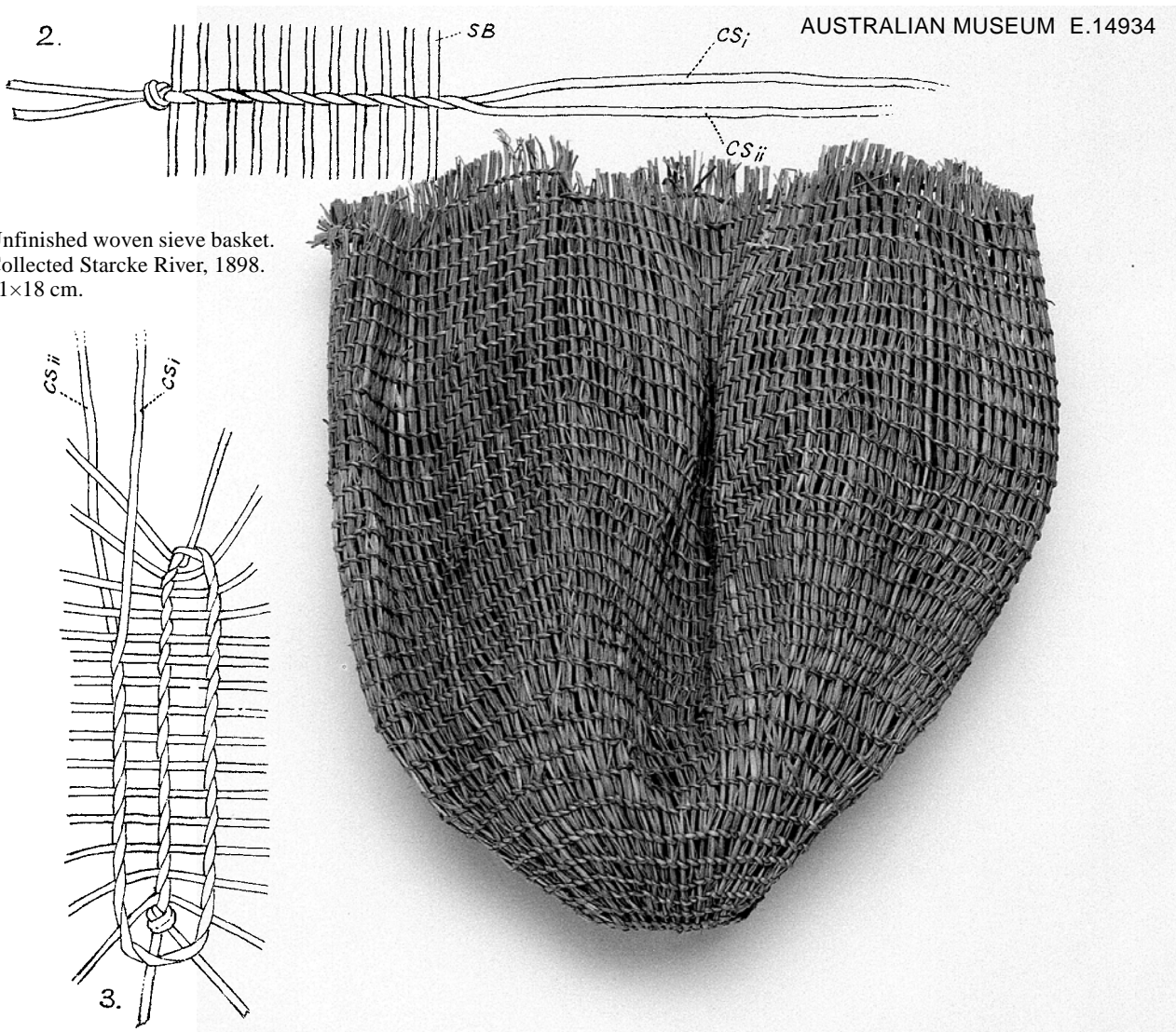
Horton, D., ed., 1994. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*, p. 443. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
 Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 2: 5.
 Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 18: 93.

Containers

Woven sieve baskets

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. These baskets 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. Variations in the pattern differed only in the way by which the base of the receptacle was started, that is, in the initial fixing of the base strands.

In woven baskets from the Starcke River, Middle Morehead and Middle Palmer Rivers, the two continuous strands were knotted some distance from their ends, and held between the left thumb and forefinger. One base strand, at about its middle, was placed in the fork of the knot, the two continuous ones twisted around it and pressed in the fingers. Another base strand was fixed as before and so on, as shown in Bulletin 1, pl. xvi, fig. 2. When a certain number of base strands have been included, all the time working from left to right, the two horizontal strands make a sharp double twist round the last inserted base one, which is simultaneously bent at an acute angle. The length, so far made, is then round, so that the end furthest from the knot is held in the maker’s left thumb and forefinger, while the second row of the chain twist was made by picking up from



Unfinished woven sieve basket. Collected Starcke River, 1898. 21×18 cm.

left to right each base strand in regular rotation. The operation was continued and repeated as shown in Bulletin 1, pl. xvi, fig. 3.

Vegetable fibres listed by Roth as being used by people living around the Starcke and Palmer River to make baskets on the chain twist pattern were the spring rolling grass, *Spinifex hirsutus*, now known as *Spinifex sericens*, *Pandanus* and a grass-like plant, the bloodroot, *Haemodorum coccineum*.

The dried leaves of the bloodroot were moistened just before use, when they were split into thin strips with the finger-nails. He said the local people called the bloodroot *tan-dai*. He said these baskets were used solely as sieves or colanders.

Collection information. There are two sieve baskets from the Starcke River, collected by Roth in 1898.

- E.14934 The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "dilly basket (or sieve bag?)". It is unfinished and is 21 by 18 cm.
- E.79256 The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Found unregistered in collection Oct.1979". Label on specimen reads on obverse side in W.E. Roth's handwriting: *Starcke River 1898*. On reverse side in W.W. Thorpe's handwriting: *not registered—overlooked*. (Reg. ref. G. O'Donnell). W.W. Thorpe was working as the assistant to R. Etheridge in Ethnology at the time and registered the Roth collection in 1905.

G. O'Donnell was Registrar in the Department of Anthropology in 1979, and gave the basket its registered number. The basket has only just begun to be made and of the 27 cm of fibre only 4 cm has been woven.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available for E.14934, negative sheet 4206M, frame, 1618.

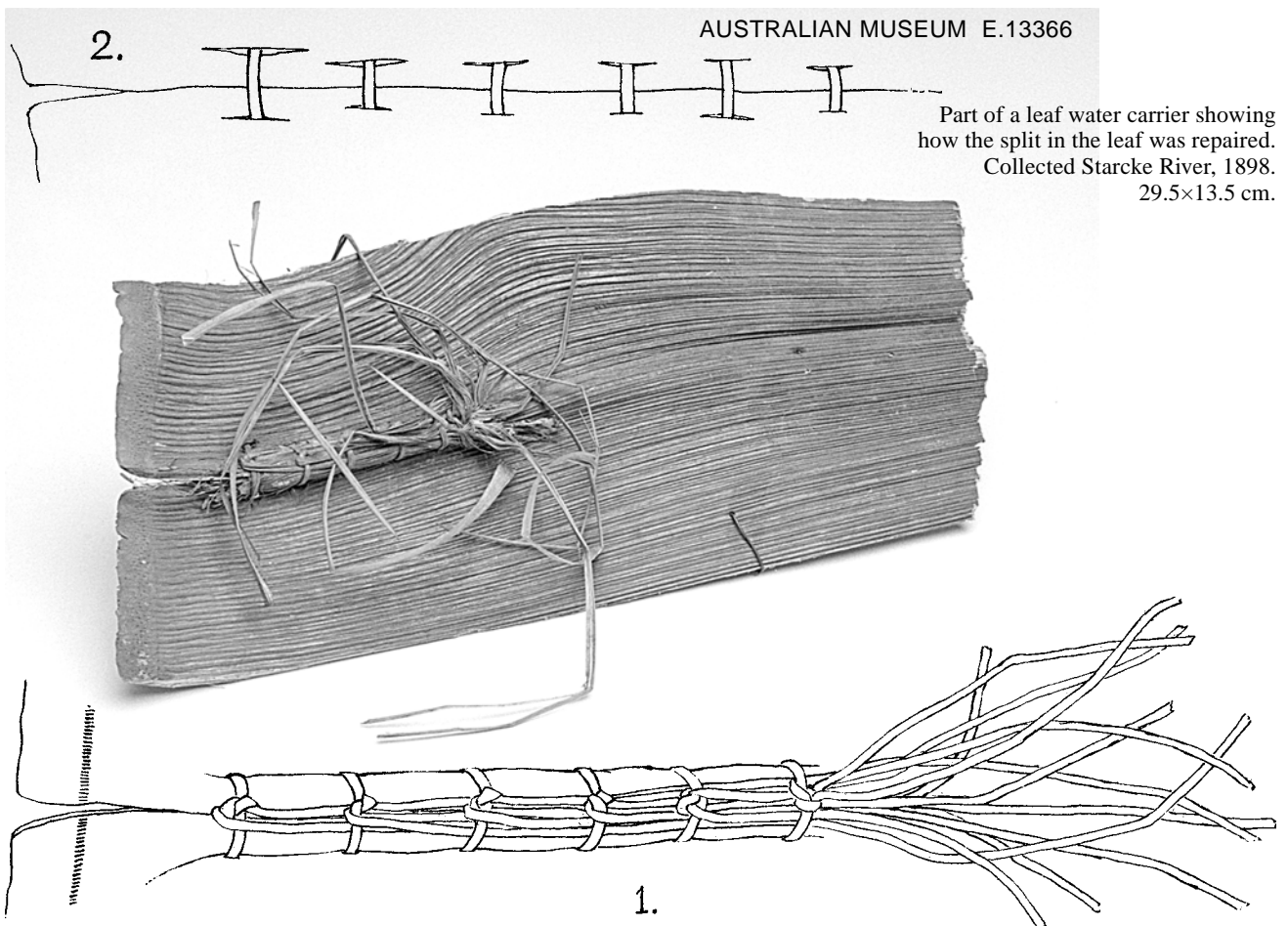
Reference

- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 9–14.
- Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 31.

Leaf water carrier

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth said that while leaf water carriers were normally made of palm leaf sheath stalks, he had seen one from the Starcke River, made from the split leaves of the bloodroot, *Haemodorum coccineum*. Children often used any large sized leaf, rolled into shape.

The more common palm leaf water carriers could be either punt or scoop shaped. The punt shaped ones, according to Roth, were used by people living around the Moreton and Ducie Rivers. The scoop shaped ones were easily made, and useful for carrying water a short distance. A length was cut from part of the sheath stalk, the base of which formed the mouth of the scoop. The cut end, pleated



and tied round with handspun bark fibre twine, formed the handle. These scoops were used by people living around the Tully, Bloomfield and Endeavour Rivers, and at Cape Bedford and on the Palmer and Starcke Rivers. People living around the Starcke River called it *kundari*.

Roth described how splits in two old leaf water carriers were repaired using overknotting. In this process six pairs of holes were punctured on either side of the split in an old leaf water carrier; six pairs of holes are illustrated in Bulletin 1, pl. vii, fig. 1. (This is E.13366, from the Starcke River). Through these holes a corresponding number of strands were knotted on the outer surface. He said they were “granny knots” but to prevent them loosening, the free ends of each strand had been fixed by the immediately succeeding knot. The appearance of the inner surface can be seen in fig 2 of Bull. 1, pl. vii.

He said overknotting was seen at old camps on the Starcke River and on the Princess Charlotte Bay coast, close to the mouth of the Normanby.

Collection information. There is one leaf water carrier from the Starcke River, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13366 Roth’s collection number is WT.16. The Australian Museum’s Anthropology register dated 1905 includes “portion of leaf water carrier to show method of fixing”. It is 29.5 by 13.5 cm.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4006M, frame 50.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 9, 12.
Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 31.

Shell water carrier

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. Roth said the large melon shell, *Melo diadema*, now known as *Melo amphora*, was mainly used as a water carrier, but could also be used to bail water out of a boat. People living on the east coast of Cape York Peninsula north of Bowen cut away the ventral surface of the last whorl, the spire and the columella, to form a basin. If the shell was fresh this could be done straight away. If not, the shell was soaked in water for three to four days before being worked on. The chipped edge was finally ground down with a stone.

Roth commented that this shell water carrier was traded a considerable distance inland. He did not say what the people living around the Starcke River called it, but said the Koko-Yimidhirr people living around Cape Bedford called it *dirakai*.

Collection information. There is one melon shell water carrier from the Starcke River, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.13341 Roth’s collection number is MD.26. The ventral surface of the last whorl, spire and columella has been chipped away to form a basin. The outer surface has been blackened, possibly by fire. The Australian Museum’s Anthropology register dated 1905 includes “water was being boiled in this”. It is illustrated in Bulletin 7, 1904, pl. xxiv, fig. 210. It is 32.1 by 18 by 15 cm deep.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4003M, frame 25.

Reference

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



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13341

Melon shell water carrier.
Collected Starcke River, 1898.
32.1×18×15 cm deep.

Raw material

Resin

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Resin from the grass tree was found in lumps among the roots and only needed heating before use. In Bulletin 7, Roth wrote that the Kokoyimdir people of Cooktown and Cape Bedford called this resin *pungga*, while Thorpe has written in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register the names *tun-ja* and *kannojo-ol*. Did Thorpe mis-read Roth's notes, was there unrecorded communication between Thorpe and Roth, or was a mistake made in the printing?

In 1904 Mr Henry G. Smith, F.C.S. of the then Museum of Technology, Sydney, identified the resin for Roth as coming from the grass tree, *Xanthorrhoea arborea*, now known as *Xanthorrhoea johnsonii*.

This cement is in irregular lumps, having a purplish-brown colour in the fracture, but almost black externally. It is sufficiently hard not to become plastic when pressed between the fingers. In water at 50 degrees C. it softens slightly, but soon hardens when removed. At a higher temperature it softens readily. In the flame it runs quickly, and takes fire readily; when thus melted it can be readily moulded, and sets hard quickly: ... the small amount of admixed clay is remarkable in reference to the other cements. On ignition, a large amount of carbon was found to be present, and the amount of inorganic constituents was only 2.47 per cent. Only a very small amount was soluble in petroleum ether, but a resin was dissolving in ordinary ether which was yellow on evaporation. In alcohol the whole of the resin was dissolved, having a deep red colour: the organic matter is then left behind. This resin acted in every way like a Red Grass-tree Resin, it formed a red varnish, melted at exactly the same temperature, and when heated side by side with grass-tree resin no difference could be detected in odour, etc. Its reaction with sulphuric acid and other

reagents were also those of grass-tree resin. Water also dissolved from the original material an acid liquid which deposited microscopic crystals on evaporation. The resin thus bears a remarkable similarity to grass-tree resin... The organic matter consisted of a brown powder, and burnt like tinder, with a burnt-grass odour. Particles of woody fibre were also detected. It seems probable that this organic material is added to the resin to overcome the brittleness; but the quality of the cement would be improved if inorganic constituents were present also. (H.G. Smith).

Collection information. There is one lump of resin from the Starcke River, collected by Roth in 1898.

E.14764 Roth's collection number is C.S.6. A round lump of reddish brown resin. It is 4.3 cm in diameter and 3.2 cm deep. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "*Xanthorrhoea arborea* as carried about on a piece of stick ready for use. Reddish, typical of the northern specimens".

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4184M, frame 1448.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 13–14.

Secret/sacred object

Because of the sensitive nature of this object, information will only be given to those people who have a right to know. The Aboriginal Heritage Officers in the Australian Museum should be able to help in this matter. Their telephone numbers are (02) 9320 6192 and (02) 9320 6186.

Collection information. E.13531 was collected by Roth at the Starcke River in 1898.



Tinaroo

Contents

The people	85
Weapons	86
Shield	86

The people

The Atherton Tablelands was changed forever in 1878 when tin was discovered at Tinaroo Creek and Wild River. Local people had coped fairly well with the timber getters. Now, as well as the timber getters, there were tin miners, and new cattle stations to contend with. Everything that made life worthwhile was under attack from the newcomers. On the other hand, by 1885, the Tinaroo Progress Association reported that miners and settlers feared for their lives. The Police Inspector at Port Douglas informed the Police Commissioner:

It must be borne in mind that as the axe of the white man gradually but surely destroys the strongholds of the natives, so are outrages likely to increase as their scope gets narrower and narrower.

Inspector J.B. Isley,
Port Douglas to Police Commissioner,
5 May, 1885.

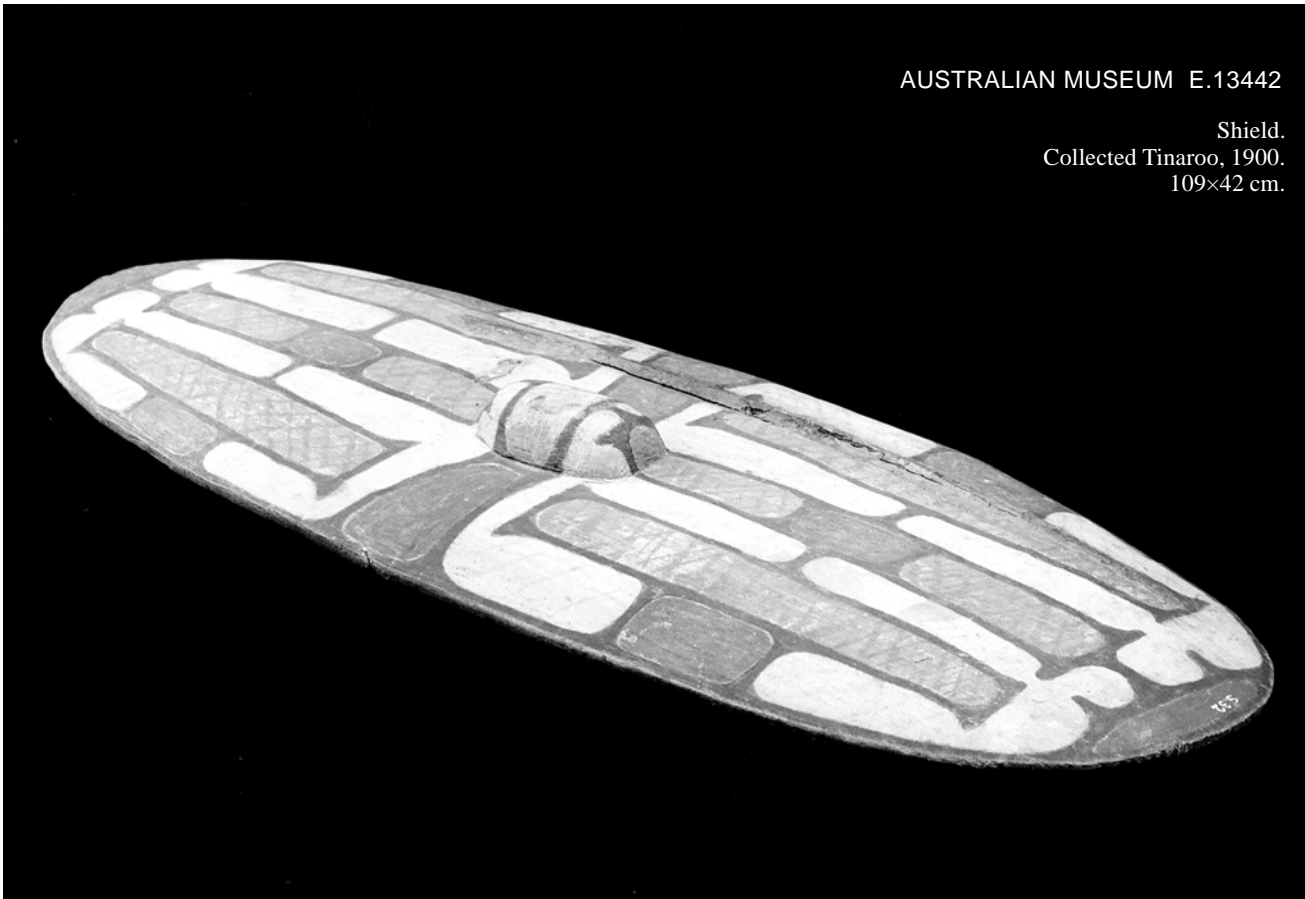
In 1902 Roth wrote that the Tinaroo Divisional Board had put forth a proposal for an Aboriginal reserve to be proclaimed on the water reserve at Atherton. The District Lands Commissioner rejected the idea stating a place so near town was not good.

Roth also wrote that the local Dyirbal speaking people called the Tinaroo Ranges Mun-gija.

Reference

Dixon, R.M.W., 1972. *The Dyirbal Language of North Queensland*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 Loos, N., 1982. *Invasion and Resistance. Aboriginal-European Relations on the North Queensland Frontier 1861–1897*, pp. 94–99, 240–241. Canberra: ANU Press.
 Roth, W.E., 1903. *Annual Report of the Northern Protector of Aboriginals for 1902*. Brisbane: Government Printer, p. 22.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13442

Shield.
Collected Tinaroo, 1900.
109×42 cm.

Weapons

Shield

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth's description of how the painted rainforest shields were made was based on his observations on the Lower Tully River.

- 1 Two curved cuts were made in the buttress of a fig tree, *Ficus* sp., about the length of a shield. 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 with cinders to make a cavity.
- 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 the second soaking, the shield was tied to a bush overhanging a creek or waterhole, so that it hung flat, suspended about 30 cm 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.

- 7 A striking design was painted on the outer side to complete the shield.

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

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

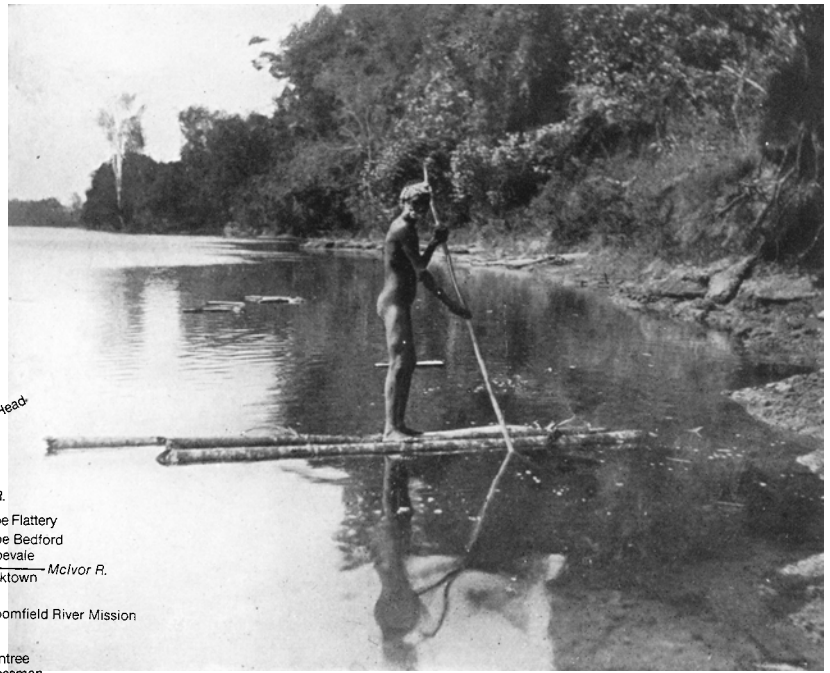
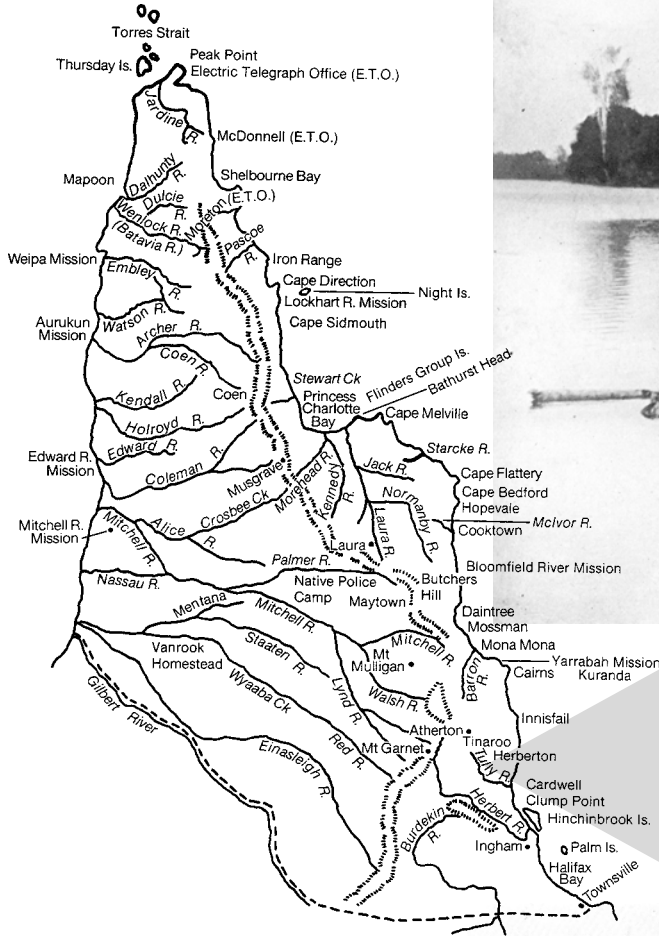
Collection information. There is one shield from Tinaroo, collected by Roth in 1900. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "Tinaroo, Herberton".

E.13442 Roth's collection number is S.32. The design painted on the front of the shield is yellow rectangles and red shapes outlined in black on a white background. It is 109 by 42 cm (max. width).

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4018M, frame 126.

Reference

- Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 9.
Roth, W.E., 1909. Bulletin 13: 204–205.



Tully River

[ABOVE RIGHT] Loops tied together forming a simple raft. The man propelling the structure with a pole had attended a prun and his head and face were still covered with feather down. A prun was a regular gathering or tournament, as Roth called it, where people living around Cardwell and the Tully River came together to show off prowess, courage and to settle disputes. Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 14, pl.1, fig. 2.



[RIGHT] Completed hut, thatched with “blady-grass” over a wityh frame-work of hoops. Lower Tully River. Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 16, pl.xii, fig. 2.

Contents

The people	88
Dress and ornament	88
Lawyer cane armlets	88
Eel cheek-bone forehead bands	88
Possum fur string forehead band	90
Possum fur string tassel	90
Message stick	91
Raw material	91
Adhesive	91
Tools	92
Snail shell knives	92
Traps	93
Crocodile screen	93
Weapons	94
Shield	94

The people

In a private note prefacing the Scientific Report (to the Under Secretary, Brisbane) on the natives of the (lower) Tully River, 1900, Roth wrote:

... got help from Ernest Brooke of Brooke & Co Orchardist, Tully River who spent a fortnight with me showing and translating everything he could... he has been born and bred amongst them.

Charles Hedley (Malacologist at the Australian Museum from 1896 to 1923) and Walter Roth travelled together down the Queensland coast. He wrote to R.J. Etheridge the Director of the Museum in a letter dated 9 August 1901:

... Leaving Lucinda Point we sailed up the Hinchinbrook Channel. There is not a solitary black left on Hinchinbrook. Disappointed of the hope of securing an ethnological collection there, we steered to the Tully River. Here we found a large tribe but a big "prune" or corroboree was coming on and nobody would part with a thing. However relations were established with a settler which may be profitable to you in the future...

In a further letter dated 30 August 1901 Hedley wrote:

... We proceeded there [Tully River] by way of Cardwell and Goold Island, but were again disappointed. In view of an impending feast the natives were disinclined to part with their property. Mr Ernest Brooke kindly presented me with sundry articles for the Museum and offered to furnish you with a complete local collection, a duplicate of one that he made for Dr Roth...

Roth called the Aboriginal people living around the Lower Tully River the Mallanpara. He said they always camped on river sandbanks, and that all he wrote about Tully River people referred to them. His informant, Ernest Brooke, estimated that in 1900 over 300 Aboriginal people lived here.

From 1874, timber getters, settlers and tin miners had moved into the area, threatening Aboriginal land and hunting rights. The sugar market collapsed in 1885, so the Henry family with large tracts of land on the Tully River, turned from sugar to cattle. Within ten months they lost nearly 300 head of cattle. Other settlers were threatened and their homes ransacked. Calls for assistance to resist Aboriginal attacks resulted in a detachment of Native Police being stationed on the Johnstone River, to patrol both the Johnstone and Tully River regions.

In 1963 an American company, King Ranch, was invited by the Queensland government to clear the land between the Tully and Murray Rivers and establish a large cattle station there. Many Aboriginal camps were destroyed. R.M.W. Dixon, a linguist, wrote in 1972:

The last initiated man, with a full set of tribal scars, is now about 50. The last fighting corroboree was held in the mid-fifties; it was broken up by the police on the third day. Singing corroborees were still held from time to time in the sixties, with the approval and attendance of the white settlers. Marriages are still arranged according to the section system and the gubi [wise man] is still listened to and respected.

Most Tully River people now live in the town of Murray Upper.

Reference

- Dixon, R.M.W., 1972. *The Dyirbal Language of north Queensland*, pp. 28–36. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 Horton, D., ed., 1994. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*, p. 296. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
 Loos, N., 1982. *Invasion and Resistance. Aboriginal-European Relations on the North Queensland Frontier 1861–1897*, pp. 1, 93–96, 114. Canberra: ANU Press.
 Roth, W.E., 1900. Scientific Report (to the Under Secretary, Brisbane) on the natives of the (lower) Tully River: with an appendix. Cooktown, 20 September 1900.

Dress and ornament

Lawyer cane armlets

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth said that people living on the Tully River made split lawyer cane armlets, using a single strip, double coiled, and fixed according to two patterns. The first pattern covered the whole circumference of the armlet and can be seen in the following illustration from Bulletin 1, pl. vi, fig. 3. The second, a chain which was formed of a series of loops, occupying only part of the armlet is shown in Bulletin 1, pl. vi, fig. 4. There are also two illustrations in Bulletin 15, p. 44, figs. 27 and 27a. Roth, in the unpublished manuscript on the Tully River people, mentioned that the armlets were worn by both men and women on both arms.

Collection information. There are two lawyer cane, *Calamus* sp., armlets from the Tully River, collected by Roth in 1900. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "lawyer-cane armlet 'raingkan'".

- E.14746 Armlet completely covered with a fine woven strip of cane as illustrated in Bulletin 1, 1901, plate vi, figs. 3a & 3b, and Bulletin 15, 1910, p. 44, figure 27a. Diameter 7.7 cm.
 E.14747 Armlet partly covered with a looped cane strip as illustrated in Bulletin 1, 1901, plate vi, figs. 3a & 4, and Bulletin 15, 1910, p. 44, figure 27. Diam. 8.5 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both armlets:

- E.14746 negative sheet 4182M, frame 1430.
 E.14747 negative sheet 4182M, frame 1431.

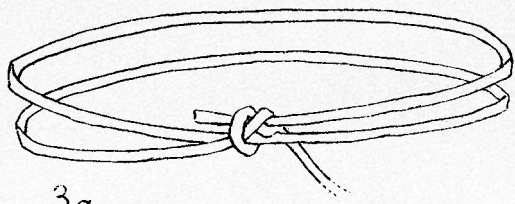
Reference

- Roth, W.E., 1900. Scientific Report (to the Under Secretary, Brisbane) on the natives of the (lower) Tully River: with an appendix. Cooktown, 20 September 1900.
 Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 12.
 Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 44.

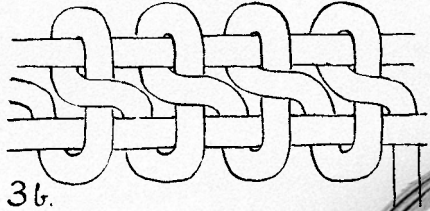
Eel cheek-bone forehead bands

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote that two eel cheek-bones, curving inwards, were held together opposite each other with a blob of beeswax. Several such units were then attached to a length of handspun bark fibre string which was tied at the back of the head so that the bones were held across the forehead. They could sometimes be worn as a necklace. Roth said that he occasionally saw one pair of eel cheek-bones attached to a lock of hair at the forehead. Roth did not specify whether these forehead bands were worn by men or women.

People living on the Lower Tully River hunted eel with



3a.



3b.

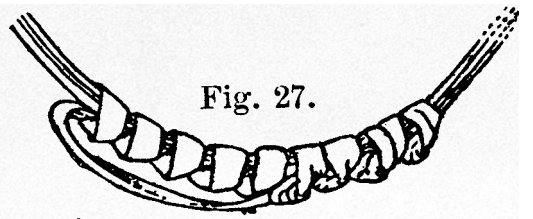


Fig. 27.

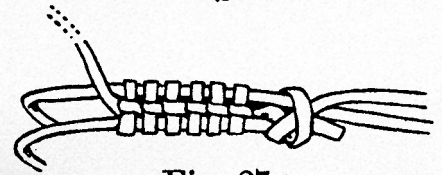
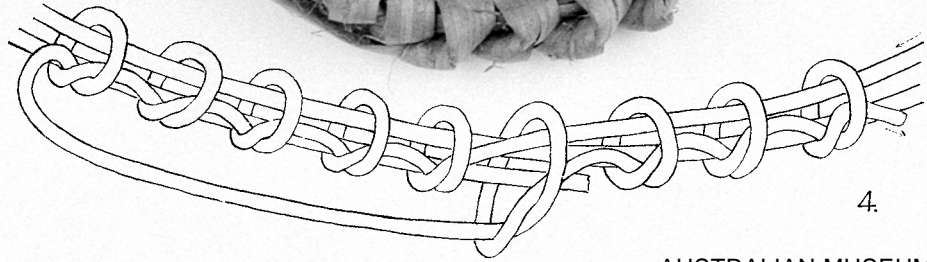


Fig. 27a.



Lawyer cane armband.
Collected Tully River, 1900.
Diameter 8.5 cm.



4.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14747



Eel cheek-bone forehead band.
Collected Lower Tully River, 1900.
106.3 cm long.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14548

funnel-shaped lawyer cane fish traps which were lowered into the water in the daytime and left overnight. If they thought an eel was hiding in a hollow log, the cage was held at one end, while a length of lawyer cane with a frayed end, was poked in the other end of the log, and the animal hunted out.

On the Lower Tully they also “bobbed” for eels. Up to a dozen worms would be impaled on twelve finely split lengths of lawyer cane. A string was attached to the end of each cane. These ends were then tied to a main cord attached to the end of a short stick. At night time this tassel-like bait was bobbed in the water. As soon as the eel had taken a good bite, the line was jerked over the shoulder, and the eel was thrown on the bank. Sometimes all worms would be brought together in a bunch and the string attached to the end of a stick as described before.

Collection information. There are two eel cheek-bone forehead bands from the Lower Tully River, collected by Roth in 1900. The Australian Museum’s Anthropology register dated 1905 includes “Eel cheek-bone forehead band, the “*Wakai*” of the Mallanpara tribe”.

E.14547 Six sets of eel cheek-bones attached with beeswax to handspun bark fibre string. The forehead band has been broken into two sections. The total length is 82.7 cm. The average eel cheek-bone is 6.9 cm long.

E.14548 Ten sets of eel cheek-bones attached with beeswax to handspun bark fibre string. It is 106.3 cm long. The average eel cheek-bone is 6.6 cm long.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for both eel cheek-bone forehead ornaments.

E.14547 negative sheet 4157M, frame 1231.

E.14548 negative sheet 4157M, frame 1232.

References

- Mjoberg, E., 1918. *Among Stone Age Men of the Queensland Wilderness*. Stockholm: Albert Bonnerr, p. 194 [Mjoberg reported that the Cedar Creek Aborigines used to leave their home when food supplies ran low to visit the Tully River, rich in fish, particularly eel. On p. 454 he mentions eel.
- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 15 (how to make eel/fish traps).
- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 3: 20–21 (how to catch eels).
- Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 27.

Possum fur string tassel

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. Roth wrote that men often wore certain ornaments fixed or suspended from a waist band. Men living around the Tully River wore a possum fur string tassel hanging down from the back of the waist band. Roth had also seen the tassel worn over the chest, hanging from a neck string.

Collection information. One possum fur string tassel was collected from the Tully River in 1900.

E.14714 The Australian Museum’s Anthropology register dated 1905 includes “Opossum string tassel “*Mitin*” of the Mallanpara tribe, (*mitin* = opossum). Destroyed by moths/larvae 12/79.”

Reference

- Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 40.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14575



Possum fur string forehead band.
Collected Tully River, 1900. Total length 100 cm.
The looped and overcast section is 20.3×1.1 cm.

Possum fur string forehead band

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. Roth wrote that possum fur twine was much more commonly used in the western part of north Queensland than on the eastern side. In fact he could only recall one place on the eastern side where the people used it, and that was at the Tully River. The Tully River people called it *mitin*, after the name of the animal.

Roth made no further mention of forehead bands from the Tully River.

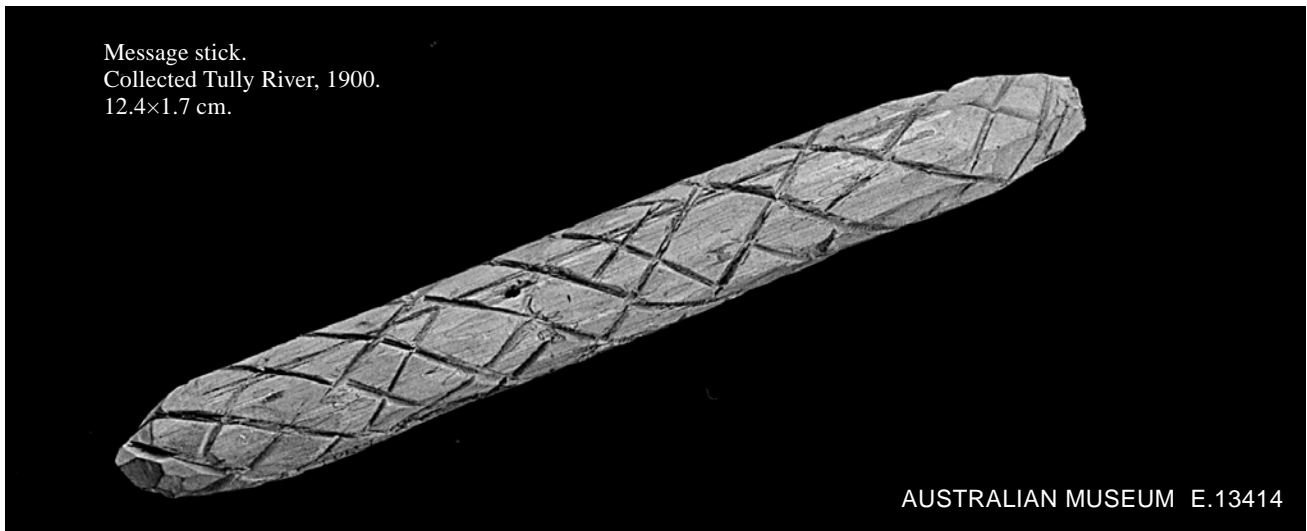
Collection information. There is one possum fur string forehead band from the Tully River, collected in 1900.

E.14575 Lengths of entwined possum fur string form the coiled headband. At each end, handspun fibre twine is looped over the possum fur twine, and is overcast with possum fur string. Adhesive is smeared on the end of the possum fur twine. The total length is 100 cm. The looped and overcast section is 20.3 by 1.1 cm.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4161M, frame 1259.

Reference

- Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 26.



Message stick

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote about the use of message sticks by people living around the Tully River, but did not describe how they were made, by people living around the Tully River, 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 that 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 Tully River, collected in 1900.

E.13414. Roth's collection number is S.47. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "made by a Tully River boy, but no meaning to its maker". It is rounded, cigar-shaped, with incised cross-hatched design. It is 12.4 by 1.7 cm.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4012M, frame 98.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1906. Bulletin 8: 9–10, pl. 4, fig. 10.

Raw material

Adhesive

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote that this adhesive came from the Pencil-wood tree, *Panax murrayi*, now known as *Polyscias murrayi*. The adhesive was removed from a split in the wood by alternately warming and hammering between two stones, but no charcoal was purposely added as was the case with other adhesives prepared by people living around the Tully River. There is possibly an error in this entry in the Bulletin. Following the information given for the Tully River region, Roth noted that the Nggerikudi people living on the Gulf coast around the Pennefather and Batavia Rivers called it *buragal*. This name for this type of adhesive is also written in the

Australian Museum's Anthropology register for the Tully River region, but there seems to be no connection between people living on the Gulf coast and those living in the rainforest on the east coast.

H.G. Smith, the Curator of the Technical Museum in Sydney in the 19th century, analysed this adhesive for Roth:

This cement is a portion of an irregularly rounded stick-like mass... it is almost black in colour, and although soft, it is not sufficiently so to become plastic between the fingers. It softens readily, however, when slightly heated and readily melted to a black tarry-looking mass. On ignition the organic matter burnt away with a smoky flame, leaving 5.72 per cent of inorganic matter, consisting of a soft grey-coloured clay, only slightly ferruginous. The resins were completely soluble in petroleum ether, ether, alcohol, although but slowly in the latter menstrum. The resins were brittle, almost colourless, and very bright. The material also contained a good deal of carbonaceous matter, which readily burns away with a characteristic burnt-grass odour: it is this material which gives the black colour to the cement, as the resins are light-coloured... (H.G.Smith)

Collection information. There is one lump of adhesive from the Tully River, Rockingham Bay, collected in November 1900.

E.14765 The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes " "*buragal*" gum cement made from *Panax murrayi* F.v.M". It is an oblong piece rounded at one end. It has a hard, black, shiny surface imprinted with finger marks and is 70 by 3 by 2 cm thick.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4184M, frame 1449.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 13.

Tools

Snail shell knives

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth said the snail shell slicer or knife was used only in the Tully River region and the neighbouring islands.

An empty shell of a land snail, *Xanthomelon pachystyla*, now known as *Xanthomelon pachystylum*, was stuffed firmly with grass and the body whorl behind the opening was ground over a sharp piece of stone. The grinding was helped with a little water. Soon this part of the shell became so thin that it was split across with the thumb nail.

Once this cut had been made, the whole top or spire of the shell was removed by cracking it on a stone around the edge. In this way a section of shell with a sharp cutting edge was made. As well as cracking on a stone, the removal of the top of the shell was also helped by sharply tapping on the shell, and biting it between the teeth as shown in Roth's drawings in Bulletin 7, pl. xv, figs. 110–111, 113.

To use, it was held with the base up, and the fore-finger left free. The top of the thumb rested on the centre of the base, while its extreme tip met and pressed on the tip of the middle finger, passing through the opening from underneath. The top of the "ring" finger pressed into the hollow on the under side, giving the whole implement more stability. This action can be seen in Roth's illustrations in Bulletin 7, pl. xv, figs. 114–115. The blade of the knife was thus made by the ground-down and broken edge behind the opening, so that as each slice of a particular nut, the Moreton Bay chestnut, *Castanospermum australe* or a Zamia nut, *Cycas media*, was removed by the cutting edge pressing down, the separate portions passed upwards between thumb and shell-lip. That is, this snail shell

implement acted like a spoke-shave, the thinness or thickness of each slice being determined at will. Sliced pieces of nut would later be soaked in water to make them safe to eat.

Roth said the Tully River people called both the land snail and the finished knife by the same name, *kajiri*.

Collection information. There are three snail shell knives from the Tully River, but no collection date is given. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "snail shell knives (*Xanthomelon pachystyla* Pfr.) used for cutting Moreton Bay chestnuts etc. See Bull. 7, figs. 110–115".

The lower half of the snail shell has been ground to a sharp cutting edge in all three snail shell knives.

E.13851 It is 3.8 by 3.3 by 1.5 cm deep.

E.13852 It is 3.8 by 3 by 1.5 cm deep.

E.13853 It is 4 by 3.3 by 1.8 cm deep.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all three snail shell knives:

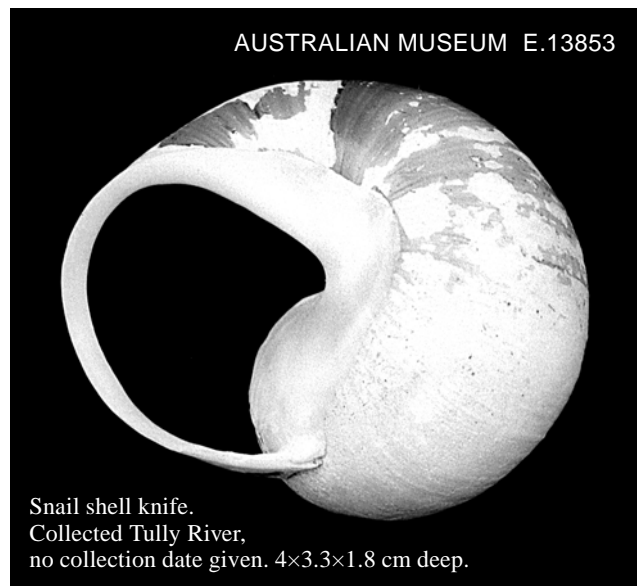
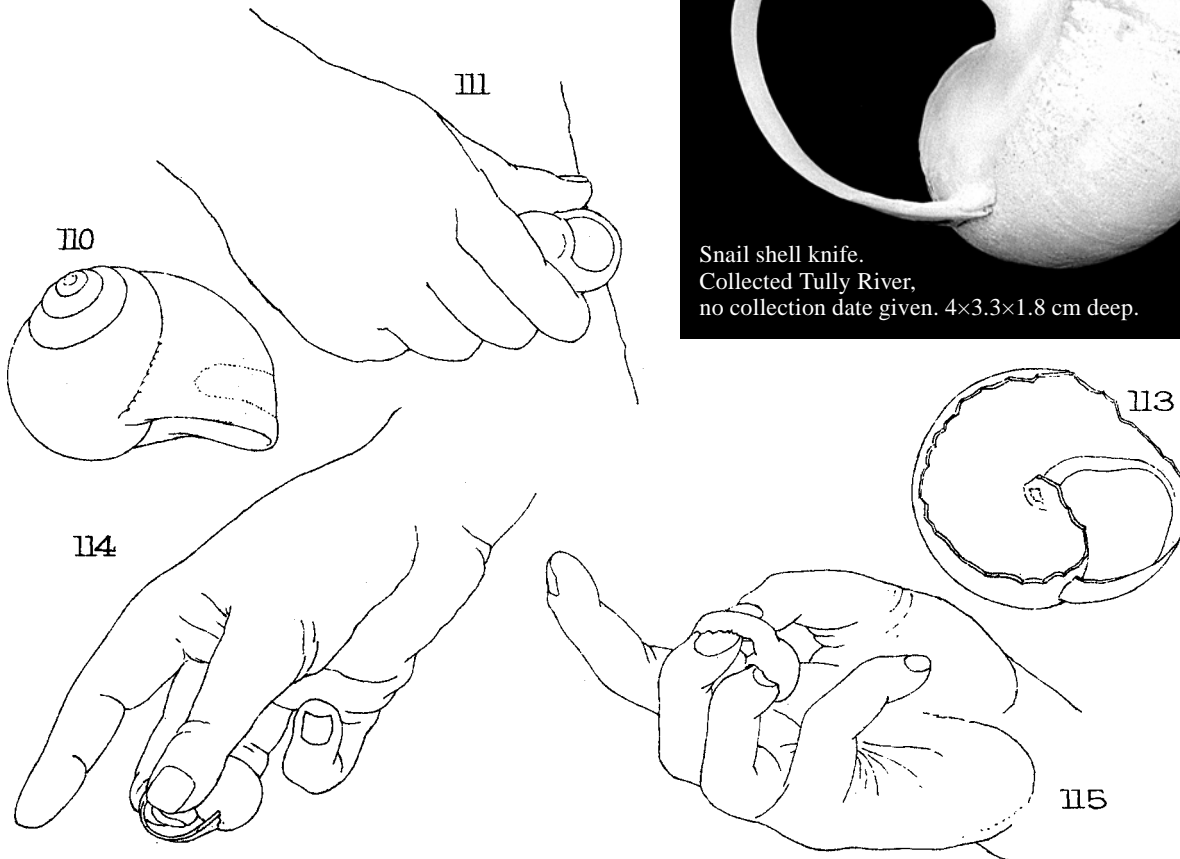
E.13851 negative sheet 4070M, frame 534.

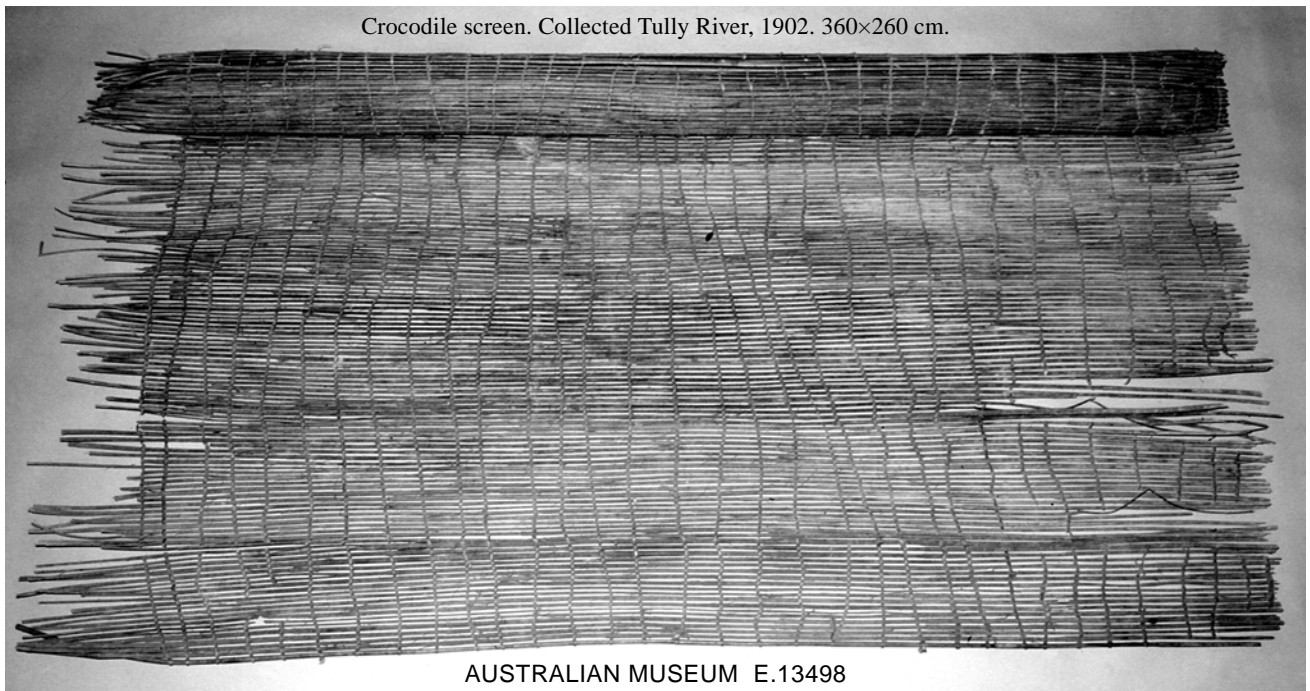
E.13852 negative sheet 4070M, frame 535.

E.13853 negative sheet 4070M, frame 536.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 21.





Traps

Crocodile screen

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Crocodiles were usually speared just behind the front leg. As a rule the larger ones could be caught only after being stranded in small water holes after flood when dozens of spears were hurled at them.

On the upper Leichhardt and lower Palmer Rivers, Roth heard of a couple of cases where the Johnstone River crocodile, *Crocodylus johnstoni*, had been caught by hand in the water. At Cape Bedford one or two old men were not afraid to dive into a waterhole and tackle the large saltwater crocodile, *Crocodylus porosus*. The latter were caught on the lower Tully River either by a slip-noose or a screen.

To catch crocodiles in tidal waters, a screen was used in association with a fence thrown across the stream. The fence, made of some fair-sized stakes, 300 to 360 cm long, was driven down into the mud on their pointed ends, about 30 cm apart, but leaving an open space about 180 cm wide in the centre of the creek. The tops of the stakes, flush with the high water level, were held in position with small lawyer canes, *Calamus*

sp. Such a fence could lie idle for some time, but as soon as someone noticed a crocodile had gone upstream through the open space, it was closed with the screen, called the *niakai*.

The screen consisted of pieces of split pieces of cane placed longitudinally, and woven together with a close mesh. It could be rolled up for transport. The screen was tied to the top of an upright stake on one side of the hitherto open space. It was also fixed at the bottom by a forked stick driven into the mud. The progress of the crocodile was checked, the fall of the tide was waited for, and finally spears and sticks were used to kill the stranded crocodile.

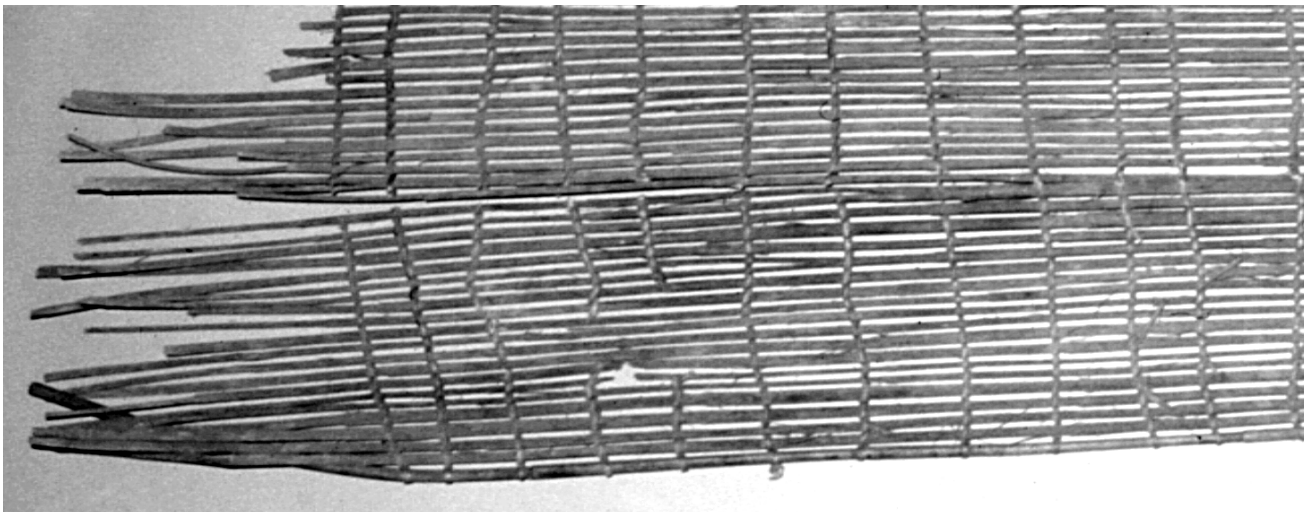
Collection information. There is one crocodile screen from the Tully River, collected by Roth in 1902.

E.13498 A large, heavy screen, measuring approximately 360 by 260 cm.

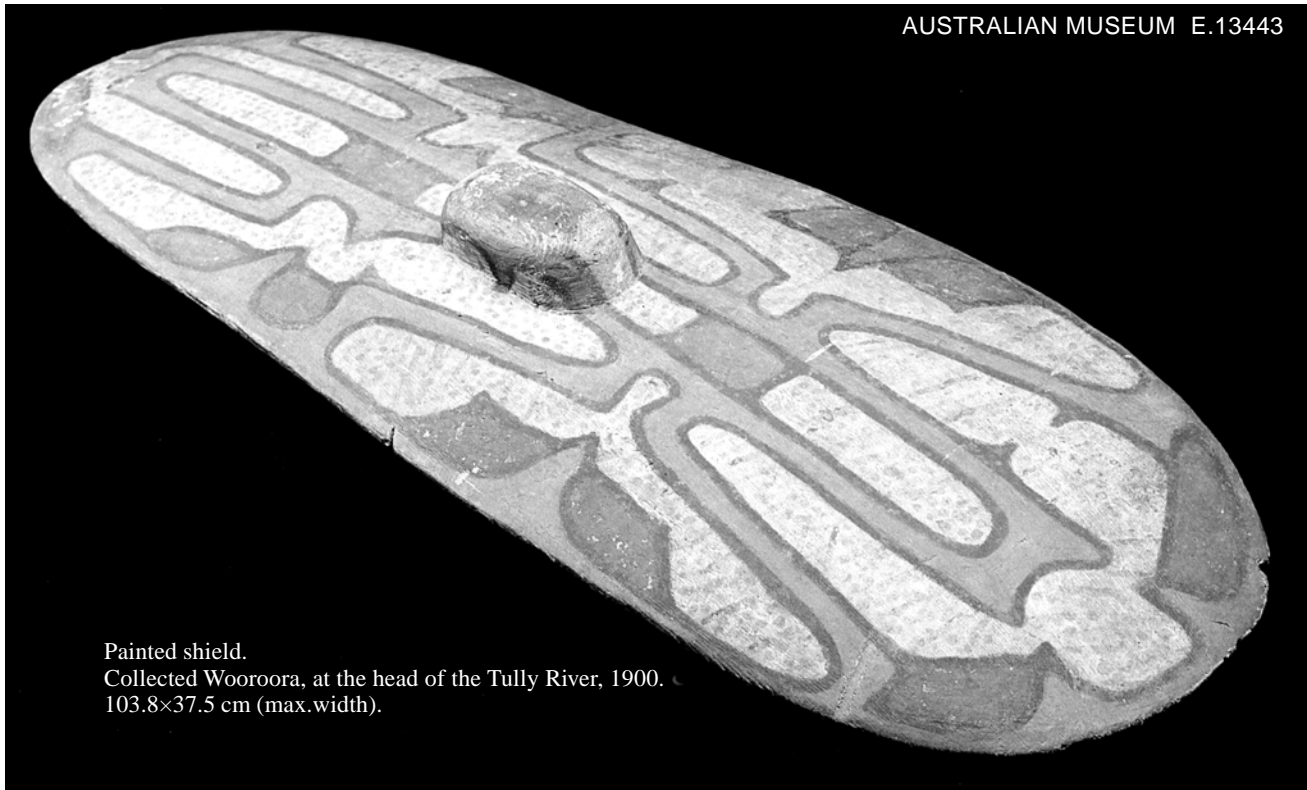
Photographic information. Black and white photographs and colour slides are available, negative sheet ci 44, frame 5 (full screen), frame 10 (close up).

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 3: 24–25.



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13443



Painted shield.
Collected Wooroora, at the head of the Tully River, 1900.
103.8×37.5 cm (max.width).

Weapons

Shield

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth's description of how these painted rainforest shields were made was based on his observations on the Lower Tully River.

- 1 Two curved cuts were made in the buttress of a fig tree, *Ficus* sp., about the length of a shield. The shape was not quite oval, depending 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 with cinders to make a cavity.
- 4 The process of making the shield lighter began with it 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 the second soaking, the shield was tied to a bush overhanging a creek or waterhole, so that it hung flat, suspended about 30 cm 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.
- 7 A striking design was painted on the outer side to complete the shield.

Roth said the local Tully River people called this shield *pi-kan*. Wood used to make the shield came from a fig tree, *Ficus echretioides*, now known as *Ficus variegata* var.

variegata, known locally as *magura*, and another timber not identified by Roth, called *keba* by local people. The front was called *kananja*, meaning inside, (ie., the outer bark having been removed in manufacture). The central projection was called the *namma*, and the back of the shield, the *chu-cha*. The handle was called *dumbal*, which is the name of female genitalia. He could find no meaning for the painted designs on the shields.

These shields were found only from the Bloomfield and Endeavour Rivers south to below Cardwell, and along the inland mountain ranges, including Atherton, the same region where the large swords were used. Roth said the Bloomfield River shields were more rectangular and larger than those found on the Tully.

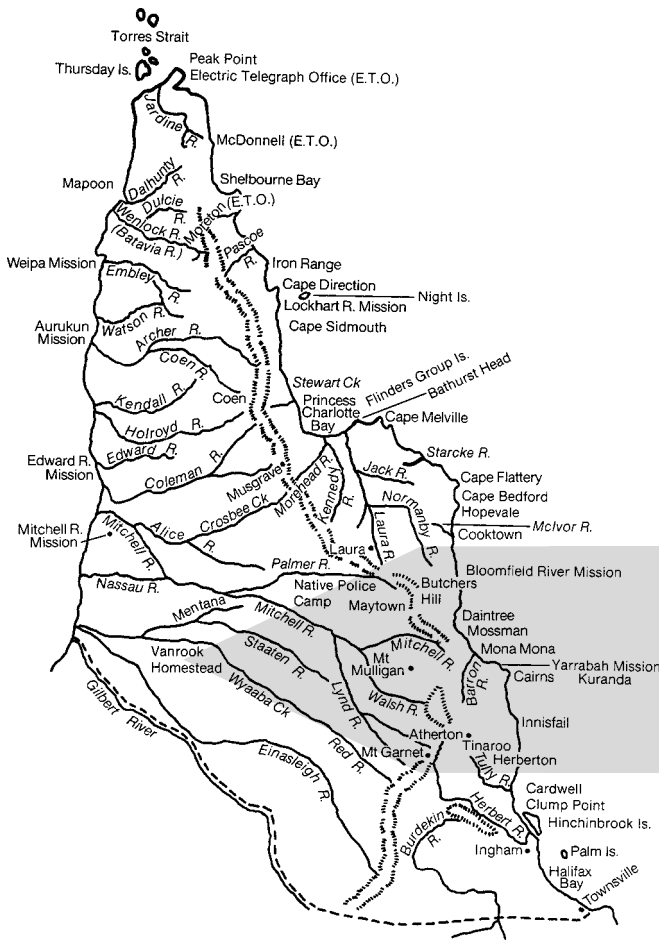
Collection information. There is one painted kidney-shaped softwood shield from Wooroora, at the head of the Tully River, collected in 1900.

E.13443 Roth's collection number is S.33. A yellow and red painted design outlined in black on a white background is on the front of the shield. There are spear holes and weapon cuts in the shield. It is 103.8 by 37.5 cm (max. width).

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4018M, frame 127.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 9.
Roth, W.E., 1909. Bulletin 13: 203–205.



Vanrook

Contents

The people	95
Dress and ornament	95
Cockatoo feather headdress	95
Shell forehead band	96

The people

Roth does not seem to have written anything specifically about the people living around Vanrook, on the western side of Cape York Peninsula. Tindale referred to the people at Vanrook as the Araba, also known as the Aripa and Ngariba.

According to the Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia, the Araba people are today known as the Kurtjar. There might also have been Koknar people living around Vanrook.

The Kurtjar, living between the Staaten and Norman Rivers and inland to Strathmore lost their lands to pastoralists in the late 19th century. The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia records that pastoralists moved all Kurtjar people from their cattle stations and that they now live outside Normanton.

The Koknar lived in the Gulf region between the Nassau and Staaten Rivers, but that little was known about them, and they now live around Inkerman Station.

References

Horton, D., ed., 1994. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*, pp. 565–566, 568–569. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
 Tindale, N.B., 1974. *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia. Their Terrain, Environmental Controls, Distribution, Limits and Proper Names*, p. 164. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Dress and ornament

Cockatoo feather headdress

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. There is no direct reference to any artefacts from Vanrook in any of Roth’s Bulletins. The reference to *Ethnological Studies*, items 163–164 in the Anthropology register refers to the North-West-Central District of Queensland. It mentions feather tufts tied in small sprigs and stuck indiscriminately in the hair, or in waist belts or armlets. This comment does not seem to relate to this cockatoo feather headdress.

Collection information. There is one cockatoo feather headdress from Vanrook, collected in 1897 through Mrs Secret of Normanton.

E.14394 The Australian Museum’s Anthropology register dated 1905 includes “cockatoo feather headdress, hung from a string round the head, hanging over the back. Thro. Mrs Secret of Normanton. Ethno.St.163–164”. A bunch of yellow-green cockatoo feathers have been secured to a fabric wad by a strip of red cloth. Cotton wool has been placed between the binding and the wad. There is a fibre twine loop at the base of the wad. It is 27.3 by 4.5 cm (max. width).

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14394



Cockatoo feather headdress.
Collected Vanrook, 1897. 27.3×4.5 cm (max.width).

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4138M, frame 1077.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1897. *Ethnological Studies among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*, p. 108. Brisbane: Government Printer. [This is the reference referred to in the Australian Museum's Anthropology Register.]

Shell forehead band

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote nothing about these shell forehead bands being made by people living in the vicinity of Vanrook, on the lower Gulf coast. He wrote about shell forehead bands made by people from the Keppel Islands, Whitsunday Island and Cape Grafton where they used double drilled pieces of shell. Elsewhere the shells were only drilled once and a double strand fibre string was woven through using a chain twist pattern. As a general rule Roth noted that people living on Cape York Peninsula and the eastern coast line cut the shells in a rectangular shape while people living on the lower Gulf shores favoured an oval shape. Roth surmised that the oval shaped shell forehead bands and necklaces found around Cairns, Cardwell and the Tully River had been traded from the Gulf coast via the Mitchell River.

Generally 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

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 placed on a stone and splashed with water.

Necklaces such as these were made by drilling a hole in the centre of each rectangular or oval shaped section of *Nautilus* shell to make up the pieces for the forehead band. Handspun fibre string was threaded through the hole, pulling the pieces of shell together so they overlapped.

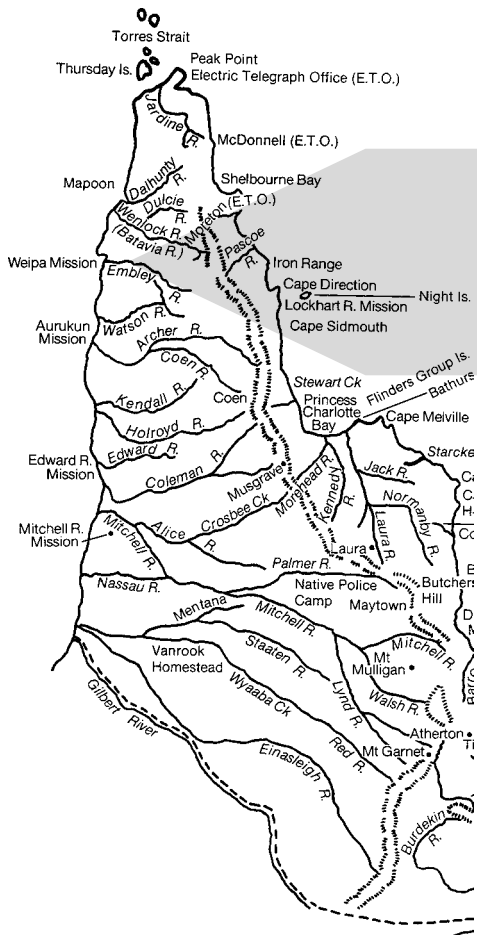
On the coastline between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers, the shell segments used to be pierced with a possum tooth drill. This tool may have been used on this forehead band from Vanrook.

Collection information. There is one shell forehead band from Vanrook via Normanton, collected through Mrs Secret of Normanton in 1896.

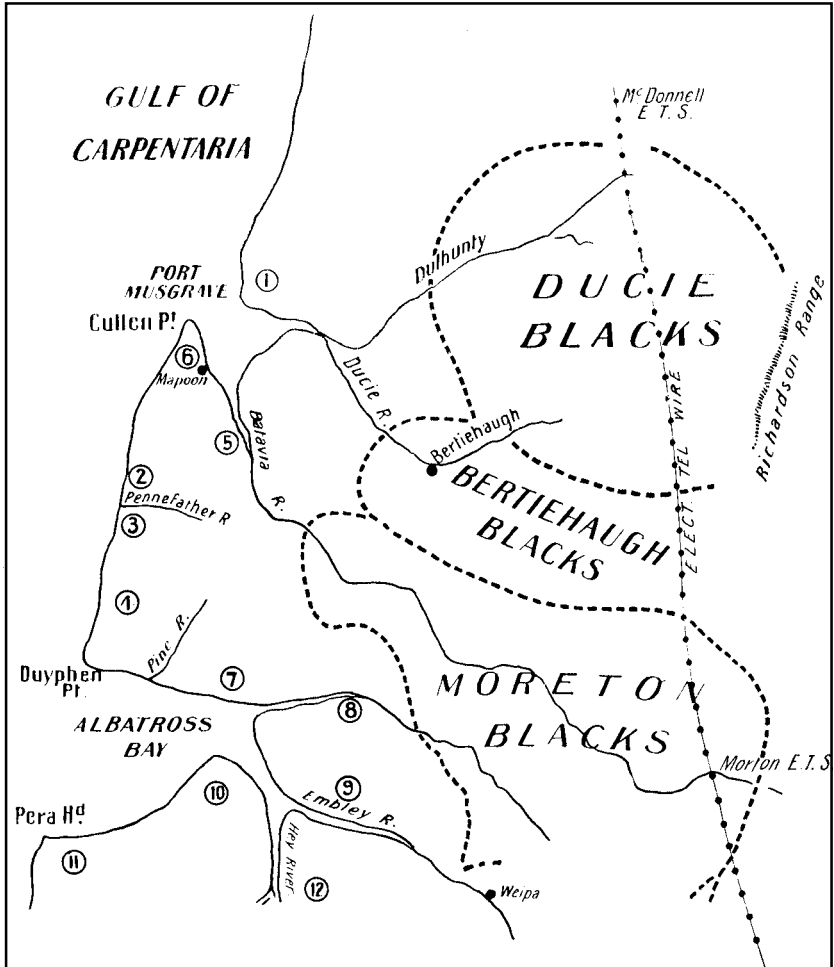
E.14557 Roth's collection number is G.65. The forehead band is made of rectangular pieces of *Nautilus* shell threaded on handspun bark fibre string. It is impossible to measure the length of the forehead band because the string is broken and the shells are loose. Each shell segment is about 1 by 0.7 cm

References

Roth, W.E., 1901. *Bulletin* 1: 14.
Roth, W.E., 1904. *Bulletin* 7: 24–25, 27.
Roth, W.E., 1910. *Bulletin* 15: 27.



Weipa and the Embley River



Contents

The people	98
Dress and ornament	99
Human hair forehead fringe	99
<i>Nautilus</i> shell forehead bands	100
Pearl shell chest and back pendants	100
White cockatoo feather headdresses	101
Pearl shell necklaces	101
Reed nose pin	102
Orchid belt	103
Fire making equipment	104
Fire sticks	104
Food	104
Edible molluscs	104
Tools	105
Stone axe head	105
Weapons	106
Single-barbed spear	106

The people

Roth wrote in 1898 that he was worried about recruiting activities for beche-de-mer boats on the west coast of Cape York Peninsula, especially at Mapoon and Weipa Mission Stations. He said young men and boys, some as young as ten or eleven, were taken from their homes and never seen again.

Weipa Mission, on the Embley River, managed by Moravian missionaries, was gazetted on 4th November 1899. The mission of some 200 square miles stretched from the Mission River on the north, the Embley River on the south, Albatross Bay on the west and York Downs Cattle Station on the east.

Roth pointed out that the advance of white settlement was seriously depleting Aboriginal access to their own lands.

... I beg most earnestly to plead for some more land to be reserved for the benefit of the outcast Aboriginal. In the extreme North, for instance, the formation of one large aboriginal reserve of the whole Peninsula north of the Coleman and Morehead Rivers...

W.E. Roth. 1900: 9

In the following year's Report, he continued to plead for Aboriginal people to be given their own lands:

... imperative on humanitarian grounds, but also on the grounds of practical policy. If the blacks continue to be dispossessed of their hunting grounds and sources of water supply by their lands being rented for grazing rights at a nominal figure—lands from which the lessees naturally desire to drive them—bloodshed and retribution will be certain to ensue...

W.E. Roth. 1901: 6.

Roth reported in 1901 that more Aboriginal people were now coming into Weipa from Pera Head, the upper reaches of the Batavia (now the Wenlock River), Ducie and Archer Rivers, Morton and from around Coen and Mein. He noted that Aboriginal people did not see Weipa as a permanent home but came in when starving and when sick. The Reverend Russell wrote that Weipa had the advantage of Mapoon in that it had freshwater lagoons, so water was plentiful.

The last Annual Report Roth submitted before he resigned in 1905 noted that things were much the same at Weipa. There was a Mission house, church, dormitories, bark and thatch huts. People came and went on a casual basis, with a somewhat permanent settlement of about 60 people.

The Mission was originally inland near York Downs Station, but moved to Jessica Point on the Embley River estuary in 1932 because of malaria.

Everything changed with the re-discovery of bauxite at Weipa in 1955 (originally noted by Jan Carstenz, a Dutch explorer who sailed down the west coast of Cape York Peninsula in the early 1600s, 200 years later Matthew Flinders recorded these red cliffs, and there was a further report in 1902). Comalco began commercially processing bauxite there by 1963, and by 1968 Weipa was the largest town on the Gulf. The Awngthim people, the original landowners of Weipa undertook negotiations with Comalco who agreed to pay \$300,00 towards new housing and a reserve. Comalco eventually worked closely with the community through the Weipa Aborigines Society, supporting community enterprises.

Weipa is now called Napranum. Local Awngthim people are today joined by people from other parts of Cape York Peninsula coming to find work at the mines.



“The presence of Mrs Foxton... will be long remembered by the mango-tree which she planted there, while the native name of ‘Weipa’ which she gave to this station, is that by which it will in the future be officially designated.” Roth, W.E. 1900. Report of the Northern Protector of Aborigines for 1899. Government Printer, Brisbane, pl.v.



Human hair forehead fringe.
Collected Embley River, 1899.
65.3 cm long. Each fringe is about 2 cm long.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14546

References

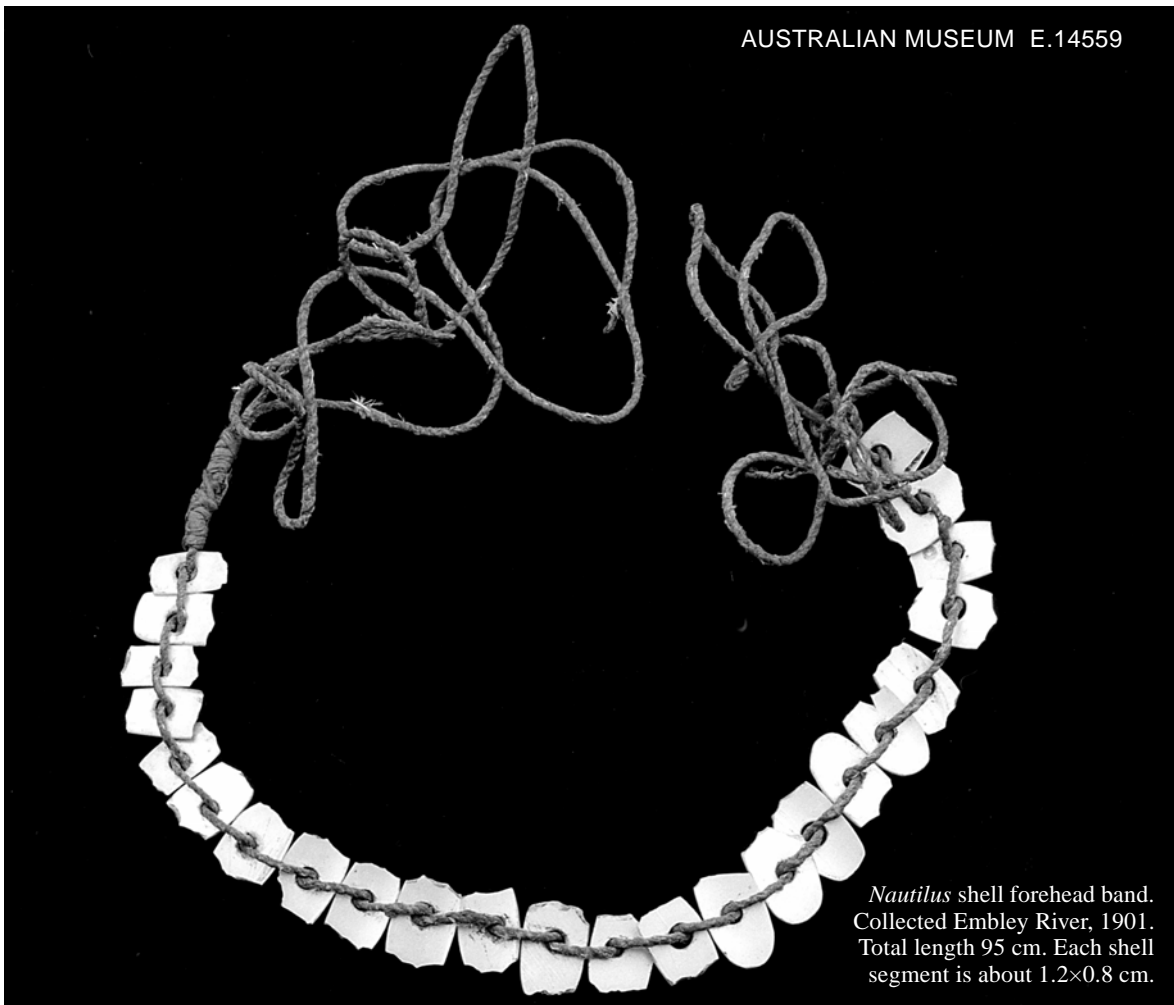
- Bolton, G.C., 1970. *A Thousand Miles Away. A History of North Queensland to 1920*. Canberra: ANU Press.
- Horton, D., ed., 1994. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*, pp. 79, 579, 1173. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Roth, W.E., *Annual Report of the Northern Protector of Aborigines for 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905*. Brisbane: Government Printer.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 18: 96.
- Sheehy, D.J., 1991. *A Century at the Top. A History of Telecommunications on Cape York Peninsula in Far North Queensland 1887–1987*. Telecom Australia, July 1987. Revised July 1991. Queensland: Government Printer.

Dress and ornament

Human hair forehead fringe

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote that women living around the Embley River wore adjustable fringes made of small lumps of human hair fixed onto a top string. The end of each tassel of hair was weighted with a blob of beeswax.

Collection information. There is one human hair forehead fringe from the Embley River, collected by Roth in 1899. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14559

Nautilus shell forehead band.
Collected Embley River, 1901.
Total length 95 cm. Each shell
segment is about 1.2×0.8 cm.

includes “adjustable forehead fringe. Pennefather River tribe.”

E.14546 It is 65.3 cm long and each fringe is about 2 cm long.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4157M, frame 1230.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 23.

***Nautilus* shell forehead bands**

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. Roth wrote generally about these delicate *Nautilus pompilius* shell forehead bands. He said the little rectangular pieces of shell each had a small hole drilled through the centre. A double strand of handspun fibre string was threaded through the holes in a chain twist pattern 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 did not write about them from the Embley River.

Collection information. There are two *Nautilus* shell forehead bands from the Embley River, collected by Roth in 1901. The Australian Museum’s Anthropology register dated 1905 includes “*Nautilus* shell forehead band”.

E.14558 Roth’s collection number is G.209. It has 24 rectangular pieces of shell making up the forehead band. A length of European cloth is attached at one end of the fine fibre string. The total length is 53.5 cm, the shell section is 12 cm, and each rectangle is about 0.9 by 0.5 cm.

E.14559 Roth’s collection number is G.210. It has 24 rectangular pieces of shell making up the forehead band, threaded on fine fibre string. The total length is 95 cm, the shell section is 18 cm, and each rectangle is about 1.2 by 0.8 cm.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available for one of the forehead bands. E.14559, negative sheet 4159M, frame 1243.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 27–28.

Pearl shell chest and back pendants

Information from Roth’s Bulletins. Roth did not describe pearl shell chest and back pendants from the Weipa region, but did mention them being worn by people living around the Pennefather River.

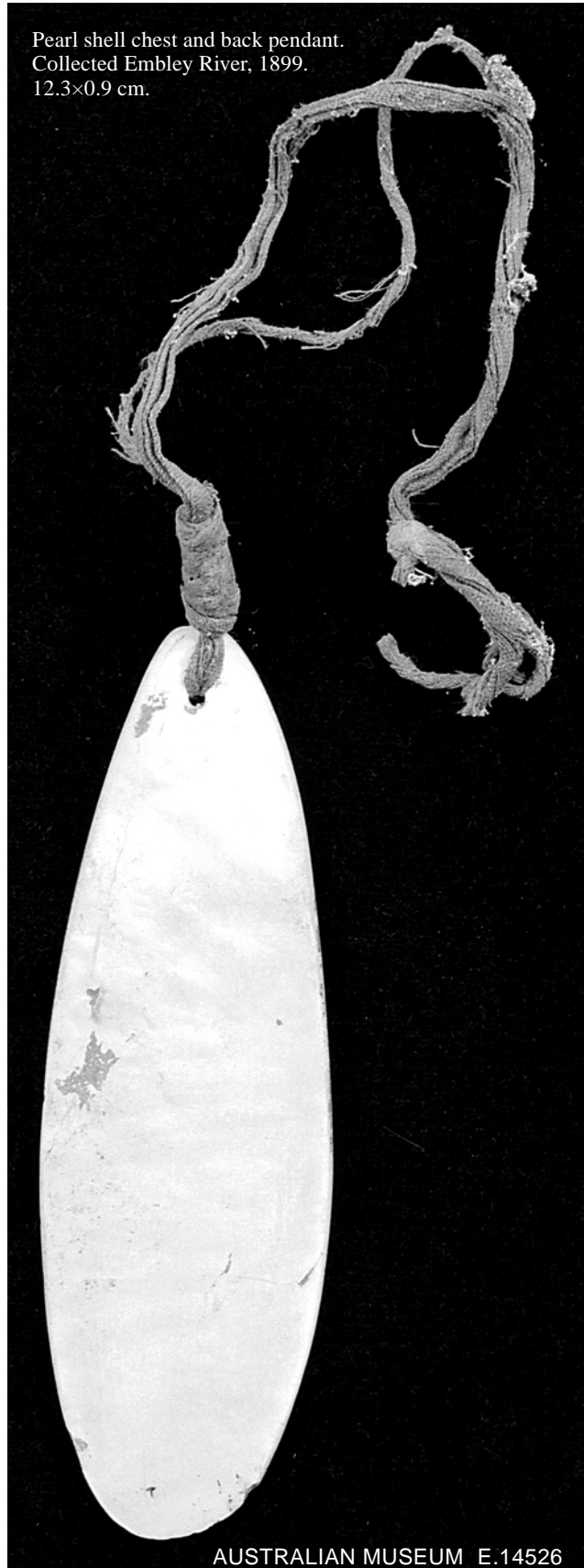
The outer layer of shell was removed by placing the shell on cold earth, face down, and covering it carefully with hot ashes. In this way the surface was more easily removed when it was ground on a stone with water. When pearl shell was scarce, the shell of the hammer oyster, *Malleus vulsellatus*, now known as *Malleus albus*, was used.

Holes were made in the shell pieces with a shell drill. This drill was a sharply pointed chip broken off from the shell of the *Cyrena jukesii*, now known as *Geloina erosa*. The chip was fixed with fibre string and adhesive into the split end of a small wooden stick. It was used for piercing components of shell necklaces etc.

Roth did mention that the Embley and Pennefather River peoples also often wore a flat circular chest ornament, made from grinding down the base of a cone shell.

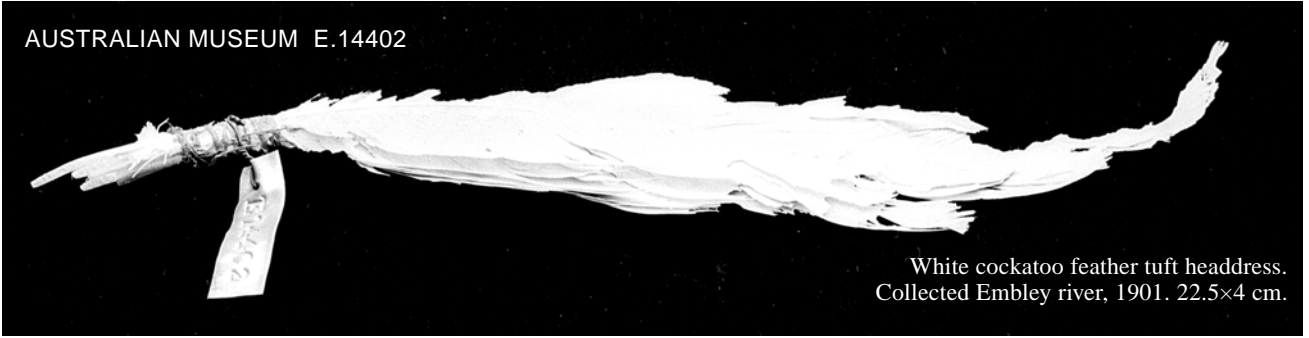
Collection information. There are no examples of flat circular chest ornaments made from cone shells in the Roth collection from Weipa. There are, however, four pearl shell chest and back pendants from the Embley River, collected by Roth in 1899.

E.14525 Roth’s collection number is G.207. An oval-shaped piece of shell with fibre twine threaded



Pearl shell chest and back pendant.
Collected Embley River, 1899.
12.3×0.9 cm.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14402



White cockatoo feather tuft headdress.
Collected Embley river, 1901. 22.5×4 cm.

- through the two holes drilled at the narrow end. The shell is 11.8 by 0.6 cm.
- E.14526 Roth's collection number is G.208. An oval-shaped piece of shell with fibre twine threaded through a hole drilled at the narrow end and bound with strips of European fabric. The shell is 12.3 by 0.9 cm.
- E.14527 A quarter of a shell with a hole drilled at the narrow end. It is 13.2 by 0.7 cm.
- E.14528 An oval-shaped piece of shell with fibre twine threaded through a hole drilled at the wide end of the shell. The shell is 13.8 by 2.7 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all four pearl shell chest and back pendants:

- E.14525 negative sheet 4154M, frame 1209.
E.14526 negative sheet 4155M, frame 1210.
E.14527 negative sheet 4155M, frame 1211.
E.14528 negative sheet 4155M, frame 1212.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 25.
Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 36.

White cockatoo feather headdresses

Information from Roth's Bulletins. According to Roth, these feather tuft headdresses were worn by men throughout north Queensland, especially in the eastern half of the State. The feather tufts were made by tying bird feathers to a small twig and then stuck indiscriminately here and there in the hair. As well as the white cockatoo, emu, eagle-hawk, pelican and turkey feathers also could be used. Roth said men wore these for corroborees and when on fighting expeditions.

Collection information. There are five white cockatoo feather tuft headdresses from the Embley River, collected by Roth in 1901, and one length of feathered string related to these headdresses. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "string for E.14398–402 for feather plumes" for each of the following entries.

- E.14398 Seven greyish-white cockatoo feathers bound at the quills by fibre twine. It is 12.6 by 1.6 cm.
E.14399 Three greyish-white cockatoo feathers bound at the quills by fibre twine. It is 2.4 by 4.6 cm.
E.14400 Five greyish-white cockatoo feathers bound at the quills by fibre twine. It is 22.5 by 5.2 cm.
E.14401 Five greyish-white cockatoo feathers bound at the quills by fibre twine. It is 17.5 by 4.2 cm.
E.14402 Seven greyish-white cockatoo feathers bound at the quills by fibre twine. It is 22.5 by 4 cm.
E.14403 Length of fibre and feather twine. At one end a strip of red European fabric has been finely wound round the twine, at the other end is a small loop. According to the note in the Australian Museum's Anthropology register for 1905 this

feathered string is for use with the above cockatoo feathers, but no further explanation is given. It is 297 cm long.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all five cockatoo feather tuft headdresses and the feathered string:

- E.14398 negative sheet 4139M, frame 1081.
E.14399 negative sheet 4139M, frame 1082.
E.14400 negative sheet 4139M, frame 1083.
E.14401 negative sheet 4139M, frame 1084.
E.14402 negative sheet 4139M, frame 1085.
E.14403 negative sheet 4139M, frame 1086.

Reference

- Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 24.

Pearl shell necklaces

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth wrote about shell necklaces worn by people living in the Pennefather River district, north of the Embley River, but did not specifically write about the Embley River people.

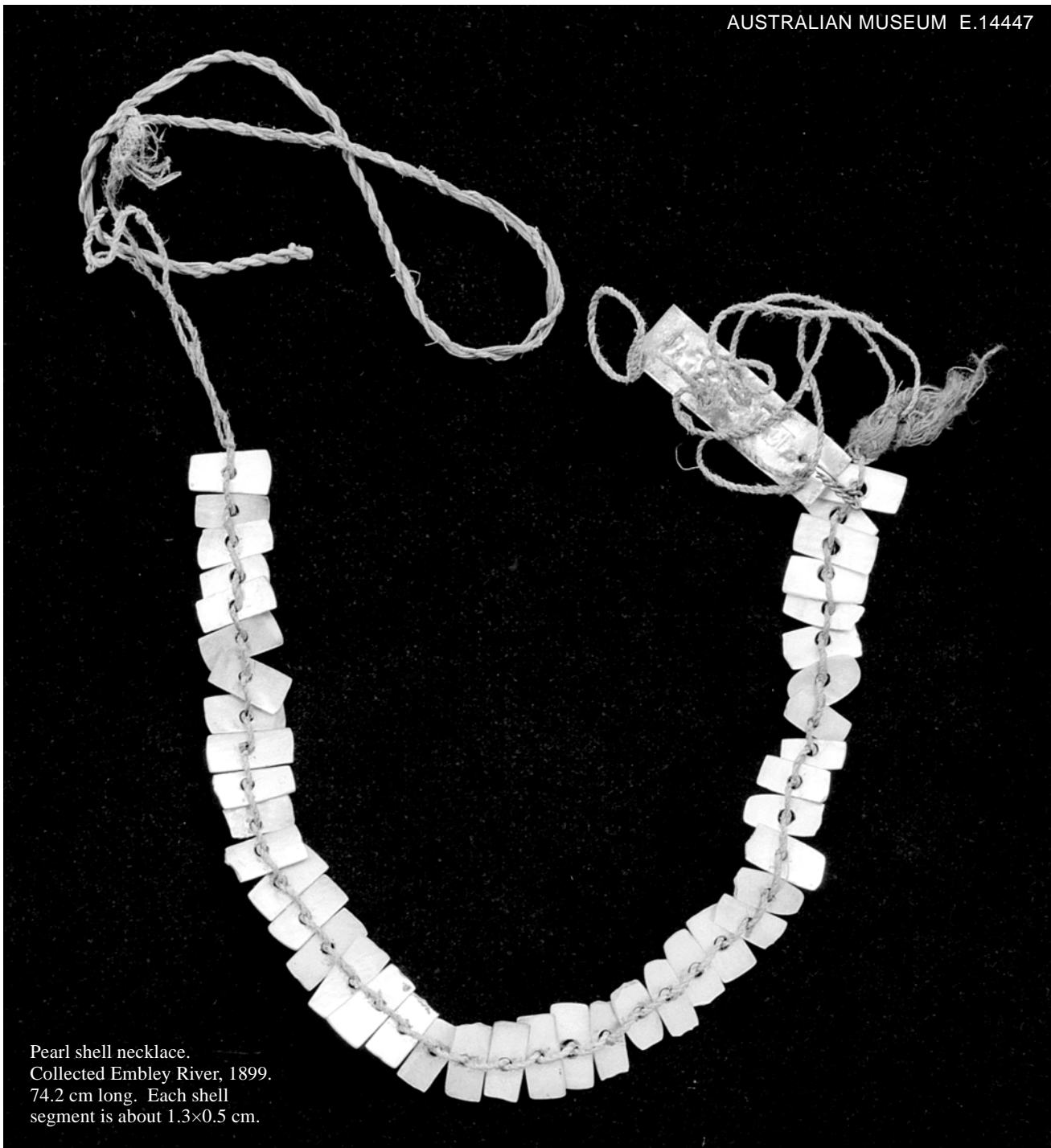
He said when working with shell it was important that it was fresh. If it was an old shell, it had to be soaked in water, otherwise it would not split in a clean fracture.

The little rectangular pieces of pearl shell each had a small hole drilled through the centre using a shell drill made with a sharply pointed chip broken off a shell of the *Cyrena jukesii*, now known as *Geloina erosa*. The chip was fixed into the split end of a small wooden stick and held in place with fibre string and adhesive. A double strand of handspun fibre string was woven into a fine chain and threaded through the holes to link all the pieces of shell together.

Roth said that rectangular pieces of shell usually were made and used by people living on the Peninsula and eastern coastline while oval-shaped pieces of shell were found on the lower Gulf shore. He thought oval-shaped pieces of shell worn by people living on the eastern coast of Cape York Peninsula were probably bartered from the Gulf coast.

Collection information. There are three pearl shell necklaces from the Embley River, collected by Roth in 1899. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "pearl shell necklet" for each of the following entries.

- E.14445 Roth's collection number is G.189. It has 28 pieces of pearl shell, three oval shaped, the rest rectangular, making up the necklace. It is 32 cm long and each rectangle is about 1.2 by 0.5 cm.
E.14446 Roth's collection number is G.190. It has 23 rectangular pieces of shell making up the necklace. It is 40.5 cm long and each rectangle is about 1.8 by 0.3 cm.



Pearl shell necklace.
Collected Embley River, 1899.
74.2 cm long. Each shell
segment is about 1.3×0.5 cm.

E.14447 Roth's collection number is G.191. It has 41 rectangular and one oval piece of shell making up the necklace. The fibre twine is bound with a strip of red European fabric at one end. It is 74.2 cm long and each rectangle is about 1.3 by 0.5 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for all three pearl shell necklaces:

- E.14445 negative sheet 4144M, frame 1129.
- E.14446 negative sheet 4145M, frame 1130.
- E.14447 negative sheet 4145M, frame 1131.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 25.
- Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 32.

Reed nose pin

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth said nose pins could be made of almost anything and came in many different shapes and sizes. He saw a flower stalk from a banksia tree being worn as a nose pin on the Bloomfield River, and bamboo being used by people living around the Embley River. Here, the nose pin of either wood or reed was often decorated with a seed of the *Adenantha abrosperma* or a jequirity seed, *Abrus precatorius*, at either end.

The tool used to pierce the nose was a pointed piece of bone or hardened wood.

In Roth's time, on the Middle Embley, Pennefather, Palmer, Endeavour and Bloomfield Rivers, Cape Bedford and the whole of northwest Queensland, both men and women had their noses pierced. The operation was usually performed by someone of the same sex. Roth said nose

piercing was sometimes connected with initiation ceremonies, but not necessarily so. He said women living around the Embley River wore nose pins as a sign of mourning. The men wore them sometimes as decoration.

Collection information. There is one nose pin from Weipa, collected by Roth in 1901. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "nose pin (reed) with jequirity seeds".

E.14428 The reed nose pin is 5.9 by 0.8 cm.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4142M, frame 1112.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 29–30.



Bamboo nose pin. Collected Weipa, 1901. 5.9×0.8 cm.

Orchid belt

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth said people living around the Pennefather, Lower Batavia (now the Wenlock) and Embley Rivers made bright yellow waist and shoulder belts from the prepared outer cortex or layer of the rock lily orchid, *Dendrobium bigibbum*.

Roth noted that women made the belts by overcasting two strands of fibre twine stretched between two sticks, or between one stick and the big toe. As the overcasting thread worked under and over, it alternately passed over and under the strip of orchid cortex as shown in Roth's illustrations in Bulletin 1, pl. vi, fig. 2 and Bulletin 15, p. 38, fig. 22. In a

later Bulletin published in 1910 (Bulletin 15), Roth reported seeing a variation on the above method, using three strips of cortex and four threads.

Men wore large belts, while women wore smaller ones as cross shoulder bands. Roth said they were worn when dancing or fighting.

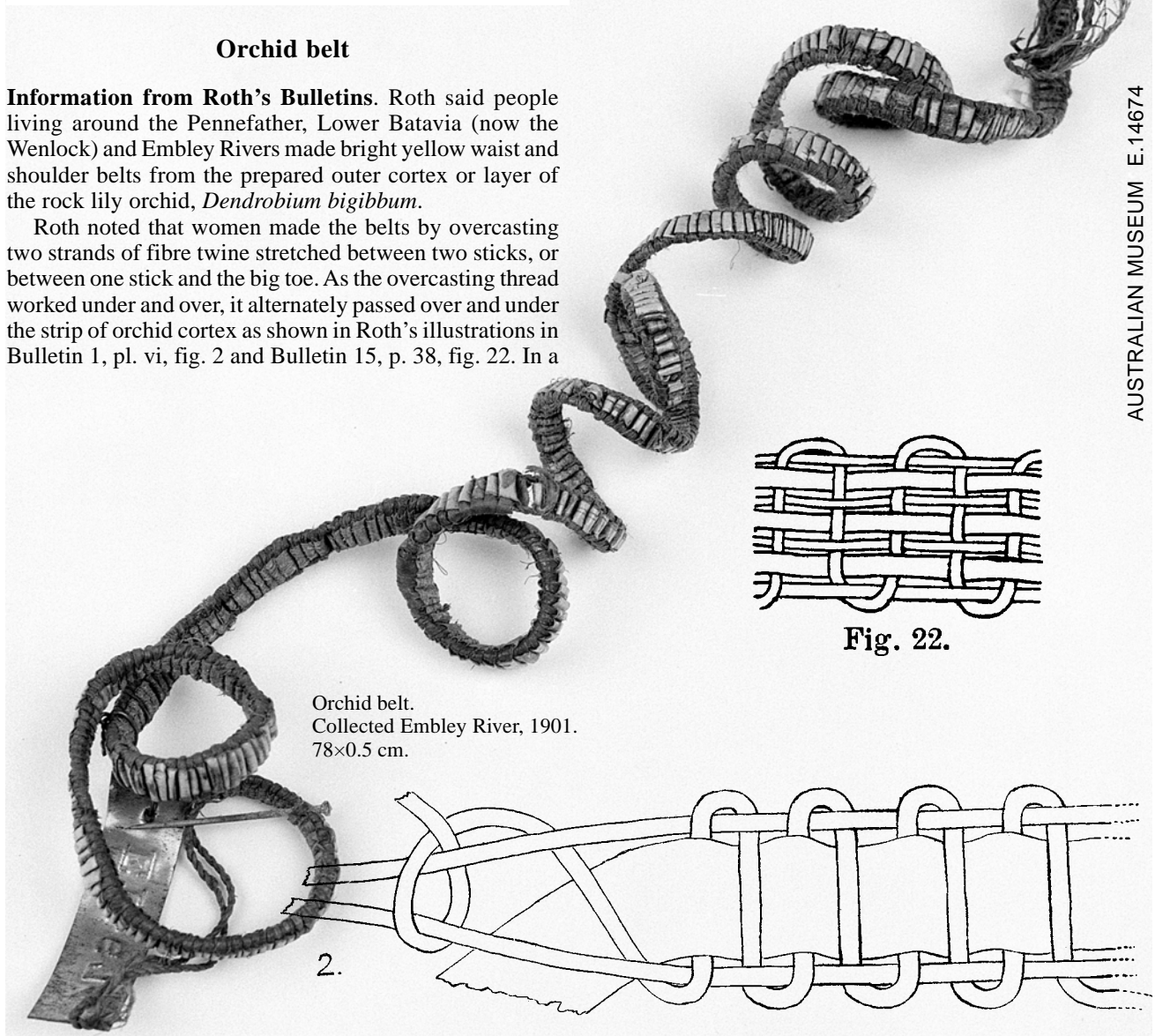
Collection information. There is one orchid belt from the Embley River, collected by Roth in 1901.

E.14674 Bright yellow orchid strip woven in and out of handspun fibre string. The string is looped at both ends. It is 78 by 0.5 cm. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "*Dendrobium* belt".

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4173M, frame 1358.

References

Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 1: 11–12.
Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 15: 38.



Orchid belt.
Collected Embley River, 1901.
78×0.5 cm.

Fig. 22.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.14674

Fire making equipment

Fire sticks

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Fire was made by twirling a thin stick into a hole in a flattened piece of softwood. Tinder of dried grass, placed around the hole would start to smoulder due to the heat caused by the friction. 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 hole was made in the softwood board 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. Thin fire sticks were usually from 60 to 120 cm long.

On the Embley, Pennefather and Wenlock Rivers, the working end of a fire stick was protected by a special cap or cover.

The cap, called a "matchbox" by European settlers, was made of two pipes bound together and closed at one end with beeswax. The pipes were made from a light pithy kind of wood, from which the pith was removed by a bone pin or awl. Occasionally two pieces of bamboo were used as a cap. The hollowed pipes were then bound together with handspun fibre string and covered with warmed beeswax at one end.

The beeswax was prepared by roasting it over a fire, squeezing it a few times in the hands, and warming and hammering it until soft. This beeswax coating held the shape of the cover, after it had been moulded into shape. It was finally dabbed over with a local adhesive or beeswax, with a knob left at the end. Poisonous red berries, also known as jequirity seeds, lobster eyes or gidy gidy beans, *Abrus precatorius*, were stuck into the sticky surface as a decoration.

On one occasion, Roth saw the eyes from a large crab being used as a decoration instead of red berries.

The thin fire stick could be made from various timbers, the most common being grass trees, *Xanthorrhoea arborea*, now known as *Xanthorrhoea johnsonii*, which were used wherever available. Fire sticks were usually named from the timber from which they were made, but sometimes had a special name.

Collection information. There is one fire stick and one cap for a fire stick from the Embley River, collected by Roth in 1900.

E.13774 Roth's collection number is F.26. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "'sheath' or 'matchbox' (for fire sticks), figured Bull. 7, fig. 2". The cap is made from pithy wood bound with handspun bark fibre twine, smeared with beeswax and decorated with bands of yellow fibre. The beeswax knob at the end of the cap is studded with red jequirity seeds. The cap is 15.7 by 3 cm. It is 5.6 cm wide at the end decorated with jequirity seeds.

E.13784 Roth's collection number is F.20. Two charred sticks are slotted into a bamboo cap that is smeared with beeswax and bound with red cloth. Strips of yellow fibre are wound around the cap. The beeswax knob at one end of the cap is studded with red jequirity seeds. The fire sticks and cap together are 153.5 cm long. The cap is 15.7 by 4 cm.

Photographic information. Black and white photographs are available for the cap and fire sticks:

E.13774 negative sheet 4060M, frame 457.

E.13784 negative sheet 4062M, frame 467.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 10–11, 14.

Food

Edible molluscs—shells

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth surmised that he had seen very few middens in the Weipa area because people moved constantly with the changing seasons and food supply. He did, however, report on the huge shell middens between the junction of the Hey and Embley Rivers. These mounds, mainly of burnt shells of *Arca granosa*, were well over 900 cm high and were dotted over a distance of about 0.8 km.

He reported that on the tops of some of these middens were the remains of fires and huts. As it was difficult to climb these middens, he suggested people deliberately camped and cooked on the summits to avoid mosquitoes and sandflies.

Roth said that these middens must have been formed over many generations, because the local population was small, and the middens must have contained tons of shells.

Collection information. These shells do not form part of the major Roth collection purchase of 1905. The shells were

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM E.13784



Fire stick and cap.
Collected Embley River, 1900.
The fire stick and cap together are 153.5 cm long.
The cap is 15.7×4 cm. See p. 112 for enlarged image.

given to the Australian Museum by Roth and registered on 5th February 1900. Charles Hedley, who was at this time the Conchologist or shell specialist at the Australian Museum and a close friend of Roth, identified the shells for him. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1900 also includes "from a kitchen midden, Embley River, north east Queensland" for the following entries.

- E.9000 Five ark shells, *Arca granosa*.
- E.9001 55 *Donax faba* shells. Roth gave the local name as *adu-ichimba-gwe*.
- E.9002 95 *Purpurea amygdala* shells, locally known as *tru-no*.
- E.9003 65 *Latirus craticulatus* shells.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 3: 7, 17-18.

Tools

Stone axe head

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth said stone axe heads were all made in much the same way. Rough pecking and grinding shaped the axe head. The cutting edge was ground smooth. In 1904 he wrote that the making of stone axes in Queensland was "a lost art".

He thought there were probably two regions where certain types of stone axe heads were made. He said the large oval, slab-like, double-edged, centrally grooved axe head was made by people living around the Herberton Ranges (see volume 2 of the Roth Catalogue by K. Khan) while the small, wedge shaped axe head came from Cape York Peninsula. The axe head, in its simplest form, was a

water-worn pebble. It could be made also by flaking from a larger block of stone or just by breaking a piece of stone.

The wedge-shaped axe head of the Wenlock and Pennefather Rivers was both used as an axe for cutting into trees, and an adze for such things as hollowing out the body of a canoe. When used as an adze, the handle was unfastened and re-fixed at right angles to its previous axis as shown in Roth's illustration in Bulletin 7, pl. ix, figs. 56 & 57.

Judging by models of axes made by older men from the Wenlock and Embley Rivers, the handle was made of cane from a small straggly tree, *Coelospermum reticulatum*, now known as *Pogonolobus reticulatus*. The cane was bent at its middle to form two arms. The two cane arms were bound by twine, tied closely below the axe head. This resulted in crossed handles or arms. When the arms were held, there was an increase in springiness in the handle and a tightening up of the axe head in a pincer-like grip.

Axe heads were not always used mounted in handles. They were domestic tools, especially for tasks such as cutting timber and chopping out footholds in trunks of trees.

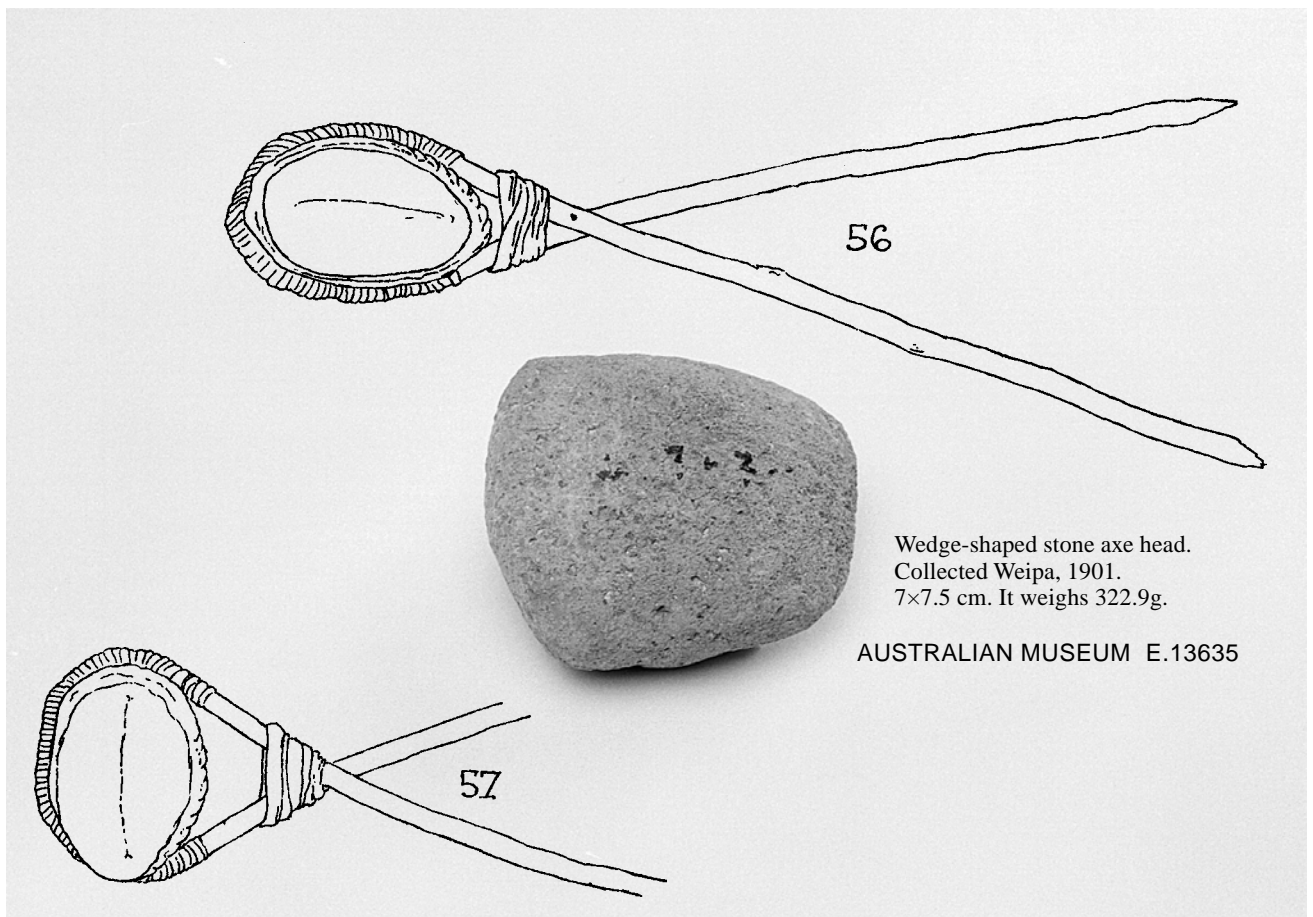
Collection information. There is one wedge-shaped stone axe head from Weipa, collected by Roth in 1901

- E.13635 Roth's collection number is 69. It is 7 by 7.5 cm. It weighs 322.91 g. The Australian Museum's Anthropology register dated 1905 includes "stone celt dug from under roots of tree".

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4043M, frame 318.

Reference

Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 18-20.



Weapons

Single-barbed spear

Information from Roth's Bulletins. Roth did not specifically describe spears made by people living around Weipa and the Embley River areas, but described in detail spears in detail made by people from the nearby Pennefather River district.

The spears were made by morticing the point or shaft into the hand-held or butt section. A bone awl, which was made from a marsupial or bird leg bone, chopped and ground to shape, was always used in the morticing process.

The tip of the spear could be single or multiple-barbed. All spears were thrown with a spearthrower, though occasionally they could be thrown with the hand alone.

The barb, except in stingray spine barbed spears, was of kangaroo-bone (often replaced in Roth's time by thick iron wire), fixed into a longitudinal groove in the shaft. The groove was cut with a tooth scraper and the bone tip fixed into the groove so that it projected beyond the body of the spear. It was then bound round and round with handspun bark fibre twine and finished with a loop. This was finally covered with adhesive to give strength.

These spears were usually painted with a small band of white at the tip end, then a similar width of red, then a longer

strip of black. Fixative used with the pigment was either gum from a *Melaleuca* tree or human blood from the arm.

Timber used for the hand-held end of nearly all spears was from the *Acacia* tree. Wood used for the barbed end varied.

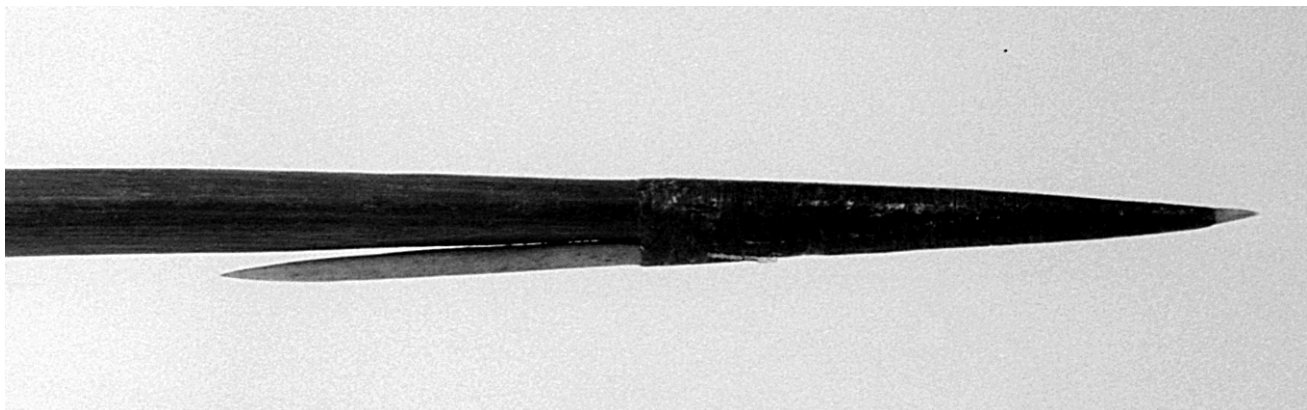
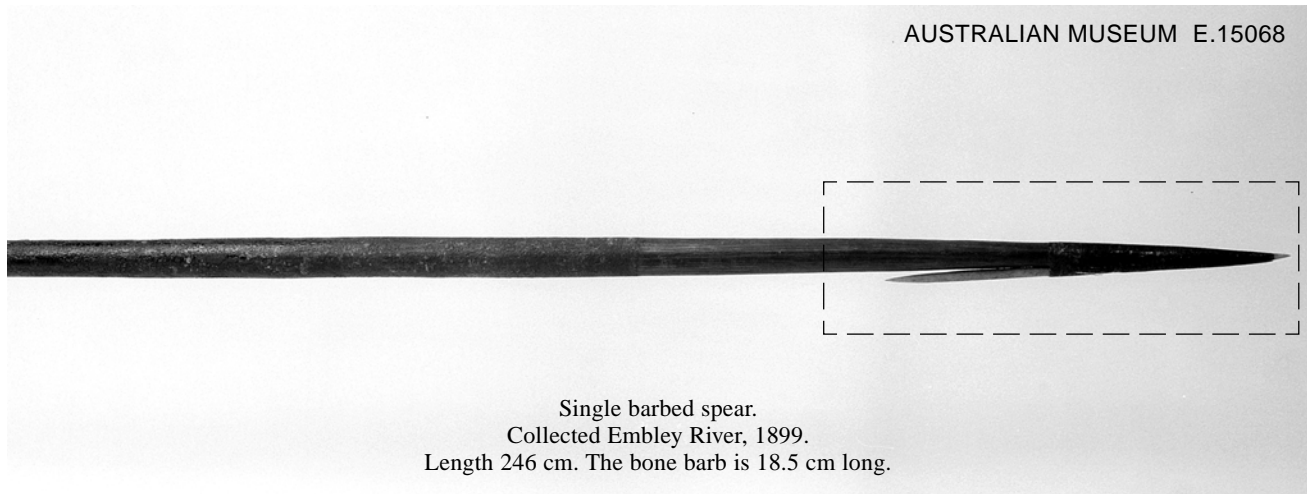
Collection information. There is one single barbed spear from the Embley River, collected by Roth in 1899. It correlates with Roth's type C spear, which is a heavy, long spear, with the hand-held end much shorter (1/5 or even less) than the shaft end.

E.15068 Roth's collection number is SP.1. A bone barb is attached with adhesive and handspun bark fibre twine. It is painted with a band of red and white pigment at the hand-held end and a small band of white just past the fibre binding. It is 246 cm long. The bone barb is 18.5 cm long.

Photographic information. A black and white photograph is available, negative sheet 4222M, frame 1752.

References

- Roth, W.E., 1901. Bulletin 3: 29.
Roth, W.E., 1904. Bulletin 7: 25.
Roth, W.E., 1910. Bulletin 13: 191–192.



References

This list is incomplete.

Nassau River

Horton, D., ed., 1994. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*, pp. 556, 565–566. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.

Night Island

Chase, A.K., 1986. Perceptions of the Past among north Queensland Aboriginal people, the intrusion of Europeans and consequent social change. World Archaeological Congress. Archaeological “Objectivity” in Interpretation, vol. 3, Section B, pp. 1–9. Indigenous history and the Archaeological Record.
Horton, D., ed., 1994. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*, p. 1123. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.

Palmer River

Brady, D., C. Anderson & B. Rigsby, 1980. Some of us are still alive: the Palmer River revisited. AIAS Newsletter, NS. No. 1, 13: 30–35.
Bolton, G.C., 1970. *A Thousand Miles Away. A History of North Queensland to 1920*. Canberra: ANU Press.
Holthouse, H., 1967. *River of Gold: The Story of the Palmer River Gold Rush*. Sydney: Angus & Robertson.
Holthouse, H., 1970. *Up Rode the Trooper*. Adelaide: Rigsby.
Jack, R.L., 1896. On Aboriginal cave drawings on the Palmer Goldfield. *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Queensland* 11: 90–98.
Rosser, B., 1990. *Up Rode the Troopers: The Black Police in Queensland*. St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press.
Sheehy, D.J., 1991. *A Century at the Top. A History of Telecommunications on Cape York Peninsula in Far North Queensland 1887–1987*. Telecom Australia, July 1987. Revised July 1991. Queensland: Government Printer.

Peak Point Electric Telegraph Office

Gribble, P.J., 1981. *What God Hath Wrought. The Story of the Electric Telegraph—Queensland*. Brisbane: Telecom.
Sheehy, D.J., 1991. *A Century at the Top. A History of Telecommunications on Cape York Peninsula in Far North Queensland 1887–1987*. Telecom Australia, July 1987. Revised July 1991. Queensland: Government Printer.

Princess Charlotte Bay

Beaton, J.M., 1985. Evidence for a coastal occupation time-lag at Princess Charlotte Bay (Nth. Q’ld) and implications for coastal colonization and population growth theories for Aboriginal Australia. *Archaeology in Oceania* 20: 1–20.
Chase, A., & P. Sutton, 1981. Hunter-gatherers in a rich environment: Aboriginal coastal exploration in Cape York Peninsula. In *Ecological Biogeography of Australia*, ed. A. Keast, pp. 1817–1852. The Hague: W. Jung.
Hale, H.M., & N.B. Tindale, 1933. Aborigines of Princess Charlotte Bay, North Queensland. *Records of the South Australian Museum* 5(1): 63–116.
Hale H.M., & N.B. Tindale, 1934. Aborigines of Princess Charlotte Bay, North Queensland. *Records of the South Australian Museum* 5(2): 117–172.
Mountford, C.P., & A. Harvey, 1938. A Survey of Australian Aboriginal Pearl and Baler Shell Ornaments. *Records of the South Australian Museum* 6(2): 114–135.
Sommer, B.A., 1976. W.E. Roth’s Peninsular Vocabularies. In *Languages of Cape York*, ed. P. Sutton, pp. 127–136. Australian Aboriginal Studies. Research & Regional Studies No. 6, AIAS, Canberra.

Thomson, D.F., 1932. Ceremonial presentation of fire in north Queensland. A Preliminary Note on the place of fire in primitive ritual. *Man, Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society* 32: 162–166.

Thomson, D.F., 1952. Notes on some primitive watercraft in northern Australia. *Man, Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society* 52: 1–5.

Thomson, D.F., 1956. The fishermen and dugong hunters of Princess Charlotte Bay. *Walkabout* 22(11): 33–36.

West, A.L., n.d. Aboriginal String Bags Nets and Cordage. Occasional Papers in Anthropology and History, no. 2. Indigenous Cultures Program. Museum Victoria, Melbourne. No date given (probably 2000).

Staaten River

Allen, L., & B. Borey, 1984. *Cultural and Historical Records of Queensland, no. 3. Annotations to publications by W.E. Roth*. Brisbane: University of Queensland Press.

Anderson, C., 1981. Queensland. In *Aboriginal Land Rights: A Handbook*, ed. N. Peterson, pp. 53–114. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

Horton, D., ed., 1994. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*, pp. 565–566. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.

Keast, A., ed., 1981. *Ecological Biogeography of Australia*. Vol. 3.

Loos, N., 1982. *Invasion and Resistance. Aboriginal-European Relations on the North Queensland Frontier, 1861–1897*. Canberra: ANU Press.

Sharp, N., 1992. *Footprints along the Cape York Sandbeaches*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.

Starcke River

Horton, D., ed., 1994. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*, p. 443. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.

Tinaroo

Bolton, G.C., 1970. *A Thousand Miles Away. A History of North Queensland to 1920*. Canberra: ANU Press.

Dixon, R.M.W., 1972. *The Dyrbal Language of North Queensland*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dixon, R.M.W., 1976. Tribes, Languages and other boundaries in northeast Queensland. In *Tribes and Boundaries in Australia*, ed. N. Peterson. Social Anthropology Series 10, pp. 207–238. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

Loos, N., 1982. *Invasion and Resistance. Aboriginal-European Relations on the North Queensland Frontier 1861–1897*. Canberra: ANU Press.

Tully River

Anderson, C., 1981. Queensland. In *Aboriginal Land Rights. A Handbook*, ed. N. Peterson, pp. 53–114. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

Bolton, G.C., 1970. *A Thousand Miles Away. A History of North Queensland to 1920*. Canberra: ANU Press.

Brayshaw, H., 1990. Well Beaten Paths: Aborigines of the Herbert-Burdekin district, north Queensland. An Ethnographic and Archaeological Study. James Cook University., Dept. of History, Townsville, Queensland.

Dixon, R.M.W., 1972. *The Dyrbal Language of North Queensland*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dixon, R.M.W., 1976. Tribes, Languages and other boundaries in northeast Queensland. In *Tribes and Boundaries in Australia*, ed. N. Peterson. Social Anthropology Series 10, pp. 207–238.

- Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.
 Henry, G.J., 1967. "Girroo Gurrll" The First Surveyor and other Aboriginal Legends. Brisbane: Smith & Paterson.
 Mjoberg, E., 1918. *Amongst Stone Age People in the Queensland Wilderness*. Translated by S.M. Fryer. Albert Bonnerr, Stockholm.
 Woolston, F.P., & F.S. Colliver, 1975. The Wildsoet interview—some recollections of the Aborigines of the Tully area. *Queensland Heritage*, November 1975, 3(3): 3–14.

Vanrook

- Sharp, R.L., 1939. Tribes and totemism in north-east Australia. *Oceania* 9(3): 254–257, 439–461.

Weipa and the Embley River

- Bailey, G., 1994. The Weipa Shell Mounds: Natural or Cultural? In *Archaeology in the North: Proceedings of the 1993 Australian Archaeological Conference*, ed. M. Sullivan, S. Brockwell & A. Webb, pp. 107–129. Darwin: North Australia Research Unit, Australian National University.
 Bailey, G., J. Chappell & R. Cribb, 1994. The Origin of *Andara* Shell Mounds at Weipa, North Queensland, Australia. *Archaeology in Oceania* 29: 69–80.
 Bolton, G.C., 1970. *A Thousand Miles Away. A History of North Queensland to 1920*. Canberra: ANU Press.

- Brown, K., 1992. There's magic in your hands: Thancoupie: artist-in-residence. *Arlink* 12(3): 53–54.
 Cousins, D., & J. Nieuwenhuysen, 1984. *Aboriginals and the Mining Industry: Case Studies of the Australian Experience*, pp. 15–36. Sydney: George Allen & Unwin with the Committee for Economic Development of Australia.
 Cribb, R., R. Walmberg, R. Wolmby & C. Taisman, 1988. Landscape as Cultural Artefact: Shell Mounds & Plants in Aurukun, Cape York Peninsula. *Australian Aboriginal Studies* (Canberra) 2: 60–73.
 Horton, D., ed., 1994. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
 Roberts, Jan, 1981. *Massacres to Mining: The Colonisation of Aboriginal Australia*. Blackburn (Victoria): Dove Communications.
 Roberts, Janine, 1987. *From Massacre to Mining: the Colonisation of Aboriginal Australia*. London: War on Want, 467 Caledon Rd., London, UK.
 Sheehy, D.J., 1991. *A Century at the Top. A History of Telecommunications on Cape York Peninsula in Far North Queensland 1887–1987*. Telecom Australia, July 1987. Revised July 1991. Queensland: Government Printer.
 Wright, R.V.S., 1971. Prehistory in Cape York Peninsula. In *Aboriginal Man and Environment in Australia*, ed. D.J. Mulvaney & J. Golson, pp. 133–140. Canberra: ANU Press.

Assoc. Eds. Jim R. Specht and Val J. Attenbrow

Index to Australian Museum registered objects

E8825–885..... 6	E13531..... 84	E13947..... 55	E14489..... 69	E14789..... 58, 60
E8972–980..... 6	E13635..... 105	E13948..... 55	E14490–92..... 69, 70	E14790–795..... 59, 60
E8974..... 35	E13640..... 75	E13949..... 77	E14519..... 29	E14796–805..... 60
E8975..... 35	E13652..... 50	E13953..... 55	E14520..... 29	E14806–811..... 62
E8976..... 35	E13654..... 36, 37	E13954..... 55	E14525..... 100, 101	E14825–828..... 26
E8977..... 16	E13655..... 36, 37	E13966..... 37	E14526..... 101	E14840–842..... 26
E8978..... 16	E13656..... 37	E14334..... 79, 80	E14527..... 101	E14843–845..... 62
E8982–87..... 6	E13657–658..... 6	E14335..... 80	E14528..... 101	E14848..... 62
E8996..... 16	E13659–665..... 6	E14337..... 80	E14529..... 67	E14848..... 62
E8996–9033..... 6	E13666–667..... 6	E14338..... 80	E14530..... 67	E14867..... 38
E8997..... 16	E13668–682..... 6	E14340–343..... 80	E14530..... 67	E14868..... 38
E8998..... 16	E13690..... 23	E14345..... 80	E14531–541..... 68	E14876..... 75, 76
E8999..... 16	E13691..... 22, 23	E14347..... 80	E14546..... 100	E14877..... 75, 76
E9000..... 105	E13692..... 22	E14348..... 80	E14547..... 90	E14878..... 76
E9001..... 105	E13692..... 23	E14350–354..... 80	E14548..... 90	E14879..... 60
E9002..... 105	E13704..... 66	E14356..... 80	E14557..... 96	E14884–886..... 64
E9003..... 105	E13711..... 24	E14360..... 80	E14558..... 100	E14888..... 27
E9482–83..... 6	E13715–719..... 28	E14362..... 80	E14559..... 100	E14889..... 65
E9722–755..... 6	E13730–734..... 23	E14365..... 55	E14575..... 90	E14890..... 65
E10173..... 6	E13735–743..... 74, 75	E14366..... 55	E14596..... 69	E14891–897..... 64
E10405–419..... 6	E13744..... 75	E14368..... 39	E14597..... 69	E14928..... 27
E13319..... 45	E13745..... 75	E14380..... 80	E14652..... 32	E14929..... 27
E13321..... 20	E13774..... 104	E14388..... 18	E14674..... 103	E14934..... 82
E13341..... 83	E13776..... 32	E14390..... 78	E14692..... 31	E14934..... 82
E13349..... 42	E13784..... 104, 112	E14394..... 95	E14693..... 31	E14969..... 74
E13350..... 42	E13851–853..... 92	E14395..... 69	E14700..... 46	E14970..... 74
E13366..... 83	E13860..... 49	E14397..... 30	E14714..... 90	E14971..... 34
E13366..... 83	E13883..... 33	E14398..... 101	E14725..... 28	E14975..... 47
E13414..... 91	E13884..... 46	E14398–402..... 101	E14726..... 28	E14994..... 49
E13442..... 86	E13885..... 46	E14399–403..... 101	E14733..... 67	E14995..... 49
E13443..... 94	E13900..... 48	E14415–418..... 71	E14746..... 88	E14997..... 53
E13450..... 16	E13904..... 52	E14428..... 103	E14747..... 88	E15022..... 33
E13451..... 16	E13908..... 48	E14445..... 101, 102	E14748..... 66	E15068..... 106
E13465..... 52	E13909..... 48	E14446..... 101, 102	E14764..... 84	E15155–274..... 6
E13466..... 52	E13930–933..... 77, 78	E14447..... 102	E14765..... 91	E15275–316..... 6
E13498..... 93	E13934..... 78	E14451–454..... 71	E14770..... 35	E15725..... 6
E13512..... 36	E13935..... 16	E14464..... 70, 71	E14771..... 35	E16395–397..... 6
E13513..... 36	E13935–938..... 16	E14465..... 70, 71	E14785..... 75	E26065–124..... 6
E13515..... 36	E13938..... 16	E14467..... 70	E14786..... 75	E79256..... 82
E13521..... 50	E13940..... 54	E14486–488..... 69, 70	E14787..... 75	

Index

This index, together with the Contents listed on page 4, provides overall access to the detail within this work; for more precise searches readers are invited to use the online versions:

http://www.amonline.net.au/pdf/publications/1372_part_a.pdf
http://www.amonline.net.au/pdf/publications/1372_part_b.pdf
http://www.amonline.net.au/pdf/publications/1372_part_c.pdf

- Abrus precatorius*, 23, 32, 102, 104
 Acknowledgments, 5
Acacia, 24, 39, 55, 106
 leptocarpa, 24, 34
 lysiphloea, 24
Adenantha abrosperma, 23, 32, 102
 Adhesive, 20, 48, 91
 gum, 35
 handle grip, 33
 Adhesive preparation, 35
Adu-ichimba-gwe, 105
 Adze, 105
 Albatross Bay, 98
Aldema, 79
Alloteropsis semialata, 49
Aln-jo, 31, 32
Aln-yira, 26
Alvau-ul, 55
Al'njo, 38
Al-pur, 48
Ambianga, 50
Angkurti-in, 52
 Animals from the sea, 74
Anjo-ana, 27, 28
 Annan River, 81
 Ant, green tree, 49
 Anthropology Division, 8
An-gaina, 48
An-gora, 33
An-ora, 26
An-to, 27
Arca granosa, 104, 105
ata-angka, 36
 Araba, 95
 Arandal, 24
 Archer River, 98
 Aripa, 95
Ari-luar, 49
 Armband
 making, 28
 Armband fabrication, 67
 Armpit
 concealing under, 77
Aru-ya, 53
Ata-angka, 36
 Arthau, 22
 Assistance, 8
 Australian Museum, 5
Awa-ra, 27
 Awl, 48
 rib-bone, 48
 Axe
 handle, 105
 head, 75
 Balser's Knob, 44
Banggorla, 66
 Bark fibre string, 62
 Bark fibre twine, 31
 Bark knot container, 20
Barringtonia racemosa, 45
 Barrow Point, 81
 Barter, 38, 55
 Basket
 making, 26
 Batavia, 98
 Battle Camp, 22
 Bauxite, 98
 Beaters, 34
 Bee hive, 49
 Beefwood, 33, 35
 Beeswax, 32, 53, 80
 Berries, 23
Binjela, 71
Binje-la, 67, 71
 Birds
 feathers of many, 69
 Birthday Creek, 50
 Bizant River, 44
 Black Kurrajong, 24, 26
 Bloomfield River, 20, 24, 26
 Body piercing, 71
Bombax
 ceiba, 45
 malabaricum, 45
 Bone awl, 48
 Bones
 death, 28
Borna, 39
 Botanical names, 8
 Boullia, 73
Bo-un, 55
Brachychiton diversifolius, 47
Brachychiton populneus, 24
 Bramighan's, 81
 Breeza Plains, 12
 Bridget Ohlsson, 5
 Bulletins, 5, 13
Buragal, 91
 Burnt shells, 104
 Cabbage Tree, 24
Cacatua galerita, 30
 Cairns, 11
Calamus, 47, 53, 88, 93
 Cane
 lawyer, 47
 Cane prodder, 53
 Cape Bedford, 26, 81
 Cape Bedford Aboriginals, 11
 Cape Direction people, 19
 Cape Flattery, 81
 Cape Melville, 26
Careya australis, 31
 Carrying on head, 50
 Carstenzoon, 17
Castanospermum australe, 92
 Catalogue, 5
 Catalogue cards, 7
 Catalogue online, 15
 Catalogues, 5
 Catfish, 33
 Cattle station, 88
 Cattle stations, 95
 Cement
 gum, 35
Charba, 35
 Charm to avenge a death, 23
 Charm to cause madness, 23
 Charm to cause sickness, 22
 Charm to protect..., 24
 Chest decoration, 67
 Chinaware, 68
 Chinese, 11, 22
Chu-cha, 94
 Cloncurry, 73
 Cloncurry district, 68
 Cockatoo feather head ornament, 30
 Cockatoo feather headdress, 95, 101
 Cockatoo grass, 49
Coelospermum reticulatum, 105
 Colanders, 27
 Coleman River, 17
 Coleman River, 98
 Comalco, 98
 Container
 bark knot, 44
 Container fabrication, 42, 44
 Containers
 palm leaf, 42
 Cooktown, 10, 11, 22, 26, 81
 Corroboree, 69, 88
 Crocodile screen, 93
 Crocodile screen fabrication, 93
 Crocodiles
 spearing, 93
 trapping, 93
 Customary law, 6
Crocodylus
 johnstoni, 93
 porosus, 93
Cycas media, 92
Cyrena jukesii, 100, 101
 Database, of artefacts, 7
 Death bones, 28
 Death pointer, 65
 Death pointer
 how used, 65
 Death Pointers, 28
 Decoration, 69
Dendrobium bigibbum, 103
Dentalium aciculum, 71
 Descriptions of objects, 8
 Diamentina River, 68
 Dilly bag, 26
Dingalka, 49
Dirakai, 83
 Disease, 22
Donax faba, 105
 Drill fabrication, 48
 Drilling, 20
 Drills, 48
Dromaius novaehollandiae, 36
 Ducie River, 42, 82, 98
Dumbal, 94

- Edible molluscs, 104
 Eel fishing, 90
 Elderslie, 68
 Embley River, 97, 98
 Emu feather, 36
 Emu feathered string armband, 66
 Endeavour River, 29, 42, 69
 Enslavement, 98
Erythrophleum, 39
 chlorostachyum, 33, 39, 46, 48, 79
 laboucherii, 33, 39, 46, 48, 79
Ethnophornographia, 14
Eucalyptus, 8, 20, 44
 tetradonta, 8
 European diseases, 11
 European fibre, 62
 European wool, 31
- Fan
 emu-feather, 36
 Feather headdress, 95
 Feather tuft hair ornament, 69
 Fernhill Mountain
 see under Mo-yeraka, 22
 Fibre
 making, 25
 Fighting, 11, 69
 Finding objects in museum, 6
 Finger-nails
 using, 27
 Fire
 making equipment, 104
 sticks, 32
 club, 33
 Fish hook, 33, 46
 Fishing
 at night, 90
 beaters for, 34
 burning-torch, 33
 equipment, 33, 46, 73
 for eels, 90
 line, 33
 no sinkers for, 33
 Fishing net, 33, 46, 73
 handling, 47
 Fishing net fabrication, 47, 73, 75
 Fly-flicks, 35
 Food collecting sticks, 49
 Food tenderizing, 52
 Footholds
 tree cutting, 105
 Forehead circlets, 69
 Forehead perspiration, 54
 Forsyth Islands, 35
 Funerals, 74
Ficus, 86, 94
 echretioides, 94
 opposita, 39
 variegata, 94
- Gamboola, 22
Geloina erosa, 100, 101
 Getting help, 8
 Gilbert River, 17, 26, 60
 Gogo-Alwangara, 44
 Gold rush, 11, 22
 Gorton's Selection, 81
 Grass reed, 69
 Grass reed necklace, 69
 Grass trees, 32
 Grasses, 49
 Green ant, 49
Grevillea striata, 33, 35, 39, 55
- Gribble, 41
 Grinding
 stone axe, 75
 Grub collecting, 53
 Gulf of Carpentaria, 11
 Gum cement, 35
 Gunanni people, 17, 18, 58, 71, 73
 Guugu-Yimidhirr people, 22, 81
 Guwa people, 68
- Haemodorum coccineum*, 27, 82
 Hair ornament, 69
 Hairstring
 human, 31
 Hale, 44
 Hammer
 stone, 37
 Handspun bark fibre, 62
 Hann River, 44
 Harpoon sockets, 48
 Heavy loads on head, 50
 Hedley, 88
 Herberton, 11
 Heritage Unit, 6
 Highbury, 22
 Honey, 20, 49
 collecting, 49
 Hopevale, 81
 Hughenden, 68
 Human hair forehead fringe, 99
- Information, 5
 Initiation, 88
 Introduction, 5
 Iron, 53
 oxide, 35
 scraper, 53
 Ironwood, 33
 cement, 48
 spearthrower, 55
Iwarwal, 26
I-wa-wal, 24, 34
- Jack, 44
 Jeannette's Tableland, 44
 Jeannie River, 81
 Jeannie River, 81
 Jequirity seeds, 104
 Jessica Point, 98
 John Day, 5
 Johnstone River, 88
- Kajiri*, 92
Kalan, 24, 26
Kaljo-ma, 58
Kananja, 94
 Kangaroo
 fur, 23
 string belt, 32
Kanina, 54
Kannojo-ol, 84
Kappatora, 77
Keba, 94
 Kennedy, 44
 Keppel Island, 69
 Kiki-Yalangji people, 81
 King River, 22
 Knife
 making, 92
 snail shell, 92
 Koknar people, 17, 58, 95
 Kokomini people, 35
 Kokopera people, 17
- Kokorarmul people, 48, 52
 Kokowarra people, 44, 46, 52, 81
 Koko-bera, 58
 Koko-lamalama, 44
 Koko-minni tribe, 23, 32, 33
 Koko-olkoolo people, 44
 Koko-olkulo people, 22, 44
 Koko-rarmul people, 22, 44
 Koko-warra people, 22, 44
 Koko-yimidir, 81
 Konongo, 22
Kora (also *Ko-ra*), 33
Ko-adam, 49
Kulkong, 77
 Kundara people, 17, 58
Kundari, 83
 Kunjen people, 17
 Kurtjar, 95
Ku-la, 49
 Kwantari people, 17
Kwa-chil, 30
 Kynuna, 68
- Lalanu*, 54
 Lamalama, 44
 Lamalama people, 47, 52
 Languages, 7, 12, 44
Latirus craticulatus, 105
 Laura, 22, 29, 39, 44
 Lawyer cane, 47
 armlets, 88
 Layout of this catalogue, 7
 Leaf water carrier, 82
Leiocarpum, 45
 Limestone, 22
Lin-ji-ila, 23
Livistona australis, 24, 33, 46, 52, 64, 65, 74, 75
Livistonia, 26
 Look-out Point, 81
 Lucinda Point, 88
- Mactra obesa*, 15
 Magdalen Mulun, 11
Magura, 94
 Maitakudi people, 68
 Malacology, 5
Malaisia
 scandens, 45, 47, 49
 tortuosa, 45, 47, 49
Malkanya, 73
 Mallanpara tribe, 90
 Mallets, 52
Malleus
 albus, 100
 vulsellatus, 100
Malle-anga, 67
 Mamu people, 11
Mandaba-daba, 71
Maner-gora, 69
Manggo-anda, 71
Marela, 75
Marra, 23
 Maytown, 22
Ma-rela, 75
 Mba Rarmul, 44
 McIvor River, 81
 Measurements, 8
Megalactractus aruanus, 71
Melaleuca, 22, 23, 50, 106
Meleagrina, 67
Melo, 15, 29, 39, 55, 79, 80
 amphora, 8, 15, 29, 39, 67, 68, 79, 83

- diadema*, 15, 29, 39, 68, 79, 83
 Melon shell chest ornament, 68
 Mentana Station, 17
 Mesh
 fishing net, 75
 Message stick, 91
 markings, 91
 deeper meaning, 91
 Metal
 preferance for, 53
 usage, 53
 Middens, 104
 Middle Palmer River, 26
Minggana, 69, 70, 74
Mingguna, 75
Mitin, 90
Mi-na, 30, 31
Mi-nganda, 74
 Mitchell River, 17
Mo-banggir, 71
 Morehead River, 44, 98
 Moreton Bay chestnuts, 92
 Morgan River, 81
 Mosquitoes
 avoiding, 104
 Mount Daintree
 see under Konongo, 22
 Mourning
 decoration, 74
 neck band, 74
 restricted diet, 74
 wear, 74
 Mo-yeraka, 22
 Mo-yir, 81
 Mulgrave, 11
 Mulligan, 22
Mulum, 52
 Murder, 11
 Museum
 acquisition, 5
 policy, 6
 Musgrave River, 26
 Mutumui people, 81

 Names, 7
Namma, 94
 Napranum, 98
 Nassau River, 17
Nautilus, 29, 67, 71, 96, 100
 pompilius, 29, 71, 100
 Nautilus shell forehead bands, 100
 Necklace
 possum fur string, 70
 shell, 71
 Needle
 wooden, 52
 Netting needles, 75
 Netting stitch, 47, 58, 73
 Ngabengamadam, 17
 Ngariba, 95
Ngau-al, 52
Ngo-mon, 50
Niakai, 93
 Night Island people, 19
Norda, 35
 Normanton, 17, 26
No-ra, 36
 Nose pins, 71
 No-kal, 81
Nung-guna, 75
 Nut cracking, 36, 52
Nu-ina, 26

 Objects, transfer of, 88
Oliva australis, 71
 Online version, 15
 Opium, 11
 Orchid belt, 103
Ostrea glomerata, 15
Otwala, 35

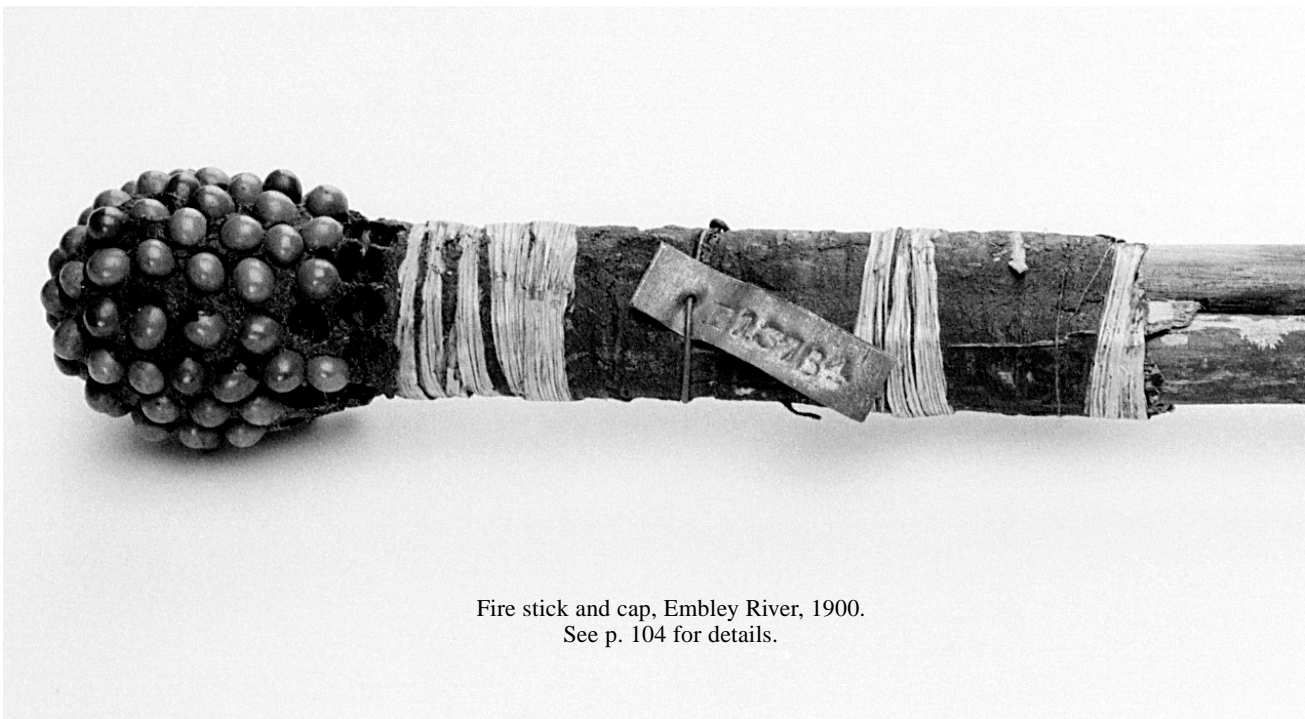
 Pad
 head, 50
 Palm Island, 11
 Palm leaf containers, 42
 Palmer goldfields, 22
 Palmer River, 11, 21
 Palmerson, 11
 Palmerville, 23
Panax murrayi, 91
Pandanus, 27, 28, 36, 50, 54, 64, 65, 67
 leaf armband, 67
Panicum semialatum, 49
 Parra, 81
 Parry-Okeden, 10, 11
 Paterson, 41
 PDF version, 15
 Pearl shell, 68
 chest and back pendants, 100
 chest ornaments, 67
 necklaces, 101
Pera, 79
 Perspiration,
 and adhesive, 54
 as lubricant, 76
 Petrie, 20, 45
 Photographic information, 8
 Piercing body pins, 71
 Pigment, 35, 75
 preparation, 35
 red, 33, 35, 75
 spraying, 35
 white, 35, 75
 wrapped, 75
Pinctada, 67
Pinna menkei, 15
Pin-yertan, 67
Pi-kan, 94
Planchonia careya, 31
Pogonolobus reticulatus, 105
 Police, 10, 22
Polyscias murrayi, 91
 Population size, 88
 Port Douglas, 11
 Possum fur string, 31
 forehead band, 90
 necklace, 70
 tassel, 90
 Pounding, 52
 Princess Charlotte Bay, 12, 20, 44
 Probing holes for fur, 53
 Prodder
 cane, 53
 sticky tipped, 53
 Protector, 10
 Publications, 13
Pungga, 84
Purpurea amydala, 105

Ra, 69
Rainkan, 88
 Rainforest
 living in, 91
Rau-wor-injala, 71
 Recruiting activities, 98

 Regional catalogues, 5
 Registration, 5, 6
 Resin, 35, 84
 Resin
 chemical analysis, 79, 84
 chemical properties, 79, 84
 Resin and fat, 79
 Resin preparation, 35
 Restricted access, 6
Re-da, 75
 Rockhampton, 11, 26
Roko-warra, 32
 Roth
 collecting, 7
 fieldwork, 7
 travels, 11
Ro-anda, 68

 Saltwater crocodile, 93
 Saltwater River, 30, 44
 Sandalwood, 36
 Sandflies
 avoiding, 104
 Sandy Creek, 44
 Sap
 collecting, 36
 harvesting, 36
 Scars
 tribal, 88
 Scientific names, 8
 Scraper
 iron, 53
 stone, 37
 Scraping, 20
 Screens for trapping crocs, 93
 Searching inside holes, 53
 Sea-slugs, 11
 Secret/sacred material, 6, 84
 Settlements, 11
 Shark's teeth knives, 77
 Sheehy, 41
 Shell
 band fabrication, 96
 chest ornaments, 29
 forehead band, 96
 necklace, 71
 water carrier, 83
 Shield, 86, 94
 fabrication, 86, 94
 kidney shaped, 86
 names of parts, 94
 painted rainforest, 94
 Sieve, 27, 64
 application, 64
 bag, 27, 64, 65
 basket fabrication, 81
 fabrication, 64, 65
 Single-barbed spear, 106
 Skeletal remains, 6
 Skirt, 30, 45
 fabrication, 30, 45
 Smoothing board, 76
 Snail shell knives, 92
 Snake scales, 53
Spinifex, 27
 hirsutis, 27, 49, 82
 sericens, 27, 49
 Somerset, 58
 Sommer, 12, 44
 Spear
 fabrication, 106
 fishing, 55

- multiple-pronged, 55
- quartz-tipped, 55
- stingray-barbed, 55
- Spearthrower, 39, 55
 - peg, 48
 - stick, 78
- Spelling, local words, 7
- Spindles, 38
- Spinning possum hair, 38
- Spokeshave, 54
- Staaten River, 17, 57
- Starcke River, 81
- Stencil, 35
- Stephens, 10
- Sterculia*
 - caudata*, 47
 - diversifolia*, 24
- Stick spearthrower, 78
- Sticky wax, 53
- Stingray spine, 106
- Stitch pattern, 73
- Stitching
 - needle, 52
- Stone axe, 36
 - head, 75, 105
- Stone hammer, 36, 50
- Straight spearthrower, 79
- Strainers, 27, 65
- Strathleven country
 - see under Arthau, 22
- String making, 58
- Sugar bag stick, 49
- Swab, 49
 - food collecting, 49
- Swords, 94
- Syrinx aruanus*, 71
- Taboo, 24
- Tang*, 48
- Tan-dai*, 82
- Tan-yil*, 81
- Tarbulanga*, 64, 65
- Tarubal*, 46
- Tarwa*, 46
- Tassel
 - possum fur, 90
- Ta-mi*, 24
- Teeth
 - shark's, 77
- Telegraph Office, 41
- Telmemuka*, 54
- Tetradonta*, 8
- The Morehead, 26
- Thomson, 19
- Thursday Island, 41
- Thygeson's Karm-bar, 81
- Timehri*, 14
- Tinaroo, 85
- Tinaroo Creek, 85
- Tindale, 17, 19, 44
- Tinder, 104
- Tooth drill, 48
- Topsy's Waterhole, 17, 58
- Top-stitching, 52
- Torch, 33
- Torng*, 39
- Trapping crocodiles, 93
- Trila-elpan*, 29
- Tri-la-el-pan*, 29
- Tru-no*, 105
- Tully River, 42, 87, 92
- Tun-ja*, 84
- Twine
 - making, 25
 - possum hair, 38
- Upper Flinders district, 68
- URL, 15
- Uutaalnganu people, 19
- Vanrook, 95
- Victim's spear, 22
- Waist belt, 32
- Wai-yir*, 36
- Wakai*, 90
- Walmbar*, 81
- Warte-a*, 47
- Water carrier, 20
 - leaf, 82
 - shell, 83
- Waterproofing, 20
- Weapon, 39
 - hiding from view, 77
- Webb's, 81
- Website, 15
- Weipa, 97
 - see also under Napranum, 98
- Wenlock River, 98
- White pigment, 75
- Wild River, 85
- Winbar-winbar, 81
- Wooden mallet, 52
- Wooden needle, 52
- Words, 7
- Workai-a*, 69
- Woven bags, 60
- Woven sieve baskets, 81
- Wunumari people, 68
- Wu-ru*, 50
- Xanthomelon pachystyla*, 92
- Xanthorrhoea*
 - arborea*, 32, 84, 104
 - johnsonii*, 32, 84, 104
- Yadhaigana people, 41
- Yam, 64
- Ye-cha*, 39
- Yirandali people, 68
- Yir-Yiront people, 17
- York Downs Cattle Station, 98
- Yorl-bun, 81
- Yorro, 81
- Yur-nganya*, 79
- Yu-ontabola*, 66



Fire stick and cap, Embley River, 1900.
See p. 104 for details.